



One Surrey Growth Board Delivery Plan 2023

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Executive Summary

This 2023 Delivery Plan presents key achievements from 2022 that were realised from some of the activities that are turning the four priorities of the Plan for Growth¹ into reality. Crucially, this plan focusses on activities that are planned for 2023 to maintain delivery momentum. This plan refreshes the 2021 Plan for Growth Delivery Plan to reflect an economic context that has changed (which has impacted some workstreams) and the activities that are starting to address the One Surrey Growth Board challenges that were formulated in summer 2022.

The Plan for Growth 2021 sets out the economic vision to grow Surrey's productivity. The four Plan for Growth priorities translate this vision into discrete but related objectives, and a delivery plan articulates how to translate ambition into reality. Crucial to successful delivery to date has been joint working with partners across the region. Most recently this was demonstrated by the successful launch of the Surrey Skills Plan at the Surrey Skills Summit and the formation of the Surrey Cyber Security Cluster. These successes and others have been attained by joint action and commitment by partners across Surrey.

Delivery in 2023 focusses on addressing the following challenge areas:

- Challenge 1: Employment and Skills
- Challenge 2: Housing Affordability
- Challenge 3: Availability of Development Land
- Challenge 4: Infrastructure
- Challenge 5: Strengthen our Key Clusters and Innovation
- Challenge 6: Branding and Promoting Surrey

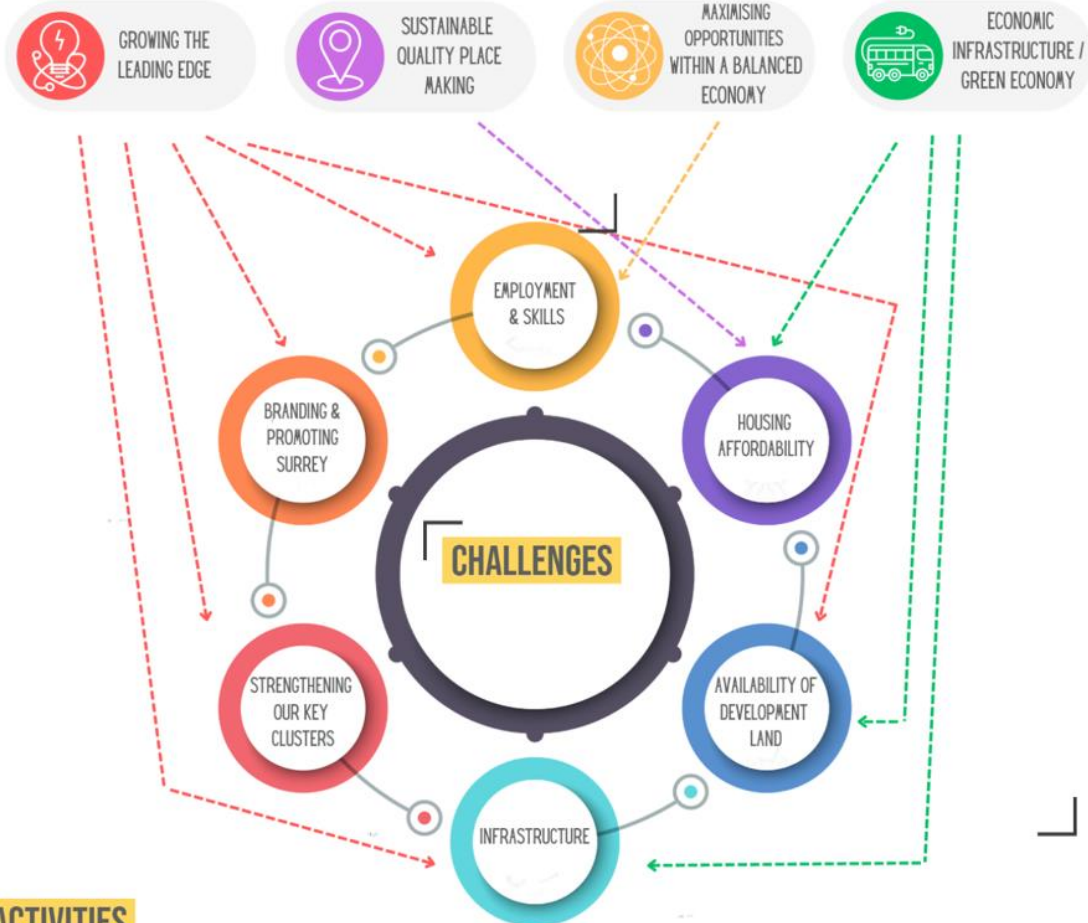
These challenges are inhibitors to the Plan for Growth priorities. Since their identification in May 2022, activity is already underway to address the challenges. Milestones for each challenge will provide visibility of progress to the Growth Board.

Delivery can only be assessed as successful if it ultimately translates into positive impact for Surrey's businesses and residents. Selected economic indicators will be used to monitor impact. Lastly, delivery in 2023 will be enabled by the working groups that sit under the One Surrey Growth Board and that have been tasked with tackling the six challenge areas.

¹ Growing the Leading Edge: supporting the growth of Surrey's innovation economy; A 'whole-place' approach to creating and sustaining quality places; Maximising opportunities within a balanced and inclusive economy; Capturing the potential of a greener economy

AMBITION OF PLAN FOR GROWTH: INCREASE SURREY'S PRODUCTIVITY

PRIORITIES



ACTIVITIES



Delivery Plan – Summary of Activity

Challenge		Link to OSGB Plan for Growth Priority				Activities and expected milestones for 2023	Future Year Activities, in line with County Deal and Devolution ambitions	Working Group Lead
		Growing the Leading Edge	Sustainable Quality Placemaking	Maximising Opportunities	Capitalising on the potential of a green economy / Economic Infrastructure			
1	Employment and Skills	✓		✓	✓	<p>Establishing an annual Skills & Careers Festival, which engages businesses, learners, and skills providers on the opportunities in Surrey in a programme of events throughout the year</p> <p>Developing a Surrey County Council ‘Skills Action Plan’ which recognises the county’s role as leader, employer, procurer, and service provider and utilises SCC’s size and scale to maximise opportunities for all</p> <p>Deliver a collaborative approach to careers advice working with a range of partners and employers, with a focus on maximising inclusion and diversity</p> <p>Creating a Surrey Green Skills plan to support a pipeline of green-skills provision across sectors</p>	The County Deal proposal sets out the intention for Surrey County Council to take on a greater role in tackling local skills challenges and shaping skills provision around local priorities. Primarily this would be through the devolution of Adult Education functions and the core Adult Education Budget, but SCC officers will be seeking greater flexibilities relating to post-16-year-old funding and apprenticeship spending to be in line with Surrey’s local economic needs.	Surrey Skills Leadership Forum

