



Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date Monday 7 November 2022
Time 9.30 am
Venue Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham

Business

Part A

Items which are open to the Public and Press
Members of the public can ask questions with the Chair's agreement,
and if registered to speak.

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Substitute Members
3. Minutes of the meeting held 3 October 2022 (Pages 3 - 12)
4. Declarations of Interest, if any
5. Items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties, if any
6. Inclusive Economic Strategy - Update (Pages 13 - 112)
 - (i) Report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth.
 - (ii) Presentation by the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth
7. Questions of relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holders in relation to:
 - (i) The Cabinet Portfolio Holder's role in attracting and supporting investors to the County.
 - (ii) What has been the Cabinet Portfolio Holders input into the UKSPF bids for County Durham.
 - (iii) An explanation for delays in Portfolio Holders responding to councillors e-mails and the length of time taken for responses.
8. Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chair of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration

Helen Lynch
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

County Hall
Durham
28 October 2022

To: **The Members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee:**

Councillor B Moist (Chair)
Councillor A Jackson (Vice-Chair)

Councillors M Abley, A Batey, G Binney, J Cairns, K Earley, D Haney, G Hutchinson, C Lines, L Maddison, R Manchester, C Marshall, C Martin, J Miller, R Ormerod, A Reed, I Roberts, A Sterling, A Surtees and S Wilson

Co-opted Members:

Mrs R Morris and Mr E Simons

Contact: Lucy Gladders Tel: 03000 269 712

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

ECONOMY AND ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the **Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in the **Council Chamber, County Hall, Durham** on **Monday 3 October 2022** at **1.30 pm**

Present:

Councillor B Moist (Chair)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors E Adam (substitute for A Batey), G Binney, S Deinali (substitute for S Wilson), K Earley, D Haney, G Hutchinson, C Lines, R Manchester, C Marshall, C Martin, R Ormerod, A Reed and A Surtees

Co-opted Members:

Mrs R Morris and Mr E Simons

Also Present:

Councillors C Hood and D Sutton-Lloyd

1 Election of Vice-Chair

The Chair noted he would need to leave the meeting and in the absence of the Vice-Chair asked for nominations to the position for the duration of the meeting.

Moved by Councillor B Moist, **Seconded** by Councillor D Haney that Councillor C Martin be elected Vice-Chair.

Moved by Councillor C Marshall, **Seconded** by Councillor A Surtees that Councillor S Deinali be elected Vice-Chair.

Upon a vote being taken the result was tied, the Chair exercised his casting vote in favour of Councillor C Martin,

Resolved:

That Councillor C Martin be elected Vice-Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

Councillor B Moist left the meeting at 1.33pm

Councillor C Martin Vice-Chair in the Chair

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Batey, A Jackson, J Miller and A Sterling and S Wilson.

3 Substitute Members

Councillor E Adam substituted for Councillor A Batey and Councillor S Deinali substituted for Councillor S Wilson.

4 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2022 were confirmed by the committee as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

6 Items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties

There were no items reported from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties.

7 County Durham Employment Land and Strategic Sites Update

The Chair introduced the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth, Amy Harhoff to give an update presentation on County Durham Employment Land and Strategic Sites (for copy see file of minutes).

The Corporate Director introduced Officers from her Directorate, including the new Head of Economic Development, Andy Kerr. Officers gave a comprehensive presentation noting points relating to the context for employment; strategic job creation; how employment was supported; the location of employment land; strategic and other employment sites; other potential sites; inward investment; attractors and barriers to businesses; key sectors to attract; and how to promote land and premises.

The Corporate Director summed up, noting that the County Durham Plan (CDP) identified a portfolio of employment land in those areas most likely to attract investment and businesses.

She noted that the strategic sites continued to deliver jobs and that Teams across the Council worked together to overcome barriers to delivery. It was noted that the Council worked proactively with a range of developers and agents across the County to address the shortage of industrial buildings and to stimulate market investment. The Corporate Director reiterated that the Council played a major role

in delivering new premises where markets were weaker and took a proactive approach, with dedicated resources to attract and coordinate support for inward investment.

The Chair thanked the Corporate Director and Officers and asked the Committee for their comments and questions.

Councillor K Earley noted Government 'development zone' proposals and asked whether the Council had a clear position in relation to such zones. The Corporate Director noted that the Government had asked for expressions of interest in relation to 'investment zones', with a tight deadline of 14 October for a response. She added that the strategic sites were an obvious starting point, though the proposals were in the process of being digested prior to a response being made.

Mrs R Morris commented that in relation to those areas in the county which do not have a strategic site, what is DCC doing to encourage growth in these areas. The Corporate Director noted that not all areas of the County had a strategic site, however, there was work to ensure all strategic sites were accessible from all parts of the County. She noted that key factors in achieving that were transport and skills and noted it may be helpful at a future meeting to give a more detailed overview of how residents can attract the best jobs, within and outside of the County, and also information on town centre investment to ensure that members have a more comprehensive picture.

Councillor E Adam asked as regards focus on high-skill, high pay jobs, supporting the larger sites and important opportunities in the green economy and how those were being encouraged. The Corporate Director noted the focus on high-skill, high-tech jobs at the strategic sites, but added there were also a number of mid-range jobs at the larger sites which would be required to meet current and future need. She added it was critical to support businesses in the value trade, in terms of training and investing in their employees to help people move into those higher skilled jobs. She noted a number of sites mentioned within the presentation already hosted a number of green economy businesses. The Inward Investment and Opportunities Director, Peter Rippingale explained that green economy was cross-cutting and not sector specific. He noted at Jade Business Park there were a number of such companies, with Corehaus delivering greener building technology, Sumitomo Electric Wiring System creating wiring looms for electric vehicles, and Power Roll producing photovoltaics. He noted that the green economy was not a secondary interest, it was value-adding, and noted discussions with the Centre for Process Innovation at NETPark as regards future battery technologies.

As regards inward investment, the Inward Investment and Opportunities Director noted that there was a much better chance of attracting such investment if there were buildings that were immediately available as many businesses were looking at 6-12 months turnaround to move, rather than looking for bespoke units to be made for them. He noted that there were exceptions to that, such as Rolls-Royce in terms of their modular reactors, with Bishop Auckland being on the shortlist of potential

locations. The Inward investment and Opportunities Director noted another aspect of attracting inward investment was the work of the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform via Invest NE England, for the LA7, Local Authorities within the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), he added that there was close working with Invest NE England.

Councillor C Lines noted the County contained many rural communities and added that further to the physical connection to strategic sites there was the issue of digital connectivity. He noted the change to working practices, with the rise of hybrid working and that he felt that model would endure. He added that therefore it was essential that there was access to fast, reliable broadband internet. He noted areas such as Bradbury and Mordon that were only two miles from NETPark, did not have 4G signal never mind high-speed internet, adding that issues such as those would hamper County Durham, if not resolved. He noted that the Government were pushing the rollout of high-speed internet and commented on the 10 year campaign of those in Bradbury and Mordon to get such internet and asked what the Council, through Digital Durham, were doing in terms of ensuring broadband connectivity. The Economic Development Manager, Graham Wood noted the Digital Durham Board spoke to internet service providers in terms of covering gaps in County Durham provision. He added that where there were gaps there was work ongoing in terms of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) and Rural Prosperity Programme to get funding to build upon provision in those areas.

Councillor C Marshall congratulated the Regeneration, Economy and Growth (REG) Service for the large amount of work in terms of their high quality competitive bids to access “levelling up” funding. He asked as regards capacity within the REG Service and also adjacent services, such as Legal Services, and timescales in having s106 Agreements signed-off, as well as the capacity within the Assets Team. He also noted the huge impact of cuts in terms of the loss of EU funding, noting that while there was the UK SPF, he asked what the impact was upon skills development and low-carbon initiatives. Councillor C Marshall noted the success of Jade Business Park and added that it was an excellent example of speculative development and thanked all involved for getting the development done. He asked why there was a push for a developer to now lead on the site when the Council had led so successfully with the site providing rental income for the Council. He also asked as regards LEP clawback at Jade and also as regards the 4,000 jobs for the Aykley Heads strategic site and whether the jobs would be all private-sector or would that figure now include public-sector jobs as a result of the Council now being located at the site.

The Corporate Director thanked Councillor C Marshall and noted that capacity was always a challenge and was not unique to Durham County Council (DCC). She noted that it was seen nationally with shortages in specialist in skilled areas such as assets, legal and planning. She noted the work with colleagues in Resources in terms of attracting and retaining a valued workforce. She noted that if Members had any specific issues relating to planning, she would be happy to receive feedback on

any particular issues. She added that the key performance indicator (KPI) relating to planning showed good performance against national rankings. She noted that the work with developers was often complex and it was an important issue nationally in terms of resources. She added that DCC had a dedicated resource in terms of Business Durham and noted that she was very proud of their work helping businesses to have a seamless journey in terms of dealing with DCC. In relation to EU funding, the Corporate Director noted that funding was now coming to an end, with bids being submitted in respect of the UK SPF. She added that information relating to bids and potential bids were reported via the Council's UK SPF Group and at Cabinet.

In reference to the Aykley Heads strategic site, the Corporate Director noted that the 4,000 forecast jobs had been based on the floorspace at the planning stage. She added that identification of Plot C for potential DCC use would represent a part of those 4,000 jobs however the site would not be limited to the 4,000 job figure. She added that by releasing the building at The Sands, that would in turn create a number of jobs within the city centre.

The Inward Investment and Opportunities Director noted that Phase 1 at Jade Business Park was 'proof' that it could work and therefore DCC had led on the site in order to build up the credibility of the site. He added it was always likely that if the site had proven successful that DCC would not then lead on Phase 2 and that it would then be for the private sector to lead. Councillor C Marshall noted some income for DCC from Jade Business Park. The Inward Investment and Opportunities Director noted there was a formula from the LEP in terms of a percentage of the Business Rates coming back to them as a quid pro quo.

Councillor C Marshall commented that there was a lack of political leadership in the area that was holding the County back. He added the Overview and Scrutiny Committees were being asked to look at areas for cuts and therefore he would propose that Councillors E Scott and J Rowlandson, as the relevant Portfolio Holders, attend the next Committee to explain the work they were undertaking to attract and support inward investment to the county; get the best deal from the UK SPF bidding process following the loss of EU funding of around £150 million and delays in responding to Councillor's e-mails and the length of time taken to respond.

The Chair noted that he felt it should be through the Chair of the Committee, Councillor B Moist to determine which meeting of the committee the Cabinet Portfolio Holders are asked to attend. Councillor C Marshall confirmed again, that the Cabinet Portfolio Holders should be required to attend the next scheduled meeting of the committee. The Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer, Stephen Gwilym noted that there were mechanisms for Overview and Scrutiny to request Portfolio Holders to attend meetings to answer questions. Councillor C Marshall asked if the Committee should put it to a vote. The Chair of the Committee noted that Councillor B Moist had been in conversation with Councillor E Scott regarding her future attendance at committee.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer, Diane Close noted that the Councillor B Moist had spoken with Councillor E Scott and she had been given future dates of the Committee.

Councillor C Marshall **moved** that the Portfolio Holders be requested to attend the next meeting of the Committee, he was **seconded** by Councillor S Deinali.

The Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer noted that the meeting in November would look at the Economic Strategy and that there would likely be considerable debate on that item.

The Chair **moved** an amendment that the Portfolio Holders attend a meeting of the Committee within the next six months, at the discretion of the Chair of the Committee, Councillor B Moist. Councillor C Marshall noted that the Economic Strategy and Portfolio Holders could be given an hour each on the next agenda if the Committee felt it was a priority. Councillor R Ormerod **seconded** the Chair's amendment to the motion.

Councillor A Surtees noted that the Economic Strategy may throw up questions for the Portfolio Holders and suggested that it would be appropriate that they attended the next meeting, or the meeting after, as Overview and Scrutiny had a role to hold Cabinet to account.

In reference to the amendment, that the Portfolio Holders be invited to the Committee within the next six months, at the discretion of the Chair, upon a vote being taken, the motion was **LOST**.

Councillor D Sutton-Lloyd raised a point of order, noting he was a substitute for Councillor M Abley, with an e-mail from their Group Leader having been sent to the Chair and Clerk at 1.26 pm. The Committee Services Officer noted that the Constitution set out that any notification of substitution was required to be received one hour before the start of the meeting.

In considering the motion that the Portfolio Holders be formally requested to attend the next meeting of the Committee, upon a vote being taken, the motion was **CARRIED**.

Councillor A Surtees thanked the Corporate Director and her Officers and asked as regards quotations for outside contractors being only for two weeks and asked how that worked in terms of increasing costs. She noted shock in terms of the UK SPF, with the County only securing £30 million across three years and also the fact that people and skills funding did not feature until year 3. She also raised huge concerns in relation to the Inclusive Economic Strategy, that the comments received from the Econ-versation were not truly reflective. She continued by asking as to how we will support developing skills going forward, especially in relation to those with disabilities.

The Corporate Director noted that in terms of costs, there was not only inflation, there were increased costs across the board, as reflected in the cost of living crisis. She noted work in terms of managing schemes and highlighted that survey returns, are part of much larger activities and represented a point in time and that engagement would be ongoing through to delivery of the strategy.

Councillor D Haney left the meeting at 2.44pm

The Economic Development Manager noted Councillor A Surtees was correct in terms of the SPF and only drawing down against skills at Year 3, April 2024. He added that until then, existing EU funding would be drawn upon, to be completed by December 2023. He added that therefore it was how to reshape funding for the financial year, with £2.8 million approved for Multiply programmes. He explained that the Council, together with colleges and education providers looked towards supporting those looking to move immediately into the labour market. He added for those with disabilities, the last EU funded programme was Durham Enable and added that this area was a priority within the SPF in addition to mainstream.

Councillor A Surtees noted she had understood that the Econ-versation survey and consultation had closed. The Corporate Director noted the survey results were from the summer and explained that there was ongoing dialogue and engagement and that the document was very much a living document, alongside sister documents such as the Transport Strategy.

Councillor K Earley asked if there were opportunities in relation to larger open sites in terms of solar farms, noting the cost per MWh in respect of the Rolls-Royce units and solar. He noted given the instability in the energy market and increasing gas prices, and asked if solar farms could be an option, noting he had attended a Pension Fund Conference recently and the markets were reflecting on such issues. The Corporate Director noted that it was an issue being looked at nationally. The Spatial Policy Manager, Mike Allum noted that the CDP had supportive policies and that there was work ongoing in relation to a Solar Power Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which could be completed by the end of the year.

Resolved:

- (i) That the report and presentation be noted.
- (ii) That the Portfolio Holders for Economy and Partnerships and for Resources, Investments and Assets be formally requested to attend the next meeting of the Committee.

Councillor C Lines left the meeting at 2.52pm

8 Quarter Four 2021/22 Revenue and Capital Outturn and Quarter One 2022/23 Revenue and Capital Outturn

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director of Resources in relation to the Quarter Four Revenue and Capital Outturn 2021/22 and Quarter One Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2022/23 (for copy see file of minutes).

Councillor S Deinali commented that there were a number of new indicators within the performance report and asked how the KPIs for DCC measuring the increase in bus services to key employment sites and tourism sites fitted with current budgets and future budgets and any government funding coming forward and with reference to the Bus Back Better scheme. The Finance Manager, Resources and Regeneration, Ian Herberson noted he would look to provide a written response to the question.

Councillor A Surtees asked as regards budget pressures in respect of temporary housing and asked if that was a result in the lifting of the eviction ban and Section 21 Notices. The Finance Manager noted that the Housing Manager, Lynn Hall has previously said that private sector evictions has had an impact.

Resolved:

That the reports be noted.

9 Quarter One 2022/23 Performance Management Report

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director of Resources which presented progress towards achieving the key outcomes of the council's corporate performance framework (for copies see file of minutes).

Mr E Simmons asked as regards the information relating to unemployment levels. He noted that a good deal of time seemed to be focussed on encouraging large employers to come to the strategic sites, however, with employment in the County being around 96 percent, how were we encouraging people to come from outside of the County, with skills we needed, alongside work to help retain those that study at Durham University. He added there was the national debate as regards an aging workforce and asked how we were working to secure employment for an aging workforce. The Economic Development Manager noted that Employment Services at the Council noted a key cohort was the over 50s, with Durham Employment and Skills working with the National Skills Agency in terms of developing skills for those wanting to move into a different employment sector.

Councillor S Deinali noted that public transport, especially to the key employment sites, was important and noted many reports of buses running late and being cancelled.

She asked if a response would look at rural areas and access to employment sites or visitor sites, and what the priorities were. The Corporate Director noted that it was a challenge for County Durham, with viability issues relating to services to a number of sites. She added there were a few ways of looking to address issues, including through planning assessments and viability, with some being via condition. She noted that there had been work ongoing as regards bus services, with agreement from Cabinet in March 2022 in terms of diverting funding savings from concessionary travel towards rural services that were at risk having a reduced service as a result of the pandemic. The Corporate Director noted that in terms of employment sites, the Bus Services Improvement Plan, with DCC and the other six NE Local Authorities had submitted to Government for additional funds for services to businesses.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

10 Minutes of the meeting of the County Durham Economic Partnership

The Committee considered the minutes from the County Durham Economic Partnership Plus Board meetings held on 24 June and 22 July 2022 (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the minutes be noted.

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Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny

7 November 2022

Inclusive Economic Strategy



Amy Harhoff, Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 This report sets out the emerging Inclusive Economic Strategy (IES) for the consideration and asks Economy and Enterprise OSC to consider the approach and priorities. Feedback from the committee will help in shaping the final draft, for consideration by Cabinet in December. The strategy has been developed through working in partnership with key stakeholders, businesses and employers, and residents, and is owned by the County Durham Economic Partnership.

