

Pendle Economic Growth Strategy

2025-2028

Pendle Borough Council

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Foreword

I am delighted to share with you the Economic Growth Strategy for Pendle 2025-28. Whilst the strategy is focused on priorities and actions for the next four years, it is underpinned by a longer term 15-year vision.

Though we have many opportunities, we are faced with a number of challenges within our economy and to fully realise Pendle's growth potential, these need to be recognised and responded to.

Together with our partners, stakeholders and business community we have established clear ambitions which will help drive the economic growth of Pendle.

We have developed the strategy around three key priorities – People, Business and Place. They are supported by three cross cutting themes – Sustainable Growth, Inclusive Growth and Effective Partnerships - which will be integrated into all activity delivered through the strategy.

Success will be measured against key economic outcomes. These include attracting investment to the borough, creating more jobs, tackling low levels of productivity, raising local wages, improving skills and expanding transport connections.

As we respond to the climate crisis, we will ensure our actions are implemented sustainably and inclusively, working in partnership with our key stakeholders.




Councillor Asjad Mahmood
Leader
Pendle Borough Council



Pendle has a distinct cultural heritage, world-class industrial credentials and stunning natural surroundings. Once a powerhouse of activity through the textile industry, today it is home to world leading manufacturing and aerospace companies, driving innovations ranging from beds to jet engines. Famous for the iconic Pendle Hill and its breathtaking views, to the notorious trials of the Pendle Witches, the borough has a powerful story to tell.

With the growth-focused agenda of the new UK Government, a new devolution deal for Lancashire and targeted investment planned and underway, Pendle can capitalise on its existing strengths and the emerging context to drive new growth.

Our Strategy will ensure that we do all we can to empower our diverse population so that everyone realises their potential and life chances. By inspiring our young people, the workforce of the future, we can ensure they are equipped with the skills, knowledge and attitude needed to support a growing and changing economy. And by creating vibrant places with lasting appeal through improved housing, heritage and leisure we can attract and retain residents, employees, visitors and investors.



Rose Rouse
Chief Executive
Pendle Borough Council





1. Introduction

1 Introduction

Driving Economic Growth in Pendle

The Pendle Economic Growth Strategy sets out clear ambitions to accelerate economic growth and increase prosperity in the borough between 2025 and 2028. The Strategy builds on the Pendle Economic Recovery and Growth Strategy which was produced in 2021 in a very different economic context, as the borough and the rest of the nation put plans in place to support local businesses and communities to recover from the widespread impacts of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Underpinned by a longer term, 15 year vision, the latest Strategy embraces a new era of growth and opportunity and takes account of recent political changes, including a change in government, to focus in on ambitious priorities and actions which can deliver a real impact in the next four years and which can lay the foundations for longer term transformation in the economy.

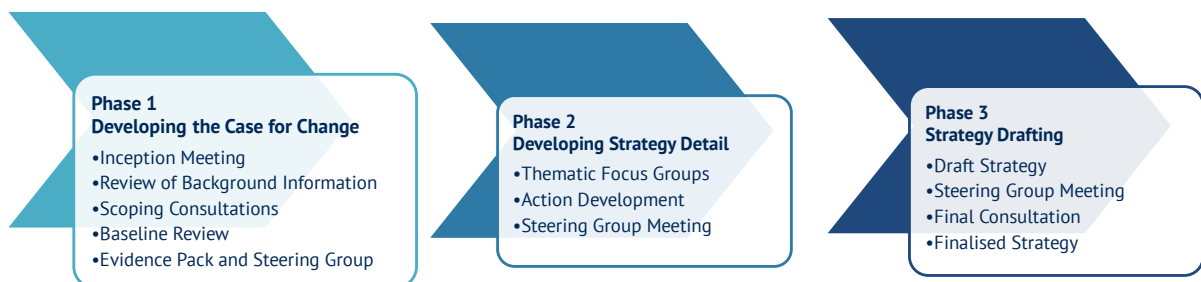
The Strategy is framed around three pillars – Business, People and Place – which each play a role in the delivery of economic growth. Within each of these pillars, there are opportunities and challenges which highlight the potential to deliver change in Pendle and which also underpin the need for investment and intervention.

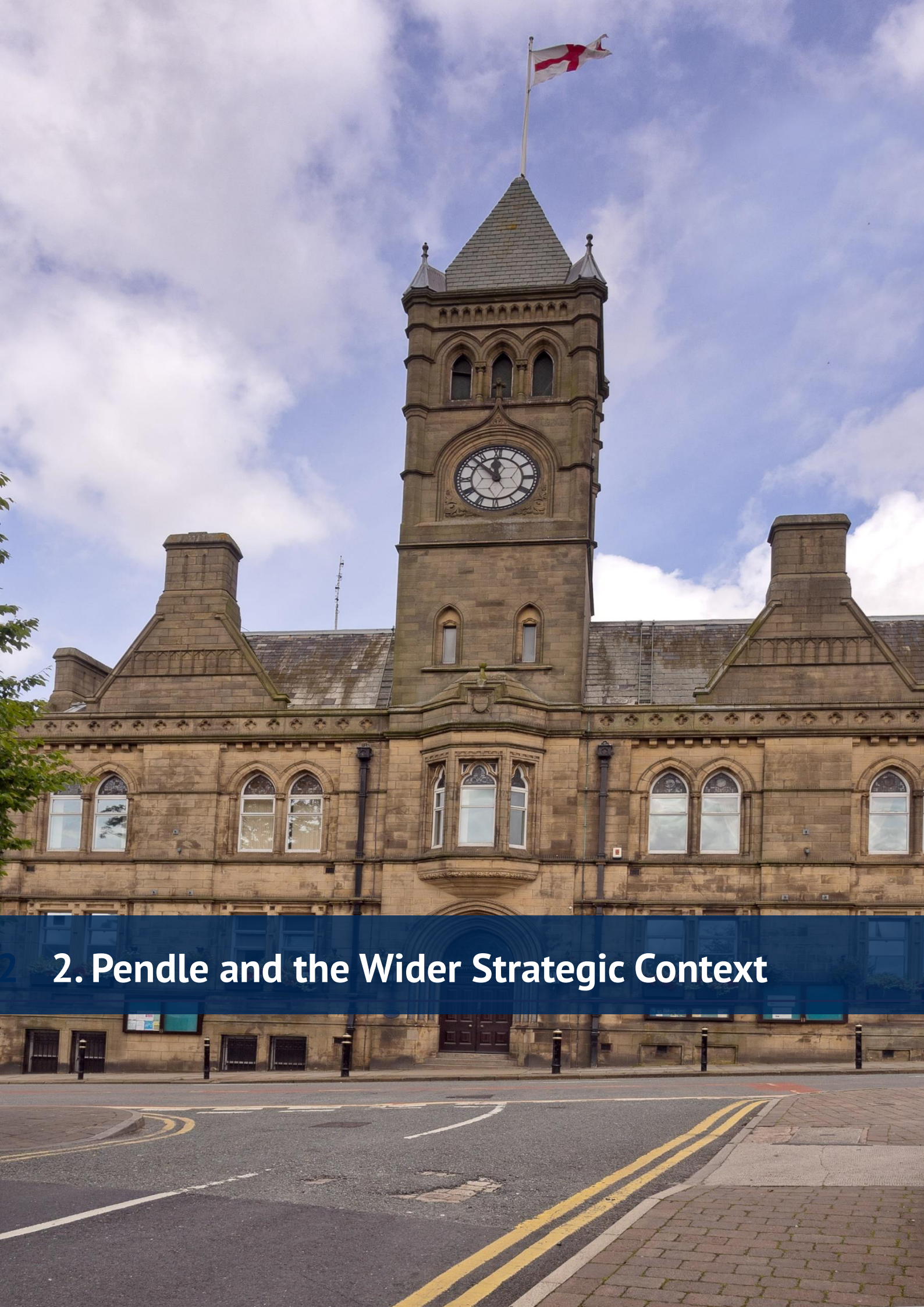
Importantly, while the strategy is focused on growth, it is fundamental that this growth is good for the borough and that it delivers benefits for Pendle’s residents and businesses, as well as visitors and potential investors. This will involve overcoming barriers to growth as well as responding to opportunities. There is also recognition that enhancing the resilience of the economy is a major priority and will directly impact upon Pendle’s ability to remain agile and respond to any future economic shocks.

Furthermore, all actions delivered through the strategy will need to be implemented sustainably and inclusively, working in partnership with key stakeholders. These priorities are articulated in the Strategic Framework and sit at the heart of the Strategy.

Development of the Economic Growth Strategy

An evidence-based approach has been taken to develop the Economic Growth Strategy. This has included reviewing the latest data and intelligence on the Pendle economy and consulting with regional and local stakeholders through a series of interviews and workshops. Key statistics and the findings of the analysis and consultations are compiled in a standalone Evidence Base report. The list of organisations consulted in the development of the Economic Growth Strategy is included as an Appendix at the end of this document.





2. Pendle and the Wider Strategic Context

2 Pendle and the Wider Strategic Context

Building on Pendle's Strengths and Assets

Home to nearly 100,000 residents, the borough of Pendle sits close to the southern edge of the Yorkshire dales and partly within the Forest of Bowland National Landscape. The hills of the southern Pennines frame the area's distinctive character, giving rise to the name Pennine Lancashire. Connected as part of the M65 motorway corridor, Pendle offers a diverse economy, with a rich and satisfying blend of rural beauty, distinctive town centres and industrial heritage. Traditional industries of the past such as textile manufacturing have given way to high tech engineering and a dense clustering of manufacturing in Pendle. The borough is known as much for the birth of the jet engine and world class aerospace, as it is for its rich history of witch trials, its place in the foundation story of the Quaker movement and its links with the Brontë sisters.

Pendle's diverse population has created a variety of communities across local towns and villages; each of these locations have different but important roles to play in the borough's success. Key employers, such as Rolls Royce, Daisy Communications, Silentnight and Graham Engineering, place Pendle at the forefront of innovation in world-leading industries.

Advanced manufacturing, engineering and aerospace are core to Pendle's DNA, while important foundational sectors meeting population needs play a vital role in the local economy. Information and Communication is a growing industry in the borough, at a time where Lancashire is uniquely positioned to be a leading player in the sector. There have also been successes in securing higher value service-based employment in professional and technical services, such as architecture engineering activities and computer programming and consultancy in recent years. The borough has well-established cultural strengths, with opportunities to increase the number of visitors to key attractions including Pendle's extensive natural assets. The foundational economy – which includes retail, health, education, transport and construction - makes up the largest number of businesses in the borough, and includes many independent businesses as well as large employers such as Boundary Outlet.

Pendle has outstanding Further Education provision at Nelson & Colne College and the potential to develop higher level skills provision to support the industries of today and tomorrow. The borough's rich innovation heritage and expertise in emergent technologies present important opportunities to diversify the local economy and support a smooth and inclusive transition to a thriving and greener economy.

