

Action Plan in Support of the Economic Growth Strategy for Gravesham, 2019-23

Short Term Actions 2020-21 - A fuller understanding of the impact of Covid-19 on the local economy is fundamental to confirming the strategy for the next 5 years. It is too early to fully assess that, however the following actions are proposed as priorities for the coming year:

Ref.	Action	Outcome
<i>Theme 1 – Place branding to promote Gravesham as a place ‘open for business’</i>		
1.	Undertake a place branding exercise to create a narrative and to inform the preparation of material to communicate Gravesham’s vision for economic development.	Place branding narrative.
2.	Develop a communication plan and consistent routes for communication with businesses via an e-newsletter, social media and the council’s website.	Communication plan
<i>Theme 2 – Land and premises to enable businesses to grow</i>		
3.	Review local plan employment land policies and proposals and take actions to bring forward identified sites, including within the Town Centre, at Northfleet Embankment (in conjunction with the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation/North Kent Enterprise Zone) and at Lion Business Park.	Progress with sites.
4.	Steps to bring forward new low cost/start up business space in the Borough, including creative space in the Town Centre.	Business space proposals.
<i>Theme 3 - Investment and improvement in physical transport and digital infrastructure to reinforce Gravesham’s connectivity advantages</i>		
5.	Make the case for additional train capacity on Highspeed 1 and for fast river bus services to and from Gravesend with additional capacity at Town Pier Pontoon, subject to a review of demand post Covid-19.	Cases reviewed and made.
6.	Influence the impact that the Lower Thames Crossing will have on the future economic prospects of the Borough so that investment opportunities do not pass the area by.	Representations made.
7.	Make the case investment in public transport with new Fastrack routes via main employment sites and cycling and walking routes to support the functioning of the local economy, especially from the eastern side of the	Case made.

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	Borough.	
<i>Theme 4 - Supporting enterprise to encourage business growth, especially within higher value sectors</i>		
8.	Ongoing dialogue with local businesses to understand the issues that they now face, supported by economic statistics and linking in with strategic responses	Business forum established and wider engagement undertaken.
9.	Develop the case for a 'digital hub' in the Town Centre to provide enhanced access to support business development.	Case made.
<i>Theme 6 - Valuing Gravesham's changing rural economy and the contribution to overall local economic growth</i>		
10.	Clarify current broadband capability issues in the Borough, especially in the rural area, and identify actions to enhance connectivity.	Updated position and actions identified.
<i>Theme 5 – Skills to ensure that the local workforce is equipped with appropriate skills to access employment opportunities.</i>		
11.	Establish clear lines of communication with businesses and skills groups, such as the Adult Skills Forum, to ensure a full response to local employment, skills and training issues in the light of Covid-19.	Response and actions identified.
12.	Collaborate with others to establish a programme of sector specific and/or general jobs & training fairs to bring employers and jobseekers together.	Programme planned.
13.	Undertake actions to expand digital skills within the Borough to ensure that businesses and residents are equipped in respect of technological change.	Programme of actions and funding identified.
<i>Theme 7 - Supporting sustainable economic growth through delivering the Council's climate change commitments</i>		
14.	Re-assess the opportunities derived from reduced travel and increased working from home or working more locally post Covid-19 in contributing towards meeting climate change commitments.	Economic development actions taken forward via Climate Change Action Plan.