

Committee:	Cabinet	Date:	Tuesday 26 November 2019
Title:	North Essex Economic Strategy		
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor John Lodge, Leader of the Council		
Report Author:	Gordon Glenday, Assistant Director – Planning gglenday@uttlesford.gov.uk	Key decision:	Yes

Summary

The North Essex Economic Strategy (NEES) 2040 has been developed through a partnership of Braintree District, Colchester Borough, Essex County, Tendring District and Uttlesford District Councils.

The partners recognise that the challenges and opportunities affecting North Essex will best be addressed through a collaborative approach to achieving inclusive and sustainable economic growth. The shared ambition is to promote, plan and deliver sustainable, strategic growth at scale and over the long-term; providing the housing, employment, necessary supporting infrastructure and innovations required to ensure the best outcomes for current and future communities of North Essex.

The Strategy provides a platform for strategic intervention at a scale which will achieve transformation in the overall economic prosperity of the North Essex area (and compliments local economic activity which the partners deliver). The partnership between the 5 Councils is set within a structure which brings the required leadership from Members and senior officers together with technical input from economic growth teams. The North Essex Economic Board, made up of Portfolio Holders from each the Partners, has led the development of the Strategy.

The ideas and priorities set out in the North Essex Economic Strategy will contribute to both the Essex Prosperity Prospectus and South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) Local Industrial Strategy. The Strategy will also form the basis for continued promotion of North Essex to Government, key national agencies and industry.

The Strategy has been articulated through an overall Vision and 4 related Missions:

The Vision:

“North Essex is a high-value, productive and sustainable economy. People choose to live and work locally, in new and established communities that are well connected and inspire innovation and creativity”

The Missions:

1. Driving innovation and technology adoption
2. Developing a skilled and resilient workforce
3. Creating a network of distinctive and cohesive places

4. Growing a greener, more sustainable economy

Alongside this Strategy a rolling ‘action plan’ will be developed, owned by the North Essex Economic Board, through which business cases for interventions can be identified, scoped and further developed. This will enable the Board to consider options in relation to each proposed action, identify lead partners and consider potential risks, with a view to working collectively on shared objectives. The action plan will be subject to annual review and will be monitored and updated over the initial five years of this Strategy.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- a) approves the North Essex Economic Strategy (see Appendix);
- b) notes that strategy’s priorities will contribute to the Essex Prosperity Prospectus and the SELEP Local Industrial Strategy;
- c) notes the partnership structures which are in place to facilitate the strategy;
- d) notes that an Action Plan will be developed to guide delivery of key actions; and
- e) notes that a process for reporting progress will be established by the partners.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications at present. In due course there will be a requirement for Partners to consider funding options for projects to be developed and delivered as part of the Action Plan. This will include consideration of external funding opportunities (e.g. the Government’s Shared Prosperity Fund).

Risk will be assessed at individual project level and addressed at that stage.

Background Papers

None.

Impact

Communication/Consultation	N/A
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Health and Safety	N/A
Human Rights/Legal	N/A

Implications	
Sustainability	N/A
Ward-specific impacts	All
Workforce/Workplace	N/A

