

CABINET

DATE	8 th September 2021
REPORT OF	Councillor Philip Jackson, Leader of the Council
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Sharon Wroot, Executive Director Environment, Economy and Resources
SUBJECT	Economic Strategy 2021
STATUS	Open
FORWARD PLAN REF NO.	CB 09/21/04

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

The Economic Strategy will contribute to the Council's 'Stronger Economy' and 'Stronger Communities' by confirming a direction of travel for economic development and regeneration activity across the borough for the next 3 – 5 years.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Economic Strategy 2021 has been created in collaboration with the business community and reaffirms our confidence and certainty in the direction of travel for our economy. The document sets out an achievable, measurable, action plan to address challenges and seize opportunities across the four themes of Business Growth, a Green Economy, Skills, and Place-making.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Adopts the Economic Strategy 2021
2. Delegates authority to the Executive Director Environment, Economy and Resources, in consultation with the Leader of the Council (where appropriate) to publish and implement such strategy.

REASONS FOR DECISION

The decision allows the Council to publicise its vision for the local economy and ensure that its engagement with all stakeholders across all sectors of the economy is consistent and focused on the stated aims and objectives within the strategy.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

- 1.1 The previous Economic Strategy was developed in 2016 and due to undergo a refresh in 2019. The refreshed version was due to be published in the summer of 2020.

- 1.2 In March 2020, the country went into a National Lockdown due to Covid-19 and it became apparent that to continue to develop an Economic Strategy, during the pandemic when there were so many uncertainties in the economy, would be problematic so the decision was taken to hold the refresh in abeyance.
- 1.2 Instead, a Recovery Plan was created in conjunction with the business community with the themes of Restore, Reshape, Replenish. The intention of the Recovery Plan was to support businesses and the workforce through the pandemic by providing information on the support and resources available, whilst at the same time giving information on the good news and initiatives being developed to provide confidence in the resilience and recovery of the area, and a 'bridge' to a new Economic Strategy.
- 1.3 Furthermore, due to the significant challenges being faced and the subsequent changes being brought about, the Local Economic Assessment was updated with a view to giving as current an evidence base as was possible to build the Economic Strategy from.
- 1.4 The Economic Strategy 2021 has been developed in collaboration with the business community, specifically through the sector leads of the Development and Growth board and takes into account the shifting and developing policy environment from central government. In particular, the Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution and the Energy White Paper which present both significant challenges but more importantly, opportunities for our Borough and the wider geography. The strategy also acknowledges the unprecedented changes that have occurred over the past year together with the huge opportunities through programmes in delivery now and looking to the future.
- 1.5 The strategy is built on the four cornerstones of North East Lincolnshire's economy
 - Business growth – building on our industry strengths
 - A green economy – maximising low carbon and healthy initiatives in industry and our place
 - Skills – investing in our workforce (across the borough)
 - Place-making – ensuring our towns are great places to live, work and visit
- 1.6 An achievable, measurable action plan has been created in collaboration with stakeholders, delivery partners and the Development and Growth board.
- 1.7 The council has committed to producing a Local Economic Assessment annually. This will provide the evidence base for an ongoing review of the action plan to refresh and respond to emerging opportunities or challenges in collaboration with the Development and Growth Board. Additionally, an annual review will highlight the point in time when a new Economic Strategy is required.

2. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 2.1 The Economic Strategy forges strong links and collaboration with the business community and forms the basis which will bring opportunities for investment, jobs, community pride, and more visitors to the area.
- 2.2 The Strategy also provides a basis upon which to develop business cases to seek funding and wider government support to our place.

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1 We could choose not to produce a new Economic Strategy. However, without an Economic Strategy we do not have a strategic plan that demonstrates collaboration with our key sectors. This would undermine the Council's ability to work with business to secure funding and policy opportunities and also, we would not have a baseline to measure performance against our agreed direction or travel.

4. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 A strong Economic Strategy gives the area a boost. It shows stakeholders and the business community our confidence in, and aspirations for, the future of North East Lincolnshire. It is a document which feeds into other regional strategies and puts North East Lincolnshire in a strong position to prioritise activities and focus, particularly with the Greater Lincolnshire LEP and Humber Leadership Board.
- 4.2 The Economic Strategy will be produced as an online booklet available to download and shared across the business communities, alongside an accessible version.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The Economic Strategy and resulting action plan will be used to create an evidence base for funding opportunities such as Levelling Up Fund, Shared Prosperity Fund and any other funding opportunities which arise.

6. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 One of the four cornerstones of the Economic Strategy is the green economy, this includes industrial decarbonisation, protecting our natural environment, creating low carbon alternatives to travel and business and leading by example in our own Council activities.

7. CONSULTATION WITH SCRUTINY

- 7.1 An informal joint Tourism and Visitor Economy and Economy Scrutiny workshop took place on 28th July 2021 and a formal joint Scrutiny was held on 31st August 2021.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Economic Strategy is closely aligned to the Council's adopted Financial

Strategy which focuses on the achievement of long-term financial sustainability by embracing the area's economic potential and by growing the local tax base. The Council has an ambitious capital investment programme, and the Economic Strategy will support the generation of external funding opportunities.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Economic Strategy sits alongside other Council policies and strategies.
- 9.2 It provides a clear and achievable economic vision and guides the way we do business, along with the area's economic activity and ambitions.
- 9.3 The strategy underpins and reinforces the Council's stated aims and objectives for the local area, bringing together a number of agendas (Business Growth, Green Economy, Skills and Place-Making).

10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct HR implications contained within this report.

11. WARD IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The Economic Strategy covers all wards in North East Lincolnshire as the economic and social benefits are borough wide.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1 Economic Recovery Plan (<https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/covid-19-guidance-and-support/covid-19-business/north-east-lincolnshire-economic-recovery-plan/>)

13. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

Sharon Wroot, Executive Director for Environment, Economy and Resources
Tel: 01472 324423

Damien Jaines-White, Assistant Director Regeneration
Tel: 01472 324674

Margaret Johnson, Inward Investment Manager (Acting)
Tel. 01472 324461

COUNCILLOR PHILIP JACKSON
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

**NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE
ECONOMIC STRATEGY**

2021

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1.0 Foreword and introduction

This Economic Strategy re-affirms our confidence and certainty in the direction of travel for our economy and our approach to local economic development for a wide range of stakeholders, coordinating their actions and investment to help secure its objectives, whilst setting the foundations for future investment for the next 3-5 years.

Developed through collaboration and engagement with key partners, including the local business community, our Economic Strategy provides a dynamic, creative, and distinctive approach to economic growth, capturing the resilience and aspirations of businesses, while supporting unrivalled job opportunities for local people and maximising the potential of our towns.

2020/21 saw an unprecedented year of change with the Covid-19 pandemic, Brexit, and the emergence of Freeports. Our Economic Strategy must account for future uncertainties, consider new ideas, and be open to challenge. It is a model which will maximise the opportunities for our businesses and communities, and a framework for decision making with regular reviews and points for action.

North East Lincolnshire has a stable and resilient economy, that has been shaped by its connection to the North Sea. Ports, manufacturing, and food processing still are at the core to the employment of our residents. The local economy is transforming again, strengthened by the strategic position it occupies on the Greater Lincolnshire coast and Humber Estuary.

The success of Offshore Wind farm clusters off our coastline continue to grow with an increasing number of businesses choosing the Port of Grimsby as their home, including Orsted's East Coast hub, the world's largest offshore wind Operations and Maintenance centre, RWE, the second largest offshore wind operator, and the commitment of the ORE Catapult to set up a centre of excellence on the Port.

While we encourage and attain economic growth, it is equally important that we consider the climate impact and the need to get carbon emissions under control. As part of the most carbon intensive industrial cluster in the UK, the protection of our natural assets combined with the decarbonisation of heavy industry, chemical processing and manufacturing is developing a new economic horizon. North East Lincolnshire is strategically well placed to grow as a leading UK destination in green energy technologies.

As well as the unique challenges faced by being a coastal community, our visitor economy and retail sectors were hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic, and our town centres will require a great deal of support to recover. Plans for repurposing and revitalising Grimsby Town Centre through the Future High Streets Fund and Towns Fund will play a critical role in achieving this and a Masterplan for the resort and town centre is also being developed to help shape the future of Cleethorpes.

In driving more investment into our economy, we will need to develop a similar transformation in our workforce skills to ensure people are well placed and informed about the future opportunities and employer needs. This is going to require individuals and businesses to invest more in training our workforce to meet those needs, both for those in employment and for those preparing to join.

The Economic Strategy 2021 is built on four cornerstones of NEL's Economy.

1. Business Growth - Building on our industry strengths.
2. A green economy– Maximising low carbon and healthy initiatives in industry and in our Place.
3. Skills – Investing in our workforce.
4. Place-making – Ensuring our towns are great places to live, work, visit and stay.

These four cornerstones are at the heart of our commitment to creating a stronger economy and stronger communities and form the basis of the priority actions we will deliver together to help to achieve our objectives.

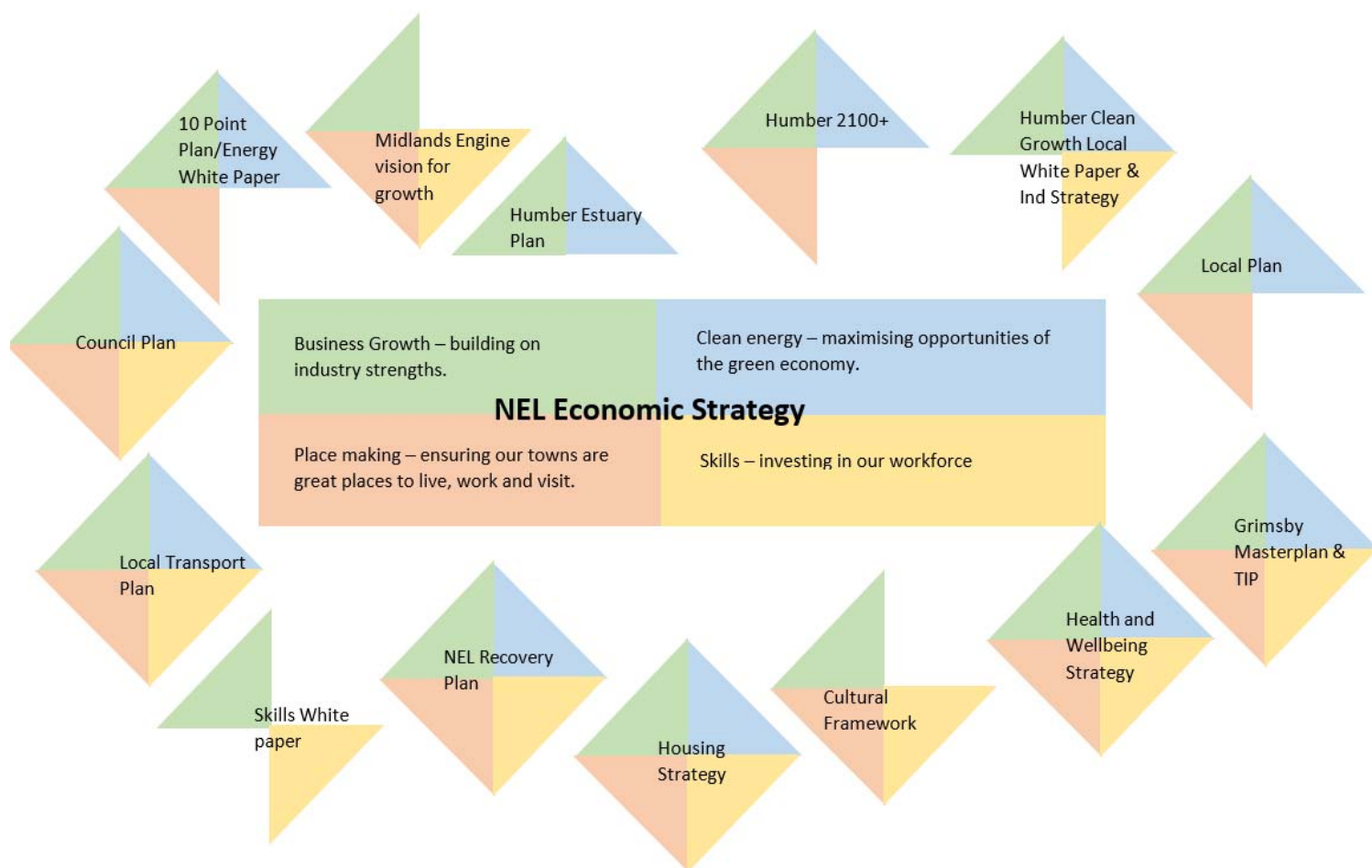
2.0 Economic Strategy at a glance

A snapshot of our vision, the objectives we have set out, the programmes which will enable this and some of the outcomes we hope to achieve for our businesses and communities. Specific activities are identified throughout the document, and an action plan with outputs created at the end.

