



Rochdale Borough Economic Development Strategy



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Introduction



Introduction

Welcome to Rochdale Borough, situated on the edge of the Pennines, with beautiful countryside surrounding our town centres, and within just 30 minutes drive of Manchester City Centre. This is a place with an economy growing faster than the North West average and undergoing major economic regeneration, which will enable us to thrive in the global economy.

We are in the process of transforming our economy into one which will thrive in the global economy.

- ▶ We have put into motion major development projects which will bring new businesses, jobs and opportunities
- ▶ Kingsway Business Park, a site of regional significance, will be one of the biggest business parks in the UK, covering an area equivalent to half the size of Manchester city centre, and make the most of our locational advantage along the M62 axis
- ▶ We have secured over a billion pounds of public and private investment over the next five years
- ▶ We have put into place the structures to support transformation, building on our tradition of partnership and co-operation

We know we still have some key challenges to address, not least low skills levels and high levels of worklessness in some areas. But we are committed to tackling those challenges and making sure all our people share in the investment we have secured.

The Rochdale Borough Economic Development strategy sets out how we will transform the economy to thrive in the global marketplace, develop a high standard of living for residents, and play an ambitious role in the economic development of the Manchester City Region.

This strategy forms the overarching strategic direction for economic development of Rochdale Borough up until 2015. It builds on the previous economic development strategy which was launched in 2003 and which formed the basis for many of the changes in progress today. However, since 2003 there have been important changes in the national, regional and sub regional context in which we operate. These have been taken into account in reviewing our strategic direction, and we will carry out another review in three years time.

A suite of inter-related strategies sits beneath this document as detailed delivery plans in the areas of Employment, Skills, Enterprise, Tourism and Infrastructure and Investment. The strategy links to other key strategies in the Borough, in particular Pride of Place (our community strategy), in which economic development is a priority, and the Rochdale Borough Masterplan which sets out the spatial framework for development in the Borough.

Purpose

The purpose of this strategy is to set out the Rochdale Borough Economic Partnership's ambition for transforming the local economy, clearly articulating our priorities and alignment with local, sub-regional, regional and national economic development strategies.



Introduction

Vision and Aims

Our people will be highly skilled, with well-paid jobs, and our economy will form a vital part of a world-class city region,

Four key aims have been identified for this strategy, in line with both local and regional priorities:

- ▶ **Increasing productivity**
- ▶ **Raising skills levels and reducing worklessness**
- ▶ **Improving infrastructure and attracting investment**
- ▶ **Improving quality of life and the attractiveness of the Borough**

Moving on from REDS 2003

In 2003 the Rochdale Borough Economic Partnership adopted its first Economic Development Strategy (REDS 2003). This strategy identified the key issues of a low skills base, high numbers in labour market difficulty, low business start-up rates, the decline of the prominent manufacturing sector, and a poor offer on employment sites. The Economic Partnership has taken forward the key actions identified in the strategy to start addressing these issues.

Since the publication of REDS 2003, extensive work has been carried out to improve the economic development evidence base in the Borough. The Rochdale Borough Economic Digest and various pieces of commissioned research, including an in-depth economic assessment, have provided further evidence on what needs to be done to transform the borough's economy. Analysis has focused on the impact of changing trends and the wider global economy in which we now operate.

The national, regional and sub-regional policy frameworks for economic development have also shifted significantly since 2003. There is a strong emphasis on focusing economic growth on city regions as the main way of bridging the north-south economic divide. There has been extensive analysis at regional and sub-regional levels leading to detailed strategies and plans which link to the national policy framework.

In addition, further analysis and the outcome of partnership working has led to the recognition that other quality of life issues, such as housing availability and affordability, have an important impact on economic development in the borough, the quality of the environment, and the health of the workforce.



For these reasons the Economic Partnership asked the Council's Research and Intelligence Team to review and produce a revised economic development strategy for the borough, which took account of the wider environment in which we operate - the global economy, the wider policy framework, and the future impact of changing trends. This strategy takes all these factors into account. It builds on REDS 2003 but takes a much broader view of what we need to do to bring about economic transformation.

Strategic Context

With significant and rapid change taking place in the UK and global economies national, regional and sub-regional strategies have been developed in recent years to re-position the UK, North West and Manchester City Region economies. A detailed assessment of these strategies has been undertaken to review the changing context. Appendix One gives a list of key strategies.

1. National Context

The government has recognised a massive imbalance in economic performance between the North and the rest of the UK. The Northern Way strategy was launched to increase Gross Value Added (GVA) per head to the UK national average within 25 years. The strategy emphasises the role of Manchester and Leeds city regions in leading the economic growth of the North, and the need to work across city regions. Rochdale Borough's location directly between these two city regions along the M62 axis offers us a huge opportunity.

The Review of sub-national economic development and regeneration sets out reforms designed to help ensure all parts of the country can respond to economic changes and increase prosperity for all. The reforms are designed to improve incentives and strengthen accountability through local government, and will ensure simplification and streamlining of strategies and funding to enable a clearer, sharper interface between the public sector and businesses. The Government pledges continued working with local authorities, businesses and other bodies in the regions to implement the reforms and ensure that localities and regions have the tools they need to achieve sustainable economic, social and environmental development for the whole nation. If the recommendations in the Review are implemented, Rochdale Borough will benefit in economic development terms from greater regional and sub-regional devolution of power, a more focussed and targeted

approach to tackling deprivation and regeneration, and a strengthened role for Local Authorities in driving forward economic development.

Rochdale Borough is part of the wider Manchester City Region economy. The Local Government White Paper "Strong and Prosperous Communities" acknowledges that economies operate at city region level rather than within administrative local authority boundaries. Future guidance as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 is expected to build on the concept of city regions. Within Manchester City Region structures are already being developed to ensure strong leadership. Rochdale Borough is committed to playing an ambitious role within the city region.

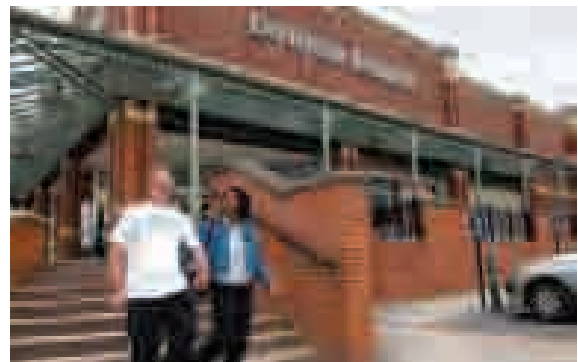
Skills are now recognised as the key lever for prosperity and fairness. The Leitch Review of Skills identifies the need for a massive increase in skills across all levels to compete in the global economy, or risk a generation being cut off permanently from labour market opportunities. Leitch makes recommendations to simplify and streamline the delivery of training to ensure it meets the needs of the economy. The implementation of these recommendations will benefit the Borough. However, we will need major change to reach targets set by Leitch, for example trebling the level of basic skills provision. Part of the future development of this strategy will include an assessment of whether skills targets are appropriate.

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The Barker review of Land Use Planning has identified the English planning system as a restraint on increasing productivity, and a contributor to the UK's productivity gap with our major competitors. In particular infrastructure, even when it is environmentally desirable, cannot be delivered quickly enough due to the planning system. If the recommendations are implemented the planning system should become more "business-friendly", helping us deliver the infrastructure, employment sites and quality premises which we need to attract and retain business and improve productivity in the Borough.

The Department for Work and Pension's number one priority is tackling child poverty. The Harker review of child poverty made recommendations to help Government achieve its targets. These include changing "Welfare to Work" programmes to better suit the needs of parents, and encouraging employment with good long-term prospects, since nearly half of children in poverty live in a family where someone is already in employment. If these recommendations are implemented across local Job Centre Plus offices, the impact in the Borough will be considerable, since more than one in four of our children live in families dependent on benefits. We do not have adequate data on numbers of children with parents in low-paid jobs, but we know that average wage levels in the Borough are very low. For parents in work, our approaches of workforce skills development and attracting higher-skilled jobs to the Borough will help raise wage levels.

The Welfare to Work programme and now the Welfare Reform agenda have brought about significant changes in trying to bring excluded groups into work. The government has set a target of an 80% employment rate. There are very high levels of people on incapacity benefits and high levels of excluded groups claiming benefits in the Borough, and we are part of the Greater Manchester City Strategy consortium to tackle this issue across the sub-region. A recent review by David Freud makes recommendations on ways of further reducing economic inactivity and in-work poverty through contracted support, which would need to be co-ordinated with the work already going on in the Borough.



Government has recently reviewed the provision of business support and identified a need to make it easier for businesses to get the support they need. In the 2006 Budget, the Government committed to a programme of business support simplification, aimed at making it easier for businesses to access support. We are committed to this programme and will work with the NWDA to ensure the views of our businesses are represented in the process.

The Respect agenda to tackle anti-social behaviour is one of the government's priority areas. Anti-social behaviour poses a number of issues that impact on economic development in the Borough, including the need to develop work-based learning and employer engagement activity with children, young people and adults showing anti-social behaviour.

2. Regional Context: North West

The North West Regional Economic Strategy sets out the region's priorities for meeting Northern Way objectives and to closing the output gap with the England average. The Rochdale Borough Economic Development Strategy is closely aligned to those objectives but reflective of our own particular circumstances. Appendix Two sets out the linkages between the Rochdale Borough Economic Development Strategy and the Regional Economic Strategy.

