

Kirklees Business Deal

Kirklees, where business grows naturally



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Welcome

“This document summarises how Kirklees Council and business can work together to achieve our shared priorities – successful businesses and a strong economy.

For business that translates into long term competitiveness and profitability. For the Council and local people, success will also mean enhanced employment opportunities, incomes, quality of life and environmental improvements.

While others have tried to artificially stimulate new sectors and emerging industries with mixed results, this area has resolutely stuck to what it knows best, and innovated. This has been our strength; and it has been our capacity to develop and innovate which has made the Kirklees economy resilient. So, where fortunes were once made from weaving cloth, today’s wealth is more likely to come from applying and developing traditional weaving techniques to produce jet engine parts. And by continuing to make products, Kirklees businesses have made wealth, not only for themselves, but the skilled people who work for them, and the increasing network of smaller businesses which have evolved to supply them.

This Council understands what Kirklees businesses want and need to expand, grow and be profitable here.

I understand that it is our role to make this happen.

From this Business Deal, I trust you will understand our commitment to transforming these words into action.”



Mehboob Khan

Cllr Mehboob Khan
Leader of Kirklees Council



John Cridland
CBE Director
General CBI

“Industrious and innovative medium-sized businesses have the potential to be the ‘Future Champions’ of the local and national economy, delivering economic growth and employment. With its long history of high-quality manufacturing and a creative and talented workforce underpinning the wider city-region economies of Leeds, Sheffield and Manchester, Kirklees and its medium-sized businesses are well placed to drive private-sector growth and prosperity for all.

We welcome the proactive approach that Kirklees Council and its partners are taking through the Business Deal to support growth and resilience in the local economy.”

For business enquiries, please contact:

The Business Team Regeneration & Investment Service

Kirklees Council **T** 01484 221000
Civic Centre 3 **E** business@kirklees.gov.uk
Market Street **W** kirklees.gov.uk/business
Huddersfield **Follow us on twitter @kirkleesbiz**
HD1 2EY

Our Vision...

is for Kirklees to be recognised as the best place to do business in the north of England. We believe that our combination of assets and position already fit this bill.



We can do more to enhance performance further, communicate our advantages better, and make Kirklees a place **where business grows naturally**.

We believe Kirklees is the best place to do business in the north of England.

Our assets include world leading engineering businesses, a talented workforce, a good supply of business premises and superb transport connections. Nowhere else is so well positioned to access the considerable markets across Yorkshire and the North West and to combine this with good connectivity to wider UK and export markets. Our location between Leeds, Manchester and Sheffield means that within one hour we have:

- a population of over 8 million people and a workforce of more than 3 million
- an economy with around 250,000 businesses and worth around £150 billion
- fast road and rail links to major cities and markets and good access to ports and airports
- 12 universities with a total student population approaching 300,000

That adds up to a huge market and probably the best combination of an attractive environment, affordable quality of life and leisure opportunities anywhere in the north.

We are committed to making the most of our advantages, enhancing our offer further, and communicating it well.

Kirklees is not only a good base to access opportunities from, it is a great place to be. We combine the thriving university town of Huddersfield with stunning Pennine countryside. Diverse towns and communities range from Dewsbury at the edge of Leeds to Holmfirth at the edge of the Peak District. We have excellent schools and colleges and a university that genuinely works for business. We combine attractive neighbourhoods and affordable homes. We stage international sporting events and festivals and have the business assets and amenities you would expect of one of the UK's top 15 centres of population. Look up placetomakeit.co.uk to find out more.

Economically, Kirklees has a major concentration of innovative engineering and manufacturing companies, a reputation for excellence in textiles, and leading edge businesses in the creative and digital sector. Those sectors point to the character of our district too – an emphasis on practicality, reliability and doing things well is coupled with creativity, enterprise and the determination to punch above our weight.

Growing business naturally

We will take full advantage of our locational strengths, industrial prowess and character in our offer to business.

That includes building a culture of openness, trust and enterprise into our work, including an 'enabling' approach to regulation through which we listen to and help businesses wherever we can. We will promise only what we can deliver and deliver it well. Firms investing here can rely on quality assets and a stable base from which to grow naturally over time, plus the vision, imagination and resolve that so often drive success.

