

Surrey Business Leaders Forum (accessible version)

Woodhatch Place, Reigate

Tuesday 14 May 2024



SURREY
COUNTY COUNCIL

Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions (including declarations of interest)
 - a) Speakers: **Dawn Redpath**, (Director for Economy and Growth, Surrey County Council); **SBLF Interim Chair- Chris Hurren** (Partner, RSM)
2. The journey so far and the refreshed Forum
 - a) Speakers: **SBLF Interim Chair- Chris Hurren**; **Patricia Huertas** (Head of Economic Programmes and Localities); **Rhiannon Mort** (Head of Economic Programmes and Localities)
3. Surrey's strategic and economic context
 - a) Speaker: **Dawn Redpath**
4. Roundtable discussion: Ambitions for the refreshed Forum
 - a) Speaker: **SBLF Interim Chair- Chris Hurren**
5. Appointment of Chair and nominations to OSGB
 - a) Speakers: **Dawn Redpath**
6. Reflections and Close
 - a) **SBLF Interim Chair- Chris Hurren**

Welcome, introductions and declarations of interest

Dawn Redpath, (Director for Economy and Growth, Surrey County Council)

SBLF Interim Chair- Chris Hurren (Partner, RSM)

- Declarations of Interest

Going around the room, introduce yourself, who you represent, and what has drawn you to be involved with the Surrey Business Leaders Forum.

The journey so far and the refreshed Forum

Item 2

What was previously achieved?

Areas of focus identified by previous Business Leaders Forum:

- Workshop session to identify the “**six strategic challenges**”
- **Host a careers fair** to enable the region’s businesses to promote their employment opportunities
- Increased engagement with HE sector and connection between education and industry to enable **business led skills provision**
- Greater clarity from national government needed and baseline assessment to **improve housing provision**
- More **collaboration with the Universities**, facilitating and enabling **innovation, growth** of existing businesses as well as attracting new investment
- Invest in branding and **promoting Surrey’s strengths** to remove the legacy brand or generalised perceptions

Examples of what has been delivered:

Innovation and inward investment

- Developed new Surrey Commercial Sites Prospectus
- Established innovation clusters
- Civic Agreement being developed with Surrey universities
- Committed £3m to CoSTAR national lab, in partnership with Royal Holloway, University of London

Employment and skills

- Secured £2.4m for Skills Bootcamps – focus on local skills gaps and co-designed with local business
- Hosted first Surrey Festival of Skills – attended by more than 1,300 young people and 8- exhibitors
- Development of Surrey Skills Plan and LSIP with Surrey Chambers and FE colleges

Housing and infrastructure

- Housing, Accommodation and Homes Strategy for Surrey developed and Call to Action to government
- Surrey Infrastructure Plan project delivery

Access to information, advice, and guidance

- New Business Surrey brand, website & integrated CRM

Surrey Festival of Skills

- Hosted the first ever **Surrey Festival of Skills** in November 2023
- Attended by more than 1,300 young people
- 80 exhibitors were present on the day including Samsung, British Airways, and Amazon
- Following the success of the first Festival of Skills event there were calls to make it an annual event, and the date for this year's event has been confirmed as 15th October 2024 at Surrey Sports Park, Guildford.



Business Surrey

Business Surrey was launched at the end of March as Surrey County Council's new county-wide business support service

Website

- 3.9k visitors in the first month
- Conversion rate of 4.5% (above 2% B2B benchmark)

LinkedIn

- 20.5k people reached
- 11.5% engagement rate on organic content (industry benchmark 2-5%)
- 205 followers in 4 weeks

