

North Warwickshire

**Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan
(2023-2030)**

Final Draft

30th January 2023

Our Vision

North Warwickshire Borough Council will provide the right tools and support to create an inclusive, diverse and vibrant economy, in which:

- Local residents have the skills to access high-quality, well-paying jobs;
 - Businesses, residents and public sector partners have embedded practices that deliver net zero targets;
 - Our town and village centres are focal points for community activity and are attractive to new, high spending visitors; and
 - Public, private and voluntary sector partners work in partnership to champion the Borough and to secure the best deals for its residents and businesses.
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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose and ambition

The Economic Strategy sets out a clear direction of travel for North Warwickshire, providing a long-term framework to deliver positive, focused interventions to secure a more sustainable economy for the future. The Strategy is a refresh of the 2019 Draft Economic Strategy, creating a response to the new challenges and opportunities as the country continues its recovery from the pandemic.

The Economic Strategy outlines our vision as to where we want the Borough to be by 2030, underpinned by four strategic themes:

- Supporting business growth and innovation
- Securing a pipeline of talent
- Enabling investment in infrastructure to support a low-carbon, modern and forward-looking economy
- Supporting vibrant town and service centres through quality place-making.

Since the last draft Economic Strategy was written, the world has experienced significant social, economic, political, and environmental changes, i.e. global pandemic, Brexit, recession, cost of living crisis, Net Zero and climate change. Adapting to these changes with practical and realistic interventions at a local level is a key driver for the refreshed Economic Development Strategy.

Ensuring that all businesses, both large and small, and all residents share in economic growth is increasingly referred to as 'inclusive growth'. This seeks to deliver long term wealth, health and well-being in a more equitable way. Social and financial inclusion are key to ensuring this.

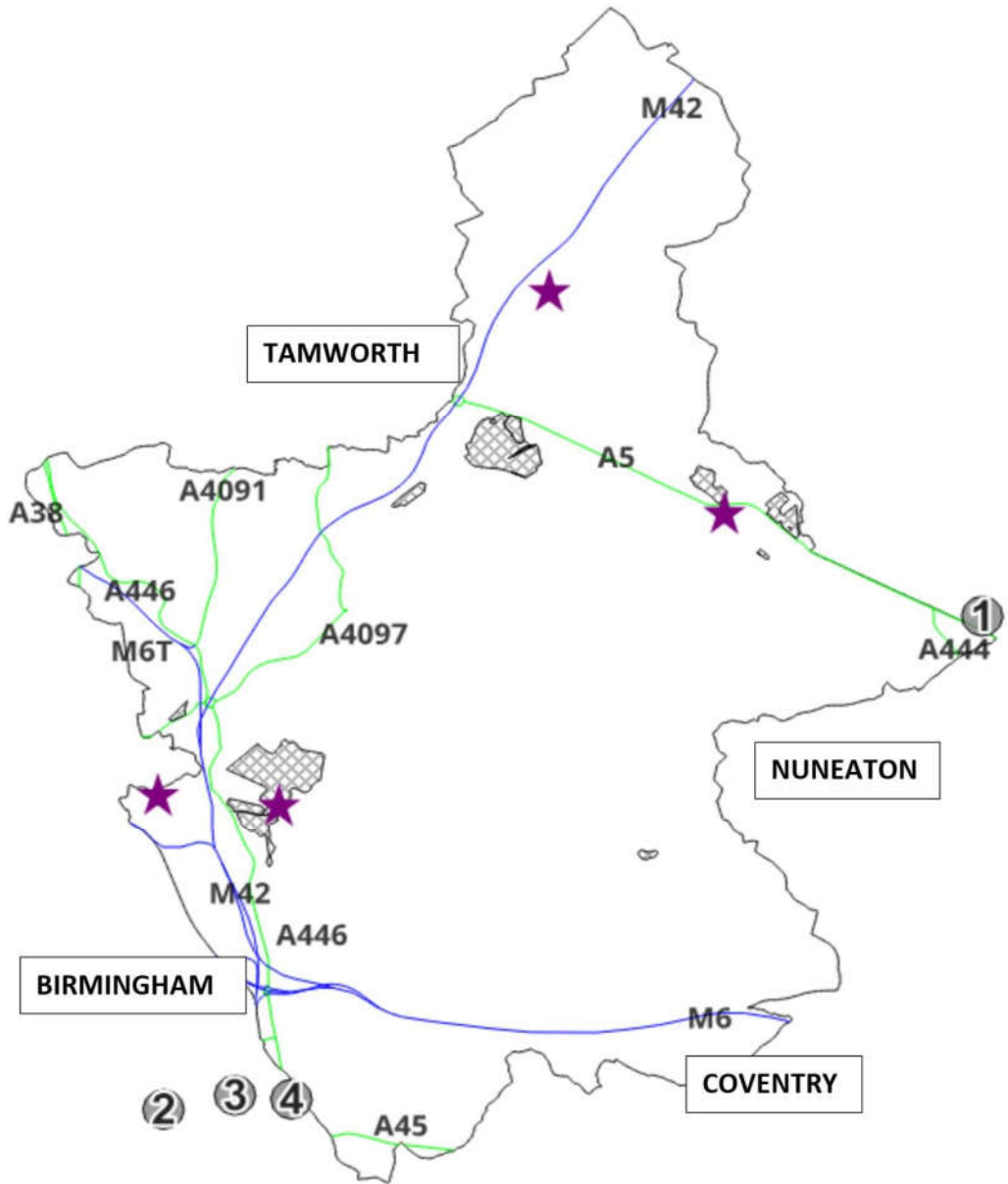
Over the last decade, the Borough has grown in many ways with a change in the overall business environment. The last coal mine closed in 2013 and logistics has become a major part of the local economy. There are now more jobs than working age residents within the Borough. Despite this, there is a large amount of in and out commuting with over 50% of working residents commuting to jobs outside of the Borough. Although unemployment is, generally, low, challenges remain, including creating better quality local jobs and making sure local residents have the skills to fill them.










The funding landscape has also changed. Despite new funding streams, most notably the Levelling Up Fund and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, pressures on the public purse mean that we need to devise and deliver smart interventions that deliver value for money and tangible benefits. Funding allocation mechanisms have also changed – away from Local Enterprise Partnerships and towards local authorities, which are required to bid directly into central government. Local governance continues to evolve, with an extending role for the West Midlands Combined Authority and continued devolution. Building effective partnerships within and beyond the Borough's boundaries will be key to ensuring that North Warwickshire is best placed to benefit from new governance arrangements.

This is an economic strategy for the whole of North Warwickshire. The Borough Council cannot deliver the actions in isolation. We will work with a range of partners and stakeholders to achieve our ambitions, building on and aligning to their strategies and actions, especially those of West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Chambers of Commerce and Warwickshire County Council (WCC). Working with the private sector will also be vitally important. The strategy defines our role and responsibilities and it should be read in conjunction with other Borough Council strategies and plans, including the Corporate Plan (2021-2023), Sustainable Community Strategy (2015) and the Adopted Local Plan (2011-2033).

1.2 How the Economic Strategy has been developed

The Economic Strategy and Action Plan has been developed with funding support through the Local Government Association's (LGA) Economic Growth Advisers programme and has involved extensive consultation with stakeholders and partners from the public and private sectors.



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|---|-------------------|---|----------------------------------|
|  | Borough Boundary |  | MIRA |
|  | Trunk Road |  | Birmingham Airport |
|  | Motorway |  | National Exhibition Centre (NEC) |
|  | Industrial Estate |  | HS2 Station |
|  | Railway Stations | | |

2. Economic & Policy Context

2.1 Macroeconomic trends and drivers

The Economic Strategy has been developed in a period of international and national economic turbulence, which is likely to impact on all local economies. The UK economy is forecast to contract throughout 2023 and into 2024 and the Bank of England responded to a CPI inflation rate of over 10% by raising interest rates to 3.5% in December 2022. Further interest rate rises are expected in 2023 and 2024, but much will depend on how sharply the inflation rate falls. High energy costs have been a key driver of inflation, but rising food costs are also a factor.

In the UK, many employers are facing labour shortages, whilst increasing household costs have added to pressure on employers to pay higher wages and contributed to more volatile industrial relations. Public finances are under pressure and the UK Government will look to address government debt through a combination of public sector efficiency savings and increasing taxes.

