

# TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL



## EXECUTIVE SERVICES

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**Chief Executive**

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**NB - This agenda contains proposals, recommendations and options. These do not represent Council policy or decisions until they have received proper consideration through the full decision making process.**

Contact: Committee Services  
[committee.services@tmbc.gov.uk](mailto:committee.services@tmbc.gov.uk)

14 February 2017

To: MEMBERS OF THE ECONOMIC REGENERATION ADVISORY BOARD  
(Copies to all Members of the Council)

Dear Sir/Madam

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the Economic Regeneration Advisory Board to be held in the Civic Suite, Gibson Building, Kings Hill, West Malling on Wednesday, 22nd February, 2017 commencing at 7.30 pm

Yours faithfully

JULIE BEILBY

Chief Executive

## A G E N D A

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**Matters for consideration in Private**

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The Chairman to move that the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting during consideration of any items the publication of which would disclose exempt information.

**PART 2 - PRIVATE**

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Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent due to special circumstances and of which notice has been given to the Chief Executive.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Cllr B J Luker (Chairman)  
Cllr F G Tombolis (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr M C Base  
Cllr R P Betts  
Cllr T Bishop  
Cllr J L Botten  
Cllr T I B Cannon  
Cllr S R J Jessel  
Cllr S M King

Cllr R D Lancaster  
Cllr Mrs S L Luck  
Cllr L J O'Toole  
Cllr Miss J L Sergison  
Cllr C P Smith  
Cllr B W Walker  
Cllr T C Walker

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Apologies for absence

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Declarations of interest

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## TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### ECONOMIC REGENERATION ADVISORY BOARD

Wednesday, 7th September, 2016

**Present:** Cllr B J Luker (Chairman), Cllr F G Tombolis (Vice-Chairman), Cllr M C Base, Cllr R P Betts, Cllr T Bishop, Cllr J L Botten, Cllr T I B Cannon, Cllr S M King, Cllr R D Lancaster, Cllr Mrs S L Luck, Cllr L J O'Toole, Cllr Miss J L Sergison and Cllr C P Smith

Councillors O C Baldock, P F Bolt, M A Coffin, N J Heslop and M R Rhodes were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B W Walker and T C Walker

#### **ERG 16/8 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

#### **ERG 16/9 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the notes of the meeting of the Economic Regeneration Advisory Board held on 24 February 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET

#### **ERG 16/10 WORK READINESS AND CAREERS ADVICE**

Decision Notice: D160064MEM

The report of the Chief Executive provided additional background to support the presentation given by Mike Rayner, Participation and Progression Manager for West Kent at Kent County Council, regarding the provision of careers advice, the key challenges faced and current initiatives to improve the work readiness of school leavers and job seekers. A draft Skills Action Plan, set out at Annex 1 to the report, provided details of a number of initiatives to support efforts to improve work readiness.

**RECOMMENDED:** That a Working Group of Members of the Council be established to assess the size and scope of the work readiness and skills issues, explore opportunities for working in partnership to improve communication between business and schools to create sustainable

employment streams and to report its findings to a future meeting of the Economic Regeneration Advisory Board.

### **ERG 16/11 SUPPORT FOR VILLAGE STORES INITIATIVE**

Decision Notice: D160065MEM

The report of the Chief Executive summarised the progress to date of the District and Local Centres Initiatives which had provided a variety of environmental improvements in retail areas to create a positive and supportive environment for local traders. The report provided an overview of a proposed 12 month scheme to support Village Stores within the Borough which would include the provision of 1-to-1 guidance and support from a specialist retail advisor through Action with Communities in Rural Kent's Rural Retail Service.

**RECOMMENDED:** That

- (1) the progress to date on the District and Local Retail Centres be noted;
- (2) if there is no evidence of tangible progress on either of the initiatives in Snodland and West Malling by the end of September 2016 at the latest, the proposal to withdraw funding for the current projects be approved; and
- (3) the Village Shops Initiative, as detailed in paragraph 1.3.2 of the report, be approved.

### **ERG 16/12 BUSINESS INCUBATOR PROPOSAL**

Decision Notice: D160066MEM

The report of the Chief Executive set out details of a proposal for the creation of a business facility to support the development of 'fledgling' businesses within vacant office space at Gibson Building, Kings Hill, as part of the Council's Economic Regeneration Strategy to facilitate economic growth within the Borough.

**RECOMMENDED:** That

- (1) the proposed Gibson Building Business Facility be supported in principle;
- (2) the engagement with key partners by the Economic Regeneration Officer be supported in order to help promote take up of the new facility by local businesses; and

- (3) a report regarding proposed financial arrangements related to the new facility be submitted to the Finance, Innovation and Property Advisory Board.

### **MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION**

#### **ERG 16/13 UPDATE ON PRIORITIES FOR 2016/17**

The report of the Chief Executive provided a detailed update on progress made on the Borough's Economic Regeneration Priorities over the last six months.

#### **ERG 16/14 WEST KENT PARTNERSHIP UPDATE**

The Minutes of the West Kent Partnership meeting held on 22 July 2016 were received and noted. Reference was made to the recent visit to West Kent by Christian Brodie, Chairman of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) on 8 July which had provided an opportunity to showcase key economic regeneration schemes linked to bids submitted to the third round of the Local Growth Fund.

### **MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE**

#### **ERG 16/15 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no items considered in private.

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm

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- Presentation from NIAB/EMR

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**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**ECONOMIC REGENERATION ADVISORY BOARD**

**22 February 2017**

**Report of the Chief Executive**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)**

**1 UPDATE ON THE BOROUGH ECONOMIC REGENERATION STRATEGY ACTION PLAN FOR 2016**

**To provide a detailed overview of the progress made in delivering the Economic Regeneration Strategy Action Plan during 2016.**

**1.1 Background**

1.1.1 At the Economic Regeneration Advisory Board on 23 June 2015, Report ERG 15/13 presented the Borough Economic Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan. It was recommended that the Borough Economic Regeneration Strategy be approved subject to a minor amendment to the 'success measure' for securing high speed broadband services across the Borough to reflect the Government's ambition of 95% by 2017.

1.1.2 This report provides the Board with information on progress regarding the actions set out under Chapter 8 of the Borough Economic Regeneration Strategy, covering the following topics:

- Business Advice and Support
- Loan Funding to Local Businesses
- Skills Development
- Work Readiness
- Infrastructure Projects
- Town and Retail Centres
- LEADER Programme
- Better Business for All
- Broadband
- Inward Investment
- Tourism
- Tonbridge & Malling Local Plan

**1.2 Progress to Date**

1.2.1 Progress on delivering the Action Plan is set out in Appendix 1. This illustrates that overall good progress is being made on a wide range of initiatives.

1.2.2 By using a RAG analysis of the actions set out in the Strategy, one can see that there are no longer any projects that have a 'red' status. The new Kent and Medway Business Fund officially launched on 12 January 2017 and will be allocating £5 million of 0% interest loans to Kent businesses during 2017.

