

**South Kesteven
Economic Development Strategy
2016-2021**

Foreword

South Kesteven is the economic jewel of Greater Lincolnshire - with the strongest economic metrics and performance in the sub-region.

The district provides the premier connectivity and business opportunities for Greater Lincolnshire to contribute to London, Cambridge and Peterborough high growth economies, and to the heart of the 'Midlands Engine'. The A1 is an essential transport route for moving goods and people, whilst the East Coast Mainline, with Virgin as the new Train Operating Company, provides direct links into London in an hour. These unparalleled connections will allow the District to exploit direct housing and labour market linkages, enabling business growth in the towns and major business locations throughout the district.

Over the period of the strategy, we shall realise our potential by supporting the delivery of a number of strategic business investments in Grantham, Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings which anchor high value, high growth businesses in the area.

We will raise higher level skills provision through reforms of skills and learning systems. We will transform the performance and character of Grantham as a sub-regional centre, and leverage Stamford's reputation as one of the UK's most attractive market towns, with an expanding tourism economy supported by the internationally-renowned Burghley House. The District's connections with Sir Isaac Newton, and Baroness Thatcher will be further utilised to put South Kesteven on the map for both tourism and business as a whole.

The Council, with our business partners, will play a major leadership role in positioning Greater Lincolnshire as an area with rapidly improving productivity, making a major contribution to the growth of London and the extended mega-city region (especially the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough sub-region), and to the Midlands Engine.

South Kesteven's location at the gateway of significant established and potential economic activity means it is perfectly placed to lead, and drive, continued economic growth to meet the needs of incumbent and new businesses for years to come.

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South Kesteven Economic Development Strategy

South Kesteven District Council has an ambitious vision for the sustainable growth of the district; a vision which will not be achieved by the District Council alone, but which will rely on the Council to work alongside other public sector bodies and private sector businesses in order to be realised.

The aim of this Economic Development Strategy is to guide the activities of all agencies involved in economic development in South Kesteven, by indicating not only what the Council intends to do, but also the totality of need and action.

South Kesteven District Council has prioritised the Growth of its economy. This Economic Development Strategy will sit alongside the Council's Corporate Plan, the Local Plan for South Kesteven and the Council's Housing Strategy as the key documents guiding the future of South Kesteven.

Your Council, Working for You

Consultation on the emerging Economic Development Strategy has re-affirmed that our future economic goals should focus on:

- More and “better” jobs – to address the relatively low job density, the low workplace productivity, occupational profile, and poor density of employment in high growth, high value sectors;
- Strengthening skills progression – building on our excellent schools to ease progression to NVQ3/4 and higher level skills alongside a strategy that takes advantage of our excellent quality of life to encourage enterprise and create local employment alternatives to commuting;
- Encouraging innovation and enterprise – to build upon business strengths (engineering, agri-food, specialist manufacturing, financial/business services, visitor economy) to improve competitiveness, productivity and our reputation for attracting and retaining business investment;
- Place-making: making our places, particularly our four towns as employment centres (and especially the town centres within these), work much better for businesses in order to retain and attract investment and jobs – a strong focus to be on our ambition to establish Grantham as a leading sub-regional centre.

Consultation also recognised the importance of ensuring that key components were in position in order for growth to take place. This reinforces the role of South Kesteven District Council in planning, and enabling economic development and growth.



Space for Innovation:
Eventus, Market Deeping



Expanding the Visitor Economy:
Stamford

Our Vision

South Kesteven is a district with considerable, well established, economic strengths, including its central location, its strategic transport links and its high quality schools. South Kesteven is home to some world-leading businesses but has significant untapped potential; offering an exciting opportunity for investment, bringing economic growth and prosperity, both to the District and the wider area beyond.

In the long term our aspiration is to grow the local economy from 59,100 jobs in 2011 to 70,600 jobs by 2036¹, a 19.5% increase. Alongside this, our aspiration is to raise our skills levels to comparable averages for, initially, the Cambridge/Peterborough LEP area and, ultimately, the East Midlands.

