

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR ROSSENDALE 2018-2033



INVEST IN

Rossendale



Foreword

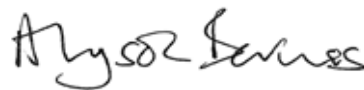
Our refreshed and ambitious Corporate Strategy for 2018 sets the overall vision and priorities for the borough. The strategy underlines our commitment to gain investment and ensure sustainable growth in Rossendale, as well as maintaining high quality, value for money services. With our strategy in place, we want to continue our journey with our residents, businesses and partners to deliver the Corporate Strategy by preparing this Economic Development Strategy to deliver the economic elements of our three corporate priorities, and specifically our priority for ‘A connected and successful Rossendale that welcomes sustainable growth’.

Following our recent successes at Spinning Point and New Hall Hey which have attracted £14m private investment and created over 175 new jobs, this strategy puts in place our long-term aspirations to grow the economy. By building on our strengths and addressing challenges, the opportunities for transforming the Rossendale economy are enormous. This is a long-term strategy, recognising that meaningful change can only be achieved by collaborative and targeted action over a number of years. Our three year, performance based, action plan will deliver positive and focussed interventions to drive forward sustainable economic growth.

The timing of our own Economic Development Strategy is critical if we are to shape and influence emerging sub-regional and regional economic development, transport and place shaping strategies in order to re-affirm and realise our growth ambitions within a Lancashire and Greater Manchester footing.

The Council wants to work collaboratively and engage with key stakeholders, our businesses, commercial letting agents, major landowners and developers to realise Rossendale’s growth potential. In addition, with our commitment to grow the economy, create jobs and improve economic opportunity for all, the Council itself is willing to make commercial investments where it is financially prudent to do so.

Rossendale is open for business!



Councillor Alyson Barnes,

Leader



Councillor Andy MacNae,

Former Portfolio Holder for Regeneration & Tourism



Background and context

Rossendale occupies a strategic location, repeatedly described as the ‘bridge’ in to Lancashire from Greater Manchester leading through to West Yorkshire. Rossendale benefits from good road communications astride the M66/A56, linking the M60/M62 with the M65 motorway. The road communications and the proximity to Manchester make Rossendale highly accessible and able to play an important role within the sub-region and the Northern Powerhouse. Significant business investment has taken place along the A56 corridor, and the west of the borough is proving attractive with recent developments drawing in advanced manufacturing businesses. Looking forward, a future supply of employment land in appropriate locations is essential to achieve our planned economic growth and prosperity driven by the Invest in Rossendale brand.

Infrastructure planning remains a top priority for the long term growth of our economy to both attract business investment and support access for workers and visitors alike. Given Rossendale’s strategic location on route into Manchester, it is surprising that it is the only borough in Lancashire without a rail link which inevitably is constraining economic growth.

In 2017 there were 2,590 businesses, including award winning companies Linemark UK Limited, JJO plc and Slingco Limited. Rossendale’s industrial sector strengths measured by employee jobs are, in joint first place, ‘manufacturing’ and ‘wholesale and retail trade’, and in joint second place, ‘administrative and support’ and ‘human health and social work’. Unlike other districts in Lancashire, the borough has a relatively high number of private sector jobs, which is considered a positive trait in times of public sector contraction. Given Pennine Lancashire’s strong advanced manufacturing base and Enterprise Zone status for the BAE sites at Samlesbury and Warton, there is an opportunity to grow associated supply chain companies in this recognised growth sector.

Rossendale hosts three distinctive market towns; Rawtenstall, referenced by the Sunday Times in its feature on Best Places to Live 2018, provides individual specialist shops with a high end offer, Bacup reputedly the best preserved cotton town in England, and Haslingden which ‘punches above its weight’ for food and drink in the evening. All have attracted recent investment; Spinning Point at Rawtenstall,



Townscape Heritage Initiative in Bacup and the Haslingden Task Force area. The Council has ambitious plans to continue to grow and develop all three town centres.

