

**HAMBLETON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Report To:** Cabinet  
16 July 2013

**Subject:** **HAMBLETON ECONOMIC PROSPERITY RESEARCH**

All Wards  
Portfolio Holder for Support Services and Economic Development: Councillor P Wilkinson

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**1.0 PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND:**

- 1.1 To inform members of the intention to engage consultancy input to develop a new Economic Development Study for the district that will be used to inform an Economic Development Strategy for the Council.
- 1.2 Through the recent Business Friendly Scrutiny review it was identified that the Council's last study, undertaken in 2005, is now out dated and was undertaken in a very different economic climate. The Council is keen to develop a new Economic Strategy and formulate a series of actions or potential investments to improve the prosperity of the district. To justify investment and use of resources a fresh study and robust evidence base will be required.
- 1.3 As well as informing actions to improve the prosperity of the district the study will form part of the review of the Local Development Framework reassessing employment land needs for the district.
- 1.4 Members will be engaged early on in the delivery of the project to ensure that their views and ideas are properly considered as part of the overall process. A seminar in July has been scheduled to allow ideas to be developed alongside consideration of the Local Development Framework.

**2.0 LINK TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES:**

- 2.1 The study will help deliver Council priorities by providing a robust evidence base from which to develop an Economic Development Strategy for the district. This will be used to inform appropriate investments and actions for the Council to undertake to ensure it is contributing to the sustained prosperity of the district.

**3.0 RISK ASSESSMENT:**

- 3.1 There are no significant risks associated with approving the recommendations.
- 3.2 The key risk is in not approving the recommendation(s) as shown below:-

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Implication</b>	<b>Prob*</b>	<b>Imp*</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Preventative action</b>
Economic Development work undertaken is not based on a robust, defensible evidence base.	The work undertaken and the resources or investment expended could be challenged and criticised.	3	4	12	Invest in a study to justify expenditure and actions in support of developing the economy

The risk is reputational but any significant investment made in a period of economic uncertainty will be under greater scrutiny. To mitigate the risk an evidence base underpinning actions undertaken as part of a coherent Economic Development strategy should be developed.

**4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

4.1 The overall the revenue effects of the study will be as follows:-

<b>Revenue Effects</b>	<b>2012/13 £</b>	<b>2014/15 £</b>	<b>2015/16 £</b>	<b>2016/17 £</b>
Economic Study including any contingency	<u>£100,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Financed by:				
One-off Fund	<u>£100,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	<b><u>£100,000</u></b>	<b><u>0</u></b>	<b><u>0</u></b>	<b><u>0</u></b>

4.2 The resulting Strategy will identify any revenue or capital implications for the Council.

**5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

5.1 A contract framework for the successful consultant will need to be drawn up to ensure the research is delivered to the timetable, level of quality and cost required by the Council.

**6.0 EQUALITY/DIVERSITY ISSUES**

6.1 The research will take account of any equality issues that arise from the evidence gathered.

**7.0 RECOMMENDATION(S):**

7.1 It is recommended that Cabinet agree to the investment of £100,000 from the one-off fund to be made available to conduct an Economic Study of the district to inform the development of an Economic Development Strategy.

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**Background papers:** Nil

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