

# North Somerset

## Economic Plan



North Somerset

[www.innorthsomerset.co.uk](http://www.innorthsomerset.co.uk)

### Ambitions



Electric cycle hire



Employment and skills hubs



Weston General Stores



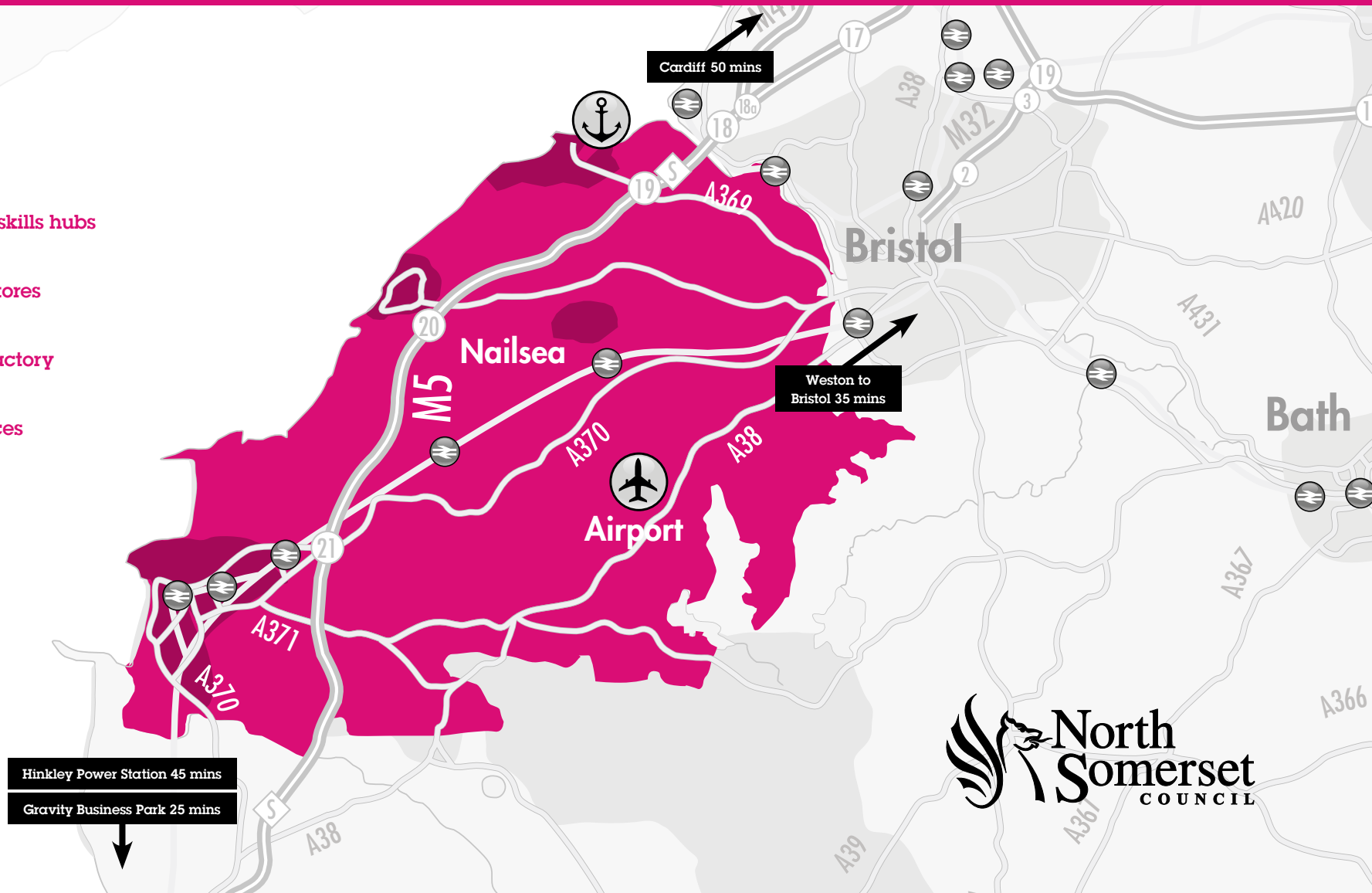
Weston housing factory



Flexible workspaces



MetroWest



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## Open

We will provide strong community leadership and work transparently with our residents, businesses and partners to deliver our ambition for North Somerset.

## Fair

We aim to reduce inequalities and promote fairness and opportunity for everyone.

## Green

We will lead our communities to protect and enhance our environment, tackle the climate emergency and drive sustainable development.



# Section 1: Introduction

The Coronavirus pandemic has had a profound effect on our daily lives and the economy. We don't know how long it will take before we have a full economic recovery, and there are significant challenges ahead.

We've listened to our businesses, residents and stakeholders about what they are going through and recognise the need to act quickly to show what we will do to help.

Transport, retail, the visitor economy and creative industries have been hit particularly hard. Unemployment has risen and our young people are especially at risk with fewer job opportunities and apprenticeships.

And, the risk of a no-deal exit from the European Union at the end of the year is creating additional economic uncertainty.

Lockdown has highlighted the problem of digital poverty; those without access to broadband or the right equipment and skills are at a big disadvantage. Such unprecedented times have put huge pressure on mental and physical health, highlighting the importance of wellbeing.

The changes to lifestyle and work as a result of the pandemic means we need a new approach to our existing economic plan which was due to run until 2036. This new plan will have two core drivers: Helping those suffering economic hardships and building on the opportunities the crisis has revealed.

Our priority is to first identify projects which can help residents experiencing exacerbated deprivation due to the impact of the pandemic. Job losses, business closures, reduced access to digital learning or reskilling courses must be addressed to lessen the impact felt by our vulnerable communities.

The Governor of the Bank of England said that how we respond to these key issues will be the true measure of effectiveness 'rather than the scale of any short-term plunge in GDP' and we at North Somerset Council agree.

Our second driver is rooted in the changes we've all had to make to the way we live and work and the opportunities that has created. Economic and financial values will remain a core priority in our recovery, but the lockdown has also highlighted a different set of values. Community, connectivity and wellbeing, as well as a healthy and sustainable environment, are now much more prominent drivers for decision-makers.

In response, the Council is prioritising economic renewal activity around three key pillars:

- Providing inclusive growth and wellbeing for North Somerset **people**.
- Delivering **digital access** for all.
- Supporting **green** business and low carbon activities.

In this plan, we'll set out in more detail the drivers for our strategy, our priorities and commitments and how we will deliver and measure our success. This is a 5-year plan but during a time of economic uncertainty, it needs to be flexible and responsive. It will be reviewed every three months by an Economic Plan Steering Group and the commitments will be continuously assessed to ensure they are responding to needs and opportunities.