Rossendale's visitor, cultural and leisure offer is significant, with an untapped potential for growth. Rossendale is home to the famous East Lancashire Railway. The natural beauty of the Rossendale Valley set amongst open moorland supports a backdrop for 'adrenaline' outdoor active pursuits; with Ski Rossendale, Lee Quarry Mountain Bike Trails, the 'Grip and Go' climbing facility and Whitworth Water Ski Academy to name a few. A strategy and action plan now needs to be put in place to realise this growth.

Rossendale residents achieve high rates of educational attainment, out-pacing regional and national figures attaining top positions in business and unemployment is low. However, there are growing economic disparities within the borough, with some areas facing severe social and economic deprivation contrasting with areas of relative prosperity. This strategy aims to reduce the gap in our most deprived communities by ensuring all residents and communities benefit from economic growth, as well as benefitting from targeted specific initiatives.

Our vision

By 2033, the Rossendale economy will show strong and sustainable growth, with improved connectivity as a 'bridge' in to Lancashire from Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire. The Invest in Rossendale brand will be firmly established within the business community, attracting growth sector businesses to our employment sites with access to a skilled labour supply, creating well paid jobs for local residents. Rossendale will be known in the sub-region and beyond for its Adrenaline Valley offer and cultural experiences. Residents will have improved life chances and achieved greater economic success through the provision of enhanced employment, skills and educational opportunities. Rawtenstall, Bacup and Haslingden will be well known regionally for their unique offers and be strong destinations for shoppers and visitors.



What this strategy means for Rossendale:

- Private sector investment within our town centres, from employment sites and residential development worth £550m
- Over £200m public sector investment required in rail and road infrastructure
- Creation of 1600 new jobs, with more than 800 new jobs in growth sectors
- Achieving greater prosperity for all by raising income levels
- Increasing the business rate base on undeveloped and under-utilised sites

Rossendale's economy, defining the future

The Government's Industrial Strategy 2017 sets out a long term plan to boost the productivity and earning power of people throughout the UK by helping businesses create better, higher-paying jobs in every part of the UK with investment in the skills, industries and infrastructure of the future. The Government has identified 5 foundations to boost productivity and earning power across the country:

- **Ideas:** the world's most innovative economy
- **People:** good jobs and greater earning power for all
- **Infrastructure:** a major upgrade to the UK's infrastructure
- **Business Environment:** the best place to start and grow a business
- **Places:** prosperous communities across the UK

The Industrial Strategy also sets out four 'Grand Challenges' where Britain can lead the global technological revolution: artificial intelligence and big data; clean growth; the future of mobility; and meeting the needs of an ageing society.

Relevance to Rossendale

The Government's Industrial Strategy aligns well with our infrastructure requirements to open up new employment sites and provide road



and rail improvements to support access to work; creating a strong business base; encouraging innovation in new and existing businesses, particularly in advanced manufacturing; promoting and increasing inward investment; enhancing employment, skills and educational opportunities; ensuring residents and communities reach their full economic potential; and establishing thriving town centres. Rossendale Council is keen to further develop relationships with Government and the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership to deliver this strategy and benefit from Government programmes such as a local prosperity fund to bring forward sites to achieve growth.

Transport for the North (TfN) is producing a **2020-50 Strategy** that is expected to deliver major enhancements to the region's transport infrastructure with £27billion allocated for strategic transformational projects. Within the identified corridors, Rossendale falls under both the Central Pennine and Lancashire/Manchester/Sheffield corridors. The Central Pennine and, in particular the East Lancashire to Manchester sub corridor study, is at a more advanced stage.

Relevance to Rossendale

Activity which is beneficial to Rossendale's transport aims includes improving East Lancashire to Manchester reliability and journey times particularly in relation to the M66/A56; improve public transport connectivity between Rossendale and Manchester via a rail link; access to future Greater Manchester major growth opportunities, such as Northern Gateway. It is essential that Rossendale Council works closely with TfN, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Lancashire County Council and other stakeholders to ensure that our transport aspirations are advanced and delivered through the TfN process.

The **Draft Spatial Framework for Greater Manchester** is a plan being prepared by all ten Greater Manchester authorities who will set out proposals on how Greater Manchester could be developed up to 2035, to make Greater Manchester a better place to live, work, learn and play. The plan will consider the locations for new housing and employment, and will identify the new infrastructure such as transport, schools, health centres and utility networks. The emerging Northern Gateway proposal is of particular significance to Rossendale for its economic benefits; which seeks to bring forward an indicative 2.5 million square metres of industrial floor space and deliver 9,500 new



homes along the M62 corridor at its intersection with the M66 in Rochdale, Oldham and Bury.