High energy prices and rising cost of living, Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic have impacted significantly on opportunities for delivering sustainable and inclusive economic growth. Indeed, the pandemic and our collective response to the issues it has raised, has meant that we need to do things differently to create and support safe and sustainable communities in which to live, work and visit.

Inclusive economic growth is essential if we are to Level-Up the Borough to tackle inequalities and low wages, pockets of deprivation and poor housing provision that affect our communities. Work to support economic growth, particularly to attract and secure investment to unlock major development opportunities, will need to be a core feature of our future economic development programme.

In addition to the fiscal stimulus measures to get the country back on its feet and the Government's 'Building Back Better' agenda, there is a renewed focus on climate change, sustainability and working towards net zero. We need to ensure that we focus on our commitments to climate change actions that deliver a better result both for the local economy and for the environment.

The initial period of the strategy is likely to be focused on building resilience, with a view to a longer-term approach of ensuring that the Borough's businesses can thrive when economic conditions improve.

2.2 Policy Context

Whilst the Strategy has a strong local and regional focus, it also takes account of and responds to national policy. This recognises the important role the Borough plays in the wider economy and ensures that interventions are shaped to support national and regional government funding priorities. This section considers the wider policy context within which the economic strategy has been developed.

The Government's post-Covid economic strategy, **Build Back Better, Plan for Growth, (2021)** builds on its previous industrial strategy. It identified three core pillars of growth:

Infrastructure, Skills and Innovation, with cross-cutting themes to “level up” the whole of the UK, support the transition to Net Zero, and support the vision for a Global Britain. Its nationally strategic location, its technical base, and the strength of the sub-regional automotive and logistics sectors mean that North Warwickshire has a major role to play in supporting the Government to deliver its growth plans, in terms of each of the three core pillars of growth.

Levelling Up is the central theme to the Government’s approach to sub-regional economic development, set out in the **Levelling Up White Paper (2022)**. The aim is to level up opportunities in different parts of the United Kingdom. It recognises that there are persistent spatial disparities and seeks to address these by investing in the six “capitals” – physical, human, intangible, financial, social and institutional. The rationale is that places that exhibit strengths in these six capitals benefit from agglomeration effects, attracting talent and private investment, engendering civic pride and building strong and resilient communities, which becomes a virtuous, self-re-enforcing cycle. Where these “capitals” are weak or depleted, they need investment and rebuilding.

Levelling Up Fund, the Future High Streets Fund, Towns Fund and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) are all financial instruments that the Government is using to address these local challenges, focusing primarily on local areas that are identified as being most in need and most likely to benefit from investment.

The Levelling Up Fund, first announced in the 2020 Spending Review, committed £4.8 billion over three rounds to invest infrastructure that improves people’s everyday lives. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund, launched in April 2022, provides a further £2.6 billion of capital and revenue funding for local economic development projects over a three-year period

Following the unsuccessful Levelling Up Round 2 bid, North Warwickshire Borough Council will submit a bid for Levelling Up Funds (Round 3) to create a new ‘Health and Wellbeing activity hub’ in Atherstone town centre. Subject to feedback, it is likely to include a new wet and dry leisure facility, new library and relocated NHS clinic. Its allocation of £3.5 million UKSPF will be used to:

- Enhance community facilities, amenities and activities that support community health and well-being including by reducing social isolation and loneliness; and
- Improve the vitality and viability of the Borough’s market towns, enhancing their contribution to community health and well-being and the development of the Borough’s visitor economy.

At sub national level **West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy (2019)** guides policy on transport infrastructure, housing, skills and innovation. It identifies key market opportunities as the future of mobility; data driven health and life sciences; creative, content, techniques and technologies; and modern services. Warwickshire County Council is currently refreshing its economic strategy. Seven emerging themes have been identified:

- Maximising the county’s economic strengths;
- Supporting business growth;

- A well and appropriately skilled population;
- Inclusive Growth;
- A network of diverse and vibrant place;
- A connected county; and
- A green and sustainable economy.

We will continue to work closely with key partners to ensure that the infrastructure developments come forward at a pace that matches our ambition for the Borough. £154.7 million of Growth Deal funding (including £89 million of Government funding) has already been secured to support Coventry & Warwickshire's aspirations to build on its advanced manufacturing and engineering strengths.

At local level, the **Corporate Plan (2021-2023)** sets out the council's priorities and the **North Warwickshire Adopted Local Plan (2011-2033)** identifies the spatial priorities for the Borough. The Council's economic development priorities centre on supporting employment & business and promoting sustainable and vibrant communities. There are ambitions to deliver around 100 hectares of employment land (Policy LP5), whilst protecting existing sites (LP11), identifying new employment and industrial areas (LP12 & LP39) and diversifying the rural economy (LP13).

Approximately 42 hectares of land has been allocated to extend the existing MIRA Technology Park, located just outside the Borough. The Local Plan (2021) identifies this as a key opportunity to diversify the local economy and to secure high level E(g)(ii) Research & Development and (B2) employment at the site, attracting and nurturing new and growing research and development companies. New job opportunities are expected around the development of the HS2 Interchange Station, located on the south west border of the Borough, further diversifying the economic base; whilst the Local Plan (2021) also focuses on rural employment, including farm diversification and re-use of existing rural buildings to support businesses.

The **Adopted Local Plan (2011-2033)** provides a commitment to make best use of land and buildings to maintain and improve the vitality of the Borough's Market Towns, where most of the housing growth is concentrated.

In 2019, the Borough Council declared a climate change emergency and in June 2022 it published a Climate Change Action Plan. This aims to make the council's activities Net Zero by 2030 and commits it to ensuring that all strategic decisions are in line with the shift to zero carbon by 2030. The Sustainable Community Strategy (2015), which is currently being reviewed, has priorities to raise skills and aspirations, build healthier communities and improve transport and access, all of which align closely with this economic strategy.

Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce is one of three Chambers leading on the development of the West Midlands Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP). The aim of LSIPs is to put employers at centre stage in ensuring that the region's skills system is responsive to their needs and to strengthen the links between businesses and learning providers.

3. North Warwickshire Profile

3.1 SWOT Analysis

The table below provides a summary of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for North Warwickshire over the course of this strategy period.

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>
<p>People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing population • Steady improvement in those achieving NVQ levels 3 / 4 and above • Strong technical skills base • Low levels of unemployment <p>Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headquarters of national and international companies • High level of jobs per residents • Land south of MIRA for major expansion • Second fastest growing economy in the UK • New visitor economy assets: Emerge Surf/the Eternal Wall <p>Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good connections – located within the Golden Triangle for logistics • Located Between UK Central and MIRA Technology Park, which are research and development hotspots • Future development of the Southern Manufacturing Site at MIRA • Growth being promoted • Strong sense of community • Good housing affordability • Good learning provision in the sub-region <p>Promotion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great rural environment • Natural and heritage assets • Nationally strategic location 	<p>People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger than average proportion of workers at risk of automation • Lower GVA per resident compared to jobs • Need to improve skills / re-skilling • Ageing population • Low unemployment rates mean less spare capacity in the labour force • Poor social mobility, particularly amongst young people <p>Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age of industrial stock • Affordability of business space • High dependence upon large employers, but low levels of business start-ups and SMEs • GVA per job has fallen that last few years (productivity) <p>Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low levels of investment in infrastructure • High levels of in and out commuting • Difficult access within the Borough; poor public transport • Regeneration required on key sites • Need to keep pace with the digital revolution <p>Promotion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The larger urban areas take the accolade of things happening in North Warwickshire • Low visitor economy profile compared with south Warwickshire
<i>Opportunities</i>	<i>Threats</i>
<p>People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand labour market risks and futureproof the workforce • Investigate the opportunities that automation may present to increase job growth • Develop technical career/learning pathways • Strengthen business-education links <p>Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out of 5G and fibre – explore creating digital hubs • Business diversification • Encourage more business start-ups • Provision of affordable workspace, including in rural areas 	<p>People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redeployment of workers due to automation in the future • Impacts of increasing debt • Demand for better services from new residents <p>Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over-reliance on a limited number of companies • Impacts of automation • Lack of, or lower than required, energy supply • Pressure for more and bigger sites from the logistics sector

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore supply chain opportunities to exploit automotive, research and development as well as Hs2 opportunities • Encourage growth of low carbon technologies • Create vibrant town centres <p>Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site regeneration opportunities • Improvement of rail services and connectivity <p>Promotion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a legacy from key events in and around the Borough • Implement the Destination Management Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing shopping habits impacting on the high streets <p>Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congestion could stifle growth • Lack of investment in infrastructure • Pressure for change to old established high streets • Relatively rural location with a small and dispersed population that impacts on the cost of service provision. <p>Promotion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The larger urban areas and southern Warwickshire take the credit of what is happening in North Warwickshire
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3.2 Location & Topography

North Warwickshire is a rural borough covering an area of 284 sq.km, located between the major conurbations of Birmingham, Solihull, Coventry, Tamworth, Hinckley and Nuneaton. The Borough has three main towns of Atherstone, Coleshill and Polesworth with a number of smaller local service centres and a range of rural villages. Settlements range in size from Atherstone and Mancetter, with a population of 10,000 to small hamlets. The market towns are important to the health of the surrounding rural economy as they provide many services and facilities to the outlying hinterland.