	Business Growth Building on our industry strengths	A green economy Maximising low carbon and healthy initiatives in industry and in our Place.	Skills Investing in our workforce	Place-making Ensuring our towns are great places to live, work, visit and stay.
Vision	To strengthen the core business foundations where there is the most potential to add value.	To be the centre of the UK renewables industry, with a thriving low carbon economy powered by sustainable energy, where our businesses and communities embrace a low carbon future to protect the environment for future generations.	To create an environment where businesses flourish, and our residents have access to the necessary skills to adjust to a changing business environment.	To transform our town centres into vibrant, dynamic destinations for visitors, and where residents and businesses are proud of where they live and work.
Objectives	<p>To continue to support business recovery and resilience as we emerge from Covid-19.</p> <p>To continue to invest in our key employment areas to modernise our business needs and create the infrastructure for growth and investment. This includes our industrial estates, maximising the opportunities that Freeport status brings, but also in our town centres where we will create an environment which attracts new business activity and supports the change in working practices.</p> <p>To work with our sector leads to review the key strategic challenges and to create an action plan which drives business growth and supports our Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs).</p>	<p>To support the decarbonisation of energy intensive businesses and transport through measures such as carbon capture and storage.</p> <p>Support research and development opportunities for low carbon alternatives to fuel, and for next generation components.</p> <p>To incorporate low carbon, biodiversity, and healthy initiatives into our working practices and programmes.</p> <p>Build on our success of ecological mitigation around key development sites, to ensure growth and environmental performance go hand in hand.</p>	<p>To support the local workforce to develop the skills for an adapting business environment, and occupational changes through robotics, automation, and digitalisation.</p> <p>To create a less complex landscape of initiatives for employees and employers, by promoting a collaborative, collective working approach between providers.</p> <p>To ensure specialised training is available to support skills gaps across industry and gain the full engagement of businesses in succession planning.</p> <p>To increase participation rates in learning across the borough, both in young people and adults.</p>	<p>Enhance the visitor experience and promote civic pride, creating a year-round tourism offer through marketing activities and a diverse event and cultural programme to attract more visitors and promote longer stays.</p> <p>To continue the regeneration and revitalisation of our Town Centres, including the diversification of retail space for a sustainable future, creating a renewed interest in town centre living and working to support the evening/night-time economy.</p> <p>To open up our waterfront in Grimsby Town Centre to provide a vibrant mix of activities, leisure and living opportunities.</p> <p>To identify opportunities from the Government's Tourism Recovery Plan for the advantage of the local sector.</p>
Programmes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SHIIP 2. Growth Hub business support programmes 3. Freeport seed capital 4. Business environment study (property and digital) 5. Cleethorpes Masterplan 6. Local Transport Plan (LTP) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NEL Net Zero Carbon Roadmap 2. Humber Industrial Cluster Plan 3. Freeport Innovation hubs 4. ORE Catapult 5. Humber 2100+ 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Skills implementation plan 2. Kickstart 3. A range of programmes at National (DWP), regional (LEP) and local levels 4. Green energy hub 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Grimsby Town regeneration programmes (Future High Street Fund/Towns Fund) 2. Cleethorpes Masterplan 3. Grimsby Creates 4. Creativity Strategy for NEL 5. Tourism Action Plan 6. Housing Strategy
Outcomes	<p>New business units completed on development land.</p> <p>New town centre business space, a decrease in vacant units, and new strategic development sites identified.</p> <p>Improved freight rail links and estate road infrastructure.</p> <p>More businesses aware of and taking advantage of support mechanisms.</p>	<p>Transition of business and industry towards a carbon neutral and sustainable future.</p> <p>Visual renewable energy initiatives in our town centres.</p> <p>An increase in R&D activities, including 5G infrastructure to support innovation testing.</p> <p>The creation of a green energy hub in Grimsby Town Centre.</p>	<p>The retention of more graduates through better jobs and higher earning potential.</p> <p>A less fragmented landscape between skills providers.</p> <p>An increase in the number of good quality jobs, raising the average earnings locally.</p> <p>An increase in Apprenticeship and graduate placements locally.</p>	<p>Improved gateways into Grimsby, Cleethorpes, and Immingham to aid perception issues.</p> <p>An increase in the number of visitors who stay for longer and spend more.</p> <p>A full programme of events and activities across the whole year.</p> <p>An improved leisure, creative, cultural, heritage and business offer in our Town Centres.</p> <p>Improved infrastructure, including a direct rail link to London.</p>

3.0 Strategic fit

The table shown in Appendix A outlines in detail the priorities for each of the linked strategies, but as shown in the diagram below, the four cornerstones underpin local, regional, and national strategies. Through the Economic Strategy and other mechanisms, the Council and partners will continue to influence the strategic direction of the Greater Lincolnshire LEP's.



3.1 New and emerging strategies

Several strategies are in development and will form an important role in shaping our economy. These have been considered as part of the development of the Economic Strategy and will form part of the resulting action plan to ensure key areas of development have a focus, these include.

- The Cleethorpes Masterplan and Investment Plan which will focus on the next phases of development in Cleethorpes and identify opportunities for investment.
- The Tourism Action Plan, aligning with the Government's Tourism Recovery Plan, to build on our visitor economy, working to promote the borough, attract more visitors and encourage longer stays.
- The Creativity Strategy which will set out how arts, culture and heritage will be at the heart of enhancing the lives of people in North East Lincolnshire. It will celebrate our unique heritage and how creative innovation will enable a prosperous future.

4.0 North East Lincolnshire in Context

4.1 Background

North East Lincolnshire lies on the east coast of England, at the mouth of the River Humber, the UK's Energy Estuary, and the gateway to Europe for the economies of the 'Northern Powerhouse' and 'Midlands Engine'. Our location, and the growth of the Ports of Grimsby and Immingham, have played a major role in our industrial development and continue to underpin our economy today, and securing Freeport status for the Humber Ports presents a huge opportunity for the area, both in terms of job opportunities and investment.

With a population of 159,400 (ONS: Population estimates 2020) – mainly residing the areas of Grimsby, Cleethorpes, and Immingham, all with differing demographics. Grimsby, a traditional industrial town with its core shopping centre close to the waterfront of Alexandra Dock, and industrially at the heart of the burgeoning offshore wind industry, home to two of the largest offshore wind owner operators who have chosen the Port for their Operations and Maintenance activities. Cleethorpes, our traditional seaside resort with visitor attractions, a long quality beach, boating lake and a wide mix of boutique shops and restaurants. Immingham, our industrial backbone, key to attracting industrial investment and home to the largest port by tonnage in the UK.

North East Lincolnshire has 95,100 working age residents, 70,900 are in employment. Of the 66,000 jobs (ONS: Business Register and Employment Survey 2019), over half of the employment base is in the three largest sectors of Manufacturing, Wholesale and Retail trades and Human Health and Social Work. The proportion of the jobs in manufacturing, wholesale and retail trades and the transport and storage sector are larger than the GB averages in terms of percentage of the total jobs share. In manufacturing that proportion is almost double the GB averages. Our strengths underpin the importance of the Ports, Logistics, and the food processing sector in the area as well as the neighbouring refineries and chemical processing related to the east coast gateway Grimsby and Immingham represent to the UK.

Key employment locations include Grimsby Town Centre, the Ports and related employment sites, and the Europarc Business Park, while the South Humber Industrial Investment Programme (SHIIP) is unlocking 90 additional hectares of employment land over the next 20 years.

In terms of economic performance, GVA has grown by 16.5% over the past ten years to £3.1bn (ONS, GVA by local authority 2016). In 2019, the number of jobs had dropped to 66,000 from 67,000 in 2015 (ONS Business register and employment survey) with numbers lost across the public sectors (Education and Health) it has remained below pre-recession levels, the number of jobs in Yorkshire and the Humber and Great Britain have slightly grown. The full impact of Covid on jobs numbers is unlikely to be seen for some time.

North East Lincolnshire is home to 4,635 businesses (ONS: Inter Departmental Business Register 2020), including major national and international companies such as Young's, ABP, Siemens and Ørsted. The business environment is made up of seven priority sectors, based on current specialisms and geographical strengths, employment concentration and numbers in employment. These are categorised as

- Ports and Logistics
- Renewable energy
- Chemical processing
- Construction
- Food processing and manufacturing
- Health and Care

- Visitor Economy, Service and Retail

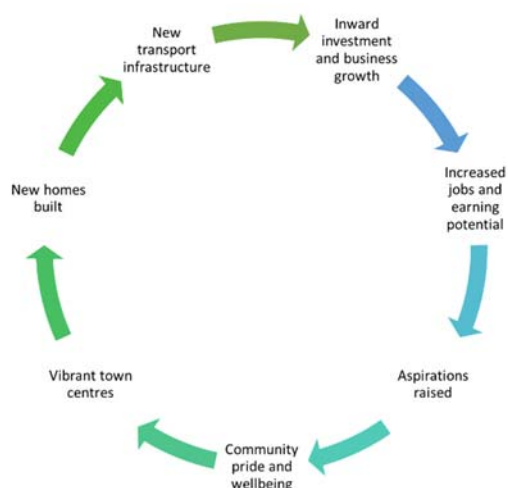
In addition, Advanced Manufacturing has been identified as a growing industry in North East Lincolnshire with employment growing by around 50% over the past ten years, and the labour force, transport linkages and availability of land all make NEL an attractive location for advanced manufacturing investment.

Our industrial base has grown, with the Humber Link Road, Mitigation land and the first building on Pioneer Park, an integral part of the South Humber Industrial Investment Programme (SHIIP) all being delivered. In addition, North East Lincolnshire is part of a successful Humber Freeport bid, the largest in the UK, which will attract investment, become a hotbed for innovation and create high value jobs.

Despite the uncertainties of the past year, North East Lincolnshire has continued to develop as a place. Initiatives such as Grimsby Creates, the completion of the Coastal Communities Fund public realm enhancement works in Cleethorpes, delivery of events such as Festival of the Sky and Sea, and the completion of the Grimsby Town Investment Plan which, along with the Future High Street Funding, has attracted funding of £48m to regenerate, reinvigorate and reinvent the town centre.

4.2 Setting the scene.

To enable us to capitalise on economic growth we must understand what this means for our residents and how the links between creating sustainable business and attracting investment converts into a better place to live and improved health and wellbeing. The diagram below shows the relationship cycle of how the elements fit together as a bigger picture.



In 2019, the North East Lincolnshire Union board approved Talking, Listening and Working Together, a community engagement strategy and the commitment which sets out how the council and the CCG will engage with communities. Developed by community members and representatives from the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector, it sets out the steps we will take to understand the different points of view of local people, and to work together to develop the best solutions so we can all live well in North East Lincolnshire. The strategy is a first step towards a clear and more consistently applied approach to developing an ‘on the ground’ understanding of North East Lincolnshire and its communities. This will build mutual trust and sincere relationships to help us make the right decisions and support community-led change.

To understand the journey North East Lincolnshire has made over the past five years, the incredible amount of work, and the progress made, we need to revisit our vision from 2016.

The 2016 Economic Strategy set out a long-term vision for North East Lincolnshire’s economy, aligned with the plan period adopted for the Council’s Local Plan to 2032:

“North East Lincolnshire – where businesses invest and grow; our entrepreneurs flourish; our workforce is skilled, productive and has fulfilling, well-paid jobs; our infrastructure is world class; and our young people’s aspirations hold no bounds.”

To realise the above vision for North East Lincolnshire's economy, the 2016 Strategy set out three significant and inter-related challenges, which remain relevant in 2021:

• to create the 'right' environment to attract and sustain business investment, providing high quality business infrastructure (including road and rail connectivity, superfast broadband, high quality employment sites and premises); access to effective business support services which foster growth; access to cost effective finance tailored to meet business needs; support to stimulate entrepreneurship and new businesses, including those with high growth potential; and a skilled, productive workforce.

Considerable progress has been made through a range of programmes and projects, including.

- completion of SHIP infrastructure, including the completion of the Humber Link Road, providing a strategic link between the Ports of Grimsby and Immingham, unlocking development land, delivery of 100 acres of mitigation land (which won a Natural Environment award in 2020 for Planning Excellence), infrastructure to Pioneer Business Park and funding secured to develop a flagship building on the site, with the tenant in occupation.
- funding secured to unlock two further speculative builds on Europarc, both of which are already sold or let.
- securing Freeport status for the Humber Ports and the potential for up to £15m seed capital investment for North East Lincolnshire to further unlock investment and development opportunities.
- increased business support mechanisms, and new business units to support SME's.

• to improve our 'quality of place', including delivering housing choice and affordability; developing our leisure and cultural offer; capitalising on our heritage assets and the built/natural environment/public realm; and promoting NEL to key audiences – including existing residents – as a place to live, work, visit and invest.

A significant amount of funding has been secured to support the revitalisation of our towns,

- The Greater Grimsby Town Deal, a pilot model for government, enabled several projects to unlock investment. The success of this pilot resulted in the roll out of a further 100 Town Deals across the county, resulting in Grimsby securing a further £22m funding to create a Grimsby Masterplan, Town Investment Plan and an exciting programme of regeneration activities commencing in 2021/22. A wide consultation exercise took place to ensure a sense of connectedness and a shared sense of ownership from businesses and the community, an important part of identifying the social and environmental priorities of our residents.
- Grimsby was also successful in securing £17.3m through the Future High Streets Fund to deliver the repurposing and revitalisation of Victoria Street West, a joint initiative with Freshney Place which will bring a new vibrant market space, food and drink establishments and leisure space into the heart of the town.
- Grimsby was successful in receiving £3.3m from the Cultural Recovery Fund which has helped deliver the refurbishment of St James' Square and built new and innovative creative partnership to deliver creative programming throughout Grimsby town centre.
- Heritage Action Zone status awarded for Grimsby Town Centre and the Docks, with funding to deliver a range of projects including a creative workspace on the Kasbah, enhancing Grimsby Minster and the building of the Horizon Youth Centre.
- Cleethorpes has seen the delivery of a substantial £6.7m regeneration programme funded through Coastal Communities Fund, National Heritage Lottery Fund and the Humber LEP and a revived programme of activities throughout the borough which have drawn visitors from across the country.

• to equip NEL residents – particularly young people, and those living in our most deprived communities – with the skills and confidence to secure and sustain well paid employment in all sectors

of our economy; this means improving the educational attainment of our young people and preparing them more effectively for the world of work; developing better career pathways including Apprenticeships and other vocational/academic learning; improving the quality and relevance of training for unemployed adults; and encouraging more employers to invest in upskilling their workforce.

- The Careers & Enterprise Company are actively involved in our secondary academies promoting work related learning activity to attempt to bridge the gap between education and employment enabling young people to apply what they learn to the world of work.
- Since 2016 there has been an increase in the number of school leavers continuing with their education in some form or another, with a decline in the number taking up apprenticeships but an increase in the number moving into employment.
- The local Employability Wide Forum, made up of organisations who have a vested interest in supporting all members of the community into education, employment or training continue to meet to ensure that employability initiatives and support are meeting the needs of the local community, acknowledging barriers which sometimes prevent positive progression.
- Skills funding has continued to support local initiatives, particularly in collaboration with the local Job Centre, supporting adults into employment, education, or further training. However, we know that too many of our residents do not have the skills needed to capitalise on the new jobs that will come into the borough in the next 10-20 years.

Building on these successes, we will

1. Continue to engage with our businesses and communities to ensure a sense of connectedness and shared ownership, taking onboard the place-based engagement strategy of [*Talking, Listening and Working Together*](#).
2. Continue to develop and promote our SHIP sites to stimulate business growth and investment.
3. Continue to support speculative builds, working in partnership to secure funding to unlock development.
4. Continue to work with the Humber Freeport bid team to deliver a Freeport model, including securing Seed Capital funding to support investment.
5. Continue to work with our business support network to identify funding and support mechanisms for our business environment.
6. Deliver the Towns Fund and Future High Streets Fund programmes whilst continuing to plan for the next phases of development.
7. Complete the creative workspace at the Kasbah, creating a vibrant, alternative working space for the creative industries.
8. Work to support delivery of a full programme of events across the region, including new events targeting growth tourism markets and improve the legacy of existing events which have proven successful engagement
9. Continue to forge relationships between employers and providers, seeking to ensure our workforce of the future has access to all opportunities.
10. Commit to put in a programme of intervention that addresses the skills challenge some of our residents' face in being ready for future skilled job opportunities.

