



2024 – 2028 South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

To seek Cabinet approval for the adoption of the 2024 – 2028 South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy.

Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to approve the adoption of the 2024 – 2028 South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy

Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Enabling economic opportunities
Which wards are impacted?	All Wards

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 The development of the Economic Development Strategy is an important part of the work programme of the Committee as it has significant implications for the economic vibrancy of the District. The development of the supporting Action Plan may have financial implications and these will be considered at that time

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 There are no significant legal or governance implications arising from this report.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Monitoring Officer

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 Enabling Economic Opportunity is one of the priorities in the Council's Corporate Plan 2024-2027. Supporting a dynamic, resilient and growing local economy will benefit all our communities. A vibrant economy will attract new and expanding businesses which in turn creates job opportunities and encourages inward investment in our towns and communities. Embracing a strategic approach to enabling local growth represents the golden thread running through the Corporate plan, Local Plan and other service areas.
- 2.2 The Economic Development Strategy will be organised around five areas of focus where the Council is most likely to influence the key challenges to economic prosperity and set a path to achieving the vision for South Kesteven in 2028, as follows:
 - Business, job creation and employment safeguarding
 - Skills development
 - Inclusive growth and regeneration
 - Inward investment
 - Enhancing South Kesteven's tourism and visitor economy offer
- 2.3 The Economic Development Strategy will be used as a basis to promote the District as a prime location for investment and to assist in securing new infrastructure.

Crucially, the strategy can communicate messages to Government, investors and interested parties, that South Kesteven has a positive approach towards managing and delivering growth in the long term.

- 2.4 As a key enabler, it is important that the Council has a strategy setting out a series of commitments about how we will work with businesses, residents, the local voluntary and communities sector and other stakeholders to achieve our ambitions.
- 2.5 On the 16th April 2024 Members of Cabinet approved a draft South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028 for consultation with partners and stakeholders during May 2024.
- 2.6 The results of this consultation exercise were reported to Cabinet on the 9th July 2024. During this meeting Members were asked to note that a further Workshop for the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FEOSC) had been established later that month for members to consider consultation feedback and its impact on the development of the Economic Development Strategy
- 2.7 During the Workshop a presentation was given by the Head of Economic Development and Inward Investment that identified the main points received through the consultation period. A summary of stakeholder comments is provided at **Appendix 1**.
- 2.8 Each point was debated, and the meeting concluded with further recommendations from FEOSC Members to strengthen the ‘Vision’; to include reference to retaining, growing and attracting businesses and to include the Council’s Corporate Plan Objectives as Key Performance Indicators (KPI) within the strategy; ensuring a clear relationship between the documents.
- 2.9 **Appendix 2** identifies the necessary changes that were made to the final strategy following stakeholder consultation and the additional FEOSC Member Workshop.
- 2.10 **Appendix 3** identifies the revised Strategy, which was presented to FEOSC on the 17th September 2024, who agreed to recommend its adoption to Cabinet as the South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028.
- 2.11 **Appendix 4** South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028 Appendices
- 2.12 The Economic Development Strategy will be used as a basis to promote the District as a prime location for investment and to assist in securing new infrastructure. Crucially, the strategy can communicate messages to Government, investors and interested parties, that South Kesteven has a positive approach towards managing and delivering growth in the long term.

2.13 The final draft strategy was discussed at FEOSC on 17 September (**See background papers**). That Committee resolved to recommend to Cabinet that the strategy is adopted.

3. Key Considerations

3.1. The strategy will communicate messages to Government, investors and interested parties, that South Kesteven has a positive approach towards managing and delivering growth in the long term.

4. Other Options Considered

4.1 The Cabinet could decide not to adopt to an Economic Development Strategy. This is not recommended as a strategy is an important document in delivering the ambitions of the South Kesteven District Council Corporate Plan 2024 – 27.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

5.1 The revised South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028 represents an opportunity to strategically manage economic development activity across South Kesteven, providing a ‘Golden Thread’ between the work of the Economic Development Service and the ambition of the Council, through its Corporate Plan, ‘To enable and support a dynamic, resilient and growing local economy, which benefits all communities’

6. Consultation

6.1 Between 7 May and 8 June 2024 officers wrote directly to Stakeholders introducing the consultation process for the Economic Development Strategy and asking them to visit the Council’s website to make representation on the online consultation software. The Stakeholder group included over 250 public sector partners, town and parish councils, business club representatives and citizens, who had expressed an interest in previous planning, economic or similar consultation exercises.

6.2 Officers also attended several business clubs and business exhibitions across the district where a presentation was given and/or ‘flyers’ handed out to interested parties. In addition, the SKDC Communications Team broadcast details of the consultation period across the Council’s social media channels throughout the four-week period.

7. Background Papers

7.1 Progress update on the new South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2023-2028 – Report for Finance, Economic Development and Corporate Services

Overview and Scrutiny Committee, published 22 November 2022, available online at:

<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s36141/Progress%20Update%20on%20new%20South%20Kesteven%20Economic%20Development%20Strategy%202023%20-%202028.pdf>

7.2 Report to seek approval for stakeholder consultation in respect to the draft Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028 and accompanying action plan. Report for Cabinet, published April 2024, available online at:
[http://moderngovsvr/documents/s41688/Cabinet%20Economic%20Development%20Strategy.pdf?LO\\$=1](http://moderngovsvr/documents/s41688/Cabinet%20Economic%20Development%20Strategy.pdf?LO$=1)

7.3 Report to update members of Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the progress made in developing an Economic Development Strategy for South Kesteven 2024 - 2028. Report for Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee published May 2024, available online at:
[http://moderngovsvr/documents/s41885/Update%20on%20the%20Economic%20Development%20Strategy%202024%20-%202028%20FEOSC.pdf?LO\\$=1](http://moderngovsvr/documents/s41885/Update%20on%20the%20Economic%20Development%20Strategy%202024%20-%202028%20FEOSC.pdf?LO$=1)

7.4 Report to Cabinet on the 9th July 2024 to inform members on the progress made toward the development of an Economic Development Strategy for South Kesteven 2024 – 2028
[http://moderngovsvr/documents/s42736/Update%20on%20the%20development%20of%20the%20Economic%20Development%20Strategy.pdf?LO\\$=1](http://moderngovsvr/documents/s42736/Update%20on%20the%20development%20of%20the%20Economic%20Development%20Strategy.pdf?LO$=1)

7.5 A Report to update members of the Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FEOSC) on progress made toward the final version of the South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028.
[Economic Development Strategy Report - Final Draft.pdf](#)

8. Appendices

8.1 **Appendix 1**, List of comments from Stakeholder Engagement.

8.2 **Appendix 2**, Changes to Strategy post consultation

8.3 **Appendix 3**, Final Draft of the South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028.

8.4 **Appendix 4**, Economic Development Strategy 2024 – 2028, Appendices.