

Notice of Meeting



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Special Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission

Tuesday 17 March 2020 at 6.30pm
in the Council Chamber Council Offices
Market Street Newbury

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Date of despatch of Agenda: Monday 9 March 2020

For further information about this Agenda, or to inspect any background documents referred to in Part I reports, please contact Stephen Chard / Gordon Oliver on (01635) 519462

e-mail: stephen.chard@westberks.gov.uk / gordon.oliver1@westberks.gov.uk

Further information and Minutes are also available on the Council's website at www.westberks.gov.uk



**Agenda – Special Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission to be held on
Tuesday, 17 March 2020 (continued)**

- To:** Councillors Dennis Benneyworth, Jeff Brooks, James Cole, Lee Dillon, Alan Law (Chairman), Thomas Marino, Steve Masters, Garth Simpson and Martha Vickers (Vice-Chairman)
- Substitutes:** Councillors Jeremy Cottam, Carlyne Culver, Owen Jeffery, Tony Linden, David Marsh, Claire Rowles, Joanne Stewart and Tony Vickers
- Other Officers & Members invited:** Councillor Hilary Cole (Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Planning), John Ashworth (Corporate Director – Place), Gary Lugg (Head of Development and Planning), Bryan Lyttle (Planning and Transport Policy Manager), Gabrielle Mancini (Economic Development Officer)

Agenda

Part I

Page No.

1. **Apologies for Absence**
To receive apologies for inability to attend the meeting (if any),
2. **Declarations of Interest**
To remind Members of the need to record the existence and nature of any personal, disclosable pecuniary or other registrable interests in items on the agenda, in accordance with the Members' [Code of Conduct](#).
3. **Economic Development Strategy and Delivery Plan** 3 - 74
For the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission to consider the Economic Development Strategy and Economic Development Delivery Plan in order to offer any recommendations prior to its consideration by the Executive.

Sarah Clarke
Head of Legal and Strategic Support

If you require this information in a different format or translation, please contact Moira Fraser on telephone (01635) 519045.

Economic Development Strategy and Delivery Plan

Committee considering report:	Special Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission
Date of Committee:	17 March 2020
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Hilary Cole
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	5 March 2020
Report Author:	Gabrielle Mancini
Forward Plan Ref:	EX3758

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.0 To introduce the final Economic Development Strategy (EDS) and Economic Development Delivery Plan (EDSDP).

2 Recommendation

- 2.0 That Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission considers and offers its recommendations on the Economic Development Strategy and the Economic Development Strategy Delivery Plan.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	Additional funding for £96,000 was sought as a pressure bid for 2020/21. The 2020/21 Revenue Budget confirms an investment for Economic Development support of £80,000; some of which will be awarded to the Newbury West Berkshire Economic Development Company subject to appropriate governance arrangements and Terms of Reference being established. The remained will go into new staffing at West Berkshire Council.
Human Resource:	It is envisioned that a new Economic Development Officer post will be created at West Berkshire Council. Recruitment will begin in April 2020.
Legal:	None

Risk Management:	None			
Property:	None			
Policy:	This is a renewal of the existing Economic Development Strategy 2018			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?	X			The strategy promotes skills, employment, infrastructure and place-making initiatives which it is anticipated will have a positive impact on the prosperity and wellbeing of the district's residents and businesses.
Environmental Impact:	X			The strategy promotes infrastructure improvement and projects that will contribute towards the Council's aspirations towards carbon neutrality by 2030 as laid out in the emerging Environmental Strategy 2020.

Economic Development Strategy and Delivery Plan

Health Impact:	x			Addressing employment equalities should have a positive health impact.
ICT or Digital Services Impact:		X		None
Council Strategy Priorities or Business as Usual:	X			<p>The Economic Development Strategy contributes to the following Council Strategy priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire; • developing local infrastructure including housing to support and grow the local economy; • ensuring our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes; • maintaining a green district; • ensuring sustainable services through innovation and partnerships.
Data Impact:		X		None
Consultation and Engagement:	<p>Legal</p> <p>Finance</p> <p>Bryan Lyttle – Planning and Transportation Policy Manager</p> <p>Nick Carter- Chief Executive</p>			

4 Executive Summary

- 4.0 West Berkshire Council's previous Economic Development Strategy came to an end in 2018.
- 4.1 Given the council's strategic commitment to promoting Economic Development, an Economic Development Board was established in late 2018 to consider how best to do so and Economic Development consultancy SQW was engaged to do some preliminary research work into potential content for a new strategy.
- 4.2 Following the establishment of the Board and the employment of a new Economic Development Officer, work on the new strategy began, considering closely how West Berkshire could be promoted as a great place to do business and how the council's aims could be aligned with the West Berkshire 2036 Vision and the emerging Berkshire Local Industrial Strategy.
- 4.3 The draft strategy went out to consultation in July 2019 for 6 weeks. Following this consultation, further amendments took place to reflect the public comments mentioned in Appendix D and the result was the production of the strategy outlined in Appendix C.
- 4.4 The strategy introduces four chapters which contain actions that it is anticipated would contribute to a successful local economy.
- People- Good jobs and greater earning power for all in West Berkshire
 - Places- Creating prosperous communities across West Berkshire
 - Infrastructure- Future-proofing West Berkshire's infrastructure
 - Business Environment- Making West Berkshire the best place to start and grow a business
- 4.5 An associated Delivery Plan has also been produced. This can be found at Appendix C. In order to support this Delivery Plan, additional funding will be provided. This will take the form of an additional post at West Berkshire Council and funding of £40,000 being awarded to the Newbury West Berkshire Economic Development Company, subject to appropriate governance arrangements and Terms of Reference being established.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

- 5.1 The strategy at Appendix C is intended to refresh West Berkshire Council's previous Economic Development Strategy, which came to an end in 2018.

Background

- 5.2 Given the council's strategic commitment to promoting Economic Development, an Economic Development Board was established in late 2018 to consider how best to take this forward and Economic Development consultancy SQW was engaged to do some preliminary research work into potential content for a new strategy.

5.2.1 Officers from Education, HR, Public Protection and Culture, Transport and Countryside, Development and Planning, and Adult Social Care were involved in the drafting of material for each of the draft chapters. It was also informed by meetings the Economic Development Officer had directly with local businesses.

5.2.2 Initial drafts were considered by the Economic Development Board and content was amended accordingly before going out to consultation in March 2019.

5.2.3 The consultation was publicised in accordance with West Berkshire Council's usual consultation procedures. It was also publicised to business contacts by the Economic Development Officer and was promoted at a number of engagement events, including visits to town and parish meetings as well as at Newbury West Berkshire Economic Development Company stakeholder and networking meetings.

5.2.4 The consultation resulted in 48 survey responses, 12 email responses and 84 individual comments for action.

5.2.5 The final strategy was originally due to go before Executive in December 2019 but this was delayed due to the period of Purdah surrounding the General Election, which took place on 12th December 2019. It was subsequently suggested that the Strategy should be taken to Executive on 30th April 2020 alongside the Environment Strategy in order to ensure strategic alignment.

5.2.6 The final strategy has been amended to reflect the consultation responses in the following ways:

- Some of the comments reflected that the Strategy did not contain any targets or key performance indicators. Although the Foreword reflected that a delivery plan would follow, this has been made more explicit in the text and the Delivery Plan is being made publicly available at the Executive meeting considering the final Strategy.
- Content in the People chapter has been amended to more clearly reflect the council's firm commitment to inclusive growth which was made in the Council Strategy.
- Comments regarding the timeline for the revised West Berkshire Local Plan were considered and informed amendments in the Places chapter.
- Many felt that the table displayed in the draft Infrastructure chapter did not accurately capture the district's infrastructure needs. The table has since been removed and the chapter has been restructured to reflect these comments.
- Revisions have also been made to the Business Environment to reflect the leading role of the Newbury West Berkshire Economic Development Company in delivering the strategy's delivery plan.
- In line with comments made in the West Berkshire Council Local Government Association Peer Review, the strategy was reviewed in order to make the links between it and the council's other strategies, including the emerging Environment Strategy, clearer.

5.3 Proposals

- 5.3.1 It is proposed that Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission considers and offers its comments on the Economic Development Strategy before it progresses to Executive for final approval.
- 5.3.2 The additional West Berkshire Council post mentioned at 4.5 will be used to support the delivery of the actions outlined in the People, Places and Infrastructure chapters, as outlined in the Delivery Plan. It is anticipated that the Newbury West Berkshire Economic Development Company will fulfil the actions outlined in the Business Environment chapter.

6 Other options considered

- 6.1 Not considering the Economic Development Strategy and Economic Delivery Strategy Delivery Plan. This option is not recommended given the council's commitments as outlined in the Council Strategy 2019-23.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission is asked to consider and issue its recommendations on the final draft of the Economic Development Strategy and the associated Delivery Plan as it is integral to the authority's strategic framework and the delivery of its stated priorities as outlined in the Council Strategy 2019-23.

8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment
- 8.2 Appendix B – Data Protection Impact Assessment
- 8.3 Appendix C – Economic Development Strategy and Economic Development Strategy Delivery Plan
- 8.4 Appendix D- Spreadsheet containing consultation comments

Appendix A

Equality Impact Assessment - Stage One

We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity as set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act), which states:

- “(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:***
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;***
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; this includes the need to:***
 - (i) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;***
 - (ii) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;***
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, with due regard, in particular, to the need to be aware that compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.***
- (2) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.***
- (3) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.”***

The following list of questions may help to establish whether the decision is relevant to equality:

- Does the decision affect service users, employees or the wider community?
- (The relevance of a decision to equality depends not just on the number of those affected but on the significance of the impact on them)

- Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?
- Is it a major policy, or a major change to an existing policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?
- Will the decision have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?
- Does the decision relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?
- Does the decision relate to an area with known inequalities?
- Does the decision relate to any equality objectives that have been set by the council?

Please complete the following questions to determine whether a full Stage Two, Equality Impact Assessment is required.

What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Executive to make:	To endorse the Economic Development Strategy
Summary of relevant legislation:	
Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the Council’s key strategy priorities?	No
Name of assessor:	Gabrielle Mancini
Date of assessment:	26/02/2020

Is this a:		Is this:	
Policy	No	New or proposed	Yes
Strategy	Yes	Already exists and is being reviewed	No
Function	Yes	Is changing	Yes
Service	Yes		

1 What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	To identify opportunities to promote West Berkshire as a great place to live, work, learn and do business.
Objectives:	To propose actions for developing the district's economy.
Outcomes:	This document in and of itself will not facilitate outcomes as it is strategic and aspirational in its focus. The delivery plan, when completed, will eventually fulfil this purpose.
Benefits:	This document in and of itself will not facilitate benefits as it is strategic and aspirational in its focus. The delivery plan, when completed, will eventually fulfil this purpose

2 Note which groups may be affected by the proposed decision. Consider how they may be affected, whether it is positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this.		
(Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.)		
Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Age	None	
Disability	None	
Gender Reassignment	None	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	None	
Pregnancy and Maternity	None	
Race	None	
Religion or Belief	None	
Sex	None	
Sexual Orientation	None	
Further Comments relating to the item:		

3 Result	
Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?	No
Please provide an explanation for your answer:	
Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?	No
Please provide an explanation for your answer:	

If your answers to question 2 have identified potential adverse impacts and you have answered ‘yes’ to either of the sections at question 3, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.

If a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the [Equality Impact Assessment guidance and Stage Two template](#).

4 Identify next steps as appropriate:	
Stage Two required	N/A
Owner of Stage Two assessment:	
Timescale for Stage Two assessment:	

Name: Gabrielle Mancini

Date: 26/02/2020

Please now forward this completed form to Rachel Craggs, Principal Policy Officer (Equality and Diversity) (rachel.craggs@westberks.gov.uk), for publication on the WBC website.

Appendix B

Data Protection Impact Assessment – Stage One

The General Data Protection Regulations require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) for certain projects that have a significant impact on the rights of data subjects.

Should you require additional guidance in completing this assessment, please refer to the Information Management Officer via dp@westberks.gov.uk

Directorate:	Economy and Environment
Service:	Development and Planning
Team:	Planning and Transport Policy
Lead Officer:	Gabrielle Mancini
Title of Project/System:	Economic Development Strategy
Date of Assessment:	26/02/2020

Do you need to do a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)?

