REPORT TITLE: Kirklees Inclusive Economy Strategy

Meeting:	**Council (Reference from Cabinet)**
Date:	**16 July 2025**
Cabinet Member (if applicable)	**Cllr Graham Turner**
Key Decision **Eligible for Call In**	**No** **No**

Purpose of Report
To present the Kirklees Inclusive Economy Strategy for approval in accordance with Article 4 of the Council's Constitution.

Recommendations

- Council to approve adoption of the Kirklees Inclusive Economy Strategy

Reasons for Recommendations

- The KIES accurately reflects the ambition of the Council and partners for development of an increasingly productive, inclusive and sustainable economy in Kirklees.
- It demonstrates alignment with the West Yorkshire Local Growth Plan and UK Modern Industrial Strategy.
- It is an important strategy for the Council and partners forming the final Top Tier strategy.

Resource Implications:

There are no resource implications directly arising from this strategy.

Date signed off by <u>Executive Director</u> & name	**David Shepherd, 07 July 2025**
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?	**Kevin Mulvaney, 03 July 2025**
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning (Monitoring Officer)?	**Samantha Lawton, 07 July 2025**

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: Ward councillors have been engaged through the strategy's presentation at Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel.

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes

1. Executive Summary

This report presents the Kirklees Inclusive Economy Strategy (KIES), which is the final top-tier strategy. The KIES is framed as a partnership strategy and aims to align with the national UK Modern Industrial Strategy and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's Local Growth Plan. This economic strategy is crucial for driving local action and informing engagement with regional and national partners. It addresses the need for close collaboration with businesses and economic partners to identify growth, skills, and investment opportunities in Kirklees. The document emphasizes that the economic strategy's approval will contribute to establishing a clear vision for the local economy.

Council is asked to approve the strategy in accordance with Article 4 of the Council's Constitution.

2. Information required to take a decision

2.1. Background

The Kirklees Inclusive Economy Strategy (KIES) is the final top tier strategy to come to completion. The others are the Inclusive Communities Framework, Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and Environment Strategy. As with all the top tier strategies the KIES is framed as a partnership strategy.

The West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) have agreed the Local Growth Plan (LGP) which was both a manifesto commitment of the mayor and a requirement of the new Labour Government. The Government has now published the UK Modern Industrial Strategy. This strategy is a key pillar delivery against the Government's mission to achieve the longest sustained growth in the G7.

It is important that Kirklees has an economic strategy in place that both aligns with the national and regional economic strategies. Furthermore, it must articulate our priorities to inform engagement with WYCA and Government as well as driving our own action. Recommendation 5 of the recent LGA Corporate Peer Challenge was "Working with Business and Economic Partners - Work more closely with businesses and economic partners to define potential growth, skills and investment opportunities in Kirklees." Approval of the economic strategy will contribute to addressing this by establishing a clear vision for the local economy and setting out a platform for engagement with businesses.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1. Council Plan

"Local economic growth, working with regional and national partners" is one of the Council Plan priorities. Under this sits the objective to "Engage on and deliver the Inclusive Economy Strategy".

3.2. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

3.3. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

3.4. **Climate Change and Air Quality**

Creating an increasingly environmentally sustainable local economy is a core objective of the strategy. This objective is aligned with local and West Yorkshire net zero targets and supported by the National Industrial Strategy.

3.5. **Integrated Impact Assessment**

An integrated impact assessment has been completed for the strategy and can be accessed via the link below. This demonstrates that the Strategy will have either a Neutral or Positive impact on Equality, diversity and inclusion, and Access to services.

https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/delivering-services/integrated-impact-assessments/home/details/IIA-671512717/

4. Consultation

Development of an economic strategy is not subject to formal consultation requirements.

5. Engagement

There has been significant engagement with partners and within the Council throughout development of the KIES, and there is ongoing engagement with key stakeholders. Meetings at which the KIES has been presented and discussed include:

- 25/01/2025 – Health & Wellbeing Board
- 10/12/2024 – Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel
- 04/01/2024 – Kirklees Health & Care Partnership
- 09/11/2023 – Kirklees Partnership Executive
- 06/12/2023 – Kirklees Health & Care Partnership, Development Session
- 10/10/2023 – Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel
- 04/10/2023 – Picture of Kirklees, Partnership Conference
- 12/06/2023 – Communities Senior Management Team
- 24/04/2023 – Inclusion and Diversity Hub
- 19/04/2023 – Tackling Inequalities Programme Board

The strategy has also been discussed periodically with the Leader and Cllr Turner as Portfolio Holder for Finance and Regeneration throughout its development.

The strategy has been presented to Cabinet on 8 July 2025, and they endorse the strategy.

6. Options

6.1. **Options considered**

The options considered are:

- To recommend that this strategy should be approved for adoption. The reasons for this are set out below at paragraph 5.2

- To recommend that this strategy should not be approved for adoption. However, this would not achieve the council's commitment to deliver an inclusive economic strategy to support local and regional growth. Without an inclusive economy strategy, Kirklees risks deepening inequality, missing out on local talent, and undermining long-term economic resilience. Having the strategy is essential to achieving the council's ambitions for sustainable growth, community wellbeing, and fair access to opportunity for all residents.

6.2. **Reasons for recommended option**

By adopting this strategy, we will:

- Demonstrate that, as a Council and as a district, Kirklees is committed to further developing a local economy that is productive, inclusive and environmentally sustainable.

- Deliver on one of the actions of the Council Plan 2025/26.

- Demonstrate Kirklees' alignment with the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy and West Yorkshire Local Growth Plan.

7. Next steps and timelines

Subject to adoption by Council the strategy will be officially launched. This launch will activate our communication strategy and dedicated webpage on the Council website.

8. Contact officer

Jonathan Nunn, Policy & Partnerships Lead

9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

The current Kirklees Economic Strategy was approved by Council on 20/03/2019.

10. Appendices

Kirklees Inclusive Economy Strategy

11. Service Director responsible

David Wildman, Service Director Skills & Regeneration