4.3 Covid-19

The 2020s started with two of the largest changes to the UK in the last fifty years: Covid-19 and Brexit, and in a similar way to the consolidation of the UK's banking industry post 1918, and the emergence of suburban living after 1945, the country is living through another big change moment.

This has been a time of unprecedented government interventions including the growth of place-based programmes, and the influence on UK-wide policy agendas such as 'levelling up'. We have experienced a shift in economic geography as Coronavirus imposed changes on households and businesses, forcing us to change the relationships we have with the places that matter most to us: where we live, work and play.

The pandemic has tested the resilience and strength of our local communities and businesses. Home, flexible, and remote working has accelerated many digital skills in the homes as we seek to continue learning and work. Despite all the uncertainties work has continued.

Covid-19 related business grants of more than £62m were distributed to businesses across North East Lincolnshire between March 2020 and July 2021, and other initiatives and support mechanisms such as Bounce Back Loans and furlough were taken up. New ways of delivering services have emerged, alongside more looking to self-employment as a way forward, and some businesses flourished during this time, finding new and innovative ways of working. In addition, with limits on travel, many householders turned to home and garden improvements, creating a surge in demand for supplies.

Recovery has affected our sectors in different ways. The deepest felt by our hospitality, leisure, and retail businesses. Levels of those furloughed were drawn to a peak in numbers in August 2020 to nearly 20,000, just over a quarter of our economically active workforce. Recovery of some sectors such as Construction and Manufacturing was relatively quick as flexible working and adapted working environments enabled a safe return to work. Unemployment levels have risen like the rest of the UK, with youth unemployment (16–24-year old's) particularly high and a reduction in female employment levels.

Health and wellbeing are more important now than ever before – homeworking, volunteering, and a better work-life balance has changed many people's perspective and priorities, but also furlough, redundancies and loneliness have had an effect.

North East Lincolnshire Council created a Recovery document for business, 'Reshape, Restore, Replenish' as a pre-cursor to the Economic Strategy, signposting the support packages available to businesses and their workforce to assist with resilience and recovery, but also outlining the steps being taken to ensure the area can build back better in the future.

Following the general election in 2019, government planned to progress many important Bills through Parliament. Clearly those plans had to change to reflect the major impacts of the Covid pandemic with Skills for Jobs and the announcements of the new Structural Funds to replace the European Programmes beginning to emerge. National policies have been produced and the renewable and green agenda as well as skills and enterprise are at the heart of those plans. The Prime Minister's promise to 'level up across Britain' reconfirmed the focus of the 2017 Industrial Strategy White Paper, recent announcements relating to the levelling up agenda include.

- An increase in R&D investment.
- Reconfirmation of the commitment for a new UK Shared Prosperity Fund to match EU receipts of £1.5bn.
- A new levelling up fund worth £4bn for England to invest in infrastructure, including innovation.
- Continued investment from the Towns Fund to regenerate our high street.
- £50.7m for business support programmes to improve SME productivity through leadership, management, and technology adoption.

Post Covid – we will

1. Continue to support the recovery of businesses through grant support mechanisms where available.
2. Continue to work with business support agencies to offer advice and guidance through webinars, training, advisor support, etc. including post-covid financial resilience and diversification.
3. Ensure initiatives from government are made available to our local business community.
4. Gather a strong post-covid evidence base of the needs of our business community to ensure economic resilience.
5. Commit to bidding for funding which will further enhance regeneration and growth.

4.4 Protecting our Environment

The relationship between economic growth and environmental sustainability has never been more important with sustainable development and growth essential to underpin economic activity and wellbeing. We face significant environmental challenges, both in the UK and globally. The Humber is the most carbon intensive industrial cluster in the country, emitting 12.4m tonnes a year.

A report by DEFRA on Economic Growth and the Environment (2010) states

'Economic and environmental performance must go hand in hand. The natural environment is central to economic activity and growth, providing the resources we need to produce goods and services, and absorbing and processing unwanted by-products in the form of pollution and waste. Environmental assets contribute to managing risks to economic and social activity, helping to regulate flood risks, regulating the local climate (both air quality and temperature), and maintaining the supply of clean water and other resources. This underpins economic activity and wellbeing, and so maintaining the condition of natural assets is a key factor in sustaining growth for the longer term. Correspondingly, economic growth contributes to the investment and dynamism needed to develop and deploy new technology, which is fundamental to both productivity growth and managing environmental assets.'

NELC has declared a climate emergency and is developing a roadmap to a Zero Carbon future. To address the climate change emergency, it is imperative that any future development considers the lifecycle carbon impact and environmental sustainability. This includes commercial, residential and transportation.

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs sets out 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), adopted in 2015, which are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. It is a model which North East Lincolnshire should aspire to achieving locally.



Protecting our environment – we will

1. Continue to develop the North East Lincolnshire Zero Carbon Roadmap
2. Ensure all development considers carbon impact and sustainability to protect and enhance our natural assets and to promote a sense of wellbeing.
3. Adopt the UN Sustainable Development Goals as standard to achieve a better and more sustainable future for our businesses and communities.

4.5 Our workforce

In March 2020 NEL's resident workforce aged 16-64 was 74,600 (ONS: Annual Population Survey). Unemployment at this time was 5.2% as it remains consistently higher than regional or GB averages by some 1 to 1.3% and at times of higher unemployment levels the gap can be wider. It is estimated that nearly 90% of the local labour force live and work in the local area.

Although overall employment growth over the last 5 years has been stable, there is some longer-term evidence of a slight reduction as some sectors have changed operational models to reduce labour numbers. Over half of the employment base is in the three largest sectors of Manufacturing, Wholesale and Retail trades and Human Health and Social Work.

This poses challenges to the local workforce – the drive for increased productivity and innovation will reduce job numbers, particularly in food manufacturing which currently employs over 6,000 people. Additionally, the high-street retail trade has suffered terribly during the Covid-19 pandemic with consumers turning to online shopping and despite government intervention and local support packages to support retailers, some businesses may not survive.

There are opportunities for our workforce, the emergence of new businesses to the renewable energy sector and advanced manufacturing brings the opportunity for skills transfer into new industries. Understanding the expectations and aspirations of our workforce, and in particular our young people, is essential to creating the opportunities, retaining the talent, and enhancing the 'offer' to businesses who want to invest in a local talent pool. Initiatives such as Women into Manufacturing and Engineering (WiME), Sector Ambassadors, Young Peoples Networks, and a programme of visits, talks, exhibitions and activities at schools, colleges, and community centres, led by business and supported by NELC will inform and inspire our communities and raise awareness of the opportunities available.

Developing a strong and sustainable pipeline of local training and upskilling opportunities is key to the long-term economic prosperity of the region. Increasing strengths in innovative, fast-growing, and strategically important sectors for the UK, such as clean energy, energy-intensive industries, and advanced manufacturing, require a new and evolving skillset. Therefore, it is imperative that opportunities exist to support the local labour force to be employed successfully in these sectors, both for the benefit of the industries and our local communities.

The opportunities provided by the Humber Freeport through a dedicated Freeport Skills Group will unlock employment opportunities in fast-growing, highly skilled sectors that will strengthen the dynamics of the local jobs market and enable workers to develop careers within the region as well as creating additional opportunities for microbusinesses and the self-employed.

While strengthening the economy and creating jobs is a major priority, increasing attention is being given to quality of life and wellbeing. This agenda is now influencing employer behaviour as well as public sector investment priorities. People's expectations are changing to take a wider view of lifestyle, beyond merely income, placing a greater emphasis on employment flexibility, neighbourhood environment, and quality of key public services including schools, and healthcare services.

This is reflected in place shaping – creating the opportunities for people to thrive through jobs, education, and leisure, creating an infrastructure that keeps people connected and able to access opportunities and services. The living and working experiences of our workforce are key to promoting a healthy work-life balance, and a working environment which offers healthy alternatives to travel, a flexible approach and sustainable use of resources will aid this. The 15 minutes City Concept connects neighbourhoods with the objective that everyone can meet most, if not all, of their needs within a short walk or bike ride from their home, reconnecting people with local amenities.

The breadth of community spirit was spotlighted through the Covid-19 pandemic as people came together to support one another. The Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector in North East Lincolnshire plays an important role in the economy, not just through the support networks it offers to our most vulnerable residents, but as a significant local employer. The sector comprises of 376 registered charities, with a combined income of £67m, employing 3,000 people and governed by 1,200 trustees. Investing in people through skills, training and support and working across every field of the community landscape from health and social care to the environment.

The long-term impact of Covid on our local workforce is yet to be seen, but expectations are that those with the lowest skills and most vulnerable will be hit the hardest and we have already seen the impact on our younger people who have the highest levels of unemployment. However, initiatives such as the Kickstart scheme and other funding being released gives us the opportunity to address specific problems and grow our workforce, especially in those sectors where retraining and upskilling will be critical to assisting people back into employment.

By fully engaging with our employers, skills providers, and training organisations to understand the business needs of the future, our workforce of the future has access to the necessary skills and opportunities to fulfil their ambitions.

A study carried out by the Institute for the Future of Work (IFOW) ‘The Grimsby Project’ concluded that the aspirations of our workforce are high, but at present the mechanisms for achieving them are lacking, with a need to create ladders to success so that the real desires of communities are heard.

4.6 Skills

Internal discussions and stakeholders have raised concerns that there is lack of a local coordinated approach to skills, and it is acknowledged that this needs to be addressed. There are two main identifiers to the local skills challenge.

- new technologies are bringing highly skilled job opportunities, but these are not matched by local talent pool.
- North East Lincolnshire has high levels of multiple deprivation, preventing barriers to gaining the qualifications, skills, and capabilities to take up training and employment opportunities.

The council has a statutory role to monitor attainment up to age 16/17, but after that our involvement is limited (except for some vulnerable groups), which makes it difficult to have an influence. In addition, the Greater Lincolnshire LEP produces a skills report which forecasts economic growth against labour market analysis to consider skills gaps and potential programmes to address this, and these documents are used to influence government funding.

However, these reports are not designed to reflect local nuances and the challenges faced at a very local level, e.g., it may conclude that participation is low in North East Lincolnshire compared to the rest of the region, but it won’t dig into the factors behind that issue. Locally, we should gather intelligence to allow for local, targeted, interventions.

In January 2021, the government published the Skills White Paper – Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth. Improved engagement with the Greater Lincolnshire LEP and council interventions are needed to ensure that local training providers are aware of, and able to benefit fully from the funding opportunities.

Statistics drawn from the Local Economic Assessment 2020 highlighted the following points.

Participation of 16–17-year-olds is low, and the trend is decreasing, reporting the lowest level in the Yorkshire and Humber region and Lincolnshire, where participation figures are above 90%. Figures for those not in education, employment, or training (NEET's) in NEL at the end of 2019 was 6.5% compared to 5.6% for the Yorkshire and Humber region and 4.8% across Lincolnshire (ONS, Employment and Labour Market Data). This with decreasing levels of adult learning participation is of concern.

The percentage of students attending a top 3 University is also dropping. Statistics show that NEL residents graduating were mainly studying at local Universities particularly Hull which is ranked in Higher Times Universities tables in 2021 as 61 of 130 - equal to the University of Lincoln (Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency, HESA). In terms of regional distances Leeds, Sheffield, York, Manchester, and Nottingham are in the top third of university tables. If these were promoted this would increase the participation in the top UK Universities alongside the wider Oxbridge and Russell Group choices.

The Humber region is a net-exporter of first-degree graduates, retaining only 1,710 of the 2,285 who entered work in 2016/17 (Source: HESA Destination of Leavers of Higher Education Survey data 2016/17). The majority of NEL graduates gained employment in the public sector.

In 2020/21 North East Lincolnshire Council concentrated on reviewing the skills opportunities and the threats businesses are currently facing. The review considered previous local strategic skills reviews, as well as national policies and reports, and included insights from the local business community.

There is an additional opportunity to specifically focus on the opportunities in the health sector through the recent NHS reforms with the development of Integrated Care Systems (ICS). This will create opportunities for partners to work together to address some of the challenges within the Health and Care sector with a focus on Place and shared ambition. The sector is one which is due to grow and where skills demands are rapidly changing. The Northern Lincolnshire & Goole (NLAG) NHS Foundation Trust have identified that there are over 150 skills sets across hospital provision alone. The sector employs the highest proportion of graduates in the borough.

Key points from the business community were.

1. Generally good skills provision across all sectors, with examples of joint employer and trainer relationships.
2. Training offered to employers is often complex and fragmented, requires brokerage to listen and tailor to employer's needs.
3. Areas for improvement include digital and green skills.
4. Recovery priority is to support employees to retrain and up-skill in the workplace.
5. Local business engagement with education can be strengthened to ensure accurate view of local employment opportunities.
6. Evidence of good retention and attraction of graduates and skilled people.
7. Encourage more private sector employers to employ graduates.
8. Provide skill shortage areas with tailored short courses and pre-employment package meet needs.
9. More support should be offered to employers to restructure, retrain, or plan recovery and longer-term workforce needs in the face of new technologies and major economic changes.

10. Strengthening people management skills in the workplace would be beneficial across several sectors.

In the absence of a skills strategy, a plan which highlights several key aspirations in relation to education, careers and skills which can be actioned and monitored would be appropriate and timely. In 2020, Amberwade Ltd provided some valuable analysis of the skills landscape and suggested a Skills Implementation Plan, capturing several key challenges and identifying potential interventions and sources of funding. This forms a good basis for a Skills Strategy but will require a dedicated resource to develop and lead the skills agenda, particularly in relation to our economy.

Workforce and Skills - we will

1. Continue to engage with partners to understand fully the skills landscape, the opportunities, and the future needs of our businesses, taking on board the comments in the IFOW 'The Grimsby Project'.
2. Support initiatives which inform, build ambition, and inspire our communities and youngsters to understand the opportunities in our business sectors and particularly new and emerging industries
3. Address the fragmented landscape between education and employers by bringing together providers to reach a common understanding of needs.
4. Evidence immediate priorities with the buy-in of all stakeholders to address the key barriers to education, careers, and skills.
5. Work closely with the Freeport skills group to unlock opportunities for our workforce
6. Promote a collaborative, collective working approach to funding opportunities.
7. Continue to work on a Skills Implementation Plan, building on work carried out by Amberwade Ltd and commit to a dedicated resource to lead on the development, delivery, and evaluation of a skills strategy.

5.0 Priority programmes

North East Lincolnshire Council is a key enabler of the local economy, but ultimately it is the activity and investment of businesses that defines the borough's economy. Attracting new businesses and meeting the needs and expectations of growing, successful businesses must lie at the heart of our economic strategy.

