

Bridport and West Bay Coastal Community Team Economic Plan



January 2016

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The Bridport and West Bay Coastal Community Team wishes to acknowledge the valuable input it received from many local businesses, community groups and residents during the work to create this Economic Plan. It is also grateful for the secretarial support that was provided by Bridport Town Council.

It acknowledges that funds enabling this plan to be produced were provided by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

The plan document was drafted for the Coastal Community Team by Brian Wilson, who was CCT Project Manager from October 2015 to January 2016.

Executive summary

In 2015 Bridport and West Bay successfully bid to become a recognised Coastal Community Team and, as such, received some funding from central Government to produce an Economic Plan for the area. The plan is being published at the end of January 2016 and will be subject to regular review.

The local area has a high percentage of people who are self-employed, who work part-time and who are retired. An above average share of its workforce are in skilled trades, caring/leisure, sales/customer services and elementary occupations, but a below average share are in professional, associate professional and administrative occupations.

The most significant business sectors are retail (18% of all businesses), construction (11%), accommodation and food (10%), professional and technical (10%), and arts, entertainment and recreation (8%). The economy depends considerably on tourism.

Local businesses, organisations and residents who participated in the consultation for this plan said particular strengths for the area's economy included the fabulous coastal scenery, independent shops and producers, Bridport's market, town events and having good places to eat or drink. Weaknesses included the lack of affordable housing, the loss of young people, a shortage of car parking, the seasonal nature of many jobs and low local wages.

Six priorities are identified within the Economic Plan, namely:

- Improving the environment at West Bay;
- Relieving parking pressures and reducing traffic congestion;
- Promoting the area's unique heritage;
- Enhancing workforce skills and employment opportunities;
- Creating employment space for start-ups and small businesses; and
- Supporting the value of the visitor economy.

The plan sets out twenty proposed actions or projects which seek to address these priorities over the period to 2020. Some are new initiatives and some are already in the pipeline. Some will require access to new funding resources and some can progress within existing resources.

Those actions or projects include:

- Upgrading car parks at West Bay, plus other environmental improvements;
- A feasibility study for a regular bus link between West Bay and Bridport;
- Creating a Visitor Interpretation Centre at West Bay Methodist Church;
- A Work Hub at Bridport's Literary and Scientific Institute building (East Street);

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- Making progress with plans to regenerate the St Michael's Trading Estate;
- Creating more apprenticeship opportunities, especially for young people; and
- Developing a Bridport town centre Wi-Fi network.

These and other projects aim to deliver new business opportunities, additional jobs, better access to job opportunities, an improved visitor experience and higher visitor spend (including outside the main tourist season).

The final section of the plan describes measures being put in place to monitor progress and to assist with its delivery. These will involve a range of local organisations from the public, private and community sectors.

Introduction

This Economic Plan has been prepared during Autumn and Winter 2015/16 following a successful application made to the Department for Communities and Local Government, which resulted in the area receiving Coastal Community Team (CCT) status and £10,000 of initial funding.

The Bridport and West Bay Coastal Community Team partnership was formed (see the membership list below) to oversee production of this Economic Plan, including agreement of the plan's priorities. A part-time project manager was appointed to undertake the activities leading up to the plan, which included:

- Establish and update a CCT web presence, with the Town Council;
- Desk review of other strategies and plans relevant to the area;
- Analyse economic data to inform understanding of the area;
- Design, manage and analyse results of a (mainly online) survey;
- Run workshops aimed at local businesses and community groups;
- Explore opportunities for appropriate plan actions; and
- Draft the Economic Plan document.

Information gathered about the area's economic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats has been used to identify a set of six Economic Plan priorities. These, in turn, form the basis for a set of actions which will be taken forward, either directly by the CCT or by other local organisations.

This Economic Plan will therefore shape efforts over the next three years to sustain, promote and enhance the economy of Bridport and West Bay. Those efforts will be subject to regular monitoring and review, as noted in the final section of this document.

| Governance information | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Point of contact | Bob Gillis (Town Clerk) Bridport Town Council Mountfield, Rax Lane Bridport Dorset, DT6 3JP |
| CCT membership | Richard Smith (Chair) Bridport Chamber of Trade & Commerce Scott Condliffe |

Bridport and West Bay Coastal Community Team: Economic Plan

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|---|--|
| | <p>Bridport and District Tourism Association</p> <p>Mike Nicks West Bay Community Forum</p> <p>Maureen Jackson Bridport Local Area Partnership</p> <p>Cllr Ros Kayes Dorset County Councillor</p> <p>Cllr Dave Rickard West Dorset District Councillor</p> <p>Sarah Williams Town Councillor and Bridport Area Development Trust</p> |
| <p>Standing invitation to attend meetings</p> | <p>Trevor Hedger Senior Economic Regeneration Officer, West Dorset District Council</p> <p>The two neighbouring coastal Parish Councils for Burton Bradstock and for Symondsburry</p> |
| <p>Accountable body (for the period up to January 2016)</p> | <p>West Dorset District Council South Walks House South Walks Road Dorchester Dorset, DT1 1UZ</p> |

Description of the area

General description

As a medium sized market town, Bridport has an important retail and service function, serving a wider rural hinterland in West Dorset. One and a half miles to its south, on Lyme Bay, is the popular harbour and seaside destination of West Bay with its spectacular sandstone (to the east) and clay (to the west) cliffs.

By any standards, the natural environment can be described as 'special', situated on the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site and surrounded by the West Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Coastal tourism plays a key part in the economy and has recently benefitted from being the main filming location for the 'Broadchurch' TV series.

Bridport has been known for rope making since the thirteenth century, a heritage that is still evident in its central street layout and buildings. Many of today's businesses are based on the town's seven light industrial or trading estates, including (still) some rope and net making firms.

The town hosts a popular, twice weekly street market and a monthly farmers' market, the latter winning the 2015 Dorset Best Farmers' Market award. Its high street area retains a high proportion of independent retailers. There are a large number of arts, crafts and antique businesses, as well as many local food producers.

The area is home to a healthy mix of long-term residents and more recent arrivals. Its two main arts venues are Bridport Arts Centre and the Electric Palace, and there are various annual events or festivals. The extent of community activity and volunteering is often cited, including initiatives such as the Community Orchard and Community Development Trust, plus many clubs, societies and groups.

In 2013 The Times listed Bridport as one of the 30 best towns to live and BBC Countryfile nominated it as one of the UK's top 10 market towns.

"This is a market town with chutzpah; the street market hums with activity, and Bridport's independent retailers are holding up strongly." (The Times newspaper)

The main access route is the A35 trunk road, which runs past the town from east to west. The nearest rail heads to London and the south east are at Crewkerne and Dorchester, some 12 and 15 miles distant respectively.

Location

The map below shows the general location of Bridport in west Dorset and on the A35 between Dorchester and Honiton. West Bay is immediately to its south on the coast at Lyme Bay.

Map1: Location of Bridport and West Bay



Source: ONS Open Geography using an OS map base.

Map 2 (overleaf) then shows the boundary of the Town Council parished area. Although the Economic Plan has been drawn up primarily for this area, it is recognised that the economic footprint of the town is larger. Delivery of this plan will also bring benefits to the town hinterland.

Map 2: Bridport Town Council (parished) boundary



Note: This remains the boundary of the Town Council area, though District and County electoral boundaries have been changed since 2011. The source is Open Street Map.

Analysis of the economy

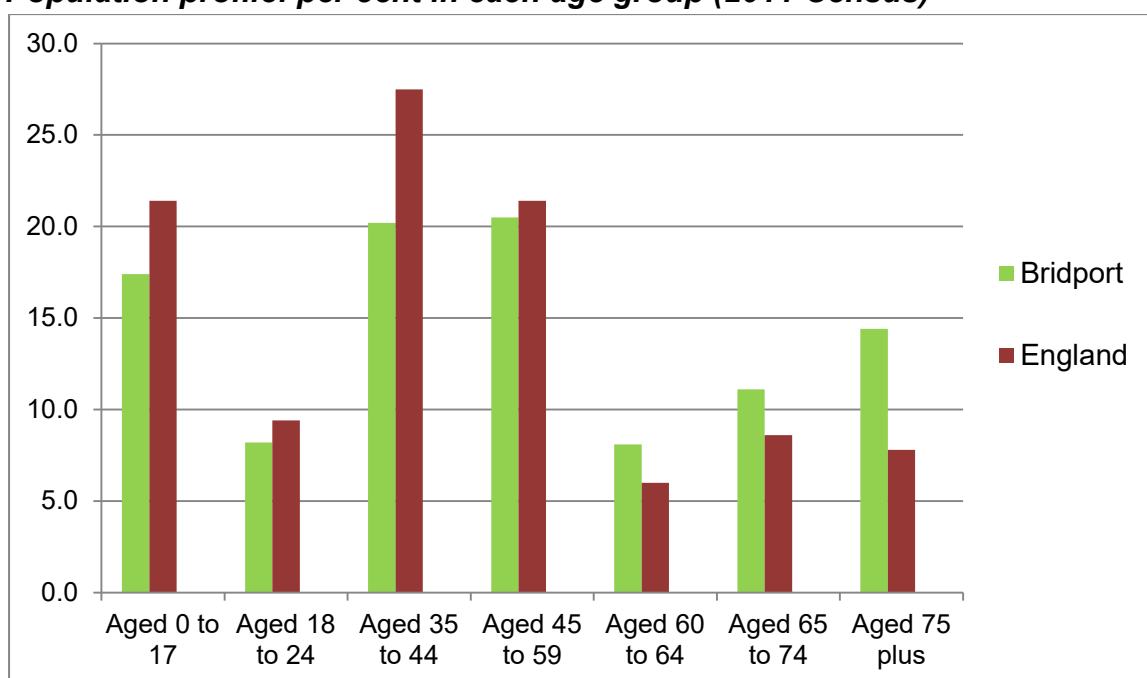
This section summarises some analysis that was undertaken of Census and other statistics. The full write up of that analysis is available to download on the Bridport and West Bay Coastal Community Team web page.