Challenge		Link to OSGB Plan for Growth Priority				Activities and expected milestones for 2023	Future Year Activities, in line with County Deal and Devolution ambitions	Working Group Lead
		Growing the Leading Edge	Sustainable Quality Placemaking	Maximising Opportunities	Capitalising on the potential of a green economy / Economic Infrastructure			
2	Housing Affordability		✓		✓	<p>Produce Housing, Homes and Accommodation Strategy by January 2023 which reflects the initial findings from the baseline assessment and the stakeholder engagement which has taken place.</p> <p>The follow-on actions/ recommendations from the Housing, Homes and Accommodation Strategy will be considered by the appropriate boards and partnerships charged with the delivery of housing (e.g., Surrey Infrastructure Steering Group)</p>		Surrey Infrastructure Steering Group
3	Availability of Development Land	✓			✓	<p>The completion of commercial site analysis work by Arup in March 2023 to identify commercial sites across Surrey which will help inform the 'Invest in Surrey' inward investment service engage meaningfully with business interests.</p>	<p>Consider how the County Deal ask in relation to infrastructure delivery oversight could help to unlock new sites for development through appropriate infrastructure provision and funding.</p>	Surrey Infrastructure Steering Group

Challenge		Link to OSGB Plan for Growth Priority				Activities and expected milestones for 2023	Future Year Activities, in line with County Deal and Devolution ambitions	Working Group Lead
		Growing the Leading Edge	Sustainable Quality Placemaking	Maximising Opportunities	Capitalising on the potential of a green economy / Economic Infrastructure			
						The completed work will enable conclusions to be drawn around additional support required for businesses looking to relocate or expand in Surrey such as where infrastructure constraints exist, helping to inform the use of SCC owned assets, and/or providing businesses with an initial single point of contact for alternative site options (that would otherwise involve multiple agencies). Potential future actions and interventions will be established based on the outcome of the analysis. This includes the potential to develop a tailored Surrey specific Research, Innovation, and Investment Zone proposal.		
4	Infrastructure	✓			✓	Continued work by the Surrey Infrastructure Steering Group to coordinate delivery across Surrey. This includes SCC's delivery of the Surrey Infrastructure Plan Programme of capital investment.	The County Deal proposal sets the intention to develop a Surrey Infrastructure Investment Plan to help target devolved funding from Central Government.	Surrey Infrastructure Steering Group

Challenge		Link to OSGB Plan for Growth Priority				Activities and expected milestones for 2023	Future Year Activities, in line with County Deal and Devolution ambitions	Working Group Lead
		Growing the Leading Edge	Sustainable Quality Placemaking	Maximising Opportunities	Capitalising on the potential of a green economy / Economic Infrastructure			
						<p>Develop priorities on which to speak with one voice to Government and other agencies on infrastructure requirements and barriers to growth across Surrey.</p> <p>Set up of partnerships for priority town centres.</p>	Establish a single Surrey Growth and Investment Fund offering revenue and capital funding to support the delivery of infrastructure and other interventions.	
5	Strengthening our key Clusters and Innovation	✓	✓		✓	<p>Establishing an ambitious (but achievable) vision for regional innovation in Surrey to be co-designed with place leaders and innovation partners which provides a shared sense of endeavour and alignment of what the Innovation Working Group wants to achieve based on a shared understanding of the unique strengths of Surrey's innovation economy.</p> <p>Leveraging resource through the Innovation Working Group, such as through the shared post between Surrey County Council and the University of Surrey.</p>	Develop a Surrey Growth and Enterprise Hub model, to support the integration of LEP functions as Surrey moves to agreeing a County Deal.	Surrey Innovation Working Group

Challenge		Link to OSGB Plan for Growth Priority				Activities and expected milestones for 2023	Future Year Activities, in line with County Deal and Devolution ambitions	Working Group Lead
		Growing the Leading Edge	Sustainable Quality Placemaking	Maximising Opportunities	Capitalising on the potential of a green economy / Economic Infrastructure			
						<p>An innovation partnership agreement (as part of the wider civic agreement) and agree associated collaboration principles, ways of working and governance arrangements which partners can sign-up to, and which will provide the basis for partnership working in the future.</p> <p>Identification of an initial programme of innovation activities including measurable objectives, prioritised activities, and tangible outputs potentially supported by some joint resources</p>		
6	Branding and Promoting Surrey	✓				<p>Recruitment of Brand and Marketing Manager and establishing the Surrey Story Partner Board.</p> <p>Agreeing the future work programme.</p>		Surrey Story Partner Board

Introduction

It has been just over two years since the One Surrey Growth Board (OSGB) was formed in response to some of the economic challenges faced during the pandemic. The work of Lord Philip Hammond's Future Economy Surrey Commission and the production of the University of Surrey's "Charting Surrey's Post Covid Rescue, Recovery and Growth" report highlighted the shock to the UK economy caused by the pandemic but also underscored existing trends, with the growth of Surrey's economy falling behind other parts of the country in relative terms. The widening gap in economic performance between the east and west of the county was also identified as a concern and challenge to Surrey's future prosperity.

The Growth Board was established to convene key stakeholders, to breakdown siloes and drive forward a more joined-up and consistent approach to tackling economic constraints and the productivity challenge. The activities of the Growth Board are rooted in a common understanding that Surrey has many strengths to offer, whether this be the highly educated workforce, diverse sectors of industry, world leading institutions for research and innovation or Surrey's excellent transport connectivity. It is recognised, however, that the trend of strong economic performance and high GVA² mask inequalities, with pockets of deprivation and other barriers which are holding back the potential of Surrey's economy.

In 2021 the role of the Growth Board in maximising Surrey's potential through a partnership-led, collaborative approach commenced, with the agreement of a Plan for Growth to 2030 and associated delivery plan. The Plan for Growth set the foundation for work to proceed under four key priorities: growing the leading edge, a 'whole place' approach, maximising opportunity within a balanced, inclusive economy, and capturing the potential for a greener economy.

