

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAVERING

Shaping Growth and Delivering Opportunity

Havering's Inclusive Growth Strategy

2020 – 2045

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Foreword from the Leader of the Council

Representing the very best of being both part of a global city and retaining an Essex spirit of independence and entrepreneurialism, Havering is a fantastic place to live, work or set up a business. Easy access to the city and the wider South East via the M25, relatively affordable housing, and a wealth of green and open space has made Havering an attractive haven for businesses and residents.

Thanks to our ambitious regeneration programme, as well as extensive support for local businesses and start-ups, we have already seen significant pay-offs in terms of growth. Regeneration is intricately linked to economic development, and we want to capitalise on that link by supporting businesses to locate and expand within the borough, and make sure our residents are the first to benefit from such growth with the wide range of jobs this will create.

As one of the most diverse boroughs in London in terms of our range of business bases – from cultural and creative industries to logistics, constructions and engineering – there has never been a better opportunity to demonstrate Havering as *the* place for your business needs.

We are proud of our business community, and have worked closely with them when putting this strategy together, in order to address the very real challenges facing businesses today.

This Inclusive Growth Strategy provides an analysis of Havering's economy, identifies the types of employment growth and locations for growth over the coming years, and sets out the Council's approach to inward investment and business support. The strategy also incorporates our Employment and Skills Plan, and links to the regeneration programme, ensuring the large-scale developments generate social value, benefiting those that need it most.

We will also engage Central Government and the Mayor of London in order to facilitate the investment in infrastructure that is so critical to growth in Havering. It is going to take willingness from all the public agencies as well as the private sector, to achieve the growth and development that we all want to see for the benefit of residents and businesses over the coming years.

The Strategy identifies the tactical and operational interventions that the Council will take to facilitate growth, and the part that other agencies must play if we are to fulfil our bold ambitions. Over the coming years, Havering will lead the way in pursuing a prosperous future for businesses and residents, using innovative regeneration and development programmes to facilitate meaningful growth and an even brighter future for Havering.

At this time we face the uncertainties and vulnerability of the COVID19 pandemic. Recovery from the economic effects of the pandemic are already being given the highest priority alongside the need both to mitigate its impacts and build an even more resilient future for Havering.

Councillor Damian White
Leader of the Council

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Contents

Foreword from the Leader of the Council	3
Contents.....	5
Executive Summary	7
1. Shaping growth and delivering opportunity	11
1.1 Vision and ambition.....	11
1.2 Opportunity for growth	12
1.3 A Note on Baseline Data.....	13
2. Economic and policy context.....	14
2.1 Immediate and long-term economic trends	14
2.2 Industrial Strategy	15
2.3 The London policy context	15
2.4 Havering Emerging Local Plan 2016-2031	16
2.5 Havering Employment and Skills Plan.....	17
2.6 Digital Skills.....	17
3. Evidence and Issues for the Strategy.....	19
3.1 The local economy and business base.....	19
3.2 Business and agency views.....	23
3.3 Key issues arising from the evidence	23
4. Priorities for Action	27
5. Priority 1 - Foundations for growth.....	30
5.1 Transport Infrastructure.....	30
5.2 Digital Infrastructure	30
5.3 Workspace.....	31
6. Priority 2 - Enterprise and Innovation.....	32
6.1 Business starts.....	32
6.2 Business support and growth.....	32
6.3 Innovation and productivity	32
6.4 Business networks and engagement	32
6.5 Sector Development	33
7. Priority 3 Increasing inward investment.....	37
7.1 Role of Inward Investment for Havering - the why?	37
7.2 Place brand, awareness and inward investment - the where?	37
7.3 Targets: markets, sectors, types - the who	38

7.4	London opportunities.....	38
7.5	Process - the how	38
7.6	Business Retention & Expansion (Investor Development).....	39
7.7	Leveraging Partners	39
8.	Priority 4 – Regeneration.....	40
8.1	Romford Town Centre.....	40
8.2	District Town Centres.....	41
8.3	Strategic industrial Locations.....	42
9.	Priority 5 – Employment and Skills.....	44
9.1	Employer Engagement.....	45
9.2	Raising Ambition	46
9.3	Navigating Skills Routes	47
9.4	Apprenticeships and Workforce Development	47
9.5	Equal Access	48
10.	Delivering the strategy	49
10.1	Partnership and co-ordination	49
10.2	Demonstrating achievements	49
10.3	Delivering Havering Council Corporate Themes	50

Executive Summary

Havering features high quality of life, award-winning parks and green space, and these attributes are attracting growing numbers of people and businesses to locate in the Borough. The opportunities for continuing growth in Havering are substantial. Over 13,700 new homes will be built in the Borough over the next decade. The Elizabeth Line will increase the already good rail links into Central London and to Heathrow. Town Centre regeneration will transform Romford back into a destination of choice, building on the growing creative and office-based business sectors. The potential for growth in housing and employment in Romford has led to its designation as an Opportunity Area in the London Plan. We will continue to review the strategy as the impacts and implications of the Covid Pandemic become more apparent and consideration will be given to how Havering and its business community responds to the new working environment.

The Borough offers the advantages of a London location, alongside excellent road connections to the South East and the rest of the country. Rainham and Beam Park is part of the London Riverside Opportunity Area which includes extensive land in both Havering and adjoining Barking and Dagenham. The London Riverside Opportunity Area Planning Framework (2015) identifies that the wider area has the capacity to provide 26,500 new homes and 16,000 new jobs across the two boroughs. In Havering, the focus will be on the intensification of industrial land in the Rainham Employment Area and the creation of new residential communities served by a new railway station at Beam Park.

A comprehensive body of evidence has been commissioned to inform the Council's approach, including an economic evidence base, a survey of 400 businesses, interviews with a wide range of local businesses and organisations, and stakeholder workshop discussions. The findings from the analysis of the evidence are that Havering has significant potential for additional investment and growth, but currently is projected to become a residential base for increasing numbers of commuters, with housing growth outstripping business growth.

The business base is diverse. Industrial sectors such as logistics, engineering, manufacturing and construction are important, as is retail, although this is vulnerable to the impact of online and other changes in shopping dynamics, and is likely to consolidate over the coming years. There are also a number of new sectors, growing rapidly - professional, scientific and technical, IT and creative. Health, education, and social care are the biggest employers. Productivity is relatively low, and despite good GCSE performance in the Borough's schools, skills levels post-16 are also low, and we will need to work to co-ordinate provision under the new Further Education (FE) reforms.

Romford will be the subject of intensive programmes of regeneration and housing development, improvements to the Market, the Ring Road, and the shopping centres. Romford's Business Improvement District will bring benefits to the local trading environment. This strategy will complement and aim to align with the Romford Masterplan which sets out a vision for Romford to maintain its strategic role within Havering, North East London and Essex for the next 20 years.

The Rainham Strategic Industrial Area has a diverse industrial base and, as part of the London Riverside Opportunity area, is part of one of the few remaining areas of this type in London. It serves the Borough well in providing a wide range of jobs for all skills levels. It has new office space at SEGRO Park, and the Centre for Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence (CEME) at its core. Growth sectors such as construction and e-commerce are becoming increasingly significant. Its growth needs to be driven by high quality spaces, and connectivity through ultra-fast broadband, and multi-modal physical access. It provides low, medium and high skilled jobs and the opportunity to work close to relatively low cost housing and high quality green space. It benefits from established and collaborative partnerships with businesses through the successful Business Improvement District, and key business and agency partners.

The first of the strategy's priorities for action is providing the foundations for continued growth. Businesses need adequate transport and digital infrastructure and access to skilled labour to function efficiently and grow. Improvements in this infrastructure are needed, particularly in certain sectors and in the Rainham employment area. Skills infrastructure in the form of training programmes, facilities and relationships between employers and training providers is vital for boosting productivity and growing employment. This strategy will complement the work of the Infrastructure Team within the Planning Service and recognise that infrastructure needed to support communities will also play a central role alongside infrastructure to support businesses.

The second priority for action is support for enterprise and innovation. Havering is a great place to start a business, and we will continue to encourage business startups through the Invest in Havering inward investment service. We will target our new business growth programme to support those businesses that want to develop and grow. We will also boost productivity through a new innovation support programme and working with key partners to develop sector-based innovation hubs. We will encourage and support the local construction sector through public sector supply chain initiatives to ensure local businesses can access opportunities to tender for contracts and benefit from development.

Our third priority is the delivery inward investment to the Borough. We recognise that Havering as a brand is not widely recognised and that winning investment for Havering will require us to partner with other stakeholders – with other London boroughs and London more broadly, and with Essex to the East. Our inward investment work will make sure that Havering benefits from new investment from overseas companies, UK based companies outside of the Borough and also from local occupiers that choose to expand within the Borough where decision are made elsewhere – so-called 'investor development'. We need to seize opportunities as they arise by carefully marshalling our partners and the unique advantages of our programmes and location. We will work with our partners more effectively to maximise the potential benefits of technological changes within public and private sectors. The development of health technologies, for example is particularly important given the size of the health and care sectors in the Borough. We will improve our marketing and promotion through our website and promotion activity and our enquiry

handling, and co-ordinate activity with our partners. We will also work more effectively with commercial agents in London as well as maintaining our links with those in the Borough. We will target key sectors for investment, and identify mechanisms to incentivise investment where possible.

The fourth priority for action is support for boosting our key growth locations through regeneration. Romford is the location for a Business Improvement District, and will be the focus for major regeneration and development, as well as improvements to the trading environment and infrastructure. Expanding on its role as a major retail centre, we will turn Romford into a major new destination, and support the growth of professional, creative and IT industries. We will support Hornchurch, Upminster, Elm Park, Harold Hill, Collier Row and Rainham Village centres by strengthening existing businesses, and encouraging diversification. The Rainham Strategic Industrial Area will become a highly competitive industrial location with a strong partnership of agencies working with the business community. Together they will enhance infrastructure, innovate, improve productivity, and provide the right training to residents to put them in the best position to access the area's jobs. New, focused partnerships with businesses and agencies will be the key to achieving our ambitions in both these areas, and across the Borough.

Our fifth priority for action is to ensure the skills of residents meet the current and future needs of employers. Employer demand is continually increasing; there is an increased need for higher levels of formal qualifications, which must match the demands and skills required of our workforce. Residents with few or no qualifications are becoming more vulnerable when seeking jobs and financial security, and require motivation and support to upskill. Employer demand is also continually changing; there is a growing digital skills gap that needs to be addressed. Digital skills are near-universal requirements, and they are in demand in all employment sectors. The move up the career ladder from low- to high-skill jobs comes with increased demand for specific digital skills, and specific digital skills may help workers avoid the risk of automation.

We will engage with employers and with skills providers through the Employment and Skills Provider Forum in key sectors, particularly Construction, Logistics, Engineering and Manufacturing.

