

Appendix 1 – Economic Priorities – Progress against delivery of the Action Plan

Priority	Approach	Progress as at April 2017
<p>P1: Harness the local entrepreneurial spirit and support business start-ups and existing business growth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business support initiatives ▪ Mentoring ▪ Access to finance ▪ Networking ▪ Workspace/ incubation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bromsgrove benefits from a number of new initiatives focused on supporting business start-ups and existing businesses to grow; the schemes are being funded by European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and cover the Worcestershire and Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP areas. ▪ The NWEDR service has supported 59 entrepreneurs with support and advice and awarded 14 grants to start up companies between July 2015 and March 2017. ▪ 580 new businesses established in Bromsgrove in 2015 (Source; Office for National Statistics – Business Demography). ▪ NWEDR supported 26 existing businesses to grow either through grant assistance and/or advice between July 2015 and March 2017. ▪ NWEDR continues to work to identify potential sites and funding opportunities for additional small business units / incubation space.

<p>P2 Encourage new inward investment / SME growth through development of the key employment sites</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote key employment sites ▪ Incentivisation packages ▪ Promotion of Bromsgrove district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Council and the NWEDR service works in partnership with Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership and Worcestershire County Council Inward Investment service to promote Bromsgrove as a location for prospective inward investors. Bromsgrove continues to be an attractive and popular location for companies to invest. ▪ NWEDR is working with the owner of Bromsgrove Enterprise Park to encourage and facilitate the development of the site. Since July 2015, further development of the Enterprise Park has taken place with a local company relocating its manufacturing and distribution operation to the site. ▪ NWEDR is part of the partnership group working alongside the proposed developer, agencies and local authorities to bring forward the Redditch Gateway (located within Bromsgrove District) employment site for future development.
<p>P3 Create a more vibrant Bromsgrove Town Centre by enhancing the current retail and leisure offer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Town centre regeneration programme ▪ Town centre management ▪ Incentive packages ▪ Events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Council has successfully introduced a Centres Management approach to improving the vibrancy of its key centres, with a dedicated Centres Manager in post since May 2016. ▪ The Bromsgrove outdoor market is now operated by an external company CJ Events and an events sub-group has been set up by the Centres manager to co-ordinate a year round package of events. CJ Events are planning to run a new Food

		<p>Festival in summer 2017.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There has been good progress made with a number of town centre development sites, as follows: ▪ Former Market Hall Site. Phase 1: Little Waitrose, new store to open in May 2017. Planning application submitted for Phase 2. ▪ Former Clarks Site. Aldi have received planning consent for a new store on the Birmingham Road. It is anticipated that demolition of the existing buildings on the site will begin imminently with the work on the store to start later this year. ▪ Bromsgrove Retail Park. Planning permission for a refurbishment of the Bromsgrove Retail Park was granted to IM Properties in 2016 who are planning to invest £4m in the site. ▪ In addition, work continues apace at the Recreation Road development site with the development of a new care village.
<p>P4 Improve connectivity within Bromsgrove (Digital and Transport)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved broadband ▪ A38 – programme of investment and development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bromsgrove District and town centre have benefitted and continue to benefit from the roll out of Worcestershire’s Superfast Broadband Programme. ▪ The Council is working with Worcestershire County Council to develop a strategic business case for a major upgrade of the A38 to reduce journey times

		<p>and release the growth of new housing and employment opportunities. £7.5m of funding has been provisionally secured from Worcestershire LEP from its Local Growth Fund allocation to support an initial programme of works.</p>
<p>P5 Invest in our local workforce by supporting training and apprenticeships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Investment in and promotion of Apprenticeships ▪ Understand local businesses skills needs ▪ Work experience opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unemployment in Bromsgrove stands at 1.1% (source: Office for National Statistics Clamant Count – February 2017) this is well below the West Midlands rate of 2.4%. ▪ The development of a district Employment and Skills Plan has been taken forward by NWEDR in conjunction with the Economic Development Theme Group. ▪ The Council and the NWEDR service continue to promote the benefit of Apprenticeships to local businesses. ▪ 780 new Apprenticeship opportunities were created in Bromsgrove during 2015/16; 260 of these were ‘Advanced’ or ‘Higher’ level Apprenticeships. ▪ The Council and the NWEDR service are working with Heart of Worcestershire College to review its curriculum offer and seek to align it with the priorities of key local sectors.