The contribution of skills training to the Regional Economic Strategy is developed in the North West Statement of Skills Priorities. This identifies priority areas and influences training provision across the region and Manchester City Region. Our strategy identifies our contribution to these priorities.

Sustainable development is a key objective of the North West Regional Assembly. This strategy recognises that developing local jobs for local people is an important element of sustainable solutions: we do not want to become a commuter borough for Manchester city centre.

Action on Equality is another important priority for the North West Regional Assembly. Delivering equal employment opportunities for excluded groups would make the North West economy 25% more effective. This strategy identifies excluded groups and areas, which we will target in raising skills levels, and increasing their numbers in the workforce. We will also improve transport links between residential areas and employment areas. This strategy has been subjected to an equality screening to identify any gaps in our approach.

3. Sub-regional: Manchester City Region

The Manchester City Region Development Programme (MCRDP) sets out the Manchester City Region's response to the Regional Economic Strategy and the Northern Way. It identifies how Manchester City Region is the powerhouse of the North, and how it plans to increase productivity at a faster rate than the England average. Many of the drivers for our economic development strategy are common across the city region, such as raising skills, fostering entrepreneurialism, tackling worklessness and creating the conditions for sustainable growth. A key issue for the Borough, however, is our relatively weak representation in most of the MCRDP's growth accelerator sectors - those that offer the greatest potential for accelerating growth in the city region. We have identified five (out of six) of these sectors as key sectors for the Borough.

Greater Manchester's contribution to the Manchester City Region Development Programme and the Regional Economic Strategy is set out in the Greater Manchester Economic Development Plan. It identifies six strategic drivers broken down into objectives.

4. Local context

Pride of Place is the Borough's community strategy and has been developed following widespread consultation with residents, local businesses, community groups and partner organisations. It identifies Jobs and Prosperity as one of the key priorities for the Borough. The Rochdale Borough Economic Development Strategy sets out the Economic Partnership's contribution to Pride of Place, and to achieving its vision of: "...a thriving place where people want to live, work, visit and do business - a place in which we can all take pride". The Rochdale Renaissance Borough Masterplan sets out the physical development aims linked to Pride of Place, and this strategy sets out our contribution to those aims as well.

Introduction

Delivery of the Strategy

The Rochdale Borough Economic Partnership is responsible for commissioning and delivering this strategy. Many of the actions identified will be the responsibility of the three Economic Partnership sub-groups:

- ▶ Infrastructure & Investment Group
- ▶ Skills and Work Advisory
- ▶ Supporting Enterprise

There is a suite of strategies (some in development) which sit beneath the Rochdale Borough Economic Development strategy, and which include the detailed actions and activities, which feed into delivering this strategy. Other actions will be the responsibility of other thematic partnerships in the Borough. The partnership structure is shown in the diagram.

Key Assets and Opportunities

Rochdale Borough has important assets, which will make delivering our vision easier. We are already working on some major changes and have identified other opportunities, which will help bring about a transformation in the economy of the Borough.

Location

Rochdale Borough has a central location on the “Northern Way” – the strategic growth corridor connecting Liverpool to Hull and Manchester to Newcastle. Our location on the M62 and proximity to the M66 and M60 offer a major advantage for businesses needing good road links. Rochdale town centre is within 30 minutes drive of Manchester city centre and Manchester Airport, and Heywood and Middleton town centres are even closer.



Kingsway Business Park

This development is of truly regional significance and will be no ordinary business park. It will be one of the biggest business parks in the UK. The sheer scale and ambition of the development - 420 acres and 7,250 jobs (with an additional 1,750 indirect jobs) - will bring about a major change in the employment prospects of the area and create a fundamental shift in the Borough's economic base. The park will have cutting-edge IT infrastructure, a new Metrolink stop to connect it to Rochdale, Oldham and Manchester, and a dedicated recruitment team. The site includes a 70 acre green corridor to protect and enhance natural habitats.

Business Successes

We have many successful businesses in the Borough. Two of the Borough's companies are ranked in the top 25 in Greater Manchester - British Vita and UK Car. Several companies have their UK or European headquarters in the Borough, including United Co-ops, British Vita, Takeuchi and Zen Internet. There is a growing representation of business administration companies such as PC World, and a small but growing cluster of ICT and digital companies including Zen Internet and Celltek. We also have major public sector employers, such as the NHS, generating significant employment and development opportunities for Borough residents.

Rochdale Town Centre

Major redevelopment of Town Centre East is already happening with new office locations planned to bring an extra 1,766 jobs to the Borough by 2021. A new bus station and the attraction of national retail chains will bring about a step change in the shopping and leisure offer of the town centre. The partnership between Rochdale MBC and Impact Partnership (a public-private partnership with the Council and Mouchel Parkman) has already made a significant contribution to the local economy, creating more than 150 new jobs in its first year alone.

Metrolink

Investment has been committed for an extension to Metrolink, which will link Rochdale Railway Station, and Kingsway Business Park with Manchester city centre and Oldham town centre. Completion is planned for 2011. A bid for Transport Innovation funding to extend Metrolink from the Railway station to Rochdale Town Centre has recently been submitted.

Strong Partnerships

We have put in place an effective partnership involving all key economic agencies. All are committed to transformation of the Borough. We have a proud tradition of working in partnership since the birth of the co-operative movement. The Impact Partnership will create 300 new jobs in the Borough by 2010.

Cross Partnership Working

The development of this strategy, along with other initiatives underway and planned, has renewed a commitment by the thematic partnerships across the Borough to work collectively to deliver shared objectives. Only through true collaboration, and understanding the inter-dependence of thematic areas, can we achieve sustainable economic development in Rochdale Borough.

Townships

The Borough is made up of a number of towns and each of these towns has its own distinct identity. Four townships cover the whole of the Borough; these are Rochdale, Middleton, Heywood and Pennines. Township committees ensure that local people have a meaningful voice in shaping decisions that affect their lives.

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Manchester City Region

Rochdale Borough is part of the Manchester City Region economy, the primary economic centre of the North West. Manchester is the city with the most potential in terms of establishing itself as a major economic centre to complement London and the South East. We are committed to playing an ambitious role in the city region, and to making sure our people and businesses benefit from economic growth.

Middleton Town Centre

Over the last five years we have been carrying out major regeneration of Middleton Town Centre, with a new bus station. Construction of a new civic and leisure centre, Middleton Arena, has recently started and will be followed by a new superstore creating 200 jobs.

Heywood Distribution Park

Heywood Distribution Park is now the premier distribution park in Greater Manchester. The distribution park is one of the largest in the UK and has won many awards for design, security and management, and is home to many international companies.

Natural environment

The natural environment - the countryside, topography and water - is one of the Borough's greatest assets. Making more use of our green spaces and promoting active leisure, particularly in the Pennines Township, will help us capitalise on this asset.

A unique heritage

Rochdale Borough has a strong and unique heritage which have shaped and formed not only the locality but also shaped the country's history. The Borough boasts some iconic and unique buildings, such as Rochdale Town Hall and the Edgar Wood buildings in Middleton. The Borough also has a strong social heritage, being the birthplace to the co-operative movement and Rochdale Pioneers.

Diversity of our people

The Borough has a growing and increasingly diverse population. We recognise this as a real economic asset which gives businesses the opportunity to move into new markets and source a wider range of customers, gain a competitive advantage, increase creativity and innovation, and increase penetration of overseas markets.

Housing Market Renewal

Together with Oldham we aim to bring £2billion worth of investment to create a step change in housing diversity and choice, transform the quality of housing and neighbourhoods in the HMR area, and promote and provide affordable housing options. We will create more stable and confident communities by promoting integration through greater choice and opportunity resulting from Housing Market Renewal.

Heywood New Deal for Communities

The New Deal for Communities (NDC) Partnership was awarded £52million in 2001. The NDC partnership brings together residents, voluntary organisations and public agencies to deliver better outcomes for Heywood residents, delivered through three thematic areas: Jobs, Training and Learning; Health, Wellbeing and Young People; and, Neighbourhood Management and Community Safety. The NDC also provides us with an opportunity to test new and innovative ways of working in Rochdale Borough.

Educational Successes and Opportunities for our Young People

Rochdale Schools Service has turned around educational achievement in our schools, with all secondary schools above the government target for achieving good GCSEs. We have attracted major investment in our schools through the Building Schools for the Future Programme, and secured funding for a new sixth form centre in the Borough.

Economic Challenges

A comprehensive assessment of the Borough's economic position has been published in the Rochdale Borough Economic Digest. The key challenges facing us are summarised below.

Legacy of economic under-performance

Estimates of GVA (Gross Value Added) per person show it growing steadily since 2000, and at a faster rate than the North West average. However, GVA is still well below that in other parts of Manchester City Region. To close this gap GVA growth in the Borough will have to be at a faster rate than elsewhere.

Low business stock

Rochdale Borough has traditionally had low business start-up levels and a low business stock, with an 'enterprise gap' of 1,285 businesses compared with the national picture. Notwithstanding other key drivers, this represents a significant drag on the economy in terms of productivity, output and economic growth.

Over-dependence on manufacturing

The Borough's economy is over-dependent on low skilled, low wage manufacturing. Over the last two decades the manufacturing sector has been contracting and restructuring. Jobs forecasts suggest a further 5,000 jobs will be lost in the sector in the next ten years. But this sector is still very important in the Borough, creating 28% of GVA. Further restructuring will mean a move towards higher value-added manufacturing businesses, which will need people with high-level skills to be successful. Our economy is also at risk from wider economic restructuring, which may also adversely affect other employment sectors in the Borough. We need to support our businesses to diversify into higher value added activities, and ensure Borough residents are suitably skilled to service higher skilled, technical occupations.