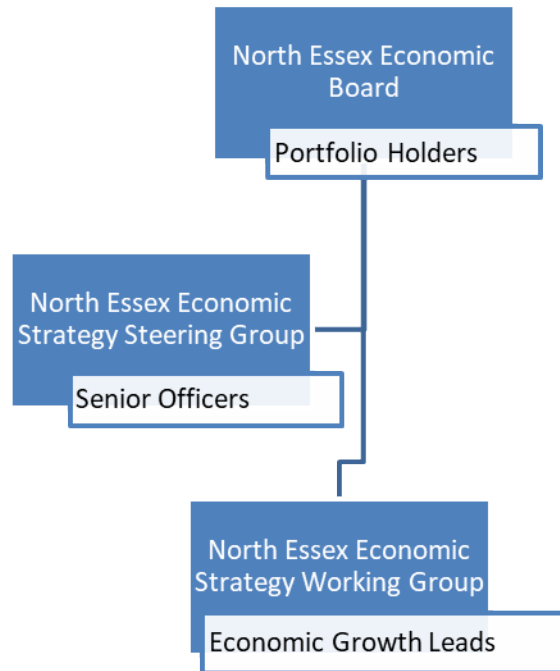
Situation

Context

- 1) In 2017 Government launched its Industrial Strategy aimed at boosting UK productivity by focusing on five key foundations; ideas, people, infrastructure, the business environment and places. The Industrial strategy also identified four 'grand challenges' which the UK will need to address over the coming decades, related to our ageing population, the growing importance of artificial intelligence and the data-driven economy, the need for a new model of environmentally-sustainable 'clean growth' and the changing nature of mobility and transport.
- 2) Further details on the Government's Industrial Strategy can be accessed via the following link:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/the-uks-industrial-strategy>
- 3) In 2018 Government mandated that every Local Enterprise Partnership should produce a Local Industrial Strategy (LIS). The Government is therefore working with the South East Local Enterprise partnership to prepare its LIS, setting out how it will contribute to productivity growth and respond to the 'grand challenges', and to inform the LEP's approach to any future local growth funding.
- 4) In order to inform and influence the development of the SELEP LIS, work is underway to prepare a Prosperity Prospectus for Essex to set out Essex's ambitions for long-term sustainable and inclusive prosperity and to outline where we must act in the next two or three years to achieve this.

North Essex Approach

- 5) The North Essex Economic Strategy (NEES) has been developed through a partnership of Braintree District, Colchester Borough, Essex County, Tendring District and Uttlesford District Councils.
- 6) The NEES provides a platform for strategic intervention at a scale which will achieve transformation in the overall economic prosperity of the North Essex area (and compliments local economic activity which the partners deliver).
- 7) The partnership between the 5 partner Councils is set within a structure which brings the required leadership from Members and senior officers together with technical input from economic growth teams as outlined below:



- 8) The North Essex Economic Strategy drives forward the aspirations of the North Essex Economic Board, its political leaders and individual Local Authorities to come together and drive forward a collective long-term ambition for economic growth across North Essex.
- 9) The ideas and priorities set out in the North Essex Economic Strategy will contribute to both the Essex Prosperity Prospectus and SELEP Local Industrial Strategy. The Strategy will also form the basis for continued promotion of North Essex to Government, key national agencies and industry.

