

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION**

ECONOMIC GROWTH UPDATE

1. **Purpose of Report**

This report identifies the progress made by Slough in meeting the ambitions set out in its Economic Growth Strategy and to identify how through its rewrite it will ensure residents will benefit from the activity in the future.

2. **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

The Committee is requested to:

- a) Note the progress made to date in delivering the priority in the economic growth strategy
- b) Note the intention to rewrite the economic growth strategy and to comment on Scrutiny's future involvement in its development.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy (SJWS) is the document that details the priorities agreed for Slough with partner organisations. The SJWS has been developed using a comprehensive evidence base that includes the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA).

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

The activities listed in this report address and link to the Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy (SJWS) priorities below.

Priorities:

1. Protecting vulnerable children
2. Increasing life expectancy by focusing on inequalities
3. Improving mental health and wellbeing
4. Housing

3b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The actions highlighted in the report will help deliver outcome 5 of the 2017-2021 Five Year Plan - Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide jobs and opportunities for our residents (Outcome 5).

However it is important to understand that the economic growth activities also help deliver other outcomes such as:

- Our children and young people will have the best start in life and opportunities to give them positive lives (Outcome 1)
- Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and visit (Outcome 3)
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The local actions taken will help to ensure residents will benefit from the economic growth taking place in Slough taking on board the vision to '**Grow a place of ambition and opportunity**'

4. **Other Implications**

(a) Financial

There are no direct financial implications. Any implications arising from the refresh of the strategy will be reported to the Cabinet as part of the adoption process.

(b) Risk Management

Risk/Threat/Opportunity	Mitigation(s)	Recommendation
No risks identified.		

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act and legal implications identified.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

It is not necessary to undertake an Equalities Impact Assessment at this stage. However should any actions require an assessment, this exercise will be carried out when necessary according to Slough Borough Council's rules and guidelines.

5. **Supporting Information**

5.1 Slough is entering a time of opportunity. The wider context is giving us a real sense of confidence both in our ambition and the opportunities it presents. With the government selecting Heathrow as its preferred option for airport expansion, Town Centre investment through ADIA, our improving infrastructure both in transport as well as homes, schools and leisure offer all nearing completion, it is a positive picture.

5.2 There remain a few areas to ensure we maximise the benefit for our residents business and communities but it might be worth reflecting on our work so far. The recent Centre for Cities report 2017 highlights a number of areas we should rightly be proud of;

- The best 5GCSE results in the country
- 2nd highest GVA outside London
- 3rd highest business start up in the country
- Improving leisure facilities such as Arbour Park
- Delivering improvements to a number of schools

- Building 2 new hotels
 - Securing £500m investment into the Town Centre
- 5.3 Some of our successes are also demonstrated through the effectiveness of our partnerships e.g. our youth services, pre employability courses, adult and community learning, job brokerage and many others. The partnerships we have are many and varied being both formal and informal large and small.
- 5.4 One example is our Strategic Skills and Employment Group led by our Head of Learning & Community Services which includes East Berkshire College, JCP, SUR, and Heathrow, Local School representatives, Aspire and the voluntary sector. This partnership is focused on ensuring Slough and in particular its residents have access to develop the right skills and opportunities
- 5.5 Partners cannot fail to be impressed with the scale and impact of these achievements however the challenge is for us is ensuring all our residents benefit from these achievements and no one gets left behind.

Challenges

- 5.6 We are aware from the NOMIS data that highlights for us whilst we have relatively low unemployment running at 9.3% the majority of these people are on Employment Support Assistance (ESA). However, our residents who are employed are significantly over represented in lower skilled roles and underrepresented in professional roles. This means in cash terms weekly pay for a Slough resident on average is £58 less than the rest of the South East.
- 5.7 We are also mindful that there are other challenges in ensuring we are able to support and retain our existing business both large and small. Key amongst these are the outcome of Brexit, the prospect of the Elizabeth Line (Crossrail) and its improving access to east London and the expansion of Heathrow and other transport links on Slough and its communities.

Opportunities

- 5.8 We are just in the process of revisiting our current Economic Growth and Enterprise Strategy (which was agreed in 2014) in recognition of the changing circumstances set out above. We have reasons to be positive. However, we need to ensure we have a clear plan of action in approaching this task. As part of the 5 Year Plan we have recognized the following as headline objectives to delivering our outcomes:
- Creating the Slough story
 - Delivering high quality skills and training
 - Providing excellent infrastructure
 - A clear local plan
 - Attracting new investment
 - Retain and growing existing business
 - Delivering creativity and innovation

- 5.9 We are now looking to create a timeline for the process of developing the strategy Part of that process will be to create a number of groups including an overarching steering group made up of various stakeholders representing all sectors and markets. There will be a need to use existing groups as reference groups e.g. the existing Strategic Skills and Employment Group as well as existing documents such as the Local Plan.

The proposed process is as follows

Phase 1	Definition / objective of strategy Develop a 'Theory of change' model Engagement with partners	
	How have we done against our past targets	End of March
Phase 2	What do we want to do and how	End of April
Phase 3	How do we know we're doing it right targets/ Performance	End of June
Phase 4	Review progress to date – gap analysis	End of Sept
Phase 5	Consult with wider stakeholder group	End of Oct.
Phase 6	Launch strategy	October/November

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked whether, and if so how, it would want to be involved in the refresh of the strategy.

6. **Comments of Other Committees**

None.

7. **Conclusion**

This report has highlighted through a snapshot of activities of the progress made by with the economic growth strategy. It seeks to identify the key actions needed to address as part of the rewrite of the economic growth strategy. It also welcomes comments on the future involvement by scrutiny in its development

8. **Appendices Attached**

None.

9. **Background Papers**

None.