At a national level, the Borough's central location is a key asset and is an important driver of location decisions of businesses within the logistics sector. This is unlikely to change, so North Warwickshire Borough Council needs to make this work to its advantage by engaging with the sector to identify supply chain, research and development, skills and inward investment opportunities that are linked to the Borough's strategic location and quality of life offer.

North Warwickshire is essentially a rural district with local strong communities. With greater capacity for remote working, small rural start-ups could become a key feature of the local economy. Housing is affordable compared with many parts of the country, making it attractive for people and families looking for good value homes with access to good employment. However, mobility within the Borough is challenging: Its rural nature and small urban centres make it largely car dependent with limited public transport connecting people between towns and villages and employment opportunities

Historically mining dominated the Borough, but the last mine (Daw Mill Colliery) closed in 2013. However, the coalmining legacy remains, shaping the Borough's topography and its strong local community identity.

In its place a major logistics sector has emerged, with large warehouses and distribution centres acting as a hub for delivering goods and supplies throughout the United Kingdom.

Alongside this, the Borough has a strong technical base, being part of the Midlands automotive cluster.

But its town centres are modest and its visitor economy continues to be in the shadow of its more high-profile cultural centres of Warwick and Stratford-upon-Avon. There are no out of town shopping areas in North Warwickshire, so it is likely that many residents travel outside the Borough to larger retail centres. However, on-line shopping habits are driving changes in physical retail provision and placing fresh demands on town centres roles in their communities.

The remainder of this section provides a summary of the North Warwickshire economy, drawing on publicly available data and qualitative insights that have been provide during the consultation that has informed this plan. It provides a SWOT analysis for the Borough, which is followed by three themes: People; Economy & Business; and Place

3.3 People

3.3.1 Population Growth

Table 1: Population by Age 2015-2030¹

Age	2015	2020	2015-2020 Change	2030	2020-2030 Change
All Ages	62,765	65,452	+2,687	72,788	+7,336
Aged 0 to 15	10,788	11,428	+640	12,329	+901
Aged 16 to 64	38,803	39,738	+935	42,567	+2,829
Aged 16 to 24	6,034	5,796	-238	6,610	+814
Aged 25 to 49	19,354	19,546	+192	21,681	+2,135
Aged 50 to 64	13,415	14,396	+981	14,276	-120
Aged 65+	13,174	14,286	+1,112	17,890	+3,604

In 2020, North Warwickshire had a resident population of just under 65,500 people – an increase of nearly 2,700 (+4.3%) from 2015. Over a fifth (21.8%) of local residents are aged 65+ years and 60.7% are of working age (16-64 years). Recent population growth has been mainly amongst older residents and there was a modest reduction in the number of 16-24 year old residents and only very modest growth in the number of 25-49 year olds between 2015 and 2020.

There is projected to be significant population growth over the next decade. ONS population projections forecast that there will be 72,800 residents in the Borough by 2030 – an increase of 7,300 (+11.2%). This places demands on the supply of new housing and good quality jobs, whilst new residents are likely to expect an improved offer from the district’s three main town centres, Atherstone, Coleshill and Polesworth. Plans to develop a Health & Well-Being Activity Hub in Atherstone reflect this.

¹ Source: Mid Year Population Estimates; Local Area Population Projections; Office for National Statistics, via NOMISWEB (2023)

3.3.2 Deprivation, Unemployment and Social Mobility

Theme	NWBC Data	Theme	NWBC Data	England Data
Number of LSOAs in Top Quintile ² (2019)	2/38	Claimant Count ³ (Percent) (Aug. 2022)	2.5%	3.8%
Number of LSOAs in Education, Training & Skills top Decile ⁴ (2019)	10/38	Claimant Count (Number) (Aug 2022)	1,010	1,324,060
Social Mobility Index Rank ⁵ (2016)	284/324	Increase in Claimant Count (since Aug 2018)	+490	+584,415
<i>Early Years</i>	255/324	Percent of Adults with Level 4+ qualifications ⁶	24.8%	33.9%
<i>School</i>	303/324	Percent of Adults with no Qualifications ⁷	22.2%	18.1%
<i>Youth</i>	271/324	Median Annual workplace Earnings (Full-time Workers) ⁸	£28,863	£31,480
<i>Adulthood</i>	96/324	Median Annual Resident Earnings (Full-time workers) ⁹	£31,332	£31,490

North Warwickshire is a relatively affluent district, with pockets of deprivation, mainly around Atherstone. Two of the district's 38 Lower Super Output Areas are in the top quintile of most deprived local areas in England (IMD 2019). The most widespread deprivation relates to Education, Skills & Training (ten in the top quintile).

Overall, North Warwickshire performs poorly in terms of social mobility, based on its deprivation profile, however. This is particularly the case for School Social Mobility indicators (SMI 2022): It is within the '*weak education; strong adulthood*' quadrant of the Social Mobility Commission's Social Mobility Index report.

This needs further explanation and may present specific challenges for the Borough Council and its partners around raising aspirations and achievement amongst young people, in terms of taking advantage of the higher-value jobs within the borough. North Warwickshire has a plentiful supply of jobs, but these are not always at high level, as shown by the low median workplace earnings. As unemployment is also low, jobs may not be difficult to find, but accessing higher level, better paying jobs is likely to be more challenging, particularly if there are not clear progression pathways. Furthermore, technological changes and greater complexity in business processes are likely to favour people with higher level skills in the future, whilst lower skilled jobs are most vulnerable to the impact of automation.

There is a strong education/training profile within and around the Borough. North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College (NWSLC) has an automotive engineering training and education campus at the MIRA Technology Park on A5, running specialist skills

² Source: Indices of Multiple Deprivation, Department of Housing Levelling Up & Communities (2019)

³ Source: Claimant Count; Office for National Statistics via NOMISWEB (2022)

⁴ Source: *ibid*: Indices of Multiple Deprivation, Department of Housing Levelling Up & Communities (2019)

⁵ Source: Social Mobility Index – Weighted Scores and Rankings (2016)

⁶ Source: TS067, Census 2021; Office for National Statistics via NOMISWEB (2023)

⁷ Source: *ibid*

⁸ Source: Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings, Office for National Statistics via NOMISWEB (2022)

⁹ Source: *ibid*

training programmes up to Level 4 for the automotive sector (including apprenticeships in Automotive Engineering). NWLSC has other specialist college campuses in neighbouring areas, including the Clear Campus in Lutterworth (Logistics); the Digital Skills Academy in Coventry; and Construction Trades and Logistics in Hinkley. The Nuneaton campus provides a broad range of general further education courses. The universities of Coventry, Warwickshire and Aston all provide high level education and training opportunities within reach of the Borough’s residents and businesses.

The Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) aims to address the skills needs of local businesses and improve the responsiveness of the local skills system. According to the 2021 Census, nearly a quarter (22.2%) of local adult residents hold no qualification, compared with 18.1% in England. In some Lower Super Outputs Areas (LSOAs) this rises to a third. This is a higher proportion than in England (18.1%). A slightly higher proportion (24.8%) of adult residents hold Level 4+ qualifications, compared with 33.9% in England. In some LSOAs, fewer than 15% of adult residents have higher level qualifications.