Relevance to Rossendale

Ensuring the right education and skills provision is in place, with the ability to commute to the Northern Gateway so that residents are well placed to access job opportunities.

The **Pennine Lancashire Growth and Prosperity Plan 2016-2032** has an ambition to accelerate economic growth and housing development in Pennine Lancashire, close the productivity gap and ensure Pennine Lancashire builds on its position as a major contributor to the Lancashire economy and the Northern Powerhouse.

Relevance to Rossendale

The Economic Development Strategy for Rossendale will be integral to supporting the vision for Pennine Lancashire by improving business innovation, strengthening the advanced manufacturing base, closing the productivity gap, offering an attractive place to live, sustainable and inclusive growth for communities, and first class employment sites with improved connectivity to markets.

Rossendale Council's Corporate Strategy sets the overall vision and priorities for the borough. The strategy underlines the Council's commitment to gain investment and ensure sustainable growth in Rossendale, as well as maintaining high quality, value for money services. The Economic Development Strategy for Rossendale will deliver the economic elements across all corporate priorities, and specifically the priority for prosperity: 'A connected and successful Rossendale that welcomes sustainable growth'.

There are a number of regional, sub-regional and local economic development, transport and place shaping strategies currently being prepared or refreshed. In order to bring forward activity, it is essential that Rossendale's economic priorities and proposals, identified in this economic development strategy, are recognised in the development and delivery of the following strategies and plans:

- Transport for the North 2020-50 Strategy



- Greater Manchester Spatial Framework
- Emerging Lancashire Combined Authority
- Lancashire Enterprise Partnership – emerging Lancashire Industrial Strategy
- East Lancashire Transport and Highways Plan
- Local Plan for Rossendale

The Strategy – Our Priority Themes

The vision will be delivered through five priority themes:

- To establish thriving Town Centres of Rawtenstall, Bacup and Haslingden, each providing its own unique offer and a destination for shoppers and visitors
- To establish the Invest in Rossendale brand, promoting and increasing inward investment in Rossendale by attracting growth sector businesses and bringing quality employment
- Creating a strong and thriving business base, supporting new and existing businesses
- Developing our visitor economy, active leisure and Adrenaline Valley brand and cultural offer
- Ensuring residents and communities reach their full economic potential; enhanced employment, skills and educational opportunities

The context and actions to address the priority areas are provided below in more detail.

Timescales

This Economic Development Strategy has a fifteen year vision; to be achieved by 2033. However the actions identified for each of the priority areas cover a three year period. The strategy will be refreshed every two years.



Resources

Whilst the Council will use some of its limited resources, within a considered approach, to underpin the delivery of this strategy, it recognises the importance of working collaboratively to realise Rossendale's growth ambitions. This strategy will provide a framework to not only attract external funding, but influence partner resources, as well as attract private sector investment. The Council is also willing to make commercial investments where it is financially prudent to do so.

Action Plan and Monitoring

In order to monitor the progress in delivering against the priority areas, key success measures have been identified. Quarterly monitoring reports will provide a statement of progress on the delivery of the key actions, along with appropriate reporting of actual performance against the success measures.



Priority 1: To establish thriving Town Centres of Rawtenstall, Bacup and Haslingden, each providing its own unique offer and a destination for shoppers and visitors

Our three town centres each provide a distinctive offer serving the day to day needs of residents, as well as a retail and leisure destination for visitors. The Rossendale ‘Town Centre, Retail, Leisure and Tourism Study 2017’ identified that for comparison goods shopping, 90.2% residents travel outside Rossendale; with Bury as the most popular destination, followed by Manchester, and finally ‘elsewhere’ such as the Trafford Centre.

