

Building a competitive
vision for Fenland

Fenland Economic
Development Strategy
2012 - 2031

Fenland Economic Development Strategy

● Foreword	3
● Executive Summary	4
● Introduction	6
● Economic Context	9
● SWOT Analysis	15
● Enterprise	16
● Workforce Development	19
● Business Retention & Growth	22
● Inward Investment	29
● Develop Effective Partnerships	31
● Economic Development Priorities	31
● Monitoring and Measuring Success	32
● Annex One: Fenland Economic Development Action Plan	35

Building a competitive vision for Fenland

Fenland is a dynamic district with a tradition of embracing change and growth. This strategy examines the trends, threats and opportunities Fenland will face over the coming years and how Fenland District Council and its public and private partners can take action to address the challenges facing the district from an economic perspective.

‘Fenland’s future success will be based on creating a strong and resilient economy that generates an environment of opportunities which will make a real difference to people’s lives, nurturing businesses to start, stay and grow in a sustainable way, and where significant improvements in training and skills development will underpin economic prosperity for the district’.

Helping people into work and encouraging innovation and enterprise are key to improving Fenland’s economic vitality. They are essential ingredients for improving the quality of people’s lives across Fenland. In developing this strategic approach we have worked with our partners, business support organisations, business champions and other key stakeholders, including the Wisbech 2020 partnership, that impact on the economic viability of our area.

The Economic Development Strategy and action plan sets out a framework for the development of the local economy. It should not be read in isolation and is part of a suite of strategies designed to deliver the ambitions set out in Fenland District Council’s Corporate Plan and that of the Fenland Communities Development Plan: The Core Strategy and Fenland Neighbourhood Planning Vision.



Councillor Alan Melton
Leader of the Council



Councillor Chris Seaton
Portfolio Holder for Economy

Executive Summary

This document replaces the Fenland Economic Development Strategy Framework 2007. It takes into account the changing profile of the district since 2007 and in particular the challenges for the business and resident communities produced by the economic slowdown. It has been developed as part of a suite of strategies including **Fenland Communities Development Plan: The Core Strategy**, **Fenland Neighbourhood Planning Vision (FNPV)**, **Fenland Infrastructure Delivery Plan** and the **Fenland Rail Development Strategy** and should not be read in isolation.

This document is focused on long-term objectives for sustainability, positioning the district as an important economic centre outside of the major conurbations of Cambridge, Peterborough and Norwich and responds to the drive and vision of Fenland District Council to create a strong, resilient and successful economy – an area built on economic participation that stimulates opportunities for all.

The refreshed strategy '**Fenland Economic Development Strategy 2012-2031**' sets out a framework for economic development in Fenland over a 19-year period and defines a series of strategic 'Model for Growth' themes (**Enterprise, Workforce development, Business retention & growth and Inward investment**) designed to underpin the sustainable growth in new homes, drive the creation of over 7000 new jobs and to ensure continued district wide competitiveness.

These themes are growth driven and look to focus and guide future economic, social and environmental interventions.

Enterprise

The need to build a thriving enterprise culture that encourages businesses to start up and grow and improve entrepreneurial education

Workforce development

Ensure that current and future workforce education and skills are appropriate for the global marketplace, as well as offering young people improved aspirations, increased wage levels and alternative career paths

Business retention & growth

The importance of proactively targeting and supporting growth oriented employers in Fenland; helping them to grow through enhanced access to finance, expert advice, suitable premises and locations

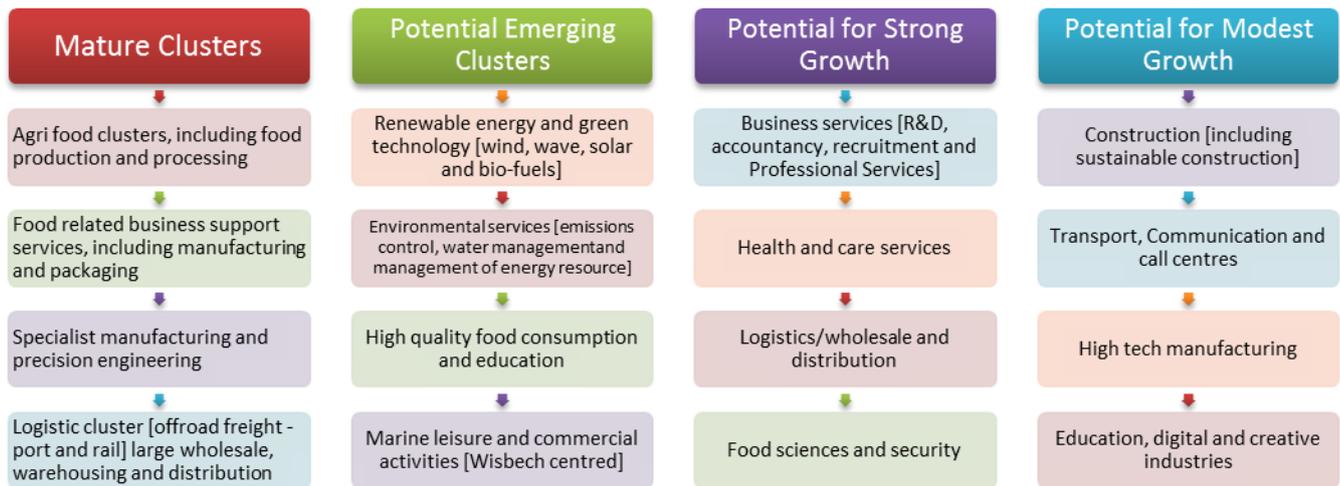
Inward investment

Evolving the promotion and proactively targeting of inward investment to support local sector strengths and supply chains (food, engineering, manufacturing and renewables) working with UKT&I and other partners on trade and inward investment

This strategy also recognises the importance of infrastructure provision to underpin economic growth as reflected in the Council's separate detailed Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

In order to understand the future spatial pattern of business and employment growth in Fenland, this strategy has utilised the Oxford Economics East of England Regional Forecasting Model. Through considering the outputs of this model, alongside further research completed as part of FNPV and the Employment Evidence Report it is possible to consider trends and opportunities in and for the District.

The table below summarises current and potential growth sectors which arise from these evidence sources.



The **Fenland Economic Development Strategy 2012-2031** sets out a clear sense of direction and an overall vision for the district. It will be regularly reviewed to take into account the fast changing economic landscape and is supported by a rolling action plan (included within this document), which highlights what we, together with partners intend to achieve, and how we intend to do it.

The rolling action plan is a fluid document that will be subject to annual review to ensure that it remains responsive, appropriate and up-to-date. This will allow the plan to take into account any changes in economic profile, conditions or comments received from stakeholders and the community that emerge during the period of the strategy.

Fenland District Council has an established and effective track record in the sub-national partnership arena, working together setting clear targets. Key to the successful delivery of Fenland's economic vision will be a suite of tools, shown below that provide a foundation for future success.



Introduction

This new strategy is an ambitious but a realistic strategy, building on the Council's Economic Development Strategy framework 2007 and aligning with the Fenland Communities Development Plan.

It seeks to identify economic opportunity and make positive long-term changes happen through a range of projects and programmes. It recognises the changing economic environment within which the Council and its partners now operate and the need to provide clear and coherent support within the broader partnership arena.

This strategy along with the **Fenland Communities Development Plan: The Core Strategy** is expected to contribute to the realisation of an economic vision:

'Fenland's future success will be based on creating a strong and resilient economy that generates an environment of opportunities which will make a real difference to people's lives, nurturing businesses to start, stay and grow in a sustainable way, and where significant improvements in training and skills development will underpin economic prosperity for the district.'

Building a competitive vision for Fenland looks to create a sustainable and prosperous future that will:

- Strengthen Fenland's economic competitiveness, which will underpin development of sustainable growth
- Develop an appropriately educated and skilled workforce
- Support the innovation of enterprise that will help diversify the business base
- Recognise the importance of strategic and sustainable areas of economic growth and investment

To do this we will

- Create in this document, a rolling action plan with strong partnership arrangements that will be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains responsive, appropriate and up-to-date.
- Actively manage business development opportunities that support identified areas of growth or potential growth
- Work more effectively with neighbouring districts to develop mutually beneficial partnerships to exploit strategic economic opportunities
- Proactively work with the Local Enterprise Partnership to access funding opportunities
- Promote the 'open for business' message for the creation of new businesses and the generation of new jobs for the benefit of all.