	Yes	No
<p>Will you be processing SENSITIVE or “special category” personal data?</p> <p>Note – sensitive personal data is described as “<i>data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or trade union membership, and the processing of genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person, data concerning health or data concerning a natural person’s sex life or sexual orientation</i>”</p>		x
<p>Will you be processing data on a large scale?</p> <p>Note – Large scale might apply to the number of individuals affected OR the volume of data you are processing OR both</p>		x
<p>Will your project or system have a “social media” dimension?</p> <p>Note – will it have an interactive element which allows users to communicate directly with one another?</p>		x
<p>Will any decisions be automated?</p> <p>Note – does your system or process involve circumstances where an individual’s input is “scored” or assessed without intervention/review/checking by a human being? Will there be any “profiling” of data subjects?</p>		x
<p>Will your project/system involve CCTV or monitoring of an area accessible to the public?</p>		x
<p>Will you be using the data you collect to match or cross-reference against another existing set of data?</p>		x
<p>Will you be using any novel, or technologically advanced systems or processes?</p> <p>Note – this could include biometrics, “internet of things” connectivity or anything that is currently not widely utilised</p>		x

If you answer “Yes” to any of the above, you will probably need to complete [Data Protection Impact Assessment - Stage Two](#). If you are unsure, please consult with the Information Management Officer before proceeding.

Economic Development Strategy

2019- 2023

DRAFT





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Foreword



Nick Carter
Chief Executive



Hilary Cole
**Executive Member for
Economic Development**

West Berkshire has a strong, diverse and resilient economy. It forms part of the Thames Valley, the most productive regional economy outside London and effectively blends the economic strengths of the South East with a wide range of environmental assets often more associated with the South-West. Information Communications, Technology and Logistics are key sectors and reflect in part the district's excellent physical and digital connectivity. However, West Berkshire also supports many different businesses of varying sizes along with a significant self-employed workforce.

The Centre for Cities' report 'Talk of the Town' singles out Newbury, West Berkshire's biggest town, as a rare example of a town with a strong and self-sufficient economy which does not rely on links to a neighbouring larger town. Newbury has also been recognised by the Financial Times as a European city of the future as well as the most business friendly small town in the UK. We want to make sure West Berkshire's new and existing businesses have the opportunity to build on this. Factors such as emerging technology, including 5G connectivity, green initiatives, electric and autonomous vehicles and the Internet of Things, will play a major part in this and we plan to facilitate delivery of the infrastructure to support this. Similarly, through our work on the education and training agenda we will work to give the next generation the skills they need to thrive whilst ensuring they have a great environment in which to live.

The West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board published its 2036 Vision for the district in 2019 and outlined one of the key themes as 'welcoming business and enterprise'. In the council's own Strategy for 2019-2023 which was published shortly afterwards, the theme of 'open for business' was cited as an underpinning principle for the council's work over the coming 4 years. Both ambitions are reflected in this Economic Development Strategy which is built around the four themes of People, Places, Infrastructure and Business Environment.

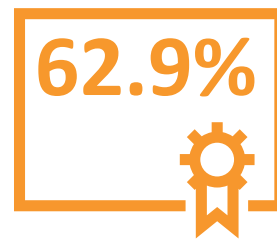
This new strategy reflects a refreshed commitment to supporting the economy of West Berkshire. Whilst the area has many strengths we recognise that there is still more to do. This Strategy seeks to focus on these issues and, in particular, those challenges where we feel we can make a real contribution.

Our commitment is matched with new resources. We will deploy these resources, not only to strengthen our own staffing, but also to support work with our partners. We recognise that we can only remain 'open for business' if we all work together in a coordinated way and what follows is clarity on what we intend to focus on as well as how we will seek to deliver.

West Berkshire in numbers



Population of **157,900**²



qualified to NVQ3 and above³



Working age Population⁴

97,600

85.3%

of the 16-64 population

economically active⁵



Almost **9,000** businesses

74% Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



Unemployment **2.7%** (full employment)⁶



Average pay **£32,884** Per annum¹⁰

5,700



properties registered for business use. More than ever before⁸

Healthy life expectancy⁷



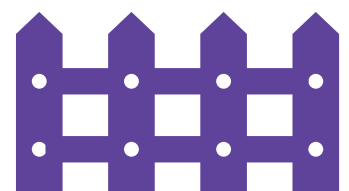
for women **70.1** for men **66.4**

House prices v income ratio¹¹

10.65



In **bottom half** of authorities for barriers to services⁹



A new Economic Development Strategy for West Berkshire

West Berkshire's economy is very much a success story. Continued growth over many years has meant West Berkshire now has one of the strongest economies in the country sitting within the most successful economic region outside London.

The district's connectivity has always been one of its assets. Within easy reach of London and Bristol by the M4, it has also recently seen the railway lines through the district electrified, meaning that London can now be reached in 45 minutes by train. The A34 provides a fast link between the south coast ports and the Midlands, and the Newbury bypass and the new A34/M4 junction are further examples of infrastructure improvements which have made West Berkshire accessible from many parts of the UK.

Digital connectivity has advanced at a similar pace. Virtually all of West Berkshire is now connected to Superfast Broadband and 5G connectivity is also being established across the district, having gone live in Newbury in 2019.

The working and living environment in West Berkshire is also a major attraction to business. Whilst enjoying many of the economic benefits of the Thames Valley, much of the district is designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Good quality schools are available and a University Centre is in the process of being established.

In the context of such success, the council's approach to economic development in the past has been focused on providing the right conditions to sustain relative prosperity. The emphasis has been on the provision of infrastructure and on 'place shaping', most notably around town centres but also on supporting the development of locally based community plans.

Looking ahead, West Berkshire is likely to see much of its recent relative economic success continue. However, this will not come without its challenges, notably;

- a projected reduced rate of population growth – around half that seen over the last 30-40 years;
- a projected reduction in the size of the resident working population as an increasing number of residents retire;
- a growing number of jobs with a reducing number of people to fill them may well cause labour shortages or potentially increased inward commuting assuming workers are available and willing to come to West Berkshire to work. Skill shortages are also a potential risk and are already evident in some sectors;
- West Berkshire's prosperity is not felt by all those who live in the district. Whilst the area has some of the highest economic activity rates in the country, the activity rates within some disadvantaged groups remain very low. Educational attainment shows a similar pattern. Economic inequality and social mobility are real concerns;
- West Berkshire has a highly qualified workforce but recent research has highlighted issues with underemployment which if significant will have an impact on productivity within the district;

- whilst the district has historically been blessed with significant infrastructure investment, the affordability of affordable housing remains acute and for some employers is a restriction on future growth. The West Berkshire Local Plan currently suggests that 500-600 homes per year need to be built in West Berkshire to support both population growth and the local economy up to 2036. On average 35% of these should be affordable. The council's new Housing Strategy sets out how this will be achieved;
- future economic growth and development cannot be looked at in isolation from the challenges of climate change. It is essential that West Berkshire moves towards a low carbon economy whilst at the same time delivering the inclusive growth that will be needed to sustain quality of life in the district. The council's new Environment Strategy sets out how this will be addressed.
- the West Berkshire economy is directly linked to both the national economy and the wider international economy. The ongoing challenges within the retail environment is one example of a wider economic trend, as is Brexit and the wider implications associated with the adoption of new technologies. The council has a role in responding to and planning for these.

All of the above trends and issues were highlighted in West Berkshire 2036, a Vision for West Berkshire which was published by the Health and Wellbeing Board in 2019. The commitments created in that document were;

- a West Berkshire where everybody has what they need to fulfil their potential;
- a West Berkshire with a housing mix with something for everyone;
- a West Berkshire that welcomes business, enterprise and industry into a productive, growing and dynamic local economy;
- a West Berkshire where the health and wellbeing of residents of all ages and backgrounds is good;

- a West Berkshire with both beautiful and diverse natural landscapes and a strong cultural offering.

The council embraced this Vision through its own Council Strategy 2019-2023 which was published in May 2019. and identified six priorities for the following four years, all of which are reflected on within this new Economic Development Strategy. They are;

- supporting businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire;
- developing local infrastructure including housing to support and grow the local economy;
- supporting everyone to fulfil their potential;
- ensuring our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes;
- maintaining a green district;
- ensuring sustainable services through innovation and partnerships.

In developing this new Economic Development Strategy for West Berkshire, the council has been cognisant of the aims of the Berkshire Local Industrial Strategy (BLIS). Local Industrial Strategies are being prepared by Local Enterprise Partnerships across the county in support of the national industrial strategy which was published in 2018. Each of these Local Industrial Strategies is based upon the five foundations of productivity, namely **Ideas, People, Places, Infrastructure and Business Environment**.

The council has been actively involved in the preparation of the BLIS. In March 2019 the Framework Document for consultation set out a vision under the heading, 'the Best of Global and Local' and went onto identify the following priorities;

- enhancing productivity within Berkshire's enterprises;
- eco systems which are maturing and evolving and extend beyond Berkshire;
- international trade, connections, collaborations and investments;
- vibrant places and a supportive infrastructure;
- making Berkshire an inclusive area where aspirations can be realised.

The BLIS is a key document and the council will continue to work with the TVLEP to ensure it is implemented. The aim of the West Berkshire Economic Strategy 2019-2023 is not to replicate the BLIS but rather to focus on those areas of activity which will be a particular focus locally here in West Berkshire.

Working to the 2036 West Berkshire Vision, the Council Strategy theme of ‘open for business’ and the foundations of productivity mentioned above, we have developed actions in the four areas seen to have the most relevance locally. These are;

1. people – good jobs and greater earning power for all in West Berkshire;

2. places – creating prosperous communities across West Berkshire;

3. infrastructure – future-proofing West Berkshire’s infrastructure;

4. business environment – making West Berkshire the best place to start a grow a business.

The following four chapters set out what we propose to do under each of these themes over the coming four years.

“West Berkshire now has one of the strongest economies in the country sitting within the most successful economic region outside London.”



People

Good jobs and greater earning power for all in West Berkshire

In the West Berkshire 2036 Vision we outlined a number of aspirations that would see better educated, more productive communities. These included assisting our young people to develop their digital skills, prioritising STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) subjects, addressing the district's social mobility gap and considering how we can create a more inclusive working environment to help those in certain groups to enter, or re-enter, the workplace. The last two of these are particularly important as the issue of inequality is much more prevalent in West Berkshire than in many other areas of the country; a fact we urgently want to address. In this strategy, we look at how West Berkshire Council can tailor its economic development activities to contribute to these aspirations.

Also in the Vision, we highlighted how the district's demographic profile is shifting, with the number of workers per retired person projected to halve by 2036. Again, we must seek to address this if we are to thrive as a district.

Key to this will be our efforts to attract and retain young people. For too long we have allowed them to reach university age and leave the district as they do not see West Berkshire as a vibrant and, importantly, affordable place for them to begin and progress their career or start a family.

The **Places** chapter looks at how we can deliver the requisite affordable housing and leisure offer to make this a reality. Here, however, we will consider how we can help to deliver the 'West Berkshire where everybody has what they need to fulfil their potential' that we have subscribed to through the 2036 Vision. To do so, we will outline the actions we intend to carry out in two key areas: **inclusive growth** and **skills**.

Inclusive Growth

We will:

Empower everyone to enter the workplace

The West Berkshire 2036 Vision highlighted the need for older workers, those from disadvantaged backgrounds and those with mental health issues or learning difficulties would be given the opportunity to participate in the workplace.

We commit to working with our partners to deliver targeted interventions, such as the LEP's Stronger Together Partnership, which is addressing barriers to work through a £1.3m investment, and our own initiatives, such as the pioneering Emotional Health Academy.

There are also opportunities for us to collaborate with the private sector in order to make the workplace more accessible to all. Many local employers, including West Berkshire Council and AWE, are members of the Disability Confident Scheme, which promotes inclusivity in the workplace. There is scope to build on this, particularly through the use of promotional material and the existing work of our Adult Social Care team, to encourage and incentivise more employers to offer opportunities for these groups to enter the workplace.

Similarly, poor mental health can have a major impact on the ability to remain in the workplace and data suggests that this is a greater problem in West Berkshire than in other areas. This is not only damaging for the individuals concerned but also affects labour supply, which is an issue for West Berkshire's businesses. Through our own West Berkshire Wellbeing Service, we will promote the need for increased mental health awareness and mental health first aid training in order to ensure that as many workplaces as possible offer an inclusive working environment.

We will also conduct a review into nursery provision across the district to ensure that the need for childcare is not a barrier to parents wishing to return to work.

Tackle underemployment

In West Berkshire we have full employment, which is one of the many benefits of a strong local economy. However, the Learning and Work Institute's Youth Opportunity Index, published in late 2018, singles

out West Berkshire as having a particular issue with underemployment, which may involve someone working for fewer hours than they would like or carrying out work that doesn't make best use of their skills. Whilst there are no mechanisms for measuring whether those deemed to be underemployed see this as an issue, the fact remains that some people do wish to work for more hours or in employment they find more fulfilling

Through tailored careers advice and a more comprehensive range of training opportunities, we will help those facing this challenge to move on in their careers.

Skills

The Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership's Priority Skills Statement makes clear that, in some sectors, employers are struggling to recruit workers due to an absence of specific skills among the workforce. This is particularly true in the digital, social care and construction industries; all of which are key to our local economy.

