

AGENDA

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Thursday, 10 May 2018

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT

Membership:

Councillors Sarah Aldridge, Mike Baldock, Monique Bonney, Andy Booth (Vice-Chairman), Lloyd Bowen (Chairman), Nicholas Hampshire, James Hunt, Peter Marchington, George Samuel, Ben Stokes and Tony Winckless.

Quorum = 3

Pages

1. Fire Evacuation Procedure

The Chairman will advise the meeting of the evacuation procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. This is particularly important for visitors and members of the public who will be unfamiliar with the building and procedures.

The Chairman will inform the meeting whether there is a planned evacuation drill due to take place, what the alarm sounds like (i.e. ringing bells), where the closest emergency exit route is, and where the second closest emergency exit route is, in the event that the closest exit or route is blocked.

The Chairman will inform the meeting that:

(a) in the event of the alarm sounding, everybody must leave the building via the nearest safe available exit and gather at the Assembly points at the far side of the Car Park; and

(b) the lifts must not be used in the event of an evacuation.

Any officers present at the meeting will aid with the evacuation.

It is important that the Chairman is informed of any person attending who is disabled or unable to use the stairs, so that suitable arrangements may be made in the event of an emergency.

2. Apologies for Absence and Confirmation of Substitutes

3. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 April 2018 (Minute Nos. 602 - 610) as a correct record.

4. Declarations of Interest

Councillors should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves or their spouse, civil partner or person with whom they are living with as a spouse or civil partner. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

The Chairman will ask Members if they have any interests to declare in respect of items on this agenda, under the following headings:

(a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) under the Localism Act 2011. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DPI, the Member must leave the meeting and not take part in the discussion or vote. This applies even if there is provision for public speaking.

(b) Disclosable Non Pecuniary (DNPI) under the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council in May 2012. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DNPI interest, the Member may stay, speak and vote on the matter.

(c) Where it is possible that a fair-minded and informed observer, having considered the facts would conclude that there was a real possibility that the Member might be predetermined or biased the Member should declare their predetermination or bias and then leave the room while that item is considered.

Advice to Members: If any Councillor has any doubt about the existence or nature of any DPI or DNPI which he/she may have in any item on this agenda, he/she should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer, the Head of Legal or from other Solicitors in Legal Services as early as possible, and in advance of the Meeting.

Part B report for the Committee to decide

5. Regeneration Strategy

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The Committee is asked to consider the Regeneration Strategy.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration, the Interim Head of Economy and Community Services and the Economy and Community Services Manager have been invited to attend for this item.

Issued on Monday, 30 April 2018

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**Chief Executive, Swale Borough Council,
Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT**

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Policy and Development Review Committee	
Meeting Date	10th May 2018
Report Title	Draft Swale Economic Regeneration Framework
Cabinet Member	Cllr Mike Cosgrove, Cabinet Member for Regeneration
SMT Lead	Emma Wiggins
Head of Service	Charlotte Hudson
Lead Officer	Kieren Mansfield
Key Decision	Yes
Classification	Open
Recommendations	That the Policy and Development Review Committee consider the draft Economic Regeneration Framework 2018-2021.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report presents the consultative draft of the Council’s new Economic Regeneration Framework for consideration by the PDRC. This high level document seeks to set out a framework to which relevant Council services and other, partner organisations can refer in making their contribution to promoting growth, particularly within the local economy. Such growth will support the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy through business rate retention.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Corporate Peer Challenge in April 2016 made a number of recommendations, the first of which was for the Council to “Develop and articulate a clear policy and programme plan for Regeneration and Economic Development.” The draft Economic Regeneration Framework (at Appendix I) seeks to address the policy element of this recommendation and sets out particular ‘areas of focus’ under four broad themes. The document is presented as a Framework for the period 2018-2021, with a view to a refresh at this time, to align with the Local Plan Review and the new spatial policy framework that this will set.
- 2.2 Overall the Swale economy has performed well, with substantial growth having been a feature of recent years. The Council has played an important role, making provision for such growth in its spatial planning and through a range of activity, including efforts to promote the Borough to the investment and business communities; positively supporting private sector investment; lobbying for and securing government funding to help deliver infrastructure and providing a range of business support to encourage business start-up, growth and survival.
- 2.3 Much of the Framework’s focus is to support the Borough’s current trajectory and to maintain the pursuit of long-standing ambitions, not least improving access to

the strategic road network and improved local access and choice for technical FE provision. It also seeks to address the points made by the Peer Review in respect of communicating the Swale brand and investment offer.

