

Darlington Economic Strategy

2016 / 2017 Action Plan

Place

Objective 1: Raise the profile of Darlington (marketing/influencing/informing) in order to generate economic growth (general and sector specific) by:

What we will do		Lead	Partners/Support	Timescale
1.1	Continue building momentum on brands such as Ingenious Darlington, Invest in Darlington and Darlington for Culture, working with partners and businesses to encourage recognition and adoption of the brands.	Ingenious Darlington Steering Group / Creative Darlington group	Darlington Businesses	2017
1.2	Develop clear sector propositions promoting Darlington as a place to invest – for Logistics, Advanced Manufacturing, Digital, Biologics, Subsea and Business Services.	TVCA / Sue White / Richard Baker (Economy Team)	CPI / Digital City	2017
1.3	Promote Darlington (including the Town Centre) as an excellent place to live, work, shop and do business – through marketing literature, media communications and social media. To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tees Valley Place prospectus - Town Centre communications action plan - Town Centre Events Plan - Healthy high streets initiative 	DBC Communications Team / Economy Team	TVCA / Distinct Darlington / DBC Events Team Businesses	2017
1.4	Build on the success of the festival of ingenuity and build a business week to complement the 2017 festival, including flag ship business conference to raise the profile of Darlington to businesses from outside the sub region.	Economy Team	North East England Chamber of Commerce / Local businesses	Autumn 2017
1.5	Work with town centre landlords and agents to encourage alternative or temporary uses for vacant units to create a vibrant town centre.	Healthy high streets team / Lucy Humphreys (Economy Team)	Businesses/ Distinct Darlington / Steven Wiper	Autumn 2017

Key Outputs		
Description	Target	Timescale
Halt decline in annual footfall in the Town Centre	No lower than 2014 count of 21.45m ¹	2016/2017
Attract new investment enquiries – expansion or new development	30 per year	2016/2017

¹ Based on 7 counter sites at West Row, Skinnergate, Northgate, Post House Wynd, Blackwellgate, Bondgate and High Row.

People

Objective 1: Improve Darlington’s economic competitiveness and growth prospects by increasing the supply of appropriately qualified workers and continuing to develop vocational skills to meet the needs of employers and enterprise

Objective 2: Remove barriers preventing people from participating in the workforce and work with the Combined Authority to create opportunities to retrain or up skill the existing workforce.

Objective 3: Maximise the opportunities to link resident to employment opportunities (within/outside the borough)

What we will do		Lead	Partners/Support	Timescale
1.1.	Continue to facilitate strong working relationships between industry and education providers, bringing employers, schools and Colleges together to deliver practical activities for young people.	Owen McAteer FFJ / TVCA	Local businesses, universities, colleges, schools, voluntary sector, DBC	2016/2017
1.2	Continue delivery of Foundation for Jobs project to support the development of high quality STEM provision and foster better relations between industry and education providers through a series of targeted events aimed to promote participation by young people.	Owen McAteer FFJ	Darlington Partnership, local businesses, colleges, schools, voluntary sector, DBC	2016/2017
1.3	Support / and develop activity aimed at increasing apprenticeship opportunities	TVCA / Owen McAteer, FFJ/ Economy Team	Local Businesses and business organisations	2016/2017
1.4	Secure a sustainable funding model for FFJ, securing delivery over the medium – long term.	Economic initiatives external funding team	TVU, Darlington Partnership, Schools, Colleges and local businesses’	July 2017
1.5	Promote to businesses the financial support available through Tees Valley combined authority’s devolved skills budgets to support apprenticeships and up skilling of existing staff.	Economy Team	TV Combined Authority, TVU, SFA ...	Ongoing
1.6	Continue to deliver the ‘Encouraging Engineering Scheme’ for the existing undergraduates, phasing the scheme out once all enrolled students have completed their course.	Owen McAteer FFJ	BAT Panel Members	Due to end Summer 2017.
1.7	Enable new routes to employment opportunities for all Darlington residents, for example ensuring that Council procured building / development projects include provision for employment and training of local people.	Economic Initiatives	Construction industry / developers	2016/17

1.8	Attract and retain talent within the local labour market by tackling perceptions of place through better promotion of Darlington for building a successful career and of upcoming opportunities in key sectors such as biologics.	TVCA / Economic Initiatives / DBC Communications team	Local Businesses and business organisations	2016/17
1.9	Remove the barriers to employment for residents, narrowing the gaps between the in employment and unemployment rate.	DWP, TVCA, Economy team	Local partners involved in Youth Employment initiative and building better opportunities scheme	2016/2017
1.10	Work with Combined Authority colleagues to explore the opportunities to develop a business mentoring scheme to up skill and share knowledge with high growth potential SME businesses.	TVCA / Lucy Humphreys (Economy Team)	TV Combined Authority, local businesses	2016 /2017

Key Outputs		
Description	Target	Timescale
Engage school pupils in meaningful links with business and industry.	minimum of 1,250 school pupils	2016/17
Increase the proportion of school pupils leaving school who continue on to pursue STEM subjects	Increase by 5%	2018
Increase the number of apprenticeship starts in the borough	Increase by 5%	2016/2017

Infrastructure

Objective 1: Ensure that Darlington has the appropriate physical infrastructure to attract and sustain investment and employment growth.

