

Economic Recovery Plan

2021 - 2024



The purpose of this plan is two fold:

1. To provide an overview of the interventions and actions that the Council has taken over the last 18 months in response to the pandemic and the devastating effects it has had on our communities and local economy.
2. To set out a plan and pathway that will inform our way towards long term recovery and economic growth centred around inclusiveness, sustainability and resilience.

During the first year of the pandemic, Councils experienced an unprecedented challenge of having to rapidly adapt and change the way they would operate and serve their communities. This was characterised by an immediate emergency response from WLDC, in collaboration with partner organisations, where we strived to ensure continuity to deliver critical services and respond to urgent welfare needs.

As the pandemic halted the global and local economies and national lockdown restrictions were imposed, the priority of the Growth Team was to focus primarily on supporting local businesses and protecting jobs. During a period of 18 months the Team delivered nearly £32million in Government Covid-19 related grants assisting circa 1,800 businesses and to date we continue to advise on any financial support and initiative that may be made available to businesses as we transition out of the pandemic (see Appendix A - Page 31 - for a summary of the financial support awarded by WLDC to local businesses).

With the Council having moved from emergency to recovery phase, going forward, the emphasis will now shift to more medium/longer term priorities also aligned with the overarching vision and strategic aims of our Corporate Plan. In this respect, the attention will not remain solely on immediate business and financial support to address loss of trade and income, and safeguarding jobs but will extend to a more concerted effort to future-proof our socio-economic environment against the long lasting effects of Covid-19 and other emerging and future challenges.

This means that any support and action identified in the Recovery Plan will set the foundations and will feed into the Review of our Economic Growth Strategy (due by 2024) to ensure that our long term vision for economic recovery and growth reflects and captures both local changes and global megatrends (such as climate change, digitisation and EU Exit) - whilst at the same time exploring how those can be capitalised into new areas of opportunity.

The Recovery Plan is a key strategic document which is complementary to other Council's strategies, policies and plans and closely aligned with the West Lindsey Corporate Plan. The Recovery Plan is a new addition to the overarching Council's strategic framework and has specifically been developed in the wake of the pandemic. Due to its function and priorities the plan will be regularly reviewed to ensure that its trajectory is still relevant and in tune with the fast-pacing socio-economic environment we are in.

The current review of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan presents another great opportunity for our Recovery Programme to focus on the sustainable development of our district, town centres and rural villages and supports the aim and objectives of other important strategies that affect Central Lincolnshire's future.