## Section 2: The commitments

The council will prioritise the following projects:

- **Full fibre and 5G:** Ensure next-generation digital connectivity and telecommunications technology is supplied into premises, workplaces and homes.
- **North Somerset Local Plan:** Develop evidence led economic input into the new Local Plan to deliver mixed and sustainable communities with new homes, jobs and infrastructure.
- **Town centre transformation:** Encourage our town centres to become thriving places to live, work and enjoy.
- **Tech adoption:** Ensure businesses can adopt digital technology and maximise the benefits.
- **Mobility as a service:** Develop wider access to on-demand transport, mobility services and carbon-efficient local delivery solutions.
- **Low carbon inward investment:** Grow North Somerset's green economy by working in partnership with regional inward investment organisations and working with residents to access skills to support the sector.
- **Infrastructure for local working:** Provide digital infrastructure and facilities for local working so that our places can realise the maximum opportunities of distributed and flexible working.
- **Retrofitting buildings, community energy, renewable energy and carbon reduction:** Maximise benefits of energy efficiency schemes by ensuring local people have the right skills to make the most of the job opportunities.
- **Employment and skills strategy:** Focused activity around opportunities for those who have lost their jobs and are disenfranchised from the labour market, combined with the provision of opportunities to reskill, upskill and deliver access to further and higher education.
- **Strategic employment sites:** Protect jobs and deliver sustainable activity which retains positive outcomes within the economy and benefits local employment, businesses and communities.
- **Visitor economy action plan:** Deliver a plan which prioritises the promotion and growth of environmentally friendly holidays, and targeted support to improve the quality and diversity of our visitor economy.
- **Creative industries action plan:** Deliver a plan which prioritises sustainability throughout the supply chain, makes the case for investment and nurtures talent.
- **Enhanced business support programme:** Commission a universal pre-start, early growth and business resilience service and support Small and Medium Sizes Enterprises to develop inclusive practices into their business models, such as employee ownership.
- **Voluntary, community and social enterprise:** Work with the sector to help them demonstrate the positive impact they have on the economy and jointly make the case for increased investment.
- **J21 enterprise area:** Directly invest and seek investment to help the creation of jobs.
- **West of England working:** Prioritise regional partnerships to ensure maximum impact across the West of England to grow businesses, protect and create jobs.

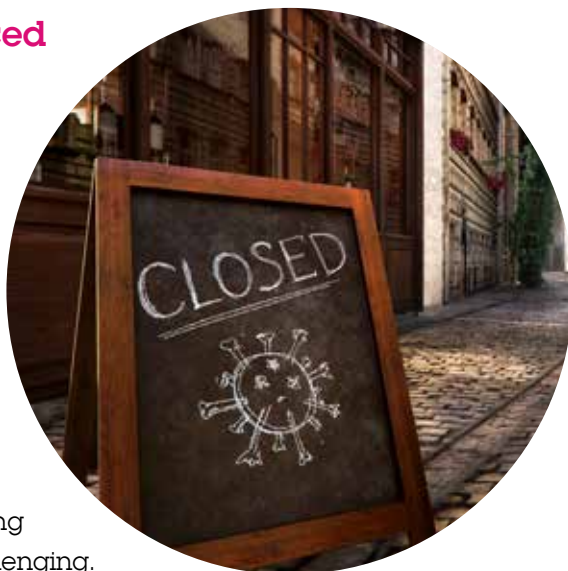
# Section 3 The evidence

## Known Challenges

The biggest challenge facing North Somerset is unemployment and the financial hardship which can make people vulnerable to homelessness, mental and physical health issues.

## Furlough and reduced hours

Lockdown had an immediate impact on working hours and income levels as furloughed staff received 80% of their normal wage. Even though lockdown has eased, social distancing, reduced demand and economic activity are making business viability more challenging.



Some businesses have already had to lay off staff and the furlough scheme is being phased out which mean further redundancies are likely in the coming months.

The following table shows the level of furlough by sector at the national level and the proportion of people employed in these sectors in North Somerset. This gives an indication of which sectors may be vulnerable to further redundancies.

It is important to note that the redundancy risk is sector-specific, for example, construction has brought many workers back from furlough and into full-time employment while hospitality services are likely to see job losses.

Given the prevalence of visitor economy jobs in Weston Super Mare, should these furlough figures turn into redundancies there will be a significant and structural employment crisis in the town. Already we know that a higher proportion of Weston residents have been furloughed than the district overall (32% compared to 26%)



Viper Innovations at desk, Paul Groom 2019

Sector	% furloughed nationally	% of North Somerset residents working in sector
Accommodation and food services	77%	11%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	70%	3.4%
Construction	60%	5.4%
Manufacturing	42%	8%
Admin and support services	32%	12%
Transport and storage	32%	8%

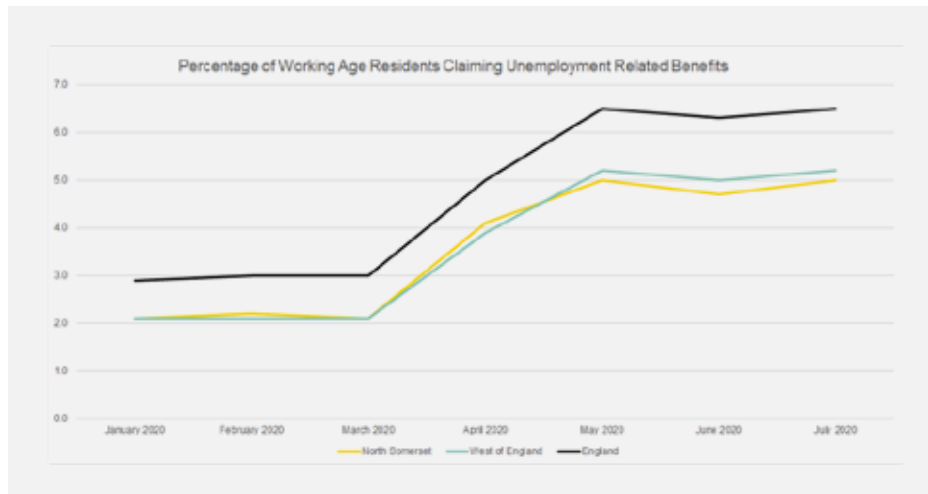


## Job vacancies and unemployment

- In North Somerset 50% drop in job vacancy w/e 10 May compared to mid-March
- 40% drop in job vacancy May 2020 compared to May 2019.
- £15-25,000 job range biggest fall in job vacancies.

## Unemployment & UC Claimant Numbers:

Labour market: unemployment rose sharply in May 2020 but now appears more stable



Universal Credit (UC) claims have also increased demonstrating how many residents need additional income, even if they have been able to keep working. Between March and April, there was a 46% increase in individuals in work receiving UC.