Low levels of business growth

Low business start-up rates have been compounded by low business growth rates, with many businesses simply trading to survive. This has limited employment creation in the Borough. Diversifying the economic base and focusing on the growth of priority sectors will be crucial to overcoming projected job losses and raising employment levels in the Borough.

Poor commercial property offer and inappropriate locations of employment sites

The Borough's reliance on traditional manufacturing industries has left a legacy of old commercial properties, many of which are in close proximity to residential areas and unsuited to the needs of the modern economy.

Under-investment in gateways and corridors

The lack of attractive gateways and corridors into the Borough will restrain future investment in the Borough and continue to damage the Borough's reputation and image unless there is significant investment to improve them.

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Poor public transport infrastructure

Rochdale Borough has relatively poor connectivity to Manchester city centre. Public transport links within the Borough are also limited in particular areas, so some residential areas are not well linked to employment sites.

Employment sites are not in appropriate places

The traditional industries, which developed in the Borough, have left inappropriate land use patterns, such as industrial employment sites in predominately residential areas. These are no longer suitable for the modern economy.

ICT infrastructure under-developed

The infrastructure demands of 21st century businesses are significantly different to those of traditional industries with a need for good ICT connectivity and adequate security. ICT infrastructure is under-developed in the Borough.

Under-investment in Town Centres

Under-investment in the past has meant town centres in the Borough have lagged behind modern standards, both in terms of the commercial and leisure offers.

Low skills levels constraining economic growth

Rochdale Borough has a very poor skills profile, from basic skills through to degree level and above. This is the case in all townships in the Borough. Employers need adequate leadership and management skills to develop their business and the ability to innovate and adapt their business to remain competitive in a changing economy.

Mismatch of skills supply and demand

The low skills base and the rapidly changing economy mean skills supply has not kept pace with demand. Skills provision and workforce development programmes need to be demand-led if we are to meet the needs of our businesses and diversify the economic base.



High levels of worklessness constraining economic growth

26,400 people (20% of the working age population) claim out of work benefits or income support, of which 14,800 are reliant on incapacity benefits, with higher than average rates in all four townships. There are also low levels of economic activity amongst certain groups, in particular women, black and minority ethnic group, people over 50 and young people. Low skills levels and discrimination in the workplace are combining to significantly reduce the contribution of these groups to the economy, and resulting in deprivation and disadvantage. Some of these groups are expected to grow significantly in size in the future because of population change.

Key Economic Sectors

We have identified a number of key sectors for Rochdale Borough's future economic prosperity. These are based on important existing sectors, such as manufacturing, which through diversification can support higher value-added employment and economic growth. They also include sectors which are growing in the wider economy and which we aim to further develop in, or attract to, the Borough. The relative importance of the sectors will depend on the context (e.g. skills or inward investment) and location within the borough (town centre or business park).

The key sectors identified are:

- ▶ Manufacturing:
- ▶ Food and drink
- ▶ Chemicals
- ▶ Technical textile
- ▶ Advanced engineering
- ▶ Environmental services / technologies
- ▶ Logistics
- ▶ Financial and professional services
- ▶ Creative, cultural and media
- ▶ Business administration
- ▶ ICT and digital
- ▶ Hospitality and tourism
- ▶ Retail
- ▶ Public sector, health and social care
- ▶ Construction



Introduction

Key Aims for Economic Development

Four key aims have been identified to help develop the economic prospects of the Borough:

- ▶ Increasing productivity
- ▶ Raising skills levels and reducing worklessness
- ▶ Improving infrastructure and attracting investment
- ▶ Improving quality of life and the attractiveness of the Borough

The following chapters set out the objectives we need to fulfil, and the key actions we will deliver to bring about change.

The activities underpinning these key actions, and the targets set for each area, are set out in detail in the other strategies and plans identified next to each key action.

Measuring our Success

The key performance indicators we plan to use to measure our progress and success are listed opposite.

We are committed to reviewing this strategy in three years and will use progress against these indicators to inform that review.

Headline Economy				
	SOURCE	BASELINE YEAR	BASELINE VALUE	TARGET 2010
Total Population	GMFM Oxford Economics	2007	£207,600	£208,600
Total Population	GMFM Oxford Economics	2007	£207,600	£208,600

Increasing Productivity				
	SOURCE	BASELINE YEAR	BASELINE VALUE	TARGET 2010
VAT registrations per 10,000 working age population	SBS	2005	38.1	43.9
Total business stock per 10,000 working age population	Beta Model	2005	553	679
Self-employed as % of all people aged 16+	APS	2006	10%	Maintain 10%
Total number of jobs in Borough	GMFM Oxford Economics	2007	76,600	77,400
Employee numbers by sector (as % of total employment)	GMFM Oxford Economics	2007	15.3%	13.5%
Manufacturing			6.7%	7.0%
Construction			18.6%	18.6%
Distribution & Retail			6.6%	6.6%
Hotels & Restaurants			8.3%	8.4%
Transport & Communication			1.1%	1.1%
Financial Intermediation				
Business Services			13.4%	14.3%
Public Admin & Defence			3.7%	3.7%
Education			8.7%	8.9%
Health			13.0%	13.3%
Other personal services			4.4%	4.5%

Raising Skills Levels and Reducing Worklessness				
	SOURCE	BASELINE YEAR	BASELINE VALUE	TARGET 2010
Working age residents with no qualifications	APS	2005/06	23,800	21,600
Working age residents qualified to level 2 & above	APS	2005/06	75,100	78,100
Working age residents qualified to level 3 & above	APS	2006/06	45,000	49,400
Employment rate	APS	2005/06	73.6%	74.4%
Working age residents claiming out of work benefits in City Strategy area	DWP	February 2007	11,510	10,453
Borough average workplace based earnings	ASHE	2006	£410.70	£450.00

Improving Infrastructure and Attracting Investment				
	SOURCE	BASELINE YEAR	BASELINE VALUE	TARGET 2010
Number of new jobs created through IMPACT Partnership	IMPACT Partnership	2006/07	166	298
Number of Borough residents securing employment on Kingsway	Kingsway Partnership	2006/07	0	545
Rochdale Borough average house price	Land Registry	August 2007	£122,729	£161,000
New businesses attracted to Borough	Rochdale Development Agency	2006/07	10	75
% households within 30 minutes access by public transport to a Category A interchange by 08:45	GMPTE	2005	85%	Maintain 85%

Improving Quality of Life and the Attractiveness of the Borough				
	SOURCE	BASELINE YEAR	BASELINE VALUE	TARGET 2010
Visitor numbers	STEAM	2005	7.2 million	10.1 million
Economic impact of tourism	STEAM	2005	£259 million	£373 million
% pupils obtaining 5 or more GCSEs at grade A* to C or equivalent	RMBC	2006	50.3%	58%
British Crime Survey comparator crimes i.e. crimes that impact most on individuals and communities	BCS	2003/04	20,643	14,484
Levels of households within 400m of a good quality natural green space, woodland, green space corridor or national cycle network	RMBC	2007	22.2%	37.2%



Increasing Productivity



Increasing Productivity

In order to increase, strengthen and diversify the business base and opportunities available in the Borough, five key strategic objectives have been identified:

- ▶ Increase the number of businesses
- ▶ Increase productivity of existing businesses
- ▶ Diversify the type of businesses
- ▶ Create more jobs
- ▶ Improve the environmental performance of business

Case Study: Zen Internet

Established in 1995 by Rochdale entrepreneur Richard Tang, Zen Internet was one of the first Internet Service Providers in the UK. What began as an idea grew into a small business with a handful of staff and has become a national, award-winning company with over 200 employees, and ambitious plans for future growth.

The company plans to relocate to new state-of-the-art headquarters in Rochdale by 2010. The move would support the firm's goal of doubling in size over the next few years - to around 500 employees and an impressive £50 million annual turnover.

"The opportunities are out there, so we certainly don't plan to slow down anytime soon," said Iain Johnstone, the company's Sales and Communications Manager.

"We're excited about the future, and are looking forward to continuing to grow our business here in Rochdale."

FACT BOX

*VAT registrations per 10,000 working age population are **38.1**, compared to **49.7** nationally*

***28%** of GVA (Gross Value Added) comes from manufacturing, compared with **17%** nationally*

***14%** of GVA comes from financial and business services, compared with **19%** nationally*

***19%** of Borough employees work in manufacturing industries, compared with **11%** nationally*

*The manufacturing sector is expected to lose a further **5,000** jobs in the next ten years*

*An additional **5,000** people would need to work in financial and business sectors in the Borough to match the national average*

*Average earnings for jobs in the Borough are **£50** per week less than the GM average and **£70** less than the national average*



Context

Productivity (measured by GVA per employee) has been growing steadily in the Borough since 2000, and at a faster rate than the North West average. The number of jobs has also been increasing, again at a faster rate than nationally or regionally. Economic forecasts predict continued growth of both GVA and jobs in the borough, based on past trends. These forecasts do not however take into account the massive impact that Kingsway Business Park and other development projects will have. Kingsway alone will bring another 9,000 jobs (including indirect jobs) to the Borough by 2021, a 12% increase on the current number of jobs. Our job is to make sure this growth happens in a way that all our residents benefit. We also need to help businesses across the borough make productivity improvements which will allow them to grow and generate new employment opportunities.

