

ALL TOGETHER AS

**ONE**

ONESTOCKPORT



# One Stockport Economic Plan

February 2022

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# Our Vision: A Stockport economy which is...



## Fair & Inclusive

We will support a fairer economy where local people are the primary beneficiaries of regeneration and growth.



## Enterprising & Productive

We will seek to capture a bigger share of high value knowledge sector jobs while supporting a resilient foundational economy.



## Climate Friendly & Resilient

We will tackle the climate emergency, grow the green economy, and enable Stockport to 'build back better' and recover from COVID-19.



## Accessible & Connected

We will ensure that multi-modal transport infrastructure and digital infrastructure supports employment and inclusive economic growth.

# The One Stockport Economic Plan:

The One Stockport Economic Plan outlines our shared approach to the economy over the next ten years. It provides the framework to secure the benefits of Stockport's unprecedented growth opportunity and contributes to our ambition to become a **fair and inclusive** Borough. Our Economic Plan will enable local businesses to start, seed and grow to create a more **enterprising and productive** Stockport. Responding to the climate emergency, our Economic Plan recognises that future prosperity relies on delivering an economy that is **climate friendly and more resilient**. The Economic Plan seeks to enhance Stockport's **accessibility and connectivity** with investments to increase regional competitiveness while improving access to opportunity across the Borough.

# Introduction

*“Harnessing Stockport’s opportunity for growth to create a distinctive and thriving economy and secure shared prosperity for all residents”*

## What is the Stockport Economic Plan?

Calling this the Stockport Economic **‘Plan’** is a deliberate statement of intent. It is a roadmap for action to ensure that we are delivering a stronger and fairer economy for everyone who lives and works in our borough. It is an active, living document that will guide our approach to the economy for the next decade and beyond.

This is not a plan for one single organisation. It is a shared plan for Stockport’s economy that recognises the importance of partnership. It has been co-designed to reflect and embody the ambitions of the council, residents, and our key stakeholders. It is not the Council’s Plan, but the Council will be key in driving forward the actions in this Plan.

## One Stockport

A thriving and enterprising Stockport with a successful, growing, and resilient economy is integral to the health, happiness and prosperity of our communities.

The Stockport Economic Plan interfaces with and has strong links with other thematic strategies and plans, enabling the delivery of shared missions including core priorities around climate, health and care, ageing well and children and young people.

Specifically, the priorities and actions in the Stockport Economic Plan are intended to complement, influence, and reinforce the Stockport Housing Plan, the Transport Plan, the Climate Action Plan, and the emerging Local Plan.

**Fig 1: where the Economic Plan sits**



## Our Shared Values

Our vision for Stockport 2030 also included commitments about how we will work together. This runs through all our plans, including our Safer Stockport Partnership Plan:

- **We are inclusive:** We believe our differences and unique experiences need to be celebrated. We proactively address inequality and hold ourselves accountable for everyone feeling included and valued.
- **We are ambitious:** We believe in Stockport, our people and the places that make up our Borough. We are continuously challenging ourselves to be the best we can be for Stockport.
- **We are collaborative:** We believe in working together openly and honestly. We support each other and always work together for the benefit of Stockport.

These values have shaped how we developed the One Stockport Economic Plan as well as how we implement the commitments within it.

## An Evidence-Led Economic Plan

The One Stockport Economic Plan, or the ‘Economic Plan’, is based on extensive socio-economic analysis which was undertaken in parallel to a wide-ranging programme of stakeholder engagement.

The One Stockport Economic Plan responds to the latest available data. It is well known that borough level data can mask the inequalities that exist within Stockport. Some of this data will now be dated in terms of not fully reflecting the impact of COVID-19 and Brexit.

To address this, we created the [Stockport Atlas](#) which maps the key data on Stockport’s economy, people, and places. This provides a granular understanding of the specific challenges and opportunities facing our neighbourhoods – targeting Economic Plan interventions where they can have the greatest impact.

However, we recognise that socio-economic data alone is not enough to capture the complexity of Stockport’s economy and communities. The One Stockport Economic Plan therefore marries robust quantitative intelligence with invaluable stakeholder insight – ensuring we reflect the lived experience of residents and businesses to provide qualitative evidence

**Fig 2: The Economic Plan Process**



**Fig 3: The Stockport Evidence Atlas**



The Vision, Strategic Pillars, Priorities and Actions are a direct response to both the qualitative and quantitative evidence bases. The One Stockport Economic Plan has been developed in consultation with local leadership forums, including: Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC), the Stockport Economic Alliance, the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector, Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), Climate Action Now, colleges and head teachers.

The process of co-production has enabled us to develop an Economic Plan for the whole Borough which can be owned and delivered as 'One Stockport'. The Economic Plan outlines how we will all work in partnership, as public sector organisations, business, or communities to deliver the change we need to see across our Borough.

**Partners have generously volunteered their time to shape this Economic Plan at multiple stages of development. Workshops were held to test and validate the evidence base, shape the priorities and draft actions and secure feedback from Stockport's businesses and wider stakeholders.**



# Why Stockport Needs a New Economic Plan

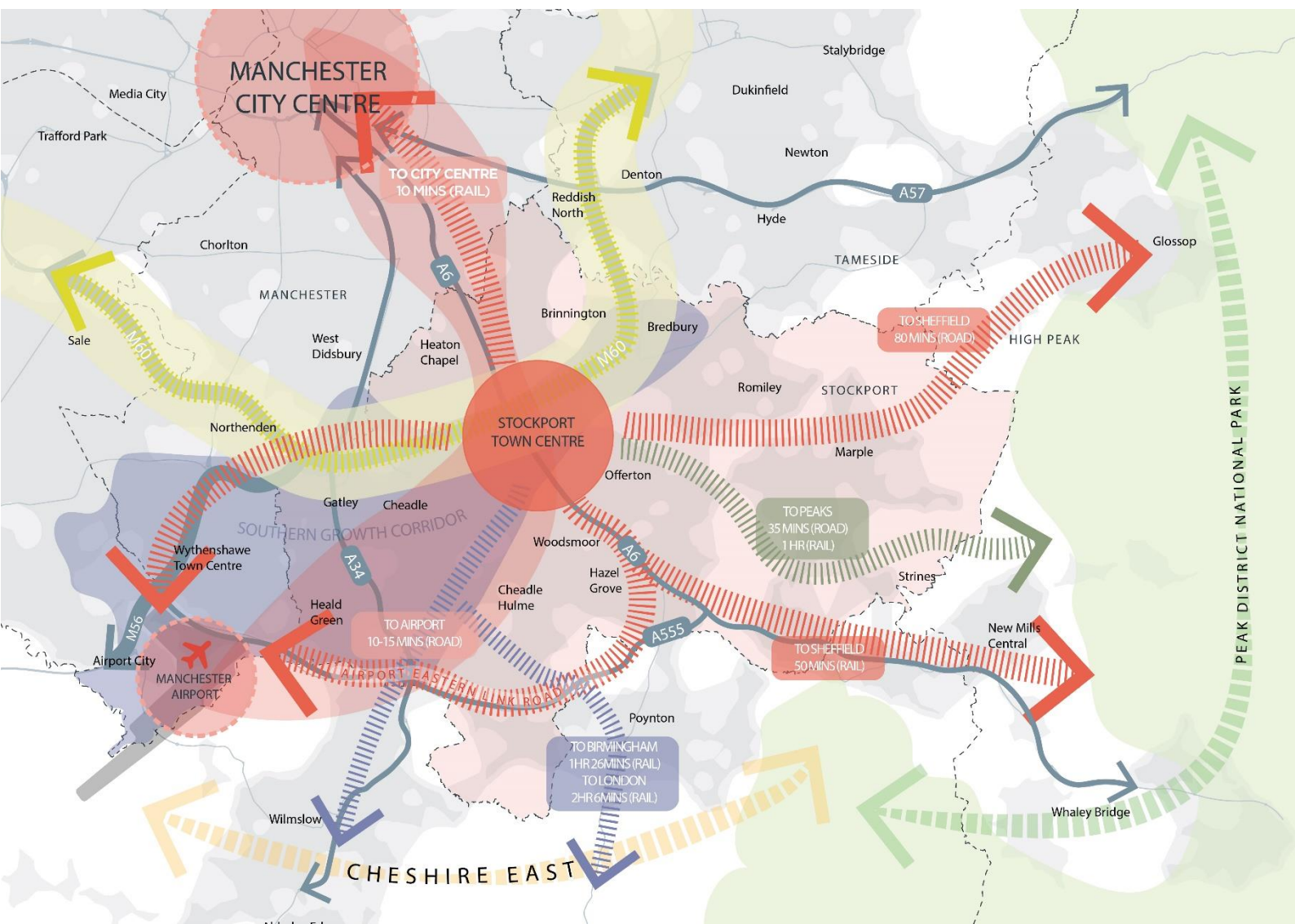
*Stockport is home to 294,000 people, 12,000 businesses, and 146,000 jobs. It comprises thriving town and neighbourhood centres, bustling hubs of commercial activity, and excellent transport infrastructure. This has attracted, supported, and enabled strong economic growth and unprecedented investment over the past decade. Stockport is well positioned for further growth, but our economic opportunity is matched by grand challenges which will define a generation. The One Stockport Economic Plan is therefore a long-term response to these defining factors to enable those who live, work, and do business in Stockport to thrive. The core opportunities and challenges are set out below:*

## Opportunities and Challenges

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- **Stockport is strategically located within one of the most important, exciting, and dynamic city regions in the country.** Our residents and businesses benefit from Stockport's proximity to Manchester, our economic linkages to Cheshire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire which are vital to our shared success. Stockport benefits from excellent connectivity to the vibrant economic hub being developed at Airport City and is part of the Southern Growth Corridor, an area of strong economic opportunity. These linkages are shown in Fig 5.
- **The Borough has experienced rapid and sustained economic growth** over the past decade, making Stockport a major regional economic driver in its own right. Since 2015, Stockport's employment base has grown by 13% which is stronger than the England and Greater Manchester averages.
- **Stockport is home to a range of nationally and internationally significant companies** such as Music Magpie, BASF, Adidas and McVities. The borough also retains specialisms across many critical foundational sectors such as utilities, logistics and manufacturing which are integral to regional and national prosperity. Stockport is proud to have a large and engaged VCFSE sector which works tirelessly to deliver tangible social and economic value across our communities.
- **Stockport makes a distinctive contribution to the Greater Manchester (GM) Economy** in terms of its high-quality skills base, its innovative businesses and its thriving VCFSE sector. The One Stockport Economic Plan aligns closely with the Local Industrial Strategy and the 10 Priorities of the Greater Manchester Strategy, and there is clearly a significant opportunity for Stockport to capture a bigger share of growth and investment at GM level. There are opportunities to build on Stockport's existing strengths in business, finance and professional services, health innovation, life sciences, medical technology and digital. Furthermore, the ambitions set out in the Economic Plan align closely with the recently proposed Levelling Up initiatives, and in particular the Innovation Accelerator centred on GM, which seeks to create clusters of research and innovation around local companies.