Demography

At the time of the 2011 Census there were 8,332 residents living within the Town Council boundary in 4,029 households. The population of the wider built-up area was 13,986 residents, which takes in parts of neighbouring parishes. The population grew by 7.8% over the decade 2001 to 2011 which is close to the national average.

In common with many coastal areas a disproportionate share of the population is formed by older age groups (see chart below).

Population profile: per cent in each age group (2011 Census)



Economic activity

A distinctive feature, comparing Bridport with national figures, are the high percentages of 16 to 74 year olds who are:

- Self-employed (14.4%); or
- Part-time employees (17.0%); or
- Retired (18.8%).

Indeed, taking only those who are in employment of some sort, 37% of them can be classified as working part-time or up to 30 hours per week.

Another feature is the profile of the population in terms of qualifications (see table below). There are relatively few with degree level qualifications and over a quarter with no qualifications.

Highest qualification level of residents aged 16 or over (2011 Census)

| | Bridport | West Dorset | England |
|--------------------------------------|----------|-------------|---------|
| No qualifications | 26.0% | 20.1% | 22.5% |
| Level 1 1-4 GCSEs or equivalent | 15.8% | 12.6% | 13.3% |
| Level 2 5+ GCSEs at grade C | 16.4% | 16.5% | 15.2% |
| Apprenticeships | 4.2% | 4.4% | 3.6% |
| Level 3 2+ A levels or equivalent | 11.5% | 11.8% | 12.4% |
| Level 4 Degree or higher | 22.3% | 30.8% | 27.4% |
| Other qualifications | 3.7% | 3.9% | 5.7% |
| Totals | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

To some extent this pattern is reflected in the occupational structure of the labour force. Compared with the national profile Bridport and West Bay have:

- A high proportion working in skilled trades, caring/leisure, sales/customer services and elementary occupations; but
- A low proportion working in professions, associate technical/professional and administrative/secretarial occupations.

At £457 per week, West Dorset has a low figure for average gross pay of those in full time employment. The England average is £523.

Business profile

Four-fifths of businesses in Bridport and West Bay are ‘micro’ businesses, with fewer than 10 employees. This, however, is not exceptional if compared with the national picture. What does stand out is the high proportion of local businesses classified as ‘small’, with between 10 and 49 employees. ‘Large’ businesses with 250 or more employees are entirely absent.

Well over half of all businesses in Bridport and West Bay fall into five sectors. They are:

- Retail businesses (18%);
- Construction businesses (11%);
- Accommodation and food businesses (10%);
- Professional, technical and scientific businesses (10%);
- Arts, entertainment and recreation businesses (8%).

Compared with the national economy, the area has a high proportion of businesses in the retail, accommodation/food and manufacturing sectors.

County Council estimates are that 9% of jobs in Bridport and West Bay are in tourism and leisure businesses, so depend specifically on the visitor economy. It should be noted that various other local jobs will be in businesses which derive some of their income from tourist expenditure (whether directly or indirectly).

Deprivation

According to the Government's 2015 English Indices of Deprivation there are pockets of deprivation within Bridport.

The North Allington/Court Orchard neighbourhood has the highest deprivation score of any neighbourhood within West Dorset district and it falls in the highest scoring 20% of neighbourhoods nationally.

Travel to work

At the time of the 2011 Census there were 4,578 people employed within the Town Council area. Unsurprisingly, this means there is a net inflow of commuters to the Town Council area, with more people coming to it than leaving it for work.

Within the Town Council area, there are relatively high percentages travelling to work on foot, by bike or as a car passenger, as well as working from home (see table 2). The means of travel for those arriving from further away may, of course, be quite different.

Travel to work mode for residents in employment aged 16 to 74 (2011 Census)

| | Bridport | West Dorset | England |
|------------------|----------|-------------|---------|
| Work from home | 7.4% | 10.1% | 5.4% |
| Drive car or van | 52.2% | 60.8% | 57.0% |
| Car passenger | 6.1% | 4.5% | 5.0% |
| Cycle | 4.4% | 2.5% | 3.0% |
| Walk | 25.2% | 17.0% | 10.7% |
| Bus | 2.1% | 1.7% | 7.5% |
| Other | 2.5% | 3.5% | 11.4% |
| Totals | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

Note: 'Other' includes motorbike, moped, train, taxi and more.

More than half of Bridport and West Bay residents travel only a short distance to work (up to 2 kms), which is well above the national average. In that sense, it can be said to have a fairly self-contained labour market.

Businesses and community views

Consulting local interests

Considerable efforts were made to ensure that local businesses, community groups and residents had the opportunity to input to this Economic Plan. This included:

- Two workshops, one held in Bridport early evening and one held at West Bay during a morning; and
- A questionnaire survey, with online responses encouraged, though paper copies were also made available.

These were advertised through an email circulated by local networks, a press release, publically displayed notices and notification on the town website.

The main purpose of the workshops and survey was to gather views about the local economy and what participants saw as its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities or threats (SWOT). This, along with the statistical analysis, was to help inform the choice of plan priorities. Participants were also asked about any ideas they had for actions or projects which could be taken forward by the Economic Plan.

Survey responses

Those responding to the CCT survey considered that the main problems with the local economy were (in order):

- High house prices (to buy or rent);
- The loss of young people;
- The low level of local wages;
- There being few local job opportunities; and
- A shortage of car parking spaces.

Conversely, the survey respondents considered that the main strengths of the local economy were (in order):

- The attractive natural environment;
- Bridport's market;
- Local events and festivals;
- Arts and leisure facilities; and
- Cafes, bars and restaurants.

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT)

The SWOT analysis derives from material that was gathered at the workshops. It is summarised below. This summary lists only the more commonly mentioned issues and is not intended to be a full listing.

Strengths and opportunities

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| <p>Strengths (apparent now):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Coastal and landscape sceneryIndependent shops and producersBridport's marketTown eventsGood places to eat and drinkStrong community spiritQuirky character and styleLoyal visitors who returnPresence of holiday parksMany family run businessesTourism boost from TV features | <p>Opportunities (for the future):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Re-use of West Bay Methodist ChapelScope to improve public transportScope to make West Bay prettierRe-development at St Michael'sCulturally led regenerationScope to diversify economyFind opportunities for young peoplePossibilities for water sportsAbility of voluntary groups |
|---|--|

Weaknesses and threats

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Weaknesses (apparent now):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Lack of affordable housingLoss of young peopleShortage of car parkingSeasonal nature of many jobsLow level of local wagesOver dependency on tourismPoor facilities for visitorsPoor transport linksUnder-funded servicesSome resistance to change | <p>Threats (in the future):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Rising sea levels and coastal erosionAn ageing populationLack of infrastructure for growthRising traffic and road congestionLack of public investmentHigh street impact of online retailing |
|---|---|

Helpfully, there is very significant overlap between the survey and workshop results.

Other consultation material

The CCT was also able to draw upon consultation material from early 2015 which was collected for the area's Neighbourhood Plan. This concluded that affordable housing, job opportunities and transport infrastructure were the three priorities of local people. Respondents to that exercise wanted, amongst other things, to see actions that would:

- Support the area's employment base;
- Promote the heritage of the area;
- Provide support for local shops;
- Ease traffic and car parking problems;
- Provide opportunities for young people; and
- Provide low cost housing.

Some further material came from Year Ten Pupils at the local secondary school (The Sir John Colfox Academy) on Democracy Day 2013. Issues raised by the pupils relevant to the Economic Plan were:

- Improving bus services;
- Supporting local businesses;
- Helping young people find employment;
- Encouraging visitors to Bridport museum;
- Putting on more local events (including music events); and
- Encouraging a wider range of shops.

Other strategies and plans

It is important for the Bridport and West Bay Economic Plan to take proper account of other economic strategies and plans that affect the area. As far as possible, these need to be aligned with each other and working towards the same or complementary objectives. Moreover, these other strategies and plans may provide opportunities for future actions and, in some cases, funding.