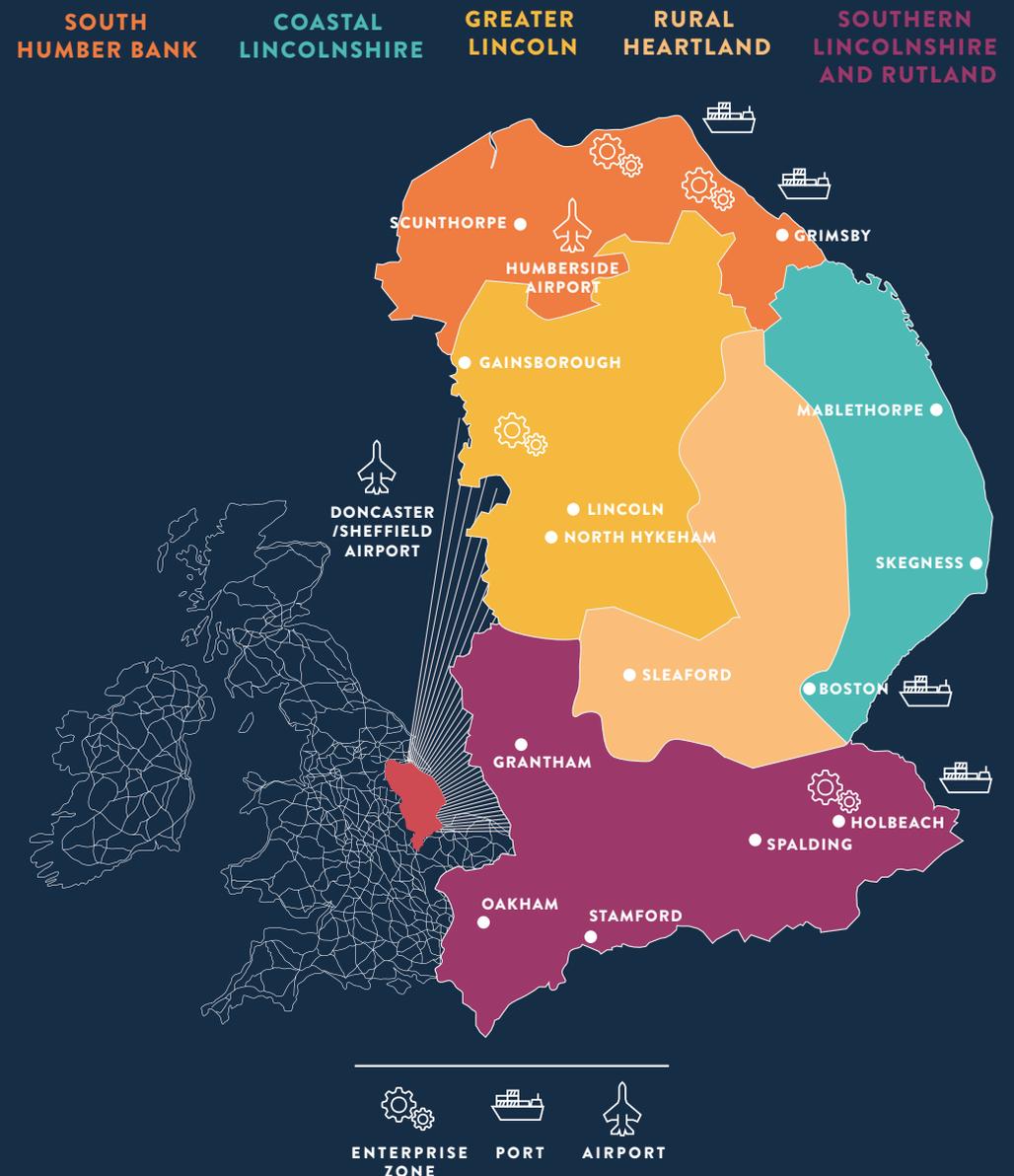
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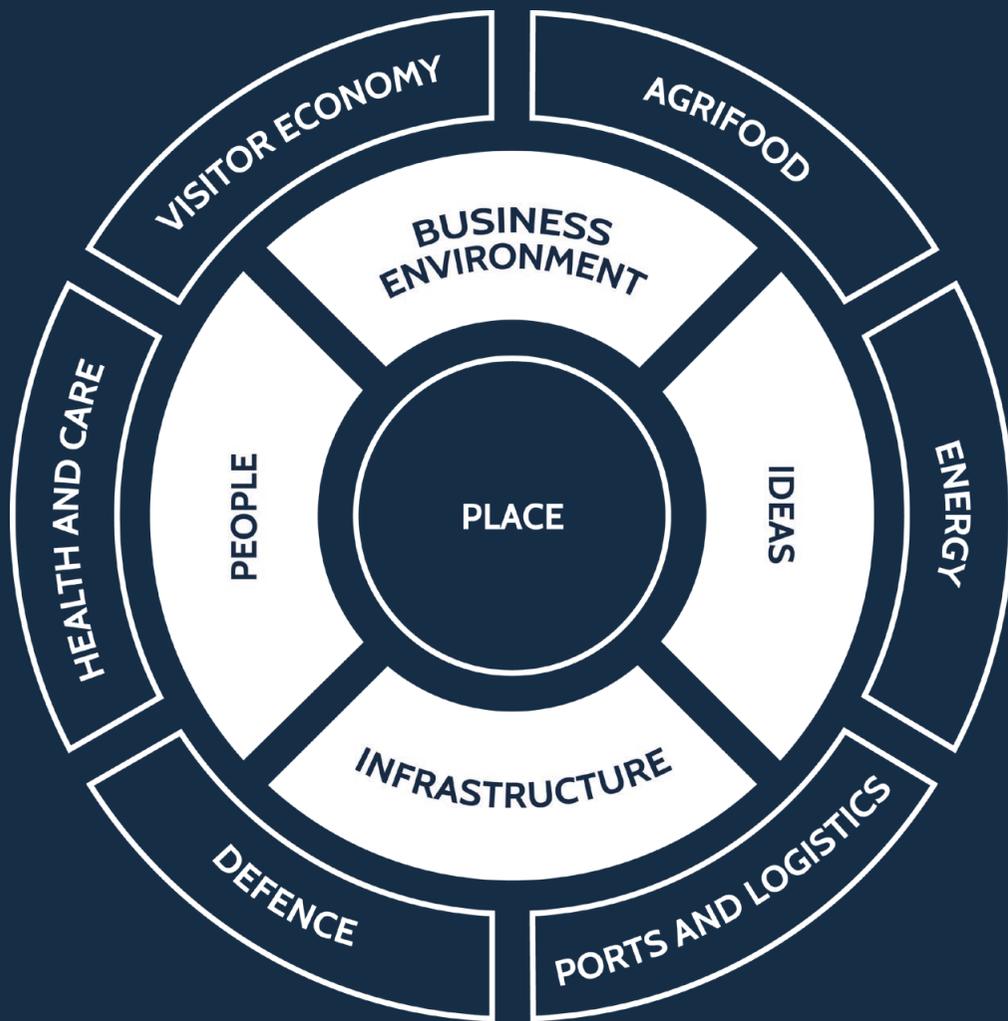
The content of this Plan is the result of ongoing work that has been carried out over the last 18 months by WLDC also in collaboration with key partners such as the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum (LRF) and the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP) with adjoining Local Authorities. Much of the evidence base and business intelligence informing the Plan has been captured during the pandemic by the Growth Team as part of the Covid-19 business grants process and other platforms such as the LRF 'Business and Recovery Task Force' and the Lincolnshire Growth Hub.

Whilst this process may have put into evidence gaps and weaknesses in our local economy that will call for specific interventions and measures, it has also reinforced the need to continue to build on the wider work that was already underway with the GLLEP in respect of the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) in which our economy has a clear role to play.

To complement and support the LIS, the GLLEP has recently produced an Economic Plan for Growth called 'Protecting, Progressing, Prospering', a road to recovery and revival map document that acknowledges the effects and changes brought about by Covid-19 across the Great Lincolnshire area and outlines the strategic steps necessary to re-stabilise and level up our economy in the longer run.

The West Lindsey Recovery Plan is based around the key themes and principles set out in the GLLEP Revival Plan (see Figure 1 on Page 5) and will aim to cascade those into a more localised and relevant delivery model for our district so that whilst rebuild is driven at local level any action will be fully integrated and represented into the Greater Lincolnshire wider context.





Place:

Our ambition is to capitalise on the dispersed economy to create a leading polycentric, productive economy.

Ideas:

Our ambition is to broaden and deepen the base of innovating firms in Greater Lincolnshire, aligning innovation with the priority sectors, and trebling the level of innovation investment in the region.

People:

Our ambition is to enable our residents to reach to their potential in the labour market and participate in a flourishing and inclusive economy.