- 1.2.3 There have also been a number of achievements over this period, most notably the award of £4.64m of Local Growth Fund Round 3 funding towards the Leigh Flood Storage Area (including Hildenborough) and East Peckham, as well as a well-used programme of business support.
- 1.2.4 Unlike the update for 2015, there is now enough statistical information to start illustrating initial trends, as set out in Appendix 2. Under the heading 'Previous Performance', some of the figures are set out in bold. These are figures that have either recently become available or are modifications of previous estimates. This has meant that some of the figures for 2013 and 2014 are quite different to those originally set out. For example, the 3 year business survival rate for 2013 was originally estimated at over 70%, and this has subsequently been downgraded to 60.2%.
- 1.2.5 As is evident from the information in Appendix 2, most of the trends are moving in a positive direction. However, the number of VAT de-registrations was higher than expected for 2015 (540). Despite this, there was still a net gain of businesses of 235 (775 VAT registrations minus 540 VAT de-registrations).
- 1.2.6 In addition, the 3-year survival rate information is still awaited for 2015. However, it is highly unlikely that the target of 80% survival will be met, given that the original benchmark statistics referred to in 1.2.3 have been downgraded.
- 1.2.7 It is therefore, proposed that the targets relating to certain indicators are amended to reflect this in the following way:

### **3 YEAR SURVIVAL RATE**

	<b>Original Target</b>	<b>Proposed Target</b>
<b>2015</b>	80%	68%
<b>2016</b>	82%	70%
<b>2017</b>	84%	72%
<b>2018</b>	85%	74%

### **% 16-64 CLAIMING OUT OF WORK BENEFITS**

	<b>Original Target</b>	<b>Proposed Target</b>
<b>2015</b>	6.9%	6.0%
<b>2016</b>	6.8%	5.7%
<b>2017</b>	6.7%	5.6%
<b>2018</b>	6.6%	5.5%



### 1.3 Proposed Priorities for 2016/17

1.3.7 The priorities for 2017/18 are to some extent influenced by progress made in specific areas as well as the level of future financial resources.

- To work with Kent County Council to effectively market and promote the **Kent & Medway Business Fund Programme** in the Borough now that it has become operational.
- To continue to promote the new **LEADER Programme** to Tonbridge & Malling businesses and to co-ordinate business advice for prospective applicants.
- To work with the **Kent & Medway Growth Hub** and business support providers to help start-up businesses and aim to increase the 3 year survival rate.
- To deliver **skills development and work readiness initiatives** that support our young people and local businesses (dealt with as a separate item on this agenda)
- To increase communication with the local business community through the development of the **Tonbridge & Malling Business Bulletin**, the regular updating of the TMBC business pages and regular social media activity.
- To support the Tonbridge Town Team and other local traders groups with initiatives and events that **support our town and retail centres**.
- To work with Kent County Council in addressing remaining **broadband** issues and mobile blackspots in the Borough.
- To provide support, information and guidance on the local economic impact of **key infrastructure projects**, including the Leigh Flood Storage Area.
- To work closely with NIAB EMR on accessing government funding for the proposed **Bio-tech Hub at East Malling**.

### 1.4 Legal Implications

1.4.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### 1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.5.1 The priorities as set out above can be dealt with within existing Economic Development budgets.

### 1.6 Risk Assessment

1.6.1 Not Applicable.

### 1.7 Equality Impact Assessment

1.8 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

**1.9 Recommendations**

1.9.1 That the Borough Economic Regeneration Strategy Action Plan update, as set out in Appendix 1, **BE ENDORSED**.

1.9.2 That the amendments to the targets as set out in 1.2.7 **BE AGREED**.

1.9.3 That the priorities for 2017/18 as set out under 1.3.1 **BE AGREED**.

The Chief Executive confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

Nil

contact: Jeremy Whittaker,  
Economic Regeneration  
Officer

Julie Beilby  
Chief Executive

# Appendix 1: Economic Regeneration Strategy Update

Action	Success Measure	Achievements during 2016/17
<p>Deliver free business advice and support focusing on the needs of entrepreneurs, micro businesses and home based businesses.</p>	<p>The number of local businesses supported. <b>Target: 75 per year.</b></p>	<p>During 2016/17 the business support programme across the West Kent area reduced in scope as the one-off Growth Hub funding via Kent County Council came to an end. Despite this, there has continued to be considerable activity in this area, with the target of 75 businesses being supported having been exceeded by February 2017.</p> <p>Over the course of the 2016/17 financial year, the following were delivered in Tonbridge and Malling as a result of our support:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Generic Workshops with follow on support (through Pro-Actions, FSB and the Institute of Chartered Accountants): <b>62 businesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 24 May 2016 in Aylesford – Marketing and Social Media – <b>17</b> businesses</li> <li>- 08 June 2016 in Tonbridge – Sales and Winning More Business – <b>6</b> businesses</li> <li>- 30 June 2016 in Kings Hill – Preparing your Business for Growth – <b>15</b> businesses</li> <li>- 26 January 2017 in Tonbridge – FSB Business Breakfast – <b>24</b> businesses</li> <li>- 28 February 2016 in Kings Hill – Sales and Winning More Business - TBC</li> </ul> </li> <li>2) 1-2-1 Business Support (through Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- From April –June 2016 (end of contract) – <b>8 businesses</b> from T&amp;M Borough received advice and support.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3) Support for Home-Based Businesses (through Centre for Micro-Business) has so far supported <b>11 businesses</b> located in Tonbridge &amp; Malling</li> <li>4) My Incubator Web Chat facility – informal advice at the click of a button. <b>15</b> T&amp;M businesses accessed this facility between April and December 2016 (most recent figures).</li> <li>5) Rural Pubs Programme – through Pro-Actions. A total of 15 pubs across West Kent accessed this programme of support, with <b>5</b> located in Tonbridge &amp; Malling borough.</li> <li>6) Village Stores Initiative – through Action with Communities in Rural Kent – to date <b>3 village stores</b> in the borough are being supported through the programme.</li> </ol> <p><b>Total Number of Local Businesses supported (as of February 2017) – 104 businesses</b></p>
<p>Secure additional 0% interest loan funding to support local businesses with growth potential.</p>	<p>New fund established. External funding successfully obtained by <b>10 local businesses</b> successfully applying for funding per year.</p>	<p>The new Kent and Medway Business Fund was soft launched by Kent County Council in December 2016, with a formal launch on 12 January 2017 at Westenhanger Castle and a call for new expressions of interest closing on 19 January 2017. There will be a number of further calls over the course of 2017. TMBC have promoted this new fund via the Economic Regeneration E-Bulletin to over 950 local businesses.</p>