We will develop the education workforce through the Havering Academy of Leadership, to combat low ambition, to promote apprenticeships and workforce development within other key sectors, in particular construction, engineering, logistics and manufacturing, and the digital and creative industries.

We will engineer skills pathways within health and social care through the Health and Social Care Academy linking to local businesses and health organisations to enable career progression opportunities to be clearly signposted.

We will work closely with the newly established London Enterprise Adviser Network to help young people build the skills and experiences they need to lead successful futures by connecting businesses with schools and colleges.

We will influence and encourage equal access to opportunities for skills training, qualifications and employment for Havering residents, with specific focus on the Council's role as a Disability Confident Employer.

Finally, we will monitor future skill requirements and work with the local education and training sector to deliver the skills for the future.

We will know that we are achieving our objectives through monitoring employment and business growth, improvements in the proportion of higher level adult qualifications, monitoring business views and the health of the town centres.

1. Shaping growth and delivering opportunity

1.1 Vision and ambition

Havering is London's big opportunity. We are proud of the Borough's heritage, and the new developments coming on stream will open a new chapter in Havering's story. With our culture and leisure offer, quick links into London and the wider South-East, high quality homes, extensive town centre regeneration programmes and our award-winning parks and open spaces, Havering will be an even better place to live, work and visit.

The Council has set out its priorities within its Corporate plan, and is seeking to provide its existing and new residents with vibrant culture and leisure facilities, and thriving town centres. The strategy will complement private housing development across the borough and the Council's housing regeneration programmes including the 12 Estates Regeneration programme which will bring 3,500 new homes into the borough over the next 12-15 years.

The Inclusive Growth Strategy will translate these priorities into actions that will secure its vision. We will support sustainable economic growth that generates local wealth and opportunities, as well as securing investment in high-quality skills and careers.

We want to capitalise on our location with fast and accessible transport links into Central London, Essex and the South East, and the world. These include the M25, A12, A13 and A127 and rail links including the Great Eastern Mainline railway (GEML), Essex Thameside line (the C2C), London Overground, TfL Rail and the London Underground District Line. There will be improved public transport access to Central London via the new Elizabeth Line, the Lower Thames Crossing and the new railway station at Beam Park. Within the Borough we want improved local accessibility, including north-south routes and into the Rainham Strategic Industrial Location. We will continue to improve digital connectivity for businesses as well as residents. Enhancing our connections will strengthen the Borough's offer as a business hub.

This vision provides the framework for the Inclusive Growth Strategy. The Council has set up four joint venture development companies in order to contribute to the achievement of significant housing growth. We are committed to a major transformation of Romford through a masterplanning process, restructuring of the ring road and Market Place, and with our partners will also see improvements to the town centre through the new Business Improvement District and the redevelopment and improvements to the shopping centres.

The Inclusive Growth Strategy provides the mechanism to match the growth in the population with business and employment growth. The Employment and Skills Plan agreed by the Council in April 2018¹ identifies the ways in which these additional opportunities will

1

<http://democracy.havering.gov.uk/documents/s28341/FINAL%20Havering%20Employment%20and%20Skills%20Plan%202018-%202021.pdf>

support local residents to meet their potential and improve income levels across the area. To complement that, the Inclusive Growth Strategy sets out how the Council can achieve :

- More jobs and greater opportunities for residents to increase their skills, resilience and incomes;
- A higher profile for the Borough with the business community, potential investors, government and partners; and,
- A more diverse and sustainable economic environment with increased footfall in Romford and other town centres.

1.2 Opportunity for growth

Havering will undergo significant change over the coming decade, with an expected 13,700 new homes, major regeneration programmes, and improvements in infrastructure including the arrival of the Elizabeth Line and a new railway station at Beam Park. The resulting population growth will increase local spending power, and the attractiveness of the Borough as a business location, but the Council also wants to support the growth of the local economy, to provide more jobs and improve productivity. This will help to maintain and improve the opportunities available in the area, and help to counter the increasing need for our residents to commute into Central London to work.

Havering's strategic industrial locations are key economic assets. The Borough has strengths in transport and distribution, construction, and the traditional sectors of manufacturing and engineering, and new sectors including professional, scientific and tech sectors are growing strongly. The borough has the advantage of being within London with proximity to Europe alongside excellent road connections to the south east and the rest of the country.

The Borough is also supporting growth in its town centres though the scale of growth varies across the town centres – Romford, Hornchurch, Upminster, Elm Park, Harold Hill, Rainham Village, and Collier Row - which provide a location for businesses as well as providing local services for our communities. Romford is recognised in the London Plan as a Metropolitan Centre and has the potential to be a main destination for shoppers and visitors. The ambition for Romford is that it becomes a focus for the growth of professional and creative businesses within Havering which want to realise this potential through planned regeneration and development.

Those areas that have a long-term vision, and implement programmes designed to encourage investment, will have a better chance of harnessing the impact of wider social and economic changes. Havering has that vision, and strong local partnerships, and we will secure the economic future over the Borough through our actions over the coming years.

1.3 A Note on Baseline Data

The development of this strategy has been undertaken over many months and to a large extent our proposals are based on baseline data gathered in 2017 which itself may rely on primary data from earlier periods. In reviewing the strategy we gave careful consideration to whether it might be appropriate to bring this baseline data up to date but took the view that the impact of the referendum to leave the EU has had a destabilising effect on many of the measures upon which we comment, and thus any revised data might be considered to be less reliable than the previous 'steady-state' analysis to which it is not unreasonable to suppose that in time we will in future return. Commissioning further studies in order to generate more 'up to date' data is therefore deemed not necessary. The strategy will remain under constant review.

2. Economic and policy context

There is considerable uncertainty about the future of the UK economy, and growth forecasts are relatively low. It is worth noting some of the external factors that are likely to impact on the prospects for growth for Havering businesses over the coming years.

2.1 Immediate and long-term economic trends

PWC in their July 2019 economic outlook revised their forecast for growth in 2019². Their prediction is for UK growth was forecast to slow to 1.4% in 2019 and 1.3% in 2020 assuming an orderly exit from the EU. They also note that Q2 growth in 2019 was due to slow to near zero but with continuing volatility quarter to quarter in the lead up to the UK's exit from the EU. Looking beyond the EU, the key challenge for the government is to boost UK productivity growth, which has according to the OECD in November 2018 slumped from the fastest growing economy at the start of 2016 to the second slowest in the G7 at Q2 2018. This will require increased public and private investment in housing, transport infrastructure, skills and innovation. PWC also published in 2017 a report on a number of likely longer-term changes in *"The Long View – How will the economic order change by 2050?"*³. There are a number of long-term trends that will impact on the national and local economy over the coming decades. These include the continuing growth of emerging markets – in particular China and India, but also other countries, such as Mexico coming to the fore, with the EU forming a far smaller share of world GDP. For the time being, today's advanced economies will continue to have higher than average incomes, but this gap will close by 2050.

The retail sector is experiencing structural change with the rise of online shopping, and the consumer desire for a shopping experience being catered for within a smaller number of major centres. Continuing technological changes will continue to transform business and societies, enabling increases in productivity, but eliminating jobs in some areas. Unless society, and the people working in these industries are able to adapt by gaining new skills and/or using their time in a different way, their incomes will be seriously impacted.

These issues raise a number of potential priorities for the Council, including supporting increased productivity within local businesses, and rethinking skills infrastructure. We need to recognise the significance of health and social care both for the ageing population and because of the scale of employment in that sector. As Havering and the rest of the country eventually emerge into post-COVID environment the council needs to support the local economy and business community to be resilient in the face of national and global economic upheaval.

² <https://www.pwc.co.uk/economic-services/ukey/ukey-july2019.pdf>

³ The Long View: How will the global economic order change by 2050? PWC, Feb 2017
<https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/world-2050/assets/pwc-the-world-in-2050-full-report-feb-2017.pdf>

2.2 Industrial Strategy

Productivity improvements are central to current Government policy. The Government's Industrial Strategy⁴ seeks to improve living standards and economic growth by increasing productivity and driving growth across the country in the context of Brexit. It emphasises the need to improve productivity and support key growth sectors where there is a comparative advantage. It also emphasises the need to close the gap between the most and least productive places in the country.

2.3 The London policy context

The Mayor of London has published a draft London Plan⁵, which when adopted will provide the framework for London's growth and development and complement the Transport Strategy published in 2018. The London Riverside Opportunity Area Planning Framework (2015) identifies capacity for 26,500 new homes and 16,000 new jobs across Havering and Barking and Dagenham. In Havering, the focus will be on the intensification of industrial land in the Rainham Employment Area and the creation of new residential communities at Rainham and Beam Park. The scope for this is as a result of the provision of a new station at Beam Park and the opportunity to provide space for essential local services. New social infrastructure including a school and health hub to support new communities will also be introduced into Rainham which will complement infrastructure to support businesses.

Currently the Adult Education Budget is devolved allowing the Mayor of London to direct funding to address the skills needs of adults across the city. London government – the Mayor of London and London Councils – has come together to call for a new devolution and funding deal from government to establish an integrated, properly funded skills and employment system that can meet the city's challenges now and in the future. This call asks for the full range of skills funding including careers advice, non levy apprenticeships and 16-18 skills funding to be devolved to enable the creation of an integrated system that is better able to respond to the needs of the city, its businesses and communities.

The Mayor of London set out a Skills for Londoners Strategy which has three priorities:-

1. empower all Londoners to access the education and skills to participate in society and progress in education and work
2. meet the needs of London's economy and employers now and in the future
3. deliver a strategic city-wide technical skills and adult education offer

The creation of the Mayor's Construction Academy, a quality mark for construction training provision is part of a range of initiatives to ensure that training provision is relevant to the needs of employers, the New City College Group in the name of the former Havering College and STC Ltd both achieved the quality mark in 2018 and are active members of the MCA network engaging with developers to meet their employment and skills needs.

⁴ Industrial Strategy, Building a Britain fit for the future, HM Government, 2018
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664563/industrial-strategy-white-paper-web-ready-version.pdf

⁵ The London Plan, the Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London, draft for consultation, July 2019
<https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan/draft-london-plan-consolidated-suggested-changes-version-july-2019>

In June 2018, the Mayor of London announced the expansion of the London Enterprise Adviser Network to support state secondary schools, Pupil Referral Units and Further Education Colleges in every London borough. The London Enterprise Adviser Network helps young people to build the skills and experiences they need to lead successful futures. It does this by connecting businesses with schools and colleges. This ensures that young people are aware of all the career pathways and opportunities available to them.

The Mayor's economic development strategy for London⁶ aims to support the conditions for growth through providing employment space, digital and transport infrastructure, education and entrepreneurship. It identifies sectors where growth offers opportunities to achieve the vision. These are advanced urban services (eg architecture, engineering, property), cultural and creative industries, finance and business services, life sciences, low carbon and environmental goods and services, technology and digital industries, and tourism.