South Kesteven District Council recognises the importance of housing in delivering Economic Growth and will pursue an ambitious housing delivery programme for the district which will be embodied in the Council's Housing Strategy. This strategy will meet a housing need – informed by significant economic growth – of circa 14,000 new homes being built by 2036.

The Council's approach to job creation and the economic benefits of housing are explored further below.

Job Creation

Through its strategic location, South Kesteven is well placed to attract additional employment. Our new Local Plan will establish appropriate employment land allocations to meet our needs up to 2036, informed by a technical study. Whilst there is overall sufficient employment land, there is a shortage of high quality serviced sites and premises. A key outcome for this Economic Development Strategy is to address this shortage and set out potential interventions for the Council, working in partnership with others, to ensure serviced land and premises are available to meet current and future needs of business.

This strategy identifies key strategic employment sites which would form a “pitch book” of opportunities attractive for both indigenous and inward investment. Within this strategy there is a focus on delivering growth and investment in Grantham, creating a leading sub-regional centre. Our aim is to deliver additional employment opportunities alongside a step change in the leisure and retail offer for both residents and visitors.

As additional serviced land becomes available as part of the “pitch book”, a key strand of this strategy will focus on marketing and promotion to attract new investment.

As well as increased employment opportunities, we also want to encourage increased productivity and innovation in our local economy, higher skills in the workplace and higher levels of enterprise.

This strategy paves the way for key interventions from the Council, working in partnership with others, to help achieve these outcomes. A key focus is for us to understand and respond to the current and future needs of business, particularly in relation to skills and training. In addition, we want to encourage an increasing number of innovative, ‘knowledge-based’ businesses to establish and grow within South Kesteven.

Making these interventions will help to raise skills, aspirations and prosperity for our residents.

¹ page 41 of [Peterborough Sub-Region Strategic Housing Market Assessment, October 15](#)

