



PRCC.09 14/15
Committee: Prosperous Communities
Date: 15th July 2014

Subject: West Lindsey Economic Growth Strategy

Report by:	Chief Operating Officer
Contact Officer:	Jo Walker Team Manager Projects & Growth 01427 676633 Joanna.walker@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Purpose / Summary:	To seek approval of the draft Economic Growth Strategy.

RECOMMENDATION(S): That Members approve the draft Economic Growth Strategy for circulation to stakeholders.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: None as a result of this report. Some of the projects contained within the Action Plan will have legal implications but these will be dealt with individually through the approved project methodology process.

Financial: fin /28/15 None as a result of this report. The projects contained within the Action Plan will have financial implications but these will be dealt with individually through the approved project methodology process.

Staffing: None as a result of this report. For certain projects, additional resources may be required. Where this is the case, any staffing and consultancy costs will be considered as part of the individual project plans.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights: Stakeholder engagement has been a key aspect in developing this Strategy and will continue to form an integral part of the projects outlined within the Action Plan. The issues raised by stakeholders will inform and shape the projects outlined in this plan. Equalities, diversity and human rights issues will be considered as an integral part of this engagement process.

Risk Assessment: This Strategy contains a range of projects, all of which will have their own individual project plans, including risk assessments in line with the Council's approved project management methodology. Key risks and mitigation measures for the overall Strategy are summarised thus:

- Delays to the delivery of the Economic Growth Strategy: the strategy has been delayed due to management and staffing issues. These have now been resolved and draft strategy produced, ready for approval and wider stakeholder involvement.

- The ED Strategy may not have sufficient data or information to support it and therefore the findings/proposals may not be appropriate: extensive secondary data analysis currently being undertaken + primary data collection via a questionnaire survey, stakeholder workshop and 'Seeing is Believing' visits

- The ED Strategy may not have buy-in from stakeholders: questionnaire survey and stakeholder workshop taking place to encourage participation from external stakeholders; internal stakeholders kept informed via reporting such as this and through the committee process; stakeholders to be involved in the governance process

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities: Sustainable growth is at the heart of this Strategy. The Strategy has regard to economic, social and environmental issues which will impact and influence development in West Lindsey.

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

West Lindsey Economic Appraisal - [Economic Appraisal.docx](#)

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

Yes

No

X

Key Decision:

Yes

No

X

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Economic Growth Strategy sets out the overall vision for the growth and prosperity of our District over the next 20 years.
- 1.2 The Strategy is the product of a sustained programme of research, preparatory work and consultation which has included:
- Analysis of key economic, social and environmental data available from secondary sources and primary data
 - ‘Seeing is Believing’ meetings with major businesses in the District to identify issues and opportunities for growth
 - Economic survey and workshop event for stakeholders covering the business community, public sector bodies and training providers

An Economic Appraisal has been prepared in support of this strategy, with full details of the consultation, research and analysis undertaken.

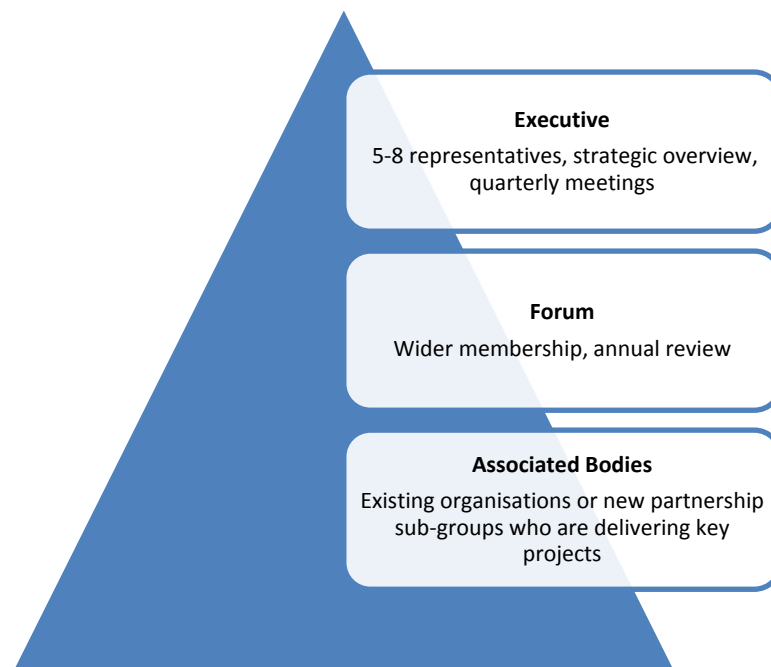
- 1.3 The Strategy builds upon the work undertaken as part of the Gainsborough Regained Masterplan 2007 and subsequently, West Lindsey’s Programme of Development for Growth published in 2008, which outlines proposals for large-scale housing growth through the delivery of sustainable new neighbourhoods, principally focussed around Gainsborough. It has been prepared with reference to a range of local, sub-regional and national policy documents including the Greater Lincolnshire Local Economic Partnership’s Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), the new Local Plan for Central Lincolnshire and the Council’s Corporate Plan.
- 1.4 A draft 20-year vision and priorities for economic growth are outlined below:

A resilient and diverse rural district which has embraced sustainable growth whilst retaining its quality, heritage and character for the benefit of all.

West Lindsey will have:

- **A thriving micro business sector with the highest number of global micro-businesses for a rural district of its size**
- **A diverse and productive agri-food industry, renowned nationally for its innovation**
- **An enterprising manufacturing sector which has risen to the challenges of the modern economy and pioneered new technologies**
- **A business base which has fully embraced green technologies**
- **An extensive leisure and cultural offer which complements and fully takes advantage of the natural environment and built character of the area, providing for residents and attracting corporate and leisure visitors from around the world**

- **A highly skilled and productive workforce, with local jobs and training options to match their needs**
 - **A connected economy with high speed broadband provision and improved transport links which encourages businesses to relocated to the area**
 - **A balanced housing market providing a range of quality housing in appropriate locations to support economic growth**
- 1.5 The Strategy is designed to be a partnership Strategy, not just a Council document. Direct support from service providers, businesses and the wider community will be needed in order to achieve the vision.
- 1.6 We want to engage stakeholders in a workable and streamlined way. To this end, key partners have been identified for each of the seven priorities, outlined in the preceding tables. We will now look to establish a partnership of dedicated stakeholders to oversee the delivery of the plan, with the Council adopting the role of facilitator.
- 1.7 A potential model for this partnership is presented below. The exact model for delivery will be determined by the stakeholders:



- 1.8 Members are invited to read, consider and approve the full Economic Growth Strategy, which is appended below.

Economic Growth Strategy (Draft V.3)

Title Page

Our 20 year vision for West Lindsey:

A resilient and diverse rural district which has embraced sustainable growth whilst retaining its quality, heritage and character for the benefit of all.

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Section 1: Introduction

The Economic Growth Strategy sets out the overall vision for the growth and prosperity of our District over the next 20 years. The Strategy provides measurable aims and targets which will focus the resources and activities of the Council and its partners so that collectively, we can achieve this vision.

