

**DRAFT KIRKLEES ECONOMIC STRATEGY 2019-2025**

*Growing an inclusive and productive economy*

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## FOREWORD

We are committed to supporting the growth of an inclusive and productive economy that creates opportunities for everyone, and uses innovation to build local wealth. This means building an economy that works for all our communities and connects people to the benefits of economic growth. This strategy will help do that.

This economic strategy seeks to harness the power of the public, private and third sectors together around this common goal of growing an inclusive and productive economy. It will work for all our towns, villages and rural areas across Kirklees and support our vision of being the place to make it in the North.

Kirklees has a diverse and resilient business base, with enduring strengths in advanced manufacturing and engineering, and a myriad of small and medium sized enterprises rooted in their local place. We value businesses for the wealth they create and are proud of the contributions they make to our communities. Working together we can create an environment that encourages greater productivity and raises incomes.

Strong communities and even stronger identities make up Kirklees. Our impressive industrial heritage and outstanding countryside, and our connections to major cities create a fantastic quality of life offer. We will work to make the most of our location at the centre of the North of England and our connections across the globe.

While Kirklees has always been a place of innovation, the way people live and work is changing. The UK's exit from the European Union creates significant uncertainty for people and businesses. Here in Kirklees we are focused on building local wealth that supports the long term resilience of our economy and communities.

We know that we are stronger together, and are committed to building stronger partnerships across Kirklees and beyond. This strategy gives us the basis for joint action. Closer working within the Leeds city region, wider region and with cities and towns across the UK will help us deliver our commitments and contribute towards the nation's wider economic success.

Kirklees: the place to make it.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Kirklees: the place to make it

Our focus is on growing an inclusive and productive economy at the heart of the North. We are committed to building local wealth, focusing on an economy that is:

**Inclusive:** every person realising their potential, through good jobs, and higher levels of skills, income and wellbeing.

Work and the economy has an impact on people's lives. Good work as well as good pay can contribute to people's health and wellbeing.

**Productive:** innovative, outward and forward looking businesses.

Progressive modern businesses recognise that how they support their staff and help them to progress also contributes to how they grow their bottom line.

Businesses create wealth. The Council's role is to focus only on the things that it is best placed to do, and act as a strategic facilitator and broker, bringing partners together and enabling action around shared priorities. Anchor institutions – big organisations, rooted in local communities - can improve local economic and social wellbeing and resilience through the way they spend, their employment practices and the use of their land and assets. Community and voluntary organisations can make a real difference in local communities. This strategy is focused on working together to make a long lasting impact on people's lives, make our communities great places to live and work and help grow an economy that is both inclusive and productive.

Building on existing action, this strategy's priorities focus on a concise set of programme level interventions that will make the biggest difference and take forward a co-ordinated approach to delivery. This will help to focus the efforts and impact of partners and investment, locally, in Leeds City Region and across the North. It will also provide the flexibility to plan for change and sustainability, respond to the impacts of Brexit and be positioned to benefit from the devolution of powers and responsibilities to Yorkshire.

Five priorities will enable an inclusive and productive economy:



As catalysts for further action we will deliver five 'big wins' that will make a difference for people and businesses in Kirklees:

- **A Digital Innovation Zone**
- **Integrated Health & Care Workforce Development** leading to better jobs, progression and care
- A new anchor institutions network that builds **local wealth, supply chains and social value**
- People benefiting from the construction and delivery phases of infrastructure investment, like the **Transpennine rail upgrade**, and a Huddersfield-North Kirklees-Leeds **Inclusive Growth Corridor**
- **Revitalising Huddersfield and Dewsbury**, by improved profile and town centre masterplans, leading to new investment and development progressing at key sites

With a focus on a concise set of actions, we will know when we are successful when we can see improved productivity, more money in people's pockets, more people in work, higher skills levels and the regeneration of our key centres.

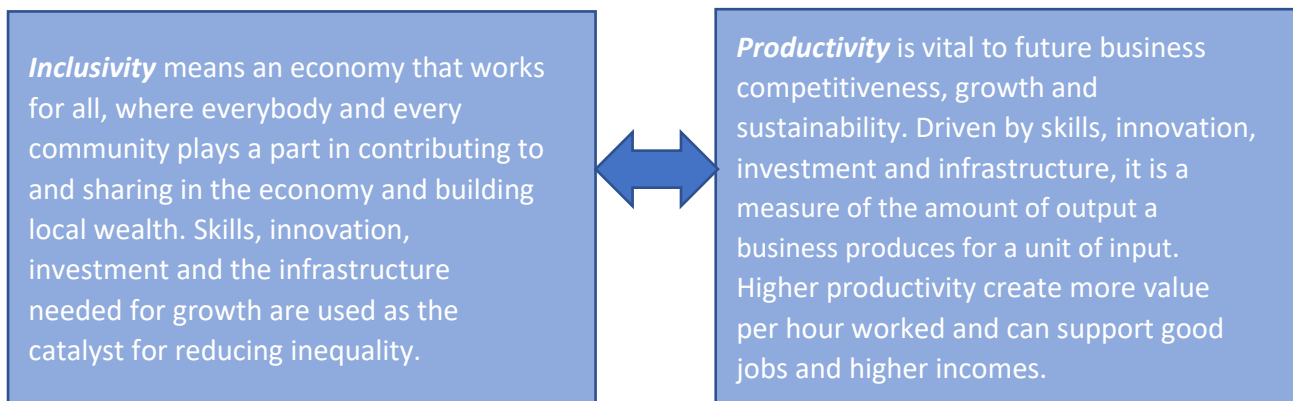
## 1. OUR VISION – an inclusive and productive Kirklees