Rawtenstall is a traditional market town and is Rossendale’s largest defined centre; and recently referenced by the Sunday Times in its feature for Best Places to Live 2018. The main retail offer is strong with low levels of vacancy in the Primary Shopping Area and is concentrated along Bank Street with individual specialist shops providing a high end offer. There has been significant investment in Rawtenstall in the recent past with the opening of New Hall Hey Retail Park which offers strong and prominent trading positions having attracted top names such as M&S Simply Food, TK Maxx and Costa. Further opportunities for investment and growth are currently underway at Spinning Point Phase 1 which will improve the town’s accessibility and connectivity with a new bus station and interchange. With planning permission now in place, Phase 2 will create a 5317 sq. m retail and leisure offer with the potential to provide a hotel, spa, cinema along with new eateries. The vision for Rawtenstall requires further work to continue the stepped change to the town centre’s retail, evening and leisure economy integrating necessary improvements to accessibility and connectivity, ensuring a sufficient provision of car parking in the right places, and further proposed investment in the permanent indoor covered market and outdoor market stalls.

Bacup is the second largest defined centre in Rossendale, serving the east of the borough, and is reputedly the best preserved cotton town in England, regularly attracting film crews. Unsurprisingly, most of the town centre is part of a Conservation Area. A new Morrisons and B&M Bargains have been constructed in the recent past, and with the Council’s ambitions to revitalise Bacup and create the conditions for further investment, Bacup has benefitted from £2.2m from the Townscape Heritage Initiative to refurbish its historical buildings along with



public realm improvements. In December 2016, some 26.3% of units were identified to be vacant, equating to 30.6% of the district centre's floor space. Unfortunately, Bacup suffers remoteness in its location 5 miles from the motorway network. However, looking eastwards, Bacup is well placed for the South Pennines and the new Todmorden curve. The Council is keen to develop a vision and discover Bacup's 'next big thing', with opportunities to build on Bacup's heritage and back drop of moorland beauty as a visitor destination, as well as serving the day-to-day needs of local residents.

Haslingden is of a similar scale to Bacup and serves residents in the west of the borough. Haslingden has a well maintained outdoor market, benefits from a number of independent retailers, and has an upward trajectory in the retail hierarchy of serving day-to-day needs. There is also evidence that Haslingden has benefitted from the national trend of a growing food and drink focussed leisure destinations, providing a relatively strong evening economy. Town centre vacancy rate is below national average. The northern end of Deardengate benefits from a stone cobble finish to the vehicular highway which offers the surrounding retail and leisure units a very attractive setting with a village feel. There is an opportunity to raise the quality of the townscape on other primary routes.

Our three main town centres of Rawtenstall, Bacup and Haslingden each provide their own distinctive offer for both residents and visitors, and each are undersold.



Key actions (2018/19-2020/21)

Develop Town Centre Visions for Rawtenstall, Bacup and Haslingden
To deliver Spinning Point Phases 1 and 2
To bring forward Spinning Point Phase 3
Attract a quality investor to reinvigorate and manage Rawtenstall market
Develop a car parking strategy for Rawtenstall
Develop a forward strategy for Bacup Townscape Heritage Initiative
Investigate a shop local scheme for Bacup
To continue to seek external funding to support the investment in Haslingden Town Centre
Promote walking routes and signage in our town centres
To ensure town centre management and maintenance systems are in place
With our traders groups, develop and deliver an action plan to promote the unique offers of our town centres

Success Measures

Increase in town centre footfall
Increase in the evening economy footfall
Reduction in vacant town centre floor space
Percentage occupancy of Rawtenstall market
Number of press releases/features



Priority 2: To establish the Invest in Rossendale brand, promoting and increasing inward investment in Rossendale attracting growth sector businesses and bringing quality employment.

Rossendale occupies a strategic location, repeatedly described as the ‘bridge’ in to Lancashire from Greater Manchester leading through to West Yorkshire. Rossendale benefits from good road communications astride the M66/A56, linking the M60/M62 with the M65 motorway. The road communications and the proximity to Manchester make Rossendale highly accessible and able to play an important role within the sub-region and the Northern Powerhouse. Significant business investment has taken place along the A56 corridor, and the west of the borough is proving attractive with recent developments drawing in advanced manufacturing businesses at New Hall Hey. However, a future supply of employment land in appropriate locations is essential to achieve our planned economic growth and prosperity.