Western Dorset Economic Plan (WDDC)

West Dorset District Council, together with Weymouth & Portland Borough Council and North Dorset District Council, are completing an economic plan for the period 2015 to 2030. Whilst a key focus is the Growth Corridor between Dorchester, Weymouth and Portland, it also identifies Rural Dorset Growth Towns of which Bridport is one. The town is seen as having potential for growth and proposals for a Work Hub at the Literary and Scientific Institute building are cited.

The District offer some business support services, often signposting to or brokered through partner organisations, to help businesses start-up, grow in or relocate to the area. Its Economic Regeneration team co-ordinates this effort, which includes helping bring forward employment sites, developing the business support offer, promoting the area to inward investors and promoting it to tourists.

It is also noted that West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland Councils have recently adopted a joint Local Plan. That document contains planning policies to support the economy and allocate land for future employment use, including 4 hectares at Vearse Farm on the western side of Bridport.

Dorset Strategic Economic Plan (LEP)

Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is the strategic economic partnership for the county and neighbouring Bournemouth/Poole conurbation. Its priorities are set out in the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) – entitled Transforming Dorset – although this document is currently being revised. Investment programmes are delivered under the Dorset Growth Deal, which combines £79 million of local, national, EU and private sector funding. Whilst much LEP work focuses on larger urban centres, certain elements have obvious relevance to Bridport and West Bay.

The Dorset LEP intends to pilot a programme that will support the county's Growth Towns which, as noted above, is a classification the district council applies to Bridport. Its broad aim will be to marshal existing resources, to re-invigorate smaller towns and their role in the county's economy.

The LEP's EU investment programme (ESIF) recognises the potential to increase productivity and employment in rural businesses dependent on tourism. There may well be a further LEP call for rural tourism grant funding during 2016 (using money from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development). If this follows the previous call, it will target tourism businesses, land owners, diversifying farmers and communities, for projects to develop visitor attractions, events and festivals, and related small-scale infrastructure.

Dorset Destination Management Plan

The Dorset DMP was produced by the Dorset LEP, which is establishing a new Destination Management Organisation to take it forward. Its efforts will largely be around destination marketing, visitor information and branding of the county, as well as working with others to promote the area to inward investors.

Other Dorset Coastal Community Teams

There are five CCT initiatives within Dorset. Four, like the Bridport and West Bay CCT, cover local areas. The fifth (Dorset CCT) is dealing with a larger stretch of the remaining coastline. This might present future opportunities to co-ordinate effort and take forward joint actions or funding bids.

Southern Dorset LEADER

The Southern Dorset Local Action Group manages the LEADER programme across this area, according to its Local Development Strategy 2014 – 2020. It will seek applications and offer grants towards innovative and sustainable projects that assist growth in the rural economy. It is particularly suited to small-scale projects and they must fall within one of six programme themes, namely:

- Support for micro and small businesses (including farm diversification);
- Support to improve productivity in the farming sector;
- Support to improve productivity in the forestry sector;
- Support for rural tourism initiatives or enterprises;
- Support to improve the provision of rural services and facilities; and
- Support for cultural and heritage activities.

Vision 2030 Neighbourhood Plan

Vision 2030 is the Neighbourhood Plan being produced for the Bridport Town Council area, plus the four adjoining parishes of Allington, Bothenhampton & Walditch, Bradpole and Symondsborne. Work on the plan is at a relatively early stage, but objectives have been set and efforts to determine appropriate plan policies are underway. The plan should be drawn up by the end of 2016.

The three economic objectives under Vision 2030 are:

- To facilitate the expansion of the local economy, extending opportunities for established local and for new businesses, ensuring that our economy is robust with high quality jobs and skills;
- To maintain, protect and enhance the independent nature and vitality of our town centre;
- To encourage sustainable tourism which uses local services, facilities and locally produced goods, creating an accessible and attractive destination for visitors and local people.

Bridport Town Plan

Bridport Town Council has a Town Plan which sets out its priorities, as well as the services and projects it will deliver. It is also a basis for its financial planning and promotional activities. Town Plan objectives of particular relevance are:

- The efficient management of physical assets i.e. land and buildings;
- Managing, developing and promoting the town's market;
- Promoting the town through publicity and events;
- Protecting and enhancing the town's natural and built environment; and
- Developing partnerships with businesses, local groups and agencies to improve the wellbeing of the town and its residents.

The existing Town Plan is under review and a new one covering the period 2015 to 2019 will soon be adopted. The Town Council will be looking to see how it can best support local businesses.

Bridport Local Area Partnership

BLAP is one of five area partnerships in West Dorset, in this case covering Bridport town and ten nearby rural parishes. It has leverage through its wide membership, which includes those town/parish councils and around ninety community groups or individuals. Its work is guided by a Steering Group. BLAP: assists networking and information exchange between members; engages with service providers about local area needs; and feeds information up to the West Dorset Partnership to influence district or county level decisions.

BLAP prepares a Local Area Community Plan and an annual Action Plan. Its areas of interest include employment, skills training, tourism, transport and infrastructure.

Economic Plan priorities

The context for our Economic Plan priorities can be summed up thus:

- We have a fabulous asset in our natural environment, being located at the heart of England's only natural World Heritage Site;
- We have a creative and active community whose enterprise – not least in local foods, the arts and crafts – brings distinctiveness to our retail and tourist offer;
- We recognise a need to diversify our economy, with a sustainable balance between tourism-based businesses and other sectors, including knowledge-based sectors;
- We know we have to do more to retain our young people, providing them with attractive opportunities for living, working and leisure in the area;
- We want local economic growth that respects our environment and supports a reduction in carbon emissions; and
- We want to ensure the area retains maximum benefit from local economic growth, by supporting independent local businesses, market traders and local supply chains. Wherever possible actions taken forward under this Plan should use local suppliers, local providers and local labour, to grow the area's economic resilience.

Six priorities have been identified for this Economic Plan. They are as follows.

1. Improving the environment at West Bay

West Bay, with its working harbour and famous cliffs on the Jurassic Coast, is a very special location. There is, however, widespread recognition that action is needed to improve the quality of its built environment. This would benefit local residents and the visitor economy. A programme of environmental improvements would enable West Bay to show its best face. It will be vital that this respects the semi-rural and attractively quirky character of the place.

2. Relieving parking pressures and reducing traffic congestion

Both Bridport and West Bay experience serious pressure from traffic, as does the A35 trunk road which runs past them, notably in the summer season. Car parks struggle to accommodate visitors and shoppers, resulting in a loss of trade. Roads become congested and easily blocked, including the main access road to West Bay. In a rural location, car dependency is hardly surprising, but with infrastructure constraints we must try to provide people with an alternative means of transport.

3. Promoting the area's unique heritage

The area could make more of its history, including rope making, the harbour at West Bay and many attractive older buildings. These should form a key part of the area's visitor offer and they have potential to attract visitors outside peak months. Proposals for a heritage interpretation centre at the West Bay Methodist Church and for a major redevelopment of the Bridport Town Museum present significant and tangible opportunities.

4. Enhancing workforce skills and employment opportunities

Too many local jobs can be classed as low skill and low paying jobs. Yet at the same time some of our employers cite local skills shortages. We need to support facilities or initiatives that will provide school leavers, working age residents and those with the capacity to continue working irrespective of age, with workforce and enterprise skills, especially where this would equip them for local job opportunities or enable them to start up new businesses.

5. Creating employment space for start-ups and small businesses

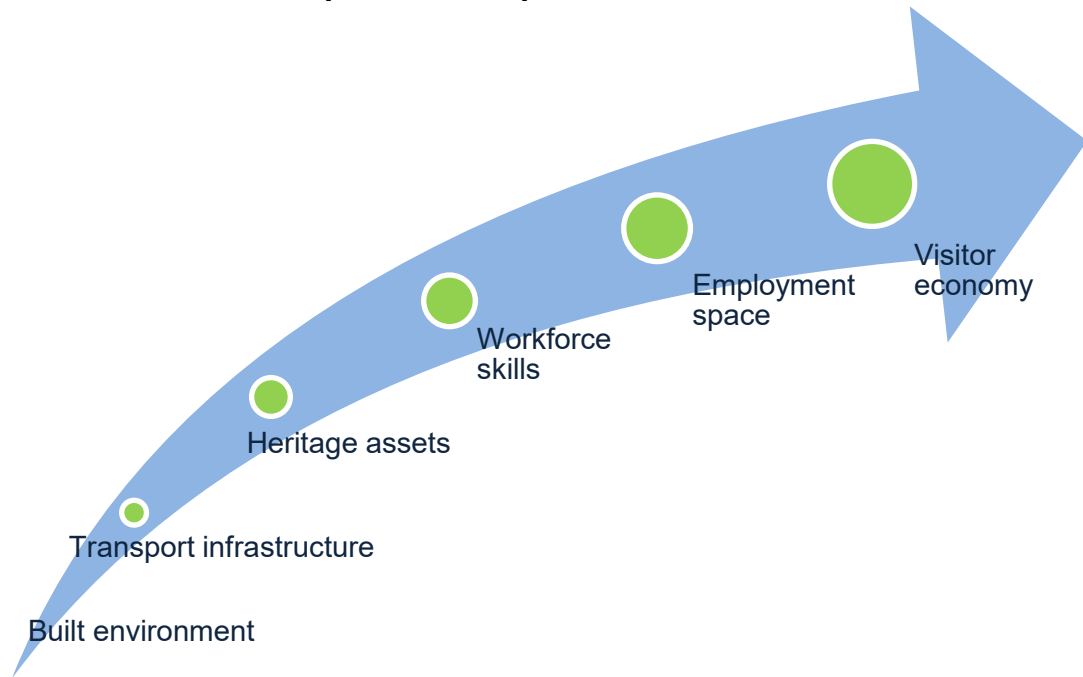
Our local economy needs to be forward-looking and provide workspace for knowledge-based, high-tech and IT-driven businesses to start up in or locate to the area. The arrival of superfast broadband offers opportunities, despite limitations in its reach to some outlying areas. Business incubation centres are an approach offering the type of flexible workspace, resources and networks that are required by many entrepreneurs, freelancers and micro-businesses.