Business Environment:

Our ambition is to create a supportive business environment for entrepreneurs, micro and SMEs to grow and become more productive and resilient.

Infrastructure:

Our ambition is to develop the infrastructure needed to support business growth, move goods, connect employees, trainees and visitors, and be prepared for future growth and challenges.

Figure 1: Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership Responding to Covid-19 across the Five Foundations of Productivity

In terms of geography, West Lindsey is one of the largest and most rural districts in England. Gainsborough's position in the westerly part of Greater Lincolnshire adjacent to the River Trent forms a natural getaway into Central Lincolnshire from the Sheffield City Region and Nottinghamshire. Both the market towns of Market Rasen and Caistor have strong appeal and potential in supporting the growth of their neighbouring economic geographies whilst retaining their distinctive landscape and attractiveness of a rural location.

The district serves a population of 96,200 and circa 3,800 businesses with micro businesses (employing 0-9 people) making up 90.6% of all business in the district and only 1.2% of medium size businesses (50 to 249) representing this group.



Whilst West Lindsey GVA performance has generally fared lower compared to other districts in Greater Lincolnshire, its rate of growth has shown a strong and steady trend between 2016 and 2019 reflecting an average annual growth of 1.61% (compared to 1.67% for the United Kingdom).

However, since March 2020, as elsewhere the Covid-19 pandemic has started to significantly cripple the district's economy and workforce. As of December 2020 there were 40,000 economically active people resident in West Lindsey as opposed to 46,000 in the previous year.

As of June 2020, approximately 27% of the eligible workforce was on furlough with the number of job on furlough being reduced down to an estimated 3.5% in August 2021. (Source: GLLEP Covid-19 Impact Monitoring Dashboard). This was coupled with a substantial increase in the take up of Universal Credit Claims by almost 40% between the period March 2020 and August 2021 (however this may also cover a broader range of out of work or low work benefits due to the roll out of the new Universal Credit Full Service).

Experimental statistics published from HM Revenue and Customs show that in West Lindsey around 3,400 individuals claimed for the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) up to 15 August 2021. This represented over 70% of the total potentially eligible population with a total value of claims amounting to over £29million. At regional level the sector with the highest number of potentially eligible individuals and the highest proportion of claims was the construction industry.



From the analysis of the ONS GDP Quarterly Estimates, the most severe effects of the pandemic on the district's economic activity have been experienced as a result of the first national lockdown in March 2020 when almost £7million in production of goods and services was lost in one quarter. The Retail, Hospitality and Leisure sectors were the most hardly hit.

Since then the sharp fluctuations in downturn and depression have slowly stabilised as the economy gradually and partially started to reopen with the enforcement of health and safety measures and the vaccine campaign.

Whilst the economy has suffered a total loss of circa £4.7million in outputs since March 2020 those estimates also indicate that West Lindsey, has been the Local Authority with the least severe depression across Greater Lincolnshire. This may also be attributed to the contribution of high-value added sectors such as Construction and Manufacturing which have a strong presence in our economy and were not affected by full industry closure.

Key Challenges

Covid-19 has brought into stark relief some of the challenges that West Lindsey was already facing before the pandemic, and the effects of the pandemic amplified and exacerbated those aspects even further:

- Sparse population and social isolation issues due to district's rurality: this not only emphasised existing vulnerabilities but increased the divide in both economic and health inequalities.
- Prevalence of low skills base and difficulty attracting skilled workers from outside the district also due to remoteness from social opportunities and poor public transport.
- Comparatively low economic output/productivity due to low value micro enterprises dominating our business fabric.
- Low activity in inward investment.
- Ageing workforce and population – aligned with out-migration of younger people.
- Connectivity challenge for rural locations and the role of mobility and digitalisation in the way services are accessed in rural places including health provision.
- Leverage of new infrastructure investment to deliver inclusive and sustainable growth that will contribute to bridging the gap between urban and rural areas and will make our place and people more resilient. Lack of much needed upgrades and improvements in existing infrastructure will severely hinder and affect our Place making vision and aspirations.
- The revitalisation and future sustainability of our rural towns and high streets with the shift to increased online shopping and customers' changing behaviours.



In addition to the above, feedback and evidence captured from local businesses during the Covid-19 grant process, highlighted a number of recurrent areas for consideration and a set of asks on the Local Authority to help businesses restart and recover.

After Financial Support, improved and more frequent communication was the second most common ask amongst our businesses. They called upon more easily accessible online signposting, business webinars and dedicated business advice. They also requested regular updates from us in relation to future grant funding.

Another repeated theme was 'Rethink local'. In order to boost and level up the local economy the Council will have to deliver locally led interventions that will target the inequalities that emerged during the pandemic and at the same time to invest resources that will also harness the district's local assets and economic strengths.



Messages such as 'Shop small', 'Closer Together', 'Support local' and develop more 'Shop local' initiatives, have emphasised the desire of businesses to forge a more cohesive community where they can intertrade with each other, support the local supply chains and make residents more aware of the offer they have at their doorsteps in order to encourage more localised shopping.

Another area of activity where businesses felt they wanted to see more of or receive more support from the Local Authority, was in relation to advertising and marketing. Linked also to the think local agenda, businesses welcomed more initiatives championed by the Council that would promote the place, increase footfall and attract more visitors and tourists not only to the key market towns but also to more rural parts of the district.

What have we done to date?