Economic indicators identified within the Action Plan of the strategy will be used to track change and 'health check' the Fenland economy, monitor and measure the success and impact of the strategy. Indicators include:

Measure	Data Source
Business growth	ONS Local Profile data
New business registrations	Companies House data
Employment rate	ONS Annual Population Survey
Self-employment rate	ONS Local Profile data
JobCentre Plus vacancies	DWP JobCentre Plus East Anglia Labour Market statistical data
Working age residents in receipt of out of work benefits	DWP JobCentre Plus East Anglia Labour Market statistical data
Job Seekers Allowance claimant rate	ONS Claimant Count
Job Seekers Allowance claimant rate (16-24 year olds)	ONS Claimant Count
16 – 19 year olds – Not in Education, Employment or Training	Fenland 14-19 Partnership
Working age residents with no qualifications	ONS Annual Population Survey
Working age residents with level 1 and 2 qualifications only	ONS Annual Population Survey
Working age residents with level 3 and above qualifications	ONS Annual Population Survey
Visitor Spend	Tourism South East
Office, retail and commercial vacancy rates	Fenland District Council Property Database/ commercial agents
Average house prices	Land Registry

To calculate the scale of job growth required, a number of factors have been considered, including the evidence arising through, for example, the Fenland Neighbourhood Planning Vision (FNPV) project, the use of forecasting models within FNPV, the need for jobs to support housing growth and demographic trends.

It is also influenced through the aspiration and vision of Fenland District Council to support the economy, create more jobs and reduce out commuting. All of this evidence points to a figure of 7,200 for net increase in jobs for which the Council needs to plan over the period 2012-2031, aligning to the proposed increase of 11,000 new homes over the same period.

To demonstrate that there is sufficient understanding of future employment growth, the Council has prepared an **Employment Evidence Report** to establish the right level of employment growth, and to align with the housing growth targets. The published version of the Employment Evidence Report is available on Fenland District Council's website.

This evidence document considers a range of scenarios including:

- The forecasting of employment growth to 2031
- The forecast of employment growth based upon future demographic projections and housing growth and the consideration of past trends.

The above indicators will also annually monitor the employment trajectory, which will enable the Council to proactively implement plans, investment and resource required to underpin the delivery of job creation in line with the **Fenland Communities Development Plan: the Core Strategy** and exploit growth opportunities in new and emerging markets.

As stated earlier, this new strategy is an ambitious but realistic strategy, which builds on the current strengths of the district and converts and delivers the FNPV strategic programmes in which future success can be built through 4 main themes identified as:

Model for Growth



1.0 Economic Context

- 1.1 The Fenland Economic Development Strategy aims to influence the shape and direction of the local economy. In undertaking this task we acknowledge that the district is not an isolated economy, and that other economic factors whether sub-national, national and international will impact on the productivity and competitiveness of the district.
- 1.2 Fenland is a rural district of 54,547 hectares, lying to the east of Peterborough and north of Cambridge, one of five districts in the county of Cambridgeshire, in the East of England. It shares boundaries with the Lincolnshire district of South Holland (East Midlands region), and East of England's unitary authority of Peterborough, King's Lynn & West Norfolk (Norfolk county), East Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire (both Cambridgeshire).
- 1.3 The district has four market towns: Wisbech, March, Whittlesey and Chatteris, with a further twenty-nine hinterland villages.

1.3.1 Wisbech

Wisbech, renowned for its elegant Georgian architecture and historic assets is the largest settlement in Fenland with a population just over 22,800¹. An inland port located on the River Nene, Wisbech has long played an important role as a trading centre serving a wide rural catchment. Today it remains an important destination for comparison retail and services for the surrounding rural communities. Key sources of employment include food processing industries; such as Del Monte, Princes Foods, Moy Park, Greencore and LambWeston as well as manufacturing, logistics and storage.

1.3.2 March

March is an historic market town at the heart of Fenland with a population just over 22,200². It is relatively well connected by road and benefits from a railway station situated on the Stansted-Birmingham line. Like Wisbech, March has an established legacy as a trading centre. Today it benefits from a town centre with an historic urban form and attractive riverside setting. There is however, a need to refresh the range and scope of the leisure and retail offer to maintain its function as a key service centre serving the wider hinterland. March's employment base includes Smurfit Kappa, Greenvale AP, G's Foods, PX Cables, March Foods, and Whitemoor Prison and is also the administrative centre for the district. In addition, there is potential to capitalise on the town's heritage and accessibility in order to strengthen the employment base through the visitor economy.

¹Population figures from 2011 Census <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/research>

²Population figures from 2011 Census <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/research>

1.3.3 Whittlesey

Whittlesey is a broadly linear settlement situated in the west of the district with a population just over 12,700³. It has a close functional relationship with Peterborough, which is located only a few kilometres to the west, and like March has a railway station on the Stansted-Birmingham line. Although Whittlesey is a local service centre in its own right, Peterborough's role as a major sub regional employment centre has seen Whittlesey emerge as an increasingly popular settlement for out commuters. Nevertheless, Whittlesey is not purely a dormitory town and supports important local employers including Hanson Brick Co. [part of the Heidelberg Cement Group] and McCain Foods.

1.3.4 Chatteris

Located in the south of Fenland, Chatteris is the smallest of the four market towns with a population just over 10,400⁴ and is considered as being part of the Cambridge growth necklace. It boasts an attractive town centre, with narrow streets and a rich mix of historic properties forming a tight urban grain, which contributes to the town's unique character. As well as serving a local retail function, Chatteris features several hotels and a range of pubs, bars and restaurants which indicate its role as a visitor destination as well as a service centre. Businesses which have a presence in the town include; ERMS Ltd, Eclipse Scientific, Produce World, HB Fuller, Alan Bartlett & Sons and Metalcraft.

- 1.4** Together these four market towns comprise 72% of the district's population. Although the district remains relatively sparsely populated, Fenland has experienced considerable housing and population growth in recent years. In the decade up to 2001, the district's population grew at four times the national average and has continued to grow ever since. The 2011 Census shows a population for Fenland just over 95,000, compared to 83,700 in 2001 and 75,500 in 1991.
- 1.5** In the county of Cambridgeshire, only 19 market town settlements have more than five thousand people, and Wisbech and March are ranked the third and fourth largest settlements. March has the civic offices of the district authority and of Cambridgeshire County Council. Whittlesey and Chatteris are eighth and ninth largest settlements in Cambridgeshire County.
- 1.6** The local economy is developing well but growth in employment has not matched that of the growth in economically active residents. As a result there are a large number of people who commute out of the district for work.
- 1.7** Fenland is also included in the London-Stansted-Cambridge-Peterborough Growth Area within the East of England sub-national area. It holds a strategic environmental and renewable technology sector location served by the A47 corridor linking to A1(M) via Peterborough to the west and Norwich, Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth to the east, and the A141/A142 roads linking to Huntingdon, Ely and Cambridge to the south.

³Population figures from 2011 Census <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/research>

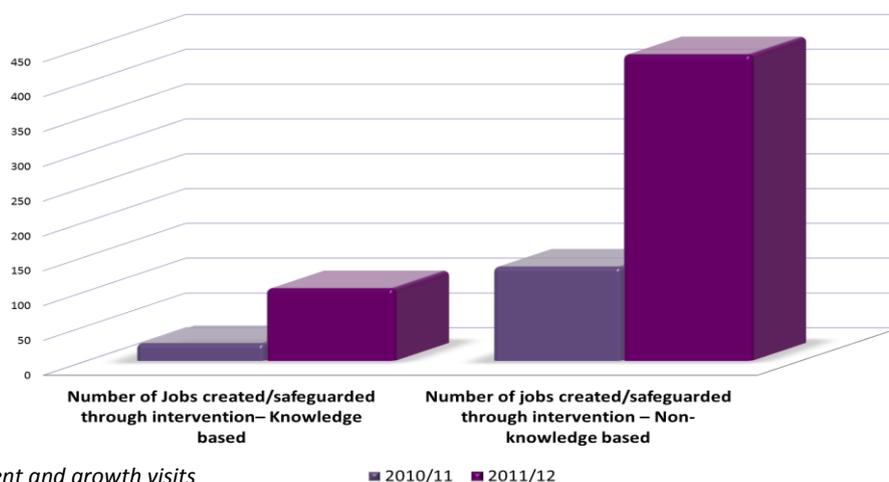
⁴Population figures from 2011 Census <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/research>

1.8 Fenland possesses some mature and well-established sector clusters of businesses relating to areas of Food & Drink, manufacturing, storage and distribution which include Princes Foods, Del Monte, Greencore, McCain Foods, Greenvale AP, LambWeston, Nestle Purina, ERMS Ltd, Crown Packaging, Wincanton, Partner Logistics, Metalcraft, PCML, CEVA Logistics, Knowles Transport Ltd, Jack Richards & Son Ltd and Eddie Stobart amongst others.

