

Economic development and tourism Strategy

2017-2021



April 2017



Tewkesbury Borough Council's future focus for economic development and tourism will be on:

- 1 Employment land planning.
- 2 Transport infrastructure improvement.
- 3 Business growth support.
- 4 Promoting Tewkesbury Borough.
- 5 Employability, education and training.

The Borough Council intends to work closely with the business community and its partners... to deliver and monitor this work.





The strategy outlines how the council will help promote a strong and diverse local economy.

Introduction

The purpose of this strategy is to set the priorities within which the Borough Council will deliver and support economic development and tourism over the next four years. This is based on research, consultation and identified need from within the local business community and partner organisations.

The strategy outlines how the council will help promote a strong and diverse local economy, support business growth, inform spatial planning strategy, support regeneration, encourage inward investment and maximise visitor numbers to the area.

It sets out the Borough Council's objectives and priorities and a series of actions to be delivered through an annual delivery plan. The delivery plan for year one is included within this document.

This strategy is built on a robust understanding of the local economy, the different sectors, relevant policies and key economic drivers of growth. It also considers the various powers and resources available to the council to support a vibrant local economy. We also recognise the pivotal role of highway infrastructure improvements to deliver our growth aspirations.

The Borough Council intends to work closely with the business community and its partners, including the Local Economic Partnership (LEP), to deliver and monitor this work.

Background to the strategy

The current Economic Development and Tourism Strategy 'Regenerating and Growing the Economy,' has come to the end of its life and in order to reflect the changing nature of the local economy and the impact on businesses, the council has developed a new strategy.

A clear focus on economic growth has emerged through the government's National Growth Policy and Gloucestershire's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP). The borough has also been identified as a key area for growth in the county, in terms of both housing, employment and associated facilities and it's important the new Strategy supports this within its priorities.

Significant government funding has been secured through the Gloucestershire Growth Deal, providing key opportunities for the borough, including: the M5 growth zone, a growth hub and the support of key growth sectors. The EU Structural and Investment Funds Strategy (EUSIF) also delivers further funding. The new strategy will reflect and position the borough for these opportunities.

The council has a relatively small and dedicated economic development and tourism resource but has maximised this capacity by working creatively and in partnership to 'punch above its weight'. Delivery of a new strategy must consider future partnership development and include input from local organisations, including: GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership, the County's Economic Development Unit and Cotswold Tourism.

To support and provide an evidence base for the new strategy, an employment land review and economic development study was commissioned by the borough. This was undertaken by Bruton Knowles and AMION Consulting and has helped inform priorities within the strategy. A copy of the report can be found at www.tewkesbury.gov.uk/planning-policy-evidence-base



Economic context and key business sectors

The Borough of Tewkesbury is the northern gateway into the south west region. It offers a high quality environment, including parts of the Severn Vale and Cotswolds area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and stretches south to the outskirts of Gloucester and Cheltenham. The main population concentrations lie within the market towns of Tewkesbury and Winchcombe, and the centres of Bishop's Cleeve, Brockworth and Churchdown.

The area boasts an excellent location at the heart of the motorway network, with the M5 passing north to south through the borough and the M50 joining the M5 just to the north of Tewkesbury. Tewkesbury is ideally situated half-way between Bristol and Birmingham. The A417 and A419 link the M5 to the M4 at Swindon. This prime location with no less than five motorway junctions within its boundary, places it at the centre of the M5 growth zone.

Air travel for business is facilitated through Gloucestershire Airport, which is based within the borough. Rail links are also provided at Ashchurch for Tewkesbury station.

The borough boasts a number of key employment areas and rural business centres, which are very popular locations for business. The emerging Joint Core Strategy (JCS) also allocates new employment land at a number of strategic locations.

Demand for employment sites and premises has always been strong due to proximity with surrounding economic centres like Cheltenham, Gloucester and Worcester and its key strategic location with junctions 9, 10, 11 and 11a of the M5 running through the borough. The key sites, although, distributed throughout the borough are mainly positioned adjacent to Tewkesbury and Ashchurch in the north and near Cheltenham and Gloucester to

the south. There is a diverse range of new and renovated industrial and commercial premises, which serves the needs of the many employment sectors present. The business parks are home to a wide range of businesses from multinationals to Small and Medium sized enterprises (SMES).

The council supports the ambitions of Gloucestershire LEP to deliver new jobs into the area by 2031, attract substantial private sector investment, and create a well-motivated workforce with the skills to meet business needs and to build the foundations for a long term, sustainable, economy.