Our vision is for Kirklees to be **the place to make it** in the North.

This strategy builds on the strength of Kirklees' many distinctive places – from the large towns of Huddersfield and Dewsbury to a wealth of smaller towns, villages and rural areas. The combination of assets in these places, and our excellent location at the centre of the Leeds, Manchester and Sheffield city regions, mean that we have leading businesses, many skilled people, an excellent university, a strong leisure and tourism offer, a high quality of life and a diverse housing offer upon which to build.

But there is more to do and more that can be achieved. To get the best from our assets we must tackle the challenges that are holding parts of Kirklees back, spot and seize new opportunities, deliver on our investment plans to improve our infrastructure, and create change at pace. We will do this through a twin focus on inclusivity and productivity.

Inclusivity and productivity are essentially connected, but we recognise that they sometimes require different interventions to make them happen. By keeping them both at the heart of our economic strategy we make sure we understand the way they are interrelated as well as the potential for tensions. This determination runs right through this strategy, and each action programme is considered in terms of its effect on inclusivity and productivity.



The strategy sets out our approach to the shared outcome of creating a sustainable economy – focusing on creating sustained economic growth and providing good employment for and with communities and businesses. It aligns to partnered strategies that have a fundamental impact on the success of our economy, including the Local Plan, Digital Plan and Housing Strategy, and the forthcoming inward investment plan.

It is instrumental in supporting people in Kirklees to have aspiration to achieve their ambitions through education, training employment and lifelong learning, setting the context for the the Learning and Post-16 Employment and Skills Plans.

The Kirklees Economic Strategy and the Kirklees Joint Health and Wellbeing Plan reinforce one another as the two central strategic pillars in the district. Good health allows people to enjoy life to the full and to make a productive economic contribution. Meanwhile a strong, inclusive and sustainable economy has a positive influence on the determinants of health such as learning and skills, work, incomes and housing.

This strategy also responds to the UK Industrial Strategy, and focuses on the Kirklees contribution to raising the nation's productivity. But it does it in a way that is distinctive to Kirklees – putting inclusivity at the heart of our approach to economic success.

## 2. KIRKLEES: THE STORY OF OUR PLACE

The place to make it vision builds on the history of innovation and entrepreneurship to be found all across Kirklees.

Supported by its excellent location at the centre of the northern industrial corridor, from cloth production as a supplement to agricultural work (Shoddy & Mungo – Benjamin Law – Batley), to large scale textile manufacturing (The Heavy Woollen District - Dewsbury, Camira - Meltham) that spurred the development of the chemical (Syngenta – Huddersfield) and engineering sectors (David Brown – Meltham, Cummins turbo chargers – Huddersfield), and more recently the precision engineering (Reliance, Huddersfield) and medical technology industries (Paxman Coolers – Huddersfield) – Kirklees has a history of being the place to make it. These firms have had a lasting impact on the local and national economy, both in terms of the product and processes they developed, but also for the people, organisations and communities that led and shared in their growth.

We will making sure Kirklees continues to be the place to make it by ensuring that our places have the right conditions to enable future generations of innovators, and connect people and communities to wealth.

**This history has provided excellent assets for economic success...**

- **World-leading manufacturing and engineering businesses** – the most pronounced high value sector in Kirklees, employs 25,000 people, double the national average at 16% of the economy. Leading areas of expertise include textiles and products such as gears, valves, pumps and turbo chargers.
- **Innovation and training assets** include the Textiles Centre of Excellence, the University's 3M Buckley Innovation Centre and the Kirklees College Process Manufacturing Centre.
- **Dynamic SMEs and microbusinesses** spread across Kirklees including in our major towns and attractive hubs for enterprise such as Holmfirth and the Holme and Colne Valleys.
- A relatively **young workforce**, together with increasing emphasis on *STEAM*<sup>1</sup> subjects, a strong track record on apprenticeships and links to business which enhance their value to employers.

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<sup>1</sup> Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Design and Maths – this is an extension of 'STEM' which recognises the importance of the crossover between creativity and design and STEM



- The **University of Huddersfield** - has nearly 20,000 students, excels in innovation and won the first Global Teaching Excellence Award in 2017.
- **Some of the best schools and colleges in England.** The outstanding rated Huddersfield New College is ranked number one in England for Equality and Diversity; Greenhead College has the best designated sixth form college A level results in Yorkshire; and Kirklees College has 18,000 students, links to 1,000 businesses and is in the top ten in England for apprenticeships.