Executive summary

- 2 In December 2021, the Council's Cabinet agreed to the process for developing a new Inclusive Economic Strategy (IES). The first stage in creating the IES was to produce a comprehensive economic evidence base to understand our economy. This was captured in an Economic Statement which provides the strong foundations to make evidence-based decisions about the future of our economy. The Statement provides clarity on how the economy is performing and what are the opportunities and challenges. This has informed the IES vision, priorities, and areas of focus - such as our strengths in advanced manufacturing, key opportunity sectors for growth, and addressing the causes of economic inactivity around health. The IES is not prepared in isolation but links across a number of other strategies and work undertaken by partners, a list is shown at Appendix 2.
- 3 The journey and partnership working to build the strategy have been as important as the final document. The Big Econ-versation was undertaken between 31 January and 22 April 2022 and was widely

promoted including through press releases, social media, case studies, a radio advert for Smooth NE, bus panels and digital media. There were also 86 events held and attended by over 1500 people which identified key issues to be tackled and suggested some actions to address them. A total of 1455 surveys completed including from 918 residents, 94 businesses and 443 young people were also received.

- 4 Feedback received during the Econ-versation was sense checked in a number of workshops held in July and following preparation of a draft a round of targetted engagement was also undertaken in September.
- 5 The IES is firmly rooted in the Econ-versation that developed a new approach to engaging with our communities and stakeholders. This has provided a detailed understanding of the aspirations and priorities of our residents, partners and businesses and the barriers to creating economic growth that is inclusive for all. The new approach to engagement has also allowed us to re-energise relationships with partners such as CPI, the university and the Further Education colleges, alongside the Economic Partnership who have been integral in developing the IES. More importantly, these partnerships are committed to being the key driving forces in delivering the future vision.
- 6 Our vision for County Durham's future is to have a sustainable, inclusive economy with a diverse range of jobs to meet all skill levels, with targeted training and learning programmes tailored to our employment specialisms and needs of business. We can only achieve this vision by working together with our partners and anchor institutions and in collaboration with our communities.
- 7 This is particularly important in the current circumstances, with cost of living and doing business rising for all. This strategy has been developed alongside the Poverty Action Plan, an important plan to work together with communities so fewer people will be affected by poverty and deprivation in the county. At the same time as responding on the immediate challenges in front of us, we are focused on building a stronger County Durham, one where everyone reaches their potential, and we have a future focused economy.
- 8 The strategy also includes a simple ambition: more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy. To achieve this the IES sets a framework for an inclusive economy, focusing on People, Productivity, Places, Promotion and Planet:
 - People - Delivering our ambition for more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy by enabling residents to access economic opportunities and excel in business and their careers

- Productivity - Delivering our ambition for more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy by supporting local wealth creation and retention
- Places - Delivering our ambition for more and better jobs by developing places and infrastructure so that people and businesses thrive, creating an inclusive, green economy
- Promotion - Delivering our ambition for more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy by promoting our county, assets and opportunities to businesses, investors, visitors and residents
- Planet - Within each of the above headings we have specific actions related to green growth. The target for County Durham to become net zero has been brought forward to 2045. The Climate Emergency Plan sets out how we need to be at the forefront of the clean, green, industrial revolution. This strategy needs to complement these plans by investing in people, technologies, research and development, and business.

9 To make the Inclusive Economic Strategy a reality we will require new ways of working, collaboration and funding from us all as partners. The shift (and reduced funding) as we move to UK Shared Prosperity Fund requires us to think differently to build the resources, we need to deliver this long term strategy. This means that as a county we need to leverage as much external investment as possible through bids into relevant funding calls, by attracting private sector investment, and by creating the conditions for local growth and investment. The Council is able to tailor programmes and use funding to achieve the ambition and priorities set out in this Strategy.

10 Our next steps are to develop a detailed Delivery Plan and monitoring framework to deliver against our Strategy. We will look to engage partners, residents and communities, including Community Champions and Area Action Partnerships, in decision-making and the coproduction of relevant actions and initiatives. The use of a Delivery Plan approach throughout the vision period will enable regular reviews to respond to economic changes; allow priorities to be reassessed and recalibrated by future administrations; and actions to be refined based on whether outcomes are being achieved. This will ensure the IES remains a relevant and live document throughout its lifespan.

Recommendation

11 Economy & Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny members are invited to note the report and pass on any views they have on the Draft Inclusive Economic Strategy.

Background

- 12 In December 2021, the Council's Cabinet agreed to the process for developing a new Inclusive Economic Strategy (IES). The first stage in creating the IES was to produce a comprehensive economic evidence base to understand our economy. This was captured in an Economic Statement which provides the strong foundations to make evidence-based decisions about the future of our economy. The Statement provides clarity on how the economy is performing and what are the opportunities and challenges. This has informed the IES vision, priorities, and areas of focus - such as our strengths in advanced manufacturing, key opportunity sectors for growth, and addressing the causes of economic inactivity around health.
- 13 The journey and partnership working to build the strategy have been as important as the final document. The Big Econ-versation was undertaken between 31 January and 22 April 2022 and was widely promoted including through press releases, social media, case studies, a radio advert for Smooth NE, bus panels and digital media. There were also 86 events held and attended by over 1500 people which identified key issues to be tackled and suggested some actions to address them. A total of 1455 surveys completed including from 918 residents, 94 businesses and 443 young people were also received.
- 14 Feedback received during the Econ-versation was sense checked in a number of workshops held in July and following preparation of a draft a round of targetted engagement was also undertaken in September.
- 15 The IES is firmly rooted in the Econ-versation that developed a new approach to engaging with our communities and stakeholders. This has provided a detailed understanding of the aspirations and priorities of our residents, partners and businesses and the barriers to creating economic growth that is inclusive for all. The new approach to engagement has also allowed us to re-energise relationships with partners such as CPI, the university and the Further Education colleges, alongside the Economic Partnership who have been integral in developing the IES. More importantly, these partnerships are committed to being the key driving forces in delivering the future vision.
- 16 It is this vision that sets a long term plan for County Durham's economy - In 2020 the county agreed the County Durham Plan, but the County Durham Economic Partnership was working to a strategy from 2012. If the County Durham Plan looks at where growth will go, the vision sets out how we plan to achieve that growth and who that growth will benefit. Some of this builds on the excellent work that is already taking place, but establishes clarity of direction and clear priorities to inform future

decision making and drive a step change in delivering economic growth for the county.

- 17 Once approved the IES will provide the bold ambitious long-term vision, and a framework as to how that vision will be delivered. The next stage of strategy development will be to create a detailed short to medium Delivery Plan through the County Durham Economic Partnership. Applying a Delivery Plan approach will allow the adoption of a long term vision until 2035 that provides clarity, consistency and confidence, but then allows flexibility in delivery. The development of a series of Delivery Plans throughout the vision period will enable regular reviews to respond to economic changes; allow priorities to be reassessed and recalibrated by future administrations; and actions to be refined based on whether outcomes are being achieved.

Inclusive Economic Strategy

Vision

- 18 The key to delivering an inclusive economy for County Durham is to have a clear, bold and ambitious vision for the future, developed in partnership, and to which all our partners have signed up to deliver. This long-term economic vision for County Durham in 2035 balances our need to growth with achieving prosperity for all. At the same time as responding on the immediate challenges in front of us, we are focused on building a stronger County Durham, one where everyone realises their ambitions in a modern green economy firmly focused on the future.
- 19 By 2035 County Durham will be a sustainable, inclusive economy with a diverse range of jobs to meet all skill levels, with targeted training and learning programmes tailored to our employment specialisms and needs of business.
- 20 We will have strengthened the existing strong partnership working in the county, with agile support for businesses, residents, and places to transform the economies in all our communities - a catalyst that mines our assets in new and imaginative ways and delivers recovery and renewal rooted in our place to reconnect people, places, history, culture, and land.
- 21 The county will balance growth with prosperity for all and support for cost of living. At the same time as responding on the immediate challenges in front of us, we are focused on building a stronger County Durham, one where everyone reaches their potential and we have a future focused economy. That is the focus of this long term strategy.

Developing our Inclusive Economic Strategy

- 22 This is a strategy of our county, not of one organisation, and has been codeveloped in partnership. It takes a holistic view of what the economy needs so that all people and places can contribute to and benefit from growth and the county's success, whilst having a positive impact on the planet. Our first County Durham Inclusive Economic Strategy has been developed by the County Durham Economic Partnership with residents, businesses, anchor institutions, and the voluntary and community sector.
- 23 It focuses on inclusive economic growth and aligns with existing strategies and plans in place across the county, including council documents such as the County Durham Plan, Climate Emergency Response Plan, Digital Strategy, Poverty Action Plan and UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan, plus regional strategies from the North East LEP. It does not describe everything that is happening in the county or replicate other documents.
- 24 This strategy is deliverable and realistic. It will address immediate and long-term opportunities and challenges, giving a 2035 perspective. We will use this strategy as the vision and strategic framework to coordinate activity it is designed to be inclusive for new ideas as they emerge.
- 25 It recognises the excellent work we are already doing as partners across the county and identifies areas for further focus. This is about County Durham activity and where we have agency as a partnership, focusing on county-wide and place-based actions where it makes sense, rather than giving national or regional solutions.
- 26 We will codevelop in partnership our 4-year Delivery Plan, which will include our first set of detailed actions to deliver a step change for the county, as well as other documents. This will build on and coordinate the project and programme ideas that we have collated from the Big Econ-versation and stakeholder engagement. We will consider and add transformational projects and programmes as our Delivery Plan is refreshed and updated.

Our Focus

- 27 Our overarching focus for this strategy is to create more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy.
- 28 This means:
- More jobs, in the county's broad business base

- Better jobs, to ensure that residents can access secure work that pays a living wage
- Inclusive, to ensure that the benefits of growth are shared fairly amongst our people and places
- Green, to ensure that activity contributes to the 2045 goal of net zero carbon County Durham

Delivering Our Vision

29 We have developed a strategic framework to co-ordinate delivery against our vision and ambition. This focuses on the five Ps: People, Productivity, Places, Promotion and Planet. It will be delivered through a sixth P: Partnerships.

People - We will support people into education, training, jobs, and to excel in business and their careers

- Priority 1: Raising skills levels, including higher and green skills, directly targeted to what employers need
- Priority 2: Overcome barriers into employment, including work readiness, skills, improved careers advice and guidance, and addressing poor health
- Priority 3: Increase in-work progression and upskilling linked to new opportunities
- Priority 4: Harness economic growth to Improve health and wellbeing outcomes and transform life choices

Links to Planet

30 Delivering our ambition for more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy by reaching net zero by 2045 through a just transition that creates good jobs, by promoting green skills and jobs pathways within the countywide Careers Service and expanding energy networks and partnerships.

Productivity - We will support business innovation, growth, and higher levels of productivity

- Priority 1: Harness the power of our major employment sectors and accelerate our opportunity sectors
- Priority 2: Provide excellent support at all stages for businesses to start-up, sustain, thrive and grow in County Durham

- Priority 3: Expand the thriving innovation ecosystem
- Priority 4: Drive good business practices, including improving health in the workplace

Links to Planet

- 31 Delivering our ambition for more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy by reaching net zero by 2045 through a just transition that creates good jobs, by developing a Green Park with Enterprise Zone status and encouraging the adoption of circular economy approaches amongst businesses and Build the retrofit evergreen fund to support more businesses to adapt their premises.

Places - We will improve places and plan infrastructure so that people and businesses can access opportunities

- Priority 1: Build vibrant and diverse towns and villages
- Priority 2: Unlock employment land for high quality premises
- Priority 3: Improve physical connectivity between places in the county
- Priority 4: Enhance digital infrastructure and connectivity

Links to Planet

- 32 Delivering our ambition for more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy by reaching net zero by 2045 through a just transition that creates good jobs, by promoting Durham as a compact county by exploring the development of 20-minute neighbourhoods and encourage biodiversity and protecting nature by enhancing green space and supporting woodland expansion and urban greening.

Promotion - We will promote our county, assets and opportunities to businesses, investors, visitors, developers and residents

- Priority 1: Develop a clear brand and place marketing
- Priority 2: Attract inward investment in the sectors and places it makes sense
- Priority 3: Grow a year-round visitor economy
- Priority 4: Enhance cultural and creative infrastructure

Links to Planet

- 33 Delivering our ambition for more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy by reaching net zero by 2045 through a just transition that creates good jobs, by encouraging active travel as part of the visitor economy offer.

Delivering Our Strategy

- 34 The Inclusive Economic Strategy is an ambitious economic strategy to 2035. It sets out our vision for a new economic future and has a clear focus on how we will deliver this through more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy. It will create a strong identity for the county, develop our strengths, address inequalities, and better connect residents to existing and new opportunities. This could have enormous positive impact both locally and for the UK economy.
- 35 To make it a reality will require new ways of working, collaboration and funding from us all as partners. The shift (and reduced funding) as we move to UK Shared Prosperity Fund requires us to think differently to build the resources we need to deliver this long term strategy. This means that as a county we need to leverage as much external investment as possible through bids into relevant funding calls, by attracting private sector investment, and by creating the conditions for local growth and investment. The Council is able to tailor programmes and use funding to achieve the ambition and priorities set out in this Strategy.

Delivery Plan

- 36 Our next steps are to develop a detailed Delivery Plan and monitoring framework to deliver against our Strategy. The Economic Partnership will engage stakeholders, residents and communities, including Community Champions and Area Action Partnerships, in decision-making and the coproduction of relevant actions and initiatives.

Monitoring Progress

- 37 We want to monitor our progress in delivering more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy. We will take a bold and innovative approach to transforming our economy – trying new ideas and evaluating them to understand what works.
- 38 The table below summarises a set of high-level outcome measures that reflect the priorities in this strategy and we will use to monitor progress. We will also link to the metrics included in the Climate Emergency Plan to monitor our progress in the Planet pillar.

Pillar	Outcome measures
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents with high level skills (NVQ Level 4 & 5) • Residents who are economically inactive but want a job • Residents in employment • 18-24 year old residents in employment • Disabled residents in employment • Healthy life expectancy of residents • GVA per capita • Employee jobs earning Real Living Wage or higher
Productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of jobs • Proportion of higher-level jobs • Job density • Number of businesses • GVA • GVA per filled job • County Durham Procurement Family budget spend in the county
Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of neighbourhoods in the most 10% most deprived nationally • Town centre vacancy rate • Public transport connectivity • Employment land take up • Occupancy rate of council business premises • Premises with gigabit connectivity
Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor expenditure • Number of visitors • Number of inward investment projects secured and value
Planet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to metrics included in the Climate Emergency Plan

Conclusion and Next Steps

- 39 The Inclusive Economic Strategy is an ambitious long-term economic strategy to 2035. It provides a wider strategy for the economy, businesses and residents, complementing our overall vision, spatial strategy and plans to reduce the impacts of climate change and poverty, and is fully integrated with regional and national policy.
- 40 We are incredibly grateful to the individuals, communities and organisations who have been part of the development of this strategy. This is only the first step on our inclusive economic journey.
- 41 We invite you to be part of turning this into a reality now, identifying where and how you want to be involved in delivery. We will be setting

up the Citizen Panel to ensure that residents have their say throughout, and the Economic Partnership will work with the broad partner base to codevelop actions.

- 42 We've already achieved so much in the county. This strategy sets out our path for the next decade and how we will, in 2035, be a sustainable, inclusive economy with a diverse range of jobs to meet all skill levels, with targeted training and learning programmes tailored to our employment specialisms and needs of business.

Background Papers

- Draft Inclusive Economic Strategy (attached)

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

The Inclusive Economic Strategy will aid in negotiations for the devolution of powers from the Government.

Finance

The Inclusive Economic Strategy will be used to inform decisions on how the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and other national and regional funding is spent. It will also be used to attract private investment to the county.

Consultation

Our Big Econ-versation ran from 31 January to 22 April 2022. Targetted consultation on the emerging draft strategy was also undertaken across September.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

The Council will take all opportunities to get feedback from hard to reach groups across the county and the strategy will be accompanied by an equalities impact assessment.

Climate Change

The Planet and the green economy is one of the key elements of the IES and each pillar has a section which considers net zero and other environmental considerations.

Human Rights

None.

Crime and Disorder

None.

Staffing

None.

Accommodation

None.

Risk

None.

Procurement

Consultants have been procured to support Our Big Econ-versation, develop a county deal proposal, and draft the new Inclusive Economic Strategy.