3.4 Economy & Business

	NWBC Data	England Data
Value of the Economy - £m (2020) ¹⁰	£2,693	£1,682,752
Productivity - GVA per hour (2020) ¹¹	£37.82	£38.80
Productivity - GVA per job (2020) ¹²	£59,992	£58,995
Number of Businesses (2022) ¹³	2,785	2,408,040
Number of Employees (2021) ¹⁴	50,000	26,601,000
Business start-up rate (2021) ¹⁵	10.7 per 100 businesses	12.5 per 100 businesses
3-Year business survival rate (2021) ¹⁶	61.7%	57.5%

3.4.1 Economy & Productivity

In 2020, the North Warwickshire economy was worth £2.69 billion (Source: XXX). This represents a real terms fall of -£96 million since 2015 and -£450 million since 2018. The fall between 2018 and 2020 is likely to be the result of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The main contributors to the economy in 2020 were:

- Wholesale & retail (£506 million);
- Transport & storage (£446 million); and
- Manufacture of metals, electrical products & machinery (£404 million); and
- Warehousing, transport support, postal & courier services (£342 million).

GVA per job in North Warwickshire is £59,992. This is higher than in England (£58,995), Rugby (£53,741) and Nuneaton & Bedworth (£43,240), but below that in Warwick (£66,226) and

¹⁰ Source: Regional Gross Value Added (Balanced) by Industry by ITL Region: West Midlands; Office for National Statistics (2022)

¹¹ Source: Sub-Regional Productivity: Labour Productivity Indices by Local Authority District; Office for National Statistics (2022)

¹² Source: *ibid*

¹³ Source: UK Business Counts; Office for National Statistics, via NOMISWEB (2022)

¹⁴ Source: Business Register & Employment Survey, Office for National Statistics via NOMISWEB (2021)

¹⁵ Source: Business Demography 2020; Office for National Statistics (2022)

¹⁶ Source: Business Demography 2020; Office for National Statistics (2022)

Stratford-upon-Avon (£61,777). Productivity per hour in 2020 was £37.82. This compares with £38.80 in England, £28.91 in Nuneaton & Bedworth, £35.43 in Rugby, £40.19 in Stratford upon Avon and £43.83 in Warwick. There has been a noticeable improvement in productivity since 2015 (+20.1% at current prices) in North Warwickshire, perhaps suggesting an upwards shift in the value of jobs in the Borough in recent years.

3.4.2 Business & Employment

North Warwickshire is a 'job rich economy'. In 2021 2,800 businesses provide around 50,000 jobs – 1.24 jobs for every working age resident. Only two other districts/boroughs in England (outside London) have a higher job density than North Warwickshire (Crawley and Cambridge). What happens to businesses in North Warwickshire has a major impact on employment prospects in neighbouring areas as well the Borough itself.

The business start-up rate is low (10.7 per 100 businesses) by national standards, but the 3-year survival rate (61.7%) is comparatively high. This may partly reflect the structure of the economy, which is more technical than service sector based and may lend itself less to low cost, low risk start-ups than economies that have a stronger service sector bias.

The Borough has 25 businesses that employ over 250 people, five of which employ over 1,000 staff. These large businesses are important sources of local employment and, through their supply chains and with the right support, they can stimulate economic activity and support jobs in the wider local economy.

The transport & logistics sector is a key part of the Borough's economy and is likely to continue to be so, given its nationally strategic location. There are, however, concerns that the Borough is too dependent on this sector and that automation could result in future job losses that will impact negatively on local communities. Much depends on what happens within the sector over the short to medium term and how these businesses are planning for the future.

A report by Localis¹⁷ suggests that North Warwickshire is one of the local authorities most at risk of automation because of its sectoral make up, with 39% of its jobs defined as "at risk of total automation". However, the Government's long-term plan for freight highlights an ambition to change the perception of the industry and for it to be seen as an "industry of choice for talented, diverse and skilled people" to combat future skills shortages. Whilst there are concerns that automation in the sector will result in the loss of lower skilled jobs, those that remain are becoming more diverse as automated systems have increased the demand for software engineers, supply chain managers and data analysts.

The Midlands' automotive sector and this technical slant is part of the Borough's DNA. There are high profile and high-end businesses within and around the Borough, including BMW at Hams Hall and Aston Martin, Jaguar Land Rover, Bentley, Aston Martin, Toyota and Triumph, which are all located at MIRA Technology Park. Environmental and technological factors are driving innovation in this sector and its strong presence in North Warwickshire means that the Borough is well positioned to benefit in the future. Aldi's UK Head Office, employing 1,400 staff, is also located within the Borough.

¹⁷ The Automation Impact: Which, When & Where; Localis (2018)

Developing and maintaining strong links with these businesses, including developing joint initiatives that promote local skills, strengthen local supply chains and attract new, high quality inward investment will be important to safeguard and strengthen the Borough’s economic assets in the future. However, it will also be important for North Warwickshire to diversify its economic base, so that it is less reliant on a small number of large businesses and the transport and logistics sector.

3.5 Place

	NWBC Data	England Data		NWBC Data	England Data
Commercial Floorspace - sq.m (2022) ¹⁸	1,921	549,155	Commercial Rateable Value ¹⁹ - per sq.m	£51.00	£88.00
Office (sq.m)	61	81,260	Office	£101.00	£180.00
Industrial (sq.m)	1,745	316,436	Industrial	£47.00	£41.00
Retail (sq.m)	44	98,447	Retail	£94.00	£161.00
Other (sq.m)	71	53,012	Other	£57.00	£91.00
Average House Price (June 2022) ²⁰	£240,000	£280,000	Housing Affordability Ratio ²¹	8.3	8.9

3.5.1 Employment Areas

There are 10 main industrial estates within the Borough, as well as two rail freight terminals - at Hams Hall and at Birch Coppice. These support the Borough’s three main towns and 5 local service centres. The main estates are:

- Holly Lane, Atherstone
- Carlyon Road, Ratcliffe Road and the Netherwood Estate, Atherstone
- Manor Road, Mancetter
- Coleshill Industrial Estate
- Kingsbury Link
- Collier’s Way, Arley
- Kingsbury Road, Curdworth
- Hams Hall, Coleshill
- Birch Coppice, Dordon including Core 42

The rail freight terminals at Birch Coppice and Hams Hall are of strategic significance. Businesses on these two estates are encouraged to use these terminals to reduce road traffic. Existing rail sidings on these sites will be safeguarded.

¹⁸ Source: Non-Domestic Rating: Stock including Business Floorspace; Valuation Office Agency (2022)

¹⁹ Source: *ibid*

²⁰ Source: House Price Statistics for Small Areas in England & Wales; Office for National Statistics (2022)

²¹ Source: Calculated from House Price Statistics for Small Areas in England & Wales; Office for National Statistics (2022) & Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings, Office for National Statistics (2022)

Although outside the Borough, MIRA Technology Park in neighbouring Hinckley & Bosworth is a key economic driver for the Borough. MIRA Technology Park is Europe's leading mobility Research & Development location for the latest in automotive technology. It is recognised as a national centre of excellence in the middle of the UK automotive sector, providing access to the most comprehensive engineering consultancy and test simulation facilities in Europe. As well as accommodating over 35 major companies on site, it also provides specialist engineering and management education through the MIRA Technology Institute.

Plans are well advanced to support the expansion of the MIRA Technology site into North Warwickshire. This is aimed at Class B2 manufacturing uses and is known as the Southern Manufacturing Site (SMS). It is not seen as a location for logistics uses. Currently the site comprises four enclosed arable fields (c59 hectares). The majority of the site is allocated for 42 hectares of employment space within the North Warwickshire Local Plan (adopted September 2021) and is recognised as a highly strategic site within the Midlands Engine.

A planning application has been submitted which encompasses a larger area than the allocation in the Local Plan to allow the provision of a link road through the site and strategic landscaping. Indicative schedule plans indicate seven units equating to a total floor area of up to 213,500m² with associated office and service uses (Class E), and storage (Class B8). It is proposed that this will allow flexibility for detailed proposals to come forward in a bespoke manner depending on occupier requirements. The overall scale of net developable area proposed remains at 42 hectares.

Once operational the site will provide the opportunity for complementary uses to those on the northern site, providing advanced manufacturing and R&D jobs and linking with the wider West Midlands engineering network. The development of this site is important to broadening the employment base for the Borough.