## Kirklees in 2019

Our heart of the North location close to the M62 and M1 and with fast Transpennine rail, brings access to a 4 million workforce, 250,000 businesses, a £160bn economy and 15 universities. There is a high level of net out-commuting (around 25,000 people) – especially to access higher skilled, higher paid jobs. Kirklees has the opportunity to be an attractive base for commuters and create more good jobs locally.

- With **437,000 residents** Kirklees is the 11th biggest local authority district in England and the largest that does not include a city.
- **GVA economy of £7.5bn per annum, over 200,000 workers, 14,500 businesses.**
- **GVA growth** of 12% between 2009-15 is lower than the 14-17% achieved elsewhere in West Yorkshire and productivity is below UK and West Yorkshire averages.
- Although unemployment is low at 5% and our **employment rate** (70.5%) has risen since the recession, that figure is below a previous peak of 73%, and private sector job growth of +5% also lags the +12% GB average.
- There are fewer high value jobs than in some neighbouring districts and lower concentrations of **higher pay / productivity sectors** such as finance and insurance, ICT and professional services.
- Kirklees residents' wages are around average for West Yorkshire, but **wages from workplaces** within Kirklees are the lowest in West Yorkshire at just below £460/week.
- A third of the population are qualified at NVQ level 4+, but 13% have no qualifications.
- **Levels of deprivation are falling**, but we aim to reduce them further. Only 9% of areas in Kirklees are in the most 10% deprived in England – down from 14% in 2010 and in contrast to rising deprivation in neighbouring areas.

### 3. DELIVERING AN INCLUSIVE AND PRODUCTIVE KIRKLEES ECONOMY

Five priorities will help to deliver our vision for an inclusive and productive economy, building on existing foundations and putting Kirklees on a positive, long term trajectory that will deliver tangible change:

- 1. Modern, Innovative Business** - boosting business ambitions, best practice and innovation to drive productivity and good jobs.
- 2. Skilled and Ambitious People** - equipping people with the skills, talents and confidence they need to access good, well paid jobs, contributing to and benefiting from economic success.
- 3. Active Partnerships** - building high impact partnerships across private, public and voluntary sectors, with a focus on how ‘anchor institutions’ can use their employment, procurement, assets and service delivery to build community wealth and achieve better outcomes.
- 4. Advanced Connectivity and Infrastructure** – securing and maximising benefits from the Transpennine rail upgrade, a Huddersfield-North Kirklees Leeds Inclusive Growth Corridor, 10,000 new homes and excellent digital and green infrastructure.
- 5. Revitalising and Promoting Key Centres** – using a forward looking, place based approach across Huddersfield, North and South Kirklees to celebrate our district’s diversity.

Priorities	Innovative Businesses	Skilled, ambitious people	Active Partnerships	Advanced connectivity & infrastructure	Revitalised centres
12 Action Programmes	Business ambitions & best practice  Innovation uplift  Engineering & manufacture	Aspiration uplift (skills)  Health/care workforce development	Anchor institutions, social value and supply chains	Transpennine upgrade & inclusive growth corridor  The Big Build  Digital infrastructure	Huddersfield  North Kirklees & Dewsbury  South Kirklees & rural areas
5 ‘Big Wins’	Digital Innovation Zone	Integrated Care Workforce Initiative	Kirklees Anchors Network	Transpennine upgrade & Inclusive growth corridor	Masterplans, branding & development in Huddersfield & Dewsbury

## Measuring Success

We will track progress against our central goals of productivity and inclusion and the regeneration of our key centres. We will use five headline success measures to do this, with specific indicators for each of these shown in the table, drawing from the JRF inclusive growth indicators framework<sup>2</sup>.

Headline success measures	Indicators
<b>Incomes</b>	Household disposable incomes
	Median wages
	Incomes of the lowest paid 20%
<b>Productivity and growth</b>	GVA per worker per hour
	GVA per capita
<b>Skills</b>	% of population with NVQ level 4+
	% of population with NVQ level 2+ (and other skills levels)
<b>Employment</b>	Employment rate
	Unemployment rate
<b>Better Places</b>	Town centre footfall and tangible regeneration in Huddersfield and Dewsbury

Data is for working age population where relevant

We will compare ourselves against Leeds City Region/West Yorkshire, Northern and national averages. Where data allows, we will drill down to monitor the extent of inequalities and diversity across different places and groups within Kirklees.

We will also look to enhance our data and intelligence capabilities and communication, including through partner collaboration, open data and the ability to undertake horizon scanning analysis, particularly in relation to innovation, exports, quality of life, quality of place and culture.