1.9 There may be employment decline in some manufacturing sectors going forward, but other niche food and engineering areas are strong and will continue to support employment growth. Similarly, Fenland is also positioned to take advantage of new and emerging clusters where there is potential for job growth. The SWOT analysis captures Fenland’s strengths and opportunities and where intervention or support can be made and delivered more effectively.

1.10 Fenland’s economy was traditionally based on agriculture. It still provides many direct and indirect jobs in food processing, specialist engineering, packaging, storage & logistics and support services. The added value investment within the agri-food sector continues to be highly successful, with multi-national companies choosing Fenland as a prime location for UK operations.

1.11 Over the last two years with Fenland District Council’s intervention and support, this level of investment has increased the diversity of job opportunities and created positive sectorial employment growth



Source: Investment and growth visits

1.12 To demonstrate that there is sufficient understanding of future employment growth, the Council has prepared an Employment Evidence Report to establish the right level of employment growth, and to align with the housing growth targets.

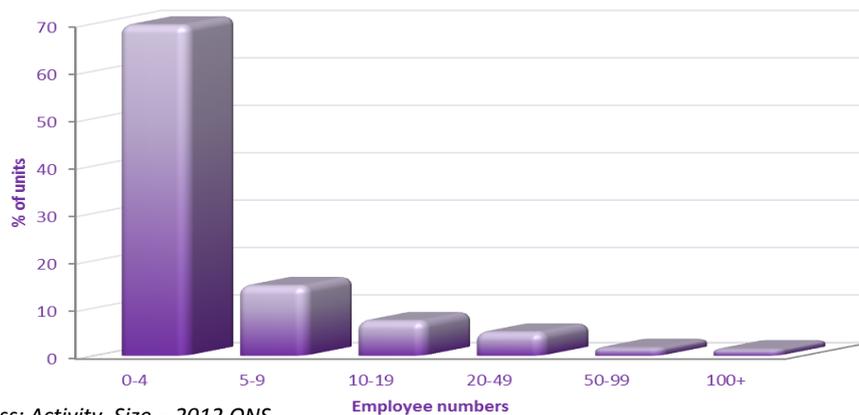
1.13 This evidence document, which can be found on the Council’s website, considers a range of scenarios including: the forecasting of employment growth to 2031 taking into account anticipated changes in the national and regional economy; the forecast of employment growth based upon future demographic projections and housing growth and the consideration of past trends.

1.14 The employment evidence report recommends that a target of around 7,000 would be achievable and would support housing growth based on anticipated demographic and sector trends.

1.15 For Fenland District Council to achieve its challenging target of creating over 7000 jobs by 2031, the focus in part will be on attracting large sector-driven multinational businesses that have the financial strength to invest and create significant numbers of jobs and attract and support new and existing supply chains. It will be important when selecting target companies to support this level of employment that these organisations sit within our 'potential growth sector' table (*Business Retention & Growth 5.10*).

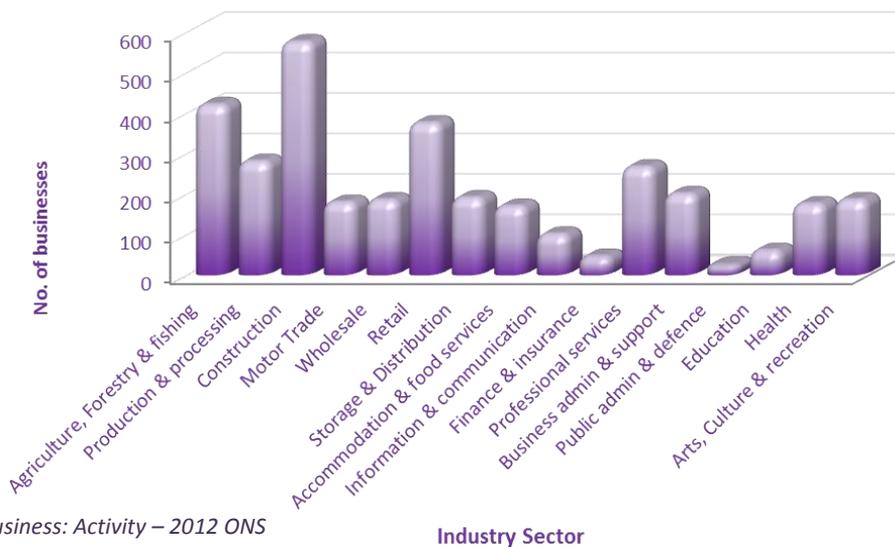
1.16 Currently, there are 3,730 VAT and/or PAYE based enterprises in Fenland. **Tables 2 and 3** reflect the distribution of businesses by employment size and industry sector. The construction sector accounts for the largest number of businesses with 16% of all industry sectors. Analysis by size shows that 84% of businesses employ fewer than ten people, and 97% employ fewer than 50.

Table 1: Local units in VAT and/or PAYE based enterprises



Source: UK Business: Activity, Size – 2012 ONS

Table2: Number of businesses in Fenland by sector



Source: UK Business: Activity – 2012 ONS

- 1.17** As stated before, the Fenland district is identified as being part of the London-Stansted-Cambridge-Peterborough Growth Area. This opens up funding opportunities for the key infrastructure we need to support our population and housing growth. It is critical that quality employment opportunities match the projected housing growth, to create a more sustainable environment for those to live and work in Fenland.
- 1.18** Fenland has areas of relative wealth and deprivation. The most deprived areas in Fenland include Wisbech and its surrounding rural areas. The latest Indices of Multiple Deprivation figures released in 2010 indicate that Fenland is ranked 94th of 326 local authorities in the country for deprivation levels (where 1 is the most deprived). Between 2007 and 2010 Fenland has grown relatively more deprived as our position in 2007 was 125th. However it is important to note that there were 28 fewer local authorities in 2010 (326 compared with 354 in 2007) so the results are not directly comparable.
- 1.19** Fenland has consistently been the most deprived district in Cambridgeshire in the 2010, 2007 and 2004 Indices of Deprivation results. In 2010, 18.52% of Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Fenland were in the bottom performing 25% in the country. Fenland also has three LSOAs that are among the 10% most deprived areas nationally. The concentration of deprivation and Fenland's position relative to the rest of Cambridgeshire and the region makes its opportunity strongly apparent.
- 1.20** There are areas of the district where unemployment rates are comparably higher, in particular within Wisbech. Promoting the economic vitality of localities needs to go hand in hand with helping into work those people most marginalised in the employment market. This strategy aims to support and maximise partnership activities that engage the economically inactive and put them back into employment.
- 1.21** Fenland is in the lowest quartile of English districts for 'job density', the ratio of jobs to working age people, with about 60 jobs for every 100 people of working age, whilst the national figure is 78. The result is high out-commuting, with nearly 40% travelling out of the district for work; and in particular to Peterborough, Lincolnshire and Norfolk.
- 1.22** Claimant unemployment is lower than the national average but the wider measure, which includes people not eligible for an unemployment-related benefit, exceeds the national rate, especially for women. Women also appear particularly disadvantaged in terms of earnings **Table 3**.

Table 3: Median full-time gross weekly earnings



Source: *Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings – Workplace Analysis, NOMIS*

1.23 Fenland has a number of strengths and weaknesses as well as facing opportunities to create, and threats to, sustainable economic prosperity and wellbeing. Facilitating greater collaboration between our areas of opportunities and threats will stimulate innovation and support the development of sector specific growth.

1.24 The strengths include its strong entrepreneurial culture, excellent business networks, strategic location for food production, storage & logistics and the quality of life. The weaknesses represent fundamental issues that have the potential to undermine the on-going growth of Fenland’s economy, and continue to deepen the district’s disparities. The opportunities represent significant potential while the threats are predominantly external and forward looking and based on Fenland’s position in relation to the sub-national and national economies.



Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats to the district's economy



2.0 Enterprise

- 2.1** The local economy is developing well but growth in employment has not matched that of the growth in economically active residents, which is reflected in the Office of National Statistics' jobs density figures of 0.60; just over a half a job per working age Fenland resident. The density figure represents the ratio of total jobs to population aged 16-64. As a result there are a large number of people who commute out of the district for work.
- 2.2** To meet the needs of the growing workforce, Fenland requires growth and an improved range of jobs for everyone. The infrastructure needs to be improved to retain and attract employers, and the district needs to keep its presence and appeal to potential investors.
- 2.3** Existing Fenland businesses need space to expand, and new businesses moving into the district or new business enterprises need suitable sites or premises from which to operate. Without the right level of provision, enterprise development is stifled or encouraged to look out of the area.
- 2.4** The Council manages a portfolio of over seventy small industrial units throughout Fenland, together with 45 serviced offices at the South Fens Business Centre in Chatteris and 36 offices situated within the Boathouse Business Centre, Wisbech. The lack of supply of quality small industrial units hinders micro business start-ups and is exacerbated by the lack of provision of 'move-on' space for Fenland's existing business base.
- 2.5** Any support that is provided to promote enterprise and entrepreneurship needs to reflect the fact that different support is required at different times during the life cycle of developing a business – whether it's people looking to start their business but do not yet have a clear idea of what it is they want to do, or those who have a viable idea but are unsure how to turn it into a reality and need support to develop the business to flourish and grow.
- 2.6** Of crucial importance will be to ensure that any support to promote enterprise is accessible to all who have a business idea, not only entrepreneurs but also those who often struggle to access support in general, such as those living in disadvantaged areas, rural areas and those currently unemployed.
- 2.7** The council has and will continue to work proactively with local businesses to establish what additional support they need to grow and prosper. This strategy will look to compliment a package of council run measures, such as the Prompt Payment Scheme and the recent review of the procurement process to make it more sympathetic to local suppliers.
- 2.8** Tourism has been identified as an economic driver. The newly-created Fenland Tourism Board is acknowledged for its role in taking this objective forward.

The following actions are proposed over the next 12 months to respond to the **Enterprise Strategic Objective: To support the development of and survival rates in innovation and enterprise.** These therefore represent short to medium term actions to be delivered over the next 12 months.

	How will the objective be met (Actions planned for 2013/14)	What is the expected outcome
E1	Maintain monthly meetings with the business community, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Fenland Chamber of Commerce o Federation of Small Business o East of England Energy Group o Institute of Directors o Other business groups 	Greater business intelligence and understanding of business issues to guide and support activity to promote business growth and competitiveness
E2	Deliver the annual Fenland Enterprise & Business Awards	Local business community benefits from marketing opportunities to promote procurement and supply chains
E3	Develop the Fenland for Business on-line resource centre to support enterprise with access to advice and guidance	A recognised integrated business support and guidance provision that helps increase survival rates and job growth
E4	Promote available employment sites and premises through marketing packs, commercial agents and business partners including provision of; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Boathouse Business Centre o South Fens Business Centre and Enterprise Park o Council owned land & industrial units o Private commercial property and land 	Increased access to employment sites and development land to support the needs of current and future business growth Increase occupancy levels in the Council business premises portfolio
E5	Deliver a range of district-wide mentoring/training opportunities through the Fenland for Business 'Enterprise Fenland' seminars and workshops (aiming for 20 in 2013/14)	A stronger and more diverse business base

In the delivery of the above actions, Fenland District Council will work with the following partners:

- Local Enterprise Partnership
- Wisbech Chamber of Commerce
- UK Trade & Investments
- Fenland for Business Partnership
- Fenland Chamber of Commerce
- March Chamber of Commerce
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Federation of Small Business
- Whittlesey Business Forum
- NWES

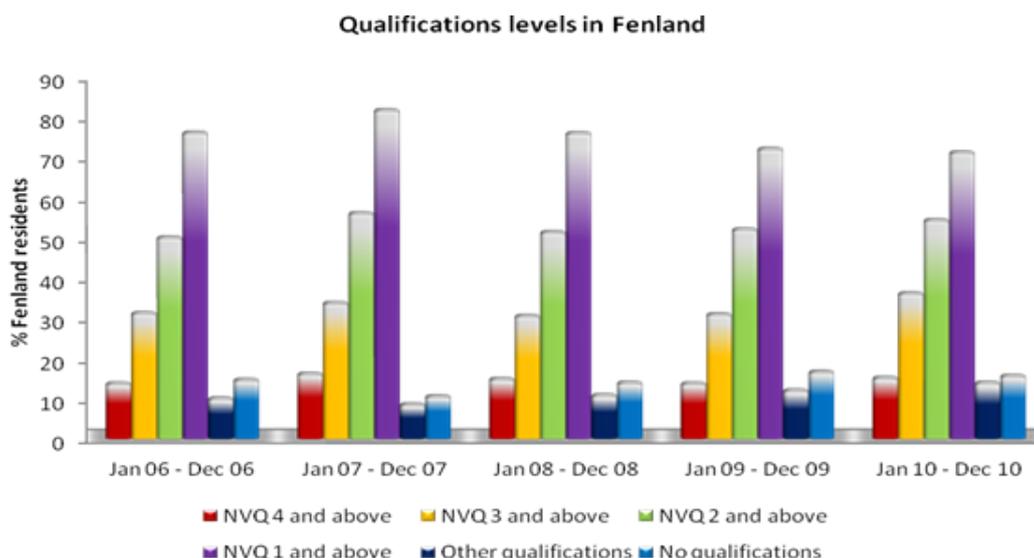
The effect of these actions will be assessed through monitoring of detailed service performance and the strategic indicators shown in section 8 of this report - Monitoring and Measuring Success.



Creating environments for enterprise

3.0 Workforce Development

3.1 The availability of an appropriately educated and skilled workforce is identified as a key underpinning theme to economic development. Fenland's skills base is improving, but skills levels need to continue to improve to ensure that the district's aspirations keep pace with the ever-increasing demand for higher skilled occupations and new and emerging market opportunities.



Source: ONS annual population survey

3.2 The skills and abilities of our workforce are vital to Fenland District Council's aspirations of a thriving high value-added economy. We need to ensure that young people in particular gain the necessary knowledge and competence to drive forward innovation and enterprise.

3.3 A recent Fenland Skills Summit event captured businesses' concerns over the work readiness and skills of the people leaving full time education. Our future local economy requires more qualified, enthusiastic employees with the right attitude, in order to complete and boost productivity

3.4 The Fenland Engineering Skills Centre and the engineering block at the College of West Anglia have seen significant investment from Fenland District Council. Working with the local schools and supporting existing employers to raise the aspirations of the future workforce through the Fenland Enterprise in Education project and the development of stronger links with the region's Universities will underpin this investment in education and skills development.

3.5 By 2031, it is estimated that a high proportion of the workforce at that time, are already in the work cycle. It is apparent therefore, that alongside current projects and strategies to drive up attainment within the education system, continuing workforce development will be key to ensuring that Fenland has a highly competitive and skilled workforce to support future business growth.

3.6 Further Education and apprenticeship provision delivered through the College of West Anglia (CWA) and other partners is central to developing and supporting higher-level skills within the district of Fenland. Working with CWA and the business community, Fenland District Council will continue to develop this learning provision and enhance the delivery of professional and advanced, including vocational qualifications, which address known skills gaps and provide capacity in line with the increase in population.

The following actions are proposed over the next 12 months to respond to the Workforce Development Strategic Objective: To improve access to employment, training and skills for balanced economic participation. These therefore represent short to medium term actions to be delivered over the next 12 months.