Elsewhere it is expected that the majority of employment generating uses will be concentrated in the existing industrial estates and proposed employment allocations.

3.5.2 Transport Infrastructure

The Borough is well located, at the heart of England, with major parts of both the strategic road network (SRN) and main roads network (MRN), including the M6, M42, A5 and A446. HS2, the planned high-speed railway that will connect the north and south of England, passes through North Warwickshire and includes the Delta Junction, just to the south of Water Orton/west of Coleshill. This will have a significant impact on the transport infrastructure within the Borough. The main road transport routes within the Borough and their development status are identified (as of January 2020) as:

- **A446** – impact of growth and HS2 requires the completion of dualling
- **A4097** (Kingsbury Road) – impact of growth and HS2
- **Junction 9 M42** – capacity, impact of growth and HS2 Phase 1
- **Junction 10 M42** – capacity, impact of growth and HS2 Eastern Leg
- **Junction 4 M6** - capacity, impact of growth and HS2 Phase 1
- **A5** – complete overhaul to improve capacity and to unlock future growth

Studies are being undertaken to assess impacts of growth both within and close to the Borough to determine long-term infrastructure needs as well as to identify key constraints for future growth. These studies will include road, rail and sustainable travel solutions.

The Borough currently has four train stations: Atherstone, Coleshill, Polesworth and Water Orton. Warwickshire County Council has prepared a Rail Strategy which seeks to improve passenger rail services and facilities at all the stations. It includes a new station for Kingsbury with a fully operational Polesworth Station (be this on the existing site or an alternative location).

There are two sites in North Warwickshire which provide for rail freight: BIFT (Maritime Transport Birmingham Intermodal Freight Terminal) at Birch Coppice and ABP (Associated British Ports) Hams Hall Rail Freight Terminal at the Hams Hall Distribution Park.

3.5.3 Digital infrastructure

The Warwickshire local authorities in partnership with BT OpenReach have been rolling out superfast broadband across the county for some years. The percentage of homes and businesses with broadband connection now stands at 98% across Warwickshire with around 92% in North Warwickshire. Many businesses in the Borough do not, however, have access to ultra-broadband connections. This is due, principally, to path dependency on old digital infrastructure based on copper cabling, rather than modern optical fibre connections to homes and businesses (full fibre).

3.5.4 The Visitor Economy

The Borough is strengthening its visitor offer, building on the Belfry Hotel, Spa and Golf Course and ensuring it benefits from the other cultural and natural attractions offered in the wider Coventry and Warwickshire sub-region. Emerge Surf²² Birmingham, located on a 15 acre (6.1 hectares) site in Coleshill is expected to attract 250,000 visitors per year, whilst there are also plans for a 51.5 metre Eternal Wal²³ to become a major tourist attraction. Both developments will enhance the visitor product offer and it will be important for the Borough and industry to look at ways on encouraging visitors to stay longer and spend more within the locality.

3.5.5 Commercial Floorspace

The stock of the commercial accommodation in the Borough reflects its economic structure – it is heavily skewed towards industrial floorspace, which accounts for 91% of the total stock. By contrast, its office stock (3%) is very modest by national standards (15%) and compared with Stratford-upon-Avon (12%) and Warwick (20%). Its retail floorspace, too, is both modest (2%) and of low value (£94.00 per sq.m) compared with England (18% and £161.00 [per sq.m),

²² <https://emergesurf.com>

²³ <https://www.eternalwall.org.uk>

perhaps indicating a lack of vibrancy in the Borough's town centres and the ease of access to other retail centres outside the Borough.

Changes in operations of the logistics sector have resulted in different design of logistics space, with office space increasingly being located alongside warehouse and manufacturing space²⁴. A sound understanding of this and strong engagement with businesses in this sector is likely to be key to ameliorating risks and identifying opportunities associated with automation.

Overall, the rateable value of commercial property in the Borough is low (£51.00 per sq.m), compared with England (£88.00 per sq.m), the West Midlands (£59.00 per sq.m) and neighbouring authorities (VOA 2022). This is almost certainly due to the structure of the local economy, disproportionately reliant on large industrial and logistics centres. The quantum of industrial commercial floorspace increased significantly (+23%) between 2015 and 2022, but there has been no increase in office, retail or other commercial floorspace, suggesting that it is the industrial/logistics sector that has continued to drive the economy.

²⁴ Levelling Up – the Logic of Logistics; Savills Research

4. Vision and Priority Themes

4.1 Our Vision

Working together with our business communities and stakeholders, North Warwickshire Borough Council is committed to providing the right tools and support to create an inclusive, diverse and vibrant economy, in which:

- Local residents have the skills to access high-quality, well-paying jobs;
- Businesses, residents and public sector partners have embedded practices that deliver net zero targets;
- Our town and village centres are focal points for community activity and are attractive to new, high spending visitors; and
- Public, private and voluntary sector partners work in partnership to champion the Borough and to secure the best deals for its residents and businesses.

The Economic Development Strategy aims to build on local economy for the benefit of all. Our vision is set out in the box below.

By 2030, the extended MIRA Technology Park, fully integrated within its rural setting, will be globally recognised as a leading automotive technologies research and development location, with the enlarged Technology Institute developing specialist skills in key areas of emerging automotive technology.

We will be recognised as a great location for innovators and be open and welcoming to external investment. Our logistics and distribution sector will be consolidated to provide high value employment and be at the leading edge of research and innovation, supported by the North Warwickshire Centre of Excellence for Logistics.

Our towns and service centres will be the focal points for our communities, becoming vibrant places for social and commercial interaction, contributing to our net zero targets, and providing day and night-time attractions that encourage a growing number of visitors to stay longer and spend more locally.

There will be a new spirit of collaboration between government, our public sector partners and local businesses, which will ensure that the impact and influence of sustainable economic growth are fully realised, whilst protecting our distinctive rural environment.

4.2 Priority Themes

The Economic Strategy outlines our vision as to where we want the Borough to be by 2030 and beyond, underpinned by four Priority Themes:

- Supporting business growth and innovation
- Securing a pipeline of talent
- Enabling investment in infrastructure to support a low-carbon, modern and forward-looking economy
- Supporting vibrant town and service centres through quality place-making.

5. Action Plan

The Action Plan sets out a high-level programme for the Borough Council's economic development activities. It is a pragmatic plan, based on actions in which the Council will:

- Have greatest influence using the limited resources available
- Have greatest effect on meeting the economic development priorities of the area
- Have greatest opportunity to find funding or partners to work on its delivery.

Much of its delivery will be dependent on resources allocated through the Shared Prosperity Fund, which includes a priority focus on:

- Community and Place
- Local Business Support
- People and Skills.

Timeframe

Short: within 12 months

Medium: up to 2 years

Long: 3+ years

Priority Theme 1: Supporting Business Growth & Innovation

Rationale & Approach

Broadening the Borough's business base will make our economy more resilient and support innovation. It will ensure that the Borough is not over-reliant on one industry, so that it risks future prosperity. Our land allocations and interventions will broaden the Borough's employment base. Great opportunities exist for businesses to take advantage of its location between UK Central to the west and Horiba MIRA to the north-east. We will work with partners to secure the successful delivery of the Southern Manufacturing Site at Horiba MIRA. The site provides an opportunity to complement the northern site of the MIRA Technology site.

We will ensure that the logistics sector works to our benefit, working with partners to ensure that the workforce adapts to the new skills demanded by automation within the sector.

Several organisations already provide business support, including the Chamber, Growth Hub, WCC and the FSB. We will work with partners, particularly the Combined Authority, WCC and Business Growth Hub to make North Warwickshire a supportive place to establish, grow and scale high-quality businesses, using innovation to drive productivity improvements and make our businesses more competitive.

We will add value to these wherever possible, working with Warwickshire County Council and other partners to design, develop and commission joint business support programmes, where funding is available to do so with the aim of establishing and growing high-quality businesses, helping them to respond to climate change and supporting the growth of the local low carbon sector.

We will create a new framework and plan to support the growth of the Visitor Economy, sitting at the heart of wider placemaking, focusing mainly on our three market towns. Emerge Surf and the Eternal Wall of Prayer also are likely to have a significant impact on the number of day visitors.