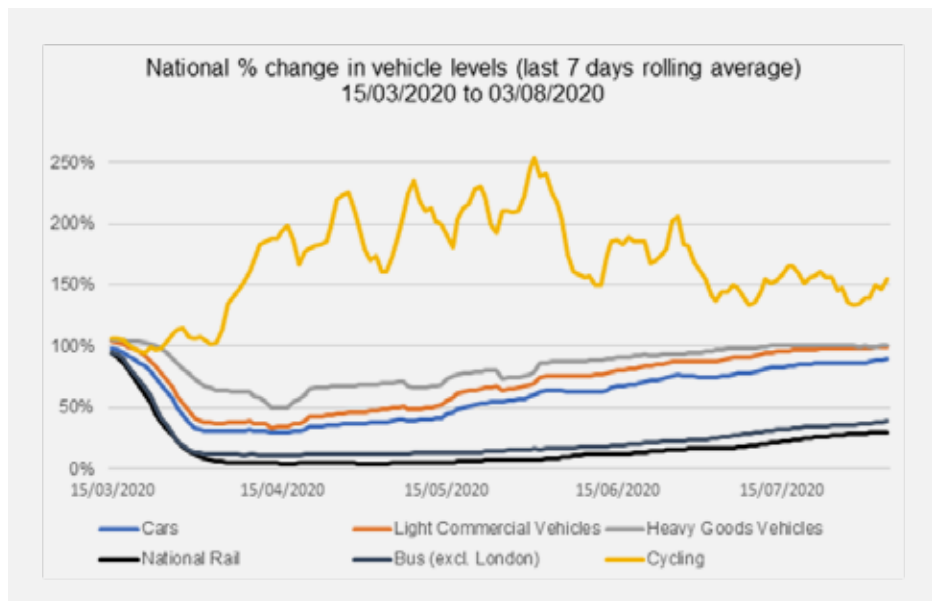
## Inequality:

- Women are more likely to have experienced changes to their work such as reduced hours, furlough or additional caring responsibilities to balance with paid work.
- Men are more likely to have moved onto Universal Credit.
- Under 25s are amongst the most likely to have been furloughed, lost hours or lost work completely.
- Those leaving full-time education are entering a severely restricted labour market.
- Over 50s experienced the second-highest increase in Universal Credit claims and some may face challenges in changing their career.
- People in lower paid and atypical work (e.g. temporary contracts) have been more affected than those on permanent contracts.
- Some Black and Ethnic Minority groups are over-represented in lower-paid/atypical work.
- Fewer job opportunities often mean that people with additional support needs (e.g. people with disabilities) are overlooked for roles.
- Rural poverty will be exacerbated due to lack of transport, heightened digital exclusion and reduction in job opportunities in non-urban areas.
- Some individuals have missed out on government support, for example, some freelancers, new start-ups and directors of limited companies.



## Business sectors most exposed

### Public transport



### Aviation and aerospace

- At the height of the crisis activity at Bristol Airport dropped to 98%.
- Activity in the aviation sector and supply chain increasing but it is unclear how long full recovery will take.

Source: FlightTrader 24, Forbes

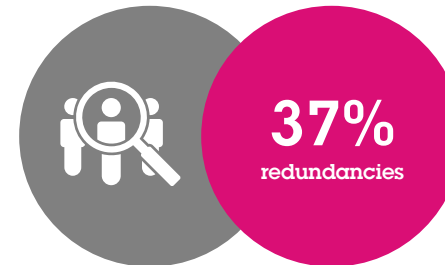
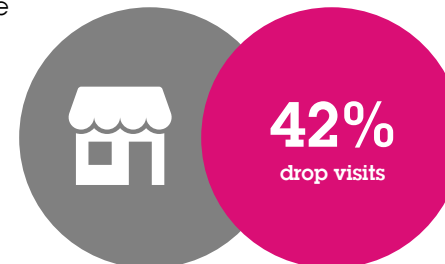


### High street and wholesale retail

- 80% drop in footfall during lockdown
- 42% drop visits and dwell compare to pre-Coronavirus levels
- At 37% retail is reporting the highest proportion of redundancies in the West of England according to HR1 announcements (employers must file a HR1 with Government when they are planning to make more than 20 people redundant)

Source: House of Commons economic briefing 15 June – 4 July, Google Mobility Reports,

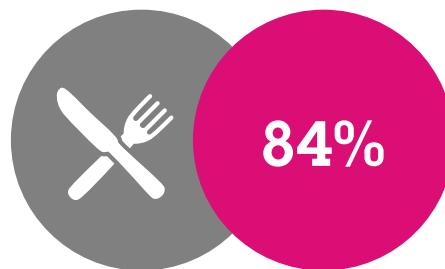
WECA data



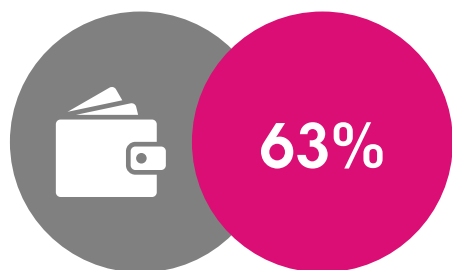
## Visitor economy



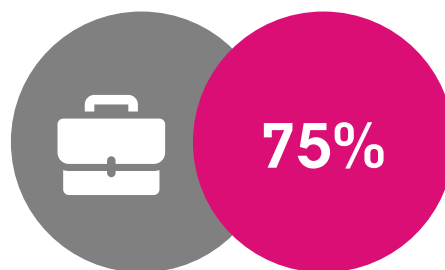
- £373m contribution to North Somerset's economy before Coronavirus.



- 84% of accommodation and food services businesses reported reduced turnover.



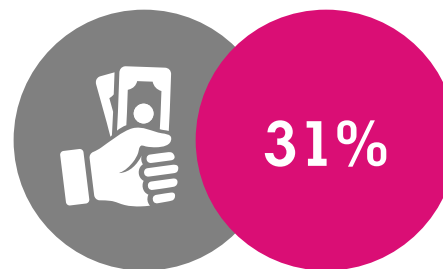
- 63% drop in visitor spend anticipated for the UK as a whole.



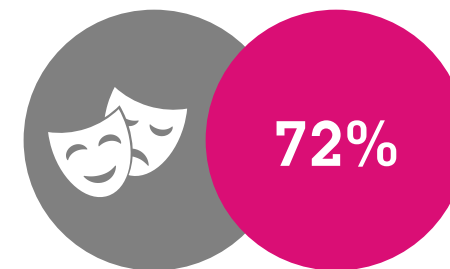
- Highest level of furlough in sectors represented in the visitor economy and 75% of businesses surveyed said they will need to make some redundancies.

Source: ONS Business Impact Survey (29 June to 12 July), Visit Britain, North Somerset Council survey

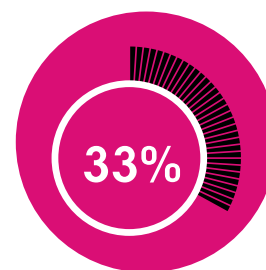
## Creative industries



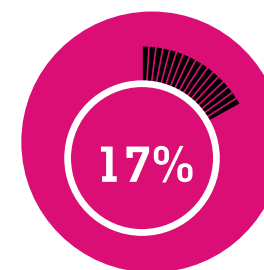
- 31% of self-employment income support claims in South West.



