

# **Rutland County Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

## **Scoping Document**

### **1. Topic**

1.1 Economic Development, levelling up and devolution. These issues are inextricably linked but the scope of this review will be economic development.

### **2. Purpose**

2.1 The aim of this review is to analyse available data and experiences of other authorities to recommend key focus areas to be considered in the production of an economic development strategy.

2.2 This strategy needs to align with other plans within Rutland such as the Local Plan, Local Transport Plan and Health and Wellbeing Strategy so we can effectively deliver the communities 'Future Rutland' vision we have endorsed as a council.

### **3. Members (Identify Chairperson)**

### **4. Portfolio Holder:**

4.1 Councillor Lucy Stephenson

### **5. Officers**

- Penny Sharp – Director – Places

- Ingrid Hooley – Head of Sustainable Economy and Place

## **6. Rationale**

- 6.1 The Government's Levelling Up agenda is predicated on improving economic prosperity. In order to capitalise and benefit from Levelling Up investment and opportunities Rutland needs to have a clear economic development strategy. Economic development is a critical component for the future of Rutland. It drives economic prosperity in the area, creating new job opportunities and most importantly facilitating an improved quality of life, which includes increased access to opportunities for existing and future residents.
- 6.2 The main objective of the review, therefore, will be to recommend key focus areas that will be considered in the production of an economic development strategy.
- 6.3 We will all have opinions on what the economy in Rutland should look like and what issues developing our economy might address. However we need to ensure the economic development strategy is built on a strong evidence base, as this might suggest a different approach on matters such as business sector development, skills and employment support, transport or housing. We need to understand what the data is telling us, identify key areas that the strategy development can explore and ultimately provide actions to address. This will ensure we develop targeted policies which not only deliver what our current residents want, but also what future residents may need.

6.4 The opportunity this review offers is to 'join-up' key policies.

## 7. Background

7.1 Our role as a council is to develop programmes, policies or targeted interventions that seek to improve the economic well-being for *all* of our community. Economic development priorities vary, economic development strategies often aim for common, positive results, such as increasing economic productivity and prosperity or quality of life (especially for distinct groups), getting more skilled workers living in our community, retaining businesses, and attracting or growing new ones.

7.2 The new strategy will be replacing the Economic Growth Strategy 2014-21. A new Economic Strategy was due to be developed during 2020, however, it was decided to put this on hold due to the pandemic.

7.3 Much has happened since the Economic Strategy was originally published. A new Government in 2019 set new priorities and the global pandemic and rising fuel prices has impacted on businesses however large or small. It is essential therefore that a new strategy is developed to take into account this changed landscape.

7.4 The increased pressure for local authorities to join together as combined authorities, and the Government's levelling up agenda means that if RCC is to receive benefits from these initiatives the Council needs to be clear what benefits it might want and developing a data driven economic strategy will aid this. The strategy should also provide the platform to inform which partners the Council should proactively

engage with to achieve the identified outcomes e.g. Local Enterprise Partnerships.

7.5 It is important that current employers, and interest groups of employers such as Discover Rutland inform the strategy as well as local and regional educational institutions who are nurturing future employees and residents more widely.

## **8. Timetable**

8.1 The initial data review will be concluded by December 2022

8.2 To be completed by March 2023

## **9. Methodology/Approach**

9.1 The initial work will be a desk top review of data and consideration of economic development policies adopted by authorities similar to Rutland and the impact these have had. Discussion with officers will also form part of this process as will consideration of research already undertaken, for example by the LGA [Rural recognition, recovery, resilience and revitalisation | Local Government Association](#)

9.2 As the work progresses this group might undertake interviews with key stakeholders but as the primary purpose is to identify potential options it would be at the stage of choosing options that such discussions would be most useful.

## **10. Evidence Sources**

10.1 Independent research articles and papers

10.2 Data provided by RCC

## **11. Witnesses**

11.1 This will be considered once the desk based work is nearing completion.

## **12. Other Considerations**

12.1 None at this stage.