



## Mayor and Cabinet

### **Response to Overview and Scrutiny Committee – An economically sound future**

**Date:** 14 September 2022

**Key decision:** No

**Class:** Part 1

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Contributors:** John Bennett, Head of Economy, Jobs and Partnerships

### **Outline and recommendations**

This report provides a response to the recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Committee arising from “Future Lewisham – an economically sound future”.

Mayor and Cabinet are recommended to agree the approach to the development of an Economic Development Strategy for the borough set out in this report, and to outline this approach in a report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **Timeline of engagement and decision-making**

Announcement of Future Lewisham priorities by the Mayor of Lewisham, 26 May 2021

Future Lewisham – an economically sound future, Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 8 March 2022

Approval of Lewisham Works and initial response to Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Mayor and Cabinet, 9 March 2022

## 1. Summary

- 1.1. At its meeting on Tuesday 8 March 2022, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) considered an officer report on plans to deliver the Mayor's Future Lewisham ambition for an economically sound future. OSC agreed to ask Mayor and Cabinet to set out a strategy for future economic development in the borough, and that delivering this should be agreed as a priority for the Council as part of the next Corporate Strategy.
- 1.2. This report sets out a recommended response to OSC and outlines the process for developing an Economic Development Strategy.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Mayor and Cabinet are recommended to agree the approach to the development of an Economic Development Strategy for the borough, as set out in this report, and agree that this is reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its next meeting.

## 3. Policy Context

- 3.1. At the Council's Annual General Meeting in May 2021, the Mayor outlined the Council's priorities to support the borough's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. "Future Lewisham: our borough's recovery" sets out four themes at the heart of the Council's response to the impact of the pandemic. The report considered by OSC relates to the theme of "An economically sound future".
- 3.2. The current Corporate Strategy priority "Building an inclusive local economy" includes the following commitments:
  - *More Living Wage employers*
  - *Support to access work and to progress*
  - *High quality work and reduced inequalities*
  - *A thriving local economy*
- 3.3. The Mayor of London, Greater London Authority (GLA), London boroughs and a range of other strategic partners have jointly agreed an Economic Recovery Framework for London. The framework contains five pillars of activity – Jobs, Business, Thriving Neighbourhoods, Connected City and Global London. Within each pillar are four key issues to focus collective efforts on, with building the green economy and narrowing social, economic and health inequalities as cross-cutting themes. This Economic Recovery Framework also guides how the £144m UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocation to London will be spent.
- 3.4. In March 2021 the Government set out its ambition to "Build Back Better" through the pillars of infrastructure, skills, innovation, "Levelling Up" across the UK, transition to net zero and a vision for a Global Britain. The Government also launched a "Plan for Jobs" to protect, support and create jobs. Any future Government funding and investment in the economy, training and jobs will be focused on these priorities.

## 4. Background

- 4.1. At its meeting on Tuesday 8 March 2022, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) considered an officer report on plans to deliver the Mayor's Future Lewisham ambition for an economically sound future. OSC agreed to ask Mayor and Cabinet to set out a strategy for future economic development in the borough.
- 4.2. Such a strategy would allow the Council to set out its ambitions for economic growth in the borough and how this growth can benefit local residents. It can also set out how Lewisham residents can benefit from the economic opportunities which are available in

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the wider London economy. In this report the term economic development strategy is used to describe this strategy. However, this will not necessarily be the name of the final document and is only used here for brevity.

## 5. Strategy development

5.1. Over the last year the work of the Economy, Jobs and Partnerships service has been guided by a framework which had been discussed with Cabinet Members but not formally adopted as council policy. The framework has four objectives, each of which has three priorities:

- *More local jobs*
  - *Growth from existing employers*
  - *Attracting new employers*
  - *Start-ups and scale-ups*
- *Increased local spending*
  - *Footfall and spend in town centres*
  - *Visitor economy*
  - *Local supply chains*
- *Strong partnerships and infrastructure*
  - *Transport and digital connectivity*
  - *Community involvement*
  - *Available and affordable workspace*
- *Tackle unemployment and inequalities*
  - *Youth employment and training*
  - *All-age training and job brokerage*
  - *Living Wage and in-work progression*

5.2. This framework provides a foundation from which a new economic development strategy can be built over the next six months.