4 PRIORITY PLAN

Our plan focuses on four main priorities where investment has the greatest potential to deliver growth and jobs:

- strength in depth and excellence of manufacturing
- innovation
- infrastructure
- workforce

THE FACTS

An entrepreneurial place with above average business formation rates

Schools that score highly on GCSE attainment and some of England's top performing colleges

The University of Huddersfield has impressive statistics on teaching excellence, placements and graduate employment (94% in work/study after 6 months), and has some of the best available facilities for business innovation and enterprise

A national reputation as a low carbon leader, pioneering in new techniques and markets

Growing creative and digital businesses that take advantage of local centres and superb location

A concentration of value adding engineering, manufacturing and design, driven by globally leading businesses in fields such as gears, valves, pumps, turbos, textiles, and chemicals

The best place to do business in the north

-  **Airports**
Three major airports within an hour
-  **Ports**
International ports at Hull and Liverpool
-  **Business Centre**
Centre of the Leeds, Manchester, Sheffield commercial axis
-  **Skills**
Highly skilled university talent pool and R&D facilities drawn from Sheffield, Leeds, Manchester, York, Bradford, and Huddersfield
-  **Rail links**



Our Approach and Priorities

At Kirklees Council we are committed to creating the right conditions for sustainable jobs and growth. We know that to do this we need to be open to change, and show agile, receptive and responsive leadership.

We also know that success demands that we take our existing relationships with business to the next level. Our approach to working with business to deliver this is based on four guiding principles (detailed further in section 3).

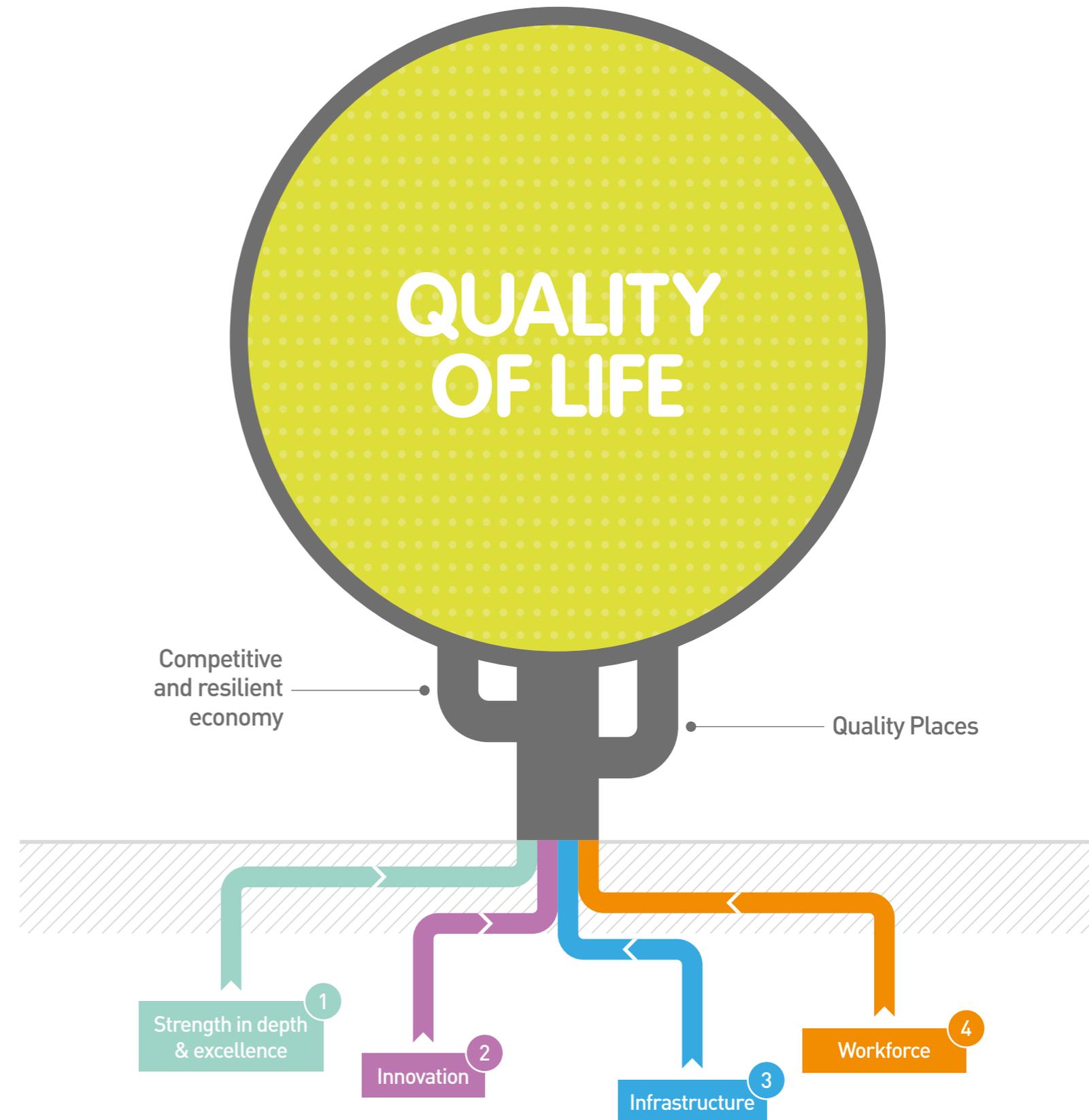
Kirklees Council will:

- **Ensure there is no wrong door for all businesses** – by developing a single point of entry for businesses and putting in place an ethos and systems that drive quick, sharp and focused responses.
- **Engage with business in a proactive and targeted way** – with in-depth engagement and assistance focused on growing and medium sized businesses that make up the base of our local economy, in particular engineering and manufacturing firms and the supply chains that feed them.
- **Be intelligence led** – continuing to listen to business, share economic intelligence, and together identify key issues and opportunities that Kirklees can exploit to build competitive advantage.
- **Be an enabling authority** – applying a ‘can do’ attitude to making regulation work for business.

We are committed to delivering maximum impact and getting the best return on investment for businesses and communities in Kirklees. Our choices have been guided by economic analysis and in-depth local business intelligence gathered through our Employer Survey and daily interactions with the business community. We have used this to identify opportunities for businesses to grow in Kirklees and to make fruitful connections beyond our boundaries.

We will focus on four priorities where there is a strong asset base and unique opportunities to exploit:

- **Strength in depth & excellence...** precision engineering and innovative manufacturing
- **Innovation...** championing creativity and entrepreneurship
- **Infrastructure...** making it easier for businesses to work
- **Workforce...** the people to power business success





Priority One

Strength in depth & excellence

Precision engineering & innovative manufacturing

Successful economies are built upon genuine assets and distinctive strengths. So our approach is founded upon understanding what is special about the Kirklees economy and enabling it to go from strength to strength.

Kirklees has an established reputation for engineering and manufacturing. The sector's concentration here is double the national average, it combines breadth with high added value activities and real niche strengths. Those include design, process, electrical and mechanical engineering and products that are critical to automotive, energy and low carbon supply chains such as gears, valves, pumps and turbo chargers.

The extent and specialism of the sector locally provides a solid foundation for further expansion – and one that cannot easily be replicated. It means that both skills and supply chain opportunities are available, and Huddersfield's university and colleges already have well developed expertise and courses in engineering disciplines. Other assets include the Textiles Centre of Excellence and linkages to the sector and to 12 universities elsewhere in the Leeds, Manchester and Sheffield city regions, including the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre near Sheffield.

Manufacturing has endured challenging times over recent decades, although jobs in the sector in Kirklees have actually increased in recent years. Pressures include low cost competition from abroad and rising energy and resource costs. A focus on advanced engineering and manufacturing, where advantage is based on knowledge, expertise

and innovation will be vital to future growth. Resource efficiency, taking advantage of new energy and low carbon opportunities, and export markets will also engender success.

To fulfil its potential the sector needs to replace an ageing labour force with skilled new recruits; the sites and space for growth; and to innovate further making full use of HE expertise. There are skills shortages in engineering in particular and a range of activity including promotion of apprenticeships and collaboration between businesses, schools and the Council can help to address that (see also priority 4 on Workforce Skills).