The Strategy is the product of a sustained programme of research, preparatory work and consultation which has included:

- Analysis of key economic, social and environmental data available from secondary sources and primary data
- ‘Seeing is Believing’ meetings with major businesses in the District to identify issues and opportunities for growth
- Economic survey and workshop event for stakeholders covering the business community, public sector bodies and training providers

An Economic Appraisal has been prepared in support of this strategy, with full details of the consultation, research and analysis undertaken.

The strategy builds upon the work undertaken as part of the Gainsborough Regained Masterplan 2007 and subsequently, West Lindsey’s Programme of Development for Growth published in 2008, which outlines proposals for large-scale housing growth through the delivery of sustainable new neighbourhoods, principally focussed around Gainsborough.

It is housing-led growth which underpins West Lindsey's economic growth strategy, with the rationale that attracting more people to the area will create the demand for more services and goods which will in-turn attract more businesses and organisations to supply these needs, thereby improving employment opportunities and increasing productivity. Nevertheless we cannot depend exclusively on residential development to drive the economy. Housing and employment must go hand in hand and development should adhere to sustainable principles, taking into account the social and environmental impacts as well as the economic benefits.

Economic growth is heavily dependent on the state of the local and national economy, and the appetite of developers and companies to invest in the District. It is the role of the Council, and its public sector partners, to intervene whether there are issues of market failure (e.g. stalled development, high unemployment) and to encourage appropriate development solutions whilst limiting the negative externalities of growth (e.g. pollution, flood risk). Alongside a proactive inward investment campaign, the Council recognise the importance of supporting indigenous businesses and is committed to creating the right conditions to facilitate their growth and resilience.

This Economic Growth Strategy provides the overall vision and priorities for sustainable economic growth in West Lindsey. It includes a summary of the current economic situation

with respect to each priority and outlines key measures and activities which our stakeholders have identified to help achieve our vision.

This is a partnership strategy: the Council cannot deliver this strategy alone. Stakeholders from the public and private sectors have already been involved in developing this strategy. We now need to establish a strong partnership in order to achieve the vision, with the Council adopting the role of facilitator. The actions associated with this strategy should be viewed as a starting point. The plan, and the evidence base which supports it, will be reviewed on a regular basis to monitor progress against our objectives and ensure that delivery is kept on track.

Section 2: Strategic Linkages

The Economic Growth Strategy for West Lindsey has been prepared with reference to a range of local, sub-regional and national policy documents.

National Policy & Role of the Local Enterprise Partnership

The Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP) has an increasingly important role to play in delivering growth as central government pursues a decentralised approach to economic planning in response to the Heseltine Review, *No Stone Unturned* (BIS October 2010). As part of this process, and in order to secure important resources via the Single Local Growth Fund, the GLLEP has prepared a Strategic Economic Plan (SEP). The SEP identifies priority sectors and activities which will contribute to local growth, summarised as follows:

- *To drive the growth of the 3 strongest sectors: agri-food, manufacturing & visitor economy*
- *To grow opportunities identified as future defining features: health & care, low carbon, ports and logistics*
- *To drive growth through expansion into new markets, telecommunications, infrastructure improvements and skills*
- *To promote sustainable growth through improved transport infrastructure*
- *To recognise the need for new housing and to support balanced housing and economic development*

West Lindsey is an integral part of the Greater Lincolnshire economic area and the priorities for the District largely reflect those identified within the SEP, although interventions are tailored to the local area.

The Local Plan

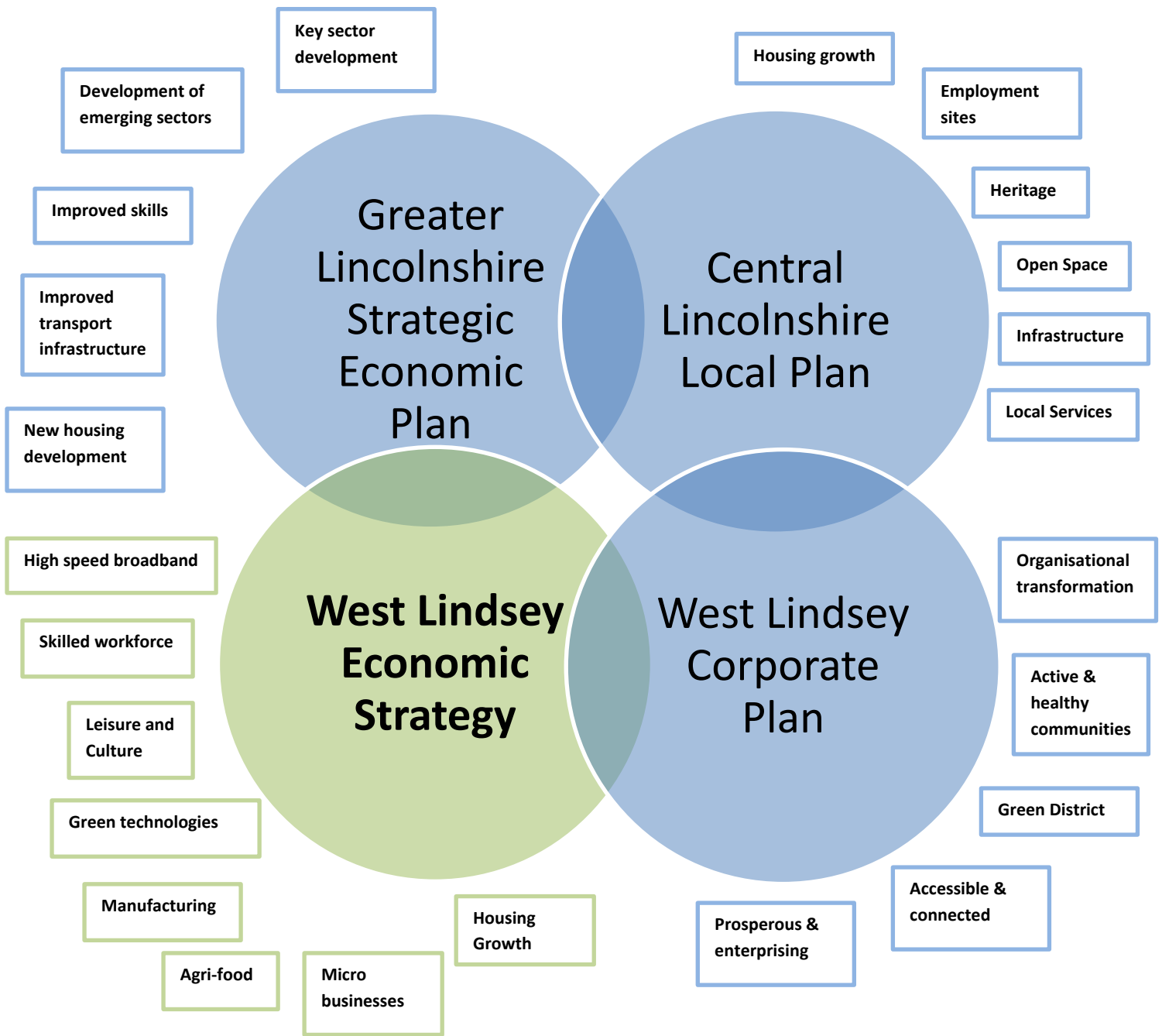
The Local Plan will provide a spatial framework for the delivery of new development across the Central Lincolnshire area up to 2036. The Local Plan will cover all aspects of development, with targets for house-building, employment land, job creation, infrastructure and service delivery. Sustainable growth will be at the heart of this spatial planning document although the quantum and geographical distribution of development have yet to be confirmed and will emerge later on in 2014/15. The Economic Strategy and supporting evidence is being used to inform the Local Plan process. As the work progresses, the Local Plan will also inform future iterations of this Economic Strategy. Similarly, Neighbourhood Plans will inform the approach to economic development at a very local level, where communities choose to pursue this approach such as at Caistor. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be developed alongside the Local Plan, allowing the local planning authorities to charge new development for infrastructure which will support growth such as roads, schools and community facilities. The level at which CIL is set, is to be

defined primarily by evidence on development viability and the level of funding required to help pay for infrastructure.