Appendix 2 – List of related strategies and work

- Inclusive Economic Strategy Delivery Plan
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Investment Plan
- Poverty Action Plan
- Approach to Wellbeing Self-Assessment Framework
- Child and Young People’s Strategy
- Strategic Partnership Approach to Early Help
- Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy
- Framework for good workforce mental health in County Durham businesses
- Better Health at Work award
- County Durham Pound
- County Durham Plan
- Towns and Villages Programme Investment Plan
- Masterplans
- Place Strategy
- Local Transport Plan
- Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans
- North East Bus Service Improvement Plan
- Digital Strategy
- Digital Durham
- Project Gigabit
- Connectivity Strategy
- Internationalisation Strategy
- Culture Durham and Visit County Durham work
- Durham 2025 Cultural Programme
- Climate Emergency Recovery Plan



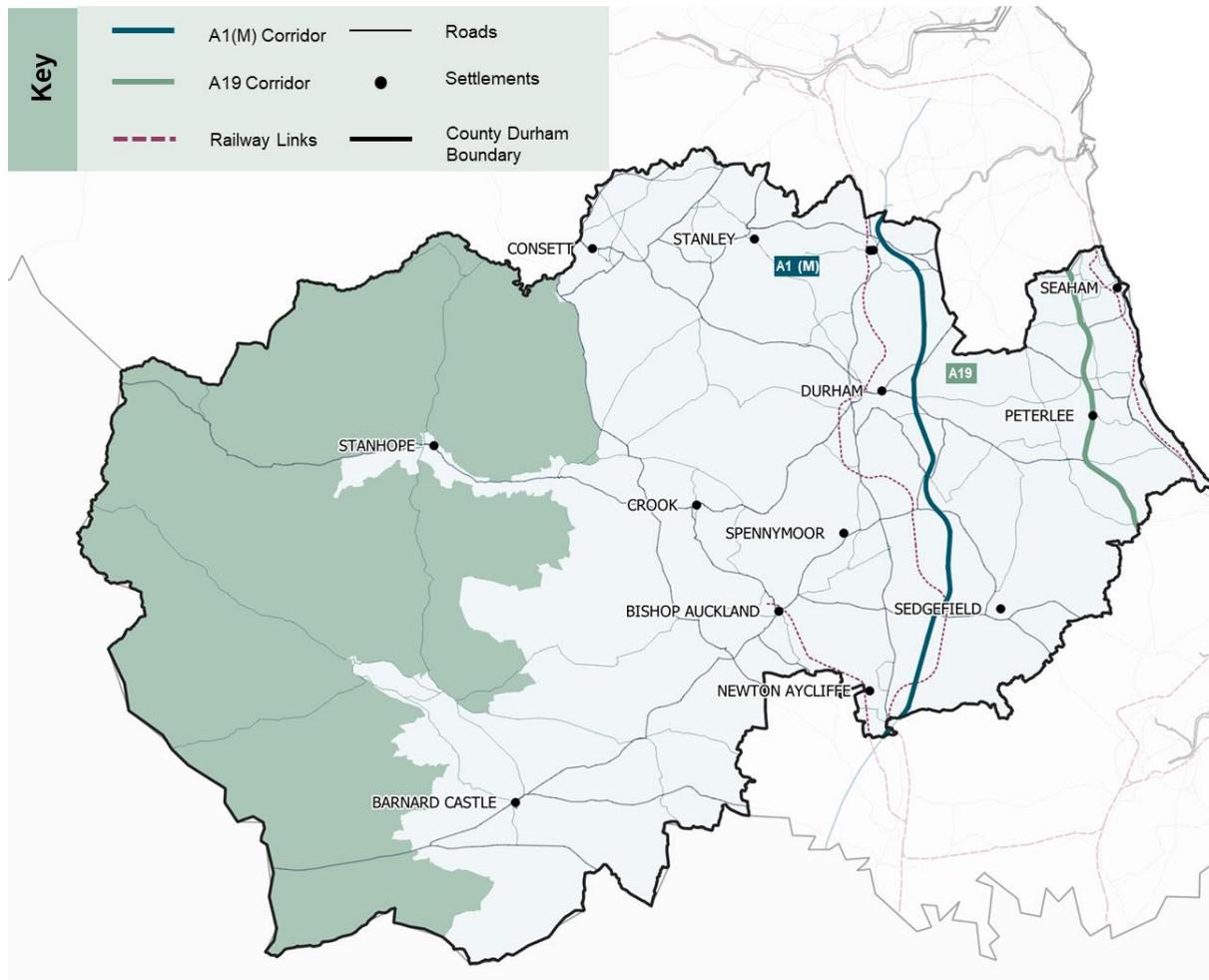
Better for everyone

Inclusive and green County Durham: a sustainable economy for a diverse county

Inclusive Economic Strategy

DRAFT October 2022





This strategy has been developed by the County Durham Economic Partnership. The Partnership has representation from the private sector, voluntary and social enterprise, statutory agencies and elected representatives from Durham County Council that work together to drive a common purpose and ambition for economic development and regeneration activity in County Durham. As a business led partnership the Chair and Vice Chair are elected from the private sector.

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Foreword

[PLACEHOLDER]

DRAFT

Economic vision for County Durham

The key to delivering an inclusive economy for County Durham is to have a clear, **bold** and **ambitious** vision for the future, developed in partnership, and to which all our partners have signed up to deliver. This long term economic vision for County Durham in 2035 balances our need to grow whilst achieving prosperity for all. At the same time as responding on the immediate challenges in front of us, we are focused on building a stronger County Durham, one where everyone realises their ambitions in a modern green economy firmly focused on the future.

In achieving the vision we will have strengthened the existing strong partnership working in the county, with agile support for businesses, residents, and places to transform the economies in all our communities. This will be a catalyst that mines our assets and history in new and imaginative ways, delivering recovery and renewal rooted in our place to reconnect people, places, history, culture, and land.

By 2035 County Durham will be a sustainable, inclusive economy with a diverse range of jobs to meet all skill levels, with targeted training and learning programmes tailored to our employment specialisms and needs of business.

At the heart of our strategy is innovation. County Durham has been at the forefront of economic progress for generations, producing the fuel, power and materials that drove the industrial revolution. Our economy has continued to adapt and evolve to become a leader in advanced manufacturing and space and satellite applications. County Durham is currently seizing the opportunities of green technology and our mining past to use the landscape to provide new sustainable energy to power our future growth.

We have a world leading university that will continue to attract international research and development, headquarters and talent to the county. We will harness our proud industrial heritage, skills, and employment land to manufacture the products of our innovation. This will allow us to create high value jobs and skilled and aspirational pathways for all our communities.

Innovation is so much more than just the work of higher education. Our strength will continue to be the innovation that takes place in all our businesses - from small independents to big multinationals. We will support our businesses to be at the forefront of research and development, to increase productivity, to fuel growth, and to create more and better-quality jobs.

It is these better-quality jobs that will raise the aspirations in all our communities, and particularly our young people. There is no greater impact on people's health and well-being than access to good quality housing, education, training, and meaningful employment. Overcoming these barriers for those in poor health will not only improve the quality of people's lives but will allow the county's economy to thrive.

We will focus on the barriers that individuals face by taking a person-focused approach that incorporates targeted skills training. We will raise educational

attainment and improve health outcomes. And we will improve the County's transport network and infrastructure to support employment opportunities while homes across the County will be digitally connected to embrace the new opportunities of home and hybrid working. The job market will also offer more flexible and part time roles that fit around people's daily lives and circumstances.

To maximise the benefits of economic growth we will target key areas of opportunity, including research and advanced manufacturing, focused on our emerging green jobs, electronics, digital and creative, fintech, life sciences and satellite applications sectors. Inward investment will also be directly focused on these specialisms and ecosystems to create sustainable supply chains and jobs across the county and beyond.

A strong County Durham needs to look beyond its boundaries, and will benefit from a strong, integrated, collaborative North East. County Durham has the potential, skills, and natural resources to be the economic driver of the whole region. Our key A1 and A19 corridor, with unrivalled travel links to both the north and south, and the improved A66 connecting east to west, will provide more jobs in a range of sectors on key strategic employment sites. And we will support our large rural communities to diversify, driving forward digital and mobile connectivity to support home working and remote access to high-value employment that can underpin local services and successful resilient places.

Our celebrated heritage, natural beauty, high quality tourist attractions, and our people will attract investment for growth in the visitor economy, creating more quality jobs in the high spend overnight stay tourism. And our investment in tourism will be both sustainable and respectful of our communities, ensuring visitors underpin our uniquely beautiful Durham city and vibrant towns, villages and landscapes that support jobs and local services for our residents.

Executive Summary

The County Durham Economic Partnership is delighted to present County Durham's first Inclusive Economic Strategy, codeveloped with and for residents, businesses, and the voluntary and community sector. It has been a year in development. It builds on the 2021 Economic Review and Economic Statement; since then, over 3,000 residents, businesses and organisations contributed through the Big Econ-Versation, suggesting ideas and priorities to help the county accelerate towards an inclusive and green future.

We have strong economic foundations. In 2022 our new green economy is growing; we are developing specialisms in emerging sectors like fintech and advanced materials, our global university is expanding, our cultural industries are emerging, and partners are committing investment to ensure our creative potential is realised. Pages 12 to 17 set out the economic opportunities and challenges facing our county today.

This is not a traditional economic strategy. We have designed the strategy to be inclusive – ensuring that all our residents can benefit from and contribute to prosperity and growth through secure work and optimum pay. We start this strategy with a bold 2035 vision (set out on page 4) to create a step change in the county's economic future and we finish with a commitment to support those who face additional barriers to inclusion (page 37). This will create County Durham's inclusive economy.

At the heart of this strategy is a clear focus: **more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy.**

More jobs, in the county's broad business base.

Better jobs, to ensure that residents can access secure work that pays fairly.

Inclusive, to ensure that the benefits of growth are shared fairly amongst our people and places.

Green, to ensure that activity contributes to the 2045 goal of net zero carbon County Durham.

This document sets out the strategic framework to deliver this focus through the 5 Ps, on People, Productivity, Places, Promotion and Planet. 16 priorities are set out on pages 21 to 35. Reflecting feedback through the process, Planet priorities are embedded into the other Ps, recognising the importance of Planet and net zero in all our activity and future plans.

The strategy is designed to steer and inform delivery; flexible to reflect changing economic circumstances, with actions that are updated and refreshed every few years. This doesn't start with a blank sheet of paper. There are already many examples of good work happening across the county. This document builds on what we are already doing as partners and our direction of travel for creating a step change.

The 2021 Economic Statement identified high level targets; by 2035 the county will bridge the gap with national performance across key measures around employment, unemployment, higher level skills, and higher level occupations. Detail is contained on page 36. Alongside this, we have developed measurements which we will use to guide delivery under each P. These are set out at the end of each of the Ps chapters, and are also collated on page 38.

Delivery through partnerships

The Inclusive Economic Strategy has been codeveloped with partners and will be delivered by a wide range of partners, businesses, community groups and key stakeholders, led by the County Durham Economic Partnership. We will also continue to work with our regional and national partners. We are now moving to delivery of our clear and agreed long term vision, working collaboratively to codevelop and deliver against a 4-year Delivery Plan.

The accompanying Delivery Plan(s) will set out detailed actions which will deliver a step change for the county, with next steps, lead partner(s), timescales, funding routes and deliverability status. We have already received significant input from residents and business from the Big Econ-versation and through stakeholder engagement, which has informed this strategy and will inform delivery.

As we implement and embed this strategy, we will build on our Big Econ-versation approach and our track record of partnerships to develop new ways of working with businesses and residents. We will establish a Civic Panel to involve residents in decisions about priorities and delivery. And we will develop a set of outcome measures, and targets to monitor progress collectively.

This is the start of our inclusive economic journey, one which will create more and better jobs in County Durham.

A Framework for more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy: The five Ps



1 Introducing the Inclusive Economic Strategy



Inclusive in development

Through the Big Conversation



Inclusive and green in design

Going beyond a traditional economic strategy



Inclusive in delivery

Delivered as a partnership

This is a strategy of our county, codeveloped by the County Durham Economic Partnership with residents, businesses, and the voluntary and community sector.

It focuses on inclusive growth. Inclusive growth is defined by the RSA Inclusive Growth Commission as ‘enabling as many people as possible to contribute to and benefit from growth’.¹ This can be socially, benefitting groups that may face high barriers to quality employment, and place-based by addressing inequalities between different geographies. Moving to a new model of inclusive growth means integrating economic and social policy and seeing investment in social infrastructure on the same level as investment in physical infrastructure.

This strategy is ambitious yet deliverable and realistic. It will address immediate and long-term opportunities and challenges, looking toward the 2035 Economic Vision. We will use this strategy as the vision and strategic framework to provide the social and physical infrastructure to match the aspirations of our communities and residents and deliver tangible change to people’s lives.

It builds on work that is already underway across the county and identifies areas for further focus that will bring about transformative changes. We will build on the good work already being done by partners across this county to deliver this strategy, focusing on the priorities and areas which can really make a difference to County Durham.

It aligns with existing strategies and plans in place across the county, including council documents such as the County Durham Plan, Climate Emergency Response Plan, Digital Strategy, the Durham 2025 UK City of Culture bid, Poverty Action Plan, Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan, plus regional strategies from the North East LEP. It does not describe everything that is happening in the county or replicate other documents.

This is about County Durham activity and where we have agency as a partnership, focusing on county-wide and place-based actions where it makes sense, rather than giving national or regional solutions.

¹ RSA (2017) Inclusive Growth Commission. Making our Economy Work for Everyone.

We will codevelop with partners our 4-year Delivery Plan, which will include our first set of detailed actions to deliver a step change for the county, as well as other documents. This will build on and coordinate the project and programme ideas that we have collated from the Big Econ-versation and stakeholder engagement. We will consider and add transformational projects and programmes as our Delivery Plan is refreshed and updated.

Delivered as a Partnership

As the County Durham Economic Partnership, we will draw on our close links with our business community to deliver shared goals and gather intelligence of what is needed to support business growth and success. We also work in partnership to promote our cultural and visitor economy sectors.

Across County Durham, 12 anchor institutions are part of the County Durham Procurement Family, working together through the County Durham Pound, to increase local spend, build capacity in our local businesses, develop strong, local supply chains, and support local businesses growth. There is also close working between Durham County Council and the County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust; we have a diverse voluntary and community sector that works to improve the lives of people in the county and support their communities, both by providing services and through volunteering opportunities.

We collaborate closely across the North East. There is potential to leverage the presence of our globally leading university and our colleges as anchor institutions to deliver the strategy, working with regional partners and communities on skills, economic development, place, culture and heritage, building on the memorandum of understanding (MOU) between Durham County Council and Durham University

Alongside work with partners, we will build on our Big Econ-versation approach to create a Citizens' Panel, which brings together residents in a form of deliberative democracy, to allow residents and communities have a say in local decision making and direction setting around the inclusive economic strategy delivery plan.

Our roadmap for developing and delivering our Inclusive Economic Strategy



2 Economic performance



£8.8bn GVA
26.8% growth
(2006-20) (national:
49.6%)



168,500 jobs
3.7% growth (2010-
20) (national: 11.8%)



14,600 businesses
27.3% growth
(2010-21) (national:
33.8%)



533,100 residents
7.1% growth (2000-20)
(national: 14.3%)

In 2021 we launched the [County Durham Economic Statement](#) following the Economic Review. The Statement set out headline economic strengths and challenges. In particular it highlighted the county's lower prosperity with GVA per capita of £16,490, which is 55.4% of the national average (£29,757), and the importance of raising productivity in the country, addressing the growing gap of £1.6bn per annum between the county and national performance. It proposed that our high level targets seek to bridge the gap with national performance across key measures around employment, unemployment, higher level skills, and higher level occupations.

Below are some of the economic review's findings that have informed this strategy.

The economy today

Our economy has transformed over the past 3 decades and County Durham sits at the heart of the North East, with the biggest population and the strongest economic connectivity from the Tyne to the Tees. Many of our strategic employment sites are concentrated along the north to south axes of the A1(M) and A19 in the east of the county. Businesses in County Durham are part of multiple regional, national and international supply chains and we benefit from proximity to major growth centres including Teesside Freeport and the Darlington Economic Campus.

The county has high levels of employment with an unemployment rate of 4.2% compared to the 4.6% England average.² With strong road and rail links across the region, we have a highly connected labour market. At the time of Census 2011, almost 90,000 people commuted between County Durham and the rest of the North East. The employment pipeline is fuelled by the county's good quality schools where educational attainment is above the national average at Key Stage 4.³ We have four successful further education colleges and are home to the North East Institute of Technology, which provides specialist training in construction, engineering, manufacturing and digital sectors.

² ONS Annual Population Survey (2021)

³ ekosgen (March 2021) County Durham Economic Review Final Report

The county has attracted new investment, delivering regional and national growth. This has been possible through the development of key emerging industries, strong strategic infrastructure, a range of employment sites and a connected labour market. The industrial economy remains a strength anchored by the large and productive manufacturing base. It is the largest source of full-time, well-paid jobs and the workforce productivity easily exceeds the national average.



25,000
jobs in advanced
manufacturing

The county is also set to capitalise on new subsectors and opportunities. Space & satellites, fintech and the green economy are emerging as new opportunities, which will in turn create new jobs for residents. We are the second highest renewable energy generator in the North East with strengths in geothermal energy and onshore wind,⁴ and are home to innovative businesses leading the way in sustainability.

The county benefits from a number of major strategic employment sites. Aykley Heads, an attractive city centre business location primed for delivery next to Durham’s main train station, is growing as a knowledge cluster, home to innovative businesses generating new ideas around technology and the service economy. The county is home to NETPark, a premier science park in Sedgfield, and some of the UK’s leading innovation institutions, including the Centre for Process Innovation (CPI), as well as clusters in Durham City and Newton Aycliffe.

Durham University is a significant asset, which attracts students and researchers from across the globe. 90% of its research is rated as world-leading or internationally excellent¹ and the university is one of the county’s major employers, with 4,155 full-time equivalent staff totalling 5% of the county’s total employment.¹ The university has strong ties to the wider North East, working with other academic institutions to build a strong research and access to finance base. The university also has a strong local focus, working with local businesses and entrepreneurs to grow the innovation base.

Alongside this, the health sector has a large employment base in the county which supports and ensures the well-being of our residents and communities. We have the highest number of jobs in life sciences and pharmaceutical manufacturing in the North East and a large health sector.⁵ This sector is a good source of employment opportunities across a broad range of skill levels, with continued high demand generating new job opportunities each year.



2,000 life science &
pharma jobs and
25,000 in health and
care



10,000+
jobs in tourism & supply
chain



16m visitors and
£827m spend

The arts, entertainment and recreation sector has been growing faster (50%) than the North East average (23%) between 2009 and 2019. Arts, culture and tourism sectors have huge growth potential, capitalising on the strong culture and heritage offer, beautiful countryside

⁴ Durham County Council (2019) Climate Emergency Update Report

⁵ Life sciences and pharmaceuticals – North East LEP Evidence Hub – Local Business; health and care - ekosgen (March 2021) County Durham Economic Review Final Report



Better for everyone

and coast, with the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Beauty.

County Durham is a large and mainly rural county – the 8th largest in the country by population – Durham City and Bishop Auckland act as major centres but two in five residents live in rural areas. The national shift to home and hybrid working is potentially transformative for the county in terms of land use and access to better quality jobs and wages. It has the potential to overcome transport issues, allow densification of office space so smaller footprints can support more jobs and economic activity, spreading spend across the county rather than focusing it in major employment sectors, improving quality of life and well-being impacts.

The county is growing, with housing and employment growth plans set out in detail in the County Durham Plan. Our abundant land supply is one of the key economic assets to facilitate this. Future growth prospects will seek to achieve sustainable growth which will benefit both urban and rural areas of the county, investing in our town and village centres and place-based regeneration while respecting the landscape and natural assets, ensuring they are providing quality environments for people to live and visit.

We are proud of the county’s progress, but we cannot stand still.