We will:

Encourage the uptake of apprenticeships

A university education opens up new opportunities and increases earning power. What it isn't, however, is a one size fits all approach to social mobility and this is why we commit to promoting a wider range of education and training opportunities, including T Levels and apprenticeships, so that more people are able to access them.



In order to do so, we will commit to facilitating apprenticeships in every service at West Berkshire Council so that our own workforce more accurately reflects the community it represents, allows for career progression and has the skills it needs for the future. This will also enhance the variety of careers opportunities available in the district whilst creating a more inclusive workplace.

Employers paying the Apprenticeship Levy are now able to transfer up to 25% of their levy payments to another employer, which will allow a wider range of businesses to employ an apprentice. Such a transfer has been done successfully on a small scale, with a local housing association using their levy to provide teaching assistants for one of West Berkshire's academies.

To accelerate this good practice, we will partner with major local employers and the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership to broker an Apprenticeship Levy Fund. This Fund will welcome bids from local organisations who either are too small to pay the levy or who are paying their levy and have been successful in allocating all of their funds to apprenticeships. This will ensure that more Apprenticeship Levy funds raised locally are spent locally, giving more people in West Berkshire better prospects.

Support Newbury College's University Centre

At the Newbury 2026 Vision Conference in October 2018 Newbury College announced that it was in advanced discussions with a local university and a training provider to explore how this could be developed. Bids for TVLEP funding have also been made, with the support of West Berkshire Council.

In order to support this, the council will engage local businesses and the LEP in the project and offer the college any expert advice it needs as it expands to meet the skills needs of the district.

Once it has been delivered, we will work with the College to place some of its students, whose skills are likely to meet our needs as an authority, within relevant council service areas. Where relevant, we will also facilitate introductions to our suppliers or partners so that they can do the same.

Help partners to become training providers to meet our skills needs

Through our work with local nurseries and schools, we have identified that there is a need for upskilling in the education sector and for providing a broader range of specialists in West Berkshire who are equipped to deliver the training that will address this. Where suitable partners can be found, we will develop specialised training consortia to close our skills and provision gaps.

Help to grow digital skills

In the West Berkshire 2036 Vision, a commitment was made to ensuring that our young people are given the skills they need to progress, including coding and computer programming. This is also a key aim of the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership's Priority Skills Statement. Not only will enhancing the availability of provision be invaluable to our young people, but it will also mean our employers will have a wider pool of local digital talent from which to draw further down the line.

Some of this teaching is already taking place in our schools and in our libraries, through coding clubs. We will grow this further, fostering a new generation of digital skills in partnership with the businesses we hope will one day employ our young people.

Whilst this will help us in the future, we recognise that this skills gap exists now. For this reason, we will explore how we can work more closely with partners such as the Jobcentre, local businesses and local day centres to enhance digital skills training provision amongst adults. This is particularly important for many of our elderly residents experiencing social isolation and we believe that undertaking this work will contribute to better wellbeing levels across the district.



Work with partners to improve Careers Advice

In engaging directly with industry to provide careers advice, including through the West Berkshire Education Business Partnership and our work with the TVBLEP, we will enhance the range of careers advice available across all of our schools and will showcase the excellent range of employment opportunities available in West Berkshire. This will encourage our young people to consider developing their career within the district.

Not only this, but we will provide materials to teachers, parents and pupils to advise them on employment opportunities in the district and will use the Skills and Enterprise Partnership, a sub-group of the Health and Wellbeing Board, to bring together educators and employers to decide collaboratively on the best way to address both the needs of pupils and of the employment market as we move towards a more inclusive local economy.

Put employment and skills at the heart of all we do

As a local authority, we are well placed to extend the benefits of development and growth to everyone in the community. For this reason, we will, when appropriate weave Employment and Skills Plans in to every major development, ensuring as much as we can that local people are involved in every stage of the project, from build to completion and beyond. This may take the form of apprentices being involved in the build, developers investing in training opportunities or contributing to established community schemes and social enterprises. This maximises the social value of development in the district, contributing to a more inclusive local economy and environment overall.

Ensure environmental stewardship is integral to the school curriculum

As our Environment Strategy outlines, embedding an understanding of climate change into teaching in our schools from a very early age is important if we are to ensure that our young people are equipped to become custodians of our natural environment and to carry out the green jobs of the future.

By realising these ambitions, we will have contributed to the creation of an inclusive, skilled West Berkshire where communities work and grow together as outlined in the West Berkshire 2036 Vision

“We committed to a number of aspirations that would see better educated, more productive communities”



Places

Prosperous communities

In the West Berkshire 2036 Vision, we made a commitment to making West Berkshire a place where everybody has the opportunity to thrive and fulfil their potential in a high quality and safe environment.

Fulfilling this aspiration will require work to ensure that more housing of the right type in the right locations and of the correct tenure is available to residents so that it meets local needs. This must be balanced with our commitment to delivering well-planned, well-connected communities with thriving urban areas and high quality rural ones. We will need to ensure that the leisure, education and community facilities complement this housing so that we create an even greater place to live, work, relax and do business.

From busy town centres, to the gallops in Lambourn, to world class digital tech facilities, West Berkshire's businesses operate in a diverse range of locations.

This chapter explores how through carefully considered planning, we can:

- help our communities to shape their own places
- Use the Local Plan to encourage inclusive growth
- Reshape our town centres
- Promote the AONB as a living, working landscape
- Enhance the district's cultural and leisure offering

Under these headings, the following actions will ensure that West Berkshire continues to be a great place to live, work and do business.

We will:

Help communities to shape their own places

In the West Berkshire 2036 Vision we reflected on the fact that in some areas, particularly in rural parts of the district, access to services is challenging and that work must be done to ensure all of our communities are able to play their part in the district's future. As we set out at the beginning of this document, we do not wish to take a prescriptive approach as we do so. Instead, we will work with our parishes across the district on their Neighbourhood Development Plans so that locations for development can be identified and community-led economic growth promoted widely.

Use the Local Plan to plan for a cohesive district

The **east of West Berkshire** has particularly strong economic links to Reading and therefore may be where there will be significant new housing and infrastructure development. We will work in partnership with our neighbouring authorities and others to deliver sustainable low carbon development with a strong sense of community, as well as great employment opportunities for its residents.

Theale, located at Junction 12 of the M4, is of particular economic importance as it is the location of Arlington Business Park, which houses the international headquarters of a number of firms, as well as some creative, and rapidly growing, small and medium sized businesses. We will support Theale as a prime location for business by protecting its status as an important employment location through our planning processes and will work with partners to enhance the infrastructure and offering there to attract other businesses to the town.

The **Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE)** has two bases in this area, at Aldermaston and Burghfield. AWE is an important provider of local jobs but its location has implications for the future level of development in the surrounding area. We will consider how we can support sustainable growth on these sites, ensuring that AWE's status as a world leader in innovation and employment opportunities is allowed to grow.

We will focus on town centre masterplanning in **Thatcham** and will seek external investment for this purpose. This would ensure that infrastructure and town centre facilities can be upgraded to meet the demands and ambitions of Thatcham Town Council and the town's residents and businesses.

Newbury which was recognised recently as having more economic potential than any other UK small town, will continue to be a major focus for development in the district up to 2036 with the re-development of Market Street and the regeneration of London Road, which will increase the vibrancy of the town. This will be facilitated by a town centre masterplanning exercise, undertaken by independent consultants in conjunction with the local community. We will then work in collaboration with the Newbury Business Improvement District (BID), the LEP and Newbury Town Council to deliver sustainable, attractive projects of which the district can be proud.

In **Hungerford**, we will work with stakeholders including Network Rail and Great Western Railway to consider how the town's aspirations can be realised, including for the area surrounding the station. We will also work with the Chamber of Commerce to highlight the town's unique offer as a thriving retail centre with a variety of exciting independent retailers.

We commit to address this through better use of technology, including through the Internet of Things as part of the Smart Cities project, so that where our people live does not affect their chances of securing employment and opportunities.



“We committed to making West Berkshire a place where everybody has the opportunity to thrive and fulfil their potential in a high quality and safe environment”

Reshape our town centres

The changing role of town centres has been well-documented. Footfall nationally has declined in the face of online shopping and the future is likely to see our town centres used for a wider variety of activities, including office, leisure and experiential uses. This is also a key theme of the BLIS, which highlights the increasing importance of effective placemaking to our economic prosperity.

Starting first in Newbury, our largest town, and moving elsewhere as resources allow; we will undertake work and research to determine how the future of our high streets is likely to look and what we can do as a council can facilitate this.

We also recognise that running an independent business can be particularly challenging and are committed to raising awareness of the importance of supporting all of our town centres and independent businesses in our district through direct support, communications and campaigning activities.

This work is not something that we can do alone. We will drive these ambitions, working with stakeholders such as the Newbury Business Improvement District, the Newbury West Berkshire Economic Development Company, TVBLEP and others.

Promote the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty's status as a living and working landscape

The North Wessex Downs AONB is a nationally protected landscape and is West Berkshire's biggest environmental asset. Covering 74% of the district, from Hungerford and Lambourn in the west to Pangbourne in the east together with Bradfield Southend, Chieveley, Compton, Great Shefford, Hermitage and Kintbury.

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Our approach to development will continue to reflect our duty to protect this asset whilst balancing the need to ensure the vitality of our rural communities and economy through well-planned infrastructure.

We recognise that the current financial climate can be challenging, particularly for our rural businesses, which is why we intend to assist them to diversify where appropriate to increase their income potential. Many of our businesses and local estates have already managed to do this with great success and we will work with the Thames Valley Berkshire LEP to help others follow suit.

One of the strongest rural industries in West Berkshire is the racehorse industry. We are home to a world class racecourse in Newbury and the 'Valley of the Racehorse' (Lambourn) which is worth over £22m each year to our economy and employs over 700 people. We will further improve links with the industry, carefully considering how we can help to deliver a setting that allows it to develop at pace as an integral part of the rural landscape.

Enhance our leisure and cultural offering

The perceived weakness of our leisure offering has been anecdotally expressed as a barrier to younger people choosing West Berkshire as a place to live, work and learn.

To reflect the importance of this in retaining young people, contributing to positive wellbeing and making West Berkshire a great place to live, the council will work with partners to develop new Culture and Leisure Strategies.

Through our work with partners, our parishes and our businesses, we will assist with the delivery of the well-planned, well-housed and cohesive communities as set out in the West Berkshire 2036 Vision and the Council Strategy 2019-2023



Infrastructure

Future Proofing our infrastructure

Effective strategic infrastructure, is key if we are to deliver the aspirations laid out in the West Berkshire 2036 Vision and, consequently, this strategy.

The identification, funding and provision of this physical, social and environmental infrastructure will ensure that West Berkshire will thrive economically. It is the reliability of local transport networks, the security and cost of energy, the affordability of housing, the resilience of local utility services and digital connectivity that will be critical to local people and businesses in the years to come. This infrastructure should be well-planned, unlocking the district's potential and contributing to an inclusive environment in which we are proud to work and live.

As set out in the Places chapter, this strategy is interwoven with the Local Plan Review to 2036 which will focus the location of new development based upon the Plan's spatial strategy. Physical infrastructure will need to adapt to and complement future development proposals, which will be achieved through the development of an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which we will implement in collaboration with our partners. The key parts of this IDP are likely to be:

- Green infrastructure
- Digital infrastructure
- Housing
- Transport, including road, rail and cycling

Through the delivery of this strategy we will:

Improve our green infrastructure and create a low carbon future for West Berkshire.

In July 2019, West Berkshire Council declared a Climate Emergency and committed to working towards carbon neutrality by 2030. An integral part of delivering this will be in the implementation of our Environment Strategy 2020-2030.

As well as measures to boost recycling, protect our natural environment and address the district's carbon budget, the Environment Strategy includes plans to ensure the delivery of sustainable utilities, offer support to businesses wishing to adopt green initiatives and invest in green infrastructure, including public transport and flood defences.

We will respond to climate change mitigation targets and the district's vulnerability to flooding and rising consumption of finite resources, and seek to minimise carbon emissions by locating major developments in the most sustainable locations.

We will also do all we can to minimise the impact of our own buildings on the environment and assist residents and businesses to do the same whilst considering new ways of generating energy. We have recently invested a significant amount into solar panels across the district and will look to work on similar projects as funding allows.

Future-proof our digital infrastructure

Throughout this strategy, reference is made to the importance of the digital technology industry in West Berkshire, now and in the future. Central to this is the need to ensure that even better digital infrastructure is in place to further enhance the district's already excellent offer.

The Superfast Berkshire project, which West Berkshire Council leads, has delivered almost 100% superfast broadband coverage across West Berkshire in recent years. A key priority for this project in future years is likely to be the installation of full fibre across Berkshire. At present 12% of businesses and residents have access to 'full fibre' and it is hoped to significantly increase this over the period of this Strategy.