Business start-up levels across the borough are amongst the lowest in Greater Manchester. We need to invest in enterprise development in order to foster an 'enterprise culture', generating more business start-ups and expanding the business base in the borough. In order to do this we need to reach out to disadvantaged communities, emphasising that self-employment can be a key vehicle in enabling disadvantaged groups access to employment suited to their individual needs and requirements. The Government's Social Enterprise Strategy in particular emphasises the role social enterprise can play in acting as a vehicle for regenerating deprived communities. We need to invest in social enterprise development as a means of building up the capacity of local communities to re-engage in economic activity.



Business survival rates in the borough are relatively strong but our economic position is comparatively weak, suggesting businesses are, to a large extent, simply trading to survive. This is constraining the growth of the economy and our ability to create much needed new employment opportunities.

Our economy is also in a state of transition. The manufacturing sector has contracted and restructured over the last couple of decades, resulting in thousands of jobs losses. With more jobs losses forecast over the next ten years, manufacturers need to diversify into higher value-added activities if we are to remain competitive in the global economy.

Similarly, we need to prioritise support for new and growing businesses in the key sectors we have identified as being important to the Borough's future. We have a strong offer for sectors such as communications, and we offer an attractive alternative to Manchester city centre for businesses that do not need city centre addresses. For example, an out of town location, proximity to the countryside and accessibility to the city centre and Media City in Salford provide a good offer for key elements within the growing creative, cultural and media sector. We also provide an ideal base for back-office functions in the finance and business sectors.

Increasing Productivity



Businesses also need to be supported to access appropriate support and reduce red-tape. As the global economy has developed and continues to grow, so too has the legislation and requirements on business to minimise their environmental impact. Legislation changes will affect all businesses, but may have a disproportionate impact on Rochdale businesses due to the large manufacturing sector. If local firms are not able to meet new minimum legal standards, the future sustainability of many businesses may be in doubt. We will work with our national, regional and sub-regional partners to influence and shape the future of business support provision, in line with the Government's Business Support Simplification Programme ensuring the needs of our local businesses are reflected, whilst making it easier for local businesses to access the support they need.

A cross-cutting key action for the Economic Partnership, addressing all four key aims in this chapter relates to business engagement. We are committed to a sectoral approach to business engagement, and will where appropriate develop events to engage with priority sectors and key employers. We are also committed to developing an account management approach to business support across the Borough, ensuring we are meeting the needs of our businesses, enabling growth, survival and diversification.

OBJECTIVES	KEY ACTIONS	REASON	LEAD
Increase the number of businesses	Increase business start up rates and self-employment	Higher levels of enterprise activity and entrepreneurship will make the economy more dynamic. Self-employment plays a key role in supporting many disadvantaged groups, where conventional employment is not a viable option	Supporting Enterprise Group (Enterprise Strategy)
Increase the productivity of existing businesses	Increase business survival and growth rates	Low levels of business growth will constrain the economic development of the Borough through low productivity and output. Businesses must develop and grow to increase their contribution to the local economy and in order to remain competitive in the market place	Supporting Enterprise Group (Enterprise Strategy)
	Work with the third sector to achieve sustainability to ensure economic growth is allied to economic inclusion	The government are committed to ensuring the third sector play a bigger role in public sector service delivery. Social Enterprises have an important role to play in engagement, and providing employment opportunities for groups and individuals who may otherwise have been excluded from the labour market	
Diversify the types of businesses	Diversification of local business base, focussing on the development of priority sectors	The development of priority sectors and diversification of manufacturing industries will shift the economy towards higher value added activities, enabling the Borough to compete and our businesses to remain viable in the global economy	Supporting Enterprise Group (Enterprise Strategy)
	Attract new business to the Borough in priority sectors	Securing new investing businesses in higher value added sectors will diversify and strengthen the local economy	Infrastructure & Investment Group (Infrastructure & Investment Strategy)
	Undertake work to form a view on working relations with China	Investigating the potential of overseas markets may generate opportunities for indigenous business diversification, expansion and/or retention	Economic Partnership
Increase the number of jobs	Assist both new and existing businesses to grow and employ greater numbers of people	Business development through innovation and diversification will create employment opportunities	Supporting Enterprise Group (Enterprise Strategy)
Improve business environmental performance	Develop resource efficiency, sustainable procurement and corporate social responsibility	Legislation changes to tackle climate change will disproportionately affect the Borough economy due to the reliance on manufacturing industries. Borough companies must be equipped to adapt and comply with legislative requirements in order to continue to operate.	Environment Partnership, Supporting Enterprise Group (Enterprise Strategy)



Raising Skills Levels and Reducing Worklessness



Raising Skills Levels and Reducing Worklessness

To ensure Rochdale Borough has an adequate supply of suitably skilled labour to meet the needs of the economy, and deliver greater prosperity to residents, four key strategic objectives have been identified:

- ▶ **Raise skills levels**
- ▶ **Ensure training provision meets the needs of the economy**
- ▶ **Reduce worklessness and increase employment**
- ▶ **Develop the infrastructure and skills for the future workforce**

Case Study: RMBC Stepping Up

Stepping Up is designed to significantly and systematically improve services across the Council and provide value for money for citizens of the Borough. As part of the Stepping Up programme the Council has committed to a series of projects designed to maximise the potential of staff, creating opportunities for employment and career development.

An apprentice team and graduate trainee programme has been established. By actively seeking local graduates and young people, opportunities are being created to enable skilled young people to work in the Borough, preventing further 'brain drain' as talented young people leave the Borough to seek suitable employment.

A specialist talent pool has been established to develop approximately 75 existing employees to be job-ready for key, business critical posts across the Council and partner organisations.

An Enterprising Leadership programme has also been established to develop leadership and management skills within the Authority. The Leadership development programme will equip senior and middle managers to be effective leaders. The three strands combined all form part of the overall approach to succession planning for the Council, which will bring significant benefits to service delivery and Borough residents.

FACT BOX

23,700 people have no qualifications

40% of adults do not have Level 2 qualifications (equivalent to 5 good GCSEs) compared with **35%** nationally

Only **36%** of adults have Level 3 (2 A Levels) and above qualifications compared with **44%** nationally

Nationally over **two thirds** of new jobs in the future will require NVQ Level 3 (2 A Levels) or above

An additional **3,000** people need to enter employment to increase the employment rate in line with the national rate

14,800 adults do not work due to ill health or disability

Closing the gap between the Borough and national employment rates would bring an additional **3,000** people into employment

To close the gap between the employment rates of disadvantaged groups and the Borough average employment rate, the following extra numbers would need to get jobs:

- 6,600** disabled people
- 3,800** black and minority ethnic group people
- 3,300** women
- 800** people aged 50 to retirement age

More than **one in four** children live in families dependent on benefits

Only **27%** of white boys and **37%** of white girls aspire to university level education



Context

At city region level there has already been a shift towards businesses and jobs in the knowledge economy, which rely on high levels of skills. Many of the growth sectors for the Borough will also rely on higher-level skills. This is an opportunity for Borough residents to secure better-paid jobs, but many do not have the skills needed across all four townships in the Borough. Employers within Rochdale Borough and Manchester City Region report having difficulties in recruiting suitably skilled candidates and having low levels of skills in their existing workforce.

Rochdale Borough has significant concentrations of people with low or no qualifications, and high levels of worklessness. Improving the skills profile of the Borough and moving more people into employment will allow the Borough's economy to grow and compete in the modern marketplace.

Through our economic development strategy we must develop the skills of Borough residents to ensure people are equipped to access vacancies in the Borough and the wider city region, and progress to better paid jobs. We need to retain and attract skilled individuals to the Borough so that businesses can recruit the skills they need. We also have to address the problems caused by many of our higher skilled young people leaving the Borough to seek suitable employment opportunities and a quality of life fit for young professionals.

The pace of change of the global economy has been particularly rapid in recent years. We must therefore work with the business community to ensure strong leadership and management skills are in place, and businesses have the requisite skills to adapt, develop, innovate and remain competitive. Skills provision should also be developed in consultation with employers so that it meets the needs of the economy and provides training in areas of skills shortages and growth sectors.

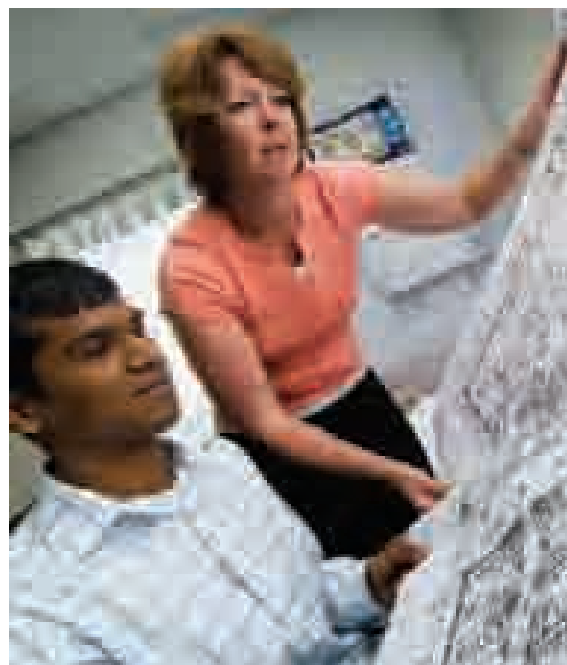
We need to continue tailoring skills provision to ensure the Borough reaps the maximum possible economic benefit from opportunities. Work is already underway to provide training to Borough residents in Kingsway Business Park target sectors, and specific training is planned to ensure residents can access employment opportunities through the town centre redevelopment programmes.