Economic development teams from each of the Central Lincolnshire Authorities are actively engaged in the plan-making process.

West Lindsey District Council Corporate Plan

The Economic Growth Strategy has been prepared at the same time as the Council's Corporate Plan. The priorities identified within the strategy fit with the Corporate Plan under theme one, *A Prosperous and Enterprising District*.



Section 3: West Lindsey Area Overview

West Lindsey has a total population of 89,250¹ and covers an area of 115,773 hectares, giving a population density of 0.77 per hectare. It is the sparsest district in Lincolnshire but is also one of the fastest growing, with a population increase of 12% between 2001-2011, compared with a county average of 10% and significantly higher than the regional (8%) and national (7%) averages². Census data does however show that the demographic in West Lindsey is skewed towards the older age groups compared to national averages, with significantly fewer young people (aged 20-29).

Gainsborough, with a population of 18,508 is the main service centre for the District, located to the west of the district, on the banks of the River Trent. There are two further market towns within the district; Market Rasen (3,904 inhabitants), to the east and Caistor (2,674 inhabitants) in the north-east offering further, more localised service provision to support the area's rural population. Lincoln lies to the south of the district with Scunthorpe to the north. Nottinghamshire borders to the west and East Lindsey and North East Lincolnshire lie to the east.

The vast majority of the district is used for arable farming and like most of Lincolnshire, the topography is flat or slightly rolling in nature. However, West Lindsey is punctuated by the higher grounds of the Lincolnshire Wolds (AONB) to the east and the Lincoln Edge scarp which runs north to south down the middle of the district, which (apart from the Peak District National Park) is the only designated landscape in the East Midlands. The River Trent marks the western border of the district with Nottinghamshire.

Rurality inevitably brings with it access issues however, the district is surprisingly well connected. The principal town of Gainsborough is within 20 miles of the A1/motorway network and has an extensive catchment reaching into Nottinghamshire and South Yorkshire. Two international airports (Humberside and Robin Hood) are within easy reach of the district, as are the Ports of Immingham and Hull. Coupled with this, house-prices are only half the national average making it an attractive but affordable lifestyle destination.

Patterns of deprivation show the extent of diversity and disparity between different parts of the district. Areas of Gainsborough rank amongst the most deprived in the country, whilst parts of Saxilby, Welton and Nettleham on the Lincoln fringe, are amongst the least deprived.

Overall, skill levels for the resident population in West Lindsey are commensurate with regional and national averages and the district fares better than the region for higher level skills³. The situation is very similar for unemployment at a district level⁴. However, a geographical breakdown of the data shows that unemployment and skill levels reflect the current patterns of deprivation across the District. In Gainsborough, the proportion of the population with no qualifications is between 10-30% higher than national averages whereas

¹ Population figures – Census 2011

² Lincolnshire Research Observatory, Mid-Year Estimate 2011

³ Skills Data - Census 2011

⁴ Using Claimant Count data (via Nomis)

the least deprived wards (Nettleham, Sudbrooke, Scampton, Welton) have a much greater percentage of residents with higher level skills (10-30% above national average). Similarly unemployment levels are significantly above the national average in the Gainsborough wards and the levels of young people who are out of work, education and training are of particular concern.

Economic data shows that West Lindsey is still predominantly characterised by micro businesses (86%), small businesses (10%), with a very small proportion of medium and large companies⁵. Whilst this mirrors the national bias towards small business, evidence shows West Lindsey has a lower proportion of larger businesses both in terms of employment and turnover, which is to be expected given the rural nature of the district.

As the commercial hub, Gainsborough has the highest concentration of businesses (20% total) and employment (28% total) in the district, with Market Rasen a distant second (9% businesses). Aside from these main centres, businesses are dispersed across the area with a number of small clusters located on former MoD sites and in the larger villages.

The most important sectors in terms of employment are Health, Manufacturing, Education, Retail and Construction. The district has a strong tradition of manufacturing and engineering principally focused on Gainsborough which is still evident today, with a much greater proportion of the population employed in this sector compared with national averages. The range of products which are produced in West Lindsey ranges from high-tech products such as golf clubs (Ping), exhaust systems (Eminox) and food packaging machinery (AMP Rose) through to agri-food production (Kerry Foods, Cherry Valley Farms, Noble Foods, SeaLord). The visitor economy (which includes retail) is another expanding sector both in terms of employment and value. With recognised deficiencies in 'leisure' provision and accommodation, and 90% current visitors being day trippers with a low spend per head, the sector offers further potential for growth over the coming years.

Our vision for growth builds on our key strengths and is captured in the next section.

⁵ Micro businesses (0 to 9 employees); Small businesses (10 to 49 employees); Medium and Large businesses (over 50 employees). Data taken from local business directory - figures include all businesses (inc. Home-based) and not just VAT registered businesses. Dataset can only be used for local analysis as it is bespoke to WL. Data is provided by ADMAR

Section 4: Our Strengths, Vision and Priorities

What is special about West Lindsey's economy?

- Home to over 5000 businesses including a number of high profile international companies such as Ping (European HQ), Eminox, SeaLord and Regal Beloit.
- An enterprising area with over 86% of our business base being micro, creating a vibrant platform for business to business activities⁶.
- A strong tradition of manufacturing and engineering, which remains a feature of our economy today along with construction and health
- A significant Agri-food sector employing more than 1 in 10 people across Lincolnshire⁷
- A thriving and expanding visitor economy – 40.5% growth in visitor spend between 2003-12 with award winning attractions⁸.
- High ranking secondary schools (top 100 in the country), and Lincoln University on the doorstep.
- A good supply of affordable land with 29 ha available immediately for development, coupled with a business friendly planning service with a 'can do approach'.
- Average houses are 55% lower than the national average, with a semi-detached property costing approx. £120,000.
- Diverse business base with good road, rail and air connections; Robin Hood and Humberside airports and the Humberside ports all within a 30 minutes' drive time.
- Attractive rural lifestyle with an abundance of environmental and heritage assets including the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB (only AONB in the East Midlands) with an array of walking and cycling opportunities, and close to the historical cathedral city of Lincoln.

Case Studies

Freewatt Ltd

The story of Stow-based Freewatt is an excellent example of the kind of entrepreneurial spirit and business growth that is a feature of the county.

Since its inception in 2008 the company has been responsible for installing nearly 6MW of solar energy at 700 different locations around the county – enough to power 2,000 homes –

⁶ Figures from local business directory

⁷ The Value of Food and Farming in Lincolnshire, LRO, 2007

⁸ STEAM data 2003-2012 (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor)

and saved 3 million tonnes of CO₂ per year in the process. And during that time the company has grown its turnover of just £40,000 in its first year to more than £6 million this year and now employs a 30-strong workforce.