	How will the objective be met (Actions planned for 2013/14)	What is the expected outcome
W1	Support skills centres that deliver employer-led sector skills, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fenland Engineering Skills Centre ○ Delamore Horticulture and Botany Skills Centre 	Business-led skills development opportunities that meet demand and increase apprenticeship opportunities within potential growth and emerging sectors
W2	Work collaboratively with Jobcentre Plus to help raise awareness for young people and long-term unemployed of enterprise opportunities, apprenticeships and work placements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monthly meetings with Jobcentre Plus ○ Proactive joint marketing of DWP programmes and initiatives 	Improved awareness for young people of enterprise opportunities, apprenticeships and work placements that result in fewer skills shortages
W3	Work collaboratively with College of West Anglia to deliver programmes that meet the needs of local business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue CWA Board membership ○ Quarterly collaboration meetings 	A more supportive environment for private sector involvement and improved opportunities for employment growth
W4	Delivery of the Fenland Enterprise in Education project to support greater business-education links	Coordinated linkages between schools and businesses that provide a flexible and responsive service to help learners make an easy transition from education to employment.
W5	Encourage apprenticeships through skills centres as above and local employers in public and private sectors	Increased opportunities for career development and improved aspirations

In the delivery of the above actions, Fenland District Council will work with the following partners:

- Local Enterprise Partnership
- Fenland Chamber of Commerce
- Federation of Small Business
- Wisbech Chamber of Commerce
- March Chamber of Commerce
- Whittlesey Business Forum
- Fenland Enterprise in Education
- College of West Anglia
- Fenland 14-19 Partnership
- Jobcentre Plus

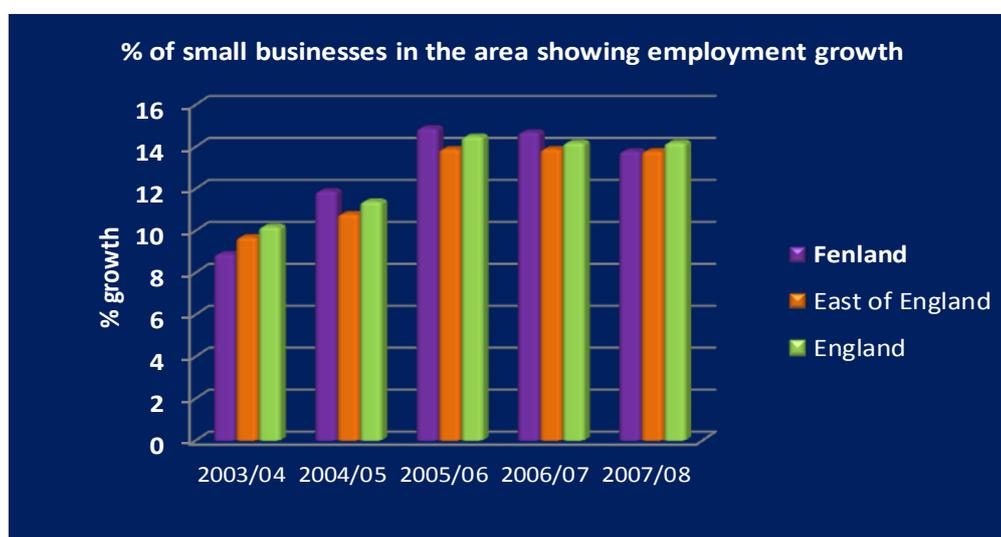
The effect of these actions will be assessed through monitoring of detailed service performance and the strategic indicators shown in section 8 of this report - Monitoring and Measuring Success.



Creating environments for growth

4.0 Business Retention & Growth

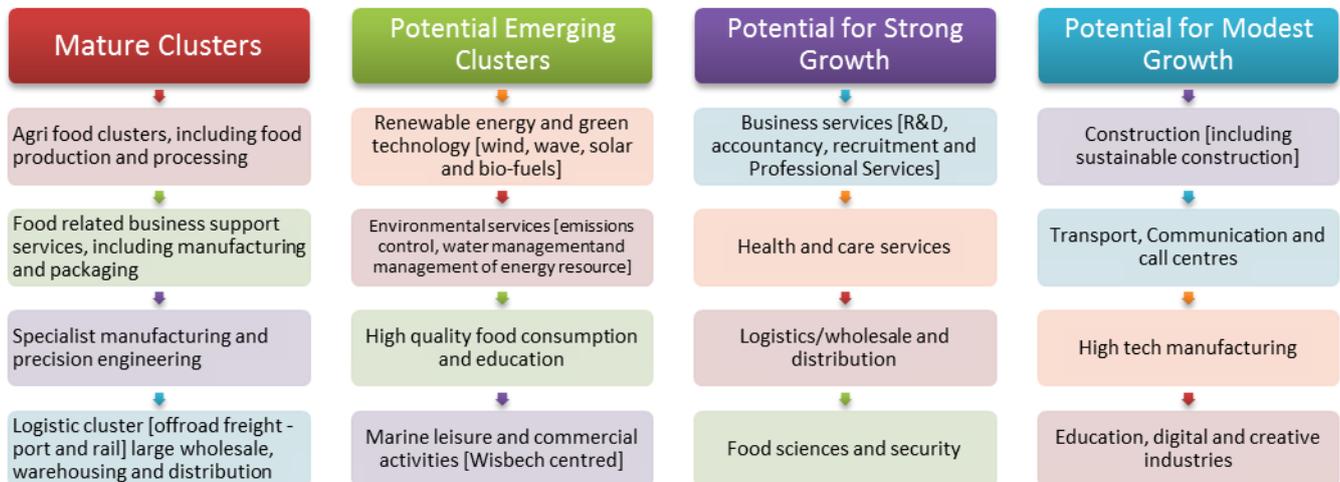
- 4.1** Fenland is an area that is considered by many of its inhabitants as a great place to live, with the quality of the natural environment and landscape ranked as a key strength. The district is also seen by many as an exciting place to seek to start or grow their own business.
- 4.2** As the table below sets out, Fenland has seen steady growth in small business employment over the last few years. The proportion of small businesses showing business growth increased by 4.7 percent between the periods and before the economic slowdown 2003/04 and 2007/08. This change was greater than the increase in the East of England region (4.1%) and greater than England (4%).



- 4.4** Fenland has a mixed economy where the majority of the business base is micro and small businesses. However, a key strand of the inward investment strategy is to build upon the internationally recognised brands of food production, world class precision engineering and manufacturing with supply chain linkages across automotive, aerospace, defence, healthcare and electronic sectors and new and emerging renewable energy sector. These form examples for attracting in a new generation of value-adding businesses which will help create future employment for school and further education leavers in Fenland.
- 4.5** A significant part of responding to current and future business and employment needs involves Fenland District Council reviewing and planning for its housing and jobs growth needs now and in future. This strategy will complement the new economically-driven Fenland Communities Development Plan: The Core Strategy that looks at a range of different scenarios across the district and data contained in the FNPV document. The Model for Growth illustrates key themes that will underpin the development of sustainable local economy to ensure its continued competitiveness.

- 4.6** Infrastructure is an important component of Fenland's future growth enabling competitiveness and prosperity. Investment in infrastructure, such as transport and junction improvements, new roads or high speed broadband are positive contributions which raise the district's economic resilience, as they enable better access to markets for business and employment opportunities for local residents.
- 4.7** To demonstrate that there is sufficient understanding of the strategic infrastructure requirements that are necessary to deliver the economic vision for Fenland and to ensure there is a reasonable prospect of the timely provision of this infrastructure, the Council has prepared an **Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)**. This will help bring together and facilitate infrastructure provision and ensure that funding and delivery timescales are closely aligned to that of the Core Strategy, particularly in regards to the strategic areas of economic growth.
- 4.8** The Fenland Communities Development Plan: The Core Strategy sets out proposals for large numbers of new homes and for new employment opportunities in the district and wherever these home and jobs are located, public transport will be an integral part of making this growth more sustainable and aligning with the Market Town strategies and the Fenland Leisure and Tourism Strategy encourage the better use of public transport, walking and cycling by employees where business uses allow.
- 4.9** The Fenland District Council Rail Development Strategy 2011 – 2031 sets out a continuous rail and station improvement programme over the next 20 years.
- 4.10** Development of clusters and the potential clustering of uses, for example to establish a Food & Drink, Precision Engineering, Renewable Energy or a Marine cluster will have sub-national significance. It will allow like-minded businesses to be built up and will enable Fenland District Council to establish more effective branding around sectoral strengths and supply chain management.
- 4.11** In order to understand the future spatial pattern of business and employment growth in Fenland, this strategy has utilised the Oxford Economics East of England Regional Forecasting Model. Through considering the outputs of this model, alongside further research completed as part of the FNPV, it is possible to consider trends and opportunities in and for the District. The table below summarises current and potential growth sectors which arise from these evidence sources.

Potential growth sectors



4.13 The Mature Clusters (agri-food, niche manufacturing and logistics) are likely to continue to drive employment growth as they are built on long-standing expertise, assets and resources. They are also essential for driving high-value jobs, especially in specialist engineering and manufacturing.

4.14 The Potential Emerging Clusters represent sectors where Fenland has some competitive advantages through location or proximity and is therefore well placed to position it to develop new specialisms and attract some key employers in growth sectors. Approaches here could include targeting sectors such as green technology and marine engineering. A partnership approach would enable Fenland to compete on its particular competitive strengths and tailor its skills/sites and premises offer to meet emerging sector requirements in key locations.