Priority programmes developed, delivered, and currently in delivery will support businesses to create sustained employment for the people of North East Lincolnshire and enhance the quality of place to attract workers and visitors as well as providing our residents with a healthy, vibrant environment in which to live.

Quality of life and wellbeing, especially post-covid provides an added consideration in terms of our economic strategy and emphasises the need to take account of both the environment and service provision within the local economy. Changes to working practices with more businesses choosing to move away from high-cost offices to a more remote working environment will have an impact on the dynamics of our town centres and workforce behaviours. More and more we need to find alternative ways of attracting people into our towns.

Quality of place is an essential characteristic which has a powerful influence on the well-being of our residents; a sense of freedom from pollution, the presence of aesthetically pleasing natural features

and buildings, connectivity and the dynamics of the place all add to people's satisfaction and pride in where they live and work.

5.1 Town Centres

5.11 Grimsby

Footfall has been dropping in Grimsby Town Centre consistently since 2016 (Source: Springboard footfall data), a trend across the whole country as traditional town centres saw a decline in retail activities. This has resulted in a higher proportion of vacant units and a decline in business activity. Government acknowledged that unless acted upon, town centres would be unsustainable in the long term unless a more diversified offer to attract alternative uses including a range of leisure and business uses, improving activities and the night time economy.

Grimsby was the first town to secure a Town Deal in 2018 and this support helped unlock projects and leverage private sector investment into the wider region. To ensure that Grimsby Town Centre maintains pace with investment across the wider region, a Grimsby Town Masterplan was produced in 2020 informed through extensive consultation with businesses and communities, focussing on a transformational change to revitalise and reinvigorate the town centre, including making the best of our untapped waterfront potential. The aim is to create a town centre which focusses on core activities which promote a sense of wellbeing that our residents can enjoy and be proud of.

As a result of the Grimsby Town Masterplan, a Town Investment Plan was created, and funding of £20.9m secured to deliver 6 projects to address the main weaknesses and challenges the town centre faces and to help deliver the ambitions of residents, businesses, and other partners in Grimsby, bringing in new activities and opportunities.

In tandem with the Grimsby Town Masterplan and Town Investment Plan, an additional £17.3m was secured through the Future High Streets Fund for an ambitious redevelopment of the Western end of Victoria Street, repurposing some poor-quality retail space, reconnecting the Market Hall, and introducing new leisure facilities to the centre. This project, in conjunction with Freshney Place, creates new public realm to connect with the recent refurbishments at St James Square.

Additional regeneration works, including the replacement of the pedestrian bridge across the Freshney to access the waterfront and the Grimsby Fishing Heritage Centre, re-connecting the area for water and heritage-based activities and a renewed sense of purpose, and the acquirement of land on the adjoining Garth Lane all add to the development opportunities in the Town Centre.

The Great Grimsby Heritage Action Zone is a prime example of heritage led regeneration in North East Lincolnshire to address a number of heritage assets at risk, which are of national significance and importance, covering a broad area from the Kasbah portside to Grimsby Town Centre. This includes industrial spaces, with examples such as Petersons Smokehouse, Grimsby Creates Creative Industries Workspace, Great Grimsby Ice Factory, Victoria Mills Silo, Corporation Bridge and West Haven Maltings, visitor attractions and accredited museum such as Grimsby Fishing Heritage Centre and associated Historic Vessels, community spaces such as Central Library and Town Hall and public outdoor spaces such as St James' Square and Garth Lane public realms.

Heritage assets across North East Lincolnshire are linked to tremendous strategic opportunities, enhancing the place, and fundamental to all of this is how heritage can contribute to regeneration and place shaping, whilst also providing communities with a sense of ownership.

5.12 Cleethorpes

Cleethorpes remains a popular destination for residents and visitors with its long beach front, Victorian heritage, diverse offer of activities and independent shops, bars, and restaurants.

Recognising the unique challenges that face a coastal community, such as seasonal working, low skill levels, poor health and lower life expectancy, Cleethorpes welcomed and benefitted from a £3.8m investment through Coastal Communities Funding to improve and enhance the public realm, a programme of activities completed in 2021 with improvement works to Seaview Street, Alexandra Road, High Street, and the North Promenade. The Humber Local Enterprise Partnership provided £1m Local Growth Fund for public realm works at Sea Road and for the construction of a new building on a key strategic site on the former Waves site.

Additionally, £1.9m from the National Heritage Lottery Fund to restore some of the original Victorian buildings and heritage assets on Alexandra Road and Sea View Street.

A full range of activities and events, targeting a wide demographic of visitors, are held all year round, both at the Meridian Showground and across the wider town area and resort, including military days, festivals, races, and music events. Extending these events to create a year-round tourism offer will reduce the seasonality of the resort and encourage residents and visitors to enjoy longer stays and make repeat visits.

As we see some of these regeneration projects completed, the time is right to create a new Cleethorpes Masterplan and Investment Plan to highlight further areas of improvement and projects which will enhance the offer.

5.13 Immingham

Immingham is the smaller of the three North East Lincolnshire towns which was relatively undeveloped until the early 1900s when development started on Immingham Dock, and it has subsequently become a major industrial location. Forming the boundary between North and North East Lincolnshire and located at the heart of the Humber Freeport with the Immingham customs zones and neighbouring Tax site at Killingholme, Immingham stands to reap significant benefits from the Freeport. Consideration of the opportunities this will bring for additional housing and town centre amenities should be explored.

Immingham is home to the MODAL training centre and Maritime College, a £7.5m investment, one of the largest in Europe, which provides a range of merchant navy cadetships, logistics sector upskilling, and driver training with state-of-the-art simulators and scenario-based training for the Marine, Offshore Wind and Logistics sectors.

The Kennedy Way shopping area, constructed in 1965 is situated in the centre of the town, offering residents a range of value and essential retail stores. Immingham has a long history, being mentioned in the 11th-Century doomsday book and buildings, including St Andrew's church dating back to the 11th or 12th century. In 1608, the village briefly became a location in the story of the Pilgrim Fathers of America which features in the town's museum alongside the Great Central Railway archive. Focus on attracting visitors to Immingham to discover its history is being incorporated into the wider tourism offer for the county to promote longer stays.

5.2 South Humber Industrial Investment Plan (SHIIP)

This 15-year, £42m strategic programme is the most ambitious industrial project in North East Lincolnshire's history, delivering infrastructure improvements, land allocations and an international business development campaign to create high quality jobs and opportunities for local people.

The programme is delivering key assets which are already paying off in the number of investment enquiries and opportunities for business growth. The Humber Link Road, completed in January 2021, gives a direct road link between the Ports of Grimsby and Immingham, creating development opportunities on adjoining land.

Mitigation land, a strategy to promote economic growth whilst conserving the environment is the first of its type in Europe won a Natural Environment award earlier this year for Planning Excellence. Developed through partnerships with industry and environmental groups such as Natural England, RSPB, and the Environment Agency, the project builds mitigation land in advance of industrial demand, offsetting the impact of development and providing a bio-diversity net gain, the project provides monetary and time savings to investors.

The council owned Pioneer Business Park is under development, with a flagship building completed by the council in 2021 to kickstart investment. Tenants myenergi are global leaders in the design and manufacture of eco-smart home energy technology, and since taking over the building have committed to further expansion on the site. Progression of a development model for the remainder of the site will enable further business growth and job creation.

5.3 Freeport

In 2020, the Humber submitted a joint bid for a Freeport status covering a 45km area from the Ports of Grimsby & Immingham, and across to Hull on the north bank and Goole. The bid was successful, and it is expected the Freeport will be fully operational by early 2022.

Freeport status for the area brings with it huge potential. Within the Freeport are four customs sites in Grimsby, Immingham, Hull, and Goole, and three tax sites at Able Marine Energy Park, Goole, and Hull East. These tax sites offer incentives to attract new investment made by 2026.

In addition to initial seed capital funding from Government, the Freeport body benefits from the retention of 100% business rates generated on the tax sites which will be reinvested within the Freeport footprint to support the delivery of other sites across the Freeport Zone, a huge boost for North East Lincolnshire, particularly around the SHIP locations, providing new opportunities and benefits for the local supply chain.

The key objectives of a Freeport are to attract investment, create high value jobs, promote research and development, innovation, and clean energy technology and practices, all priorities apparent in the Economic Strategy.

The opportunities for North East Lincolnshire, our businesses and our workforce are endless, and a strong pan-Humber governance arrangement will ensure the best possible package for North East Lincolnshire and the Humber region.

Priority programmes – we will

1. Continue to deliver the Grimsby Town Centre programmes, whilst continually identifying additional investment and funding opportunities to further enhance the town centre.
2. Create a Cleethorpes Masterplan and Investment Plan to identify projects for the resort which will attract and retain more visitors to the resort.
3. Develop a Tourism Action Plan for the area, which aligns with Greater Lincolnshire's tourism offer and supports the Government's Tourism Recovery Plan.
4. Continue to invest in Council-owned heritage assets and explore how we can best use them to benefit the community, the economy, and visitors. This includes developing the future role of the Grimsby Fishing Heritage Centre and associated vessels, integrating our Library and Archive offer, and finding ways to house and display the North East Lincolnshire Museum Service Collection.
5. Identify how heritage spaces can be more effectively used as meeting places, places to celebrate, places to draw people in.
6. Recognise different types of assets – people and their stories, places and things that are dear to people, natural resources, local knowledge, and enthusiasm.
7. Continue to work with investors and local businesses to support the growth ambitions and creation of jobs on our SHIP sites, including progressing a delivery model for Pioneer Park.
8. Continue to work with the Freeport bid team to deliver a Humber Freeport spanning our local ports and surrounding areas, and we will work to secure funding to incentivise and unlock key industrial sites.

6.0 Our business environment

The dynamics of an existing business base are real influencers for growing businesses and inward investors, especially in high value clusters which enhance the overall image and improve confidence. Companies want to understand their chances of success in a local economy and an understanding of the level and quality of local and regional supply chain opportunities are essential.

Our Health and Wellbeing Strategy outlines the contribution of organisations, partnerships and systems which shape NEL and people's lives. Understanding that to achieve both stronger economy and stronger communities there needs to be a connection between the two to ensure benefit and impact on all citizens in NEL – good working relationships between Public Service, businesses, and community aid to promote and enable growth, social value, and resilience.

Business leadership and networks offer a valuable sense of connectedness, direction, and pride in a local economy. North East Lincolnshire has the advantage of a collaborative leadership arrangement through the Development and Growth board to set examples, as this extends beyond the function of the Local Authority. This Economic Strategy has been created through the engagement with our key sector leads and business communities to ensure the needs of the borough are captured.

The Development and Growth board are committed to supporting the outcomes of the Economic Strategy and will review, on an annual basis, key strategic challenges and opportunities that are cross sector and drive the economic growth of the area. To assist with this, North East Lincolnshire Council have committed to refresh the Local Economic Assessment on an annual basis to inform the direction of travel in respect of our workforce, GVA, and other key indicators. This framework will enable us to respond to pressures, seize opportunities and maintain an Economic Strategy which is continually reviewed and challenged.

6.1 Business support

North East Lincolnshire had 4,635 registered businesses in 2020, and all but 20 of those are SMEs with 4,010 being micro businesses, employing less than 10 staff.

Access to business support services for those in the early stages of development for those who do not have the resources, experience, or training to carry out the full range of tasks required to run a business can be critical.

North East Lincolnshire's future economic growth will, in part, be dependent on helping businesses across all sectors access the support they need to enhance their productivity and move activity 'up the value chain.' This will require access to high-quality, cost-effective business advice and support.

North East Lincolnshire provides a significant amount of independent Business support and Advice through a unique, commercially led not for profit company, E-Factor Group, who not only provide support on behalf of the LEP Growth Hub and NELC, but also independently through their own revenue streams, generated through a substantial commercial property portfolio. This partnership working provides every type of business support from start-up coaching and workshops through to established Business growth support, employment, and productivity.

Tailored financial advice and specialist referral support is offered by the NEL Investment Hub, and an investment readiness support programme through the Growth Hub available to local businesses will be especially important in the post-covid environment as evidence has shown that banks are reluctant to offer additional borrowing, adding to financial pressures as bounce-back loans and other Covid related initiatives come to an end. Monitoring and identifying the ongoing needs of businesses and implementing support measures will be critical as the economy recovers from the pandemic.

Additional business support is delivered by a wide range of public and private sector organisations in NEL including North East Lincolnshire Council and its regeneration partner ENGIE; Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education (GIFHE); Hull and Humber Chamber of Commerce; Federation of Small Businesses; Lincs Inspire, and the Department for International Trade (DiT).

Despite the large amount of business support available to businesses, access to funding to assist with expansion and job creation is valuable and we will continue to secure additional funding wherever possible. Businesses in the area have, over the past few years, been able to access capital grant support for expansion through the Regional Growth Fund and subsequent Local Growth Fund, but these schemes are now closed leaving a gap in the support available to businesses.

Changes to working practices during the pandemic and a move towards agile working has created a need for more flexible workspaces. In addition, home-based businesses who have seen a boom during the pandemic require the support to move to the next phase in their business development.

Fostering greater connections between the larger and smaller local companies to create supply chain opportunities is an important part of ensuring local content. Initiatives such as Loyal to Local could be utilised to create these links.

There continues to be a need to further strengthen business awareness of the support available, while working toward filling in the gaps in provision. There is scope to strengthen engagement with the business community, reaching out to businesses who would not otherwise be aware of the support mechanisms available to them and identifying businesses with high growth potential.

Quality workspaces, space to grow, and access to a quality digital infrastructure are critical to business, with each company having its own requirements which will change through the life of the business. Businesses and those looking to relocate require certainty that there is a variety of competitively priced accommodation, of a standard that helps them service clients and attract and retain talented

staff. This requires a pathway of business growth workspace covering everything from co-working opportunities and affordable, flexible, managed workspace to large industrial space and development land.

Business support – we will

1. Continue monitor business recovery and resilience and put in place mechanisms for support where possible.
2. Continue to work with business support organisations and partners to ensure businesses have access to good quality advice, support mechanisms, and where available, grant funding to facilitate growth.
3. Endeavour to foster local business relationships to strengthen the local supply chain.
4. Further strengthen the reach to businesses in partnership with support organisations to ensure as many businesses as possible are aware of, and engaged in, support activities where required.
5. Carry out a study to consider the business environment of the future – business space, repurposing opportunities, digital infrastructure to create an evidence base which will inform and support future opportunities.