Fig 5: Stockport’s strategic economic context



**The One Stockport Economic Plan needs to build on these strengths to ensure that we are securing maximum social, economic and environmental benefit.**

- **Through the One Stockport Economic Plan, we intend to unlock the benefits of unprecedented investment in Stockport's people and places.** Over recent years, Stockport has successfully obtained over £1bn of funding to deliver game-changing regeneration projects. This includes bringing new retail and leisure into the Town Centre, significant improvements to the mainline railway station, the redevelopment of Merseyway and the exciting new Transport Interchange with major town centre park and the ability to accommodate Metrolink.
- **Investment is also delivering new employment sites,** including Stockport Aurora at Junction 1 of the M60, which is bringing crucial jobs, training and apprenticeship opportunities to the borough. We are already investing in Stockport's net zero future and projects such as the Cheadle Town Deal, that will deliver a new Railway Station and an Eco Business Park to secure new green jobs.
- **The council is taking an active role in place-shaping.** Stockport town centre is being transformed through award-winning commercial and leisure developments at Stockport Exchange and Redrock work alongside support for a thriving independent sector around the marketplace and Underbanks. Greater Manchester's only Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) has been established in Stockport which is focussed on regenerating Town Centre West. These ambitious plans include over 3,000 new homes as part of a mixed-use development and providing the social infrastructure to support a growing town centre community.

**Not everyone is sharing in Stockport's success. The One Stockport Economic Plan brings together a coordinated and long-term response to address the challenges of COVID-19, the climate emergency, and inequality.**

- **Despite recent economic growth, our Borough sits at a cross-roads.** We face significant challenges which will test the resilience, adaptability, and ingenuity of our residents, businesses, and anchor institutions. COVID-19 has shown how quickly the things we take for granted can change and has exposed underlying fragilities within our economy and communities. Our actions over the next decade will shape the borough's future economic trajectory for generations to come.
- **Local partners have a duty to tackle deeply embedded inequalities.** Stockport is the 8<sup>th</sup> most polarised Borough in England in terms of deprivation (out of 317 local authorities) and the Stockport Atlas has shown that borough-wide averages mask acute and highly localised challenges<sup>1</sup>. We will use evidence to target interventions where they will have greatest impact – ensuring that regeneration and growth reduces inequalities by design, not as an afterthought.

<sup>1</sup> MHCLG, 2019, English indices of deprivation.

- **Diversifying Stockport's economy is integral for future resilience.** A lack of business dynamism and poor survival rates risks undermining Stockport's recent growth. Despite hosting a micro-business dominated economy, there is little evidence of an entrepreneurial start-up culture. Existing employment specialisms are also forecast to decline, making economic diversification an urgent necessity. Key employment sectors such as manufacturing and utilities are forecast to shrink by over 5,000 jobs by 2040<sup>2</sup>. Current trends around automation in key sectors, such as logistics and distribution, further strengthens the need for diversification.
- **The council has declared a climate emergency<sup>3</sup>.** Issues of congestion, air quality and the carbon footprint of our buildings and business activities need to be addressed if we are to meet regional and national net zero targets. Greening our borough also represents an economic opportunity. The development of skills to support the 'green economy' is a key priority. In addition to supporting climate adaptation, we will enable businesses and residents to take advantage of new opportunities in the green economy. Supporting businesses to help make the necessary adaptations to achieve net zero targets will also form part of the Economic Plan.

## **A Positive, Outward Looking and Confident Stockport**

- **To build on these opportunities and address the challenges highlighted above it is important that Stockport has a positive, outward looking and confident Economic Plan.** We have key strengths and assets which are recognised far beyond the City Region especially our businesses, skills, our VCFSE sector and our strong partnership ethic and attitudes. We have an opportunity to attract investment and skills on a National level and as a key driver of the Greater Manchester economy we should be shaping the delivery of the Greater Manchester Strategy and participating to the fullest possible extent in the 'Levelling-Up' activity proposed for GM much of which plays to our strengths as a Borough.

<sup>2</sup> Oxford Economics Forecasting Model, Q3 2020.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/can-climate-strategy-stockport/can-why-we-have-a-climate-strategy>

## The Case for Change

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*The evidence base which underpins the Stockport Economic Plan presents a compelling case for change. By taking a granular approach to evidence collection, the Stockport Atlas shows how borough-wide averages mask neighbourhood-level inequalities which have been exacerbated by the pandemic. Whilst Stockport's economy has grown, there are clear structural weaknesses that will constrain the borough's potential if left unaddressed.*

**The need to address barriers to inclusion is corroborated by stakeholder consultation<sup>4</sup>.**

The evidence shows that:

- Stockport is one of the most polarised boroughs in the country
- For too many people, work is unfairly rewarded and a high number of children are living in poverty
- Educational outcomes and attainment inequality is high which is impacting the life chances of many of our young people
- COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crisis have widened existing inequalities and have disproportionately impacted the borough's most disadvantaged residents

Quantitative data alone is not sufficient to capture the diversity of challenges and there is a need for this to be supplemented by lived experience. Engagement with Stockport's diverse communities has directly informed the 'Case for Change' and has shown that there are a range of less visible barriers to economic inclusion such as age, disability, race, religion, and gender.

### **Growth and diversification are crucial for long-term prosperity**

The evidence shows that:

- The Stockport economy lags behind Greater Manchester and the UK in terms of GVA growth despite resilient employment
- Several of Stockport's key employment sectors are forecast to decline over the next 20 years, highlighting the need for diversification
- Stockport's stock of high-quality office accommodation and modern industrial and logistics sites requires improvement to capture a bigger share of high value employment in sectors forecasts to grow over the long term
- Stockport has a significantly older workforce than the regional or national averages, highlighting the need to utilise the economic ambitions and talent of the older workforce, whilst seeking to grow a wider population demographic over time.

<sup>4</sup> Hatch/Forever Consulting, 2022, Economic Plan Stakeholder Engagement Report,

The economic data analysed as part of the evidence base and the discussions with Stockport businesses highlight the urgent need to grow and diversify the economy. This is both to address a long-term productivity gap in comparison with the regional and national economy whilst responding to the forecast decline in some of Stockport's strongest employment sectors (manufacturing, wholesale and retail).

Creating well-connected, competitive business locations will ensure that Stockport can attract a bigger share of the forecast growth in the professional, scientific, creative, and digital employment sectors and respond positively to strong demand from the logistics, distribution high tech manufacturing sectors. The provision of new housing including in key locations (such as Town Centre West) can help attract new economically active residents to Stockport, which seeks to address the ageing workforce.

**Pursuing a green and resilient recovery will unlock economic, social, and environmental benefits.**

The evidence shows that:

- COVID-19 has had a significant, lasting impact on the Stockport economy - with the sectors most acutely affected by lockdown restrictions suffering the largest losses in terms of output.
- Immediate economic pandemic support made a tangible difference to residents and businesses. For example, Stockport's Job Match service has directly linked unemployed residents with local job opportunities.
- More needs to be done to enhance economic resilience by 'building back better' from the pandemic and preparing the borough for opportunities in the green economy. Research has shown that to stay within the commitments made as part of the Paris Agreement, Stockport has a maximum cumulative carbon dioxide emissions budget. Assuming a continuation of 2017 CO<sub>2</sub> emission levels, Stockport would use this entire budget within 7 years from 2020.
- Stockport already hosts a diverse green economy which can support future clean growth. From renewable energy companies based in Stockport town centre, to environmental consultancy activities in Cheadle Hulme; there are a range of burgeoning activities which can be encouraged to grow across the Borough.

Managing the transition to a low carbon, climate friendly economy effectively can deliver significant opportunities for Stockport. Firstly, there will be a wide range of well-paid, highly skilled employment opportunities to deliver national and regional net zero commitments. Secondly, reducing congestion in Stockport's town centre high streets and key arterial routes can improve air quality and the health of our residents. Finally, restoring Stockport's habitats, tree planting, and urban greening can create balanced communities, which enhance wellbeing and bring residents closer to nature whilst helping to mitigate the impacts of climate change.



**Strengthening connectivity and accessibility is critical to the ambitions in the Stockport Economic Plan.**

The evidence shows that:

- There are reliability, capacity and affordability issues with public transport, and some residents experience poor access to employment centres particularly in the south and east of the Borough. Orbital connectivity has also been identified as an important area for improvement.
- There are high levels of congestion, along key routes and corridors including the A6, A34 and on the network surrounding the M60.
- Stockport has a lower proportion of trips made by active travel modes in comparison to the average for Greater Manchester.