We will encourage the deployment of 5G, or other relevant emerging technology, across the whole of West Berkshire, not just the urban parts. We will seek to ensure that the Government's 5G Testbeds and Trials programme includes West Berkshire, and will participate in bids to achieve this to ensure that rurality is not a barrier to business success and access to digital services.

Through the emerging Local Plan, we will include plans to require the installation of gigabit capability in all new builds in urban areas and all developments of over 10 homes across the district, subject to viability.



Redress the district's housing mix

The shortage of affordable housing is a particular problem, which has implications for workforce availability and the economic sustainability of our district. The affordability and accessibility of housing is also key if we are to attract and retain young people in West Berkshire whilst meeting the needs of the whole population. The council's Local Plan Review and Housing Strategy will outline what we will do in order to achieve this.

Through our Housing Strategy, we will review the need for further provision to be made for key workers. We will also consider how we can provide affordable housing to those who work in the care industry so that they can afford to live as well as work in the district and will work hard to try to attract a provider of rented accommodation specifically for single young professionals to West Berkshire.

Enhance our transport infrastructure

The council will develop a new Local Transport Plan, which will outline how our roads, rail, pedestrian and cycle ways can be improved in order to meet the demands of the future. Among the actions currently being considered are:

Roads

Given the Government's commitment that almost all vehicles will be electric by 2035 as well as emerging technology in autonomous vehicles, we must ensure that the infrastructure is in place to support them. In doing so, we will help to reduce carbon emissions, reduce congestion and make travel smarter.

The council will seek to develop further use of Intelligent Transport Systems, including intelligent roads and bridges, to help manage transport networks and to provide better information to transport users.

Additional public charge points will be installed at safe, convenient and sustainable locations throughout the district, including in on-street residential settings, to minimise barriers to charging for those who wish to use electric vehicles.

To demonstrate our own commitment to this we will increase the percentage of our existing car club vehicles as well as others in our fleet that are electric.

Rail

Improvements to our railway stations are already underway, with the benefits of electrification having delivered additional services to central London and a £ 6 million redevelopment at Newbury Station starting in 2020. As funding allows, we will extend this to other stations so that as many people as possible are able to take advantage of enhanced rail connectivity.

Cycling

In recent years, we have seen significant investment in our cycling infrastructure. In line with our commitments in the Environment Strategy, and in order to increase the number of travel modes available to residents and workers in the district, we will further expand this in the future.

It is our hope that in realising these ambitions, we will have contributed to the creation of a high tech, well-connected West Berkshire that is open for business.



“In recent years, we have seen significant investment in our cycling infrastructure. In line with our commitments in the Environment Strategy, and in order to increase the number of travel modes available to residents and workers in the district,”

Business Environment

The best place to start and grow a business

The council plays a major role in the local economy. It is one of the district's biggest employers and is a key local influence due to its regulatory functions (such as planning and licensing), its collection of business rates, ownership of leisure and cultural facilities as well as its delivery of services to residents such as waste collection, road maintenance, education and social care.

How we as a council can help to create the 'West Berkshire that welcomes business, enterprise and industry into a productive, growing and dynamic local economy' that partners subscribed to in the West Berkshire 2036 Vision is key to the delivery of this strategy. In order to do so, we must:

- Create an environment that helps businesses to start up
- Ensure existing businesses are able to grow
- Promote West Berkshire as an inward investment destination
- Be a business-friendly council
- Foster relationships and networks

This is not something we will deliver alone. We will commit to funding the emerging Newbury West Berkshire Economic Development Company (EDC), which will play a leading role in this work, making West Berkshire the go to destination for businesses. In order to do this, together we will:

We will:

Create an environment that helps start-ups and existing small businesses to grow

We want to do all we can to encourage businesses to start up and to help them to expand. For this reason, we will develop a clear **package of business support** that will act as a **one stop shop** for our businesses. We will work directly with business owners to ensure this is tailored to each of the sectors operating in the district. This will allow as many businesses as possible to take advantage of this service.

Furthermore, we are members of the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership, who provide specialised business advice services through the Berkshire Growth Hub. This includes courses for start-ups, accelerator programmes for high growth businesses, information sessions on marketing and advice about access to finance. By referring our businesses to the programme, we will help them to develop the skills they need to grow.

With the growing profile of the **green agenda** and the need to move towards carbon neutrality, many new green businesses are emerging. Across our district there are examples of businesses taking responsibility and showing leadership on this issue and grasping the market opportunities arising from a low carbon global economy.

The policy decisions we make and the infrastructure we provide should enable our businesses to grow in a responsible and sustainable way. To support this, facilities such as remote working, a wider range of travel options and access to sustainable utilities will be made readily available to them. Equally, the existing support offered to businesses through our work with the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership will help new and existing green businesses to grow and develop within the district.



The Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership has undertaken research into the availability of **incubator space** for early stage businesses and has highlighted that West Berkshire is lacking such facilities. It is felt that such facilities may boost opportunities for start-ups and growing businesses who require flexible, good value spaces for their fledgling enterprises. We will therefore develop a business case to establish whether there is a need to convert space that has gone unused for some time into incubator and shared working space. We will also, through the Local Plan Review, consider how the planning process might assist in facilitating the delivery of such space across the district.

Remain the most business-friendly council

West Berkshire is already a great place to do business, with Newbury being recognised as the most business friendly small town in the UK. In the West Berkshire 2036 Vision, we showed a strong commitment to economic development and recognised its importance to the district's future if we are to build on this.

Business rate relief has proven effective as both an incentive for new businesses and a helping hand for existing ones. West Berkshire Council already provides businesses with a variety of business rate relief schemes with good results. As part of our ongoing drive to support more and more businesses, we will regularly review our relief schemes and consider, where affordable, whether they can be expanded. In line with our commitment to inclusive growth, we intend to target this where possible at firms who demonstrate a commitment to an inclusive local economy and who can evidence the social value they contribute.

We will also ensure that our own processes do not place an unnecessary burden on those who choose West Berkshire as the location in which to run their business.

West Berkshire Council has decided to reflect this prioritisation by applying new resource in its economic development function and developing the services provided by the **Public Protection Partnership**. Furthermore, it is restructuring teams within its Planning and Development service to consider economic development consequences more closely in its decision making.

The council's **planning** policies will facilitate and support a strong, diverse and sustainable economic base across the district. Through the Local Plan Review we will continue to ensure sufficient sites are provided in the right locations to foster sustainable economic growth, and the district's Protected Employment Areas will continue to play a vital role in maintaining a portfolio of suitable sites to meet future demand.

In 2018, West Berkshire Council worked with Greenham Trust to produce a successful Local Development Order for Greenham Business Park. This LDO offers those wishing to relocate to the Park the opportunity to create bespoke premises in which to grow their business through a simplified planning process. We will continue to promote this LDO and look to implement other similar initiatives to boost our economy, where appropriate.

As a local authority, we **procure** a great deal of goods and services as well as works as part of major spending through our Capital Programme. We will support our local SMEs and voluntary and community sector organisations by providing guidance about how they may form consortia bids with their peers to deliver value. Furthermore, we will hold local events pre-tender to provide them with opportunities to understand future requirements.

We will encourage SMEs and voluntary community sector organisations to bid for contracted work at a scale that is appropriate to their capacity and capability and hold periodic supplier forums for specific areas of purchasing such as adult social care to ensure that there is good understanding in the market about current requirements and developments in the sector to aid contract delivery.

We will also, as part of our commitment to inclusive growth, seek to encourage bidding from businesses who share our aspirations towards inclusive growth and social value-friendly practice including the opportunities available to their own workforces, payment of the Real Living Wage to its employees and their environmental sustainability records.

Promote West Berkshire as an inward investment destination

West Berkshire has many assets. What it does not have, however, is a clear brand identity that is recognisable to those who do not live in, or at least close to, the district. Arguably, this is a difficult

concept to develop as the area is diverse and offers excellent prospects across a wide range of industries.

The Newbury West Berkshire Economic Development Company will partner with us to address this issue. Together, we will work to attract new businesses to West Berkshire by promoting available land in the district and offering a 'soft-landing service' to potential new movers to the area whilst assisting existing businesses with their future growth plans.

The EDC will also work with the various volunteer groups and networks it has established to create events which help promote the local area for the benefit of all of those who live and work here.

Although the form this will take is still unknown, we are confident that the range of stakeholders involved with the project will give us the best possible chance of success.

Foster relationships and networks

We know we aspire to be business-friendly and that we are ready to help but this is irrelevant if the business community doesn't know it too.

An important part of this is getting out and about in the community, meeting businesses and gathering their views. We will do this even more often, including during our annual budget setting when we will host an engagement event for our businesses. It is therefore our intention to continue developing these activities, ensuring that our engagement is innovative and tailored to the individual needs of those we meet.

Moving forward, we as a council will seek to further increase our use of social media across a wider range of platforms so that we are able to engage with businesses in a more dynamic way and will also contribute to a comprehensive programme of networking events for our businesses, to be organised by the Newbury West Berkshire Economic Development Company.

It is our hope that in delivering these ambitions, together with the the Newbury West Berkshire Economic Development Company, we will have created the best possible environment in which our businesses are able to thrive.

Delivering the Strategy

West Berkshire is an ambitious district and must be well-prepared for the future. Ensuring that we are is not the role of West Berkshire Council alone. For this reason, it is our intention to continue to work with our partners, including the TVLEP and the Chamber of Commerce to realise the objectives and programmes we have outlined. We will also continue to work with the Newbury Business Improvement District and local councils, particularly to support our own place shaping aspirations and those of our local communities.

To support the Delivery Plan, the council is intending to recruit an additional post into its Economic Development Team. We also, subject to appropriate governance agreements being put into place, intend to provide financial support to the Newbury West Berkshire Economic Development Company as we see them as a key partner in delivering a number of the aspirations outlined in this strategy. We have highlighted within the attached Delivery Plan where we feel our joint working would be most beneficial.

In the coming years, a range of factors, both within our control and otherwise, will influence the future course of West Berkshire. Demographics will change, the implications of national political change will be manifested and trends will come and go. In realising the ambitions in this strategy, we will have ensured that we are as well-positioned as possible to remain on a course that benefits all of our residents and businesses.



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WBC/SS/GM/0319

Number	EDS Chapter	Strategic aim	Linked Council Strategy Priority(ies)	Link to BLIS Theme	Action(s)	Responsible organisation	Governance Group	Resource	KPI/Measures	Q1 2020	Q2 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020
1	People-Inclusive Growth	Create a more inclusive working environment	Support everyone to fulfil their potential Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes	People, Priority Skills Statement	Promotional campaign around disability confident scheme West Berkshire Wellbeing courses World of Work programme	WBC	Economic Development Board Workforce Board	Economic Development Team, Post 16 Team, West Berkshire Wellbeing	Reduction in number of NEETs Promotion scheme established by Q4 2020 3 businesses referred to WBW courses per quarter				
2	People- Skills	Encourage uptake of apprenticeships across West Berkshire	Support everyone to fulfil their potential Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships	People, Priority Skills Statement	Create a Community Apprenticeship Levy Fund	WBC or TVBLEP	Economic Development Board Workforce Board	Economic Development Team, Workforce Board	WBC to recruit 10 businesses to Apprenticeship Levy Fund 15 apprenticeships created				
3	People- Skills	Encourage uptake of apprenticeships at West Berkshire Council	Support everyone to fulfil their potential	People, Priority Skills Statement	Create workplace apprenticeships at WBC	WBC	Workforce Board	Strategy and Governance	WBC to create 24 apprenticeships annually including 9 for low employment groups				
4	People- Skills	Support the university centre at Newbury College	Support everyone to fulfil their potential Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships	Ideas, People, Priority Skills Statement	Create placements for Social Care students Work with Newbury College on Employment and Skills Plans	WBC	Economic Development Board	Economic Development Team, HR Support	100% of ESP to consider needs of UCN construction students Assistance with funding bid submissions for expansion plans as appropriate				
5	People- Skills	Ensure comprehensive careers advice is available	Support everyone to fulfil their potential Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships	People, Priority Skills Statement	Deliver tailored careers advice Deliver a more comprehensive range of training opportunities Showcase employment opportunities available in the district at a careers fair or similar event through SEP/NWBEDC Rebadge Skills and Enterprise Partnership as an employer/educator forum	WBC, TVBLEP, Education Business Partnership, Skills and Enterprise Partnership	Skills and Enterprise Partnership	Economic Development Team	Delivery of annual careers fayre Renewed ToR for Skills and Enterprise Partnership TBA WBC work experience programme established by Q3 2021				
6	People- Skills	Improve digital skills provision	Support everyone to fulfil their potential Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships	People, Priority Skills Statement	Expand coding club provision Bid for funding for equipment	WBC		Economic Development Team, Libraries, Schools Improvement Team	Funding bid submitted by Q2 2021 Partnership with local day centre established for adult training by Q3 2021 3 employers recruited as volunteers by Q2 2021				
7	People- Skills	Achieving skills legacy from major development	Support everyone to fulfil their potential Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships	People, Priority Skills Statement, Infrastructure	Embed Employment and Skills Plans into major applications	WBC	Economic Development Board	Economic Development Team	ESP delivered for 100% of large developments				