Employment growth, productivity and resilience in Havering is an integral and important component of the overall growth of London and the national economy. As such it is in the interests of regional and national governments to ensure that the infrastructure to support that growth is in place.

2.4 Havering Emerging Local Plan 2016-2031

In March 2018 the Council submitted the proposed Havering Local Plan to the Secretary of State. The emerging Local Plan was subject to an Examination in Public in October 2018 and May 2019. The Council is currently working with the Inspector to confirm a schedule of main modifications to the plan to be publically consulted on. The emerging Local Plan identifies both Romford and the Rainham and Beam Park area as 'Strategic Development Areas' which are anticipated to be the main areas for accommodating Havering's growth over the plan period. Both areas have been identified as Opportunity Areas within the draft London Plan and have Housing Zone status. The plan states that the Council places a very high priority on ensuring that Havering has a prosperous economy. The Plan's Spatial Strategy includes a number of objectives for the borough including protecting and enhancing employment across the Borough. The Local Plan is underpinned by the infrastructure delivery plan and references are made in the plan to improving the north south connectivity issue in the borough between Romford and Rainham.

In particular it identifies the following objectives:

- Regeneration of Romford Town Centre, providing a more diverse and higher quality retail, leisure, cultural and employment offer
- Directing an appropriate scale of retail, culture, service industries and office development to the Borough's network of town centres

⁶ The Mayor's economic development strategy for London, draft for consultation Dec 2018
<https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/business-and-economy/economic-development-strategy>

- Protection of the Borough's Strategic Industrial Locations (SIL) (Rainham Employment Area, Harold Hill Industrial Area, King George Close Estate and Freightmaster Estate) for continued industrial use
- Protection of the Borough's Locally Significant Industrial Sites (LSIS) (Harold Wood, Hillman Close, the Seedbed Centre, Lyon Road and Crow Lane) for continued industrial and employment use
- Intensification of the Borough's designated industrial areas to optimise the use of the land and support transformational new developments which will maximise the economic benefits for the Borough

2.5 Havering Employment and Skills Plan

In April 2018 Cabinet approved an Employment and Skills Plan for the Borough. This has three core themes. The first of these is to develop the local workforce by recruiting local people at key employment sites and in sectors facing workforce challenges, and making better use of the Council's resources and relationships, contracting and procurement activity to secure greater social value for businesses and residents.

The second is to improve the prospects for and prosperity of those residents with employment needs, particularly those stuck in long term unemployment or low paid / temporary / low quality work, lone parents, and young people.

Thirdly, growing our own by building on the strengths of an entrepreneurial Havering, supporting the growth of micro businesses to create opportunities. These priorities complement the priorities set out in this document. Far though from being mere context for a strategy which elsewhere might have been about supporting economic growth in the hope that the benefits of this growth might have 'trickled down' to those most in need, this inclusive growth strategy rejects the long-discredited philosophy of trickle-down economics. Instead it commits itself to delivering for residents furthest from the labour market, those in work whose life chances are not yet fully optimised, and those whose contribution to our growth has been stifled by the very system in place to bring opportunity. To this end, this Inclusive Growth Strategy seeks to integrate key elements of the Employment and Skills Plan so that its interventions might be delivered in concert to delivery opportunity for all.

2.6 Digital Skills

Digital skills are not only required for high-skill jobs. They are now called for across the full span of the labour market ranging from entry-level call centre workers to sophisticated information technology roles. The Government's Digital Strategy also recognises this important point, acknowledging that the benefits of digitalisation are not limited to the 'traditional tech sectors' and that digital transformation can make every business in every sector more productive.

The rise of technology in the job market has sparked intense debate about the future of work. Digital skills have become an unavoidable necessity for job seekers looking to get ahead, however automation and artificial intelligence are expected to disrupt the job market in the coming years.

3. Evidence and Issues for the Strategy

Within the policy context set out above, a comprehensive body of evidence has informed the content of the Strategy. This includes:

- An evidence base commissioned from SQW and BBP consultancies, on the local economy and labour market – February 2018
- A survey of 400 businesses, commissioned from BMG in 2018
- Interviews with a wide range of local businesses and organisations, along with discussions with Council service providers
- Stakeholder workshop discussions

The key issues emerging from the evidence and conclusions informing the Strategy are set out below. As referenced throughout the document issues and matters that will arise because of the COVID pandemic will continue to be monitored and the strategy revisited in light of the impact of the virus.

3.1 The local economy and business base

Havering's economic position needs to be understood as a function of its geographical location on the eastern boundary of London forming a bridge into greater Essex, and its historical development as one of the key industrial bases in the region. Studies and policies underpinning this document include the employment land review and leisure studies that were prepared for the local plan.

Havering has seen substantial growth over the last fifteen years in terms of employment, business stock and population (including the working age population). These trends relate to the expansion and increasing national dominance of the London economy, and notwithstanding the current economic uncertainty, are expected to continue in the years to come.

Havering's population grew from 225,000 in 2001 to 253,000 in 2016⁷ and it is forecast to grow to almost 300,000 by 2030⁸. While the working-age population rose by 12% between 2001 and 2016⁹, the Borough has more recently seen faster growth among other older and younger age groups since 2008. The implication is that dependency ratios are increasing, which could pose increasing challenges for the Council in the future, and also means that the pattern of demand for local services are likely to change in the future.

⁷ ONS Population Estimates

⁸ GLA Population Projections, central trend, 2017-2030

⁹ GLA Population Projections

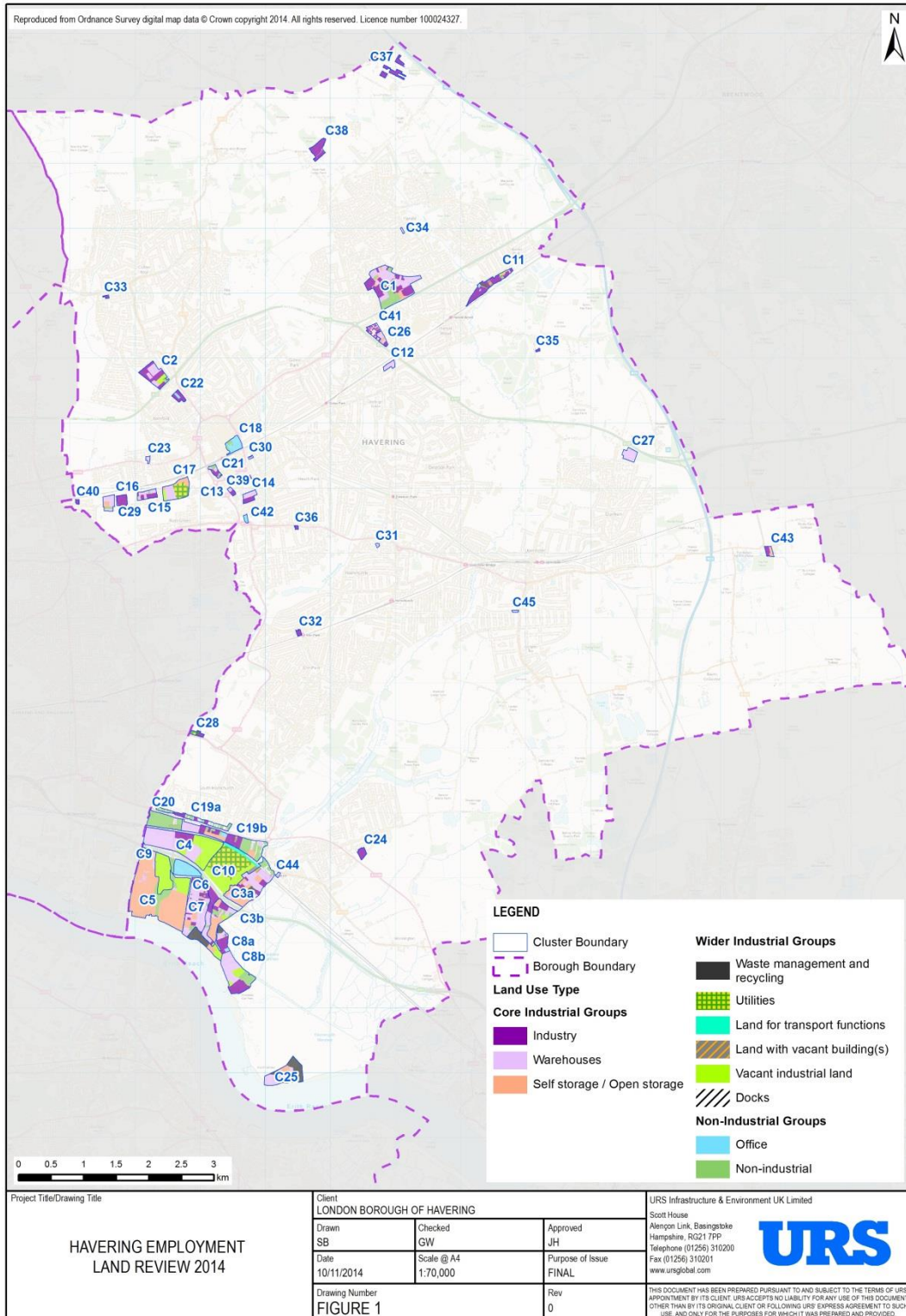
The Borough's ethnic diversity is also increasing. The size of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) population grew by 38% between 2011 and 2016¹⁰. National Insurance number registrations suggest there also has been an increase in the EU-born population, especially from Eastern Europe¹¹.

The main business locations in Havering are shown in the figure below. The largest industrial locations are at Rainham Riverside and in Romford, with other industrial areas around the Borough including Harold Hill. The business base has grown quickly since 2010, from 6,700 enterprises then to 9,800 in 2017¹², largely. This growth is largely among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

¹⁰ GLA Ethnic-group Population Projections, central trend, 2011-2016

¹¹ Department for Work & Pensions, National Insurance Number Registrations of Overseas Nationals, Borough and MSOA

¹² ONS UK Business Counts, 2017



Growth has been particularly strong among firms in the professional/scientific/technical sector, where numbers have risen by 75%, and information/communications, where numbers grew by 96% (and creative, a cross-cutting sector, where numbers more than doubled)¹³. Construction, the largest sector in terms of business numbers also grew strongly

¹³ ONS UK Business Counts, 2017

(+35%). By contrast, other sectors saw modest growth in business numbers. Examples include retail, which saw a 6% growth in enterprise numbers, and manufacturing (10%).

The sectors in which the Borough's jobs are distributed provides a different picture of the local economy. The biggest sectors in terms of jobs are health (13,000 employee jobs), retail (10,000), education (8,000), business administration and support (8,000), and construction (7,000)¹⁴. Professional, scientific and technical (4,500 employee jobs), and information and communications (2,250), were both more modest sources of employment. However, these areas are now growing rapidly, and have the potential to support the growth of new, office-based industries in the Borough, and particularly in Romford.