4.15 Potential for Strong Growth in sectors where Fenland is currently underrepresented and where there is strong forecast growth nationally. In business and professional services the forecasts for Fenland identify the strongest growth in low value back office services. There is an opportunity as the service sector strengthens following the recession to target higher value services in key locations: March/Wisbech/Chatteris. This sector specific targeting would include professions such as IT, accountancy, property services, consultancy etc.

4.16 The approaches for encouraging the growth of these clusters over the long-term have as much to do with 'place making', social infrastructure provision and a strong residential offer as providing the right sites and premises. All these factors are essential in attracting and retaining skills in the area. Other sectors such as health and care for the elderly are likely to grow nationally by virtue of the ageing population and will continue to provide employment.

4.17 Sectors with the **Potential for Modest Growth** are those with an established presence in Fenland and which are predicted to grow across the region in the

period to 2031. For example, whilst manufacturing is predicted to decline in overall terms there is an opportunity for some employment growth in niche areas, particularly in relation to the mature clusters i.e. food processing, metal components manufacture, equipment manufacturing, electrical engineering and rail engineering. There may also be some growth opportunities within the emerging clusters in green technology and renewable energy industries. These sectors can be supported through Fenland for Business partnership and the Fenland Green Business Club.

- 4.18** If the economy is to grow and prosper then other support sectors will also need to expand, in particular retail, hospitality and leisure. These are the sectors that not only help support the economy but also create the vibrancy, particularly in the market towns, that will help to attract the talent and investment that is vital for the growth sectors and emerging clusters.
- 4.19** Fenland District Council will not work in isolation to develop sectoral growth and will look to explore opportunities of mutual economic benefit with our neighbours. This will mean engaging with, and working more effectively with neighbouring districts to develop mutually-beneficial partnerships to exploit strategic economic opportunities.
- 4.20** The Business Rates Retention Scheme offers an opportunity to leverage funding to further develop and support those sectors showing growth or potential growth within the district.
- 4.21** The market towns of Chatteris, March, Whittlesey and Wisbech, which serve the surrounding rural hinterlands provide essential services and although demand from large multiple occupiers is currently low, there is small demand from the independent sector. However, it appears that this demand is being hindered by difficulties in securing deals with landlords.
- 4.22** Tourism too plays an important role in the economic wellbeing of the district, and everyone is influenced by it in some part. It is therefore very important that a flourishing tourism economy is encouraged to grow and creating joint opportunities with neighbouring local authorities will enhance the visitor experience. Without the tourism sector there would be fewer businesses, less employment and less income being generated into the district.
- 4.23** In Fenland, culture plays just as an important role economically and socially. It helps strengthen community cohesion and inter-cultural understanding, encourages local pride, a sense of wellbeing and increased self-esteem to the district, with a long term economic benefit of raised aspirations and educational performance.
- 4.24** Broadband is becoming an essential part of life for communities, public services and businesses, which increasingly depend on quick, reliable access to the internet. Also, broadband speeds are increasingly becoming a more important factor when purchasing residential property.

4.25 Apart from the large conurbations of Cambridge and Peterborough, the Cambridgeshire area is mostly a rural county, meaning that a large number of settlements within the hinterlands of these cities are dispersed. They often have a poor legacy of road, rail and first generation broadband infrastructure and therefore access to services and information.

4.26 This is particularly prevalent in Fenland where the majority of businesses and households in areas with poor internet speeds are those in our small towns and rural communities. Improved digital infrastructure will limit the impact of a decrease in our rural competitiveness. Aligning this strategy to the Connecting Cambridgeshire project is imperative to support the growth and development of the Fenland district.

The following actions are proposed over the next 12 months to respond to the Business Retention & Growth Strategic Objective: To deliver sustainable development of emerging business sectors, the rural economy and market towns. These therefore represent short to medium term actions to be delivered over the next 12 months.

	How will the objective be met (Actions planned for 2013/14)	What is the expected outcome
BR1	<p>Drive collaboration with agents and developers to bring forward employment land provision, encourage investment in 'move on' opportunities through;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Quarterly Agents and Developer Forum meetings ○ On-line Fenland District Council Property Bulletin 	<p>An enhanced district-wide office and commercial accommodation that supports growth and diversity in the emerging sectors</p> <p>Businesses will have a better understanding of business accommodation available</p>
BR2	<p>Strengthen the visitor economy, the local retail offer, mix and street scene through;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fenland Tourism Board (included in the emerging Leisure and Tourism Strategy) ○ Renaissance Project ○ Proactive planning policy and delivery approach 	<p>A vibrant and attractive market town economy that supports the growth in employment, housing and community</p> <p>Business investment will be prioritised and actively encouraged</p>
BR3	<p>Develop and deliver workshops and seminars that will improve the survival rates of rural enterprises, working with;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NIAB workshops ○ Fenland for Business 'Enterprising Fenland' support programme, which will include support to businesses on marketing, skills and growth 	<p>A diverse and competitive business base that is more resilient to economic shocks</p> <p>Better informed business community able to compete within a competitive marketplace</p>
BR4	<p>Strengthen dialogue with businesses in Fenland through a programme of business engagement, aiming for quarterly sessions throughout 2013/14</p>	<p>Better informed intelligence to enable support and guidance to be delivered in a more coordinated way to facilitate economic growth</p>
BR5	<p>Support the development of sustainable and enhanced broadband infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Delivery of the Fenland component within the Connecting Cambridgeshire project 	<p>Widespread access to enhanced broadband speeds and infrastructure that provides greater business competitiveness and viability with increased learning opportunities</p>
BR6	<p>Deliver the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Green Business Club ○ SmartLife project ○ Action plans to enable business growth in these sectors 	<p>A sustainable environment to support green infrastructure, environmental and renewable supply chains.</p>

In the delivery of the above actions, Fenland District Council will work with the following partners:

- Local Enterprise Partnership
- Wisbech Chamber of Commerce
- Fenland for Business Partnership
- Private international development partners
- Fenland Tourism Board
- Environment Agency
- Fenland Chamber of Commerce
- March Chamber of Commerce
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- NWES
- Connecting Cambridgeshire
- Private developers and landowners
- Federation of Small Business
- Whittlesey Business Forum
- UK Trade and Investment
- Town Councils
- Cambridgeshire Highways

The effect of these actions will be assessed through monitoring of detailed service performance and the strategic indicators shown in section 8 of this report - Monitoring and Measuring Success.





Creating environments for prosperity

5.0 Inward Investment

- 5.1** Fenland needs to maintain and increase the level of employment in the district and improve the quality of employment locally to provide all sections of the community with the opportunities that match their skills and aspirations. This will require the district to secure new investment to complement current local employers.
- 5.2** Fenland District has clear advantages to offer investors in key sectors, in particular agri/food, precision engineering and manufacturing, professional and business support services, port and marine-related activities and the environmental and renewable sectors.
- 5.3** Fenland is promoted as an investment destination through the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership (GCGP LEP), Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Business, commercial agents and established relationships with strategic employers. The GCGP LEP deals with all Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) promotion through a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Inward Investment Service, UK Trade & Investment.
- 5.4** Locations that are successful in winning inward investment tend to have strong propositions to present to potential investors. By delivery through the Fenland Economic Development and Core Strategies, the district can offer potential inward investors in particular target sectors of marine, environmental & renewable energy, engineering and manufacturing, food & drink, integrated support of strategic sites for large or small scale employment, a strategy for developing 'move on' space units, fast track planning for large scale developments, improving infrastructure including Broadband and a clear balance between where new homes and jobs are to be located.
- 5.5** Investors often seek advice from professional advisors during their location search. This will include commercial agents, location advisors and solicitors and accountants. Some businesses will retain professional advisors, including relocation experts to search for suitable locations. Other professional firms are actively looking for potential inward investors to the UK as they hope to secure new clients. To help deliver and promote development areas, Fenland District Council has built up strong relationship with local agents and developers through the successful Fenland Agent and Developers Forum.
- 5.6** Many of these firms will have a limited understanding of Fenland's business advantages or landscape. Strong branding with key messages like '*Fenland – A great place to grow*' need to be developed to convince key decision makers of these organisations that the Fenland district is a credible option for their business relocation.
- 5.7** The Wisbech Port and Marina is an important asset for Fenland and will play a major marketing and development role in the long-term economic positive for the

district. The geographic spread and offer of Fenland’s market towns is also part of the targeted approach to enhance and improve the quality and attractiveness of town centres, to support investment and growth of existing retailers and to identify development opportunities to attract new commercial enterprise.

5.8 To support direct contact and targeted marketing to potential investors, Fenland District Council is developing a suite of promotion tools. These include an Investment Pack, which contains sector fact sheets, case studies and information sheets with relevant general information about the Fenland offer as an investment location.