Adopted policy documents contain clear priorities on connectivity and accessibility for Stockport. Achieving the ambitions set out in the One Stockport Economic Plan will be significantly enhanced by addressing these priorities and in particular the capacity and reliability of public transport, high levels of congestion on key routes and a low proportion of trips in active travel modes. Improving connectivity and accessibility underpins the creation of competitive places to attract investment and high value employment and helps address inequality by improving access to opportunities for all parts of the Borough. To this end the One Stockport Economic Plan builds on the South-East Manchester Multi-Model (SEMM) Strategy, the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy (GMTS) 2040 5-Year Delivery Plan (2020-2025) and the Active Communities Strategy, and will inform the emerging Stockport Transport Plan

# Our Vision for Stockport

*The One Stockport Economic Plan vision is directly informed by the evidence presented within the ‘Case for Change’. We are guided by a shared commitment to use growth, regeneration, and investment to build a more inclusive, resilient and greener economy by design. This will be delivered through our four pillars of change which capture the change we want to see and set out how we will measure success.*

Fig 6: The One Stockport Economic Plan Vision and Pillars of change



Each pillar is supported by a mission statement that will guide the activity and actions of the council and its partners over the next decade. These are:

**Fair and Inclusive:** *“Supporting a fairer economy where local people are the primary beneficiaries of regeneration and growth”*

**Enterprising and Productive:** *“Capturing a bigger share of high value knowledge sector jobs while supporting a resilient foundational economy”*

**Climate Friendly and Resilient:** *“Tackling the climate emergency, growing the green economy, and enabling Stockport to ‘build back better’ and recover from the pandemic.”*

**Accessible and Connected:** *“Ensuring multi-modal transport infrastructure and digital infrastructure supports employment and inclusive economic growth”*



The One Stockport Economic Plan sets out how each pillar is led by the evidence, showing how interventions will tackle unique local challenges and realise opportunities. This has directly informed our thematic priorities which underpin the framework for action.

We know that it is not enough to diagnose the challenges facing Stockport – the borough needs robust and decisive action. Recognising the importance of accountability, we have outlined the specific actions the partners will take to achieve the priorities set for each pillar. This includes new actions, refocusing and intensifying of existing ones, and influencing other plans to meet economic needs.

Over the last few years, it has become more apparent that the world is inherently uncertain. Therefore, it is important that local economic partners retain the agility to review these actions in perpetuity to ensure their ongoing relevance. The Borough Plan review process also enables a two-way flow of intelligence and priorities which will ensure that priorities and actions are regularly reviewed and updated.

To understand our progress to delivering our vision for Stockport, the Stockport Economic Plan outlines a suite of performance metrics which we will track on an ongoing basis to ensure that it remains a live document. Stockport's Economic Alliance will lead on the governance, oversight, monitoring and delivery of actions from the Economic Plan. The relevant partnership organisations (such as council committees) will receive regular progress updates on the delivery of the Economic Plan.

# Pillar 1: Fair and Inclusive

***“Supporting a fairer economy where local people are the primary beneficiaries of regeneration and growth”***

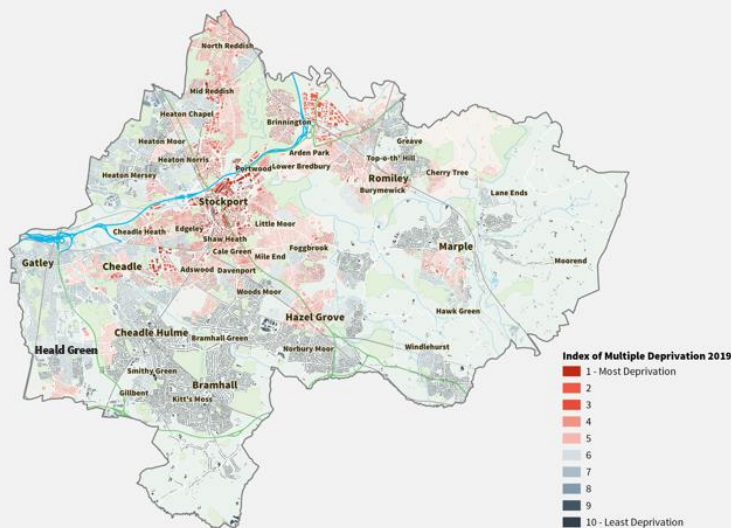
Challenges	Opportunities
<p><b>Stockport is the 8th most polarised borough in England.</b></p> <p>This is affecting the prosperity and opportunity for residents living in the borough’s most deprived neighbourhoods. Residents of these areas play an important economic role in Stockport’s local districts and other smaller centres.</p>	<p><b>Unprecedented opportunity to marry need and opportunity.</b></p> <p>Areas of most significant deprivation are where the borough’s most significant economic assets and growth opportunities are located.</p> <p>Town Centre West and other developments will deliver significant growth and regeneration investment in two areas of high deprivation. We will harness this opportunity to ensure that local people are the primary beneficiaries of growth.</p>
<p><b>Stockport ranks 260th out of 317 local authorities nationally in terms of early years social mobility (where 317th is the lowest ranked).</b></p> <p>This is affecting the life chances of children in their most formative life stage.</p>	
<p><b>Stockport has a dual economy.</b></p> <p>Our research shows that borough averages mask deeply embedded and highly localised challenges which are affecting economic participation and prosperity.</p>	<p><b>A large and engaged local VCFSE sector.</b></p> <p>Stockport has a thriving VCFSE sector which provides significant economic and social value in the borough. The activities of VCFSE businesses directly address many of Stockport’s inclusivity challenges.</p>
<p><b>Impacts of COVID-19 have disproportionately impacted the borough’s most disadvantaged residents.</b></p> <p>The number of residents claiming benefits has risen most rapidly in Stockport’s most deprived areas.</p>	<p><b>Taking a joined-up approach to support inclusion.</b></p> <p>Consultation showed the importance of linking with other local plans and strategies which will support labour market participation.</p>
<p><b>Educational outcomes and aspirations inequality.</b></p> <p>Stockport’s young people are less likely to continue to sustained education at higher levels and residents from disadvantaged areas are more likely to attend a poor-performing school.</p>	<p><b>Stockport’s ageing population are an asset to our communities and</b></p> <p>The role of the ageing population as consumers, community leaders, experienced and skilled members of the workforce, retired or otherwise is important to the economy of Stockport and should be harnessed to support inclusive growth.</p>
<p><b>Disabilities and health inequalities are barriers to participation.</b></p> <p>Consultation identified wider barriers to economic participation which need to be addressed to create a more inclusive economy.</p>	<p>Volunteering is also important, and consultation showed that many volunteers have become paid staff. There is an</p>

These barriers are preventing employers from accessing a diverse workforce and filling key skills gaps as well as driving further consumer demand.	opportunity to raise the visibility of volunteering opportunities amongst Stockport’s older population. Additionally, opportunities for life-long learning can enable older workers to retrain.
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## The issues behind the averages

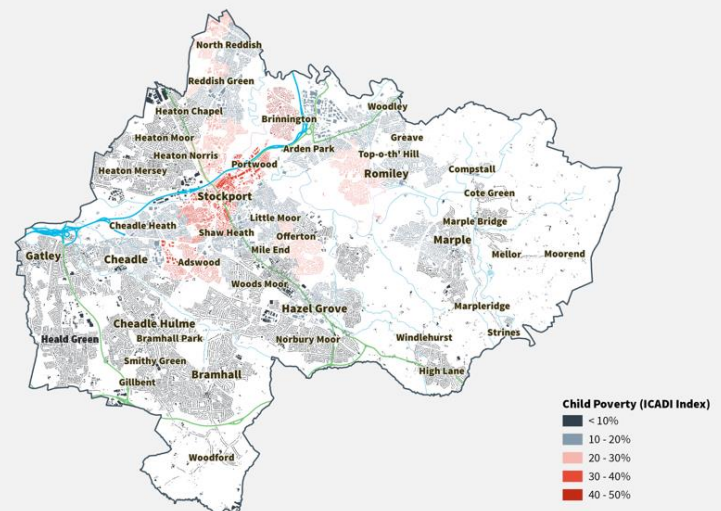
Borough-wide challenges mask challenges of severe localised deprivation and the varying experiences amongst different parts of the community. The maps below articulate the scale of Stockport's inclusivity challenge and the importance of addressing unfairness through the One Stockport Economic Plan.

Index of multiple deprivation, 2019



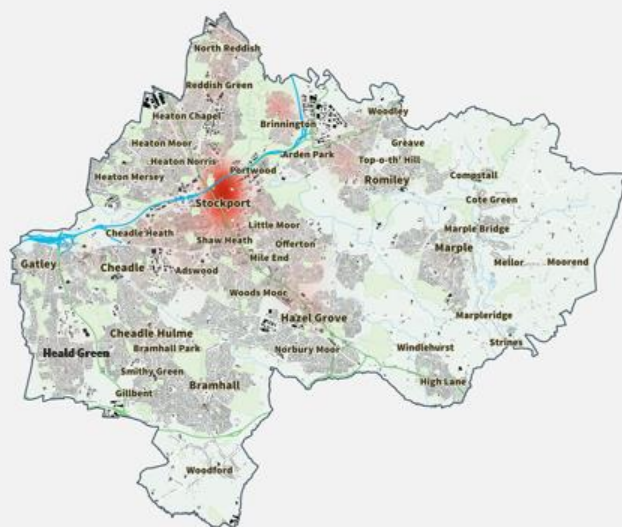
Deprivation is highly concentrated in the north of the Borough. Stockport town centre, Brinnington and Bredbury contain some of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country. However, the demographic of the town centre is rapidly changing with an emerging community of young professionals.

% Of children living in poverty by MSOA



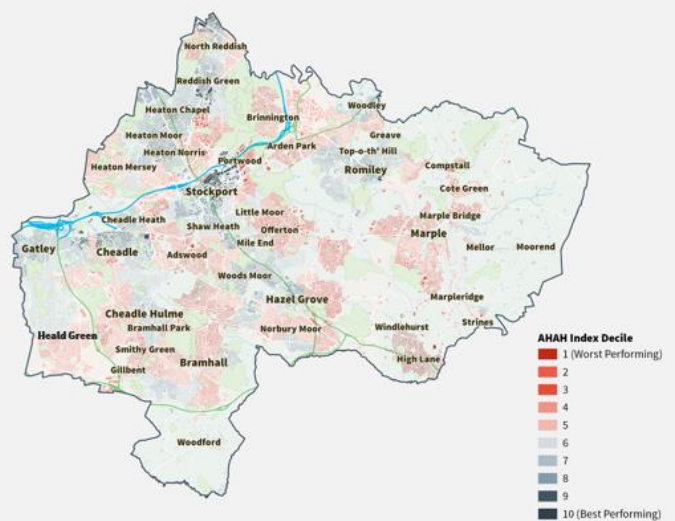
Although Stockport has the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest rates of child poverty in Greater Manchester, 1 in 4 children are still living in poverty. This varies across the borough and in areas such as Brinnington, as many as 1 in 2 children are living in poverty.