In order to ensure a suitable supply of labour to fill the projected job growth in the Borough and across the Manchester City Region, we need to move people who are economically inactive into sustainable employment. High levels of worklessness are evident across the Borough, with concentrations in our most deprived areas and within certain groups. 14,800 adults do not work due to ill health (mental and physical) or disability, and are reliant on incapacity benefits. If half of these people could successfully secure employment the economic activity rate in the Borough would increase from 76% to 82%. In order to close the current employment gap between disabled residents and the Borough average, an additional 6,600 disabled people would need to secure employment. Through joint working with health partners and employers we must develop flexible ways of working, which would allow more incapacity benefits claimants to access employment. We must also work with economically inactive residents to equip them to be the 'best candidate for the job'.

Raising Skills Levels and Reducing Worklessness

Economic inactivity (i.e. adults not in the workforce) is particularly marked within the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities in Rochdale Borough. An additional 3,800 BME residents would need to enter employment to close the employment rate gap between BME groups and the Borough average. Due to the young age profile the proportion and number of people from Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage in the Borough are expected to increase over the next 20 years. By 2021 an additional 6,300 BME residents would need to enter employment to match the current Borough employment rate. Part of the solution is to increase skills levels in BME groups. However, national research suggests that between a third and a half of the gap in employment rates is a result of employer discrimination. Public sector agencies in the Borough already have targets for recruitment of BME and other disadvantaged groups, and procurement policies, which require race equality in the workplace of suppliers. We can do more to publicise the value of these policies with private sector employers.

Successfully securing employment for more women and people aged between 50 and retirement age would also release a pool of currently untapped labour. To close the current employment gap between working aged residents over 50 and the Borough average, would require an additional 800 over 50s to secure employment. To close the gap for women would mean an additional 3,300 getting jobs. Increasing the employment rate of our over 50's population will also contribute to reducing adult and older people's poverty across the Borough.



Another source of future employees is young people. We need to ensure young people leave education with good skills levels and get the best transition to working life. To do this we need to coordinate strong links between vocational training and education provision, and growth areas of employment. We also need to ensure young people are fully engaged to reduce the risk of them not being involved in employment, education or training.

Rochdale Borough is also seeing a year on year increase in the number of economic migrants registering for employment here, notably from Eastern European Countries. Nationally, economic migration is recognised as positively benefiting the economy, filling skills gaps and supplying labour where shortages exist. The Economic Partnership is currently gathering information on the nature of migrant labour across the Borough, equipping us with the necessary information to be able to take an informed view on the likely impact this new workforce is having, or will have, on our economy. We will then develop any key actions necessary.

OBJECTIVES	KEY ACTIONS	REASON	LEAD
Raise skills levels	Raise educational aspirations of children and young people	Low educational aspirations will reduce the earning power of children and young people when they are adults, and reduce the supply of labour for higher-skilled jobs .	Children's Trust
	Reduce the number of residents with no qualifications	Low skills levels will constrain economic development as Borough residents will not be equipped to fill vacancies.	Skills & Work Advisory Group (Skills strategy)
	Deliver level 2 qualifications	The minimum level required to effectively operate in the labour market is level 2 which is equivalent to 5 good GCSEs.	
	Deliver level 3 and above skills in subjects which will serve the needs of the economy	Employers across Greater Manchester report both skills gaps (their existing workforce lacks the skills required to fulfil the needs of the business) and skills shortages (where employers are unable to recruit enough employees with the required skills for the job).	
	Deliver leadership and management skills to ensure employers are equipped to develop their business	Business leaders and employers need the skills required to innovate and ensure their businesses remain competitive as the economic climate continues to change.	
	Invest in workforce development	Employers across Greater Manchester report skills gaps, in terms of their existing workforce lacking the skills required to fulfil the needs of the business.	
	Develop provision to overcome skills disparities in: BME community, Women Disabled people, Older people People with no qualifications Offenders/Ex-offenders	The skills deficit is particularly high in these groups so we need to ensure programmes to increase skills include targeted activity for these disadvantaged groups.	
Ensure training provision meets the needs of the economy	Deliver demand-led skills provision to meet the needs of Borough employers and employment growth sectors	Understanding the demand for skills and how best to provide this will ensure resources are not wasted delivering skills, which are not economically valuable. Training provision should be developed in partnership with funding organisations, training providers and in consultation with employers and reviewed regularly.	Skills & Work Advisory Group (Skills strategy)
Reduce worklessness and increase employment	Through both mainstream and discretionary funded employment and training activities, increase the number of people moving from benefits into sustainable employment	Ensuring sustainable employment for those currently outside the labour market, with progression routes and well-paid opportunities is the best route out of poverty for many of our most disadvantaged residents and will significantly improve the economic position of the Borough.	Skills & Work Advisory Group (Employment Strategy)
	Work within our most deprived neighbourhoods and targeted interventions for specific client groups to overcome barriers to employment, in particular: People claiming incapacity benefits, Older people, BME, Women People with dependent children	Providing suitable training and support for currently workless residents will address both labour and skills shortages in the workforce. Concentrating efforts on our most deprived communities will strengthen the local economic base and ultimately increase the Borough's performance and competitiveness.	
	Work with Health and Well Being Partnership to reduce barriers to securing and maintaining employment for those Borough residents suffering ill-health	High quality employment and prosperity is a positive determinant of good health and well being. Poor health is a recognised barrier to employment and progression, with around 16% of salary costs being spent on sickness absence.	Skills & Work Advisory Group with Health and Well Being Partnership
	Reduce numbers of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET)	Youth unemployment is high across the Borough and the skills profile in our most deprived communities is poor. Reducing the number of NEET young people will help to ensure we have an adequate supply of suitably skilled labour to service the needs of the economy.	Children's Trust (Children & Young People's Plan)
Develop the infrastructure and skills for the future workforce	Increase the proportion of graduates who stay in the Borough or relocate to the Borough	Each year 800 students leave the Borough to attend HE courses and many do not return. We need to retain and attract better qualified young people to meet the needs of employers.	Skills & Work Group (Skills Strategy)
	Develop the role of Higher Education (HE) in contributing to the skills transformation	Limited local provision of HE is an issue in retaining people. Access to HE can be difficult for BME communities.	
	Increase by 75% the number of young people achieving apprenticeships	Promoting the value of vocational training routes to young people, and ensuring vocational training courses are delivered in economically valuable subject areas, will increase the credibility of vocational courses and provide real choice to young people in terms of learning and career development.	Children's Trust (Children & Young People's Plan)
	Deliver new sixth form centre	A significant number of our young people attend post-16 education outside the Borough. We need to improve provision and attainment at A Level.	Children's Trust



United
Cooperatives

Creating Infrastructure and
Attracting Investment



Creating Infrastructure and Attracting Investment

Rochdale Borough needs to develop its infrastructure - employment sites, commercial property, urban environment, spatial framework, transport and ICT networks - to provide a sound base for developing a modern economy. It also needs to attract more investment and develop a better image.

Four key strategic objectives for infrastructure and investment have been identified:

- ▶ **Deliver employment sites and premises to meet the needs of modern business**
- ▶ **Promote integrated transport and communications infrastructure and networks**
- ▶ **Develop town centres as economic hubs**
- ▶ **Attract inward investment and visitors**

Case Study: Woolworths

Woolworths' Contact Centre in Castleton is a major employer in Rochdale, and an essential part of the company's national operation. Staffed by around 90 people (rising to 150 during peak trading periods) the Contact Centre handles customer enquiries from 820 stores nationwide, and orders from Woolworths' growing number of internet and catalogue shoppers. It is also responsible for the Mystery Shopping Programme across all stores.

Customer contact centre manager Alan Wenham explained: "Rochdale offers a very good balance of labour, from students to more mature colleagues. We have built up good relationships with local recruitment agencies, who understand the local market and provide us with good quality extra staff at peak times." This ready supply of good quality staff proved especially crucial during the busy 2006 Christmas period. The Centre was able to call on the services of Rochdale Employment Partnership (REP) to recruit for temporary customer advisors. REP helped to source and screen suitable candidates, ensuring the Centre was geared up for the seasonal shopping frenzy.

FACT BOX

Rochdale Borough is well placed between the major city regions of Manchester and Leeds and on the M62 axis

33,000 people commute out of the Borough to work, but only 9,600 travel into the city centre

23,100 people travel to jobs in the Borough from outside

67% of people travel to work by car. Only 11% travel to work by public transport, compared with 14% in Greater Manchester and England and Wales

Over 80% of commercial property is industrial in nature – the highest level in the country – and more than three-quarters of the stock was built before 1970

Kingsway Business Park is 420 acres in size, equivalent to half the size of Manchester city centre

Inward investment has averaged £12.8 million per year over the last 12 years

Alan said: "We are committed to developing the skills of our staff, so that they can reach their full potential. Most temporary staff start out as Customer Service Advisors, but after a successful temporary contract can go on to become Senior Advisors or even team leaders. Several members of staff now have NVQ qualifications in Customer Service."

Context

The Borough's industrial past has left us with a commercial property offer with employment sites located in inappropriate locations. We are in the process of developing a portfolio of employment sites in suitable locations, in particular town centres and business parks along motorway corridors. This approach, coupled with development of public transport systems within the Borough will maintain an accessible link between local communities and employment sites.

