

<b>Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council</b>	
MEETING:	Health and Wellbeing Board
MEETING DATE:	6 November 2013
TITLE:	B&NES Economic Strategy
WARD:	All
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>	
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b>	

## **1 THE ISSUE**

1.1 The B&NES Public Services board is working towards a coordinated approach to local services and is now in the process of working towards three key strategies to support this:

- Health & Wellbeing
- Environmental
- Economic

1.2 The 2010 B&NES Economic Strategy committed the Council to refresh and renew its plans after a period of three years. The Council has now commenced work on refreshing the strategy and wishes to take this opportunity to broaden the scope of the strategy to embrace a wider range of Health & Wellbeing Interventions and Outcomes.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

The Board is asked to agree that:

2.1 The review of the B&NES Economic Strategy and the integration of the Health & Wellbeing agenda should be supported.

2.2 To support the setting up of a sub group to work on the review of the strategy.

## **3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

3.1 The exact resource implications are not yet known, however the integration of the Economic Strategy and Health & Wellbeing agenda could have resource implications. It is proposed that the working group consider these and report back to the Health & Wellbeing board.

## **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL**

4.1 The Economic Strategy is not a statutory function of the Council. However the overarching theme 'To improve the prosperity and wellbeing of Bath & North East Somerset residents through a more productive, competitive and expanded economy'; underpins a number of key Council strategic objectives including the Children Leaving Care and Health and Wellbeing agendas.

## 5 THE REPORT

5.1 The present B&NES Economic Strategy was produced in 2010 and was to deliver a 16 year plan to be coterminous with the original B&NES Core Strategy. The strategy's main objectives were:

- Skills development for residents and employers
- Increased business space
- Supporting start ups and knowledge intensive sectors/ industries
- Maintaining market position in retail, leisure, tourism and manufacturing
- Improve inward investment across districts especially outside Bath.

5.2 In the 3 – 4 years following the strategy's release there have been significant changes both locally and nationally. These have included the socio economic impacts of the 2008 recession, changes to the Welfare System and Universal Credit, the increase in the age of retirement and the raising of participation age.

5.3 This has seen the socio economic position of B&NES shift where 20% of the population live in communities where there is:

- Shorter life expectancy, increased prevalence of long-term conditions.
- Poorer general health, lower breastfeeding levels, higher admissions for self-harm and poisoning
- Poor dental health, higher rates of smoking and more than four times as likely to be admitted to hospital for alcohol specific conditions.
- Significant relationship between unemployment, offending and education achievement.
- Strong relationship between lower levels of social capital and inequality.

5.4 There are also increasing concerns in the cost of living and the present inequalities that are related to relatively low wages (the lowest in the West of England) and very high house prices (some of the highest in the Country.) There are mounting issues with in work poverty and this is set to become increasingly acute as Universal Credit is fully applied. The combination of the Welfare reform and the increase of the retirement age is also expected to increase pressure on the labour market, with an extra 1400 residents needing to find employment. This is a concern in the context of B&NES market employment having shrunk by approximately 1%.

## 6 RATIONALE

6.1 It is accepted that the present economic strategy has not yet fully addressed all the issues outlined above. In part this has been due to the greatly altered national picture. There is also an acceptance that there has been a focus on the creation and support of higher value sectors and employment opportunities, which has meant that there is now a need to increase and support pathways into employment at lower skills and experience levels.

6.2 If the present socio economic and social inequalities/ disparities are to be challenged in B&NES and improve overall health and wellbeing, then it is expected that the refresh of the B&NES Economic strategy will need to take this into account and build on the recommendations of the Marmot review:

*Reducing health inequalities will require action on six policy objectives:*

- *Give every child the best start in life*
- ***Enable all children young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives***
- ***Create fair employment and good work for all***
- *Ensure a healthy standard of living for all*
- *Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities*
- *Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention*

6.3 Embodied within the review is the belief that to tackle health and wellbeing (inequalities) there needs to be an understanding of fairness. From our perspective, wealth disparities are the main issue for us to tackle. Tackling not only the worklessness agenda but also the issue of low pay/ productivity employment, and balancing this with affordable housing provision, will increase household incomes and raise standards of living. This, in essence, reduces the gap between high and low incomes increasing 'fairness' in society, and reducing health and wellbeing disparities that are associated with low incomes.

6.4 If people are to 'maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives' then being economically active, in work and have reasonable social mobility will enable this. In addition, for young people, receiving a 'fair' standard of education and access to employability, support increasing social mobility, and preventing them from experiencing perceived health and wellbeing issues, could also be implied.

6.5 There are also the other wider benefits to society of increasing the social mobility of an individual in economic terms, through elevated tax revenues and decreasing pressures on health and education services.

## **7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

7.1 None

## **8 CONSULTATION**

Cllr Allen, Mike Bowden, John Cox – For Information Tim Richens, Vernon Hitchman

## **9 RISK MANAGEMENT**

9.1 Not applicable

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<b>Background papers</b>	
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	