Crime in Stockport, 2020



In 2020, there were 104 crimes per 1,000 residents in Stockport compared to 149 in Greater Manchester. Most crimes in Stockport are in and around the town centre.

Access to healthy assets and hazards



Too many of Stockport's places are not conducive to healthy lifestyles. Parts of Bramhall, Windlehurst and Marple do not have sufficient assets to support healthy lifestyles. This includes high amounts unhealthy food outlets, coupled with low proximity to leisure centres, and green spaces.

## **Our priorities**

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- 1. Utilise Stockport's unprecedented growth opportunity to benefit local people and business to make the Stockport pound go further.**
- 2. Support an economy that delivers a minimum standard of prosperity.**
- 3. Improve access to training and skills provision to enable residents to take advantage of new opportunities at all life stages.**
- 4. Recognise the importance of the VCFSE sector to drive economic and social value.**
- 5. Tackle the wider barriers to economic participation to ensure all residents are empowered to be happy, healthy, and well.**

## What we will do

Action	Lead/Partners
<p><b>Utilising Stockport's unprecedented growth opportunity to tackle areas of disadvantage. We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritise local suppliers in regeneration projects, where appropriate, to make the Stockport pound go further.</li> <li>• Explore how new and existing community assets in deprived areas can be used to accommodate and support skills development and training.</li> <li>• Using public sector held assets more effectively to drive increased social value in areas of highest need and understand how local companies can be prioritised and supported to access new workspace provided.</li> <li>• Civic leadership role to work with anchor institutions to establish how more money can be retained within Stockport and continue to generate greater social value through procurement.</li> <li>• Use of Employment &amp; Skills Agreements for major developments to ensure those most economically disadvantaged benefit</li> </ul>	<p>Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC)/Economic Alliance and Chamber of Commerce/Local Businesses</p>
<p><b>Support an economy that delivers a minimum standard of prosperity in line with our Boroughwide commitments for a Fair and Inclusive Stockport. We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the GM 'Living Wage City Region' ambition by proactively encouraging more employers to obtain real Living Wage accreditations.</li> <li>• Sign up to the GM Good Landlords Charter and Good Employer Charter.</li> <li>• Continue to support the GMCA and partners in delivering against the recommendations set out by the Independent Inequalities Commission.</li> </ul>	<p>SMBC/GMCA/Economic Alliance and Chamber of Commerce/Local Businesses</p>
<p><b>Improve access to training and skills provision to enable residents to take advantage of new opportunities at all life stages. We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with GMCA to maximise the benefits of skills devolution at all life stages (e.g., using the Adult Education Budget (AEB) more effectively to support Stockport's economic needs and life-long learning).</li> <li>• Promoting and enabling targeted apprenticeships and innovative use of the apprenticeship levy.</li> <li>• Create clearer career progression routes for young people with careers support linked to workforce demand. This should include real actions to support schools and employers to work together to help shape curriculum delivery for the benefit of all young people.</li> <li>• Promote uptake of higher-level apprenticeships as an alternative to Higher Education.</li> </ul>	<p>SMBC/GMCA/Economic Alliance and Chamber of Commerce/Local Businesses/Skills Providers</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pursuing initiatives outlined in the Levelling Up White Paper and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to maximise skills opportunities for all who need them.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Recognise the importance of the VCFSE sector to drive economic and social value. We will work with the VCFSE sector to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the sector to drive inclusive outcomes and SMBC fulfilling its role as signatories of the VCFSE Accord. Encourage businesses to engage with existing networks to formalise how they support the voluntary sector in Stockport.</li> <li>Ensure opportunities to support and develop co-operative/social enterprises are explored through the development and operation of workspace projects and understand barriers to growth (e.g., affordability of space).</li> <li>Recognise the important economic role of the sector by increasing the number of VCFSE sector businesses on the Stockport economic alliance and other business support forums <b>and continue to encourage cross sector working and collaboration via the One Stockport initiative.</b></li> <li>Support and signposting for Stockport's over 50s to signpost to volunteering opportunities.</li> </ul>	<p>SMBC/GMCA/VCFSE/ SHG/SFT/ Economic Alliance</p>
<p><b>Tackle the wider barriers to economic participation to ensure all residents are empowered to be happy, healthy, and well. We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote and support inclusive employment practices: Public services in Stockport should be leading the way in employing people with disabilities and those in protected characteristic groups (PCG)<sup>5</sup>.</li> <li>Support local businesses to address mental health challenges in the workplace to enable employees to be happy, healthy, and well at work, through the One Stockport initiative</li> <li>Strengthen progression routes for young people into by supporting careers advice with strong local employer engagement and workforce demand intelligence (e.g. the GANDER approach is one example locally). Support existing schemes around ageing (e.g., GM Centre for Ageing Better).</li> <li>Ensure interface and alignment with key partnership strategies that are fundamental to breaking down barriers to employment. These areas are not within the direct responsibility of this plan but are important dependencies on ensuring economic success for people and our Borough. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving health and well-being of Stockport residents so that people are able to live healthy and independent lives – One Health and Care Plan.</li> <li>Improving confidence and ability of people to remain active and well - Active Communities Strategy.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>SMBC/GMCA/VCFSE/ SHG/SFT/ Economic Alliance</p>

<sup>5</sup> Equality Act 2010.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Ensuring that people have safe and appropriate housing – Housing Strategy.</li><li>○ Ensuring Stockport has the best education possible for all children and young people – Stockport Inclusion Strategy (developing).</li><li>○ Supporting early years - ensuring our children have the best start in life – Children and Young People Partnership Plan.</li><li>○ Providing cross-partnership action between public services to prioritise equality, diversity and inclusion across organisations – through a review of equality objectives.</li></ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tackle wider barriers to economic participation through the Greater Manchester Working Well programme (including the Work &amp; Health Programme)..</li></ul>	
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## How we will measure progress

Priority	Performance metric
<b>Utilising Stockport's unprecedented growth opportunity to tackle areas of disadvantage.</b>	<p>£ spend with Stockport and Greater Manchester-based businesses</p> <p>£ of social value delivered through public services procurement (e.g. SMBC, NHS, SHG)</p> <p>% Of LSOAs in top 10% most deprived</p>
<b>Support an economy that delivers a minimum standard of prosperity.</b>	<p>Median resident and workplace earnings</p> <p># Of Living Wage accredited employers</p> <p># Of Stockport-based 'good employment charter' signatories</p> <p>% Of children living in poverty in Stockport</p> <p>% Of children living in poverty living in working families</p>
<b>Improve access to training and skills provision to enable residents to take advantage of new opportunities.</b>	<p># Of Stockport residents receiving adult education</p> <p># Of apprentices in Stockport</p> <p># Of higher-level apprentices in Stockport</p> <p># Of NEET young people</p>
<b>Recognise the importance of the VCFSE sector to drive economic and social value.</b>	<p># Of VCFSE organisations in Stockport</p> <p># Of jobs in the VCFSE sector</p> <p># Of VCFSE organisations represented on the Stockport Economic Alliance</p> <p># Of VCFSE organisations supported into new workspace in the borough</p>
<b>Tackle the wider barriers to economic participation to ensure all residents are empowered to be happy, healthy, and well.</b>	<p>% Economically inactive</p> <p>% Economically inactive who want a job</p> <p>% Economically inactive where reason is 'long-term sick'</p> <p>Economic activity and unemployment rate of people classified as 'equality Act core or work-limiting disabled' within the ONS' Annual Population survey.</p>