In terms of achieving the economic prospects indicated by the employment forecasts, and maximising benefits from growth opportunities within Tewkesbury Borough, there is a need to focus not only on ensuring the provision of an adequate supply of land but also that business needs are met in terms of suitable and appropriate accommodation and business support, including addressing skills needs within the workforce.



This prime location with no less than five motorway junctions within its boundary, places it at the centre of the M5 growth zone.





the borough remains an established centre for high quality manufacturing and is home to some world class high tech aero engineering firms.

Opportunities for training and re-skilling are vital to ensuring that the borough has the right skills to meet demand and minimise unemployment. It is also important that skills development within young people is in line with employer needs. Businesses have indicated a desire to work more closely with HE establishments, schools and the local organisations in order to achieve this.

The borough is an established investment location and boasts a diverse economy in a broad range of sectors. These include advanced manufacturing and engineering, construction, transport, IT and other technology, banking, finance and insurance, land-based industries, business services, creative industries and retail. Major companies include Cotteswold Dairy, Endsleigh (Zurich), G4S Technology, GE Aviation, L-3 TRL Technology, Moog and Trelleborg Sealing Solutions.

Despite this broad base the borough remains an established centre for high quality manufacturing and is home to some world class high tech aero engineering firms. This is a significant sector of employment and remains important to the local economy. It also includes key sub sectors which should be encouraged through future policy development. Growth sectors in the borough, as in the county as a whole, are the knowledge economy and cyber, these should be nurtured and developed. The agricultural sector also remains important, particularly for the rural economy.

Tourism is an important industry for Tewkesbury Borough. It is one of five local districts that have formed a partnership as Cotswolds Tourism (Destination Management Organisation) which is the sixth most popular destination within England. Cotswolds Tourism is led by a small team of staff along with supporting work by the local authority tourism officers.

Tewkesbury Borough has some key tourist attractions for Gloucestershire including the second most visited attraction of Tewkesbury Abbey – attracting around 250,000 visitors per

year. Other key attractions in the borough are Sudeley Castle, Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway, Snowhill Manor, Nature in Art, the Jet Age Museum and Flyup417, a new series of downhill cycling tracks.

The Borough Council currently manages two tourist information centres in Tewkesbury and Winchcombe. Tewkesbury is fully financed and managed by the Borough Council but Winchcombe is currently funded by Winchcombe Town Council.



Economic activity

Tewkesbury Borough has traditionally been strong in economic terms, playing a significant role within the region. This is demonstrated by its large workforce and high levels of economic activity, which are higher than both the county and national average.

The economy of Tewkesbury Borough supported 43,300 jobs in 2015 and a strong employment rate of 84.5%, compared with the South West (77.4%) and nationally (73.5%). The unemployment rate remains low at 1% (ONS 2017). This is below county (1.1%), regional (1.3%) and national (1.9%) levels.

In terms of employee jobs by industry, the manufacturing sector represents a significant 23% of overall employment in Tewkesbury Borough, with the health sector (11%) business administration and support (7.3%), and professional, scientific, and technical sector (7%) also strongly represented.

Tewkesbury Borough has a high job density, with close to one job for every resident. This provides a useful indicator of the demand for labour and at 0.96 jobs per person this is higher than the South West (0.86) and nationally (0.82).

In terms of productivity the area performs well, with the value of the goods and services produced (GVA) in Tewkesbury Borough in 2014 was £2.23 billion. (Source: ONS). Total GVA for Tewkesbury Borough is estimated to have increased by 21.7% from £1.84 billion over the period 2009 – 2014, exceeding average growth across Gloucestershire, the South West and England.

Tewkesbury Borough has a strong business base with 3,915 enterprises in 2015 made up of 3,445 micro-businesses, 380 small businesses, 70 medium-sized businesses, and 20 large businesses. This is consistent with the regional and national profile. In 2014, there were 445 new businesses registered in Tewkesbury Borough, 51% higher than the number registered in 2009 and above regional

(41%) and national (49%) levels. The borough also has a strong business survival rate with 94.9% of new businesses surviving the first year compared with 90.8% nationally and 45.8% in the fifth year compared with 41.7% nationally.

In total, 25,211 people commute into Tewkesbury Borough from other districts on average each day while 20,566 people commute from Tewkesbury Borough to other areas – resulting in a net average inflow of 4,645 commuters.