The Growth Team distributed
£32million
in Central Government Grants



We circulated regular e-Briefs to
Over 3,000
businesses, keeping them informed of any changes or updates



We gave extra support to 233 hospitality businesses via TOPUP grant totalling
£700,000



We were awarded
£169,196
as part of the Reopening the High Street Safety Fund/Welcome Back Fund

We have promoted
150 Businesses
on our Think Local online platform



We developed a
Covid-19 Toolkit
to help businesses open safely

Over 175 Businesses
accessed the West Lindsey Business Revival Grant



We partnered with the Federation of Small Businesses to offer
50% discount
to new members

We appointed a dedicated business advisor who helped
185 Businesses
navigate their way through the pandemic

We approved
125
commercial planning applications during the lockdown periods

Summary of Key Activities Undertaken

The following section provides a review of some of the main business support initiatives led by the Council during the pandemic:



Central Government Grant Support:

Since March 2020, the Growth Team has led on the distribution of new financial packages of Government support released in response to Covid-19 and national lockdowns. To date this has resulted in a total spend of almost £32million and a total of 7,735 grant awards split between mandatory and discretionary schemes (for full details of Covid-19 Business Grants see Appendix A - Page 31).

West Lindsey Business Revival Grant:

This grant scheme was aimed at supporting businesses to reopen, recover and prosper.

It was one of the latest initiatives in a programme of support to assist businesses to respond to the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. This support was in addition to the Restart Grants and previous Local Restrictions Support Grant.

Businesses could apply for up to £5,000 to help them to adapt, diversify and to support long-term sustainability. The types of measures that could be supported included specialist advice or purchase of equipment and/or new technology to enable sustainable ways of working and improve resilience.

Federation of Small Business Programme:

To provide help to our small-business community, West Lindsey District Council has partnered with the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), who are able to provide smaller businesses in the district with information to respond to the challenges they are facing due to Covid-19.

Membership benefits include: free business banking, 24/7 legal advice, HR support, tax guidance, late payment and financial help, insurances, health and safety information plus healthcare.

eBrief:

As part of the Council's ongoing commitment to maintain regular communication with businesses during the pandemic, the Growth Team increased the frequency of ebrieffs to be issued to businesses to keep them informed of any update in respect of funding, Government policy changes and restrictions and additional guidance.

Think Local Campaign:

Creation of an online platform to promote and support local businesses encouraging local people to shop locally and businesses to use local supply chains.

Re-opening High Streets Safely/Welcome Back:

In June 2020 West Lindsey was allocated £84,598 from the 'Reopening the High Street Safely Fund'. This funding allocation was then merged into the Welcome Back Funding scheme, which had a broader criteria. West Lindsey were then awarded a further funding allocation taking our total funding to £169,196. This funding has to be defrayed by March 2022.

The fund allows local authorities in England to put in place additional measures to create and promote a safe environment for local trade and tourism, particularly in high streets as their economies reopened.



Support to our Commercial Council Tenants:

In light of the request from Government for most businesses to close during Covid-19 lockdown, West Lindsey's Property & Assets team anticipated that rental payment holidays requests would come forward from some of the Council's commercial tenants. A general consensus was reached by West Lindsey that tenants requesting assistance would be offered a reviewable 3 month rent deferral period on the proviso that any deferred rent would be paid back in full by the 31st March 2021.

Further support was also offered to tenants that allowed them to change their rent payments dates e.g. from Quarterly to Monthly payments to aid their business cash flow and this was taken up by some of the larger commercial tenants.

WLDC also offered support to their Guildhall tenant, The Department of Works & Pensions, by facilitating extended office hours to their staff in order that they could manage their workloads and continued to allow The Plough Business Hub micro business tenants to use the facility (with Covid-19 procedures in place).

Retail/Visitor Economy direct business support:

West Lindsey District Council has secured the support of Clare Bailey, a Lincolnshire-based independent business advisor, to help businesses to navigate their way through the current situation and to help ensure they are recovery ready.

Covid-19 Safe Re-opening Support/Guidance Packs for safe re-opening:

Guidance, detailing the measures businesses should take to meet the necessary social distancing and hygiene standards, was developed and published on our website; this included a Covid-19 Tool Kit which aimed to help businesses become Covid-19 secure, resume trading safely, and protect their staff and customers as lockdown is eased.

Number of planning applications received and determined:

Comparing the same periods pre and post Covid-19 (March 2019/2020 and March 2020/2021), it appears that in terms of commercial applications the figures have remained fairly stable (respectively 136 against 125); this suggests that during lockdown certain areas of business activity have continued to occur and have allowed businesses to progress their investment plans – whether in the form of physical refurbishments or new developments.

Also, due to the eligibility criteria set out in the Government Covid-19 business grants which required businesses to be appearing on the rating list, this triggered a number of new planning applications for some of those businesses that were not registered on the system.





Lincoln Distillery, Saxilby

This family run business was established in 2017, becoming Lincoln's first commercial distillery since 1863. They are the home of Lincoln Gin, which is now available in London Dry, Cask Aged and Navy Strength varieties.

The owner, Matthew Felgate, works alongside his farther-in-law, John. They have taken the business from its humble beginnings in the family kitchen to an established craft distillery.

Matthew has a variety of roles that include the everyday running of the distillery, business development, distilling, blending, bottling and labelling, social media and even deliveries.

Matthew said: "I love the creativity and the pride it gives producing something of a high standard. The relentless variety of work offers multiple obstacles and reminds us we are always learning."



CLK Books, Searby

Clare Kendall, the owner of CLK Books, is a bookkeeper, licensed and regulated by the Institute of Chartered Bookkeepers (ICB), providing bookkeeping services to the local area including VAT returns, self-assessment tax returns and help with accounting software.

Clare helps small businesses across the Lincolnshire area including Brigg, Caistor, Grimsby, Cleethorpes, Barton and the Lincolnshire Wolds.

Clare said: "I love helping people succeed in business! The one thing entrepreneurs can be weak at is the paperwork and numbers, often wasting their precious time catching up on the necessary administration involved. I can help business owners understand the numbers and take away all the paperwork, freeing them to grow their business and giving them free time to enjoy with their families and friends."