## Pillar 2: Enterprising and productive

***“Capturing a bigger share of high value knowledge jobs while supporting a resilient foundational economy”***

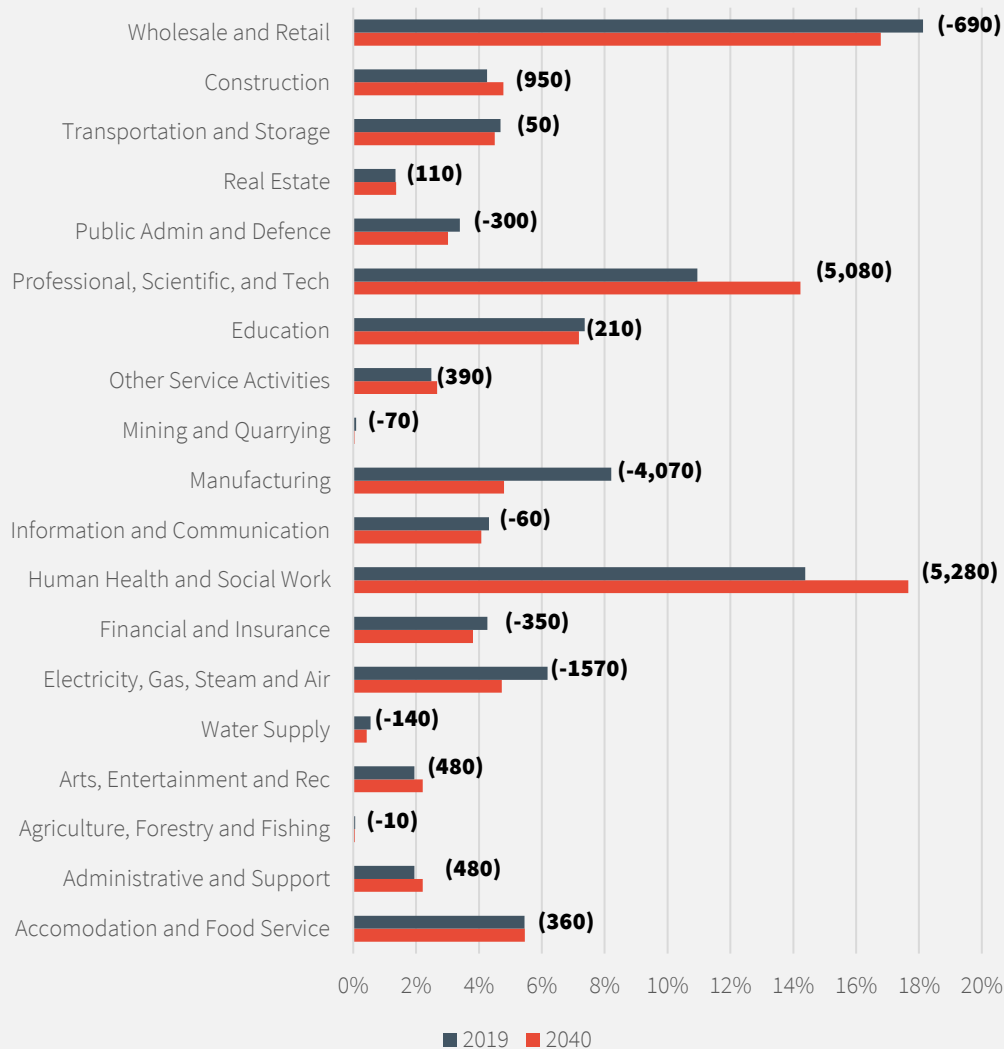
Challenges	Opportunities
<p><b>GVA growth has been sluggish, Stockport’s economy grew by +24% between 2008 and 2018, which was below the national (+35%) and Greater Manchester (+38%) averages.</b></p> <p>Economic forecasts suggest that Stockport will continue to lag behind national and regional averages up to 2040 without intervention.</p>	<p><b>The Economic Plan has at its core an ambition for growth and diversification.</b></p> <p>There is an opportunity to build on recent strong growth in professional services, scientific, digital, and creative to capture high value knowledge intensive employment. These sectors are forecast to grow strongly at National and GMCA level.</p>
<p><b>Only 12% of Stockport’s office stock is of high quality this is limiting efforts to attract new investment to Stockport.</b></p> <p>The borough will lose out to other parts of Greater Manchester and beyond if the sites and premises offer is not improved.</p>	<p><b>Building on current regeneration and transport investment to create well connected and competitive business locations to attract investment and talent in growth sectors.</b></p> <p>This approach can also help to address the ageing workforce challenge</p>
<p><b>There is a lack of modern high quality industrial sites in Stockport as well as sites for logistics and distribution.</b></p> <p>There is strong growth and demand in these sectors and Stockport could make a key contribution to the Greater Manchester economy through capturing a share of this growth.</p>	<p><b>Consultation with business has validated our research findings that there is strong demand for high-quality sites for light industrial, high - tech manufacturing and logistics &amp; distribution occupiers.</b></p> <p>These businesses underpin a lot of employment in the borough and there is an opportunity to reinforce Stockport as a well-connected high-quality location for these growth sectors.</p>
<p><b>The Stockport economy is dominated by small and micro businesses, but business growth has lagged behind the national and regional averages.</b></p> <p>Lack of business dynamism and poor survival rates means that Stockport is increasingly reliant on a smaller group of major employers.</p>	<p><b>There is an opportunity to position Stockport as an excellent location for new start businesses or those small business that have ambitions to grow.</b></p> <p>Our business consultations have identified flexible and affordable space/meeting and networking facilities as a priority for agile working in the small business sector. Ensuring those small business who wish to expand have follow-on space would also support growth of the small business sector. Driving up demand for and, increasing awareness of business support is an opportunity to strengthen the sector and target growth.</p>
<p><b>Decline is forecast across many of Stockport’s key employment sectors.</b></p>	<p><b>There is an opportunity to orientate the economy towards those sectors which are</b></p>

<p>The Oxford Economics Forecasting model suggests a large fall across several of Stockport's current employment specialisms namely general manufacturing, wholesale, retail, and some energy sectors representing a loss of over 5,600 jobs by 2040.</p>	<p><b>forecast to grow strongly at Stockport and Greater Manchester levels.</b></p> <p>This will include expanding both high value knowledge jobs (including and business services, high tech manufacturing, digital. creative and scientific) and a range of other critical employment sectors including health and care, logistics, distribution, construction, light manufacturing and the green economy (clean tech and green tech) to protect jobs and livelihoods over the long-term.</p>
<p><b>Stockport's population is forecast to grow by over 5,000 people over the next five years, but this is primarily forecast to be concentrated amongst retirees.</b></p> <p>Over the next 10-years, the number of people aged over 60 is predicted to grow by 13%. Conversely, school-aged children (-3%) and young professionals (-7%) are both forecast to shrink over the next decade further exacerbating the issue of an ageing workforce.</p>	<p><b>Addressing the ageing workforce will be approached through multiple strands:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attracting new employers in growth sectors to draw in talent from outside the borough.</li> <li>• Influencing local skills and training providers to deliver provision to support retraining and career change.</li> <li>• Continuing the placemaking and regeneration including housing targeted at both younger economically mobile people and the ageing population in line with the All Age Living Prospectus<sup>6</sup>.</li> <li>• Ensuring that connectivity and public transport enable employers in Stockport to access a larger pool of labour.</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> Happy, Healthy homes to Age Well in Stockport, A Prospectus for All Age Living.

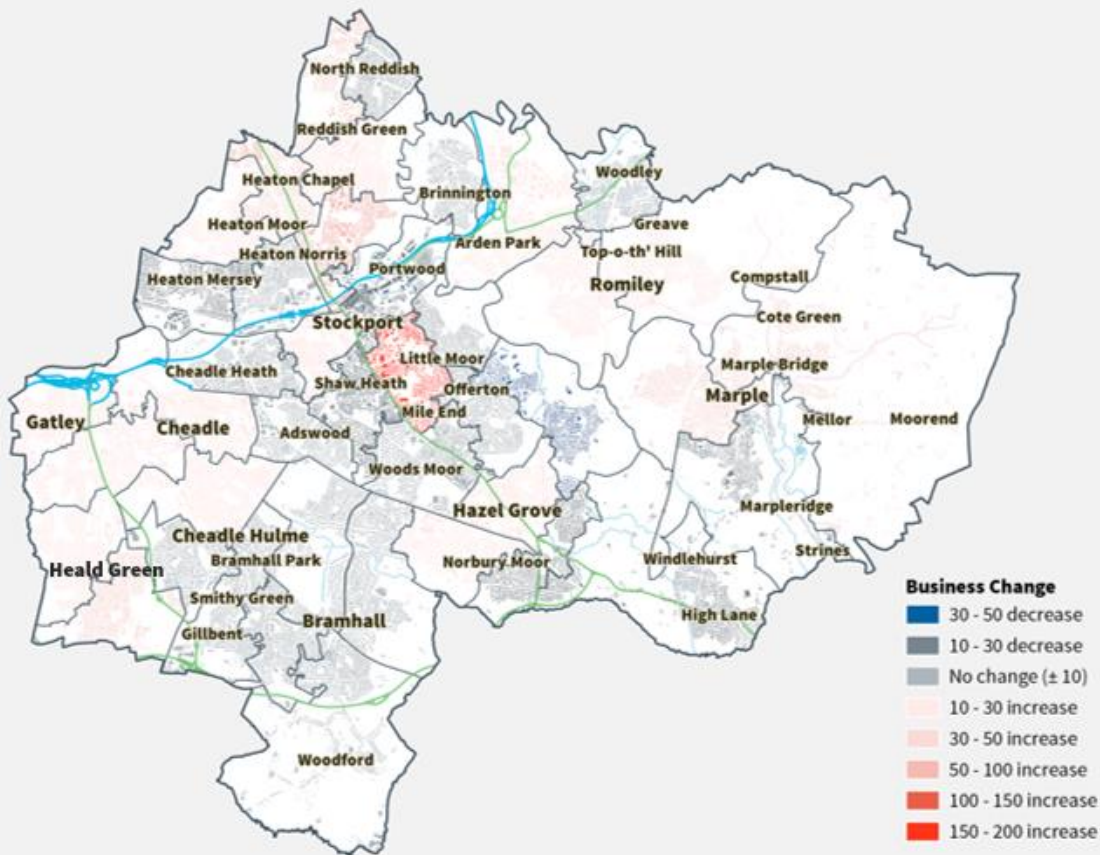
## The need for growth and diversification

% Of total employment by sector, 2019 vs 2040 (absolute change)

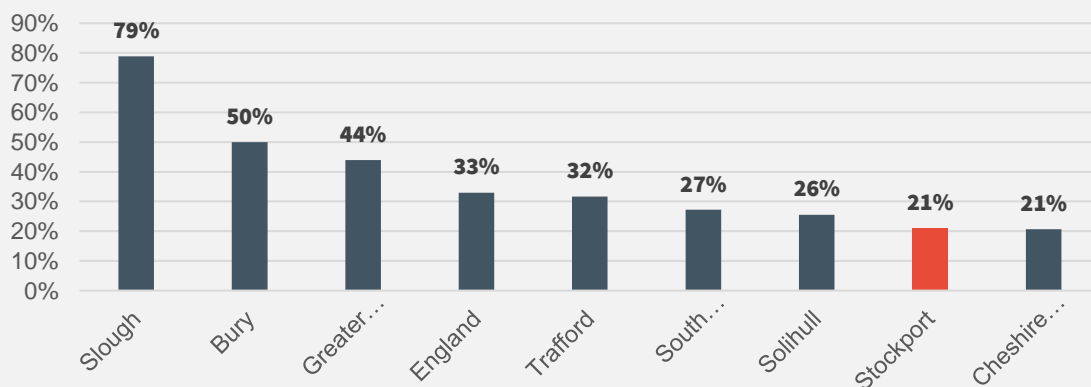


The Oxford Economics Forecasting Model suggests a large fall across several of Stockport's current employment specialisms which is likely to require economic reorientation to protect jobs and livelihoods over the long-term. Across manufacturing, electricity, gas steam, and air, there is forecast to be a loss of over 5,600 jobs by 2040. Simultaneously, there is forecast to be significant employment gains across a range of knowledge intensive roles including professional, scientific, and technical (+5,080), and human health and social work (+5,280). This is likely to dictate the demand for future commercial space and should be considered through the forthcoming Local Plan.