Freewatt has already been responsible for a series of ground-breaking projects. It was the first company to build a solar farm in Lincolnshire and is one of only a handful of companies with English Heritage approved status for fitting PV on Grade 1 listed buildings.

The company is growing the area's reputation for excellence in engineering by carrying out landmark work across the UK. Its ventures include Winchester College private school, a 10th century church in Buckinghamshire and BSF projects in central London.

Company CEO Julian Patrick's flagship has also completed a project to develop the UK's greenest period home, providing a blueprint for how to manage sustainable energy use for rural heritage homes, which has won acclaim and interest across the UK.

Freewatt also ensures it practices what it preaches. The company HQ has a myriad of the latest green technologies including solar PV panels on the roofs, a biomass boiler heating the offices and the house next door and its own 1.1MW solar farm being grazed by rare-breed sheep. It has coupled green technologies with a commitment to energy reduction and uses hybrid cars and a plug-in electric car powered by and housed in a specially constructed solar car canopy.

Freewatt's continued growth and achievements across this sector has resulted in local and national awards.

Ping Europe Ltd

Founded in the US in 1959 by Karsten Solheim, Ping remains to this day a family owned golf brand with an industry leading, worldwide reputation. Ping Europe has traded successfully in Gainsborough since 1973. The company assemble, manufacture and distribute golf clubs and equipment and are recognised as the leaders in custom fitting. The Ping brand is renowned for its innovation, design, quality and service.

Recent investment in a new extension to their existing premises in Gainsborough has provided this blue chip company with the growth capacity for both their medium and long term expansion plans. Ping Europe currently employs around 230 local people, which can increase in peak periods due to the seasonal demands of the industry.

Ping assembles its clubs in only three locations, Phoenix, Tokyo and Gainsborough. Ping Europe has additional facilities in Germany, Sweden, France and Spain and trades throughout Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

Our Vision

Our strengths and case studies show that West Lindsey is already a great place to live, visit and do business. But we are ambitious. We want everyone to know about our area; we want to build on our strengths and we want to excel at what we do best. Our 20 year vision for West Lindsey is:

A resilient and diverse rural district which has embraced sustainable growth whilst retaining its quality, heritage and character for the benefit of all.

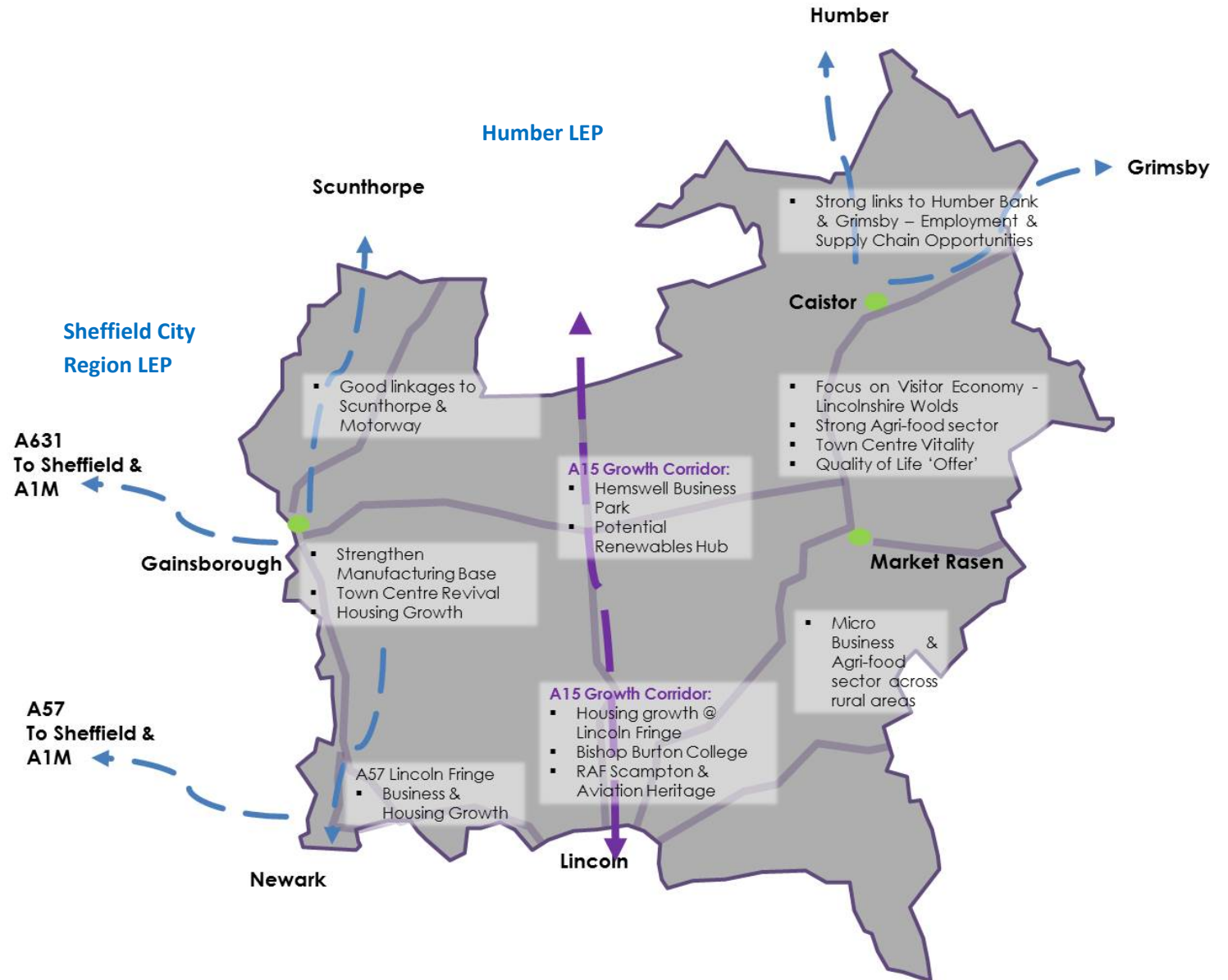
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Our Vision: A Spatial Interpretation

The priorities in this strategy are theme-based rather than area-based. It is the job of the Local Plan to translate these priorities into a spatial framework to guide development in our area up to 2036, in support of sustainable economic growth. As part of the Central Lincolnshire Joint Planning Unit, West Lindsey is actively engaged in the Local Plan process.

This strategy provides a high-level spatial vision for economic growth based on our evidence to date. The Local Plan process will refine this further and provide full details relating to the targets and broad locations for house building, employment growth, infrastructure and services in our area.



Section 3: Priorities for Action:

Our Priorities illustrate what we want to see happen over the coming years and are in line with the key themes and underlying priorities outlined in the West Lindsey Corporate Plan 2014 - 2018. The tables below provide more detail as to the current situation, projects and activities which are already being pursued to support these objectives and SMART measures which we will use to monitor progress.

Priority 1: A thriving micro business sector with the highest number of global micro-businesses for a rural district of its size

Corporate Plan Theme 1 - A prosperous and enterprising district

(Priority 1.2: Job creation, NEETS and apprenticeships, Priority 1.3: Open for Business)

Corporate Plan Theme 2 – Connectivity

(Priority 2.1: Broadband)

Why this priority?