<sup>2</sup> C.Beatty et al, A framework of indicators for measuring inclusive growth, CRESR, Sheffield Hallam University, July 2015

## **PRIORITY 1: MODERN, INNOVATIVE BUSINESS**

*Stimulating business ambitions, best practice and innovation to drive productivity and good jobs*

### **Our ambition**

**The Long Term Outcome:** Ambitious and confident businesses investing in best practice and growing as a result – leading to greater productivity and more private sector jobs

Our priority is to create the best possible environment for businesses (including social enterprises) to grow and enable them to access the full range of support they need, including for SMEs which make up the bulk of our economy. In the context of uncertain trading relationships as the UK exits the EU, we will help businesses to be more outward facing and dynamic, trade more internationally and build strong relationships to further embed them into the Kirklees economy.

### **Key assets and action to build on**

- The University of Huddersfield and its role in higher level skills, enterprise, innovation and international profile, including through the 3M Buckley Innovation Centre
- Specialised advanced manufacturing support and innovation assets - including the Textile Centre of Excellence and the Kirklees College Process Manufacturing Centre
- A refreshed and joined up business growth support system, bringing partners and interventions together, to work with and back small businesses, delivering a single front door to support, events and peer-to-peer networks that create an Open for Business environment
- A new partnership approach to promoting Kirklees as a place to invest and start up a business, including joint work between the Chamber of Commerce, College, University and Council
- The Chamber of Commerce's Export Hub and work to help businesses to respond to Brexit

### **What we will deliver**

#### **Action Programme 1: Raising Business Ambitions and Best Practice**

We will work systematically across partners with a business-facing role, fronted by the private sector where possible to foster forward looking, ambitious business leadership and cultures, , and underpinned by sound businesses planning. This will include:

- Fostering more networking and collaboration across business and sector types (including social enterprise), using advocates to make the case to others for action, creating more dense local supply chains and growing a spirit of enterprise
- Clearly communicating the range of available business support, particularly to SMEs, including public and private sector provision, online and in person (e.g. via a key account management approach and SME Growth Managers), and local, regional and national provision.
- Increasing awareness of business practice that drives productivity and good jobs – including innovation, exports, design, uptake of digital technology, use of quality apprenticeships, high level skills and staff progression, flexible working, resource efficiency and healthy workplaces

## Action Programme 2: Deliver an Innovation Uplift

With the University of Huddersfield in the driving seat and bringing together business support and sector specialists, we will help make innovation in its broadest definition real for many more businesses, so that more businesses connect to innovation assets and apply creativity to drive their competitiveness and productivity. This will include:

- Securing a Digital Innovation Zone in Huddersfield by 2021 connected to the district's strengths in precision engineering and advanced manufacturing, textiles, big data and analytics; with the digital transformation of businesses across sectors at its heart
- Targeted promotion of the innovation support available at local, Leeds City Region and national levels, and communication of innovation and creativity as core to modern business practice, including via business champions already applying and reaping benefit in their businesses
- Enabling innovation networks to be built that facilitate the exchange of practice and support better connections between business, the knowledge base and across value chains and sectors

## Action Programme 3: Growth and Investment in Engineering & Advanced Manufacturing

We will work in depth in our advanced manufacturing and engineering sector, recognising its unique concentration here and its breadth, high added value activities and niche strengths and products critical to automotive, energy and low carbon supply chains. This will include:

- Facilitating further links to university/FE expertise and sector crossovers to promote innovation
- Helping industry meet its labour and skills needs, and use this as an opportunity to create and fill both more quality apprenticeships (as routes into the sector) and high skilled, high value jobs
- Supporting trade and exports, attracting investment and developing supply chains post-Brexit
- Prioritising industry's needs in the development of employment sites and business premises
- Building mutually beneficial links with other key sectors in Kirklees and Leeds City Region e.g. creative and digital, construction, financial and professional services, health and low carbon

**The Big Win:** Secure a Digital Innovation Zone by 2021

### Case study: Polyseam – investing in R&D, winning exports

Sealant and adhesive manufacturer Polyseam has hailed the benefits investment in a new 82,000sq ft Huddersfield site has had on the business. The £2.3m facility includes research and development (R&D), engineering, planning and storehouse space, as well as modern manufacturing units containing the latest technology. Chief Executive, Kjetil Bogstad, said *“the new facility has helped boost exports, now accounting for 80% of sales, by enabling process efficiencies and R&D opportunities”*. Polyseam is now focused on further growth and looking to recruit new employees in areas including R&D.

## **PRIORITY 2: SKILLED AND AMBITIOUS PEOPLE**

*Equipping people with the skills, talents and confidence they need to access good, well paid jobs and to contribute to the economy so that sharing the fruits of prosperity is the norm*

**The Long Term Outcome:** Improved skills at all levels and especially levels 4 and 5, boost in average weekly workplace wages, and reduced in-work benefit claimant rate

### **Our ambition**

We want every person to reach their potential. Kirklees benefits from a strong education and skills landscape, with high performing colleges and a world-class university. However, there remains too big a gap in education, skills and employment outcomes – across different parts of the district and often with national averages. This means that too many people are not fulfilling their potential and therefore our economy is not either. We will work with individuals, providers and businesses to recognise the value of investment in personal and workforce development to create an upward cycle of higher level skills and wages, providing pathways into training and working to deliver specific progression opportunities in the Health and Care sector.

