

Cherwell District Council

Executive

5 November 2018

Towards Creating a Cherwell Industrial Strategy

Report of Assistant Director – Economy and Regeneration

This report is public

Purpose of report

To seek the Executives' endorsement for the development of a 10 year district industrial strategy for Cherwell; the Cherwell Industrial Strategy (CIS).

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To endorse and support the process to prepare a ten year industrial strategy for Cherwell.
- 1.2 To agree the approach for Cherwell.
- 1.3 To note the programme and indicative timeline for delivery.

2.0 What are the issues we are looking to address?

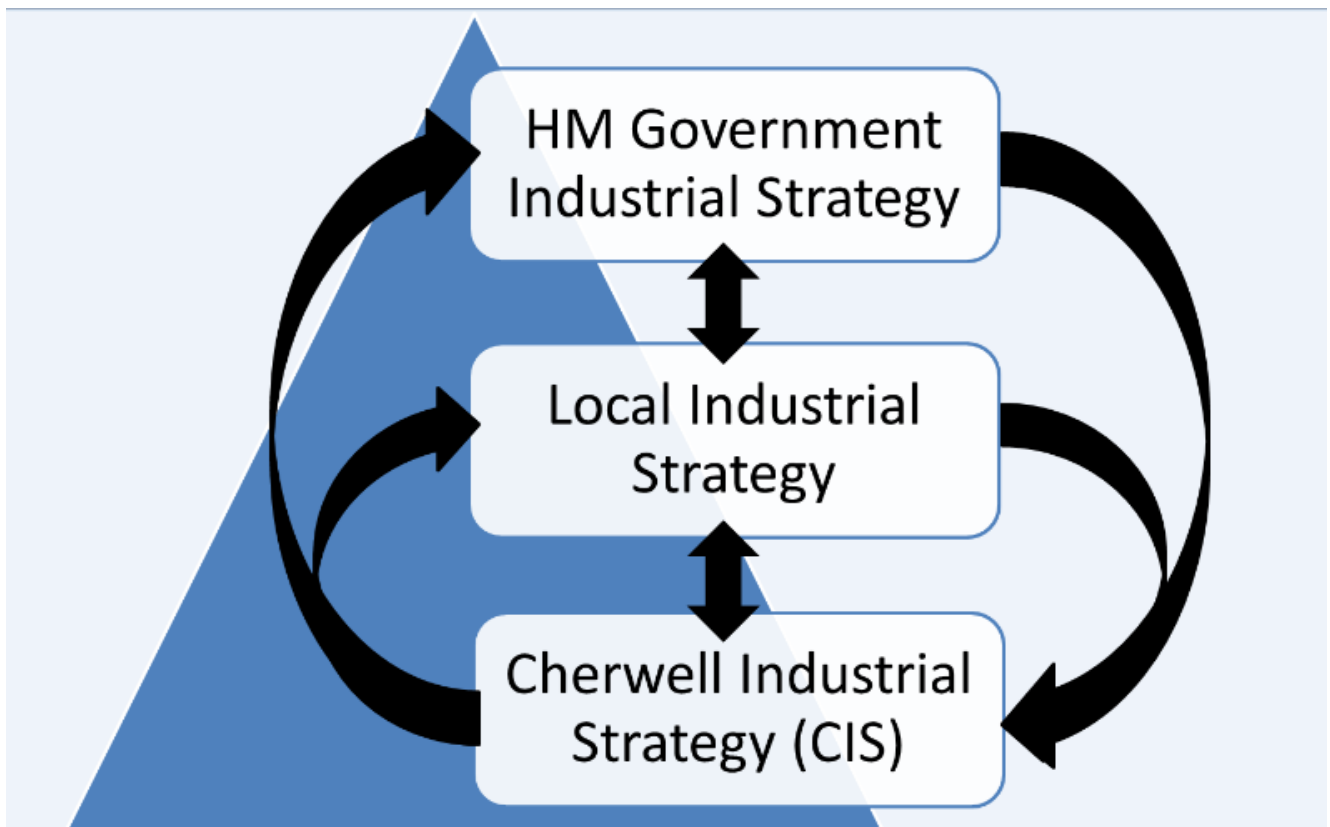
2.1 Cherwell needs a new economic strategy. The current CDC strategy expired in 2016 so something positive needs be done, as a matter of urgency. This situation does present some fantastic opportunities - some of which include:

