

CABINET

Subject Heading:

Adoption of Revised Inclusive Growth Strategy.

Cabinet Member:

Councillor Graham Williamson, Lead Member for Development & Regeneration.

ELT Lead:

Neil Stubbings, Strategic Director for Place.

Report Author and contact details:

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Policy context:

The proposed revised Inclusive Growth Strategy describes the context of economic challenge and opportunity and the proposed strategy approach to supporting the economic growth of the Borough.

Financial summary:

There are no direct financial implications from approving the revised strategy as the process was completed on a 'light touch' basis. Financial implications will be considered through any proposed action to deliver and approval sought at that time.

Is this a Key Decision?

Significant effect on two or more Wards.

When should this matter be reviewed?

Review by 2027.

Reviewing OSC:

Places.

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well

Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy

Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council

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SUMMARY

This report presents to Cabinet for adoption the revised Inclusive Growth Strategy. The current Inclusive Growth Strategy was last presented to Cabinet and was adopted in November 2021 based on data collected and reviewed in 2019.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommended to adopt the draft revised Inclusive Growth Strategy

REPORT DETAIL

It will be recalled that at the time when the Inclusive Growth Strategy was formally adopted by Cabinet in 2021 the UK and the World was emerging from COVID. The data referenced was assembled in 2019 and was itself based on primary evidence dating back in some cases to 2011. In the context of COVID and the disruption resulting from the UK's decision to exit the European Union, it was felt in 2021 that additional data at that time would be unhelpful especially in terms of the cost of reworking the proposed strategy.

It remains the case now that the geopolitical context in which we are revising the strategy, and having regard to the Council's levers of control, there is little merit, and certainly no resource, to revise the strategy from a zero base.

Instead, a light touch review of the previous strategy has been undertaken taking into account the completion of projects that had not in 2021 then commenced, ones then in delivery and reconfirming support for those that remain even now, aspirational. These factors would include the adoption of the Romford Masterplan, the opening of the Elizabeth Line (formerly Crossrail), the birth of the Thames Freeport, the maturation of Local London and the defunding of the Thames Estuary Growth Board.

In particular, the revised strategy no longer incorporates the Council's Employment & Skills Strategy and it should be noted that this revised companion strategy is now presented later on this agenda supplemented by the proposed Social Value Strategy. While presented separately today, these three pivotal documents remain symbiotic

While presented as a revised 5-year strategy it remains the commitment to keep the Inclusive Growth Strategy under continuing review.

REASONS AND OPTIONS

There is no statutory requirement for any local authority to adopt an inclusive growth or economic development strategy. It is self-evident however that should a Council wish to prioritise the economic health of its borough, it should make tactical decisions in pursuit of such an objective in the context of a competent strategy

Reasons for the decision:

The adoption of a revised strategy would allow project investment decisions to be made in their proper strategic context.

Other options considered:

The options in this matter are five-fold:

1. To decide that an Inclusive Growth Strategy is unnecessary
2. To decide that the previous strategy remains more appropriate
3. To adopt the revised strategy as drafted
4. To require minor changes
5. To require a comprehensive reworking of the strategy

The first option is not recommended as it would lead to sub-optimal decision making without strategic context beyond the less specific context of the Corporate Plan.

The second option cannot be recommended as it would lead to inconsistency and duplication between two adopted strategies.

The third option is recommended as the most proportionate to the need and the opportunity.

The fourth option can be recommended if members feel that amendment is required.

The fifth option could bring with it an unresourced cost (£80-100,000) without anticipated return on such an investment.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

There are no direct financial implications from approving the revised strategy as the process was completed on a 'light touch' basis. The decision to have a strategy is not a statutory requirement. Financial implications will be considered through any proposed action to deliver and approval sought at that time.

The report readily identifies that the strategy remains based largely on the data compiled in 2019. It makes the point that data is likely to be unsettled during the last five years or so. To update this, it would require approximately £100,000 of investment, which would not directly yield a return.

With the authority requiring a Capitalisation Directive, in order to set a balanced budget, it is necessary for it to strike a balance. However, an opportunity maybe missed in not completing a comprehensive update to this strategy for the Borough, its residents and businesses.

Legal implications and risks:

There are no direct legal implications arising as a result of the recommendation in this report.

Human Resources implications and risks:

The recommendations made in this report do not appear to give rise to any identifiable HR risks or implications that would affect either the Council or its workforce.

Equalities implications and risks:

Note here the equalities and social implications of, and risks relating to, the proposed decision.

Consider the impact your proposal may have upon individuals with protected characteristics:

- *age,*
- *disability,*
- *gender reassignment,*
- *marriage and civil partnership,*
- *pregnancy and maternity,*
- *race,*
- *religion or belief,*
- *sex,*
- *sexual orientation.*

In addition to the above the Council considers equality implications on the following criteria:

- Socio-economic status
- Health and wellbeing

Equality and Health Impact Assessments (EHIA) involve anticipating the consequences of our strategies, policies and activities, making sure that any negative, detrimental, and discriminatory behaviours are eliminated. The EHIA is used to check that the design and approach to delivery of our commitments ensures that benefits and opportunities are realised by all our communities.

Please make explicit what can be done, where possible to mitigate for any negative impacts or enhance positive impacts with due regard to ensure that the council fulfils its Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equalities Act 2010. This requires the Council to have due regard to:

- a) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;*
- b) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;*
- c) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.*

An Equality and Health Impact Assessment (EHIA) is required when considering any new policy/strategy/activity. Where existing policies and activities are being reviewed this should align with the review periods suggested in the design phase. An EHIA is not required in all decision-making process. Please review the EHIA Process Flowchart for a quick overview whether an EHIA report is required for the decision you seek to undertake. If it is considered that an EHIA is not necessary, the reason for that MUST be stated here.

An EHIA should normally be reviewed every 2-3 years.

Check the intranet page for more information.

Please contact the Race, Equality, Diversity, Accessibility and Inclusion (READI) Programme Team for further guidance on READI@havering.gov.uk.

An EHIA has been prepared for the revised strategy.

Health and Wellbeing implications and Risks

Havering Council is committed to protecting and promoting the health and wellbeing of residents. By driving forward the Inclusive Growth agenda, the adoption of this strategy offers an important opportunity to improve the health and wellbeing of local residents by helping to address economic inequity and disadvantage, which are key drivers of health inequalities. Ensuring that inclusive approaches and principles are at the heart of all activity will be essential in ensuring that Havering residents reap the benefits of the economic growth and prosperity that the strategy seeks to facilitate.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Guidance on completing this section can be found on this link:

<https://onesourceict.sharepoint.com/sites/SustIntranet/SitePages/Committee-Guidance.aspx>

The strategy does not propose the delivery of any individual projects but rather indicates the purpose of strategic context of projects that might be delivered in future. As such, the environmental impact and climate change consequences of such projects at the time they are proposed.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

The proposed revised Inclusive Growth Strategy is appended.