

People – Good jobs and greater earning power for all in West Berkshire

Short term: Now to March 2023

Put in place employment support for the newly-unemployed and underemployed in partnership with Berkshire Opportunities and the LEP, and continue to promote Kickstart, creating more temporary roles within WBC services and schools

Empower everyone to enter the workplace by developing projects with partners such as the LEP and educational providers, with a particular focus on those most impacted by Covid-19 i.e. young people, Ethnically diverse groups and women

Achieve skills legacy from major developments by embedding Employment and Skills Plans (ESPs) into major applications (via inclusion of policy in the Local Plan Review)

Improve digital skills by partnering with the LEP and schools, expanding coding club provision, bidding for funding for equipment and recruiting employers as volunteers

Ensure comprehensive careers advice is available by delivering an annual careers fayre, relaunching the Skills and Enterprise Partnership as an employer/educator forum and establishing a WBC work experience programme

Support the university centre at Newbury College by creating placements for social care students, working in partnership on ESPs and assisting with funding bids for expansion as appropriate

Create apprenticeships at West Berkshire Council including for low employment groups

Encourage uptake of apprenticeships across West Berkshire by creating a Community Apprenticeship Levy Fund and supporting the LEP's new Apprenticeship Hub

Create a more inclusive working environment by establishing a promotional campaign around disability confident scheme, delivering West Berkshire Wellbeing courses and World of Work programme

Medium term: April 23 to March 26

Long term/ongoing: April 26 to March 2030



Places – Prosperous communities

**Short term:
Now to March 2023**

Support town centres and High Streets across the district to deliver new uses, by seeking funding to improve public realm and space, and establishing a town centre grant scheme to drive footfall

Use Local Plan Review to deliver cohesive sustainable development, including embedding economic development priorities within and ensuring that the altered needs of businesses in the post-Covid landscape are considered

Enhance West Berkshire's leisure and tourism offer by working collaboratively on major projects such as Northcroft Lido and the development and implementation of new Culture and Leisure Strategies

Promote independent businesses in town centres as retail destinations including holding Small Business Saturday events and developing Shop Local branding and marketing activity to encourage more ethical, impactful shopping and purchase of services

Support and encourage rural diversification including in the racehorse industry by joining and contributing to WiRE, establishing a Rural Network to include rural businesses and estates, and supporting projects to 'green' farm infrastructure such as solar panels

Promote West Berkshire as a business destination and inform the business community of development within Newbury by holding annual New in Newbury conferences

Plan for the future of Thatcham and Hungerford Town Centres by submitting Local Growth Fund and other funding bids where available

Through the Berkshire Placemaking Board, seek project funding from Government through the Levelling Up Fund and similar revenue streams and identify opportunities to work alongside other public entities to bring forward co-location opportunities under the One Public Estate programme.

Ensure that Economic Development consequences are considered in the planning process by offering consultation advice/responses to major non-residential planning applications

Deliver the regeneration of the London Road Industrial Estate and Town Centre Master Plans with economic development at their core, including allowing for alternative and experimental uses

**Medium term:
April 23 to March 26**

**Long term/ongoing:
April 26 to March 2030**

Infrastructure - Futureproofing our infrastructure

Short term:
Now - March 2023

Further improve digital infrastructure, focussing on 'full fibre' and 5G coverage, by promoting it through the Local Plan Review, working in partnership with the LEP and schools and by maximising the benefits of superfast broadband, particularly in rural areas

Improve rail infrastructure by delivering Newbury Station improvements, Thatcham, Theale and Hungerford railway station projects and the Market Street development

Improve cycling infrastructure through the new Local Transport Plan and Environment Strategy, including A4 cycle lane plus further strategic network improvements as funding allows (aligns with Environment Strategy: Healthy Communities)

Enable the construction of more affordable housing, including affordable rented accommodation for young professionals, through the delivery and implementation of the new Housing Strategy and new Local Plan policies, and by working with the LEP to harness the Local Growth Fund

Support delivery of green infrastructure through the Environment Strategy Delivery Plan, including the development and implementation of the West Berkshire Tree Strategy and working closely with landowners and agri-businesses to explore opportunities for natural sequestration through environmental land management techniques (aligns with Environment Strategy: Carbon Neutral by 2030 and Working with our Communities)

Encourage uptake of greener modes of transport by promoting active commuter travel in planning consultations, connecting to the LEP's Berkshire-wide connected travel plan and encouraging the take-up of emerging transport technologies through collaboration with technology companies and government trials, and working with local businesses to promote sustainable travel by staff (aligns with Environment Strategy: Healthy Communities)

Medium term:
April 2023 – March 2026

Long term/ongoing:
April 2026- March 2030



Business environment – the best place to start and grow a business

Short term:
Now - March 2023

Support businesses that have been affected by Covid-19 to reopen and trade resiliently by bolstering our existing support (including business grants) and building closer relationships

Help start-up businesses to develop and grow by developing an incubator space business case and a 'one stop shop' business advice service and website signposting page and by ensuring new businesses have access to finance

Offer support to existing businesses by developing a soft landing business support package and referrals to Berkshire Growth Hub for bespoke advice

Promote the West Berkshire brand by producing an inward investment prospectus, working more closely with the LEP to encourage Foreign Direct Investment and developing a business engagement and networking events programme, including social media and geographical spread beyond Newbury

Remain business friendly as a council by ensuring our regulatory functions act as enablers, including annual business rate reviews, holding supplier forums and quarterly webinars to inform businesses of our work (e.g. on the budget and public protection), using the planning process to enhance strategic employment sites (e.g. Local Development Orders) and developing and implementing a Social Value Policy in procurement (aligns with Environment Strategy: Carbon Neutral by 2030)

Medium term:
April 2023 – March 2026

Long term/ongoing :
April 2026- March 2030