Salutation Inn, Nettleton

In response to the Covid-19 lockdown, The Salutation Inn set up a community shop in their pub, selling essential items to support those in need. They also supported local businesses in the area by teaming up with their local veg supplier and butcher.

Back in May 2020, we spoke to Jo Parsons, who runs the pub. She said: "We sell items at cost and do not make a profit. The shop operates on a call and collect service with designated collection times to ensure social distancing."

Since then, the pub was able to reopen like normal and they post regular updates about their service on their Facebook page.



J A Photo Studio, Gainsborough

Ranked number 1 on Google, J A Photo Studio is one of the only professional photography studios in Gainsborough, offering high quality services such as modern family portraits, stunning full day wedding photography and commercial services.

Jason, a MPA Certified Professional Photographer & Web Developer, runs the studio alongside his wife Amy. He said: "I am so lucky that I get to do what I love every day! I enjoy meeting people from all different walks of life, constantly learning new skills and working for myself."

As well as commercial photography and marketing services for businesses of all sizes anywhere in the UK and beyond, they also offer mini sessions all year round, including school portraits and Christmas sessions.



Waltham Herbs Willow Vale Nursery, Caistor

This local nursery has used the money from the Revival Grant to purchase bees and beehives, and enable 8 acres of their business to remain a green space for pollination.

Collecting the honey and looking after the bees and beehives provides many health and wellbeing benefits, both to those working on the site and customers who choose to buy it.



BoardGame ParaDice, Gainsborough

This small independent business has created two 'green areas' at the front and rear of the shop. The front is now an oasis of planting, with the double benefit of being a bee/insect haven, along with the mental wellbeing benefits when a person encounters even a small haven of beauty. The rear has now been converted into a covered decking area, which provides space for a small sustainable food source, and an area for customers to peacefully reflect away from the busy main road.

The outside lighting at the rear of the property has been converted to low energy lighting, reducing the carbon footprint of the building. The landmark clock at the front of the building has been restored to working order, with the internal lighting again converted to carbon reducing low energy lighting. The hope is that the funding, along with hard work, will benefit the local area, and may even encourage other people to bring one of the main roads in Gainsborough into a safe and attractive area.



Glentham Grange, Glentham

This caravan site has created a sheltered outdoor space to encourage guests to have a more outdoor approach to their stay.

The space is large enough to satisfy guests requirements and affords the ability to social distance where appropriate. It is effectively an all weather viewing area, overlooking the newly created lake and the Lincolnshire Wolds. This will encourage guests to leave the confines of their touring caravans, televisions, laptops etc. in favour of fresh air and the opportunity to socialise.

They have also incorporated a barn owl flight within the enclosed roof space which is already providing hunting roosts for the resident barn owls.



Gainsborough Forge, Marton

This rural micro business specialises in the design and manufacturing of bespoke hand crafted metal products and furniture.

The business used the Revival Grant to take full advantage of digital tools and applications that would enhance both the business visibility online as well as the customer experience.

Part of the grant helped with the development of a brand new website, with an online shop facility and showroom displaying existing products and previous designs. The funding also supported the purchase of new IT equipment and specialist design software that would allow the business to create and share orders' ideas with the customer in a more professional way.

What will we be doing next?

As a Council, despite the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, we have continued to deliver high quality services to our residents and business community.

We have shifted our delivery model to a hybrid of remote and in-person service, maximising the effectiveness of new digital technologies and efficient ways of working. Where necessary we have flexed our resources to respond to urgent and emerging priorities.

Economic regeneration and growth that benefits all of our communities is a key focus in our Corporate Plan.

Encouraging investment, supporting our businesses, developing growth and employment opportunities and harnessing the potential of green recovery underpins our recovery plan which, developed around our understanding of the challenges, with feedback from our businesses and informed by our opportunities is based around the following key themes:

- Green Recovery
- Business Environment
- Regeneration and Levelling Up
- Key Sector Development
- Infrastructure (Physical and Digital)
- Supporting People and Skills



Green Recovery:

The Plan will champion and promote the transition from a traditional linear economy (make, use, dispose) to a more circular economy (a system which is designed to re-use, repair and recycle as many of its products, including waste products, as possible).

The shift to a zero carbon economy will have major impact on the existing workforce and industries with creation of job opportunities and growth in new sectors. The economy will experience a transition from high carbon jobs to more technologically innovative roles.

Inevitably there will be a greater need and requirement to support the transition of existing workforce from high carbon industries to a low carbon economy (without the necessary level of training and skills provided this could lead to unemployment, job displacement or loss of livelihoods so support during this transition is key).



Business Environment:

The focus of this Plan is to create a thriving and dynamic economic environment in which our enterprises can be more competitive, productive and reach their full potential. We will continue to offer practical support to our businesses to survive through the crisis and recover at the earliest opportunity.

We will also encourage diversification and investment in new market areas particularly in those low carbon, high value and innovative sectors that will reshape the future of our economies.



Regeneration and Levelling Up:

Place-based investment and heritage-led regeneration underpin both the GLLEP Revival Plan and WLDC Recovery Plan.

Gainsborough serves a large rural catchment area due to the existing infrastructure including employment opportunities, education (including post 16yrs) shops, health care facilities etc. However, the current town centre is significantly under performing and there is a need to rejuvenate the town centre and provide much needed leisure provision to develop a 24hr economy.

The Council is working to ensure that the disadvantaged residents can take advantage of economic opportunities and participate in the rising prosperity of the area by embedding social value at the heart of major development proposals (Capturing local jobs, training opportunities and local investment via procurement and contracting).

