

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 12th April 2018

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WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION**

FIVE YEAR PLAN: OUTCOME 5 UPDATE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update the Committee (OSC) on the progress of Outcome 5 (with particular reference to key actions 1, 3, 5 and 6) from Slough Borough Council's (SBC) Five Year Plan.

'Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide jobs and opportunities for our residents.'

- 1.2 These actions were chosen by OSC at its meeting on 14th September 2017 and are as follows:

1. Focus the council's business inward investment and retention function on growing business rate income to support service provision.
3. Support businesses and partners to enable residents to develop skills to meet local employers' needs.
5. Maximise the opportunities for local people from an expanded Heathrow Airport.
6. Cultivate a vibrant town centre

- 1.3 OSC is also asked to note that the 5 Year Plan has been refreshed, and the report is a retrospective view of the progress made on these actions in 2017 – 18. OSC will be asked to allocate scrutiny of the new key actions in 2018 – 19 at the start of the next Municipal Year.

2. Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

- 2.1 OSC is requested to consider and comment on the actions taken to deliver the key actions.

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

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment**

Outcome 5 of the 5 Year Plan relates to the following priorities of the Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy:

- Increasing life expectancy by focusing on inequalities

The 5 Year Plan has been developed using the evidence base of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the Slough Story.

3b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

This report focusses on outcome 5 of the 5 outcomes in the Five Year Plan:

- Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide jobs and opportunities for our residents.

4 **Other Implications**

(a) Financial

The Five Year Plan is important in determining the priority outcomes against which resources will be allocated. The time frame for the Five Year Plan is aligned with our medium term financial planning and will roll forward each year, i.e. the new Plan looks ahead for the five years 2018/19 to 2022/23.

(b) Risk Management

There are no identified risks associated with the proposed actions.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no direct legal implications. The specific activity in the Plan and other plans may have legal implications which will be brought to the attention of Cabinet separately. There are no Human Rights Act Implications.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There is no requirement to complete an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) in relation to this report. EIAs will however be completed on individual aspects of any actions produced to sit underneath the Plan, as required.

5 **Supporting Information**

5.1 OSC decided to retain responsibility for Outcome 5 of the 5 Year Plan at its meeting on 20th December 2016. As with the 4 other Outcomes of the Five Year Plan, Outcome 5 has a series of key actions which set out what will be done to achieve the outcome – these are:

1. Focus the council's business inward investment and retention function on growing business rate income to support service provision.
2. Deliver infrastructure improvements to attract and support businesses.
3. Support businesses and partners to enable residents to develop skills to meet local employers' needs.
4. Deliver a Local Plan that supports economic growth
5. Maximise the opportunities for local people from an expanded Heathrow Airport.
6. Cultivate a vibrant town centre

This report focuses on the progress being made on key actions 1, 3, 5 and 6.

5.2 OSC is also requested to note that the Board overseeing Outcome 5 of the 5 Year Plan is establishing 3 key measures of progress. Once these are in place, they will form a central element of reporting on the outcome in 2018 – 19 and future years. It is anticipated that this will be in place for the outcome's report to Cabinet in July 2018, and will centre on access to employment, business rate income and journey times.

Focus the Council's business inward investment and retention function on growing business rate income to support service provision

5.3 SBC has held its first property investor day. This provided an ideal opportunity for Slough to showcase its economic strengths to potential investors, and for those involved in both housing and commerce to initiate conversations regarding the town's position as a vibrant economic centre with regional and international transport hubs to facilitate trade.

5.4 The work on this key action is already delivering support for service provision across Slough. Through our economic activity, SBC has generated an additional £3.5 million; this enabled the Council to balance its budget without having to make cuts to front line services whilst also maintaining relatively limited increases to Council Tax.

5.5 As a vital part of the investment required to generate growth in business rate income, SBC have acquired the former Thames Valley University (TVU) site to assemble the North West Quadrant ("NWQ") of the Heart of Slough Strategy. The current outline proposals for this mixed-use site include 250,000 sq.ft. of Grade A office space, which contribute to a gross development value of circa £600m and act as a major attraction for investors. As well as the growth in jobs and business that this will attract.

Support businesses and partners to enable residents to develop skills to meet local employers' needs

- 5.6 SBC has secured the funding for the 'Building Better Opportunities' project. This work will be a core element in developing residents' skills, as its aim is to provide the necessary assistance to residents currently out of work to obtain the requisite aptitudes to find opportunities in the local economy. The project is aimed at over 25s who are currently economically inactive or unemployed, and will be launched in the coming year.
- 5.7 Recognition of the opportunities open to local residents has come from external sources. In September 2017, Slough was named as the best place to live and work in the UK; this involved analysis of the jobs market, the cost of living and worker satisfaction. Given the existing number of major employers with head offices in Slough, the high proportion of 'start ups' and other innovative firms in the area and the expansion outlined elsewhere in this report, it is anticipated that local residents will have a wide range of opportunities from which to choose when selecting their future careers.

Maximise the opportunities for local people from an expanded Heathrow Airport

- 5.8 SBC has secured a Memorandum of Understanding. This will provide a clear partnership arrangement for the Council's co-operation with Heathrow Airport, and ensure that SBC is in a position to maximise the potential benefits to local residents. A major element of our joint work with Heathrow Airport will be to encourage the use of sustainable methods of transport to reduce congestion and improve air quality.
- 5.9 Slough Borough Council is one of the founding members of the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group (HSPG) representing 12 local authorities around the airport who have come together to seek to mitigate and benefit from the potential expansion of Heathrow. Slough Borough Council are the Accountable Body for HSPG and Chair the Transport Sub-Group.
- 5.10 The Director of Regeneration, in his capacity as Chair of the Transport Sub-Group, made representations in the Houses of Parliament to the Transport Select Committee examining the National Policy Statement (NPS) on future airport capacity.
- 5.11 Slough has also submitted its own comments to the Department for Transport on the NPS as well as responding to Heathrow's own recent informal consultation document on airport expansion.

Cultivate a Vibrant Town Centre

- 5.12 Slough is committed to altering the perception of the town centre. Having undertaken consultation with local residents and visitors, it was understood that the central issues limiting footfall in the High Street area were cleanliness and the retail opportunities available. As a result, a programme of work has

been initiated which is aimed at ensuring the area is clean, safe and vibrant. In addition, plans are being made so that the period between the end of the existing shopping centres and the establishment of the revamped town centre will see pop ups and similar attractions brought to the town to maintain visitor numbers and revenue for local businesses.

- 5.13 A brief for the Business Improvement District is being prepared. This will allow us to understand who is best placed to work on feasibility, the benefits of the District and the costs associated. This exercise will allow us to shape our forward strategy on the District and appoint (subject to feasibility) a consultant to deliver the project.

6 **Comments of Other Committees**

The Five Year Plan and performance on Outcome 5 is regularly discussed by the Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This specific report has not been considered by any other Committee within SBC.

7 **Conclusion**

OSC is requested to consider the progress made to date. The most appropriate manner in which to scrutinise the revised Outcome 5 will be addressed at the start of the new Municipal Year.

8 **Appendices Attached**

None

9 **Background Papers**

Five Year Plan 2017 – 2021.