

Agenda Item No:	5	
Committee:	Overview & Scrutiny	
Date:	31 July 2017	
Report Title:	Wisbech 2020 Vision Update	

Cover sheet:

1 Purpose / Summary

- To consider and approve the draft refreshed Wisbech 2020 Vision strategy and agree to FDC progressing consideration and adoption via the Core Vision Group followed by delivery of actions contained therein alongside partners.

2 Key issues

- The Wisbech 2020 Vision is regularly refreshed to ensure that it is fit for purpose and reflects the feedback received through annual Wisbech 2020 Vision Summit meetings.
- The latest refresh of the Wisbech 2020 Vision has included intensive research, consultation and analysis to review and rebuild the vision document.
- The refreshed Wisbech 2020 Vision strategy now includes four interrelated themes which provide a framework for a comprehensive series of actions. The themes are:
 - Education and Skills
 - Health, Wellbeing and Cohesion
 - Infrastructure and the Built Environment
 - Local Economy

3 Recommendations

- Overview and Scrutiny Panel Members are asked to note the report and provide feedback on the revised Wisbech 2020 Vision document.

Wards Affected	All Wisbech wards and surrounding rural Wisbech wards
Forward Plan Reference	
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr John Clark - Leader of the Council
Report Originator(s)	Gary Garford - Corporate Director Ross Ingham - Ingham Pinnock Associates

Contact Officer(s)	Paul Medd - Chief Executive Gary Garford - Corporate Director Carol Pilson - Corporate Director Richard Cassidy - Corporate Director
Background Paper(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refreshed Wisbech 2020 Vision (appendix A)• Wisbech 2020 Vision Delivery Matrix (appendix B)• Wisbech 2020 Baseline Report (appendix C)

1 The original Wisbech 2020 Vision strategy (2012)

- 1.1 The Wisbech 2020 Vision originally emerged from a meeting in 2012 of the then Leaders of FDC and CCC and the MP for North East Cambridgeshire.
- 1.2 The original idea to pay particular attention to issues in Wisbech in response to the release of information that highlighted acute issues of deprivation, poor transport infrastructure and the poor condition of many prominent buildings. It was recognised that across a number of indicators, Wisbech performs worse, and in some cases significantly worse, than other towns and villages in Fenland which in turn are below the performance of the majority of the rest of Cambridgeshire.
- 1.3 A series of thematic workshops and public consultation exercises were held in 2012 in order to develop the content of the first version of the Wisbech 2020 Vision strategy. The resultant document was launched in January 2013.
- 1.4 This first version of the Wisbech 2020 Vision strategy contained 29 actions divided between three themes of live, work and visit. Many of these actions related to eight key issues that emerged from the workshops and consultation.

2 The second version of the Wisbech 2020 Vision strategy (2015)

- 2.1 At the start of 2015, the Wisbech 2020 Vision strategy was updated. The update provided a new structure for the programme and a smaller number of actions. The original three themes of live, work and visit were replaced with infrastructure and growth, town centre, skills and education, health and wellbeing and communications.
- 2.2 In response to new data and feedback at the Wisbech 2020 Summit in 2015, the updated strategy deliberately placed greater emphasis on social issues such as skills and education and health and wellbeing.

3 Achievements

- 3.1 Many of the actions contained in the first two versions of the strategy have been delivered, some are ongoing and others have fallen away as the situation has changed around them.
- 3.2 Examples of success include:
 - Improvements to dilapidated buildings across the town, including the former Belfast site on Nene Quay
 - Successful £1.9 million Heritage Lottery fund to regenerate Wisbech High Street
 - Investment in skills training for young people, including the £7.2million Technology Centre opened at the College of West Anglia
 - Weekly Job Cafes and annual Job Fairs supporting employment and skill development opportunities
 - Infrastructure for Growth campaign, investigating a Wisbech to Cambridge rail link, route options and costings for A47 Thorney to Wisbech. Recent Combined Authority approval for A47 and M11/A47 link feasibility funding at a cost of £1.75m
 - Wisbech Access Study £1m design & £10.5m infrastructure to remove transport impediments to growth
 - The 'big idea' of Wisbech Garden Town – 10,000 new homes. Combined Authority recently allocated £6.5m to complete a full business assessment of the proposals
 - New affordable & private housing on the Nene Waterfront site
 - Adoption of a masterplan for South Wisbech industrial zone and the development of East Wisbech housing site (1550 dwellings)

- Approval by FDC to promote an Enterprise Zone via the Greater Cambridge and Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership for south Wisbech employment area
- Continually expanding and thriving Cromwell Road development improving economic offer, jobs and leisure opportunities
- Improvements to living conditions and tackling rogue landlords through projects such as Operation Pheasant
- Introduction and promotion of new high speed broadband for businesses and residents
- Opening of new Tesco bus service route 68 in the town
- New brown signs and further promotion of Wisbech as an ideal tourism destination
- £6m Government Opportunity Area Funding (Fenland and East Cambs) for education improvements to local schools
- Recent promotion of Wisbech related transport improvement schemes to the DfT National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF)