6. Supporting the value of the visitor economy

Given the importance of tourism within the local economy, the area must avoid complacency about its future. We need to refresh the way in which the area promotes itself to potential visitors and improve the visitor experience. This should improve the online offer, as well as securing the future of the Tourist Information Centre.

One further key issue is undoubtedly the need for affordable housing to buy or to rent. A downside of the area's popularity is that house prices are beyond the reach of many young people and many on modest incomes. We support the work to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for the wider Bridport area, as that (rather than the Economic Plan) will be the appropriate vehicle for addressing this particular concern.

Our Economic Plan: six prioritised topics for a better future



Economic Plan actions and delivery

This section describes the actions (or projects) which the Economic Plan proposes to deliver, or help to deliver, in order to address the priorities that have been set out above. All are considered to be valuable in their own right and in combination they should make a substantive difference to the future economic prospects of Bridport and West Bay.

These actions are each considered by the CCT to be realistic, deliverable and sustainable. Some, however, will depend upon accessing extra funding, typically through a successful grant application.

Since not all these actions can be costed accurately at this stage the descriptions below give an indication of scale, where (£) is low cost up to £20,000, (££) is medium cost between £20,000 and £100,000 and (£££) is high cost over £100,000.

Priority 1: Improving the environment at West Bay

Three actions with differing timescales will seek to make a sustained improvement to the environment at West Bay, for the benefit of both visitors and residents.

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| Action: 1A | <i>Short term project to benefit the West Bay environment</i> |
| Description: | The provision of planters and planting at West Bay, to make the area more welcoming and attractive to visitors. |
| Lead body and partner: | West Bay Community Forum, working with Bridport Town Council |
| Timescale: | Planter purchase by March 2016. Planting in Spring 2016. |
| Estimated funding requirement: (£) | £3,000 from the initial CCT funding that has been provided by the Department for Communities & Local Government. This will be used to purchase the planters. It is likely that planting will be sponsored by local businesses. |
| Economic benefits: | Volunteer effort, organised by the Community Forum, will maintain the flowers and planters. |
| Performance measures: | See project A3 below, which is the larger programme of environmental improvements. In total, they are intended to: encourage more visitor footfall at West Bay; and increase the number of returning visitors. |
| Links with other | This small project is for initial works, prior to a more |

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| initiatives: | substantive programme of environmental improvements proposed for West Bay (subject to funding). |
| Comments: | It is considered important that some of the initial CCT funding is used to make a tangible difference and demonstrate intent. |

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| Action: 1B | <i>Major improvement of the West Bay play area</i> |
| Description: | Extension of the site to provide a fully accessible play area with similar structures to the existing area, built to enable everyone to use them and a picnic area. |
| Lead body and partners: | Bridport Town Council in partnership with Bridport Young Persons Action Trust (BYPAT). Local schools and Flood Lane Day Centre are helping determine the equipment for those with a physical or learning disability. |
| Timescale: | Works are due to begin in March 2016 and to complete May 2016. |
| Estimated funding requirement: (££) | The total project cost is estimated at £100,000. Funding contributions come from Dorset County Council's Short Breaks Budget (for children with disabilities), the Olympic Legacy Fund (administered by the County Council), West Dorset District Council, Bridport Town Council, Bridport Round Table, Bridport Lions Club and BYPAT, plus donations from other local businesses and charities. West Dorset Mencap is helping fund equipment for those with a learning disability. |
| Economic benefits: | The improved play area will add to the attraction of West Bay as a visitor destination for all family members, whatever their age. |
| Performance measures: | There is significantly increased usage of the play area, including by visiting families and disability groups. Positive assessment of user groups and individuals. |
| Links with other initiatives: | This should be seen as linked with the proposed environmental improvement programme (1C) at West Bay. Action 2B on upgrading car parks should consider the provision of parking spaces for wheelchair users. The action is also linked to Special Educational Needs targets of Dorset County Council. |

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| Comments: | This action has clear plans and funding for delivery over coming months. It will contribute to the environmental improvements at West Bay. The fully inclusive and accessible play area is expected to be the first in the South West region to be accredited under the Plan Inclusive Play Area (PIPA) assessment guidelines. |
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| Action: 1C | <i>Programme of environmental improvements at West Bay</i> |
| Description: | Undertake a major programme of improvements to West Bay, to address a set of identified priority issues, which will ensure an attractive local environment for visitors and residents alike. The West Bay Community Forum is consulting about local priorities, which are expected to relate to at least some of the following: visitor amenities; greening/smartening the environment; new (small) physical structures; heritage interpretation; and road/car park improvements. |
| Lead body and partners: | Bridport Town Council, with West Bay Community Forum and West Dorset District Council |
| Timescale: | Draw up business case and funding bid by early 2017 (or sooner if the funding deadlines require it). Commence improvement works during 2017/18, in line with the next round of the Coastal Communities Fund. Works are expected to span at least two financial years. |
| Estimated funding requirement: (£££) | Detailed costings will be generated by work to draw up the business case and funding bid. It is, however, likely this will be a bid in the range up to £1,000,000 (when combined with the linked action 2B to upgrade West Bay car parks). This action and 2B are expected to be the subject of a future bid to the Coastal Communities Fund, which is currently managed for Government by the Big Lottery Fund. |
| Economic benefits: | Environmental improvements at West Bay are intended to result in more visitor footfall and to increase the number of returning visitors. This will create economic benefits for local businesses in the tourism and related sectors, including additional jobs. |
| Performance measures: | A successful major funding bid by 2017, which reflects the views of local businesses and residents. Ultimately, an increase in visitor numbers, which is reflected in |

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| | better trading conditions for local tourism businesses. |
| Links with other initiatives: | Action 2B is a part of this action, though is shown separately below because of its contribution to Economic Plan priority number two on transport. This action follows on from some initial (small) improvement work, which is action 1A. |
| Comments: | The priority topics are being identified with local residents and businesses. They will be subject to further specification. |

Priority 2: Relieving parking pressures and reducing traffic congestion

Three actions will bring about a much-needed upgrade of car parks at West Bay, as well as improving public transport provision and facilities in the area.

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| Action: 2A | <i>New Minibus Link between Bridport and West Bay</i> |
| Description: | Feasibility study to establish a new regular bus (or minibus) service, linking West Bay with Bridport town centre and one or two other service locations, such as the community hospital. The aim is both to improve access for those without their own transport and to encourage those with a car to switch mode. It may be able to make better use of vehicles currently in use for just part of the day e.g. for travel to/from school. |
| Lead body and partners: | Bridport Town Council with Dorset County Council, Western Area Transport Action Group and other partners |
| Timescale: | Commence feasibility study in Autumn 2016 and complete it by Spring 2017. |
| Estimated funding requirement: (£) | Possible (match-funding) contribution has been identified from the Divisional Funding Pot which is delegated to Dorset County Councillors. A further funding source for the feasibility study is required. It is envisaged the service would be mainly self-funding (through fares) once established, though it may well require some subsidy off-season and off-peak. This should be tested by the feasibility project. |
| Economic benefits: | This would make it easier for visitors to West Bay to reach the coast by public transport (even if car parks near the coast are full). It would equally make it easier for visitors at West Bay to visit Bridport town centre, bringing benefit to its shops, cafes |

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| | and other businesses. The service would improve access to local job opportunities for those without their own car. |
| Performance measures: | Feasibility study to complete on time and identify a way forward. Levels of patronage of the new bus (or minibus) service. Extent of financial self-sufficiency of the new service. |
| Links with other initiatives: | The Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Local Transport Plan has objectives: to provide people with choices for greener travel; and to provide realistic alternatives to the private car. There is a clear link with 2C since the service would call at Bridport bus station. |
| Comments: | The feasibility study will consider the scope for this service to be provided by a locally-based operator. |