# Appendix 1: Economic Regeneration Strategy Update

<p>Help broker engagement between local employers and local training providers across the West Kent area.</p>	<p>Establishment of an active West Kent Business Skills Forum.</p>	<p>Please refer to the 'Skills and Work Readiness' report which is also being presented at the Economic Regeneration Advisory Board on 22 February 2017. In short, this report sets out a number of actions following the Skills Forum that took place in November 2016. These are proposed under the following headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Careers and Enterprise Company – establishment of an adviser network for West Kent</li> <li>• Make it Work Event – industry related challenges set by local businesses for young people to solve.</li> <li>• Taster Days – giving young people the opportunity to get experience of the workplace.</li> <li>• Speed Networking Event – opportunity for young people to discuss careers options with local businesses.</li> </ul>
<p>Work with partners to promote greater work readiness via training, apprenticeships and support for self-employment.</p>	<p>15% reduction in the number of ESA clients over the strategy period.</p>	<p>At the start of the strategy period, the most up to date statistics (from February 2015) illustrated the following:</p> <p>Total Claimants – <b>6,440</b> (equating to 8.5% of residents aged 16-64 years). Of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job Seekers – 850</li> <li>• ESA and Incapacity Benefits – 2,780</li> <li>• Lone Parents – 690</li> <li>• Carers – 970</li> <li>• Disabled – 870</li> <li>• Bereaved – 160</li> <li>• Others - 120</li> </ul> <p>Main out of work benefits claimants (Job Seekers, ESA and IB, Lone Parents and others) numbered 4,440.</p> <p>The most up to date statistics from the Office for National Statistics (from May 2016) now show that the picture has changed to a total claimant figure of <b>6,120</b>, with a break down as follows (please note that figures are rounded up to the nearest 10):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job Seekers – 540</li> <li>• ESA and Incapacity Benefits – 2,770</li> <li>• Lone Parents – 640</li> <li>• Carers – 1080</li> <li>• Disabled – 840</li> <li>• Bereaved – 180</li> <li>• Others - 90</li> </ul> <p>Main out of work benefits claimants (Job Seekers, ESA and IB, Lone Parents and others) numbered 4,030 representing a <b>drop of around 9.2%</b> since February 2015. <b>However, ESA and Incapacity Benefits claimants actually only fell slightly during this period by 0.4%.</b></p> <p>Whilst further work clearly needs to be done to reduce these figures further, TMBC has been pro-active in building upon the good work during 2016/17 to work on initiatives to support people into employment and training, such as:</p>

# Appendix 1: Economic Regeneration Strategy Update

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The West Kent Jobs and Training Fairs are continuing on a regular basis – in September 2016, over 300 job seekers attended the fair in Tunbridge Wells, with feedback from the 30+ businesses that attended being overwhelmingly positive. The next West Kent Jobs and Training Fair is on 30 March 2017 at the Angel Centre in Tonbridge and will involve over 25 local businesses with job opportunities available, as well as seminars for job seekers giving practical advice on funding employment.</li> <li>• Jobs Clubs continue to be run in Snodland, East Malling and Trench through Clarion Housing Group.</li> </ul>
<p>Identify a pipeline of potential projects to support key transport infrastructure and business support needs including improvements to the Leigh Flood Storage Area, other local flooding issues and traffic pinch points.</p>	<p>2 priority schemes funded over the strategy period including improvements to the Leigh Flood Storage Area.</p>	<p>At the Economic Regeneration Advisory Board on 23 September 2015, the updated ‘West Kent Priorities for Growth Strategy’ was presented. It was decided by the Board to establish the Leigh Flood Storage Area as its top transformational priority, with a clear second priority given to the investment required at the East Malling Research site.</p> <p>On 22 March 2016, Greg Clark MP announced that there would be a Local Growth Fund Round 3. The Borough Council worked closely with partners to raise the profile of both projects and submit business cases to the South East LEP in July 2016.</p> <p>In the Autumn Statement on 23 November 2016, an approximate indication of funding for regions was given as “£492 million to London and the south east”. However, it was not until 02 February 2017 that an official announcement was made for individual projects. <b>The good news is that T&amp;MBC, in partnership with the EA and KCC, was successful in securing £4.64m towards the Leigh Flood Storage Area (including Hildenborough) and East Peckham works.</b></p> <p>The following is a very brief outline of the proposal as per the submitted business case:</p> <p>Leigh Flood Storage Area (LGF3 funding request of £4.64m): The primary aim of this project is to provide flood defences for Tonbridge and East Peckham in order to achieve greater protection for existing homes and businesses, and to enable new residential and commercial development to take place and meet the objectively assessed needs of the area. Key SMART targets are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of East Peckham Defences by April 2019</li> <li>• Completion of Leigh Flood Storage Area works by July 2022</li> <li>• 2,308 homes defended from the 1 in 100 year event by 2022</li> <li>• 283 businesses defended from the 1 in 100 year event by 2022</li> <li>• 200 homes completed by 2022 (1,950 new homes completed by 2031)*</li> <li>• 70 direct jobs created and safeguarded by 2022</li> <li>• 500 associated jobs created by 2022 (2,900 new jobs created on unlocked employment sites by 2031)*</li> <li>• 2.5ha of new employment land by 2022 (Over 13ha of new employment land in use by 2031)*</li> </ul> <p>*Figures for the period up to 2031 have been provided to illustrate the considerable beneficial impact the scheme would potentially have on the delivery of the emerging Tonbridge and Malling Local Plan. Section 6.2 provides annual figures up to 2031.</p> <p>Unfortunately the proposals for East Malling Research (LGF3 funding request of £6.157m) were not successful in securing LGF3</p>

# Appendix 1: Economic Regeneration Strategy Update

		<p>funding. The overview of this project is as follows:</p> <p>To enable NIAB EMR to build upon its existing services to industry and deliver significant business growth in the horticultural, agricultural technology and bio-tech sectors with particular emphasis on the commercialisation with industrial partners of existing intellectual property (IP), generation of new IP, new products and services and value-add at source for the primary producer. The strategic aim is to improve the scale and resilience of the regional and national economy including the creation of opportunities to export, and to place East Malling at the centre of a globally significant Agri-bio-tech cluster. Key SMART targets are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More than 30 companies supported in new product development or improved productivity</li> <li>• 8 new fruit varieties launched with 2 subject to export</li> <li>• 1 new crop introduced to the UK with EMS support</li> <li>• 4 new engineering products supported to market</li> <li>• 4 new chemical or bio products supported to market</li> <li>• 25 trials to support product</li> <li>• 25 innovative projects.</li> </ul> <p>Using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3,154m2 of state of the art facilities created by 2019</li> <li>• 25 FTE high skilled jobs created by 2019</li> <li>• 87 FTE high skilled jobs safeguarded by 2019</li> </ul> <p>To Catalyse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 950 indirect jobs created nationally, with the largest impact in the South East by 2025</li> <li>• 7,500 indirect jobs safeguarded in Kent in horticultural businesses by 2025</li> <li>• £47m boost to industry per annum by 2025</li> </ul> <p>With the announcement that there is likely to be an Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund opening in April 2017, which is aiming to increase Government spending on R&amp;D, it would appear that the proposals for a biotech hub at East Malling would fit well with the aspirations of Central Government and give some hope for funding in the future.</p>
<p>Bring forward further retail and mixed use developments and townscape improvements to strengthen the retail appeal of Tonbridge town centre.</p>	<p>Planning permissions in place by end of the strategy period.</p>	<p><b>Retail and Mixed Use Developments</b></p> <p>There have been some retail and commercial developments during 2016/17 which have the potential to further strengthen the town centre, these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of a new M&amp;S Simply Food and McDonalds at Cannon Lane.</li> <li>• A range of new independents along the High Street including – Havet (Turkish Restaurant); ArtSpring Gallery (Arts Collective); Nancy’s Team Room and Sulston’s Kitchen (Health Food)</li> <li>• On the edge of the town centre there have also been additions to the leisure offer – such as Jump In Trampoline Arena at Morley Road which opened in October 2016.</li> </ul>