- The vast majority of our (86%) businesses are ‘micro’ businesses, employing less than 10 people
- West Lindsey has a higher proportion of businesses with a turnover of less than £50k (21% compared with 18% for the country) and fewer large firms with a turnover of £1m+ (7.2% compared with 9.44%)⁹
- Micro-businesses offer a sustainable form of employment in rural areas although opportunities for expansion may be more restricted for a number of reasons: transport and access to labour/markets is more difficult in rural areas; broadband infrastructure is lagging behind, sites and premises may not be available and support services for small businesses has been scaled back in recent years
- Data shows that the number of business start-ups in West Lindsey declined between 2010-11. Over the same period, new starts actually increased for the county as a whole. In 2011, the number of business deaths was actually greater than the number of new starts in West Lindsey. This data suggests a potential issue with the level of support available locally to help sustain new businesses beyond their first year of trading
- There is a need to better understand our micro-business sector in order to identify and assist those with growth potential

What activities are currently taking place?

- NBV Business support service: providing business support and advice to SMEs, backed by WLDC which includes services designed to support new start enterprises and covers areas such as writing a business plan, sourcing finance, managing cash flow and business banking solutions. Established businesses can benefit from a personalised business needs assessment , mentoring/coaching support and business master classes aimed at encouraging growth aspirations.

⁹ Figures based on VAT/PAYE based enterprise only, Economic Development In-depth Business Review, June 2013, p.50 Chart 23

- Various business growth support initiatives currently being pursued by WLDC and Partners including Lincolnshire Chamber (SME growth fund through RGF), Lindsey Action Zone (further LEADER funds being pursued to run rural business growth scheme) and Gainsborough Growth Fund (WLDC funded programme of support for business growth in Gainsborough)
- Skills and training initiatives include Skills Support for the Workforce (see priority 6 below)
- Broadband initiatives including BDUK roll-out, WLDC Rural Broadband initiative and digital connectivity seminars/training through partners

What do we want to see happen and how will we monitor our progress?

- More micro-businesses choosing to set-up, expand and grow in West Lindsey
- *Change in total number/percentage of micro-businesses (0-9 employees) operating in West Lindsey*
- *Number of business births and deaths in West Lindsey*
- *% businesses reporting an increase in: profitability, turnover, market share*
- *Number of micro-businesses assisted through WLDC and Partner interventions*

What more do we need to do to achieve our aim?

- Further research to understand barriers to growth for our micro businesses and gaps in provision/how these might be filled
- Work with the GLLEP to investigate delivery of business support packages to improve start-up and survival rates
- Improve marketing and promotion of support packages for our businesses

Who are the key partners? GLLEP, LCC, Lincolnshire Chamber, NBV and other providers, business community

Priority 2: A diverse and productive agri-food industry, renowned nationally for its innovation

Corporate Plan Theme 1 - A prosperous and enterprising district

(Priority 1.2: Job creation, NEETS and apprenticeships, Priority 1.3: Open for Business)

Corporate Plan Theme 2 – Connectivity

(Priority 2.1: Broadband)

Corporate Plan Theme 3: A Green District Where People Want to Work, Live and Visit

Priority 3.2: Drive down waste and support rural initiatives

Why this priority?

- The food chain is the largest industry in the UK (in terms of employment) and the Greater Lincolnshire food sector is a national leader amongst LEP areas, with a higher proportion employed in the sector compared with national averages (e.g. 7% workforce employed in food-processing compared with 1.4% nationally)
- The primary agricultural sector employed 14,552 across Greater Lincolnshire in 2010, a slight increase since 2009; 20,000 are in food processing (4.9% of the UK total) and 8,000 in food wholesale (4.1% of the UK total)¹⁰
- Food processing creates high value jobs due to increasing automation - GVA per capita in modern food processing is now comparable to other high tech manufacturing
- The GLLEP area contains sites operated by many of the UK's largest agri-food companies. This includes Cherry Valley Farms (global leader in duck rearing), Frontier (UK leading crop inputs and grain marketing business) and Kerry Ingredients (leading provider of technology-based ingredients for all food sectors). When combined by the large number of SMEs in the industry this gives the sector depth, breadth and a significant role in both the UK and international food sector
- West Lindsey borders North and North East Lincolnshire, with easy access to the UK's largest port (by volume) at Immingham. This area is a major centre for logistics with one of the largest concentrations of food storage and freezing facilities in the world. Agri-business in West Lindsey is well placed to take advantage of such facilities.
- West Lindsey has one of the main centres of education, training and research for the sector. Riseholme Campus of University of Lincoln offers FD and BS courses in agriculture and short courses, whilst Bishop Burton College offers a suite of FE agricultural courses on the same location. A new campus is currently being developed on the Lincolnshire Showground in the District.

What activities are currently taking place?

- Development of a new specialist land-based college on Lincolnshire Showground (Bishop Burton College). Phase 1 is underway with

¹⁰ University of Lincoln, Rose Regeneration (2012), Learning from Our Place in the Global Economy - Final Report

phases 2 & 3 subject to funding (currently being sought through GLLEP). This will include, precision agriculture centre, canine training and grooming centre, animal behaviour centre, wildlife and countryside facility, equine science centre.

- Agri-food sector recognised as a priority for GLLEP interventions with a Sector Plan being developed
- West Lindsey Agri-food steering group established with links to GLLEP, LANTRA and local industry to identify key interventions locally
- Individual business diagnostics undertaken to identify key barriers to growth, including skills gaps and use of renewable technologies
- Lindsey Action Zone (LEADER +) funding (ended March 2014) provided grant support to help land-based businesses develop new income streams

What do we want to see happen and how will we monitor our progress?

- A strong agri-food industry which has access to support networks, infrastructure, training and research to ensure its continued growth.
 - Change in number of businesses and employees in the sector
 - Value of the sector to the local economy
 - 'Agri-food' investment and development in West Lindsey
 - Number of agri-businesses assisted through WLDC and Partner interventions

What more do we need to do to achieve our aim?

- Work with the GLLEP to influence and deliver the Agri-food Sector Plan within West Lindsey to ensure our local businesses benefit from the proposed interventions as follows:
 - Project 1: Industry Representation & Intelligence - develop an expanded agri-food representative body of industry leaders, engage with 'top 50' agri-food companies, detailed analysis of food supply chain
 - Project 2: Clusters & Workspace - consider use of LDO/EZ to support development of the northern seafood cluster and a southern food processing cluster, develop database of food grade premises and land, promotion of supply chain projects to farmers with use of RDPE funding where appropriate
 - Project 3: Research & Skills - develop agri-food ATA to increase apprenticeship numbers & food science graduates, develop Food Engineering and Chemistry Innovation Centre and National Fresh Produce Centre, promote applied research programmes with EU funds
 - Project 4: Water Management – develop 25 year plan for water supplies for the industry
 - Project 5: Roads – develop economic case for investment in road infrastructure (priority A17)
 - Project 6: Exports & Inward Investment – develop inward investment plan, promote inward investment in the sector, promote trade delegations, assist companies with export opportunities through UKTI and EU funding opportunities
- Work with LAZ to prepare further bid for LEADER funds

Who are the key partners? GLLEP, LANTRA, DEFRA, RDPE, Local agri-food companies, Bishop Burton College & other skills/training providers

Priority 3: An enterprising manufacturing sector which has risen to the challenges of the modern economy and pioneered new technologies

Corporate Plan Theme 1 - A prosperous and enterprising district

(Priority 1.2: Job creation, NEETS and apprenticeships, Priority 1.3: Open for Business)

Corporate Plan Theme 2 – Connectivity

(Priority 2.1: Broadband)

Corporate Plan Theme 3: A Green District Where People Want to Work, Live and Visit

Priority 3.2: Drive down waste and support rural initiatives

Why this priority?