5.9 We recognise that inward investors often need assistance when looking for alternative areas to develop their business. Fenland District Council will support such business development by;

- Identifying suitable land or commercial premises
- Helping to facilitate planning applications
- Identifying suitable funding streams
- Working with the business to source suitable workforce
- Arrange business development meetings with local supply chains, and once here;
- Facilitating on-going high quality business support to help nurture business growth

The following actions are proposed over the next 12 months to respond to the Inward Investment Strategic Objective: To maximise economic wellbeing through inward investment. These therefore represent short to medium term actions to be delivered over the next 12 months.

	How will the objective be met (Actions planned for 2013/14)	What is the expected outcome
li1	Strategically market Fenland based upon the district’s competitive advantages across the wider inward investment arena; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Inward Investor Pack ○ Business exhibitions ○ Programme of strategic marketing ○ Attend 6 business fairs/events per year 	Positive coverage of Fenland as a location of choice for business to start up and grow, leading to increased investment in Fenland
li2	Delivery of ‘soft landing’ tools that support an aftercare programme for new and recently established investors, through; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Face-to-face meetings ○ Internet based activities ○ Printed material ○ Customer feedback 	Effective coordination of a positive ‘Open for Business’ message delivered to businesses and investors Business are supported and assisted within the district
li3	Proactively develop relationships in emerging growth sectors including Renewable Energy, Marine Leisure, Food Sciences and Security, Retail and Business Services, through a programme of engagement with sector specialists	Established and effective branding, sectoral strengths and supply chain management Increased investment
li4	Continue to strengthen and broker relationships with overseas contacts, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Quzhou Municipality, Peoples Republic of China ○ UK Trade and Investments, and ○ With other partners, source international investment approaches from emerging economies 	Strong international relationships that support sectoral strengths of Fenland and ensure increased investment opportunities to support job growth

In the delivery of the above actions, Fenland District Council will work with the following partners:

- Local Enterprise Partnership
- Wisbech Chamber of Commerce
- Fenland for Business Partnership
- Private international development partners
- Fenland Chamber of Commerce
- March Chamber of Commerce
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Federation of Small Business
- Whittlesey Business Forum
- UK Trade and Investment

The effect of these actions will be assessed through monitoring of detailed service performance and the strategic indicators shown in section 8 of this report - Monitoring and Measuring Success.

6.0 Develop Effective Partnerships

- 6.1** Fenland District Council acknowledges that the 2031 Fenland Economic Vision will be best delivered through a cohesive and coherent partnership of public, voluntary and the private sector working together as stakeholders of this strategy will be essential.
- 6.2** Partnership arrangements will not just be confined to the district border. Fenland District Council will look to explore opportunities of mutual economic benefit with our neighbours. This will mean engaging with, and working more effectively with neighbouring districts to develop mutually-beneficial partnerships to exploit strategic economic opportunities.
- 6.3** Fenland District Council will drive collaboration with local and sub-national partners to ensure economic prosperity is delivered through investment in such a way as to maximise benefits for Fenland's business and resident communities which will leave a long-term positive legacy that increases its attractiveness to new residents, visitors and inward investors.

7.0 Economic Development Priorities

- 7.1** The economic development priorities for Fenland District Council's economic development strategy are set out in an action plan that underpins the vision (below) for achieving sustainable economic growth and wellbeing for the Fenland community. They have been developed to create a synergy with Fenland District Council's Corporate Plan, Fenland Communities Development Plan: The Core Strategy and Fenland Neighbourhood Planning Vision.

'Fenland's future success will be based on creating a strong and resilient economy that generates an environment of opportunities which will make a real difference to people's lives, nurturing businesses to start, stay and grow in a sustainable way, and where significant improvements in training and skills development will underpin economic prosperity for the district'.

7.2 The priority staffing and budget resource for each individual activity will be set out in the Council's Corporate and Planning policies. However, in addition to the planned activities set out in the rolling action plan, the Council will be prepared to respond to unanticipated opportunities or economic shocks during the life of the plan.

8.0 Monitoring and Measuring the Success

8.1 Fenland District Council will lead on taking this strategy forward. The Council, in partnership will provide a leadership role in promoting district wide economic development and addressing the skills needs of local employers and individuals through the appropriate partnership working, ensuring that local needs and priorities inform policy development and by taking forward specific projects that add value to the local business and residential communities.

8.2 The Fenland Economic Development Strategy is intended as a fluid document that will be subject to continuous review to ensure that it remains responsive, appropriate and up-to-date. This will allow the strategy and associated action plans to take into account any changes in economic profile or conditions that emerge during the period of the strategy.

8.3 In order to review the progress of activities against the priorities that have been set the following monitoring and evaluation exercises will be undertaken:

- Strategic data gathering and analysis of key economic indicators as detail within the action plan
- Monthly progress review updates reported to Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Economy
- Annual summit with Fenland for Business partners to discuss the current economic landscape
- Business wellbeing survey undertaken to monitor employment and business growth

8.4 In addition to service-specific performance, such as business centre occupancy rates, the following strategic economic indicators will be used to annually track

change and health check the Fenland economy and monitor the impact of the Fenland Economic Development Strategy 2012 – 2031.

8.5 These indicators will also be used to annually monitor the employment trajectory, which will enable the Council to proactively implement plans, investment and resource required to underpin the delivery of job creation in-line with the **Fenland Communities Development Plan: the Core Strategy** and exploit growth opportunities in new and emerging markets.

Economic Indicators

Measure	Data Source
Business growth	ONS Local Profile data
New business registrations	Companies House data
Employment rate	ONS Annual Population Survey
Self-employment rate	ONS Local Profile data
Jobcentre Plus vacancies	DWP Jobcentre Plus East Anglia Labour Market statistical data
Working age residents in receipt of out of work benefits	DWP Jobcentre Plus East Anglia Labour Market statistical data
Job Seekers Allowance claimant rate	ONS Claimant Count
Job Seekers Allowance claimant rate (16-24 year olds)	ONS Claimant Count
16 – 19 year olds – Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)	Fenland 14-19 Partnership
Working age residents with no qualifications	ONS Annual Population Survey
Working age residents with level 1 and 2 qualifications only	ONS Annual Population Survey
Working age residents with level 3 and above qualifications	ONS Annual Population Survey
Visitor Spend	Tourism South East
Office, retail and commercial vacancy rates	Fenland District Council Property Database/ commercial agents
Average house prices	Land Registry



Fenland District Council
Fenland Hall
County Road
March
Cambridgeshire
PE15 8NQ
01354 654321
www.fenland.gov.uk

Fenland Economic
Development
Strategy

'Building a
competitive vision for
Fenland'

Action Plan

(2013 - 2014)



For ease of reference the actions detailed in each chapter are presented here in a consolidated format.

Measuring the success....

The key drivers of this strategy are jobs growth, business growth and economic participation and are delivered through 4 strategic 'Model for Growth' themes set out in the associated Action Plan.

The following strategic economic indicators will be used to track change and 'health check' the Fenland economy and monitor the impact of the Fenland Economic Development Strategy 2012 – 2031.

Measure	Data Source
Business growth	ONS Local Profile data
New business registrations	Companies House data
Employment rate	ONS Annual Population Survey
Self-employment rate	ONS Local Profile data
Jobcentre Plus vacancies	DWP Jobcentre Plus East Anglia Labour Market statistical data
Working age residents in receipt of out of work benefits	DWP Jobcentre Plus East Anglia Labour Market statistical data
Job Seekers Allowance claimant rate	ONS Claimant Count
Job Seekers Allowance claimant rate (16-24 year olds)	ONS Claimant Count
16 – 19 year olds – Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)	Fenland 14-19 Partnership
Working age residents with no qualifications	ONS Annual Population Survey
Working age residents with level 1 and 2 qualifications only	ONS Annual Population Survey
Working age residents with level 3 and above qualifications	ONS Annual Population Survey
Visitor Spend	Tourism South East
Office, retail and commercial vacancy rates	Fenland District Council Property Database/ commercial agents
Average house prices	Land Registry

The above indicators will also annually monitor the employment trajectory, which will enable the Council to proactively implement plans, investment and resource required to underpin the delivery of job creation in line with the **Fenland Communities**

Development Plan: the Core Strategy and exploit growth opportunities in new and emerging markets.

Delivering in partnership

Fenland District Council will oversee the implementation of this strategy and action plan, and acknowledges that the 2031 Fenland Economic Vision will be best delivered through a cohesive and coherent partnership of public, voluntary and the private sector working together as stakeholders of this strategy.