- Working with our partners and stakeholders in a highly collaborative manner towards important, clear, shared objectives;
- Offering opportunities towards greater engagement with the business community and stakeholders throughout the district providing continuity and reassurance that business is a high priority for CDC – whatever is happening with Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)
- Creating significant opportunities for CDC – creating an ambitious long term economic strategy for one of the most successful economies in the country. This is the right thing to do and will present opportunities to integrate and

disseminate (to other parts of the district and county) existing projects working with the Bicester and Build! Teams.

- 2.2 The new strategy will align with the national (HM Government Industrial Strategy, published November 2017) and local industrial strategies (LIS – being undertaken by SEMLEP and OxLEP – there are only three areas that HM Government has chosen to undertake LIS “trailblazers” which reflects the national prominence of our economies nationally). The accompanying BPM report on the Industrial Strategies and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) contains more detail. The national and local industrial strategies establish a long term vision for the future and will inform our proposed district industrial strategy. Figure One shows the relationship between the national, local (regional) and district industrial strategies.
- 2.3 In addition there is a wider set of context issues such as the Oxfordshire Growth Deal and the Ox-Cam corridor work which looks to create one million new homes and an additional 163bn GVA by 2050. The proposed strategies will all contribute towards this work.

Figure One: National, Local and District Industrial Strategies framework



3.0 What are we proposing to do about addressing these issues?

- 3.1 We propose to develop, at pace, over some months, an inclusive, iterative and collaborative process to develop a long term (10 year) industrial strategy for CDC – a Cherwell Industrial Strategy or CIS. Officers are also undertaking a work stream to develop an SNC industrial strategy and officers are currently exploring

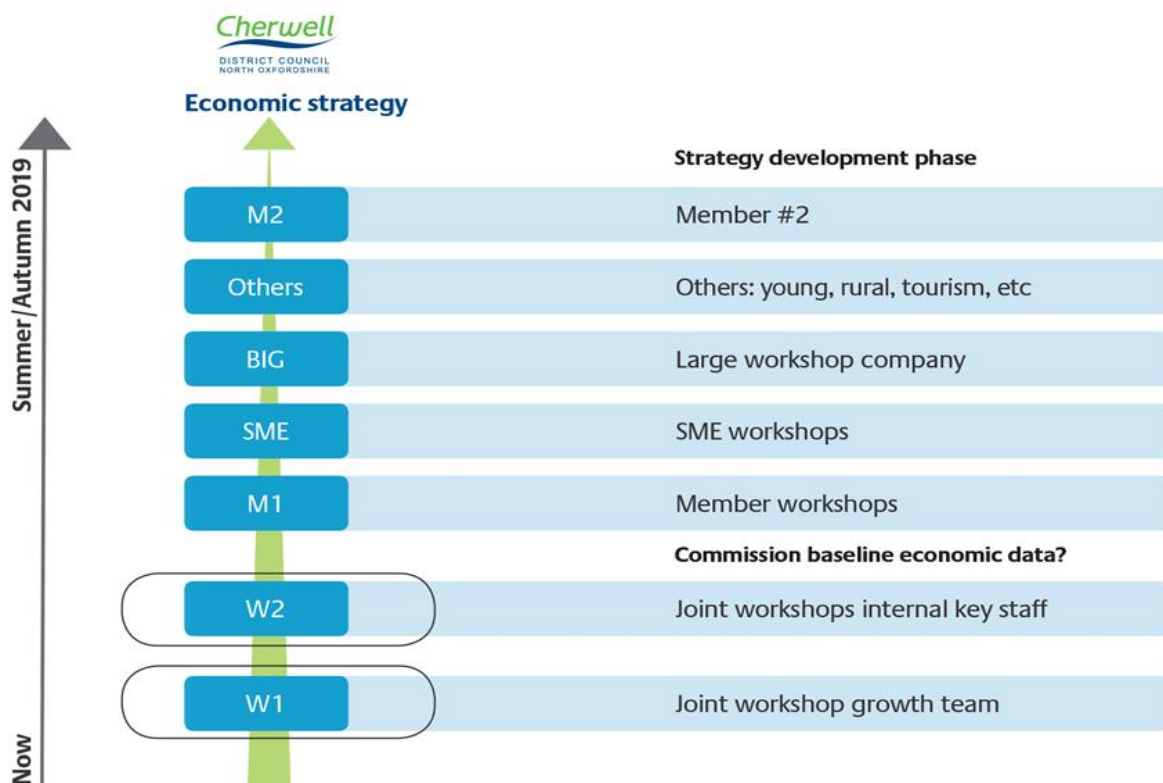
whether this can be extended to embrace Kettering and Northampton Borough as a prelude to the West Northants unitary being formed.