Out of Home

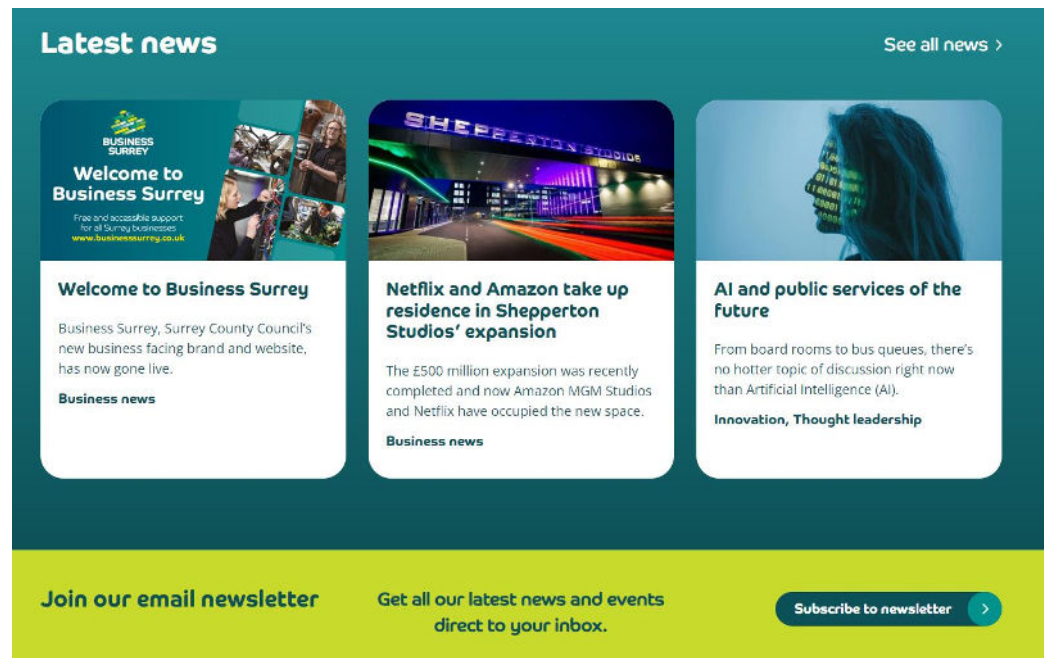
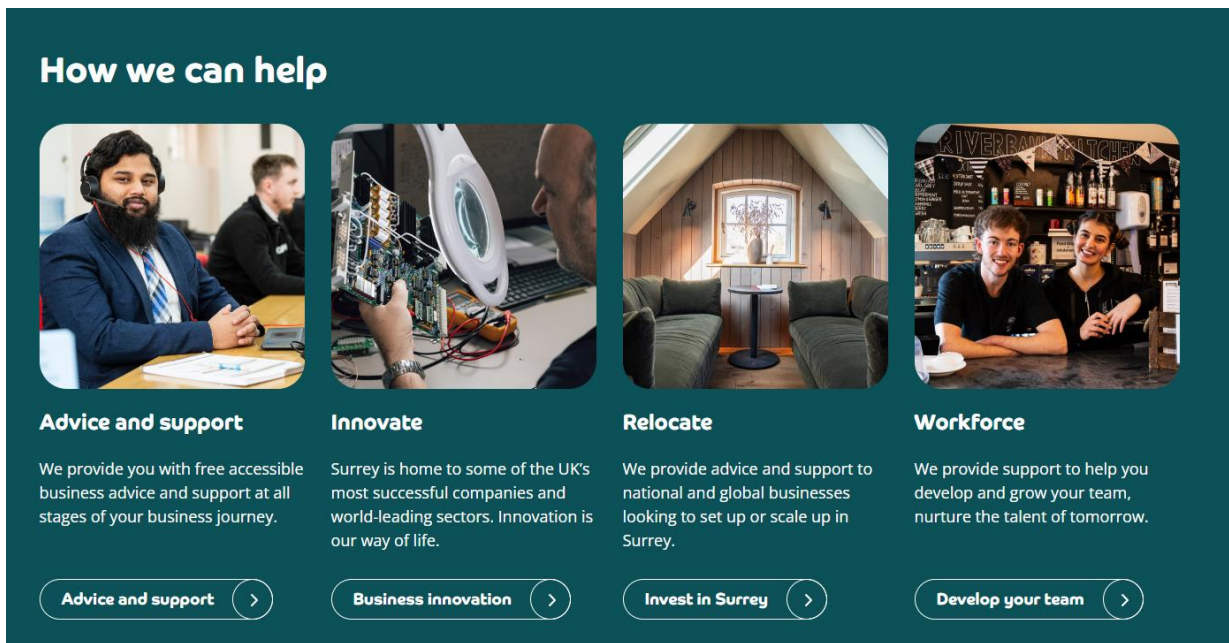
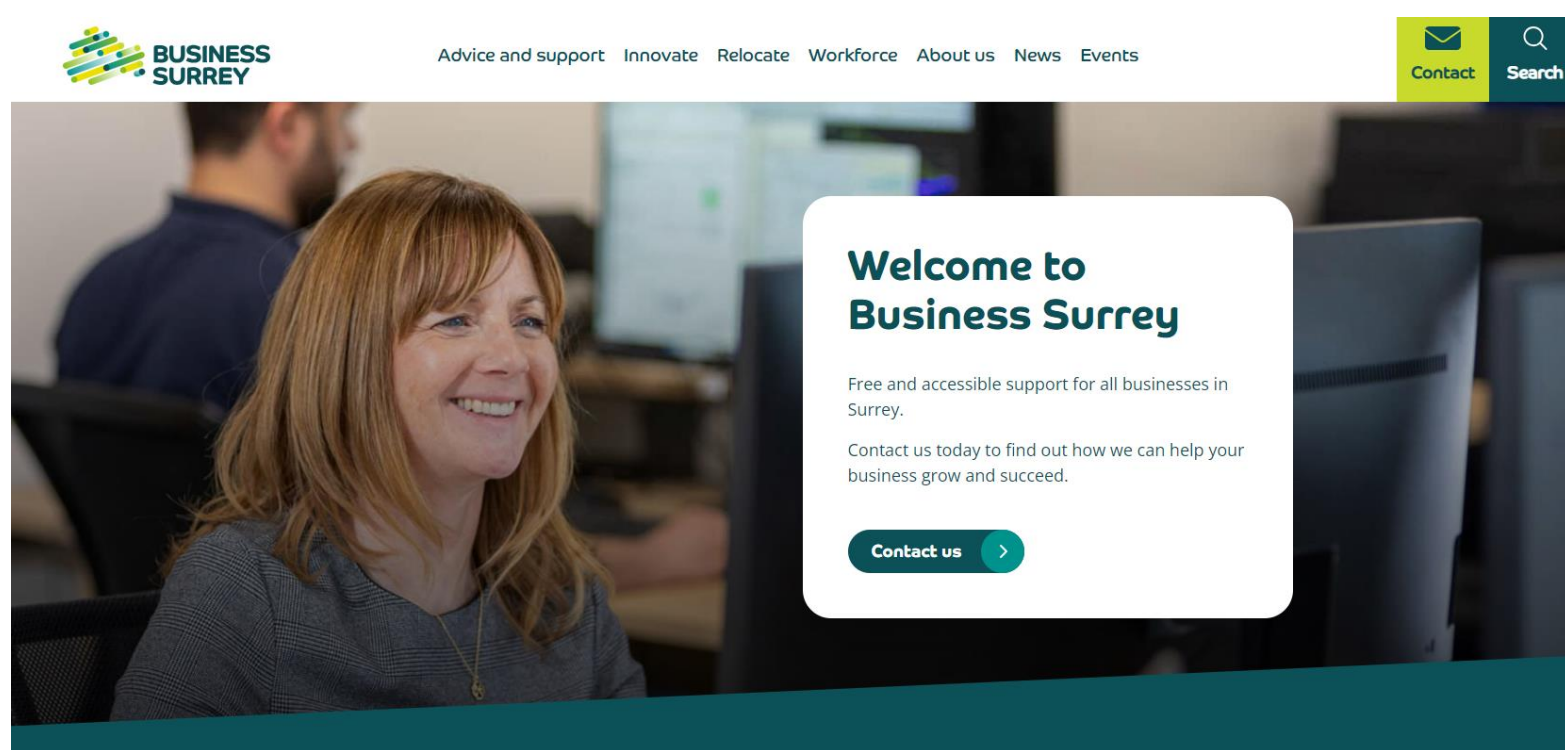
- Campaign now live, more than 30 locations across Surrey - including railway stations, roadsides and back of buses
- More sites go live throughout May