Number	EDS Chapter	Strategic aim	Linked Council Strategy Priority(ies)	Link to BLIS Theme	Action(s)	Responsible organisation	Governance Group	Resource	KPI	Q1 2020	Q2 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020
1	Places-Help communities to shape their own places	Ensure that Economic Development consequences are considered in the planning process	Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy	Places, People, Infrastructure	Offer consultation advice and/or responses on all major non-residential planning applications	WBC	Economic Development Board	Planning Policy Team	95% of all Major Non Residential Applications to have a Economic Development response to the planning application consultation				
2	Places- Local Plan	Ensure that adequate employment land is identified in the Local Plan to 2036	Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire	Places, Business Environment, Ideas, Infrastructure	Produce HELAA and promote sites that are recommended for development	WBC	Economic Development Board	Planning Policy Team, Economic Development Team	The promotion of suitable employment policies in the local plan at every stage of the process until adoption.				
3	Places- Town centres	Promote West Berkshire as a business destination and inform the business community of development within Newbury	Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire	Places	Host regular New in Newbury Conferences	WBC	Economic Development Board	Economic Development Team	Annual conference delivered				
4	Places- Town Centres	Plan for the future of Newbury Town Centre	Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire	Places	Prepare Masterplan for Newbury Town Centre London Road Industrial Estate	WBC	Economic Development Board	Economic Development Team	Plan delivered by Q2 2021 Projects contained delivered TBA				
5	Places- Town Centres	Plan for the future of Thatcham Town Centre	Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire	Places	Submit LGF bids where available Submit High Street Fund bids where available	WBC, TTC	Economic Development Board	Economic Development Team, Planning Policy Team	Bids submitted Projects completed subject to funding				
6	Places- Town Centres	Plan for the future of Hungerford Town Centre including Station and surrounding area	Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy	Places	Submit LGF bids where available Submit High Street Fund bids where available	WBC, HTC, Hungerford Neighbourhood Development Group		Economic Development Team	Bids submitted Projects contained delivered TBA				
7	Places- Town Centres	Promote independent businesses in town centres as a retail destinations	Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire	Places, Business Environment	Hold Small Business Saturday events Develop marketing campaigns for town centres	WBC, Newbury BID, NTC, HTC, TTC, TPC	Economic Development Board	Economic Development Team, Graphics	Decline in vacancy rates, position on retail index maintained, retaining footfall, Business rates receipts increase				
8	Places- Rural and AONB	Support and encourage rural diversification including racehorse industry	Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire	Places, Business Environment, Ideas	Join and contribute to WIRE Establish regular meetings with rural businesses, including the Estates and Newbury and District Agricultural Society	WBC, TVBLEP, Berkshire Growth Hub	Economic Development Board	Economic Development Team	Rural network established by Q1 2021				
9	Places- Culture and Leisure	Create new Culture and Leisure Strategies	Maintain a green district Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy	Places	Produce and implement a new Cultural Strategy Produce and implement a new Leisure Strategy	WBC	Place directorate	Public Protection and Culture	Strategies to be delivered by date agreed on Forward Plan				

Number	EDS Chapter	Strategic aim	Linked Council Strategy Priority(ies)	Link to BLIS Theme	Action(s)	Responsible	Governance Group	Resource	KPI	Q1 2020	Q2 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020
1	Infrastructure-Digital	Further improve digital infrastructure, including 5G	Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy	Infrastructure, Ideas, Business Environment	Promote the availability of gigabit capability in every development through the Local Plan WBC to lead on Superfast Berkshire Smart Cities Project Bid for Rural 5G Test Bed Status	WBC, TVBLEP	Economic Development Board Berkshire Digital Infrastructure Group, Planning Advisory Group	Economic Development Team, Planning Policy Team	Delivery of associated projects Completed bid to DCMS New policies in Local Plan review Level of coverage 98.7% by Q3 2020. Further timescales and projects to reach 100% to be established by Berkshire Digital Infrastructure Group				
2	Infrastructure-Housing	Enable the construction of more affordable housing, including affordable rented accommodation for young professionals	Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy	Infrastructure	Delivery and implementation of a new Housing Strategy Sovereign JV	WBC, TVBLEP, Sovereign	Housing Board	Housing Team	Targets contained in housing strategy including average 35% affordable- key worker in narrative				
3	Infrastructure- Rail	Improve rail infrastructure	Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy	Places, Infrastructure	Newbury Station improvements Thatcham, Theale and Hungerford railway stations Market Street Development	WBC	Economic Development Board, Transport Advisory Group	Market Street Development Project Team, Planning Policy Team, Economic Development Team, Transport Policy Team	Railway station projects completed				
4	Infrastructure-Cycling	Improve cycling infrastructure	Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy	Places, Infrastructure	New Local Transport Plan, Environment Strategy	WBC	Environment Board	Planning Policy Team, Economic Development Team, Transport Policy Team	A4 cycle lane plus further strategic network improvements as funding allows				
5	Infrastructure-Green	Increase availability of green infrastructure	Maintain a green district Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy	Infrastructure, Energy Strategy	Environment Team to confirm post-consultation	WBC, TVBLEP	Environment Board	Environment Team	To be advised by Environment Team/Environment Strategy Delivery Plan				
6	Infrastructure-Green	Encourage uptake of greener modes of transport	Maintain a green district Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy	Places, Infrastructure, Energy Strategy	Increase car club fleet Deploy EV Charging Points	WBC	Transport Advisory Group	Transport Policy Team	Measured decrease in congestion Delivery of transport schemes Additional charging points installed WBC fleet 100% ULEV by 2030				

Number	EDS Chapter	Strategic aim	Linked Council Strategy Priority(ies)	Link to BLIS Theme	Action(s)	Responsible organisation	Governance Group	Resource	KPI	Q1 2020	Q2 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020
1	Business Environment- Start ups	Help start up businesses to develop and grow	Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy	Business Environment, Ideas	Develop incubator space Develop a soft landing business support package	TVBLEP, Newbury West Berkshire EDC	Newbury West Berkshire EDC, TVBLEP	Economic Development Team	Business birth rate and business death rate to remain steady Vacancy rate to decline No decline in footfall Business support package in place by Q1 2021 Inward investment strategy delivered by Q2 2021 Governance and Terms of Reference in place by Q3 2020 Business case demonstrating need for incubator space to be developed by Q4 2021				
2	Business Environment- Existing businesses	Offer support to existing businesses	Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire	Business Environment, Ideas	Develop a soft landing business support package	Newbury West Berkshire EDC	Newbury West Berkshire EDC	Economic Development Team	As above plus 30 businesses to be referred to Berkshire Growth Hub each quarter, including 5 to the scale up programme				
3	Business Environment- Business friendly council	Ensure our regulatory functions act as enablers for businesses	Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy	Business Environment	Consider how we can improve our own procurement to promote local businesses Use the planning process to enhance strategic employment sites eg LDOs PPP Undertake regular business rate reviews Meet the professionals engagement events	WBC	Economic Development Board	Economic Development Team, Development & Planning, Public Protection Partnership, Revenues & Benefits	Annual business rates review to take place as part of budget setting Six monthly 'Meet the professional' sessions held Annual 'Meet the buyer' event to be held				
4	Business Environment- Networks	Develop a business engagement and networking events programme	Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships	Business Environment, Ideas	Hold regular, targeted events	Newbury West Berkshire Economic Development Company	Newbury West Berkshire EDC	Economic Development Team	6 networking events hosted annually including 2 sector-based sessions Number of attendees to increase by 10% per quarter Number of companies as members to increase by 15 per quarter High growth in social media reach and content Evidence that geographical spread of businesses involved in NWBto be extended beyond Newbury				

EDS Chapter	Strategic aim	Linked Council Strategy Priority(ies)	Link to BLIS Theme	Action(s)	Responsible organisation	Governance Group	Resource	KPI/Measures	Q1 2020	Q2 2020	Q3 2020	Q4 2020
People- Inclusive Growth	Tackle underemployment	Support everyone to fulfil their potential Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes	People, Priority Skills Statement	TBA	WBC	Economic Development Board	Economic Development Team, Post 16 Team	TBA				
Infrastructure-Roads	Improve road infrastructure	Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy	Places, Infrastructure	TBA	WBC	Environment Board	Planning Policy Team, Economic Development Team, Transport Policy Team	Measure of congestion Smart motorways project delivered Car patronage				
Infrastructure-Green	Encourage uptake of greener modes of transport	Maintain a green district Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy	Places, Infrastructure, Energy Strategy	Public Transport enhancements	WBC	Transport Advisory Group	Transport Policy Team	Public transport measure TBA				
People- Skills	Support the university centre at Newbury College	Support everyone to fulfil their potential Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships	Ideas, People, Priority Skills Statement	Create placements for Social Care students Work with Newbury College on Employment and Skills Plans	WBC	Economic Development Board	Economic Development Team, HR Support	TBA number of students placed in ASC				

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Appendix D: Economic Development Strategy Consultation

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
1	<p>At this point in time there is no certainty that any development at Grazeley will take place. Whilst the Council is committed, in conjunction with neighbouring authorities and other partners, to exploring the opportunities that arise at this site there remain a number of factors influencing its uncertainty. For example, the infrastructure requirements are so great that government forward funding is required for any development to proceed. It is also considered necessary for the site to be properly assessed through the Local Plan Review process, and therefore it is important that the Council does not, at this stage, commit to delivering a site, and any associated infrastructure, when such uncertainties exist.</p>	<p>This comment is noted</p>
2	<p>In opportunities, section, suggest amending text to allow for flexibility in the plan-making process and to ensure certain developments do appear to be a 'done-deal' Strategic developments in sustainable locations e.g. Sandleford Park</p>	<p>Amendment accepted</p>
3	<p>In notable achievements section, Last bullet point; Clarify electrification. Suggest amendment to text; Electrification of the railway</p>	<p>Amendment accepted</p>

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	<p>P10</p> <p>What is an Employment and Skills Plan? How will Employment and Skills Plans be woven into every major development? Is this something for planning policy/Local Plan Review (LPR)? If so, this needs evidence.</p> <p>Suggest amendment to text; ...For this reason, we will always consider the employment and skills needs in tandem with all major development. ...</p>	
4	<p>P11</p> <p>Suggest some amendments to text; Fulfilling this aspiration will require work to ensure that more housing of the right types, locations and tenures is available to residents that meets local needs. This must be balanced with our commitment to delivering well-planned, well-connected communities with thriving urban areas and high quality rural ones. We will need to ensure.....</p>	<p>Amendment accepted</p>
5	<p>P12</p> <p>2nd paragraph – what is meant by community-led evidence-based new culture leisure strategies? This encompasses a lot, and whilst we would welcome culture and leisure strategy for the District, it raises questions as to how these are resourced and implemented.</p>	<p>The Libraries and Culture Manager was consulted on the document and was comfortable with the wording in this part of the document. The new Cultural Strategy is currently in development.</p>

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
6	<p>P13</p> <p>1st paragraph – remove the word perhaps from the second line. Suggest amendment to text; ...nationally protected landscape and is perhaps West Berkshire’s biggest environmental asset.</p> <p>2nd paragraph – the Council has a statutory duty to conserve and enhance the AONB. Suggest amendment to text; will continue to reflect our duty to conserve and enhance this asset</p> <p>3rd paragraph – change the word necessary to appropriate. Suggest amendment to text; ...to diversify where appropriate to increase their income potential. ...</p> <p>4th paragraph – change the word horseracing to racehorse. Suggest amendment to text; ...is the racehorse industry. ...</p> <p>5th paragraph – Suggest amendment to text; allows it to develop at pace as an integral part of the rural landscape.</p>	<p>Amendments accepted</p>
7	<p>P13</p> <p>1st paragraph – no decisions have been made through the Local Plan Review process with regard to spatial areas. Therefore, at the present time there remains four spatial areas across the District as set out in the Core Strategy. It is suggested to amend the ‘Eastern Area’ to read either ‘The eastern part of the West Berkshire..’ or ‘The east of West Berkshire..’</p> <p>The remainder of the paragraph should be reworded to make development at Grazeley sound less definite. Suggest amendment to text;</p>	<p>Amendments accepted</p>