4 The current version of the Wisbech 2020 Vision strategy (2017)

- 4.1 As part of an ongoing process of review and in order to keep pace with change, at the start of 2016, Fenland District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council along with Wisbech Town Council, the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership and Anglian Water resolved again that more focus was needed to take the 2020 Vision strategy to the next level.
- 4.2 As a result, over the course of 2016 and early 2017, high levels of research, consultation and analysis were carried out to review and rebuild this iteration of the Wisbech 2020 Vision strategy. Specific activities undertaken include:
- Education and Skills thematic workshop
 - Health and Wellbeing thematic workshop
 - Local economy thematic workshop
 - Infrastructure and built environment workshop
 - Public consultation event in the market place
 - Primary research undertaken by CCC and Ingham Pinnock Associates
 - One-to-one consultations
 - Wisbech Member Workshop (all FDC, CCC and WTC Members were invited)
- 4.3 Based on the results of the above, the 2017 strategy is designed around four inter-related themes that provide a framework for a comprehensive series of actions that can support the regeneration and growth of Wisbech:
- Education and skills
 - Health, wellbeing and cohesion
 - Infrastructure and the built environment
 - Local economy
- 4.4 All of the themes are underwritten by a new Charter whereby the partners will be asked to agree to work better together to deliver the various actions.
- 4.5 Within each theme, the strategy contains transformational actions based on evidence of demand and need and fresh thinking such as the Beyond 2020 report. These actions are

deliberately bold but they are also deliverable. It is these actions that the partners involved in the Wisbech 2020 Vision will strive to achieve.

- 4.6 The refreshed draft Wisbech 2020 Vision strategy is now at its final stage to be put to the Core Vision Group for adoption (please see appendix A). This document is designed for public use and summarises the broad aims and objectives of the strategy as follows:

Cross-cutting theme: Working better together		Partners at the centre of the Wisbech 2020 Vision will:
	Theme 1: Education and skills	a) Equip schools in Wisbech to attract the very best teaching talent
		b) Place schools and libraries at the centre of community life
		c) Build better links between schools and regional businesses
	Theme 2: Health, wellbeing and cohesion	a) Deliver new initiatives and pilot new ideas to improve health & wellbeing
		b) Shape new and improved health facilities in Wisbech
		c) Support the community to grow together and address areas where there is a lack of cohesion
	Theme 3: Infrastructure and the built environment	a) Reduce journey times between Wisbech and Cambridge and reduce the perceived distance
		b) Redouble efforts to secure improved national road connectivity
		c) Accelerate development at existing allocations and undeveloped sites
		d) Secure further investment in Wisbech's outstanding built heritage and leave a positive legacy for future generations
	Theme 4: Local economy	a) Position the agri-food cluster at the centre of the Wisbech economy and help it to thrive
		b) Increase engagement with businesses to help them flourish and help grow the economy
c) Restore the image of Wisbech as the proud economic and social Capital of the Fens.		

- 4.7 The main Wisbech 2020 Vision strategy is accompanied by a number of supporting documents as follows:
- Appendix B - Wisbech 2020 Vision Delivery Matrix which provides more detailed descriptions of the actions and assigns overall responsibility to specific partner organisations. This document will be updated quarterly and is intended as a project management tool for members of the Steering Group
 - Appendix C - Wisbech 2020 Baseline Report which provides a summary of the primary research underpinning the refreshed strategy.
- 4.8 A performance management framework has also been produced to monitor progress with individual actions. This framework will be reviewed at each meeting of the regular Wisbech 2020 Steering Group.
- 4.9 In addition a communications strategy has been produced to highlight the need to engage with the community on the Wisbech 2020 programme and individual projects, share information with relevant stakeholders and promote the profile of the town. It is intended to hold a launch event of the refreshed strategy in October 2017 to which stakeholders will be invited.

5 Management and governance

- 5.1 The Wisbech 2020 Vision is overseen by the Core Vision Group. This group comprises the Leaders of Wisbech Town Council, Fenland District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council and the MP for North East Cambridgeshire.
- 5.2 On a day-to-day level, the actions in the strategy are managed by a Steering Group that was established at the start of 2016 and meets monthly. The Steering Group provides joined-up senior level leadership from across local agencies and co-ordinates action to ensure delivery of the actions in the Wisbech 2020 Vision. It represents an unprecedented level of collective action and corporate focus from the member agencies which include FDC, CCC, Wisbech TC, GCGP LEP, Anglian Water, Thomas Clarkson Academy, Wisbech primary schools and Wisbech Schools Partnership.
- 5.3 The Steering Group is supported by FDC and Ingham Pinnock Associates who were previously involved in the Wisbech High Street Project.

6 Effect on corporate objectives

- 6.1 The ongoing delivery of the Wisbech 2020 Vision strategy will have a positive impact on a large number of the objectives in FDCs Business Plan (2017-18). Specifically:

Communities

- Support vulnerable members of our community
- Support our ageing population and young people
- Promote health and wellbeing for all

Environment

- Work with partners and the community on projects that improve the environment and our streetscene
- Work with partners to keep people safe in their neighbourhoods by reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and promoting social cohesion

Economy

- Attract new businesses, jobs and opportunities whilst supporting our existing businesses in Fenland
- Promote Fenland as a tourism and visitor destination
- Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration across Fenland
- Promote and lobby for infrastructure improvements across the District

7 Conclusions

- 7.1 This report is intended to act as an update for members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee. It outlines the continual review of the Wisbech 2020 Vision and how it aims to address issues of deprivation and poor transport in the Wisbech area.
- 7.2 The revised Wisbech 2020 Vision document will be shared with all Members once approved by the Core Vision Group and other partner agencies.