This new approach to joint working across the Surrey geography has led to many successes. Most recently, partners came together at the Surrey Skills Summit to celebrate the launch of the Surrey Skills Plan. Achieving this milestone is testament to the contributions and ownership of this work by the Skills Leadership Forum, but it further highlights the need for joint action and commitment by partners across Surrey to drive system change and to realise the economic and social benefits that can be achieved.

The work programme across innovation has also seen many successes, with partners recently having come together to submit a joint "Launchpad Bid". In the bid, Surrey County Council brought together contributions from three universities (University of Surrey, Royal Holloway University of London, and the University for Creative Arts), alongside the Local Enterprise Partnerships and district and borough representatives. If successful, the bid will help lever in funding and resource to support the creative industry in Surrey. The submission of the bid reflects the progress which has been made in supporting innovation activities on a Surrey-wide basis under the direction of the Growth Board.

² Gross value added



In June 2022, Surrey was formally recognised by UKC3³ as a Cyber Security cluster and is currently the only one formally recognised in the South East. This followed the development of an application by Surrey universities and business leaders, working with Surrey County Council, which showcased the strength of the sector and the assets available across Surrey to support the further growth of the sectors activities in Surrey. The ambition and opportunity to shine a spotlight on some of Surrey's high growth sectors continues, and a joint post has recently been created between Surrey County Council and the University of Surrey to support collaboration.

³ UK Cyber Cluster Collaboration. An organisation funded by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sports

Surrey Cyber Security Cluster, Red Team Thursday January 2023



Alongside the many achievements facilitated through the Growth Board to date, there have also been opportunities to reflect on the latest insights into economic performance at a Surrey and UK level and the key challenges which face Surrey businesses, as the impact of the cost-of-living crisis is felt by Surrey residents and businesses. Six key challenges were agreed by the Growth Board in May 2022 to reflect the latest economic context. These are:

- Challenge 1: Employment and Skills
- Challenge 2: Housing Affordability
- Challenge 3: Availability of Development Land
- Challenge 4: Infrastructure

- Challenge 5: Strengthen our Key Clusters and Innovation
- Challenge 6: Branding and Promoting Surrey

Working groups are driving forward activities designed to address the first five challenges. This 2023 Delivery Plan sets out the activities that will be progressed by the associated challenge working groups over the next 12-month period.

Strategy and Policy Context

Plan for Growth

SQW's economic growth strategy 'Surrey's Economic Future: Towards 2030 and the Growth Board's **Plan for Growth** sets the overall economic strategy for Surrey. The Plan for Growth and supporting Delivery Plan were established following research reports led by the University of Surrey which considered Surrey's Post-Covid recovery⁴ and community-based growth⁵.

The Plan for Growth is a look ahead to 2030 and sets out the county's strengths, opportunities, and challenges. It presents the Growth Board's priorities to support a productive, resilient, and high-value economy that contributes to the growth of UK Plc. It recognises that Surrey is one of England's most productive economies, contributing £44.3bn to national GVA in 2019. The county is fortunate to be home to world-leading academic and corporate research, boasts excellent transport connectivity to London and the rest of the world, though its proximity to both London Heathrow and London Gatwick Airports, has a highly skilled workforce and offers superb quality of life.

There are challenges ahead for the county considering technological, environmental, and demographic changes, which will have implications on jobs, businesses, and the residents of Surrey.

Plan for Growth Priorities

To respond to the mix of challenges and opportunities identified in the Plan for Growth and highlighted through previous research, the following four strategic priorities were identified:

Priority 1: Growing the Leading Edge: supporting the Growth of Surrey's innovation economy

Surrey has clear strengths around innovation, with a high-density network of larger technology corporates and smaller innovative firms. Key assets include Surrey based universities, as well Surrey Research Park which accommodates around 500 businesses and is one of the UK's key innovation assets. Whilst working from a position of strength, there is an opportunity to do more to reach Surrey's potential. The Science and Innovation Audits highlighted that component parts of the Surrey innovation ecosystem are excellent; however, the overall ecosystem is fragmented. There is an opportunity to build stronger networks between businesses, universities, and other partners, and to develop a stronger investment 'brand' and offer.

Priority 2: A 'whole-place' approach to creating and sustaining quality places

Surrey's quality of life is both a contributor to, and a consequence of the county's economic success. The role of towns has evolved with the pandemic having accelerated emerging trends

⁴Charting Surrey's Post-Covid Rescue, Recovery and Growth, University of Surrey 2020

⁵ Charting Community-based Growth in Surrey: Local Responses and County Drivers, University of Surrey 2020

and changed how town centres are used. The Plan for Growth sets out the need to reimagine the function of town centres. There are opportunities to introduce a wider range of public services, workspaces, and creative and cultural offers into Surrey's town centres to reorientate towns away from only serving a retail function.

Priority 3: Maximising opportunities within a balanced, inclusive economy

Surrey benefits from a highly skilled workforce, with around 54.4% of the county's working age population being qualified to NVQ4 or above. There is also a tight labour market with unemployment rates in Surrey at 2.1% relative to the national average of 3.6%. This buoyant labour market presents an opportunity to drive inclusion as the economy recovers. It also highlights the importance of retaining and upskilling the existing workforce to ensure that the economy can grow.

Priority 4: Capturing the potential of a greener economy

Nationally and locally, there is a commitment to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Surrey's Climate Change Strategy and Delivery Plan sets out an overarching approach to decarbonisation. Meeting the net zero carbon goal ought itself to involve innovation and bring about productivity gains and it is important that Surrey takes advantage of this to remain at the 'leading edge'.

Decarbonisation drives new economic opportunities, for example in relation to energy generation and supply, building technologies and the development of more efficient products and services.

[Update on Plan for Growth Delivery Plan 2021](#)

The Plan for Growth Delivery Plan 2021 set out specific interventions to be progressed under each of the four priority areas. Many of these activities have been progressed by the OSGB over the last 18-months. The status of the actions has been reviewed and the summary position is set out in Appendix 1.

Some of the activities identified in the Plan for Growth Delivery Plan remain a priority for delivery and work is underway to progress actions. Other activities are no longer as relevant given the changing economic context or have been superseded by other work streams.