## Absolute business change by MSOA, 2016-2020



## Business change, 2010-2020



Over the last decade, Stockport's business growth has consistently been outstripped by the England and Greater Manchester averages. Stockport had an additional 2,000 businesses in 2020 compared to 2010 (+21%). Of the 11,900 businesses based in the borough, 79% employ less than 4 people. Supporting Stockport's micro-business dominated economy to survive, and grow will be integral to the borough's long-term economic prosperity. A significant proportion of recent business growth is shown in red on the above plan is clustered around Stockport town centre and reflects recent regeneration and development. Whereas many areas to the south of the borough show very slow or no growth.

## **Our priorities**

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- 1. Support the foundational economy to continue deliver jobs across the borough.**
- 2. Capture high value jobs in professional and technical services which have demonstrated strong potential and are forecast to grow.**
- 3. Ensure high quality sites and premises for business and employment growth in the right locations.**
- 4. Strengthening key growth nodes and corridors to create vibrant business locations.**
- 5. Support Stockport's growing low carbon sector and digital sectors.**
- 6. Enable Stockport's small business sector to access high quality business support.**

## What we will do

Action	Lead/Partners
<b>Securing Growth in Foundational Economy. We will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek to secure new sites for logistics/distribution.</li> <li>• Pursue selective Industrial Estate Refurbishment to address shortfall in quality industrial space (highlighted evidence base and ELR).</li> </ul>	SMBC/Private Sector
<b>Capture high value jobs in professional and technical services. We will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek new Grade-A Office Accommodation for business and professional services firms to address shortfall identified in the ELR.</li> <li>• Create the following themed business districts to attract business and investment in Stockport's growing knowledge employment base: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Creative (central)</li> <li>○ Green Business</li> <li>○ Life Science (Hazel Grove/other)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	SMBC/private sector/MIDAS
<b>Support Stockport's growing low carbon sector. We will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver the Green Business Investment Zone such as the Low Carbon Eco Park proposed at Cheadle combines Active Travel, Wellbeing with Low Carbon business clustering.</li> </ul>	SMBC/GMCA/other
<b>Support Stockport's small businesses and start-ups. We will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support a Central Flexible Business Hubs in town/district centres to support post-covid agile working. A high-quality resource for Stockport's micro businesses to enable flexible use of meeting/networking and exhibition space and access business support.</li> </ul>	SMBC/GMCA/other
<b>Enable Stockport's small business sector to access high quality business support. We will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve access to high quality tailored business support to existing businesses in Green Tech, Digital &amp; Life Science &amp; Manufacturing.</li> <li>• Increase take-up of start-up, scale-up and growth support to new start businesses. e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Growth Strategy</li> <li>○ Towards net zero</li> <li>○ Recruitment</li> <li>○ Marketing</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	SMBC/GM Growth Hub/Business Support Provider
<b>Strengthen digital skills and business support across all sectors. We will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase take-up of digital skills in the workforce in line with the priorities identified in the GM Skills Plan including software and programming, computer and networking support, data analysis, digital design, CRM, digital marketing.</li> <li>• Contribute to delivering on the ambitions set out in the Radically Digital Strategy.</li> <li>• Targeting the use of digital technology in the VCFSE sector.</li> </ul>	SMBC/GMCA/VCFSE

## How we will measure progress

Priority	Performance metric
<b>Securing Growth in Foundational Economy</b>	<p>New Sqft in high quality industrial space</p> <p>New Sqft in logistics and distributions space</p> <p>Growth in jobs in foundation economy (see definition)</p>
<b>Capture high value jobs in professional and technical services</b>	<p>New employment within Stockport in high value jobs (knowledge intensive sector definitions)</p>
<b>Support Stockport's growing low carbon sector</b>	<p># Of firms in Stockport's Green Economy (evidence base definition)</p> <p>New Sqft business space targeted at Green Business</p>
<b>Support Stockport's small businesses and start-ups</b>	<p># Of business flexible Business Hubs for small business, social enterprises and VCFSE organisations</p> <p># Of Stockport businesses accessing Business Hub</p>
<b>Enable Stockport's small business sector to access high quality business support</b>	<p># Of Stockport businesses accessing business support and business growth support</p> <p># Of Stockport social enterprises / VCFSE organisations accessing business support and business growth support</p>
<b>Strengthen digital skills across all sectors</b>	<p># Of Stockport businesses accessing digital skills training</p> <p># Of Stockport social enterprises / VCFSE organisations accessing digital skills training</p> <p># Of Stockport businesses accessing digital tech support</p> <p># Of Stockport social enterprises / VCFSE organisations accessing digital tech support</p>

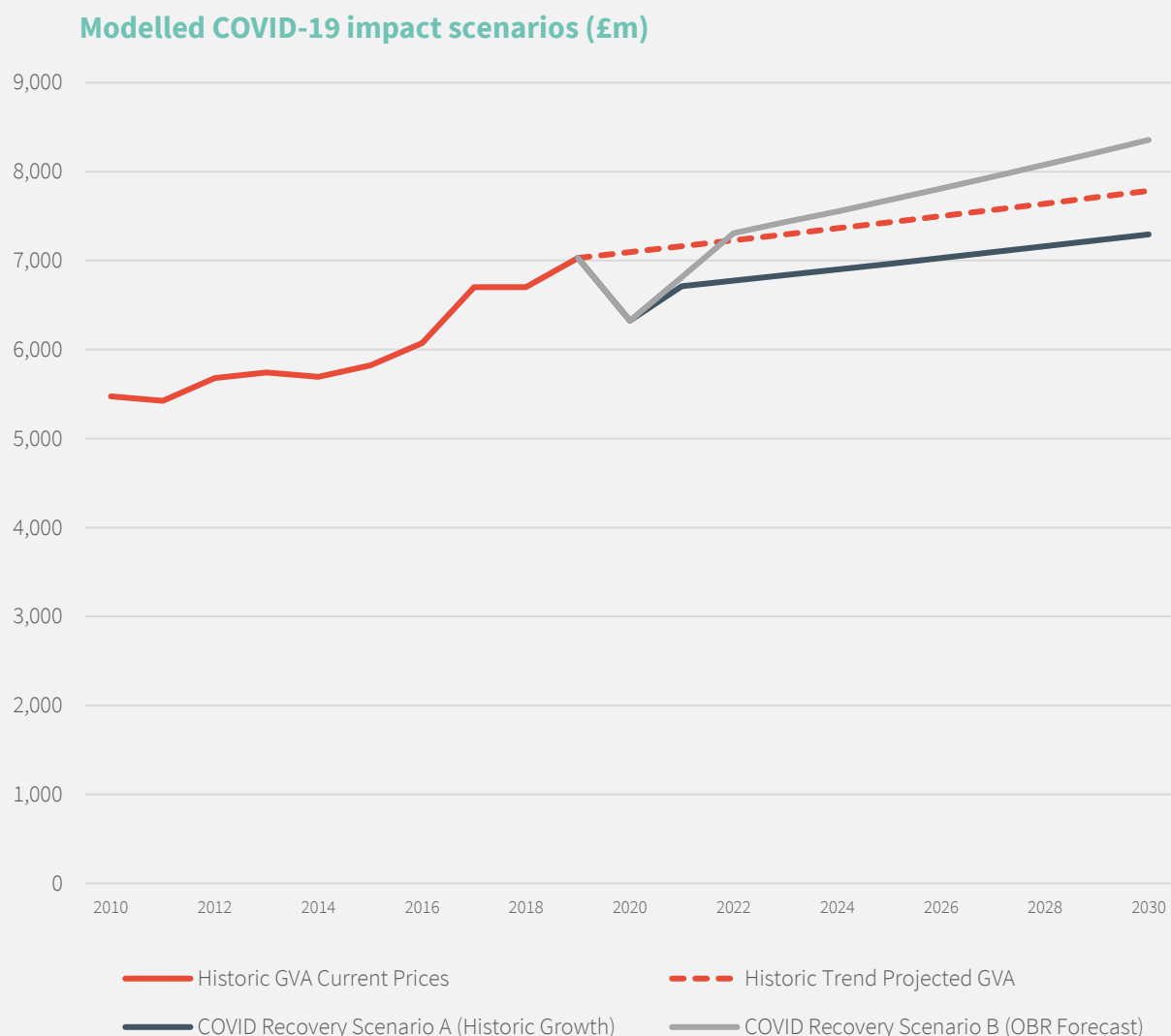


## Pillar 3: Climate Friendly and resilient

***“Tackling the climate emergency, growing the green economy, and enabling Stockport to ‘build back better’ and recover from COVID-19”***