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| Action: 2B | <i>Upgrade of West Bay car parks</i> |
| Description: | Assess how best to improve the quality and capacity of car parks and then implement the identified solutions. This to include the better marking out of parking bays in existing car parks so as to enhance their capacity. The scope for creating 'pop-up' car parks will also be explored, since this could either increase capacity at peak times or offer an interim solution. |
| Lead body and partners: | West Dorset District Council, working with Bridport Town Council and the West Bay Community Forum |
| Timescale: | Draw up business case and funding bid by Spring 2017 (or sooner if funding deadlines require it). Commence improvement works during 2017/18, in line with the next round of the Coastal Communities Fund. |
| Estimated funding requirement: (£££) | Detailed costings will be created through work to draw up the business case and funding bid. This project (together with 1C) is expected to be the subject of a future bid to the Coastal Communities Fund, managed for Government by the Big Lottery Fund. It is likely this would be match-funded by West Dorset District Council as owner of the car parks. |
| Economic benefits: | It has been estimated that increasing capacity at West Bay car parks could enable at least 50 extra cars (with 100+ visitors) to |

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| | <p>park properly at the location during peak times, where they will use local businesses.</p> <p>Both this and making improvements to the quality of car parks will encourage visitors to make return visits, thus benefitting the tourism economy.</p> |
| Performance measures: | <p>Increase in the number of bays at West Bay car parks. Increasing purchase of car parking tickets (estimated contribution to).</p> |
| Links with other initiatives: | <p>It is envisaged that this action will be taken forward as part of project 1C, which is a programme of environmental improvements at West Bay.</p> <p>West Dorset District Council is producing a Parking Plan, an aim of which is to improve the quality of car parks. There is also a need to look at car parks and car parking provision in the town centre.</p> |
| Comments: | <p>This has the support of a large number of organisations in the area including all those represented on the CCT.</p> |

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| Action: 2C | <i>Renovate facilities at Bridport bus station</i> |
| Description: | <p>This will renovate the bus station at Tannery Road in Bridport, improving its facilities (such as passenger information) and making it a more attractive place to arrive or wait. This is important for regular bus users and for travellers visiting by coach. The aim is to turn it into a small public transport hub, where it is easier for passengers to make connections. Given the adjacent car park, more might be done to encourage drivers to switch mode.</p> |
| Lead body and partners: | <p>West Dorset District Council (as site owner and planning authority), with Dorset County Council (as local transport authority) and Bridport Town Council. Local bus service operators would also be partners.</p> |
| Timescale: | <p>Delivery by end 2018</p> |
| Estimated funding requirement: (££) | <p>There is not yet an estimate of costs or an allocated budget. Costs are thought likely to fall into the medium category.</p> |
| Economic benefits: | <p>Improvements to the bus station would provide a more attractive gateway to Bridport for arriving visitors and</p> |

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| | <p>shoppers.</p> <p>Making the bus station more of a travel hub, with interchange facilities, should encourage bus travel and help address traffic congestion and parking concerns, both of which result in economic costs for the area.</p> |
| Performance measures: | <p>An increase in bus service patronage to/from Bridport.</p> <p>Greater use of the site by coaches and their passengers.</p> |
| Links with other initiatives: | <p>There is a link with action 2A, which seeks to create a regular minibuss service between West Bay and key Bridport locations.</p> <p>There are links with the Bridport Town Plan, the Local Transport Plan and potentially the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> |
| Comments: | <p>This has long been an aspiration of the Town Council. The land is owned by West Dorset District Council and proposals would be taken forward with them.</p> |

Priority 3: Promoting the area's unique heritage

Three actions will seek to make more of the area's fascinating history and heritage, with a major upgrade of facilities in Bridport and a new facility in West Bay.

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| Action: 3A | <i>Visitor interpretation centre</i> |
| Description: | <p>Restoration and conversion of the (disused) Grade II Listed Methodist Church at West Bay, turning into an all weather visitor interpretation centre which celebrates the history of the harbour and its setting within the fabulous environment of the Jurassic Heritage Coast. The aim is to make it a visitor experience which appeals to different age groups, including educational groups (schools and universities) and young children.</p> |
| Lead body and partner: | <p>Bridport Area Development Trust, working with Bridport Town Council</p> |
| Timescale: | <p>The timescale could be dependent upon future application rounds to the Coastal Revival Fund.</p> <p>The broad aim, however, is to secure the major funding partner by early 2017 and to complete works in time to open for the 2018 visitor season.</p> |
| Estimated funding | <p>There is an existing proposal with a budget requirement of</p> |

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| <p>requirement: (£££)</p> | <p>£115,000. The Trust has £20,000 from the District Council.</p> <p>A probable way forward for the remainder is an application to a future round of the Coastal Revival Fund, managed by HLF, though other grant stream possibilities exist. There is scope to raise some of the likely match-funding required through crowdfunding.</p> |
| <p>Economic benefits:</p> | <p>Jobs would be created to staff the centre.</p> <p>It will create a year round visitor attraction, bringing people into West Bay out of season. It will keep visitors in West Bay by offering a “wet weather” attraction.</p> <p>The centre will publicise and signpost people to other tourism businesses in the West Bay area.</p> <p>It will safeguard one of the most prominent and unique buildings in West Bay, bringing it back into productive use.</p> <p>Its educational offer will contribute long term economic value.</p> |
| <p>Performance measures:</p> | <p>Visitor numbers at the centre, including in off peak months. Use of the centre by schools and children’s groups. Feedback from nearby tourist businesses and attractions.</p> |
| <p>Links with other initiatives:</p> | <p>This has various links with actions falling under objective one on improving the West Bay environment and objective six on supporting the visitor economy. It also links with action 3C, given the hope that the town heritage trail can extend to West Bay.</p> <p>Other related documents are: Dorset Coast Forum, Dorset Coast Strategy 2011-16. Objectives 2.6/2.7 on promoting tourism and supporting regeneration of coastal resorts. Dorset and East Devon World Heritage Site Management Plan, 2014-19. Policy 3.9: Support the development and delivery of specific new or improved visitor facilities to interpret, understand and celebrate the WHS, in locations where there is a gap in provision and an identified need. District Council’s Vision for West Bay Regeneration Framework and other priorities in Bridport Local Area Partnership’s Community Plan and Bridport Town Council’s Town Plan.</p> |
| <p>Comments:</p> | <p>This is a key project for the Economic Plan and it is hoped that progress can start to be made within the next year.</p> |

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| Action: 3B | <i>Redevelopment of Bridport museum</i> |
| Description: | A Round 2 Lottery bid has been submitted for the restoration of the Bridport Museum building, upgrading facilities (including installation of a lift), complete redisplay of all galleries and development of an extensive education and community engagement programme. |
| Lead body: | Bridport Museum Trust |
| Timescale: | <p>A decision from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) should be received in late March 2016.</p> <p>Works will begin immediately, with a view to reopening the museum in April or May 2017.</p> |
| Estimated funding requirement: (£££) | <p>Total project cost is £1,312,000.</p> <p>The HLF application is valued at £841,000.</p> <p>Given other resources, the current funding shortfall is £91,000.</p> |
| Economic benefits: | <p>The museum is situated at the heart of the town. It is in a pivotal position to encourage visitors to the town and tourist spend. The newly developed museum will be able to extend its opening hours to encourage year round tourism. It will support the area's offer to visitors interested in the Jurassic Coast and those wishing to explore the cultural and artistic heritage of Bridport.</p> <p>The project will develop relations with local rope and net companies. A more exciting and engaging museum, showing the industry off to its best effect, will help address recruitment issues caused by negative perceptions of the industry locally.</p> <p>Throughout the capital works goods and services will be procured locally, where possible. Local artists, craftsmen and freelancers will be used to deliver the Activity Plan.</p> <p>The museum will become more financially robust. Its future viability will be assured and it will be more resilient to potential public funding cuts.</p> |
| Performance measures: | <p>Project delivery is on time and on budget.</p> <p>Increase in visitor numbers and participants in activities.</p> <p>Growing number of opportunities for people to engage with the museum (events, volunteering, education, outreach).</p> |

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| | Increased profile of the museum and understanding of the town's heritage. |
| Links with other initiatives: | Season of Heritage (see 3C). Liaison with the Activities Coordinator at the (to be renovated) Literary and Scientific Institute (LSI). |
| Comments: | This project is highly dependent on the round 2 HLF funding application. It has its own management arrangements, so the role for the CCT is essentially to monitor progress, and to offer support to the Trust and promote the project where it can. |

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| Action: 3C | <i>Season of Heritage and Town Heritage Trail</i> |
| Description: | As part of the Museum redevelopment project a Town Heritage Trail will be developed, to include main sites of historic/heritage interest (notably the Town Hall and LSI). It is hoped that the trail can extend to take in West Bay. It will be launched as part of a planned 'Season of Heritage' celebration in 2017. During this season the LSI will reopen (see 5A), the museum will re-launch (see 3B) and an enlarged Ropewalk Fair/Charter Fair will be programmed, alongside a programme of heritage based events, workshops, talks and walks. The season will be promoted as a coordinated event with its own branding and marketing material. The event will be organised and delivered by volunteers. |
| Lead body and partner: | Bridport Museum, working with Bridport Area Development Trust and Bridport Town Council |
| Timescale: | Planning for the season and heritage trail has begun. Event to take place late Spring 2017 (exact dates to be confirmed to align with LSI and museum completion). |
| Estimated funding requirement: (£) | Total estimated project cost is £12,500. HLF contribution (as part of Museum project) is £6,500. The current shortfall is £6,000. |
| Economic benefits: | Increased visitors to the town during early Spring shoulder months. |