Our 'Thriving Gainsborough 2024' proposal was successfully awarded more than £10 million by Central Government in October 2021 as part of the Levelling Up Fund programme. The plans are designed to revitalise the local economy and ultimately reduce the acute deprivation experienced across several wards. It is hoped that this ambitious investment programme will have a 'domino effect' improving prosperity not only within the town but across the district.

Whilst it may be acknowledged that priority on the Levelling Up agenda has been given by Government to primarily support inner cities/towns investment plans and transport improvement schemes, the Council recognises that there is a risk that emphasis on urban areas, productivity and industrial growth may place rural economies at further disadvantage and alienate those who live and work in rural environments.

The Recovery Plan and the next iteration of the Economic Growth Strategy will ensure that rural needs and potentials have greater visibility and urban rural interdependencies are clearly embedded and represented throughout our inclusive growth policy.

Key Sector Development:

As part of the wider work on the Local Industrial Strategy and the GLLEP Revival Plan, we will continue to support the overarching vision of the GLLEP to create a productive, resilient and low carbon economic base and understand how those aims and objectives can be translated in achievable and deliverable outcomes for our district.

We will continue to build on the district's existing assets and human capital and strengthen our local based investment propositions particularly around agri-food and the visitor economy.



Infrastructure (Physical and Digital):

To realise the full potential of the area and the network which supports it, consideration must be given to the routes which provide strategic linkages and specifically any potential constraints in capacity and traffic. In this instance, extensive work including modelling of the river crossing junction at Gainsborough has taken place, with capacity issues directly linked to future growth identified. Lack of much needed upgrades and improvements in existing infrastructure to serve those networks and corridors will severely hinder and affect our Place making vision and aspirations.

The A46/A15 improvements within West Lindsey provides a real opportunity to create new sustainable communities along this strategically important economic corridor between the Humber Ports and Lincoln.

Working with the LCC Highways Authority we will continue to champion the improvement of the public transport network, including rail and bus travel, particularly for our rural communities where services are less resilient, whilst developing plans for improved walking and cycling opportunities across the district.

Reliable and efficient digital infrastructure and broadband is also crucial for a more inclusive economic recovery: improved connectivity and adoption of digital technologies particularly for rural businesses can help to address digital exclusion and inequalities in communities.

Supporting People and Skills:

The impact of Covid-19 on our workforce has been severe and the opportunities for our young population significantly reduced. In addition, the end of the furlough scheme on 30th September, whilst in many ways has been very successful, it has also led to increased unemployment and redundancies rates and a higher number of unfilled vacancies in some sectors. Those trends are expected to create unemployment amongst the older, and more experienced residents with a risk that if made unemployed after furlough they may drop out of the labour force altogether.

In this respect, re-training and skills development are key enablers if we are to convert the above challenges into opportunities for our labour market and encourage more people to access emerging markets that require new skills and human capital (such as digital technology and green economy).



Green Recovery - Our aim is to support the 'Green Business' strand of the Climate Change, Sustainability and Environment Strategy.

Actions currently being delivered and proposed	Timeline
Develop and adopt robust policies within the revised Local Plan to support the transition to a net zero carbon Central Lincolnshire.	Adoption of the revision of Local Plan early 2022
Develop an appropriate resourcing and delivery plan for large scale solar projects.	March 2022
Investigate the development of renewable energy and energy storage for localised energy schemes.	2022/2023
Explore the opportunity to develop a Rural Pathfinder Project with associated Toolkit that would help assess current challenges on rural mobility and sustainable transport.	December 2022
Agree key walking and cycling routes that require investment to support rural connectivity.	December 2022
Stimulate and support the digital economy to improve digital connectivity across West Lindsey.	Ongoing
Support businesses to access funds and expertise to develop or invest in new environmentally-friendly products or energy-efficient technologies that will drive the transition to a low carbon economy.	Ongoing
Educate and support businesses to reduce, recycle and reuse materials as part of sustainable circular economy.	Ongoing
Support communities to develop Low Carbon Neighbourhood Plans which contribute to green and sustainable growth.	Ongoing
Use the council's procurement processes to ensure the local authority supply chain is minimising carbon emissions, including through circular procurement.	Ongoing
Creation of a Green Tourism Toolkit containing step by step actions that businesses in the tourism and hospitality sector can take to reduce their carbon emissions.	March 2022

Business Environment - Our aim is to diversify and strengthen the economic base, create more jobs and skills and training to serve our businesses.

Actions currently being delivered and proposed	Timeline
Delivery of Business Revival Grant to support businesses to recover, diversify and growth in response to the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic.	May 2021 to March 2022
Provision of specialist Retail Business Adviser to offer 121 advisory sessions and a suite of online support package.	May 2020 to March 2022
Issue of e-brief/digital newsletters to regularly inform the business community of any support programme or initiative that may be available to them.	Ongoing
Creation of an online platform to promote and support businesses - Think Local Campaign.	Ongoing
Development of a social media platform to support visitor economy and retail businesses.	November 2021 to March 2022
Delivery of a Market Traders Grant for Gainsborough, Market Rasen and Caistor designed to support traders who have regularly attended local markets throughout the crisis, and that would also encourage growth for more localised shopping.	March 2022
Continue to work in partnership with FSB / Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce to promote events and support available.	Ongoing
Plan and organise a WLDC business showcase event to highlight Council's current programme of work and present WLDC commercial opportunities available to businesses.	March 2022
Work in partnership with the Lincolnshire Growth Hub to ensure our businesses continue to have access to the wider Business Support Programmes.	Ongoing
Continue to support small and micro businesses with their path to recovery and growth potential.	Ongoing
Develop and strengthen our Business Engagement programme in order to gather economic intelligence and trends that would help shape a responsive and relevant Recovery Action Plan.	September 2022
Continue the Data collection programme including Town Centre Vacancies index and footfall data monitoring.	Ongoing
Explore the implementation of new Government Procurement Policy PPN11/20 to allow local suppliers to access Council contracts to support local jobs.	June 2022

Regeneration and Levelling Up - Our aim is to improve the economic performance of Gainsborough, Market Rasen and Caistor Town Centres.