Challenges	Opportunities
<p><b>COVID has wiped £700m from the Stockport economy and has had most significant impact on the sectors with high placemaking value.</b></p> <p>The accommodation and food services sector lost an estimated £100m in 2020.</p>	<p><b>Turning climate declaration into action.</b></p> <p>The council’s climate emergency declaration is the first step to addressing the climate crisis. The Stockport Economic Plan will interface closely with the work of the Climate Action Now Strategy to create a Stockport economy which is greener and more resilient.</p>
<p><b>Congestion and air quality.</b></p> <p>Congestion along some of Stockport’s key arterial routes and high streets is increasing the cost of doing business and is detrimental to the health of our residents</p>	<p><b>Embedding sustainability in new developments.</b></p> <p>Although retrofitting existing stock will be critical to achieving net zero, new housing and commercial developments at Town Centre West can become exemplar low carbon developments.</p>
<p><b>Practicalities of delivering net zero.</b></p> <p>SMBC is just one organisation in the borough. Emissions directly related to our activities typically represent less than 5% of the total emissions of the borough, therefore we have an important role in stimulating and influencing action in the borough.</p>	<p><b>COVID-19 has shown how quickly the things we take for granted can change, but also how quickly we can adapt.</b></p> <p>The climate emergency and ongoing impact of the pandemic means that we need to focus on enhancing the resilience of Stockport’s businesses and residents if we are to take advantage of opportunities in the new economy.</p>
<p><b>Climate action is needed now to meet net zero obligations.</b></p> <p>Research has shown that to stay within the commitments made as part of the Paris agreement, Stockport has maximum cumulative carbon dioxide emissions budget. At 2017 CO2 emission levels, Stockport would use this entire budget within 7 years from 2020.</p>	<p><b>Economic necessity.</b></p> <p>The global energy price rises mean that the payback time for renewable alternatives is shorter. Transitioning to renewable energy can bring the costs of doing business down and accelerate Stockport’s transition to net zero.</p>
<p><b>Land ownership and ability to act.</b></p> <p>Consultation showed that whilst many businesses wanted to implement low carbon solutions, many were prohibited by their landlord.</p>	<p><b>Jobs in the green economy.</b></p> <p>The transition to net zero has the potential to create thousands of new opportunities in low carbon sectors. It is the role of the public sector and education providers to future-proof courses and raise the profile of new green opportunities.</p>

## The impact of COVID-19 and the importance of embedding resilience



The Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) sectoral impact estimates have been used to provide a central estimate of the impacts of COVID-19 on Stockport's economy. It is estimated that Stockport's GVA was £7.03bn in 2019 and that £704m, or 10%, of that was lost during 2020 which is slightly higher than for the national economy.

The chart above shows two scenarios for recovery in Stockport - Scenario A is based on a historic 0.9% real growth rate per annum going forward whilst Scenario B is based on OBR's March growth forecast for the national economy. The OBR forecasts growth to be about 4% in 2021, 7% in 2022, then around 1.7% thereafter.

As shown by the scale of the economic impact of the pandemic, embedding resilience and pursuing a green recovery is more than a 'nice to do' – it is an economic imperative.

## **Our priorities**

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- 1. Contribute to delivering on the ambitions of the Stockport Climate Action Now (CAN) Strategy and Action Plan.**
- 2. Grow green, sustainable, and socially focused businesses, and employment.**
- 3. Support businesses and residents to recover from the ongoing impacts of the pandemic and enhance their long-term resilience.**
- 4. Green Stockport's existing assets and housing stock to lead the change we expect to see of others.**
- 5. Increase active travel and improve air quality by reducing Stockport's car dependency.**
- 6. Manage conflict between growth and achieving net zero commitments.**
- 7. Use Stockport Council's influence and civic leadership to ensure residents and businesses can take advantage of new opportunities.**

## What we will do

Action	Lead/Partners
<p><b>Grow green, sustainable, and socially focused businesses and employment. We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accreditation - Work with B Corp UK and other local partners to expand the B Corp Local Network.</li> <li>• Explore opportunities for green industrial parks targeting green tech, clean tech, and renewables and ensure that our Local Plan policies support delivery etc.</li> <li>• Seek to attract 'green' professional services firms to develop the Town Centre West cluster.</li> <li>• Seek to increase employment opportunities in the green and low carbon sectors.</li> </ul>	SMBC/Private Sector
<p><b>Support businesses and residents to recover from the ongoing impacts of the pandemic and enhance their long-term resilience. We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with GMCA to ensure that worst affected businesses have access to the support they need to recover and grow.</li> <li>• Use the One Stockport initiative to promote support for local businesses and shop local.</li> <li>• Continue to grow and support Stockport Jobs Match to support provision of careers information, and access to jobs and training.</li> <li>• Continue to distribute and improve access to future government recovery grants.</li> <li>• Climate action to become a scoring criterion for future business/community funding rounds (e.g., Stockport Local Fund).</li> </ul>	SMBC/GMCA
<p><b>Green Stockport's existing assets and housing stock to lead the change we expect to see of others. We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of electric vehicle charging points across the borough.</li> <li>• Increase the amount of council housing stock incorporating renewable energy solutions.</li> <li>• Identify training and employability opportunities aligned to emerging building retro-fit schemes across council-owned homes and premises to recycle more spend within the Stockport economy.</li> <li>• Explore potential for community energy generation schemes.</li> <li>• Ensure that our local plan and revised planning guidance support those who want to make renewable energy modifications and improvements.</li> </ul>	SMBC/TfGM
<p><b>Increase active travel and improve air quality by reducing Stockport's car dependency. We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take a multi-modal approach to transport in our new Transport Plan.</li> </ul>	SMBC/TfGM/GMCA

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that our Local Plan has policies which encourage the delivery of active travel infrastructure and reduced car dependency as part of all new developments.</li> <li>• Continue to deliver active transport infrastructure investments as part of the GM Bee Network and other funding streams including the Towns Fund.</li> <li>• Encourage the uptake of low and zero emission vehicles by providing supporting infrastructure.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Manage conflict between growth and achieving net zero commitments. We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a District Heat Network through the MDC in collaboration with government and private sector partners.</li> <li>• Maximise sustainability standards through our development plans and local plan policies.</li> <li>• Protect and enhance our natural environment and work together to plant; 11,500 standard trees.</li> </ul>	<p>SMBC</p>
<p><b>Use SMBC's influence and civic leadership to enable residents and businesses to take advantage of new opportunities. We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop green skills by working with schools, colleges, and the GMCA through all life stages and advance the priorities set out in the GM Local Skills and Labour Market Plan around green and digital jobs.</li> <li>• Deliver the annual Stockport Climate Summit – we will encourage commitments to achieving a greener Stockport through climate summits with businesses and residents.</li> <li>• Continue to grow the climate action business network and target engagement with businesses that have the highest carbon footprint.</li> <li>• Support residents and businesses to measure their carbon footprint to establish a baseline and track progress.</li> <li>• Work with 'business sustainability champions' to advocate for sustainable business practices.</li> <li>• Continue to seek funding for zero emission buses and depots, including provision for skills and funding.</li> </ul>	<p>SMBC/TfGM/Schools/ Colleges/Economic Alliance</p>

## How we will measure progress

Priority	Performance metric
<b>Grow green, sustainable, and socially focused businesses</b>	# Of B Corp accredited businesses in Stockport in the Stockport B Corp network # of 'green' businesses attracted to locate in the borough through inward investment activities # Of jobs in low carbon sectors based in Stockport # Of businesses in low carbon sectors based in Stockport
<b>Support businesses and residents to recover from the ongoing impacts of the pandemic and enhance their long-term resilience</b>	£ of grant funding administered # Of vacancies listed on Jobs Match # Of unemployed people securing employment via Jobs Match
<b>Green Stockport's existing assets and housing stock to lead the change we expect to see of others</b>	# Of council homes retrofitted # Of employments/apprenticeships created through council home retrofitting # Of Electric Vehicle charging points across the borough £ invested in community energy generation pilots % Of council stock using renewable energy
<b>Increase active travel and improve air quality by reducing Stockport's car dependency</b>	% Method of travel to work by bike Traffic counts along key arterial routes # Of cyclists using dedicated active travel routes Air quality levels (e.g., NO2)
<b>Encourage sustainable growth to help achieve net zero commitments</b>	# Of planning applications incorporating higher environmental standards # Of homes powered through the District Heat Network # Of trees planted
<b>Use SMBC's influence and civic leadership to enable residents and businesses can take advantage of new opportunities</b>	# Of attendees to Climate Summit # Of businesses engaged to support emission reduction # Of residents taking courses to support the green economy # Of Business Sustainability Champions

## Pillar 4: Accessible and Connected

***“Ensuring multi-modal transport infrastructure and digital infrastructure supports employment and inclusive economic growth”***

Challenges	Opportunities
<p><b>Public transport in Stockport suffers from reliability and capacity issues, as well as poor access in the South and East of the Borough.</b></p> <p>Such issues create barriers to inclusion for those in poorly connected areas; as well as those experiencing issues with orbital connectivity and reaching jobs at the airport.</p>	<p><b>Improving public transport to those areas which currently face poor access to employment and other opportunities will enable more people to access higher value jobs helping to address Stockport’s productivity gap.</b></p> <p>Similarly, more residents will be able to access training and other amenities and services where currently access is limited.</p>
<p><b>Capacity improvements to the local railway network have struggled to keep up with demand.</b></p> <p>Such issues lead to several infrastructure pinch points which results in poor reliability and delays, and reductions in services.</p>	<p><b>Making public transport and active travel more attractive, will have a transformational effect on the commuting experience in Stockport making the area more attractive as a business and residential location which will in turn improve business performance and enhance access to employment nodes.</b></p>
<p><b>Stockport suffers from high levels of congestion.</b></p> <p>Traffic frequently accumulates along the A6, A34 and on the network surrounding the M60. Problems with congestion are exacerbated by high levels of vehicle ownership and single vehicle occupancy, as well as large flows of movements through Stockport into the wider GM city region and Cheshire.</p>	<p><b>Addressing congestion on key corridors would bring significant benefits to business in those locations who would access a larger pool of labour.</b></p> <p>Active Travel can help tackle congestion, reduce carbon emissions and promote healthy lifestyles.</p>
<p><b>Public transport in Stockport suffers from poor timetable coordination and a lack of ticketing integration.</b></p> <p>Such issues on the public transport network contribute to high levels of car usage and challenges for those who rely on public transport.</p>	<p><b>Through more effective integrated ticketing and timetabling there is an opportunity to increase modal shift away from cars and improve access to opportunities across the Borough.</b></p>
<p><b>Stockport has a lower proportion of trips made by active travel modes in comparison to the average for Greater Manchester.</b></p> <p>This low rate of active travel places additional demand on the public transport and highway networks. The challenge of retaining frequent</p>	<p><b>Active Travel is a win-win for Stockport it will help reduce congestion, reduce carbon emissions and promote healthier lifestyles.</b></p> <p>For an economically mobile workforce especially those in high value sectors the ability to be able to walk and cycle to work is a competitive</p>

high-speed connectivity to London directly from Stockport after HS2 commences is an important issue.	advantage which makes a location more attractive.
<b>Stockport's lack of Metrolink constrains accessibility to Manchester city centre, and other areas on the network (e.g. Ashton Town Centre, MediaCity, Trafford Park, East Didsbury etc) especially for those who do not live within proximity to a railway station.</b>	<p><b>Extension of Metrolink to Stockport would have a significant impact on the competitive position of Stockport as a location for both residents and business.</b></p> <p>Over the long-term this would help address the relative high age of the workforce as younger workers are attracted to locate in Stockport. Similarly, Stockport businesses will be able to reach a bigger potential labour supply.</p>
<p><b>Despite reasonable broadband coverage across the Borough some rural parts of Marple do lack Superfast access.</b></p> <p>Less than half of premises in some rural areas are able to access Superfast broadband speeds. There are some gaps in Ultrafast coverage in Stockport Town Centre, Bramhall, Hazel Grove and Marple.</p>	<p><b>Ensuring all parts of the Borough can access Superfast broadband will help address digital exclusion and improve access to education/employment /training opportunities.</b></p> <p>Furthermore, ensuring that all employment locations have access to Ultrafast speeds will boost productivity.</p>