Pendle has a range of opportunities to grow and achieve equitable outcomes throughout the borough. With the growth-focused agenda of the new UK Government, a new devolution deal for Lancashire and targeted investment planned and underway in Pendle, the borough can capitalise on its existing strengths and the emerging context to drive new growth for the benefit of residents and businesses.

Overcoming Barriers and Challenges

To realise Pendle's economic growth potential, local challenges in Pendle need to be recognised and responded to including:

- **A high reliance on manufacturing** which increases the vulnerability of the local economy.
- **A lack of local employment opportunities** with a low number of jobs relative to the scale of the population.

- **Low average earnings** and **low levels of productivity** impacting directly on prosperity in the borough
- **High economic inactivity rates** in the borough pose challenges to productivity, and reflect wider issues such as long-term sickness, health deprivation and differing cultural attitudes to work
- **Supporting infrastructure** is a key barrier to growth in Pendle, with limited transport connections inhibiting access to economic opportunity, a shortage of strategic sites and fit-for-purpose premises restricting space for businesses to grow and the breadth of quality housing limiting Pendle's ability to retaining and attracting people to live in the borough
- **Skills shortages in key sectors** and **low retention of young people** present risks to the future workforce, and
- **Concentrations of deprivation** in the borough, which undermine local quality of life, health and wellbeing. This includes particularly high levels of deprivation relating to the quality of the living environment, health and education as well as reasonably high levels on the income and employment domains.

Driving Economic Growth

In driving forward economic growth, Pendle needs to celebrate its strengths, proudly promote its assets and demonstrate strong ambition and opportunities for all people in the borough. Collaborating with others and building on the borough's innovation spirit to solve the challenges of current and future generations will be crucial to securing future growth and prosperity in Pendle. Further detail on the underpinning case for intervention for each of the Strategy's pillars, is set out in the dedicated thematic sections.

The Strategic Context

When developing the Economic Growth Strategy for Pendle, the local, regional and national strategic context has been taken into account.

National policy is set to have key implications for Pendle, particularly with the start of a new UK Government earlier in 2024. While Labour's policies relating to the economy are still emerging, the government has set out five missions to lead the government's activity including kickstarting economic growth; make Britain a clean energy superpower; take back our streets; break down barriers to opportunity; and build an NHS fit for the future. A newly announced Industrial Strategy green paper is currently out for consultation, with this being positioned as core to the government's mission to kickstart economic growth. As part of the strategy, sector plans will be developed at a national level which Pendle should look to align with, while local areas will also be expected to develop local plans to focus efforts for economic growth.

On a regional level, a new Economic Strategy is currently being drafted for Lancashire. This is expected to focus on a number of priorities which Pendle can align with, including growth in manufacturing sectors and the information and communication sector. With a relatively young population, Pendle will have a role to play in preparing future talent with skills in emerging tech sectors, while there also opportunities to collaborate with other areas in the county on diversification and the increased adoption of emerging manufacturing technologies to enable future growth. Pendle should look to leverage connections with employers in line with the aims of the Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), and look to collaborate with neighbouring boroughs to lobby for improvements to transport and infrastructure. A new

devolution deal is set to be finalised for Lancashire, presenting new opportunities for Pendle to collaborate regionally.



At the local level, Pendle has a range of policies that will impact how economic growth can be secured in the borough. These include the Pendle Local Plan, which promotes the flexible use of land and a flexible policy approach for both additional housing and employment sites to be allocated in the borough. The Economic Strategy needs to consider how Pendle ensures appropriate scale and quality of strategic sites to meet the demand of employers growing within the borough, and those that may look to move to the borough, aligning with the Local Plan. The Pendle Council Corporate Plan also sets important context for the future direction of the borough.

A range of masterplans exist to develop Pendle's towns, including Colne, Barnoldswick and Earby, in addition to the Nelson Town Investment Plan and draft Long Term Plan. This strategy needs to align with these plans, considering the diversity between settlements in the borough. The strategy has also considered the Pendle UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Plan, which seeks to ensure that the benefits of economic growth are shared widely across Pendle through delivering targeted support for disadvantaged areas. Uncertainty over the future of existing funding schemes and emerging new funds present both challenges and opportunities for funding economic growth initiatives in the borough.

Planned Investment

A range of investments have already been secured in Pendle, offering opportunities to support future growth.

In recent years a number of national funds have been released to support local places, including the Levelling Up Fund, Future High Streets Fund, Long Term Plan for Towns¹ and the Towns Fund. A total of £51.5m of funding has been allocated to Pendle through these funds, accounting for 12% of the funding secured across Lancashire. In particular, Pendle was allocated £6.5m in Round 1 of the Levelling Up Fund, £25m through the Towns Fund and £20 million was allocated to Nelson (25% revenue, 75% capital split) as part of the Long-Term Plan for Towns. These funds have allowed work to commence on a number of projects, from town centre regeneration to improved public transport.

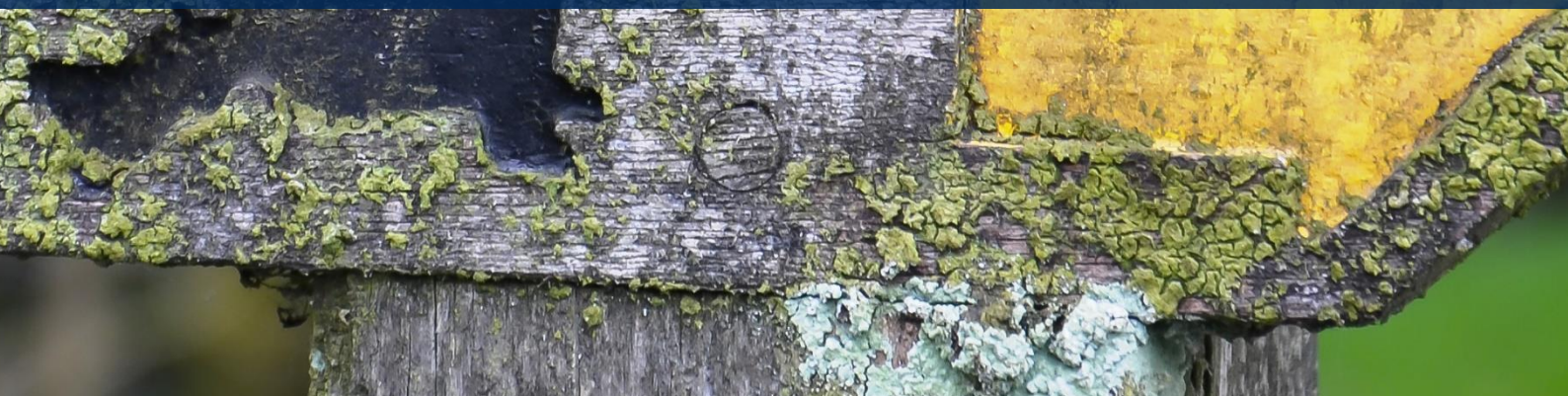
Through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Pendle was allocated £3.6m in core funds. The funding was released in support of the previous government's Levelling Up agenda, with funding to be spent on priorities including community and place; supporting local businesses; and people and skills. In Pendle, funding was allocated to a number of projects selected by the UKSPF Local Partnership Group. These included projects for public realm improvements, arts and cultural development, specific sector support such as for manufacturing businesses, and business support through pan-Lancashire schemes. Separate funding to boost core skills and to support adults to progress in work was also provided at a Lancashire level through the Multiply programme.

It is important to recognise the existing activity taking place through investments in Pendle, and to consider how to build on this further through new schemes in a continually changing funding landscape.

¹ It should be noted that the name of this fund may be subject to change. The Autumn 2024 Budget confirmed that following the recent change in Government, the fund would be retained and reformed into a new regeneration programme



3. Our Vision and Strategic Framework



3 Our Vision and Strategic Framework

Our Vision

While the Economic Growth Strategy is focused on priorities and actions for the next four years (2025-2028), it is underpinned by a longer term, 15-year vision which captures local ambition to deliver transformational change in Pendle.

Growing Pendle to 2040

"Pendle: A vibrant and inclusive Pennine borough celebrating its breathtaking views and landscapes, fascinating heritage and multi-cultural identity, powered by a growing, thriving and modern economy. We create high quality jobs, foster innovation and unlock opportunities for all, ensuring that inclusive and sustainable economic growth benefits residents and future generations."

Strategic Framework

To make progress towards this vision, the strategy is framed around three thematic pillars and strategic priorities – **People, Business** and **Place**. The pillars are intrinsically linked and it is recognised that the success of the strategy is dependent upon activities being delivered against each of the strategic objectives. For example, challenges related to skills and connectivity captured under People and Place, need to be addressed to support the growth priorities within the Business pillar.

The pillars are supported by three cross cutting themes – **Sustainable Growth, Inclusive Growth** and **Effective Partnerships** – providing core principles that will be integrated into all activity delivered through the strategy.

Strategic Framework for Economic Growth in Pendle

People



We will empower Pendle's diverse population to realise their potential and increase life chances. We will grow, attract and retain an appropriately skilled workforce that can meet the current and future needs of local employers by inspiring our large population of young people; helping more people into work through addressing economic inactivity and overcoming barriers to participation; and by supporting our residents to progress in their careers.

Business



We will grow, diversify and strengthen Pendle's business base We will enhance business resilience and create new local jobs by removing barriers to growth, capitalising on our existing manufacturing strengths, building on our recent successes in information and professional services, diversifying the economy to embrace opportunities in foundational and emerging sectors, and driving entrepreneurial and innovative activity.

Place



We will create vibrant places with lasting appeal which attract and retain residents, employees, visitors and investors. We will leverage funding opportunities to build capacity, ambition and drive investment; enhancing our heritage, leisure and visitor offer and improving housing, connectivity and business premises in our towns, villages and rural areas. We will create safe, welcoming and sustainable places which can be enjoyed now and in the future.

Supported by Cross Cutting Themes...

Sustainable Growth

We will deliver economic growth sustainably - carefully managing resources, retrofitting infrastructure, developing green economy skills and driving innovation - to facilitate a smooth and inclusive transition to an environmentally sustainable economy which enables residents and businesses to access green jobs and business opportunities.

Inclusive Growth

We will celebrate our diversity and ensure that the benefits of economic growth are shared widely across Pendle, recognising the demographic challenges and inequalities that exist across the Borough.

Effective Partnerships

We will adopt a partnership approach to delivery, working collaboratively to harness public, private and voluntary capabilities and resources at the local, regional and national level to ensure success and to maximise the impact of actions within Pendle.

Measuring Success

Success over the **next four years** will be judged through key economic outcomes including:

- The creation of new jobs
- The generation of additional GVA
- Increased levels of economic activity amongst working age residents in Pendle
- An improved skills profile for the working age population in Pendle
- An increase in average earnings for Pendle residents
- An increased investment pipeline for Pendle

Over the **longer term**, there are ambitions to accelerate growth in Pendle to:

- Reduce the gap with the regional and national job density.
- Increase productivity levels and reduce the productivity gap with the regional and national average.
- Close the gap between average resident and workplace earnings in the borough.