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	<p>The eastern part of West Berkshire has particularly strong economic links to Reading. As such, we will work with our neighbouring authorities and others in exploring potential for significant new housing and infrastructure development at Grazeley, which could deliver a sustainable strategic site with a strong sense of community, as well as great employment opportunities for residents.</p>	
8	<p>P14 Final paragraph - suggest amendment to text; At the time of writing, the following strategic infrastructure requirements have been identified by West Berkshire Council as a result of potential increased development in the district to 2036. no infrastructure requirements can be certain. However, as the Local Plan Review progresses, its accompanying Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) will set out robust requirements for infrastructure provision to support new development to 2036.</p>	<p>Table will be removed so this comment will also be taken out</p>
9	<p>P15 Suggest removal of the table. As set out above, infrastructure requirements are not certain at this stage and this table provides a level of detail which doesn't fit with the rest of this document. At such an early stage of the Local Plan Review process, this commits to infrastructure without the Plan context. No decisions have been made through the Local Plan Review process with regard to spatial areas. Therefore, at the present time there remains four spatial areas across the District as set out in the Core Strategy – the table sets out three areas.</p>	<p>Amendment accepted- table will be removed</p>

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
10	<p>P16 4th paragraph – concern over policy implications for Local Plan Review. Commitment to require the installation of gigabit capability in all new builds in urban areas and all developments over 10 homes across the district. Is this evidenced? Suggest amendment to text; Through the emerging Local Plan Review, we will consider policies to implement the installation of gigabit capability in</p>	<p>Ashford BC and a number of other authorities have sought to apply this policy with some success. The Economic Development Team would be happy to work with the Planning Policy Team to evidence the need for such a policy in West Berkshire Council's Local Plan Review.</p>
11	<p>P14 1st paragraph – affordable housing is an issue across the whole district. Is there evidence to indicate that this is particularly worse in rural areas? Suggest amendment to text; The shortage of genuinely affordable housing is a particular problem, especially in rural areas, which has implications</p>	<p>Amendment accepted</p>
12	<p>P18 1st paragraph – concern over policy implications for Local Plan Review. Commitment to place Employment and Skills Plans into planning applications to facilitate the delivery of incubator space - is this evidenced? Suggest amendment to text; Where appropriate, we will do this by placing Employment and Skills Plans into planning applications to facilitate the delivery of such space. Through the Local Plan Review, we will consider how the planning process may assist in facilitating the delivery of incubator space cross the District.</p>	<p>The need for incubator space is evidenced in the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership's report, published in June 2019. Text amendment accepted</p>

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
13	P18 Title – Suggest amendment to text; Build the West Berkshire brand by promoting West Berkshire as a place that offers the best of both worlds (i.e. high quality natural environment and good access to Reading/London)	Amendment accepted
14	<p>I have to say it is an excellent document and covers all aspects of developing and improving West Berkshire during the next 17 years but why not make it a 20-year plan to 2039?!</p> <p>Having invested over £14m. across West Berkshire during the past 10 years in developing various ventures (www.cobbsfarmshop.co.uk); (www.cobbsfarmshops.co.uk/englefield); (www.alderridge.co.uk); (www.wbbrew.com), I am delighted to have created over 200 new, rural jobs. However, I must say that it has always been a constant (and costly!) battle with your Council's planning department who are consistently slow and generally negative in all their responses to my various applications. Surely an area for major improvement, please?</p>	<p>The year 2036 has been chosen as it aligns with the span of the new Local Plan.</p> <p>The comments with respect to the council's Planning service will be passed to relevant officers.</p>
15	We are very pleased to see that a road bridge is expressly stated as part of the Council's economic development strategy for the Borough. It is clearly an essential element of the improvements to local infrastructure that the Council seek.	Although the table is being removed, this comment will be passed back to the Transport Team.
16	The Strategy refers considerably to the Digital Business	The strategy refers in the main to business as a whole.

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	<p>World and also mentions the Horseracing Industry, however, there is no mention of the business sectors of; Agriculture, Forestry, Hotel / Tourism / Leisure, Culture / Performing Art (Watermill, Corn Exchange, New Greenham Arts, West Berkshire Museum) nor, surprisingly, the potential of future-looking Green Industry. For a 17-year forward plan for Economic Development this omission is very disappointing.</p>	<p>Any reference to individual sectors is on the basis of these sectors' need for specific infrastructure as well as the fact that the TVB LEP's 'Business in Berkshire' report identifies them as major employment sectors for West Berkshire.</p> <p>In terms of performing arts, a new Cultural Strategy is in development which is likely to focus on this.</p> <p>West Berkshire does not currently have a large group of businesses operating in the green industry but the Environment Strategy pledges support to those as these arise. This has been reflected in the revised Economic Development Strategy.</p>
17	<p>Page 12 looks at individual communities. It is disappointing to note the lack of detail within the Strategy and the lack of references to Thatcham, and no mention of working with Thatcham Town Council, Thatcham Chamber of Commerce nor the work done by the Thatcham Vision.</p> <p>Thatcham Town Council requests that the "Thatcham" paragraph be amended to reflect the Town Council's opinion that Thatcham requires a properly resourced future Economic Development Plan that re-energises the retail sector and integrates new and existing business with excellent public facilities in the Town centre and that West Berkshire Council will work with Thatcham Town Council to agree priorities. Referring to the "Newbury" paragraph, Thatcham too wishes to benefit from "attractive projects of which the district can be proud"!</p>	<p>This is a strategy, not an implementation plan. As more projects are identified and attract funding, this will be reflected in the regular reviews of the strategy.</p> <p>There are not currently plans to resource the projects highlighted in the Thatcham Vision.</p> <p>Comments on the business park have been referred to colleagues in Transport and Countryside.</p>

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	<p>Thatcham Town Council also requests that the existing Business Parks at Colthrop and Pipers Way be managed and supported sustainably so that the weight of activity moves from the current low-tech, low paid, distributive trades that cause incessant HGV traffic through the Town, towards high-tech and future facing businesses not only in the Digital Industrial Field but also in the Green Sector.</p>	
18	<p>Page 13 states that “we hope to assist with delivery of well-planned, well-housed and cohesive communities...”. Thatcham Town Council requests that this statement be amended to “we intend to assist with delivery of...”.</p>	<p>Amendment accepted</p>
19	<p>Thatcham Town Council requests the following amendments to the table on page 15:</p> <p>Education: Remove “new primary school provision” and replace with “re-provision Kennet School as a purpose designed, purpose built 1,750 pupil school with all appropriate technical and sporting facilities on site”. Thatcham does not require a new primary school; it does however require improved secondary provision.</p> <p>Highways - Newbury: amend to “Potential bypass for A339 <u>provided that it does not negatively impact Thatcham.</u>”</p> <p>Highways - Thatcham: Delete 1st paragraph and replace with “Create a Thatcham - Newbury Leisure Cycle Path.” Amend 2nd paragraph to “Bridge over the railway for the</p>	<p>These recommendations were identified in conjunction with officers from across West Berkshire Council, including in Education and Transport, and are evidence-based.</p> <p>The table will be removed after consultation with the Planning Policy Team.</p>

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	benefit of local residential traffic.”	
20	Currently a very generic document with little detail on targets and timescales and a disappointing lack of reference to working with Thatcham Town Council. There is no reference to the recent declaration of a Climate Emergency and how the Strategy can support this. The SWOT report is the second item, perhaps this may be better as an appendix document.	<p>This is a strategy, not an implementation plan. An implementation plan, which will include targets and specific projects, is in development.</p> <p>The SWOT has been moved to the end of the document as suggested.</p>
21	The Strategy is for 2019 – 2036, a period of 17 years, with proposed reviews four yearly. Thus, the final review will be 12 months before the period ends. Suggest that a 12-, 15-, 16- or 20-year period with either 3 or 4 yearly reviews would be more appropriate. However, Thatcham Town Council appreciates that 2036 aligns with the Local Development Plan.	As you say, it aligns with the new Local Plan so there are no plans to amend this at this time.
22	The document should refer to organisations that the Economic Development Team may have been in touch with to provide evidence that they will then have used to fashion the EDP. Either they consulted with them BEFORE producing the document so that it was developed in conjunction with the local business community or they have now produced this document without that information gathering and the Council is presenting it as its plan for comments – not the best way around, I would suggest. So can we get a list of the companies/organisations that they consulted with BEFORE this draft was developed and thus referred to in the document?	List provided

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
23	In the opportunities – of the SWOT analysis - that starts the document, there is no reference to enhanced Broadband or 5G roll out – how can we make much of this in the main document without showcasing it in the SWOT analysis.	Added to SWOT
24	The document is riddled with the word “hope” in our summary objectives – Page 13, 16, 19, - this is very weak – hope is not a strategy – the document needs to be so much more positive than simply hoping we can make progress.	The language here was developed with the Economic Development Board and deliberately retains a cautious approach.
25	There is a lack of targets – big ambitions that can be measured and promoted as KPIs that everybody signs up to. I might accept that the document is a high level plan BUT it should have a number of ambitions/goals that it can be measured against - otherwise it risks being simply a bland, tick box exercise rather than an ambitious roadmap for the development of the West Berkshire economy. What would be our 5G ambition in the plan period – could we not “stick our neck out to make progress that could be measured?	This is a strategy, not an implementation plan. An implementation plan, which will include targets and specific projects, is in development.
26	I think there are two ways of going with this – 1) where you keep it so high level that it is largely meaningless or 2) where you are prepared to commit to ambitious targets that the Council can work to achieve with local stakeholders – business community, of course, and several other organisations that have a commitment to improving the economy of West Berkshire.	This is a strategy, not an implementation plan. An implementation plan, which will include targets and specific projects, is in development.

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
27	<p>The main concern is that there is no reference to environmental sustainability in the strategy. When attending Newbury Town Council's Planning Committee, the Economic Development Team explained that a new Energy Strategy is being developed which will encompass environmental sustainability, and the Economic Development Strategy will be amended to mention it. Town Councillors however believe it is insufficient to merely refer to another strategy, as following the declaration of a climate emergency, this matter should be central to the strategy.</p>	<p>The strategy was developed before the declaration of the climate emergency.</p> <p>Since this declaration, the council is doing a significant amount of work in this area, which will go out to public consultation after October's Climate Conference.</p> <p>This strategy and the new Environment Strategy will be implemented alongside each other at the same Executive meeting.</p>
28	<p>The Economic Development Team showed the Planning and Highways Committee a slide detailing the five key points from the 2036 Vision document, which again do not include sustainability, and Town Councillors asked that an additional key point be added to reflect it. This should be done when the Health and Wellbeing Board review the document at their annual conference.</p>	<p>This comment has been passed to the Health and Wellbeing Board who oversee the West Berkshire 2036 Vision.</p>
29	<p>Councillors are surprised that the closure of the Newbury Town Football Club is not mentioned in the Strategy, and when attending Newbury Town Council's Planning Committee, the Economic Development Team explained that it falls within the remit of the Cultural Strategy. Town Councillors also asked that they have representation on the West Berkshire Cultural Forum, which is being consulted on the Cultural Strategy, to be published by December 2019.</p>	<p>New Cultural and Leisure Strategies are currently in development. Issues surrounding Newbury Town Football Club will be considered as part of this work.</p>
30	<p>Councillors were concerned to see reference to a by-pass</p>	<p>The infrastructure table will be removed and its contents</p>

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	for the A339 and a link road for the Robin Hood Roundabout in the strategy, but no further information on this. Both items could have many implications for the town. When attending Newbury Town Council's Planning Committee, the Economic Development Team confirmed that the responses to this consultation will inform the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.	revisited in due course
31	A new Housing Policy is also being developed, and Town Councillors asked that affordable housing specifically for the local workforce be considered, to avoid the affordable housing to be provided being used by those commuting to other towns. It was also felt that we have a housing emergency and the document did not reflect the urgency of this. The unaffordability of housing affects all generations of working or retired age, and much more social housing is needed to provide security and affordability for many local people, including key workers.	The Economic Development Strategy makes reference to this issue but isn't in a position to comment as to what form new affordable housing developments will take given the stage we are at with the new Local Plan.
32	Newbury Town Council There is also no mention in the Strategy of the opportunity arising from the development of the Sterling Cables site. This could enable routes for sustainable travel to and from the employment area of Hambridge Road and Hambridge Lane, for example cycle lanes.	The infrastructure table is being removed but the opportunities presented by Sterling Cables will be added to the SWOT analysis.
33	Finally, in reference to Digital Connectivity, could the minimum development size be reduced from 10 or more homes to 3 or 5 or more?	This comment will be passed to the Planning Policy Team.
34	The enhanced leisure offering must include a football ground of the same standard as the stadium at Faraday Road comprising large 11v11 pitch/goals, floodlights,	New Cultural and Leisure Strategies are currently in development. Issues surrounding Newbury Town Football Club will be considered as part of this work.