# Appendix 1: Economic Regeneration Strategy Update

		<p>There are also a number of other developments in the pipeline which will progress during 2017, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new ‘state of the art’ medical centre at the site of the former Teen and Twenty Club.</li> <li>• Fuggles Beer Café to open on the High Street in 2017</li> <li>• Introduction of retail chains to Cannon Lane, including Go Outdoors, Home Bargains, Aldi and Costa Coffee.</li> <li>• Subject to planning approval, the creation of an instruction centre for indoor climbing and indoor skiing at Morley Road.</li> </ul> <p><b>Townscape Improvements</b></p> <p>The £2.65m Tonbridge High Street regeneration scheme was completed in June 2016 and has helped to create a much more pleasant visitor experience, allowing cafes and restaurants to spill out into the street, and reducing the dominance of traffic along the High Street. New directional signage has also been installed to give visitors clearer information on how to get around the town by foot. In addition, a partnership between the Borough Council and the Environment Agency to improve flood defence for the town has led to the creation of a fantastic new open space along the River Medway at the Tonbridge Town Lock. These improvements also include a new boathouse and telemetry system, which were completed in Spring 2016.</p> <p>An upgrade to the River Walk area also started in November 2016. Once completed in March 2017, this area will be completely repaved, with new seating and planting and opportunities for local eateries to stretch out on to the waterfront.</p> <p>Having gone out to consultation in November 2016, plans to improve the area around Tonbridge Station are currently being drawn up, and (subject to sufficient funding) will be implemented during 2018/19.</p>
<p>Engage effectively with town centre and local centre traders and extend support to neighbourhood centres.</p>	<p>Establish a town centre business forum</p> <p>Launch a grant scheme for neighbourhood centres.</p>	<p><b>Town Centre Forum</b></p> <p>The Tonbridge Town Team has acted as an effective mechanism for delivering positive action in the town during 2016/2017, including the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Dragon Boat Race has become a regular feature in September each year, attracting thousands of people in to the town.</li> <li>• Growth in membership of the Tonbridge Loyalty Card (TLC) – with around 60 businesses and in the region of 500 regular users of the card.</li> <li>• Promotional activity – the ‘What’s On’ booklet has become a regular publication (every three months), promoting the wide range of events that take place in the local area.</li> </ul> <p><b>District and Local Centres - Grant Schemes</b></p> <p>During 2016/17 the following progress has been made:</p> <p>District Centres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Snodland – following a meeting with Snodland Town Council, funding was withdrawn from the Snodland wi-fi project. Although considerable time had been given to Snodland Chamber of Commerce to deliver the project, it became</li> </ul>

# Appendix 1: Economic Regeneration Strategy Update

		<p>increasingly clear that they did not have the resources to bring the initiative forward. Instead, funding has been approved for the creation of new, accessible meeting and function rooms at the Snodland Town Council offices. Currently such facilities are not available in Snodland, but through refurbishment and the construction of an external lift, local businesses and business rep. organisations will have a free venue for meetings, network events, seminars and workshops.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- West Malling – a planning application was approved in December 2016 for the introduction of new signage in the centre of West Malling and, as of January 2017, WMPC are liaising with highways contractors to implement the works. WMPC have also agreed a contribution of £5,000 towards the project.</li> <li>- Quarry Hill (Tonbridge) – the foundation for the proposed artwork at Quarry Hill was completed in January 2017, with the local artist Guy Portelli including artwork from local schoolchildren in to the overall design. The artwork itself is scheduled to be installed in March 2017 once a lamp post has been moved further away from the foundation.</li> </ul> <p>Local Centres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The last of the local centres (Plaxtol) was completed in August 2016, with improvements to the entrance of the village car park (which serves the small number of shops).</li> </ul>
<p>Promote the take up of LEADER grants by rural Borough businesses.</p>	<p>25 grants awarded to Borough rural businesses.</p>	<p>The LEADER Programme is funded by DEFRA and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), with the West Kent LEADER being awarded €2,266,000 for the period 2015-2020 to deliver the strategy and support the rural economy of West Kent.</p> <p>Since opening in September 2016, TMBC have been helping to promote the scheme through the use of the TMBC website and social media, as well as working with West Kent partners to provide additional business support for prospective applicants.</p> <p>To date there have been 9 applications from T&amp;M businesses to the West Kent LEADER Programme. Of these, 2 have subsequently been withdrawn, 2 have been approved and the remaining 5 are working their way through the process. The total value of approved projects, and those working their way through the approval process, is well over £530,000 (grants are normally calculated at 40% of total costs).</p>
<p>Adopt a corporate ‘open for business’ approach across all council services.</p>	<p>100% positive feedback from businesses engaging with the council.</p>	<p>The Better Business For All (BBFA) initiative for Kent &amp; Medway is a partnership aimed at improving relationships between regulatory bodies and businesses, making access to information easier and helping to create economic growth. TMBC has been at the forefront of this work with the Chief Environmental Health Officer at TMBC chairing meetings up until the end of 2016, and the Economic Regeneration Officer at TMBC acting as the Kent Economic Development Officer Group (KEDOG) representative.</p> <p>Progress during 2016 has seen the following developments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch of the BBFA Charter.</li> <li>• Strengthened links with the Kent and Medway Growth Hub</li> <li>• Increased numbers of positive case studies illustrating the way regulatory services have supported economic growth.</li> <li>• Development of a new regulation booklet for start-up businesses - <a href="http://dev6.nvweb.co.uk/wp-">http://dev6.nvweb.co.uk/wp-</a></li> </ul>