6.2 Infrastructure

Infrastructure is a vital economic asset – providing the conditions for growth, connecting people with places, businesses with ideas and allowing residents and businesses to make the most of opportunities locally and further afield. The quality of the economic infrastructure is a key factor determining competitiveness and impacts on the productivity levels of local areas.

North East Lincolnshire benefits from a good strategic road network with relatively low levels of congestion. Improvements have been made to road linkages to the ports to accommodate increased traffic arising from Port expansion and to unlock development land. Although its physical location does infer it is somewhat isolated, all of England's major conurbations are accessible in less than 4.5 hours by HGV (one drive shift).

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) sets out a bold vision for North East Lincolnshire, identifying that the LTP has a major role in helping to facilitate growth by enabling and supporting connectivity and accessibility to areas of employment, health, social and leisure opportunities.

The rail network also provides connectivity to key locations including Doncaster, Sheffield, Leister, Nottingham, Manchester, and Liverpool. However, Grimsby and Cleethorpes are not well connected to the rest of the UK by rail and improved connections are needed to London and other northern cities. This is a critical issue for residents, visitors, and existing and prospective businesses who find the long rail journeys, lack of direct connections and limited frequency, a constraining factor for the area.

The rail freight network is heavily used to transport cargo to and from the ports. Located just outside the area, Humberside Airport provides links to Amsterdam and Aberdeen. It is also an important base for helicopter services for the offshore industries.

The bus network is important to the c. 30% of households in North East Lincolnshire who do not have access to a car. It is important to ensure that new employment sites to be well-served by public transport and cycle lanes to ensure that the jobs created are accessible. The permeability and access to our employment sites and town centres, allowing the free movement of pedestrians and cyclists, will encourage more people to walk and cycle for work and leisure, creating a healthier environment.

In addition, the availability of accessible town centre public transport networks is fundamental to the success of the town centres, and the provision of a low carbon transportation hub in Grimsby Town Centre is an important piece of infrastructure. Getting more people onto public transport will reduce our carbon emissions and improve our air quality, more-so if our aspiration for providing an electrified bus fleet can be achieved.

Access to good broadband coverage is an increasingly important economic asset, enabling businesses and residents to connect to the information economy, work remotely and benefit from electronic commerce and new ways of working. North East Lincolnshire has excellent broadband coverage, with 98% of premises having ultrafast broadband, compared to 97.3% across England as a whole (Source: GLLEP Board Report Nov 6th, 2020). There are, however, still areas with particularly poor coverage and access to a digital infrastructure, including 4G/5G are of increasing importance with a switch to more remote and agile working, on our business estates and in our Town Centres. A study to understand the weak spots will identify those areas where additional resource is required.

Increasingly, a priority for businesses looking to invest is the availability of low carbon alternatives to heat and power. There is an opportunity to harness and distribute both heat and power in several areas, including our industrial estates at Stallingborough and in new housing. North East Lincolnshire has already set itself a strong vision around energy, with clear ambitions to 2050 and our Net Zero Carbon Roadmap sets out how we will deliver a strategic and economic advantage for businesses, and affordable heat and power for our communities.

Infrastructure – we will.

1. Continue to deliver the Local Transport Plan (LTP), addressing key transport challenges.
2. Carry out a digital infrastructure study to understand where the weak spots are which hinder investment.
3. Investigate and enable low carbon alternatives to power to businesses and communities.
4. Lead by example in our own working practices, and by identifying potential opportunities to reduce energy consumption that can be led by NEL, including the provision of low carbon public transport and infrastructure
5. Create an infrastructure which supports and promotes low carbon and healthy travel options, including cycling and walking.

7.0 Sectors

7.1 Ports and Logistics

The Ports and Logistics sector continues to be one of North East Lincolnshire's largest employers, and the development of the North East Lincolnshire ports, capitalising on the East Coast location, has underpinned the growth of our economy.

The international movement of people and goods and services impacts on all our businesses. For North East Lincolnshire, Brexit has brought forward huge investment into a new border inspection post, completed in summer 2021. Operating from the West Gate near Immingham, performing customs, security and health checks on imported seafood and many other goods for human and non-human consumption.

The Ports and Logistics sector is supported by the ports of Immingham and Grimsby which are of national significance and see the highest volume of freight (by tonnage) of all ports in the UK, handling around 46 million tonnes of cargo every year. The port is a critical part of the supply chain for sustainable energy generation and other energy production, as well as handling a wide range of cargo including Ro-Ro, containers, dry bulks, and liquid bulks serving key sectors across the economy. The

transportation and storage sector is the fourth largest employment industrial group employing 5,000 people (Source: ONS Business Register and Employment Survey) across over 400 companies. The ports complex, operated by ABP, is a major asset and can be levered to attract in companies which are part of the supply chain of major Port users such as the renewables / offshore wind sector.

Our Ports are at the centre of the UK's trade and communication links and the M62 economic corridor, providing the gateway to Europe for the Northern Powerhouse and Midlands Engine. The strategic road network allows goods to be delivered to 75% of the UK's population within a four-hour driving time.

The Port of Immingham provides daily services to Belgium, Holland, Germany, and Scandinavia with further expansion of services and routes underway. A significant proportion of container freight with an origin or destination in the North of England continues to utilise the South Coast ports and there is a significant opportunity to develop new services to create new opportunities for investment and employment. There is scope to increase added value through the expansion of container freight services and facilities at the Port of Immingham, with a particular focus on the development of Ro/Ro activity. Unit load business continues to expand at Immingham, with strong growth experienced at the Immingham Container Terminal and DFDS. Significant investment in equipment upgrades for container handling have recently taken place.

Bridge Infrastructure enhancements by Network Rail help transfer unit load business from road to rail and could potentially pave the way for fully intermodal traffic at Immingham, alongside efforts to encourage more importers/exporters to shift activity from road to rail.

The Port of Grimsby's origins are rooted in the export of coal and the fishing industry. Today, the Port is focused on car import/export activity, handling over 400,000 vehicles per annum with a River Terminal capable of handling vessels carrying up to 3,000 vehicles. Offshore wind is also a critical focus for the Port, with over £30m invested in infrastructure and a 200-tonne boat hoist.

North East Lincolnshire offers a wide range of both general and specialist logistics providers, including those serving the food sector. It has the largest provision of cold storage facilities in Europe, linked to the requirements of our food sector.

There are also a range of specialist packaging and added value logistics providers, as well as several automotive logistics businesses based in the area. There remains a shortage of land for the development of logistics/distribution uses, but the South Humber Industrial Investment Programme (SHIIP) is bringing forward several sites in the A180 corridor which should unlock land suitable for the logistics sector.

Challenge and opportunity

As throughput increases, there is a need to ensure the ports have the capacity to deal efficiently with larger ships and more automated approaches. Offshore Wind Operators are working on larger wind farms and their needs for Operations and Maintenance facilities on Grimsby Docks will increase as these are constructed.

Regeneration activities on the Port of Grimsby would attract more investment from businesses, works are underway on some of the heritage assets at the Kasbah, but more modern facilities that could be utilised by some of the smaller satellite offices have long been needed, especially for those in the Offshore Wind Industry.

There is significant growth potential in the Ports and Logistics sector for North East Lincolnshire. The announcement that the Humber ports were successful in their bid for Freeport status will attract

investment, create supply chain and local business growth, and support high value jobs - the proposed tax site at the neighbouring Able UK site at Killingholme is projected to create 2000 jobs alone.

Businesses across the Humber would benefit from an expansion to the Centre for the Assessment of Technical Competence Humber (CATCH) facility at Stallingborough to support emerging skills and training opportunities brought through the Freeport and the advent of alternative renewable energy creation. In addition, securing the funding to deliver a state-of-the-art testing facility for next generation components would boost innovation and Research and Development activities in the area.

Training facilities such as HETA and Maersk provide complimentary activities and apprenticeships, creating a strong industry training cluster.

Businesses in the Ports and Logistics industry identified a need for a stronger shared understanding of the Maritime market, as well as the opportunity to develop in-house talent and promote career pathways. The logistics industry in particular has an ageing workforce and succession planning to encourage this as a career path for youngsters is required.

A significant challenge to UK carbon zero targets and air quality improvements is the lack of economically viable alternatives to fossil fuels to power larger HGVs and refrigerated trailers. Support for research into lower emission technologies for these vehicles is required as well as support for businesses looking to trial and incorporate these into their fleets.

7.2 Renewable Energy

Forming part of the 'Energy Estuary' there are significant assets in the area and continued opportunities from the development of offshore wind farms and alternative energy production,

- The Port of Grimsby East is the closest Port to major windfarms, including, Dogger Bank, Triton Knoll, and Hornsea 1, the largest windfarm in the world. Hornsea 2, an even larger site, is already under construction, with Hornsea 3 & 4 being developed in the future. It has become the preferred location for Ørsted, RWE, MHI Vestas, RES, CWind and many other major organisations involved with Operations and Maintenance activities.
- Siemens Gamesa have developed a major blade and pre-installation assembly facility in the Port of Hull.
- Able UK has recently secured Tax Zone status as part of the Humber Freeport bid, and £75m funding through the Offshore Wind Manufacturing Investment Scheme (OWMIS) to create the infrastructure to secure investment, and already in talks with a major component manufacturer.

Together, these locations offer an attractive proposition for global investors in the industry. The Humber currently produces 2.6GW of renewable energy from Offshore Wind, approximately 27% of the UK total, providing 2.3m homes with electricity, and a further 4.7GW planned or under construction. Our region plays a key part in supporting the government commitment to increase Offshore Wind capacity by 2030 from 10GW to 40GW.

Investment in the renewables sector has attracted an array of inward investors, with approximately 500 businesses involved in environmental technologies in the area and significant further development planned.

Led by Ørsted, the production of a Humber Offshore Wind prospectus and resulting action plan aims to create an advanced cluster for the Humber, and sub working groups have been put in place to find solutions to shortcomings the industry faces.

While the Offshore Wind industry is continuing to grow, attention is now turning to alternative ways of producing renewable energy as businesses strive towards goals for carbon neutrality or benefit.

There is huge potential for Research and Development and innovation into renewable energy production both on and offshore. Current projects include geothermal, the production of hydrogen from offshore wind, a growing number of solar farms are obtaining planning permission, plus research into the possibility of creating a renewable energy pipeline to industry across the SHIP sites. In addition, green maritime and alternative fuels for vessels and logistics and the stimulation of more innovation, particularly through the ORE Catapult, means the area is becoming recognised as the place to be to get new ideas into the sector.

Challenge and opportunity

There is growing demand for local content from major operators, both as a requirement of the Offshore Wind Sector Deal, but also because of the economic and logistical pressures in constructing larger wind farms. However, North East Lincolnshire needs to have a more effective and compelling voice in showing our strengths to developers – a coordinated, direct, marketing approach between the Humber representative organisations and a plan to invest in infrastructure.

The Port of Grimsby is lacking in facilities that would support the Offshore Wind industry and give Grimsby an advantage. Many businesses operate from small satellite offices and do not have training facilities, meeting rooms or a place to host visitors.

The addition of an Operations and Maintenance Centre of Excellence (OMCE) on Grimsby Docks, providing a testing facility for next generation components is being pursued through Government and would be of significant benefit to the area, creating a unique selling point for Grimsby, capitalising on our world class Operations and Maintenance status, and supporting the export of our expertise.

Offshore Wind and the renewable industries are fast paced with technology constantly changing, there is a specific gap in the availability of people with electrical and mechanical skills, as well as data science and software engineering. Continual personal development is a particular problem, especially with technicians who need training on new components, the Government does not subsidise training in the same way other countries do so often workers are sent abroad to train. Gaining experience on turbines is difficult & availability of qualified, experienced people will be a bottleneck as installations accelerate

As with other industries, the renewables sectors would like to see increased participation in STEM subjects within schools. Additionally, an increase in apprenticeships is key to getting students into the renewables industry.

7.3 Chemical and Processing Industries

This sector accounts for 2,265 jobs across approximately 50 companies in NEL. Due to the proximity to the Humber Estuary and a strong supply chain of specialist construction, engineering, and logistics companies, North East Lincolnshire has created a cluster for chemical and process industries, attracting global players for over 50 years.

The capital assets across the Humber are very large in scale and significant sums are invested each year on maintenance and compliance activities which support a highly skilled engineering supply chain.

These businesses tend to operate in niche markets and as a result will continue to be subject to globalisation pressures and competition from producers in China and the Middle East. Energy cost reductions in the US through the exploitation of shale gas also impact on global investment decisions. Moving forward it is likely that the global businesses located in NEL will need to demonstrate continual

process efficiencies to remain competitive and although a relatively stable sector, policy pressure on businesses for the decarbonisation of process industries is high.

The Council works closely with the employer-led Humber Chemicals Focus Centre for the Assessment of Technical Competence Humber (HFC CATCH). CATCH is a unique, industry-led training centre for the energy and process industries sectors based on the South Humber Bank at Stallingborough, developed through a long-term public/private partnership and managed by CATCH on behalf of the Council which owns the asset. The facility supports businesses of all sizes in the process manufacturing and energy sectors.

In 2020, £1.7m of funding was secured to develop a Humber Industrial Cluster Plan (HICP) through the Government's Industrial Decarbonisation Challenge Fund (IDCF) scheme. The project, a collaboration between The Hull and East Yorkshire LEP (HEY LEP), CATCH and private sector partners including strategically important refining, energy producers and low carbon infrastructure providers will create a roadmap to find lasting and effective solutions for the area.

Several projects are leading the drive for local decarbonisation, these include

- The Zero Carbon Humber Partnership, supported by big industry names such as Centrica, Uniper, ABP and British Steel, aims to draw on existing skills and infrastructure to become the base for the UK's first net zero carbon industrial cluster, helping to create a cleaner environment for future generations whilst delivering new jobs and export opportunities. Developing carbon capture and storage (CCS) and low carbon hydrogen (H₂) technology with shared onshore and offshore infrastructure to enable energy intensive industries such as the chemical processing sector to continue to operate and thrive whilst decarbonising to meet the UK emissions targets.
- Humber Zero – a £1.2bn project to develop technology to capture and safely store carbon emitted by the Immingham Industrial Cluster, radically reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- V Net Zero – a coalition of industry partners including Phillips 66, VPI Immingham and Uniper which aims to store and transport CO₂ from the Immingham Industrial Cluster
- Gigastack – led by Orsted, Phillips 66 and ITM Power, to develop electrolyser technology to produce large-scale renewable hydrogen.

Challenge and opportunity

Decarbonisation is the most significant challenge and the greatest opportunity for the Humber economy over the next two decades, and for the chemical and process industries especially. Zero carbon process technology changes may see new job roles emerge with STEM subjects are the core.