[Priority Actions for 2023](#)

[Growth Board challenges](#)

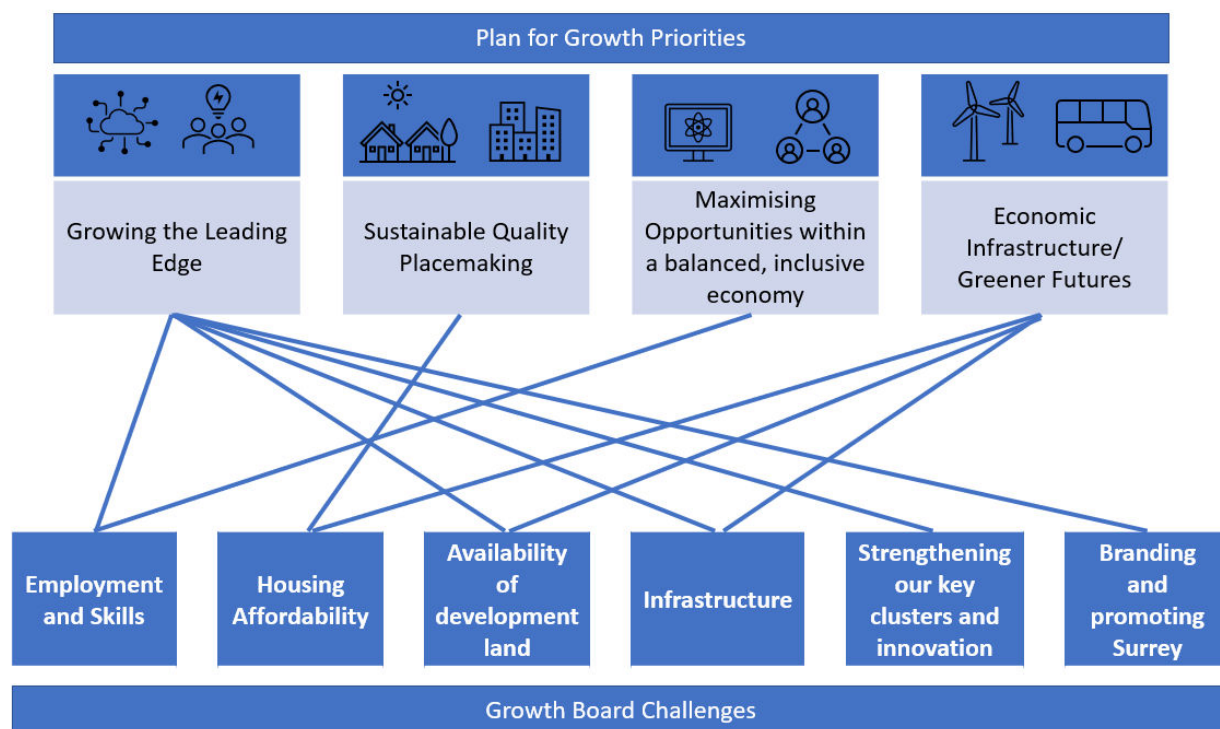
To reflect the rapidly changing economic context, a workshop was held in May 2022 to consider the emerging economic priorities. The following six key challenges were identified and agreed at that workshop:

- Challenge 1: Employment and Skills
- Challenge 2: Housing Affordability
- Challenge 3: Availability of Development Land
- Challenge 4: Infrastructure
- Challenge 5: Strengthen our Key Clusters and Innovation
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To a large extent, these six challenges align with the activities identified in the Plan for Growth. However, there have been substantial changes to the UK economy since 2021 as the country has

emerged from the pandemic, including the impact of the war in Ukraine, the cost-of-living crisis, and the tightening of the labour market, to name just a few. This has necessitated a shift in focus of activity and a refresh of the 2021 Plan for Growth Delivery Plan. This 2023 Delivery Plan has been developed to reflect these six challenge areas.

Links between the Plan for Growth Priorities and Growth Board Challenges



Addressing Growth Board challenges

Challenge 1: Employment and Skills

Home to 1.2 million residents, Surrey is a strategically important economic powerhouse with a productive and highly skilled workforce across a mostly rural geography without a single major conurbation. The region supports the UK's economic growth. It is home to world-leading research and innovation assets, highly successful large and small businesses, and a rich cultural heritage that provides residents with access to good work and a high quality of life. Yet Surrey also has areas of deprivation which do not share in this success and are adversely affected by the very high cost of living (including housing affordability) and barriers to education and employment for those furthest from the labour market. There are skills mismatches between employer demand and talent supply across multiple key sectors and there is a disparity between what those who live and work in Surrey earn compared to those who live in Surrey but work elsewhere, such as in London.

The **Surrey Skills Plan (SSP)** forms the strategic basis for delivering on skills priorities in Surrey. This is a plan for all of Surrey's businesses, education and training providers and residents. Its main purpose is to articulate the medium-long term skills needs of employers and set out actions that

will drive real change in Surrey's skills system. It also includes short-term actions which reflect the need to respond to more immediate skills demand and existing challenges.

The Plan is designed to support all people across the learning and work lifecycle. It seeks to ensure inclusive access to high quality skills provision for residents. It also seeks to ensure all businesses, small and large can access the talent they need and are empowered to engage with and shape Surrey's skills system.

The four core objectives of the plan are:

- **Supporting Business:** Help businesses prosper by making the skills system more responsive both to immediate needs and those anticipated in the medium-to-long term.
- **Supporting People:** Support inclusive access for Surrey's residents to improved careers education, information, and guidance, linked to clear learning, work and training pathways.
- **Enabling Collaboration:** Deliver a step change in the skills system through enhanced and purposeful collaboration between and across businesses, anchor institutions and skills providers.
- **Future Proofing:** As part of a thematic focus on skills of the future, strengthen the pipeline of priority skills to meet employer demand, recognising the needs of both SMEs and larger businesses.

The SSP sets out the priority activity for 2023 as well as for the period up to 2025, with 17 key activities outlined for the next year.

Action: Our vision is for a dynamic, demand-led skills system which hones Surrey's leading edge, recognises the needs of all businesses, and maximises inclusion, whilst powering economic growth across the UK.