The past five years have seen the country face multiple shocks and change. High inflation is having wide ranging repercussions for energy and material prices. Businesses and communities have time and again proved resilient to change and external pressures; however the recent pandemic, and UK wide energy price increases and financing pressures, provide a very real risk of drawing the county’s residents into poverty and constrain our businesses. Reduced consumer spend will impact local and town centre businesses who are reopening in the county after two years of disrupted trade. The Council’s Poverty Action Plan provides a complementary strategy which will be vital in this tough economic environment.



Some places and people face long-term – sometimes intergenerational – barriers to employment, resulting in deprivation and inequality, primarily in the east and north of the county. Almost 1 in 4 jobs in the county earn below the Real Living Wage and an estimated 21% percent of households across the county live in relative poverty before housing costs.⁶ We have high levels of deprivation with 12% of neighbourhoods in the 10% most deprived in the county.

⁶ Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (2020) Employee jobs with hourly pay below the living wage. Based on the Living Wage Foundation’s calculation of the Real Living Wage, which at the time was £9.30 outside of London.

Whilst the county is seeing low unemployment rates in 2022, economic inactivity levels are high, mainly driven by long-term health conditions, with 24,700 people economically inactive due to long-term health conditions and another 18,600 due to caring responsibilities.⁷ Average healthy life expectancy is 59, five years lower than the UK average, and this varies by 13 years across the county. This means on average our residents live 20 years in poor health and in the lowest performing neighbourhoods up to 25 years.⁸ This requires tackling the multiple barriers people face at the right time and in a joined-up way.



25%
neighbourhoods in the
most deprived 10% for
health

The majority of our businesses are micro, small and medium size employers. They are at risk of rising costs; after 2 years of pandemic trading conditions their resilience & cash flow to manage turbulent conditions may be reduced. Our successful manufacturing base (one of the largest employment sectors in the county) are heavy energy users and as global traders they face rising costs of doing business.

The county has good North-South connectivity however, some areas see limited public transport options or major roads, especially to some of our more rural areas. Our large, rural geography means residents are often reliant on cars for commuting, and the cost and availability of transport may be a barrier for access to work and training opportunities. Public transport networks are of key importance, connecting people to employment and services and allowing young people to access education at our good quality schools and colleges.

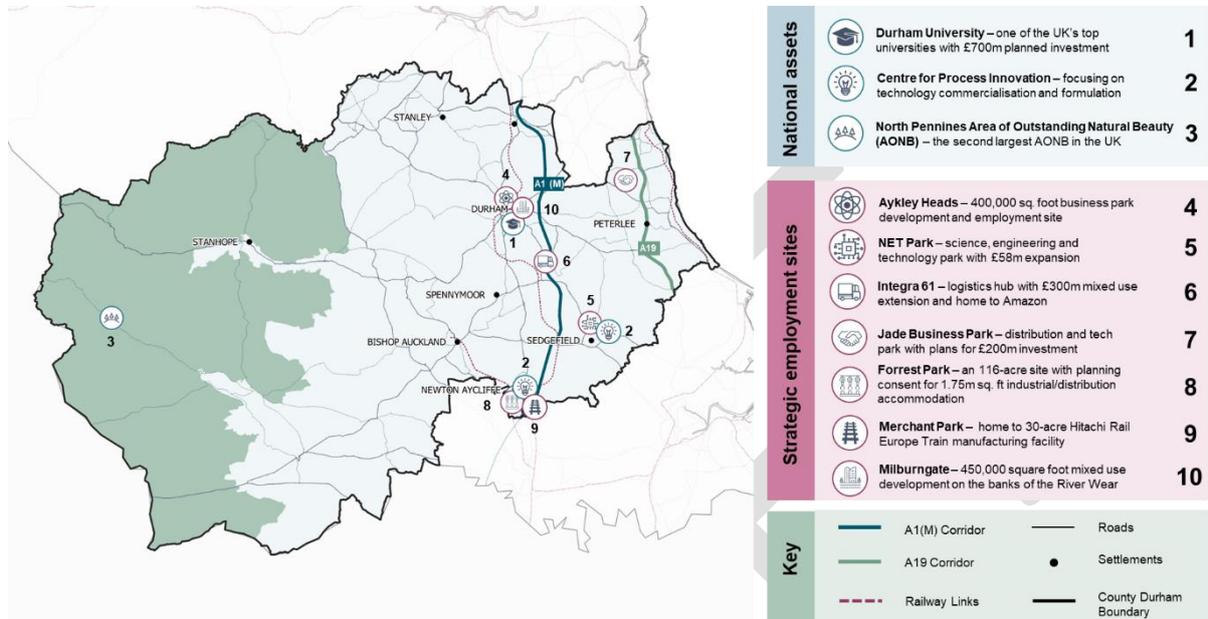
If we continue business as usual it's likely that the county will see some businesses, residents and places thriving, and others feeling left behind. This is not an inclusive model of growth; already the county's economy is growing slower than the national average, productivity and prosperity is lower and the gap is widening. It is vital that we join the dots between the areas that are doing well and close the gap with national performance in order to improve local wages, quality of life, health and wellbeing for all residents and parts of the county.

⁷ ONS Annual Population Survey (2020)

⁸ Health deprivation – MHCLG Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019); ONS Life Expectancies (2018-20)

County Durham’s national assets and strategic employment sites

DRAFTING NOTE: THIS MAP AND DESCRIPTIONS OF COUNTY DURHAM TOWNS AND RURAL AREAS IS HOLDING TEXT ONLY AND WILL BECOME A 2 PAGE DESIGNED UP MAP WITH PULL OUT BOXES TO SHOWCASE THE VARIETY OF THE COUNTY’S PACES AND ASSETS – POTENTIALLY THIS COULD SIT BETWEEN THE PLACES AND PROMOTION ‘P’S



<p>Barnard Castle A market town in the Durham Dales and tourism honeypot site, named after and built around the medieval castle ruin, set on a high rock above the River Tees. The main employment and service centre for Teesdale, with the Auction Mart located in the town and home to GlaxoSmithKline.</p>	<p>Newton Aycliffe The largest town outside of Durham City, located in the south of the county, close to Darlington. Home to the largest business park in the North East and manufacturers including 3M and Husqvarna. The Hitachi Rail manufacture and assembly plant at Merchant Park, producing rolling stock for East Coast and Great Western Trains.</p>
<p>Bishop Auckland Located in the Vale of Durham, above a meander in the River Wear. A growing tourist destination with Auckland Castle, the Food Festival, Kynren and other attractions. Recent investment of £72.1m in the town.</p>	<p>Peterlee A new town in East Durham built on rolling hills overlooking the Durham limestone coast and rural farmland. Several major national and international manufacturers are based there, including Caterpillar and ZF.</p>
<p>Chester-le-Street Located on the River Wear and home of the international Riverside Cricket Ground with a rich history and heritage.</p>	<p>Seaham A town on Durham’s Heritage Coast with the sandy North Beach, Harbour Marina and beautiful coastal footpaths.</p>



<p>Good transport links to London and Edinburgh via the East Coast Mainline.</p>	<p>There are established business parks at Spectrum, Dawdon, Seaham Grange, and Jade in Murton.</p>
<p>Consett Sitting above the Derwent Valley, on the edge of the Pennines, Consett is located in close proximity to Durham City and Newcastle. The town has historical industrial strengths. The town has regenerated since the closure of the steelworks. Important employers located in Consett include Thomas Swan, Erwin Hymer, and Gardner Aerospace.</p>	<p>Spennymoor Located in the south east of the county, within easy reach of scenic beauty spots and well connected to Tyneside, Wearside and Teesside. The town is home to large employers including Thorn Lighting, Tridonic, Stanley Black and Decker, and Learniohn Curve. There have been recent redevelopments of industrial sites and creation of a mixed used development at Durhamgate.</p>
<p>Crook A market town in the south west of County Durham on the edge of Weardale. A former mining town with manufacturing heritage. The town centre has benefited from investment in Market Place and North Terrace.</p>	<p>Stanley A town in the north of the county with good accessibility across the county and to Gateshead and Newcastle. Major employment sites include Tanfield Lea Industrial Estate and Greencroft Industrial Park.</p>

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3 What we heard in the Big Econ-versation

The Economic Partnership have taken a bold and inclusive approach to co-developing the strategy. We wanted a more creative way of engaging, starting with a conversation with business, residents, voluntary sector, and wider groups before a plan was developed, to really understand aspirations and opportunities. Over January to April 2022, we engaged with residents, businesses, young people, anchor institutions and partners through our Big Econ-versation. In September 2022 we undertook further engagement, asking residents for feedback on the strategic framework.

Our Big Econ-versation engaged with 70 organisations and over 1,500 people through 86 conversations across the county. In addition, 1,455 surveys were completed by residents, businesses, and young people. We heard about the issues people face as they seek to grow and prosper, we asked what people would prioritise in this strategy, and we listened to ideas for interventions and policy direction that will help drive economic growth.

Our residents said...

More good quality jobs

and ensuring these are accessible to local people is a major priority.

Public transport

is a major priority and seen as a barrier to economic opportunities, especially in rural communities

“There has been a historic lack of investment in the area compared to other parts of the country.”

Our businesses said...

A skilled workforce

was viewed as the best way to improve productivity

Skills, digital & transport infrastructure

was seen as the key to economic growth

“My business is in County Durham because I am proud of where I live.”

Our young people said...

c. 57%

of those who plan to go to a university, said they would go to one outside of the county

54%

said they could not or are unsure they could pursue their chosen career or business idea in the county

“I don't know where I want to live; it will depend on work opportunities but I'd like to stay in Durham near my family and friends.”

The Big Econ-versation was widely promoted through press, social, digital and broadcast media. We engaged widely across the county through our existing partnerships and used digital and physical versions of the survey to make sure we reached as many groups as possible.

This has been an opportunity to capture the expectations and thoughts of residents, businesses and communities who will be able to benefit from the opportunities that economic growth will bring and to better understand the challenges faced as they seek to secure employment and embark on careers in the county.

In the Econ-versation we heard that...	By working in partnership, our strategy aims to...
<p>County Durham needs more good quality jobs</p>	<p>Create and grow jobs in our opportunity and major sectors</p> <p>Support more businesses to start and grow here</p> <p>Encourage good business practices</p>
<p>Jobs need to be accessible to local people, through improved public transport, especially in rural and deprived areas, and inclusive skills provision</p>	<p>Make it easier to use our bus services and explore different solutions to help people get around to employment sites in the county and wider region</p> <p>Bring jobs closer to people by investing in digital infrastructure and our town and local centres</p> <p>Provide residents with a better understanding of training and career pathways so they can gain the skills that local and regional businesses need</p>
<p>More needs to be done to market and promote the county</p>	<p>Create a brand for County Durham to encourage people to visit, study, work and live in the county</p> <p>Build a year round visitor economy based on our assets</p>
<p>Investment in places is needed county-wide, particularly in smaller towns and villages</p>	<p>Reimagine our town and local centres by transforming unused retail units into space for cultural and creative enterprises, start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises.</p> <p>Encourage people back into our town centres through events, leisure, and culture</p>
<p>Green economy and climate change is seen as an opportunity for growth, but this needs to protect jobs and not increase costs</p>	<p>Up and reskill residents to work in new green jobs</p> <p>Equip businesses with the tools to transition to net zero</p>

4 Our focus

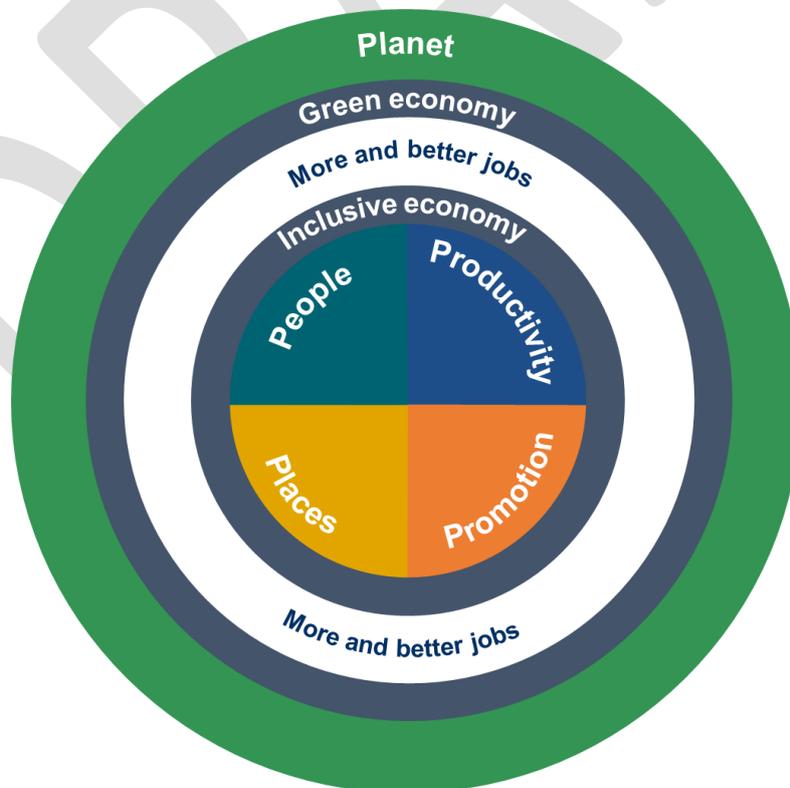
Our overarching focus for this strategy is to create more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy.

This means:

- **More jobs**, in the county’s broad business base
- **Better jobs**, to ensure that residents can access secure work that pays a living wage
- **Inclusive**, to ensure that the benefits of growth are shared fairly amongst our people and places
- **Green**, to ensure that activity contributes to the 2045 goal of net zero carbon County Durham

We have developed a strategic framework to co-ordinate delivery against our vision and ambition. This focuses on the five Ps: People, Productivity, Places, Promotion and Planet. It will be delivered through a sixth P: Partnerships.

Over the following pages Planet priorities are woven into the People, Productivity, Places, and Promotion chapters. This is to recognise the importance and cross cutting nature of planet in all our work.



DELIVERING OUR VISION

5 People

We will support people into education, training, jobs, and to excel in business and their careers.

The Delivery Plan will identify how we will work with training, education, health and employment providers to ensure that skills and training are completely aligned with the jobs and areas for growth identified in this strategy. A focus in improving the quality of intelligence will allow further education (FE), higher education (HE) and training providers to respond to evidenced local skills needs and target our residents furthest from the labour market. Below are the Partnership's People priorities.

1. Raise skills levels, including higher and green skills, directly targeted to what employers need

The county has high quality jobs already and these are likely to grow in our opportunity and major sectors, innovative businesses and public sector. Residents in County Durham have high aspirations; it is important that we harness this aspiration so that residents have the right skills that businesses need to enable them to access local and regional opportunities. Given our highly interconnected North East labour market, we also want our residents to have the maximum opportunity to access the wider regional opportunities from Tyne to Tees.



1 in 3 resident survey respondents reported that they have faced barriers to good skills training, jobs & career progression

We will:

- Align skills provision and training with County Durham and regional major employment and opportunity sectors to create routes into work and talent pipelines
- Provide a wide range of training routes for residents, including through schools, FE, apprenticeships and HE and ensure these are widely understood by young people to understand future skills pathways and working age residents
- Enable FE, HE and training providers to respond to skills gaps and employer demands by improving the quality of intelligence on local skills needs
- Ensure that the skills system responds to residents with lower skills levels and communities furthest from the labour market

2. Overcome barriers into employment, including work readiness, skills, improved careers advice and guidance, and addressing poor health

Approx. one quarter of disabled survey respondents work full-time, compared to over half of non-disabled respondents

43% young people

who responded to the survey were unsure that they could get their future job or start a business in the county

Some residents require bespoke support to access employment opportunities – this requires a joined-up response that may go beyond traditional employment support to address barriers such as connectivity, health, or caring responsibilities. This will enable more residents to become economically active. Young people highlighted the importance of raising awareness of the opportunities available in the county – many knew what they wanted to do in the future but were unsure if the opportunity was available in the county. This is a barrier we need to unblock.

We will:

- Target residents with specific and often intergenerational barriers to employment and unlock employment opportunities in the county, for instance by exploring initiatives such as an intermediate labour market (specially created jobs) and ringfencing
- Develop a countywide approach to Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance, raising awareness of training and career pathways and opportunities in our major employment and opportunity sectors, working with young people from primary education age upwards
- Respond to new ways of accessing services through a network of physical and virtual integrated employment and skills services hubs

3. Increase in-work progression and upskilling linked to new opportunities

Our businesses perform well at offering on and off the job training relative to other places. As the labour market changes, with increased use of technology and new green skills, up & reskilling and progression opportunities will enable people to access higher earnings and increase productivity. For example, housing retrofit is a near time opportunity to improve the quality of our older housing stock, lower household bills, create new jobs, and to link these to residents through up & reskilling.

78% businesses

who filled in the survey saw training the county's workforce as important or very important for driving economic growth (most common answer)

We will:

- Respond to skills and labour demands in the health and care sector, a major employer offering quality employment across a broad range of skill levels, by advancing skills and employment pathways
- Ensure that employers can understand and diagnose their skills and training requirements to empower their workforce and support the productivity and growth of their business
- Promote lifelong learning and progression opportunities for residents linked to new technology and jobs, for instance in the green and digital economy

4. Ensure good health and wellbeing leads to economic inclusion

Improving health outcomes will reduce inequalities and barriers to economic participation, increase productivity and decrease the frequency of days lost to sickness. This effects too many residents and places in the county; better linking economy and health policy and delivery could have a transformational impact. In 2014/15, nationally, 9.9m days were lost to work related stress, depression and anxiety, and the Covid-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on mental health and social isolation.⁹

We will:

- Work with employers to build and maintain healthy workplaces, including active transport for commuting journeys
- Ensure that the health and economy agendas continue to be aligned and work together to deliver positive outcomes for all, building on existing good practice such as where embedded mental health practitioners working alongside job coaches
- Champion public sector service providers to improve individual and community health and wellbeing outcomes through better data sharing and joint working

⁹ Durham County Council (2020) A framework for good workforce mental health in County Durham businesses

Links to Planet

Delivering our ambition for more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy by reaching net zero by 2045 through a just transition that creates good jobs.

