

# Economic Development Strategy 2016-2019



Runnymede Borough Council

Runnymede Civic Centre

Station Road

Addlestone

Surrey

KT15 2AH

[www.runnymede.gov.uk](http://www.runnymede.gov.uk)

**Runnymede**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL



## Table of contents

<b>Executive summary</b> .....	<b>3</b>
The Council's strategic economic ambition.....	3
Who is the Economic Development Strategy aimed at? .....	3
Runnymede's economic performance and trajectory.....	3
New economic priorities for the Borough.....	4
<b>Chapter one: Introduction</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Purpose of the Economic Development Strategy .....	5
Geographic context .....	6
<b>Chapter two: Economic Assessment</b> .....	<b>8</b>
People and communities of Runnymede.....	8
Workforce dynamics .....	9
KEY FACTS:.....	9
KEY FINDINGS:.....	9
A Competitive Business Location .....	10
A connected borough with a vibrant commercial property market .....	12
<b>Chapter three: Results from the Business Survey</b> .....	<b>15</b>
Business growth .....	15
Exports and markets.....	16
Locational considerations .....	16
Skills and recruitment .....	16
Runnymede Business Partnership.....	17
<b>Chapter four: Runnymede Borough SWOT analysis</b> .....	<b>18</b>
Borough strengths .....	18
Borough weaknesses .....	19
Borough opportunities.....	20
Borough threats .....	21
<b>Chapter five: Policy context</b> .....	<b>23</b>
The policy context for economic development.....	23
CENTRAL GOVERNMENT POLICY .....	23

LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP .....	25
SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL.....	27
RUNNYMEDE BOROUGH COUNCIL.....	29
RUNNYMEDE LOCAL PLAN.....	29
<b>Chapter six: Priorities, objectives and deliverables .....</b>	<b>31</b>
Priority 1: Business relocation, expansion and investment in the Borough.....	31
Priority 2: Maintaining competitive advantage through business engagement and support.....	32
Priority 3: A dynamic workforce for a high-tech economy.....	33
Priority 4: Better infrastructure for growth.....	34
Priority 5: promoting innovation and technology sectors.....	35
<b>Appendix .....</b>	<b>1</b>

## Executive summary

The Runnymede Economic Development Strategy 2016-2019 aims to ensure that the Borough continues to be a leading economy in Surrey and the wider sub-region. The Strategy comes at a very important time for the Council, given the increasing flexibilities in economic development being passed to local government (e.g. business rates retention and setting, and bidding for funding from the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership (EM3 LEP)), and the imminent review by the EM3 LEP of its Strategic Economic Plan (SEP). The Strategy will enable the Council to effectively contribute to the consultation on the new SEP, better align its priorities with those of the LEP, and ensure that the Council builds on recent regeneration initiatives and Runnymede's well established business partnership.

Runnymede has witnessed unparalleled economic growth within the sub-region over the last 15 years as the Borough has established itself as a location of choice for many multi-national companies seeking EMEA headquarters close to London and Heathrow. Home to a number of research facilities, as well as Royal Holloway, University of London, and its world leading Information Security Group, the Borough was ranked sixth in the UK as a location for high tech employment in 2013.

## The Council's strategic economic ambition

The Borough's Officers and Members are keen to ensure that economic growth continues and strengthens, and that the local community is able to benefit from opportunities provided wherever possible. The Council wish to build on recent regeneration initiatives and Runnymede's well established business partnership to ensure a proactive stance in relation to economic development and the Council's relationship with local business. This will ensure that the Borough actively exploits new economic opportunities for businesses, residents and visitors. The Strategy was informed by a detailed economic assessment of the Borough's performance and potential, business surveys and consultation with both businesses and Members.

## Who is the Economic Development Strategy aimed at?

The strategy is for businesses, entrepreneurs, educational establishments, Officers, politicians and the Borough's partners. Delivery of the priorities around business location and investment, business engagement, skills, infrastructure, and promotion of innovation and technology sectors will ensure that the Borough plays an enabling role within the local economy, and actively collaborates with partners.

## Runnymede's economic performance and trajectory

Chapter 2 outlines the key findings of the economic assessment. It focuses on exactly what makes the Borough a dynamic location for business and such a competitive local economy. Its findings show that the Borough has:



- Witnessed outstanding growth over the last 15 years with a CAGR GVA of 4.3%, considerably higher than for Surrey, the South-East and the UK.
- Outstanding transport connections which allow local businesses to operate successfully in local, national and international markets.
- Quality Grade A office accommodation and strategic employment sites for further commercial development, including Longcross Park – one of the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership's (EM3 LEP) largest strategic sites, and recently designated Enterprise Zone.
- Access to a large skilled pool of labour within a one hour commute.
- A large number of company headquarters and a significant number of workers employed in high tech companies.

However, despite these strengths, the assessment also identified a number of potential weaknesses, which could threaten the future competitiveness of the area and have resulted in many of the opportunities provided in the Borough not being accessible to local residents.

### **New economic priorities for the Borough**

As part of the Strategy, a detailed SWOT analysis was undertaken (Chapter 4). The SWOT analysis was informed by the economic assessment and findings of the business survey. In light of the evidence five economic priorities were proposed and consulted on. Following broad agreement by consultees on the proposed priorities, a number of objectives were developed relating to each priority, and from these deliverables were identified which are set out at the end of this strategy.

The Council will continue to work with partners over the next three years and beyond to implement the deliverables and maintain Runnymede's position as a top-performing borough.

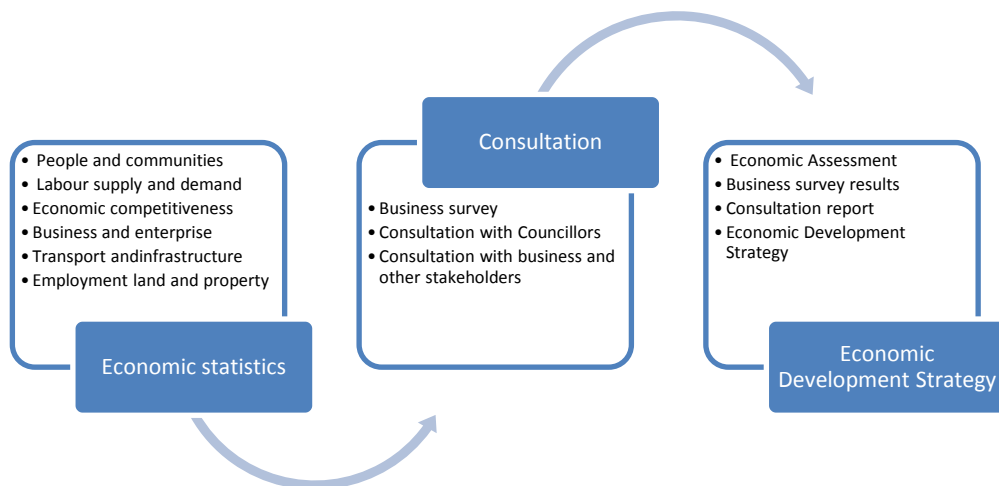
## Chapter one: Introduction

### Purpose of the Economic Development Strategy

The aim of the Economic Development Strategy is to ensure the Borough continues to be a leading economy in Surrey and the wider sub-region through:

- articulating a clear economic narrative for the Borough based on a review of economic performance and business and stakeholder priorities, with their support and continued endorsement;
- set the strategic direction for economic development for the next three years, with a focus on business and economic growth;
- make clear links with internal and external strategies including those of the EM3 LEP, Surrey County Council and neighbouring authorities; and
- set out clear deliverables, which derive from the key priorities and define how economic development will be delivered.

The following steps were undertaken to develop the strategy:



All data contained in this strategy is taken from the Economic Assessment. For information on data sources please refer to the Economic Assessment.

## Geographic context

Runnymede Borough is located in north-west Surrey, only 20 miles from central London. It is a small borough when compared with most other Surrey authorities, measuring only eight miles from north to south. Approximately 79% of its area currently lies within the metropolitan Green Belt and the Borough provides the first major expanse of Green Belt on the south-western edge of the London metropolitan area.

The Borough is strategically located at the junction of the M25 and M3 motorways, and is only two junctions on the M25 from the M4 motorway. It has good rail and excellent road connections to the capital and wider South East, and excellent road connections to Heathrow and Gatwick Airports.



The Borough adjoins five neighbouring local authorities; Windsor and Maidenhead to the north, Spelthorne and Elmbridge to the north-east and south-east respectively, Woking to the south and Surrey Heath to the west. The nearest major settlements in these adjacent local authorities are Staines-upon-Thames, Weybridge, Windsor and Woking.

