

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

Committee: Cabinet	Report Number: BCa/18/05
From: Cabinet Member for Economy	Date of meeting: 11 June 2018
Officer: Andrew McMillan – Economic Development Officer	Key Decision Ref No: CAB50

SADBURY VISION FOR PROSPERITY NEXT STEPS

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The *Vision For Prosperity* (VfP) work is intended to kick-start a resurgence in Sudbury and its surrounding area, coordinating services and responding to the needs of the community. This work is a priority as set by councillors within the recently updated 18/19 priorities.
- 1.2 During the consultation (October 2017) there were a number of comments made about a lot of issues, but the overwhelming majority of interest was in the town's existing suite of possible projects. In short, the perception is that the town is constantly being considered for major regeneration projects, but that they are not delivered and no information is forthcoming. Consequently, the reputation of the Council is damaged which hinders positivity in residents and in potential investors in the area.
- 1.3 This report is seeking endorsement of the draft VfP Action Plan and accompanying background paper that responds directly to the issues raised in public consultation, prior to publication.

2. Recommendations

The Cabinet are recommended to:

- 2.1 Endorse the draft Sudbury VfP Action Plan and background paper for publication.
- 2.2 Delegates authority to the Strategic Director (with responsibility for Sudbury), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Economy, to make minor updates/amendments prior to formal publication.

Reason for decision:

The publication of the documentation will bring the first phase of VfP to a close by responding to the issues raised, and by setting out the action plan that will bring the community together and deliver positive changes in the Sudbury area, and pave the way for further VfP projects and interventions.

2 Financial Implications

- 2.1 None arising directly from this report. The projects identified within the document are already subject to their own individual reports and consideration.

3 Legal Implications

3.1 None arising directly from this report. The projects identified within the document are already subject to their own individual reports and consideration.

4 Risk Management

4.1 The report links to the following risks in the Councils' Significant Risk Register:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
Failure to develop the local economy and our market towns to thrive – Risk 2b	Likely	Bad	Work with Town Councils, steering groups and partnerships to develop vision; Development of Suffolk tourism strategy; Promotion of area to attract new business; Increased commercial awareness and relationship building with our businesses.

4.2 Other project risks:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
Further reputational risk is there is no communication with the public and businesses about the outcome of potential major regeneration projects.	Likely	Bad	The VfP publication will make definitive statements about the existing large projects currently considered in Sudbury.
Establishing a brand, shared ownership of delivery against VfP. Getting the collective buy-in.	Unlikely	Low	Ensure partner buy-in and involvement throughout the branding/marketing exercise to instil ownership.

5 Consultations

5.1 The VfP consultation was undertaken in October 2017, as the culmination of significant priority work undertaken and managed by the Open for Business Team. Over 400 response comments were received, as well as numerous conversations taking place with the public, Members and Officers. A specific effort was made to engage with young people through work with Sudbury Ormiston Academy. The overwhelming issue was that the public want answers and information regarding the potential major projects already being considered, and they displayed frustration that projects are considered in isolation rather than in the round. This has steered the format of the prepared response.

5.2 The VfP is not a stand-alone document, but an ongoing umbrella approach to advance change and intervention in the Sudbury area. Therefore, further public display/engagement activity demonstrating potential projects, schemes and options will naturally follow and continue the VfP work.

6 **Equality Analysis**

6.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

7 **Shared Service / Partnership Implications**

7.1 Given the collaborative approach to the VfP with partner organisations, the draft documents have been shared with partner organisations to review them and make comments. The VfP is a Babergh District Council-led initiative, but may be considered a 'Sudbury response' because of the collaboration.

8 **Links to Joint Strategic Plan**

8.1 The 2016 MSDC Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) sets out the direction of the Council for the next four years. Further, 2018/2019 priority refinement has just taken place in support of the JSP, of which VfP is included (for both Stowmarket and Sudbury).

8.2 The JSP articulates three priority areas: Economy and Environment, Housing and Strong and Healthy communities which will be delivered under five key strategic outcomes. The following key strategic outcomes are linked to this project:

- Further develop local economy and market towns to thrive
- Property investment to generate income and regenerate local areas

9 **Key Information**

Engagement responses

9.1 Officers have analysed the responses from the consultation exercise and prepared a report of findings. This considers the content, tone and circumstances of the event that was held in October 2017. The report is attached as Appendix 1.

VfP Response Document

9.2 The VfP is not a stand-alone document, but an ongoing umbrella approach to advance change and intervention in the Sudbury area, led by the District Council. Therefore, the background paper responds to the issues raised and 'sets the record straight'. The Action Plan addresses the main criticism of not knowing what is going to happen, by updating communities in a single simple poster on the range of projects being considered.

9.3 Within the Action Plan, a number of additional future projects have been identified and those will be brought forward in due course. By adding them to this response now, it will sow the seed for these projects and ensure that there is a holistic and managed approach, rather than introducing them suddenly at a later date. This will improve community confidence in leadership, the Vision and the brand. One such example is the Sudbury Town Council Vision for the Market Hill/Town Centre area. As that project is not sufficiently advanced to include within the VfP and with any definitive accompanying statement, instead it can be 'signposted' to come as part of the broader package of interventions.

9.4 In order to maximise the impact of the Action Plan it is proposed that it is not a lengthy, wordy document, but a map-based 'poster' that simply and clearly makes statements about the projects. This high-impact approach will be both easily digested and shared. The draft is attached in Appendix 2. At this draft stage the Action Plan has

not benefitted from professional production, but once the content is agreed that may be addressed and approved under delegated authority.

VfP Response Publicity and further public engagement

- 9.5 Members are reminded that Suffolk Day takes place on 21 June 2018. Sudbury Town Council is hosting Suffolk Day and will deliver a 'market place' type event in the Town Hall. It is recommended that the Council uses this as the platform to launch the VfP response. This will provide a joined-up approach towards services and investments in Sudbury.

Marketing/branding for Sudbury – Growth & Efficiency Fund application

- 9.6 The VfP consultation yielded no significant alternative existing 'character' or identity that Sudbury has that could be the basis of its marketing angle. Silk, Wool Towns and Gainsborough heritage aspects provide a sound starting point, but these did not resonate so strongly with young people. The marketing would include a logo, strapline, colour scheme and other brand identifiers, but will draw from and connect existing methods rather than re-invent something wholly new/different. The Council must commit to using the branding in its range of functions and duties to ensure it is effective.
- 9.7 The procurement of marketing/branding services may be approached through partners and provide additional opportunities such as the use of the University of Suffolk's marketing course students. The appropriate procurement methods will be used to secure any such services.

10 **Conclusion**

- 10.1 The VfP project has sparked some initial interest and by updating the public on the range of major projects (including shared projects) through these publications there is the opportunity to capitalise on the momentum, redress community cynicism and apathy, and align focus on positive and progressive steps. There is also the opportunity to pave the way to introducing additional projects in a holistic action plan., with a clear leadership by the District Council.

Authorship:

Open for Business Team
Andrew McMillan Open for Business

Tel: 01449 72 4931

Email:

Andrew.mcmillan@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

Appendices

Title	Attachment
Draft VfP background paper	Attached
Draft VfP Action Plan	Attached