- 2.4 Whilst not a strictly like-for-like document, the Economic Regeneration Framework replaces the Council's previous Economic Development Strategy 'Open for Business'. The four priorities set out in the Framework are similar to those previously used, but the document reflects the progress that has been made and recognises the changing environment within which the Council's local ambitions are set. Aside from the economic uncertainties that persist and implications of Brexit, the Governments Industrial Strategy and policy drive for increased housing delivery are two key influences upon the future of the partnerships through which we work (such as the South east LEP) and the manner in which funding is distributed. There is also the emergence of the Thames Estuary Commission, overlaying the existing Thames Gateway initiative, and we await the publication of its report later this year.
- 2.5 Ultimately the Framework will be supported by action plans that will detail delivery and closely reflect the relevant service plans from across the Council. Delivery of the Framework will seek to make use of the Council's existing available resources and compliment this through strong partnership working and the pursuit of appropriate external funding and investment.
- 2.6 Outcomes will be measured through practical change as projects are progressed and completed and through both performance and local economic indicators. Those available to us and considered the most appropriate are set out in the document.

3 Proposal

- 3.1 The Policy and Development Review Committee consider the draft Economic Regeneration Framework 2018-2021, based around four headline priorities
- Promote Swale
 - Secure Investment
 - Support Business
 - Provide Relevant Skills

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 **Do nothing** - this is not recommended given the growth being supported by the Council and the contribution that is being made to the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan. Economic Regeneration is a corporate priority and no other organisation is as well placed to take a positive leadership role for the Borough, across the breadth of issues and opportunities that are highlighted.
- 4.4 **Status Quo** – The 'Open for Business' Strategy expired in 2016 and it is recommended that a new document setting a framework for the Council's regeneration and economic development activity over the next three years would

be beneficial, particularly a period within which we are likely to see substantial uncertainty and change.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The draft Economic Regeneration Framework has been published for an eight week consultation, circulated to key partner organisations and to the Council's business e-bulletin recipients and presented to the Swale Economy and Regeneration Partnership.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	<p>The priorities the draft Economic Regeneration Framework sets out contribute substantially to all three of the priorities in the Corporate Plan.</p> <p>A Borough to be proud of is supported by the securing of new investment and promoting Swale as a great location for investment and as a visitor destination</p> <p>A Community to be proud of is supported by the business support activity, the encouragement of co-operation within the business community and the drive to secure relevant skills provision for local people and businesses.</p> <p>A Council to be proud of is largely supported by the contribution that Economic Regeneration makes to the Council's future financial sustainability through retained business rates.</p>
Financial, Resource and Property	<p>Delivery of the Framework will seek to use of the Council's existing available resources and compliment this through strong partnership working, and the pursuit of appropriate external funding and investment. The creation of new commercial floor space, supported through the Council's economic regeneration activity, contributes significantly to the Councils budget through retained Non-Domestic Rates. NDR has risen from £41,509,000 in 2013/14 to £47,542,000 in 2016/17, the largest growth in Kent. Areas of focus, particularly related to infrastructure, will also have wider implications for future housing delivery and the consequent impacts on future Council tax receipts. Whilst several service areas contribute to this agenda the core economic development activity costs are £441,000, with 5 FTE staff.</p>
Legal and Statutory	<p>Economic regeneration is not a statutory function of the local authority but the agenda set out in the draft Economic Regeneration Framework does link closely with the Local Plan (both delivery and the review), particularly under the Secure Investment priority.</p>
Crime and	<p>No specific implications are identified at this stage, although access to employment, skills and other opportunities will help enhance the</p>

