

Agenda Item 5: Norfolk Local Growth Plan Action Plan

Author: Roberta Willner, Head of Economic Development

Summary

This paper updates on the development of a detailed Action Plan, building on the Norfolk Local Growth Plan.

Following the launch of the Norfolk Local Growth Plan by the Norfolk Business Board in January 2025, officers are now progressing an Action Plan to support the implementation of the strategy.

The paper provides an update on the engagement of stakeholders through workshops, development of further detailed actions for the Norfolk Local Growth Plan, and the review of funding horizons to support implementation of the strategy.

Background

The Norfolk Local Growth Plan Action Plan is being developed to support the implementation of the Norfolk Economic Strategy and detail the activities which will take place to deliver on the strategy's priorities, as set out across the strategy's four key pillars (Supporting Norfolk's Businesses, People and Skills, Infrastructure, Place Making and Communities). The Action Plan will also capture the activities taking place to support the key sectors identified in the Local Growth Plan, and the cross-cutting themes of reducing inequalities, decarbonisation and sustainability, and supporting rural and coastal economies.

The Action Plan is developed in multiple steps:

- Step 1: Capturing details of activities from each pillar in the Norfolk Local Growth Plan, (Jan 25 – February 25)
- Step 2: Planning, developing and delivering workshops with the Norfolk Business Board, themed on the key sectors and pillars from the strategy. Additional asks will identified and incorporated into the Action Plan (March – May 2025)
- Step 3: Analysis, drafting the public-facing Action Plan and finalising. (Summer 2025)

Devolution Opportunity

Since the initial proposal for the Action Plan, Norfolk County Council has successfully applied for the Government's Devolution Priority Programme. This has resulted in increased collaboration with Suffolk County Council and join-up in the development of workshops. As a result, the initial timescales for delivery of the Action Plan have moved back, to adapt to these circumstances.

Internal review and mapping

The first step of developing the Action Plan was to capture the actions in the Local Growth Plan, and to engage with stakeholders to capture details on the activities taking place across each pillar. This information was captured alongside a record of

the project/ intervention owner, timeframe and funding source of this activity. This allowed officers to identify activities planned and also highlighting initial gaps in implementation of the strategy, due to limited resources (for example, where an intervention has been identified but funding is required for delivery). Alongside this, officers have worked with Norfolk County Council's External Funding team to develop a map of the funding landscape, that could support the implementation of actions. The funding map captures opportunities from the public sector and beyond, which will be used in the future to sign-post action owners to funding opportunities, where a funding deficit is restricting the delivery of the action.

Workshops

A series of workshops will be hosted by representatives of the Norfolk Business Board and industry stakeholders. The purpose of the sessions is to understand what activities are taking place against the strategic pillars, identify areas for development where an intervention is not in place, and further ways that the Local Growth Plan Action Plan can be implemented. This will be supported by workshop breakout sessions, where delegates will share their ideas on overcoming key challenges outlined in the Local Growth Plan. These ideas will then be analysed and developed into delivery objectives, then incorporated into the Action Plan.

Officers have been working with Norfolk Business Board representatives to plan four workshops, themed on supporting VCSE organisations, People and Skills, SME support and the Agri-Food Sector across Norfolk and Suffolk. During April and May, we will coordinate further workshops (in-person and online), targeting key sectors identified in the Norfolk and Suffolk, Local Growth Plans, bringing the business board and industry council representatives, to draw out the key asks which will inform the implementation of the Local Growth Plans across both counties.

Planned workshops are listed as follows:

Workshop	Date	Norfolk Business Board Lead
1. VCSE and inclusive growth	18 th March 2025	Amy Griffiths
2. People and Skills	19 th March 2025	Paul Padda
3. DBT Consultation Small Business Strategy and Business Growth Service	21 st March 2025	Nick Steven-Jones & Mark Pendlington (Suffolk Business Board)
4. Agri-Food	8 th April 2025	Mark Gorton

A further series of workshops, co designed with industry councils and Norfolk and Suffolk Business Boards include:

Future Workshops	Date
Clean Energy	April – May 2025
Climate Change	April – May 2025
Heritage & Visitor Economy	April – May 2025
Creative Sector	April – May 2025
Financial Services	April – May 2025
Tech Convergence	April – May 2025

Recommendation:

- The Board is to acknowledge progress, workshops planned and revised timescales for delivery of the action Plan.