- Promoting green skills and jobs pathways within the countywide Careers priority, with a focus on preparing young people for careers at an early stage

Our delivery plan will be measured through improvements in:



6 Productivity

We will support business innovation, growth, and higher levels of productivity

The Delivery Plan will build on the extensive work already underway locally and regionally, working with businesses and representative organisations to understand how and where the Partnership can add value, support the existing business base and create new opportunities for businesses to start and move to the county. These opportunities must be linked to our residents through the People priorities, ensuring that new jobs are created, and residents and young people are given the best chance of accessing those jobs, and our Places priorities, ensuring the infrastructure is ready to support business needs – for example land and digital connectivity. Below are the Partnership’s Productivity priorities.

1. Harness the power of our major employment sectors and accelerate our opportunity sectors

Many businesses surveyed see manufacturing as a future growth sector, highlighting green, renewables and electric vehicles

“The opportunities in skilled manufacture for the green economy are enormous”

Opportunities for growth for businesses in the survey

County Durham has a well-performing manufacturing and engineering sector, large health and care sector and growing visitor economy. Their growth is important to our economy, providing good quality jobs for residents and supply chain opportunities for local businesses. Alongside this County Durham has growing strengths in the green economy, space, advanced material electronics, life sciences, creative & cultural and high growth service sub-sectors, such as fintech. Developing clusters and specialisms in these sectors – linked to the wider North East - has the potential to create high-quality jobs and increase productivity, creating opportunities for inward investment and innovation. Together these will create more and better jobs in the county.

We will:

- Promote identified high growth opportunity sectors through targeted inward investment and skills and training, showcasing career opportunities to young people and attracting entrepreneurs to the region
- Foster collaboration and attract more businesses and investment in our specialisms by linking in to, and in taking a lead in, regional and national

sector and ecosystem support networks and building multifaceted peer-to-peer networks (for example across our green economy)

- Support our SMEs to grow through access to supply chain and exporting opportunities, and ensure that SMEs are linked into university research to unlock new product and process innovation
- Support cluster development by ensuring new and small businesses in opportunity sectors have access to high quality incubation, coworking and flexible space in identified locations
- Promote our research and business strengths, such as around geothermal, to attract and secure funding to the county

2. Provide excellent support at all stages for businesses to start-up, sustain, thrive and grow in County Durham

Lack of finance and low innovation

seen as barriers to trade and growth for businesses surveyed

We will strengthen our economy by increasing the number of start-ups and encouraging business growth and business investment in the county. We have fewer businesses than expected for a population the size of County Durham (441 businesses per 10,000 working age residents), compared to the national average at (683 per 10,000).¹⁰ This priority will look to address this, creating more jobs and opportunities in all parts of the county across the business base and sectors.

We will:

- Ensure businesses have access to a ‘single front door’ to access the business support they need at the right time, from marketing to access to finance to exporting advice
- Attract investors to work with the county to invest and grow the business and enterprise base, including alternative business models
- Promote networking and collaboration, bringing together businesses and partners within and across sectors to share knowledge, expertise and resources, and stimulate innovation and growth
- Explore innovative ways to encourage entrepreneurship and enterprise in local communities

¹⁰ Note this this does not capture our many micro-entrepreneurs and sole traders who are not VAT/PAYE registered).

3. Expand the thriving innovation ecosystem

The county has a growing knowledge economy and innovation assets including Durham University, NETPark and CPI, as well as sectoral and spatial clusters of innovative businesses. This doesn't sit in isolation, and is a vital part of a growing North East innovation ecosystem. We will build on and further develop the innovation ecosystem to support product and process innovation across the whole business base, sustained by skills, access to finance, business support, private sector networks and the necessary facilities that make up a thriving ecosystem.

We will:

- Build a leading UK innovation district, capitalising on existing spatial assets to create a corridor stretching from Durham City to NETPark
- Maximise the county's role in national R&D funding and programmes, ensuring that entrepreneurs and business understand the breadth and depth of support available
- Increase the level of start-ups and spin-outs that start and grow in the county, through more accelerator programmes and wider support

4. Drive good business practices, including improving health in the workplace

All the county's employers have an important role to play in creating a more inclusive economy with better outcomes for our residents. This includes through valuing and rewarding the workforce, investing in training, development and in-work career progression, promoting health and wellbeing in the workplace, and demonstrating social responsibility. This can increase retention, wellbeing and productivity. There is a link between productivity and workforce health. Research by the Northern Health Science Alliance estimates that 30% of the productivity gap between the Northern Powerhouse and rest of England is due to ill-health.¹¹ This priority will build awareness and the case for change with local employers, to ensure that all local jobs are better jobs.

We will:

- Strengthen our role as a national leader in social value to support thriving communities and local economies by leveraging the collective power of local anchor partners through collaboration and joint working
- Encourage good practices across our diverse business base, including wages, training, job security, social value, and health and wellbeing, potentially through a Good Employment Charter

¹¹ Bambra, Munford, Brown et al (2018) Health for Wealth: Building a Healthier Northern Powerhouse for UK Productivity. Newcastle: Northern Health Science Alliance.

- Explore the impact and opportunities to raise wage levels and productivity by setting up a living wage taskforce

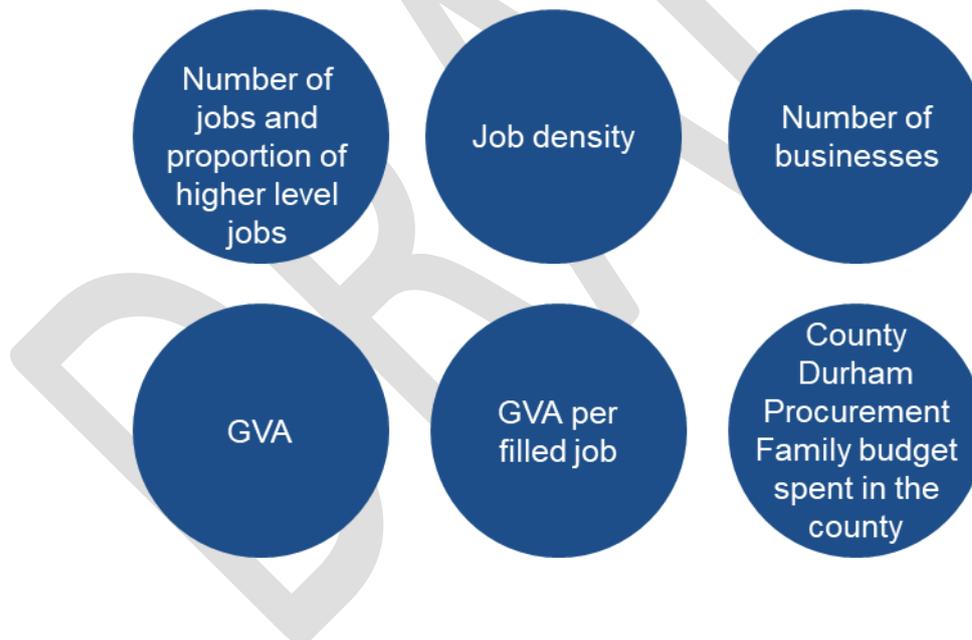
Links to Planet

Delivering our ambition for more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy by reaching net zero by 2045 through a just transition that creates good jobs.

We will:

- Develop a Green Park with Enterprise Zone status
- Encourage the adoption of circular economy approaches amongst businesses
- Build the retrofit evergreen fund to support more businesses to adapt their premises

Our delivery plan will be measured by improvements in:



7 Places

We will improve places and plan infrastructure so that people and businesses can access opportunities

The Delivery Plan will focus on how we will unlock the economic potential of all our places, working alongside the County Durham Plan, which sets out future employment and housing land requirements and locations. There will be work to do on strategy and delivery – particularly around connectivity and inward investment – and this will involve local partners alongside regional and national agencies. These opportunities must be linked to existing and new businesses through the Productivity priorities, with our assets promoted through the Promotion priorities, ensuring that businesses, visitors, residents, and investors understand the excellent opportunities and assets available in the county. Below are the Partnership’s Places priorities.

1. Build vibrant and diverse towns and villages

70% businesses

surveyed thought creating & maintaining vibrant town centres was very important or important to economic growth

93% resident survey respondents

rated improving town centres as important or very important (the top priority for the future), emphasising fewer vacant shops

We have an opportunity to build on existing investment in many of our towns, local centres and rural areas, recognising their distinctive opportunities and challenges. Housing is a major enabler to achieving economic growth and better social outcomes for our communities. The council has committed to build over 24,800 new homes of mixed type, size and tenure between 2016 and 2035; alongside this housing growth we need to actively engage our communities to consider the role of town and local centres in the new economic context, create thriving mixed use centres alongside new homes, and increase footfall in thriving local centres.

We will:

- Explore the economic role of each of our towns, independently and as a network across the county, to enhance their unique character and attractions and improve digital and physical accessibility as places to live, work, study and visit
- Expand the leisure, culture and event offer, building from the ideas that arose from the UK City of Culture bid alongside the local food economy
- Develop innovative approaches to repurpose vacant retail units into flexible space for start-ups, small businesses and entrepreneurs
- Ensure that housing is used as an economic enabler, supporting SME contractors and supply chains to deliver homes for our future, embedding new



low carbon construction methods and improving energy efficiency in new homes, industrial and commercial premises

2. Unlock employment land for high quality premises

Our opportunity and major employment sectors highlight the need for high quality employment space to attract and retain more businesses. The County Durham Plan sets out where this growth can go – this strategy supports that, focusing on building the concentration of businesses in clusters and on business parks, creating more and better jobs.

A challenge of being in the county for businesses surveyed

“Finding suitable premises that are central and accessible”

We will:

- Attract international headquarters, research and innovation, and support growth in fintech, life sciences and digital services, focused on growth locations such as the Aykley Heads development
- Take early advantage of new investment opportunities in our major employment and opportunity sectors by developing an economic growth and investment pipeline for the county
- Encourage innovation and enterprise in our rural communities by supporting rural diversification

3. Improve physical connectivity between places in the county

70% residents surveyed think there is good access to road links & **80%** who travel to work go by car vs **5%** by public transport



For too many people and places connectivity is a barrier to better jobs. The majority of those surveyed said they travel to work by car; this needs changing in order to deliver our net zero ambitions. Given our interconnected labour market, we need to think about

travel within the county and also travel to other parts of the North East. Improved connectivity will be vital for business trade and for people to get to work, particularly for shift workers, those on low wages, young people, and people & businesses in rural areas. It is important that this is inclusive; transport improvements need to be affordable and frequent, creating a multi-hub county which is accessible to all.

We will:

- Carry out an in-depth piece of work led by the Council on developing further solutions to physical and digital connectivity through a Connectivity Strategy
- Explore innovative solutions, such as demand responsive transport, low / no cost electric bike rentals, electric vehicle car clubs and e-bike hubs
- Develop a plan for commercial operators to transition to electric bus fleets, building on the electrification of Park and Ride

- Encourage modal shift to public transport and behaviour change, both within the county and for residents to commute across the region, such as through the delivery of fares initiatives, ticketing and subsidised fares, as well as by utilising Council planning guidance to encourage delivery of sustainable transport options
- Deliver on our carbon emission targets by reducing the volume of freight on the road by supporting the development of an intermodal rail freight interchange

4. Enhance digital infrastructure and connectivity

High-quality digital infrastructure is essential for productivity. It helps attract businesses, supporting sectors such as fintech. It also is important for inclusivity, enabling residents can access training and employment. Recently trends towards home and hybrid working in some sectors and roles require stable and fast connections. There is currently a lack of fast and reliable broadband in the county, where 53.1% of premises have access to ultrafast broadband compared to 71.5% nationally, with poor connectivity particularly in rural areas¹². There is high risk of digital exclusion in parts of Chester-le-Street, Seaham, Peterlee, Newton Aycliffe, and south of Barnard Castle. Supporting home and hybrid working by improving digital connectivity will open up access to more and better paid jobs across the county, particularly in areas difficult to reach by public transport.

We will:

- Create digitally enabled towns and villages to increase technology uptake, encourage innovation, and improve access to digital services and skills by exploring initiatives such as municipal data networks and digital community hubs, and the adoption of innovative new technologies, including 5G and next generation satellites
- Hardwire digital connectivity and inclusion considerations in regeneration and development projects

Links to Planet

Delivering our ambition for more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy by reaching net zero by 2045 through a just transition that creates good jobs.

We will:

- Promote Durham as a compact county by exploring the development of 20-minute neighbourhoods
- Encourage biodiversity and protecting nature by enhancing green space and supporting woodland expansion and urban greening

¹² Durham County Council.

Our delivery plan will be measured by improvements in:

Proportion of neighbourhoods in the 10% most deprived nationally

Town centre vacancy rate

Public transport connectivity

Employment land take-up

Occupancy rate of council business premises

Premises with gigabit connectivity

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8 Promotion

We will promote our county, assets and opportunities to businesses, investors, visitors, developers and residents.

The Delivery Plan will build on the wide range of work ongoing around culture and visitor economy. We know that we have excellent tourism assets and economic opportunities in the county. The priority now is to showcase this to the world, ensuring that we capitalise on the work underway through the Productivity and Place Priorities. Below are the Partnership’s Promotion priorities.

1. Develop a clear brand and place marketing

Advantages of being in County Durham for those surveyed

“Beautiful countryside”

“Attractive built environment”

People are proud of the county – our cultural, heritage and natural assets – and think this should be better known regionally and nationally. We are home to a wide range of businesses and lead the North East for employment in advanced manufacturing and health & life sciences. We have an abundance of land and strong natural, cultural and heritage assets. This is a strong

foundation for marketing and investment. There’s an opportunity to capitalise on this through a strong brand and county narrative for residents, tourists, and inward investors.

We will:

- Build the County Durham Brand, aligned with the distinctive strengths, assets and opportunities identified in this strategy
- Grow our profile as a major destination for innovation, business and investment by attracting academic and business conferences and events, aligned to our major employment and opportunity sectors and research strengths

2. Attract more inward investment in the sectors and places it makes sense

The county already sees inward investment interest and this strategy sets out the sectors we have an opportunity to grow, our innovation potential, and the employment land assets. We need to develop a clear pitch for business attraction and expansion that attracts more and better jobs to help retain local talent and attract more highly skilled workers into the county.

We will:

- Develop a new strategic approach to inward investment, aligned to our major employment and opportunity sectors, promoting our strategic national and



Better for everyone

international sites and assets, attracting corporate R&D headquarters and supporting innovative SMEs

- Capitalise on our role at the heart of the North East by considering developing a regional Internationalisation Strategy promoting our sectoral strengths in energy and advanced manufacturing, tourism, trade and international investment, and maximising our links to international gateways in the Port of Tyne, Newcastle Airport, and Teesport

3. Grow a year-round visitor economy

The county is home to some of the country’s best natural assets, from coast, to countryside, heritage city and culture. This is an opportunity to capitalise on these strengths to grow the tourism and culture offer and positively impact our productivity and economic growth. We want to encourage people to stay longer and visit more parts of the county by investing in technology, physical assets, and events where it is needed.

Tourism

identified as a future growth sector by businesses in the survey

We will:

- Maximise the potential of all places as visitor destinations by ensuring that they have the right infrastructure to meet their needs, such as accommodation, attractions and leisure facilities
- Improve productivity in the culture, heritage and leisure offer in the county by using new technologies, for instance 5G and digital

4. Enhance cultural and creative infrastructure

75% residents

in the survey thought more could be done to attract tourists – better transport & town centres, more events & a stronger cultural offer, place promotion, and clean, safer streets

We have growing strengths in culture and the creative sector. Culture has the potential to play an important role in revitalising our town and local centres. This requires investment in the sector, existing and new assets, and skills.

We will:

- Strengthen our asset base and capacity by delivering capital projects, including Riverbanks, Millennium Place and the transformation of the Durham Light Infantry Museum
- Deliver an ambitious county-wide cultural programme as a legacy of shortlisted UK City of Culture bid

- Strengthen the resilience of our communities through citizen-led cultural and community projects

Links to Planet

Delivering our ambition for more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy by reaching net zero by 2045 through a just transition that creates good jobs.

We will:

- Encourage active travel as part of the visitor economy offer

Our delivery plan will be measured by improvements in:

Visitor expenditure

Number of visitors

Number of inward investment projects secured and value

9 Delivering our Strategy

The Inclusive Economic Strategy is an ambitious economic strategy to 2035. It sets out our vision for a new economic future and has a clear focus on how we will deliver this through more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy. It will create a strong identity for the county, develop our strengths, address inequalities, and better connect residents to existing and new opportunities. This could have enormous positive impact both locally and for the UK economy.

To make it a reality will require new ways of working, through close collaboration, and shared funding from us all as partners. The shift (and reduced funding) as we move to UK Shared Prosperity Fund requires us to think differently to build the resources we need to deliver this long term strategy. This means that as a county we need to leverage as much external investment as possible through bids into relevant funding calls, by attracting private sector investment, and by creating the conditions for local growth and investment. The Council is able to tailor programmes and use funding to achieve the ambition and priorities set out in this Strategy.

2035 Targets

Our overall ambition is to support the creation of more and better jobs across the county. Bridging the performance gap in the employment and unemployment rates will lead to more than 10,000 more residents in work. Supporting residents to achieve higher level skills and occupations will lead to productivity improvements, wage growth, and new business opportunities across the county and more innovation. It will also make the county's economy more stable and more resistant to future economic recessions. It is proposed that our high level target is to bridge the gap with national performance across the following key measures.

Employment - County Durham's employment rate is typically 2 to 3 percentage points below the national average and a little above the regional average. Over the last 3-5 years the employment rate has averaged around 72%.

Unemployment - County Durham's unemployment rate is typically around one percentage point higher than the national rate but around 0.5 percentage points lower than the regional rate. Over the last 3-5 years the rate has averaged around 5.5% but tends to fluctuate.