- 3.2 A meeting in November of the Northamptonshire Chief Executives will invite the relevant authorities to become involved. The South/West Northants Industrial Strategy will, as a consequence, be running a few months behind Cherwell's CIS.
- 3.3 The CIS development process will involve deep engagement with colleagues, Members, businesses and stakeholders. It is ambitious, complex and challenging but will significantly help to put CDC in the best possible economic position for the future.

4.0 How do we propose to deliver this strategy?

- 4.1 By running a process involving tried and tested expert external facilitated workshops as shown in Figure Two below. (These workshops will be supported by first class baseline economic data.)
- 4.2 These workshops will engage our stakeholder groups in innovative and effective ways: The outcome will be that our key stakeholders/ businesses will identify the resultant strategy as their own not just the Council's. It will also help everyone to transcend Local Government Reorganisation and provide hope and continuity for the future.

Figure Two: Strategy Development Process



KEY:

- W1 is workshop one involving staff from the SNC and CDC Growth teams, Build!, Strategic Transport and the Bicester team. This first workshop took place on 10th October 2018. Prior to this (July and September) team mobilisation sessions have taken place to start the process and acclimatise staff to the new way of working.
- W2 is workshop two involving key staff from the council.
- M1 is the members workshop.
- SME is the small and medium sized businesses workshop (including Chambers etc.)
- BIG is the large companies workshop (including OxLEP).
- Others is another workshop for young people and other stakeholders we feel appropriate.
- M2 is the second member workshop providing feedback on the overall programme.
- It is hoped that the CIS will be produced during the summer/autumn 2019 – a more detailed timeline will be developed subsequent to the green light being given by the Executive to proceed.

5.0 Benefits of this approach

5.1 The key benefits of this approach include:

- Linking with the national and local industrial strategies;
- Providing a long term horizon and perspective;
- Engaging the business community and working collaboratively with key stakeholders;
- Supporting change management generally; and
- Advanced and far-sighted local authorities tend to develop long term industrial strategies

5.2 The benefits to CDC include:

- Positioning CDC in the overall context of Oxfordshire – setting high standards
- Providing an opportunity to integrate with the Bicester and Build! Teams and promote the Place-making agenda. These strategies can help to progress and add impetus to the place-making agenda.
- Will help to contribute towards the Growth Deal agenda.

6.0 Inputs and outputs

Table One: Some inputs and outputs of the industrial strategies

Inputs	Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The workshops will gather the key issues, vision and priorities from stakeholders.• Robust baseline economic data summarising the performance of the two economies will be used.• Group work will be undertaken to help define what the issues and challenges are and to find ways of overcoming them in the next	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Underpinning the economic vision and priorities – gaining different perspectives which may lead to altering or changing the priorities• Gaining consensus about the direction of the strategy and local economy• Engaging with the business community and stakeholders and focussing upon finding solutions to

ten years.	<p>enable local economic growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaining buy-in and deeper understanding from some of the most influential decision makers and opinion formers in the districts • Enabling the business and stakeholder input to inform and inspire the resultant industrial strategies • Gaining insights into the possible future plans and aspirations of the local business community – particularly in terms of growth plans, skills requirement, infrastructure needs and other factors of material importance.
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7.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