Disorder	overall well-being of residents of the Borough.
Environmental Sustainability	Overall, the draft Economic Regeneration Framework is predicated on helping secure growth which has environmental implications for the Borough. The balance between these and the need for growth will largely be dealt with through the planning process. Specific elements, such as efforts to improve the provision of public transport will make a positive contribution as will the increase in local opportunities for residents, reducing the need to travel for leisure, employment and learning.
Health and Wellbeing	No specific implications are identified at this stage, although access to employment, skills and other opportunities will help enhance the overall well-being of residents of the Borough.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage. It should be noted that delivery against the Economic Regeneration Framework is, in part, dependent upon the working relationship with government and other partners and the funding decisions that are made by the private sector and at a county, regional and national level. This in itself places important elements of delivery beyond the Council's immediate control, mitigated by our ability to make a strong case to decision makers. Where external funding is secured, for which the Council is the accountable body, appropriate controls will need to be in place to manage any risk of claw back, taking account of the terms placed upon the funding.
Equality and Diversity	As a high level document, no specific implications are identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	No specific implications are identified at this stage. Management of the information used to support enquiry management and engagement with the local business community will in particular need to have regard for the issues around privacy and data protection.

7 Appendices

- 7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report
- Appendix I: *Draft Swale Regeneration Framework 2018-2021*

8 Background Papers

Swale a great place

to visit | invest | work | earn | learn

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A draft economic regeneration
framework for Swale
2018 – 2021



Foreword



Cllr. Mike Cosgrove
Cabinet Member for
Regeneration

Over the last five years Swale has seen a significant increase in commercial activity with considerable inward investment. Making Swale a great place to work, earn and learn new skills is at the centre of our ambition. Over the next three years we will see considerable change as we push through our bold ideas for regenerating Sittingbourne Town Centre, help further expand Eurolink and Kent Science Park, with much emphasis on new infrastructure and much improved connectivity to the M2 and beyond.

Across all of our borough, we will need to recalibrate our efforts to compete in a global society in which Swale's diverse and thriving business sector can continue to successfully play its part in innovation, life sciences, export, tourism and engineering.

The regeneration of the Borough is a far-reaching agenda and involves a broad range of activity with which the Council is involved. Economic regeneration has a vital role to play as part of this wider picture and this document provides a framework to which both the Council and others can refer in making their contribution. The Council's activity will seek to

- promote the borough
- lever in external funding and investment
- Support business
- improve local skills and choice
- offer help where needed
- work constructively with partners