Higher level skills - County Durham has a far lower proportion of residents with higher level skills than the national average. This means that residents have lower wages and less disposable income, are less able to secure higher-level jobs, and are less innovative than the national average. This significantly affects the overall performance of the economy. Furthermore, this gap between the County's performance and national rates is growing.

High level occupations - Similar to the County’s skills profile, we have a lower proportion of higher level jobs; those requiring a high level of skill, education, and experience. Correspondingly, we also have a high proportion of routine jobs, which are particularly at risk of being automated in the medium to long-term future. Lower level jobs are also more at risk during economic recessions and downturns and may involve zero hour contracts where work is less secure.

Delivery Plan

Our next steps are to develop a detailed Delivery Plan and a monitoring framework to deliver against our Strategy. The Economic Partnership will engage stakeholders, residents and communities, including Community Champions and Area Action Partnerships, in decision-making and coproduction of relevant actions and initiatives.

Supporting all residents in our inclusive economy

Through this Strategy, we will continue to work with our strong business base, innovation assets, high-skilled workers, and graduates, but our Strategy goes beyond a traditional economic approach – enabling everywhere and everyone in County Durham to contribute to and benefit from economic growth.

As part of the development of a Delivery Plan, we will identify where help is needed to create an inclusive economy and focus activity, target our actions, and monitor success on those groups. This does not mean that they will be the only beneficiaries of this strategy. Rather, we recognise that alongside the broad support and activity this strategy will generate, there are some people and places who may need additional support. In this way we will make this strategy – and the growth and prosperity it generates – inclusive for all.

Some of these groups will be place-based and others will be based on socio-economic or demographic groups. These will be reviewed every two years to ensure that we are still targeting activity in a way that will achieve maximum impact. These will be identified through a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis. We will work with different partners already engaged in activity to encourage participation.

This may include, for example:

- 16 neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation
- Residents earning below the Real Living Wage
- Households in fuel poverty or living in energy inefficient homes
- Residents with a long-term physical or mental health conditions
- Groups furthest from the labour market, either demographic e.g., Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, or socio-economic e.g., young people or older residents not in work, residents with low skills levels, residents with disabilities / learning difficulties

Monitoring progress

We want to monitor our progress in delivering more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy. We will take a bold and innovative approach to transforming our economy – trying new ideas and evaluating them to understand what works.

The table below summarises a set of high-level outcome measures that reflect the priorities in this strategy and will be used to monitor progress in the delivery plan. We will also link the metrics included in the Climate Emergency Plan to monitor our progress in the Planet pillar.

As we codevelop the Delivery Plan with our partners, we will develop a set of impact measures to quantify the difference the strategy is making to illustrate the impact it is having on our outcome measures.

We will baseline our current performance against aspirational targets of where we want to be and what we think good looks like. We will co-develop targets for 2035 and interim targets to enable progress to be measured year on year.

We will also monitor the success of our actions in improving outcomes amongst our inclusive economy groups.

Pillar	Outcome measures
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents with high level skills (NVQ Level 4 & 5) Residents who are economically inactive but want a job Residents in employment 18-24 year old residents in employment Disabled residents in employment Healthy life expectancy of residents GVA per capita Employee jobs earning Real Living Wage or higher
Productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of jobs Proportion of higher-level jobs Job density Number of businesses GVA GVA per filled job County Durham Procurement Family budget spend in the county
Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of neighbourhoods in the most 10% most deprived nationally Town centre vacancy rate Public transport connectivity Employment land take up Occupancy rate of council business premises Premises with gigabit connectivity
Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitor expenditure Number of visitors Number of inward investment projects secured and value
Planet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link to metrics included in the Climate Emergency Plan

Next steps

We are incredibly grateful to the individuals, communities and organisations who have been part of the development of this strategy. This is only the first step on our inclusive economic journey.

We invite you to be part of turning this into a reality now, identifying where and how you want to be involved in delivery. We will be setting up the Citizen Panel to ensure that residents have their say throughout, and the Economic Partnership will work with the broad partner base to codevelop actions.

We've already achieved so much in the county. This strategy sets out our path for the next decade and how we will, in 2035, be a sustainable, inclusive economy with a diverse range of jobs to meet all skill levels, with targeted training and learning programmes tailored to our employment specialisms and needs of business.

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Annex

[WIP]

The strategy contains a short explanation of what we mean by more and better jobs in and inclusive, green economy. Below is a fuller definition.

More jobs, in the county's broad business base. This means creating the conditions for more businesses to start, move, and grow in all parts of the county, providing advice and guidance, access to finance, unlocking employment land, and investing in digital and physical infrastructure and places so that people can work closer to where they live. We will capitalise on our heritage, cultural and natural assets to grow our visitor economy, and we will promote the county widely to attract more businesses, investment, and visitors. This also brings an opportunity to attract more people to live here as digital and remote working increase.

Better jobs, to ensure that residents can access secure work that pays a living wage. This in for jobs within the county, where we are already home to the highest number of advanced manufacturing and health & life sciences jobs in the North East, alongside growing clusters in areas such as green energy and fintech. We will also support residents with skills & training opportunities and transport options to access jobs across the wider region. We believe all jobs can be better jobs, and we will work with employers to ensure that they are supported into better work practices such as stable shift patterns, guaranteed minimum hours, in work training and health & wellbeing support.

Inclusive, to ensure that the benefits of growth are shared fairly amongst our people and places. There are inequalities across our county, for example in health, education, connectivity, skills and employment. This strategy will focus on barriers that residents face to employment, from skills to transport to health, addressing the inequality experienced between and within some of our places. The strategy will focus on the city, towns, rural, and coast for attracting investment and creating better jobs in all parts of the county. We will identify place-based and socio-economic 'Inclusive Economy Cohorts' as part of the Delivery Plan, to ensure that we maximise the impact of the strategy and its actions effectively to target the people and places that need them the most.

Green, to ensure that activity contributes to the Climate Emergency and 2045 goal of net zero carbon County Durham. We will capitalise on our green economy businesses and the innovation assets in the county and wider region. This will create more high-quality jobs for residents, and support all to reach net zero without putting increased costs on individuals and businesses, protecting jobs and workers. The Climate Emergency Plan sets out how we need to be at the forefront of the clean, green, industrial revolution. This strategy needs to complement these plans by investing in people, technologies, research and development, and business.

Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format.



Braille



Audio



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Inclusive Economic Strategy

Inclusive and Green County Durham: a sustainable economy for a diverse county

What the presentation covers

Page 70

The emerging Inclusive Economic Strategy

- Our approach
- Working in partnership
- What did the evidence show?
- What did our communities say?
- Our vision
- Focus and delivery
- How does the strategy drive change?