# Appendix 1: Economic Regeneration Strategy Update

		<p><a href="content/uploads/2016/06/BBfA-startup-brochure-2016.pdf">content/uploads/2016/06/BBfA-startup-brochure-2016.pdf</a></p> <p>During 2017, the following activities are planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed BBfA within the strategic SELEP grouping</li> <li>• Carry out further regulator training sessions following the success of these in 2015.</li> <li>• Build on the Communications Strategy of 2016, to include greater level of social media marketing</li> <li>• Identify funding streams to ensure continuation of activities.</li> <li>• Start to evidence impact of BBfA in our business communities.</li> </ul>
<p>Work with partners to secure high speed broadband services across the Borough to meet local business needs and to address local problems with mobile phone coverage.</p>	<p>95% coverage of the Borough by 2018/19.</p>	<p>By the end of 2018 (when the BDUK Phase 2 project completes), it is forecast that superfast broadband coverage will be around 96%, although this is subject to the extent to which the commercial rollout proceeds as planned and the level of provision on new housing developments in the Borough.</p> <p>As highlighted previously, Kings Hill was identified as a focus area due to inconsistencies in the broadband service. KCC have been working with Liberty to address provision to existing households and to plan proactively for future housing provision. The result has been that Call Flow have been working on providing fibre to the premises at Kate Reed Wood Estate and Airfield Estate, with BT also making arrangements to provide fibre to the premises to new housing developments at Kings Hill.</p> <p>Additional works have also been undertaken at Offham, Fairseat and Stansted and Aylesford.</p> <p>Initial discussions are taking place regarding the possibility of a Phase 3 roll out to look at what actions could feasibly be undertaken to improve superfast broadband coverage further, although no decisions have been made at this time.</p>
<p>Foster additional inward investment to the Borough via the promotion of vacant sites and existing premises.</p>	<p>20% increase in number of successful inward investment Borough projects handled by Locate In Kent.</p>	<p>For the year up to March 2016, Locate in Kent worked with 4 companies that relocated in to Tonbridge &amp; Malling and created 743 jobs. This was by far the highest number of jobs experienced by any district/borough in Kent and Medway (the next highest being Medway with 422 jobs).</p> <p>Across West Kent as a whole during this period, Locate in Kent supported 11 relocations creating 1372 jobs.</p> <p>As of February 2017, Locate in Kent currently have 60 active projects where the business is interested in relocating to Tonbridge &amp; Malling. Of these, 10 of the companies are in the construction sector, 8 in manufacturing and 8 in retail and wholesale. 18 of the companies are Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), with a third of these being from the United States, and a couple each from France, Germany and Japan.</p>
<p>Support the development of the local tourism sector to increase local spend and promote</p>	<p>10% increase in local spend by 2018/19.</p>	<p>At the time of adopting the Economic Regeneration Strategy, the most up to date statistics (Cambridge Model 2013) illustrated that the impact of tourism in the borough was:</p> <p><b>Total Visitor Spend - £129,219,000</b> Of which:</p>

# Appendix 1: Economic Regeneration Strategy Update

<p>employment</p>		<p>Staying Visitors from the UK - £25,381,000          Staying Visitors from Overseas - £11,925,000          Day Visitors - £80,875,000          Other Visitor Related Spend - £11,038,000</p> <p>Having been commissioned by Visit Kent, the Cambridge Model has just been completed for 2015 and shows the following trends:</p> <p>Total Visitor Spend - <b>£134,500,000</b>          Of which:          Staying Visitors from the UK - £25,500,000          Staying Visitors from Overseas - £12,500,000          Day Visitors - £81,500,000          Other Visitor Related Spend - £15,000,000</p> <p>This equates to an increase in visitor spend of <b>4.1%</b> so far.</p> <p>During 2016/17, there have been a number of activities that have helped to stimulate greater spend in the tourism sector including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Events and Promotion – including Music@Malling, Wrotham Festival of Light, Tonbridge Town Carnival, Summer Band Concerts, Tonbridge Arts Festival, Medieval Fair and Dragonboat racing, open air cinema at Tonbridge Castle and the Tonbridge Food &amp; Drink Festival as well as the ongoing production of a What’s On booklet to promote local events.</li> <li>- Supported Heritage Open Days across the Borough with activities at venues including Tonbridge Castle, Hadlow Tower, Aylesford Pottery, Kings Hill Control Tower and the Twitch Heritage Centre in West Malling.</li> <li>- Improved café and restaurant culture in a number of our towns, especially in Tonbridge and West Malling.</li> </ul>
<p>Support the development of a new Tonbridge and Malling Local Plan, including the identification of new employment sites.</p>	<p>Adoption of the Local Plan in 2017.</p>	<p>In the case of employment sites, the key evidence base comprises the Employment Land Review and the Economic Futures document which highlight a quantitative need for further industrial land and a qualitative need for further office accommodation, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New industrial sites/extensions to existing sites are required as well as the protection of and improvements to existing stock – a shortfall of 3.2-33ha in industrial land needs to be planned for the period up to 2031</li> <li>• There is scope for Tonbridge to play a greater role regarding industrial provision.</li> <li>• There is limited quantitative need for new offices provision – but where it does exist, highest demand in office sector is in the 1-5,000 sq. ft. bracket. There are clear indications the market is moving from larger to small and flexible accommodation.</li> <li>• There is a qualitative case for better quality, modern office space for small and start-up businesses.</li> </ul> <p>Following the completion of the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) in September 2015, the council undertook an 8-</p>

# Appendix 1: Economic Regeneration Strategy Update

		<p>week Regulation 18 'Issues and Options' consultation on a proposed development strategy for inclusion in the new Local Plan. This proposed development strategy includes a number of proposed new employment allocations, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Land at Little Postern, Tonbridge (10.76 ha)</li><li>• Former Spring Tavern site, Wrotham (2.56 ha)</li><li>• North of M20 Junction 5 (7.27 ha)</li><li>• Land at East Malling Research, East Malling (7.53 ha)</li><li>• Land south of Hermitage Court (1.39 ha)</li><li>• Branbridges Wharf, East Peckham (0.99 ha)</li></ul> <p>Along with the loss of some existing provision where this is now deemed better provided elsewhere, such as at Drayton Road Industrial Estate (circa 1.8 ha).</p> <p>This consultation closed on 25 November 2016, with over 1,300 responses received. These responses are currently being analysed ahead of a further consultation of the draft plan at the end of 2017.</p> <p>Despite this solid progress, it should be noted that there are some factors outside the control of the council that could have an impact on the timetable, such as the timeliness of contributions from key infrastructure providers and statutory consultees and the continuing planning reform agenda.</p>
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## Appendix 2 – Monitoring and Reviewing of the Strategy