This priority is about attracting large companies in recognised growth sectors, in particular building on Rossendale’s strength in advanced manufacturing, to expand the economic base and provide better paid jobs locally. *In 2017 average work place based median weekly earnings in Rossendale were the second lowest in Lancashire at £353.80, in comparison with the county average of £399.90. Unsurprisingly, the 2011 census revealed high levels of out commuting of just under 60% of the Rossendale workforce, no doubt for better paid employment, notably to Rochdale, Bury, Manchester and Burnley. By creating well-paid jobs locally, makes Rossendale more attractive as a place to live and work.

It is imperative that Rossendale continues to profit from its accessibility to Greater Manchester and the rest of Lancashire. The Council has been working with key transport partners to do this but also to take advantage of the proposed ‘Northern Gateway’ planned as part of the emerging Greater Manchester Spatial Strategy. An M66/A56 Project Group has been established which brings together key stakeholders involved in roads, highways and buses to influence decisions in favour of capacity and spend enhancements that further our growth ambitions. Operating in parallel, a rail delivery group is shortly to be established to bring together key stakeholders and develop an action plan with the long term aim of establishing an integrated heritage and passenger railway from Rawtenstall to Manchester. Whilst a strong



evidenced economic case is to be developed, it is recognised that there would be enormous economic benefit to the Rossendale economy both as a business and residential location, bringing new jobs and private sector investment, and placing Rossendale on the Northern Powerhouse map.

Rossendale’s industrial sector strength is in manufacturing, and given the backdrop of Pennine Lancashire’s strong advanced manufacturing base and the Enterprise Zone status for the BAE sites at Samlesbury and Warton, there is an opportunity to attract associated supply chain companies in this recognised growth sector.

Finally, an essential ingredient will be promoting the ‘Invest in Rossendale’ brand to sell the message that the Council is open for business and is prepared to provide the ‘red carpet’ treatment to attract businesses from outside the borough to locate in Rossendale, as well as supporting businesses already here.

*This data has been sourced from the Lancashire County Council, Lancashire Insight, Area Profile, and Local Authority Profile for Rossendale

Key actions (2018/19-2020/21)
To secure 27 hectares of employment land within the emerging Local Plan To bring forward Futures Park Leisure and Employment Village, supporting leisure and healthy life-style businesses To bring forward future employment sites suitable for advanced manufacturing and spin out companies To lobby for improvements to the M66, A56 and Gytratory to facilitate access and attract investment Promoting Rossendale as a place to invest; develop and deliver an Action Plan for ‘Invest in Rossendale’ Work with the LEP/Marketing Lancashire to promote ‘Invest in Rossendale’ in the wider Lancashire context To deliver short term actions to lobby, promote, shape strategy and develop a business case for the Rossendale Rail Link Develop a succession strategy for major inward investment; identifying sites for the longer term



Success Measures

- Increase in the number of businesses relocating/investing in Rossendale
- Increase in the number of jobs created as a result of businesses relocating/investing in Rossendale
- Increase in the number of jobs safeguarded as a result of businesses relocating/investing in Rossendale
- Increase in the job density ratio within the borough
- Increase in employment rate
- Increase in median workplace earnings (residency based)
- Reduction in out-commuting
- Increase in private sector investment as a result of businesses relocating/investing in Rossendale
- Expand the business rate base



Priority 3: Creating a strong and thriving business base, supporting new and existing businesses

This priority is about ensuring resilience within Rossendale's existing business community, supporting new businesses to start up and flourish and existing businesses to grow.

*In 2017 there were 2,590 active enterprises in Rossendale, including award winning companies such as Linemark UK Limited, JJO plc and Slingco Limited. In Rossendale as in most places, the manufacturing sector has shed jobs over the years whilst the service sector has grown to become a far greater source of employee jobs. In position order, Rossendale's industrial sector strengths measured by employee jobs are, in joint first place, 'manufacturing' and 'wholesale and retail trade', and in joint second place, 'administrative and support' and 'human health and social work'. Unlike other districts in Lancashire, the borough has a relatively high number of private sector jobs, which is considered a positive trait in times of public sector contraction. With significant land and building holdings and complementing the private sector offer, Rossendale Council sees a role for itself in the commercial property market; supporting the premises needs of start-up, micro and expanding businesses.