There are three main towns within the Borough - Addlestone, Chertsey and Egham, and a range of local/village centres. These include Virginia Water, Woodham and New Haw, Englefield Green, Ottershaw and Thorpe Village.

**Addlestone** is a relatively young centre, which grew with the coming of the railway in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The town is currently undergoing regeneration, with the Addlestone One scheme which will deliver a mixed use development in the vicinity of the Civic Centre, due to be completed in December 2017. Further phases of regeneration in the town are being explored.

**Chertsey** is an historic town which was developed around a Benedictine abbey dating from Saxon times. Part of Chertsey town was 'revitalised' with modern offices and apartments in the 1990s but the central conservation area retains much of its historic character. New town centre development and regeneration is being explored following the publication of a masterplan for the town.

**Egham** lies near to the historic Runnymede Meadow, which is close to the site of the sealing of Magna Carta in 1215. Egham has seen significant commercial redevelopment in recent years, both in the town centre and along The Causeway business area to the north-east of the town, which extends to Staines Bridge. Regeneration plans for parts of Egham town centre are currently being developed as part of the Runnymede Regeneration programme.

In addition to the town centres, major employment areas in the Borough include:

- Weybridge Business Park and Bourne Business Park, to the south of Addlestone.
- St Peters Hospital and the Hillswood Business Park, to the south-west of Chertsey.
- Thorpe Industrial Estate, to the north of Thorpe Village.
- Longcross Park, on the western edge of the Borough.
- The Causeway, located on the northern edge of the Borough.

There are also a number of individual business premises employing significant numbers of workers that are located on Green Belt sites throughout the Borough including: Royal Holloway, University of London (RHUL) campus; the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) laboratories; the CABI research establishment; and headquarters buildings for Belron and Kerry Foods.



## Chapter two: Economic Assessment

An Economic Assessment was undertaken to inform the development of this Strategy and should be read in conjunction with it. It outlines the overall economic performance, competitiveness and productivity of Runnymede, and was informed by official, updatable measures of economic well-being and competitiveness and other economic, social and environmental indicators. Overall, the assessment found that:

**Runnymede is home to some of the world's largest brands and most successful companies across a variety of sectors. It has a thriving high-tech economy which has witnessed significant growth over the last 15 years as a result of its location and connectivity. The Borough has outperformed many of its peers in terms of competitiveness and plays a vital role in supporting the growth of the South East and the UK economy.**

However, despite these strengths, the assessment also identified a number of potential weaknesses, which could threaten the future competitiveness of the area. A summary of the key findings of the assessment are set out below.

### People and communities of Runnymede

#### Key facts:



#### Key findings:

- Runnymede is located 20 miles from central London and has a population of 80,500.
- Covering just 78 km<sup>2</sup>, 79% of its area lies within the metropolitan Green Belt.
- Despite recent sluggish population growth compared to its comparator areas, Runnymede is projected to grow by a fifth by 2033, outpacing the county, the region and England.
- The proportion of the population from minority ethnic groups is lower than for Surrey and the South East.
- Mosaic data paints a picture of a very wealthy local economy with small pockets of inequality.
- Very affluent households live in some of the most sought after neighbourhoods in the country alongside middle income families living in a variety of private housing and elderly households either in private or social housing as well as younger couples and singles living in starter homes.

- Runnymede ranks the 46<sup>th</sup> least deprived out of 326 local authorities, but fell 12 places in the English rankings since 2010.
- It also ranked the second most deprived local authority area in Surrey in 2015.

### Implications for the Strategy:

The projected growth in population will require comprehensive planning to ensure adequate infrastructure, jobs and training, and public services are provided to meet the needs of a growing and ageing population. Pockets of relative deprivation need addressing and access to housing and services are an area of concern.

Policies to guide housing and employment development and infrastructure are being drafted as part of the emerging Local Plan, and the Council will work with developers, neighbouring authorities, Surrey County Council and the EM3 LEP to fund and deliver necessary infrastructure to enable growth.

## Workforce dynamics

### Key facts:



### Key findings:

- In 2014 the working age population (16-64 years) was estimated at 55,400 persons (65.5% of the population), higher than Surrey (62.1%), South East (62.4%) and England (63.5%).
- Of the 55,400 people of working age 81% are economically active and 78% are in employment.
- Between July 2014 and June 2015, 3.3% of the resident workforce was out of work.
- Although approximately 60% of residents are qualified to NVQ Level 3 and above, Runnymede has one of the lowest percentages of 16-64's qualified to level NVQ4 and above, and the highest percentage of 16-64's with no qualifications in the sub-region.
- There is polarisation in qualifications levels amongst working aged residents, with 45% in Virginia Water ward qualified to Level 4 compared to just 24% in Chertsey St Ann's and 25% in Addlestone Bourneside.

- Median earnings for residents in Runnymede are lower than for many areas in the sub-region, in particular other parts of Surrey.
- By contrast Runnymede records high median earnings in the workplace compared with many areas in the sub-region.
- Runnymede witnessed exceptional growth in workforce employment over the last decade and a half increasing by 41% or 19,470.

### Implications for the Strategy:

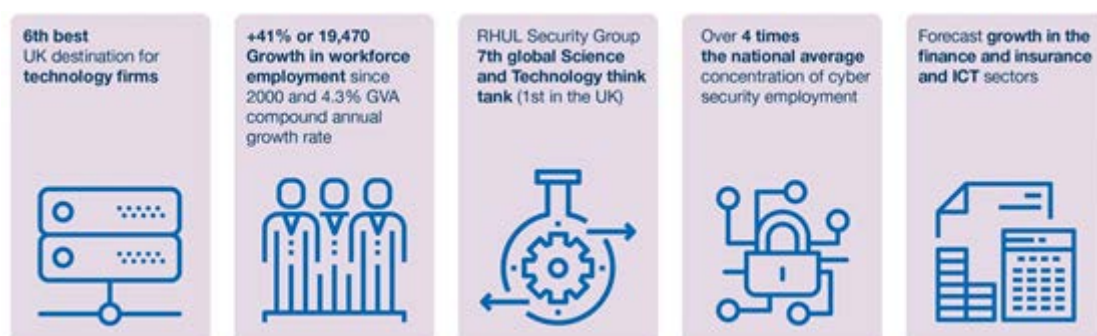
Whilst there are relatively few out-of-work claimants or unemployed individuals, there are local geographical disparities in qualification achievement and a significant gap between resident and workforce wage rates. Lower qualification levels may in part explain the lower earnings achieved in some areas of the Borough and the fact in-commuters (and in particular male in-commuters) appear to be taking a significant proportion of the better paid jobs.

The significant growth in workforce employment explains the relatively high proportion of jobs based in the Borough relative to the number of working age residents. Although the local population is forecast to increase, job density is likely to remain fairly high given the locational advantages of the area to business. This means that there will be jobs available for local residents provided they have the appropriate qualifications and skills to compete with well paid, highly skilled in-commuters.

In order for the Borough to remain competitive, the skills gaps must be addressed to ensure more residents are able to gain employment locally which will reduce reliance on in-commuting, relieve pressure on the local transport network and increase resident earnings.

## A Competitive Business Location

### Key facts:



### Key findings related to workforce jobs and density:

- In 2013, Runnymede had the third highest job density in the EM3 LEP area and the second highest job density in Surrey.

- In 2015 there were 66,770 workforce jobs within Runnymede, 32% office jobs and 14% industrial jobs.
- Between 1999 and 2015 there was a steady increase in total workforce job numbers, with office jobs increasing significantly by 54%, whilst the number of industrial jobs saw little variance.

#### Key findings related to GVA and enterprise growth and size:

- Between 2000 and 2015 Runnymede experienced a very high compound annual growth rate (CAGR) in GVA of 4.3%, considerably higher than for Surrey (2.5%), the South East (2.2%) and the UK (1.8%).
- Although the number of enterprises in Runnymede grew by 1,100 from 2,940 in 2007 to 4,040 in 2015 (growth rate of 37%), this was less than the growth experienced in Surrey, the South East and Great Britain.
- Although the majority of enterprises within Runnymede in 2015 were small (0-9 persons), the Borough had a significant number of large enterprises (250 or more persons). These represented 16% of all large enterprises in Surrey and 11% in the EM3 LEP area.
- In the last five years there has been an increase in the percentage of micro and large enterprises – the latter increased from 30 in 2010 to 35 in 2015.