Milestones:

- Establishing an annual Skills & Careers Festival, which engages businesses, learners, and skills providers on the opportunities in Surrey through a programme of events across the year
- Developing a Surrey County Council 'Skills Action Plan' which recognises the county's role as leader, employer, procurer, and service provider, and utilises the Council's size and scale to maximise opportunities for all
- Deliver a collaborative approach to careers advice working with a range of partners and employers, with focus on maximising inclusion and diversity
- Creating a Surrey Green Skills plan to support a pipeline of green-skills provision across sectors

Delivering on the ambitions of the SSP will require partnership working across multiple institutions, including businesses, education and training providers and wider stakeholders, such as Government and employer representative bodies.

Challenge 2: Housing Affordability

The Growth Board has previously raised the critically important issue of housing and its impact on Surrey's economy. It was noted that whilst several different bodies, organisations and agencies

played significant roles in the planning, delivery, management and improvement of housing, there was no one, overarching, unifying strategic approach across the county.

The places where people live and the housing conditions they are born into, have a fundamental bearing on their life chances. Housing is a fundamental determinant of individuals' wellbeing, along with employment, health, and quality relationships. Housing conditions, accessibility and mix are key determinants of a thriving and sustainable workforce and economy.

Across these issues, what is currently missing is an evidenced and joined-up county-wide strategy or ambition that directs focus and alignment across the whole housing system. This is a gap that the baseline assessment and proposed Housing, Homes and Accommodation strategy is intended to address.

Advisors (Inner Circle Consulting) were commissioned by Surrey County Council to i) undertake an initial broad baseline assessment of a wide range of housing, accommodation and homes matters, to support a better understanding of the accommodation and housing environment and the resources available, ii) conduct an engagement and deliberation programme to establish where greater collaboration and partnership working may be most fruitful and iii) develop a common set of strategic priorities for action.

The baseline assessment has been completed and it highlights some initial common themes from the analysis. This includes reaffirming that despite the median income levels for Surrey being higher than the national and regional benchmarks, the house price affordability ratio across the county is also higher than comparator areas and has accelerated by more than the wider South-East. This suggests an issue across the board but a particular concern for those earning below the median wage. Whilst efforts to deliver affordable housing across the county are demonstrable and ongoing, the overall housing stock of the county is far below the supply required to meet demand.

The immediate next step is to incorporate the findings from the analysis, engagement, and intervention mapping in a **Housing, Home, and Accommodation Strategy for Surrey**. This will move the phase of work from understanding the problem to setting out a clear plan of action that partners could take together to address the identified challenges practically and pragmatically. The draft Housing, Homes and Accommodation Strategy has been produced and it identifies the future actions to be considered by the One Surrey Growth Board.

Action: Develop Housing, Homes, and Accommodation Strategy

Milestones:

- Baseline assessment (December 2022)
- Draft Housing, Homes, and Accommodation Strategy (January 2023)
- Adoption of Housing Strategy by SCC Cabinet (March 2023)
- Promote, socialise, and communicate strategy to key stakeholders for implementation (throughout 2023)

To take forward this work, a Project Steering Group has been established, with four specific working groups, covering the following topics:

- Supporting Vulnerable Residents & Housing Affordability – to consider supported living affordability of affordable housing, homelessness, and links between health, housing, and care.
- Older residents and under-occupation – to consider extra care housing, quantity and quality of older people’s housing, remoteness and isolation and under-occupation of housing.
- Climate Crisis and Response – to consider the cost and consequences of retrofit and 20-minute neighbourhoods
- Land Supply and Housing Delivery – to consider public sector land ownership, delivery vehicles and delivery capacity for new homes and tenure and affordability of new homes.

These workstreams are further supported through the direction provided by the Surrey Infrastructure Steering Group and the Surrey Delivery Board.

It is anticipated that by working in partnership to develop and implement the Housing, Homes and Accommodation Strategy for Surrey, residents will see and experience benefits over time, in respect of:

- improved affordability brought about by addressing collectively the supply of housing and accommodation
- reduced homelessness in local areas
- improved range of housing types and quality of provision and conditions
- a positive impact for the Surrey workforce and economy with the potential for additional investment being made in priority areas and housing issues and
- improved performance of the county’s housing stock with respect to climate change and net zero ambitions.

Challenge 3: Availability of Development Land

The Plan for Growth recognises that whilst Surrey has a well performing economy, the property market presents a constraint on growth. Firms find it hard to access start-up and expansion space and there is competition between the development of land for residential versus commercial purposes.

Based on anecdotal evidence from business enquiries to the inward investment service ‘Invest in Surrey’, there seems to be demand for commercial space in Surrey, despite the impact of the pandemic changing working behaviours. There does, however, seem to be an increase in vacancy rates of commercial premises in town centres with 5.4% of premises reported as vacant in the MetroDynamics report⁶. This presents the opportunity to consider the alternative use of spaces in town centre locations.

To understand more about the current commercial space market in Surrey and help shape the future Invest in Surrey’s offer, ARUP have been commissioned by Surrey County Council (SCC) to undertake an analysis of commercial space availability. The analysis will draw upon the existing evidence bases produced by local planning authorities, such as Employment Land Reviews and seeks to present a Surrey wide view of demand and supply of commercial space. The completed

⁶ Economic Analysis and Priorities, MetroDynamics, December 2021

work will enable interventions to be designed that provide the additional support required for businesses looking to relocate or expand in Surrey and help to inform how the public sector can help address market failures, such as by maximising the use of SCC owned assets to support business growth.

Action: Complete Commercial Sites Analysis

Milestones:

- Conclusion of study (March 2023)
- Developing interventions in line with the recommendations of the analysis
- Consider future development of Research, Innovation, and Investment Zone proposals

The findings of the Arup analysis will be used to inform investment decisions by Surrey County Council and Growth Board partners. If strong evidence is identified of a market failure in a specific sector and/or location in Surrey, further work will be undertaken to consider the business case for investment. It may also help inform the future development of Investment Zones, or alternative Government policy around Research and Innovation Clusters. The overall objective will be to ensure Surrey is well positioned to respond to the needs of businesses for physical premises and become the location of choice to set-up and grow high growth businesses.

The commercial model for delivering on any opportunities identified will be equally important. As such, the next steps for 2023 will include exploring delivery models such as joint ventures and more unique solutions such as land trust models, depending on the nature of market failures identified.