Productivity in Havering stands at 78% of the London average, although 106% of the England average¹⁵. This is reflected in lower wages for people working in the Borough than the London average. However, the majority of Havering residents commute out of the Borough to work. They commute principally to neighbouring boroughs with many commuting into Central London, and bringing home higher wages than they would obtain in Havering¹⁶.

The employment rate in Havering is very high, at not far off 80%, and unemployment correspondingly low¹⁷. However, despite the good schools, adult qualification levels in Havering are relatively low. This reflects at least in part, the industrial heritage of the Borough, as well as a perception that formal qualifications are not important. Those achieving top grades at A level are only half the average proportion for the country¹⁸. Occupations of residents are becoming increasingly polarised, with higher numbers in professional occupations, but also higher numbers in service occupations. This is likely to become an increasing trend, and its social implications could be exacerbated unless the skills system is able to support more people to increase their skills levels.

3.2 Business Survey

The BMG business survey results from 2018 show that businesses in Havering are positive about their prospects. 40% of businesses at the time of the survey were trading as expected with 33% stating that they were trading reasonably or extremely well, with a similar number expecting improvements over the coming 12 months. Businesses in Rainham are most likely to have taken on additional staff and be aiming to grow further in the coming year. However, transport infrastructure is cited as the most significant barrier to growth. Half of businesses had not provided any training for staff. Yet 40% of businesses recruiting find that applicants don't have the required level of skills. There is a considerable amount of local

¹⁴ ONS Business Register and Employment Survey: open access, 2016

¹⁵ SQW Analysis of ONS Jobs Density 2015, ONS Regional GVA (Income Approach) by Local Authority in the UK, 2015 and ONS Sub-regional Labour Productivity: Nominal (smoothed) GVA per filled job (£): NUTS 3 sub-regions, 2015

¹⁶ ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

¹⁷ ONS Annual Population Survey

¹⁸ Department for Education, A level and other 16-18 results (provisional): 2016/17 - Local Authority and regional level tables

trading amongst the Borough's businesses, and nearly one third are considering moving over the next 12 months.

3.2 Business and agency views

There were a number of strong messages provided by partners during the consultation interviews and workshop discussions. In summary these were:

- Havering is a good place to invest, with low property prices and the Elizabeth Line enhancing access, but the Council should protect office space and encourage better quality
- The Council should facilitate the development of grow-on space for existing businesses and inward investors, and a wider offer, including culture and leisure
- The Council should be more flexible on changing from retail uses in South Street
- The environment around Romford Station is a key gateway into the town centre and needs improving
- The market should provide a broader and more attractive offer
- In Rainham the Council should co-ordinate work with partners on intensifying and marketing sites; and consider which types of businesses we want to attract
- Transport routes north-south need improving – particularly into and around the Rainham SIL area
- The Council should identify ways of providing opportunities for local businesses through supply chain and procurement interventions

There is enormous support from the business community, and across public sector partners who are keen to work with the Council on achieving these improvements.

3.3 Key issues arising from the evidence

The Inclusive Growth Strategy is being produced at a time of global economic change and uncertainty surrounding the impact of leaving the European Union. In addition there are major technological changes under way that will have differential impacts across sectors, and communities. Havering has experienced significant population and employment growth in recent years, and its industrial structure is changing, with the growth of service industries and in particular creative industries. As sectors of the economy will be affected by economic changes in different ways, and the implications vary for particular places across the Borough, sector dynamics and place issues need to feature in the Strategy. Population growth is projected to grow at a faster rate than employment growth.

Havering has a need to deliver additional homes to support economic growth

Havering is experiencing significant development pressure and there is a need to increase the supply of housing to meet the demands of the growing population. The London Plan sets a 10 year minimum housing target for Havering of 11,701 new homes between 2015 and 2025 (1,170 per annum). The emerging Havering Local Plan sets out how this target will be

met and commits to the delivery of 17,551 new homes between 2016 and 2031 including over 6,000 new homes in the Romford Strategic Development Area and over 3,000 new homes in the Rainham and Beam Park Development Area.

The Council is committed to ensuring that residents have access to high quality, affordable new homes. The emerging Local Plan requires 35% of new homes to be affordable.

Romford must make significant improvements to its offer, the provision of commercial space, and the overall trading environment in order to realise its potential as a diverse and thriving metropolitan town centre

Romford has seen the loss of around 118,144 sq ft of office space under permitted development rules as office space has been converted for residential use. housing, Romford has become over-reliant on the retail sector, which is facing major restructuring due to the growth of online shopping. It needs to improve its offer and its appearance. Although there is a real opportunity to attract creative businesses and other new sectors, Romford doesn't have the high quality, flexible, serviced business space that businesses want. Romford has the potential to benefit from its accessibility to Central London and its relatively low commercial property costs. It is the focus for the projected growth in offices in the Borough, cannot realise this growth without an increased supply of appropriate space. It is clear from the evidence that major improvements are required to make Romford an attractive destination. This needs to include improvements to Market Place, a better offer in South Street, transformation of the area around the station to provide the gateway to Romford, and fit for purpose office accommodation as part of mixed-use schemes. The market will need to operate differently in order to respond to changing demand.

Smaller town centres are relatively healthy, but are increasingly vulnerable to continuing change in retail

The district centres of Hornchurch, Upminster, Elm Park, Harold Hill, Collier Row and Rainham Village all provide important local service and retail centres for local residents, as well as a base for many independent retailers. Regular health checks are undertaken and we know that despite relatively healthy performance to date, in the future they will need to develop a broader offer and adapt to new circumstances. This should include continuing to develop the retail offer, and promote cultural assets such as the Queen's Theatre and other arts centres as part of the Borough's cultural and creative offer. There are few development opportunities in these town centres but it will be important to take any opportunities that arise to consolidate retail functions and promote alternative uses including leisure and providing business space possibly as part of mixed-use schemes. The town centres also have the potential for residential development which may help to support the delivery of innovative mixed use developments that provide flexibility and support for start ups and existing microbusinesses. Research has shown that 95% of UK businesses are microbusiness and most are or have been run from the owners home. They generate a third of all employment and a fifth of all turnover (Reuschke & Houston - 2016 - Microbusinesses and

the city). The ongoing covid pandemic has resulted in more home working and with the delivery of new homes in Romford and Beam Park in Rainham there is the potential to support the delivery of new housing/working typologies to support start ups and existing new businesses.

Throughout the COVID pandemic consumers have been turning to local options to replenish basics and get assistance. This could have further repercussions for the town centres throughout Havering as local stores have played an important role providing essential top services and finding new ways to support the community (including shopping hours for vulnerable people and click-and-collect services).. They will continue to serve a wider role long term, even as restrictions are lifted, with office work unlikely to return to pre-COVID-19 levels. The effect may result in an increase in shopping or possibly town centres could be re-purposed as they evolve post-COVID. The trends will need to be monitored and acknowledged within the town centre health checks.

Havering has significant potential for additional investment and growth

Havering has key locational advantages, which are often under-sold. The access to Central London and the M25, combined with relatively low land values relative to inner London, make Havering an ideal location for a wide range of industrial activities, and increasingly now also professional and creative firms. The availability of relatively low cost housing and access to open space make it an attractive residential location for people moving into the Borough. London Riverside SIL, along with the other industrial areas in the Borough, is both protected and supported by the GLA for development. Major regeneration programmes are taking place across the Borough, and will provide increased opportunities for new and existing communities and businesses.

Jobs growth is not keeping up with projected housing and population growth

The Council is committed to housing regeneration through a coordinated strategy that promotes sustainable development with the correct balance of services that a growing population needs. . However, it does not want to become a dormitory for London commuters. It is proud of its heritage as an industrial location and high profile market town, and of its close work over the years with, and in support of, the business community. To ensure continuing high levels of employment in the Borough, the Council's ambition is to increase the rate of employment growth over and above that forecast by the GLA to match its population growth rate.

Havering is still a key location for London's remaining manufacturing, logistics, engineering and construction industries, but infrastructure is a barrier to growth

Havering has 442.8 ha of employment land, with 320.6 ha allocated as Strategic Industrial Locations. Much is functioning very effectively and providing a location for these industries, along with waste and motor trades for example, that benefit from its access to the national as well as London road networks, relatively low land values, and the availability of reasonable quality premises. The majority of the land in Rainham SIL is open storage and

has the potential to be used more intensively. Significant areas are vacant despite the strong demand for premises, raising questions about the match between demand and supply. The industries in these areas provide a good range of employment, and are an increasingly important source of business rates. Existing occupiers and land-owners are seriously concerned about the quality of digital and transport infrastructure, which is acting as a barrier to growth. If it is not possible for staff to access the area, businesses will be unable to locate or expand in the area.

Havering has a diverse business base, comprising sectors with different support requirements

Industrial sectors such as Logistics, Engineering, Manufacturing – which have not demonstrated recent growth, but remain the foundation of the Borough’s industrial base. These businesses need to be supported to intensify land use and increase employment, as well as to upskill staff and innovate in order to improve productivity levels

Construction – a major sector for Havering, with potential to link into the regeneration programmes across the Borough

Retail – vulnerable to the impact of online shopping, and likely to consolidate over the coming years, meaning that as well as supporting existing independent retailers to increase their resilience, different approaches to supporting town centres are required. The decline of many household names has affected the high street and suggests a change in shopping habits. Often these retail business were also significant employers and their decline may have an effect on employment levels throughout the borough.

New growth sectors - professional, scientific and technical, IT and creative – growing, locating in Romford, but lacking appropriate office space; creative industries need support to grow, and connections to local markets and support services

Health, education, social care - the biggest employers – and sectors with potential for strategic alliances to increase technology and higher education presence in the Borough; and to collaborate in up-skilling, recruitment and retention of staff. Health and social care integration, and the need to develop a sustainable social care market are critical sector change requirements over the coming years, and will also impact on labour market demand

Productivity is relatively low

Productivity is low compared with the London average. The presence of the London Riverside Business Improvement District and other partners in the area including the GLA and SEGRO, the New City College Group and the Centre for Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence (CEME) will provide the basis for an increased emphasis on increased innovation and productivity improvements as well as support for business growth.

Skills levels post-16 are low and skills infrastructure is changing

Despite the good quality schools and attainment levels at GCSE, the residential workforce is relatively poorly qualified. As employers are increasingly seeking higher skilled staff, more will need to be done to ensure that the education and training sectors in the area meet the

future needs of both residents and businesses, while supporting increased levels of workforce training, and formal qualifications for residents.

Havering's lack of higher education institutions will have impacted on resident's access and ambition to acquire higher-level qualifications. Though major universities exert considerable influence on their communities, the specific dimensions of their economic impact are rarely appreciated. Universities are important hubs for their local area, boosting employment and spending. Allied to this, their social and cultural influence places them at the heart of the community. Universities are major employers in their own right – often one of the largest in their area. Such anchor institutions generate further jobs indirectly, through their spending on local goods and services.