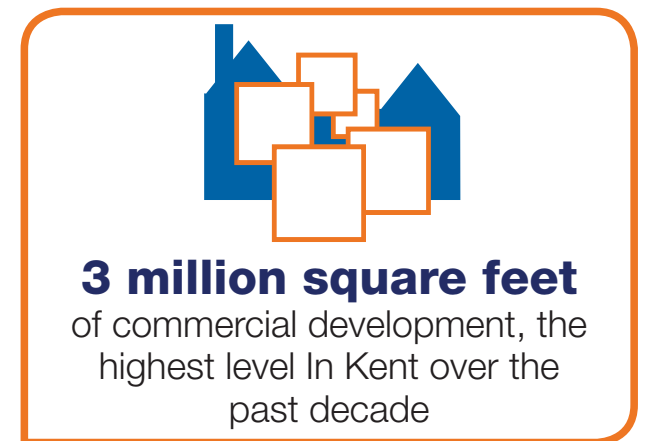
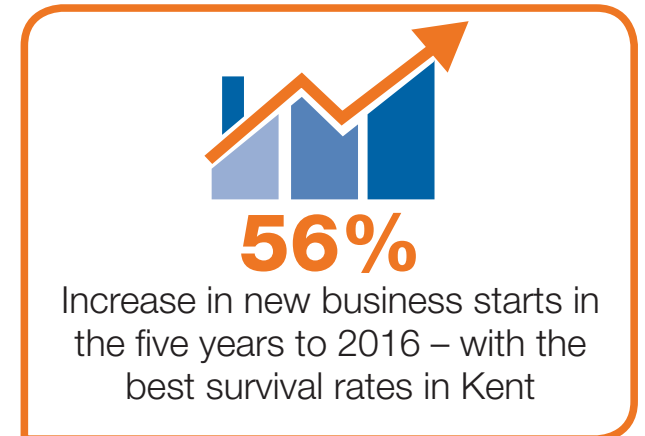
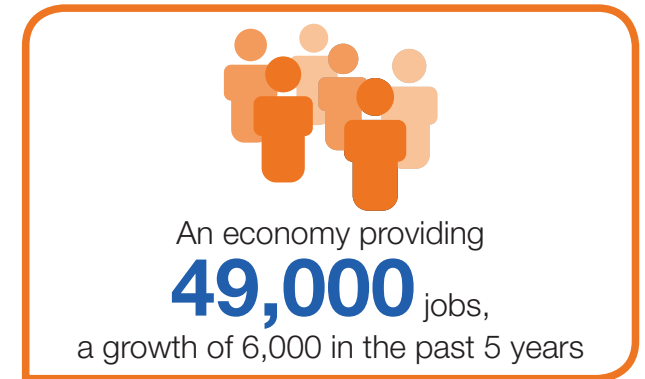
With a further tightening of slim resources this is not without challenge as competition intensifies, but our aim is “to make a difference where it matters most”. This requires agility and grip. Whilst there is always more to achieve, across Swale you can see the improvement, and this is what we aim to continue.



Our Economy

We understand our local economy well – both its strengths and its weak points. Overall we have seen growth, reflecting both our existing strengths in distribution and manufacturing as well as emerging sectors such as technical and scientific activities. The data below reflects the scale of the investment and change that has been secured. However, this in itself brings with it new challenges. We recognise the need to:

- ensure that infrastructure keeps pace with, and continues to enable our growth ambitions
- address the lack of technical and vocational learning opportunities, in particular for young people, helping create a stronger, more adaptable workforce.
- expand the range of leisure and retail opportunities for the growing number of residents, workers and visitors.
- Stay in touch with our businesses to understand their needs and help them compete in an increasingly technology driven and global environment.