Objective 2: Ensure that Darlington has an effective transport system that meets the needs and aspirations of all (residents, visitors and businesses) helping the economy to thrive, improving the environment and enhancing quality of life

Objective 3: Modernise the commercial premises stock of Darlington and bring forward opportunities on new and previously unused land

What we will do		Lead	Partners/Support	Timescale
1.1	Lobby government to deliver investment at Darlington Bank Top station using the ARUP Bank top station Masterplan and Business Case and vital improvements to rail connectivity on the ECML and local services.	TVCA	Network Rail, Stagecoach/Virgin, TV TIG / Transport for the North / ECML consortia	Ongoing
1.2	Complete a Masterplan and development framework document for key development sites, owned by the Council at: Yarm Road South (Ingenium Parc) High Faverdale (Faverdale Reserve)	Tim Crawshaw		2017
1.3	Secure the investment allocated through the Combined Authority and EU funding streams to support the delivery of key regeneration sites, this includes funding for: Horizons Centre Factories for the Future Ingenium Parc Deliver Morton Palms parking if funding released.	TVCA / John Simpson	CPI	2016/17
1.4	Develop a programme of highway and transport measures to support economic growth, particularly at key sites within the North West and Eastern Growth Zones	TVCA/ Sue Dobson/ Highways	Transport consultants / Combined Authority	Ongoing
1.5	Work with DTVA to secure a sustainable future for the airport as an international gateway to the Tees Valley	TVCA / Economic Initiative	DTVA, , local businesses/ employers	2016/2017
1.6	Work with Combined Authority and local partners to continue roll out of improved broadband infrastructure, tackling Darlington's recognised cold spots.	TVCA / Economic Initiative	BDUK, network providers	2016/2016

1.7	Secure funding as well as work with private developers to deliver premises within the borough (new and renovation of existing) to meet increased demand.	Economic Initiative	TVCA/HCA/ Developers	2016/2017
1.8	Encourage developers and existing owners to consider development or redevelopment of Grade A office accommodation.	Economic Initiative	TVCA/HCA/ Developers	2016/2017
1.9	Support the Healthy high street project to encourage occupancy of vacant town centre premises, boost footfall and promote the town centre to enhance civic pride.	Town centre traders	Distinct Darlington / businesses / Economy team	2017

Key Outputs

Description	Target	Timescale
Deliver new commercial development at a rate similar to that seen during the last period of significant growth.	15,000sqm B1/A2 4.5Ha B1/B2/B8	2016/2017
Increase residents and businesses access to superfast broadband infrastructure.	To be determined	2016/2017

Business Growth

Objective 1: Attract investment and employment opportunities through the development of clusters of activity in subsea, biologics, logistics, advanced engineering and public service sectors and other emerging sectors

Objective 2: Raise the local economy's competitiveness by increasing business formation and survival rates and supporting business growth in areas where there is the greatest potential

Objective 3: Encourage growth in target sectors and clusters by encouraging new/existing businesses to develop new products and markets; exploit innovative technologies and new ways of working and through the development of supply chain opportunities

What we will do		Lead	Partners/Support	Timescale
1.1	Raise the external profile of Darlington for key sectors such as; Subsea, Biologics, Logistics, Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering, Digital by developing sector specific action plans.	TVCA / Economy team		2016/2017
1.2	Identify and target support where beneficial to SMEs with high potential for growth through securing funding, for example from TVU Growth Compass, RGF Let's Grow programme, ERDF and other sources.	TVCA / Economy Team	TVCA, TVU	2016/2017
1.3	Promote and influence wider business support provision across the borough signposting businesses to the appropriate support (i.e. Tees Valley Business Compass, Teesside University Business Exchange Network etc)	TVCA / Economy Team	TVCA, NECC, FSB, UKTI, University of Teesside	2016/2017
1.4	Work with TEDCO to ensure that the business start-up offer is closely aligned to client needs and addresses key business planning issues such as marketing your business and financial management.	Economy Team	TEDCO, business support partners	2016/2017
1.5	Improve access to local procurement by large purchasers thereby bringing business opportunities to local firms. e.g. Organise procurement workshop with Darlington Business Club.	Procurement Team	North East Procurement Organisation	2016/2017
1.6	Increase local businesses' export activities by promoting awareness of exporting services/activities	TVCA/ Economy Team	UK Trade & Investment, Tees Valley Combined Authority & TVU	2016/2017

Key Outputs

Description	Target	Timescale
Engage with minimum 100 SME's		2016/2017
Increase survival rate of businesses aged 3 years or more by 2% per annum	60.1%	2016/2017

Create opportunities for local businesses to learn more about public procurement, exporting and marketing their business.	Hold 3 events a year.	2016 / 2017
Develop strong cluster networks of businesses in the same sector through developing specific sector action plans.	Complete sector action plans for key sectors.	2016/2017