#### Key findings related to business sectors:

- The majority of employment in Runnymede is within the service sector.
- A smaller proportion of total workforce jobs are in manufacturing than for Surrey, the South East or UK.
- The Borough has a concentration of jobs (28%) in professional and other private services.
- Although significant in employment terms, public services comprise a smaller proportion of total jobs than for Surrey, the South East and the UK.
- The information and communication and utilities sectors are more dominant in Runnymede than in Surrey, the South East and the UK.
- The three sectors forecast to show a positive 15 year CAGR are: utilities, finance and insurance and information and communication.
- Runnymede has a particularly high concentration of cyber security employment, over four times the national average.
- Runnymede was identified as the 6<sup>th</sup> best destination for technology firms in the UK in 2013.

#### Implications for the Strategy:

Whilst Runnymede has shown strong growth, it is important its relative competitive position is maintained, and that it continues to make a valuable contribution to the local and EM3 LEP economy. Recent reductions in the GVA growth rate are a warning signal that the Borough's highly performing economy can't be taken for granted.

Given the importance of large companies to the local economy, knowing and understanding the growth ambitions of large employers is a priority. However, the Borough's performance in relation to new enterprise formation and business surviving two or three years could be enhanced, and enterprise support should include measures to promote business start-ups and early enterprise growth.

Runnymede has some strong sector concentrations including ICT and digital media - one of four key sectors identified in the EM3 LEP Strategic Economic Plan (SEP). The success of this sector is key to the development of the sci-tech corridor within the EM3LEP area and of the Enterprise Zone. Runnymede also has a high location quotient for employment in the cyber security sector (over four times the national average). This sector has been identified as a niche growth sector for both Surrey and the EM3 LEP area.

Runnymede's strategic location, international schools, hotels and other facilities make it a highly attractive location for foreign companies wishing to set up UK and Global headquarters (subject to Brexit developments), and large firms continue to find it an attractive place to locate. Inward investment activity is a key priority for the economic strategy and supporting the growth aspirations of the many medium and large businesses, especially those in the fast growing tech sector is essential.

## A connected borough with a vibrant commercial property market

### Key facts:



### Key findings related to commuting:

- The overall net inflow of workers into the Borough (9,200) has almost doubled since 2001.
- The self-containment level for Runnymede 39% is low, reflecting the influence of London and density of the transport network.
- The car remains the most popular method of travel to work for those commuting from and into Runnymede (65%).
- Other popular methods of commuting include walking (10%) and using the train (9%).



### Key findings related to commercial floorspace:

- In 2015 there was 630,000m<sup>2</sup> of commercial floor space in Runnymede, 13% of which was reported vacant.
- 58% of employment floor space is in office use.
- The Borough witnessed considerable growth in office floor space between 2000 and 2012 of 35%, the highest percentage increase in Surrey.
- Between 2000 and 2012 industrial space declined by 8%.
- The Borough has the third highest concentration of B use floor space per hectare in Surrey and fourth highest concentration in the EM3 LEP area.
- Significant commercial development opportunity exists at the Longcross Park site, which will become an Enterprise Zone in April 2017, capable of providing 5,000 jobs.

### Key findings related to commercial property market:

- The Borough sits on the edge of two different functional economic areas – Heathrow and the South West London/M3/A3 Corridor Market.
- Runnymede forms part of the south-west M25 quadrant commercial property market, which is characterised by its strong links with nearby Heathrow Airport and the Thames Valley.
- The northern parts of the Borough in and around Egham are popular for larger office occupiers due to easier access to Junction 13 of the M25, better train links to London and proximity to Staines-upon-Thames. Grade A rents in this location are similar to Maidenhead, Uxbridge and Heathrow.
- Chertsey and Addlestone to the south of the Borough tend to compete with the nearby centre of Weybridge and the Brooklands business area in particular, although Grade A rents tend to be slightly lower than at the Heights in Brooklands.

### Implications for the Strategy:

One of the effects of a strategically located borough with a strong density of job opportunities is a large two way flow of commuters. Rail connections to London, road to Heathrow and local connections to neighbouring boroughs are important. Continued investment in these modes will clearly have a number of benefits if the Borough is to retain its high quality of life and remain a location of choice for employers.

Surrey County Council has recently completed a Transport Impact Assessment for the Borough which considers the resilience of the highway network and the impact of development proposals coming forward in the emerging Local Plan. This assessment, together with evidence in the Surrey Infrastructure study and other relevant infrastructure strategies, will inform the Runnymede Infrastructure Delivery Plan which will set out infrastructure requirements in the Borough for the Local Plan period.

There has been considerable growth in office floor space of over a third (35%) between 2000 and 2012, one of the fastest growth rates locally. Runnymede forms part of a wider commercial property market in the south-west M25 quadrant which is characterised by its strong links with nearby Heathrow Airport to the east of the M25 and Thames Valley to the west. This 'South-Western Wedge' is a very dynamic economy offering the ingredients –

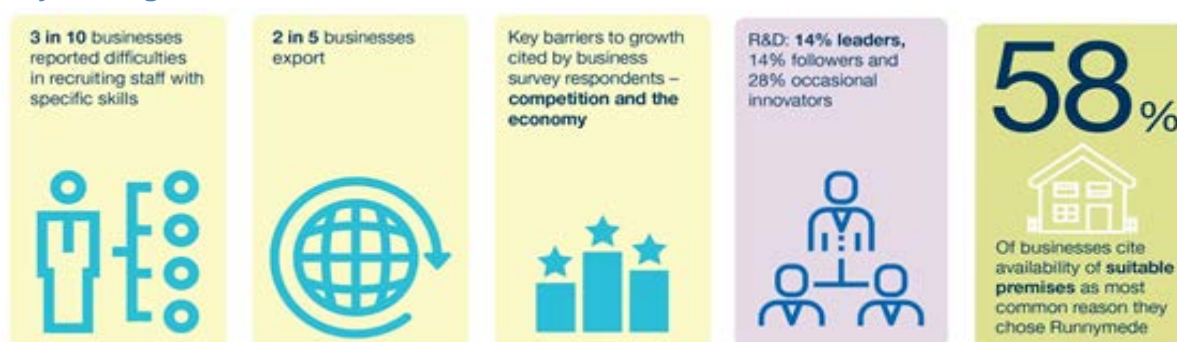
accessibility, quality of life factors and a skilled local workforce - of an attractive business location for high-value, knowledge intensive activities.

It is important the Strategy is able to ensure the Borough's new and existing businesses are able thrive, innovate and continue to be productive within the context of the 'South-Western Wedge'. This will require investment in infrastructure, skills and transport, as well as continuing regeneration of the main town centres of Addlestone, Chertsey and Egham, and key suburban office parks and industrial estates. The Council will continue to use its strategic property assets in the town centers and elsewhere to bring forward major regeneration projects and will work with the EM3 LEP and owners of Longcross Park to promote and enable delivery of the ambitious plans for the Enterprise Zone.

## Chapter three: Results from the Business Survey

Surveys with businesses in Runnymede were conducted in two phases, on line in 2015 (37 responses), and by phone in 2016 (50 responses). Although the surveys used were not identical, with the telephone survey covering fewer questions, key questions were used in both surveys. The business surveys focused on a number of key areas including: business growth and prospects – looking at exporting, R&D, procurement and turnover patterns; Runnymede as a business location; skills and recruitment requirements; and the role and activities of the Runnymede Business Partnership.

### Key findings:



### Business growth

The following findings regarding future business growth emerged:

- Businesses are generally optimistic about their prospects for revenue growth over the next three years. Many businesses are achieving growth by diversifying into new markets or seeking out new opportunities or customers and developing marketing strategies.
- Competition and the economy were mentioned by 18% and 14% of respondents respectively as the key barriers to growth, followed by recruitment (12%) and the availability/cost of suitable premises (10%).
- Looking at R&D activity 14% firms describe themselves as leaders, 14% as followers and 28% as occasional innovators. Each of these cohorts is likely to require different intensities and kinds of innovation support to achieve their requirements. 38% of businesses do not invest in R&D currently.

The Council should ensure businesses seeking assistance have access to appropriate support to achieve their growth ambitions. Businesses seeking support are likely to require referral to assistance in the areas of new market development, skills, and premises.

## Exports and markets

There is a small cohort of business (about 11%), who are regular exporters and may welcome sophisticated trade development services. Conversely, those businesses which do export, but are not particularly active overseas, may require assistance to re-engage in international markets. Furthermore 60% of businesses are non-exporters and only 2% of these are interested in trading overseas. This means there are a large proportion of businesses that would require considerable persuasion to export for the first time.