Development of employment sites has to be balanced with the demand for new housing sites resulting from a growing number of households in the Borough. An appropriate and attractive housing supply also plays a key role in the Borough's quality of life offer, so land use planning decisions will need to consider the economic impact of site allocations.

The majority of commercial property is industrial stock, and three-quarters of it dates from before 1970. Significant investment is needed to update the existing commercial stock and create new employment premises to attract potential investors, and give local businesses the opportunity to develop.

Under-investment in the past has meant town centres in the Borough have not kept up with modern standards. Redevelopment of Middleton town centre is already well underway. Major investment has also been secured to develop new shops, offices and housing in Rochdale town centre. Development of town centres as economic hubs will enable people to work locally and reinvest in the local economy through shopping and leisure activities. Gateways (the main entrance points) and corridors (the main transport routes) have a key role in physical renewal and economic development. Critically these routes affect the perception and image of the Borough and most require substantial and urgent investment in order to provide users with a better experience.

Kingsway Business Park is a major business park development of regional significance adjacent to the M62. Kingsway, together with other initiatives underway such as the redevelopment of Rochdale town centre, will go a long way to providing some of the land, premises and infrastructure to house modern businesses in the Borough and bring in new jobs. However, the general urban environment is poor, within town centres and along strategic corridors and gateways into the Borough. Quality of design of buildings is an issue, as well as basic environmental management.

Rochdale Borough's location at the centre of Northern England along the M62 Liverpool-Manchester-Leeds axis is a major opportunity. Kingsway Business Park and business parks will be able to capitalise on our strong, central location. However, the Borough overall is less well connected to Manchester city centre by public transport than other parts of the city region, with a much smaller proportion of people travelling to the central better-paid jobs. Although significant numbers do commute out of the Borough to work, they are more likely to travel to Oldham and Bury to lower-paid jobs. Public transport connections within the Borough are also poor in some areas, making it harder for local communities to travel to employment and training opportunities and we need to develop better local public transport links. The government's Northern Way strategy proposes upgrading of the M62 and the Manchester-Halifax rail link. There are also well-developed proposals for extending Metrolink to Rochdale. These will be fundamental to the future prosperity of the Borough.

Creating Infrastructure and Attracting Investment

In the future, more people will have the opportunity to work from home and will need good quality ICT links. Modern businesses also have significantly different infrastructure requirements to the traditional industries which once dominated the Borough. Businesses undergoing modernisation and businesses relocating here need suitable ICT facilities and servicing. They will also need adequate power supplies and suitable security systems. The current offer for higher technology businesses is poor, and ICT connections are under-developed in key places.

The Manchester City Region is the primary international gateway to the North of England. With a population of just over 3 million, it is the economic centre of the North. It is an international centre for knowledge intensive activity and private sector driven growth. Ambitious plans have been set out in the Manchester City Region Development Programme 2006 to accelerate economic growth over the coming years and realise the full potential of the city region. Rochdale Borough is part of that city region, and we are committed to playing a full role in the development of the city region. However, Rochdale Borough is less well connected to the regional centre, and we have major structural issues which need addressing for the city region to meet its full potential. We need to work more effectively in Greater Manchester and city region structures to play a full role and ensure that development of the city region is more balanced.



Greater Manchester is now regarded as a key location for inward investors and is ranked as one of the top business locations in Europe. Businesses in some sectors require a city centre location, or will aim to be part of clusters developing elsewhere in Greater Manchester. But other businesses will be looking for cheaper premises with good accessibility to motorways. We have an opportunity to attract such businesses, and should be targeting those in key growth sectors such as media production companies who do not want to be based in the developing Media City in Salford. We also need to attract investment into businesses already located in the Borough who may be looking to expand, and retain investment in business developments by Borough residents.

The image of the Borough is currently not very strong. However, we have a highly attractive rural environment surrounding the town centres, with good out-door leisure opportunities. Alongside tackling the issues outlined above and in other themes, we need to define a new image for the Borough, and promote what we have to offer.

OBJECTIVES	KEY ACTIONS	REASON	LEAD
Deliver employment sites and premises to meet the needs of modern business	Bring forward a range of quality 21st century employment sites	Kingsway is now underway but will need strong sustained support to deliver its objectives. A range of other sites and locations need to be promoted to suit the different needs of a variety of key sectors	Infrastructure & Investment Group (Infrastructure & Investment Strategy)
	Stimulate the development of a premises "ladder" with a range of sizes and types of accommodation for different needs	We have low business stock and low growth rates. Small cost-effective premises are needed to encourage small businesses. There are also gaps in the provision of certain types and sizes of premises	
	Encourage the modernisation of the Borough's property offer	The current commercial property offer is amongst the worst in the country. Much of this property is located in inappropriate areas not suited to modern business, and some of it is in inner urban areas, too close to housing	
	Ensure utilities infrastructure supports economic transformation	Water, gas, electricity and ICT infrastructure needs to be updated in order to attract and serve the needs of 21st century businesses	
Promote integrated transport and communications infrastructure and networks	Continue to improve road links to city regional and national road network	We need to maintain our strong competitive location regionally, and in the city region, to encourage the free flow of goods and people.	Infrastructure & Investment Group (Infrastructure & Investment Strategy)
	Ensure a modern quality public transport system linking the Borough with the city region and national networks	We need to be well connected to the city region by public transport to assist an efficient labour and leisure market.	
	Develop a public transport system which efficiently links economic locations with main residential areas	Borough residents must be able to access employment opportunities if sustainable economic development is to be achieved and we are able to maximise the benefits of investment.	
Develop town centres as economic hubs	Promote the development of masterplans and area plans to guide development and investment	The quality of a town is influenced strongly by the services and offer in its town centre. Experience has shown that with strong masterplans in place then public and private sector investment is encouraged and better coordinated.	Infrastructure & Investment Group (Infrastructure & Investment Strategy)
	Promote the development of specific sites which generate employment	Town centres are important areas of employment, not only in the retail sector but increasingly in office sectors and leisure and cultural based employment.	
	Work with Rochdale Safer Communities Partnership to work towards 'secure by design' principles for town centre developments	Improving the design and layout of our town centres will reduce crime and the fear of crime in our urban areas, increasing usage and significant in contributing to the growth of the evening economy.	Joint working Economic Partnership and Rochdale Safer Communities Partnership
Attract inward investment and visitors	Secure inward business investment in target sectors	We need to attract inward investment on an unprecedented scale, in businesses which will help to diversify the economy.	Infrastructure & Investment Group (Infrastructure & Investment Strategy)
	Retain existing businesses with the Borough and stimulate reinvestment	We need to retain those businesses with potential to grow in the future, and attract additional investment from those organisations which have parent companies elsewhere.	
	Promote the Borough to attract visitors and tourism	Our rural leisure areas and town heritage offer opportunities to generate income through tourism.	



Improving Quality of Life and the
Attractiveness of the Borough



Improving Quality of Life and the Attractiveness of the Borough

The success of this strategy is not just dependent on the three key themes we have already described. Improving the social, cultural and environmental offer of the Borough is essential too – in short improving quality of life. We have identified some key objectives for economic development to be successful. These are not part of the economic development strategy, but we will work with other partnerships in the Borough to make sure they happen. Our work in developing the economy of the Borough will have a strong positive impact on other aspects of quality of life, in particular reducing poverty levels and improving health.

Key objectives essential to support economic development are:

- ▶ **Develop and promote the social and cultural offer to encourage investment and retain and attract talent**
- ▶ **Develop urban environment and promote environmental offer to encourage investment and retain and attract talent**
- ▶ **Ensure schools are performing well and continue to improve**
- ▶ **Ensure appropriate and attractive housing stock**
- ▶ **Create and promote a new image of Rochdale Borough**

Located in the foothills of the Pennines, just ten miles from Manchester city centre, Rochdale Borough offers the best of both rural and urban life. Quality of life is one of our biggest assets, with attractive countryside and excellent road links.

Rochdale Borough has a truly multi-cultural society and much to offer our residents. But we need to develop what we have to offer to retain and attract the higher-skilled people we need to develop our economy. A well-developed and diverse social and cultural offer will act as a key lever in preventing out-migration and attracting new higher qualified residents. The ongoing redevelopment of town centres and leisure activities in the Borough will help to change the image of the Borough and ensure we can promote a strong offer to ensure investors and residents alike choose Rochdale Borough. Through partnership working, and the delivery of key strategies including the Visitors Strategy, Infrastructure & Investment and the Borough Marketing strategy, we can collectively improve the Borough 'offer', contributing to an improved quality of life for Borough residents, and the overall attractiveness of the Borough to investors.

FACT BOX

50% of rights of way footpaths in the Borough are easy to use

There were 7.2 million visitors to Rochdale Borough in 2005, 7.7% of all Greater Manchester visitors

School Key Stage 2 attainment in English and Maths matched the national average in 2006

39% of the housing stock in the Borough is terraced, compared with 26% nationally

The ratio of house prices to household incomes is higher than 3:1 in most of the Borough (housing is considered affordable if this ratio is less than 3:1)

OBJECTIVE: Develop and promote the social and cultural offer to encourage investment and retain and attract talent

KEY ACTIONS	LEAD
Deliver new sport and leisure facilities	Cultural Partnership (Cultural Strategy)
Re-establish town centres as the main focus for shopping, commerce and culture	Masterplan Steering Group
Support development of high profile events	Cultural Partnership (Cultural Strategy)
Deliver Housing Market Renewal cultural activities	Cultural Partnership (Cultural Strategy)
Develop attractive, exciting, varied tourism offer, recognised in particular for its stunning countryside and fascinating heritage	Visit Rochdale Borough Forum (Visitors Strategy)



Attractive countryside is one of the Borough's strongest assets. We need to improve access to the countryside, create better links between the urban and rural environment and promote the Borough's extensive green space. The natural environment, combined with easy access to town centres, and proximity to Manchester and Leeds, provide Rochdale with a unique selling point.