Challenge 4: Infrastructure

Transport Infrastructure

Transport connectivity is one of Surrey's key strengths with the county having excellent connections to London and Gatwick and Heathrow airports. However, east-west travel is more challenging (aside from the M25). Congestion also presents a barrier to growth, with the MetroDynamics 2021 report, identifying Surrey as having the fourth highest level of traffic in the country and below average access to public transport to employment opportunities.

The 2017 Surrey Infrastructure Study set out the scale of the challenge and identified the needs around transport, communities, schools, healthcare, leisure facilities and green space provision. Whilst the scale of the challenge is substantial, with the identified infrastructure need costing over £5.51billion to 2031 (in 2017 prices), significant investment is underway through SCC's Surrey Infrastructure Plan (SIP) delivery programme to address the infrastructure gap. SIP delivery is well underway with seven projects having been approved for implementation, with a budget allocation of £193m to 2027/28 and a further 16 interventions (with spend of £275m to 2027/28) in the future pipeline.

Digital Connectivity

Digital connectivity is also identified as a high priority in the Plan for Growth. There has been substantial investment across Surrey in recent years with 98.4% of premises now having access to

Superfast Broadband. But the technology has moved on and Government has set the target for gigabit-broadband to be available nationwide by 2030. This will enable faster download and upload speeds and support the more complex applications required by organisations that undertake world leading research and use advanced digital technology.

Surrey has made good progress towards the 2030 target with 76% premises in Surrey having access to gigabit-broadband, relative to 73% on average in England. This is largely due to significant investment by commercial providers such as OpenReach and Virgin Media, as well as smaller alternative network operators (Alt-Nets). Investment by commercial operators alone will not reach all premises and support will be required to serve those in harder to reach areas. SCC is working with Building Digital UK to help deliver a programme of targeted interventions, referred to as Project Gigabit, to ensure connectivity to those premises that may otherwise miss out. Enterprise M3 (EM3) are investing in a Digital Fibre Spine network from Guildford to Basingstoke. Market engagement and procurement processes are underway to support the investment in the Fibre Spine and EM3 have set out the opportunity for Growth Board partners to contribute to discussions around an enhanced route once the initial works are underway.

Reimagining Town Centres

There is an opportunity to improve the coordination and delivery of ‘place-making’ enhancements and the regeneration of the built and natural environments within the County Council and between partners, including enhancing partnership work around stimulating local economic activity, especially in high Streets and town centres.

Given Surrey’s largely dispersed and discrete settlements (‘polycentricity’), towns offer an optimum spatial level at which to galvanise partners and communities to work together to bring about improvements, change and empowerment.

By working more effectively together in defined localities, councils, health providers, the police, and community, voluntary, charitable, and business partners, can work with residents to identify what matters to them in their towns and work to deliver on these areas. For example, it could be reducing health inequalities, protecting the environment, growing the economy, and supporting the local community.

Based on an independent socio-economic analysis of Surrey’s 27 strategic towns, a set of multi-dimensional, socio-economic and health criteria, data, and local intelligence, has been used to identify a short list of towns to be prioritised for intervention in 2023/24.

This work and the programmes, developments and projects arising from it, are founded on the following key characteristics and benefits:

- Improved sharing of data, evidence, and perspectives
- Ensuring that partner engagement with local people, in places they recognise and associate with is happening, co-ordinated and used to drive delivery
- Convening, co-ordinating and aligning residents, finance, and assets
- Co-designing and implementing new multi-agency service models
- Shared oversight and assurance of delivery and remedial action
- Delivering identified partnership projects

The above will secure more effective and efficient delivery and better outcomes for Surrey’s residents and businesses.

Surrey Infrastructure Steering Group (covering OSGB challenges 2, 3 and 4)

The **Surrey Infrastructure Steering Group (SISG)** has been established to address closely related challenges (Housing Affordability, Availability of Development Land, and Infrastructure). The group brings together a core membership of district and borough authorities and the County Council, to tackle the big challenges facing planning, infrastructure delivery and economic growth. The membership will be extended to partners for a fixed period based on the specific focus areas identified for the SISG in 2023.

The Surrey Infrastructure Steering Group has been formed to:

- Align infrastructure, investment priorities and economic growth interests.
- Provide a focus on delivering clear outputs/outcomes through a collective effort to tackle key challenges; and
- Establish the priorities for which Surrey can speak with a single voice to lobby and influence at a regional or national level.

The group has identified the following areas of interest for 2023:

- Infrastructure including transport, utilities, and green/blue assets
- Use of public assets, including districts and boroughs, SCC, and NHS assets, covering how the use of these assets is coordinated and used to unlock development such as through the One Public Estate Programme.
- Coordination of activities around places such as through the town's partnership programme.

Action: Progress delivery of infrastructure interventions and commence activity in priority towns.

Milestones:

- Adoption of proposed principles to pursue town partnerships by SCC Cabinet (March 2023)
- Secure engagement, contribution, and commitment of local partners for priority towns (2023-24)
- Continue work by the SISG to coordinate delivery across Surrey

Challenge 5: Strengthen our key Clusters and Innovation

The Plan for Growth identified the need to support the growth of Surrey's innovation economy as a key priority. More specifically, the report identified the following innovation focussed key areas for action:

- Build stronger business-to-business and business-to-knowledge base links involving strengthening relationships between 'anchor' and emerging businesses, universities, and support institutions, especially in the east of the county where the density of existing relationships is lower.
- Ensure capacity for innovative businesses to expand by developing a coordinated strategy for grow-on and expansion space for innovative and high-growth businesses.

- Explore the potential of a joint innovation programme with the county's universities where such collaboration can add value

The need for a coordinated, multi-partner and focussed innovation approach was highlighted in the MetroDynamics report with a recommendation for a targeted innovation programme.

Progress to date

A **Surrey Innovation Working Group** chaired by Michael Queen (Chair, EM3 LEP) has been established to develop actions that address this challenge.

The group met for the first time in September 2022 and included senior representation from Surrey's universities (University of Surrey, University for the Creative Arts, Royal Holloway University of London), Surrey Research Park, the private sector (Chair of the Business Leaders' Forum), the LEPs, and district and borough partners. The activities of the Innovation Working Group are also supported by an "Innovation Project Lead" shared post (running for two years) which is jointly funded by SCC and the University of Surrey.