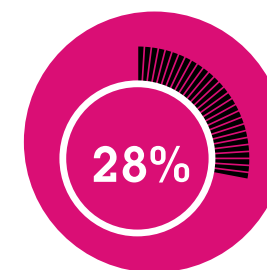
- 72% of arts, entertainment and recreation report decreased turnover.



- 33% say it will take 3-6 months to return to pre-pandemic activity.



- 17% said it would take more than 12 months to recover.



- The South West is predicted to lose 28% of its creative jobs (43,000 jobs).

Source: HMRC Self-employment Income Support Scheme Statistics: June 2020, ONS Business Impact Survey (data from 29 June to 12 July), North Somerset Council creative industries' survey, Creative Industry Federation Oxford Economics report, commissioned by Creative Industries Federation: [Our World Without Culture](#), June 2020

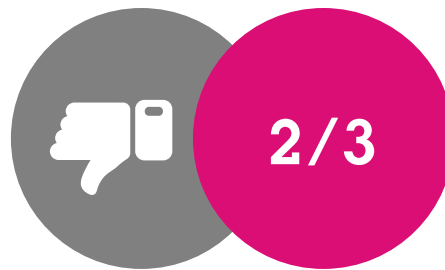




## Voluntary and Community Sector (VCSE)



- 78% of sector reported concerns about reduction to funding.



- 2/3 of the sector in North Somerset are worried that rising demand will impact capacity in the future.

Source: North Somerset Coronavirus Impact on the VCSE Sector Survey

## Health and social care

North Somerset has a sizeable health and social care market with a significant number of SME providers - approaching 3,000 care home beds and similar numbers receiving care in a community setting.

The sector has seen a downturn in demand for care home services during this crisis as a result of the national media coverage relating to Coronavirus related deaths in care homes.

Occupancy has fallen in North Somerset to 83% of the bed capacity, this will present a challenge if the supply contracts rapidly whilst our longer-term modelling suggests a continued demand for such services given our sizeable ageing population.

## Emerging And Anticipated Trends

The coronavirus pandemic has had a huge impact on how we live and work. How we adapted to the restrictions placed on our movements is expected to influence our behaviour in the long term.

In some cases, it has accelerated the adoption of trends that existed before the crisis such as flexible and distributed working, shopping online and choices we make about the way we want to travel.

With social distancing likely to be in force well into next year, it is expected that many behaviours will become the 'new normal'.

### Commuting and office work

Working from home has been an experiment forced onto many businesses and employees by lockdown, but it has shown a different way of running businesses and a different way of life.

It removed time-consuming and costly commutes and the dramatic drop in rush hour traffic meant that air quality noticeably improved. August 2020 data shows that commuting levels at peak times are still 35% below the norm.

And it is a similar picture on North Somerset's public transport. Despite passenger numbers being closer to the pre-lockdown baseline than elsewhere in the West of England, they are still significantly down according to Google Mobility Reports.

While the drop in the number of car journeys is good for reducing pollution there are economic implications for public transport having reduced passenger numbers.

Meanwhile, where working from home has been a success for businesses and employees it has opened different work options that will influence long term trends.

A report by property advisors CBRE highlights that more businesses are considering a move towards 'distributed working'. Instead of employees being tied to centralised offices, businesses could allow staff to work in different locations to suit their daily lives.

This could mean working in the office, local co-working space, a coffee shop, at home or anywhere else with suitable Wi-Fi – or a combination of those places.

Workspace will need to evolve and adapt to these changes and there could be benefits for North Somerset. If more people work locally rather than commuting to cities like Bristol that could increase demand for local co-working or more informal workspace and see weekday footfall rise in our town centres.



The Hive, Neil Philips Photography

## Visitor economy

The visitor economy in the UK has been hit by travel restrictions and subsequent gradual re-opening of hotels, restaurants and attractions.

However, there is huge uncertainty about foreign travel and holidays as quarantine rules change to respond to spikes in Coronavirus cases. Coupled with concern about getting sick abroad and potential economic constraints, holiday destination trends have changed dramatically.

As a result, it is hoped that the visitor economy will experience some level of bounce back as more people choose to holiday in the UK to avoid the potential risk of quarantine when they return.

In the longer term, the growing awareness of sustainable travel coupled with financial constraints could give UK holiday destinations, including North Somerset, a boost.

The challenge we face is responding to the immediate business impact for hospitality and visitor sector and then the changing demands from visitors, particularly for better quality accommodation and environmentally friendly holiday options.



## Supply chains

The Coronavirus crisis put supply chains under extreme pressure either through restricted operations due to lockdown or spikes in demand – or a combination. Food and drink industries had particular challenges, with restaurants closed demand for grocery shopping rose sharply as people cooked at home.

It has exposed existing vulnerabilities and businesses are reassessing their supply chain resilience.

Ernst and Young's Attractiveness Survey which looks at the environment for foreign direct investment suggests that businesses will be looking to diversify their supply sources and moving some operations closer to create more certainty. Sustainability has also become a far more important consideration in supply chain decisions.

When non-essential shops had to close, shopping online surged. This put additional pressure on logistics and last-mile deliveries. Lockdown has accelerated the trend for internet shopping and demand will unlikely return to pre-pandemic levels. It presents logistical challenges – and opportunities.

It also has big implications for high streets and North Somerset's town centre businesses will need to respond to these changes in how people shop.

Two positive outcomes from lockdown have been more people shopping locally and increasing interest in local produce and producers – although footfall and dwell times remain down.

We need to help support local supply chains and deliveries by ensuring the local workforce has appropriate skills and businesses have the space and facilities they need. We also need to make sure that growth in this sector is sustainable.





## Future pressure for SMEs

Many SMEs have had some temporary support from the Government such as mortgage holidays, grants and access to loans. Some have had to take out additional debt to keep themselves trading.

Many of these loan agreements are based on a 12-month capital and interest holiday but the repayment profile, when it starts, will be steep. With furlough coming to an end, many small businesses will have increased costs they cannot meet which may lead to redundancies or even business closures.

This isn't a problem now but could be in 6-12 months and we need to be prepared. Banks are predicting a significant number of SME's will fail and will need to work to identify early warning triggers and assist where they can.

FoodWorks SW, Nick Whimster





## Incentives, Stimulus And Existing Resources

There are specific Government initiatives and existing resources which will also drive our plans and projects, these include:

- Securing £1.7m from the Getting Building Fund for Weston General Stores a scheme to repurpose vacant retail space in Weston Super Mare creating local workspace and collective trading for local producers.
- £6m investment from Heritage England to bring historic places, rich in heritage back to life to attract residents, tourists, businesses and investors, and create economic growth.
- £1.2m to create a new High Street Heritage programme.
- £55k direct council investment in a cultural programme for our town centres.
- Opportunities for businesses to access the Government's Plan for Jobs which offers businesses financial incentives to recruit young people and apprentices.
- A proportion of £14m funding secured for a Weston College-led Institute of Technology to improve digital training facilities and investment in cyber security training.
- Initial £700k to improve and promote cycling and other green transport.
- Existing dark fibre asset under Weston which could encourage roll out and connection to public sector assets in the town – unlocking full fibre to the town's households.