Despite the fact there are some firms with a global outlook, nearly a quarter of businesses (24%) generate over 50% of their revenue locally from within Runnymede and a quarter claim to spend or procure a similar proportion on goods and services in Runnymede. The significance of local expenditure and revenue generation should not be overlooked. The Council should consider how best to promote the benefits of its procurement activities and opportunities to local firms.

## Locational considerations

The primary reason businesses chose to locate in Runnymede is the availability of suitable properties (58% of businesses). Other important reasons were historical reasons (26%), proximity to the strategic road network (15%) and proximity to London (14%). Some of these benefits should be emphasised in promotional material.

Business are generally very happy with the condition, location and size of their premises though it is worth noting 13% are do not think the size of their premises is suitable. Parking stands out as a key issue of concern in relation to location.

Most businesses intend to remain within the Borough. That said over one quarter of businesses (26%) anticipate a modest (18%), large (4%) or significant (4%) increase in floor space requirement in the next three to five years. Ensuring there is an adequate supply of space for expansion is a strategic priority for the Borough.

## Skills and recruitment

Three in ten businesses reported difficulties in recruiting staff with specific skills and these are typically within the priority sectors of IT and engineering. Skilled manual/technical and professional/managerial skills difficulties were reported by 26% and 17% of respondents. Three in ten businesses (31%) were also interested in employing an apprentice in the next year. Skills and recruitment are likely to remain an important concern for businesses in the Borough.

## Runnymede Business Partnership

There is interest in hearing about the Runnymede Business Partnership (RBP) and Council activities including the Yellow Bus Scheme and Runnymede Job Club. For members of the RBP the most useful activities or initiatives were the breakfast forums, followed by newsletters and networking. 41% of businesses are involved in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities typically sports clubs, schools and various charities. There is no reason the Council should not continue to support or grow both the RBP membership base and/or CSR activity within the Borough.



## Chapter four: Runnymede Borough SWOT analysis

### Borough strengths

Looking at the baseline evidence and listening to key stakeholders and businesses, Runnymede has many assets which make it a great place to live, work and do business.

Runnymede's economy grew more than that of any other local authority area in Surrey and the EM3 LEP area between 2000 and 2015, and is projected to continue to grow at a higher rate than that for Surrey and the South East in the period to 2033. The Borough is home to a significant and growing number of large multi-national enterprises -15% and 11% of all large enterprises in Surrey and the EM3 LEP area respectively. Such businesses locate here due to the area's excellent air, road and rail connections and its proximity to London which provides access to one of the largest global marketplaces. For some local businesses access to the airports, in particular Heathrow is vital.

The Borough was ranked the 6th tech jobs cluster in the UK in 2013 and has a large base of leading edge technology-based companies, particularly in the IT sector. The concentration of cyber security employment in the Borough, about 4.1 times the national average, is particularly high. The presence of a tech cluster in Runnymede fits well with the EM3 LEP's priorities and is important for the future growth prospects of the local economy, as the performance gap between the tech sector and the rest of the UK economy continues to widen.

The Borough has a balanced economy with less reliance on the public sector than many other local authorities in the sub-region. It also has a good supply of Grade A office space and a number of key strategic employment sites awaiting development or under construction. The area is home to a number of business networks including the Runnymede Business Partnership - which has been active since 1998, and three Chambers of Commerce.

Runnymede offers a pleasant living environment, with the Wentworth Estate in the west of the Borough recognised as one of the best places to live in Britain. The Borough contains significant green spaces including ecologically and historically important sites such as Runnymede Meadows - the location for the sealing of Magna Carta. It is home to a number of key visitor attractions and offers a good range of hotels catering for both tourist and business visitors. It is also located close to many expatriate communities concentrated in south-west London and is home to two large international schools offering both primary and secondary education.

## Borough weaknesses

Runnymede's ranking in the UK Index of Competitiveness has dropped recently and the Council recognises that it can no longer take its competitive position for granted. The cost of housing inhibits growth and the predicted rise in population will increase pressure on housing supply and affordability.

The Borough has pockets of relative deprivation, especially in relation to barriers to housing and services and educational attainment. Although skill levels are high in comparison to the national average, when the qualifications of the population are compared to those of other local authorities in Surrey and the EM3 LEP area the Borough does not compare so favourably, and has one of the lowest percentages of 16-64s qualified to level NVQ4 and above, and the highest percentage of 16-64s with no qualifications.

Although workplace earning in Runnymede are high, median resident earnings are lower, suggesting that there are many well-paid jobs in Runnymede, but a significant percentage of these are held by in-commuters rather than the resident workforce.

The dominance of large companies and high cost of commercial accommodation may be factors contributing to the lower growth rate in the number of enterprises witnessed in Runnymede when compared with that for Surrey, the South East or Great Britain.

It is recognised that the retail, leisure and cultural offer in the Borough's three town centres is not reaching its full potential and the local authority has embarked on a number of town centre regeneration schemes to address this and ensure that the town centres improve their vitality and viability and are better able to retain local expenditure.

Traffic congestion is a concern to businesses in the area and the County Highways Authority has identified current and potential future congestion hotspots in the Borough, in particular the vicinity of Junction 11 and 13 of the M25, along the A320, and at rail level crossings. Improvements to the Runnymede Roundabout off Junction 13 M25 are scheduled to start in 2016 and improvements to cycling and bus provision in the Egham area are under construction. The Highways Agency is currently considering the functioning of the immediate road network in the vicinity of the south-west quadrant M25 junctions, and a recent four LEP strategic transport study identified a high level of economic benefit to cost ratio of improvements to the A320. Although no improvements are currently scheduled in the vicinity of Junction 11 or the A320, the latter has now been identified to Government by the EM3 LEP as a 'strategic transport ask'.

## Borough opportunities

Runnymede's strongly performing economy brings many economic opportunities that are as yet under exploited. The presence of Royal Holloway, University of London, the Animal & Plant Health Agency and other research centres within the Borough provide strategic economic assets which can help drive innovation in the local economy and position Runnymede as a credible centre of smart specialisation. The University has particular strengths in cyber security and big data (key niche sectors for investment by the EM3 LEP) and its proposed regional cyber security and big data innovation centre would provide critical incubation facilities to help encourage the growth of spin-out and spin-in businesses, as well as assisting the development of an emerging cyber cluster which has the potential to compete internationally.

The recently designated Enterprise Zone at Longcross Park, which will come into effect in April 2017, will be the closest Enterprise Zone to Heathrow Airport and benefits from an onsite railway station which is on the London Waterloo to Reading line. Investment in the site and surrounding area as a result of Enterprise Zone status provides significant opportunity to accelerate the development of one of the LEP's largest strategic office sites.

The Council has been working with the UKTI and Invest in Surrey to promote sites within the Borough, including showcasing sites at MIPIM. However, as businesses have shown signs of confidence and growth in both employment and premises recently, the Council could look to take a more active interest in retaining them and supporting their aspirations. This could potentially be achieved by securing investment for high tech industries via EM3 LEP and advising on property availability. Development of a Runnymede Inward Investment Value Proposition should also be considered to market the Borough and further promote development opportunities.

The Borough could look to further promote its town centres and other 'visitor destinations' through its website and that of Visit Surrey. It could also look to support more high street events and activities and further encourage the community and retailers to engage in improving their local areas.

Development and support of the local labour market through the inclusion of a local labour market policy in the Runnymede Local Plan will assist local residents to access employment and training, and help stem the tide of in-commuters. Continued support for the Job Club in Addlestone will also assist unemployed residents to access work. Joint working with the Runnymede Business Partnership and businesses to promote STEM subjects to school children will encourage uptake of these subjects and increase awareness of high tech business opportunities available locally. In addition, the Council could work with RHUL to increase the graduate retention rate within the local labour force.

## Borough threats

There remains a heavy reliance on car based commuting in Runnymede. In order to encourage greater modal shift to sustainable transport options, significant improvements to the rail, bus and cycle facilities and services will be required. The Runnymede Business Partnership set up a yellow bus scheme for secondary school pupils in the Borough to help reduce peak time congestion, which is unique within the UK. Unfortunately this service is facing increasing funding pressures as a result of changes to S106 payments and the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy.

The provision of a range of housing to meet needs is essential to the functioning of the local economy. Like many areas in the South East, housing provision and affordability levels in Runnymede are already a concern, and with an increase in population projected over the next twenty years the pressure on housing will only increase. The emerging Local Plan will identify suitable sites for housing development within the Borough. It will also set out strategic policies to guide development of other uses including employment, as well as infrastructure requirements. Adoption of the Local Plan in 2017 is critical to enabling the strategic development of the Borough.

