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Date	3rd SEPTEMBER 2020		
Report Originator	HEAD OF NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT PLANNING & DELIVERY UNIT		
Title	NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ECONOMIC PROSPECTUS		

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 For the Joint Planning Committee to endorse the North Northamptonshire Economic Prospectus.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Last year the JPDU commissioned planning and economic consultants Lichfields to prepare a North Northamptonshire Investment Framework (NNIF). This identifies measures to accelerate the delivery of planned housing and employment growth over the period to 2031 and beyond. It was endorsed by the Joint Delivery Committee in June 2019 and has put North Northamptonshire in a good position to feed into infrastructure planning within the Oxford-Cambridge Arc and to support funding bids.
- 2.2 Work on the NNIF highlighted the need to prepare an “economic prospectus” to highlight North Northamptonshire’s potential and to focus attention on areas where concerted effort is required to realise growth priorities. This was considered timely with the formation of the Unitary Authority and with economic visioning and strategy work underway across the wider Arc.
- 2.3 A copy of the prospectus is provided at [Appendix 1](#). This report summarises the document and recommends that it is endorsed by the Joint Planning Committee. It will then be used as part of the evidence base to support discussions with Government, Homes England and other stakeholders, particularly in relation to North Northamptonshire’s role within the Ox-Cam Arc.

3. OVERVIEW OF THE ECONOMIC PROSPECTUS

- 3.1 The Economic Prospectus is not a new plan but draws together existing evidence and strategies including the NNIF, Joint Core Strategy, the South East Midlands Local Industrial Strategy and local Economic Development delivery plans. The JPDU worked closely with planning and economic development officers in the partner Councils and colleagues at SEMLEP to shape the document and secure case studies of business activity in the area. The aim is to provide a clear economic narrative that can be used in discussions with the Government and agencies in promoting North Northamptonshire.

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- 3.2 The prospectus provides a long-term view of the economic potential of the area and does not address the immediate economic shock created by the Covid-19 pandemic. The introduction notes that Councils are working to support economic recovery within the context of the national approach and the work of the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) and the Northamptonshire Local Resilience Partnership. As part of this, SEMLEP has commissioned Lichfields to develop a series of possible local scenarios for the LEP area that consider and test different trajectories of COVID 19 economic impact and recovery over the next few years and assess (as far as possible) the likelihood and potential implications these pose for different segments of the local economy and population. This will help in thinking about whether any commitments from the Local Industrial Strategy need to be reprioritised or reshaped. This work will inform future revisions of the prospectus and plans and strategies for North Northamptonshire but should not diminish the value of publishing the prospectus so that it can be used in the meantime.
- 3.3 The prospectus presents an overarching economic narrative for NN to highlight existing economic strengths and USPs, and to focus attention on opportunities to maximise its growth potential and realise priorities. It is placed within the context of the area’s wider amenity offer and underpinning place shaping ambitions which seek to ensure that development is genuinely sustainable and inclusive by creating places where people want to live, work and do business.
- 3.4 There is an infographic at the beginning of the document that highlights some specific points for North Northamptonshire. The target audience for the prospectus is Government and other key decision makers rather than individual investors or developers (i.e. it is primarily an evidence-based narrative rather than a marketing tool). However, from dialogue with stakeholders it is clear that there would be value in having a summary “flyer” reflecting the key messages from the economic prospectus designed and branded up in a way that can act as a marketing tool for North Northamptonshire.
- 3.5 The prospectus was sent by email to all members of the Joint Planning and Joint Development Committees on 1st July. The Joint Planning Committee is asked to endorse the document to strengthen the weight that can be given to it.
- 3.6 The importance of having a clear economic narrative and prioritised investment plans, and of close-working with SEMLEP, has been highlighted by the announcement in August of the projects that will be funded through the Governments [Getting Building Fund](#) for investment in local, shovel-ready infrastructure projects to stimulate jobs and support economic recovery. Three North Northamptonshire projects have been allocated funding (subject to further quality assurance) totalling over £6.5 million, and skills funding has been awarded to Bedford College, which has campuses in the Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough. The NN projects involve an innovative recycling project in East Northamptonshire, the Rockingham Clean Energy Hub, and support for cultural facilities in Kettering Town Centre. These projects align with the priority sectors that are identified in the NNIF and Economic Prospectus. Work is underway on

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an Arc economic prospectus. The NN economic prospectus will inform our input into this work.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Future revisions of the prospectus will incorporate measures to address the immediate economic shock created by the Covid-19 pandemic. It is considered that there is significant value in publishing the prospectus in the meantime to ensure that the clear economic narrative provided can be used in discussions with Government and agencies in promoting North Northamptonshire. The success of North Northamptonshire in receiving funding from the Getting Building Fund emphasises the value of the document and close relationships with SEMLEP and other agencies.

5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 **The Head of the NNJPDU recommends that the Joint Planning Committee endorse the North Northamptonshire Economic Prospectus in Appendix 1.**

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