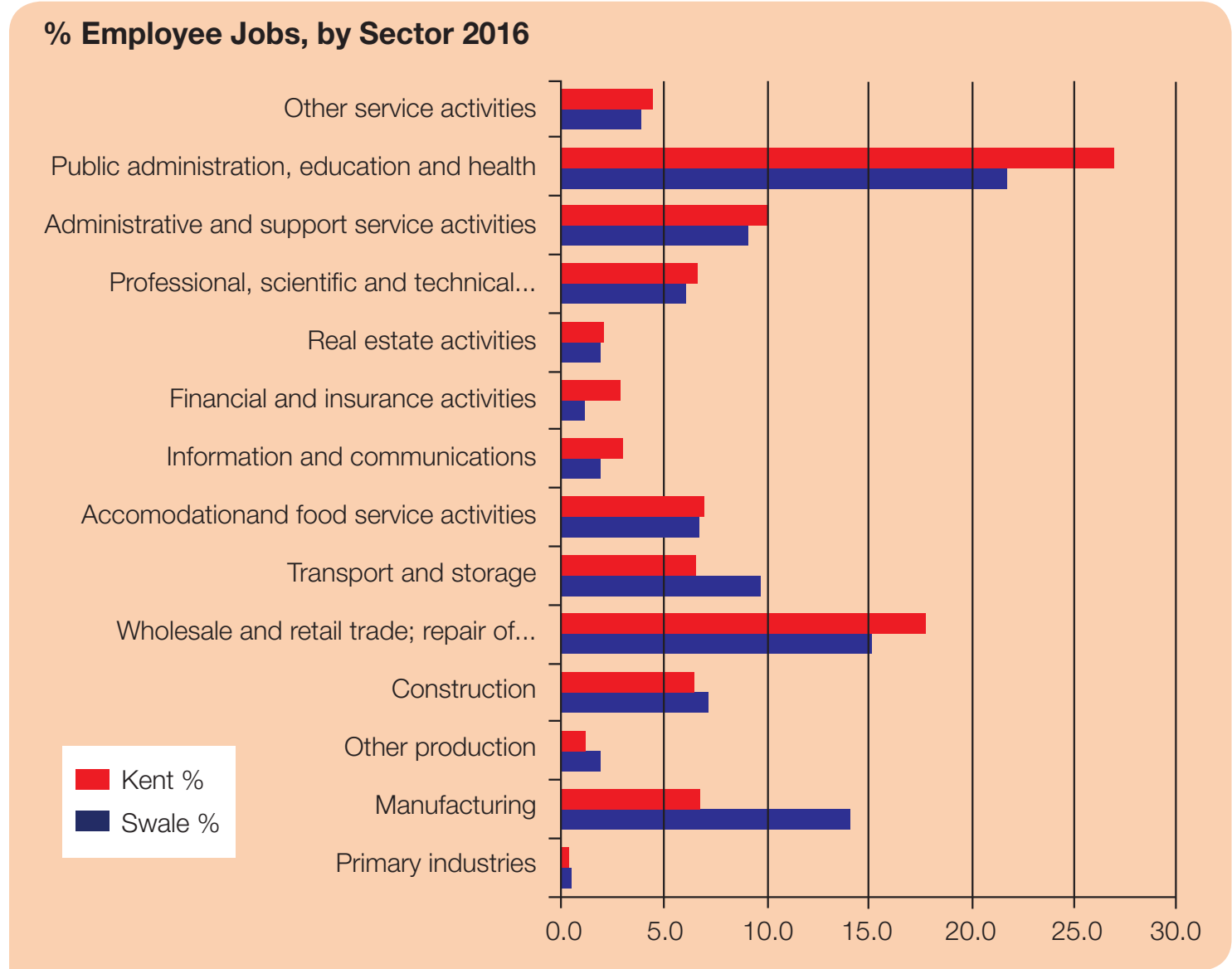


Sectors

Swale has particular concentrations in manufacturing and transport and storage, relative not only to Kent but also the rest of the country. Providing 7,000 and 5,000 jobs respectively, they are also the second and third largest sectors in absolute terms, with retail and wholesale the largest, providing 8,000 jobs.

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90% of the employment growth in the last five years has been seen in 5 sectors; manufacturing; construction; transportation and storage; professional, scientific and technical activities and business administration.



data excludes farm based agricultural jobs

Growth highlights

Queenborough & Rushenden, is a Major regeneration project providing 1100 homes and new commercial space. Phase 1 housing started and 1,000 jobs have been supported to date



ALDI are investing in new £50m distribution centre at Queenborough to join two other major national distribution centres in Borough - Morrisons in Sittingbourne and GIST, serving Marks and Spencer, in Faversham.



The Port of Sheerness, one of the UK's largest bulk handling Ports, handling 1.4m tonnes of goods. Peel Port's Masterplan is driving significant new investment and increasing land available for port use.

There is outstanding **maritime and naval heritage** associated with the Port. This is becoming part of a wider, diverse offer contributing to the Visitor Economy.



A growing Visitor Economy

see's £193m spent by visitors and supporting 4,561 jobs. There are diverse destinations

including beaches, towns, the North Kent Downs and Coastal Marshes.

Shepherd Neame, Britains oldest brewer, with a visitor centre that has become an important part of the local visitor economy.



Largest cluster of life sciences businesses in Kent, focused around **Kent Science Park**.