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| | <p>Increased visitor numbers in the town more generally, for example to use the heritage trail.</p> <p>Opportunities for involvement by community organisations and businesses, including sponsorship.</p> <p>Promotion of the local net and rope industry as a valued employer with attractive career prospects.</p> |
| Performance measures: | <p>Number and range of events programmed.</p> <p>Attendance and participation figures for each event.</p> <p>Funding secured or investment attracted.</p> |
| Links with other initiatives: | <p>This action has direct, planned links with the restoration of Bridport's Literary and Scientific Institute (LSI) and the redevelopment of the town Museum. Its timing is based on completion of those projects during 2017.</p> <p>There will be collaboration with the local Charter Fair/ Ropewalk Fair and other local community groups.</p> |
| Comments: | <p>Although not costly, the action is currently quite dependent on HLF funding, both directly to cover its costs and indirectly because of its link with the museum redevelopment. In principle the action could, however, be reshaped to match changing circumstances.</p> |

Priority 4: Enhancing workforce skills and employment opportunities

Three actions will seek to provide better training and work readiness opportunities for local people, including for school leavers.

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| Action: 4A | <i>Workspace for skills and training</i> |
| Description: | <p>This seeks local training space (or spaces) which can be used by nearby colleges and training providers to deliver courses that respond to the needs of existing and new businesses. It could be multi-use space, with training one of its uses. Assuming proposals to restore and bring back into use the Literary and Scientific Institute (LSI) building in Bridport proceed as proposed, they should largely fulfil this need.</p> |
| Lead body: | Bridport Area Development Trust, for the LSI |
| Timescale: | The LSI project (see 5A) would likely deliver appropriate training facilities by May or June 2017. |

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| <p>Estimated funding requirement:</p> <p>(£££)</p> | <p>The LSI project funding is set out in some detail at action 5A below.</p> <p>It is assumed that, once capital works are complete, the running costs for the training space would be self-financing from user bookings and charges.</p> |
| <p>Economic benefits:</p> | <p>Local residents (including school leavers) would gain from improved access to workforce training and would become better matched to the skills needs of the local labour market.</p> <p>Local businesses would face fewer skills shortages and find it easier to recruit to vacancies.</p> |
| <p>Performance measures:</p> | <p>Number of training courses or sessions that are run. Number of participants who attend the training courses. Local businesses engaged in designing training opportunities.</p> |
| <p>Links with other initiatives:</p> | <p>Links with the wider LSI restoration project and therefore with the Work Hub action (see 5A).</p> <p>Project is cited within the Western Dorset Economic Plan.</p> |
| <p>Comments:</p> | <p>Assuming the project achieves its funding target, the main initial role of the CCT will be to monitor progress, and to offer support and promote the project where it can. The project has its own Steering Group plus a Working Group drawn from local businesses and business networks.</p> <p>There may be a further subsequent role for the CCT to work in partnership with the LSI and others, so that the training space is well used to meet local economic needs.</p> |

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| <p>Action: 4B</p> | <p><i>Apprenticeship opportunities</i></p> |
| <p>Description:</p> | <p>The scope for creating additional apprenticeship opportunities with local employers will be explored, to be linked with training provision at nearby colleges. Local businesses would be asked about vacancies and skills shortages, and their willingness to take on apprentices. Since young people are the main target group, the area's main secondary school, the Sir John Colfox Academy, would be engaged.</p> <p>It is already proposed there will be 2 new apprenticeship opportunities created by works to restore the Literary and Scientific Institute (LSI) building in Bridport.</p> |

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| Lead body and partners: | Skills Training Bridport with Bridport Chamber of Trade and Commerce Nearby colleges e.g. Yeovil, Weymouth. |
| Timescale: | 2 apprenticeships at LSI project by Summer 2016. Complete scoping for other opportunities by September 2016. |
| Estimated funding requirement: (£) | Apprenticeships opportunities, whether at the LSI or elsewhere, are expected to be funded by the relevant local employer (paying the salary) and the Skills Funding Agency (paying a college for the training element). |
| Economic benefits: | Local young people would gain quality work experience and would learn workplace skills, making them better placed to find subsequent employment. This could also help to fill skills gaps in the local labour market. |
| Performance measures: | Number of additional apprenticeship opportunities created. Number of participating local employers. Number of apprenticeship places that subsequently lead to permanent local employment. |
| Links with other initiatives: | There is a link with action 5A, since the renovation of the LSI building will create 2 new apprenticeship places. |
| Comments: | There is potential for this to become a long-term initiative, if it is established successfully and proves its value. |

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| Action: 4C | <i>Attracting relocating business and inward investment</i> |
| Description: | Use of the area's new website portal and of social media to promote Bridport and West Bay as a location for small or medium sized businesses who are relocating and those seeking to invest in a business start-up. This will work with owners, commercial agents or promoters of available employment sites and premises. |
| Lead body and partners: | Bridport Town Council with West Dorset Economic Regeneration team and Bridport Chamber of Trade & Commerce |
| Timescale: | Proposals will be drawn up to start promoting the area in Autumn 2016. |
| Estimated funding | Both the start-up and ongoing costs should be small, though it |

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| requirement: (£) | will require some input from an administrator and website manager. It is hoped the scheme can become self-financing through advertising revenue for vacant sites and premises. |
| Economic benefits: | The scale of any economic benefits is hard to estimate, being entirely dependent on the success of promotional activity. It would, of course, lead to additional jobs within the local labour market. It would also help to ensure productive use of vacant sites or premises. There would be indirect benefits, as inward investment businesses made purchases (their supply chain) and as their employers made purchases (from their wages). It is accepted that some of the indirect benefits would accrue locally and some would happen in the wider economy. |
| Performance measures: | Number of new businesses either relocating to the area or setting up in the area as a result of the promotional activity. Number of new jobs associated with those businesses. Premises or sites brought into productive employment use. Estimates for indirect benefits (spend on inputs and wages). |
| Links with other initiatives: | There is a direct link with action 6A, which will upgrade the area's website. Action 5B could also be exploited, as this seeks to provide business incubation space. |
| Comments: | |

Priority 5: Creating employment space for start ups and small businesses

Two actions seek to provide facilities for business start ups, as well as other entrepreneurs and freelancers, with a view to diversifying further the local economy. A third action seeks a way forward that will regenerate an important edge-of-town-centre employment site.

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| Action: 5A | <i>Bridport Work Hub</i> |
| Description: | Plans are advancing to create a state-of-the-art Work Hub as part of the restoration of the Literary and Scientific Institute (LSI) building on East Street in Bridport, which is grade 2 listed. This will help bring it back into productive use. It will act as a focus for local business development, catering for a range of working practices. It will offer desk space, meeting space and associated digital infrastructure for freelancers, sole traders, homeworkers and other micro-businesses or start-ups. The hub will also provide opportunities for |

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| | networking, training and business support. |
| Lead body: | Bridport Area Development Trust |
| Timescale: | The tendering process for contractors is already underway. On site works are planned to commence in April or May 2016. The Work Hub is expected to open in May or June 2017. |
| Estimated funding requirement: (£££) | Capital costs shown here are for the whole LSI restoration project and not just the Work Hub, which is one element. £1,421,555 from a successful Heritage Lottery Fund bid. £300,000 agreed by English Heritage towards restoration costs for the listed building. Applications have been submitted and local fundraising will take place for the outstanding £130,000 required. Once back in use the LSI is intended to be financially self sufficient in terms of its running costs. |
| Economic benefits: | This project has its own Business Plan. This includes market research, projected user figures, income/expenditure figures and occupancy sensitivities. It is intended to: encourage new businesses; attract skilled workers to the area; provide unrivalled broadband connectivity; and offer an inspiring business and networking environment. Return on investment figures include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 6 FTE direct jobs created; - 4 work placements and 2 apprenticeships during the capital phase; - Income from business engagement 2017-20 (rentals and other uses) of £221,000; - Investment in wider local economy by users 2017-20 of £2,331,000. |
| Performance measures: | Number of businesses using desk space at the Work Hub during its first year of operation (regular and occasional basis). How many of those businesses are recent start ups. Use of the meeting space by local businesses during its first year of operation. Progression of businesses into small office space. Number of business support events programmes and number of participants. |

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| Links with other initiatives: | <p>Project is cited within the Western Dorset Economic Plan.</p> <p>There is a link with action 4A to create training space.</p> |
| Comments: | <p>Completion of this project will also contribute significantly to priority 3 in this Economic Plan, to promote the area's unique heritage. The building is an impressive piece of architecture.</p> <p>Assuming the project achieves its funding requirement, the main role of the CCT will be to monitor progress, and to offer support and promote the project where it can. The project has its own Steering Group plus a Working Group of local businesses and business networks.</p> |

