

Appendix 1: Summary of Progress

Introduction and Background

Huntingdonshire Futures (Huntingdonshire's Place Strategy) was co-created between June 2022 and March 2023 in collaboration with residents and others from across the district. Throughout the Summer and Autumn of 2022, the Council undertook an extensive programme of engagement, convening the space and enabling the district to set out its views about the future. This process helped to create the District's Place Strategy - Huntingdonshire Futures.

At the heart of this work, is the understanding of what is most important to residents, communities and stakeholders within our towns and rural areas and across Huntingdonshire. Therefore, this summary report sets out the progress and activity to date, since the Strategy was adopted at Full Council in March 2023.

Planning The Next Phase Of This Project- The Council's Role

The Council has had to re-imagine the process needed, to enable the two-dimensional strategy to be brought to life and have the desired effect, that Huntingdonshire Futures was designed to do.

The original document as you have just read, was co-created by our residents, communities, partners and stakeholders, it was not HDC's strategy, but HDC did convene and enable to the space for this work to be created.

Careful thought has been applied to ensure that HDC do not lead this next phase of delivery.

HDC's has a defined role to play but this project is more than HDC – this is for the whole of Huntingdonshire and understanding how, by working together, this project can inspire people and shape how organisations can work differently together for greater effect, and to help create that brighter future for the district.

The questions we are asking ourselves, is how the Council can support the foundations of this work by enabling and influencing; to encourage partners to do more together, for the benefit our residents, communities and businesses.

What Tools Can We Use And How Will This Document Be Brought To Life?

There are multiple tools and opportunities to help draw people into this work moving forward.

We know that this is a very bold and difficult piece of work to carry out, but it is also inspiring and innovative. We make no secret of the fact that Huntingdonshire Futures is about getting partners to work differently together for the benefit of the district.

We know there will be many opportunities to communicate what is being planned and eventually delivered, inc. the Council's role and the story of partners and stakeholders collaborating.

We will articulate the shift from Strategy to delivery, taking the opportunities around steering group meetings and workshops. There may also be strong opportunity around Huntingdonshire Day – There is aspiration to coincide a series of activities to celebrate the journey themes across the district with Huntingdonshire day on April 25th, 2024 – more will follow in our next update to the panel in March 2024.

Resourcing

What does the resourcing look like in this new phase of work for Huntingdonshire Futures.

Internal Resource

Much of the resource that supported the co-creation of the Place Strategy has been retained into this next phase of work. But as we have previously explained, this work is bigger than the Council and will not be led by HDC. The Council's internal project team remains in place, to support, enable and convene the space for partners to work closely together, in order to deliver Huntingdonshire Futures.

The project team is currently as follows:

Project Sponsor – Assistant Director for Strategic Insights & Delivery

Project Manager – Economic Development Officer

Communications – Strategic Communications Manager

Project Support – Executive Support

The process to support delivery will increase throughout this financial year. Given this fact, the Council have decided to recruit an additional full-time resource as a project support coordinator. This is the first, full time resource for this project since its inception.

This new role will act as an interface, between internal and external project stakeholders, journey working groups and senior officers to maintain and increase cadence where opportunities arise.

External Resource

While we have retained both external consultants who work with the Council last year, the focus and purpose of each consultancy has changed.

Prior and Partners were the principal consultant, who helped design and help the Council to create the Place Strategy document, last year. Their role will be to act as a critical friend, advising the Council of national and where appropriate, international examples of work that may be relevant to the evolution of Huntingdonshire Futures.

PRD ran much of the local workshops and focus groups last year as part of the engagement strategy for Huntingdonshire Futures. The Council has retained PRD's substantive role but with a different focus. PRD, this time around, will initiate and help facilitate the mobilisation of each journey steering group. Enabling discussion and helping each of the groups develop their work, in preparation for the delivery of the first projects for Huntingdonshire Futures.

As the journey working groups become mobilised, a coalition of external partners and stakeholders will be recruited to each journey steering group. Two journey groups have started this process with three to follow later during the year. A timeline can be found in the accompanying presentation. Over time, each steering group will appoint a Chair and adopt its own terms of reference. Further updates to the panel will articulate what this progress looks like.

Mobilisation Of Each Journey Steering Group

During an initial period and while each steering group form, we expect a series of milestones to be reached. We also expect that each group will behave individually, establish their own terms of reference and likely progress at different rates. But broadly, we expect that each group will go through a similar process prior to delivering Huntingdonshire Futures on behalf of their respective journey theme. The expected milestones are:

- Mobilisation
- Action Planning
- Idea Generation
- Engagement
- Reporting / Accountability

Project Governance

Slide eight of the accompanying presentation deck illustrates the project's governance framework for the next phase of the project.