Inclusive Economic Strategy

Our approach

An *Inclusive* Economic Strategy



Inclusive in development
Through the Big Econ-versation

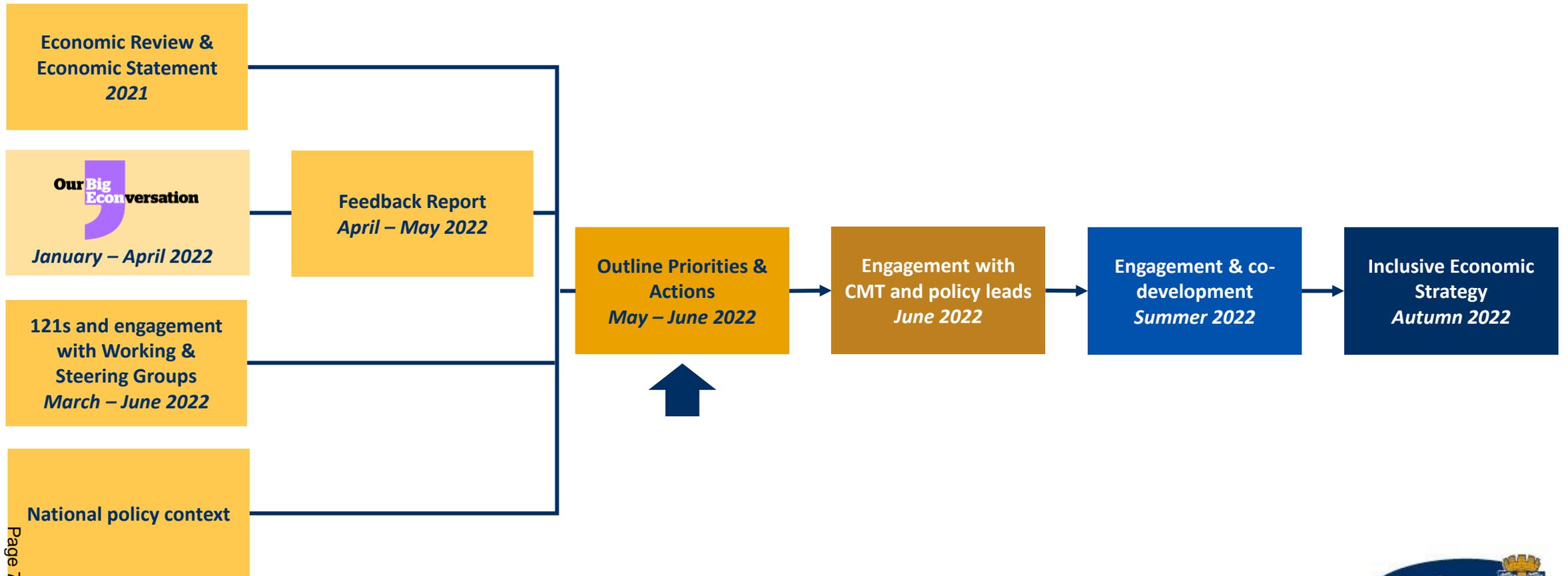


Inclusive and green in design
Going beyond a traditional economic strategy

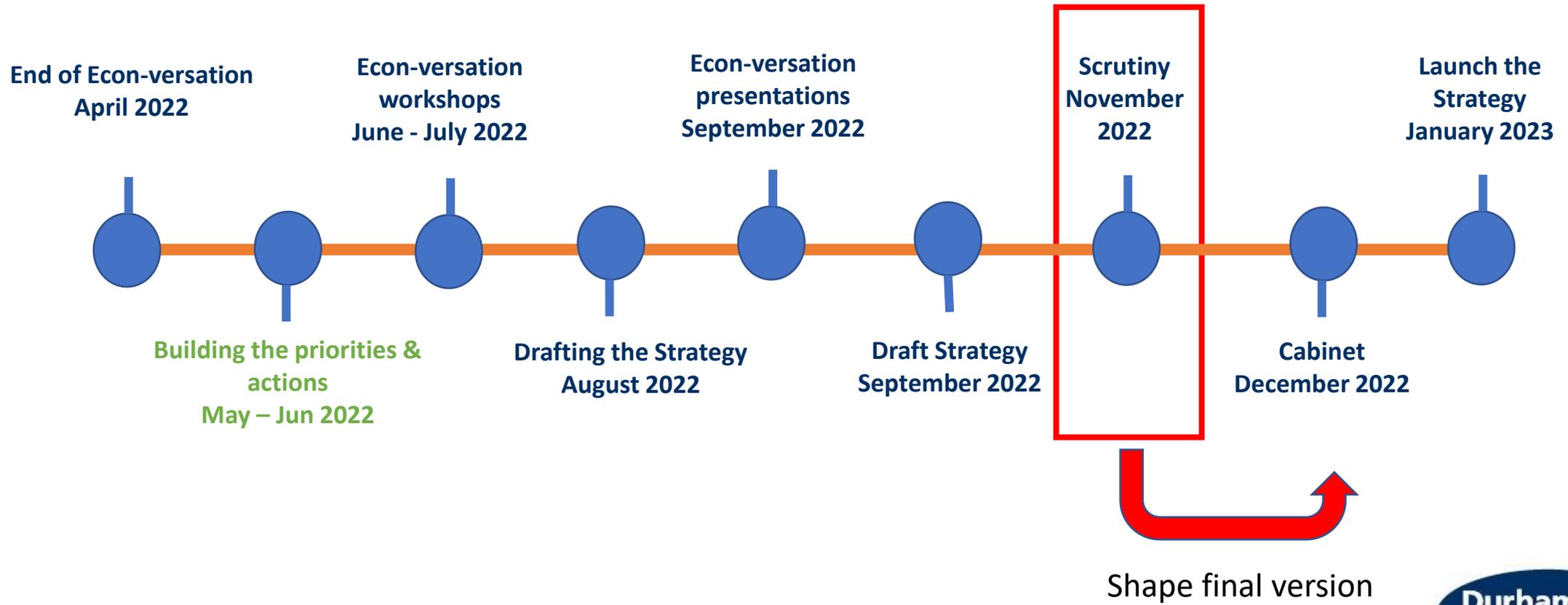


Inclusive in delivery
Delivered as a partnership

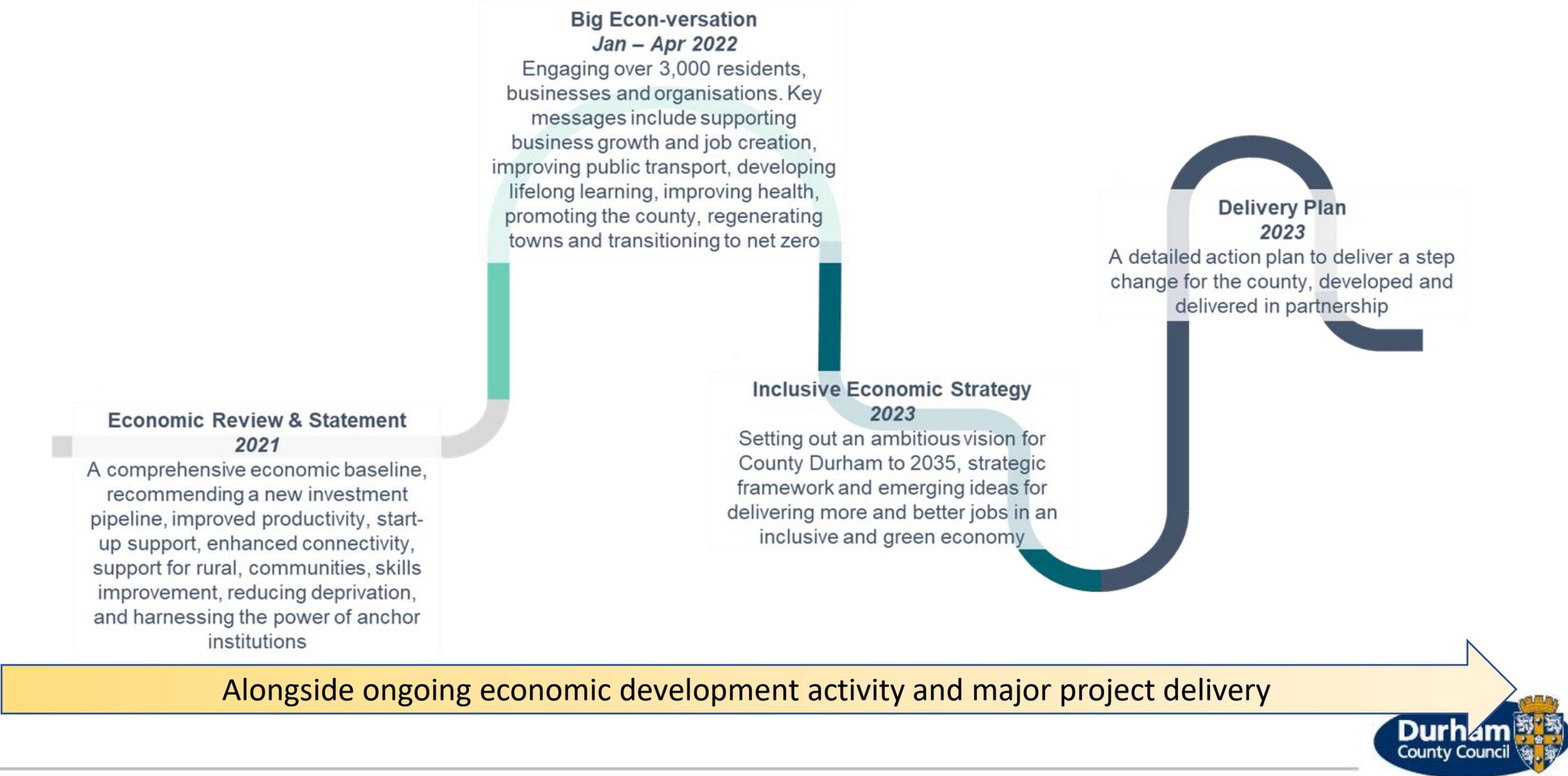
Shaping the Inclusive Economic Strategy



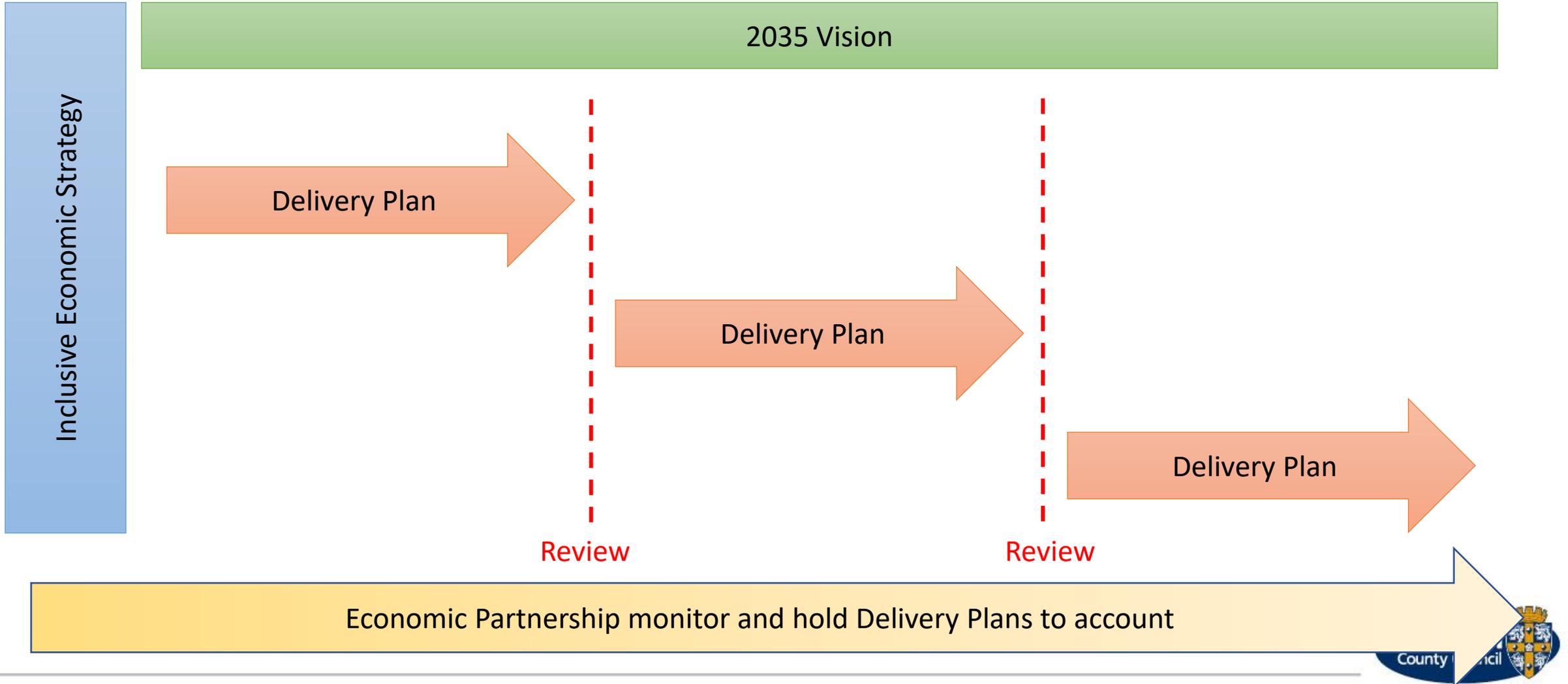
Shaping the Inclusive Economic Strategy



Roadmap for the Inclusive Economic Strategy



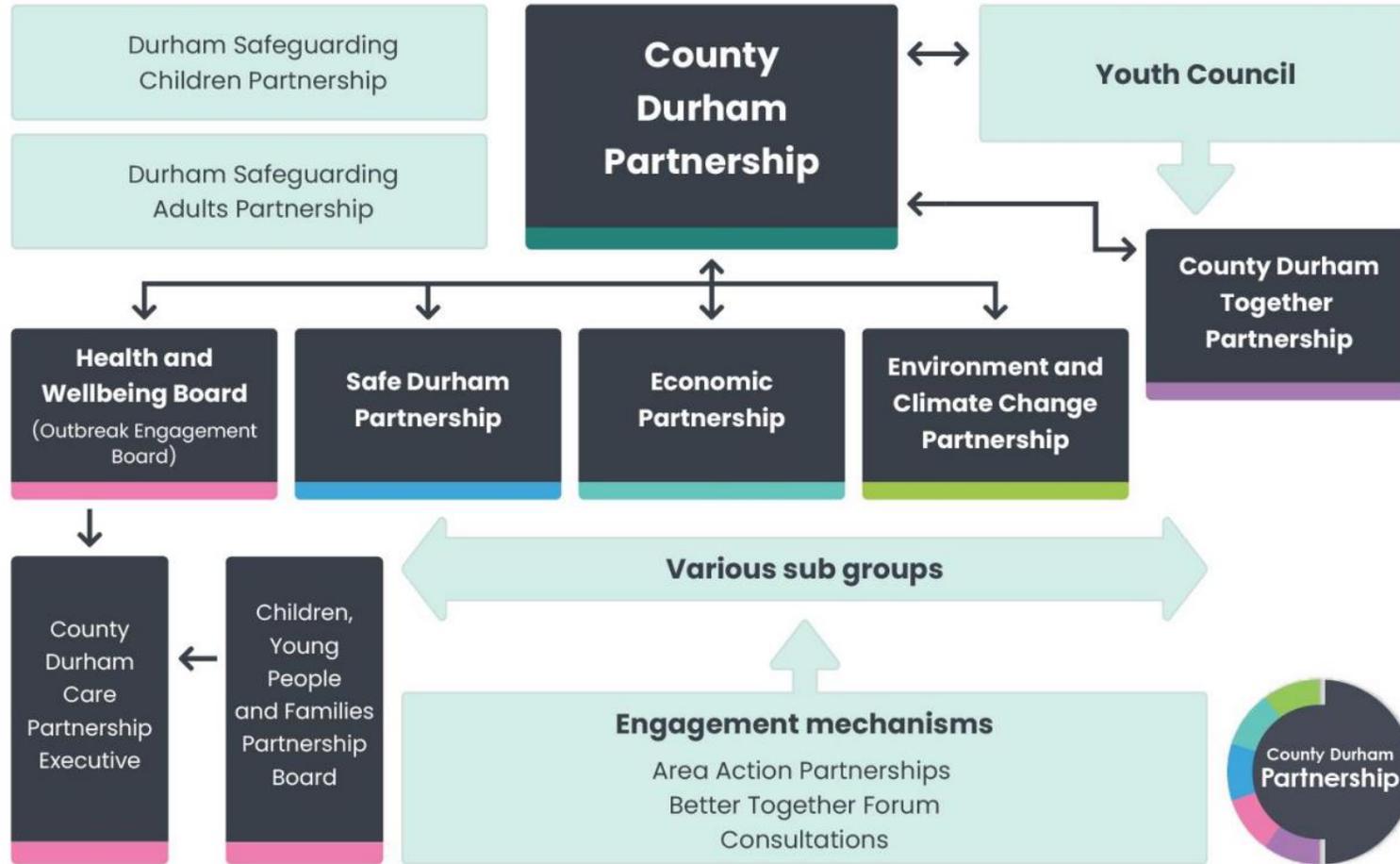
Delivering the Inclusive Economic Strategy



Inclusive Economic Strategy

Working in partnership

County Durham Partnership structure



County Durham Economic Partnership

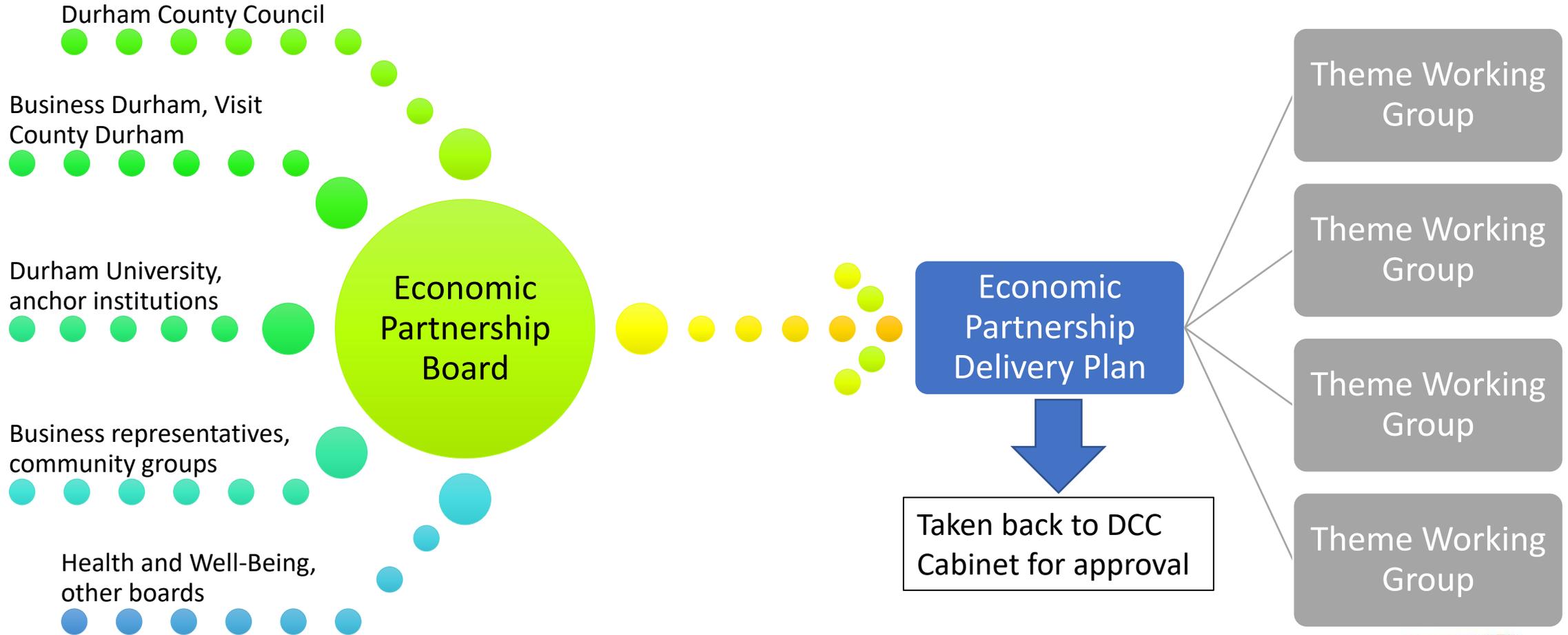


Key partner and facilitator



Delivering the plan

ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP



Inclusive Economic Strategy

What did the evidence show?

County Durham today – our economy



**£8.8bn
GVA**



**14,105
businesses**



**23% business growth
(33% nationally)**

Between 2006 and 2020 our growth was 26.8%, but nationally the figure was 49.6%

There is a significant and growing gap between the county's and national performance, amounting to £3.2 billion per annum



**183,000
jobs**



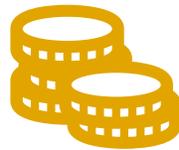
**533,100
residents
(largest LA in NE)**



**3.8% unemployment
(11.1% in 2012)**



**101,800
highly skilled
workers**



**£26,495
median wages
(£31,777 nationally)**



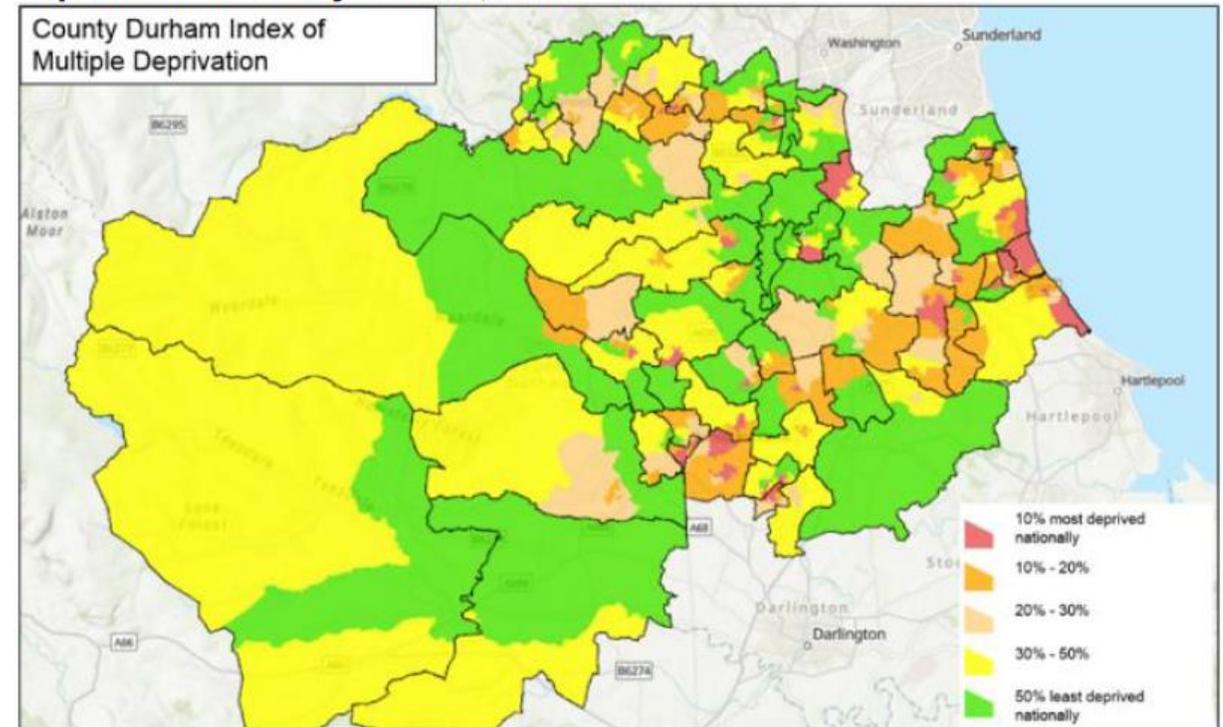
**22.2% youth
unemployment (12.9%
nationally)**

Almost 1 in 4 jobs in the county earn below the Real Living Wage and an estimated 21% percent of households across the county live in relative poverty

County Durham today - challenges

- Significant poverty and deprivation, but areas of great beauty and affluence
- 12% neighbourhoods in the 10% most deprived in the country
- Deprivation tends to be higher in towns but likely hidden rural deprivation

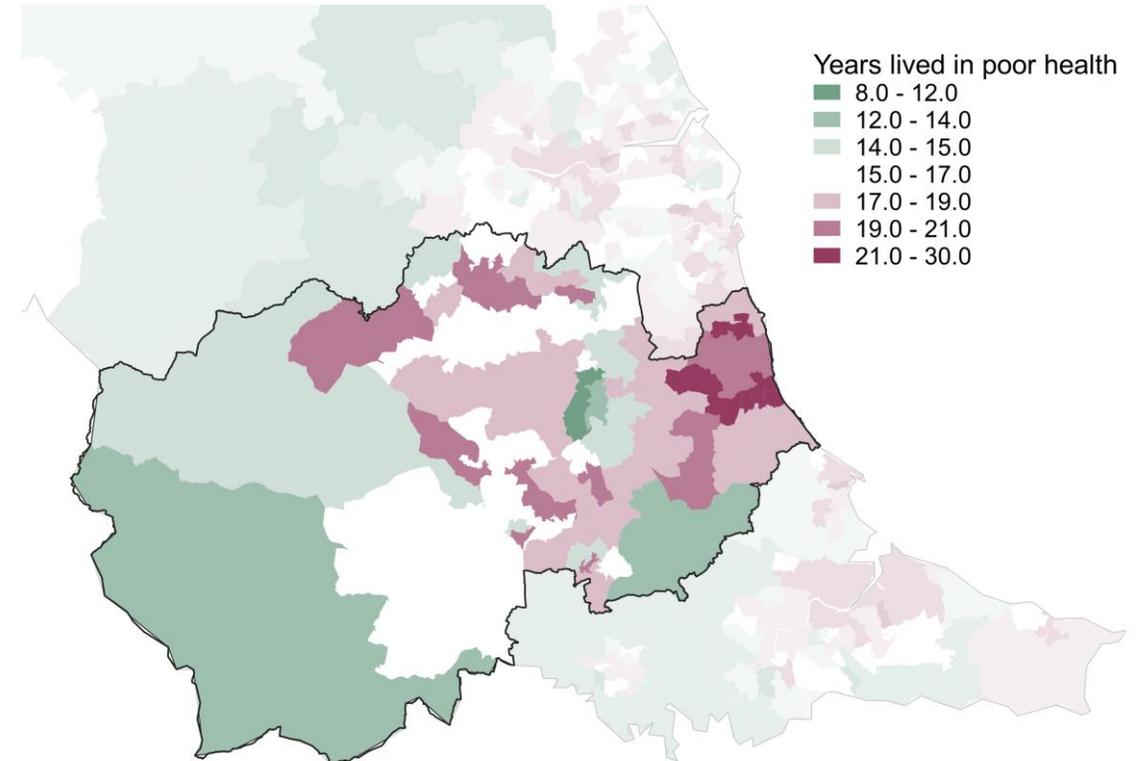
Deprivation in County Durham, 2019



Source: IMD 2019 and ekosgen mapping

County Durham today - challenges

- 1 in 4 neighbourhoods in most deprived 10% for health outcomes
- Average Healthy Life Expectancy of 59 is over 4 years lower than the UK average
- Varies by 13 years across the county – 51 years in the lowest performing neighbourhood
- 22,000 economically inactive due to long-term health conditions & 18,600 due to caring responsibilities
- Ill health and disability create barriers into and staying in work



County Durham – opportunities

Major employment sectors

- Advanced manufacturing
- Health and social care
- Visitor and tourism

Major businesses

- Hitachi Rail Plant, Caterpillar and GlaxoSmithKline
- Knowledge & high-tech - Atom Bank and Waterstons

Key opportunity sectors for growth

- Green jobs
- Electronics
- Digital and creative
- Fintech
- Life sciences
- Satellite applications



