



NORTH DORSET

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR

ACTION

2012 – 2015

INTRODUCTION:

The overall aim of this strategy is to stimulate the economy, create economic growth and jobs, attracting resources and investment to the area. The Council's role will be to help to create the right environment in which businesses can thrive. This will principally be one of facilitation, co-ordination and enabling.

The Strategy addresses a three year period and will be reviewed annually to monitor progress. The detailed actions for delivering this Strategy are contained within the Council's Services Business Plans, mainly in the Regeneration Business Plan, but also within other service areas such as Planning and Environmental Health. They also deliver against several of the Council's priorities in the Corporate Plan and the Local Enterprise Partnership Framework document.

Much of what the Council does, is done in partnership with other organisations. The resources available to support the Strategy are limited and need to be targeted where they can make the most difference. Therefore it is important that the work of the Regeneration Team concentrates on the priorities, rather than dissipating effort over too wide a range of activity. The target dates have therefore been included, partly to monitor progress, but also to indicate the urgency or priority for action. Some of the work is innovative and involves taking risks or putting forward ideas or proposals which may not ultimately be successful. Therefore, necessarily, there is a degree of abortive work. It is also difficult to assess in advance what new initiatives may come forward offering opportunities for the district. It is therefore necessary to be flexible within the Strategy in order to be able to respond to this in a timely and efficient manner.

Economic Development involves working in the wider economic environment and climate, over which the local authority has little or no influence, but it needs to be responsive to the external influences and the needs of business by listening, informing and influencing others. This is likely to be done through the Local Enterprise Partnership which is business led and takes the strategic lead on promoting economic growth for the Dorset area.

The background research and statistics, upon which this strategy is based, can be found on www.dorsetforyou.com/398154 and www.dorsetforyou.com/statistics/347502 and information is updated as new statistics become available.

Further information about the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership can be found on www.dorsetlep.co.uk and on www.investindorset.co.uk

STRATEGY:

1. SUPPORTING THE DORSET LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

Aim: To provide support to the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership as part of the Strategic Economic Development Team in making Dorset the natural place to do business.

Issues: To contribute to the success of the LEP in achieving: a strongly performing productive and sustainable economy with more higher value and skilled jobs, whilst harnessing Dorset's special environment.

1.1 Build a strong partnership between the public and private sectors

1.2 Build on the strengths of the area

1.3 Work with businesses to support their growth encourage start-up companies and attract new knowledge intensive jobs to the area

1.4 Create a business friendly culture and make it easier to do business by removing obstacles to business growth

1.5 Develop a deep understanding of the Dorset economy

1.6 Promote innovation and projects which take Dorset forward to a more resilient knowledge intensive economy

	Priorities – WHAT will be done	Actions – HOW it will be done	Targets - WHEN
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the Kick Start Process for the establishment of the LEP Supporting the Launch Event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of the initial draft for the Business Plan and Governance Structure Prepare exhibition material and invitations to businesses and attend event with Sector Lead Board Member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Terms of Reference and Draft Brief by April 2012 All promotion, invitations and exhibition material ready for 8 May 2012
1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food and Drink Sector Group Support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise a Roadshow of 6 Events for Food and Drink, Hospitality and Tourism Businesses across Dorset Establish a representative sector group and wider forum to discuss issues and inform the LEP Board Analyse and collate, results from the Roadshows under LEP themes, draft paper and discuss with sector group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May 2012 September 2012 September 2012

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a paper with recommendation to the LEP Board indicating the nature and level of support required by the sector and a short list of priority actions • Provide continued support to the Business Planning Group and the Sector Group as part of the Strategic Economic Development Team www.dorsetlep.co.uk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December 2012 • Ongoing until 2015
1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering Growing Places Funded projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit first bid for £500,000 and second bid for £300,000 Growing Places funding to upgrade infrastructure to include superfast broadband • Project plan agreed with partners, project team in place, steering group set up • Ensure delivery of infrastructure project at North Dorset Business Park • Encourage private sector investment and development of the business park • Ensure Growing Places funding repayment within 5 years • Consider other sites for funding e.g. in Shaftesbury and Gillingham 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bids submitted and successful July 2012 (£800,00 agreed) • July 2012 • Infrastructure to be commenced by January 2013 and completed by October 2013 • By 2015 • Next Growing Places funding round September 2012 and subsequent rounds
1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olympic Games and Olympic Legacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend British Business Embassy events in Weymouth during Olympic Sailing Week to promote the area to trade ambassadors • Include employment sites and major employers in promotional literature and on appropriate websites such as www.investindorset.co.uk • Continue to work with the LEP and other partners to build on the success of the business events and create a lasting legacy for the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 2012 • August 2012 • Ongoing - 2015

2. SUPERFAST BROADBAND

Aim: To achieve superfast broadband coverage for the district

- Issues:**
- 2.1 The broadband speeds across the district are low and restrict the ability of businesses to optimise their productivity and profitability
 - 2.2 The whole area is rural and only the town centres are likely to be considered viable to private sector investment leaving the majority of the district as “white area” unlikely to receive investment
 - 2.3 More services are provided through the internet and local residents and businesses are unable to access them, causing isolation and disadvantage