Digital skills are becoming ever more important in today's economy, and employers indicate that they find about one-third of vacancies difficult to fill being, to some degree, attributable to a lack of appropriate digital skills amongst applicants¹⁹. In addition, baseline digital skills are required for day-to-day living for residents, especially as core public services become digitalised.

The newly established London Enterprise Adviser Network will bring together the worlds of education and business through engaging businesses, as senior business volunteers, to inspire young people to consider all the pathways available to them, and equip them with the right skills to fulfil their potential.

Although relatively understated, the employment and skills activity already taking place in the Council has the potential to be transformative, particularly for residents where investment and support to date has been minimal or less effective than it might have been.

The challenge for Havering is making its case for investment for government funding. Havering has relative wealth and is without the same scale of disadvantage (in terms of numbers of people affected) as other areas within its devolved sub-region. There are many unknowns about the future, but we are beginning to see the impact of the London housing market and low value employment sectors in the Borough (like others) on the cost of living and homelessness.

Combined, and if left unaddressed, these factors will inevitably create greater polarisation between wealth and disadvantage, and leave those already stuck in long term unemployment or poor quality jobs further behind. Ultimately it will also lead to increased demand on Council services and budgets in the short and longer term.

4. Priorities for Action

¹⁹ M. Winterbotham, D. Vivian, et al., "Employer skills survey 2017, Research report", Department for Education, 2018

The issues arising from the evidence have been discussed within the Council and with stakeholders in order to develop priorities for action, and these have been put together into five key priorities, summarised below and discussed in the following chapters. The key issue for Havering is maintaining and enhancing the quality of life for residents in the borough. The five priorities described below will lead to greater economic growth, a more prosperous borough and will contribute towards maintaining and enhancing the quality of life for residents in the borough.

The first of the Strategy's priorities for action is providing the foundations for economic growth. This means ensuring that infrastructure is in place for businesses to operate successfully. Transport infrastructure is critical for logistics, construction and manufacturing industries to enable the movement of components to their business, and products to the market. Digital infrastructure is an essential input for business growth for all types of businesses to keep pace with changing demand, maintain competitiveness and increase productivity. There are gaps in provision of both of these types of infrastructure, which are, and must continue to be priorities for the Council and strategic partners to fill over the coming years.

The second priority for action is enterprise and innovation. Havering is a great place to start a business, as demonstrated by our high level of start-ups. We also want to support the continuing survival and growth of businesses, and we will target our new business growth programme to support those businesses that want to develop and grow. To increase productivity and support intensification of employment we will introduce a new innovation support programme, and work with partners to target key sectors for innovation and productivity improvements through new innovation centres. We will encourage and support the local construction sector through Public Sector supply chain initiatives to ensure local businesses can access opportunities to tender for contracts, and improve our business offer as a council where we can. Currently, Havering works in partnership with East London Business Place who are delivering the building legacies programme which assists businesses in Havering and East London in securing contracts through supply chain initiatives.

Our third priority is the maximisation of inward investment. We recognise that Havering as a brand is not widely recognised and that winning investment for Havering requires us to partner with other stakeholders – with other London boroughs and London more broadly, and with Essex to the East. Our inward investment work will make sure that Havering benefits from new investment from overseas companies, UK based companies outside of the Borough and also from local occupiers that choose to expand within the Borough where decision are made elsewhere – so-called 'investor development'. There needs to be a more acute understanding and clarity on why Havering needs inward investment and a realistic assessment of what can be achieved in the short, medium and long-terms. This is 'the why' of inward investment and is the driving *raison d'être* for all subsequent activities. For our communities it is all about supporting local people into work with higher skills and wages; and achieving a game-changing shift in perceptions.

The fourth priority for action is supporting our key growth locations. Romford is the location for a new Business Improvement District, major regeneration and development, and improvements to the trading environment and infrastructure. Expanding on its role as a major retail centre, we will turn Romford into a major new destination, and support the growth of professional, creative and IT industries. The Rainham Strategic Industrial Area will become a highly competitive industrial location with a strong partnership of agencies working with the business community to enhance infrastructure, innovate and improve productivity, and provide the right training to residents to put them in the best position to access the area's jobs. We will work more collaboratively with our partners in the area to improve the area's potential for private sector investment and to secure that investment for the benefit of the Borough as a whole.

Our fifth priority lies in training, educational facilities, and relationships between employers and training providers which are also vital for boosting productivity. Businesses need access to a skilled workforce, and the Borough's residents need opportunities to access training to update their skills in line with current demand. Although the availability of skilled workers has been one of the strengths of the area, resident qualification levels are low, and it will become an increasing problem for a new generation as demand for higher level qualifications continues to rise.

During the drafting this strategy the global COVID 19 pandemic has had a dramatic impact on our communities and on our economy. Our high street and local centres have been forced to close for all except essential supplies as the country and the World has sought to control the virus and limit the death toll. Thousands of workers have been furloughed and the economy shrank at a rate matched only during the Second World War. At this time (November 2020), the National economy has recovered yet still remains around 10% below its pre-COVID position. Public sector borrowing is at an all time high. While the end of the pandemic is almost in sight, we recognise that it falls to the Council and its stakeholder partners to deliver important interventions both to mitigate the economic impacts of the pandemic and to give leadership as we emerge from the crisis.

With this in mind, the Council has already provided nearly £40m of direct financial assistance to local companies, provided telephone hotline services signposting businesses to essential support, and guiding businesses on how they can trade while maintaining bio-security. We have supported our local high streets with communications campaigns promoting 'shop local' and curated key information channels during a period where messaging was changing dynamically.

For the future, we will be working towards providing further financial support, delivering programmes of information and guidance, and supporting the development of business continuity plans across the entire business community so that we can emerge from the pandemic stronger and more resilient than before.

5. Priority 1 - Foundations for growth

5.1 Transport Infrastructure

One of the key attractions of business locations in Havering is the connectivity provided by its strategic transport connections and routes. However, it is clear from the evidence that transport infrastructure improvements are needed to enable business growth. The lack of north-south connections between Rainham and Beam Park, Romford, Collier Row and Harold Hill, and in particular the almost complete absence of public transport routes within the Rainham SIL is a key barrier to growth. Lack of public transport in the Riverside BID area is a key problem for many businesses in terms of staff recruitment and retention. The Council is developing proposals for remodeling the A1306 through the Beam Parkway scheme this will be in conjunction with Transport for London (TfL) and dependent on funding from them. The Council also supports the proposals developed by the London Riverside BID in relation to electric vehicle charging points.

The Romford Ring Road is a barrier to accessing the town centre from the neighbouring housing areas in particular for pedestrians and cyclists. It also gets heavily congested, particularly at the weekend with shoppers trying to access the main car parks in the town centre. The Liveable Neighbourhoods scheme is a key part of our response to tackling the Ring Road barrier again this initiative will be in conjunction with TfL and reliant upon funding from them.

The Council is conducting a feasibility study into tram/light rail links from Rainham to Romford and north to Collier Row, and this is likely to recommend route options. The Council is lobbying TfL for the redevelopment of Gallows Corner, which is a major roundabout with a flyover and experiences significant congestion particularly at peak periods. The level of growth forecast to be delivered in East London generally and in Havering over the next 15 years is expected to put additional pressures on the local and strategic highway network. The Lower Thames Crossing will afford opportunities for Havering and the wider South East of England and address these issues to an extent. Though the pressure on the local and strategic highway network will remain and this issue will need to be addressed with strategic partners such as Transport for London as well as neighbouring local authorities outside the GLA boundary such as Essex County Council. Havering will continue to work closely with Transport for London because of the key role that it has had in ensuring that the growth envisaged in the London Plan for East London and, in particular, London Riverside, can be accommodated on the existing network or with specific interventions.

Improvements in transport infrastructure are a key requirement for employment as well as housing growth, and continuing to push for them is therefore a key priority for the Strategy.

5.2 Digital Infrastructure

The Council recognises the growing importance of the need for modern, effective communications systems to serve local residents and businesses and their crucial role in

both the national and local economy. The benefits of enhanced digital connectivity are far reaching with wider access to broadband not only encouraging local enterprise, but also paving the way for flexibility so residents can work from home, save on transport costs and reduce congestion.

Our Strategic Industrial Areas including the London Riverside BID area suffer from very poor digital connectivity, which does not enable proper functioning in a modern business environment, particularly in industries that need to develop and innovate, as in engineering, manufacturing, logistics and construction. Businesses consistently report problems with digital infrastructure. Providing ultra-fast broadband is a key priority, particularly within the Rainham SIL where there have been consistent complaints from the business community about digital connectivity. The first steps towards implementing improvements will be made through the use of funding secured by the Borough and Local London partner boroughs.

We will also explore other potential improvements appropriate to the business environment there and elsewhere in the Borough, and in particular the potential to secure access to 5G. In order to maximise the innovation potential of the area, we aim to future-proof the area by early adoption of hyperfast or gigabit broadband speeds where the opportunity arises, and we will seek to secure these improvements through the Council's emerging Digital Strategy. In the context of the fast pace of technological development, and the high levels of market penetration of mobile data, we no longer feel that town centre Wi-Fi delivery represents a good use of public funds.

5.3 Workspace

We will promote opportunities for start-up and small enterprises by expecting commercial and mixed-use schemes to provide a minimum of 10% of its floorspace as affordable workspace within the Borough's network of town centres, and employment areas. This will be a mechanism to strengthen local growth sectors and enable local people to thrive. The Council intends to use affordable workspace as a key driver to support a flourishing local economy, and the provision and preservation of affordable and suitable workspaces that can easily be sub-divided for different uses will increase the opportunities for small business which are essential to Havering's economic vitality and a catalyst for regeneration. In common with other local authorities, we will seek to develop a small investment portfolio of suitable commercial and industrial workspace that can be used to generate surpluses to fund mainstream economic development activity.

6. Priority 2 - Enterprise and Innovation

6.1 Business starts

Havering is a good place to start a business – it was the Start-up Capital of Britain in 2015²⁰. Supporting business starts and providing incubation space has been a core element of the Council's business support programme. It will continue to be an element of future programmes, while support for businesses with potential for high growth becomes increasingly important. We want to make sure that we have a diverse business base across the economy, and will ensure our support programmes help to achieve that. We need to balance the need to build of pipeline of companies with the potential to grow, with the very much higher cost of supporting early growth opportunities – companies with around 10 employees offer opportunity for growth at much lower cost.

6.2 Business support and growth

Many businesses are content to maintain their current level of trading into the future. In the current uncertain economic climate, we want to encourage businesses to consider their growth potential and diversification into new technology, and to access the advice and support that would help them to achieve it. The business survey identified a number of priorities, and we are also aware that bespoke and specialist advice is often critical for growth businesses. We want to make sure that we are able to help businesses access specialist advice (such as business finance, marketing and exporting) where this is needed.

6.3 Innovation and productivity

Logistics, engineering, manufacturing and construction firms are all experiencing major competitive challenges, and are the focus of significant information, data and AI/AMR developments. Increasing productivity through innovation and training is essential for the Borough to maintain and grow its key industrial sectors.