The following Innovation Working Group objectives have been agreed to date:

- To share updates on existing and planned innovation and cluster activity being progressed by partners across the region
- To develop activities and a coordinated and coherent programme that will strengthen the innovation economy across Surrey

The following are priority actions for the Innovation Working Group in 2023:

- Develop a vision for the Surrey innovation economy - work with Surrey's place leaders and innovation partners to establish an achievable vision for innovation in Surrey. This will progress to the design of an appropriate structure to support the delivery of the vision including a partnership agreement supported by governance arrangements and collaboration principles, for example, openness, transparency, and a commitment to flexibility.
- Cluster mapping - completion of an innovation cluster mapping commission to understand and map the spatial distribution of key sectoral centres of economic activity and Surrey's key innovation clusters and assets.
- Cluster development programme – progress both new and existing cluster development programmes in a coordinated fashion to ensure the region can take advantage of emerging synergies and/or future funding opportunities.
- Public/private sector funding leverage – identify, share, and collaborate on innovation funding opportunities to ensure Surrey's innovation economy benefits from leveraged investment. Examples of specific funding opportunities to be collectively progressed include CoSTAR (Convergent Screen Technologies and performance in Realtime) linked to the Createch sector; and the Place Based Impact Accelerator opportunity offered by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) where a bid is being developed that is centred on the Surrey's strength in the space and cyber security sectors.
- Innovation Hubs – Working with our regional innovation partners and Connected Places Catapult to design and implement a coordinated (and accelerated) approach to the development of a regional innovation hub programme (i.e., the identification, promotion, and growth of Surrey's spatial concentration of innovation activity).

Action: Maximising the collective efforts and contributions partners represented on the Surrey Innovation Working Group to create an effective innovation economy across Surrey.

Milestones:

- Establishing an ambitious (but achievable) vision for regional innovation in Surrey to be co-designed with place leaders and innovation partners which provides a shared sense of endeavour and alignment of what the Innovation Working Group wants to achieve based on a shared understanding of Surrey's unique strengths (Apr 2023)
- An innovation partnership agreement (as part of the wider civic agreement in the longer term) and associated collaboration principles, ways of working and governance arrangements which partners can sign-up to, providing the basis for partnership working in the future
- Identification of an initial programme of innovation activities including measurable objectives, prioritised activities, and tangible outputs; potentially supported by some joint resources
- Cluster mapping (April 2023)
- Innovation Hubs (Summer 2023 onwards)

Challenge 6: Branding and Promoting Surrey

Growth Board members highlighted the importance of showcasing Surrey's economic assets and raising the profile of the existing and future potential of the county at a local, regional, national, and international level. Whilst this challenge has relevance to Growth Board's ambitions in terms of securing new investment it was also recognised that, perhaps more importantly, there is intrinsic benefit in ensuring that Surrey has a strong outward looking and positive brand and that there would be economic benefits from developing this brand narrative.

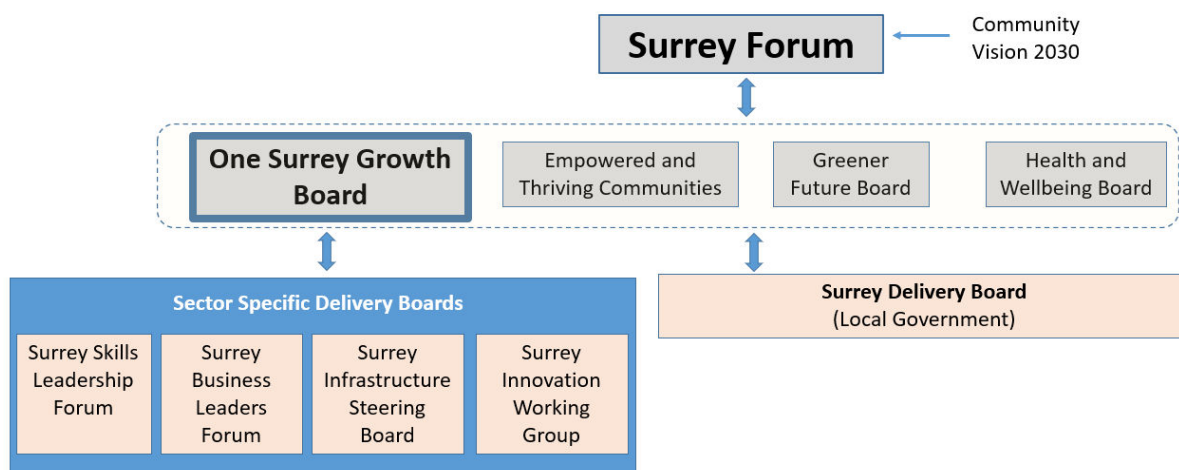
This Challenge aligns fully with the intentions of The Surrey Story and the work that has been undertaken to date to define and promote the potential of the county. The Plan for Growth recognises that Surrey has a favourable 'brand', but that it is important for existing and potential investors to understand the region's offer. The need to strengthen Surrey's brand is also highlighted in the University of Surrey's "Charting Surrey's Post Covid Rescue, Recovery and Growth" report recommendation to promote Surrey as a "place to do business".

A Brand and Marketing Manager has been recruited by SCC to work with partners to focus on key priorities and to lead on the establishment of a Surrey Story Partner Board, which is envisaged as a group of stakeholders who will design and deliver a programme of brand and promotion activities.

The Growth Board will have the opportunity for a focussed workshop discussion on this challenge at the September 2023 meeting. Through this session, which will be aligned with the vision of the Surrey Story Partner Board, a framework for future action will be agreed which will provide Growth Board members with an opportunity to act as Surrey brand ambassadors, to integrate shared positive messaging within their respective organisations and to benefit from a strong and focused elevation of Surrey as a place.

Governance

The Growth Board operates in the context of a wider governance structure, with other subject specific boards such as Empowered & Thriving Communities, Greener Futures and Health & Wellbeing Boards. These four partnership boards function to provide subject specific insights and drive forward specific programmes of work in accordance with their remit. An overarching and cross-cutting view of the activities of these boards is provided through the Surrey Forum.



In addition to the Surrey Infrastructure Steering Group and Surrey Innovation Working Group that are supporting the Growth Board drive forward specific activities related to their remit, the **Surrey Skills Leadership Forum** is leading on the development and delivery of the Surrey Skills Plan and activities identified under Challenge 1. Representation on the Skills Leadership Forum is a combination of employers, training providers and wider stakeholders and includes representation from organisations such as the NHS, McLaren, further education colleges, the universities and the LEPs.