A significant amount of land within Runnymede forms part of the largest and most at risk developed but undefended floodplain in England. The River Thames Scheme – a major programme of flood defences and projects along a stretch of the River Thames corridor from Datchet to Teddington is expected to result in more than £100m benefit to the local economy, measured as GVA, as a result of reduced business downtime due to a flood. The scheme is forecast to cost in the region of £400m to construct of which £250m has been secured.

A significant number of highly skilled employees commute into the Borough to work. The disparity between workplace and residents earnings and polarisation of skill levels amongst residents highlights the need to upskill some residents to ensure they are able to take advantage of local job opportunities.

Although the vast majority of enterprises in the Borough are micro or small businesses, the Borough has a significant number of medium and large companies who provide considerable employment. The Borough benefits from the presence of these enterprises which often provide high tech jobs, however many are foreign owned and their local investment decisions are often controlled from overseas. It is essential that the Borough not only supports engagement with its large employers in order to retain them within the Borough, but also encourages the formation of new companies as well as helping to improve new company survival rates.

The SWOT analysis is summarised in the table on the following page.

## Strengths

Highly skilled and qualified work force

Good supply of Grade A office accommodation throughout the Borough

Proximity to London in an economically dynamic sub-region with excellent air, road and rail connections

High rate of GVA per head and high median workplace earnings

Good range of educational establishments including two international schools

Range of world leading research establishments including Royal Holloway, University of London

Natural environment, with ecologically and historically important sites

Large base International technology companies - ranked 6th Tech Jobs Cluster in the UK

Percentage of population of working age higher than for Surrey, South East and England

Projected CAGR in GVA above that for Surrey, the South East and UK

Availability of Strategic employment sites and Longcross Park Enterprise Zone

Concentration of existing businesses in growth sectors including ICT and cyber security

Increased interaction between education providers and businesses re skills agenda

Proposed development of regional cyber security and big data innovation centre RHUL

Public/private sector skills initiative - Runnymede Upskilled employment and skills scheme

Runnymede part of one of the most dynamic commercial property markets

Growth rate in business start-ups increased in 2015, Borough 44th out of 328 English Districts

Council investment in town centre regeneration to enhance retail, leisure and housing offer

## Opportunities

## Weaknesses

Pockets of deprivation especially in relation to barriers to housing and services

Growth rate in number of enterprises lower than for GB, South East and Surrey

Lack of affordable accommodation for start-ups and small businesses

Median resident earnings are lower than for many authorities in the sub-region

Supply and cost of housing - entry level prices 9 or more times typical earnings of younger households

Polarised skill levels within the Borough. Runnymede has highest percentage 18-64 year olds with no qualifications in sub-region

Low level of business births compared to sub-regional authorities

Aging population with lower proportion of economically active residents than for the South East

Lack of retail, cultural and leisure facilities

Increasing congestion from lack of investment in public transport, cycling and roads

Lack of appropriate skills amongst some residents to access skilled local jobs

Foreign Direct Investment

Lack of relationship with strategic employers risks disengagement

Insufficient supply of land to meet needs of distribution businesses

Labour market shortages resulting in further in-commuting

Delay in Local Plan process to allocate sufficient housing and employment land

Stalling growth rate in business start-ups due to lack of suitable accommodation and support

Flooding: part of one of the largest and most at risk developed but undefended floodplains

## Threats



## Chapter five: Policy context

### The policy context for economic development

The past five years have witnessed a considerable shift in economic conditions with a tighter financial climate and a growing emphasis on localism. The policy environment for economic development continues to evolve. Some of the major changes and influences are set out below.



### Central Government policy

#### Devolution and local growth

The Government is committed to devolving greater powers away from Whitehall to drive local and national growth. Devolution deals involve the devolution of power from central government to local areas in England and provide an opportunity to stimulate economic growth and reform public services. They include a range of new responsibilities on adult education and transport as well as specific funds for housing investment and direct incentives to enable local areas to realise their growth aspirations through the provision of distinct long term investment funds to Mayoral Combined Authorities.

The Three Southern Counties (3SC) is a partnership of three county councils, district/ borough councils and partners in Surrey and Sussex, which is calling for a devolution deal with government. The partnership's initial pitch to government in January 2016 received a positive response, with 3SC being encouraged to carry out further work. Final submission to government is scheduled for December 2016, subject to each partner authority signing off on

the final bid. The devolution proposals, if accepted, will deliver four key outcomes across the three counties:

- investing in a **long-term infrastructure strategy**, promoting sustainable economic growth and developing a modern transport system which will also benefit London and other surrounding areas;
- **increasing housing delivery and land supply**, specifically addressing the need for affordable and starter homes, and unlocking land for business start-ups to encourage employers and employees to stay or locate in the area;
- **increasing productivity** by addressing the skills and employment needs of the area, boosting digital connectivity for businesses in rural areas and capitalising on digital opportunities, such as 5G and dark fibre; and
- **re-imagining public service delivery** with innovative approaches to health and social care integration, emergency services collaboration and other key challenges affecting the area, providing a test bed for whole system transformation.

### Local retention of Business Rates

The Government have made clear that by the end of this Parliament, there will be a fundamental reform to the financing of local government. This will give local councils in England control of around an additional £12.5 billion of revenue from Business Rates to spend on local services. In order to ensure that the reforms are fiscally neutral, councils will gain new responsibilities, and some Whitehall grants will be phased out. The Government wants to ensure that the reformed system provides stronger incentives to boost growth and rewards those authorities and areas that take bold decisions to further increase growth.

The Government consulted on the reforms to Business Rates over the summer of 2016, and has made clear that legislation will be introduced in early 2017 to provide the framework for these reforms.

### Raising productivity

The UK's economy is less productive than its peers in Europe, and productivity growth previously at 2.3% a year on average has stalled since the 2008/09 recession. The UK's low-wage sectors contribute to both of these problems. They employ a third of all workers, and produce 23% of the UK's Gross Value Added, but on average they are 29% less productive than the economy as a whole. Given that the working-age employment rate is at record levels, and the unemployment rate has fallen to its lowest level in over a decade, it is the economy's performance on productivity that will underpin the economic resilience of the UK in the coming years.

Fixing the Foundations: creating a more prosperous nation produced by Her Majesty's Treasury in July 2015, put forward a plan to accelerate the UK's productivity growth centred around two key pillars:

- Encouraging long-term investment in economic capital including infrastructure, skills, ideas and knowledge.
- Promoting a dynamic economy that encourages innovation and helps resources flow to their most productive use.

### **The National Infrastructure Delivery Plan**

The National Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2016-2021 was published in April 2016. It sets out the challenges facing UK infrastructure and the Government's strategy for meeting the infrastructure needs of the UK economy. The plan covers all types of infrastructure requirements.

### **Local Enterprise Partnership**

Runnymede Borough is part of the EM3 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) which stretches 75 miles from the outskirts of London along the wider M3 corridor to the New Forest in the south, including parts of both Surrey and Hampshire. The EM3 LEP area is one of the largest of the LEPs (by population) in the country with a population of 1.6m and 86,500 businesses.

LEPs are the main drivers of economic development at the sub-national level, bringing together the public and private sectors to create the conditions for job growth in their communities. Each LEP is tasked with developing a long term strategy for its area through a multi-year strategic economic plan. Increased funding and responsibility has been devolved to LEPs during the last few years, with the allocation of funding to local areas for skills, housing and transport through Local Growth Fund (LGF) and European Structural Funding.

The EM3 LEP has developed a number of strategies and undertaken various reports including:

- European Structural and Investment Fund Strategy
- Innovation Strategy
- Strategy for Growth
- Enterprise M3 Skills and Employment Strategy
- Strategic Economic Plan
- Commercial Property Market Study
- Enterprise M3 Housing Study
- Digital Technologies Report

## Strategic Economic Plan

The EM3 LEP set out its plans in its Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) which was published in March 2014. The SEP identifies a number of challenges to future growth in the LEP area including: growth of the labour force not keeping pace with potential growth of businesses, unreliable transport connections by road and rail with congestion on some routes, the need for essential investment in infrastructure and house building not keeping pace with the needs of the economy.

The LEP's vision is for the area to be *'the premier location in the country for enterprise and economic growth, balanced with an excellent environment and quality of life'*. The LEP aims to achieve this vision through a number of targeted interventions that support several interlinked elements of its local economy. These comprise of measures to promote:

- (1) enterprise development and competitiveness;
- (2) the generation and commercialisation of innovation;
- (3) the growth of high value industries; and
- (4) the development of skills needed by employers.