Led by the East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, with the Council and other partners, a Business Leader's Forum, comprising of Rossendale's largest businesses, has been established for some years now to develop business relationships and remove the barriers to growth. The Business Leader's Forum is well placed to champion the 'Invest in Rossendale' business brand and lead a strong business network to support Rossendale's economy.

Growth Lancashire Ltd has a vision to make Lancashire the best place to start and grow a business in the Country. In light of the Council's ambitions for Rossendale, the Council became a member of the Growth Lancashire Board in 2017. Growth Lancashire Ltd currently holds the contract with BOOST as the gateway service for Lancashire's Business Growth Hub. **The number of enquiries from Rossendale businesses to this service in 2017/18 was 5%; representative of Rossendale's business base within Lancashire. With the Council now developing its complementary business support infrastructure, including a business relationship programme with targeted Rossendale



businesses, will grow the business support offer available.

Access to high broad band speeds is essential for the day to day operation of businesses. 99% of businesses in Rossendale have connections between 2 and 24 megabits per second, however over the next 15years demand for ultrafast broadband is likely to be required. Lancashire County Council is planning to bid to Government for extra resources.

*This data has been sourced from the Lancashire County Council, Lancashire Insight, Area Profile, and Local Authority Profile for Rossendale

** Growth Lancashire Ltd Performance report 2017-18

Key actions (2018/19-2020/21)

Developing Rossendale Council's presence in the commercial lettings market with an e-enabled and up to date offer of Council owned commercial premises

To identify suitable occupants for the current Futures Park to co-locate with Rossendale Council

To recommend the acquisition and further development of employment based assets to expand the Council's portfolio, generate revenue streams and expand the business rate base

Investigate the provision of an enterprise hub managed workspace scheme for start-up and micro businesses

Deliver an NNDR relief scheme for businesses which are expanding the business rate base and creating jobs

To investigate a bond-holder type initiative for the evolution of the Rossendale Business Leaders Forum

Working with the LEP and partners, develop a social enterprise and business support infrastructure; including networking events, referrals to the BOOST Gateway and linkages to Further and Higher Education

Working with Valley at Work and the Whitaker to provide specialist support to our creative industries

Influence the LEP and other partners to maximise broadband coverage and band widths

Working with East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, support the expansion of the renewable energy sector; identifying income generation opportunities

Success Measures

Improve business formation rates

Improve business survival rates

Number of businesses supported

Jobs created/safeguarded

Business turnover increased/safeguarded

Increase in revenue streams from Council owned commercial stock

Expansion of business rate base



Priority 4: Developing our visitor economy, active leisure and Adrenaline Valley brand and cultural offer.

Rossendale's visitor, cultural and leisure offer is significant, with an untapped potential for growth. Rossendale is home to the famous East Lancashire Railway. The natural beauty of the Rossendale Valley set amongst open moorland supports a backdrop for 'adrenaline' outdoor active pursuits; with Ski Rossendale, Lee Quarry Mountain Bike Trails, 'Grip and Go' climbing facility, 'Laser Tag', Cowm off road motor sports as well as water-based pursuits including Rossendale and Clowbridge sailing clubs and Whitworth Water Ski Academy. Visited by 25.7% of residents, the Whitaker Museum and Art Gallery was highlighted as a strong visitor attraction in the Town Centre, Retail, Leisure and Tourism Study 2017. The study also recognised the significant presence of performing arts groups in Rossendale, such as the Horse and Bamboo, and a natural strength with Rossendale's theatre offer, with the Royal Court Theatre in Bacup hosting a 489 seating capacity. It is recognised that an overall tourism and cultural strategy needs to be put in place.

The 2015 'STEAM' tourism economic impact data showed that Rossendale benefitted from a total of 1.31 m visitors in 2015, a growth of 2% on the figure recorded in 2014 and marginally stronger than the Lancashire uplift at 1.7%. Day visitors accounted for 1.17m (90%) in Rossendale in 2015, whilst staying visitors accounted for the remaining 0.13m (10%). Rossendale recorded a 2.4% growth from 2014 to 2015 in staying visitors, higher than the County position of 0.1% growth.