The HICP will see the deployment of projects over the coming years such as Combined Capture, Utilisation and Storage (CCUS) and hydrogen production infrastructure, which will enable deep decarbonization across the sector, alongside government initiatives which will drive efficiency, supporting the sector to become more robust against energy prices.

The new CO₂ pipeline linking Immingham to Theddlethorpe presents an opportunity to work with neighbouring authorities to develop a CO₂ corridor, and this, coupled with hydrogen manufacturing and other renewable energy production in the Stallingborough and Immingham could provide a network of low carbon energy provision to local industry and a strong new unique selling point for North East Lincolnshire.

The CATCH Contractor Competency scheme supports the supply chain competency needs of the sector; however, a robust supply chain needs to be built and supported in order to achieve the ambitious projects to deliver net zero industrial emissions.

Skills gaps in certain trades, an ageing workforce, availability of skilled workforce and low apprenticeship numbers continue to be a problem for the chemical industry. The Humber Industrial Cluster Plan (HICP) will identify the skills needs for the Humber to achieve net zero with a focus on both the engineering construction and low carbon skills, but a collaborative approach to the skills capability across education and learning is required to encourage participation. In addition, more direct funding to support STEM subjects in schools, linking young people to employers and local jobs is required.

7.4 Housing and Construction

The Housing and Construction sector plays a vital role in supporting the growth of the area and is a key feature of NEL's infrastructure offer to inward investors. It employs over 3,000 people and proposed housing developments locally will create more job opportunities.

The Housing and Development Group brings together the key private and public sector stakeholders in this sector, including the housebuilders most active in the local market.

The Local Plan (2018) identified the need for more than 13,000 homes to meet the demands of our growing population to 2032, and the housing industry remains buoyant. Local housing developers have a reputation for high standards, and to meet the needs of the future workforce, there remains a need for new, high quality, high value properties to encourage more people to live in the area.

North East Lincolnshire's Housing Strategy sets out the vision that enables the provision of a good quality home for everyone who lives in North East Lincolnshire or wishes to move here with a focus on supporting programmes which attract investment and to improve the standards of existing homes, including reducing the number of empty homes and enhancing environmental performance.

Low commercial rents and property values still create a viability gap against the cost of construction which prevents speculative builds, but regeneration work across the town centre and on our industrial estates will go some way to bridging that gap. A new study to understand the commercial property market and business needs of the future will be undertaken to understand the business environment post covid.

The covid pandemic and Government Stamp Duty initiatives have caused a surge in both the housing and commercial property markets, creating a shortage of materials and labour. Construction products are mainly imported which causes a problem when demand is high, both to availability and cost. It is anticipated that this will level off and there is a need to forward plan for when this happens to avoid a slump in the market which could result in prices falling.

Challenge and opportunity

The time is right for low carbon construction; however, more work is required to encourage local construction companies to reduce their carbon footprint and aim for net zero. Investment in the infrastructure for renewable energy sources locally will be of benefit to construction companies and encourage more low carbon practices.

The availability of workforce is the biggest risk to the construction industry with a shortage of young people entering the industry. In addition, the facility to retrain existing employees on low carbon construction methods is of paramount importance to work towards net zero buildings.

7.5 Food Processing

Food processing has a long history in North East Lincolnshire with seafood recognised as one of the most significant industrial clusters, not only in the UK but in the Northern Hemisphere. Currently all major retailers in the UK buy most of their frozen and chilled seafood products from Grimsby, plus

smaller retailers and food service providers rely on the seafood processing cluster for supplies. Directly employing almost 6,000 people with a supply chain that relies on imported raw material from over 30 countries, Grimsby alone is home to over 100 food processing companies, including Europe's leading processor Young's Seafood who have recently announced an expansion which will create a further 400 jobs. Investment in the cluster comes from major global corporations such as, Nissui (Japan), Solfina (Canada), Sealaska (USA) and Hilton Food Group (UK).

In addition, North East Lincolnshire has a thriving base of seafood SMEs, and over 100 independent mobile fishmongers some of which have recently undertaken large scale investments to meet growing demand. The area also benefits from Geographical Indication (GI) status for our five sites producing a fine food of Traditional Smoked Haddock.

The sector is underpinned by a cluster of supply-chain services that include some of the UK's & Europe's leading businesses involved with cold storage, packaging, upskilling, innovation and research, engineering, and logistics. The new Border Control Post at the Port of Immingham will provide significant benefits and a particular advantage to our food processing industry to ensure quality of supply from across the globe, our seafood sector alone will see over 120,000 tonnes of seafood arrive annually through the Ports of Immingham and Grimsby.

North East Lincolnshire's food sector infrastructure includes the Europarc business park which is host to a wide range of food sector businesses, including Morrisons. Part of the site has Food Enterprise Zone status through DEFRA and remains a popular choice for businesses – the addition of two business units supported by grant funding were recently completed and owners Wykeland are currently working with a local cold storage and logistics business on a new facility within the site.

North East Lincolnshire is already an important location for the sustainable development of the area's marine and maritime resources, but an increased interest in aquaculture could bring further investment and opportunity to the area.

Challenge and opportunity

The recently launched 'Made Great in Grimsby' initiative, aims to give the food processing industry a clearer identity and higher profile and will raise the awareness of why Grimsby is a prime location for investment and the 1000's of healthy seafood products it produces for the UK consumer. Businesses can have the Made Great in Grimsby logo on the products they produce as a sign of provenance and trust in Grimsby.

Decarbonising the food processing industry will soon become a pressure and the industry will need support to sustain local businesses, particularly SMEs with initiatives such as electrifying fish vans, reducing waste and energy intensity.

The cold chain is vital to our society and economy however, refrigeration is energy intensive. Although cold chain businesses are taking steps to reduce energy usage, significantly more will need to be done if the industry is to help the UK meet its 2050 carbon zero target. The availability of cold storage facilities close to the ports of Immingham and Grimsby is a major contributor to the volume of traffic through the ports.

There needs to be a particular focus to reduce energy usage in cold storage facilities as ageing buildings are refurbished and replaced and incentives to facilitate this should be explored. In July 2021 Lincoln University's National Centre of Food Manufacturing a 'Cold Store Capacity in Grimsby' report highlighting the need for investment to meet carbon targets and anticipated growth.

A move towards automated processes will create a challenge to the workforce as less people are required and with a different skillset. Succession planning and upskilling is an important objective of the food processing industry.

Skills and creating a sustainable supply of labour is a high priority of the food processing industry and discussions are taking place through the National Centre for Food Manufacturing for a collaborative approach between public and private sector partners to create a talent pipeline.

Finally, focus on utilization of co-product (raw material waste) is likely to see innovation investments in start-ups as seen in other countries including Iceland.

7.6 Health and social care

Over 11,000 people locally are employed in Health and social care, accounting for 15% of our workforce, a significant local employment sector. The impact of Covid on workloads, particularly in our hospitals, put the whole system under immense strain with real concerns of exhaustion of existing staff and increased challenges with recruitment of both qualified and unqualified staff.

The Health and Social Care sector provide a uniquely broad range of jobs, with the hospitals alone requiring in the region of 150 different job roles, providing an enormous opportunity for skills of all levels.

In line with the rest of the UK, North East Lincolnshire faces a rapidly growing demand for services in an especially challenging financial climate. Forecast demographic changes will also have a significant impact on future demand for health/social care provision – the proportion of North East Lincolnshire's population aged 65 or older will increase from 19% to almost 27% between 2012 and 2032.

In addition, North East Lincolnshire has some of the UK's most innovative social enterprises in the health and social care sector, including:

- Care Plus Group, which delivers a range of fully integrated health and social care services including community and specialist nursing and palliative and end of life care.
- Navigo Health and Social Care Community Interest Company (CIC), which delivers mental health services that are very different from those often delivered in the rest of England.
- Focus CIC, which is, uniquely, the first independent adult social work organisation in the UK.

Acute care services are provided by the Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust (NLAG) at centres including Grimsby's Diana Princess of Wales Hospital. This has one of the most advanced emergency care centres in the region.

The Humber Acute Services (HAS) Programme is designing hospital services for the future across the Humber region in to deliver better and more accessible health and care services for our residents with a vision to ensure that as healthcare providers we collaborate, across the NHS, local government, and the community sectors, to deliver the highest quality and sustainable services to our patients.,

NLAG forms part of 'Together', a unique legal partnership with Care Plus Group and Navigo which commits partners to always work in the best interests of the citizens of North East Lincolnshire. The potential to extend the partnership to include General Practitioners and the St Andrews Hospice. 'Together' demonstrates the type of innovative local partnership working.

Moving forward, all key health and care partners are forming part of the new arrangements in North East Lincolnshire and across the wider area as Integrated Care Systems/Integrated Care Partnerships

continue to be developed. As part of this, it is intended that NELC will become the host for the integrated health and social care arrangements in North East Lincolnshire, working as part of the Place system alongside the Health & Wellbeing Board to address the wider determinants of health with a focus on workforce for the sector.

Challenge and opportunity

New approaches to working, with increasing use of digital technologies are emerging post covid, and the NHS bill 2021/22 brings significant changes with the proposed disappearance of CCG's and a new strategic commissioning and provider landscape. There is an opportunity through the Council hosting the new integrated health and care arrangements within NEL to join up agendas across Adult and Children's Services in order to address some of the significant challenges within both health and social care, and in turn addressing those wider determinants of health that can often act as a barrier to achieving economic stability for some families.

Significant investment is being made in acute care to actively design solutions to support the implementation of new models of care and infrastructure across three distinct but inter-related programmes of work:

- Interim Clinical Plan (Programme One) – stabilising services within priority areas over the next couple of years to ensure they remain safe and effective, seeking to improve access and outcomes for patients.
- Core Hospital Services (Programme Two) – long-term strategy and design of future core hospital services, as part of broader plans to work more collaboratively with partners in primary, community and social care.
- Building Better Places (Programme Three) – working with a wide range of partners in support of a major capital investment bid to government to develop our hospital estate and deliver significant benefits to the local economy and population.

In addition, strategic workforce planning with a focus on building local skills, employability and sustainability will address historic challenges in attracting, training, and retaining staff at all levels. Developments such as apprenticeships and Kickstart are being fully utilised to help address ongoing challenges in recruitment and retention of staff across health and social care and importantly to bring new people into the sector.

The implementation of a Humber Healthcare Academy will provide local opportunities for learning, but a specific benefit would be the development of a low-cost local job match and talent pool support for the sector.

What our businesses say – key points

1. We need a strong voice to showcase the benefits to investment in Grimsby and the Humber with more resources put into a coordinated, direct, marketing approach.
2. Investment in the dock infrastructure, particularly the Port of Grimsby is required to give Grimsby an advantage.
3. Continued backing to support an Operations and Maintenance Centre of Excellence (OMCE) on the Port of Grimsby, a unique selling point.
4. Specialised training support, particularly for technicians working on ever-changing components.
5. Skills gaps in the industry, specifically electrical and mechanical, data science and software engineering.
6. Increased apprenticeships, and not just technicians, across all specialisms including HR, finance (Renewables).
7. Availability of workforce with a shortage of youngsters entering the building trade is a problem. In addition, retraining existing workers in sustainable building practices is required.
8. Decarbonisation of the food processing industry will present business pressures.
9. More direct funding to support, and a higher focus on STEM subjects in schools.
10. Local job match and talent pool.
11. Direct rail link to London will improve business connections.

7.7 Visitor Economy, Services and Retail

This is a broadly defined sector accounting for approximately 29,000 jobs across 2,715 companies.

Like many other counties, including Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire uses the STEAM (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity) model provided by Global Tourism Solutions to track performance, trends, and the impact of the sector. STEAM is a tourism economic impact modelling process which approaches the measurement of tourism from the bottom up, through its use of local supply side data and tourism performance and visitor survey data collection.

The most recent report, for 2019, noted that North East Lincolnshire welcomed 10.3 million visitors, of which 94% (9.68 million) were day visitors. The visitor economy is worth approximately £642.26 million equivalent to 25.7% of the total tourism output for Greater Lincolnshire, with 5,079 people employed directly in the sector. Staying visitors spent £45 million on local accommodation. 625,000 visits were made by visitors staying in North East Lincolnshire as part of a holiday or short break, generating 3.152 million nights in accommodation. COVID and the associated lockdowns and travel restrictions significantly affected tourism for North East Lincolnshire and the STEAM data for 2020 reflects this. Visitor numbers dropped to 4.7 million visitors (down 55% year on year) and this therefore also affected all other associated statistics.

The Visitor Economy, Service and Retail (VESR) sectors are represented by a private sector-led group created by North East Lincolnshire Council, to champion the sector by improving resident and visitor perceptions of North East Lincolnshire and developing and promoting the area's quality of place.

VESR led the original development and implementation of the DiscoverNEL website, branding and promotional campaign which sought to promote North East Lincolnshire as a place to work, stay and play to business visitors and residents. The brand has recently undergone a refresh with a new destination website created, discovernortheastlincolnshire, with marketing and social media campaigns planned throughout the year.

New marketing campaigns to support the recovery of the high streets were funded through Covid-19 business grant funding – including LoyaltyLocal on social media, a Virtual High Street, NELincolnshire,

support for businesses to join ShopAppy to promote online sales and raise awareness of niche markets, as well as a schedule of events and activities.

The distinctive Victorian seaside town of Cleethorpes remains a major draw for the area, accounting for a third of all tourists, attracting not only holidaymakers from its traditional South Yorkshire/East Midlands catchments but also residents, and other visitors seeking to experience its emerging mix of niche independent shops and evening economy, alongside our range of attractions and burgeoning water-based activities, outdoor and active experiences.

Cleethorpes has benefitted from a £6.7m investment through the Coastal Communities Fund, National Heritage Lottery Funding, and the Humber LEP to enhance public realm areas, including the introduction of public art on the North Promenade, improve heritage assets, and create a new resort focused facility.

A new Cleethorpes Masterplan and accompanying Investment Plan, completed in 2021/22, developed through extensive consultation with key stakeholders, the public and businesses, will identify and prioritise key strategic investment and development opportunities across the resort and the town. The Investment Plan is fundamental to developing a policy framework of how we want our heritage assets to look in the future, infrastructure and to inform us of the next phase of opportunities which could be delivered through future funding streams including the Levelling Up Fund.

A planned research study which will also investigate how retail, commercial, cultural and leisure trends have changed and the likely direction of travel to 2030, including a refresh of the Hotel Study for North East Lincolnshire.

