

**TITLE OF REPORT: ITEM REFERRED FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
22 SEPTEMBER 2015 – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

The following is an extract from the Draft Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 22 September 2015.

49. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Strategic Planning and Projects Manager presented the Economic Development Strategy report.

She advised that work on the Strategy had been undertaken over the last 6 months, which had included discussions with the Executive Member and Shadow Executive Members as well as a workshop for key stakeholders.

Public consultation had taken place during February and March 2015, with the document being widely publicised through a number of different avenues.

She drew attention to Paragraphs 8.2 and 8.3 which identified the key issues and explained that giving an identity to North Hertfordshire, in Economic Development Terms, was difficult due to the uniqueness of having 4 very different towns and large rural areas within the District.

The Strategic Planning and projects Manager expressed her thanks for the help of local businesses in drawing up the Strategy.

Members expressed surprise that the Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan had been drawn up without the benefit of input from an Economic Development Officer and that, in light of the housing numbers required in the Local Plan, the target number of jobs seemed very low.

The Strategic Planning and Projects Manager advised that the team already had the skills required to draw up the Plan, and the Economic Development Officer would be tasked with taking the actions forward.

The Executive Member for Planning and Enterprise advised that the majority of North Hertfordshire residents worked outside of the District.

It was noted that the Delivery Timescale of Project 19 in the Action Plan should read “project is linked to project 11”..

Members were concerned that the Action Plan focussed on activities with Colleges, but no mention of secondary schools, as many schools now offered vocational training courses.

The Head of Development and Building Control informed Members that, once the Strategy was in place, all schools and other organisations would be contacted and those who wished to participate in the action plan invited to a future workshop.

There was some discussion about using Luton Airport and Kings Cross to promote North Hertfordshire and that this could help the Tourism industry.

The Head of Development and Building Control advised that the vision was to provide North Hertfordshire with an economic identity which could be Town or sector specific advice such as tourism and film and TV.

The Executive Member for Planning and Enterprise thanked the Officers and Members that had worked on the Strategy and commented that it had been a pleasure to work with a group of people who had worked together for the benefit of North Hertfordshire

RESOLVED: That the Head of Development and Building Control be requested to amend the wording of the Business Activity and Description of Project 12 in the Action Plan regarding the Economic Development Strategy to read:

“Project not yet scoped in any detail but North Hertfordshire College are working with local employers to develop an employability standard. The standard will set out the core competencies and attributes employers look for in their employees, regardless of job role or sector. Once developed the standard will be interweaved throughout all North Hertfordshire College’s and school’s provision, to ensure all learners, regardless of the programme they are on, are ready for the world of work.”

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That, subject to the above amendment, the Economic Development Strategy be supported.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to comment of the Economic Development Strategy prior to consideration by Cabinet.

[NOTE: The report to which this referral relates is Item 13 on this agenda.]