	Priorities – WHAT will be done	Actions – HOW it will be done	Targets - WHEN
2.1	Support the BDUK Programme Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the BDUK team to ensure that the £38.8M investment in providing Superfast Broadband to the Cabinet is rolled out across the whole county and includes the district and capitalises on the Council’s investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out in 2013
2.2	Work with CPEND/DT11 on Trailway to the Future Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as Project Assurance adviser to the Trailway to the Future Broadband Project and liaise with the BDUK project to ensure appropriate links are made through the Board and the Community Forum • Add value to the project and help to stimulate take up and demand by inclusion of additional elements e.g. North Dorset Business Park, Growing Places funding, Blandford Camp and bid to Pathways for Communities • Provide appropriate practical and professional support to the Community Rural Broadband project bid, and to its roll out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out 2013 • October 2012 • September and then during 2013
2.3	Attracting investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the benefits and uses of superfast broadband to businesses and households to stimulate demand and take up to make a business case to attract investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2012/2013

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include provision for broadband infrastructure within appropriate development infrastructure and utility works e.g. work with North Dorset Business Park and Wessex Water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December 2012
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3. SKILLS AND TRAINING

Aim: To achieve an appropriately skilled local labour market by improving the appropriateness and quality of skills in the workforce

Issues:

- 3.1 Improving the transition from education and training into employment
- 3.2 Reducing the number of NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training)
- 3.3 Improving access to local training and education

	Priorities – WHAT will be done	Actions – HOW it will be done	Targets - WHEN
3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the understanding of businesses of the different types of routes to employment and the available labour pool • Improving the quality of the skills in the labour pool 	<p>WAVE (Work experience, Apprenticeships, Volunteering, Employment):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate discussion between businesses and educational providers in setting the curriculum • Improving opportunities for volunteering, work experience, work based training, apprenticeships • Show casing local businesses to careers advisers, schools and colleges • Evaluate with partners and review the WAVE programme and determine how this might be managed on an annual basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 2013 • Apprenticeship Week mid-March 2013 • October 2012 and annually
3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitating the provision of employability skills and vocational work experience in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Equilibrium and other partners, including SturQuest Enterprise, Dorset County Council, Yeovil College, Job Centre Plus, Ansbury (Connexions), to raise aspirations of young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 2013

	NEETs	<p>and improve their employability skills, attitude and aptitude;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in the application for Sowing SEEDS funds for phase 2 of the Employability Skills Base • Raise awareness of businesses of the Employability Skills Base e.g. with colleges, training providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 2012 • Ongoing 2015
3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Yeovil College, Kingston Maurward and others to provide training and education within the district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring forward identified sites and premises in Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton for use by colleges and other training providers E.g. Training Hub on Butts Pond, and facilitate a larger college facility at Longmead, Shaftesbury • Training provision working within reasonable travel patterns to minimise logistical inconvenience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 2012 and Ongoing • May 2012 onwards

4. EMPLOYMENT SITES

Aim: To encourage development of employment sites throughout the district, to create economic growth, safeguard and create jobs and increase the economic activity of the area.

Issues:

- 4.1 Ensuring adequate supply of appropriate employment land is included in the Core Strategy of the Local development framework
- 4.2 Providing adequate infrastructure and connectivity
- 4.3 Attracting private sector development

	Priorities – WHAT will be done	Actions – HOW it will be done	Targets - WHEN
4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide adequate and suitable employment sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Planning Policy to ensure that the employment land provision within the Core Strategy meets the future needs of businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September 2012
4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring forward the development of all employment sites in the district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Dorset Business Park: Ensuring infrastructural works are undertaken in North Dorset Business Park and Growing Places funding attracted and invested and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 2012 – 2014

		<p>a project team and project plan are put in place with Council representation on the Steering Group, and work with HCA and DCA under the Protocol agreement for disposal of the serviced sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to bring forward employment land South of A30 in Shaftesbury and at Brickfields Business Park in Gillingham • Provision for Broadband is made during development work for all employment sites • Encourage green travel plans • Stimulate private sector interest by working with local interested parties wishing to locate or expand on site and inward investment enquiries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2013 onwards • As development proposals are considered and opportunities arise
4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote employment land opportunities • Promoting the district as a destination for inward investment • Improving infrastructure to sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the sites through the LEP, Invest in Dorset and Property Pilot, Information included in British Business Embassy promotion as part of hosting the Olympic Games Sailing event in Weymouth • Work directly with individual businesses wishing to expand or relocate • Establish local business ambassadors to promote the benefits of the area with a common clear message and brand • Submit appropriate bids to attract resources as opportunities arise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 2012 • April 2012 – March 2015 • April 2012 – March 2015

5. MARKET TOWNS

Aim: To enhance the role of the market towns as the vibrant economic hubs offering a wide range of goods and services

Issues:

- 5.1 Co-ordinating planning and activity to form a cohesive and coherent plan for each town
- 5.2 Providing support to individual retailers
- 5.3 Create an image and identity for the towns and help to promote them

	Priorities – WHAT will be done	Actions – HOW it will be done	Targets - WHEN
5.1	Capitalise on opportunities from the growth of Gillingham as a strategic centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood Plan in Gillingham and support the visioning exercise • Co-ordinating local groups to bring them together e.g. business clubs, Chambers of Trade, Community Partnerships • Support the Shaftesbury Town Team and other joint initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 2012 – September 2013 • As required
5.2	S106 Grant Scheme in Blandford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to design a scheme to support independent retailers within the town working within the remit of the Section 106 agreement • Manage any agreed scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By April 2013 • 2012 - 2015
5.3	Enhancing the role of the market town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate and disseminate examples of good practice and establish a district wide working group to consider how these might be implemented locally • Act as Accountable Body for any successful pilot schemes if required • Work with partners to build an individual strength and focus for each town to form complementary roles within the district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 2013 • As needed • April 2014

6. VILLAGES AND RURAL AREAS

Aim: To retain employment and access to goods and services in rural areas

Issues:

- 6.1 Loss of local facilities and services from the villages and rural areas
- 6.2 The need to retain local employment opportunities, including home workers and attract appropriate businesses that suit a rural location
- 6.3 Ensuring that the business needs and appropriate diversification proposals of landowners and farmers are met

	Priorities – WHAT will be done	Actions – HOW it will be done	Targets - WHEN
6.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retaining and supporting villages shops and Post Offices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and support the work of the Retail and Shops adviser at Dorset Community Action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing and as required
6.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support rural businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing access to support, information and advice RuralNet, DorMen Promoting opportunities to access training, events and networking Work with the Federation of Small Businesses to ensure that small and rural businesses, including self-employed and home workers are not disadvantaged Work with Planning to ensure that adequate and appropriate business premises are available and home working needs are met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular and ongoing economic development support and advice to businesses
6.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet the needs of land based industries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the LEP Rural Group and local land based industries and organisations to ensure that their needs are identified, communicated and promoted Work with Planning Policy and Development Management to positively assist with appropriate diversification proposals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2012/2013 As required

7. ATTRACTING RESOURCES TO THE AREA

Aim: To attract as much resource as possible to the area

Issues: 7.1 Bidding for appropriate sources of funding and resource
7.2 Promoting funding information and opportunities

	Priorities – WHAT will be done	Actions – HOW it will be done	Targets - WHEN
7.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing Places Fund • Regional Growth Fund • Sowing SEEDS 	<p>Ensure that suitable projects are put forward to this revolving fund:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Dorset Business Park infrastructure (Phase 1) • Broadband fibre optic cabling, gas, hot water piping (Ph. 2) • Promote grant and loan opportunities to local businesses • Assist with bid preparation and submission, attend LAG Executive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bid approved March • April 2013 • Bid June, work in conjunction with Ph.1 April 2013 • December 2012 if successful • By December 2013
7.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximising Funding Opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate opportunities for funding through Grants on Line and Grant Finder, through community partnerships • Direct bidding to appropriate sources, such as Sowing SEEDS, Lottery, Government initiatives etc • Generating ideas for income generation • Develop proposals for EU Funding Programmes for the next round (under the LEP and smaller local schemes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • By December 2013 • As required • By January 2015

8. COMMUNICATION, PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND PR

Aim: To place North Dorset as a high quality high profile and desirable place to do business and to improve physical and ICT communications in the area and promote the benefits to businesses

Issues:

- 8.1 Poor broadband and mobile phone coverage in most of the district inhibiting economic growth, inward investment and access to services
- 8.2 Poor transport availability and times inhibiting physical access to services and facilities
- 8.3 The need to better promote what the area has to offer, examples of good practice and what the council does well
- 8.4 The need to work better across borders to reflect natural travelling patterns

	Priorities – WHAT will be done	Actions – HOW it will be done	Targets - WHEN
8.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of Superfast Broadband 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the BDUK Team and its work Support the work led by DT11 on Trailway to the Future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll out 2013 Roll out 2103
8.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a transport study with partners and facilitate implementation of recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> December 2012
8.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion and PR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate and work with partners to improve the brand, image and PR for the towns through Neighbourhood Planning, Town Teams and other groupings Produce a communication plan to determine the target market and ensure that it accords with the Council’s communication strategy Prepare some coordinated promotional material Capitalise on and promote the strengths and opportunities such as the quality of life, environment, availability of employment land, assets such as Blandford Royal signals Promote the area to new businesses locally and through the LEP and proactively market the area Promoting the Council’s role in positive regulation and support to businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> December 2013 April 2013 June 2013 As opportunities arise As opportunities arise As opportunities arise
8.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross border working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the partnership with colleges, local authorities and adjoining LEPs in the “A303 Corridor” area and establish regular liaison e.g. regular meetings with Wiltshire Council colleagues and Yeovil College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 2012 – March 2015