The priorities and actions identified for the next four years will lay the foundations for the longer term, structural change required to deliver these outcomes.

Our People

The Case for Intervention: Pendle's People in Numbers



Sources: Population Estimates, ONS, 2011-2023, Census, ONS, 2021, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, ONS, 2019-2023, Annual Population Survey, ONS, 2022-2023

Pendle has a diverse and young population, which offers a pipeline of future talent to support a growing and changing economy.

Pendle has a total population of 97,000, following a growth trajectory in line with the national average over the past 13 years. Diversity is a key feature of Pendle's population, with a large Asian and Asian British community. The ethnic diversity of the population is an opportunity that can be harnessed to enhance the talent pipeline, support diversification and entrepreneurship. In doing so, there are also cultural differences, including varying attitudes to work and communication challenges for those residents with English as a Second Language that need to be recognised; these barriers to work can limit the supply of labour available to work in the area, impacting on the borough's potential to increase productivity.

Pendle also has a higher proportion of children and young people (aged 0-15) than the regional average. This group represents the workforce of the future; now is the time to engage and inspire this group and ensure that they are equipped with the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to realise their potential and to fully participate in the local workforce and economy.

Recognising young people and ethnic minority communities as priority groups will support the development and delivery of targeted support that can inspire and increase ambition amongst the current and future workforce, whilst also addressing barriers to work.

The current labour market in Pendle is relatively small with contributing factors including slow growth in the working age population and high levels of out-migration

Pendle has a smaller than average working age population (60% of population compared to 63% nationally) and has experienced slow growth (3% compared to 6% nationally) in working age residents over the past 12 years, despite overall population growth keeping pace with regional levels (8%). This reduces the scale of the local workforce available to local employers, particularly when combined with skills gaps and shortages, and issues relating to high levels of inactivity set out in further detail below.

High levels of out-migration, particularly amongst young people who leave the borough to access higher education and more diverse and better-quality employment opportunities, also stilt growth in the working age population as well as driving talent drain.

Addressing barriers to attracting people to live and/or stay in Pendle, and expanding the working age population, is a challenge which requires action across each of the strategy pillars; diversifying the economy, broadening the housing offer and developing an extended offer of higher education course provision for the borough will all be part of the response.

Challenges of a small labour market are exacerbated by high levels of economic inactivity

The number of local residents who are available for work is further restricted by high levels of economic inactivity – estimated to be double the regional and national average, highlighting the scale of the challenge and the imperative to make tackling this issue a clear priority for the borough.

Understanding the underlying reasons for the high levels of inactivity is key to developing an effective response. Data suggests the two main reasons are being a student, followed by long term sickness. There is also anecdotal evidence that caring responsibilities (which are likely to increase in the future as the population ages) are contributing to inactivity, as are cultural differences and English language barriers for speakers of other languages. Targeted interventions focused on long term sickness and cultural differences can support greater economic activity.

Tailored and effective support services are required to reduce specific barriers to work and to aid a shift towards higher levels of economic activity and labour market participation.

Concerns over residents health could contribute to longer term health related barriers to work

Looking across the population, health is a particular concern and has the potential to impact inactivity rates. Where childhood health is a concern, this could contribute to health-related barriers to work amongst the future workforce.

The Active Lives Survey for 2022/23 estimated that 66% of the adult population² in Lancashire are classed as overweight or obese, compared to approximately 64% in England. Pendle, however, has significantly higher proportions of overweight and obese adults at 73% - the highest level for any district in Lancashire.

Among Year 6 children, 38% in Pendle are overweight or obese, slightly higher than the England average and Lancashire average of 37%. Both the regional and Lancashire trends for overweight and obesity prevalence have been increasing over the last decade, raising concerns about health impacts today and future impacts on both health and the workforce.

Getting people of all ages healthier and more active is recognised as a priority related to increasing economic activity rates – to support the current and future workforce.

There are skills gaps and shortages and higher-level jobs in Pendle are often filled by workers from outside the borough

Pendle's residents are less likely to work in highly skilled occupations, and more likely to work in administrative and secretarial occupations and as process, plant and machine operatives. While this is partly a reflection of the local sectoral structure and existing qualification profile, it also contributes to skills gaps and shortages.

There is a shortfall of residents holding Level 4+ qualifications; 32% of Pendle's working age population have qualifications at level RFQ4 or above (9 percentage points below the Lancashire average), and a high proportion with no qualifications at 8% (2 percentage points above the Lancashire average). The average earnings of residents are well below average. They are also lower than the average offered by Pendle employers, highlighting the tendency for higher level jobs to often be filled by workers from outside the borough. This is corroborated by employers who report recruitment difficulties within the local labour market, encouraging them to seek recruits from outside Pendle.

As the economy diversifies and responds to technological disrupters and advancements – the skills requirements of employers are also likely to change.

An increase in skills levels is required to meet the needs of local employers, enable residents to access higher paid jobs available locally, increase average earnings and boost productivity. There is also a need to ensure that local skills meet the evolving skills requirements of local employers through reskilling and upskilling the workforce, ensuring skills provision meets employer needs and by connecting residents to jobs in areas of growth and demand.

² [Healthy weight - Lancashire County Council](#)

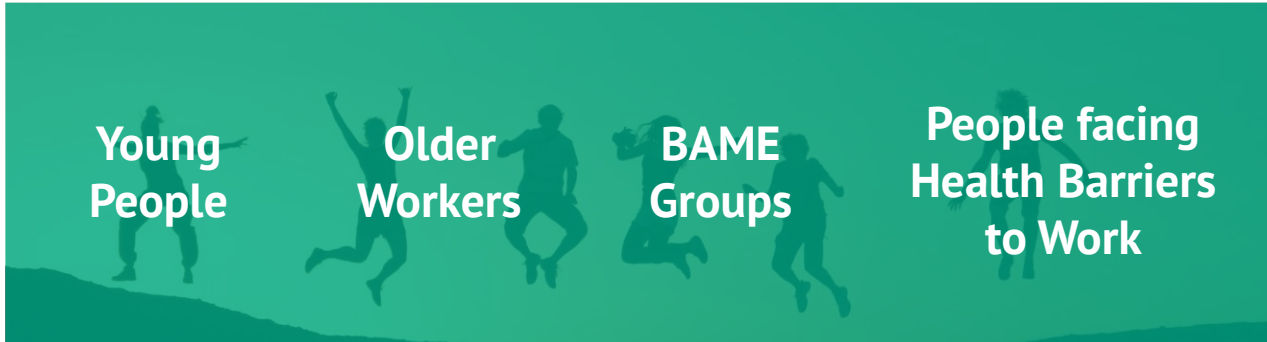
Strategic Objective

Our People



We will empower Pendle's diverse population to realise their potential and increase life chances We will grow, attract and retain an appropriately skilled workforce that can meet the current and future needs of local employers by inspiring our large population of young people; helping more people into work through addressing economic inactivity and overcoming barriers to participation; and by supporting our residents to progress in their careers.

Priority Groups



Action Plan

The action plan will build on existing and planned activity underway in Pendle including:

- The **Youth Employability Support Hub (YES Hub)** providing targeted provision for 16-24 years to find employment and access support with mental or physical wellbeing
- **Lancashire Careers Hub** connects schools, academies and colleges with local employers and career programme advisers.
- The **Lancashire Digital Skills Partnership** offers free digital skills training and support targeting businesses, educators, young people and unemployed people.
- Headquartered in Brierfield, **Lancashire Adult Learning (LAL)** aims to provide community-based learning opportunities for all adults across the region. LAL currently offers over 2,000 courses ranging from leisure learning to employability skills and skills for life, delivered at 300 venues across Lancashire.
- **Multiply** provides a UKSPF funded programme to help people become more numerate including residents and workers aged 19+ who do not have a GCSE in grade C/4 or above
- **Skills Bootcamps** provide intensive and flexible courses giving people aged 19+ the opportunity to develop sector specific skills and access interviews with local employers. Programmes include construction, digital, engineering and manufacturing, logistics, healthcare and education, business and marketing, leadership, green energy and sustainability
- **Lancashire Skills Escalator** links together employability projects, government initiatives and mainstream funding opportunities to support people living or working in Lancashire to enhance their employability skills, secure sustainable employment and progress within the workforce. This is supported by the **Lancashire Adult Skills Forum** and **Escalate**, an interactive online tool detailing funded provision

- **Lancashire Skills Pledge** provides businesses with recognition for upskilling, recruiting and inspiring people through a range of activity including helping young people to get work ready, becoming an apprenticeship ambassador or an enterprise advisor, recruiting Lancashire people, taking on apprentices, upskilling the workforce, offering graduate placements and supporting care leavers
- Recent investment in the **Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing Innovation Centre** at Nelson & Colne College
- The **Advanced Digital Skills Academy** within Nelson & Colne College with accompanying town centre learning spoke being delivered through the Nelson Town Deal
- DWP contracted provision including provision offered by **Nelson Job Centre Plus** and the national **Work and Health Programme** which provides support for those unemployed people with health conditions or disabilities, including those individuals who have been out of work for a long time or may need specialist support.
- **Active Lancashire** supports and connects communities and promotes the role that being active can play in improving mental and physical health and wellbeing
- The **Pendle Health and Wellbeing Plan 2024-26** identifies a range of actions aimed at improving health outcomes including the **Pendle Family Hub** network, **Together an Active Pendle**: Active Places and Active Practices workstream and integrated care opportunities. The plan has a specific spatial focus on Bradley which is identified as the priority health ward by the Lancashire & South Cumbria Integrated Care Board.

The delivery of this strategy will be dependent upon collaboration between a range of partners. The following action plan identifies the role that Pendle Borough Council will play:



Lead (where statutory responsibility and funding allows)



Work with partners to deliver (influence)

Priority Action – Developing a Higher Level Skills Offer within Pendle








This action seeks to build on outstanding Further Education provision in Pendle through the development of Higher Education to facilitate progression to higher level skills to support retention and attraction of talent, address skill shortages and gaps, improve productivity and support business competitiveness. This can be achieved through rolling out Access to HE pathways in Pendle across different subject areas aligned to key sectors in the local economy and strengthening partnerships with Higher Education Institutions.

Action Plan



Inspire Ambition and Improve life chances in children and young people – develop essential skills in children and young people through the delivery of extra-curricular and enrichment activity, including career inspiration, working in partnership with local employers and providers. This complements the Work Ready Lancashire initiative and encompasses the development of new local initiatives led by the college such as the Extraordinary Minds Academy and roll out of the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ).