Insights from business is provided to the Growth Board through the **Surrey Business Leaders' Forum**. This group of prominent Surrey businesses consider the Growth Board meeting agenda ahead of each session and help maintain focus on the live challenges and opportunities facing Surrey's businesses.

Over the course of 2023, progress updates on the six challenge areas will be presented to the Growth Board. Appendix 2 is an indicative forward look of the main agenda items that will be presented at the quarterly Growth Board meetings.

Measuring progress

Strategic Priority	Metric	Targeted Position set by One Surrey Growth Board in 2021	Baseline Period position	Latest reported position
1. Growth	GVA	18% increase by 2030 from 2019 baseline	£44.3bn (2019)	2019 position ⁷
2. Growing our leading edge	Employment in Knowledge Intensive Industries	1 percentage point increase employment in knowledge intensive industries across Surrey, by 2030	132,569 (2016)	131,453 (2018)
3. Business landscape	High Growth Businesses	5% of active businesses to be High Growth businesses, by 2030	5.4% (2018)	4.10% (2020)
4. Sustainable placemaking	a) Gigabit Capability	Gigabit Capability Coverage to be 40% coverage by 2030	17% (Nov 2020)	74% (Jul 2022)
	b) Housing Affordability	Improve housing affordability ratio from 11.5 to 10.5, bringing Surrey closer to the South East, by 2030.	11.41 (2019)	12.74 (2021)
5. Inclusion	Claimant Count ⁸	Claimant count to return to 1.1% within 3 years.	1.2% (Jan 2020 – pre pandemic)	2% (Jan 2023)

Number of High Growth Businesses KPIs and Employment in Knowledge Intensive Businesses

The lack of suitable commercial space in Surrey contributed to the loss of some of major employers and high growth businesses in 2020. The inward investment service ‘Invest in Surrey’ seeks to retain and attract businesses to Surrey. A procurement to analyse the demand and supply of commercial sites across Surrey is underway and seeks to identify gaps where the lack of suitable commercial sites is holding back Surrey’s economic growth potential, particularly for high growth businesses.

Gigabit coverage

At the county level, Surrey is now ahead of the Growth Board target of 40% coverage by 2030. On current performance, this will be attainable across all the eleven districts and boroughs. The more ambitious target is government’s aim of 99.9% coverage by 2030.

Housing Affordability ratio

The continued rise in Surrey’s housing affordability ratio reflects a wider national picture. The development of a Housing, Home and Accommodation Strategy for Surrey will inform how SCC can work with districts and boroughs, and partners to improve housing delivery across Surrey.

⁷ Office for National Statistics (ONS) still to release latest data set of GVA by local authority

⁸ Percentage of claimants as proportion of resident population of area aged 16-64

Claimant count

The target is for the claimant count to return to 1.1% within 3 years of post-pandemic recovery. On current performance this will be achievable, but unemployment may rise in 2023 based on the expectation that the UK will be in recession. The claimant count peaked at 4.2% in Feb 2021. The development of the Surrey Skills Plan and the Local Skills Improvement Plan will consider how to increase workforce participation across Surrey.

Appendix 1 – Monitoring Progress against Surrey’s Plan for Growth Delivery Plan 2021

Progress against OSGB priorities, agreed in Plan for Growth 2021
Growing the Leading Edge
<u>In progress</u> Building stronger business -to-business and business to knowledge-based links Status: Being progressed through the cluster development work (see Challenge 5).
Ensure (physical) capacity for innovative businesses to expand Status: Being progressed through the commercial sites supply and demand analysis (see Challenge 3)
Develop a stronger investment ‘brand’ and offer Status: Invest in Surrey, inward investment service was launched in April 2022. Further work is underway to promote Surrey as an Innovation District (see Challenge 5) and through the Surrey Story work (see Challenge 6).
<u>Paused</u> Build a targeted innovation support system to tackle the fragmented offer across Surrey. Status: Links with County Deal and how to align Growth Hub business support functions across Surrey
A ‘whole-place’ approach to creating and sustaining quality places
<u>In Progress</u> Driving the development of Surrey Infrastructure Plan Status: Considerable work underway with Surrey County Council having committed £193m to the delivery of seven projects to date, and a further £275million having been identified for a pipeline of future projects which are now under development.
Reimagining the future of town centres: Status: Hyper-local approach has been followed in Horley as a test bed for the new approach.
Improving Digital Connectivity Status: 76% premises in Surrey have access to gigabit-broadband, relative to 73% on average in England (see Challenge 5)
Maximising opportunity within a balanced, inclusive economy
<u>In progress</u> Strengthen the employers voice in skills planning Status: The former Employment and Skills Board was refreshed to become the new Surrey Skills Leadership Forum, with a membership focused on balancing the employer and training provider

Progress against OSGB priorities, agreed in Plan for Growth 2021

perspectives. The Forum helped deliver the Surrey Skills Plan and will play a key role in enabling its delivery going forward.

Promote Retraining

Status: This is a key action identified through the Surrey Skills Plan to be progressed through 2023 (see Challenge 1).

Maximise inclusion within the labour market (as above).

Drive a jobs recovery that works for businesses and employers

Status: Concerns about high unemployment once Covid support ended did not materialise in Surrey. This action has been superseded by the work on the Surrey Skills Plan, but SCC will be prepared to respond should economic conditions drive high unemployment rates locally.

Capturing the potential of a greener economy

Deliver the Surrey Climate Change Strategy

Status: Actions being progressed by the Greener Futures Board.

Appendix 2 - Indicative Forward Look of Growth Board meetings

Date	Location	Focus
Monday 6 March (1pm – 3pm)	In Person (Woodhatch Place, Reigate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge 5 – Cluster and Innovation Activity
Thursday 15 June (10am – 12pm)	Virtual, via Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge 1 – Employment and Skills
Monday 11 September (3pm – 5pm)	In Person (Woodhatch Place, Reigate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge 3 – Availability of development land Challenge 6 – Branding and Promoting Surrey
Wednesday 13 December (2pm – 4pm)	Virtual, via Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of progress against 2023 delivery plan

Acknowledgements

Front cover and Surrey Cyber Security Cluster images provided by courtesy of Echo Eighty