25,000
jobs in advanced
manufacturing



2,000 life science &
pharma jobs and
25,000 in health and
care

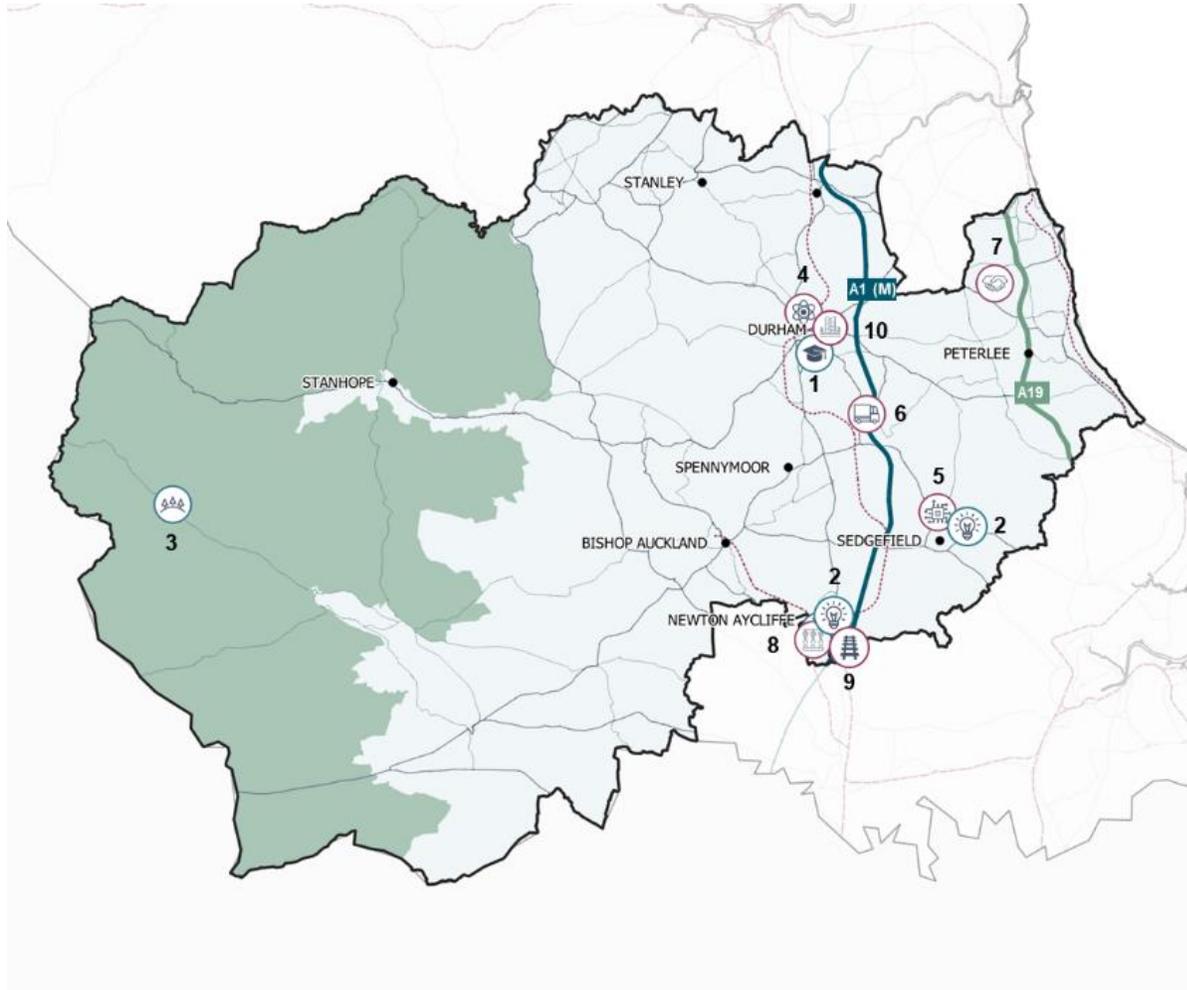


10,000+
jobs in tourism & supply
chain



16m visitors and
£827m spend

County Durham – strategic sites



National assets		
	Durham University – one of the UK’s top universities with £700m planned investment	1
	Centre for Process Innovation – focusing on technology commercialisation and formulation	2
	North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) – the second largest AONB in the UK	3

Strategic employment sites		
	Aykley Heads – 400,000 sq. foot business park development and employment site	4
	NET Park – science, engineering and technology park with £58m expansion	5
	Integra 61 – logistics hub with £300m mixed use extension and home to Amazon	6
	Jade Business Park – distribution and tech park with plans for £200m investment	7
	Forrest Park – an 116-acre site with planning consent for 1.75m sq. ft industrial/distribution accommodation	8
	Merchant Park – home to 30-acre Hitachi Rail Europe Train manufacturing facility	9
	Milburngate – 450,000 square foot mixed use development on the banks of the River Wear	10

Key			
	A1(M) Corridor		Roads
	A19 Corridor		Settlements
	Railway Links		County Durham Boundary



Ongoing economic development activity

1

Skills programmes and employment routeway courses, for instance Durham Learn and Durham Employment and Skills courses

2

Employability programmes, such as DurhamWorks, DurhamEnable and Employability Durham, tailored to meet the needs of residents over 50, those in poor mental or physical health or with caring responsibilities, and young people

3

Specialist business support, space and finance through Business Durham and the Finance Durham initiative to help businesses to start, grow and thrive, and use experience to leverage business investment in enabling digital technologies

4

The County Durham Pound initiative to increase the local spend of the 11 anchor institutions, and consider expanding the network to include major private sector employers

5

Targeted improvements to our town centres through the Town and Villages Programme Investment Plan, masterplans and Targeted Delivery Plans

6

Delivery of strategic employment sites at Aykley Heads, Merchant Park, Forrest Park, Integra 61, Jade Business Park, NETPark, South Church and Low Willington, to support incubation, start up and expansion premises

7

The Durham 2025 cultural programme, to raise the profile of the county and civic pride

8

Programmes, such as Create North, Creative Fuse and the Memorandum of Understanding with the BBC and North East local authorities, to develop our cultural and creative sector

9

Work with employers, colleges and training providers to ensure learners are equipped with green skills, for instance in retrofit, and have the right information, advice and guidance to move into green jobs

10

Energy efficiency in county's business base to help reach net zero, expanding the Business Energy Efficiency Programme

Inclusive Economic Strategy

What did our communities say?

Econ-versation



1,455
surveys completed



70 organisations
and over 1,500
people engaged
through conversations



86 conversations



Business, partnerships,
anchor institutions & partners,
community groups & residents
and DCC staff & members



Promoted via web,
social media, bus &
radio



Inclusive – diverse
representation and
online/offline reach

Econ-versation

Our residents said...

More good quality jobs

and ensuring these are accessible to local people is a major priority.

Public transport

is a major priority and seen as a barrier to economic opportunities, especially in rural communities

“There has been a historic lack of investment in the area compared to other parts of the country.”

Our businesses said...

A skilled workforce

was viewed as the best way to improve productivity

Skills, digital & transport infrastructure

was seen as the key to economic growth

“My business is in County Durham because I am proud of where I live.”

Our young people said...

c. 57%

of those who plan to go to a university, said they would go to one outside of the county

54%

said they could not or are unsure they could pursue their chosen career or business idea in the county

“I don’t know where I want to live; it will depend on work opportunities but I’d like to stay in Durham near my family and friends.”

Inclusive Economic Strategy

Our vision

2035 Vision

- Sets a positive, **bold** and **ambitious** vision for the future of County Durham
- Allows a clear **strategic focus** and alignment of inward investment, sectoral growth, skills and training to the jobs created
- Explains how the economy is **interlinked**, and investment in one area or sector will **drive economic growth** across the County
- Provides a clear picture of **opportunities** for our **communities** and young people **to raise aspiration** and ambition
- Recognises and embraces the need for **jobs at every level**
- Agrees a **long-term direction of travel** within which delivery plans can be reviewed and recalibrated

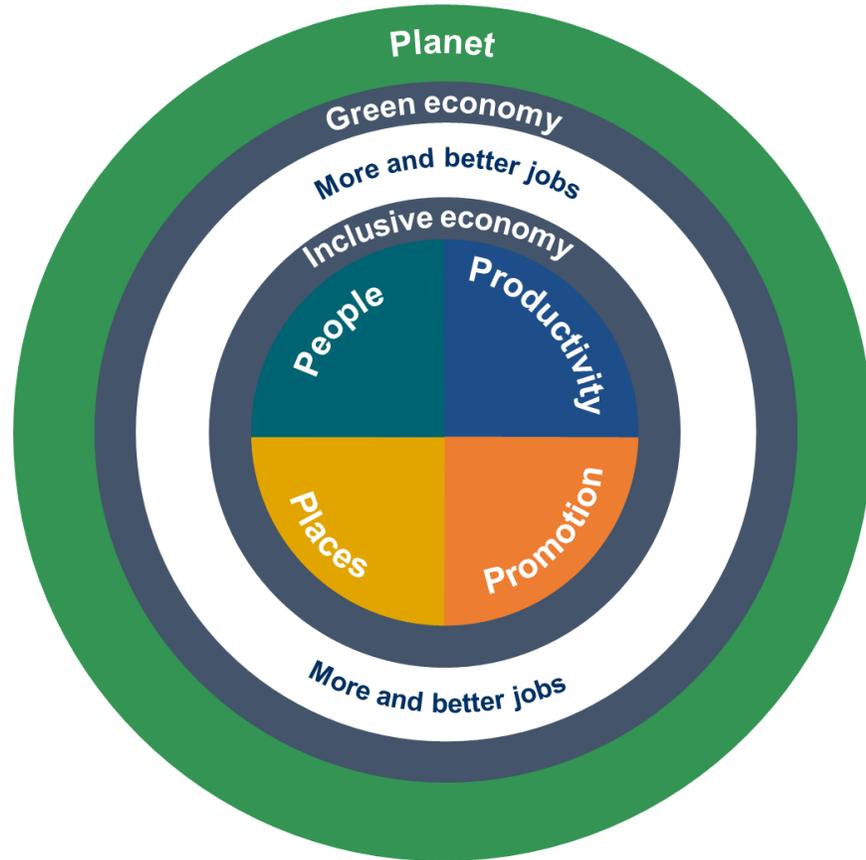
2035 Vision – key points

- A sustainable, inclusive economy with a diverse range of jobs to meet all skill levels
- Targeted training and learning programmes tailored to our employment specialisms and needs of business
- Our industrial heritage and landscape providing the green jobs of tomorrow
- Innovation, from our world leading university to R&D in all our jobs to increase productivity, fuel growth, and to create more and better-quality jobs.
- Inward investment targeted in emerging green jobs, electronics, digital, fintech, life sciences and satellite
- An inter-connected economy of headquarters, research, supply chains, logistics creating a range of jobs at all levels
- Improving access to employment through improved health, transport links, flexible working, and digital connectivity
- Growth in high value tourism that underpins jobs and services for local communities

Inclusive Economic Strategy

Focus and delivery

The focus



- **More jobs**, in the county's broad business base
- **Better jobs**, to ensure that residents can access secure work that pays a living wage
- **Inclusive**, to ensure that the benefits of growth are shared fairly amongst our people and places
- **Green**, to ensure that activity contributes to the 2045 goal of net zero carbon County Durham

Delivery Framework - The 5 “P’s”



People - priorities

We will support people into education, training, jobs, and to excel in business and their careers.

Priorities

- 1. Raising skills levels, including higher and green skills, linked to what employers need**
- 2. Overcome barriers into employment, including work readiness, skills, improved careers advice and guidance, and addressing poor health**
- 3. Increase in-work progression and upskilling linked to new opportunities**
- 4. Harness economic growth to improve health and wellbeing and transform life chances**

People – key measures

Residents with high level skills (NVQ Level 4 & 5)

Residents who are economically inactive but want a job

Residents in employment

18-24 year old residents in employment

Disabled residents in employment

Healthy life expectancy of residents

GVA per capita

Employee jobs earning Real Living Wage or higher

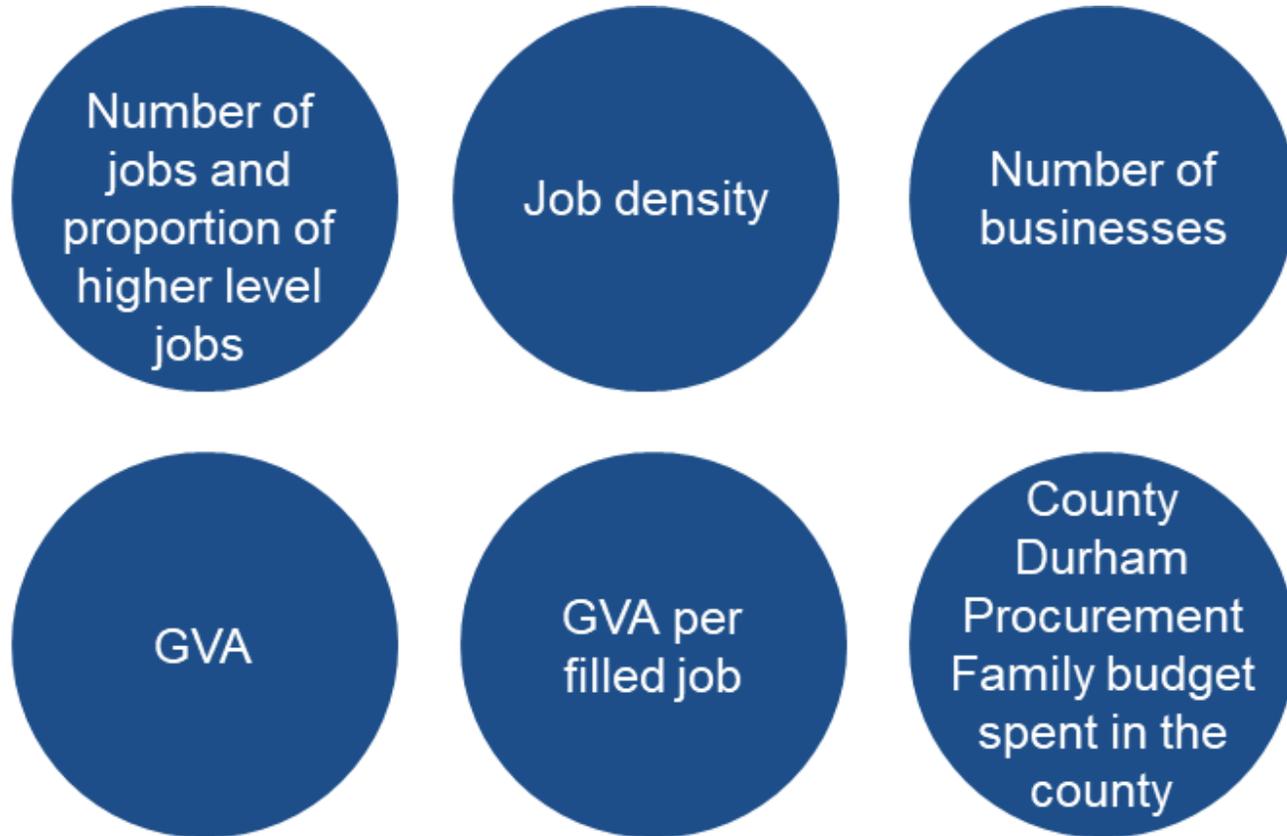
Productivity - priorities

We will support business innovation, growth, and higher levels of productivity

Priorities

- 1. Harness the power of our major employment sectors and accelerate our opportunity sectors**
- 2. Provide excellent support at all stages for businesses to start-up, sustain, thrive and grow in County Durham**
- 3. Expand the thriving innovation ecosystem**
- 4. Drive good business practices, including improving health in the workplace**

Productivity – key measures



Places – priorities

We will improve places and plan infrastructure so that people and businesses can access opportunities

Priorities

- 1. Build vibrant and diverse towns and villages**
- 2. Unlock employment land for high quality premises**
- 3. Improve physical connectivity between places in the county**
- 4. Enhance digital infrastructure and connectivity**

Places – key measures

Proportion of neighbourhoods in the 10% most deprived nationally

Town centre vacancy rate

Public transport connectivity

Employment land take-up

Occupancy rate of council business premises

Premises with gigabit connectivity

Promotion - priorities

We will promote our county, assets and opportunities to businesses, investors, visitors, developers and residents

Priorities

- 1. Develop a clear brand and place marketing**
- 2. Attract more inward investment in the sectors and places it make sense**
- 3. Grow a year-round visitor economy**
- 4. Enhance cultural and creative infrastructure**

Promotion – key measures



Planet

Delivering our ambition for more and better jobs in an inclusive, green economy by reaching net zero by 2045 through a just transition that creates good jobs

Priorities

- 1. Promoting green skills and jobs pathways within the countywide Careers priority, with a focus on preparing young people for careers at an early stage**
- 2. Develop a Green Park with Enterprise Zone status**
- 3. Encourage the adoption of circular economy approaches amongst businesses**
- 4. Build the retrofit evergreen fund to support more businesses to adapt their premises**
- 5. Promote Durham as a compact county by exploring the development of 20-minute neighbourhoods**
- 6. Encourage biodiversity and protecting nature by enhancing green space and supporting woodland expansion and urban greening**
- 7. Encourage active travel as part of the visitor economy offer**

Inclusive Economic Strategy

How does the strategy drive change?

How does the strategy drive change

Clear understanding of County Durham's economy – strengths, weaknesses and opportunities

- Provides a robust and comprehensive evidence base
- Has listened and responded to businesses, partners and our communities
- Understands that our economy as inter-connected and outlines how investment in one area or sector benefits the whole county

Provides a clear focus for future economic development

- Gives a single place that brings together what we are going to do to create a step-change in our economic growth
- Identifies clear sectoral strengths and areas to focus all our activity to achieve growth
- Adopts a delivery plan model to drive tangible and transformative actions

How does the strategy drive change

Prioritises inclusive and green growth

- Targets our objectives through an inclusive lens – for County Durham to be economically successful, all our communities need to be
- Harnesses the economy as both a tool in tackling climate change, and uses that to drive economic growth
- Brings together the role of place branding, culture and tourism to maximise the benefit and in a way that celebrates our people and heritage

Focuses on health and well-being

- Unifies the approach to tackling economic and health inequality
- Understands the impact poor health has on wellbeing and economic growth and seeks to address these challenges

How does the strategy drive change

Ownership and accountability

- Gives ownership, accountability and delivery to partners - all working collectively together
- Provides a clear strategic focus for the whole of Durham County Council to work towards and a blueprint for the Economic Development service function
- Lays the ground work for the transition from European funding to UK Shared Prosperity Funding

Builds aspiration in our young people

- Gives aspiration, ambition and focus to young people about their future job opportunities and well being

Summary

- The draft Inclusive Economic Strategy is based on robust evidence and extensive engagement
- It is the County's strategy, and is owned by the County Durham Economic Partnership
- It provides a clear vision for the future and sets the framework for delivering the vision
- It will be delivered through a series of short to medium term Delivery Plans
- We welcome scrutiny's support in considering and helping to shape the draft strategy
- Once the strategy is adopted the first Delivery Plan will be developed with stakeholders, led by the Economic Partnership
- This next stage will run alongside existing economic development activity and the ongoing delivery of major projects and strategic employment sites

Questions / comments



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