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	<p>pitch/perimeter fencing, changing rooms, spectator stand, clubhouse, storage and turnstiles to allow the growing youth/adult population to play high level league and cup matches as they have always done previously until 2018. The obvious choice is to develop the current ground, or another one similarly located, as it's unlikely Northcroft could provide this. Redeveloping the London Road Estate purely for visual appearance is not a good enough reason and the town's vibrancy will not be enhanced by having no first class, health/well-being, focal point for the national game.</p>	
35	<p>Page 12 of the draft strategy addresses the unique needs of the town centres. For Newbury, it is stated that WBC will work with Newbury Town Council. It is disappointing that there is no corresponding statement for WBC working with Thatcham Town Council. I hope that the regeneration of Thatcham will also involve "attractive projects of which the district can be proud", albeit perhaps on a smaller scale than Newbury. The Draft Strategy claims to address the period up to 2036. In that timeframe, the 'landscape' of retail will change substantially; the increase in online shopping and reduction in the use of cars is likely to increase the relative importance of shops within each centre of population, such as Thatcham.</p>	<p>This is a strategy, not an implementation plan. As more projects are identified and attract funding, this will be reflected in the regular reviews of the strategy.</p> <p>There are not currently plans to resource the projects highlighted in the Thatcham Vision. A reference to Thatcham Town Council will be added.</p>
36	<p>This response is specifically about 5G, and the sentence "We will bid to become a rural 5G testbed by the end of 2019 and will continue to submit bids to pilot emerging technologies." This sentence implies that participating in a testbed will improve 5G quality of service generally across West Berkshire. This is not inherently the case, because</p>	<p>West Berkshire Council appreciates these comments. This section will be reworded to reflect the constraints of government funding for 5G,</p>

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	<p>the focus of the DCMS Rural Connected Communities Programme (RCC) will be applications that benefit residents and businesses in rural areas. Indeed, infrastructure deployed for the testbed might be restricted to participants in the trial, as a result of UK Wireless Telegraphy legislation. The details of RCC have not yet been announced, so it is not certain that West Berkshire will meet the criteria, or will meet them well enough for a successful bid. It is unlikely that WBC would lead a bid itself (due to the structure of project funding) - this would be either TV LEP or a local commercial organisation. DCMS will announce other 5G T&T competitions, which may be more suitable for West Berkshire, including the current competition for manufacturing and logistics. For these reasons, I suggest a more general statement, such as: "We will encourage the deployment of 5G across the whole of West Berkshire (not just the urban parts). We will seek to ensure that the Government's 5G Testbeds and Trials programme includes West Berkshire, and will participate in bids to achieve this".</p>	
37	<p>I believe that in order to attract business here we need West Berkshire to be a place where people want and can afford to live. Graduate-jobs.com comments that although an average high flier will start on a £30,000 a year package a more typical graduate could start on £19 to £22,000. A high flier graduate on this evidence would be able to afford £150,000 mortgage and is unlikely to have much of a deposit and for an 80% loan will need £37,500 deposit saved up and be able to afford £187,500 as a result. On Rightmove 24.07.19 there are 372 properties</p>	<p>The Economic Development Strategy makes reference to this issue but isn't in a position to comment as to what form new affordable housing developments will take given the stage we are at with the new Local Plan.</p>

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	<p>for sale in RG14 postcode of which 47 are below £190,000, of those 10 are shared equity and 10 are 2 bed flats. 27 the vast majority are 1 bed flats. there are no houses available in this price category in RG14. We are hearing that whilst a graduate may be attracted to work for firms here it is difficult to retain them when there is limited prospect of buying their own property. The other issue is that some firms do not want full graduates but want good 18 year olds who can study for improved qualifications locally. Our priority therefore would be houses that are affordable and training that is targeted towards a need along with Business accommodation that is protected and well located. The business accommodation locally is not keeping up with need, or perceived future demand A central business district forming a hub of good employers with ready access to transport networks including rail and offering flexible work environments would be ideal, but the town centre is constrained and much employment space is ageing and being surrendered to high density residential uses</p>	
38	<p>This section mentions the housing needs issue but not under a green headed action point. Of the 372 properties for sale on Rightmove in RG14 today 118 are flats a total of 31%. We believe the national average from Land Registry to be around 18% of sales in the UK pa as flats, we appear to be well above that in Rg14 part of West Berkshire. The action points for Newbury suggest that Market Street and Faraday will add to Vibrancy, yet the principle developments are for consented flats, without much thought apparently being given to the displacement</p>	<p>The Economic Development Strategy makes reference to this issue but isn't in a position to comment as to what form new affordable housing developments will take given the stage we are at with the new Local Plan.</p>

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	of businesses homes charities and special needs groups and simple needs such as parking of vehicles, we do not share the view that as designed these areas are adding to "Vibrancy"	
39	Future Proofing is a very ambitious phrase, and perhaps already overtaken by the adoption of Climate Emergency status. However if future proofing is required phrases in the strategy like Monitor provision of schooling and considering options for Highways need to be much bolder more specific and with deliverable outcomes in our view	Comments passed to colleagues in Education and Transport for comment
40	"Housing etc" "A West Berkshire that welcomes business,enterprise and industry into a productive, growing and dynamic local economy". "A West Berkshire where the health of residents of all ages and backgrounds is good" A strong element in achieving these goals must be to consider the environmental impact in ALL planning. To reduce CO2 emissions, look at sustainability in every decision. These priorities are great but can't be achieved at any cost. You have declared a Climate Emergency. The word 'Emergency' is very strong and for a good reason. Planning must prioritise this so that in future years you don't look back in regret and wish you had made different decisions which you may have to try to reverse.New businesses which are sustainable, low/zero CO2 should be encouraged. Audited? New house building, businesses, transport for their workers etc must all be called to be show ow they will conform to what the 'Emergency' requires. For housing - what practical actions will you require of new house builders and for	The strategy was developed before the declaration of the climate emergency. Since this declaration, the council is doing a significant amount of work in this area, which will go out to public consultation after October's Climate Conference.

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	Social Housing e.g. Solar and Ground Source Heating. TVLEP - Are they required to consider the Climate Emergency?	
41	Eastern Area and Grazeley, Theale - new housing. Environmental considerations should be high priority from the start. You mention sense of community and employment for residents but there is no mention of environmental considerations	<p>The strategy was developed before the declaration of the climate emergency.</p> <p>Since this declaration, the council is doing a significant amount of work in this area, which will go out to public consultation after October's Climate Conference.</p>
42	Page 14 - "physical, environmental and social". I believe healthy living, mental health, community etc can be impacted for the better by placing a high priority on environmental/green issues. Consider BBONT Pledge For Nature.	<p>The Public Health team were consulted on and did have input into the development of this strategy but will be consulted as to whether there is room to expand on the importance of this agenda.</p>
43	Rebates for start-up and small businesses that prove sustainability etc. You mention "Build the West Berkshire Brand by promoting West Berkshire as a place that offers the best of both worlds (i.e. protected natural environment and good access). That sounds good but how will that be achieved i.e. the BEST of BOTH worlds? I understand the importance of trees but a few trees planted outside a new office may look nice but it must go deeper.	<p>The strategy was developed before the declaration of the climate emergency.</p> <p>Since this declaration, the council is doing a significant amount of work in this area, which will go out to public consultation after October's Climate Conference.</p>
44	Lets aim to learn from other areas who are leading in addressing Climate Change. Many, many people want this. There is great support. West Berkshire can also be a shining example. "Can Do" not "Might Have To".	<p>The strategy was developed before the declaration of the climate emergency.</p> <p>Since this declaration, the council is doing a significant amount of work in this area, which will go out to public consultation after October's Climate Conference.</p>

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
45	Good Jobs etc.It is not easy to comment as they are obviously good in principle but there also needs to be a strong consideration of work for those at 'the bottom end of the scale'. As you say, "Greater earning power for ALL"	The council is working towards this. The Skills and Enterprise Partnership, the West Berkshire 2036 Vision and policies such as the Greenham Business Park Local Development Order will be integral to this.
46	Need more provision for social housing. 'Affordable' housing is not really affordable for those at the bottom end of the ladder who need most hope. Private rental offers no security. For people to have a real sense of community and take pride/interest in their area, they need security in housing, education, employment. If you cannot guarantee where you will be living next year as private landlord may increase rent to unaffordable levels or decide to sell up you cannot have confidence that you will still be able to send your children to them same school, insecurity in housing leads to people feeling insecure in all other areas, which impacts local economy as they will not spend money in local shops or amenities. Don't care about their area as it's not their's and never will be. People need to feel invested. More could be done for public transport to surrounding areas, if you want people to be greener, stop relying on cars and use public transport the transport has to be there for them to use before they will make the change. Yes, it would make a large loss at first but it has to seen as easier and more cost effective than using a car for people to consider making the change.	The Economic Development Strategy makes reference to this issue but isn't in a position to comment as to what form new affordable housing developments will take given the stage we are at with the new Local Plan.
47	"Attract a university presence to West Berkshire" - this is great but needs to be more ambitious than current plans. Providing a space for limited HE provision for local learners is a good plus for the local economy but Newbury would make an excellent location for a university campus	The University Centre is being developed by Newbury College. West Berkshire Council is supportive of this initiative as the need for such a facility, as well as the courses it will be offering, are demonstrated by the TVBLEP's Priority Skills Statement.

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	<p>which seeks to attract students from across the country and internationally with the accompanying student accommodation. Ideally a University of Newbury but possibly Newbury Campus of Reading, Bucks New Uni etc. or even reaching out to major international players like Harvard or Yale about opening a UK campus in the town. The economic benefit of bringing thousands of students into the town would obviously benefit town businesses on Northbrook Street and beyond but could also contribute (with the right housing policies) to growing the permanent graduate population in the town to help with the ageing population demographic balance problem identified in the Draft Strategy. Thought should given to whether there are town centre locations (the Royal Mail facility could be moved elsewhere, the old phone exchange building and empty Post Office are examples) where student accommodation and learning space could be developed in the town centre. "We will also conduct a review into nursery provision" - this is great to see but must not preclude the council taking a proactive approach of opening its own Maintained Nursery (in addition to Victoria Park) if the review concludes this is what is needed. "Link rural and urban areas" - conversations should be started with Network Rail and GWR about the feasibility of a shuttle rail service running simply Hungerford-Kintbury-Newbury-Newbury Racecourse-Thatcham, backwards and forwards, to dramatically increase frequency of services and also encourage more commuters/shoppers to ditch their cars. The Department for Transport should be contacted as it could be an opportunity for a cutting edge driverless light rail (Tram</p>	

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	train) solution.	
48	We should also speak with DCMS about opening a National Children's Library here in Newbury which would build on the literary history of the place (Paddington, Watership Down) and attract vital tourism to the area as well as being a wonderful facility for local people.	Comments passed to Libraries and Culture Manager for consideration as part of the development of the Cultural Strategy
49	We need to be encouraging modal shift. Far too much in here about car use including bypasses. I've previously mentioned that we should look at increasing frequency of services between Hungerford-Kintbury-Newbury-Newbury Racecourse-Thatcham. We should seriously review whether small light rail (see http://www.parrypeoplemovers.com/) could be utilised in connecting Newbury railway station with a light rail link up to the retail park and onto Greenham (potentially then down to connect to Newbury racecourse) and also a link into the town centre, down Northbrook Street (which would need to become no longer open for car use) potentially then linking, via London Road (and incorporating both a 'Victoria Park stop' and a 'Health Centre stop'), then back to Newbury racecourse to create a loop (The Newbury Circle Line?). It could, somehow, perhaps link to Vodafone HQ too and thus garner funding from them which is currently spent on operating a fleet of buses. This kind of service, with frequency and reliability provided by the small light rail model, would be sure to dramatically increase the shift from car use to public transport. The Department for Transport are currently consulting on expanding light rail services across the UK and funding should be explored. Finally we need to consider rail links to nearby conurbations. It's ridiculous	<p>The infrastructure table will be removed and its contents revisited in due course.</p> <p>These comments have been passed to the Transport Policy Team who will be in a position to comment as to whether any material changes might be made to reflect this response.</p>

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	<p>that commuters from Newbury-Didcot; Newbury-Swindon; Newbury-Basingstoke must go via Reading for a train service or, as is the case for most, opt to drive thus causing the congestion in Newbury and the demand for bypasses etc. There needs to be a serious consultation done on whether, at the very least, the Southampton-Winchester-Newbury-Didcot line can be rebuilt anew, perhaps alongside the A34 for the majority of its stretch. This has the obvious commuter benefit but also freight coming off the A34 onto rail. This service should be pitched as the Western-most wing of the East-West Rail service the Government are developing which will link Norwich with Oxford via Cambridge, Milton Keynes and Bicester Village. This could allow direct services between Newbury and Oxford which would have major modal shift potential, getting commuters out of their cars and onto the railway. A new Southampton-Winchester-Newbury-Didcot line could also incorporate a new stop at Oxford Harwell Innovation campus. Consultation with DfT, Network Rail and others should be held on the feasibility of new rail links from Newbury to Basingstoke - via Tadley too. The economics probably don't stack up for a Newbury to Swindon rail link to be honest but journey times might be reduced if services could run direct from Newbury via Didcot on the aforementioned rebuilt line. There are currently some direct services from Newbury to Slough. As the Heathrow spur is opened representations should be made from the Council to GWR to ensure there are at least some morning and evening direct services from Newbury to Heathrow. These would be hugely beneficial to holidaymakers in the District but also increase the</p>	

