

Report to Cabinet

Subject: Economic Growth Framework

Date: 4 November 2021

Author: Economic Growth Manager

Wards Affected

All wards

Purpose

The purpose of this report is:

1. to seek approval for the Economic Growth Framework 2022-2027 and beyond.
2. To seek approval of appropriate delegations in relation to changes to the Economic Growth Framework 2022-2027 and beyond.

Key Decision

Yes this is a key decision as it will significantly affect residents in more than two Borough wards.

Recommendation(s)

THAT Cabinet:

- 1) **approves the Economic Growth Framework 2022-2027 and beyond, and**
- 2) **delegates authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Growth and Regeneration to approve future changes to the Economic Growth Framework 2022-2027 and beyond as detailed in this report.**

1 Background

- 1.1 Through the Gedling Plan 2020-2023 the Council identifies Priorities and Objectives linking through into delivery plans for services. The Economic Growth Framework seeks to provide a bridge between the Economic Growth Team's work and activity and how these meet the Priorities and Objectives. It goes further by looking at how other Council services also support economic growth.
- 1.2 The document shows the link from the Council Priorities upwards through County, regional and up to national level, as well as downwards. This clear link will assist the Council when seeking funding or support by showing how a project or activity not only meets local priorities but also hits regional or national goals. An example of this is the Levelling-Up Funding where clear outputs are identified by a funder; being able to clearly and comprehensively link together activities is key and the Framework provides this link.
- 1.3 The Framework is intended to be a working document that provides sufficient 'hooks' within it to allow it to be used by EGR and other Council services as a way of showing how projects fit together and develop the economy of the Borough. It is not designed to be detailed in nature.
- 1.4 The Framework was conceived in July 2019. A workshop was held with colleagues from Planning Policy, Economic Growth, Housing and Performance and Projects. The Communities team were also involved later in the process. A facilitated session was held to establish what issues the Borough may need to deal with over coming years. Following the session a series of officer interviews and follow-up sessions were held in order to shape the structure of the Framework and to get information about on-going work that needed to be referenced. A number of presentations were also held and feedback sought.
- 1.5 Whilst the work stalled when the pandemic hit, the pandemic raised the need for such a document to help identify how projects were interrelated and how they could be developed in a way that benefitted the Borough. This has become more apparent with funding streams announced, such as the Levelling-Up Fund which seek specific types of project and outputs. Having a Framework to show how a project fits in and has some strategic backing, rather than just responding to the Fund, is very useful in making a coherent case for investment.
- 1.6 The Economic Growth Framework, as attached at Appendix 1, will assist the Council in showing a clear link between the Council's Golden Thread and individual projects. It will be usable by a range of services and help to show how projects at delivery level achieve Council and other aims. It is not a strategy that seeks a specific set out outcomes,

rather it is a way of describing how work fits together to achieve a range of economic goals.

1.7 The Framework also shows how smaller individual elements can work towards and achieve higher aims which will be useful when bidding for funding by showing how, at a very low level, individual activities fit. The document is also designed to be a living document that can change over time.

1.8 The Framework is split into five sections covering:

- Opportunities for economic growth – focussed on physical economic development and the infrastructure to achieve this, such as business support.
- Working with partners – this focusses on communities and the partnerships needed to achieve economic growth.
- Visitor, heritage and leisure opportunities – not only is the visitor economy important as a sector but it also helps to sell the district as great place to live and locate.
- Increasing and enhancing the labour market – these are activities that make our population well skilled and placed to contribute economically.
- Infrastructure improvements – this is about making sure that Gedling is well placed and accessible to enable it to grow and grasp opportunities

Together these five themes establish what is needed to achieve economic growth in the Borough – good, accessible locations, an appropriately skilled workforce, a nice environment and a strong local partnership working together to achieve this. Activities should be able to fit into one of these themes. There are also a number of sub-themes under each one.

2 Proposal

2.1 It is proposed that Cabinet approves the Economic Growth Framework 2022-2027 and beyond.

2.2 It is proposed that that authority is delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Growth and Regeneration to approve changes to the Economic Growth Framework 2022-2027 and beyond in order to ensure that the Framework can be adapted over time

as projects are delivered and new projects come forward.

3 Alternative Options

- 3.1 An alternative option would be to not approve the Economic Growth Framework 2022-2027 and beyond. This option would mean that there is no clear framework within which economic development activities fit. This may impact on the future ability to show the link between projects and the objectives of the Council.
- 3.2 An alternative option would be to instruct officers to develop an Economic Strategy: The Framework proposed is not a strategy – it does not seek to move the economy of Gedling from one state to another. An Economic Strategy would incorporate what is presented in the Framework but would require significantly more resources and time to achieve. As a current measure, the Framework provides some of the benefits in terms of having a document to work with to help with immediate work and is felt to be sufficient at this time. An Economic Strategy could be approved in the future.
- 3.3 An alternative option would be not to delegate authority to the Chief Executive to approve changes to the Economic Growth Framework 2022-2027 and beyond. However, this would place an unnecessary burden on Cabinet with regards to approving multiple changes to the Framework which is not only intended to be an overarching plan, but also a working document.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 Business cases for any project proposals arising from the Economic Growth Framework 2022-2027 and Beyond will be produced and subject to detailed analysis before consideration as part of the annual budget preparation process

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 All project proposals would require assistance from legal to consider individual legal implications and to ensure that appropriate legal agreements are entered into in respect of each project.

6 Equalities Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct equalities implications as a result of this report.

7 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications

- 7.1 There are no direct carbon reduction or environmental sustainability implications as a result of this report. All carbon reduction and

environmental sustainability implications will be considered in respect of each individual project when approvals are sought.

8 Appendices

8.1 Economic Growth Framework 2022-2027 and beyond

9 Background Papers

9.1 None.

10 Reasons for Recommendations

10.1 To ensure awareness of activities from across Council areas that have an impact on the economic growth of the Borough and highlight how these are interrelated and fit in to the Gedling Borough Council Golden Thread delivery.

10.2 To ensure that the Economic Growth Framework 2022-2027 and beyond is able to be used within other plans and strategies and to support funding bids as appropriate.

To ensure efficient decision making and avoid Members from becoming overwhelmed with approvals for changes to the Economic Growth Framework 2022-2027 and beyond.

Statutory Officer approval

Approved by: Head of Finance and IT

Date: 12 October 2021

On behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Approved by: Deputy Monitoring Officer

Date: 15 October 2021

On behalf of the Monitoring Officer