Actions currently being delivered and proposed	Timeline
Develop the West Lindsey Place Plan.	Longer term project to commence in 2022
Continue to work with the Rural Services Network and adjoining members in pushing the Levelling Up agenda for rural areas (Revitalising Rural Campaign).	Ongoing
Utilise Re-opening High Street Safely/Welcome Back Fund to support businesses across the three market towns and main retail areas including a package of public realm improvements.	Complete by March 2022
Deliver Thriving Gainsborough 2024 (programme dependent on external funds).	Outcome of Levelling Up Funding Bid expected end October 2021
Redevelop the former Lindsey Centre.	Confirmed plan by 2022
Deliver the Gainsborough Townscape Heritage programme.	Underway with completion in 2024
Market Rasen Historic Building Grants.	March 2023
Delivery Shop Front Improvement Scheme across Caistor, Market Rasen and Gainsborough.	Ongoing (subject to budgetary implications)
Redevelopment of South Caistor as 'Gateway to the Town'.	Feasibility underway to complete by March 2022 and then agree next steps
Develop a business and masterplan for the redevelopment and regeneration of the site in partnership with the Community and future owner of RAF Scampton (masterplan to be in place prior to planning approval for redevelopment).	Disposal scheduled for December 2022
Delivery of the Living Over the Shops Scheme.	March 2022

Housing Growth - Our first aim is to deliver housing led economic growth and infrastructure.

Actions currently being delivered and proposed	Timeline
Adoption of revised Central Lincolnshire Local Plan.	Early 2022
Completion of Phase 1 Warren Wood (anticipated to be between 35-40 dwellings per year) including securing recycled grant funds for re-investment.	Monitor delivery
Master planning and planning submission for phase 2 Warren Wood.	June 2023
Thonock Park phase 1 to secure housebuilder and commence delivery.	Reserved matters application mid 2022
Monitor and maintain 5 year land supply to ensure housing growth is plan led (working with Central Lincolnshire).	Annual 5 year land supply statement

Our second aim is to drive housing growth and meet need and demand, using private sector solutions where appropriate.

Delivery of the updated Housing Strategy.	April 2022
Continue to engage with registered Providers to bring forward affordable housing schemes that can offer a range of property types and tenures to meet identified housing need within the District.	Ongoing
Work with LCC colleagues, developers and RP's to deliver specialist housing to meet the identified needs across the district. To include: working age adults with disabilities, older people, care leavers.	Ongoing
Secure policy compliant affordable housing contributions from housing development.	Annual Monitoring Report to review progress
Delivery of Viable Housing Solutions project.	Long term project
Support delivery of affordable housing being delivered through S106 off-site contributions.	All 5 projects in pipeline to be in Grant Funding Agreements March 2022

Key Sector Development - Our first aim is to position our economy to maximise its economic integration into the region and align to the local industrial strategy.

Actions currently being delivered and proposed	Timeline
Take full advantage of West Lindsey's geographical location at the heart of several important economic geographies and promote the district's offer to areas where existing economic linkages are low; for example, Sheffield City Region and Nottinghamshire.	Ongoing
Review our approach to inward investment and the account management of companies within our key sectors e.g agri food, manufacturing, visitor economy and renewable technologies.	New approach to be in place by December 2022
Continue to work with Team Lincolnshire and the Foreign Direct Investment Group (FDI) to promote the GLLEP Sector Propositions Offer and the business aftercare programme.	Ongoing
Understand and maximise the benefits and opportunities of Humber Freeport and the UK Food Valley Programme to the district's economy.	Work with LEP is Ongoing
Secure delivery of Hemswell Cliff Food Enterprise Zone and associated socio-economic benefits for the wider settlement (residential area and existing business park).	Key milestone includes supporting business to submit planning application by March 2022
Deliver the Gainsborough Townscape Heritage programme.	Underway with completion in 2024
Develop further the business case for investment in Somerby Park Employment Growth site.	June 2022

Continued on the next page.

Our second aim is to develop a Vibrant Visitor Economy.

Actions currently being delivered and proposed	Timeline
Refreshed and adopted Visitor Economy Strategy with aligned and co-ordinated cultural offer.	March 2022
Enhanced visitor profiling research.	September 2022
Continuation of dedicated business support for visitor economy/retail/town centres sector via Clare Bailey or similar supplier including support in e-commerce and on-line functionality and search engine optimisation.	March 2023
Development of itineraries for West Lindsey Area and promoting to Group Travel Operators.	March 2023
Development of new cycle routes for West Lindsey and promotion locally/regionally/nationally/internationally.	March 2023
Development of food related digital campaigns and across West Lindsey.	March 2023
Review Mayflower 400 project and understand potential for legacy.	March 2022
Deliver Townscape Heritage Activity offer.	September 2024
Cultural offer – investment in Trinity Arts Centre and hub and spoke model.	Bid for National Lottery Funding to be submitted by March 2022
Support the implementation of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Management Plan in partnership with The Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service and Lincolnshire Wolds Joint Advisory Committee (AONB Partnership)	Ongoing
Secure sustainable future for West Lindsey Markets.	Final proposal to Prosperous Communities Committee in January 2022

Infrastructure - Our aim is to deliver housing led growth and infrastructure .