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| Action: 5B | <i>Support for business incubation space</i> |
| Description: | <p>A Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for the Bridport area, known as Vision 2030, is being produced. The Economic Plan encourages the inclusion of a policy to support the provision of incubation space for new businesses within the NP. Although this has merit, it is not possible to state firmly, at this stage, that the NP will include such a policy. All policies that appear in the final NP must have been subject to due process.</p> <p>The incubation space could offer opportunities for start-ups working in alternative markets, such as recycling and the restoration of second hand goods.</p> |
| Lead body: | Vision 2030 Steering Group and its Employment Working Group |
| Timescale: | <p>The NP Working Groups are reviewing the evidence to support various policy options by April 2016.</p> <p>The aim is to produce a draft of the NP document by Autumn 2016.</p> <p>The NP will probably reach its examination and referendum in 2017.</p> |
| Estimated funding requirement: (£) | <p>There are no obvious additional costs arising from this action. The NP work is ongoing already. It does, however, depend on volunteer input.</p> |
| Economic benefits: | This is an enabling policy that makes it easier to create |

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| | <p>business incubation space. Such space would assist business start ups by local entrepreneurs and would encourage inward investment by those from outside the area.</p> <p>There would be employment creation and additional business investment or spend in the area.</p> <p>If start ups were to be in alternative markets, that would encourage innovation and diversification (although such benefits need not be specific to alternative markets).</p> |
| Performance measures: | <p>Decision to include a relevant policy within the draft of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>A relevant policy being included within the final ('made') version of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> |
| Links with other initiatives: | <p>There is a specific link with the Neighbourhood Plan work.</p> <p>There is also a link with action 4C, since new businesses can only realistically be attracted to set up in the area if suitable employment space is or could be made available.</p> |
| Comments: | <p>This action complements action 5A, since business incubation will be supported by the Bridport Work Hub.</p> |

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| Action: 5C | <i>Long term regeneration of St Michael's Trading Estate</i> |
| Description: | <p>St Michael's Trading Estate covers a sizeable area close to Bridport town centre and presents considerable regeneration opportunities. A planning application in 2012 was given consent, subject to satisfactory completion of a Section 106 agreement. In the light of subsequent events this will need revisiting and the site will – in any case – require a masterplan before it can proceed to a detailed planning application.</p> <p>It is a complex site with substantive building refurbishment challenges (including some buildings of heritage value), as well as a need to deal with site contamination. Many existing buildings are in a poor state of repair. There is scope for environmental improvement where it gives public access to the riverside.</p> <p>The trading estate currently provides workshop and retail space for various arts, crafts and antiques businesses (as a popular Bohemian quarter). It also hosts somewhat larger and more traditional retail, warehouse and business outlets.</p> |

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| | <p>The existing planning application is for mixed use development, with housing towards the northern end of the site. There is a strong desire locally to retain the unique character of the site and its small business community.</p> <p>As part of any 'community contribution' current thinking is that the site could include a new building which offers community space and which, at other times, could be used for commercial purposes such as auctions.</p> |
| <p>Lead body and partners:</p> | <p>Site owner (Hayward & Co) working in partnership with Enterprise St Michael's (tenants' group), West Dorset District Council (Economic Regeneration team), Bridport Town Council and potentially Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership.</p> |
| <p>Timescale:</p> | <p>The aim is to agree how to move forward from the current position by Summer 2016.</p> <p>Developing a masterplan and dealing with residual planning issues will need roughly one year.</p> <p>The aim would be to submit a detailed planning application during the latter part of 2017.</p> |
| <p>Estimated funding requirement: (£££)</p> | <p>There is commercial value in the future of the site and it is likely that much of what needs to be done could be funded from enabling some on-site housing development (albeit this has not found favour among all parties). However, there are likely to be remaining viability concerns, given the site's complexity, and these may well require some public funding to resolve. It is noted that Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership intends to launch a Growth Towns initiative, which could be an appropriate funding source, though other options should be explored e.g. the Homes and Communities Agency.</p> |
| <p>Economic benefits:</p> | <p>Helping secure the future of many existing businesses, including those in the arts, crafts and antiques sectors, with their associated employment.</p> <p>New opportunities for SME businesses (including those outside of mainstream economic sectors).</p> <p>Bring the whole site back into productive use, including environmental improvements. This to include commercial activity in a new building space.</p> |
| <p>Performance measures:</p> | <p>Parties agree a way forward quickly, including for the planning application process.</p> <p>Masterplan and funding plans are produced, which meet the various ambitions for the site.</p> |

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| | Any bid required for public grant investment is successful. |
| Links with other initiatives: | <p>The Local Plan includes a policy (BRID5) for comprehensive mixed use redevelopment of the site, subject to important heritage, employment and environmental caveats.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan being created for the area could also include an enabling policy for this site.</p> |
| Comments: | St Michael's is an important site within the town and previous attempts to regenerate it have stalled. Getting interested parties to agree a viable way forward, that enhances its value to the area, would be of major benefit. This would need to involve Historic England. |

Priority 6: Supporting the value of the visitor economy

Five actions will seek to modernise and upgrade the visitor offer of the area, greatly improving the provision of information for visitors and potential visitors.

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| Action: 6A | <i>Upgrade of the Bridport and West Bay website</i> |
| Description: | Upgrade of the existing Bridport and West Bay community site to create a single portal to town sites, including the Town Council, Tourism Association and other community or business organisations. This will give a consistent theme (look) to the site, in keeping with town publicity e.g. the Town Guide. It will need to make the site mobile compatible. |
| Lead body and partners: | Bridport Town Council, working with Bridport District Tourism Association, Bridport Chamber of Trade & Commerce and other local interests |
| Timescale: | The new website to be live by Summer 2016 (with further content added subsequently). |
| Estimated funding requirement: (£) | <p>The budget estimate for this project is almost £10,000.</p> <p>It is proposed that most of this comes from the Town Council (it is in the draft Town Plan), topped up with funding from the Bridport and District Tourism Association.</p> <p>Advertising revenue could subsequently be generated by the site to make it largely self-financing.</p> |
| Economic benefits: | Improved promotion of Bridport and West Bay as a destination. |

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| | <p>Help visitors to find and retrieve information about the area and signpost them to other information sources, including on local events and businesses. The upgrade will improve mobile compatibility of the website.</p> <p>A local web designer will be sought for this project.</p> |
| Performance measures: | <p>Completion of the new website on time and on budget. An increase in page hits on the community website. Advertising revenue generated.</p> |
| Links with other initiatives: | <p>This project falls within the Bridport Town Plan.</p> <p>The website will be a resource that can be used to promote various other initiatives in this Economic Plan.</p> |
| Comments: | <p>This project falls directly within the control of the Town Council, though adding web content will involve other parties. It is a short-term priority to improve the offer to visitors, businesses and residents.</p> |

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| Action: 6B | <i>Tourist Information Centre management</i> |
| Description: | To safeguard the Tourist Information Centre and improve services offered, in the light of a service review being undertaken by the District Council. |
| Lead body and partners: | West Dorset District Council and Bridport Town Council |
| Timescale: | The review is due to report in Summer 2016. |
| Estimated funding requirement: (££) | Costs are dependent upon the management model adopted, but one option is Town Council management with transitional funding. A figure for required transitional funding is to be confirmed. The current operating cost of the TIC is around £40,000 per year. |
| Economic benefits: | The TIC is the town's public reception, located in the centre of town and providing important visitor information, booking services, events management and signposting. |
| Performance measures: | Number of users of the TIC and its services. Value of over the counter sales at the TIC. |
| Links with other | There is a link with actions 1C and 3A, both of which will |

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| initiatives: | <p>improve the provision of tourist information at West Bay. There is a direct link with action 6E which improves promotion of the area to visitors.</p> <p>This action appears in the Bridport Town Plan.</p> |
| Comments: | <p>The Town Council is discussing potential options for future management of the TIC to ensure that it is retained. One option is Town Council management, which would seek to build on existing services offered and sales.</p> |

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| Action: 6C | <i>Upgrade of public conveniences</i> |
| Description: | <p>There are currently 5 public toilet blocks – 3 in West Bay and 2 in the town centre. They are maintained by the District Council, but it is likely that future management arrangements will be reviewed. There is a need to upgrade as well as maintain some of the existing facilities.</p> <p>There is also a disused toilet block at East Street car park in Bridport (now owned by a local philanthropic individual), which would need a funding solution if it is to re-open.</p> |
| Lead body and partners: | <p>West Dorset District Council with Bridport Town Council. Action at the East Street car park would be led by its private owner.</p> |
| Timescale: | <p>Confirm future management arrangements by March 2017.</p> |
| Estimated funding requirement: (££) | <p>To be confirmed, but £100,000 is the one-off costs possibly required to upgrade existing facilities. There is an ongoing revenue commitment.</p> <p>Renovation/re-opening of the East Street car park toilet block would probably require some sort of enabling development to deliver the funding.</p> |
| Economic benefits: | <p>Visitors and shoppers not unreasonably expect to find public toilets which are accessible and of a decent standard. If they do not it creates an unwelcoming impression and deters return visits.</p> |
| Performance measures: | <p>Identify sustainable management arrangements by the end of the 2016/17 financial year.</p> <p>This will contribute to visitor experience and numbers, which have economic benefit.</p> |