The seaside resort of Cleethorpes remains the major tourism draw for the area with its traditional seaside attractions, long beaches, Victorian heritage, wide range of outdoor experiences and independent shops, bars, and restaurants, plus the following additional assets:

- Cleethorpes' natural habitat and area of special scientific interest including approximately 2500m of saltmarsh serving as a rest and feeding ground to migratory winter birds and many local flora and fauna.
- Cleethorpes Boating Lake next to a local nature reserve.
- May 2021, Cleethorpes awarded a Blue Flag for the Central Beach area.
- Cleethorpes paddling pool, which is free to the public.
- Historic Cleethorpes Pier, opened in 1873.
- Meridian Showground which hosts a variety of events throughout the year.
- The Resort Hub which has responsibility for beach safety and tourist information.
- Greenwich Meridian Line located along the coastal path close to the Meridian Showground.

Our ambition is to grow the tourism offer across the whole of North East Lincolnshire and encourage longer stays, by promoting other major assets which contribute to our quality of place as follows:

- Grimsby Fishing Heritage Centre and Historic Vessels – an Arts Council accredited museum provides an insight into Grimsby's maritime history, fishing heritage and the life of trawlermen in the 1950s. It also hosts exhibitions of the North East Lincolnshire Museum Service Collection and is a five times winner of the Trip Advisor Certificate of Excellence and a member of the TripAdvisor Hall of Fame. It also holds the Sandford Award to Heritage Education, 2021-2026 and the Visit England Quality Rose Marque. At the heart of the

regeneration plans in the Grimsby town centre, the vision for the future of the Grimsby Fishing Heritage Centre and its historic vessels sets out the ambition to create an innovative and inspiring heritage attraction for the 21st century telling Grimsby's unique and nationally important story.

- The Time Trap Museum at Grimsby Town Hall, including the former Town Hall prison cells.
- Immingham museum which tells the story of the building of Immingham Dock and the involvement of the Great Central Railway and features a special exhibition about Immingham's place in history regarding the Pilgrim Fathers.
- Marinas – there are 3 yacht clubs in NEL, two in Grimsby and one in Cleethorpes.
- More than 50 parks and open spaces to enjoy such as Cleethorpes Country Park, Peoples Park, Weelsby Woods, and Homestead Park.
- Lincolnshire Wolds – the southern rural parts of NEL form part of the Lincolnshire Wolds, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which forms an important part of NEL's wider place offer.
- Festivals and events – a range of festivals are held across venues and public spaces in North East Lincolnshire, including military weekends and cultural events such as Festival of the Sky, Birdhouse Theatre family festival, music events such as The Gathering and Fake Fest and regular race events such as the Great Grimsby 10K and the ABP Half Marathon.

Work is being carried out to develop a diverse and exciting range of 'out of season activities' to create a year-round offer across the borough, including the Grimsby Creates Programme of cultural activities, and the Festival of the Sea funded through the Cultural Development Fund.

Challenge and opportunity

The challenges and opportunities for the Visitor Economy, Service and Retail sector has been split into two distinct areas to cover our Town Centres, including retail and services, and our Tourism offer.

7.71 Town Centres

Pre-covid, town centres, and particularly retail were in decline, and the covid pandemic accelerated this, forcing businesses in the retail and hospitality sectors to diversify into alternative trading activities to survive. The face of retail is likely to be changed forever, with reduced physical town centre presence and the slowest to recover.

There are, however, opportunities to build on. Significant public and private investment have already been secured to invest in the Town Centres, commercial areas, and transport infrastructure. Future High Street funding (£17.3m) will transform and repurpose the retail core of Freshney Place and the Market Hall area to deliver new leisure opportunities, cinema, market, and public realm. The Town Deal funding of £21m will further underpin the delivery of the Town Centre masterplan. Grimsby Creates, utilising funds from the Cultural Development Fund has provided resources to deliver creative events and activities in Grimsby town centre aiming to add vibrancy and increased footfall to maximise enhanced public spaces such as St James Square.

The Greater Grimsby Masterplan guides our investments to 2032 and sets out our plans to enrich and transform our town centres. The vision is for *Grimsby town centre to be an attractive, thriving place attracting new land uses, a growing town centre residential community and new businesses supported by enlivened public areas, new and improved access to the water and where culture and heritage is embraced, and a broad offer of activities and pastimes are available to a wide range of age groups.*

These activities will be critical to businesses in the hospitality sector to ensure resilience for the future, enhancing the quality of place to attract workers and visitors as well as providing our residents with a healthy, vibrant environment in which to live.

Businesses in the service industry may turn to more agile ways of working, so a range of good quality, affordable, office space with the right digital infrastructure needs to be in place to ensure the town centre remains a choice when businesses are considering their business models.

The area has a strong heritage and robust communities that have always pulled together to support each other in hard times. Housing is affordable and many who do come to the area quickly realise the benefits of a great place to buy a house, live and raise a family and stay.

Attracting town centre living and a range of leisure (both indoor and outdoor) activities and one-off events are key priorities to the investments being made to improve the early evening and night-time economy to support the hospitality businesses.

Attracting and retaining the talent needed in the economy is increasingly important as competition for experienced and skilled labour is high. In addition, our businesses want to work within an environment where their staff and clients feel safe and secure, especially in our town centres.

Managerial and experienced professional skilled labour is in shortage and the recent skills survey evidenced the need of business for more management and leadership training to upskill the workforce. The local professional occupational levels compared the national levels is increasing but slower than the UK average so the gap is widening and could make the area less competitive and attractive to investors.

7.72 Tourism

Within the context of being a coastal community with its inherent challenges, COVID hit the tourism and hospitality sector particularly hard. It is important therefore that the area capitalises on visitors while confidence in travelling abroad is low and there is a keen interest in holidaying in the UK, ensuring the visitor experience is such that they will want to repeat and stay longer in the area.

There has been a challenging balance for Cleethorpes in particularly in managing the resort and reopening the economy – footfall figures soared dramatically as restrictions started to lift as visitors have flocked to the resort to take advantage of the open coastal spaces. This led to close operational management of the resort and the adoption of clear COVID safety messaging to help protect our community, businesses and visitors supported through Government funding streams such as Reopening High Streets Safely Fund and the Welcome Back Fund.

Our intention to support the sector's recovery post-COVID, there is a focus on five key strategic tourism objectives for North East Lincolnshire:

- To carry out a Cleethorpes Masterplan to determine priority projects for future funding streams (e.g., to improve the infrastructure for tourism and the visitor economy).
- To raise awareness of North East Lincolnshire as a visitor destination.
- To extend the traditional tourism season by offering a year-round events and activity schedule.
- To increase overnight visitor numbers.
- To support tourism businesses to enable them to grow and create sustainable, non-seasonable jobs.

A Cleethorpes Masterplan will help to set out a clear vision for the future development and regeneration of the resort and main town centre area over the next 10 years. It will reflect Cleethorpes' ambition to develop and grow the tourism offer including increasing footfall, creating

sustainable jobs, creating a green economy and environment which maximises low carbon and healthy initiatives in our Place, improving infrastructure and encouraging more overnight stays. Priority projects will be identified, and business cases developed for future funding opportunities.

Increasing visitor numbers, but also increasing the length of stay is important to the economy – having a destination which visitors see as being worth more than a day's investment. Activities to support this include creating itineraries to give 'staycationers' an idea of what they could do whilst on a longer break in North East Lincolnshire, working with local businesses to create new visitor experiences and working with coach and tour operators that will attract national and international tourists to North East Lincolnshire. An 'Inspire Me' section is now included on the [discovernortheastlincolnshire](#) destination and visitor website, suggesting a range of itineraries.

Branding and marketing through a range of social media channels are key to attracting footfall and a public/private coordinated approach is required to ensure the 'offer' is both attractive and visible both locally and further afield. Well-advertised and promoted events and activities generate increased footfall and longer stays. Using online advertising and Search Engine Optimisation', targeted marketing opportunities are possible through new direct rail links from Nottingham, Leicester, Liverpool and London.

There will also be continued collaboration with Greater Lincolnshire tourism officers and businesses to develop and maximise tourism opportunities through platforms such as Visit Lincolnshire which will provide a wider reach. Additionally, a key opportunity is to create new markets for tourism across the whole borough, for example, cycling, walking, exploring nature and wildlife, eco-tourism, wellbeing and fitness and business tourism, so that we can capitalise on visitors interests in eco-tourism and nature-tourism through offering new experiences.

There will continue to be close working with the Greater Lincolnshire LEP to ensure that the opportunities offered through the Government's Tourism Recovery Plan are maximised locally and regionally. We will also continue to work with Greater Lincolnshire and Visit Lincoln for the future establishment and shaping of a refreshed Destination Management Organisation, Destination Lincolnshire. It will lead the positioning and branding of Lincolnshire as a visitor destination and place to invest, learn and work. Its primary activities will be marketing, business support, visitor management and supporting product development through funding.

The external image of the area is a challenge, Cleethorpes is perceived as being closed outside of the summer months, and Grimsby has a legacy of being perceived as 'Grim', due to a lack of knowledge as to our rich maritime history and heritage. External image can also be challenging for recruitment and investment, but our experience of previous inward investment examples show that once people are persuaded to come to the area, they do want to stay. Challenging that perception and having confidence in our offer as a place is an important strand of our economic plans. 'Operation Gateway' aims to enhance the key entrances to the towns of Grimsby, Cleethorpes, and Immingham through a number of initiatives.

There is good infrastructure by road and rail to the resort, but it could be improved. There is considerable congestion at busy times, particularly on the roads into Cleethorpes and alternative measures for visitors to access the resort would be a benefit with consideration given to the possibility of future park and ride facilities. In addition, promoting cycling, walking and transport links to encourage multi town activities will increase the opportunity for longer stays.

Many people in the hospitality sector are over-skilled for the jobs they find themselves in, this may point to the opportunity to upskill and train our local labour force to take them to the next professional occupational level as new Managers to meet local skill shortages at this level. There is also a lack of

people working in the hospitality sector on a general level, which is a national problem which will require us to align with Government initiatives to try and address this issue.

Visitor Economy – we will

1. Develop a Tourism Action Plan which aligns with the Greater Lincolnshire tourism offer.
2. Work to place the www.discovernortheastlincolnshire.co.uk website at the forefront of our visitors as a place to seek information for their visit and continue to develop the website to encompass hospitality businesses.
3. Create a marketing strategy which will utilise social media channels, promote our visitor guide to a wider audience, implement low season content strategy to use via digital marketing and create a mechanism to engage directly with visitors through use of email marketing to encourage visitors, and to promote the area as a visitor destination.
4. Develop the group travel market and work with hotels and visitor attractions to create packages and encourage partnership working.
5. Create experiences packages to attract out of season visitors and re-engage with locals to offer special deals and leverage events into the area that are held out of season to create a year-round events and activities schedule.
6. Ensure tourism businesses gain access to business advice and support, grant and finance opportunities, especially in aiding businesses to become easier to book by visitors.
7. Engage with the Greater Lincolnshire LEP and Lincolnshire-wide tourism officers to collaborate and work in partnership for the greater good of the region, including the identification of opportunities presented through the Government's Tourism Recovery Plan and future opportunities to be part of a Destination Management Organisation.

8.0 Harnessing opportunities and addressing our challenges—developing an action plan.

North East Lincolnshire has secured an unprecedented amount of funding to deliver some exciting regeneration projects with the opportunity to build on these through Levelling-Up Fund and Shared Prosperity Fund. Preparation work to ensure we are in a strong position once these opportunities arise is imperative, for example, the Cleethorpes Masterplan and Investment Plan.

Restoring Grimsby Town Centre to a bustling, vibrant town with family and community activities, promoting a healthy lifestyle and providing the space for creative and business activities where people feel safe, want to visit, and stay for longer is of huge importance. Funding of £48m through the Future High Streets Fund and Towns Fund will start this transformation and unlock the potential for Grimsby to be Great again. Bringing dockside activities, open spaces, and promoting town centre living will all add to providing the town centre with the visitors it needs to bring it back to its former glory.

There is a challenge to increase awareness of North East Lincolnshire as a destination, promoting the place to support tourism and the visitor economy, by providing our residents and visitors with a range of experiences and attractions throughout the year with the marketing to support this

Freeport status for the Humber will improve import and export trade through the ports, with capital funding to unlock and accelerate investment and infrastructure projects, bringing with it the opportunity for local businesses to benefit through supply chain activities and expansion. A robust supply chain network, improved links between local SMEs and larger organisations, and a coordinated direct approach to marketing between public and private sector will be a huge boost to the region.

Provision of good quality workspace for business investment has been a challenge to North East Lincolnshire due to low rental/sale values and the viability gap in the cost to build. This has prevented speculative building by developers in the past and when quality property comes on the market it is usually snapped up. The development of Pioneer Business Park and availability of land across Enterprise Zones in North East Lincolnshire offer the opportunity for investment, and a study of business growth needs should be established, to include property, land, and digital infrastructure. In addition, access to low carbon energy solutions is becoming a top priority for businesses and investors.

The availability of a skilled workforce was highlighted as a concern across all sectors. Participation of youngsters, a shortage of apprenticeships and an ageing workforce all adding to concerns over succession planning.

STEM subjects are core to many of our industries and will form the basis of future technologies as we move into green technologies in the future. Opportunities for skills facilities such as a Freeport skills academy, a Green Energy skills hub, and expansion to the CATCH campus are all possibilities which would boost skills and training.

Working with businesses to establish the long-term skills needs of the sectors is critical in being able to facilitate the courses and training required to fulfil these needs locally. In addition, the current fragmented landscape of education and training needs to be coordinated into a 'one for all' model to ensure a collective approach to ensuring the correct skills paths are facilitated, and to provide businesses with an easy to navigate local offer is available to businesses.

As part of our commitment to create a framework with regular reviews, is open to challenge, and account for uncertainties, the following outputs will be reviewed on an annual basis in partnership with the Development and Growth board, creating an annual action plan of activities to measure the success of these interventions.