We need to make sure that we access the benefits of wider developments and technological enhancements in these sectors, and promote them across our business community. The Council has secured funding to support innovation as the first step in achieving its ambitions to improve productivity. Work with key partners, including SEGRO and the New City College Group is focusing on this area and on developing innovation hubs to target key sectors for adoption of new technologies and processes. We are also continuing work with CEME, to support provision for early stage and growing businesses.

6.4 Business networks and engagement

A large proportion of small businesses in Havering rely on trade within the Borough. Business to business trading can be promoted by the Council with its business networks, and

²⁰ Experian Start-up Capital of Britain 2015

we will focus on this and on ensuring that local businesses can access public sector supply chains. This will include improving information, advice and access to contracts. Local trade networks are particularly important for the emerging cultural and creative industries. We will help connect these businesses to local markets and support services. In construction, where the potential for links into the regeneration programmes could be particularly beneficial for the sector, and networking and information opportunities will be developed.

6.5 Sector Development

Havering is home to 9,800 enterprises, provides 11,100 commercial units, and 92,000 jobs²¹. The key employment sectors in Havering are Construction, Health, Retail, Tech, Professional, and Scientific.

Construction

The Construction sector remains Havering's largest sector. It grew substantially between 2010 and 2017²² and this growth is expected to continue over the next decade due to Havering's ambitious regeneration programme. With availability of industrial land at affordable prices, Havering has strong competitive advantages for the construction sector. Durable partnerships with education and training providers will guarantee that the Borough is best placed to ensure the steady flow of a skilled workforce to take advantage of planned infrastructure projects and activity in the housing market. Supply of skilled labour will increasingly threaten our preeminence in this sector and we must work to innovate to mitigate this threat. The Mayors Construction Academy is attempting to address this by supporting training providers to have a dialogue with developers to ensure the training they deliver is relevant to the skills needs of the sector. Two training providers within the Borough, the New City College Group and STC Ltd have achieved the MCA quality mark.

Health

The Health sector is a vital market for Havering and the leading sector by employment due to Queen's Hospital being located in Romford. It is a premier acute hospital providing complex care and specialist services for the population of North East London and Essex. The Borough has the largest population of people aged 65 and over in London – and we are committed to working with providers to develop a stimulating, diverse and active market ensuring that our residents needs continue to be met. Like the Construction sector, the Health sector will also suffer from a demand for labour which will almost certainly outstrip the supply of appropriately skilled staff. We will work with the sector through the Health & Social Care Academy to identify skills development needs and where possible procure resources to address these needs.

Finance and Professional Services

Romford is Havering's key hub for office-based employment and is home to over three

²¹ ONS UK Business Counts, 2017 and ONS Job Density, 2015

²² ONS UK Business Counts, 2017

quarters of the Borough's Class B1 Business property. The majority of this is concentrated within the Romford old office quarter, mainly in the Western Road and Eastern Road areas, which despite being conveniently located in close proximity to the town's main line railway station and major bus interchange facilities, has suffered under the Government's Permitted Development Rights and is now a mix of residential and office uses. Moreover, the office accommodation is dated and not necessarily well suited to modern working practices.

The town centre benefits from very high levels of accessibility and these will be enhanced when the new Elizabeth Line services become operational in 2020/2021. This accessibility contributes considerably to the importance and significance of the Romford old office quarter in employment and economic terms, and could deliver good quality office space within a business orientated environment to mainly professional services, with rental rates that are low in comparison to central London boroughs. With an impressive and very extensive range of town centre facilities on the doorstep, plus numerous amenities, public transport links, road connectivity and services, the area is considered a key location by many businesses.

Tech

The exploitation of opportunities in tech has been one of the most important drivers of productivity growth over past decades. All new technologies essentially rest on an interconnected 'smart world', where objects, machines, people and the environment are increasingly closely interlinked.

The Tech sector is an enabler of economic progress and also an important driver for the future development of the digital economy. It integrates the digital ecosystem, which is a network of economic and social activities, such as the Internet, mobile and sensor networks. Technology brings change to virtually every sector – offshoring in accountancy, cloud computing, autonomous machine reasoning, high frequency algorithmic stock and options trading, etc. Traditionally, Central London and the City have been the most attractive locations for Tech companies, however the increase in flexible and serviced office accommodation in Romford, the comparative low rental rates, the high speed public transport links into the City, and high quality data links, have enabled Romford to host this growing sector.

Retail

The retail sector share in Havering is one of the largest in London. Havering has seven designated town centres; a Metropolitan town centre and six district town centres. Romford is the Metropolitan town centre within the Borough and is the 5th largest within the London region. Hornchurch, Upminster, Collier Row, Elm Park, Harold Hill and Rainham are the district town centres within the London Borough of Havering.

Romford town centre has a diverse range/special mix of national high street shops/brands, unique specialist independents, restaurants, cafés plus a traditional outdoor market dating back to 1247. The restaurant offer within the town centre remains vibrant and busy, though the offer is largely aimed at the value end of the market rather than high end dining. As a

metropolitan centre within greater London we will look to create a vibrant safe night economy by liaising with developers and entertainment venue operators and town centre groups via the community safety team. Moreover, in a post covid environment the food and drink offer within Romford will have to reconfigure itself which may have implications for employment numbers and the physical way that customers are accommodated.

Romford has three large vibrant shopping and leisure malls plus a shopping arcade; The Brewery, The Liberty, The Mercury and The Romford Shopping Hall.

Hornchurch, Upminster, Collier Row, Elm Park, Harold Hill and Rainham offer a diverse range of multiples and unique specialist independent shops and restaurants all within conventional high streets and historical locations.

We recognise that retail is changing at a faster pace than since the 1970s. Over the past 12 months, footfall on the high street has declined by around 5% with supplier able to offer better price competition built on lower premises costs outside traditional retail centres. As customer choice take them towards online retailers, our retail centres must adapt by offering the customer something which can only be had by spending time on the high street; by delivering an experience without sacrificing the convenience of limitless choice and almost immediate availability for delivery to the customer's home. While we can encourage an emphasis on service sector offers on the high street to reduce our dependency on take away products – we can do this through the provision of a mix of traditional retail with leisure, food and drink, entertainment, and animation – we must also address the demand for immediate availability. We will thus need to innovate and Havering is no less well placed than other locations to experiment in new retail models. Alongside this, we are prepared to innovate in the taxation of retail to mitigate the advantage that e-tailers have over the high street. The recommendations for a new retail offer and experience for consumers will be consistent with existing land use policies and a commitment towards high quality urban design.

We note the anecdotal evidence that the withdrawal of retail banking service from some of our high streets is having a perceived negative impact on footfall. The same might be said of the closure of Crown Post Offices. We see both these perceptions as part of the undoubted evolution of the high street but cannot be sure whether this impact is real or merely perceived. We can however be sure that for our high street to survive, we need to develop a forensic understanding of the current state of our high streets, the factors which are driving change, and ways in which we can optimize our response to these changes in the 21 century. The analysis we will undertake will inform the interventions that are recommended in this document.

Other Key Sectors:

A Key Manufacturing Hub

The Havering Riverside Employment Area at London Riverside in Rainham is a key hub for manufacturing businesses and employment opportunities in the Thames Gateway development zone. It is home to more than 500 firms ranging from small and medium sized

businesses across a variety of sectors to major international companies. It is also home to important centres of learning and business support such as the Centre of Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence (CEME) and Havering College's Southern Campus. It also has the largest available supply brownfield strategic industrial land in London. The CEME campus offers a fantastic education centre for young people interested in manufacturing, engineering, design and technology has been created and delivered in partnership with distinguished businesses such as Ford and Network Rail and universities including University College London. Through these initiatives and others of a like kind, we will continue to work to broker connections between industry and academia to bring new technologies, processes and products to market to improve our productivity and thus our attractiveness on the national and international stage.

Logistics

Like other sectors, we recognise that the logistics sector is changing as processes are automated and productivity increases. This will likely lead to larger facilities with smaller head counts. With land at a premium, we will give priority to logistics businesses with higher levels of added value and thus yielding opportunities for high levels of employment.

Beyond this however, we regard the logistics sector as offering opportunities for real innovation and growth. In particular, while online commerce might present itself as a threat to our high streets, it offers an opportunity for the development of modern and sustainable mode for 'last mile' delivery in a manner that can mitigate the impact of higher volumes of deliver being undertaken using efficient point-to-point paradigms. Our key location serves us well from our position at the gateway between London and Essex but also at the key lowest crossing point of the Thames and close to the launch point of the anticipated and hoped for, new Thames Crossing. Finally, we see our riverside location as potentially playing a significant role in the development of freight consolidation models for the carriage of goods into Central London using the Thames as a key arterial route. We are already in discussion with the Port of London Authority in scoping out this potential.

7. Priority 3 Increasing inward investment

7.1 Role of Inward Investment for Havering - the why?

We recognise that Havering as a brand is not widely recognised and that winning investment for Havering will require us to partner with other stakeholders – with other London boroughs and London more broadly, and with Essex to the East.

Our inward investment work will make sure that Havering benefits from new investment from overseas companies, UK based companies outside of the Borough and also from local occupiers that choose to expand within the Borough where decision are made elsewhere – so-called ‘investor development’.

We need to seize opportunities as they arise by carefully marshalling our partners and the unique advantages of our programmes and location. We will work with our partners more effectively to maximise the potential benefits of technological changes within public and private sectors. The development of health technologies, for example is particularly important given the size of the health and care sectors in the Borough.

We will improve our marketing and promotion through our website and promotion activity and our enquiry handling, and co-ordinate activity with our partners. We will also work more effectively with commercial agents in London as well as maintaining our links with those in the Borough. We will target key sectors for investment, and identify mechanisms to incentivise investment where possible.

There needs to be a more acute understanding and clarity on why Havering needs inward investment and a realistic assessment of what can be achieved in the short, medium and long-terms. This is ‘the why’ of inward investment and is the driving *raison d’être* for all subsequent activities. For our communities it is all about supporting local people into work with higher skills and wages; and achieving a game-changing shift in perceptions.

7.2 Place brand, awareness and inward investment - the where?

Promotional activity however is not always a requirement but proactive business engagement based on use of corporate tracking and intelligence tools most certainly is.

There is a complex and often misunderstood relationship between branding, awareness and inward investment. While it seems logical that the better known a location, the more likely they are to attract investors however this is not the case. Some of the best known place brands in the UK, like Liverpool or Sheffield, receive far less inward investment than the less famous brands of Milton Keynes, Reading and Slough. It would be a mistake to focus on awareness raising activities in the hope that it will translate into investment success.

The issue of place brand is further exacerbated by the fact that Havering has poor brand recognition while our actual brands like Romford lack positive resonance. This is not as much a problem as it might appear. From a branding perspective, Havering should be seen as very much part of the London brand for inward investment and all collateral and communications should reflect this fact. It also means that relationships with London & Partners and others in the capital is a fundamental part of the approach which Havering will adopt.