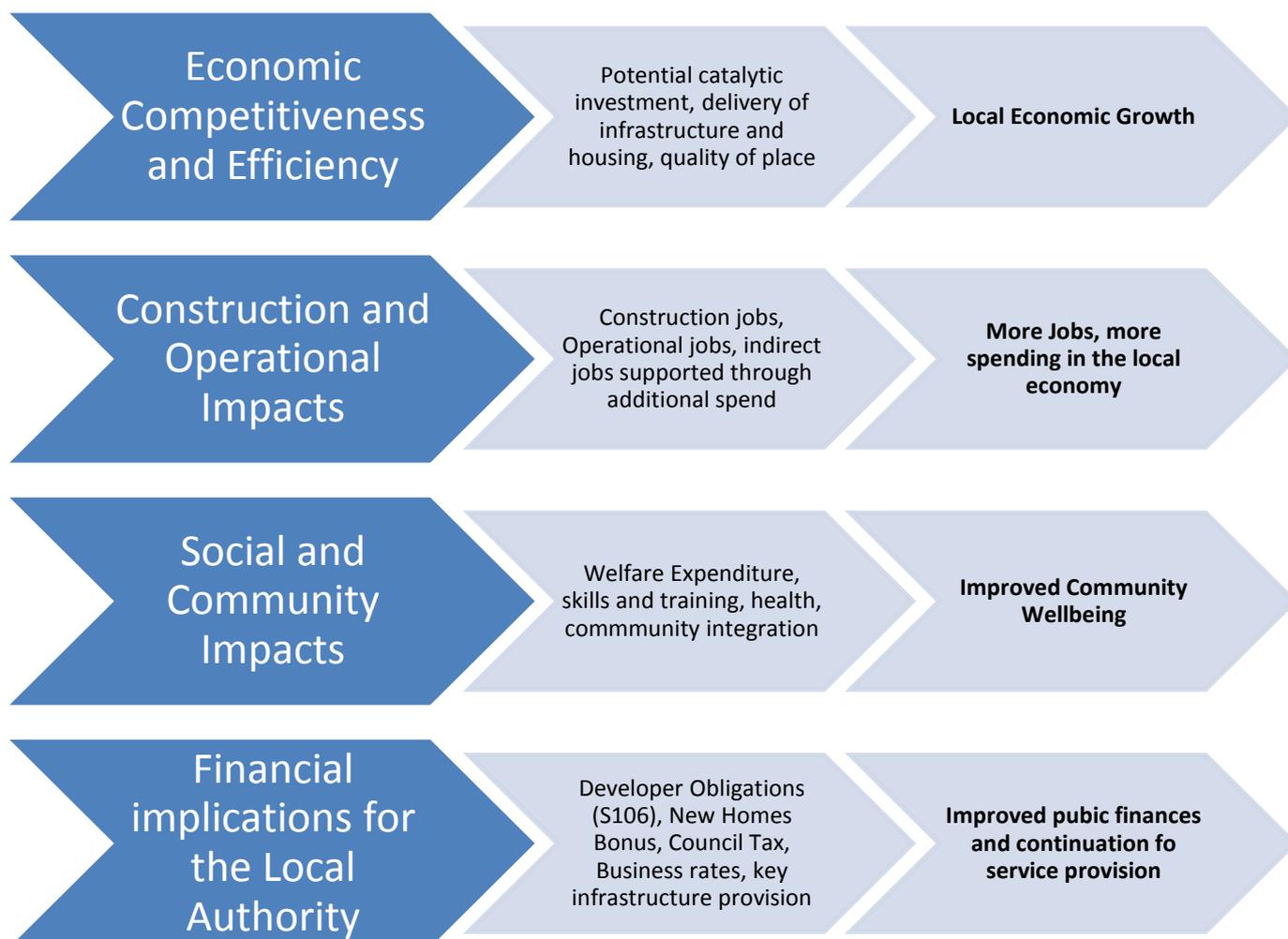
Housing and Economic Growth

Development of new housing, commercial space and infrastructure is vital to sustaining a competitive economy, whilst also delivering significant local benefits for residents, businesses and the local authority.

The range of local benefits include:

- employment and Gross Value Added (GVA) impacts at both construction and operational phases
- additional resident expenditure to support local shops and services
- contribution to local authority revenues, including Council Tax, New Homes Bonus and Business Rates
- enhancements to the competitiveness of the local economy and labour market
- valuing social and regeneration impacts, including community infrastructure and welfare savings

The Council recognises the importance of Housing Delivery as a driver of economic growth, and will support initiatives which can accelerate delivery of key housing sites, and which then help to promote those sites to the market.



The Council's Housing Strategy will promote an intelligent approach to housing delivery, recognising that there is no 'one size fits all' solution to achieving the amount of housing required to meet the District's need.

Programmes and Projects

In order to achieve its vision, the Council will work with its partners to:

1. Enable the provision of serviced land and premises to meet the current and future needs of business
2. Provide space for innovation and high value “knowledge based” businesses
3. Enable the creation of a skilled workforce to meet current and future needs of employers
4. Attracting inward investment and expand the visitor economy

1. Enabling the provision of serviced land and premises to meet the current and future needs of business.

Through the new Local Plan we will ensure a sufficient supply of sites and premises to meet current and future employment needs, providing a mix and choice for the market. We will ensure that there is a sufficient supply of a wide range of homes that people need, which will support that business growth.

A key issue is bringing forward serviced land for employment use, in suitable locations, in a timeframe that meets market demand and growth requirements. Within the first 5 years we will work with landowners and developers to ensure the following sites are serviced and available for development:

- **St Peters Hill, Grantham:** an enhanced leisure offer in Grantham town centre;
- **Grantham Southern Gateway:** delivery of major investment opportunities to provide sustainable employment towards the growth of Grantham, taking advantage of direct access to A1 and Southern Relief Road;
- **Grantham Town Centre West:** develop a scheme for high quality commercial and housing space close to Grantham Town Centre.
- **Empingham Road, Stamford:** facilitate the take-up of this key strategic employment site as part of the mixed use development scheme;
- **Northfields, Market Deeping:** facilitate the take-up of this key strategic employment site, building on the success of the Eventus BIC
- **Spalding Road, Bourne:** facilitate the take-up of this key strategic employment site

Whilst supporting Economic Development initiatives across the whole of the District, there is a clear focus on growth in Grantham. This will help in establishing Grantham as a leading sub-regional centre, taking advantage of development opportunities, creating employment, providing growth in new housing and helping to improve the town centre offer to enable more people to invest, shop, work and relax there.