Action Plan

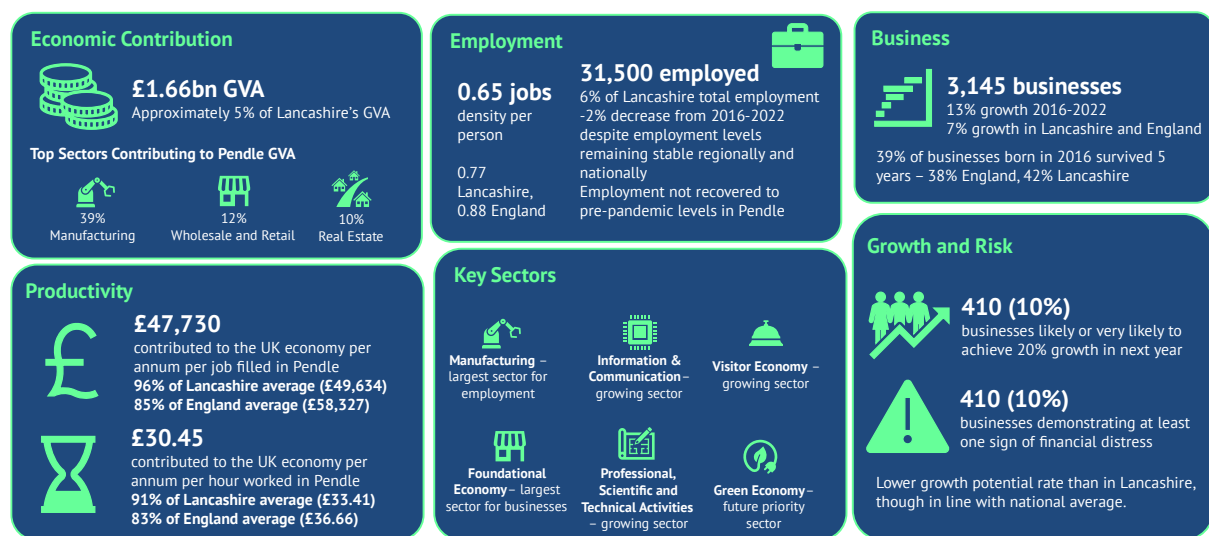
	<p>Support young people into positive destinations – ensure young people can access quality career advice and guidance to be supported into positive destinations in education, training and employment at KS4 and KS5. This includes increasing exposure to inspirational and meaningful encounters with local employers and gain work experience, as well as ensuring those at risk of becoming NEET are supported to overcome barriers to participation.</p>
	<p>Attract working age residents to Pendle – leverage Pendle’s quality of life offer, relative affordability and proximity to city regions to attract working age residents (including those who left the borough and encourage them to return). This action recognises changing working patterns that enable more people to work from home. This action will deliver a compelling proposition about the borough as a place to live, work and invest including inspirational case studies of returners who have experienced success and key facts and figures about the borough, with appropriate signposting to further information.</p>
	<p>Boost core skills and employment prospects – improve essential skills in adults and work with partners to support targeted interventions to develop core skills such as numeracy, literacy and digital. This can be achieved through information advice and guidance and referrals to existing and planned provision tailored to Pendle resident’s needs, as well as increasing awareness and exposure of local residents to local employment opportunities.</p>
	<p>Increase the economically active population – this action recognises the potential to tap into the inactive population and support them to progress to economic activity. This will be facilitated through local and national initiatives to tackle barriers to work in addition to a targeted focus on the role that cultural diversity plays in influencing labour market participation and the need to harness diversity as a driver of growth. This could include targeted support to encourage participation in education, training and employment through raising awareness of the benefits and addressing barriers; raising awareness of enterprise as a route to employment etc.</p>
	<p>Encourage take up of the Lancashire Skills Pledge – increase awareness of the Pledge amongst the Pendle business community and encourage participation to support the provision of good jobs through promoting, building awareness and increased take up of ‘good work’ in Pendle employers. This includes supporting employers to promote and increase access to employment opportunities for local people. A key area of focus should include promote, build awareness and increase take-up of the Real Living Wage amongst Pendle employers.</p>

	<p>Align Skills Provision with Business Demand – leverage connections with the business community to develop skills provision that meets current and future skills needs and develop initiatives that directly supports employment and economic growth. This action aligns with the Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) with a focus on critical skill shortages in key sectors such as digital, manufacturing, health and social care and construction. This includes collaborative work to drive demand led provision including the creation of apprenticeship opportunities and graduate placements. This action will be facilitated by the College roll out of the Industry Innovation Hub which was launched initially in engineering and provides access to state of the art facilities and equipment alongside a wraparound support offer for the student including guaranteed interactions with employers. This is being rolled out to other key sectors and is facilitated by Industry Innovation Boards where employers meet providers on a regular (half termly) basis to shape and co-develop the offer.</p>
	<p>Secure Capital Investment in Skills Infrastructure – actively seeking funding opportunities to invest in capital equipment and estate to address deficiencies and enhance the offer to deliver improved learner experience and meet business needs.</p>
	<p>Increase access to and promote healthy and active lifestyles – preventative action to tackle poor health outcomes, childhood obesity, health deprivation and long term sickness. This includes working with partners to support education and participation in healthy and active lifestyles.</p>



Our Businesses

The Case for Intervention: Pendle's Businesses in Numbers



Sources: GVA, ONS, 2022; Productivity, ONS, 2022; Business Register and Employment Survey, 2016-2022; UK Business Counts 2016-2022; Growth Flag, August 2024

There has been strong growth in the business base in recent years, with evidence of high growth potential in the years ahead

Pendle's business base has experienced strong growth over the last 8 years, with the increase in the number of businesses outstripping the Lancashire and national averages. Overall, the borough's business density remains low, presenting further opportunities to boost enterprise levels and vitality in the business base. There are also opportunities to support the expansion of existing businesses, including those with high growth potential. Data from Growth Flag, a data intelligence tool that forecasts growth potential in individual businesses and local authorities throughout the UK, suggests Pendle has over 400 businesses with high growth potential, slightly lower than the Lancashire-wide average.

Promoting and celebrating the existing business base – strategic employers and SMEs – and entrepreneurial opportunities will raise the profile of Pendle’s economic offer and boost enterprise levels. Identifying and engaging with high growth businesses to understand their future plans and any associated support needs has the potential to unlock high levels of growth in the short to medium term.

Growth in the business base has not translated into employment growth; employment has contracted in recent years and there is a lack of job opportunities relative to the scale of the population

While strong business activity has been visible in the borough, this hasn’t translated into job creation to date, with employment in Pendle having declined by -2% since 2016, contrary to the Lancashire (+1%) and national (+6%) position. Employment in Pendle has not recovered to pre-pandemic levels, and the number of jobs relative to the working age population is significantly lower than average at 0.65 jobs per person (compared to 0.77 in Lancashire and 0.88 in England).

Creating employment opportunities in Pendle – including a targeted focus on the key sectors identified below - is a major priority, which will underpin both economic and inclusive growth.

There are signs of vulnerability in the business base requiring diversification and support

Despite being a major strength and source of opportunities for the borough, the high concentrations of employment in manufacturing are also a cause for concern, especially given the high levels of overall employment decline in the sector in recent years. Over reliance upon the sector underpins the need for diversification to strengthen Pendle’s business base and boost economic resilience.

Looking more widely across the business base, there are also signs of vulnerability and financial distress amongst over 400 businesses in Pendle.

Supporting and building resilience in the local business base – through diversification and through targeted business support to overcome barriers and challenges – will ensure that Pendle is able to remain agile in challenging times, and will also maximise the borough’s ability to respond to and capture emerging opportunities.

Productivity remains low

Despite growth in GVA, productivity in Pendle remains low and is a key challenge for the borough. The contribution to the UK economy for an hour worked in Pendle is just 83% of that contributed on average in England, and 91% of the amount contributed in Lancashire. There are various factors which contribute to this – the shortfall of jobs, concentrations of low value and precarious employment, and low levels of participation amongst the workforce.

The productivity challenge has a direct impact on prosperity and highlights the importance of diversification and productivity improvements through innovation; as well as the need to drive good and inclusive growth in the borough; creating high quality employment opportunities and maximising opportunities for participation.

Our key sectors offer potential for growth, diversification, innovation and investment

Six sectors which build upon existing employment specialisms, recent growth successes, and emerging opportunities have been identified for Pendle.



As detailed in the following key sectors section, each sector has a specific role to play in supporting growth across the borough.

Horizon scanning, identifying disruptors of change and developing a detailed understanding of the growth opportunities within these sectors, and how this aligns with regional and national priorities – particularly in relation to Local Growth Plans and the National Industrial Strategy – will be a key step in positioning Pendle to benefit from strategic investment and emerging sectoral opportunities.

Considering how these sectors can be supported through existing and enhanced business support services will also be key to unlocking growth, improving productivity and driving innovation. This includes addressing business related barriers which are covered within the People and Place Pillars, such as skills gaps and shortages, outdated premises and associated viability gaps, and connectivity challenges.

Strategic Objective

Our Businesses



We will grow, diversify and strengthen Pendle's business base We will enhance business resilience and create new local jobs by removing barriers to growth, capitalising on our existing manufacturing strengths, building on our recent successes in information and professional services, diversifying the economy to embrace opportunities in foundational and emerging sectors, and driving entrepreneurial and innovative activity.

Key Sectors

Manufacturing

An existing employment specialism for the borough and a regional priority sector, anchored by key employers and offering opportunities to build upon historical strengths and skills, driving innovation and modernisation of the sector.

Employing over 7,000 people and generating £647m on GVA per annum, manufacturing is Pendle's largest and most highly represented sector. Manufacturing businesses account for 25% of total employment and 39% of total GVA in the borough, reflecting the sector's higher levels of productivity. With employment levels almost double the regional average and 3.5 times the national average, there are significant concentrations of manufacturing activity in Pendle.

In terms of specialisms, the manufacture of other transport equipment, furniture, food products and fabricated metal products are amongst the ten largest and most highly represented sub-sectors in Pendle. In particular, there are very significant concentrations of employment in the manufacture of other transport equipment and furniture reflecting the presence of major employers such as Rolls Royce and Silentnight in Barnoldswick and the role Pendle plays in Lancashire's advanced manufacturing and aerospace strengths.

There are, however, also vulnerabilities in the manufacturing base which need to be addressed. Between 2016 and 2022, there was a net loss of 1,000 manufacturing jobs in Pendle - equivalent to an 11% decrease and much more significant than the contraction experienced in the sector nationally (0.5%). It also contrasted with trends in Lancashire where manufacturing employment experienced a slight increase (+1%) over the same period.

While further job losses in parts of the sector are inevitable as long term trends of automation continue, there are opportunities to support manufacturing businesses to grow through innovation and the adoption of emerging manufacturing technologies, diversification and productivity improvements. In some cases – as seen recently in food machinery and equipment manufacturing in Pendle, this will create jobs. Further diversification efforts could include building on existing strengths and responding to demand for manufacturing in clean energy industries.

With manufacturing recognised as a priority sector and specialism across Lancashire, there are opportunities to collaborate with other areas across the region particularly in relation to the adoption of advanced technologies, supply chain development and attracting and securing investment.

Information and Communication

A Growing sector in Pendle, with links to the wider digital sector.

