

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET 10 DECEMBER 2024 FROM THE REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL MEETING HELD ON 19 NOVEMBER 2024

RD61: CABINET REPORT – ECONOMIC STRATEGY FOR WEST NORFOLK

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The Regeneration Programmes Manager presented the report which outlined the development, and recommended the adoption of the Economic Strategy for West Norfolk. It was noted that the Strategy had come to Panel several times in its draft format for the Panel to have input and make comments.

The Regeneration Programmes Manager highlighted the importance of the document for future funding opportunities, investment and devolution deals and how the Strategy set out the ambitions, vision and needs of the area.

The Strategy would inform and support delivery of other organisational Strategies such as the Cultural Strategy.

The Panel were provided with information on the extensive consultation and engagement with Stakeholders to develop the Strategy.

The Regeneration Programmes Manager highlighted the key themes, priorities, strengths and challenges as set out in the Strategy along with the four key sectors. It was noted that the next stage was to look at what investment was needed to maximise growth within the key sector areas and develop an Investment Plan, which would be presented to the Regeneration and Development Panel once prepared.

The Panel was informed that the Strategy had also been endorsed by external partners.

The Assistant Director explained that a lot of time and resource had gone into preparing the Strategy which he felt was sound and objective and delivered a holistic approach.

The Chair thanked officers for the report and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

The Chair referred to future expansion plans for RAF Marham.

The Portfolio Holder for Business and Culture, Councillor Ring addressed the Panel and thanked officers and Metro Dynamics for preparing the Strategy. He reminded the Panel that this linked with the Norfolk wide Economic Strategy which had previously been endorsed by the Panel. Councillor Ring commented that this document was crucial for investment and to showcase the benefits of the area.

Councillor Collingham asked what the main drivers for change were and that realistic specific actions were required. The Assistant Director explained that drivers for change included the changing use of the town centre, the change in people's shopping habits and the decline in the working age population and the need to retain young people in the area by offering opportunities for them.

Councillor Bubb referred to the change in peoples shopping habits and people doing more online shopping. He commented that ways to entice people to the area needed to be looked at by making the area more attractive to businesses and investors.

The Portfolio Holder for Business and Culture, Councillor Ring commented that actions to make West Norfolk an attractive place for people to want to visit, stay and live would be looked at and this Strategy provided the starting point to shape the area, make it a place where businesses wanted to invest in and promote tourism opportunities.

Councillor Beal commented that it would be good to have an initial big project to kick start the Strategy.

Councillor Colwell addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34 and commented that the vision and objectives were clearly set out.

RESOLVED: That the Regeneration and Development Panel support the recommendations to Cabinet, as set out below.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Endorse the West Norfolk Economic Strategy.
2. Endorse the revised King's Lynn Town Board vision and priorities as detailed in section 4.