The CBI's 'Future Champions' report identifies how the 1% of businesses that are medium sized (50-500 employees) are often overlooked, but account for 16% of employment and 22% of revenue. Businesses in and around this size bracket form the bedrock of the engineering and manufacturing sector in Kirklees. We will put them and their supply chains at the heart of our approach. We pledge to put these businesses and their supply chains at the heart of our approach. In doing this we aim to help connect local suppliers to the support that can boost skills, efficiency, and stimulate growth.

Kirklees Council will:

- Make prestigious and accessible sites close to the M62 available to support expansion of the sector, well connected to digital infrastructure, labour markets and trade routes
- Work with companies to enhance and develop their supply chains and awareness of new opportunities
- Better promote careers and apprenticeships in the sector so that businesses find it easier to recruit a new generation of engineers and technicians
- Ensure businesses in the sector influence what is taught in schools and colleges, with more emphasis on practical 'making things' skills, generic skills and employability (see Priority 4). That includes promoting science, technology, engineering and maths skills.
- Help businesses to exploit university assets to boost R&D, including facilities at the 3M Buckley Innovation Centre at the University of Huddersfield (e.g. for design and modelling, precision measurement and prototyping), and the wealth of other nearby university expertise
- Promote the Textiles Centre of Excellence in Huddersfield, which offers training, access to leading edge technology, a technical workshop for warping and weaving, and a product-testing lab

- Take a targeted and proactive approach to attracting new businesses and inward investment in the sector, utilising existing business supply chain relationships and focusing on firms who would gain significant long term advantages from moving to Kirklees or expanding their presence here
- Further build the sector's profile and reputation and explore potential for sector based events

Businesses can:

- Collaborate to promote the sector, including to young people, schools and investors, and by using the 'Place to Make it' brand where helpful
- Provide high quality apprenticeship and work experience opportunities
- Make full use of university and R&D centres to help drive innovation
- Work collaboratively to strengthen local supply chains

Outcomes

Success will be measured by:

- Growth of output, productivity and profitability in the sector
- Increased employment
- Enhanced skills, including more apprenticeships, technicians and engineers

CASE STUDY

Bruno Jouan VTL Group



Kirklees companies lead the world when it comes to the turbo technology market; and while you might not be familiar with the company names in what is an increasingly-focussed local supply

chain, you will certainly know the names of the companies whose engines they supply component parts to. One such company is VTL Group, who have successfully secured Regional Growth Fund to develop and expand the business.

"Huddersfield has a long history of engineering; and having a concentration of engineering and manufacturing companies in the area has certainly helped to attract the skilled workforce companies like mine need to thrive and expand. I relocated from France to take charge here at VTL Group, because I could see the opportunity to capitalise on an established supply chain. Twelve years later, I haven't been disappointed, and the business continues to grow and diversify into new markets."

World-class gear systems produced by Lockwood-based David Brown



THE FACTS

Manufacturing makes up a quarter of the Kirklees economy (GVA of £1.5 billion)

It employs over 25,000 people – 17% of the workforce and the third highest number in any locality in England

Companies including Cummins, VTL and David Brown are global leaders in their fields and have HQs in Kirklees

Strong growth prospects linked to energy and low carbon



Priority Two Innovation

Championing creativity and entrepreneurship

Innovation drives business growth and lasting success. It is about a business reading its environment and continually evolving and improving its products, processes and services in response.

Kirklees businesses demonstrate this in practice. For example, where in many places the textiles industry has faded away, ours has had a renaissance. Our businesses have applied innovation and creativity to move up the value chain into competitive niche markets for example providing advanced technical textiles for jet engines and vehicle manufactures. They have helped Kirklees gain an international reputation for creativity. Similarly strength and depth is now obvious in our creative and digital sector. This creative ethos is a unique selling point for the district.

Innovation in its broadest sense is at the heart of enterprise. It is about someone spotting an opportunity to do something new or different and acting upon it. We know that we have a strong spirit of enterprise in our district. More people are self-employed here than elsewhere in the region; and our business start-up rate is better than the national average. We will make good quality business intelligence available that will help entrepreneurs spot opportunities to start or grow their business.