However, we cannot retain and attract residents and investment on the strength of the natural environment alone. The urban centres of the Borough must also be developed and promoted. Rochdale Borough has a strong heritage, with some unique, even iconic buildings, not least Rochdale Town Hall. This built heritage should form the basis of further development of our urban areas, ensuring high standards of design of both buildings and open spaces to create attractive and pleasant places to live, visit and strengthen our offer to investors.

While Rochdale Borough may never be one of the country's top tourism destinations, we do have a strong offer. We are developing locations, attractions, and events to promote the environmental offer so Rochdale Borough becomes a place where both residents and visitors choose to spend their leisure time.

OBJECTIVE: Develop urban environment and promote environmental offer to encourage investment and retain and attract talent

KEY ACTIONS	LEAD
Work in partnership to ensure the delivery of the Visitors, Infrastructure & Investment strategies and the development of a Borough Marketing Strategy	Economic Partnership (and sub-groups), working with other LSP partners
Create outdoor leisure product that can be used to promote the rural areas for residents and visitors	Oldham & Rochdale Economic and Skills Alliance
Promote the countryside as a major asset and connect it to our neighbourhoods through river valleys and environmental corridors	Masterplan Steering Group
Input into the Local Development Framework development to deliver improved built environment	Masterplan Steering Group Cultural Partnership (Cultural Strategy)
Make a dramatic improvement in the design of new development and open space and create more good quality open space in town centres	Masterplan Steering Group
Improve environmental management	Environment Partnership
Develop parks and open space in Borough	Environment Partnership Cultural Partnership (Cultural Strategy)
Raise awareness of built heritage of Borough	Cultural Partnership (Cultural Strategy)
Increase amount of quality-assessed accommodation	Visit Rochdale Borough Forum (Visitor Strategy)
Deliver crime prevention advice through employers so people feel safer and assist in reducing crime	Skills & Work Advisory Group in partnership with Rochdale Safer Communities Partnership

Improving Quality of Life and the Attractiveness of the Borough

The role and location of schools also play an important part in where people choose to locate. Large numbers of families are drawn to highly performing schools, to try to ensure their children get the best possible start in life. The improvement in school performance we have enjoyed over the last few years will have a big impact on the attractiveness of the Borough. Potential investors may consider locational factors, such as schools when choosing sites for employment development, both in terms of the ready supply of labour in the parents, but also looking to the future workforce, particularly around secondary schools with specialist status or centres of vocational excellence (COVEs).

OBJECTIVE: Ensure schools performing well and continue to improve	
KEY ACTIONS	LEAD
The percentage of pupils obtaining 5 or more GCSEs at grades A* to C or equivalent is 58% by 2010	Children's Trust (Children & Young People's Plan)
All schools and other establishments, including pre-school provision receive the minimum of satisfactory OFSTED inspection	Children's Trust (Children & Young People's Plan)
All schools provide a range of easily accessible out of hours provision agreed through consultation with children and young people	Children's Trust (Children & Young People's Plan)



Our industrial legacy is evident still in the high density terraced housing which dominates large parts of the Borough. Much of the housing stock is out dated, in need of repair or replacement and does not offer the choice in terms of size or type, which people want. The Housing Market Renewal (HMR) programme is making big changes to quality of the housing stock, creating a better choice and mix of housing development. It is also helping to re-dress imbalance in the housing market and delivering environmental improvements. Working with HMR, we must ensure we can offer an appropriate and attractive housing supply to meet the demands of both the current and future workforce, ensuring housing supply does not act as a brake on the economic development of the Borough.

OBJECTIVE: Ensure appropriate and attractive housing stock	
KEY ACTIONS	LEAD
Create a step change in housing diversity and choice by providing and facilitating new housing and securing a radically better mix of housing sizes and types	Oldham Rochdale Partners in Action (HMR Strategy)
Develop attractive, sustainable neighbourhoods, focussing on massive regeneration of areas close to town centres, and restructuring of large social rented housing areas	Masterplan Steering Group
Transform the quality of housing in neighbourhoods in the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder area and deliver long-term sustainability	Oldham Rochdale Partners in Action (HMR Strategy)
Increase new homes across the Borough	Strategic Housing Services (Local Area Agreement)
Develop housing strategies, policies and procedures that meet changing needs and demands	Strategic Housing Services (Housing Strategy)

Appendix One:
Key Strategic Documents



Appendix One: Key Strategic Documents

National

Review of Sub-national Economic Development and Regeneration (July 2007) HM Treasury, Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform and Department for Communities and Local Government, www.hm-treasury.gov.uk

This sets out reforms to ensure all parts of the country can respond to economic challenges and increase prosperity for all. The reforms set out will empower Local Authorities and Regional Development Agencies to deliver economic development objectives, simplify sub-national structures, ensure objectives for growth and tackling deprivation are clear and ensure policy decisions are taken at the right spatial level to deliver better outcomes.

Local Government White Paper: Strong and Prosperous Communities (Oct 2006) Department for Communities and Local Government www.communities.gov.uk

This recognised that economies operate at city/city region level rather than within administrative Local Authority boundaries. The Paper identifies the challenges posed by globalisation, the importance of developing the knowledge economy, and tackling deprivation and high levels of worklessness. The White Paper argues for the need for local areas to work across city regions to address these challenges and improve economic performance.

Leitch Review of Skills: Prosperity for all in the global economy - world-class skills (Dec 2006) Lord Leitch, TSO

This has also introduced a potentially new policy framework for the development of skills nationally to ensure the UK is equipped to develop and remain economically competitive.

Moving Forward: the Northern Way - First Growth Strategy Report (2004-2005) Northern Way Steering Group, www.northernway.co.uk

The Northern Way strategy has been developed to address how the North could unlock the potential for faster economic growth and bridge the £29billion output gap between the North and the rest of England.

Respect Action Plan (2006-2008) Respect Task Force, Home Office, www.respect.gov.uk

Barker Review of Land Use Planning - Final report and recommendations (Dec 2006) Kate Barker, HM Treasury, TSO

Delivering on Child Poverty: what would it take? (Nov 2006) Lisa Harker, Department for Work and Pensions, TSO

Regional

Northwest Regional Economic Strategy (2006-2009), North West Development Agency, www.nwda.co.uk

The North West Regional Economic Strategy (RES) is the key strategic document to drive forwards the economic development and growth of the North West, playing a key role in bridging the output gap between the North West and the UK average.

Action for Sustainability - Framework and Programme for Integrating Sustainable Development across the North West, North West Regional Assembly, www.nwra.gov.uk

Action for Equality - celebrating diversity and creating opportunity for all in the North West of England - a Consultation Paper (2005) North West Regional Assembly, www.nwra.gov.uk

North West Statement of Skills Priorities (Dec 2006) North West Regional Skills Partnership, www.nwda.co.uk

Sub-regional

Manchester City Region Development Programme - Accelerating the Economic Growth of the North (2004) Manchester Enterprises, www.manchester-enterprises.com

Manchester City Region Development Programme 2006 - Accelerating the Economic Growth of the North (2006), Manchester Enterprises, www.manchester-enterprises.com

Greater Manchester Economic Development Plan (2004/05 - 2006/07), Manchester Enterprises, www.manchester-enterprises.com

Greater Manchester City Strategy Business Plan (2007-2010) Greater Manchester City Strategy Consortium, www.manchester-enterprises.com

Local

Oldham and Rochdale Economic and Skills Alliance (ORES) Strategy (2007-2017) ORESA

Pride of Place (2007-2010), Pride Partnership, www.pridepartnership.co.uk

Rochdale Renaissance Borough Masterplan (2005-2020) The Pride Partnership, www.pridepartnership.co.uk

Rochdale MBC Unitary Development Plan (June 2006), www.rochdale.gov.uk

Children and Young People's Plan (2006-2010) Rochdale Borough Children's Trust, www.rochdale.gov.uk

Transformation and Cohesion - The Scheme Update for the Oldham Rochdale Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder (2005-2007) Oldham Rochdale Partners in Action

Rochdale Borough Local Area Agreement (2007-2010) The Pride Partnership, www.pridepartnership.co.uk

Appendix Two:
REDS Strategic Objectives and
Key Actions & Alignment with Regional
Economic Strategy Objectives



Appendix Two:

REDS Strategic Objectives and Key Actions & Alignment with Regional Economic Strategy Objectives

Priority Sectors	
REDS Key Economic Sectors	Regional Economic Strategy Priority Sectors
Manufacturing: Food and drink Chemicals Technical textile Advanced engineering Environmental services/technologies	Manufacturing: Food and drink Energy and environmental technologies Advanced engineering and materials
Logistics	
Financial and professional services	Business and professional services
Creative, cultural and media	Digital and creative industries
Business administration	Business and professional services
ICT and digital	Digital and creative industries
Hospitality and tourism	Visitor economy
Retail	Retail
Public sector, health and social care	Public sector Care/healthcare
Construction	Construction