- The numbers employed in manufacturing in West Lindsey (and the wider Greater Lincolnshire area) are significantly higher than the national average¹¹
- The District has maintained a strong tradition of manufacturing despite the decline in this sector at a national level. The challenge will be to sustain this key industrial sector in a difficult economic climate
- Existing companies have highlighted key concerns with their older premises which are limiting productivity and expansion of their operations. Problems include: difficulties winning new orders due to site image, building design and inability to respond to modern manufacturing practices; poor storage and distribution logistics, high energy consumption, noise and disturbance to neighbouring properties¹²
- Problems with certain skills gaps (e.g. R&D, higher level skills) and a lack of ‘work-ready’ young people to replace aging workforces have also been raised¹³

What activities are currently taking place?

- Key employers such as Eminox and AMP Rose are investing in new premises in Gainsborough
- Seeing is Believing visits undertaken to understand barriers to growth
- WLDC support for ‘Gainsborough Growth Fund’ to encourage business growth and job creation
- Gainsborough Masterplan being prepared to provide spatial framework and marketing tool for redevelopment of key sites in the town
- Skills Support for the Workforce – ESF funded training for businesses promoted to local firms
- Youth 100 (Gainsborough Traineeship) scheme to provide young people with work placements supported by key manufacturing firms,

¹¹ Business Register and Employment Survey 2011, via Nomis 2012

¹² WL ‘Seeing is Believing’ business visits 2012-13

¹³ ibid

PING, Regal and Hootons

- Manufacturing recognised as a priority sector for GLLEP interventions

What do we want to see happen and how will we monitor our progress?

- Safeguard our manufacturing industries and support their growth whilst also attracting new industry to locate in the District to diversify and build the strength of this sector:
 - Change in number of businesses and employees in this sector
 - Value of the sector to the local economy
 - Manufacturing sector investment and development in West Lindsey
 - Number of manufacturing businesses assisted through WLDC and Partner interventions

What more do we need to do to achieve our aim?

- Gain approval for and launch Gainsborough Growth Fund
- Work with LAZ to secure further LEADER funding for a rural business support programme
- Continued programme of business visits to provide individual support and build our knowledge of the sector
- Engage with GLLEP to understand potential opportunities for interventions in West Lindsey
- Engage with skills and training providers to address the needs of the sector

Who are the key partners? GLLEP, SEMTA, Local firms, University & skills/training providers

Priority 4: A business base which has fully embraced green technologies

Corporate Plan Theme 3: A Green District Where People Want to Work, Live and Visit

Priority 3.2: Drive down waste and support rural initiatives

Why this priority?

- West Lindsey has a clear commitment to cutting greenhouse gas emissions; the Council has the lowest emissions from its own operations of all Councils in Lincolnshire through embracing renewables such as PV and investing in modern business premises
- In terms of emissions per capita, West Lindsey has a lower rate than the national average (7.9 compared with 8.2)¹⁴ but the proportion of emissions from the industrial and commercial sector is higher than the national average (45% compared with 38%). This reflects the industrial profile of the district and brings into focus the need to assist businesses with energy efficiency measures
- As well as the obvious environmental benefits, embracing green technologies can assist businesses to be more competitive through energy efficiency improvements and diversification of energy supply. Given the rural nature of the District, there are particular opportunities for our land-based and manufacturing businesses (2 major sectors) to take advantage of renewables such as wind, biomass, ground-source heating, solar and other technologies.
- Energy- efficiency and waste management programmes for existing businesses are a key priority for the GLLEP¹⁵. This is also reflected with the Council's Green Strategy with its aim to support existing firms to face the challenge of rising energy costs.
- In terms of energy production, Central Lincolnshire only produces 0.2% total annual energy demand from renewables and the figure is even less for West Lindsey. There is considerable potential for growth within the low carbon sector, building on the success of firms such as Freewatt (see above case study). The Council is also helping to lead the way by achieving the lowest emissions from its own operations of all Councils in Lincolnshire
- Greater Lincolnshire is now at the forefront of the UK's emerging offshore wind sector, with Able UK's consented development for a new port facility and marine energy park at Immingham. This will create significant supply-chain opportunities across the manufacturing sector as well as creating new jobs in the low-carbon sector for the existing population and attracting new residents to live in the area
- Housing growth offers further opportunities within low carbon construction and green energy. There are also supply chain opportunities related to the Green Deal. Through the Home Energy Lincs Partnership (HELP), WLDC is investigating the best way to engage with Green Deal and ECO activity.

What activities are currently taking place?

¹⁴ AECOM Nov 2011

¹⁵ GLLEP Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), 2014

- GLLEP – Single Local Growth Fund priorities include Greater Lincolnshire-wide energy efficiency and waste management programme as well as promoting supply-chain opportunities linked to off-shore wind power and related developments on the Humber Bank
- SUSTAIN Lincolnshire: initiative led by Lincolnshire County Council to promote and support resource efficiency amongst SMEs through measures such as free intensive resource efficiency support
- Sustainable Travel: financial assistance to support businesses in implementing sustainable travel plans with support from Lincolnshire County Council
- West Lindsey Carbon Management Plan and Renewable Energy Statement & Action Plan in place with WLDC committed to ongoing reduction in carbon emissions, achieving a 30% reduction in carbon emissions by 2012 (exceeding the target of 17%).

What do we want to see happen and how will we monitor our progress?

- Measures to be determined following research project outlined below

What more do we need to do to achieve our aim?

- Create a Green Economy Project Group to assess best opportunities for green business and economic development locally, and to develop a baseline from which to monitor progress
- Liaise with the GLLEP to understand their priority actions and research behind the Greater Lincolnshire low carbon agenda

Who are the key partners? LCC (SUSTAIN Lincolnshire), GLLEP

Priority 5: An extensive leisure and cultural offer which complements the natural environment and built character of the area, providing for residents and attracting corporate and leisure visitors from around the world

Corporate Plan Theme 1 - A prosperous and enterprising district

(Priority 1.3: Open for Business)

Why this priority?

- Tourism (incorporating accommodation, food & drink, recreation, shopping and transport) is a significant and growing sector within West Lindsey. It has been recognised by District Councillors as a priority and by the GLLEP as a key sector for the Greater Lincolnshire area.
- Tourism revenue and employment has continued to grow before, during and after the recession. Visitor spend increased by 40.5% between 2003-2012 and 14.2% during 2008-12 with employment in the sector increasing by 10.4% and 4.5% during the same periods. Latest data for 2012 shows a total revenue of £93m, with 2 million visitors during the year¹⁶
- 90% visitors are day visitors with very low spend levels per head compared with other areas
- Deficiencies in accommodation and the general 'leisure/cultural offer' are recognised, particularly in Gainsborough, despite considerable improvements in its retail offer as a result of Marshall's Yard
- The Lincolnshire Destination Management Plan (DMP) highlights opportunities for growth for example by converting day visitors to overnight stays through the development of the accommodation offer¹⁷

What activities are currently taking place?