Economic Indicator	Previous Performance				Trend 2011-2014	Targets Vs Actuals								Current Trend
	2011	2012	2013	2014		2015 Target	2015 Actual	2016 Target	2016 Actual	2017 Target	2017 Actual	2018 Target	2018 Actual	
VAT Registrations (Start-Ups)	550	545	675	<b>715</b>		675	<b>775</b>	680		685		690		
VAT De-registrations	450	515	510	<b>475</b>		500	<b>540</b>	490		480		470		
3 Year Survival Rates	65%	59%	<b>60.2%</b>	<b>63.6%</b>		80%	<b>TBC</b>	82%		84%		85%		<b>TBC</b>
Median Weekly Full-Time Earnings (Workplace Based)	£533.80	£491.90	£527.70	£529.20		£535	<b>£518.8</b>	£545	<b>£550.8</b>	£555		£565		
Unemployment Rate (Claimant Count)	1.9%	2.1%	1.8%	1.2%		1.1%	<b>1.0%</b>	1.0%		0.9%		0.8%		
% 16-64 claiming out of work benefits	7.1%	7.4%	7.0%	<b>6.2%</b>		6.9%	<b>5.8%</b>	6.8%		6.7%		6.6%		

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**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**ECONOMIC REGENERATION ADVISORY BOARD**

**22 February 2017**

**Report of the Chief Executive**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)**

**1 SKILLS AND WORK READINESS**

**This report provides feedback on the findings of the Skills Panel in November 2016, and sets out a series of actions which will help contribute towards improving skills attainment and careers guidance.**

**1.1 Background**

1.1.1 As requested by the Economic Regeneration Advisory Board in September 2016, a Skills Panel (comprising Members, Officers and a representative from the Kent Education Business Partnership) was convened on 09 November 2016 to discuss some of the key challenges and possible solutions to the skills and work-readiness agenda in the borough.

1.1.2 To aid the discussion, a short paper setting out key statistical information was provided to the panel. This paper is attached to this report (see Appendix 1).

**1.2 Overview of the Discussion**

1.2.1 Key issues raised by Members included:

- Although things are changing, there is still currently too much emphasis on academia/university as a route to employment, at the expense of vocational training and apprenticeships.
- Where there is a focus on apprenticeships, there is currently not enough focus on higher level and degree apprenticeships.
- In many schools there is a general lack of awareness amongst young people of their career options. This is in part due to a lack of professional careers advice, with the responsibility falling to teachers that are often not well-informed themselves.
- Need to be more businesses going into schools (both primary and secondary schools) to offer advice on employability skills, and for more school visits to local businesses to help young people and teachers build an initial understanding of the work place.

- In addition, need more work experience opportunities for young people to help them gain a greater appreciation of how businesses work.
- Work readiness is a key issue that has been raised by businesses. This includes the softer skills that are required in order to fit in to a work environment.
- Churches and voluntary sector can assist with work experience, but are generally not used enough.

1.2.2 With the above issues in mind, and recognising that there are a number of initiatives already being delivered (as set out in Appendix 1), the Skills Panel then looked at potential additional actions that could be undertaken by the Borough Council that would add value to this agenda. These included:

- **Engage with the Careers and Enterprise Company and Kent County Council (through the West Kent Partnership) to establish an enterprise adviser network across West Kent.** This measure would help to forge stronger links between education establishments and the private sector through establishing a number of local business mentors to help secondary schools in the area with setting up and providing good quality careers advice for their students - <https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/>
- **Explore a possible ‘Make it Work’ event via the Kent Education Business Partnership.** This initiative involves Year 10 students being set work related challenges by local businesses (and potentially also voluntary sector groups) that can run over the course of a number of days. Students are selected to work with a particular employer based upon their career aspirations and general abilities. In previous events elsewhere in the county, challenges have included designing a bomb detector, designing offices for research staff, creating a campaign to raise awareness of skin cancer, and to draw up plans for a housing development.
- **Explore possible ‘taster’ days via Kent EBP and promotion of work experience.** Either as a follow on to the ‘Make it Work’ event or as a separate initiative, to enable young people to get real life work place experience for a couple of days with local businesses.
- **Investigate setting up a ‘speed networking’ event with the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and local SMEs to engage hard to reach young people.** Having discussed this initiative with the FSB, this event gives local businesses an opportunity to forge strong links with a local school, share experience of running a business and meet potential young employees. The format of the event elsewhere in the county has been for students take part in workshops related to work readiness whilst business owners attend a seminar on a current topic, such as a new initiative or change in legislation. Then, afterwards both groups meet together for facilitated speed-networking.



### 1.3 Proposed Next Steps:

- 1.3.1 **Careers and Enterprise Company:** some initial exploratory work has been undertaken already through an informal working group comprising the West Kent Partnership, the 3 West Kent local authorities, Kent County Council and the Careers and Enterprise Company to pull together funding for a network co-ordinator, who will work directly with local businesses and schools to improve relationships between the two for the mutual benefit of students and employers.
- 1.3.2 The proposed breakdown of contributions is as follows:
- Careers and Enterprise Company - £25,000
  - Hadlow Group - £15,000
  - West Kent Partnership - £5,500
  - Sevenoaks DC - £1,500
  - Tunbridge Wells Borough Council - £1,500
  - Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council - £1,500
- 1.3.3 It is therefore proposed that a contribution of **£1,500 per annum for three years (2017/18 – 2019/20)** be put towards this initiative in order to guarantee the Borough Council maintains a voice on decision-making and ensuring maximum benefit for Tonbridge & Malling. This funding will be taken from existing Economic Development budgets.
- 1.3.4 **‘Make it Work’ Event and ‘Taster Days’:** initial discussions have taken place with the Kent Education Business Partnership, who have expressed an interest in supporting the Council in delivering these events and offering up match-funding themselves as a contribution. At this initial stage, it is proposed that a contribution of **£2,000 for 2017/18** from existing Economic Development budgets be used to carry out two ‘Make it Work’ Events involving 2 local schools and local businesses, and look to use these events as a route in to setting up a selection of ‘Taster Days’.
- 1.3.5 **‘Speed Networking Event’:** the next steps would be to work with the Federation of Small Businesses to identify a local secondary school or schools that are interested in taking part in this event. This could conceivably be done in liaison with the Careers and Enterprise Company, who could also promote the mentoring scheme to local businesses.
- 1.3.6 Once willing schools are identified, then dates would be established and the event would be promoted via social media and newsletters.
- 1.3.7 It is expected that the cost of holding these events would be low as the school would act as the venue. However, a nominal budget towards this initiative of **£500 for 2017/18** is suggested. Again, this would be from existing Economic Development budgets.

## 1.4 Legal Implications

1.4.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## 1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.5.1 These are addressed in Section 1.3 of this report.

## 1.6 Risk Assessment

1.6.1 Not applicable.

## 1.7 Equality Impact Assessment

1.7.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

## 1.8 Recommendations

1.8.1 That the feedback from the Skills Panel is noted and the proposed next steps, as detailed under 1.3 of this report, **BE APPROVED**.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and the Chief Executive confirm that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

None

contact: Jeremy Whittaker,  
Economic Regeneration  
Officer

Julie Beilby  
Chief Executive

# Tonbridge & Malling – Workforce Skills Overview

## November 2016

### 1. Introduction:

This paper aims to provide information that is useful in aiding discussion on the issue of work readiness and skills attainment. In the first section, some contextual statistics are provided to provide an overall feel for how the local economy is performing, what sectors are well-represented and growing in the borough, as well as some of the challenges these sectors face. The second part of this paper looks at what activities and support the Borough Council has been involved in to date.