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	<p>business reputation of the town. Similarly discussions should be facilitated by the council between South West Railways and GWR (and the Department for Transport) about running a cross-franchise set of services that run on the existing Newbury-Reading line and existing Reading-Waterloo line to allow some Newbury-Bracknell direct services that would foster greater links between the two tech towns, reduce journey times from current 1hr 12mins/1 hr 20mins to just 45 minutes and also allow direct links from Newbury to the business park at Winnersh Triangle and Reading university via Earley. GWR already run services from Wokingham (on the Reading-Bracknell line) to Gatwick. It must be possible to instigate Newbury-Reading-Wokingham-Guildford-Gatwick direct services even if just one in the morning and one in the evening. Being able to say Newbury has direct rail links to BOTH Heathrow and Gatwick would be massive. Finally on rail, the Council should take advantage of the delays to Crossrail to lobby DfT and the GLA to extend Crossrail to Newbury. Putting Newbury on the tube map would have obvious huge benefit to the area economically and potentially reduce consumer travel costs by introducing competition with GWR on the line.</p>	
50	<p>Just a plea to be ambitious. I appreciate I've set out bold calls for action on rail, light rail and a proper university of which not all can be achieved but there's huge potential in Newbury to bring young people and new businesses to the town and also for us to lead on modal shift to live up to the councils' declaration of a climate emergency.</p>	<p>This comment is noted</p>
51	<p>Good jobs - Businesses are leaving the area non stop. Shops who have been here decades are closing and even</p>	<p>This comment is noted</p>

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	<p>major chains such as star bucks are leaving. Prosperous communities - Crime is up, Earnings are down, People are not happy and you can see that by spending 5 minutes on any Newbury based social media account. The place looks like a tip - Graffiti and vandalism are rife again. the whole town is gridlocked due to un needed roadworks that serve no purpose. Half the high street is empty shops and homelessness is rife with people sleeping in doorway Infrastructure - Council cuts to all social aspect have ruined the towns infrastructure, Public transport is a joke Business - I run 4 businesses and am currently well into planning to leave this county as can no longer buy supplies needed nor park anywhere. roads are a joke</p>	
52	<p>You can not have good jobs when business are leaving for towns that are run by councils who actually try to improve the town rather than run vanity projects to try and make themselves look good on paper. This town is a ghost town now and once vodafone leaves it will be empty</p>	<p>This comment is noted</p>
53	<p>people feel abandoned. Public services are cut, public transport is non existent and no one can afford to live here</p>	<p>This comment is noted</p>
54	<p>Just look at how many businesses have left over the past 5 years - If the Councillors got off their backsides and walked around the town once a week they might of noticed the lights are OFF and no body's home</p>	<p>This comment is noted</p>
55	<p>Core basics before grandiose schemes designed to make the Councillors have something to sing about are what's needed WBC waste so much money - For example how much did this fancy booklet cost the tax payer? Newbury town council wastes hundreds of thousands of</p>	<p>This comment is noted.</p>

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	pounds a year and serves no purpose other than vanity If you have a town where a portion of its residents are hungry or homeless then you have a problem that needs fixing BEFORE anything else!	
56	Whilst I agree with the general direction, premature investment in long term strategies at this point, could wasteful. In 2021 the next census and (hopefully) greater post Brexit reality, will provide far greater certainty of planning and policy direction.	This comment is noted
57	I would once again caution, that the next census and (hopefully) greater post Brexit reality in 2021, will provide far greater certainty of planning and policy direction. For all local authorities. On transport, I would caution on the reality of electric vehicles to overcome pollution and congestion. The reality is that the average age of vehicles on the road today is 9.1 years old, and that austerity and the cost and performance (mainly range) will probably mean only higher end vehicles see growth. How long will it be until sufficient numbers of second-hand vehicles are available, that do not require new batteries costing thousands of pounds to replace, to enable those with less funds to switch. Imaging just 0.1% of vehicles running out of power on the M25 As is widely known, electric cars do not solve congestion, or particulate pollution and It is no good being open for business if people find it a frustrating area to getting in and out. It is never wise to base future plans around technology and infrastructure that is not here, or affordable to the whole demographic. On people, the next census will provide confirmation of whether Newbury has reversed the trend of its younger demographic not returning after post education. My own	<p>These comments have been passed to the Transport Policy Team who will be in a position to comment as to whether any material changes might be made to reflect this response.</p> <p>The Economic Development Strategy makes reference to the issue of housing but isn't in a position to comment as to what form new affordable housing developments will take given the stage we are at with the new Local Plan.</p>

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	<p>children do not want to return to West Berkshire as they say there is no community spirit, and with so many employers now moving to remote working, where you live is becoming less important, and will probably continue to be the case. There are many other areas with lower house prices, and Newbury is in danger of being priced out the market. This will not be solved by more housing as it is the land value that keeps costs high. How will younger people afford to repay degree funding, save for housing, pay a mortgage and invest in a pension that can continue to pay rental once retired if they are not home owner at retirement. These are national issues but local problems. Have West Berks looked at the impact of artificial intelligence on the future job market trends?</p>	
58	<p>As housing costs are such an issue, it would be useful to keep the young people who would wish to stay in the area because they have family already here. Housing is one priority but I support the Arts and Culture promotion as Newbury has a reputation as being 'dull' for young people, as you say.</p>	<p>The Economic Development Strategy makes reference to this issue but isn't in a position to comment as to what form new affordable housing developments will take given the stage we are at with the new Local Plan.</p>
59	<p>Reliable broadband is key for us Agree 20 somethings do leave the area. In one way it's healthy for them to leave home but it would be good if our 20 somethings were replaced by new ones coming into the area. Transport also a big issue for young people to access rural workplaces if they don't drive.</p>	<p>This comment is noted</p>
60	<p>Not comfortable with AWE's poor safety record.</p>	<p>This comment is noted</p>
61	<p>Good jobs and greater earning power. I fail to see how a council can have a direct input in to this Creating prosperous communities depends primarily on the people</p>	<p>This comment is noted</p>

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	in that community to achieve this, not the council Future proofing the infrastructure. Yes, this is something the council can do. A better place to start a business. There is only a limited amount a council can do, easing of taxes etc. Business training, finding customers, suppliers, is all down to the entrepreneur	
62	Helping young people has to be a priority. In Hungerford, we are concerned about the John O'Gaunt School as it is a vital place of learning for the poorer folk in our rural community. One thing I would add is better careers advice. So many young people leave school unsure as to what they should do next, and can spend several years swapping from one job to another before they find a direction that suits them. If a person can start on a career that suits their talent, they are more likely to be successful, they will have a happier life, and be a net contributor to the community.	This comment is noted
63	The spirit of what is written in the infrastructure section is undoubtedly right, but is it achievable. More houses means more land is needed, which reduces the open spaces in the towns, and steals land from our countryside. It causes more cars on the roads, and more pressure on our public services. I feel there is no ideal answer for the problems that this section is trying to address.	The Economic Development Strategy makes reference to this issue but isn't in a position to comment as to what form new affordable housing developments will take given the stage we are at with the new Local Plan.
64	West Berkshire is an ideal location for international businesses because of its closeness to Heathrow Airport, and geographically it holds a central position for access to all the major cities in the South. Glad to see an emphasis on Engineering. I understand there is a shortage of machinists in this sector.	This comment is noted
65	With regard to improvements to railway stations. We are	This comment is noted and the Economic Development

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	currently battling with Network Rail to improve Hungerford Station. I think there needs to be a re-shift in Network Rail's priorities to make this happen in a more seamless way.	and Transport Policy Teams will work with Hungerford Town Council to put together bids for funding for improvement at Hungerford Station.
66	Not enough focus on the Eastern area unless the ridiculously large development at Grazeley happens There needs to be some planned investment without Grazeley are there is no guarantee this will happen and it will take years to get started.	This comment has been passed to the Planning Policy Team
67	We have been fortunate in attracting a number of successful high-tec businesses. This should be developed. But we must also increase spending on care for elderly.	This comment is noted
68	Apprenticeships are a great way to up skill the population and encourage young people to work in the area. Attracting a University to West Berkshire doesn't seem necessary, Reading is easily commutable from most of the county for students who want to stay at home, students who want to travel would prefer to be in a city or large town, this may benefit Newbury but is unlikely to help the rest of the county or its young people.	This comment is noted
69	With respect to AWE it's notable that there are certain nuclear industry hubs specifically in Warrington to support BNFL and Bristol to support EDF and Magnox which attract businesses and employees. These hubs go on to support other clients. If West Berkshire were to attract one of these hubs it would encourage people to live and work in the area rather than having so many people commuting in from other parts of the country on a weekly basis.	This comment is noted
70	Affordable housing is needed- e.g. at £100k or less otherwise younger people will move out the area. You	The Economic Development Strategy makes reference to this issue but isn't in a position to comment as to what

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	have noted it as a target area but the referencing is very vague and does not actually say what you intend to do.	form new affordable housing developments will take given the stage we are at with the new Local Plan.
71	This survey purposely misleads people so it can be said you have consulted the people of west berkshire. Why name each heading policy 1/2/3/4? Say what it actually is! Yes i have read the manifesto but i have not memorised which point is which. By doing this you are less likely to have objections as the audience is confused. I hope that was not the intention. I have 3 degrees and i was still confused. This makes the survey less accessible to all people. Please rectify.	This comment has been passed to the Consultation Team
72	High added value essential for greater prosperity. This means best education, particularly in science and engineering - not necessarily university-level. Strong apprenticeship programme essential and fundamental: not everyone is university material, but with the right training they probably have more to offer than undistinguished graduates.	This comment is noted
73	good sports facilities. Encourage exercise and healthy living to reduce obesity, diabetes, pressures on NHS. Doctors to provide positive encouragement to cut out junk food.	The Public Health team were consulted on and did have input into the development of this strategy but will be consulted as to whether there is room to expand on the importance of this agenda.
74	Ensure housing development is in the right places: avoid creating traffic chaos by wrong siting eg south of Hungerford, when most employment requires access to/via M4	The Economic Development Strategy makes reference to this issue but isn't in a position to comment as to what form new affordable housing developments will take given the stage we are at with the new Local Plan.
75	5G Digital connectivity is all very well, but first of all ensure everyone has access to a basic level of Internet and mobile telephone: not the case in many rural	This comment will be passed back to the Infrastructure Team for comment

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	locations today	
76	I live in the Tilehurst area of West Berkshire and have always considered this area to be neglected by the Council. The Strategy really makes no mention of how Tilehurst West Berkshire will be seen as part of the bigger picture. There are many highly skilled and experienced entrepreneurs here who ask 'what is in it for us?' Newbury seems a long way away.	This comment has been passed to the Local Plan Team
77	Although the vision claims to put pedestrians and cyclists at the heart of planning the draft forgets to even pay lip service to this strategy. Companies looking for the wellbeing of staff will want a better sustainable infrastructure.	These comments have been passed to the Transport Policy Team who will be in a position to comment as to whether any material changes might be made to reflect this response.
78	no mention of a climate emergency - no mention of reducing cars - no mention of improving walking and cycling	This document was written before the declaration of the climate emergency and changes will be made to reflect this. It is also worth noting that an Environment Strategy is being developed, which will work alongside this strategy to help maintain West Berkshire's position as a thriving district.
79	My priorities would be: Increased policing and reduction of crime. War on the current drug epidemic and anti social behaviour. Reduction of the amount of homeless on the streets - your strategy will do nothing to improve this despite your rhetoric. Support for world class leisure facilities such as the Corn Exchange and our libraries. Again, you mention this but don't have a credible track record in these areas.	This comment is noted
80	Why is the focus on prosperity rather than on the current anti social state of our communities. There is rapidly	This comment is noted

Number	Representation	Action / Comments
	developing an under- class of people in the area who see thieving and drug taking as acceptable behaviour. The police seem unable to do anything about this.	
81	The current infrastructure is in a woeful state. I would start with putting that right first. Look at the fiasco with put football club. The council have totally mismanaged that. What happened with Chenz? The only sit down Chinese restaurant that used to exist in the town. The Kennett Centre, and the Bartholomew Street area is becoming a ghost area. Why are you focusing on making things conducive for business when there are so many other things wrong with the town?	This comment is noted
82	Lack of house building in the last 10 years will prevent future growth, without concerted effort to increase housing in the villages, many of which are in desperate need of revitalisation. Too much focus has been on large developments adjacent to towns.	This comment is noted
83	Good and important that people who have Learning Disabilities are considered. Many older people with strong skills have retired to the area	This comment is noted
84	Reliable broadband is important for small developing businesses in particular for the villages	This comment is noted