- Tourism Business Workshops being held, following on from successful Tourism Summit, to understand business needs and develop actions
- Digital marketing and business networking events to promote use of Visit Lincolnshire website
- Delivery of Aviation Heritage Trail
- Partnership working with Gainsborough Town Partnership, Caistor and MR BIG

What do we want to see happen and how will we monitor our progress?

- Number of businesses and employees in the sector (STEAM)
- Number of visitors to West Lindsey (STEAM)
- Total expenditure by visitors to West Lindsey (STEAM)
- Area of new floorspace for 'town centre uses' (WL Planning Applications)

¹⁶ STEAM data 2012

¹⁷ DMP 2013-2020

- Total number of jobs created by new 'town centre uses' (WL Planning Applications)
- Number of businesses assisted within the 'tourism' sector through WLDC or Partner interventions
- Lincolnshire Wolds visits increasing (figures from Lincs Wolds Walking Festival, Walkers are Welcome Market Rasen, Walkers are Welcome Caistor)

What more do we need to do to achieve our aim?

- Seeing is Believing visits undertaken to understand barriers to growth
- Facilitation of training for any identified skills requirements
- Frequent liaison with businesses/partners to ensure data capture
- Monitor website statistics to ensure changes to site marketing are effective
- Work jointly with ELDC to develop the tourism offer in the Lincolnshire Wolds.
- Greater marketing of the Wolds as Lincolnshire's "Best Kept Secret"

Who are the key partners? Visit Lincoln Partnership, City of Lincoln, North Kesteven District Council, Lincolnshire County Council, Visit England, Tourism Businesses, MR BIG, Caistor Town Council & Caistor Means Business Group, Gainsborough Town Partnership

Priority 6: A highly skilled and productive workforce, with local jobs and training options to match their needs
Corporate Plan Theme 1 - A prosperous and enterprising district
(Priority 1.2: Job creation, NEETS and apprenticeships, Priority 1.3: Open for Business)

Why this priority?

- Overall, skill levels for residents in the district are commensurate with regional and national averages. Skill levels have improved in recent years and West Lindsey now fares better than the region for higher level skills. However, overall skill levels hide particular problems with low skills in certain pockets of the District – particularly in Gainsborough¹⁸.
- The proportion of the population with no qualifications in the Gainsborough wards is between 10 and 30% above the national average. Similarly the proportion of the population with NVQ level 4 qualifications is only 13%; this is 30% below the national average¹⁹.
- Data on socio economic classification confirms the skills gaps that still affect the employability of the local workforce and the lack of highly skilled people available locally. Only 9.2% of residents aged 16-74 are currently employed in Higher Managerial, Administrative and Professional Occupations as opposed to 22.1% who occupy lower managerial and administrative positions²⁰.
- The situation is similar in relation to unemployment data. The most recent JSA figures show that WL has a Claimant Count rate of 3.4%, slightly above the national average of 3%²¹. Overall statistics hide significant variations in unemployment across the District. There are 5 wards in WL with higher than (GB) average Claimant Count rate as follows:
 - Gainsborough SW – 12% (386)
 - Gainsborough East – 8.3% (356)
 - Gainsborough North – 7.1% (307)
 - Hemswell – 4.6% (82)
 - Market Rasen – 3.6% (110)
 - The remaining 20 wards have Claimant Count rates which are significantly below the national average.
- In terms of youth unemployment, a higher proportion of JSA Claimants are aged 18-24 (32.7%) compared with the GB average (24.8%). Breaking this down further shows that the wards with the highest proportion of young claimants are not necessarily the most deprived (and in some circumstances, the more affluent), suggesting that there are other forces at play such as transport/isolation.
- The need to address unemployment and low skill levels, particularly amongst young people is a recognised priority for WLDC and also

¹⁸ Census 2011

¹⁹ ibid

²⁰ ibid

²¹ Claimant Count data, January 2014, via Nomis

the GLLEP

What activities are currently taking place?

A number of organisations are currently delivering services to address unemployment and youth unemployment, with much of the provision focussed in Gainsborough (where the need is evidently the greatest in terms of overall numbers). This includes:

- Connexions: Provides guidance on the options available and refers them for appropriate support
- CLiP: Operates in Gainsborough and Market Rasen. Offers the Foundation Learning Programme (FLARE) for 16+ to support young people with training, gaining qualifications and getting into work; manages the Youth 100 scheme which is working with local employers to provide paid work experience for young people coming through the CLiP programme
- Hill Holt Wood: TEEN programme open to NEETs. The aim of the Study Programme is to maximise the potential of young people to progress onto higher education and/or skilled employment by ensuring that vocational routes to higher education and employment are seen as high quality and a genuine alternative to academic routes
- Gainsborough College: Offer 'Skill Up', 'Work Skills Programme and 'Skills for Working in...'' to help students with employability and basic skills
- Riverside Training: Operate a 14-19 NEET project via Grantham College, which provides 6 hours of support per week
- Talent Match: Big Lottery funded project to support 18-24 year old unemployed people in Gainsborough South West Ward. It is being managed by the Prince's Trust and delivered locally by Barnardo's.
- Work Programme - provided locally by A4e and Ingeus. This is a government programme for 18-24 year olds who have been unemployed for at least 9 months
- DWP Work Experience - Young People are offered up to 8 weeks work experience with local employers.

At a strategic level, the Greater Lincolnshire Skills Board oversees provision and helps to co-ordinate interventions on behalf of the GLLEP. West Lindsey is represented on this Board.

The Skills Support for the Workforce currently offers free training options to help enhance the skills of employees within existing businesses in Lincolnshire, funded through ESF. This programme has been promoted across our business networks.

What do we want to see happen and how will we monitor our progress?

- Level of qualifications
- Average wage levels (workforce and resident)
- Overall unemployment rate

- Unemployment rate for 18-24
- % businesses reporting an increase in workforce

What more do we need to do to achieve our aim?

- More research is required to understand how the various labour supply-side interventions above are working in practice and whether there are additional needs/gaps in provision which could be addressed as part of this strategy, by WLDC and its partners

Who are the key partners? GLLEP, LCC, CLiP, DWP, Work Programme Partners, Gainsborough College, Hill Holt Wood, Riverside Training, Barnardo's, Princes Trust

Priority 7: A connected economy with high speed broadband provision and improved transport links

Corporate Plan Theme 1 - A prosperous and enterprising district

Priority 1.3: Open for Business)

Corporate Plan Theme 2 – Connectivity

(Priority 2.1: Broadband)

Why this priority?