Havering enjoys a great strategic location at the gateway to London from the East and to Essex from London. It also sits alongside the lowest crossing point of the Thames which remains an under exploited asset that could be used for activities including distribution and passenger transport. Havering is also situated on a key transit route around London's outer fringe linking the Midlands and the East of England with key and key markets in mainland Europe. More than this though it also forms part of the M11 corridor in the development of high end technological development. These locational benefits and the wider recognition of its strengths in key sectors of logistics, construction; finance and professional services, care, manufacturing, and importantly, retail, offer considerable opportunity to attract significant inward investment. Havering's brand identity is respected but weak – Rainham, Romford, Hornchurch and Upminster are better known but still lack identification as preeminent in any particular field. Establishing the identity and recognition of our place must therefore sit high on our list of challenges and opportunities.

7.3 Targets: markets, sectors, types - the who

What and who is Havering for? Coming up with a clear targeting plan is a necessary precursor to inward investment activity. The targeting plan will articulate the geographic markets that are to be prioritised (eg London, South East, UK, Europe, USA etc) as well as the sectors (healthcare, professional services, technology, manufacturing) and the types (startups, scaleups, SMEs, large firms). Following the targeting plan, there will be compelling propositions developed and tailored to suit each market, sector and type.

7.4 London opportunities

In the pre-COVID world, there were on average between 2 and 5 new inward investment projects each week which land in London. In most cases, these new arrivals would tend to take space in short-term flexible offices or serviced offices such as WeWork or Regus. From the outset, the high-costs, congestion and lack of available grow-on space in places like Paddington and Shoreditch is rarely an issue. As these companies grow, however, they recruit more staff and the challenges of growing in central London become more evident. Before new inward investors establish deep roots in their first landing location, there are opportunities for Havering to engage and explain the benefits of a more affordable London location with space to grow.

7.5 Process - the how

Creating an inward investment service that is fit-for-purpose, proactive and customer-focussed does not cost millions. In fact it has very little to do with financial resources.

Havering recognises that there is an opportunity to create a ‘best-in-class’ service that outshines all other London Boroughs and teams across the wider South East.

Havering will set out its ambition to be:

- *‘London’s most welcoming borough’*
- *‘London’s most business friendly borough’*
- *‘London’s most ambitious borough’*

All of these mantels are achievable as they are within the control of the council and are not a result of current performance or future funding. It requires having a small, effective and agile inward investment team that uses free online tools for research and intelligence, coupled with high proficiency in using social media platforms like LinkedIn to engage with potential targets. Most importantly though, it requires a business culture and customer-service ethos. It also needs the council to guarantee an element of independence and autonomy in order for the team to focus on attracting business and not be diluted or distracted by broader issues.

7.6 Business Retention & Expansion (Investor Development)

The importance of working with existing businesses in the Borough is not just good for local companies, it is an essential part of inward investment too. According to the latest DIT figures for inward investment (2018-19), some 60% of foreign direct investment projects are from existing investors already in the UK and 31% are expansions of an existing facility. Working with the existing firms in Havering is the best way of securing future jobs growth for the Borough. Local firms also represent an opportunity to engage with suppliers and customers of existing investors, who are located outside of the area; this can be a lucrative source of potential leads.

7.7 Leveraging Partners

Leveraging partner resources and support central to our plan. This includes public and private sector organisations that are active in advising companies - such as Department for International Trade, London & Partners and intermediaries such as bankers, lawyers and accountants.

The relationship with DIT is particularly important as there is a perceived tendency to pigeon-hole ‘London’ as the place for financial services, new technology and big headquarters - and to refer more back-office and manufacturing opportunities to places in the ‘Midlands Engine’ and ‘Northern Powerhouse’. This strategy is aimed at educating partners and intermediaries that there is a place, inside London, which has the demographics, space and cost-base to attract a wider array of projects than those currently choosing London.

8. Priority 4 – Regeneration

The Council has established three joint venture companies and Mercury Land Holdings, in order to play its part in delivering housing growth, and these will create £3 billion of development activity in the Borough over the coming years. We want businesses to benefit from this and contribute to the development itself, through supporting access to local supply chains (as discussed in the previous section), and through providing apprenticeships, and increasing the range of jobs available locally.

The Council wants to see economic growth keeping pace with the housing growth projected for the Borough. The Romford masterplan acknowledges the need to create new and better types of business space and within future developments, and we will increase our inward investment activity to market available space. We will consider any opportunities to develop and improve business space, including direct intervention through joint ventures with the private sector, and work with partners, developers and through existing regeneration programmes to support the incorporation of employment space.

Business and employment growth will be encouraged across the Borough. However, in Rainham Employment Area Romford Town Centre, employment growth features within Opportunity Area Frameworks and larger scale growth is more likely to take place. District Town Centres are also key priority areas for the Council, and could provide locations for both housing and employment growth. There are three principal geographical areas for business growth and investment, set out below.

8.1 Romford Town Centre

Romford Town Centre is a key location for growth, but currently under-performing. Major improvements in the operating environment are needed, and significant transformation is already planned through works to the ring road, investment in the Market Place, the redevelopment and improvements to the shopping centres, and investment in events, signage, and community safety through the Romford Business Improvement District. As previously stated the Romford masterplan will add value and enhance the town centre and this strategy will aim to align with the masterplan. This will include a commitment towards delivering a major public scheme linked to the reconfiguration of the Romford ring road.

A critical finding from the evidence is that we need to improve the quality and supply of appropriate and flexible office space in Romford. There is unmet demand for high quality grow-on space and wherever practicable, the Council's regeneration programmes should incorporate business space through incorporation of mixed use schemes, and this should feature in the forthcoming Romford masterplan.

The Romford Town Management Partnership secured agreement of businesses to establish a Business Improvement District for the Town Centre in June 2018. Now established, the Council will work with the BID to co-ordinate improvement plans for Romford.

8.2 District Town Centres

The District Town Centres of Hornchurch, Upminster, Harold Hill, Elm Park, Collier Row and Rainham Village provide vital centres for local businesses and communities. We want to maintain a network of thriving town centres across the Borough to provide good access to services for local communities, increase sustainability and convenience by reducing the distance needed to travel, and improve trading opportunities and business resilience. As stated throughout the document local centres may become more important as we emerge into a post covid world. The Covid pandemic has exposed the reliance on global markets and we may see a move towards using local markets and local centres. It is unlikely that home working will cease even as the nation emerges from the pandemic and Havering district centres may become more important as people are encouraged to use local facilities.

In the context of the structural changes impacting on the retail sector, it is vital to understand the dynamics of the centres, and to support them to adapt to changes and to respond in order to continue to meet local needs. District Centres may need to adapt to social and economic changes, and the Council will support this process by developing bespoke plans for each of these centres. The plans will set out, for each of these centres, the potential for strengthening and diversifying their offers, and promoting workspace development as well as housing growth where appropriate.

We will continue to undertake regular health checks within the Town Centres across the Borough, incorporating vacancy, footfall and classification analysis. The health checks will also incorporate a broader approach considering a holistic view of the uses of the town centres including analysis of dwell time, use of parks and green spaces and quality of visitor experience. An audit of the public realm in the town centres will also inform policy relating to the accessibility and inclusivity of the town centres for all residents.

We will continue our programme of town centre support and capacity building, and work to increase the effectiveness of local town partnerships to increase trading. We will roll out the successful business support digital delivery programme that has been initiated in Hornchurch town centre by encouraging increased online trading, digital exposure and marketing. We will also help to improve the trading environment in town centres through marketing, branding and improved signage.

We will look for opportunities to diversify the local offer by increasing leisure, services, and space for business where that is viable. Moreover, as we move into a post covid environment any diversification of leisure services will incorporate changes to maintain the physical and mental health of residents. We will develop a strategy for each town centre that takes account of social, economic and cultural inward investment opportunities, to place the town centres on a more sustainable footing for the future

We will also look at the feasibility of supporting additional Business Improvement Districts in Hornchurch and Upminster as a mechanism for sustainable funding for improvements into these town centres by consulting with our business partners and town teams.

We will incorporate Hornchurch, Rainham and Upminster into a strategic programme of support for cultural and creative industries, to maximise the impact of the Borough's cultural assets including the Queen's Theatre, Fairkytes Arts Centre, Langton's House and Gardens, Upminster Windmill, Tithes Barn, Museum of Nostalgia, The Old Chapel, and Rainham Hall. Romford will maintain its position as cultural and leisure hub with facilities including the library, museum, theatre and cinema complex's. We do acknowledge that during the covid pandemic and even as we move into a post covid environment there may be changes in how these venues are used and configured. The Council will also consider supporting outdoor events/performances which will support creative organisations during and after the pandemic.

8.3 Strategic industrial Locations

The strategic industrial locations in the Borough are essential locations for growth. In that context we will continue to identify potential barriers to growth and to tackle them where possible, or work with partner agencies to address them. However there are a number of critical and immediate priorities.

Rainham Riverside: Alongside the new community to be housed at Beam Park as part of the Council's regeneration programme, the south of the Borough is a premier business destination. The area does suffer from poor connectivity though it is highly competitive compared to other areas within London. A number of sectors have grown in this environment, particularly in the logistic, transport and distribution sectors. Manufacturing and engineering are also key sectors for Havering where we want to see intensification, development and innovation.

This is the key location for intervention to support the intensification and growth of the Borough's industrial firms. This process has already started, and East Plus is the first phase of the SEGRO development and will see a new innovation village created alongside larger units creating up to 1700 new jobs. We will develop a programme of interventions with our key partners in the area – notably the Greater London Authority and SEGRO, the London Riverside Business Improvement District and CEME. Intensification may mean strategic targeting of investment in particular locations in order to maximise the potential for growth and retaining existing businesses where appropriate.

We need to seize strategic opportunities for support in the area – for example, resources from the GLA to support regeneration and development in key areas like Salomon's Way. We are also working with our partners to support wider investment, for example the development of innovation hubs to support productivity improvements. A strong partnership exists in the area, including the BID, the GLA and SEGRO, and CEME. We will strengthen the partnership and incorporate the New City College Group and wider business community, and agree an updated action plan for the area.

Harold Hill: Harold Hill Industrial Estate, at almost 31 hectares in size is one of Havering's strategic industrial locations. It is just off the A12, which has direct access to the M25, making it a very convenient and attractive location for businesses. Harold Hill Industrial Estate has a number of detached warehouse and industrial units, many of which include high quality office facilities. There is also a mixture of new and established properties currently used for business purposes including offices, factories and retail outlets. Much of the area's commercial real estate is well located with sufficient distance away from residential developments. We will monitor the continuing growth and prosperity of the area and tackle specific local barriers to growth here and in other industrial locations where possible.