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| Links with other initiatives: | <p>There is a link with action 1C, which is the programme of environmental improvements at West Bay.</p> <p>This action is in the Bridport Town Plan.</p> |
| Comments: | <p>These are important facilities that need safeguarding and in some cases improving. There is no timing yet for the service review, but it will probably take place within the next year.</p> |

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| Action: 6D | <i>Town Wi-Fi network</i> |
| Description: | <p>A feasibility study, prior to provision of a public Wi-Fi network in the town centre. This would benefit visitors seeking local information, as well as residents and regular shoppers. There may be scope for an App. If it could incorporate a secure connection it could enable market/street traders to accept debit or credit cards.</p> |
| Lead bodies: | <p>Private sector led by Bridport Chamber of Trade and Commerce, with Bridport Town Council assistance</p> |
| Timescale: | <p>For implementation by 2017/18</p> |
| Estimated funding requirement: (££) | <p>The cost estimate is £30,000 to build and maintain the network, financed as a three year deal.</p> |
| Economic benefits: | <p>Those visiting the town provided with easier access to information about local businesses, visitor attractions and entertainment venues. This should result in increased spend in the local economy.</p> <p>It could bring a first 4G mobile network to the town centre. There may also be connectivity benefits for surrounding areas within line of site.</p> <p>Traders in the town market(s) would benefit from extra or higher spending customers if they could accept electronic payments.</p> |
| Performance measures: | <p>Number of users accessing or logging in to the network in its first year of operation.</p> <p>Technical robustness of the network.</p> <p>Number of town market traders who start accepting electronic payments as a result of the network.</p> |

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| Links with other initiatives: | There is scope for links with action 6A on upgrading the Bridport and West Bay website. This action is now cited in the Bridport Town Plan. |
| Comments: | This could be a self-financing project. It will be important to learn from the experience of similar projects in other market towns. |

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| Action: 6E | <i>Promoting the area as a visitor destination</i> |
| Description: | This will use available channels more effectively to promote Bridport and West Bay as a visitor destination. They include the new website and the new town guide. There is scope to tie in promotional activity with planned developments set out elsewhere this plan. There could equally be scope to promote the area's arts offer, not least given proposals to refurbish Bridport Arts Centre. As well as seaside tourism, there are opportunities to promote the town's characterful retail offer, such as the street market and small traders. This work should revisit and build upon the findings of the Spirit of Bridport project, funded through the LEADER programme in 2012. |
| Lead body and partner: | Bridport and District Tourism Association with Bridport Town Council |
| Timescale: | Initial review of options by Autumn 2016. Implementation of actions to coincide with Season of Heritage in Spring 2017. |
| Estimated funding requirement: (£) | To be confirmed. Opportunities would be sought to piggy-back on other actions, to keep costs down. There should be scope for private sponsorship or funding. |
| Economic benefits: | Tourism is a vital component of the local economy, providing a sizeable share of employment and business opportunities. A downturn in visitor numbers or spend would have serious consequences. Visitor spend results in indirect benefits for much of the rest of the local economy. |
| Performance measures: | Increased visitor numbers and visitor length of stay. Increased visitor numbers in off peak months. |
| Links with other initiatives: | There are direct links with the TIC review (6B) and the Season of Heritage (3C). |
| Comments: | The area has recently benefitted from publicity from TV |

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| | programmes. Options to promote the area better (and perhaps to a wider demographic) should now be considered. |
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Timescales and milestones

The actions above represent a significant programme of projects and activities which could only realistically be implemented over a number of years and with the co-operation of a range of organisations. The table below summarises them in terms of short, medium and longer term actions. It should be noted, however, that some will need progressing over a number of years. So, for example, a longer term action may still have initial or feasibility work undertaken to a shorter timescale.

Summary of Economic Plan actions according to their timescale

| Short term actions (by mid 2016) | Medium term actions (by 2017/18) | Longer term actions (by 2019/20) |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • 1A West Bay (short term) improvements • 1B Revamp of West Bay play area • 4B Apprenticeship opportunities • 5B Incubation space within NP policies • 6A Upgrade of Bridport and West Bay website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • 2A Minibus Link feasibility study • 2B Upgrade of West Bay car parks • 3A Visitor Interpretation Centre (West Bay) • 3B Redevelopment of Bridport museum • 3C Season of Heritage and Heritage Trail • 4A Workspace for skills and training • 4C Attracting inward investment • 5A Bridport Work Hub at the LSI • 6B Tourist Information Centre • 6C Improve public conveniences • 6D Town Wi-Fi network • 6E Promote area as visitor destination | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • 1C West Bay improvement programme • 2C Renovate Bridport bus station • 5C Regenerate St Michael's trading estate |

All of the actions cited in this Economic Plan indicate a timeframe or dates when progress is expected. Some of them can be considered significant milestones for the overall delivery of this Plan. They are:

Bridport and West Bay Coastal Community Team: Economic Plan

Short term (by Summer 2016):

- Commencement of works (fully funded) to restore the LSI and create a Work Hub;
- The award of HLF funding which will allow the redevelopment of Bridport Museum;
- Initial environmental improvements delivered and the play area upgraded at West Bay.

Medium term (by the 2017/18 financial year):

- Commencement of a funded programme of environmental programme works at West Bay;
- Re-opening of the LSI building (with Work Hub) and the Bridport Museum, together with a Season of Heritage and new town heritage trail;
- Identification of a viable solution to provide a regular public transport service between West Bay and key sites in Bridport.

Longer term (by the 2019/20 financial year):

- Renovation of Bridport bus station, making it a better transport hub and with improved facilities;
- Completion of funded works to create a visitor interpretation centre at the disused West Bay Methodist Church building;
- Commencement of works to regenerate the St Michael's trading estate, in a way which retains an important employment function.

Monitoring and review

This Economic Plan is an important document for our area, its businesses and its residents. But it is also just a starting point. It will require a degree of management and monitoring, to ensure it is taken forward and that it stays fit for purpose. This section outlines our approach to ensure that happens.

Plan management

The Coastal Community Team governance group will be retained and will continue to meet four times a year. Bridport Town Council will act as its secretariat and will provide some initial project management. Approval has been given to recruit a project manager, who will oversee progress with this Economic Plan, as well as with the Neighbourhood Plan and Bridport Local Area Partnership community planning.

CCT support and networks

Delivery of certain elements of the Economic Plan is dependent upon other local partner organisations and networks. The CCT and Town Council needs, therefore, to maintain close contact with them, to ensure those elements progress as envisaged. In most cases this will be straightforward, since the organisations or networks are represented on the CCT group. It will be particularly important to maintain links with the area's Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, with its economic sub-group (working group). We will review membership of the group at its next meeting and consider whether it would be prudent for others to join.

Running costs

CCT members attend meetings purely on a voluntary basis. The Town Council is able to continue hosting the CCT and offering administrative support for the group from within its existing resources.

As noted above, it is proposed to appoint a project manager, part of whose time will relate to this plan. This will provide a dedicated oversight of Economic Plan delivery and the time likely to be required to input to the drawing up of individual project plans or funding bids. The total cost – salary and overheads – for roughly a day per week on Economic Plan work is likely to be between £7,000 and £8,000 per year.

Further plan development

To varying degrees all of the actions set out in this Economic Plan will require some further developmental work e.g. to write a detailed specification, produce a project

plan, test project costs and associated risks, explore new funding streams. We take it as read that this will need to be taken forward on an action by action basis, sometimes with the CCT in the lead, sometimes with other organisations in the lead.

Plan monitoring

The prime reason for maintaining a quarterly schedule of CCT meetings is to maintain the momentum which has been established and to monitor progress with Economic Plan delivery. This plan provides the headline monitoring information which will be required for this task, such as timescales and performance measures for each of the proposed actions. The project manager for the Economic Plan would be responsible for maintaining an up-to-date monitoring record.

Plan review

The Economic Plan will also be subject to annual review. This will be an opportunity:

- To assess any major changes to the context in which the plan is operating (either helpful or not);
- To review whether the plan, as written in January 2016, needs any updates or amendments and remains fit for purpose;
- To consider whether any changes should take place to the way in which the plan is being managed.

It will be particularly important to review the plan after year one, as policies should then have been drafted for the area's Neighbourhood Plan. Some of them will be economic and there may be scope for additional actions to assist their delivery.

At this stage (and subject to later review) the CCT and its monitoring of this Economic Plan are seen as having a three year lifespan. All actions within the plan should have been delivered or be underway or be substantively initiated by the early part of 2019. If there is still a strong case for monitoring and refreshing an Economic Plan at that date, it will probably need to be an entirely new plan.

Communications

The Town Council, through its dedicated project manager, will maintain and update the CCT webpage, so that local residents, businesses and interests can follow progress. Where the Economic Plan is updated or revised that will be made publicly available. There will be further public or business engagement specific to some of the individual actions or projects as they are progressed.