Based on AMION's Economic Growth and Competitiveness Index (EGCI), Tewkesbury Borough performs strongly in terms of quality of life, economic output, enterprise, and employment in high-technology sectors relative to the average of all local authority districts in England. Whilst the overall analysis indicates that the economic performance of Tewkesbury is relatively strong, there are areas which have the potential to impact upon future growth prospects. In particular, this relates to working age population (suggestive of an ageing demographic) and indicators of knowledge and innovation (both employment in knowledge intensive services and residents working within managerial or professional occupations). In addition, issues such as the relatively low rate of self-employment may also warrant further consideration.

There is an annual tourism related spend of 125 million to the borough economy. The borough has around 304,000 trips by staying visitors and 830,000 staying visitor nights. There are 1.8 million day visits to the area per year. Over 2,000 jobs within the borough are related to tourism spending which means that around 5% of the employment is supported by tourism. Tourism businesses are largely made up of SME's.



Tewkesbury Borough has a high job density, with close to one job for every resident.



The Council Plan objectives:

Tewkesbury Borough Council is proud of its proactive approach to supporting local business development and economic vitality, which is a central priority within the Council Plan.

Economic development is one of four key priorities for Tewkesbury Borough Council, as committed to in the Council Plan 2016 – 20.

The Council Plan defines the economic development objectives as:

- Be the primary growth engine of Gloucestershire's economy.
- Identify and deliver employment land within the borough, in accordance with the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and the Tewkesbury Borough Plan.
- Maximise the growth potential of the M5 junctions within the borough.
- Deliver regeneration for Tewkesbury town.

This Strategy provides the primary focus and direction for the work and activities of Tewkesbury Borough Council, in order to achieve these objectives.

It replaces the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy 2012-15.

The purpose

As the district council and local planning authority, Tewkesbury Borough Council aims to:

- Provide practical support for businesses in the borough.
- Promote the area, to attract investment and visitors.
- Deliver effective strategic planning to facilitate economic prosperity.
- Take the lead in influencing partner public sector organisations, and act as key co-ordinator, to facilitate economic growth.
- Be proactive in seeking external funding for the area.

Tewkesbury Borough Council, in partnership with Bruton Knowles and Amion Consulting, has researched the local economy in depth, and consulted extensively with businesses, to determine how best to focus its resources and activities, to deliver against its objectives.

From this, it has identified a set of key strategic activities, to prioritise and direct the work of the authority.

- Employment land planning.
- Transport infrastructure improvement.
- Business growth support.
- Promoting Tewkesbury Borough.
- Employability education and training.

This is not considered an exclusive list, rather a set of priorities derived from existing needs, which may well evolve and change with time, and it does not preclude other activities, which may in future be deemed to be effective in delivering the objectives.



Tewkesbury Borough Council, in partnership with Bruton Knowles and Amion Consulting has researched the local economy in depth, and consulted extensively with businesses.



Strategy 2017-2021

Tewkesbury Borough Council will focus on the following strategic priorities:

1. Employment land planning

Development Services will support the Council Plan economic development objectives through:

- a) Practical solutions to facilitate business growth needs on existing and potential commercial sites.
- b) Delivering sufficient employment land to meet the needs of the strategic plan.
- c) Positive application of land use policy in delivery of achievable employment land sites.
- d) Supporting key business park areas.

2. Transport infrastructure improvement

- a) Road – promote traffic flow improvements to M5 Junctions 9, 10, 11 and 11a, strategic routes A46, A417 and A40, and any associated roads.
- b) Air – support Gloucestershire Airport business expansion and highway access improvements.
- c) Rail – Support rail service improvements, including Ashchurch for Tewkesbury Station and the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway expansion.

3. Business growth support

- a) Instigate business support initiatives to promote economic growth.
- b) Promote rural businesses and economic growth in rural areas of the borough.
- c) Stimulate business start-ups and enterprise growth rates, incorporating the development of a growth hub.
- d) Work Jointly with Gloucestershire LEP to seek commercial investment from outside the borough and actively secure available public funding.

- e) Encourage investment to improve the provision of visitor accommodation.
- f) Drive retail centre growth through regeneration projects.

4. Promoting Tewkesbury Borough

- a) Promote Tewkesbury Borough and the 'M5 growth corridor' as the uniquely connected business location.
- b) Promote Tewkesbury Borough to visitors, working with Cotswold Tourism and other partners, including neighbouring tourism destinations.

5. Employability education and training

- a) Promote initiatives to improve education and training relevant to local employment.
- b) Facilitate links between local schools/colleges/universities and local businesses.



Although the strategy will be delivered over a four year period, a delivery plan will be adopted on an annual basis.