Pendle has been successful in securing growth in the information and communications sector in recent years. Between 2016 and 2022, it was the sector which experienced the largest net increase in employment in Pendle, creating 750 jobs – a 60% increase.

Building upon this momentum and maximising opportunities linked to the digital sector and in emerging markets such as robotics and AI (identified as regional priorities), can help the borough to diversify the economy, attract investment and create higher value, service based employment for local residents.



Professional, Scientific and Technical

A growing sector in Pendle

Professional, scientific and technical activities have also grown in the borough, driven by architectural and engineering activities, and computer programming and consultancy which collectively created over 500 jobs over recent years.

As with information and communication, the sector can play a role in diversifying the economy, attracting investment and creating higher value, service based employment for local residents.



Visitor Economy

A sector with unrealised potential.

Situated partly within the Forest of Bowland National Landscape, Pendle has an attractive visitor offer based upon its natural assets – including stunning countryside and the iconic Pendle Hill - and its heritage – including the renowned Pendle Witches and Lancashire's last working mill steam engines at Bancroft Mill. However, the supporting visitor economy sub sectors have experienced mixed fortunes in recent years and overall, employment levels remain low when compared to the national average.

While food and beverage service activities have experienced strong growth in recent years – creating 500 jobs, both accommodation and arts, entertainment and recreation have contracted. There is an opportunity to capitalise on the area's existing offer and to expand employment in the core and supporting sub sectors, creating a pipeline of entry level jobs for residents in Pendle, as well as opportunities for career development and progression. Opportunities to boost and expand the sector, link with ambitions under the Place pillar to raise the profile of Pendle as an attractive place to live, visit and invest.



Foundational Economy

An under-represented sector with potential to create jobs and additional services and amenities for local residents.

The foundational economy encompasses a wide range of sectors which are primarily focused on providing services for the local population. This includes retail, health, education, construction and transport. While many of these sectors account for an average share of employment in Pendle, the low job density means that there are core services which are smaller than would be expected when compared to the scale of the population.

With ambitions to create attractive places for residents, employees, visitors and investors, there is an opportunity to expand the offer of these sectors, creating growth and new jobs, services and amenities, across the economy, supporting place based ambitions. Given the sector's breadth and consequent scale, increasing employment across the foundational economy has the potential to play a key role in addressing the low employment density in the borough.

Green Economy

An aspirational sector that seeks to embrace new and emerging opportunities.

The national drive for net zero carbon emissions and the transition to a low carbon circular economy is creating investment and growth opportunities within the green economy. There are also opportunities linked to the decarbonisation of carbon intensive industries, such as manufacturing and construction. Pendle's existing skills and capabilities provide a strong foundation for the development of the green economy and can support the borough in creating green jobs and capturing green business opportunities, facilitating a smooth and inclusive transition to a more sustainable economy. Opportunities to secure investment through carbon trading or offsetting, and the role that the green economy can play in supporting the green agenda are also important considerations.

Action Plan

The action plan will build on existing and planned activity underway in Pendle including:

- The Town Deal funded **Business Resilience and Growth** programme has offered capital grants to businesses in Nelson, with grants of up to £100,000 available to eligible Nelson businesses for the purposes of investing in new machinery, lowering CO2 emissions or energy consumption and for building improvements to support growth. Originally just for manufacturing businesses, the criteria were expanded to allow all sectors to apply for match funding.
- Small grants are available to businesses in the towns of Nelson, Brierfield, Barnoldswick, Barrowford, Colne and Earby to **support with costs of improving shop fronts**, through funding delivered by the Council.
- **Colne Business Improvement District** (BID) supports the town centre and business resilience through private business rates levy investment.
- Pendle is part of the delivery for **Boost Business Lancashire**, offering a variety of support to local businesses in the borough. Support available for businesses in Pendle through the service includes a business advice offering, the Growth Catalyst programme for established and ambitious businesses looking to grow, and Scale to Thrive which supports businesses which want to scaleup and push forward on innovation, investment and internationalisation. An access to finance service and a programme to support the development of new businesses are also available to businesses in Pendle.
- East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce delivers **RedCAT, the Lancashire Centre for Alternative Technologies**, which offers businesses technical consultancy, financial and R&D support to accelerate the commercialisation of low carbon technologies. Businesses in Pendle can access the programme through UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF).
- **AMRC North West** offers a range of support for manufacturing organisations who want to improve productivity. Working with Pendle Borough and South Ribble councils, the centre runs **SCAN, an innovative supply chain support programme** to help manufacturers digitalise and adopt advanced and sustainable technologies in order to become more resilient.
- Marketing Lancashire runs the **Lancashire Business Ambassadors** programme, working to promote the strengths of Lancashire to national and international audiences.

- **A wide range of other activities** are also ongoing in Pendle and the wider Lancashire region. These range from international trade support to initiatives such as the Lancashire Skills Pledge supporting working with businesses to develop the current and future workforce.

The delivery of this strategy will be dependent upon collaboration between a range of partners. The following action plan identifies the role that Pendle Borough Council will play:



Lead (where statutory responsibility and funding allows)



Work with partners to deliver (influence)



Priority Action – Securing Private Sector Investment through a Compelling Investment Proposition

Increase focus on emerging and growing sector opportunities in Pendle, linked to Lancashire-wide priorities, to increase job creation and business formation, support diversification and increase the profile of Pendle as an attractive location for new and expansion investment demand. This will be achieved through the development of compelling investment propositions in collaboration with partners, including clear investment opportunities. Showcasing recent investment successes will strengthen the proposition. The proposition must be accompanied by practical action to ensure a quality sites and premises offer and supportive business environment is in place to realise investment opportunities.

Action Plan

Identifying Business Support Needs



Business Support and Skills Needs Diagnostic – identify business level challenges to growth and productivity improvements and provide targeted support to enable growth and innovation. This includes a targeted focus on growing and vulnerable businesses to provide tailored diagnostic and support. This can be facilitated by working with partners in Lancashire to identify these businesses from the Lancashire State of Growth Report. This will support understanding of business challenges and opportunities and the appropriate support response.

This action aligns with 'People' interventions to upskill and reskill the workforce and align the available workforce with employment opportunities to meet skill demand. Horizon scanning to identify future drivers and needs will facilitate a future facing response. This could include, for example, identification of green skills and digital skill requirements.



Develop sector action plans – develop a selection of sector action plans to support diversification, a smooth and inclusive transition to a green economy, and productivity growth in the economy. This will include enhancing the competitiveness of existing sector strengths such as manufacturing; support growing sectors such as information and communication, and professional, scientific and technical, and nurture opportunity sectors including the foundational economy, visitor economy and green economy.

Action Plan

The action will work in partnership with others to explore business needs, barriers to growth and productivity, and identify what levers the Council and partners have to support.

Targeted Business Support



Seek Opportunities to Extend the Business Growth and Resilience Programme - opportunities to secure further funding to extend the capital grants programme to support business growth and resilience across the borough should be sought to facilitate productivity growth, innovation and decarbonisation.



Support entrepreneurial and innovative activity - boost enterprise and support businesses to grow (with a focus on innovation, productivity, new markets and enabling infrastructure). Entrepreneurs from ethnic minority backgrounds and business owners should be a specific focus within Pendle.



Build on manufacturing credentials to drive resilience and growth – strengthen relationships with manufacturing primes and SMEs and encourage them to promote their sector strengths and opportunities for growth. This will support career inspiration, a responsive skills system, facilitate a smooth and inclusive transition to a sustainable economy and a responsive policy and business support approach, increase innovation, strengthen supply chain linkages and access to new markets. Supporting innovation in the sector will enable responsiveness to emerging technologies and disruptors of change.



Develop the visitor economy – the visitor economy sector plays an invaluable role in supporting place vitality, developing enhanced image and perception and supporting quality of life for residents. Working with partners in Lancashire, increase profile of Pendle on the regional and national stage and curate visitor product offerings to drive visitation and spend leveraging Pendle's assets. Key assets include Pendle Hill, National Landscape, and stories such as Pendle Witches and Quaker origins can be levered. A review of the current business base in the visitor economy can inform product and packaging of the offer. Encouraging development of the food and drink offer will support the early evening economy and retention and attraction of spend in Pendle.



Celebrate and raise awareness of small businesses - raise awareness of local small businesses through case studies and marketing campaigns to celebrate and promote local business in the borough and support enterprise and entrepreneurship. This can be strengthened through a supportive environment encouraging start up and growth for entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Action Plan

Capacity Building



Strengthen economic partnerships – diversify and add new members to economic partnerships to offer clearer strategic direction, and to build on the important role of previous private/public partnerships in supporting collaboration between the business community and wider stakeholders including anchor institutions such as the Council and College. This action will consider successful models from elsewhere. This action will support peer mentoring, encourage collaboration between businesses to boost innovation and growth, including through networking events and linking in to wider ecosystem activity in multiple sectors (including digital, low carbon etc.) in Lancashire, and encourage key employers to proactively champion Pendle as an investment location.

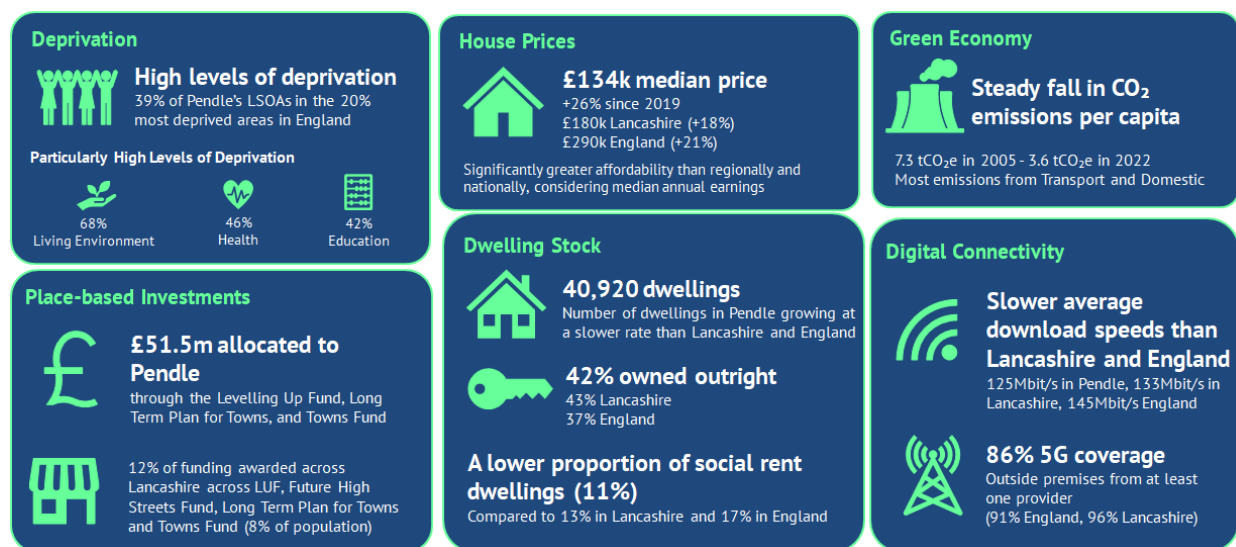


Increase capacity of the VCSE sector – support the development of the VCSE sector in recognition of the important role the sector plays in supporting local communities, mitigating the impact of austerity which has limited public service provision, and building resilient, healthy and safe neighbourhoods.



