



**AGENDA ITEM: 5(q)**

**CABINET: 17<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2015**

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**Report of: Assistant Director Housing and Regeneration**

**Relevant Managing Director: Managing Director (Transformation)**

**Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor D. Westley**

**Contact for further information: Mrs P. Huber (Extn. 5359)**

**(Email [paula.huber@westlancs.gov.uk](mailto:paula.huber@westlancs.gov.uk))**

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**SUBJECT: WEST LANCASHIRE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2015-2025**

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Wards affected: Borough wide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To inform Members of the outcome of the consultation exercise in relation to the draft West Lancashire Economic Development Strategy and to agree the final version of the Strategy.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET**

2.1 That the West Lancashire Economic Development Strategy 2015-2025 be approved for adoption, incorporating the proposed changes highlighted within Part 1 of Appendix A.

2.2 That the Assistant Director Housing and Regeneration be authorised to make minor amendments to the Strategy to correct any typographical or factual errors prior to the printing and implementation of the Strategy.

2.3 That the Assistant Director Housing and Regeneration be authorised to implement the West Lancashire Economic Development Strategy 2015-2025.

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**3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Following Cabinet approval of the Draft West Lancashire Economic Development Strategy in January 2015, the document has been through a series of consultation exercises.
- 3.2 During the six week consultation exercise which began on the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2015 and completed on the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2015 officers participated in a number of events to promote the consultation and encourage engagement. These events included a Business and Stakeholder consultation event, a business 'Start Up and Growth' event and an exhibition at Edge Hill University. In addition, the draft Strategy was presented to the West Lancashire Skills, Training and Employment Partnership (STEP), One West Lancashire Board meeting and a meeting of the Lancashire Economic Development Officers network.
- 3.3 A dedicated web page was created on the Council's website and details of the consultation exercise were sent to businesses on the Economic Regeneration's business database. Letters were also sent to the key businesses which the two Managing Directors have met, as well as stakeholders, partners, neighbouring local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships. Press releases were also issued to the media during the six week period.
- 3.4 Respondents were encouraged to complete an online questionnaire, although some paper copies were also available should individuals have preferred this method.
- 3.5 As a result of the six week consultation exercise, a total of 6 detailed comments were received, along with 11 further questionnaire responses.

#### **4.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

- 4.1 All of the detailed responses to the consultation have been analysed and are provided for consideration at Appendix A. Appendix A has been divided into two parts, part 1 details the comments recommended for inclusion into the final Strategy and part 2 provides full details of all responses for noting and not recommended for inclusion.
- 4.2 Individual responses have been received from the larger stakeholders, including the Homes and Communities Agency, Lancashire County Council, the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group and the North & Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, who have all provided detailed comments. These are all detailed within Appendix A. The questionnaire results, of which there were 11, are all detailed within Appendix B.
- 4.3 Comments received have been positive and generally supportive of our strategic approach both from the completed questionnaires as well as the discussions and meetings that have taken place and the events officers have attended. The perception of Skelmersdale is a particular area in which comments have been made and useful suggestions around branding and building on the strengths of the town have also been made. An amendment to the Key Ask in relation to Skelmersdale Town Centre is suggested to make more of a reference to the implementation of the Skelmersdale Vision and the addition of a Key Ask to

strengthen the support delivery of new market and affordable housing in Skelmersdale has also been suggested and recommended for inclusion.

## **5.0 PROPOSALS**

- 5.1 Upon adoption of the West Lancashire Economic Development Strategy 2015-25, the implementation of the action plan will commence during 2015, with progress reports provided to Members periodically on progress.

## **6.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

- 6.1 The Draft West Lancashire Economic Development Strategy 2015-25 has developed eight core strategic themes that will drive economic growth forward through a series of Key Asks and a suite of actions. The purpose of the Strategy will be to increase the growth of the borough in terms of employment opportunities, availability of housing, raised skill and training levels of our local residents, support for indigenous businesses and attracting new investment through the delivery of significant economic regeneration activities. It is proposed that initiatives will be developed from the key actions that will advance equality of opportunities, in particular around the skills and training agenda.

## **7.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The West Lancashire Economic Development Strategy 2015-2025 has been informed by the 2014 Economic Study and has been subsequently produced within existing resources. Resources of up to £150,000 over a 3 year period have been secured to support delivery.
- 7.2 Implementing all the actions will require additional resources, some of which will be from a range of partner organisations and some of the actions will require external funding to be secured.

## **8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 8.1 The actions referred to in this report are covered by the scheme of delegation to officers and any necessary changes have been made in the relevant operational risk registers.
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## **Background Documents**

The following background documents (as defined in Section 100D (5) of the Local Government Act 1972) have been relied on to a material extent in preparing this Report.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Document</u>	<u>File Ref</u>
Sept 2014	West Lancashire Economy Study 2014	ED Study14

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

There is a direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. Therefore an Equality Impact Assessment is required. A formal equality impact assessment is attached as an Appendix to this report, the results of which have been taken into account in the Recommendations contained within this report.

## **Appendices**

Appendix A - West Lancashire Economy Strategy 2015-2025 Consultation Responses

Appendix B - West Lancashire Economy Strategy 2015-2025 Questionnaire Responses

Appendix C - Equality Impact Assessment