In addition to the above, other key projects for Grantham include:

- Rejuvenating the town centre so that it can perform as a sub-regional and leisure destination, serving the local community and attracting shoppers and visitors from a wider area, bringing forward new developments and public realm improvements.
- Enabling the creation of a vibrant historic church close with new visitor facilities and investment to improve the visitor experience and attract new audiences.
- Supporting the creation of a business-led Business Improvement District.

2. Providing space for innovation and high value “knowledge based” businesses

The Council will, in response to clear market demand, seek to facilitate the provision of two new high quality managed workspace/business innovation centres in Grantham and Stamford. We will seek to encourage the private sector to lead this provision wherever possible. Building upon the successful Eventus Centre, we will also consider how best to provide for move-on accommodation in Market Deeping and Deeping St James as well as looking at the scope for managed workspace provision in Bourne.

This Strategy will encourage and facilitate close working between the private sector and the Council, taking advantage of external funding and finance opportunities wherever possible with the aim of creating a network of business locations to create new high value jobs, providing 7,000 sq. m of office floorspace supporting in the region of 300 businesses. An imperative within this objective will be to develop a tailored business support package, working with Local Enterprise Partnerships, Higher Education and Research and Development providers.

3. Enabling the creation of a skilled workforce to meet current and future needs of employers

This is perhaps the most challenging of the five intervention strategies for a number of reasons:

- It is absolutely central to transforming our economy from the current relatively low wage, low productivity profile with a focus on how local residents can best benefit from growth proposals.
- There is no major local HE presence whose mission includes a specific district focus, so we lie in a HE “cold spot”.
- Significant parts of our labour market faces largely away from the GLLEP area towards the south.

What we can do in the short term is:

- Work with the emerging Combined Authority to play a leading role in the Area Reviews of post 16 education and training;
- Support an Employment and Skills Board-type arrangement within the District to link businesses together with suppliers within employment and skills areas in order to be able to consider measures to improve matching of supply and demand (including anticipating future skills needs);
- Facilitate links to Universities, UTCs and Colleges;
- Ensure that this increased intelligence is fed into our relationships with all LEPs, increasing skills and employment responsibilities and specific investments;
- Encourage the take-up of apprenticeships;
- Support ways for exploring and developing new, innovative solutions to our skills and employment challenges.

4. Attracting inward investment and expanding the visitor economy

Inward investment and the expansion of the visitor economy offer the opportunity to make further transformational changes in the local economy. As the investment in serviced land and premises comes to fruition, we will use our key strategic investment sites as a “pitch book” to attract both indigenous companies to grow and inward investment to be brought to fruition. These ‘pitch book’ projects will be a focal point for the Council’s pursuit of Government, and other agency, funding as the District looks to pilot schemes where the potential economic impact is justified, but may not be fully evidenced.

In addition, we aim to improve visitor experiences and develop new tourism products, supported by close effective working with existing and emerging tourism attractions and accommodation providers. In so doing, we will build-upon the role of the District as a strategic gateway into Lincolnshire and surrounding areas. We believe that there are significant opportunities to improve our tourism offer and experience, particularly regarding Isaac Newton, as a means to encouraging an increasing number of overnight stays within the District.

An initial focus will be on engaging with - and listening to - tourist attractions and accommodation providers, with a key strand being to review and enhance our web presence.