Our Places

The Case for Intervention: Pendle as a Place



Sources: Indices of Multiple Deprivation, ONS, 2019, Dwellings, ONS, 2014-2021, Median house prices, ONS, 2016-2023, Investment funds, GOV.UK, UK Government, 2024, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, 2005-2002, Connected Nations Report, Ofcom, 2023

There is an opportunity to promote and build upon Pendle's attractive natural environment and heritage

Sitting on the Southern edge of the Yorkshire Dales and partly within the Forest of Bowland Natural Landscape, Pendle benefits from stunning natural surroundings and a distinct cultural heritage. Key assets include the iconic Pendle Hill and the notorious trials of the Pendle Witches. It is recognised that more could be done to develop a place-based narrative for the borough which showcases these assets and markets the borough's offer to visitors. There are also opportunities to build upon current strengths to further establish the borough's towns and villages as visitor destinations, although this needs to be supported by investment in supporting infrastructure and challenges relating to image and safety in some areas need to be addressed to increase appeal.

Creating a place-based narrative for Pendle and building upon the borough's heritage and existing natural assets, will not only support the development of the visitor economy – a key priority within the business pillar – it will also raise awareness and increase the appeal of Pendle as a place to live, work and invest.

Pendle has been successful in securing over £50 million of place based investment which can help to deliver opportunities and address some of the challenges the borough faces

Pendle has secured funding through the Towns Fund, Long Term Plan for Towns and the Levelling Up Fund, which are being used to deliver a wide range of initiatives that will support town centre regeneration and economic growth in the coming years.

Whilst this is a significant amount of funding, and accounts for 12% of the funding awarded across Lancashire (relative to Pendle's 8% share of Lancashire's population), there are restrictions about where and/or how the money can be used - for example, the £20m of Long Term Plan for Towns funding is focused upon Nelson and specific intervention areas such as safety and security. The funds secured across the borough are also time limited, and as a finite resource, additional and replacement funds will be required to capitalise on opportunities and address ongoing challenges across the borough.

Continued lobbying to raise awareness of the opportunities and challenges in Pendle, and to position the borough for future investment will be a priority, especially as discussions around devolution advance at the regional level.

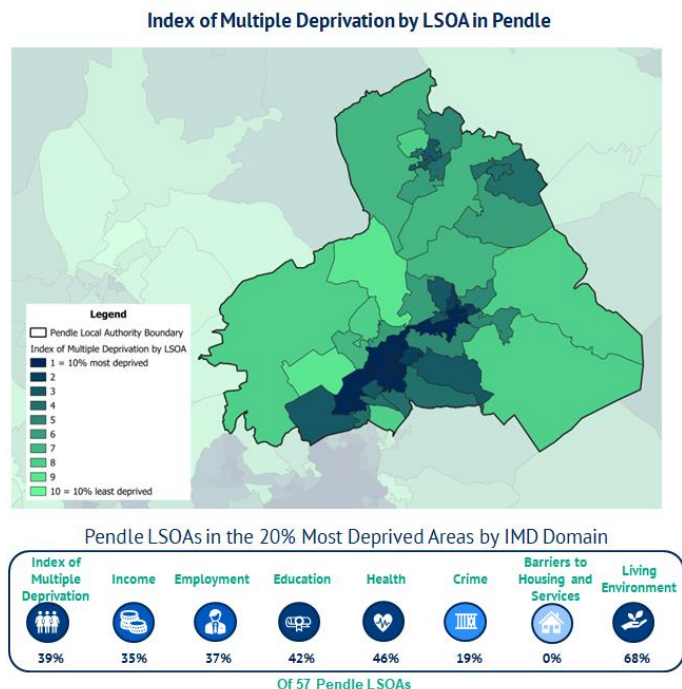
There are concentrations of deprivation within Pendle

Across the borough, 39% of LSOAs are in the 20% most deprived areas in England.

Pendle's most deprived areas are clustered in the South of the borough in Nelson. There are also concentrations of deprivation in the North in Barnoldswick and Earby.

There are particularly high levels of deprivation relating to the quality of the local environment, health and education, as well as reasonably high levels on the income and employment domains.

While the Index of Multiple Deprivation, shows low levels of deprivation in Pendle in the barriers to Housing and Services domain, this relates to physical and financial access to housing rather than the quality of the housing offer – which is a known challenge (as covered below).



The statistics on deprivation reflect and reinforce challenges that are highlighted within the People and Business pillars. Reducing levels of deprivation is complex and will require actions across each of the strategy's pillars to be delivered effectively. Ensuring growth is inclusive will also be key to successfully tackling deprivation.

Housing in Pendle is affordable, however there has been relatively slow growth in housing stock and there are issues relating to the quality and variety of housing

Despite house prices in the borough rising at a faster rate than regionally and nationally, median prices are significantly lower and more affordable than average. The borough has higher levels of homeownership and private renting than nationally, with lower levels of social renting. Affordable housing is a driver attracting migrants to Pendle, however, many households who own their house outright do not aspire to move up the housing ladder.

In terms of housing stock, the number of new dwellings has been growing at a slower rate than average between 2014 and 2021, and there are issues relating to both the quality and breadth of housing which limit choice. The offer also varies significantly across the borough. There is a lack of suitable family housing and aspirational housing, which impacts directly on the attractiveness of parts of Pendle as a place to live and as a place to invest.

There is a need to widen the housing offer to support growth ambitions. This includes both responding to increased annual housing targets, as well as ensuring that a broad range of quality housing is available to meet identified need and to support Pendle's place proposition as an attractive place to live, work and invest.

Supporting infrastructure is a key barrier to growth in Pendle - Limited transport connections pose challenges for the accessing of economic opportunity, while a shortage of strategic sites and fit-for-purpose premises limits space for businesses to grow.

The lack of east-west connectivity is a significant barrier to growth, with the M65 extension recognised as an opportunity as well as a need to invest in rail line and rolling stock (including from Colne to Skipton). There is high demand for industrial space near the M65, which in the short term can be met through the Lomeshaye extension, however beyond this, there are limited opportunities to bring industrial space forward. This is a barrier to attracting investment in Pendle, as well as being a factor which increases the risk of businesses leaving the area due to challenges in finding strategic sites with suitable capacity.

Further challenges for existing businesses, include viability gaps which are inhibiting businesses from investing in their premises to bring them up to the standards required to support growth and increase energy efficiency. There are also investment barriers to enable the retrofit of ageing commercial premises (i.e. old mills) to support decarbonisation and increase energy efficiency.

Issues relating to connectivity, the availability of strategic sites and fit for purpose premises are physical barriers to growth which need to be addressed to support the delivery of priorities within the Business pillar. Without the right premises and transport connections, there will be limitations to the extent to which certain businesses can grow and/or diversify regardless of other business support offered. Securing transport infrastructure investment can deliver transformational change to Pendle. Continuing to lobby for investment in strategic infrastructure including the M65 and rail network is key.

Digital connectivity varies across the borough and requires improvement

Pendle has a slower average internet download speed than regional and national benchmarks. Whilst the borough has 100% 3G and 4G coverage (whereby at least one operator provides this mobile coverage to outside premises throughout the borough), there are concerns that the removal of a 3G offer could lead to further cold spots, especially given that 5G coverage in the borough is more limited than regionally and nationally.

Digital infrastructure is a key enabler for economic growth and improvements in productivity and businesses commercial success. Continued investment is needed to enable access to gigabit-capable broadband and 5G connectivity.

Strategic Objective

Our Place



We will create vibrant places with lasting appeal which attract and retain residents, employees, visitors and investors. We will leverage funding opportunities to build capacity, ambition and drive investment; enhancing our heritage, leisure and visitor offer and improving housing, connectivity and business premises in our towns, villages and rural areas. We will create safe, welcoming and sustainable places which can be enjoyed now and in the future.

Investment Needs



Action Plan

The action plan will build on existing and planned activity underway in Pendle including:

- **Place-based investments into town centres**, such as the Nelson Town Deal and proposed Long Term Plan for Nelson, various public realm improvement schemes, and work to develop masterplans for Colne, Barnoldswick and Earby.
- **New employment sites** including Lomeshaye Phase 1 and 2, and the West Craven Business Park extension.
- **Redevelopment of Northlight at Brierfield Mill** into a multi-use community including enterprise offices and workshops, leisure, residential and public realm.
- **PEARL/PEARL together** supporting the delivery of new homes in Earby, Colne and Nelson
- **Super Slow Way**, an arts programme in Pennine Lancashire which supports people to create the future cultural landscape along the Leeds & Liverpool Canal Corridor, building on the assets of the natural environment, heritage, and community.
- **Refurbishment of cultural venues** in Colne including the Little Theatre, the Municipal Theatre, the Hippodrome Theatre and Colne Market Hall through the Levelling Up Funded programme.
- Plans to **promote active travel by bike and on foot** as identified in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

The delivery of this strategy will be dependent upon collaboration between a range of partners. The following action plan identifies the role that Pendle Borough Council will play:



Lead (where statutory responsibility and funding allows)



Work with partners to deliver (influence)



Priority Action – Successfully deliver Town Centre Regeneration Programmes

The successful delivery of major town centre regeneration programmes including Town Deal, LUF and Long Term Plan for Towns will support town centre vitality and diversification, driving footfall and spend and supporting quality of a life through an enhanced offer. Continue to seek gap funding to diversify the use of town centres, including re-use of vacant or underutilised spaces to better meet the needs of the economy and population, improve building frontages and public realm, and re-animate town centres with events and activity. This will support implementation of town centre masterplans in Barnoldswick, Earby, Colne and Nelson.

Action Plan



Develop new quality employment sites and premises to meet demand – consider how Pendle can ensure the delivery of appropriate scale and quality of sites to meet the demand from growing employers within the borough, and those who may look to the borough, with a spatial focus around the M65 corridor as a driver of investment interest. Continue to seek gap funding to address viability gaps and unlock sites. This action includes realising development potential at Lomeshaye Phase 2 through supporting site owners and developers to bring the site forward. The development of the new Local Plan informed by an Employment Land Review will determine additional employment sites for inclusion in the next plan period.



Retrofit ageing commercial premises – work with business owners and building owners to develop plans to retrofit and regenerate ageing commercial premises such as old mills to meet future business needs, support decarbonisation and increase energy efficiency. This includes support to secure gap funding.



Ensure that Pendle offers a broad quality housing offer to meet identified need – progress schemes to meet existing targets, and consider possibilities for future sites (linked to the Local Plan). In addition to building new homes, support investment in existing stock including retrofit and securing investment to support housing regeneration and renewal.