### **Key assets and action to build on**

- High performing colleges and university with strong links to business
- A Learning Plan centred on giving our young people the best start in life, from quality childcare and early years settings (including to unlock barriers to work) through to learning and education and ensuring children achieve well and leave school ready for life and work
- A Post-16 Employment and Skills Plan and joined up skills system designed to help people improve their skills and prospects across their working lives, with a focus on key sectors of manufacturing and engineering, health and social care, creative and digital, and construction
- Strong buy in and performance in apprenticeship delivery, with Kirklees College the top further education apprenticeship provider in West Yorkshire and 10<sup>th</sup> in England
- Increasing integration of the employment and skills offer which incorporates a strong *Works Better* employment programme, adult and community learning programmes and third sector led Community Learning Works programme
- One of 10 Local Authorities to secure a National Careers Hub

### **What we will deliver**

#### **Action Programme 4: Deliver an Aspiration Uplift**

Working across the district's education and skills system, we will deliver a programme targeted on expanding horizons, equipping people with the confidence to unlock their ambitions, increasing social mobility and tackling the exclusion and disadvantage that can curtail self belief and limit opportunity. This will cover both under 25s and adults, and combine employability and 'soft' skills with specific qualifications and training (or retraining). It will include:

- Designing and delivering a campaign with and for young people to heighten understanding of the value of studying, to broaden learning and career horizons, and raise confidence as a route to social mobility, including by influencing families, teachers, providers and businesses

- Prioritising excellent careers information, advice and guidance for all ages and points in working life, aligned to key skills sectors, and facilitated by improved access to information on current and future skills to guide people to support on retraining and upskilling for in-work progression
- Strengthening business-education links with a focus on key sectors including work experience, mentoring, graduate placements, employability and STEAM skills
- Working to increase the number, range and quality of apprenticeships – including degree level
- Raising awareness of the value of investing in workforce skills linked to Action Programme 1
- Working to increase the number, range and quality of apprenticeships, including influencing provision and promoting uptake of higher and degree level apprenticeships
- Widening participation activity to build higher level skills (and fostering business uptake of them)
- Prioritising digital skills, including by working with the creative and digital sector

### **Action Programme 5: Integrated Health and Care Workforce Development**

There are specific opportunities in the Health and Care sector, where filling vacant roles and enabling progression will provide routes into work, create greater resilience in the face of changing labour markets as the UK exits the European Union, and enhance health and care outcomes. This means overcoming complex barriers including traditional organisational and professional boundaries, pay, perceptions and career structures. The Kirklees Integrated Care Workforce Development Steering Group is developing workforce planning and progression across a wide range of health and care roles, including community-based ones. With the public sector playing a market shaping role, it will lead the design and delivery of an 'Integrated Care Workforce Development' initiative that will involve:

- Improving and widening progression paths from less skilled and low paid roles into more highly skilled and better paid health and care careers – leading to higher recruitment and retention
- Working with the sector to address barriers that prevent uptake and mobility within it, e.g. historical organisational and professional boundaries, improving the transferability of skills, and with the education sector and others to promote opportunities
- Supporting delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Plan by helping to recruit, train, and retain a workforce that can support more integrated ways of working and in particular Primary Care Networks and the wider integration of health and social care
- Potential collaboration across West Yorkshire and Harrogate where issues are shared and joint action makes sense

**The Big Win:** An Integrated Care Workforce Development initiative that increases uptake of roles and progression in the sector, including by disadvantaged groups, and enhances care and support

## **PRIORITY 3: ACTIVE PARTNERSHIPS**

*High impact partnerships and anchor institutions using their employment, procurement, assets and service delivery to build community wealth and achieve better outcomes for our district*

**The Long Term Outcome:** Rising proportion of local spend in Kirklees and West Yorkshire (resulting in business growth and local employment), a more inclusive labour market and more good jobs

### **Our ambition**

There is wide scope for action and impact across our '**anchor institutions**'. These large, well established organisations – including our colleges, university, hospital trusts, housing providers, large businesses and the local authority – are rooted in our district and through their spend, employment practices, services and use of land and assets can play a key role in improving local economic, social and environmental wellbeing. When large anchor institutions in Kirklees spend more money in local supply chains, employ more local people, support social mobility and lead the way on healthy workplaces, which leads to more contracts for businesses, more local people in good jobs and improved wellbeing. In addition, smaller community and voluntary organisations, often in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, can act as 'community anchors' that support local communities and connect residents to opportunities.

In Kirklees we are committed to increasing the social value that we can achieve via the money we spend, and have undertaken analysis on procurement to understand our current position and help define our ambition. We believe there is significant opportunity to act differently, to root wealth here and so achieve more for local business, people and places, and we will act accordingly using a focus on progressive procurement, employment and assets.