Key Performance Indicators by 2030:

KPI 1A: Increase business start-up rate from 10.7 per 100 businesses to the England average (12.0)^{25,26}

KPI 1B: Maintain three year business survival rate at least at its current level (61.7%)²⁷

²⁵ Source Business Demography (2021); Office for National Statistics

²⁶ Note this is the same as KP3A

²⁷ Source ibid

KPI 1C: Increase real terms GVA by at least the same rate as the England economy ²⁸ KPI 1D: Complete development of the southern extension of MIRA Technology Park ²⁹ KPI 1E: Value of the visitor economy to increase at a faster rate than the England average ³⁰			
Actions	Delivery Partners	Resource	Timeframe
1.1 Design, develop and commission a small number of joint business support programmes, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Starting a business ▪ Addressing barriers to growth ▪ Achieving net zero ▪ Innovation support ▪ Supporting international trade 	NWBC in partnership with WCC and other delivery agencies	UKSPF Internal staff resource (EDO)	Short-Medium term
1.2 Signpost support and advice services available to businesses to simplify access to grants, funding, business advice, sites and premises etc	NWBC	Internal (EDO)	On-going
1.3 Introduce a formal Account Management approach to consult with the Top major employers in the Borough	NWBC – CEO / Leader	Internal (EDO)	On-going
1.4 Hold an annual North Warwickshire Business Forum to enable the Council to engage with the business community on economic development matters	NWBC	Internal (EDO)	On-going
1.5 Development of sector plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Automotive ▪ Logistics 	NWBC in partnership with WCC	tbc	Medium term
1.6 Work with partners and stakeholders to ensure the successful delivery of the southern extension of Horiba MIRA Technology Park	NWBC in partnership with landowner, WCC and WMCA	Partnership funding	Long term
1.7 Refresh the Destination Management Plan to provide a new framework for the Visitor Economy	NWBC in partnership with	tbc	Short term

²⁸ Source: Regional Gross Value Added by Industry (2020); Office for National Statistics

²⁹ Note: This is the same KPI as KP3C

³⁰ The annual average of the North Warwickshire Visitor economy between 2017 and 2019 was £113 million; Source: Visit England;

	neighbouring authorities		
1.8 In partnership with Invest in Warwickshire County Council, promote investment opportunities specifically those that support target sectors (i.e. automotive sector), including developing a brand proposition	NWBC	Internal (EDO)	On-going
1.9 Support applications to the Warwickshire Recovery & Investment Fund (Business & Investment Growth; Local Communities & Enterprise	NWBC, WCC, C&W Chamber; FSB	Internal (EDO)	Short- medium term

Priority Theme 2: Talent, Employment & Skills

Rationale & Approach

For the Borough's economy to flourish the workforce needs the skills and attributes to take advantage of future opportunities. There are more jobs than people within the borough, but there are still many residents who do not reach their full potential and/or require upskilling to respond to the new opportunities associated with automation.

We will take a balanced approach to build North Warwickshire's talent pipeline by 'growing our own' by reskilling and upskilling our people and by attracting and retaining new talent to the borough.

We will work with partners to ensure that schools and/or training providers are providing the right education and training for our businesses. There is still a gap between the future aspirations of companies, which require more highly skilled workforce and the NVQ level attainment of residents within the Borough. The number of residents achieving NVQ 3 and above has increased over recent years, but further work is required to develop higher level skills amongst local residents. This includes young people and those already in the workforce who need new skills to adapt to changing demands: Encouraging lifelong learning will be a key feature of our approach.

We will also support our most vulnerable residents and those on the fringes of the labour market through a package of employability and life skills interventions, including financial inclusion and health & well-being initiatives.

Social and environmental factors, including housing affordability, access to public transport, and opportunities to pursue active lifestyles, impact on creating an inclusive economy. We will commit to becoming a living wage local authority and encourage other local businesses to do the same, in order to support this.

Key Performance Indicators by 2030:

KPI 2A: Increase the proportion of local working age residents with Level 4+ qualifications to the England average³¹

KPI 2B: Maintain the proportion of local working age residents with qualifications below Level 2 to below the England average³²

³¹ Source: Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics via NOMISWEB

³² Source: ibid

KPI 2C: Maintain the claimant count unemployment rate below the England average ³³ KPI 2D: Increase GVA per hour worked above the rate of increase in England ³⁴ KPI 2E: Increase average gross earnings for full-time workers above the rate of increase in England ³⁵			
Actions	Delivery Partners	Resource	Timeframe
2.1 Develop 'wrap around' programmes to develop skills and resilience amongst the Borough's most vulnerable residents, including basis skills, ESOL and the Multiply programme.	NWBC, DWP, NWSL College, WCC	UKSPF, Multiply	Medium
2.2 Facilitate stronger links between education providers and local businesses to improve career and learning pathways, particularly focusing on technical/vocational skills within the context of the LSIP	NWBC, WCC, NWSL College, FSB, C&W Chamber and key local employers	Internal (EDO)	On going
2.3 Develop digital skills programmes to support digital adoption amongst SMEs and to improve digital skills of local residents	NWBC, WCC, NWSL College., C&W Chamber, FSB	UKSPF	Medium
2.4 Support actions identified in the Local Skills Improvement Plan that are relevant to the Borough	NWBC, C&W Chamber, WCC	tbc	On going
2.5 Develop and implement a mentoring programme for young people	NWBC, Aston Villa FC	UKSPF	Medium
2.6 Work with the MIRA Technology Park Skills Manager to support businesses to develop corporate skills plans that encourage apprenticeships and local recruitment	NWBC, MIRA Tech Park, WCC	Internal (EDO)	On going
2.7 Develop an Employment & Skills Plan for the Southern Manufacturing Sector site to secure S106 funds	NWBC MIRA Tech Park	Internal (EDO)	Medium

³³ Source: Claimant Count, Office for National Statistics via NOMISWEB

³⁴ Source: Labour Productivity Indices by Local Authority District; Office for National Statistics

³⁵ Source: Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings; Office for National Statistics via NOMISWEB

Priority Theme 3: Development & Connectivity

Rationale and Approach

We will facilitate and secure infrastructure and employment sites that will support a low-carbon, modern and forward-looking economy. The rural economy is very important to the Borough. It provides employment and maintains vibrancy in our rural communities. Encouraging more employment in the rural areas must be balanced with retaining the Borough's landscape and rurality. Working with landowners and farmers, we will explore opportunities for small scale rural enterprise workspace within this context.

The cost of land for many small to medium sized businesses is too expensive. On site charges also add to the cost of sites making them uneconomical for many businesses. Hams Hall and Birch Coppice are aimed at large logistics end users and are some of the most expensive sites within England due to their great location. In terms of workspace there may be opportunities to develop larger sites as well as in regeneration schemes. Both of these aspects will be explored further with partners, identifying preferred option(s) and funding streams.

Working with Warwickshire County Council, we will continue to support a sustainable transport infrastructure, including encouraging the use of more sustainable forms of transport, such as walking, cycling, bus and rail services. This will include providing local bus routes to access employment and services to our small towns and villages.

We will continue to support the implementation of the A5 strategy to ensure that it is fit for purpose in terms of capacity and safety, specifically at the MIRA Technology Park and its proposed extension.

Digital infrastructure is now essential to a successful economy and it helps to address the climate change agenda. The Council is working with the West Midlands Combined Authority through the WM5G to stimulate provision of 5G / full fibre in the Borough. The Borough's focus needs to initially be towards the main urban areas and industrial estates. In addition, as part of the emerging Local Plan, developers are required to provide ducts and sub ducts to new homes and business sites ready for fibre to be pulled through. As well as making sure that residents and businesses are well connected the Borough Council will actively support approaches that maximise the opportunities for smaller and innovative businesses to take part in the local economy utilising digital technologies.