Kirklees has a strong innovation and excellence infrastructure to support our efforts in this area. The University of Huddersfield 3M Buckley Innovation Centre, the National Physical Laboratories, the Media Centre, and the Textiles Centre of Excellence are all catalysts for growth. They have reach and influence beyond our boundaries. They are further supported by the Council's nine Enterprise Centres across the district and the proposed Globe Mill Environmental Technology Centre in Slaitthwaite. There is no shortage of managed workspace facilities in the district. There is however scope to improve strategic co-ordination, growth sector focus, and connect businesses to support. We will use these physical assets as a tool in our drive to deepen our engagement with businesses. We will proactively target opportunities to support businesses to make the most of Kirklees' unique location and further embed their investment, particularly through their supply chains.

Kirklees Council will:

- Work in partnership with existing networks of business generators and centres of excellence to promote innovation, enterprise and business collaboration - in particular linking manufacturing with creativity and design; and to deliver bespoke and proactive business support
- Promote targeted local business support programmes and funds such as the Access to Finance Fund, Apprenticeship Hub, and Working Smarter Framework to help businesses create new jobs and access support; as well as wider funds for growth e.g. Regional Growth Fund
- Support businesses to access and trade with new markets overseas
- Nurture the talents of young entrepreneurs through the Kirklees Youth Enterprise Centre
- Provide access to good quality business intelligence and public procurement to stimulate local enterprise; help businesses identify new opportunities; and to grow and build the capacity and social value of the third sector
- Establish business friendly systems for firms wishing to access advice and support especially in relation to business regulations
- Build on the successful Green Business Network to help local businesses introduce resource efficiency measures and exploit emerging opportunities in the low carbon economy

Businesses can:

- Proactively seek out opportunities for greater collaboration with the higher education research base and sector specific centres of excellence
- Develop a continuing commitment to innovation and building a creative corporate culture
- Actively participate in dialogue with the Council and relevant partnerships to express business need and barriers to growth e.g. on skills demand, connectivity, premises, access to finance
- Develop a diversity policy that draws on untapped potential of women, young people and ethnic minorities as a lever to business success

Outcomes

Success will be measured by:

- Sustained above average performance in new business formation rate
- Improved rates of employment, self-employment and new business start-ups amongst young people, ethnic minorities and those from disadvantaged communities
- Increased R&D expenditure as a percentage of GVA
- Improved rates of graduate retention

CASE STUDY

Zeb Pervaiz
SKA Textiles, Huddersfield



“Like many of our competitors, we have previously sourced some of our suppliers in the far east to ensure we offer the best terms to our national chain store customers; but we have become increasingly

concerned that the cost, reliability and the quality of products sourced abroad is not of the high standard we demand. It made sense for us to start bringing back some of our production to Yorkshire and to our Huddersfield base so that we have greater control over our supply chain and our future. As an additional benefit, we are also looking to capitalise on research facilities and expertise available to us at the University of Huddersfield to develop innovative manufacturing processes, which will increase productivity and save energy and waste. The combination of a central location, skilled people, advanced R&D facilities and a helpful local authority make Huddersfield a natural choice for our business and a great Place To Make It... just like we've been doing since 1975”.

Using nettles to produce durable fabric called 'Sting' – Camira Fabrics, Mirfield



THE FACTS

- 44% of Kirklees businesses have introduced new products or services in the last 12 months
- Over 40% of firms still source more than half their resources locally
- Over 2,200 new business start-ups recorded in 2012 – an increase on the previous two years and above the regional and national average
- In 2009, almost 10% of all start-ups were social enterprises. A greater percentage than in the Leeds City Region
- 51% of businesses say they would benefit from business support in the next 12 months
- The University of Huddersfield won the Times Higher Education Entrepreneurial University of the Year award in 2012 and the Queens Award for Enterprise and Trade in 2013

Priority Three Infrastructure

Making it easier for businesses to work

Kirklees benefits from a strategic location at the heart of northern England and the city regions of Leeds, Manchester, and Sheffield. Its unique locational advantages combine this position with affordability, quality of life and access to an outstanding natural environment.

Kirklees is a great location to act as a northern centre for innovation, learning and investment. This geographical position creates two unique opportunities. The first is in the growth of the engineering and manufacturing sector by helping it to expand, attract investment and access markets (see Priority 1). The second is the geographical identity for businesses and sectors that value our location, such as creative businesses and those seeking to recruit skilled workers from a wide labour market.