### 2. Statistical Information:

2.1 The information below simply provides some background information on the local economy that highlights key issues relating to workforce and skills.

Measure	Source & Date	T&M	KCC Area
% of residents leaving Kent and Medway to work	Census 2011	24%	16%
Average weekly earnings (K&M residents)	ONS 2015	£640.80	£552
Average weekly earnings (K&M workers)	ONS 2015	£518.8	£504.10
Unemployment	ONS Annual Population Survey April 2015- Mar 2016	4% unemployed 15.9% economically inactive	6% unemployed 22% economically inactive
Unemployment rates 18-24 years	ONS Claimant Count Aug 2016	1.6%	3.5% (relates to K&M)
NEETs (Not in Employment, Education or Training)	KCC 2014	3.5%	4.7%
Deprivation Extent - % living in 20% most deprived areas	IMD2015	1%	-
Graduate level skills (residents aged 16 and over)	Census 2011	27%	25%
Residents aged 16 and over with no qualifications	Census 2011	20%	22%
Rank – Education, Skills and Qualifications	IMD2015	20,839* out of 32,844	-

**Table 1: T&M Background Statistical Information**

\*A score of 1 indicating the most deprived.

2.2 **Local Sector Employment Strengths:** The following information provides an indication of the key sector strengths that Tonbridge & Malling enjoys. The location quotient (LQ) used below in Table 2 is an indication of how well represented each sector is in the area based on size of workforce – i.e. if the percentage of the workforce employed in the borough in motor trades was the same as the percentage in the sector

across the country the LQ would be 1.0, but if it was only half of what would be expected the LQ figure would be 0.5.

- 2.3 As is evident below, the borough has strong representation from the following sectors – Energy and Utilities; Primary Industries (Agriculture); Motor Trades; Wholesale; Transport; Construction; Retail; and Finance & Insurance. This provides an initial indication of where best to focus effort if we are to consolidate existing strengths in the local economy.

Sector	Source and Date	T&M	KCC Area	Great Britain	Traffic Lights
Energy and Utilities	ONS BRES 2013	2.9	1.0	1.0	
Primary Industries	ONS BRES 2013	1.7	0.7	1.0	
Motor Trades	ONS BRES 2013	1.7	1.2	1.0	
Wholesale	ONS BRES 2013	1.5	1.0	1.0	
Transport and Storage	ONS BRES 2013	1.5	1.1	1.0	
Construction	ONS BRES 2013	1.5	1.5	1.0	
Retail	ONS BRES 2013	1.3	1.3	1.0	
Financial and Insurance	ONS BRES 2013	1.2	0.8	1.0	
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	ONS BRES 2013	1.1	1.0	1.0	
Business Administration	ONS BRES 2013	1.1	1.1	1.0	
Education	ONS BRES 2013	1.1	1.2	1.0	
Information and Communication	ONS BRES 2013	1.0	0.7	1.0	
Property	ONS BRES 2013	1.0	0.8	1.0	
Digital and Media	ONS BRES 2013	0.9	0.7	1.0	
Public Administration & Defence	ONS BRES 2013	0.8	0.9	1.0	
Accommodation & Food Services	ONS BRES 2013	0.8	1.0	1.0	
Professional, Scientific & Technical	ONS BRES 2013	0.7	0.7	1.0	
Manufacturing	ONS BRES 2013	0.7	0.8	1.0	
Life Sciences	ONS BRES 2013	0.6	1.1	1.0	
Health	ONS BRES 2013	0.5	1.0	1.0	

**Table 2: Location Quotient**

- 2.4 However, it is also important to assess the actual size of the workforce in individual sectors and also their forecast growth potential in order to ascertain future demand – for example, whilst T&M has a strong agriculture sector, numerically it still only employs a very small percentage of the workforce. Table 3 below takes information from recent studies to address both these issues as well as providing notes on other specific issues such as skills requirements (NB unfortunately there are a few gaps in the data).

Sector	T&M (LQ)	Forecast 2013-22 (K&M)	Notes (sector related issues)
Energy & Utilities	2.9	11%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector currently employs <b>1,700</b> people in T&amp;M</li> <li>- relatively small sector within K&amp;M</li> <li>- diverse workforce</li> <li>- need to improve <b>image of the sector</b> and ensure <b>appropriate apprenticeship frameworks</b> are in place</li> </ul>
Primary Industries	1.7	-3%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- quite small in employment terms</li> <li>- over half the workforce are in skilled trades</li> <li>- decline mostly as a result of <b>automation</b></li> <li>- <b>need for skills</b> in following areas: succession planning, environmental management skills, risk management, scientific knowledge and technology transfer and better ICT skills.</li> </ul>

Transport	1.5	10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector employs <b>3,500</b> people in the borough</li> <li>- around a third of the workforce are drivers</li> <li>- <b>focus on lower level qualifications</b></li> <li>- need to attract new recruits; promote clearer development pathways and professionalise the workforce.</li> </ul>
Construction	1.5	17%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector currently employs <b>3,500</b> people in the borough</li> <li>- sector is dominated by micro-business</li> <li>- construction workforce is more susceptible to changes in the economy</li> <li>- <b>Increasing demand for higher level skills</b></li> <li>- new skills required to keep up with changes in the sector (low energy requirements/higher spec)</li> </ul>
Retail	1.3	3%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector currently employs <b>7,400</b> people in the borough</li> <li>- nearly half of all employment is focused on sales and customer services.</li> <li>- need to <b>improve image</b> of sector as a career opportunity</li> </ul>
Financial & Insurance	1.2	13%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector employs <b>3,900</b> people in the borough</li> <li>- highly qualified workforce</li> <li>- need for more professional staff, as well as IT, leadership and management and customer service skills</li> <li>- <b>training and skills development in risk management and regulatory compliance is a high priority.</b></li> </ul>
Arts & Recreation	1.1	8%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector currently only employs <b>100</b> people in the borough.</li> <li>- current climate of public funding increases importance in growth of self-employed workers</li> <li>- High level technical skills and knowledge will continue to be essential.</li> </ul>
Digital & Media	0.9	16%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector currently employs <b>2,600</b> people</li> <li>- demand for corporate managers</li> <li>- <b>skills shortages in a range of associate professional and technical skills.</b></li> </ul>
Accomm. & Food Services	0.8	12%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector employs <b>3,300</b> people in the borough</li> <li>- 55% of workforce are qualified to Level 2 or below</li> <li>- need to increase the workforce, improve customer service, <b>improve the apprenticeship offer</b> (matching training supply to employer needs)</li> </ul>
M'facturing	0.7	-10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector currently employs <b>3,200</b> people in the borough</li> <li>- sector is focussed on medium to large companies</li> <li>- diverse workforce but skilled trades account for 22% of workforce</li> <li>- issue of <b>making sector attractive to new recruits</b></li> </ul>
Life Sciences	0.6	6%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector employs <b>200</b> people in the borough</li> <li>- workforce is professional and highly qualified</li> <li>- future skills needs relate to R&amp;D, the production process and management</li> </ul>
Health	0.5	3%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector currently employs <b>3,600</b> people in the borough</li> <li>- although low growth, due to its size, it is expected that <b>2-3,000 additional workers</b> will be needed across the county by 2022.</li> <li>- 3 priorities for action are – <b>efficiency and innovation; having a skilled workforce and sustainability.</b></li> </ul>