AbBaltis, supplies blood plasma to disease-testing firms, has grown rapidly since forming in 2010 and in 2015 received the Queens Award for export.



Swale's Industrial Hub, the biggest concentration of manufacturing in Kent, with Eurolink being Kent's largest business zone, home to 300+ companies.

Cook Kitchen are a growing national brand, cooking and selling frozen ready meals that are made like you would at home. Based on Eurolink it has seen remarkable growth since starting in 1997.

Aims and priorities

Our aim is to continue to develop the right conditions to support and stimulate growth so that Swale is recognised as one of the most enterprising locations along the Thames Estuary - a great place to visit, invest, work, earn and learn. To deliver change over the next three years, our contribution is set out under four broad priorities

1. Promote Swale
2. Secure investment
3. Support Business
4. Relevant skills

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To deliver the outcomes required, support and investment from our partners is vital. Given the scale of change we are seeking, this document is a call to action at the sub-regional and national levels, with KCC, Government and its agencies and the South East LEP, all required to play their part. Nor will we lose sight of the 'local'. We will work with local bodies, including our local business partnership, and look at cross-cutting issues for Swale, whilst also recognising how different parts of the Borough present different challenges and opportunities. This includes our outstanding rural areas, which make a substantial contribution to our visitor economy and are seeing a growth in a broad range of SME's including a strengthening local food and drink sector.

Whilst these priorities and our areas of focus under each will guide the Council's efforts we will also remain responsive to issues and opportunities as they arise. Again, these will be both local, as partner organisations, residents and businesses bring forward issues and ideas and on a broader stage, including working with the priorities that come forward from the Thames Estuary Commission.





Promote Swale

Promoting Swale's assets is critical to delivering our regeneration priorities. Appreciation of the Borough's facets and creating positive perceptions will enhance our ability to attract business investment and expand the visitor economy. Over time it will also boost development values, which in turn will help drive up quality and enable the private sector to contribute more substantively to the delivery of critical infrastructure.

Areas of Focus

- Take advantage of the unique attributes of each area of Swale to promote the Borough as great place to invest, work, visit and live.
- Continue to develop and enhance the Swale Means Business web presence, using social and other media to develop new audiences
- Work with partners to develop and push shared stories about Swale as a great place in which to invest and do business.
- Build the area's reputation through the work of key bodies on the national and international stage including the Department for Trade and Investment, the Thames Estuary Commission, Visit England and the South East LEP.
- Promote local 'success stories' to reinforce the Swale Means Business branding
- Work with partners to provide networking opportunities that help raise the profile of the Borough

Secure investment

In recent years Swale has successfully levered in substantial public and private sector investment, including £250m of government funding in local roads and the highest level of commercial development in Kent. Nonetheless, there is a need to ramp up our efforts and extend our ‘investment reach’ by creating the right conditions for growth.

Areas of Focus

- Continue the review of the Local Plan, adopting a balanced approach which can deliver the required infrastructure, jobs and homes.
- Secure improvements to the strategic road network, particularly at Junctions 5 and 7 of the M2 and at key junctions along the A249
- Push for a new A2-M2 link, addressing issues on the A2 and creating the capacity for future growth
- Lobby and work with public transport providers to optimise and integrate local services and enhance access to London
- Promote and support the delivery of improved broadband and mobile services where we can, in particular to support the rural economy
- Provide a ‘team around the investor’ approach, utilising the experience and knowledge from across the organisation to grasp investment opportunities
- Create town centre environments which can help meet the needs of communities and provide confidence to new businesses to expand and change the offer.



Support Business

Whether starting or growing, small businesses are a major source of new investment and employment for Swale. There is a demand for services that will support them and provide opportunities that allow local businesses to network and influence. We aim to continue to deliver these with partners and will develop the offer so that it remains relevant.

As we embrace the global economy, the focus for our support will be placed on developing export markets; supporting ideas and innovation, developing a more skilled and technical workforce and bettering our local business environment.