7.1 This programme is ambitious and provides the opportunity to mobilise, motivate and inspire participants including internal teams, members throughout CDC and external partners. The methodology is proven. The iterative and incremental approach to gaining internal and external buy-in has been shown to deliver successful strategies elsewhere. The process will ensure that the final strategies have the support of the various groups and partners. The time is right to prepare a ten year economic strategy for CDC as the current strategy has expired. The strategy will realise real benefits including enabling an organisation-wide approach to delivering economic growth. The strategy development process will ensure the interests and input of a wide range of organisations are represented enabling effective delivery. It is requested that:

1. The Executive endorses and supports the process and creation of a Cherwell Industrial Strategy (CIS)
2. The Executive endorses CEDR's decision for relevant teams to proceed with the strategy development process.
3. The Executive will be given regular progress updates.

8.0 Consultation

8.1 The strategy development process will involve consulting and engaging with various stakeholder groups as set out in Section 5.0.

9.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

9.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Do nothing; this was rejected because the District's current plan for the economy expired in 2016 and a replacement is overdue.

Option 2: Undertake producing a three year plan for the economy adopting traditional and prosaic methods. This was rejected because the time is right for an ambitious ten year strategy which aligns with the national Industrial Strategy and the work being undertaken by the LEPs and their LIS trailblazers. Furthermore, with the Growth Deal and the Ox-Cam corridor there is currently a mood of ambition and positivity which makes producing a much more progressive district industrial strategy the right thing to do for our times.

Option 3: Produce a joint economic strategy with South Northamptonshire. This option was rejected on two grounds. The first is the imminent split with SNC through local government reorganisation and secondly because the economies are not sufficiently similar. It was, initially, proposed to pursue a "twin-track" approach where Cherwell and South Northants would develop concurrent strategies following the same, progressive, strategy development methodology. Things have moved on since then and the creation of a three way (South Northants, Daventry and Northampton) West Northamptonshire Industrial Strategy is currently being considered. This development creates a situation that puts Cherwell at the forefront of this process because the West Northamptonshire strategy will, unavoidably, now be some months behind.

10.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

10.1 There is budget allocated from within existing resources to undertake the strategy development process. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

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Legal Implications

10.2 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

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Risk Implications

- 10.3 Given the timing of the industrial strategy development process there is a risk that external factors may lead to changes to the programme and engagement with key stakeholders and partners. There may be opportunities for further partnership with Oxfordshire County Council following the appointment of a Joint Chief Executive in October 2018. The programme for preparing the Cherwell District Industrial Strategy will take some months to undertake. During this period there may be significant changes major undertaking and will provide a long term plan for economic growth projects in the District with benefits for service delivery and partnerships with key stakeholders. The mitigation is that the proposed strategy development process is sufficiently flexible to accommodate new developments and issues such as these.
- 10.4 If we do not do this work, the District will not have an up to date plan for economic growth to inform and align with other local plans and strategies. As a result, the requirements of business may not be recognised or identified and they may be susceptible to economic impacts over the coming years (like Brexit, for instance). This, in turn, may mean that opportunities could be missed in terms of maximising the potential to help create a district that is attractive to businesses and allows existing businesses to grow. The Oxford to Cambridge growth corridor provides potential for the local economy which may not be fully realised if the proposed industrial strategy is not developed. This may lead to reduced levels of economic activity and employment in the District with the potential for businesses and investment being lost to competing economies. The mitigation is that the CIS will provide opportunities to connect with the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy and maximise the potential for growth in the Oxford Cambridge corridor through increased economic prosperity, housing growth and infrastructure delivery.
- 10.5 By not preparing the CIS, the Council risks damaging the future local economy as the economic vision and priorities will not be defined. The mitigation is that we should continue to identify opportunities for engagement with stakeholders and monitor the national and local policy context.
- 10.6 These operational risks will be managed as part of CIS strategy and escalated to the Leadership risk register as and when necessary.

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11.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: No

Community Impact Threshold Met: No

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

This report directly links to all three themes from the Joint Corporate Strategy 2018-19:

- District of Opportunity & Growth
- Protected, Green & Clean
- Thriving Communities & Wellbeing

Lead Councillor

Councillor Lynn Pratt, Lead Member for Economy, Regeneration and Property

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
None	N/A
Background Papers	
None	
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