



Policy and Resources Committee 10 July 2017

Business Charter

Purpose of report

This report seeks Members' approval for a new Business Charter which has been produced to help drive forward and promote the delivery of "Enterprising East Northants", the Council's Economic Growth, Tourism and Regeneration Strategy.

Attachments:

Appendix 1: Draft Enterprise East Northants Business Charter

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Council's refreshed Economic Growth, Tourism and Regeneration Strategy 2017-2020 was approved at the April Committee meeting. It sets out a vision and work programme to drive forward the Council's Corporate Plan priority regarding regeneration and economic development and its vision of Working with Communities to Sustain a Thriving District.
- 1.2 The Strategy will play a pivotal role in both nurturing and supporting economic prosperity across the district and presenting a cohesive and compelling narrative to secure support and resources from strategic partners, with a particular focus on the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership, Government and private investors and businesses.
- 1.3 The Strategy will also ensure that local people benefit from prosperity through projects and initiatives that will seek to improve their skills, encourage innovation and entrepreneurship across communities, enhance the natural and built environment and secure investment into essential infrastructure.

2.0 Business Charter

- 2.1 The proposed new Business Charter (set out at Appendix 1) seeks to align Council services behind economic development, and provides the basis for strengthening relationships between the Council and local businesses to drive delivery of Enterprise East Northants.
- 2.2 The Charter details the Council's commitment to:
 - ✓ Champion and support local business
 - ✓ Deliver the highest quality of service for businesses
 - ✓ Provide good value for money
 - ✓ Seek the views of businesses to help plan services
 - ✓ Deal with businesses honestly and with integrity
- 2.3 The Charter sets out the different roles of the Council and how these can support local businesses and the economy along with the expectations of businesses in this relationship.
- 2.4 Lastly, the Charter emphasises that, while we will always aim to be business-friendly, those businesses that disregard the law will be subject to formal action in line with the Council's statutory obligations and enforcement policy.

- 2.5 Delivery will be taken forward via an internal cross-Council business champions group that will review progress and deal with key issues identified. Consideration will also be given to setting up an external group to enable business representatives to help drive forward delivery and to make sure the Charter remains fit for purpose.
- 3.0 Enterprising East Northants**
- 3.1 Enterprising East Northants is the new brand for the Council's economic development strategy and will be used to promote the strategy and its work streams. This will include the production of a suite of documents to communicate and drive forward delivery of which the Business Charter is the first.
- 4.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**
- 4.1 The Charter seeks to secure prosperity for all and, as a result, reduce inequality across the district.
- 5.0 Legal Implications**
- 5.1 The Charter reinforces the point that all regulatory and legal matters relating to businesses will still be relevant and, where necessary, enforced.
- 6.0 Risk Management**
- 6.1 The Charter will help to manage reputational risks by strengthening the Council's relationship and interaction with local businesses. It will also support cross-service working, which will help to identify and manage those risks that cut across a number of service areas.
- 7.0 Resource and Financial Implications**
- 7.1 The Charter will be managed and driven by the Economic and Commercial Development service with support from a cross council grouping of staff that will meet periodically as a Business Champions group and who will feed back to other staff via team meetings and to the District Regeneration and Tourism Working Group.
- 8.0 Constitutional Implications**
- 8.1 There is no direct impact on the Council's constitution.
- 9.0 Implications for Our Customers**
- 9.1 The delivery of the Business Charter will include working closely with the customer service team to review how best to communicate with, and manage the interface between, businesses; this will be a key focus for the Business Champions group.
- 10.0 Corporate Outcomes**
- 10.1 The Business Charter will improve the Council's understanding of and working relationships with businesses which will help delivery against corporate outcomes in terms of :
- Good Quality of Life - Prosperous: improving and targeting business support to nurture business start ups and growth
 - Good Quality of Life - Safe: Securing better compliance with all relevant legislation and regulations
 - High Quality Service Delivery: Ensuring the needs of business are considered as part of service design and delivery
 - Effective Partnership Working: Better joint working to drive forward projects to improve town centres and bring forward employment sites that meet the needs of business.

11.0 Recommendation

11.1 Members are asked to consider and approve the Business Charter.

(Reason – To enable delivery of Enterprise East Northants through strengthening relationships with and support for businesses).

Legal	Power: Localism Act 2011				
	Other considerations:				
Background Papers: Economic Growth, Tourism and Regeneration Strategy 2017-2020					
Person Originating Report: Greg Macdonald, Head of Economic and Commercial Development ☎ 01832 742014 ✉ gmacdonald@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk					
Date: 22/06/2017					
CFO		MO		CX	