9. Priority 5 – Employment and Skills

Demand and supply of skills is a critical issue for employers, and for people seeking jobs and financial security.

Employer demand is continually increasing; there is a stronger need for higher levels of formal qualifications, which need to match the demands and skills required of our workforce. Residents with few or no qualifications are becoming more vulnerable when seeking jobs and financial security, and require motivation and support to upskill.

Employer demand is also continually changing; there is a growing digital skills gap that needs to be addressed. Digital skills are near-universal requirements, and they are in demand in all employment sectors. The move up the career ladder from low- to high-skill jobs comes with increased demand for specific digital skills, and specific digital skills may help workers avoid the risk of automation.

The skills system is undergoing major changes. Skills devolution will change the way that further education is commissioned and provided, and for the first time local government will be represented on the Local Skills and Employment Board along with local businesses.

Colleges are merging to provide much larger institutions. Havering College and Havering 6th Form College have merged and are now part of the New City College Group, Havering has a Careers College that provides Higher as well as Further Education.

Skills provision is hard to navigate, and we have the opportunity now to better co-ordinate provision through the Adult Education service, New City College Group, and the new Employment and Skills Provider Forum, to make more sense of the system and make it more accessible and responsive for local businesses.

Our assessment of the case for action has focused on understanding the impact unemployment, poor quality jobs and low skills have on the costs of Council services. We have also determined where the Council is missing out on employment and skills investment by not having a strategic plan which is resulting in opportunities lost for the Council, businesses and its residents.

The Council will maximise the funding it secures through ESF, the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and all other potential funding streams. We will improve processes for engaging and supporting providers to work in the Borough to help residents access training and employment. We will develop programmes that better target and support residents at risk of placing high demand on council services. We will make the best use of our resources to support people into work and ensure this is sustainable. We will support to help people manage the transition to employment and ensure they sustain employment

We will work effectively to support key and growth employment sectors within the Borough using secured funding to help make savings in social care through workforce development. We will develop responsive and integrated sector focused interventions. We will work with stakeholders to increase the provision of digital skills training for children, young people and adults.

Our findings have shown that there is real potential for the Council to use this plan to act on several fronts. We have structured our proposed interventions around three principles with clear ambitions for change and for the future.

- First Principle - Working towards the Havering Vision

Recommendations and actions have a clear relationship to, and contribute towards, the achievement of the Havering vision (see section 2.2).

- Second Principle - Embedding a Havering way of working

Recommendations and actions rely on greater cross-service collaboration and developing a universal 'Havering way of working' that is client centred and focuses on reducing duplication and costs.

- Third Principle - Preparing Havering for the future

Implementation of the Employment and Skills Plan should build the policy and delivery infrastructure for maximising employment and skills funding and investment into the Borough beyond 2020.

By including these elements from the Employment and Skills Plan 2018 -2021 in this Inclusive Growth Strategy, we are confident that it provides a blueprint for the Council to:

- take concerted action, with clear returns in savings and cost avoidance to support demand management, and
- a practical way forward to build capacity within the organisation to prepare the ground for, and be more resilient to, changes in policy and funding for employment and skills beyond 2020.

Accordingly, our priorities emerging from the evidence are:

9.1 Employer Engagement

We will work closely with New City College Group's Career College Board, and with other providers through the Employment and Skills Providers Forum, to increase employer engagement in course design and delivery in key sectors, particularly Construction, Logistics, Engineering and Manufacturing.

We will support the newly established London Enterprise Adviser Network to bring together the worlds of education and business through engaging businesses, as senior business volunteers, to inspire young people to consider all the pathways available to them, and equip them with the right skills to fulfil their potential.

We will work directly with employers and stakeholders to identify and address the current and potential future digital skills gap to ensure Havering's adults and young people can access high-skilled jobs.

We will work with businesses directly to understand their skills needs, sharing information with local providers so they are better able to respond and provide suitably skilled candidates.

We will use our existing business networks to promote the brokerage service to provide the connection between residents seeking work and local employers.

We will use our contracting and procurement processes to leverage employment and skills opportunities for local people, ranging from businesses engaging with schools and colleges delivering careers information sessions, projects and work experience to offering apprenticeships and job opportunities.

9.2 Raising Ambition

To develop an aspirational programme through the Havering Academy of Leadership, to combat low ambition among young people and their parents. The Local Authority has worked with the early year's providers, schools, and colleges to develop a shared Education Vision for the Borough. Through this consultation, three key priorities were identified; Leadership, Inclusion, and Aspiration, which link into the wider Vision for Children's Services.

With regard to Aspiration, the following areas were highlighted to focus on, and will be developed further into a roadmap for the future;

- Develop an innovative educational offer, matched to the needs of the local communities.
- Ensure a broad, relevant and inclusive curriculum is on offer.
- Develop partnerships with the private sector to develop pathways linked to key employment opportunities.
- Raise aspirations of local communities, developing routes through to Apprenticeships, Further, Adult and Higher Education.
- Develop sector-led improvement model, promoting provider-to-provider support.
- Capitalise on Havering's location to access opportunities for children and families.
- Raise aspirations of local communities to develop the digital skills required in today's world, and in the future.

9.3 Navigating Skills Routes

The Skills system is complicated. We will support residents with information and brokerage support to enable them to be able to access the opportunities available and improve their skills.

We will work with local skills providers to develop a local network so they build their understanding of the provision and support that is available in order to provide a joined up offer to residents.

We will utilise the Mayors Construction Academy and the Health and Social Care Academy in partnership with local employers to open up career ladders.

We will promote the transferability of digital skills in all employment sectors to encourage more diversity in our resident's career pathways.

9.4 Apprenticeships and Workforce Development

Apprenticeships have evolved from their previous form and can now represent an exciting option for both apprentice and employer. Employers are now appreciating the benefits brought by changes to funding, minimum requirements, and the development of occupation-focused standards that have enhanced the quality of apprenticeships.

The Council already works in partnership with the local education and training sector to provide a programme of activity that encourages young people to consider apprenticeships, including Higher Apprenticeships as a viable option after sixth form or college.

The Council offers work experience, apprenticeships and a Graduate Scheme that encourages residents to consider local authority career opportunities. By working with our public sector colleagues we could develop a more holistic offer that enables residents to utilise transferable skills through public service.

The Council will investigate utilising the Apprenticeship Levy Funds, where the opportunity arises, to fund the delivery of Apprenticeship standards within local businesses linked to the priority sectors for the area.

We will develop the education workforce through the Havering Academy of Leadership; Promoting apprenticeships and workforce development within other key sectors, and in particular engineering, logistics and manufacturing, and the digital and creative industries.

We will become proactive in bidding and securing funds to support residents working in low skilled and/or low paid employment to enhance their skills and enable them to improve their earnings.

9.5 Equal Access

Ensuring that all residents have equal access to the skills and employment opportunities that enables them to reach their aspirations is imperative.

People with disabilities are less likely to be employed even if are capable and wish to work. The Council, as a Disability Confident Employer, will act as an influencer, encouraging businesses in the area to become Disability Confident and promote the employment of individuals with disabilities including the promotion of the DWP Access to Work funds. It will do this by :

- Hosting and attending employer events promoting equal access, Disability Confident and
- Providing information and features on the employment support available to employers and residents through Council communications e.g. Living Magazine
- Promotion through employer facing services - e.g. licensing, council tax
- Holding targeted events - e.g. the International Day of the Disabled
- Seeking specialist training and support services that provide upskilling opportunities, especially in digital skills
- Working with employers to provide flexible working that supports individuals remaining in employment, and identify progression opportunities that enhances a person's career pathway
- Ensuring the Employment and skills team (Havering Works) and its services are accessible to people with disabilities enabling individuals to access employment opportunities.
- Ensuring the collaboration between the Community Development and Employment and Skills teams when working with local specialists in the community to link services for people with disabilities to enable a joined up offer to individuals, reduce duplication and where possible enhance the offer.
- Monitoring published data over time to measure the impact of its measures

Those in retirement are least likely to have basic digital skills, however these skills are required for day-to-day living, especially as core public services become digitalised. The Council will utilise funded programmes that offer digital skills and will support those who are not engaged and active online to ensure these residents are able to engage in the local economy.

10. Delivering the strategy

This is a three year Strategy, but designed to put in place programmes and approaches to economic growth that will achieve significant growth over the coming decades. We cannot achieve our ambitions without the involvement of our partners, and we need to have structures in place to agree joint interventions, co-ordinate activity and monitor achievements. The following paragraphs set out how we propose to do this.

10.1 Partnership and co-ordination

The Council is proud of the relationship it has developed with business in Havering, and is committed to maintaining and strengthening it in order to deliver its growth ambitions. Regular business network discussions have helped to inform the contents of this Strategy. We have now agreed with our key partners that with the increased complexity and intensity of regeneration programmes and economic interventions in the Borough, we need to develop partnership arrangements that can meet current challenges and engage a range of appropriate partners.

We are therefore planning to establish a Romford Forum to:

- Ensure that business activities are coordinated with the development programme in Romford
- Provide a consultative mechanism on council initiatives in and around Romford;
- Engage businesses across a wider area to discuss support and development of creative and digital industries, and workforce recruitment and development

We will establish a Rainham Riverside Forum to:

- Co-ordinating developments in and around Rainham SIL
- Provide a consultative mechanism on council initiatives in and around Rainham SIL
- Engage businesses across a wider area to discuss support and development of key sectors, including innovation and workforce recruitment and development

10.2 Demonstrating achievements

This will be done at the strategic level through monitoring key performance indicators relating to the high level objectives set out in the Strategy. The high level indicators are:

- Employment growth year on year (matching the rate of population growth)
- Growing the business base year on year
- Improving productivity rate
- Improving adult skills levels
- Improving business perceptions of the operating environment in Romford and Rainham SIL
- Minimising town centre vacancy rates

More detailed indicators will be put in place for programmes and projects implemented through council and partnership management structures.

10.3 Delivering Havering Council Corporate Themes

In developing this Inclusive Growth Strategy we have throughout borne in mind the delivery of the Council's overarching vision for its stewardship of Havering. We have in particular ensured that the key themes of Opportunities, Communities, Places, and Connections are all fully represented in its recommendations.

In fully integrating the Council's Employment and Skills Plan, we have ensured that our residents and business are placed at the centre of our thinking: our work is to deliver real benefits for the People who make up our Borough.

We recognise that the Council does not have control of all of the levers in influence: we have the power to convene our Communities to work together to deliver change for the better.

For all that is good about Havering, we recognise that we can perform better and be better; we can optimise our performance to play our part economically on the national and international stage while at the same time bringing the regeneration and reimagining of our built environment – our Places.

Finally, we know that our performance can only be optimised if we address the need to improve the Communications infrastructure that makes our success and growth sustainable and inclusive – highways, transport, data and workspace.

These are times of great challenge and great opportunity. It is the core purpose of this strategy to support this development so that the benefits can be felt by our entire community.