

## COUNCIL

11<sup>th</sup> January 2021

### FUTURE RUTLAND CONVERSATION

#### Report of the Interim Chief Executive

Strategic Aim:	All	
Exempt Information	No	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	Mr O Hemsley, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Rutland One Public Estate & Growth, Tourism & Economic Development, Resources (other than Finance)	
Contact Officer(s):	Mark Andrews, Interim Chief Executive	01572 758339 <a href="mailto:mandrews@rutland.gov.uk">mandrews@rutland.gov.uk</a>
	Holly Bremner, Head of Communications	01572 758222 <a href="mailto:hbremner@rutland.gov.uk">hbremner@rutland.gov.uk</a>
Ward Councillors	All	

#### DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council:

1. Endorses the Future Rutland Conversation project to engage with residents and businesses to develop a vision and aspirations for Rutland that will inform future Rutland County Council strategies and approaches
2. Approves the commencement of the Future Rutland Conversation project
3. Agrees indicative timeline for the Future Rutland Conversation project and for future reports and updates to be presented at Full Council
4. Agrees to support the planning of Future Rutland Conversation engagement approach through input at an engagement event to be held in late January 2021.

#### 1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To recommend to Full Council that Rutland County Council seeks to establish a conversation with residents, particularly those who do not traditionally engage with Council consultations and plans, to understand what matters most to them in order to develop a vision and aspirations for Rutland to inform future strategies and approaches and broaden the Council's ongoing engagement with residents.

## **2 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS**

- 2.1 In 2019 Rutland County Council agreed its Corporate Plan 2019-2024. As part of its strategic aim to Deliver Sustainable Development it was identified that a 50-year vision needed to be established.
- 2.2 Work commenced on developing a process to establish a 50-year vision in early 2020, but this was delayed by the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and the need to reprioritise resource to support the activity around this.
- 2.3 The postponement provided an opportunity to reassess this project. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the lives of our residents, the local economy and future Council funding. The Council remains eager to understand what matters most to the residents and businesses. The effect of the pandemic on Rutland has been significant and we are committed to ensuring that in future residents and businesses of have their needs met in both good times and bad and to achieve this it is important to understand what those needs might be.
- 2.4 It is therefore proposed that we start a conversation with resident and businesses. The feedback from this work, called the Future Rutland Conversation (see section 3 below), will be used to develop a vision and aspirations that will be used to inform and guide future Council policy and strategies. We will also use the outcomes of the Conversation when we work with partners, for example health services, to help inform the provision of services and amenities
- 2.5 In November 2019, the Local Government Association's Peer Review Team was invited to meet with residents and stakeholders to review what the Council is doing well or could improve. The findings identified that the Council should review its approach to communications, engagement and co-production and this project seeks to inform this as a secondary outcome.

## **3 THE FUTURE RUTLAND CONVERSATION**

- 3.1 To undertake this project, we want to shift the way in which we communicate and engage with the people of Rutland by seeking to see the world through their eyes.
- 3.2 It is proposed that Rutland's approach should focus on developing a stronger ongoing relationship with our residents and businesses through engaging, posing questions and listening to what matters to them about their lives in Rutland. We will feedback what we hear and, in developing policies, will make it clear what is, and is not possible.
- 3.3 Through the Future Rutland Conversation, it is proposed that people at different life stages and businesses and organisations within the county would be engaged through a range of communication methods, including surveys, virtual events and direct mail and engaging with bodies and networks to encourage those residents who do not traditionally engage in council initiatives to get involved.
- 3.4 Elected members play a key role, not only in facilitating these conversations, but in providing the voice of the residents they are elected to represent. It is therefore important that local knowledge and insight informs the development of the approach to ensure a high level of engagement across the county.
- 3.5 Members will be invited to engage in co-producing the engagement approach for

this project to support its design and planning. A Members' session will be held in January to look at the approach taken to engage, themes for engagement, the questions being asked, who we engage with (i.e. businesses, residents, organisations and parish councils) and how that engagement may be undertaken. Governance will also be considered, including the role of scrutiny to provide oversight and critical guidance for the project.