**Table 3: Sector Growth Potential**

2.5 As such, from the statistical evidence available it is possible to divide the following sectors into a matrix based on sector strength and growth potential:

	<b>Low or Negative Growth</b>	<b>Average Growth</b>	<b>High Growth</b>
<b>Weak Representation</b>	Health** Manufacturing	Life Sciences	Accommodation & Food Services
<b>Average Representation</b>		Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	Digital and Media
<b>Strong Representation</b>	Retail Primary Industries		Finance & Insurance Construction Transport Energy & Utilities

**Table 4: Strength and Growth Potential by Sector.**

\*\*Although comparatively weak representation and low growth, because so many people are employed in the health sector, this growth still translates as 2-3,000 additional workers across the county by 2022.

2.6 As such, in simple terms it can be highlighted that the main issues highlighted for those sectors that are high growth or have strong representation in the borough are:

- Require an improvement to the apprenticeship offer and development pathways (Accommodation & Food Services; Energy & Utilities and Transport)
- Address shortages in technical/higher level skills (Digital & Media; Finance & Insurance)
- Improvements required to the image of certain sectors (Retail and Energy & Utilities)

2.7 On top of this, discussions with local businesses (via the T&M Local Strategic Partnership and the West Kent Partnership) have also highlighted the following general issues:

- The need for training in helping the development of softer skills
- In the face of cuts to careers advice in many schools, support is needed to fully demonstrate the real careers options that are available through greater interaction with businesses.
- Schools are required to be too focussed on meeting their targets as opposed to thinking about pathways to employment.

### **3. Delivery to Date**

3.1 The following initiatives have so far been delivered by the Borough Council as part of its Skills Action Plan:

#### **a) KCC Guilds:**

Participation in the sector guilds is a key strand to supporting the work of the KCC Skills and Employability Team. The aim of these sector guilds is to:

- Promote the positive image of the sector and the opportunities

- Develop the employability skills to enable young people to sustain employment in the sector
- Develop a curriculum offer in Kent that provides young people with appropriate qualifications and skills.

Whilst most of these guilds are still embryonic, through the West Kent Partnership, the West Kent authorities have supported the development of action plans.

One example is the Science and Technology Guild which has the following actions:

- Employer led initiatives – school visits by businesses; schools coming out to see businesses; specialist careers events.
- Creating work experience opportunities.
- Improving communication between businesses and schools – through events and informative material.
- Create focus on degree level apprenticeships.

#### **b) Jobs and Training Fairs:**

These have taken place in Tonbridge (March) and Tunbridge Wells (September) this year. These events have been co-ordinated through a partnership approach involving JobCentre Plus and the three West Kent Authorities via the West Kent Partnership.

Most recently at Tunbridge Wells, over 500 people (job seekers) attended the event, which included 30 business and training providers as well as seminars on CV writing and interview techniques which were both well attended.

All the information is still to come back to the JobCentre Plus but from the 5 companies that have responded, 11 people have been recruited from the Jobs Fair so far.

Feedback forms from the businesses taking part were overwhelmingly positive. However, the issues that were flagged up were a) venue needed air-conditioning; and b) request to have some food to keep the business reps going throughout the event.

Plans are in place for future Jobs and Training Fairs, there are a number of improvements that can be implemented for the next one (planned for March in Tonbridge):

1. Production of 'helpful hints' sheet for businesses looking to recruit at the event - highlighting benefit of having a pre-interview at the jobs fair, positive body language, and colourful displays.
2. Improved signage - especially between workshops and main fair
3. Badges/T-Shirts for people helping at the event so that it is clear who is there to help and support the job seekers
4. Packed lunch for stall holders to ensure they stay at their stands (this would probably be where the extra funding would go towards)

5. Reduce the event from 10-4pm to 10-3pm to make sure that stallholders are less inclined to leave early
6. Where possible, promote the individual businesses on the promotional material (although this will require the businesses to confirm attendance earlier).
7. Build upon the workshops to give consideration to motivational speakers aimed at boosting confidence.

**c) West Kent SkillsFest:**

The West Kent SkillsFest took place in October 2016 at Salomons in Tunbridge Wells, and was delivered by the Kent Education Business Partnership and supported by TMBC via the West Kent Partnership. The aim of the event was to link businesses with students to help make young people aware of the job and training opportunities and the pathways to employment. In total, over 80 businesses attended and nearly 900 students took part. Anne McNulty of the Kent Education Business Partnership will be able to provide further details at the meeting.

A debrief session for the event takes place on 10 November at which plans for future events will be discussed.

**d) Lobbying – Measures of Success:**

On 23 September 2016, the Leader of the Council wrote a letter to the Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP, Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills to highlight some issues concerning work readiness which had been picked up in our discussions with local businesses.

This letter flagged up:

- Whilst the responsibility does not solely rest with schools, there is inconsistency between them in preparing their students for the world of work, with some doing a very good job whilst others do not.
- Success measures for schools should be broadened out beyond how many students get in to university, and should also include the number that go into apprenticeships and employment.
- The need to strengthen links between schools and business through the Government's forthcoming Careers Guidance Strategy.

A response is expected shortly.

**e) Work Ready Interviews:**

In February and March 2016, TMBC supported a series of work ready interviews with students from Mid-Kent College that were soon to be seeking employment. These mock interviews helped the students to build gain confidence, experience an interview situation and pick up useful advice on how to improve their interview technique.



#### **4. Next Steps:**

- 4.1 Given the information above, covering an overview of the economy and the interventions currently being undertaken, the key question to discuss is:

***Are there other activities that the Borough Council should deliver or support that will help to contribute towards the work readiness agenda?***

- 4.2 To help aid discussion, we are fortunate enough to be joined by Anne McNulty of the Kent Education Business Partnership, who will provide an overview of work that they undertake and some of the key issues that they continue to face in maintaining effective links between schools and local businesses.

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# Agenda Item 7

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent due to special circumstances and of which notice has been given to the Chief Executive.

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# Agenda Item 8

The Chairman to move that the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting during consideration of any items the publication of which would disclose exempt information.

**ANY REPORTS APPEARING AFTER THIS PAGE CONTAIN EXEMPT  
INFORMATION**

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# Agenda Item 9

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent due to special circumstances and of which notice has been given to the Chief Executive.

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