### **Key assets and action to build on**

- Kirklees Inclusive Growth Group and work underway to form a new economic partnership
- Business Voice/Huddersfield Unlimited proactively supporting the town's economic development, promotion and investment proposition; and active business networks and groups including the Chamber of Commerce, FSB and Kirklees & Calderdale Manufacturing Alliance
- Committed and capable voluntary and community sector organisations – with potential for further contribution and growth
- Commitment by anchors to work together, and work carried out on local spend and supply chain analysis and a good practice toolkit and framework developed at a city region level
- Commitment to maximising social value outcomes through the commissioning and procurement of public sector spend on goods and services using the principles of local wealth building



## What we will deliver

### Action Programme 6: Anchor Institutions Network, Social Value and Supply Chains

Kirklees will adopt a focus on community wealth building via a partnership of anchor institutions committed to working together. This will include:

- Establishing then running and maximising local and economic benefit from a Kirklees Anchors Network where each anchor is represented and can take leadership for driving change
- Anchor institutions working collaboratively to support an inclusive economy across procurement, workforce, land property and assets
- Carrying out annual supply chain analysis and identification of influenceable spend and local opportunities within the Council
- Exploring scope to increase and expand the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector's contribution to economic wellbeing via a co-commissioning framework with the public sector, and recognising the role of volunteering as a route into employment and for the value it brings to creating a resilient economy

**The Big Win:** Kirklees Anchor Network playing an active role in increasing local employment, supply chains and social value

#### Case study: TimberTight

TimberTight is a family owned start-up based in Cleckheaton, showing tremendous growth in its first year of operation. The company has accessed both business start-up and employment support provision, the latter helping it to develop inclusive recruitment practises and create sustainable jobs for Kirklees residents. The company uses local supply chains to maximise its investment in Kirklees, recognising the positive impact and social value that this practice brings. Director, Paul Williamson, said *"we are a family run business, that lives and works in Kirklees and we are passionate about keeping jobs in the district. Where we can, we will always use local labour and supply chains before reaching out further across the region."*

## **PRIORITY 4: ADVANCED CONNECTIVITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

*Secure Transpennine rail upgrade, a Huddersfield-Dewsbury-Leeds Inclusive Growth Corridor, 10,000 new homes and excellent digital and green infrastructure*

**The Long Term Outcome:** High-speed, reliable internet access and above average uptake; faster rail travel; more journeys by public transport and active travel; housing numbers and affordability

### **Our ambition**

High standards of connectivity and infrastructure are important to support business growth and investment. This includes not just road investment but public transport, active travel and modal shift to support the quality of our places, health, inclusion and air quality, safe, joined up cycling/walking routes and facilities across Kirklees and digital connectivity. Priorities are the speed and capacity of services on key corridors, especially those connecting Huddersfield and North Kirklees to each other and to Leeds and Manchester. Longer term priorities include direct rail from Huddersfield to London and faster, more frequent services to Sheffield. This combined investment, incorporating green infrastructure with an ambitious housing growth programme, improved digital connectivity, and a district heating network will raise productivity, provide a means by which people can be more easily included in the economy and enhance health.

### **Key assets and action to build on**

- Geographic position at the heart of the North, close to the M1 and M62
- Transpennine Rail services to Leeds and Manchester, and expected upgrade
- Inclusive Growth Corridor potential that fits with West Yorkshire transport and Industrial Strategy ambitions, and other schemes progressing through West Yorkshire Plus Transport Funding
- A new Local Plan that sets out and supports housing and transport priorities
- A Digital Infrastructure Development Plan to further improve broadband coverage
- Superb green infrastructure and expertise and commitment to integrate it into development
- A wealth of mills and listed buildings with potential for conversion to business and housing use
- Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan and Strategic Framework

### **What we will deliver**

#### **Action Programme 7: Deliver the Benefits of Transpennine Rail Upgrade and the Huddersfield-Dewsbury-Leeds Inclusive Growth Corridor**

We will work to secure Transpennine rail upgrade from Manchester to Leeds via Huddersfield / Dewsbury to radically improve speed, capacity and reliability. This investment will be at the centre of a broader Huddersfield-North Kirklees-Leeds Inclusive Growth corridor to better connect people in disadvantaged areas to jobs and opportunities, linked to a Leeds Road 'Smart Corridor'. The Inclusive Growth corridor will improve and better utilise key public transport corridors from Dewsbury and North Kirklees to Leeds and Huddersfield to enhance access to jobs/training and to help attract investment in and around the corridor area – alongside wider work on skills and inclusion to enable people access opportunities.