Ministerial launch taking place on May 17 and roadshows with partners in June

Ongoing content development, additional functionality, pages and cross-promotion



Business Surrey website



Business support directory

[Home](#) / [Directory](#)

Filter directory by

Support type

Scheme type

Scheme provider

Find support near you

Enter location


10 miles

Search support by keyword

Type keyword


Search

Sort by




Advanced Manufacturing Supply Chain Initiative Recycled Fund

Other




Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas)

Skills and recruitment




Be the Business

Business advice




Better Business Finance

Access to funding



Big Issue Invest

Access to funding



British Business Bank

Other

Events listings

Events


Featured event

FWD Project Masterclass – Selling and Communicating Sustainability

17 April 2024 – 18 April 2024

This online masterclass session will provide tips and insights on how sustainability can positively impact your sales pipelines and your wider business communications.

See event details



[Home](#) / [Events](#)

Filter events by


All event types

Find events near you

Enter location


5 miles

Search events by keyword



GDP Pastries & Networking at Marshalls Volkswagen Gatwick


Join for some relaxed and informal networking over tea,



Membership Meet Up April 2024

Join us every third Monday of the month for our Membership Meet Up!

15 April 2024 @ 10:30 am



FWD Project Masterclass – Selling and Communicating Sustainability

This online masterclass session will provide tips and

What has changed? – The LEP transition

From April 2024, **Government sponsorship and funding of LEPs ceased** and UTLAs/Combined Authorities (like Surrey County Council) will take on the functions.

New responsibilities from Government include:

- **Strategic economic planning**
- **Growth Hub** – Front-line business support - to include new Surrey brand and online platform.
- **Careers Hub** – already integrated and delivering
- **Business voice / representation** – *“Embed a strong, independent, and diverse local business voice into local democratic institutions.”*