Develop and Deliver a Pendle Climate Change Strategy – develop a comprehensive Climate Change Strategy aimed at achieving net-zero carbon emissions. The strategy will guide the Council's efforts in reducing its carbon footprint across operations and engage with the community to promote sustainable practices.



Enhance the Place Narrative and Brand Identity of Pendle – related to the creation of a compelling investment proposition, consider the place narrative and brand identity of Pendle to effectively promote and drive visitation, migration and investment to the borough. This will raise the profile of Pendle's towns and rural areas, celebrate the diversity of places, and define the offer and proposition of the borough to prospective businesses and residents.

Action Plan

	<p>Invest in digital connectivity – secure investment to enable gigabit-capable broadband and 5G connectivity alongside ensuring there is a comprehensive 4G strategy in place to support digital cold spots in rural areas.</p>
	<p>Lobby for strategic transport infrastructure improvements – collaborate with local authority partners and infrastructure actors to make strategic transport proposals stronger, more effective and compelling to secure national investment. This includes improvements to the M65, the Colne bypass, and the Skipton to Colne railway. These schemes will play a vital role in unlocking Pendle's economic growth potential.</p>
	<p>Improve transport links to areas of economic opportunity – improve public transport and active travel provision to employment sites and town centres <i>within</i> Pendle including those areas with poor connectivity and close to employment sites, as well as developing better links between areas of economic opportunity outside the borough which can connect residents and businesses to talent and markets.</p>
	<p>Support active travel enhancements – build upon planned investment in footpaths and cycle paths and realise the aspirations of the LCWIP to support the health and wellbeing agenda and the visitor economy.</p>

7 Delivering Our Strategy

Partnership and Collaboration

The role of district councils such as Pendle is moving more towards an enabling role with an increased reliance on a range of partners in the public, private and VCSE sectors. The delivery of this strategy will be dependent upon expertise and funding from a range of potential partners, including but not limited to:

- Pendle Vision Board
- Boost Business Lancashire
- Growth Lancashire
- East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce
- Other Pennine Lancashire authorities
- Lancashire County Council, including Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub
- Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) Marketing Lancashire and Visit Lancashire
- DWP and Jobcentre Plus
- Education providers including Nelson & Colne College, schools and HEI partners
- Central government departments such as MHCLG, Homes England, DBT, DfE, DCMS and a range of Arm's Length Bodies such as Historic England and Arts Council England

The Strategic Framework reflects the importance of effective partnerships in delivering our vision as identified as one of the three cross-cutting themes in the strategy. Pendle Borough Council's role in the action plan is identified as being either:



Lead (where statutory responsibility and funding allows)



Work with partners to deliver (influence)

Governance

The Economic Growth Strategy will be led by the Council's Economic Growth department and overseen by Pendle Borough Council's Corporate Leadership Team who will work closely with the Officer Working Group to support delivery of the Strategy.

The Pendle Vision Board will support engagement with key employers, SME representatives and public sector partners and provide a sounding board for the private sector to inform Council on long-term economic development needs; support lobbying for funds and strategic priorities; and champion for economic growth in Pendle.

Securing Future Support

Pendle has been fortunate to secure investment from a series of funding streams in recent years to support economic resilience and growth in the borough. These initiatives have included Town Deal, Levelling Up Fund, UKSPF, and the Long Term Plan for Towns. Each funding stream has enabled distinct programmes of activity, often spatially focused, and facilitated opportunities for joined up planning and delivery.

Success of the strategy will depend on delivery and funding from a range of partners. There is a continued imperative to seek further funding to deliver the scale of transformational change required in Pendle. Continued efforts to secure funding to allow programmes of activity to be extended and enhanced, and secure new sources of funding, are essential across public and private sector sources. Opportunities to lever wider investment will be considered regularly to identify potential future sources, priority intervention areas, including developing a pipeline of initiatives to ensure they are 'shovel ready' when funding opportunities are presented.

Monitoring Progress

Provision of updates on each action will be provided to the Corporate Leadership Team on a six-monthly basis. An Annual Report will review and report progress of the Economic Growth Strategy to share with partners, highlighting key successes and performance and progress against key performance indicators. Progress will be regularly shared with the Pendle Vision Board and other economic partnerships to ensure the strategy is responsive to business opportunities and needs.

Action Plan Summary

Theme	Action Name	Partners of Interest (with Pendle Borough Council)	Summary Next Steps for the next 12 months		
			Year 1 (2025)	Year 2 (includes 1-2 years across 2025-2026)	Years 3-4 (includes 3-4 years across 2027-2028)
People	<i>Developing a Higher Level Skills Offer within Pendle</i>	Further Education Providers, Higher Education Institutions, Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen partnerships with Higher Education Institutions Working with industry, identify higher level skill requirements and gaps in current provision Work with local partners to develop and roll out HE pathways in Pendle Work with education institutions to inspire ambition and encourage entry to higher education pathways 		
	<i>Inspire Ambition and Improve life chances in children and young people</i>	Schools and Colleges, Extra-Curricular Providers and programmes such as YES Hub, Local Employers, Lancashire Careers Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll out planned initiatives including the Extraordinary Minds Academy and EPQ Conduct a review of existing extra-curricular and enrichment activity available to young people in the borough, to understand what currently works well and where gaps exist in provision (by type and considering barriers to delivery and participation) Work with partners to develop and encourage up-take of extra-curricular and enrichment provision Develop stronger relationships with local employers and encourage collaboration with providers to inspire ambition 		
	<i>Support young people into positive destinations</i>	Schools and Colleges, Local Employers, Lancashire Careers Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work closely with the Lancashire Careers Hub to increase access to career advice and guidance within Pendle, with particular focus on key sectors important to the borough's future economy Work with partners to roll out more widely existing resources prepared by the Careers Hub relating to Lancashire's key sectors, and collaborate on the development of any new resources required for Pendle Work with partners including the Careers Hub and local employers to encourage the creation and uptake of work experience placements Work with local employers to develop and share case studies of local employment opportunities, in order to raise aspiration within schools and colleges 		
	<i>Attract working age residents to Pendle</i>	Local Employers, Marketing Lancashire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with employers to encourage and raise awareness of flexible working arrangements and local amenities in order to attract staff Work with partners including Marketing Lancashire to develop Pendle's place brand narrative in order to demonstrate the borough's attractiveness as a place to live, work and invest Develop inspirational case studies on the borough to showcase compelling propositions and residents who have experienced success 		

Theme	Action Name	Partners of Interest (with Pendle Borough Council)	Summary Next Steps for the next 12 months		
			Year 1 (2025)	Year 2 (includes 1-2 years across 2025-2026)	Years 3-4 (includes 3-4 years across 2027-2028)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run marketing campaigns to raise awareness of the opportunities and positive quality of life within the borough 		
	<i>Boost core skills and employment prospects</i>	Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub, Department for Work and Pensions, Local Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners to encourage participation in existing schemes such as Multiply, designed to help adults improve their maths skills and improve employment prospects Work with partners to encourage uptake of programmes supporting the development of literacy and digital skills, such as Skills Bootcamps, and identify any gaps in provision/barriers to access for local residents Review existing employability / essential skills provision and identify any gaps Raise awareness of local employment opportunities to enhance employment prospects of local residents 		
	<i>Increase the economically active population</i>	Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub, Department for Work and Pensions, Training Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using the Lancashire Economic Inactivity Report as a base, conduct further research and analysis to consider the specific reasons for economic inactivity in Pendle and the relative prevalence of the inactivity in different groups and geographical parts of the borough Review existing local and national initiatives to support the progression of the inactive population into economic activity, working with relevant partners to consider uptake and effectiveness Consider gaps in provision and how these can be filled, developing and delivering targeted interventions to the areas with the most significant prevalence of inactivity Work with the inactive population to raise awareness of the opportunities for training and the benefits of upskilling to support progression into employment. In addition, raise awareness of enterprise as a route to employment. 		
	<i>Encourage take up of the Lancashire Skills Pledge</i>	Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub, Local Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub to increase awareness of and membership of the Pledge amongst the business community in Pendle Work with local employers to encourage sign up to the pledge, and share case studies of existing members to inspire increased participation 		
	<i>Align Skills Provision with Business Demand</i>	Nelson and Colne College, Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub, Local Employers, Training Providers, Education Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In line with the Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan, develop a focus on critical skills shortages in key sectors, considering the existing evidence and how this relates to priorities for Pendle Work with partners to build on existing provision, including the Industry Innovation Hub facilitated by the college Work with partners and local employers to encourage the creation of apprenticeships and graduate placements 		

Theme	Action Name	Partners of Interest (with Pendle Borough Council)	Summary Next Steps for the next 12 months		
			Year 1 (2025)	Year 2 (includes 1-2 years across 2025-2026)	Years 3-4 (includes 3-4 years across 2027-2028)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute case studies of young people that have succeeded through these skills pathways to encourage further uptake Utilise skill diagnostics to identify current and future skill needs and work with training providers and education institutions to respond to this effectively 		
	<i>Secure Capital Investment in Skills Infrastructure</i>	DfE, Lancashire County Council, Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub, education and training providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing [in response to funding rounds] Work with partners in Lancashire including the County Council and neighbouring boroughs, working together where effective to do so to lobby for investments in critical skills infrastructure Develop investable propositions to showcase opportunities relating to skills infrastructure for investment in Pendle to investors and UK Government 		
	<i>Increase access to and promote healthy and active lifestyles</i>	Active Lancashire, Schools and Colleges, Extra-curricular Providers, Lancashire County Council, NHS/health providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Active Lancashire and local partners that work with children and young people to raise awareness and uptake of existing programmes that promote healthy and active lifestyles Work with the NHS/health providers to support preventative health including consideration of social prescribing Identify any potential gaps in provision and strengthen relationships with extra-curricular providers to explore potential opportunities for future developments 		
Business	<i>Securing Private Sector Investment through a Compelling Investment Proposition</i>	Lancashire County Council, Marketing Lancashire, Local Businesses, DBT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners to develop compelling investable propositions, providing a clear call-to-action for investors Develop an investment prospectus for the borough, while working with Lancashire County Council and Marketing Lancashire to ensure inclusion of Pendle's propositions in Lancashire wide materials Raise awareness of success stories of recent investments in the borough, supporting the attraction of future investment 		
	<i>Business Support and Skills Needs Diagnostic</i>	Lancashire County Council, Boost Business Lancashire, Growth Lancashire, East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, Local Businesses, Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness of local business support offerings and encourage participation, sharing information on the offerings and case studies of businesses currently/previously involved Work with partners to support businesses through targeted interventions, focusing on businesses with high growth potential and/or businesses with early signs of financial distress, as identified using business intelligence tools 		
	<i>Develop sector action plans</i>	Sector Bodies, Local Businesses, Lancashire County Council, HEIs/Research institutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with sector bodies and consult local businesses to develop sector action plans for the identified priority sectors for Pendle, including plans to support diversification, just transitions to net zero and productivity growth in the economy 		

