

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

CABINET

Date of Meeting:	7 th May 2013
Report of:	Director of Economic Growth & Prosperity
Subject/Title:	Vision and Strategy for Economic Growth: East Cheshire - Engine of the North.
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Jamie Macrae Portfolio Holder for Prosperity & Economic Regeneration

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 In October last year the Council set out the framework of a new Three Year Council Plan, to provide a clear strategic direction for the authority. One of the underpinning principles in this Plan to underpin budget decisions is:
“We will invest in infrastructure to promote local economic growth and access to job opportunities.
- 1.2 The Council’s Three Year Plan expands this further, giving a committed to growth and to making Cheshire East a more prosperous place. Our ambitious plan will put in place the new infrastructure to do this, creating up to 27,000 new homes to deal with the shortage for both existing and new residents, and at least 20,000 jobs by 2030. This will be supported over the next three years through:
- major investment in our existing and new road networks
 - seeking entering into a Joint Venture with AstraZeneca, one of our many international corporations based in East Cheshire, to develop a new Life Science Incubator Park at Alderley Park
 - setting up a new Development Company to drive forward our programme of major infrastructure improvements efficiently, effectively, and quickly.
- 1.3 To assist with these and other initiatives that will drive economic growth, the Council has reshaped its extensive Capital Programme to make a bigger investment of £134 million over the next 3 years in supporting economic growth.
- 1.4 In order to articulate these ambitions for economic growth in a more tangible and accessible manner, the Council has developed a Vision and Strategy for Economic Growth: ***East Cheshire - Engine of the North.***
- 1.5 This is a high level document that builds upon other key strategies and policy, including the Council’s existing Economic Development Strategy, the emerging Cheshire East Local Plan and the Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership’s Business Plan (2013-15). It will serve as a key to be

used in discussions with Government to secure funding for infrastructure projects, amply demonstrating the credentials of our economy, with a clear proposition that investing in Cheshire East reaps greater rewards than elsewhere. It is also framed to convey a similar message to the private sector; this is a rewarding place to invest, and commercial investment will be emphatically supported and driven by the Council.

1.6 ***East Cheshire - Engine of the North*** sets out:

- a Vision for Growth
- a Strategy for Change
- an Investment Plan

1.7 This document is needed to pull together all aspects of our economic growth activity into one 'vision' for economic growth which succinctly captures the scale of our ambition, the potential impact on the national and regional economy and most importantly the benefits at a local level.

1.8 It provides intelligence on our current economic position, the scale of our ambition and the economic outcomes we are aiming for, and our priorities – spatially and sectorally.

1.9 It identifies the role of the Council in delivering the economic growth-explaining how the Local Plan; place-based initiatives; commissioning; investment in infrastructure; business rates; access to finance etc all will be put in place to enable conditions for growth.

2.0 **Decision Requested**

2.1 Cabinet is requested to:

- i) approve ***East Cheshire- Engine of the North: Our Vision and Strategy for Economic Growth***.
- ii) agree to pro-actively promote the Vision and Strategy to key influencers, locally, nationally and internationally, and to both the public and private sector.

3.0 **Reasons for Recommendations**

3.1 The Council has set out the framework of a new Three Year Council Plan, to provide a clear strategic direction for the authority. ***East Cheshire - Engine of the North: Our Vision and Strategy for Economic Growth*** is an important high level document that articulates how the strategic direction will be delivered.

4.0 **Wards Affected**

4.1 All wards

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All members

6.0 Policy Implications including - Carbon reduction - Health

- 6.1 One of the Council's key priorities is: *A growing and resilient local economy*.
- 6.2 It is also prioritised in the Council's Three Year Plan:
- Outcome 2 (*Cheshire East has a strong and resilient economy*),
 - Priority 1 (*Local Economic Development*), and
 - Change Project 1.1 – Investing in new and existing road infrastructure
 - Change Project 1.2 – Investment in high speed broadband network for Cheshire East
 - Change Project 1.3 - Investment to support business growth and delivery of Macclesfield and Crewe regeneration and the Sustainable Towns programme.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no immediate financial implications, other than those that have already been agreed in the Council's Three Year Plan and Budget Report 2013-16.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 The Council is not under any statutory obligation to develop or publish a vision and strategy of this nature. Nonetheless, the Council has a general power of competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 which empowers it to take this action, and the reasoning for doing so is set out in the report summary above.

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 The key risk is that, if the Council were not to develop and publish this Vision and Strategy for Economic Growth, it would fail to articulate the Council's policy position and ambitions in a manner that is coherent to key stakeholders outside the Council, who control influence over public and private sector investment.

10.0 Access to Information

- 10.1 The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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