9.0 Action Plan and outputs

Theme / Activities	Who	When	Outputs
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<p>9.1 Business Growth - Building on our industry strengths</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to develop and promote our SHIP sites <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. stimulate business growth and investment through marketing activities and by working with investors and local businesses to support growth ambitions. b. Progressing a delivery model for the Pioneer Park Enterprise Zone. c. Continue to support speculative builds, working in partnership to secure funding to unlock development. d. Continue to work with the Humber Freeport bid team to deliver a Freeport model, including securing Seed Capital funding to support investment. 2. Continue to work with our business support network <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. We will continue to work with business support organisations and partners to ensure businesses have access to good quality advice, support mechanisms, and where available, grant funding to facilitate growth. b. We will endeavour to foster local business relationships to strengthen the local supply chain. c. We will further strengthen the reach to businesses in partnership with support organisations to ensure as many businesses as possible are aware of, and engaged in, support activities where required. 3. Support the post-Covid recovery of our businesses <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continue to work with business support agencies to offer advice and guidance through webinars, training, advisor support, etc. including post-covid financial resilience and diversification. b. Ensure initiatives from government are made available to our local business community. c. Gather a strong post-covid evidence base of the needs of our business community to ensure economic resilience. d. We will continue monitor business recovery and resilience and put in place mechanisms for support where possible. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NELC Economy and Growth and Engie partners 2. NELC Economy and Growth, Development and Growth Board, E-Factor, Growth Hub, Business Advisor networks 3. NELC Economy and Growth, E-Factor 4. NELC Economy and Growth, Transport and Infrastructure, Engie Partners, Development and Growth Board 5. Development and Growth Board sector leads, Humber Offshore Wind Cluster, Grimsby Renewables Partnership, DiT, Greater Lincolnshire LEP, Freeport 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Business Environment study completed (including digital). 2. Net increase in business floorspace. 3. Decrease in number of vacant commercial units. 4. Increase in number of businesses in rated premises. 5. Increase in RV of NEL business premises. 6. Freeport Seed Capital funding secured to unlock business investment. 7. Increase in number of registered enterprises. 8. Increase in GVA per head – all industries. 9. LTP output? 10. Direct rail route to London achieved.
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<p>4. Create an environment that enables business growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Commit to bidding for funding which will further enhance regeneration and growth. b. We will carry out a study to consider the business environment of the future – business space, repurposing opportunities, and viability gaps to create an evidence base which will inform and support future opportunities. c. Carry out a digital infrastructure study to understand where the weak spots are which hinder investment and growth. d. Continue to deliver the Local Transport plan (LTP), addressing key transport challenges, in particular lobbying for a direct rail link to London to improve business connections. <p>5. Foster a coordinated, direct marketing approach to business opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Working with the business sectors to showcase the benefits to investment in Grimsby and the Humber. b. Develop a strong marketing image which supports individual sectors to promote investment c. Facilitate and support events, trade missions and sector specific promotions 			
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<p>9.2. A green economy - Maximising low carbon and healthy initiatives in industry and in our Place.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lead by example in our own working practices <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ensure all development considers carbon impact and sustainability to protect and enhance our natural assets and to promote a sense of wellbeing b. Implement a NELC Net Zero Carbon Road map and Natural Asset Plan c. Continue to develop the NEL Net Zero Carbon Roadmap d. Investigate and enable low carbon alternatives for heating and travel for businesses and communities, including public transport and infrastructure 2. Support our businesses & communities towards a greener future <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Adopt the UN Sustainable Development Goals as standard to achieve a better and more sustainable future for our businesses and communities. b. Create an infrastructure which supports and promotes low carbon and healthy travel options, including cycling and walking. 3. Support low carbon innovation and R&D activities <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continued backing to support an Operations and Maintenance Centre of Excellence (OMCE) on the Port of Grimsby, a unique selling point. b. Support the delivery of the Humber Industrial Cluster Plan, the Zero Carbon Humber Partnership, and emerging projects. c. Support the creation of a Freeport innovation hub on the Humber. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NELC Economy and Growth, Environment, and Engie Partners 2. NELC Environment, Highways and Transport and Engie Partners 3. NELC Environment, Economy and Growth, ORE Catapult, CATCH, GLLEP/HEY LEP, Development and Growth Board 	<p>4.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Net Zero Carbon roadmap complete. 2. Heat and power mapping completed. 3. Increased decarbonisation projects in industry. 4. An increase in EV charging points in NEL 5. Increased cycle/walking routes across NEL. 6. Freeport innovation hub completed. 7. Increase in businesses engaged in R&D activity. Increase in overall employment numbers in the defined green economy cluster
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<p>9.3 Skills - investing in our workforce.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Address the fragmented landscape between education and employers by bringing together providers to reach a common understanding of needs. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continue to forge relationships between employers and providers, seeking to ensure our workforce of the future has access to all opportunities. b. Continue to engage with partners to understand fully the skills landscape, the opportunities, and the future needs of our businesses, taking on board the comments in the IFOW 'The Grimsby Project'. c. Evidence immediate priorities with the buy-in of all stakeholders to address the key barriers to education, careers, and skills. d. Promote a collaborative, collective working approach to funding opportunities. 2. Continue to work on a Skills Implementation plan <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. commit to a dedicated resource to lead on the development, delivery, and evaluation of a skills strategy. b. Commit to put in a programme of intervention that addresses the skills challenge some of our residents' face in being ready for future skilled job opportunities. 3. Support the development of skills and training facilities <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Promote and support the creation of a skills facility in Grimsby Town Centre b. Facilitate the continued expansion to the CATCH facility c. Work closely with the Freeport Skills Group to unlock opportunities for our workforce 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NELC, GIFHE, CATCH, Local schools and skills/training providers, Development and Growth Board and business community 2. NELC, Development and Growth Board 3. CATCH, GIFHE, NELC Economy and Growth, Development and Growth Board, Freeport Skills Group 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Skills implementation plan completed. 2. D&G skills sub-group engaged. 3. Green energy hub completed. 4. Expansion to CATCH skills centre. 5. Increased participation of 16/17 year-olds and adult learners 6. Increase in number of first-degree graduates retained in NEL. 7. Net additional employee jobs. 8. Increase in the number of apprenticeships and graduate placements. 9. More businesses engaged in succession planning.
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<p>9.4 Place-making - ensuring our towns are great places to live, work and visit.</p> <p>1. Continue to drive the regeneration of our town centres</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the Grimsby Town Centre programmes, whilst continually identifying additional investment and funding opportunities to further enhance, reinvigorate and repurpose the town centre. Identifying incentives such as free Wi-Fi and family activities. Create a Cleethorpes Masterplan and Investment Plan to identify projects for the resort which will attract and retain more visitors to the resort. Commit to bidding for funding which will further enhance regeneration and growth. Continue to engage with our businesses and communities to ensure a sense of connectedness and shared ownership, taking onboard the place-based engagement strategy of Talking, Listening and Working Together. <p>2. Create a strong marketing offer</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the branding and marketing of the borough to maximise opportunities for attracting visitors and engaging residents, but also linking in with Greater Lincolnshire branding to take advantage of the regional offer Work to place the www.discovernortheastlincolnshire.co.uk website at the forefront of our visitors as a place to seek information. Continue to develop the website to encompass hospitality businesses and build strong links with Visit Lincolnshire. Create a marketing strategy which will utilise social media channels, promote our visitor guide to a wider audience, implement low season content strategy to use via digital marketing and create a mechanism to engage directly with visitors through use of email marketing to encourage visitors, and to promote the area as a visitor destination. <p>3. Enhance our Tourism offer to increase visitor numbers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NELC/Engie • Development and Growth Board • VESR • GLLEP and Visitor Economy Board • Visit Lincolnshire • Local communities • Creativity board • Trade groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future High Street Fund project completed. • Town Investment Plan projects completed. • Cleethorpes Masterplan and Investment Plan completed. • Creativity Strategy completed. • Tourism Action Plan completed. • Marketing strategy completed. • Number of visitors increased. • Number of overnight stays increased. • Increase in the number of events held across the borough.
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop a Tourism Action Plan which aligns with the Greater Lincolnshire tourism offer and collaborates and works in partnership for the greater good of the region, complementing the Government's Tourism Recovery Plan b. Work to support delivery of a full programme of events across the region, including new events targeting growth tourism markets and improve the legacy of existing events which have proven successful engagement c. Develop the group travel market and work with hotels and visitor attractions to create packages and encourage partnership working. d. Create experiences packages to attract out of season visitors and re-engage with locals to offer special deals and leverage events into the area that are held out of season. e. Ensure tourism businesses gain access to business advice and support, grant and finance opportunities, especially in aiding businesses to become easier to book by visitors. f. Continue to lobby for a direct rail link to London to increase visitor opportunities. <p>4. Protect and enhance our assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continue to invest in and upgrade Council-owned heritage assets and explore how we can best use them to benefit the community, the economy, and visitors. This includes developing the future role of the Grimsby Fishing Heritage Centre, integrating our Library and Archive offer, and finding ways to house and display our Collection. b. Identify how heritage spaces can be more effectively used as meeting places, places to celebrate, places to draw people in. c. Recognize different types of assets – people and their stories, places and things that are dear to people, natural resources, local knowledge, and enthusiasm. d. Complete the cultural workspace at the Kasbah, creating a vibrant, alternative working space for artists. 			
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Appendix A - Strategic fit

	Business Growth - building on industry strengths	A green economy - Maximising low carbon and healthy initiatives in industry and in our Place.	Skills - investing in our workforce	Place-making - ensuring our towns are great places to live, work, visit and stay
10-point plan for a green revolution/Energy white paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Advancing offshore wind •Green finance and innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Advancing offshore wind •Driving growth of low carbon hydrogen •Accelerating shift to zero emission vehicles •Jet zero and green ships •Investing in carbon capture, usage, and storage 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Green public transport, cycling and walking •Protecting our natural environment •Greener buildings
Midlands Engine vision for growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •maximise new technologies - road, rail, and smart connectivity •Grow international trade and investment to create jobs in a global economy •increase innovation and enterprise Invest in strategic infrastructure - logistics, freight, connectivity		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Grow international trade and investment to create jobs in a global economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •shape great places - unlock housing growth, create great places to visit, learn, and work
Humber Estuary Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Alleviate flood risk to communities and industry •Developing ports and manufacturing clusters •Attract and deliver new investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Accelerating clean growth 		
Humber Clean growth Local white paper & Industrial Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Create a globally competitive hub for sustainable shipping, energy, and logistics •Grow and improve competitiveness in the Humber's engineering and assembly sectors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Grow the Humber energy cluster and establish the region as a global leader in smart offshore wind O&M by 2030 •Humber will be net zero by 2040 •Support for energy intensive and continuous process industries to decarbonise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Maximise benefits for local communities and businesses, and maintain economic and social progress 	
GLLEP Local Industrial Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Creation of the UK's first food valley - the most advanced food and farm technology •Home to the UK's biggest Freeport by volume and value of trade •Reverse the 12% decline in manufacturing productivity •All businesses operating in a connected environment •A quarter of firms undertaking R&D activity •Premise's vacancy rates to below 10% by adopting new uses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •10% of car users moved to more environmentally friendly modes of transport •Reduce CO2 emissions by 50% on 2005 levels while protecting jobs in every sector 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Establish a tourism recovery plan

Council Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •All people benefit from a Strong Economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •All people benefit from a green economy and high-quality environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •All people reach their full potential through skills and learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •All people live in a safe place, can have their say and participate fully in their communities •All people enjoy good health and wellbeing •All people benefit from a strong local economy
Local Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Identify development land to deliver investment and job creation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Protecting our environment for everyone to enjoy now and in the future 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •New housing to attract and retain workforce
Skills white paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Putting employers at the heart of the system so that education and training leads to jobs that can improve productivity and fill skills gaps. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Investing in higher-level technical qualifications that provide a valuable alternative to a university degree. • Making sure people can access training and learning flexibly throughout their lives and are well-informed about what is on offer through great careers support. • Reforming funding and accountability for providers to simplify how funds are allocated, give providers more autonomy, and ensure an effective accountability regime which delivers value for money. • Supporting excellent teaching in further education. 	
NEL Recovery Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Work with partners to access funding and lobby for additional powers where necessary to strengthen and build resilience for the future •Build on our position as one of the major Port complexes and seek to expand Freeport opportunities •Continue to engage, listen, and maintain the confidence and trust of the local business community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Ensure low carbon and green energy is a focus to become nationally recognised for low carbon activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Look to the future emerging job roles by equipping people with the skills for those opportunities •Implement incentives to mitigate against the impacts of Covid to assist in business needs and keep people in employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Deliver regeneration and investment plans for our Town Centres to support the delivery of a diverse range of spaces
Health and wellbeing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Encourage anchor organisations to play a role in building community wealth and wellbeing - the 'NEL pound' spent by anchor institutions goes directly into our local economy and growing the social economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Consider our legacy to future generations, and whether our actions now will have an adverse impact on the future. This represents a commitment to always have consideration to climate change and all its causes, including transport choices, consumer patterns and recycling, energy production and use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Workforce and organisational development – skills and ethos within all providers of service including voluntary sector organisations that enables delivery of services and interventions reflecting a shared set of values and principles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The quality of the environment in which people live work and play also has a profound impact on people's wellbeing and reflects a shared responsibility of agencies and citizens alike. Whether this refers to the air we breathe, our access to green space, our working environment, our own home and neighbourhood or access to cultural and leisure opportunities in the borough. A national strategy is being called for to tackle poor health and lower life expectancy in seaside towns.

Grimsby Masterplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce more diverse uses into the town centre • Identify development opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting a sustainable, low carbon future by embedding sustainable development principles at every opportunity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance opportunities for employment, skills, and enterprise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconnect the town centre with the waterfront • Celebrate and enhance our heritage assets • Promote and support community ownership and participation • Prioritise health and wellbeing • Improve permeability of the town centre
Cultural Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The full potential of culture and creativity to drive economic growth is unlocked 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture is fully integrated into the key challenges faced by the area, especially health and wellbeing and education; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new fit for purpose infrastructure for a sustainable creative sector • A step changed in local arts capacity and resilience • An open approach to heritage enriches the lives of residents and visitors
Housing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support delivery of new homes, on sites allocated in the Local Plan and other suitable sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead and support programmes that attract investment and improve the standards of existing homes, including reducing the number of empty homes and enhancing environmental performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase delivery of new and improved Affordable and Specialist housing, through working effectively with Registered Providers, Homes England, and others. • Provide effective support to households facing accommodation issues or homelessness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and plan to meet current and future housing needs and preferences. • Ensure delivery of high-quality new homes and developments
Local Transport Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support regeneration and employment by connecting people to education, training, and jobs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable sustainable growth through effective transport provision. • Ensuring transport contributes to environmental excellence, improved air quality and reduced greenhouse Gas emissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support regeneration and employment by connecting people to education, training, and jobs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the health of individuals by encouraging and enabling more physically active travel.
Humber 2100+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting business growth by flood mitigation to create a prosperous Humber with world class economy. • Create reassurance for investment in the Humber by effective management of flood risk and climate change impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investing in flood defences and tidal management to support businesses and communities to live with water in a world of climate change. • Integrated flood management with landscape and green infrastructure 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting our natural environment • Enhancing natural flood protection areas. Protecting towns and communities from damaging flood impact.