Surrey's approach to embedding an independent business voice

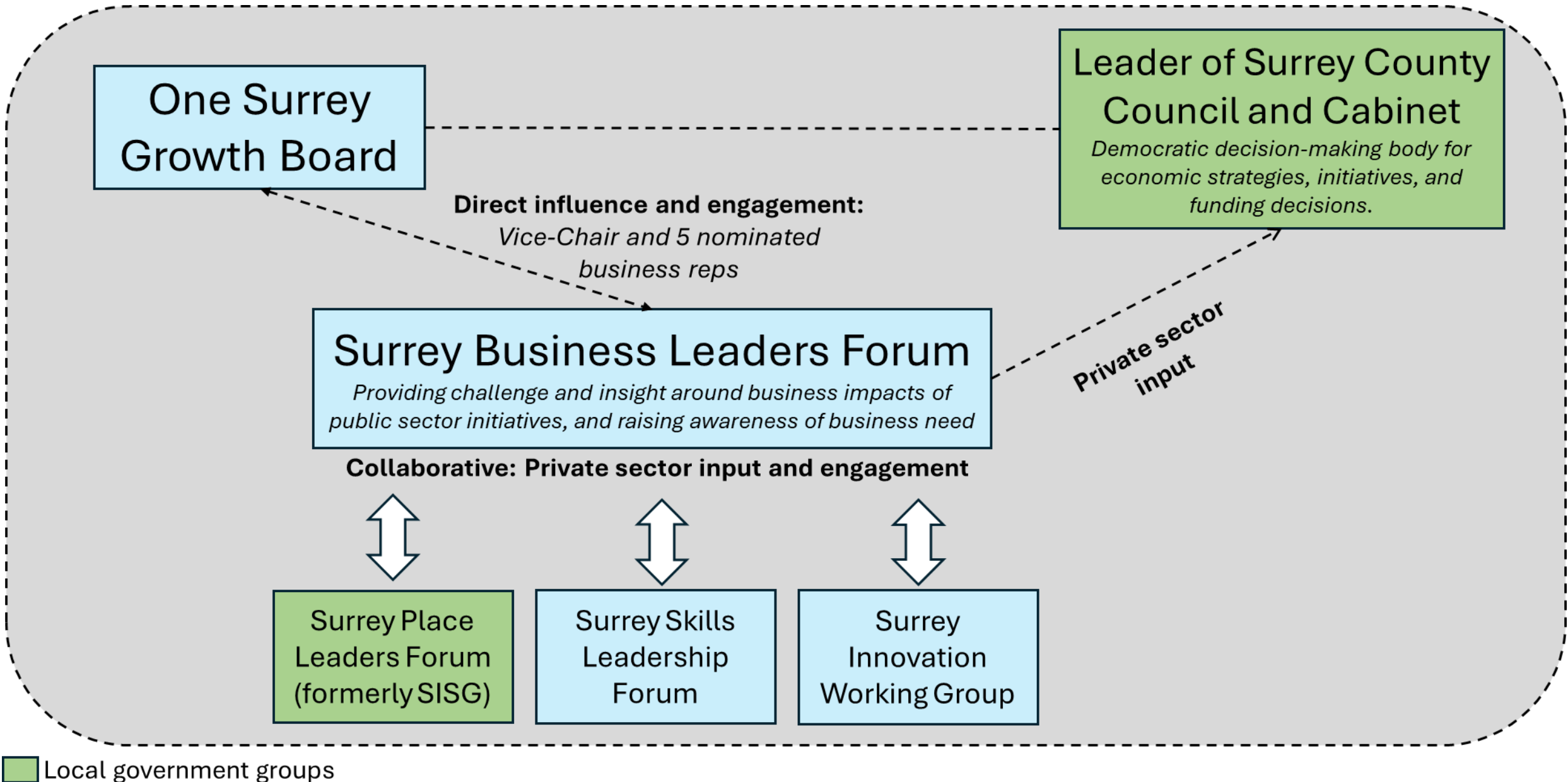
- Refreshed One Surrey Growth Board (OSGB) with strengthened private sector involvement, to become **the main strategic business advisory board** for helping to steer the County's economic growth policy and programmes.
- Refreshed and expanded Surrey Business Leaders' Forum (SBLF) will inform the OSGB and Surrey County Council with **business insight and expertise**, representing a diverse, local, business voice related to Surrey's key economic strengths.
- Several working groups also exist, which bring partners together to help **drive forward the activities identified by the OSGB** and will consult the SBLF as needed for business expertise

Overview of SBLF's role

The Forum is a strategic partnership, bringing together prominent businesses and representative organisations to amplify the voice of the private sector in local governance and decision-making.

1. Influence strategies and decision-making
 - Review and input into development of key county-wide strategies
 - Strong connections with the OSGB and SCC cabinet.
 - Check and challenge
2. Shape support programmes and initiative
 - Insights around business impacts of public sector initiatives
 - Infrastructure priorities
 - Involved in supporting delivery of programmes
3. Representative voice / engagement
 - Help to embed a strong business voice
 - Represent and advocate on behalf of local businesses and sectors
 - Raise awareness with your networks

High-level representation of governance structure



Formal steps to establish the SBLF

- Agree Terms of Reference (circulated as pre-reading). Updated version to be circulated following meeting.
- Acknowledgement of, and agree to, the Conflict of Interest statement and Code of Conduct policy (circulated as pre-reading).
- Chair appointment process – review statements and vote at end of meeting
- One Surrey Growth Board appointment process – review statements and vote at end of meeting

Discussion

- What are the ways we can ensure the Forum is effective in being a representative voice for local business?
- What ways would members like to be engaged with?