- Control over North Somerset Council owned land and assets, for example, Weston Business Quarter and the Sovereign Centre.
- £150k Universal Business Support Programme (council and West of England Growth Hub investment)
- North Somerset Council's significant capital programme including Portishead Rail, North-South Link Road, new schools and health centres.
- Access to the Government's Green Grants Programme which can unlock opportunities for businesses and residents.
- £97m for infrastructure to support future housing growth.

These financial incentives and existing resources will support us in prioritising projects and making decisions about which activities we can deliver quickly for maximum impact.

Further detailed resource mapping will take place with the Economic Renewal Steering Group to support the delivery of the Plan.





# Section 4: The foundations for economic recovery

It is clear from the evidence we have gathered and the conversations we've had that North Somerset's economic recovery should have three key foundations: People, digital and green.

These foundations aren't exclusive but will work together to deliver a resilient and sustainable economy for North Somerset.

## People

Many of our key employment sectors are vulnerable to the economic shocks of the pandemic, there have been job losses and the threat of more to come. Those in lower-skilled jobs are particularly vulnerable. Those with disabilities may be affected during a recession due to a lack of opportunities.

This has reduced incomes for those households affected which not only impacts on livelihood but can affect health and wellbeing.

We want our economic recovery to benefit all people in North Somerset supporting inclusive growth through a wide range of jobs and skills. This will involve retraining elements of the working population to have the skills for the jobs of the future, including those leaving struggling industries to work in growth employment sectors such as the green economy.

We want to bring business ownership back into North Somerset, both by encouraging entrepreneurship, but also by encouraging employee ownership.



People-centric growth not only means creating good quality employment opportunities but also ensuring residents have access to them through the right training and education.

GVA will be important for measuring our economic success and job creation. But we also want to measure improvements to health and wellbeing which are equally important.

At a macro level, we will use the Thriving Places Index (TPI) which measures the conditions which not only help people find work but also those which make people feel supported, connected and healthy. The TPI has a particular focus on physical and mental health.

We will also be using the Happiness Pulse at a micro-level to measure how people are feeling. The Happiness Pulse looks at behavioural and social wellbeing as well as physical and mental health.

Our key projects will be evaluated individually for the social value they offer in terms of job creation, health and wellbeing and sustainability.



Italian Gardens



## Digital

When lockdown began it highlighted the advantages of good digital access – and the disadvantages of bad.

It also highlighted the importance of having access to the right equipment – laptops, smartphones, tablets - and understanding how to use them.

So much of our lives are now dependent on digital access and know-how, that digital poverty is a huge barrier. It can limit people's access to available jobs and the skills to do those jobs. It can also mean social isolation – as lockdown showed.

For businesses, it can help them sell their products and services more widely and safely. And it can help them engage with their customers.

Digital access is as important as water and power, it is essential to an inclusive society and business operation and we want to make sure that everyone in North Somerset has access to the digital network.

We also recognise the challenges and opportunities that the digital

infrastructure brings in long-term working trends such as working away from offices. We want to mitigate the impact of changing demands for commercial space while maximising the opportunity of having more people working locally.

Digital access will be measured by an increase in coverage across North Somerset, including levels of coverage, quality, speed and having the right infrastructure in our buildings.

For our residents digital access will be measured by an increase in the number of people with digital skills from increasing confidence to study and progress to higher level and technical qualifications, ensuring people have the technical skills for an evolving jobs market as employers across all industries embrace digital methods in their operations, even using data and automation to support business expansion.

Additional or adapted measures may be adopted to align with the council's Digital Strategy – which is currently in development.



Local produce  
at Pill Market

## Green

Climate change is a real threat to our health, wellbeing and livelihoods. The UK Government is committed to reaching net-zero carbon by 2050 to mitigate the risks although, like many local authorities, North Somerset Council has declared a Climate Emergency and wants to achieve neutrality by 2030.

The Coronavirus pandemic has further highlighted the impact a healthy environment plays in our daily lives and the degree to which changes need to be made to have an impact. The huge reduction in travel meant air-quality noticeably improved and lockdown highlighted the importance of access to green space and a healthy environment.

Our economic recovery needs to be sustainable, supporting low carbon activities and the green economy. We need to put the infrastructure in place to make it easier for people to use greener transport whether they live in a village or a town. We need to encourage active travel and alternatives to car ownership.

Sustainability remains a vital part of the agenda and we need to ensure new behaviour is embedded to reach our carbon targets, preserve our natural environment and live healthily.

Carbon reduction presents a big challenge but also big opportunities to nurture and grow the green economy in North Somerset. It is also an opportunity to promote our visitor economy as a low-carbon alternative to travelling abroad.

At the macro level, sustainability will be measured using the annual North Somerset emissions report – total emissions/emissions per capita/emissions per GVA. At the micro level, this will be measured on a project by project basis by evaluating emissions savings and environmental impact.



## Section 5: Our priorities and action plan

Priority	Actions	Outcomes	Mechanisms for delivery	Timescale
<b>Full fibre and 5G: Ensure next generation digital connectivity and telecommunications technology is supplied into premises, workplaces and homes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use planning and highway processes to ensure next generation digital connectivity and telecommunications technology is supplied.</li> <li>● Work with providers to deliver required infrastructure needed including in rural locations.</li> <li>● With partners, lobby the Government for additional investment in connectivity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reduction in out-commuting = reduced carbon emissions + GVA growth</li> <li>● Increased attractiveness to new businesses = job creation + GVA growth</li> <li>● Reduced social isolation = improved wellbeing</li> </ul>	<p>Planning and highways legislation and policy</p> <p>+</p> <p>Identify locations for targeted investment</p> <p>+</p> <p>Regional positioning to lobby for and benefit from investment</p> <p>+</p> <p>Skills to deliver infrastructure</p>	<p>Medium term:</p> <p>1–3 years</p>
<b>North Somerset Local Plan: Develop evidence led economic input into the new Local Plan to deliver mixed and sustainable communities with new homes, jobs and infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure the local plan can support sustainable commercial investment to create good jobs.</li> <li>● Adopt a robust process for maximising the economic benefits of development via the Construction Industry Training Board's Client Based Approach.</li> <li>● Support the planning system to respond to the changes and trends to commercial space requirements as a result of Coronavirus and ensure suitable alternatives are being planned for.</li> <li>● Work across the West of England region to understand how commercial and employment areas can work together generating value for all.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Thriving environment for existing businesses, new businesses, visitors and new residents = job creation + GVA growth.</li> <li>● Civic, cultural and community space = improved wellbeing</li> <li>● Reduced out-commuting from residents = reduced carbon emissions + boost to local economy.</li> </ul>	<p>Demand-led evidence</p> <p>+</p> <p>Engagement</p> <p>+</p> <p>Space to support distributed working</p> <p>+</p> <p>A council that enables development</p>	<p>Medium term</p> <p>1–3 years</p>