Work will include:

- Case making and influence to secure the best possible Transpennine upgrade outcome
- Maximising local benefit from the upgrade and using it in promoting Kirklees to investors

- An Inclusive Growth Corridor centred on Dewsbury/North Kirklees to help unemployed and low skilled people access jobs/training in Leeds and Huddersfield by public transport and active travel
- Incorporating better connectivity between North Kirklees and Bradford into the above, and securing commitment to mass transit stations in Cleckheaton and Heckmondwike
- Improved station and services from Mirfield and Ravensthorpe via station remodelling
- Defining and seeking resources for a 'Smart Corridor' network that combines transport improvements in key corridors with quality design, digital connectivity and green infrastructure
- Delivering a Leeds Road Smart Corridor from Huddersfield to Cooper Bridge as an exemplar – to improve multi-modal access to key assets/sites and link to the Inclusive Growth Corridor

### **Action Programme 8: Deliver the Big Build**

We will deliver the Kirklees Housing Strategy and ambitious plans for more and better housing - creating construction industry, health, inclusion and wider benefits in the process. This will include:

- Building 10,000 homes within 5 years in line with the Local Plan, 1,000 of them on Council land
- A focus on quality and distinctiveness and a mix of housing types and tenures that meet local and affordability needs and appeal to the skilled workers we want to attract into Kirklees
- High energy and green infrastructure standards to support health and reduce fuel poverty
- Digital connectivity that equips more properties for home working or running a microbusiness
- Connecting people to construction jobs and procurement that supports local supply chains
- More housing within heritage and town centre buildings alongside business and wider uses
- Managing, maintaining and regulating existing housing to fit with all of the above goals
- Access to work, health and leisure facilities, including by cycle/walk routes and public transport

### **Action Programme 9: Secure top class digital infrastructure and its application**

Digital connectivity is integral to business opportunity, productivity and a skilled and inclusive society. Excellent telecoms infrastructure, above ground and below, is vital to both our busiest towns and our most rural communities. We will deliver the Kirklees Digital Plan and associated activity to support digital infrastructure and the digital economy more broadly. This will include:

- Maximising gigabit, Superfast, Ultrafast, Mobile and WiFi access across all geographical areas
- Establishing free WiFi in Huddersfield, Dewsbury and Holmfirth
- Removing barriers to digital infrastructure investment and planning for infrastructure growth by determining sites for data centres, masts and aerial infrastructure in advance of demand
- Ensuring that digital infrastructure expansion and provision is at the heart of planning applications and transport schemes
- Leveraging our infrastructure as a catalyst for innovation
- Integrating digital infrastructure with action to promote the use of digital as part of modern business practice; building digital skills and inclusion; and facilitating digital sector growth

**The Big Win:** Transpennine upgrade and an Inclusive Growth Corridor - together offering fast connections to Leeds and Manchester, and improved access to jobs and opportunities for those in disadvantaged areas of North Kirklees and Huddersfield

Case study: **Huddersfield Heat Network – new investment, new opportunity**

Kirklees Council has worked with AECOM with funding and support from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to develop proposals for a leading edge £16 million Huddersfield town centre heat network. Feasibility work has been completed and sets out the vision for developing a viable network that will distribute heat and electricity from energy generation to premises across the town centre. This would provide competitive advantages to the businesses and other users by cutting energy costs by 10-15% and would also reduce carbon emissions, increase energy security and create construction jobs. Detailed project development will now follow and the ambition is to secure funding, build the network and have it up and running in 2023.

## **PRIORITY 5: REVITALISING AND PROMOTING KEY CENTRES**

*Using a forward looking, place based approach to revitalising and promoting centres across Huddersfield, North and South Kirklees to celebrate our district's diversity*

**The Long Term Outcome:** quality environments including commercial space and residential units, improved perceptions leading to investment and greater footfall in town centres

### **Our ambition**

We want all places across Kirklees to thrive and have civic pride based on their distinctive identities and assets, to be successful economies themselves, connect to one another and contribute to a prosperous and inclusive district. As Kirklees is the sum of the places within it, we will enable locally tailored approaches to the development of our places.

Like other towns, Huddersfield and Dewsbury face the challenge of a declining retail sector and need to repurpose and secure investment to be vibrant and successful. There are major investments in the pipeline in both places and positive progress is becoming evident in Dewsbury, linked to the North Kirklees Growth Zone. More widely, small towns, villages and rural areas, such as in South Kirklees are important in their own right and to the success of Kirklees overall. While they can face challenges such as accessibility and affordable housing, they possess assets which make them hubs for enterprise and magnets for tourism, and add to the range of quality modern sites premises and enterprise hubs to support new and growing businesses. There is also significant potential to reuse mills and heritage buildings in centres and across Kirklees for new homes, business space, retail and leisure facilities.

### **Key assets and action to build on**

- *In Huddersfield:* the University of Huddersfield, the football and rugby teams and John Smith Stadium, distinctive and listed buildings, Transpennine rail, Kirklees College and the Waterfront development, the new leisure centre and Greenhead Park.
- *In North Kirklees and Dewsbury:* distinctive buildings and a heritage initiative helping to restore landmark assets, fast rail connections to Leeds and Huddersfield, town centre living potential, a new learning quarter, public realm improvements, a planned £15m Spen Valley Leisure Centre development; a masterplan in place and delivery of the North Kirklees Growth Zone underway.
- *In South Kirklees and rural areas:* attractive centres such as Holmfirth and the Holme Valley, Colne Valley and Denby Dale with visitor economy strengths, attractive environments and quality of life that draws in entrepreneurs, skilled workers and visitors.