- 3.6 To ensure that the project and the vision it seeks to develop continues to be informed by the voice of Rutland people, messages and approaches will also be tested with residents before the Conversation is implemented. The initial draft vision for Rutland, developed through the engagement, will be presented to residents and businesses to gain final views and input before it is launched.

#### 4 GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

- 4.1 Many authorities have already taken this approach to informing and setting key policies, with recognised benefits to their residents, businesses and the Council. Some of which are featured as part of the LGA's Guide to Engagement:

<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/guidance-and-resources/comms-hub-communications-support/resident-communications/new>

- 4.2 Key examples include [Hackney's A Place for Everyone](#) campaign and Cornwall's [A Cornwall We Want](#)

- 4.3 Insight and learning from other authorities and wider will be drawn upon to inform the Future Rutland Conversation.

#### 5 INDICATIVE TIMETABLE OF ACTIVITY

- 5.1 The table below provides an indicative timetable of activity (items highlighted in red indicate key meeting dates):

Date	Activity
11 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	Full Council Meeting – Seek approval to commence project
w/c 18 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	Members' co-design as outlined in 3.5
1 <sup>st</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> February 2021	Refine communications and engagement plan Develop questions for events and survey Develop detailed comms messages and assets Book events with targeted groups

W/C 15 <sup>th</sup> -29 <sup>th</sup> February 2021	Circulate plan to Cllrs, Scrutiny Chairs and Audit Committee for final feedback  Refine plan
8 <sup>th</sup> March 2021	<b>Full Council Meeting – launch consultation</b>
w/c 8 <sup>th</sup> March – w/c 26 <sup>th</sup> April 2021	Undertake engagement activity  Collate feedback and start developing draft themes and draft vision
w/c 3 <sup>rd</sup> -31 <sup>st</sup> May 2021	Present draft vision back to community and gain final input and views
10 <sup>th</sup> May	<b>Update at Annual Council</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> -31 June 2021	Refine vision and create final vision
July	<b>Full Council - Seek approval for vision</b> Launch vision

## **6 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 This programme of works proposes a Rutland-wide consultation to ensure a future vision is informed by residents and businesses.
- 6.2 This work will also inform the Council's future communications and engagement approach.

## **7 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 7.1 Not to undertake the activity proposed and develop a vision without resident engagement. This would risk a lack of buy in and support from residents and businesses for any future vision, but also plans and strategies.
- 7.2 This proposal also seeks to establish a long-term engagement with residents and businesses to broaden communication and engagement in future Council business. This would be limited if this programme of activity was not undertaken.

## **8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 A budget of £10,000 has been identified to support the delivery of this work.

## **9 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS**

- 9.1 The Council continues to revise and update its policies when deemed necessary. In order for robust policies and strategies to be developed, it is good governance to engage with members of the public, residents and businesses whose input will ensure the suitability and inclusivity within those policies.

## **10 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS (MANDATORY)**

10.1 It is recognised that this project will have Data Protection implications, however a Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) has not yet been completed as the details of which rely on the project, communications and engagement plan's development. A DPIA will be developed at this point.

## **11 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

11.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed. No adverse or other significant issues were found. A copy of the EqIA can be obtained from Holly Bremner – hbremner@rutland.gov.uk

## **11.2 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

11.3 There are no Community Safety implications arising from this report.

## **12 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are no Health and Wellbeing implications arising from this report.

## **13 ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 Environmental implications – findings will influence Council's environmental and sustainability strategy

13.2 Human Resource implications – none identified

13.3 Procurement Implications – none identified

## **14 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

14.1 The Future Rutland Conversation proposal to engage with residents and businesses will assist the Council in being able to develop a clear vision and gather the aspirations from residents and businesses of the county which will inform future Rutland County Council strategies.

## **15 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

15.1 There are no additional background papers to the report.

## **16 APPENDICES**

16.1 There are no appendices to this report

**A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.**