Based on travel times from Stockport town centre, a population of 678,000 can be reached via public transport whilst a population of 3,795,000 can be reached by car. Whilst some areas have good connectivity within the borough and into Manchester, access to public transport can be severely limited in the south. With significant residential and commercial developments planned for Stockport, investment in the transport network will be fundamental in retaining Stockport's competitive advantage in terms of connectivity.

Some of the current investment in Stockport's public transport are shown in the diagram overleaf, these initiatives are crucial in underpinning the economic and inclusivity ambitions in the Plan.

## **Our priorities**

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- 1. Improved rail capacity, additional services, a redeveloped Stockport Station, new stations to unlock economic growth and ensure Stockport is HS2 ready.**
- 2. Improved public transport connectivity (including by bus, Metrolink and rail) to improve access to employment, training and business opportunities.**
- 3. Connectivity between key employment nodes and transport infrastructure to create competitive locations which attract inward investment and strengthen Stockport's position as a southern gateway to the wider GM economy.**
- 4. Facilitating active travel modes to improve access to employment and training opportunities, promote healthy lifestyles and improve air quality.**
- 5. Sustained investment in freight networks and infrastructure, enabling the Borough's businesses to reach wider markets.**

**Strong digital infrastructure provision which will be integral to the borough’s offer and competitiveness...**

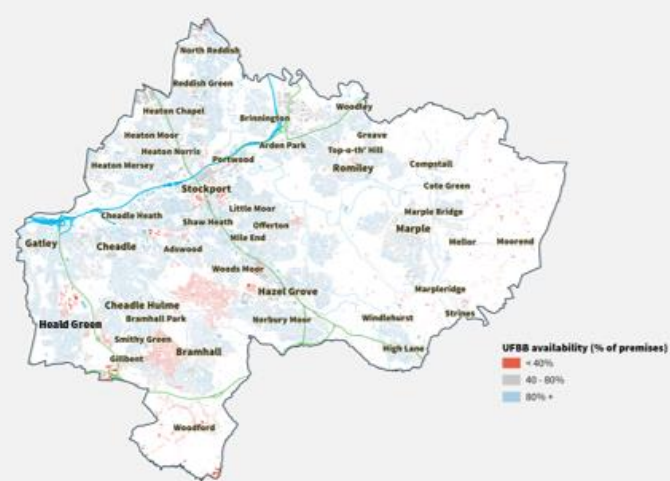
Digital connectivity across the borough is strong, with Superfast broadband coverage exceeding GM and national levels. Some rural parts of Marple do however lack sufficient Superfast coverage, with less than half of premises able to access Superfast broadband speeds.

The majority of Stockport is able to access even greater Ultrafast broadband speeds, although there are some gaps in accessibility in Stockport Town Centre, Bramhall, Hazel Grove and Marple.

Superfast Broadband availability



Ultrafast Broadband availability



Stockport’s digital connectivity performance, 2020

	Stockport	GM	England
% of premises with access to Superfast broadband	98.6%	97.7%	94.7%
% of premises with access to Ultra Fast Broadband	84.9%	75.9%	53.4%
% of places below the USO	0.2%	0.1%	0.7%

## What we will do

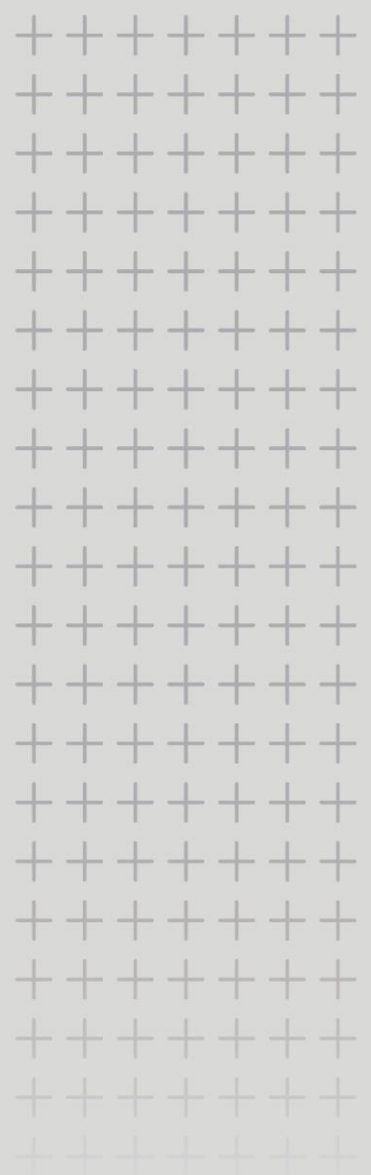
Action	Lead/Partners
<p><b>Improved rail capacity, additional services, a redeveloped Stockport Station, and new stations to unlock economic growth, and ensure Stockport is HS2 ready. We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take a multi-modal approach to transport in our new Transport Plan and work with industry partners to deliver improvements to the rail network.</li> <li>• Ensure that our Local Plan has planning policies which encourage the delivery of new rail infrastructure, including stations.</li> <li>• Continue to work closely with the rail industry and government to retain a high-speed rail connection to Stockport, and redevelop Stockport Station.</li> <li>• Support development of rail freight opportunities.</li> </ul>	SMBC/GMCA/TfGM/ Economic Alliance
<p><b>Improved public transport connectivity (including by bus, Metrolink and rail) to improve access to employment, training and business opportunities both within and outside of the Borough. We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take a multi-modal approach to transport in our new Transport Plan and work collaboratively to deliver the GM Bus Franchising scheme, delivering benefits early to Stockport where possible.</li> <li>• Ensure that our Local Plan has planning policies which support the delivery of public transport connectivity and require new developments to provide facilities for stopping and interchange.</li> <li>• Continue to work collaboratively to pursue connections to the Metrolink network.</li> <li>• Continue to work collaboratively with neighbouring authorities to identify opportunities for cross boundary improvements.</li> <li>• Continue to work to improve the affordability and integration of public transport ticketing and timetabling</li> <li>• Continue to work to improve connectivity to major employment sites, including in Stockport Town Centre, Manchester Airport, MediaCityUK and Trafford Park.</li> </ul>	SMBC/TfGM/GMCA/ Neighbouring Local Authorities
<p><b>Connectivity between key employment and transport infrastructure nodes create competitive locations which attract inward investment and strengthen Stockport's position as a southern gateway to the wider GM economy. We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take a multi-modal approach to transport in our new Transport Plan, and actively plan for improved transport connections to key employment, training and education locations.</li> </ul>	SMBC/TfGM

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that our Local Plan has planning policies which plan for new employment sites in well-connected locations.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Facilitating active travel modes to improve access to employment and training opportunities, promote healthy lifestyles and improve air quality. We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and raise awareness of local opportunities for cycle training and workforce/business travel planning amongst Stockport businesses Ensure that our Local Plan has planning policies which encourage the delivery of active travel infrastructure and reduced car dependency as part of all new developments</li> <li>• Continue to deliver active transport infrastructure investments as part of the GM Bee Network and other funding streams including the Towns Fund.</li> <li>• Demonstrate civic leadership by continuing to encourage use of active travel modes amongst staff through our Staff Travel Plan and supporting initiatives.</li> </ul>	<p>SMBC/TfGM/GMCA</p>
<p><b>Sustained investment in freight networks and infrastructure, enabling the borough's businesses to reach wider markets. We will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take a multi-modal approach to transport in our new Transport Plan and ensure that freight movements are considered</li> <li>• Ensure that our Local Plan has planning policies which support the movement of freight and encourages more sustainable freight opportunities for last mile deliveries.</li> <li>• Investigate the potential for transport hubs to support local deliveries.</li> <li>• Continue to ensure Stockport businesses are represented at the Greater Manchester Freight Forum.</li> <li>• Continue to maintain and improve the highway network to manage congestion, improve road safety and support the movement of freight.</li> </ul>	<p>SMBC/ GMCA/ TfGM/ Economic Alliance</p>

## How we will measure progress

Priority	Performance metric
Improved rail capacity, additional services, a redeveloped Stockport Station, new stations to unlock economic growth and ensure Stockport is HS2 ready.	TBC
Improved public transport connectivity (including by bus, Metrolink and rail) to improve access to employment, training and business opportunities.	% of workforce with access to rapid transit connections
Connectivity between key employment nodes and transport infrastructure to create competitive locations which attract inward investment and strengthen Stockport's position as a Southern Gateway to the wider GM economy.	# of inward investment inquiries
Facilitating active travel modes to improve access to employment and training opportunities, promote healthy lifestyles and improve air quality.	# of journeys completed by active travel modes # of journeys moving from private vehicles to active travel health indicators
Sustained investment in freight networks and infrastructure, enabling the Borough's businesses to reach wider markets.	# of Stockport businesses engaging with GM Freight Forum

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