Increasing Productivity		
REDS Objectives	REDS Key Actions	Regional Economic Strategy Actions
Increase the number of businesses	Increase business start up rates and self-employment	3 Target business start-up and survival provision at under-performing sectors 4 Focus business support on priority sectors 53 Develop business start up and support services focused on HMR areas
Increase the productivity of existing businesses	Increase business survival and growth rates	3 Target business start-up and survival provision at under-performing sectors
	Work with the third sector to achieve sustainability to ensure economic growth is allied to economic inclusion	3 Target business start-up and survival provision at under-performing sectors
Diversify the types of businesses	Diversification of local business base, focussing on the development of priority sectors	8 Cluster programmes in priority sectors to develop higher value activity and improve productivity 11 Develop sectors with large and widespread employment
	Attract new business to the Borough in priority sectors	8 Cluster programmes in priority sectors to develop higher value activity and improve productivity
Increase the number of jobs	Assist both new and existing businesses to grow and employ greater numbers of people	12 Help businesses to implement process and produce/service innovation 17 Inform companies of global opportunities / risks and help them to compete internationally 52 Encourage employment creation in or near deprived areas
Improve business environmental performance	Develop resource efficiency, sustainable procurement and corporate social responsibility	23 Improve business resource efficiency and waste minimisation support to business 25 Embed corporate social responsibility within businesses

Raising skills levels and reducing worklessness		
REDS Objectives	REDS Key Actions	Regional Economic Strategy Actions
Raise skills levels	Raise educational aspirations of children and young people	26 Deliver the basic skills required by employers for those without qualifications
	Reduce the number of residents with no qualifications	26 Deliver the basic skills required by employers for those without qualifications 32 Support the roll-out of Train to Gain 46 Develop innovative approaches to engage and motivate people in work / training
	Deliver level 2 qualifications	32 Support the roll-out of Train to Gain
	Deliver level 3 and above skills in subjects which will serve the needs of the economy	27 Deliver the skills required by priority sectors 28 Deliver the skills required to maximise the economic impact of key growth opportunities 31 Develop intermediate / higher level skills and linkages to workless people
	Deliver leadership and management skills to ensure employers are equipped to develop their business	27 Deliver the skills required by priority sectors 28 Deliver the skills required to maximise the economic impact of key growth opportunities 33 Support key developments in business with appropriate skills 35 Develop management / leadership and corporate social responsibility skills
	Invest in workforce development	27 Deliver the skills required by priority sectors 31 Develop intermediate / higher level skills and linkages to workless people 32 Support the roll-out of Train to Gain
	Develop provision to overcome skills disparities in: BME community, Women, Disabled people, Older people, People with no qualifications, Offenders / Ex-offenders	26 Deliver the basic skills required by employers for those individuals without qualifications 31 Develop intermediate / higher level skills and linkages to workless people 34 Develop provision to overcome skills disparities experienced by BME communities, women, disabled people, the over 50s
Ensure training provision meets the needs of the economy	Deliver demand-led skills provision to meet the needs of Borough employers and employment growth sectors	27 Deliver the skills required by priority sectors 28 Deliver the skills required to maximise the economic impact of key growth opportunities 37 Develop educational attainment
Reduce worklessness and increase employment	Through both mainstream and discretionary funded employment and training activities, increase the number of people moving from benefits into sustainable employment	43 Deliver employability activities and reduce the number of people on Incapacity Benefit 45 Develop job brokerage to link employers with vacancies and workless individuals
	Work within our most deprived neighbourhoods and targeted interventions for specific client groups to overcome barriers to employment, in particular: People claiming incapacity benefits, Older people, BME, Women, People with dependent	43 Deliver employability activities and reduce the number of people on Incapacity Benefit 44 Deliver intensive support for those groups with low employment rates
	Reduce discrimination against dis-advantaged groups through public procurement and promotion of the benefits of a diverse workforce	41 Work with employers to recognise the value diversity and tackle discrimination in the labour market 62 Promote the benefits of older workers to business
	Work with Health and Well Being Partnership to reduce barriers to securing and maintaining employment for those Borough residents suffering ill-health	57 Minimise or remove the major causes of ill-health in the region and reduce the level of Incapacity Benefit claimants
	Reduce numbers of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET)	
Develop the infrastructure and skills for the future workforce	Increase the proportion of graduates who stay in the Borough or relocate to the Borough	61 Promote quality employment opportunities to attract and retain young people
	Develop the role of Higher Education (HE) in contributing to the skills transformation	37 Develop education attainment
	Increase by 75% the number of young people achieving apprenticeships	27 Deliver the skills required by priority sectors 37 Develop education attainment
	Deliver new sixth form centre	37 Develop education attainment



Improving infrastructure and attracting investment

REDS Objectives	REDS Key Actions	Regional Economic Strategy Actions
Deliver employment sites and premises to meet the needs of modern business	Bring forward a range of quality 21st century employment sites	19 Inward investment 52 Encourage employment creation near deprived areas 80 Deliver strategic regional sites 83 Develop portfolio of sub-regionally important employment sites
	Stimulate the development of a premises "ladder" with a range of sizes and types of accommodation for different needs	83 Invest in quality business accommodation / workspace focused on HMR areas
	Encourage the modernisation of the Borough's property offer	83 Invest in quality business accommodation / workspace focused on HMR areas
	Ensure utilities infrastructure supports economic transformation	22 Continue to grow and develop the ICT infrastructure 90 Ensure investment by utilities to assist sustainable growth
Promote integrated transport and communications infrastructure and networks	Continue to improve road links to city regional and national road network	6 Deliver capacity / infrastructure improvements in Greater Manchester
	Ensure a modern quality public transport system linking the Borough with the city region and national networks	66 Reduce levels of congestion by increasing use of public transport 69 Improve links to Manchester / Leeds / Sheffield 77 Develop Metrolink Phase 3
	Develop a public transport system which efficiently links economic locations with main residential areas	79 Develop innovative transport solutions to link people and jobs
Develop town centres as economic hubs	Promote the development of masterplans and area plans to guide development and investment	88 Secure frameworks which support economic growth
	Promote the development of specific sites which generate employment	119 Invest in quality public realm and green space
Attract inward investment and visitors	Secure inward business investment in target sectors	19 Inward investment 54 Capitalise on the strengths and key assets of Manchester
	Retain existing businesses with the Borough and stimulate reinvestment	19 Inward investment
	Promote the Borough to attract visitors and tourism	101 Improve the product associated with tourism attack brands 113 Develop the economic benefits of the natural environment

Improving quality of life and the attractiveness of the Borough

REDS Objectives	REDS Key Actions	Regional Economic Strategy Actions
Develop and promote the social and cultural offer to encourage investment and retain and attract talent	Deliver new sport and leisure facilities	100 Develop plans to exploit the predicted business opportunities in the growth of sport
	Re-establish town centres as the main focus for shopping, commerce and culture	
	Support development of high profile events	
	Deliver Housing Market Renewal cultural activities	
	Develop attractive, exciting, varied tourism offer, recognised in particular for its stunning countryside and fascinating heritage	97 Develop the appeal, distinctiveness and diversity of the cultural offer
Develop urban environment and promote environmental offer to encourage investment and retain and attract talent	Work in partnership to ensure the delivery of the Visitors, Infrastructure & Investment strategies and the development of a Borough Marketing Strategy	97 Develop the appeal, distinctiveness and diversity of the cultural offer
	Create outdoor leisure product that can be used to promote the rural areas for residents and visitors	113 Develop the economic benefit of the region's natural environment 117 Implement the Regional Forestry Framework
	Promote the countryside as a major asset and connect it to our neighbourhoods through river valleys and environmental corridors	113 Develop the economic benefit of the region's natural environment
	Input into the Local Development Framework development to deliver improved built environment	119 Invest in quality public realm / greenspace / environmental quality
	Make a dramatic improvement in the design of new development and open space and create more good quality open space in town centres	119 Invest in quality public realm / greenspace / environmental quality
	Improve environmental management	119 Invest in quality public realm / greenspace / environmental quality
	Develop parks and open space in Borough	119 Invest in quality public realm / greenspace / environmental quality
	Raise awareness of built heritage of Borough	120 Promote good design
	Increase amount of quality-assessed accommodation	
Ensure schools performing well and continue to improve	The percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more GCSEs at A*-C, including English and Mathematics is 50% by 2010	37 Develop educational attainment
	All schools and other establishments, including pre-school provision receive the minimum of satisfactory OFSTED inspection	37 Develop educational attainment
	All schools provide a range of easily accessible out of hours provision agreed through consultation with children and young people	
Ensure appropriate and attractive housing stock	Create a step change in housing diversity and choice by providing and facilitating new housing and securing a radically better mix of housing sizes and types	87 Set Housing Market Renewal within a strong economic context
	Develop attractive, sustainable neighbourhoods, focussing on massive regeneration of areas close to town centres, and restructuring of large social rented housing areas	84 Develop new uses for brownfield land 85 Ensure new housing to support wider regeneration or knowledge based economic growth 87 Set Housing Market Renewal within a strong economic context
	Transform the quality of housing in neighbourhoods in the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder area and deliver long-term sustainability	85 Ensure new housing to support wider regeneration or knowledge based economic growth 87 Set Housing Market Renewal within a strong economic context
	Increase new homes across the Borough	
	Develop housing strategies, policies and procedures that meet changing needs and demands	86 Secure housing which is affordable to local people

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