Key Performance Indicators

KPI 3A: Increase business start-up rate from 10.7 per 100 businesses to the England average (currently 12.0) by 2030³⁶³⁷

KPI 3B: Develop and bring forward employment sites in accordance with the findings of the emerging Employment Land Study

KPI 3C: Complete development of the southern extension of MIRA Technology Park³⁸

Actions	Delivery Partners	Resource	Timeframe
3.1 Develop a viable financial model to deliver affordable and flexible workspace in town and village centres to support start-ups and micro businesses	NWBC, WCC, Commercial Agents	Internal (EDO)	Short-medium
3.2 Support the development of the Southern Manufacturing Park at Horiba MIRA	NWBC, WCC, WMCA, MIRA Tech Park	Internal (EDO)	Long term
3.3 Advocate for public transport connectivity improvements between the Borough's settlements and key employment sites ³⁹	NWBC, WCC, local bus companies	Internal (EDO)	On-going
3.4 Ensure all parts of the Borough have the optimum level of digital connectivity, including 5G/fibre ⁴⁰	NWBC, WCC, WM5G	Internal (EDO)	Medium
3.5 Make best use of Borough Council owned industrial/employment sites to encourage economic diversification	NWBC	(Internal (EDO)	On going
3.6 Lead applications to the Warwickshire County Council Recovery & Investment Fund (property & infrastructure)	NWBC, WCC, C&W Chamber	Internal (EDO)	Short-medium

³⁶ Source Business Demography (2021); Office for National Statistics

³⁷ Note: This is the same as KP1A

³⁸ Note: This is the same KPI as KP1D

³⁹ Note: This as the same as Action 4.5

⁴⁰ Note: This is the same as Action 4.6

Priority 4: Market Towns & Villages

Rationale & Approach

The vitality and vibrancy of the town centres and local service centres are important for the economic prosperity of the Borough. We will refresh the Atherstone masterplan and submit a revised Levelling Up Round 3 Bid to create a new 'Health and Wellbeing Activity Hub' on the current leisure centre site. The refreshed masterplan will prioritise future regeneration potential projects, including high-quality public realm improvements within Market Square.

We will also support local arts and cultural activities, including 'Live and Local' cultural events, to foster a sense of local pride and enhance our visitor offer.

Similar master planning that has started in Atherstone will be undertaken in Coleshill and Polesworth to maintain the towns' vibrancy and vitality as well as exploring ways to maintain services and facilities in the wider countryside.

Town Partnerships, supported by Town Centre Managers, will be established in each of the three market towns, where funding enables this. These Partnerships will work with local retailers and businesses to grow the local economy and footfall and reduce vacancy rates. These will be supported through a Town Centre Manager, who will work across the three towns.

Key Performance Indicators:

KPI 4A: Effective town centre partnerships established and operational in Atherstone, Coleshill and Polesworth, with town centre masterplans developed

KPI 4B: Maintain town centre vacancy rates below the national average (baseline to be determined)

KPI 4C: Increase footfall in town centres at the same rate as the increase in average town centre footfall for town centres in Warwickshire (baseline to be determined) by 2030

Actions	Delivery Partners	Resource	Timeframe
4.1 Develop town centre partnerships in Atherstone, Coleshill and Polesworth and provide support to develop town centre action plans	NWBC; Town Centre Partnerships	Internal (EDO)	Medium
4.2 Develop and implement town centre masterplans for Atherstone, Coleshill and Polesworth	NWBC, Town Centre Partnerships	Internal (EDO)	Medium
4.3 Encourage re-use of rural buildings in and around the Borough's villages to support diversification	NWBC, WCC, Commercial Agents/landowners	Internal (EDO)	On-going
4.4 Support village shops to become community assets	NWBC, WCC	External funding TBA	On-going
4.5 Advocate for public transport connectivity improvements between the Borough's settlements and key employment sites ⁴¹	NWBC, WCC	Internal (EDO)	On-going
4.6 Ensure all parts of the Borough have the optimum level of digital connectivity, including 5G/fibre ⁴²	NWBC, WCC, WC5G	Internal (EDO)	On-going

⁴¹ Note: this is the same as Action 3.3

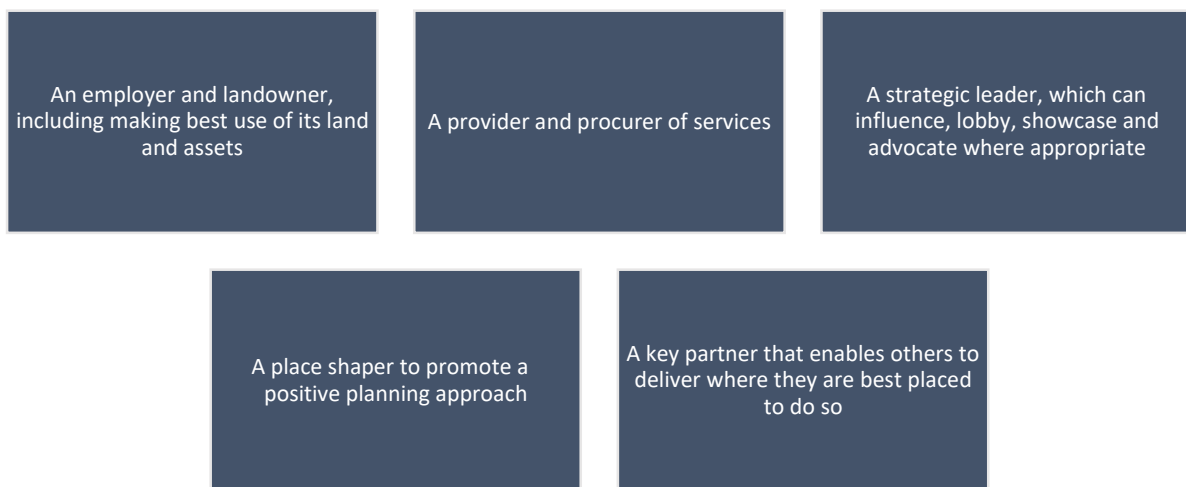
⁴² Note: this is the same as Action 3.4

6. Governance, Delivery & Monitoring

6.1 Role of North Warwickshire Borough Council

This is a strategy for the Borough. Its future success depends on the public, private and voluntary sectors working together towards common goals that support the strategy's vision. The action plan focuses on where North Warwickshire Borough Council can have the greatest impacts.

We have a key role in building partnerships, using our own assets and procurement to support local economic growth, securing external funding, setting strategic direction, and acting as the coordinator and convenor to enable partners to deliver, where they are best placed to do so. North Warwickshire Borough Council has a key role as:



6.2 How we will deliver the strategy

We will coordinate our economic development resources effectively so there are clear points of contact for economic development matters and that the actions within the strategy are delivered and communicated internally and externally to business, public and private sector partners.

North Warwickshire is part of a wider economic geography. What happens in the Borough has impacts beyond our administrative boundaries; and what happens beyond our administrative boundaries impacts on its residents and businesses. We have an important role in promoting North Warwickshire's interests at sub-regional, regional and national levels, including being actively involved in existing networks, forums and partnerships.

We will continue to work closely with neighbouring authorities, Warwickshire County Council and the West Midlands Combined Authority, in particular, to deliver the best outcomes for the Borough and to secure external funding to strengthen the local economy.

Within the Borough, it is our businesses that will drive growth, create the jobs that we need and develop our town centres into vibrant locations for residents and businesses. We will meet regularly with our strategic local businesses to understand and, where possible, respond

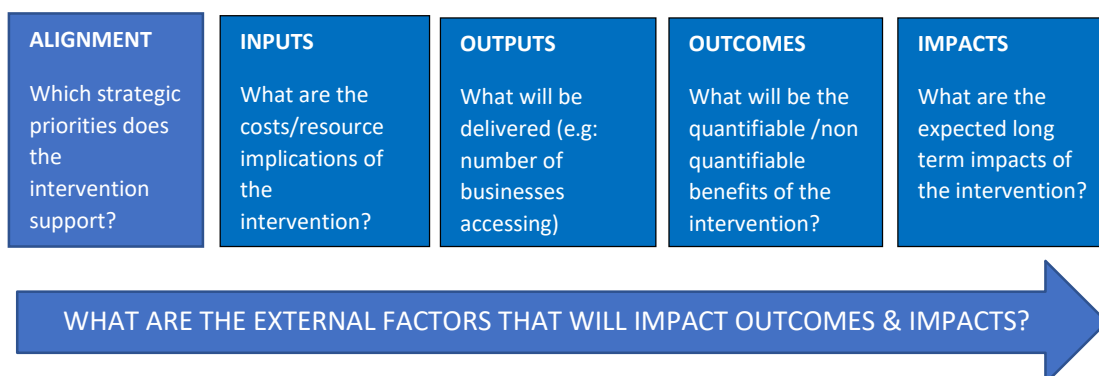
to their needs, strengthening their commitment to the Borough and ensuring that our local residents benefit most from the opportunities that are created in the future.