Making Kirklees a place where it is easy for businesses to work will be central to our approach. Physically, this means investing in public transport or physical improvements to improve movement of goods and people. That includes peak hour commuting journeys from centres such as Holmfirth, Dewsbury/Batley, Mirfield and in the Colne Valley into Huddersfield; as well as addressing congestion that slows access from Kirklees into its neighbouring centres such as Leeds, Manchester and Halifax.

It also requires adoption of more flexible policies in relation to releasing land for jobs and for

developing the appropriate mix of quality homes that will support this growth. Many businesses tell us that they need more land to grow. It is vital that they are not forced to look outside our district to find the space that meets their expansion ambitions.

We will facilitate this expansion of businesses through our Local Development Framework. We know that provision of new high quality office facilities in our main town centres of Huddersfield and Dewsbury will widen the choice of local higher paid jobs and reduce the need for out-commuting by Kirklees residents. We will work with partners, communities and business to connect to building thriving and attractive local centres that appeal to people and investors alike. We have a number of specific opportunities in this regard. This includes for example the redevelopment of the Huddersfield Waterfront for mixed-use including a new campus for Kirklees College; and the redevelopment of Pioneer House in Dewsbury to bring a key town centre building back into use and secure a viable future.

Office space outside town centres will be located on strategic employment sites and an increase in land released for employment has been proposed accordingly. Our efforts will be concentrated along our strategic employment and transport corridors of the A62 / A644 leading to the proposed Cooper Bridge site; and along the A653 to the site proposed at Chidswell. This will unlock significant opportunities for new investment and employment, and in the case of Cooper Bridge, will link to the manufacturing arc that flows through South Leeds, Dewsbury, Batley, Huddersfield, Brighouse and South Bradford. We will use our influence to secure new funds for Kirklees from city-regional and national sources to drive transport and other infrastructure improvements in these areas.

We will seek to bring forward employment land in Birstall, Cleckheaton, Clayton West and Meltham offering more locally significant employment and investment opportunities.

We will build on other assets including the Media Centre in Huddersfield, which can provide an anchor point for the growth of creative businesses.

Likewise, we will capitalise on recent improvements to ensure that key gateways and centrepieces such as St George Square in Huddersfield create positive impressions that attract businesses and skilled employees to base themselves in Kirklees. That will drive up demand and create a virtuous circle where a better urban environment boosts trade and profits and in turn attracts more investment and thriving town centres. Our emphasis on digital connectivity will focus on transforming the digital landscape in Kirklees to create world class connectivity to support innovation and economic growth. We will look to a rollout of high speed connectivity in key urban areas and along our strategic economic corridors; and we will encourage partners in the district to promote their own superfast networks and connectivity such as that between the University of Huddersfield and the Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus in Cheshire.



Kirklees Council will:

- Stimulate job creation opportunities through land releases at key strategic sites proposed through the Local Development Framework
- Invest in town centres and along strategic corridors including the A62, A644, A629 and A653 to ease congestion and create an efficient road network serving strategic employment zones
- Collaborate to strengthen the local public transport network to better connect homes with sites for employment, learning, retail and leisure and other local facilities
- Leverage the Council's assets and work with the private sector and communities to support regeneration and invest in vibrant and thriving town centres
- Focus on developing local energy management in building schemes, district heating and energy efficiency to reduce emissions
- Enhance the attractiveness of the area for business and investment through a focus on our high quality green natural environment
- Provide strategic leadership and explore all means available to us to help transform the digital landscape in Kirklees

Businesses can:

- Tell the Council about your development and expansion requirements
- Consider development of travel plans that help employees move around the City Region, ease peak flows, and reduce carbon emissions
- Work with other businesses, local communities and the Council in driving place improvements to create thriving local centres as places in which to do business in the long term

Outcomes:

Success will be measured by:

- Strategic economic corridors connecting local communities to flexible, high quality, employment sites that meet business demands
- Increasing number of businesses investing or reinvesting in the district
- More reliable journeys, less congestion, and improved public transport usage
- Reduced CO2 and other harmful emissions
- Greater uptake of high speed broadband

CASE STUDY

Peter Horton Chief Operating Officer, Liverpool Victoria



"We have been continuously growing our operation in Huddersfield over the last few years and we are really impressed by the pool of talent in the area. People were asking why we didn't

move to Leeds, but the people here were just brilliant - and our business is all about people."