Priority	Actions	Outcomes	Mechanisms for delivery	Timescale
<b>Town centre transformation:</b> <b>Encourage our town centres to become thriving places to live, work and enjoy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Directly invest and seek regional and national investment in town centre projects.</li> <li>● Provide digital support including skills training for businesses.</li> <li>● Create space for pop-up retail and local producers, start-ups, creatives, community and civic uses as well as affordable homes.</li> <li>● Work with Citizens Advice North Somerset to promote their 'Zoom Booths' in our centres.</li> <li>● Develop a cultural programme and revitalised events strategy with a focus on town centres and high street.</li> <li>● Marketing: Promote town centre opportunities to businesses, investors and visitors</li> <li>● Deliver Weston General Stores - repurpose redundant retail space in Weston town centre to deliver workspace, start-up space micro-manufacturing, events, rehearsal space, cycle hub, business support, skills, learning and employability training.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Thriving environment for existing businesses, new businesses, visitors and new residents = job creation + GVA growth.</li> <li>● Civic, cultural and community space = improved wellbeing</li> <li>● Reduced out-commuting from residents = reduced carbon emissions + boost to local economy.</li> </ul>	Placemaking approach across all town centres + Identify local priorities and needs + Utilise North Somerset Council controlled space + Seek and secure investment + Culture, events, business and skills support located in town centres + Partnership promotion of our places	Short/ medium term: Delivery starts in 2020 but programme will span many years



Priority	Actions	Outcomes	Mechanisms for delivery	Timescale
<b>Tech adoption: Ensure businesses can adopt digital technology and maximise the benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support for and help with providing tech solutions for businesses/sectors struggling to adapt and adopt new technology, particularly in our most in need sectors such as retail, care, visitor and creative.</li> <li>● Help build resilience in case of further lockdowns or social distancing restrictions, particularly for sectors with low levels of tech adoption e.g. retail, visitor economy and care sector.</li> <li>● Work with Weston College to develop a Business Digital Hub, focused on improving the digital skills and online 'shop window' of our business community.</li> <li>● Work alongside colleagues in the Western Gateway to secure spending review funding for an Applied Digital Accelerator – identify North Somerset projects and residents which will benefit from this investment.</li> </ul>	<p>Business survival/growth = job creation + GVA growth</p> <p>Growth of businesses looking at North Somerset as a location = job creation + GVA growth</p> <p>Tech as a solution to risk reduction e.g. physical proximity at work = improved wellbeing</p> <p>Tech solutions = reduced carbon emissions</p>	<p>Coalesce support around sectors most in need</p> <p>+</p> <p>Accessible support (in locations and in ways businesses can easily access)</p> <p>+</p> <p>Quick wins e.g. Made in North Somerset Marketplace, communicating Growth Hub offer, Weston College digital hub</p> <p>+</p> <p>Partnership work to ensure North Somerset benefits from longer term ambitions</p>	<p>Short/ medium term:</p> <p>Delivery starts in 2020 but programme will span many years</p>
<b>Mobility as a service: Develop wider access to on-demand transport, mobility services and carbon efficient local delivery solutions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Planning policies to enable more on-demand services.</li> <li>● Support bike (including electric) hire in town centres.</li> <li>● Support car clubs (including electric)</li> <li>● Explore opportunities for autonomous vehicles.</li> <li>● Provide more Electric Vehicle charging points.</li> <li>● Explore carbon efficient delivery solutions, including collaborative approaches for SMEs.</li> </ul>	<p>Business survival/ growth = job creation + GVA</p> <p>Reduction use of personal cars = reduced carbon emissions</p> <p>Tech solutions for delivery = reduced carbon emissions + improved wellbeing</p> <p>Reduced congestion = improved productivity</p>	<p>A council that enables development</p> <p>+</p> <p>Planning policies and parking standards</p> <p>+</p> <p>Engagement and awareness raising</p>	<p>Medium term</p> <p>1–3 years</p>

Priority	Actions	Outcomes	Mechanisms for delivery	Timescale
<b>Low carbon inward investment: Grow North Somerset's green economy by working in partnership with regional inward investment organisations and working with residents to access skills to support the sector</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Work with Invest Bristol and Bath to develop a green industries inward investment programme and attract businesses in the green economy.</li> <li>● Use research to identify target foreign markets for increased inward investment</li> <li>● Maximise the local economic benefits associated with low carbon projects such as Hinkley Point C.</li> <li>● Work with our skills providers to ensure local workforce has the appropriate skills for green industries.</li> </ul>	<p>Green industries = reduced carbon emissions</p> <p>Inward investment = job creation + GVA growth</p>	<p>Partnership working</p> <p>+</p> <p>Clear strategies around ambitions for sites in North Somerset</p> <p>+</p> <p>Green skills</p>	<p>Short/ medium term:</p> <p>Delivery starts in 2020 but programme will span many years</p>
<b>Infrastructure for local working: Provide the digital infrastructure and facilities for local working to benefit from flexible and distributed working trends</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Attract distributed workspace operators to our towns and villages.</li> <li>● Invest in and promote a range and variety of different workspace options</li> <li>● Deliver final link of North Somerset coastal walking/ cycling path: Clevedon – Portishead.</li> <li>● Deliver final link of Strawberry Line strategic cycle route linking Clevedon to Yatton Station.</li> <li>● Promote active travel Neighbourhoods: Clevedon, Nailsea, Portishead.</li> <li>● Deliver strategic Active Travel Route: Milton Road/ Locking Road to Weston Town Centre</li> <li>● Deliver MetroWest to support increased distributed working in Portishead</li> </ul>	<p>Reduced commuting = reduced carbon emissions + improved wellbeing</p> <p>Attractive places encourage business growth, starts-ups and SMEs = job creation and increased GVA</p> <p>Healthy environment = Less sickness + improved productivity &amp; GVA</p>	<p>A council that enables development</p> <p>+</p> <p>Transport connections</p> <p>+</p> <p>Digital connectivity</p> <p>+</p> <p>Promoting our places for flexible and distributed working</p> <p>+</p> <p>A local plan that supports distributed working</p>	<p>Medium term</p> <p>1–3 years</p>