We will maintain strong relationships with our business representative organisations, including the Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses to ensure that the needs of our SMEs are fully understood and to identify ways in which they can best be supported. We will hold an annual business forum event, which brings key public, private and voluntary sector partners together to review progress against the action plan, to identify new actions that respond to changing circumstances, and to strengthen partnerships and networks around a shared vision for the Borough.

We will establish Town Centre Partnerships to ensure that businesses and residents are fully engaged in the development of the town centre masterplans and that the visions for the towns reflect the aspirations of local businesses and residents.

6.3 How we will monitor progress

We will develop a monitoring and evaluation framework, which will inform progress of each intervention and its contribution to the Key Performance Indicators. These will be informed by a Theory of Change methodology, covering:



Progress against each intervention will be monitored by clear SMART targets and reported back to the corporate leadership group on a quarterly basis. Where projects are not delivering as expected, they will be redesigned with the aim of delivering the expected outcomes.

North Warwickshire Borough Council has less control over the KPIs, as there are a wide range of factors that will influence the economic performance of the Borough. Nevertheless, an Economic Dashboard will be produced on an annual basis, setting out the performance of the Borough against the identified KPIs, with a supporting narrative which sets out external factors that have impacted on progress either beneficially or adversely. This will enable interventions to be amended, deleted, or added to the Action Plan, to respond to changing circumstances, as required, without the strategic direction of the economic strategy.

6.4 Moving Forward

This Strategy sets the framework for North Warwickshire Borough Council and focuses on our commitments to deliver a better result both for the local economy, our communities and the environment.

The Council has engaged with partners from the public, private and community / voluntary sector in developing the Strategy and Action Plan. These conversations will continue and be built upon as the Action Plan is developed and delivered over the coming months and years.

Developing the Strategy has and will continue to be an iterative process. It is based on the most recent evidence and data available and will be updated and refreshed as necessary as new evidence emerges to ensure it remains relevant. The Action Plan is flexible and will be updated and adapted to exploit funding and investment opportunities for North Warwickshire.

Appendix 1: Consultees

Organisation	Name	Job Title
North Warwickshire Borough Council	Steve Maxey	Chief Executive
	Dorothy Barratt	Forward Planning & Economic Development Manager
Hinckley & Bosworth Council	Bill Cullen	Chief Executive
FSB	Lee Osborne	Development Manager for Coventry, Warwickshire and Solihull
WMCA	Gareth Bradford	Director of Housing & Regeneration
Chamber	Louise Bennett	CEO
Warwickshire County Council	David Ayton-Hill	Assistant Director for Communities
	Alex Holmes	Tourism Officer
CWLEP	Paula Deas	Operations Director
IM Property	Kevin Ashfield	UK Development Director
Horiba MIRA	Andy MacDonald	Managing Director, Swanvale Developments Limited
Coventry and Warwickshire Growth Hub	Craig Humphrey	Managing Director

North Warwickshire Economic Strategy and Action Plan

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Purpose of this Paper

This paper supports the North Warwickshire Economic Strategy and Action Plan. It sets out the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will be used to assess the progress under each theme within it. It:

- a) Describes each KPI;
- b) Provides details of the data sources; and
- c) Sets the baseline position for North Warwickshire and, where appropriate, the benchmark area.

Priority Theme 1: Supporting Business Growth & Innovation

KPI 1A: Increase business start-up rate from 10.7 per 100 businesses to the England average

- *Data Source:* Tables 1.1d and 3.1d; Business Demography (2021); Office for National Statistics.
- *Baseline:* North Warwickshire = 10.7 Business Births per 100 Active businesses; England = 12.5 Business Births per 100 Active Businesses.

KPI 1B: Maintain three year business survival rate at least at its current level (61.7%)

- *Data Source:* Table 5.1c; Business Demography (2021); Office for National Statistics.
- *Baseline:* North Warwickshire = 61.7%; England = 57.5%.

KPI 1C: Increase real terms GVA by at least the same rate as the England economy

- *Data Source:* Regional Gross Value Added (Balanced) by Industry: Local Authority by ITL1 Region: TLG West Midlands, Chained Volume Measures in 2019 Money Value (2022); Office for National Statistics; and Table 1b, Regional Gross Value Added Balanced by Industry and ITL Regions, 2019 Money Prices (2022)
- *Baseline:* North Warwickshire = £2.693 billion; England = £1,567.374 billion

KPI 1D: Complete development of the southern extension of MIRA Technology Park

- *Data Source:* North Warwickshire Borough Council (Planning)
- *Baseline:* 90 acres of undeveloped employment land

KPI 1E: Value of the visitor economy to increase at a faster rate than the England average

- *Data Source:* Economic Impact of Tourism by Local Authority; Visit England
- *Baseline:* North Warwickshire = £113 million; England = £68,821 million (annual average 2017-2019)

Priority Theme 2: Talent, Employment & Skills

KPI 2A: Increase the proportion of local working age residents with Level 4+ qualifications to the England average

- *Data Source:* Annual Population Survey; Business Demography (2021); Office for National Statistics, via NOMISWEB
- *Baseline:* North Warwickshire = 31.7%; England = 43.2% (April 2021)

KPI 2B: Maintain the proportion of local working age residents with qualifications below Level 2 below the England average

- *Data Source:* Annual Population Survey; Business Demography (2021); Office for National Statistics, via NOMISWEB
- *Baseline:* North Warwickshire = 14.5%; England = 16.0% (April 2021)

KPI 2C: Maintain the claimant count unemployment rate (16-64 year olds) below the England average

- *Data Source:* Claimant County by Sex and Age; Office for National Statistics via NOMISWEB.
- *Baseline:* North Warwickshire = 2.6%; England = 3.8% (December 2022)

KPI 2D: Increase GVA per hour worked above the rate of increase in England

- *Data Source:* Table A3: Current Price (smoothed) GVA (B) Per Hour Worked Local Authority District 2004-2020 & Table A3: Current Price (smoothed) GVA (B) per hour worked (£); ITL2 and ITL3 subregions, 2004 - 2020
- *Baseline:* North Warwickshire = £37.82; England = £38.29 (2020)

KPI 2E: Increase median gross annual earnings for full-time workers above the rate of increase in England

- *Data Source:* Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings (Workplace Analysis); Office for National Statistics, via NOMISWEB
- *Baseline:* North Warwickshire = £31,431; England = £33,197 (2022)

Priority Theme 3: Development & Connectivity

KPI 3A: Increase business start-up rate from 10.7 per 100 businesses to the England average

- *Data Source:* Tables 1.1d and 3.1d; Business Demography (2021); Office for National Statistics.
- *Baseline:* North Warwickshire = 10.7 Business Births per 100 Active businesses; England = 12.5 Business Births per 100 Active Businesses.

KPI 3B: Develop and bring forward employment sites in accordance with the findings of the emerging Employment Land Study

- *Data Source:* North Warwickshire Employment Land Study and North Warwickshire Borough Council (Planning) data
- *Baseline:* To be agreed

KPI 3C: Complete development of the southern extension of MIRA Technology Park

- *Data Source:* North Warwickshire Borough Council (Planning)
- *Baseline:* 90 acres of undeveloped employment land

Priority Theme 4: Market Towns & Villages

KPI 4A: Effective town centre partnerships established and operational in Atherstone, Coleshill and Polesworth, with town centre masterplans developed

- *Data Source:* North Warwickshire Borough Council Monitoring Data
- *Baseline:* No Town Centre Partnerships of Masterplans

KPI 4B: Maintain town centre vacancy rates below the national average (baseline to be determined)

- *Data Source:* North Warwickshire: North Warwickshire Borough Council monitoring data; Britain: British Retail Consortium
- *Baseline:* North Warwickshire: To be Determined; Britain: 18.9% (Q2 2022)

KPI 4C: Increase footfall in town centres at the same rate as the increase in average town centre footfall for town centres in Warwickshire by 2030

- *Data Source:* TownandPlace.AI Daily Footfall data
- *Baseline:* North Warwickshire: Atherstone (6,202), Coleshill (4,313); Warwickshire: Nuneaton (35,112), Bedworth (12,655); Alcester (4,116), Kenilworth (10,440), Warwick (12,340); Stratford upon Avon (23,408), Rugby (19,058)