Broadband

- Superfast Broadband can help improve business performance by providing access to new markets, improving customer relationships and delivering operational savings. Broadband connectivity is particularly important in rural areas given the physical remoteness from markets. However, the rural nature of the District also makes it unattractive (costly) to invest in 100% superfast coverage.
- BDUK predict 81% of the District will be covered by superfast broadband by 2015. There is a need to provide a solution for the areas that will not be covered through this roll-out such as through wireless provision
- Many businesses in the District have highlighted inadequate broadband provision as a significant barrier to growth, including those located in relatively accessible locations (e.g. Gainsborough, Hemswell)

Transport

- Transport is another key issue commonly cited by rural businesses as a barrier to staff recruitment and growth. Road travel is slow and bus routes are focused on linking the main market towns with the urban areas of Lincoln, Scunthorpe and Grimsby. A Call Connect service exists to serve the rural areas but this is often not adequate to serve the needs of businesses and workers. A number of businesses have funded their own transport solutions to address labour access issues (e.g. Park Acre, Hemswell provide a bus from Lincoln for their staff).
- There are no major transport infrastructure improvements identified within the latest Local Transport Plan (LTP 4) for the West Lindsey area (other than Lincoln Eastern Bypass which touches on the southern perimeter of the District).
- The GLLEP has identified the need for a new longer-term allocation mechanism for DfT funds to support the development of up to 6 key transport corridors, in order to facilitate business growth. Of these the A15 and A46 are particularly significant for growth and investment in West Lindsey. Aside from this, the delivery of infrastructure for growth will be reliant on developer contributions negotiated through the planning process or alternative public sector funds.
- In terms of rail, Gainsborough has frequent passenger services to Lincoln, Sheffield and Doncaster with linkages to the East Coast Mainline, via Lea Road. A Saturday service operates from Central Station between Sheffield and Cleethorpes. Facilities at both stations are sub-standard and the principal station at Lea Road is not easily accessed from the town centre. Opportunities also exist to improve the frequency of services to Gainsborough Central (currently this line is predominantly used for freight), not only for leisure travel but

also as a commuter route given it links directly with the Humber employment areas at Immingham. Active lobby and station adoption groups are working on measures to improve facilities and services on these lines in conjunction with the Train Operating Companies (TOCs).

- Market Rasen Station provides passenger services towards Newark and Grimsby approximately every 2 hours. An active adoption group keeps the station in good order but as with Gainsborough, facilities are limited

What activities are currently taking place?

Broadband

- BDUK programme currently rolling out to West Lindsey area
- West Lindsey Rural Broadband Initiative, currently working with providers to deliver wireless solutions to communities/businesses in 'not-spot' areas

Transport

- GLLEP currently lobbying government for a longer-term mechanism for the allocation of DfT funds to support the development of key growth corridors, including the A15 and A46
- Active station adoption and lobby groups working on rail issues in Gainsborough and Market Rasen

What do we want to see happen and how will we monitor our progress?

- % West Lindsey covered by high-speed broadband
- Investment and development in transport infrastructure in West Lindsey
- Number of businesses assisted in improving broadband capabilities via WLDC or partner interventions

What more do we need to do to achieve our aim?

- Work with Broadband service providers to promote alternative (wireless) broadband options to businesses that will not be covered through the BDUK roll-out programme to ensure 100% superfast coverage
- Work with partners to promote the value of digital connectivity to rural businesses in terms of marketing and providing access to goods and markets without the need to travel
- Support the work of the station adoption groups in bringing about improvements to our main railway stations
- Work with our partners at GLLEP and LCC to assist rural businesses in developing transport solutions to serve their needs, including through the promotion of initiatives such as Wheels 2 Work

Who are the key partners? LCC (Highways), GLLEP, Station Adoption Groups, TOCs, Network Rail, Stagecoach, Community Transport Providers

Priority 8: A balanced housing market providing a range of quality housing in appropriate locations to support economic growth

Corporate Plan Theme 1: A Prosperous and Enterprising District

Priority 1.1 Asset Acquisition, Disposal, Management

Priority 1.3 Open For Business

Why this priority?

- Housing growth underpins West Lindsey’s economic strategy – attracting more people to the area will create the demand for more services and goods which will in-turn attract more businesses and organisations to supply these needs
- Our population is rising at a faster rate than the national average. Housing growth is required to support the needs of our expanding population
- A supply of good quality housing is essential to support a growing workforce and to keep price inflation in check
- Housing growth makes significant contribution to the local economy, supporting construction and related industries. It is estimated that each new home creates 1-2 net jobs for a year²²

What activities are currently taking place?

- A Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) is currently underway to research the need for housing growth in the Central Lincolnshire area. This document will inform the Local Plan and provide guidance on the overall numbers, type and location of housing to be provided during the plan period.

What do we want to see happen and how will we monitor our progress?

- Measures to be determined through the SHMA and Local Plan process

What more do we need to do to achieve our aim?

- Complete the SHMA & Local Plan to provide a policy framework which will help guide and support appropriate housing development

Who are the key partners? Central Lincolnshire Authorities, House-Builders

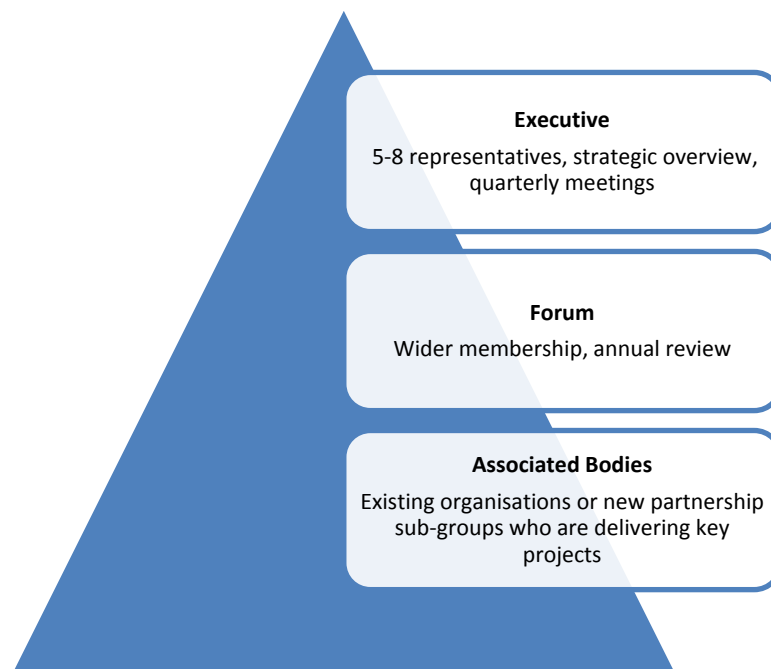
²² Dan Greaves, DCLG, 29.7.11

Section 4: Governance and Monitoring

Many stakeholders have already been involved in shaping this strategy and their continued support will be crucial as we move towards the delivery phase.

We want to engage stakeholders in a workable and streamlined way. To this end, key partners have been identified for each of the seven priorities, outlined in the preceding tables. We will now look to establish a partnership of dedicated stakeholders to oversee the delivery of the plan, with the Council adopting the role of facilitator.

A potential model for this partnership is presented below. The exact model for delivery will be determined by the stakeholders:



It is envisaged that the Executive will meet on a quarterly - bi-annual basis to discuss key developments and progress. A more in-depth review will take place on an annual basis to link with the monitoring period for the SMART measures identified above.

Clearly much of the work required to deliver this Strategy will be done outside of the Executive meetings, by existing organisations, partnerships and networks. Only where it is necessary for delivery will any new groups be established.

The Strategy will be monitored through the Council's Progress and Delivery reporting three times per year. The Economic Appraisal will be updated on an annual basis with a full review of the Strategy every three years based on the evidence contained in the Economic Development Appraisal.