Areas of Focus

- Provide a support service and networking opportunities, for existing and start-up businesses that help them take forward ideas, develop their workforce, improve productivity and grow sustainably.
- Work with partners to provide information and workshops that will help businesses internationalise and export.
- Improve the supply of workshops, studios and office space for micro and start-up businesses.
- Support a pipeline of available commercial sites and premises across Swale, to serve expansion as well as new investment
- Encourage opportunities for small businesses to trade in our town centres, through the markets.
- Support the diversification and evolution of the tourism and leisure sector on Sheppey, with a particular focus upon local heritage, its coastal location and unique landscapes.
- Provide opportunities for local universities to assist business, with access to their facilities and expertise.



Provide relevant skills

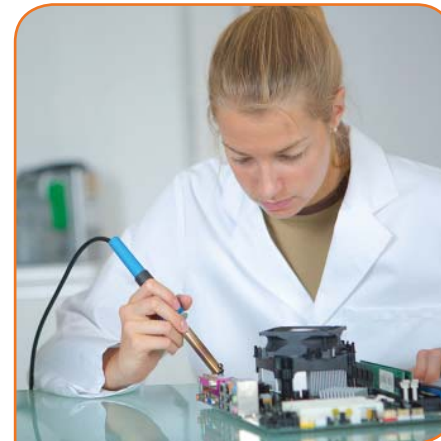
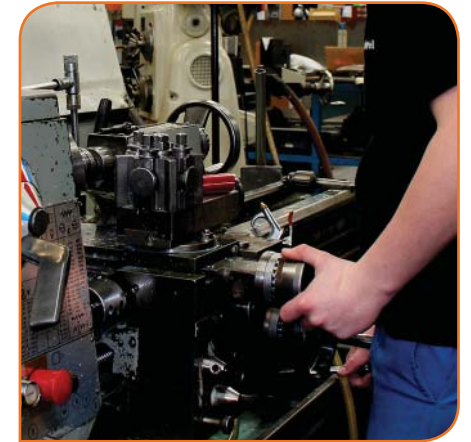
Improving access to a wider range of technical skills provision is fundamental to developing key sectors of our economy. At present 1,500 Swale students make lengthy journeys to pursue technical routes at Further Education Colleges but they are part of a much larger population of local young people for whom local opportunities are focused mostly around schools.

Alongside apprenticeships, a focused Further Education facility in Sittingbourne will help meet employer needs by creating more accessible opportunities for young people that are economically relevant, providing clear progression routes into local industry.

There also remains the need to address the deep-rooted basic skills issues, which are limiting opportunities for some residents. The Council will look to influence funders and providers so that those supported can secure progression to employment and training, rather than be trapped in a cycle of low attainment.

Areas of Focus

- Work with Canterbury and Mid-Kent College's to establish the business case and secure new, relevant FE provision in Sittingbourne
- Promote apprenticeships to both employers and local people.
- Where appropriate secure Local labour and apprenticeship outcomes from new developments in the Borough
- Encourage employers to become more involved with local schools, to build greater understanding of employer need and partnership working.
- Work with KCC and other key partners to identify how we can support efforts to provide more positive progression routes for local people facing skills challenges.



Outcomes

Outcomes will be measured through both practical change and through local economic and growth indicators, benchmarked against the rest of Kent, the south east and the UK as whole where possible.

These will reflect what is happening in the economy and in the workforce in particular and assist our understanding of the impact of interventions are making not only on the borough, but also for local people. We will also stay in touch with and be responsive to local business needs.