In recognition of the growth potential of the visitor economy, Rossendale Council is currently supporting Ski Rossendale with £460k investment from the Sport England to rebuild main facilities, and in partnership with the Whitaker Museum and Art Gallery is developing a £2m bid for Heritage Lottery Funding to extend the museum and provide exhibition space.

The 2015 STEAM data showed a total of 268 'beds' within Rossendale's stock of visitor accommodation, 204 (76%) of these formed part of 'serviced' accommodation (e.g. hotels, guest houses, B&Bs) whilst the remaining 64 (24%) were non-serviced (e.g. self-catering properties such as cottages, caravans). There was no growth in accommodation provision in the borough between 2014 and 2015. The



report concluded that the provision of visitor accommodation was weak, falling well short of current and future requirements.

In 2015 the visitor economy in Rossendale was worth £52.71m, with £38.97m (74%) derived from day visitors and the remaining £13.75m (26%) provided by those staying overnight, a 3.2% increase from 2014. Each visitor in 2015 brought on average £40.33 into the local economy, but there was a notable difference between the value generated by day visitors and staying visitors with the former spending £33.22 per person (per day) and staying visitors spending £102.59 per person (per day). With 'staying visitors' spending more than three times than 'day visitors', the report concluded that a lack of overnight tourist accommodation in Rossendale may be a barrier to growth in this sector over the long term.

In response to the shortage of overnight tourist accommodation, as well as the increasing demand for business usage, the Council is now seeking to attract a hotel operator as part of the second phase of its Spinning Point development in Rawtenstall. The Town Centre, Retail, Leisure and Tourism Study 2017 also identified a gap in cinema provision.

Key actions (2018/19-2020/21)
To develop a tourism and cultural strategy for Rossendale To bring forward a Trail Head Centre (Phase 1) for the Lee Quarry Mountain Bike facility at Futures Park Leisure and Employment Village To support the growth plans for Bacup Football Club To support the capital expansion of the Whitaker Museum and Art Gallery, securing Phase 2 Heritage Lottery Funding To support the continued development of Ski Rossendale and capital works Work with the LEP/Marketing Lancashire to promote the visitor economy in the wider Lancashire context



Success Measures

- Increase in value of the Rossendale visitor economy
- Increase in number of visitors
- Increase in over-night stays
- Increase in average visitor spend
- Increase in the profitability of the Whitaker Museum & Art Gallery
- Increase in the profitability of Ski Rossendale



Priority 5: Ensuring residents and communities reach their full economic potential; enhanced employment, skills and educational opportunities

This priority is about encouraging and supporting young people of school age to achieve their potential, both in terms of educational attainment and wider vocational skills which match in with the demand from industry and support a competitive skills offer attractive to both indigenous and inward investment businesses. **Rates of educational attainment in Rossendale are high. In December 2017, 81.1% achieved an NVQ Level 2 and above, and 51.2% achieved an NVQ Level 4 and above; with rates significantly higher than the averages for the region and Great Britain.

Rossendale is primarily served by two colleges located outside the borough: Accrington and Rossendale (Accross) College, an award winning Education College specialising in vocational education, and Burnley College partnered with UCLan (University of Central Lancashire) offering university courses. The Council is working with Accross to secure a base in the borough.

Residents in Rossendale already achieve top positions in business. **Employment by occupation shows large proportions in ‘managers, directors and senior officials’ at 18.1% (GB 10.9%) and ‘professional occupations’ categories at 25.3% (GB 20.3%).

In terms of employability, the percentage of Rossendale’s working age population is comparable to regional and national averages. **In December 2017, there were 79.5% (34,600) economically active people, 77.7% (33,900) were in employment and only 3.3% (1,200) unemployed. In March 2018, 2.3% (995) were registered on the claimant count, lower than the regional figure at 2.7%. A closer inspection of the figures shows there were a greater number of males registered at 605 in comparison to 390 females, with significant numbers aged 25 to 49 years. The percentage of benefit claimants in November 2016 in Rossendale was higher than the average for Great Britain but less than the regional average, and totalled 5,470 with meaningful numbers claiming Employment Support Allowance, incapacity, carers and disabled benefits. The ‘Rossendale Works’ employability programme is being piloted and operates borough wide from Haslingden in the west of the borough, to Whitworth in the east.



The Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub have recently launched 'Escalate' which supports the development of the existing workforce. Working with partners, the Council will promote this model to raise the economic potential of residents and support business growth by investment in education and skills.

Despite Rossendale's upbeat headline educational and employment statistics, there are growing economic disparities within the borough, with some areas facing severe social and economic deprivation contrasting with areas of relative prosperity. *The 2015 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) revealed that Rossendale was the 98th most deprived area out of 326 local authorities in England. A closer analysis of the IMD indicates geographical concentrations of deprivation in the Stacksteads, Irwell and Worsley wards measured across education, employment, income, health and crime deprivation domains. The percentage of workless households is high recorded at 24.4% in 2014 in comparison to the Lancashire average of 19.7%.

Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) in Rossendale during the three month average for November 2016 to January 2017 was 4.9% against the Lancashire 12 district area average of 5.0%, and showed an upward trajectory on the previous year.

With higher concentrations of deprivation outside the borough in Burnley, Accrington and Blackburn in Lancashire, there is little targeted service provision within Rossendale from partner organisations. To some extent, Rossendale has become overlooked. This strategy aims to reduce the gap in our most deprived communities by ensuring all residents and communities benefit from economic growth, as well as benefitting from targeted specific initiatives.

*The 2016 lower quartile median house prices to earnings ratio in Rossendale is 4.87, suggesting that it is easier to enter the housing market than other areas in Lancashire. There are around 31,700 dwellings in the borough, 85% of which are owner occupied or private rented, with a high proportion in category 'A' council tax band. Within the current Regulation 19 version of the 2018 Draft Rossendale Local Plan, there is a requirement to build 3180 new homes by 2034; with a provision of 30% affordable split 60/40 in favour of affordable rented/intermediate home ownership tenures. There is an east-west split across the borough, with affordability improving in the east.



As well as the social and economic considerations, there are parts of the borough requiring physical regeneration. ***There are 1350 vacant properties in the borough, not only affecting individual homes but whole streets which results in areas becoming less desirable, sometimes exacerbated by crime and vandalism, creating a transient population. Working with owners, the Council has brought 16 properties back into use over the last two years. Further work is now needed to identify areas for comprehensive redevelopment and bring about positive change.

*This data has been sourced from the Lancashire County Council, Lancashire Insight, Area Profile, and Local Authority Profile for Rossendale

**Data source: nomisweb.co.uk Labour Market Profile Rossendale

***Rossendale Council Tax Register 2018



Key actions (2018/19-2020/21)

Deliver the pilot 'Rossendale Works' employability programme with disadvantaged residents, supporting our businesses to employ local people

Based on a gap analysis of employment and skills provision, develop a 'Rossendale Futures' project; a single gateway multi-agency response to address the barriers for those furthest away from the labour market

To promote apprenticeship opportunities and jobs for local people within the construction sector by conditioning planning applications via the preparation of an Employment and Skills Supplementary Planning Document

Work with the LEP/Skills & Employment Hub to improve the take up of employment and skills services

Raising aspirations and informing career choices with better links between Rossendale's high schools and business

Work with Accrington and Rossendale College to re-establish a satellite presence in Rossendale

Develop strong links with Lancashire County Council Children and Young People's Service, Rathbone and Child Action North West to support those Not in Education, Employment or Training

Explore the opportunity for the Credit Union to diversify into the business loan market to support people into self-employment

In partnership with Social Enterprise Lancashire Network, developing opportunities in the third sector; including volunteering and social enterprise

To lobby for improvements to public transport links within the Central Pennine Strategic Development Corridor to support access to work

Investigate establishing a local authority-led housing company to deliver affordable housing and address local housing need across tenures

To develop a Vacant Property Plan and investigate commencing the CPO of Waterside Mill, Bacup and other targeted development opportunities



Success Measures

‘Rossendale Works’

Number of participants

Number completing a work placement

Number in to a job or volunteering opportunity

Reduction in the percentage of benefit claimants

Reduction in unemployment

Increase in educational attainment rates

Reduction in the percentage of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training

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