

Brighton & Hove City Council

Cultural, Heritage, Sport, Tourism & Economic Development Committee

Agenda Item 21

Subject: A New Economic Strategy for Brighton & Hove

Date of meeting: 14th September 2023

Report of: Executive Director Economy, Environment & Culture

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Ward(s) affected: All

For general release

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

- 1.1 The current Economic Strategy comes to an end in 2023. Since the strategy was published in 2018, there have been multiple factors impacting on the city's economy and, of particular note, is the pandemic and, more recently, the cost-of-living crisis.
- 1.2 The report sets out the rationale for preparing a new Economic Strategy for Brighton & Hove and alignment with wider policy developments, including the City Plan 2023-2027. It considers the proposed approach and overall indicative timescales for its development.
- 1.3 The new Economic Strategy should be inclusive; addressing the needs of all communities in the city and all geographical parts of the city. It should be a strategy that is owned by the whole of the city, not just the council, and should bring together all key economic players including universities, the voluntary sector and of course business.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Committee notes the development of a new Economic Strategy.
- 2.2 That Committee agrees the proposed approach and indicative timescales to develop the new Economic Strategy, and notes that the final draft strategy will be reported to committee and Full Council for approval.

3. Context and background information

- 3.1 The current Economic Strategy (2018-2023) was published in 2018 and comes to an end in 2023. Since the current strategy was written there have been a multitude of factors affecting the city's economy which have come into place or are in the pipeline, at a local, regional and national level.
- 3.2 Subsequent shifts in government priorities and then the pandemic led to delivery of the Action Plan being paused as the economic development team

at the Council and stakeholder city-wide focused on supporting businesses and individuals through the unprecedented disruption. Attention was turned to a strategy which would aid recovery instead. As part of the development of the new Economic Strategy, there will be reflection on the impact and lessons learned from the previous strategy.

- 3.3 A new Economic Strategy is needed that reflects a significantly different economic and political environment in the city, since the 2018-2023 Economic Strategy was produced. It will respond to the UK's post-EU status, the impact of the pandemic on the city's economy and the cost-of-living crisis, among other issues. A new Economic Strategy will reflect these changes and thereby enable the city to be in a stronger position to respond to new challenges and opportunities.
- 3.5 The new Economic Strategy has been commissioned and funded by Brighton & Hove City Council and developed in partnership with Brighton & Hove Economic Partnership.
- 3.6 The new strategy will cover three-years from 2024 to 2027. It will include a vision for the city's economy and an implementation plan that will build upon the city's economic strengths and its role within the Greater Brighton City Region. It will help support the delivery of the 'A City to be Proud Of' outcome in the Council's Corporate Plan 2023-2027. This outcome states that "Our goal is to develop a flourishing and inclusive local economy that attracts and nurtures businesses and talent." The Economic Strategy is the key tool for delivering that.
- 3.7 Brighton & Hove sits at the heart of the Greater Brighton City Region and although the strategy will be written for the city, it will take into consideration and align with the strategic priorities identified for this wider economic area.
- 3.8 This new Economic Strategy will ensure a joined-up approach as an overarching strategy which aligns with other strategic principles such as the Emerging City Employment & Skills Plan, Visitor Economy Strategy, Creative Industries Strategy, Circular Economy Route Map, the City's Carbon Neutral 2030 Programme and City Plans Part 1 (Refresh) and 2.
- 3.9 It will align with other priorities such as regional investment priorities, national levelling up and shared prosperity agendas and Greater Brighton Economic Board's Investment Plan.
- 3.10 Key principles in the new Strategy will be to support ways to promote inclusive growth in the city to ensure that no one is left behind and make growth work for everyone and take a local approach to address the climate crisis and deliver more sustainable growth. This includes ensuring that all parts of the city are considered; east and west as well the central areas that traditionally see more economic activity.
- 3.11 The indicative timetable is that the consultant team are starting work this month, and there will be initial engagement and consultation in the period during October/November 2023. A first draft for comment will emerge early

in 2024. This will be consulted, commented upon and refined in the early part of the year before coming to this committee for approval in the late Spring. It will then go to Full Council for adoption if this Committee approves it.

4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options

- 4.1 It is considered imperative to prepare a new Economic Strategy now for the city to reposition itself and remain competitive, particularly in light of the pandemic, leaving the EU and the cost-of-living crisis and the new opportunities and challenges facing the economy. The Economic Strategy is one of the key strategy documents the council's constitution requires to be signed off by Full Council.

5. Community engagement and consultation

- 5.1 The new strategy is being developed in partnership with Brighton & Hove Economic Partnership. There will be an extensive period of consultation with businesses, public and third sector stakeholders, central government, and the Greater Brighton Economic Board. The appointed consultants will be required to engage extensively with stakeholders in the city and city Region.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The current Economic Strategy (2018-2023) comes to an end this year and combined with a multitude of factors affecting the city's economy (see Section 3), this has informed the decision for a new strategy.
- 6.2 A new Economic Strategy is needed that reflects a significantly different economic and political context for improving the economic prospects in the city, since the last strategy was produced.
- 6.3 A clearly articulated vision that is owned by city stakeholders and accompanied by a clear strategy will ensure that the city is better able to respond to changes in the economy and exploit opportunities as they arise.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 The proposed new Economic Strategy 2024-2027 is commissioned and is estimated to cost £0.050m. This will be funded by redirecting existing service budgets in the current year and is significantly lower than the cost of preparing the previous strategy which cost circa £0.080m. There are no other direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

Name of finance officer consulted: James Hengeveld Date consulted:
01/09/23

8. Legal implications

- 8.1 The Council is not required by law to have an Economic Strategy but it is a matter of local choice and the Council has determined that its Economic Strategy is one of the plans and strategies that must be approved by full Council.

Name of lawyer consulted: Elizabeth Culbert Date consulted: 01/09/2023

9. Equalities implications

- 9.1 A key principle in the new Economic Strategy will be to support ways to promote inclusive growth in the city to ensure that no one is left behind and make growth work for everyone.
- 9.2 The project team will work with the Communities & Equalities Team at the Council to identify any equalities implications concerning the strategy or its outcomes. The new Economic Strategy will be accompanied by an Equalities Impact Assessment which will consider whether there are any negative impacts arising from the strategy and will seek to mitigate them. In particular, the strategy will need to address the Anti Racism Strategy, which identified the new Economic Strategy as a chance to rethink how the city ensures economic growth is for the benefit of all communities.

10. Sustainability implications

- 10.1 The Economic Strategy will need to be mindful of the environmental impacts of growth – especially considering the scope three carbon emissions that activity can generate and thinking about how the city can take a more Circular Economy approach to material use.
- 10.2 In considering key sectors, the strategy will also need to look at how Brighton & Hove (and Greater Brighton) is positioned to benefit from clean growth.

1. Background documents

1. [Economic strategy for Brighton & Hove - 2018](#)