## Local growth deal and other funding

The EM3 LEP was allocated £148m from the Local Growth Fund (LGF) for the first two tranches of Growth Deal. The local growth deal includes proposals to channel investment into priority industries to support a Sci-Tech corridor, and the establishment of a Growth Hub to provide business and skill support which is being operated under contract by BE Group. This includes expert support to businesses demonstrating high innovation and growth potential.

The EM3 LEP submitted a Growth Deal 3 bid for £164 million to Government in July 2016. One of the projects included in this submission was the proposed Regional Cyber Security and Big Data Innovation Centre at Royal Holloway, University of London. This will provide a location for collaboration in research and training and provide office/lab accommodation for both GCHQ and CREST (The Council for Registered Ethical Security Testers).

The Enterprise M3 area has also been allocated €50m of European Structural and Investment Funding for the 2014-2020 funding period. One of the project proposals submitted for consideration is - Enterprise M3 Innovation Support. This aims to create a new innovation service with a remit to enable highly innovative businesses, particularly SMEs to gain easy access to the knowledge exchange assets of local universities (including RHUL), public sector research establishments and the private sector research community.

It is proposed that the service be supported by new funding vehicles (grants/ innovation vouchers) and more incubation capacity, including at RHUL. This will enable SMEs to gain access to research facilities that would normally not be open to them, and thereby increase the amount of research and innovation activities conducted to bring new products and services to market.

The LEP also controls a number of other smaller funding schemes including the Growing Enterprise Fund – for which a successful bid for loan funding was made to support the Addlestone One scheme.

### **Surrey County Council**

The Surrey economy makes a significant contribution to the Exchequer (around £6 billion a year, second only to London). Surrey County Council sees economic growth as a key priority both to secure an increase in the size and value of the Surrey economy, and an increase in employment. Through implementing the County Council's One County, One Team ethos, it recognises the leadership role it can play, working with Surrey district and borough councils, businesses and other public sector partners across Surrey, to push forward sustainable economic growth. The County Council also believes it can play a significant direct and indirect role in developing the Surrey economy, as both a provider and commissioner of services, as a large employer and through its wider leadership role.

### **Surrey Local Economic Assessment (LEA)**

The Surrey LEA was completed in December 2010. The assessment covers six broad themes: economic performance; business and enterprise; labour market (including worklessness); transport and infrastructure; people and communities and sustainable economic growth. As part of the LEA, SQW and Cambridge Econometrics undertook analysis on forward-looking economic scenarios. The economic forecasts were updated in 2013, using the same economic model and similar scenarios.

The LEA was tested and validated through consultation with partners from local authorities, as well as the wider economic development stakeholder community and Surrey businesses. More detailed information on worklessness is available in the Worklessness Assessment, a complementary report on issues related to unemployment in Surrey. The LEA was used to inform economic strategy, and has and will continue to support funding bids and inform future service delivery.

### **Surrey Infrastructure Study**

The Surrey Infrastructure Study was undertaken by Aecom and published in January 2016. It indicates that delivering the necessary infrastructure to support growth planned in Surrey to



2030 is estimated to cost at least £5.37 billion with only £2.17 billion of potential funding identified.

The study was prepared using information on planned development across the County, set out in existing or emerging local plans, and the infrastructure needed to support it in the short to medium term. The study brings these plans together to provide an overview of growth and infrastructure at the strategic level across Surrey and to highlight to government, infrastructure providers, developers, local communities and businesses, the scale of investment required.

A wide range of stakeholders were engaged to inform the study including county and district council service providers, transport operators, utility companies, higher education providers, Clinical Commissioning Groups, the Environment Agency, Surrey Nature Partnership and the Coast to Capital and Enterprise M3 Local Economic Partnerships.

### **Surrey Rail Strategy**

A Surrey Rail Strategy was published in September 2013 following an extensive consultation process. It identifies proposals for improvements that partners in Surrey can plan and deliver to ensure that the county has the rail infrastructure needed for sustainable economic growth.

The final version of the Surrey Rail Strategy was published in September 2013. Surrey County Council and partners will be working with the rail industry to implement the strategy and deliver an improved rail service for Surrey residents.

Following a report by Network Rail into Southern Rail Access to Heathrow, which was published in December 2015, Surrey County Council appointed ARUP to investigate the most economically advantageous route option for Surrey. Consultation with the Boroughs and Districts on this study is about to begin.

The County Council has also produced a number of other transport strategies covering sustainable transport modes such as cycling and issues such as air quality.

### **Invest in Surrey**

Invest in Surrey is a service to enable Surrey to respond to business investment enquiries, both for those firms looking to relocate into the County from other parts of the UK or foreign direct investments. RBC is working in conjunction with Invest in Surrey to:

- Work with companies to help define re-location and/or expansion needs and requirements.
- Undertake property, locality and sector research.
- Provide introductions and engagement with local professionals and networks.

- Facilitate meetings or provide other support to help businesses navigate regulatory requirements.
- Provide an aftercare service.

## **Runnymede Borough Council**

### **Corporate Business Plan 2016 – 2020**

The draft Runnymede Corporate Business Plan (CBP) sets out the corporate priorities for the Council over a four year period, between 2016 and 2020. The priorities are split into four themes:

- ‘Supporting Local People’;
- ‘Enhancing Our Environment’;
- ‘improving our economy’; and
- ‘Organisational Development’

The draft CBP was subject to a number of consultation events in February 2016 in the form of focus groups with local residents and a survey which was available to the public on the Council’s website. 145 people completed this survey. The final version of the CBP was published in August 2016.

### **Runnymede Local Plan**

An Issues, Options and Preferred Approaches consultation was undertaken between July and August 2016. The plan will set out both strategic policies and site specific policies to guide development to 2035.

### **Runnymede Housing Strategy Statement**

The Council published its Housing Strategy Statement in October 2012. It aims to ensure that the Council works with its partners to achieve an appropriate level of infrastructure and good balance of housing that caters for a range of households with different characteristics and incomes. The strategy also seeks to ensure that the Council responds to national changes and trends which will change housing requirements, and commits to providing a minimum of 600 affordable homes between 2012 - 2017 to increase the supply of supported housing, reduce homelessness and to maintain the Council’s own stock to an acceptable standard.

### **Action plans for areas of relative deprivation**

The Council has identified four areas of relative deprivation. For each of the four areas an action plan has been developed and is being delivered. The four areas are:

- Addlestone Bourneside
- Chertsey St Ann's/Chertsey Meads
- Egham Hythe
- The Forest Estate

### **Runnymede Business Partnership**

Established in 1998, the Runnymede Business Partnership (RBP) brings together the local business community, three local Chambers of Commerce, Surrey Police, schools, colleges and the Borough Council in order to tackle issues affecting business across Runnymede. The RBP organises networking events, produces a newsletter, operates a business directory and has established a number of initiatives such as the Yellow Buses and Loyalty Card. It is run by business for business and provides a vital link between the private and public sectors.

## Chapter six: Priorities, objectives and deliverables

As a result of the findings of the Economic Assessment of the Borough and business surveys, the following five priorities were identified:

- Priority 1: Business relocation, expansion and investment in the Borough
- Priority 2: Maintaining competitive advantage through business engagement and support
- Priority 3: A dynamic workforce for a high-tech economy
- Priority 4: Better infrastructure for growth
- Priority 5: Promoting innovation and technology sectors

The priorities were tested and validated through consultation with Members, Runnymede businesses and the wider economic development stakeholder community.

For each priority, a list of key objectives and proposed deliverables has been identified; and costs, staff resources and target delivery dates are provided against each of the proposed deliverables where applicable.

### Priority 1: Business relocation, expansion and investment in the Borough

The first priority aims to ensure continued growth in the Borough's business base and economic activity by promoting the Borough as a premier business location for companies and individuals. A number of deliverables have been identified to achieve this aim including:

#### Commissioning a new business website for the Borough:

The website will enable promotion of the activities of the Runnymede Business Partnership, showcase the Borough as a premier business location, and provide business support information and activities. Provision of a modern up-to-date website is essential given that this will be the major channel used to inform businesses about the Borough and business activities happening in the local area. The website will also promote the Council's ability to search for suitable premises for businesses wishing to move or locate in the Borough.

In order to promote inward investment into the Borough, a video and other promotional material will be tendered and embedded into the website.