Delivering the Economic Development Strategy

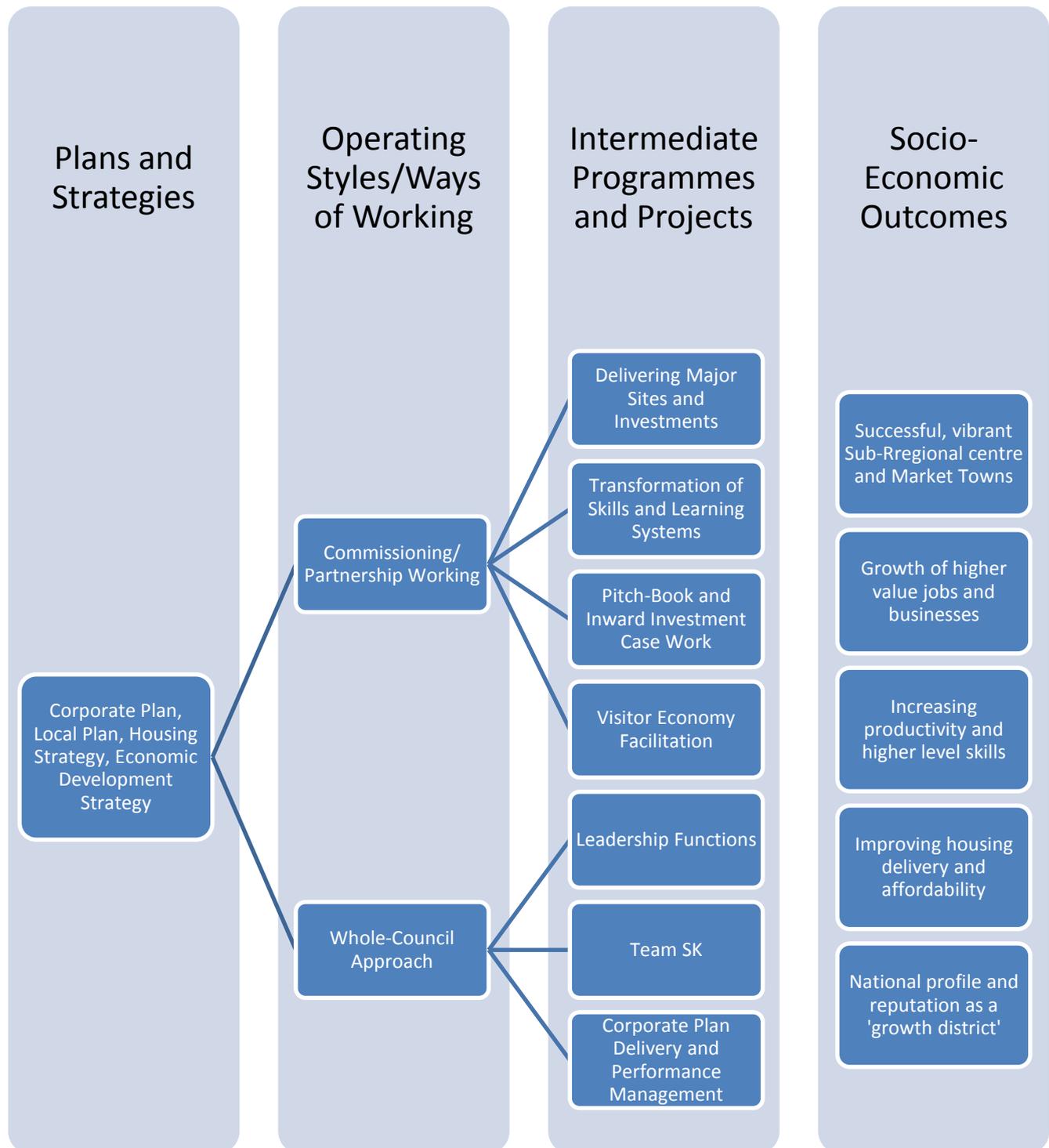
This Strategy has been formed on the principle that - in everything it does, and through every interaction that it has with public and private sector agencies and partners - the Council and District, as a whole, are ‘Open for Business’.

It is recognised that the Council does not have unlimited resources to deliver everything that is identified as being required. Nevertheless, there are a number of delivery options open to the Council to implement this strategy, including but not limited to:



From Strategy to Outcomes

The diagram below sets out how the Council's growth-related strategies come together to deliver economic outcomes.



Action Plan

The next step in the evolution of this Economic Development Strategy for South Kesteven will be to develop an action plan which delivers the Socio-Economic outcomes set out above. The Action Plan will specify timescales and resource commitments to ensure that each key step is achievable and deliverable. The action plan will be progressed to the Council's Executive for approval.