With over 5000 employees working in 17 offices across the UK, Liverpool Victoria is one of the UK's largest friendly societies and a leading mutual. Kirklees Council worked with their management team to ensure their existing Britannia Rescue operation moved into new premises in Huddersfield's landmark Folly Hall office development. The relocation ensured sufficient capacity for expansion to accommodate a further 75 new jobs. Located adjacent to the council's flagship development site at The Waterfront, less than half a mile from the 3M Business Innovation Centre, Folly Hall is at the heart of our national transport networks and in an area that has proven its attractiveness for national relocation."

THE FACTS

Kirklees lies at the heart of a £150bn economy including the Leeds, Manchester and Sheffield City regions

Train times of around 20-25 minutes to Leeds and 35 minutes to Manchester

Businesses say their decision to locate in Kirklees is driven by good access to transport, quality and size of available premises, and the overall attractiveness of the area and local environment

50% say the district is an excellent place to do business

The majority of firms wanting to relocate for growth will remain in the district

The Kirklees Local Development Framework proposes 240 hectares of land to be made available for employment use.



Priority Four Workforce

The people to power business success

Skills are critical to success in a modern economy and businesses agree that people are their number one asset. As global competition and the importance of innovation grows, so too does the value of talented employees and excellent leadership.

Evidence tells us that high level skills will become more important over the next decade. As a result, the demand for these skills, balanced with the important need for technical qualifications in sector such as engineering, are important for Kirklees.

Businesses tell us that they value a workforce who possesses a good set of qualifications including English and maths. When these qualifications are coupled with broader qualities such as communication, creativity, initiative, and a positive attitude, then performance in the workplace increases.

Young recruits who possess these broader qualities, plus real work experience, are more employable and effective. Extending apprenticeships and work experience opportunities which combine practical, personal and academic skills is a key way of facilitating young people's progression into employment.

Kirklees has seen impressive rises in GCSE attainment in recent years and now performs above the national average. Qualifications at other levels are improving. Kirklees is working with businesses, schools, colleges and universities to address these issues and drive improvements.

Kirklees has distinctive assets and programmes that it can utilise. The Employment and Skills Board brings together businesses and skills agencies and is helping to ensure that education and skills providers such as colleges serve business needs. One result is new activity to build dialogue and relationships between schools and businesses to influence what is taught and how. Other initiatives include a new Creative and Media Studio School, a local Apprenticeship Hub, promotion of work experience placements, the Work Smarter Framework to improve management skills, and greater connection between Council departments responsible for education, skills and economic development.

We are committed to ensuring that there are ladders of opportunity that allow young people who work hard and want to succeed to do so. The key task is to ensure skills work is delivered effectively, joined up with action across Leeds City Region where helpful, and on a sufficient scale to make a difference.

Kirklees Council will:

- Operate an Apprenticeship Hub and work with local agencies and employers to raise awareness of apprenticeship options and make them easy and attractive to take up
- Facilitate stronger links between schools and businesses and work to improve the educational achievement, functional/generic skills and work readiness of young people
- Strive to enhance careers information and to support the skills aspirations of young people, including focus on English, maths, science, technology and engineering
- Encourage high quality employment and improved business growth and management skills through working with employers to implement our 'Working Smarter' framework
- Increase productivity by working in partnership on Better Health at Work initiatives
- Increase work placements (including through the Kirklees Jobs Fund) that help businesses to test and gain confidence in new recruits, build work readiness skills, support innovative models such as the Creative and Media Studio School, and help young people to secure employment
- Provide information, intelligence and connections that help schools, colleges, universities and training companies to respond to business needs

Businesses can:

- Invest in training their own employees
- Invest in training for leadership and management skills
- Engage and build relationships with local schools, colleges and universities, promote career opportunities within their business/sector and influence education and training provision
- Provide work experience placements and apprenticeship opportunities
- Make good use of skilled workers, including graduates

Outcomes:

Success will be measured by:

- A reduction in businesses perceptions of the skills gaps and the increased skills of their workforce and new recruits
- Improve the achievement profile of schools through the delivery of an appropriate learning offer
- Number of apprenticeships started and completed
- Improvements in business productivity, incomes and employment rate

CASE STUDY

Stephen Owens Managing Director, Park House Healthcare



"The most important part of our business is our people - without them we would not have been able to achieve the unprecedented success that we currently enjoy. All employees are encouraged to participate in training programmes as we recognise that our biggest investment and highest priority will always be our people and their development. I am proud of each and every one here today who has worked hard to achieve qualifications - they are all a credit to Park House Healthcare and exemplify the unrivalled service we offer in the healthcare sector."

With nearly 30 years experience in the healthcare industry, Park House Healthcare is recognised as a market leading supplier of specialist equipment, nursing and care. The company's Kirklees-based head office is central to their extensive network of service and logistics centres strategically located throughout the country, providing 24 hour care, 365 days a year. The company recognises its most valuable resource will always be its people, and places a high priority on continuously encouraging staff to develop their skills and progress as part of their own career development programmes. In partnership with Kirklees College, the company has introduced a series of staff development programmes aimed at improving all round business and personal performance, which at a time of severe cost cutting in the NHS, means Park House Healthcare has reversed the industry trend, by delivering patient focused solutions centred on the key principle of "helping patients get better, quicker."

THE FACTS

- Kirklees has a population of around 422,000 and a workforce of nearly 150,000 people. 74% of people are economically active
- Rapid improvements in GCSE attainment, which is now above national average
- High level skills slightly below national average; future business skills demands to rise most at NVQ Level 4
- 25% of businesses already employ either school leavers, new graduates, apprentices, or the unemployed; and there is an increased willingness amongst firms to recruit from these groups
- Almost 5000 apprenticeships started in the 2011/12 academic year
- 16% of firms have links with education, rising to 56% for firms with 100+ employees

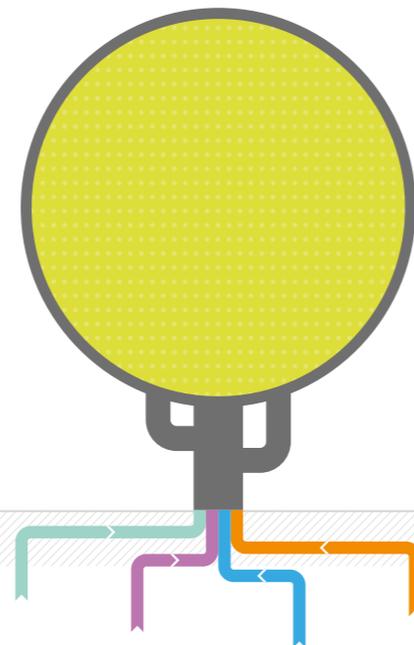
Delivery & Monitoring of Priorities

We have listened carefully and are clear about what we can do to help businesses in Kirklees. We also know that we will only succeed by working in partnership. Shared ambition is essential to success. The Council will put in place mechanisms to deliver change where they are needed, and play a strong facilitation role to bring the right people together at the right times to drive delivery of our shared priorities. This will include better connecting business leaders, education establishments and other public bodies in Kirklees, and making links beyond our boundaries where helpful. The Council will also strive to raise the profile of the district within the Leeds City Region and amongst national policy and decision makers in order to maximise resources and influence local benefits that stem from them.

We set out the four priorities that will guide our approach to working with and for business. We will embed these principles in everything we do. In addition to this we will

reshape the Kirklees Business Leaders Group to act as a sounding board for prioritisation and identification of partnerships to support delivery. And we will draw on existing sector specific networks, particularly those generated through our university and centres of excellence, to consider how we can work together.

We will measure the impact our actions have and detailed metrics are included in the Kirklees Economic Strategy. We will use these, as well as the outcomes set out here under each priority, to measure our success. This will feed into future planning and prioritisation. We will also make this information and evidence available to businesses and investors, helping them to assess risks, make informed decisions and to spot and exploit future opportunities.



For more information please visit www.kirklees.gov.uk/business or call **01484 221000** and ask for the Business Team

Follow us on twitter [@kirkleesbiz](https://twitter.com/kirkleesbiz)