#### Promoting the economic importance of the 'Upper EM3 area':

The 'Upper EM3 area' comprises the boroughs of Elmbridge, Runnymede and Spelthorne. This area is well connected, has a large business base and has delivered significant growth for the economy of the Enterprise M3 area and wider South East. The Council will work with the other authorities to promote the economic importance of this area to the EM3 LEP prior to the revision of the EM3 LEP's Strategic Economic Plan.

### **Promoting the Borough as a business location:**

The Council will work with commercial agents, Invest in Surrey, UKTI and the commercial property press to promote the Borough as a business location by:

- Promotion at MIPIM.
- Ensuring strategic sites are profiled on Invest in Surrey website and to UKTI.
- Profiling the Borough in the commercial property press.

### **Supporting and promoting the Enterprise Zone:**

An application bid for a multi-site Enterprise Zone (EZ) for the EM3 LEP area, focused around digital businesses, was submitted to Government in the autumn of 2015. The proposed EZ comprised three individual sites including one site in Runnymede Borough - the commercial site at Longcross Park. The application bid was successful and preparations are taking place to enable the EZ to go live from April 2017. The EZ will enable 100% of the growth in Business Rates collected at the site to be retained locally to invest in infrastructure, and will also enable Business Rate relief to be provided to companies locating in the EZ for a five year period.

A Partnership Steering Group (PSG) has been set up to oversee the implementation of the EZ. Representation on the PSG includes an officer from each of the relevant Borough Council's as well as relevant developers/landowners, EM3 LEP representatives, and BIS/UKTI officials. The PSG will provide oversight of the consultancy support, development of a five year implementation plan and promotion/marketing for the EZ.

## **Priority 2: Maintaining competitive advantage through business engagement and support**

The second priority aims to deliver a business engagement and support approach that keeps abreast of business needs and immediate requirements and supports firms to achieve their growth ambitions. The following deliverables have been identified to achieve this aim:

### **Continued administration and support for the Runnymede Business Partnership:**

The Runnymede Business Partnership (RBP) was established in 1998 with the aim of supporting local businesses large or small. It brings together the local business community, three local Chambers of Commerce, Surrey Police, schools, colleges and the Borough Council in order to tackle issues affecting business across Runnymede. The RBP runs various networking sessions including breakfast forums throughout the year, publishes a regular newsletter and hosts a business directory.

It has led innovative solutions to assist businesses within the Borough including the implementation of a Yellow Bus Scheme to assist in reducing peak hour congestion on the busy local road network, a business app and a Runnymede Loyalty Card to encourage use of local businesses.

The RBP is valued by the business community and provides an essential link between business, the Council and other stakeholders. Although the majority of the RBP's activities are funded through sponsorship, the Council employs a Business Liaison Officer to administer the RBP and provides a small budget to cover sundry items. Support for the RBP by the Council will be maintained and a limited additional amount of funding provided to assist its activities. In addition, a number of initiatives within this Strategy will also provide support to the partnership, including development of the new website and the proposed business engagement initiatives outlined below.

#### **Business engagement:**

A number of initiatives will be put in place to provide a more consistent approach to business engagement in the Borough and to increase contact with the Borough's major employers. This will include: the development of a basic CRM system to manage the Council's relationship with key businesses; hosting of a series of business leaders dinners; joint working with Invest in Surrey and the UKTI to ensure that engagement takes place with the Borough's top 25 employers; and development of a welcome pack to be sent to all new businesses in the Borough which will include an introduction to the Runnymede Business Partnership.

#### **Business support:**

The new website will provide comprehensive business support material, including advice for business start-ups and small businesses. Links will also be provided to the EM3 LEP's Growth Hub which provides a resource network and growth service. The resource network provides an information bank, database of key services, a helpline and webchat. The growth service is targeted at small businesses looking to innovate and grow, and provides access to one to one support with a growth champion. The Council will also continue to support and promote the work of the Growth Hub to ensure that local businesses are aware and benefit from this service.

### **Priority 3: A dynamic workforce for a high-tech economy**

The third priority aims to maintain the Borough's position as a UK tech jobs cluster by helping ensure (a) local employers have access to the skills required to grow their businesses, (b) local residents have the appropriate qualifications and skills to access local employment opportunities, and (c) new developments commit and contribute to local training and recruitment measures. The following deliverables have been identified to achieve this aim:



### **Skills initiatives:**

The Council will work with stakeholders to support a number of skills initiatives to encourage up-skilling of the local workforce and to increase awareness by residents, and particularly young people, of the high tech training and employment opportunities available locally. Initiatives will include: continued support for the activities of the Addlestone job club and further investigation of funding sources to deliver basic skills training to residents where applicable; joint working with the RBP and local businesses to organise a STEM challenge for secondary school children in the Borough, following on from the successful STEM challenge undertaken in 2016; work with RHUL and local employers to promote local graduate recruitment; and work with EM3 LEP to host a RBP breakfast forum on the new apprenticeship levy.

### **Local labour agreements:**

Local labour agreements (LLAs) involve a commitment from an employer or developer to sign up to an Employment and Skills Charter in order to commit to try and recruit and procure services locally. In order to help improve local employment and training opportunities for residents, the Council will investigate the feasibility of developing and adopting an Employment and Skills Charter and including a policy within the Local Plan requiring developers to enter into a local labour agreement (LLA). The LLA would be secured through either a planning condition or legal agreement on sites of a certain size.

## **Priority 4: Better infrastructure for growth**

The fourth priority aims to improve the Borough's competitive performance through investment in employment areas, transport, infrastructure and town centres. This will ensure the Borough continues to be an attractive place to work, visit and live. Deliverables include:

### **Transport initiatives:**

A number of major transport initiatives which impact Runnymede are currently being delivered. The Council and Runnymede Business Partnership will work with Surrey County Council Highways Department to keep businesses informed of the progress of these schemes. The Council will also work with Government transport bodies, private transport providers, the EM3 LEP, Surrey County Council Highways and Economy Departments, neighbouring Boroughs and the RBP to identify and deliver necessary improvements to the Borough's transport infrastructure. The Council will also work with the Runnymede Business Partnership to promote/support the Yellow Bus Scheme.

### **Environmental enhancement of commercial sites:**

A number of strategic employment sites within the Borough fall under multiple ownership and management. In order to optimise the attractiveness of these areas for businesses to locate, the Council will engage with landowners and managing agents to encourage environmental improvements to be made.

### **Town centre regeneration and management:**

The Council are delivering and developing a number of regeneration schemes throughout the Borough, including town centre schemes for Addlestone and Egham. The £90m Addlestone One development is due to be completed in October 2017. The new shops, leisure facilities, homes and public spaces taking shape, reflect the Council's aspiration to create a vibrant environment for people to work, visit and live, and will boost the daytime and evening economy for the town.

In 2015 the Council embarked on a tendering process 'Runnymede Regeneration Programme' to appoint a development partner to deliver five regeneration initiatives within Runnymede over a period of approximately 8 years. Initial sites include Egham Gateway Phase I (town centre site) and Egham Leisure Centre with pipeline sites in Addlestone and Egham town centres.

To complement the regeneration taking place, the Council will investigate the feasibility of submitting a bid to Surrey County Council's Town Centre Revitalisation Fund to support the place shaping agenda in Egham town centre. The Council will also engage with town centre businesses, residents and other stakeholders to develop and deliver small scale projects and events to enhance the vitality and viability of the town centres, building on the work already being undertaken in Egham by the Egham Town Team.

The Council may also investigate the feasibility of developing Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) for each town to support town centre management activity. A BID is a defined area in which a levy is charged on all business rate payers in addition to the business rates bill. This levy is used to develop projects which will benefit businesses in the local area.

### **Priority 5: promoting innovation and technology sectors**

The fifth priority aims to promote business growth through innovation and digital and technology development. Deliverables include:

Seek consultancy advice on locational requirements of the digital and cyber security sector and how best to market the Borough to these sectors. Recommendations for marketing to be covered through existing channels.

Investigate feasibility of working with EM3 LEP, Invest in Surrey, neighbouring Boroughs and RHUL to promote the university as a centre of excellence in cyber security and encourage take up of cyber essentials accreditation by local SMEs which will enhance their security and enable them to apply for Government and other contracts and thus tender for more work.

Investigate feasibility of supporting delivery of grow-on space for digital SME's at EZ

Support delivery of Enterprise M3 innovation service if ESIF application is successful. The project will create and deliver a new innovation service that supports the EM3 Growth Hub, with a remit to enable highly innovative businesses, particularly SMEs to gain easy access to the knowledge exchange assets of the EM3 area's universities and private sector research community. This will increase the amount of research and innovation activities conducted to bring new products/services to market. SMEs will gain access to research facilities that would normally not be open to them.