Priority	Actions	Outcomes	Mechanisms for delivery	Timescale
<b>Energy efficiency and carbon reduction in buildings: Maximise benefits of energy efficiency schemes by ensuring local people have the right skills to make the most of the job opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maximise links between carbon reduction programmes and economic outputs e.g. creating links between government green grants and the local economy.</li> <li>● Ensure our planning regime and council services are permissive towards these initiatives.</li> <li>● Review of our own estate and buildings and identify actions we can take.</li> <li>● Encourage landlords to take advantage of incentives and initiatives.</li> </ul>	<p>Driving Government-incentivised activity to local supply chains and residents = job opportunities + GVA growth</p> <p>Energy efficiency = reduction in carbon emissions + lower energy bills</p> <p>Tech solutions for delivery = reduced carbon emissions + improved wellbeing</p> <p>Business survival/growth = job creation + GVA</p>	<p>A council that enables development</p> <p>+</p> <p>A local plan which supports green infrastructure</p> <p>+</p> <p>Skills</p> <p>+</p> <p>Business engagement and awareness raising</p>	<p>Medium term</p> <p>1–3 years</p>
<b>Employment and Skills Strategy: Create work opportunities, training and upskilling support for those who have lost their jobs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Rapidly support people back into secure employment and paid a living wage (focus on digital and green skills)</li> <li>● Ensure development and infrastructure projects provide opportunities for local people.</li> <li>● Encourage inclusive employment practices among our employer community, including an investment in apprenticeships and training the workforce.</li> <li>● Work with partners VANs, DWP, CANS, WECA, Weston College and diversity networks to target action in areas of greatest deprivation and with groups most impacted.</li> <li>● Maximise opportunities available through the West of England Institute of Technology, led by Weston College, to drive an increase in higher level technical skills (Level 4+) delivered through University Centre Weston</li> </ul>	<p>Upskilling &amp; reskilling = access to jobs</p> <p>Having a skilled and talented workforce is attractive to inward investors = GVA growth</p> <p>Good quality jobs = improved wellbeing</p> <p>Clear link between skills and the local labour market means reduced out-commuting = reduced carbon emissions</p> <p>Focus on green skills is attractive to green industries = reduced carbon emissions</p>	<p>Partnership approach</p> <p>+</p> <p>Investment in employment generating projects</p> <p>+</p> <p>Business engagement</p> <p>+</p> <p>Resident outreach</p>	<p>Short/ medium term:</p> <p>Delivery starts in 2020 but programme will span many years</p>

Priority	Actions	Outcomes	Mechanisms for delivery	Timescale
<b>Strategic employment sites: Protect jobs and deliver sustainable economic activity to benefit local employment, businesses and communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Work with Bristol Airport to support directly impacted employees and those in the supply chain to reskill, upskill and avoid unemployment caused by reductions in aviation patronage.</li> <li>● Maximise employment and supply chain opportunities generated by innovation in the aviation sectors, especially in relation to clean aviation.</li> <li>● Work with Bristol Port to develop a growth strategy which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Articulates how its aspiration to become a Freeport will benefit North Somerset jobs and businesses – including joint lobbying and positioning of J21EA as part of the Freeport non-contiguous zone.</li> <li>○ Continues to work together on any expansion plans and ensure they address impacts on surrounding area.</li> <li>○ Provide indirect and direct jobs and GVA benefits to North Somerset and the wider West of England, for example through the 5G Create proposal.</li> <li>○ Explore how we can jointly work together to support SMEs</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Develop a portfolio of a variety of employment sites of varying sizes and locations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Attractive to businesses and people looking to move = increased GVA</li> <li>● Business growth = job creation + GVA</li> <li>● Reduced out-commuting from residents = reduced carbon emissions</li> </ul>	Skills programmes + Identifying appropriate support + Supporting investment in infrastructure + Development sites + Business	Medium term 1–3 years

Priority	Actions	Outcomes	Mechanisms for delivery	Timescale
<b>Visitor Economy Action Plan: Prioritise the promotion and growth of environmentally friendly holidays and targeted support to improve and diversify the visitor economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote North Somerset as a centre for environmentally friendly holidays including increased promotion of our green assets and infrastructure.</li> <li>Provide targeted business support for our visitor economy businesses which improve the diversity and quality of the offer.</li> <li>Improve the quality of our accommodation offer to meet visitor demands.</li> <li>Ensure businesses know what support is available to them through Government programmes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for businesses = safeguarding and creating job + protecting GVA.</li> <li>Better quality businesses will reduce precariousness of the sector and establish a year-round offer = more jobs + GVA growth + improved wellbeing</li> <li>Environmentally friendly tourism offer + campaign for people to visit within local catchment = reduced carbon emissions</li> </ul>	<p>Skills +</p> <p>Evidence &amp; trends +</p> <p>Identifying appropriate support +</p> <p>Partners +</p> <p>Business</p>	<p>Short/ medium term: Delivery starts in 2020 but programme will span many years</p>
<b>Creative industries action plan: Deliver a plan which prioritises sustainability throughout the supply chain, makes the case for investment and nurtures talent.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a support network for creative businesses and freelancers.</li> <li>Ensure access to targeted business support.</li> <li>Promote funding and financial support.</li> <li>Encourage take up of apprenticeships and T Levels by promoting schemes to businesses and engagement with Weston College.</li> <li>Promote export opportunities and signpost to specialist support.</li> <li>Promote inclusivity and diversity across the sector.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support will safeguard and create jobs = jobs created + GVA</li> <li>Better quality businesses will reduce precariousness of the sector = more jobs, increased GVA and improved wellbeing</li> <li>Increased levels of good quality start-ups = increased jobs, growth of GVA</li> <li>Upskilling &amp; reskilling = improved wellbeing</li> <li>Thriving businesses are more attractive to inward investors = increased GVA</li> <li>Culture + creativity = improved wellbeing</li> </ul>	<p>Skills +</p> <p>Evidence &amp; trends +</p> <p>Identifying appropriate support +</p> <p>Partners +</p> <p>Business</p>	<p>Short/ medium term: Delivery starts in 2020 but programme will span many years</p>



Priority	Actions	Outcomes	Mechanisms for delivery	Timescale
<b>Enhanced business support programme: Commission a universal pre-start, early growth and business resilience service</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digital innovation and adaptation support.</li> <li>Sustainability advice – building businesses with green credentials from start-up stages and supporting existing businesses to adapt.</li> <li>Inclusive practice advice – working with businesses to consider the impact and ability to ensure their practices are inclusive as possible, working with Weston College SEND Centre of Excellence.</li> <li>Health and wellbeing support – enhanced specialist support to the business community to create workplaces and businesses with a focus on health &amp; wellbeing</li> <li>Promote the Employee Ownership Trust to SME owners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased levels of good quality start-ups = job creation + GVA growth</li> <li>Businesses focused on health in their practices = improved wellbeing</li> <li>Businesses focused on good environmental practices when starting up = reduced carbon emissions</li> </ul>	Partnership approach + Investment + Skills + Places + Promotion	Short/ medium term: Delivery starts in 2020 but programme will span many years
<b>Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise economic impact: Work to help promote the sector's economic benefits and make the case for increased investment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore the scope to scale up successful interventions through social impact bonds.</li> <li>Work with VANS to identify the innovation opportunities for the fourth sector to grow our economy (the fourth sector is a blend of market approaches with social outcomes).</li> <li>More closely link social value outcomes from public sector spending to our communities.</li> <li>Link VANS and our Universal Business Support Programme to encourage high levels of social enterprises to start-up in our economy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased levels of good quality start-ups = job creation + GVA growth</li> <li>Businesses focused on health in their practices = improved wellbeing</li> <li>Increased levels of social value = better wellbeing</li> </ul>	Partnership approach + Lobbying + Investment + Skills	Medium term 1–3 years