There are three categories that have been identified to help form a robust framework:

- Partners / Community
- District Council
- Political Oversight

It is essential for the Council's project team to engage systematically, via the governance framework to maintain project assurance.

Progress To Date

There are five journey themes associated with Huntingdonshire Futures:

- Pride In Place
- Travel Transformed
- Environmental Innovation
- Inclusive Economy
- Health Embedded

Slide ten of the accompanying presentation deck explains the proposed timeline to support the mobilisation of each journey steering group. The approach for launching each of the respective groups at different times, is tactical and for the following reasons:

Health Embedded – *Many of the actors are known and engage regularly with the Council and it is for this reason that it was decided to launch Health Embedded in the Summer of 2023.*

Inclusive Economy – *The individuals who were keen to contribute into this group, wanted to start sooner rather than later and so we decided to help facilitate this energy by mobilising in the Summer of 2023*

Environmental Innovation – *This group is scheduled to launch to coincide with the Climate Conversation activity being held in November 2023*

Travel Transformed – As there are ongoing pieces of work being undertaken by the lead authorities (County Council and the Combined Authority) it was decided to wait and launch with a current proposed date of April 2024

Pride in Place – It was decided to mobilise this group as part of the Huntingdonshire Day programme of activities in April 2024

Active Journey Working Groups

Health Embedded Journey Steering Group

The steering group for the Journey theme of “Health Embedded” have met on three occasions since the first Inception Meeting on 15th June 2023. The group has seen attendance inc. the following organisations / sectors to date:

- North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust
- West Cambs Federation
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Living Sport
- Citizens Advice
- Cambridgeshire Acre
- Care Sector

The subject matter lead in these meetings is the Interim Corporate Director for People and each meeting has been facilitated by PRD and the HDC Project team.

The group have had some excellent discussions over the three meetings, they have reflected on the Journey theme and the four pathways which were created. Upon the advice of the subject matter lead, the group have focused on the wider determinants of health which has led the journey group to show a keen interest in the following two areas:

- Physical Activity
- Social Isolation and Loneliness

It is likely that the next steps for this group will be to ask a wider group of stakeholders to attend a workshop which will confirm or deny the two subjects which have been identified. We also expect that a longer list of activities will be suggested. This will form the basis and start of interventions that will become the first delivery projects for the Health Embedded workstream. A more developed plan is expected by the next update to this panel, expected in March 2024

Inclusive Economy Journey Steering Group

The steering group for the Journey theme of “Inclusive Economy” have met on three occasions since the first Inception Meeting on 15th June 2023. This smaller group has seen attendance from the following organisations to date:

- Shift Momentum / Inspire 2 Ignite

- Huntingdon BID
- Cambridges Regional College

The subject matter lead in these meetings is the Economic Development Manager and each meeting has been facilitated by PRD and the HDC Project team.

An interim Chair has been identified for this group and is expected to take up their position in October.

The group have had some interesting discussions over the three meetings as they have tried to articulate what an “Inclusive Economy” can be defined as. They have reflected on the Journey theme and the four pathways which were created. With the input of the subject matter lead, the group have focused on opportunities that provide Social Connection and including Nature.

As previously described, the action planning and delivery process is similar. And so it is likely that the next steps for this group will be to move towards an “opportunity event” in front of a wider group of stakeholders which will confirm or deny the subject identified. We expect this will lead to a longer list of activities to be suggested. This will form the basis and start of intervention/s that will become the first delivery projects for Huntingdonshire Futures for the Inclusive Economy workstream. A more developed plan is expected by the next update to this panel, expected in March 2024

What Else Have We Learned in the last six months?

So far as we know, the Council is one of few Councils tackling such pioneering work – many Councils create a Place Strategy but do not necessarily focus on the delivery in the way that we are doing. The only example to date we have been informed about is St Louis Missouri. But the team are keen to hear from other Authorities who may have done what we are doing, sharing knowledge and best practice is an essential behaviour to help support this innovative, next phase of work.

Taking the lead from St Louis, Missouri, the success created from this project, started with the laying of strong foundations to enable their work. We have found our groups so far, to be initially cautious while mobilising. But this caution is a helpful sign which suggests that the Council’s project team needs to lend greater support to our journey working groups. It is essential that the foundations are strong and fit for purpose to enable our partners to be successful when delivering this work.

There could be additional roles / functions for the journey working groups to consider, aside from delivery. They could form an external voice, a “check and challenge” group to comment, support or challenge local and regional initiatives that affect Huntingdonshire.