## Appendix – Deliverables

Economic Development Strategy - Deliverables		
<b>Priority 1: Business relocation, expansion and investment in the Borough</b>  Strengthen continued growth in the Borough's business base and economic activity by promoting Runnymede as a premier business location for companies and individuals.		
<b>Key objectives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote the Borough as a premier business location</li> <li>Increase inward investment</li> <li>Facilitate entrepreneurs, companies and individuals looking to start, locate/relocate, invest and expand in the Borough</li> <li>Support promotion of strategic employment sites and major commercial premises to reduce vacancy rates</li> <li>Support and promote Longcross Park, part of the EM3 LEP Enterprise Zone</li> </ul>		
Proposed deliverables	Staff resources	Target Delivery Date
Commission a new business website for the Borough to promote: the activities of the Runnymede Business Partnership, the Borough as a premier business location, and business support information and activities.	Communications  JS  KM  ICT  RR  Apprentice	2017

Commission promotional material for use on the website and for specific events - video/other material.	Communications  KM  RR	Video –2017  Other material ongoing
Promote Borough as a business location to EM3 LEP and work with Elmbridge and Spelthorne Borough Councils to promote economic strength of 'Upper M3 area' to LEP prior to revision of LEP Strategic Economic Plan.	RR	2016/2017
Promote Council's ability to search for suitable premises for businesses through use of EGi property search tool.	RR	Ongoing
Develop a 'Runnymede Inward Investment Value Proposition' and work with commercial agents/Invest in Surrey/UKTI/commercial property press to promote the Borough as a business location by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion at MIPIM</li> <li>• Ensuring strategic sites are profiled on Invest in Surrey website and to UKTI</li> <li>• Profiling Borough in commercial property press</li> </ul>	PT  RR  Apprentice	MIPIM 2016  (MIPIM 2017)
Support for and promotion of the EZ: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversight of the consultancy support and implementation plan via membership of the PSG</li> <li>• Promotion and marketing of the Enterprise Zone site in conjunction with site owners/developers, EM3 LEP/BIS/UKTI</li> </ul>	RR  SW	MOU submitted to Government 30 September. Appointment of consultants November 2016 Baseline and Implementation Plan submitted to Government 2016/17

## **Priority 2: Maintaining competitive advantage through business engagement and support**

Deliver a business engagement and support approach that keeps abreast of business needs and immediate requirements and supports firms to achieve their growth ambitions.

### **Key objectives:**

- Engage with new businesses locating in the Borough
- Promote the Runnymede Business Partnership as a free membership organisation providing networking, seminars, business initiatives and business support and information signposting.
- Ensure ongoing engagement with major employers in the Borough and record centrally all contacts across Council departments
- Facilitate contact with other key stakeholders
- Work with Business Growth Advisors to ensure businesses are making the most of business services available through the EM3's Growth Hub.

<b>Proposed deliverables</b>	<b>Staff resources</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
Develop a welcome pack to be sent to all new businesses locating in the Borough by e-mail.	JS KM	2017
Continued administration and support for RBP	JS KM RR SW	Ongoing
Integrate business support resource for start-ups and small businesses within RBP website and maximise opportunities for Council services income.	KM RR	2017
Develop a basic CRM system to manage the Council's relationship with key businesses in the Borough	ICT RR	2017



	Apprentice	
Agree list of top 25 employers in Borough with Invest in Surrey and ensure annual contact is maintained by either RBC/Invest in Surrey or UKTI (or combination of agencies where appropriate)	RR	Ongoing
Host business dinners for major employers	IM PT RR SW	Aim for x2 dinners 2017

### **Priority 3: A dynamic workforce for a high-tech economy**

Maintain the borough's position as a UKT tech jobs cluster by helping ensure (a) local employers have access to the skills required to grow their businesses and (b) local residents have the appropriate qualifications and skills to access local employment opportunities (c) new developments commit and contribute to local training and recruitment measures.

#### **Key objectives:**

- Promote STEM subjects and local job opportunities requiring such skills to young people in the Borough.
- Work with job club and training providers to deliver skills training to assist long term unemployed into work
- Promote graduate retention within the local job market, and employment by local companies of RHUL students on industry years
- Inform businesses about apprenticeship and skills training opportunities

#### **Related Local Plan action:**

Consider use of local labour market agreements through planning process to ensure access to jobs and training for local residents. This is an option in the Local Plan Issues and Options consultation document.

Proposed deliverables	Staff resources	Target Date
Work with RBP to organise STEM challenge	RR Apprentice	2017
Support job club activities and investigate funding opportunities to deliver basic skills training in conjunction with local skills agencies	RR SS	Ongoing
Work with RHUL and local employers to promote local graduate recruitment	RR	Ongoing
Work with EM3 LEP to host a RBP breakfast forum on apprenticeship levy and employing apprenticeships	JS RR	2017
Work with planning policy to look at feasibility of including a local labour market policy in Local Plan	GP RR	2016/17

#### Priority 4: Better infrastructure for growth

Improve the Borough's competitive performance through investment in employment areas, transport, infrastructure and town centres. This will ensure the Borough continues to be an attractive place to work, visit and live.

#### Key Objectives:

- Identification and delivery of key road improvements required to tackle current and future traffic congestion
- Lobby for improvements to rail infrastructure and services and monitor proposals for southern rail access to Heathrow
- Promote sustainable transport modes throughout the Borough
- Engage with landlords and managing agents of major employment areas to deliver environmental enhancements
- Engage with town centre businesses, residents and other stakeholders to develop and deliver small scale projects and events
- Investigate feasibility of developing BIDs for each town to support town centre management activity
- Support Commercial Services team in place shaping agenda in town centres

Proposed deliverables	Staff resources	Target Date
Work with SCC Highways/LEP/Highways England and neighbouring Boroughs to bring forward improvements to: Junction 11 M25, A320, and Station Road/High Street Junction in Addlestone	JD RR	Ongoing
Work with RBP Transport Group to lobby DfT/SW Trains/Network Rail for improvements to rail infrastructure and services and monitor proposals for southern rail access	JD RR	Ongoing
Work with RBP to promote/support Yellow Bus Scheme and with SCC to promote sustainable transport and Egham Sustainable package.	JS RR	Ongoing
Engage with landlords and managing agents of major employment areas to encourage delivery of environmental enhancements	RR	2017
Engage with town centre businesses, residents and other stakeholders to develop and deliver small scale projects and events. Work with the Commercial Services team to investigate the feasibility of submitting a bid to Surrey County Council's Town Centre Revitalisation Fund to improve the public realm and support the place shaping agenda. The grant fund requires 50% match funding	HN JR RR Apprentice	Ongoing in Egham 2017 in Chertsey 2019 for SCC fund
Investigate feasibility of developing Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) for each town to support town centre management activity. A BID is a defined area in which a levy is charged on all business rate payers in addition to the business rates bill. This levy is used to develop projects which will benefit businesses in the local area. The Addlestone One scheme will have its own Town Centre Manager.	RR Apprentice	

**Priority 5: Promoting innovation and technology sectors**

Promoting business growth through innovation and digital and technology development.

**Key Objectives:**

- Support digital sector and specifically cyber security sector

<b>Proposed deliverables</b>	<b>Staff resources</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
Seek consultancy advice on locational requirements of the digital and cyber security sector and how best to market the Borough to these sectors. Recommendations for marketing to be covered through existing channels.	Consultant RR	2016/17
Investigate feasibility of working with EM3 LEP, Invest in Surrey, neighbouring Boroughs, Surrey Chamber of Commerce, and RHUL to promote university as a centre of excellence in cyber security and encourage take up of cyber essentials accreditation by local SMEs which will enhance their security and enable them to apply for Government and other contracts and thus tender for more work.	RR Apprentice	Ongoing
Investigate feasibility of supporting delivery of grow-on space for digital SME's at EZ		
Support delivery of Enterprise M3 innovation service if ESIF application is successful. Project will create and deliver a new innovation service that supports the EM3 Growth Hub, with a remit to enable highly innovative businesses, particularly SMEs to gain easy access to the knowledge exchange assets of the EM3 area's universities and private sector research community. This will increase the amount of research and innovation activities conducted to bring new products/ services to market. SMEs gain access to research facilities that would normally not be open to them.	RR Apprentice	

# Runnymede Borough Council



Runnymede Borough Council  
Runnymede Civic Centre  
Station Road  
Addlestone  
Surrey  
KT15 2AH  
[www.runnymede.gov.uk](http://www.runnymede.gov.uk)