### **What we will deliver**

#### **Action Programme 10: Huddersfield**

Huddersfield is one of the largest towns in England and has many of the features and assets of a city. It has some fine assets but faces challenges around retail and securing new investment and purpose. Our ambition is for a sustainable, healthy and high quality centre with a widened and higher quality commercial, residential, cultural, leisure and retail offer, backed by strategic development and marketing. This will include:

- Place branding that promotes Huddersfield and connects with a wider Kirklees story of place
- Masterplan development and delivery with key elements expected to include:
  - Major investment and transformations at key sites and areas – including Station Gateway and St George’s (including the former Kirklees College site), Southgate, Queensgate, St Peter’s, New Street and the Civic Quarter
  - Putting the ring road within a ‘place first approach’ and good connections to key assets outside of the ring road (notably the University)
  - More business space and presence including high quality offices and creative spaces
  - More town centre living including apartments (not only student accommodation)
  - Widened cultural offer including a mid-sized music venue, upgraded museum and art gallery and expanded event programme
  - Coherent streetscape and zoning with high quality public realm and green infrastructure network
  - Empty/underused heritage/listed buildings brought back into use and developed as assets
  - A Huddersfield Heat Network with energy saving and cost benefits for town centre premises
  - Investment by City Fibre planned to offer Gigabit speeds to premises across the town centre
- Delivering The HD One development and mutual benefits between it and the town centre
- Securing a direct rail service to London

### **Action Programme 11: North Kirklees Growth Zone and Dewsbury Town Centre**

North Kirklees faces economic challenges but also presents significant opportunities for a bold new business, education and housing offer. These are being seized by private and public sector partners working together across the North Kirklees Growth Zone. Central to this is the transformation of Dewsbury town centre, revitalising it as a thriving market town that is a great place to live, taps into the potential of its people and maximises the benefits of its transport links and location. Subject to the adoption of the Local Plan, this will include:

- Delivery of the North Kirklees Growth Zone, including:
  - Unlocking major housing development sites at Dewsbury Riverside (4,000 new homes); Chidswell (1,500 new homes); and Soothill (350 new homes); plus delivery of new homes in Dewsbury town centre
  - Delivery of a 35-hectare business park at Chidswell
  - Delivery of supporting strategic road improvement schemes along the A653 and A644 corridors, and transport solutions that link housing growth sites to employment opportunities in Wakefield, Leeds, Huddersfield and Manchester
- Delivery of the Dewsbury Town Centre Strategic Development Framework and its three aims of:
  - Increasing activity through new residential, commercial and educational opportunities by bringing historic and vacant building back into use, supporting business growth and key projects including the refurbishment of Pioneer House, the development of a residential offer, and a Heritage Action Zone
  - Making the town centre more attractive, safe and welcoming and making the most of the town’s heritage and public realm
  - Improving accessibility and access in and around the town centre via sustainable modes

## Action Programme 12: South Kirklees and Rural Areas

Our ambition is to facilitate action that allows small towns, villages and rural areas to fulfil their potential, to promote them positively and to maximise positive connections between their success and that of Huddersfield and North Kirklees. This will include:

- Using the Place Standard approach to engage with businesses and communities in individual places within South Kirklees and to identify issues, opportunities and ways forward
- Improving digital connectivity (see also Priority 3) and exploiting opportunities in the sector
- Ensuring that there are small scale business premises and enterprise hubs to enable small businesses to start up and grow – with focus on use of vacant/underused buildings including mills
- Promoting the value of distinctive, small-scale business clusters in individual places, such as around the visitor economy, culture, and land based and environmental industries
- Ensuring that green infrastructure and natural flood management contribute to Kirklees' goals on health and recreation, the environment, quality of place and flood prevention
- Promoting places individually and collectively through place branding work for South Kirklees

**The Big Win:** Place branding leading to improved profile and town centre masterplans delivered in Huddersfield and Dewsbury, with development progressing at key sites such as St George's, Southgate, The HD One, Pioneer House and across the North Kirklees Growth Zone

### Case study: North Kirklees Growth Zone

The North Kirklees Growth Zone programme continues to gain momentum and attract investment, unlocking the area's potential and leveraging its strategic location. Subject to Local Plan approval, the Dewsbury Riverside scheme alone will bring forward 4,000 new homes, supported by new local facilities, including space for a faith/community hub, health centre, nursery, retail and a new primary school. This adds to substantial investment in the regeneration of Dewsbury town centre, including:

- £18.5 million in new education facilities through the Dewsbury Learning Quarter
- Heritage Action Zone grant to create a 'living town'
- £290K to make public realm around Pioneer House more attractive and safer for pedestrians
- A £1 million upgrade of the railway station gateway
- £3.7 million Townscape Heritage Initiative to transform the town's shop fronts