Surrey's strategic and economic context

Item 3

“A world class economy”

Surrey’s Economic Future: Our Economic Strategy, November 2020

- “Surrey has an innovative and productive economy, underpinned by excellent connectivity and workforce skills.
- “Building on these strengths will be essential to our future prosperity – and to the wider contribution that the county makes to the UK as a whole.
- “However, ... in a dynamic economy, past achievements are no guarantee of future success, and there are risks to Surrey’s ‘virtuous circle’ of innovation, productivity and prosperity.”

Key facts and figures

- £48 billion economy
- 110,000 businesses (91% micro enterprises)
- 94% business success rate
- 54% of the workforce have degrees

Economic drivers for change

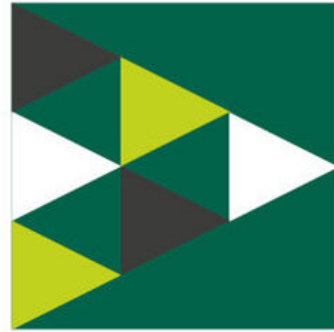
- Since the COVID-19 pandemic, **the baseline rates of high growth businesses has not recovered.**
- **A similar trend has been happening with business births**, which is being **compounded by an increase in the proportion of business deaths** OFLOG benchmark data puts **Surrey currently 10th/14 against CIPFA neighbours** for % of births and deaths of enterprises.
- This is having a **knock-on effect to our business survival rates**, which pre-pandemic (2019) was 1st year 95.4%, and 2nd year 74.6%. Latest figures show this has fallen to 1st year 93.1% and **2nd year 67.9%.**
- **Recruitment challenges** – tight labour market and skills mis-match for both highly skilled and entry / foundation roles but **23,900 residents are “Economically inactive who want to work”**, which represents 21% of all economically inactive (SE and GB average is 17%)
- The **affordability of housing in Surrey remains a key challenge** with an affordability ratio is **high at 12.36** and above the SE average.

Establishing SCC's strategic economic planning role



Strategic framework

**Council-
wide**



OUR PURPOSE

**No One
Left
Behind**



GROWING A
SUSTAINABLE
ECONOMY SO
EVERYONE CAN
BENEFIT



TACKLING
HEALTH
INEQUALITY



ENABLING
A GREENER
FUTURE



EMPOWERED
AND THRIVING
COMMUNITIES

**Growth
Board**

Growing the
leading edge

A 'whole place'
approach

Maximising
opportunity in a
balanced inclusive
economy

Capturing the
potential for a
greener
economy

**Areas of
focus**

Challenge 1:
Employment
and Skills

Challenge 2:
Housing
Affordability

Challenge 3:
Availability of
Development
Land

Challenge 4:
Infrastructure

Challenge 5:
Strengthen
Key Clusters
& Innovation

Challenge 6:
Branding and
Promoting
Surrey

Discussion- Key challenges

Previous Surrey Business Leaders Forum challenges:

- Challenge 1: Employment and skills
 - Challenge 2: Housing affordability
 - Challenge 3: Availability of development land
 - Challenge 4: Infrastructure
 - Challenge 5: Key clusters and innovation
 - Challenge 6: Branding and promoting Surrey
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- Do these challenges still resonate with businesses?
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- Are there other needs /priorities that are missing, or are important to be reflected against a specific challenge?

Roundtable discussion: Ambitions for the refreshed Forum

Item 4

What do you think the ambitions of the refreshed Forum should be, and what priority areas should we focus on?

Areas to consider:

Relevance of LEP transition for Surrey businesses:

- Greater join-up and clarity for the private sector
- A single economic vision for the county
- A new Surrey business brand and website
- Targeted business support that responds to Surrey needs
- Creation of a Surrey Growth Hub service
- Creation of a Surrey Careers Hub
- Enterprise Zone business rates retention for local investment
- Residual LEP capital funding to invest (e.g. future regeneration projects)

Growing a sustainable economy so everyone can benefit:

- Highways and infrastructure
- Placemaking
- Assets, land and commercial sites
- Business support and talent
- Strategic and transport planning
- Innovation and clusters
- Environment

Appointment of Chair and nominations to OSGB

Item 5

Reflections and Close

Item 6