5.3. Alongside this, the new Corporate Strategy is likely to contain a number of commitments relating to the local economy. An economic development strategy will provide a mechanism for outlining how these commitments will be delivered and measured. These commitments could include:

- *Economy*
  - *Creating 4,000 new jobs in the borough by 2026*
  - *Continuing to develop the circular economy*
  - *Launch a Visit Lewisham programme to encourage visitors to the borough*
- *High Streets and Town Centres*
  - *Continue the Shop Local campaign*
  - *Support the evening and night time economy*
  - *Ensure high streets are clean and attractive, and protect and improve street markets*
  - *Bring empty commercial properties in to active use through meanwhile and*

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### *pop-up activities*

- *Jobs and Skills*
    - *Support 1,000 people find a good job and develop their skills through the new Lewisham Works service*
    - *Expand the Mayor's Apprenticeship Programme to include new opportunities in London's growing and emerging sectors such as green jobs, digital, the arts, finance and professional services*
    - *Offer more jobs, training and education opportunities for people with learning disabilities with the Council and other local employers*
    - *Grow Adult Learning student numbers by at least 10% and work with more Higher Education institutions to promote lifelong learning*
  - *Business and Employers*
    - *Establish a 'Creative Lewisham' programme to drive ongoing cultural and economic development in the Borough, linked to Borough of Culture*
    - *Create more start-up and co-working spaces*
    - *Encourage more local businesses to become London Living Wage Employers*
    - *Support more businesses to increase their online presence and sales*
    - *Support the expansion of the Lewisham Local business card*
    - *Support local employers in Lewisham to replicate the council's improvements in training and recruitment of Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff*
- 5.4. The aim would be to develop the economic development strategy over the next six months, seeking approval of the proposed strategy before March 2023.
- 5.5. It is proposed that this provides a balance between allowing sufficient time for engagement and analysis to feed in to the strategy, without taking so long that it prevents actions being delivered. It is also worth noting that existing initiatives will continue (e.g. Lewisham Works, business support programmes, Lewisham Town Centre Partnership) whilst the strategy is developed, and that new programmes may also be brought forward and implemented where they fit the emerging priorities of the strategy.
- 5.6. A number of activities are proposed to feed in to the development of the economic development strategy:
- 5.7. Data analysis – reviewing the findings of the last Local Economic Assessment and analysing other data published by the Government to understand the local labour market and business base.
- 5.8. Resident engagement – reviewing existing feedback from previous resident engagement activities, including the recent Residents' Survey and Voices of Lewisham; holding focussed discussions or workshops with groups of residents who we are seeking to support through this strategy.
- 5.9. Business engagement – conducting our second survey and headcount of independent and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic owned businesses; working with partners involved in the Creative Enterprise Zone in Deptford and New Cross.
- 5.10. Member and Partner engagement – using existing partnerships such as Lewisham Backs Business and the Lewisham Deal; reviewing the comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March 2022 and any other relevant committee reports and feedback.
- 5.11. Priorities and actions – using the data, feedback from engagement, and Corporate

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Strategy commitments to draw together a vision, priorities and supporting actions to set out how the Council and partners will drive economic development in the coming years.

## **6. Financial implications**

- 6.1. The proposed strategy would be developed using resources already in place within the Economy, Jobs and Partnerships service. The development of the strategy would include the need to identify existing Council or external resources available for funding any activities included therein.
- 6.2. The proposed strategy will also provide a framework for identifying how the Council will use any resources received through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) for business support; people and skills; and town centre growth.

## **7. Legal implications**

- 7.1. There are no specific legal implications arising from the report.
- 7.2. Under S1 of the Localism Act 2011 the Council has a general power of competence to do anything which an individual may do unless it is expressly prohibited.

## **8. Equalities implications**

- 8.1. The proposed strategy would include a full analysis of equalities considerations relating to the local labour market and businesses.
- 8.2. One element of this is the commitment to continue with the headcount and survey of independent and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic owned businesses which we conducted for the first time in 2021.

## **9. Climate change and environmental implications**

- 9.1. Achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030 cannot be achieved without the skilled workforce to decarbonise the economy. This will be considered within the scope of the proposed strategy. The new Lewisham Works employment service will provide a direct opportunity for the Council to work with local residents and support them to move in to jobs in the green economy.

## **10. Crime and disorder implications**

- 10.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report. Well paid and secure employment has been demonstrated to be a positive factor in preventing offending.

## **11. Health and wellbeing implications**

- 11.1. There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising from this report. As above, well paid and secure employment has been demonstrated to be a factor in contributing to positive health and wellbeing outcomes.

## **12. Background papers**

- 12.1. [Future Lewisham – an economically sound future, Report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 8 March 2022](#)
- 12.2. [Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Future Lewisham – an economically sound future, Report to Mayor and Cabinet, 9 March 2022](#)

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## 13. Glossary

Term	Definition
Economic development	Economic development describes the process of growing and improving the economy to achieve stated objectives such as higher incomes, increased employment levels or reducing inequalities
Lewisham Works	New council service, started in Spring 2022, to provide direct information, advice and guidance to unemployed Lewisham residents who want to find a job or take up training
UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)	UKSPF is part of the Government's Levelling Up agenda and is providing £2.6billion around the UK over the next three years. The London allocation of this funding is £144m. The Fund aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances through three pillars: investing in communities and place; supporting local business; and people and skills.

## 14. Report author(s) and contact

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