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			Year 1 (2025)	Year 2 (includes 1-2 years across 2025-2026)	Years 3-4 (includes 3-4 years across 2027-2028)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Lancashire County Council to align with county-wide priorities and support for specific sectors, such as existing diversification programmes (i.e. the Watchtower Programme for advanced engineering manufacturing businesses) 		
	<i>Seek Opportunities to Extend the Business Growth and Resilience Programme</i>	Growth Lancashire, Boost Business Lancashire, East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, UK Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with Lancashire partners to seek further funding to extend capital grants programmes Develop materials to showcase the positive impact of existing schemes to support investment attraction and representation of Pendle to UK Government 		
	<i>Support entrepreneurial and innovative activity</i>	Boost Business Lancashire, Sector Bodies, Local Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build on existing start up, scale up and innovation programmes to ensure clear focus on innovation, productivity, new markets, enabling infrastructure and target entrepreneurs including those from ethnic minority backgrounds Showcase a diverse range of entrepreneurial and innovative activities in Pendle through case studies and marketing campaigns Collaborate with partners to run networking events, with a particular focus on key sectors, and signpost to support mechanisms 		
	<i>Build on manufacturing credentials to drive resilience and growth</i>	Local Employers, Sector Bodies, North West Aerospace Alliance, Boost Business Lancashire, Growth Lancashire, East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, DBT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen relationships with key employers including primes and SMEs in the manufacturing sector, encouraging the promotion of local opportunities within the sectors Develop a sector action plan for manufacturing Collaborate with sector industry bodies, such as the North West Aerospace Alliance, to develop targeted business support programmes 		
	<i>Develop the visitor economy</i>	Marketing Lancashire, Local Attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a visitor economy strategy/action plan, considering the current visitor economy assets and business base in the borough, as well as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats Curate visitor product offerings and work with Marketing Lancashire and local attractions to promote these, raising awareness of Pendle as a visitor destination 		
	<i>Celebrate and raise awareness of small businesses</i>	Local Businesses, Marketing Lancashire, Colne BID, Pendle Vision Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run marketing campaigns sharing case studies that promote local businesses and entrepreneurship Collaborate with Marketing Lancashire to include more Pendle case studies in Lancashire-wide marketing collateral 		
	<i>Strengthen economic partnerships</i>	Local Businesses, Pendle Vision Board, Colne BID, Lancashire partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and consider successful models from neighbouring districts and elsewhere Expand and diversify members of economic partnerships, building on the important role of public/private partnerships in the borough 		

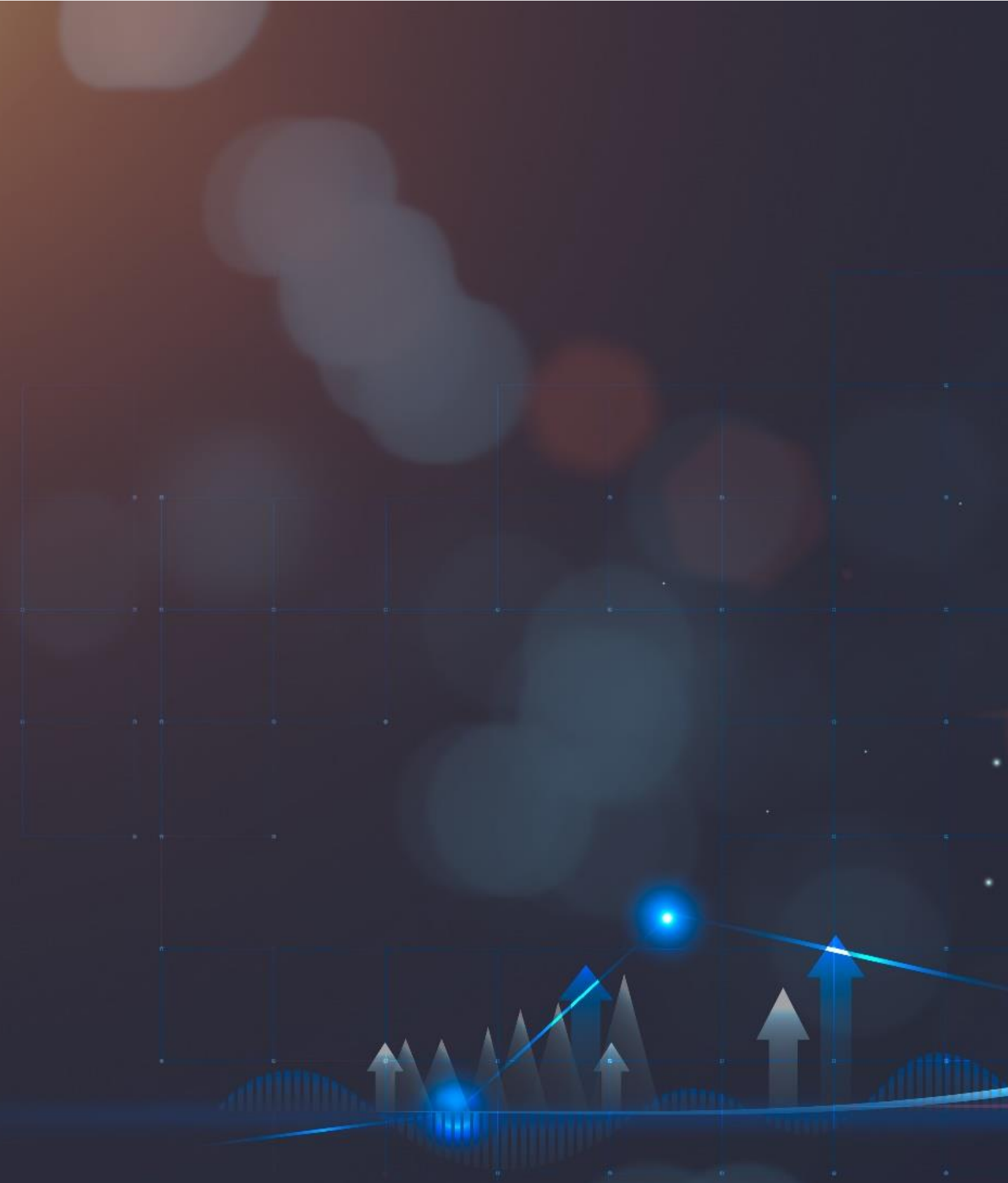
Theme	Action Name	Partners of Interest (with Pendle Borough Council)	Summary Next Steps for the next 12 months		
			Year 1 (2025)	Year 2 (includes 1-2 years across 2025-2026)	Years 3-4 (includes 3-4 years across 2027-2028)
Place			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through partnerships, encourage collaboration and participation in wider ecosystem activity in Lancashire 		
	<i>Increase capacity of the VCSE sector</i>	VCSE organisations, Lancashire County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen relationships with VCSE organisations to understand their offer, support needs, and barriers to delivery and growth Meet with VCSE organisations regularly to key discuss key issues and opportunities in the borough and involve such organisations in economic partnerships and steering groups. 		
	<i>Successfully deliver Town Centre Regeneration Programmes</i>	Public and private sector partners, MHCLG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advance delivery of interventions through town centre regeneration programmes including Town Deal, LUF and the Long Term Plan for Towns Consider potential use cases for under-utilised spaces, such as pop-up stalls or events, collaborating with community groups and local businesses on pilot and meanwhile initiatives Make the case to government/investors for gap funding to secure the future of these initiatives 		
	<i>Develop new quality employment sites and premises to meet demand</i>	Lancashire County Council, MHCLG, site owners, investors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify new sites where Pendle can offer appropriate scale and quality of sites to meet the demand from growing employers in the borough and potential inward investors Seek gap funding to address viability gaps and unlock sites Continually focus on the current and future need of businesses, informed by an Employment Land Review 		
	<i>Retrofit ageing commercial premises</i>	Local Businesses, site owners, investors, MHCLG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with businesses and property owners to develop plans to retrofit and regenerate ageing commercial premises Make the case to government/investors for securing gap funding to support these initiatives 		
	<i>Ensure that Pendle offers a broad quality housing offer to meet identified need</i>	Homes England, site owners, developers, investors, RSLs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners to progress schemes to meet existing housing targets Identify and prepare future sites, supporting the development of a broad and quality housing offer for residents Make the case for investment funds to support regeneration and renewal of current housing stock, to increase desirability of the housing offer for potential residents 		
	<i>Develop and Deliver a Pendle Climate Change Strategy</i>	Lancashire Partners, Local Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners across Lancashire to consider best practice in reducing carbon emissions Develop and deliver a comprehensive Climate Change Strategy, reducing emissions to net-zero Engage with local communities to discuss opportunities and respond to issues in the transition to net-zero, and to promote sustainable practices 		
	<i>Enhance the Place Narrative and Brand Identity of Pendle</i>	Marketing Lancashire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners to consider the effectiveness of the current place brand for Pendle and how this can be made more compelling and effective in driving visitation, migration and investment to the borough 		

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			Year 1 (2025)	Year 2 (includes 1-2 years across 2025-2026)	Years 3-4 (includes 3-4 years across 2027-2028)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Marketing Lancashire to raise the profile of Pendle's assets and brand strengths through cross-Lancashire co-ordinated promotional activity 		
	<i>Invest in digital connectivity</i>	Mobile and Internet Operators, UK Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop relationships with mobile and internet operators to support the rollout of gigabit-capable broadband and 5G connectivity, as well as comprehensive 4G coverage throughout the borough Work with UK Government to secure funding for improved connectivity, particularly in rural areas 		
	<i>Lobby for strategic transport infrastructure improvements</i>	Lancashire County Council, NP11, UK Government, National Highways, Network Rail, transport operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with partners in Lancashire including neighbouring boroughs, the County Council and partners more widely such as the NP11 to make strong cases for strategic investment into transport infrastructure that are vital to unlocking Pendle's economic growth potential 		
	<i>Improve transport links to areas of economic opportunity</i>	Lancashire County Council, Transport Operators, Sustrans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners including the County Council and local/regional transport operators to improve ease of access to key employment sites through public transport, both inside and outside of the borough Consider potential for new active travel schemes to support access to employment sites and town centres, and make the case for funding to support such initiatives 		
	<i>Support active travel enhancements</i>	Active Lancashire, Lancashire County Council, Sustrans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to considering active travel schemes for access to employment sites and town centres, deliver planned investment in footpaths and cycle paths to support health and wellbeing and the visitor economy Consider opportunities for further schemes as identified in the LCWIP and make the case for funding Actively promote travel schemes and enhancements to encourage use and visitation. 		

A.1. Stakeholders Consulted

Representatives from the following organisations were consulted through 1-2-1 meetings and/or thematic workshops:

- Barnfield Construction
- Boost Business Lancashire
- Department for Work and Pensions
- East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce
- Growth Lancashire
- Lancashire County Council
- Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub
- Marketing Lancashire
- Member of Parliament for Pendle and Clitheroe
- Nelson and Colne College
- NHS
- Northern Reach
- Pendle Borough Council
- Pendle Connects
- Pendle Vision Board
- Pettys Real Estate



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