Indicators used will include

Total number of businesses

No of businesses directly supported

Business survival rates

No of Employee Jobs

No of Jobs supported

Commercial floor space completions

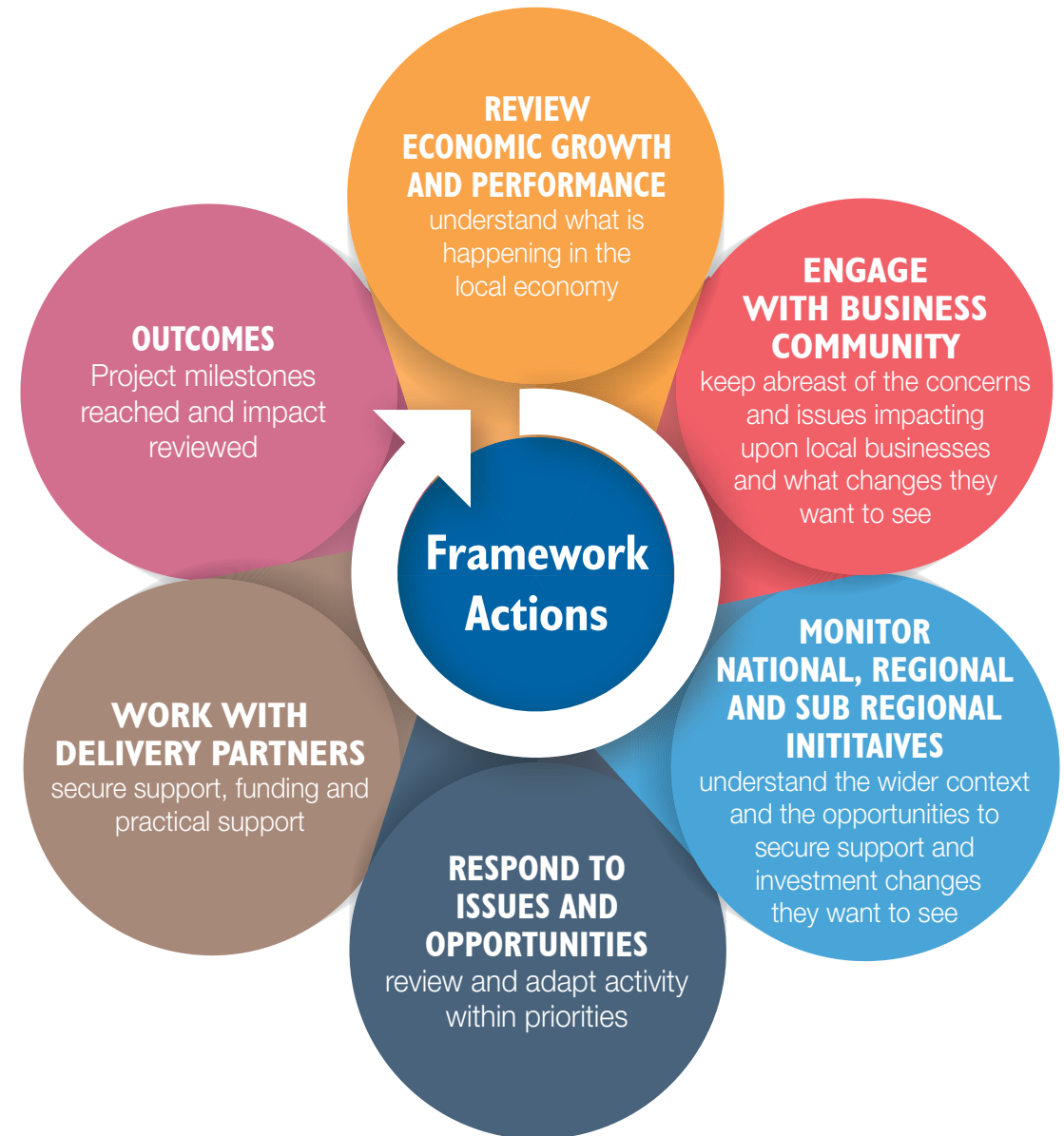
Housing completions

Unemployment (including age and duration)

Average wage by workplace

Average wage by residence

Qualifications levels 16-64



Contact Us

e: **edu@swale.gov.uk**

t: **01795 417398**

w: **swalemeansbusiness.co.uk**

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Customer Service Centre

Swale Borough Council

Swale House, East Street

Sittingbourne

Kent, ME10 3HT

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