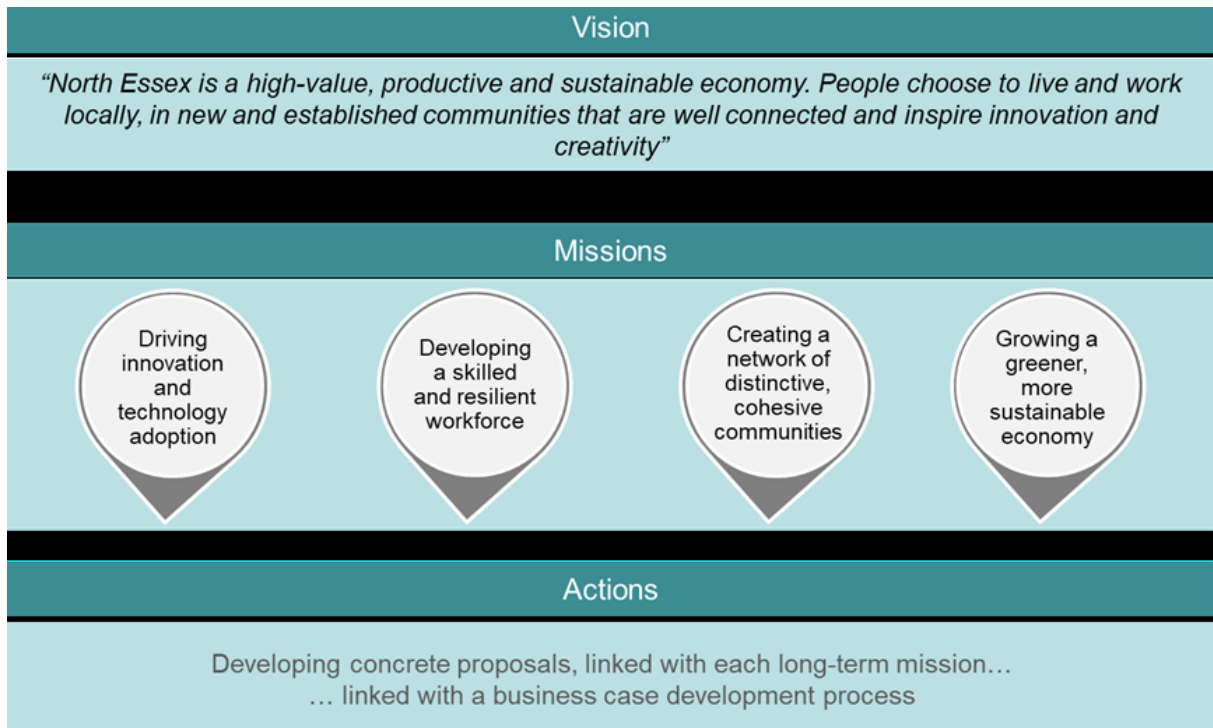
North Essex Economic Strategy

- 10) The strategy has been developed with the ambition to achieve transformational in the North Essex by 2040, in recognition that the inherent challenges and opportunities can only be fully addressed through a sustained focus over that time frame.
- 11) Although this Strategy takes a long-term view, actions taken in the shorter term will shape the direction of future growth. Much is happening already as 'business as usual', for example, in land use and infrastructure planning, and the Strategy does not duplicate this. But within a dynamic, changing economy, there should be opportunities to develop new solutions to the challenges faced, and to test out new ideas.
- 12) Therefore the Strategy highlights a series of key 'areas for action' over the next five years, setting out a framework through which the partners to progress initiatives that will make a difference across the whole of the area.
- 13) The Strategy has been articulated through an overall Vision and 4 related Missions:

14) The Vision set out in the Strategy is:

“North Essex is a high-value, productive and sustainable economy. People choose to live and work locally, in new and established communities that are well connected and inspire innovation and creativity”

15) To deliver the vision four key ‘missions’ have been identified that will be the focus the partner’s shared activity over the next five years, with each mission providing a framework to consider, and drive forward, new ideas and solutions:



Mission 1: Driving innovation and technology adoption

16) Our vision seeks an economy that is ‘high value and productive’. To support this, we will develop opportunities for innovative businesses to grow, technology clusters to emerge and for all businesses to take advantage of measures to increase technology adoption and drive forward productivity.

Mission 2: Developing a skilled and resilient workforce

17) From an economy-wide perspective, a skilled workforce is essential to productivity growth. From an individual perspective, the ability to adapt and develop new skills is essential in driving opportunity, better pay and progression in work. Looking ahead to 2040, we aim to develop a workforce – of all ages and in all communities – able to contribute fully to North Essex’s growth opportunities.

Mission 3: Creating a network of distinctive and cohesive places

18) North Essex is a diverse place, with strong local identities and a strong 'quality of life' offer. We want to preserve and enhance this, celebrating our unique local characteristics while ensuring that all our towns and communities contribute to and benefit from economic growth within a complementary 'network' of places. This will mean investing to reduce local disparities and strengthening our internal connections and our links with our neighbours, so that people and businesses can access new opportunities

Mission 4: Growing a greener, more sustainable economy

19) Over the long term, we want to ensure that North Essex is a leading example of sustainable development – within existing communities, through our ambitious proposals for new Garden Communities and through lower carbon, innovative businesses.

Delivery

20) The partners recognise that the economic challenges and opportunities affecting respective areas will best be addressed through a collaborative approach to achieving inclusive and sustainable economic growth. The shared ambition is to promote, plan and deliver sustainable, strategic growth at scale and over the long-term; providing the housing, employment, necessary supporting infrastructure and innovations required to ensure the best outcomes for current and future communities of North Essex.

21) Alongside this Strategy a rolling 'action plan' will be developed, owned by the North Essex Economic Board, through which business cases for interventions can be identified, scoped and further developed. This will enable the Board to consider options in relation to each proposed action, identify lead partners and consider potential risks, with a view to working collectively on shared objectives. The action plan will be subject to annual review and will be monitored and updated over the initial five years of this Strategy.

22) The partnership structure will evolve following approval of the Strategy and this will be in the context of the following key considerations:

- Potential expansion of the North Essex Economic Board to include key stakeholders and business leaders;
- Engagement at national and regional level to promote and lobby for North Essex;
- Effective delivery of the strategy's Action Plan through joint working;
- Identification of Success Measures.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The Strategy isn't approved by all partner authorities and so Uttlesford and North Essex loses the opportunity to develop a coordinated strategy to influence development and investment in the region	1	3	Ensure that all partners are clear on the joint benefits of developing and implementing the Strategy and its associated Action Plan effectively.

- 1 = Little or no risk or impact
- 2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.
- 3 = Significant risk or impact – action required
- 4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.