Actions currently being delivered and proposed	Timeline
Develop the Strategic Case and options for improving the A15 in partnership with Lincolnshire County Council, North Lincolnshire Council, LEP and Midlands Connect.	In line with external deadline for call for projects – estimated as early 2022
Gainsborough Bridge Road Improvements.	Secure position with Gainsborough Transport Strategy and work with LCC on scheme details
Gainsborough Green Grid development.	Refresh outline business case linking with climate change action plan – March 2022
Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) representative of local priorities.	For adoption by November 2021
Develop walking and cycling priority plan for rural West Lindsey.	Secure resources and develop delivery plan by December 2022
Play an active role in the development of the South Humber Rail Link business case.	Submission of Strategic Outline Business Case to DftT November 2022

Supporting People and Skills - Our first aim is to improve access to training and employment for residents.

Actions currently being delivered and proposed	Timeline
Gainsborough Local Access Programme (GLAP) Enterprise Development support spanning 4 year period. Networking, workshops and business support will be offered to VCSE organisations in Gainsborough. Development support grants will be available ranging from £250 to £20k. Focus on supporting; Business planning, strategic planning, product development, market testing, engagement, financial support, legal support, HR support and architectural support.	Possible launch January to Marc 2022. Will begin sooner subject to draw down of funding.
Townscape Heritage Student Support Programme.	September 2024
Kickstart programme delivery across West Lindsey, supporting 16-24 year olds with a 6 months employment. Engagement with employers and gateway organisations. WLDC to offer 6-10 placements.	Programme extended to March 2022. Scheme ends September 2022
Made In Gainsborough Engineering Apprenticeship Scheme run from Gainsborough College. Target is 20+ Apprenticeships per year (1 x full time study programme). Original target was 75 Apprenticeships over 3 years (achieved) and the extended target is to deliver 100 engineering apprenticeships over 5 years.	Deliver full cohorts for 2021/22 and 2022/23
Gainsborough Jobs Fair. Target is 10 local businesses with job vacancies, and attendance target is 70 job seekers.	Week Commencing 22nd November 2021
Sector Based Work Academies (SWAPS) recruitment programme to assist larger employers with significant job opportunities. The task is 1x SWAP for Caldero Lounge, Gainsborough (Hospitality & Catering), and the target is 10 jobs.	November 2021

Our second aim is to support local schools to improve attainment levels and employment prospects for young people.

Careers Hub and Enterprise Adviser Network. All West Lindsey secondary & special schools to have 1x Enterprise Adviser.	March 2022
Develop and deliver Careers Fair at Gainsborough Academy (target is for all pupils to attend).	February 2022
Re-establish the mentoring programme at Benjamin Adlard (WLDC to provide 5x mentors).	November 2021 to July 2022

Mandatory Business Closure Grant Update – 22nd Oct 2021 – Rated Businesses

The LRSB Business Closure Grant funding was awarded from government to support businesses severely impacted by coronavirus restrictions when most needed. Funding was first made available in Financial Year 2020-2021 and can be used across Financial Years 20/21 and 21/22.

Name of Grant	Grant Awards	Total Paid
CBSG Grant (March 2020)	1531	£16,810,000
LRSB Addendum (2nd November to 2nd December)	575	£844,322
LRSB CLOSED (3rd December to 4th January)	1168	£592,907
LRSB Addendum - January Lockdown (5th January to 14th February)	589	£1,291,209
Business Support TOPUP (5th January to 14th February)	578	£2,558,000
Christmas Support Payment (wet led pubs)	57	£57,000
LRSB Addendum – February Lockdown (14th February to 31st March)	595	£1,364,288
Restart	599	£4,391,377
Open and Impacted LRSB OPEN (3rd December to 30th December)	83	£38,957
Total	5775	£27,948,061

Discretionary/Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) Update – 22nd Oct 2021

The Discretionary/ARG funding was awarded from government to support businesses severely impacted by coronavirus restrictions when most needed. Funding was first made available in Financial Year 2020-2021 and can be used across Financial Years 20/21 and 21/22.

Name of Grant	Amount Allocated	Grant Awards	Total Paid
Discretionary Grant (March 2020)	£927,490	109	£927,490
ARG (2nd November to 31st March)	£1,913,340	580	£534,043
ARG Business TOPUP	£849,815	51	£137,000
ARG Open and Impacted (2nd November to 31st March)		473	£372,194
ARG Hospitality TOPUP		233	£751,500
ARG Animal Boarding Grant		25	£183,840
ARG Restart		55	£104,577
ARG Restart Sector 1 TOPUP		211	£273,051
ARG Impact – Pubs and Event	£653,754	86	£67,935
ARG Revival (agreed budget £700,000)		137	£602,963
ARG Specialist Retail Support Oct-March 2022			£60,000
Total	£4,344,399	1,960	£4,014,593

Future Agreed Projects

Name of Grant	ARG Funding Available	Amount Allocated
Market Traders Grant		£50,000
Visitor Economy Digital Campaign		£100,000
Completion of Business Revival Grant		£97,036
Total	£329,806	£247,036
Remaining Unallocated Budget		£82,770

Grant Summary

Name of Grants	Number of Awards	Total Paid
Mandatory Schemes	5775	£27,948,061
Discretionary Schemes	1960	£4,014,593
Total	7735	£31,962,654

Governance, Monitoring and Review

The Recovery Plan seeks endorsement by the Prosperous Communities Committee and represents the programme of actions to support the economy of the district and its businesses to recover from the impacts of the pandemic.

The plan will be overseen by the Land Property and Growth Board, with a clear link to the Homes and Communities Board where our people focused actions will be monitored.

Prosperous Communities Committee will receive an annual update on progress.



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