

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Overview and Scrutiny Committee **Date** 14th March 2019

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WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION**

FIVE YEAR PLAN - OUTCOME FIVE

1. **Purpose of Report**

To provide the Committee with an update on Outcome Five - Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents; including detailed plans to respond to the skills and investment opportunities arising from Heathrow's expansion and other major economic development schemes.

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

The Committee is requested to note details of the report.

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

3a. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

This report delivers on the following outcome

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

4 **Supporting Information**

4.1 **Outcome 5 Update**

Why this is important

- Slough has high levels of personal car use, leading to congestion and exacerbating issues around air quality.
- The use of public transport is low compared to similar areas, such as Reading.
- Slough's business start up rate is positive, but survival rates beyond five years are low.
- Slough's retail offer is limited, but there is the opportunity to establish alternative uses for the centre of town to accommodate our rising population and create the business vibrancy that Crossrail has potential to bring.
- Though progress has been made in recent years, a comparatively small proportion of Slough's population hold NVQ-recognised qualifications.
- As of 2018, the average gross weekly pay for residents of Slough working full time was £74.60 lower than the average for all those working here, which implies that those commuting in to the borough are generally in higher paid work.

- Although employment levels are good overall, some groups, such as women, remain under-represented in the labour market.

Our response

- As a Council, we are committed to promoting inclusive economic growth, ensuring that the benefits from the regeneration of our town are shared by all of our residents.
- We are well-placed to exploit new transport links and strengthen our growing reputation as a regional economic centre, but know there is more for us to do attract investment and bring more high-quality, well-paid jobs to Slough.
- Work on the old library site is now underway and we will soon begin our regeneration of the former Thames Valley University campus, which will provide more retail, office and leisure space, as well as housing.
- We will also continue plans to improve our infrastructure - supporting digital development, unshackling the town from congestion, and encouraging a shift towards more sustainable forms of transport.
- This approach will enable us to present a comprehensive vision and master planning of opportunities, and to encourage and influence high quality design and development throughout the town centre.

Our long-term priorities are to:

- Collaborate on the Heathrow expansion.
- Have a clear vision and masterplan for the centre of town, regenerating major sites and attracting investors and occupiers.
- Encourage modal shift to sustainable forms of transport - including walking, cycling and public transport - reducing traffic congestion and emissions.
- Provide residents with opportunities to improve their skills and secure quality jobs.

4.2 Update on our detailed plans to respond to the skills and investment opportunities arising from Heathrow's expansion and other major economic development schemes.

4.2.1 This report will cover the following:

- Our response to the recently released report from the Heathrow Skills Taskforce chaired by Lord Blunkett
- The Council's ambitions related to the development of a skills strategy
- Possible future activities to enhance the existing skills 'offer' in Slough

4.2.2 **A beacon of opportunity** is the Heathrow report on the recommendations falling out of the Heathrow Skills Taskforce. The skills taskforce was established 18 months ago and was chaired by Lord Blunkett with representatives from all sectors, public private, voluntary and community. The taskforce the report identified 5 key recommendations details as follows:

- **Leading business change** – influencing the behaviours and actions of its supply chains Predominantly by modelling best practice such as being a London living wage employer or delivering a sustainability strategy
- **Celebrating diversity and inclusion** . Heathrow due to the scale and influence of the expansion programme has the opportunity to set a benchmark for diversity and inclusion by providing oversight for its supply chains performance in these areas and in its own practice tailoring additional support to enable furthest from work participants to access jobs and opportunities more effectively in the future
- **Maximising apprenticeship opportunities** Heathrow is planning to deliver 10000 apprenticeships by 2030 and working with its supply chain partners to ensure they are at all levels. There will also be envisions focusing on upper level apprenticeships through collaboration with partners and SME's
- **Promoting career choices and engaging with the education sector** Heathrow is looking to establish itself as an aspirational career destination . They are looking to do this through closer collaboration with the education sector and marketing a wider choice of careers, jobs and opportunities . Heathrow also go beyond existing education providers and engage with other client groups needing opportunities such as older job seekers, and others facing barriers to employment
- **Enabling skills for a lasting legacy** Heathrow is looking to embed its offer through the UK by the provision of other hubs supported by a supply chain and ensuring jobs in the locality. These hubs will adopt similar principles as those provided at Heathrow ensuring business change, celebrating diversity ,maximising apprenticeships and promoting career choices.

4.2.3 Slough is developing its response to the above and other challenges in the skills arena through the engagement of Hatch Regeneris whose brief is to engage and identify a current baseline of the needs of our communities , businesses and other stakeholders. The baseline then allows us to develop an appropriate strategy in response to the evidence presented. This will potentially pick up on the points identified within the Heathrow report such as greater engagement with education partners and delivering legacy skills.

4.2.4 Hatch Regeneris are a highly regarded economic research consultancy that will bring their full range of expertise together with a series of potential solutions that potentially address some of the challenges Slough faces such as access to 'good jobs' , lack of clear pathways into employment and job readiness for our young people.

4.2.5 We are keen to develop our response in partnership with our businesses such as SEGRO,SUR and others to ensure effective progression for our residents into meaningful roles necessary to ensure Sloughs success as the best place to work for the last 2 years.

5. Comments of Other Committees

None.

6. Conclusion

Members are asked to note the contents of the above report.