Priority	Actions	Outcomes	Mechanisms for delivery	Timescale
<b>J21 enterprise area: Directly invest and seek investment in the creation of jobs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote logistics and hybrid employment premises space – creating space for last mile delivery and modern high value commercial activities</li> <li>Encouraging food businesses to locate at Food Works</li> <li>Identifying partners to deliver Food Works phase 2 and space in our DEFRA Food Enterprise Zone</li> <li>Support the delivery of Hive Phase 2</li> <li>Develop an investable product for Weston Business Quarter to unlock remainder of North Somerset Council-owned land.</li> <li>Work with partners to pursue and enable to development of a Modern Methods of Construction Housing Factory at J21EA</li> <li>Work to ensure a complimentary offer from the Enterprise Area to commercial development at Gravity, Port, Airport and Clevedon, Kenn Rd.</li> <li>Explore options for environmentally sustainable businesses and support services within J21EA e.g. eco-freight consolidation centre, electric forecourt.</li> <li>Use the Joint Delivery Review Board to promote sites and deliver jobs across J21EA.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attractive to businesses and people looking to move = GVA growth</li> <li>Business growth = job creation + GVA growth</li> <li>Reduced out-commuting from residents = reduced carbon emissions</li> <li>Good quality jobs + provision of affordable housing = improved wellbeing.</li> <li>MMC homes are greener = reduced carbon emissions</li> </ul>	<p>Space, including North Somerset Council-owned land</p> <p>+</p> <p>Investment</p> <p>+</p> <p>Development sites</p> <p>+</p> <p>Skills</p> <p>+</p> <p>Strategic framework (J21EA vision + Local Plan)</p>	<p>Medium term</p> <p>1–3 years</p>

Priority	Actions	Outcomes	Mechanisms for delivery	Timescale
<b>West of England working: Prioritise regional partnerships to ensure maximum economic benefits across the West of England</b>	<p>Align our priorities to ensure maximum economic impact (e.g. via the West of England Economic Recovery Taskforce, Western Gateway, Nuclear South West).</p> <p>Influence and support the development of the West of England Spatial Plan.</p> <p>Drive increases in inward investment and indigenous business growth through collaborative approaches with Invest Bristol and Bath and Department for International Trade.</p> <p>Jointly deliver Growth Hub activities and strategic account management.</p>	<p>Attractive to businesses and people looking to move = GVA growth</p> <p>Business growth = job creation + GVA growth</p> <p>Support will safeguard and create jobs = jobs created + GVA</p>	<p>Partnership and collaboration</p> <p>+</p> <p>Joint lobbying</p> <p>+</p> <p>Funding for projects</p> <p>+</p> <p>Alignment of activity</p> <p>+</p> <p>Joint delivery</p>	<p>Short/ medium term:</p> <p>Delivery starts in 2020 but programme will span many years</p>

## Open

We will provide strong community leadership and work transparently with our residents, businesses and partners to deliver our ambition for North Somerset.

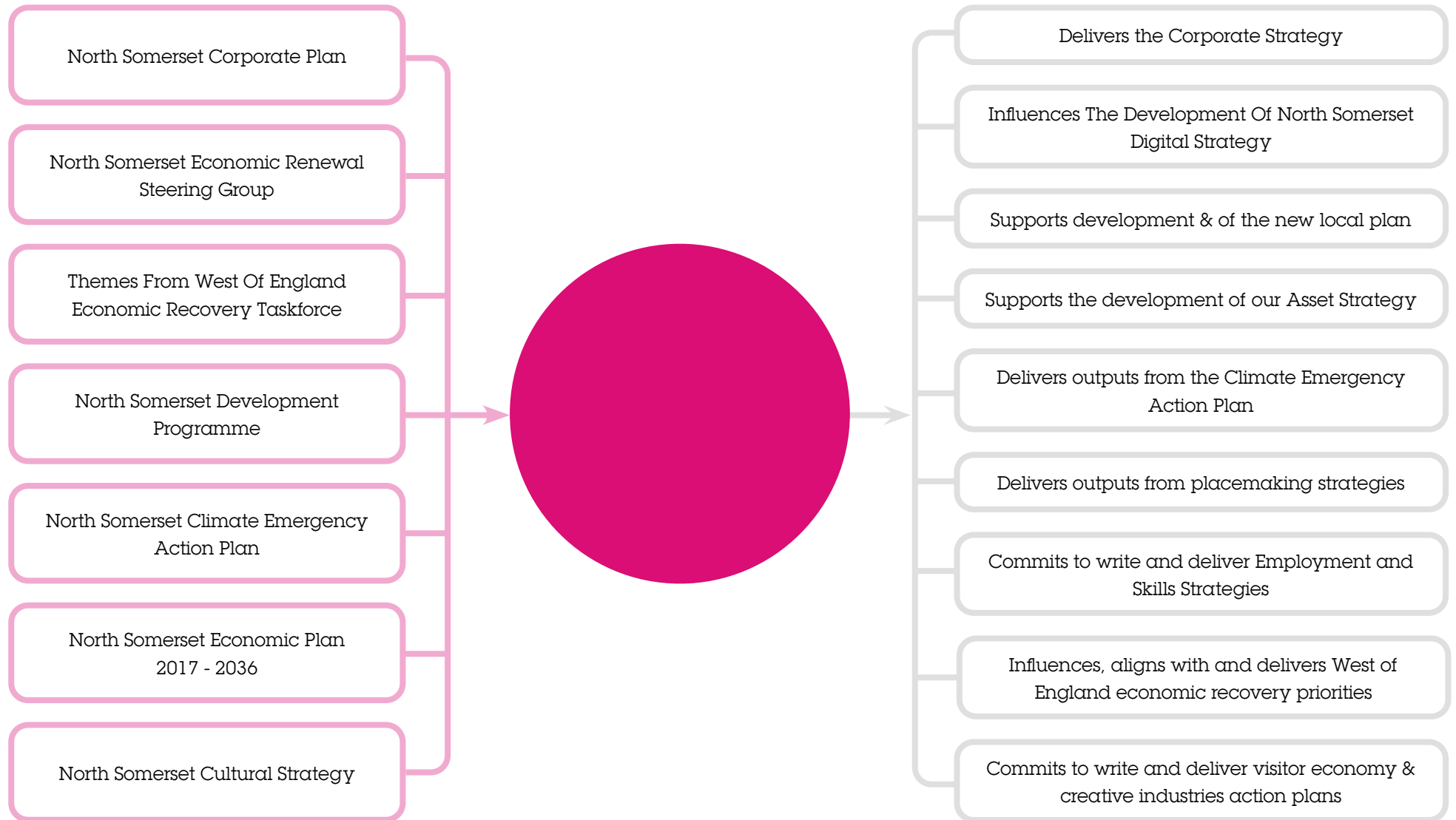
## Fair

We aim to reduce inequalities and promote fairness and opportunity for everyone.

## Green

We will lead our communities to protect and enhance our environment, tackle the climate emergency and drive sustainable development.

# Policy context



This Plan has been developed with and has the support from:



Supporting blind and partially sighted people.  
Registered Charity number: 1165364