The Economic Vision for Fenland

Fenland's future success will be based on creating a strong and resilient economy that generates an environment of opportunities which will make a real difference to people's lives, nurturing businesses to start, stay and grow in a sustainable way, and where significant improvements in training and skills development will underpin economic prosperity for the district

Partnership arrangements will not just be confined to the district border. Fenland District Council will look to explore opportunities of mutual economic benefit with our neighbours. This will mean engaging with, and working more effectively with, neighbouring districts to develop mutually beneficial partnerships to exploit strategic economic opportunities.

Fenland District Council will drive collaboration with local and sub-national partners to ensure economic prosperity is delivered through investment in such a way as to maximise benefits for Fenland's business and resident communities which will leave a long-term positive legacy that increases its attractiveness to new residents, visitors and inward investors.

Action Plan

The under mentioned rolling action plan is intended as a fluid document that will be subject to annual review to ensure that it remains responsive, appropriate and up-to-date. This will allow the plan to take into account any changes in economic profile, conditions or comments received from stakeholders and the community that emerge during the period of the strategy.

Any significant changes to the rolling plan will be presented to and consulted on with delivery partners.

Strategic Objective 1
ENTERPRISE

Objective	How will the objective be met	What is the expected outcome	Who will help deliver this
<p>To support the development of and survival rates in innovation and enterprise</p>	<p>Maintain monthly meetings with the business community, including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fenland Chamber of Commerce ○ Federation of Small Business ○ East of England Energy Group ○ Institute of Directors ○ Other business groups 	<p>Greater business intelligence and understanding of business issues to guide and support activity to promote business growth and competitiveness</p>	<p>Fenland District Council NWES Local Enterprise Partnership Fenland for Business Partnership Fenland Chamber of Commerce Wisbech Chamber of Commerce March Chamber of Commerce Whittlesey Business Form UK trade and Investment Federation of Small Business Cambridgeshire County Council</p>
	<p>Deliver the annual Fenland Enterprise & Business Awards</p>	<p>Local business community benefits from marketing opportunities to promote procurement and supply chains</p>	
	<p>Develop the Fenland for Business on-line resource centre to support enterprise with access to advice and guidance</p>	<p>A recognised integrated business support and guidance provision that helps increase survival rates and job growth</p>	
	<p>Promote available employment sites and premises through marketing packs, commercial agents and business partners including provision of;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Boathouse Business Centre ○ South Fens Business Centre and Enterprise Park ○ Council owned land & industrial units ○ Private commercial property and land 	<p>Increased access to employment sites and development land to support the needs of current and future business growth</p> <p>Increase occupancy levels in the Council business premises portfolio</p>	
	<p>Deliver a range of district-wide mentoring/training opportunities through the Fenland for Business 'Enterprise Fenland' seminars and workshops (aiming for 20 in 2013/14)</p>	<p>A stronger and more diverse business base</p>	

Strategic Objective 2

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Objective	How will the objective be met	What is the expected outcome	Who will help deliver this
To improve access to employment, training and skills for balanced economic participation	Support skills centres that deliver employer-led sector skills, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Fenland Engineering Skills Centre o Delamore Horticulture and Botany Skills Centre 	Business-led skills development opportunities that meet demand and increase apprenticeship opportunities within potential growth and emerging sectors	Fenland District Council Fenland Enterprise in Education College of West Anglia Fenland 14-19 Partnership
	Work collaboratively with Jobcentre Plus to help raise awareness for young people and long-term unemployed of enterprise opportunities, apprenticeships and work placements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Monthly meetings with Jobcentre Plus o Proactive joint marketing of DWP programmes and initiatives 	Improved awareness for young people of enterprise opportunities, apprenticeships and work placements that result in fewer skills shortages	Local Enterprise Partnership NWES Fenland Chamber of Commerce Federation of Small Business Wisbech Chamber of Commerce March Chamber of Commerce Whittlesey Business Forum
	Work collaboratively with College of West Anglia to deliver programmes that meet the needs of local business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Continue Board membership o Quarterly collaboration meetings 	A more supportive environment for private sector involvement and improved opportunities for employment growth	Jobcentre Plus
	Delivery of the Fenland Enterprise in Education project to support greater business-education links	Coordinated linkages between schools and businesses that provide a flexible and responsive service to help learners make an easy transition from education to employment.	

Strategic Objective 3

BUSINESS RETENTION & GROWTH

Objective	How will the objective be met	What is the expected outcome	Who will help deliver this
To deliver sustainable development of emerging business sectors, the rural economy and market towns	<p>Drive collaboration with agents and developers to bring forward employment land provision, encourage investment in 'move on' opportunities through;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Quarterly Agents and Developer Forum meetings ○ On-line Fenland District Council Property Bulletin 	<p>An enhanced district-wide office and commercial accommodation that supports growth and diversity in the emerging sectors</p> <p>Businesses will have a better understanding of business accommodation available</p>	<p>Fenland District Council</p> <p>Local Enterprise Partnership</p> <p>Fenland for Business partnership</p> <p>NWES</p> <p>Cambridgeshire County Council</p> <p>Town Councils</p>
	<p>Strengthen the visitor economy, the local retail offer, mix and street scene through;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fenland Tourism Board (included in the emerging Leisure and Tourism Strategy) ○ Renaissance Project ○ Proactive planning policy and delivery approach 	<p>A vibrant and attractive market town economy that supports the growth in employment, housing and community</p> <p>Business investment will be prioritised and actively encouraged</p>	<p>Fenland Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Federation of Small Business</p> <p>Wisbech Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>March Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Whittlesey Business Form</p> <p>UK Trade and Investment</p> <p>Fenland Tourism Board</p> <p>Connecting Cambridgeshire</p>
	<p>Develop and deliver workshops and seminars that will improve the survival rates of rural enterprises, working with;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NIAB workshops ○ Fenland for Business 'Enterprising Fenland' support programme, which will include support to businesses on marketing, skills and growth 	<p>A diverse and competitive business base that is more resilient to economic shocks</p> <p>Better informed business community able to compete within a competitive marketplace</p>	<p>Cambridgeshire Highways</p> <p>Environment Agency</p> <p>Private developers and landowners</p>

	<p>Strengthen dialogue with businesses in Fenland through a programme of business engagement, aiming for quarterly sessions throughout 2013/14</p>	<p>Better informed intelligence to enable support and guidance to be delivered in a more coordinated way to facilitate economic growth</p>	
	<p>Support the development of sustainable and enhanced broadband infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Delivery of the Fenland component within the Connecting Cambridgeshire project 	<p>Widespread access to enhanced broadband speeds and infrastructure that provides greater business competitiveness and viability with increased learning opportunities</p>	
	<p>Deliver the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Green Business Club ○ SmartLife project ○ Action plans to enable business growth in these sectors 	<p>A sustainable environment to support green infrastructure, environmental and renewable supply chains.</p>	

Strategic Objective 4 INWARD INVESTMENT

Objective	How will the objective be met	What is the expected outcome	Who will help deliver this
To maximise economic wellbeing through inward investment	Strategically market Fenland based upon the district's competitive advantages across the wider inward investment arena; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Inward Investor Pack ○ Business exhibitions ○ Programme of strategic marketing ○ Attend 6 business fairs/events per year 	Positive coverage of Fenland as a location of choice for business to start up and grow, leading to increased investment in Fenland	Fenland District Council Local Enterprise Partnership Fenland Chamber of Commerce Federation of Small Business Fenland for Business Partnership Wisbech Chamber of Commerce March Chamber of Commerce Whittlesey Business Form Cambridgeshire County Council UK Trade and Investment Private development partners
	Delivery of 'soft landing' tools that support an aftercare programme for new and recently established investors, through; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Face-to-face meetings ○ Internet based activities ○ Printed material ○ Customer feedback 	Effective coordination of a positive 'Open for Business' message delivered to businesses and investors Business are supported and assisted within the district	
	Proactively develop relationships in emerging growth sectors including Renewable Energy, Marine Leisure, Food Sciences and Security, Retail and Business Services, through a programme of engagement with sector specialists	Established and effective branding, sectoral strengths and supply chain management Increased investment	
	Continue to strengthen and broker relationships with overseas contacts, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Quzhou Municipality, Peoples Republic of China ○ UK Trade and Investments ○ With other partners, source international investment approaches from emerging 	Strong international relationships that support sectoral strengths of Fenland and ensure increased investment opportunities to support job growth	

economies