



# Slough

Inclusive  
Growth  
Strategy  
2020-2025





Slough

**An Economic  
Powerhouse**

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## Slough Borough Council – Leader’s Foreword

### Councillor James C. Swindlehurst

#### ▷ Leader of the Council

- ▷ Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Strategy
- ▷ Member for the Cippenham Green Ward



**Welcome to the new Slough Inclusive Growth Strategy 2020-25.** As Leader of the Council, I’m excited to present a document that will drive many of the activities and services that we deliver and act as a cornerstone to our approach as an organisation, being evidence-driven, and putting the welfare and prosperity of the Borough’s residents first.

In the midst of recent success and ambitious plans to transform the Borough, we are presented with an enormous opportunity to ensure local people benefit, whilst securing new investment and encouraging business to ‘think’ and choose Slough. The impact of this is already being seen and there is much more to come. The regeneration of our town centre is a prime example and we hope that the area will become a symbol of the Borough’s future, projecting a positive and confident image to all.

I’m immensely proud of what our Borough has achieved in the past decade, driven by a group of committed partners, our diverse and entrepreneurial communities and businesses that call Slough home. We must build on these foundations, make the most of the opportunities that are in the pipeline and do all we can to position Slough as a place of shared prosperity, innovation, excellence and diversity.



**This Strategy is targeting growth which is inclusive** – that is characterised by well-paid and sustainable employment, a first-class education and skills system, augmented by a great living and working environment. Yet whilst Slough has continued to thrive, not everyone has been afforded the opportunity to flourish. We are resolutely focused on changing this, by being data driven and accountable for our actions.

I’m also aware that we cannot afford to be complacent – our economy does not operate in a vacuum and is subject to global competition and pressures. Macroeconomic shocks remain an omnipresent threat and something we must be prepared for – **COVID-19 is a seismic reminder of the precariousness of Slough’s success.** Our economic resilience is vital, particularly in terms of protecting our small businesses, entrepreneurs and self-employed, who are the most exposed.

We have therefore developed a Strategy with the expectation that we may need to change course. A five-year duration provides us with this flexibility and I look forward to working with you to deliver the actions within.

Image: The Curve



# 01

## Slough Inclusive Growth Strategy Summary



## Our **strategic vision**

**“** **Slough** will be an economy which is defined by its inclusiveness, diversity and resilience – where small businesses flourish, large employers invest, and residents have the opportunity to aspire and prosper. The Borough will harness the value of its international connections and the potential of redevelopment and regeneration to present a confident and dynamic image to the world, where a rounded and sustainable approach to growth is intrinsic to our success. **”**

## Our **inclusive commitment**

**This Strategy is the embodiment of a new strategic direction for the Borough – one which is predicated on a resolute and steadfast commitment to inclusive growth.**

The full potential of Slough will be unlocked if all who live and work in the Borough are encouraged to aspire, participate and prosper. The Strategy will act as the lynchpin for this ambition, driving a common agenda which resonates with government, businesses and local people. This inclusive growth commitment will be enshrined within the actions taken in the future, taking a direct read from the thrust and priorities contained within this document.

The Strategy's deliberate pursuit of inclusive outcomes is distinct and characterised by the following traits:

- + Responds to **new research insights**
- + Targets **equitable outcomes for all residents**
- + Takes a **holistic view of economic growth**
- + Celebrates Slough's **uniqueness and diversity**
- + Driven by **ownership and accountability**
- + Acting as a new catalyst for **key policy areas**
- + Regeneration **benefitting local communities**

## Inclusivity **driving resilience**

By focusing on the factors that will deliver inclusive growth and more equitably share in Slough's prosperity, the Strategy is also positioned to secure the Borough's economic resilience. The intent and approach set out within has been developed to strengthen Slough's competitiveness and ensure the Borough builds on its robust growth foundations.

Whilst the pace of change increases and the degree of certainty reduces, there is a need to remain vigilant and not take future growth prospects for granted. **This is particularly important in the face of persistent economic volatility and the impact of forces that will shape Slough's future prospects, such as COVID-19 and the UK's departure from the European Union (EU).** Both present significant risks and may challenge known weaknesses in Slough's economy.

By adopting an inclusive approach, the Borough has the chance to not only insulate itself from such negative effects, but to thrive as a result of new opportunities and the inherent characteristics of the local workforce. The Strategy is therefore underpinned by a firm belief that this will position Slough on a robust and sustainable growth trajectory.

Slough's growth story is one founded on making best use of its assets, a collective will to succeed and maintaining an international perspective. This lays the foundations for the next chapter.



## Building on our **strengths**

**To deliver our vision for shared prosperity, resilience and to affirm Slough's position as one of the most inclusive economies in the UK, we must acknowledge and build on the Borough's strengths.**

Slough's economic success story is defined by the factors that underlie its competitiveness and unique character. They paint a compelling picture which has drawn businesses and people from far afield and forms the basis for Slough's enviable global reputation. This Strategy uses these as a springboard for furthering this momentum.

### **Multicultural**

One of the most diverse places in the UK

### **Youthful**

A young and dynamic population

### **Established**

A prime location for global business brands

### **Connected**

At the heart of the UK's road, rail and air networks

### **Thriving**

Growing base of companies and employment

### **Prosperous**

Quality jobs driving high output levels and wages

### **Expanding**

An increasing population and base of assets

### **Regenerating**

Transforming and creating new neighbourhoods

### **Skilled**

Well qualified people in the labour market

### **Engaged**

High levels of employment and economic activity

### **Enterprising**

Home to new businesses and scale-ups

### **Smart**

An innovative and digitally connected Borough

## Tackling our **weaknesses**

**This Strategy also adopts an honest view of Slough's inherent weaknesses, as seen within a broad base of evidence, and the barriers that are holding inclusive growth back.**

There is a prescient need to tackle known issues and redress challenges which continue to stifle the fortunes of Slough's residents and businesses. Each form an important part of the way Slough is perceived as a place and are hindering the opportunity for people to take a greater share in Slough's economic success.

### **Congested**

Traffic levels hindering trade and quality of life

### **Inactivity**

Poor levels of health holding back participation

### **Unequal**

Some groups are less economically engaged

### **Exposed**

Sectors and labour supply at risk of economic trends

### **Perceptions**

Borough's image undermines its credentials

### **Insecure**

Not all jobs are well paid and offer career prospects

### **Mismatches**

Between the supply of labour and the demand for skills

### **Safety**

Both perceived and actual is a material concern

### **Vacancy**

Town centre is underutilised and not viable

### **Affordability**

The cost of housing is high compared to wage levels

### **Environment**

Poor quality and accessibility of some areas



# Our **strategic priorities**

**This strategy is action-orientated and defined by the scale of collective ambition within.**

It responds to the opportunity to reinforce Slough's reputation for excellence, widen shared prosperity and capitalise on large-scale regeneration that will position the Borough as a progressive, productive and 'smart' place. It is also shaped by the threats to the local economy, stressing the need for Slough to not solely focus on growth, but also resilience.

Our **six priorities** are underpinned by:

- ▷ **The need to update policy** and orientate around inclusive growth...
- ▷ **Respond to the wider strategic imperative** and deliver against national objectives...
- ▷ **A deeper understanding of Slough's economic health** and competitiveness
- ▷ **Building on a track record of success** and the pipeline of investment in Slough...
- ▷ **The need to be transparent about our focus** and accountable for our achievements...

Each priority feeds through to a series eight actions, which form the basis for delivery and making a substantive change to the fortunes and wellbeing of Slough's residents and businesses.

Key factor of growth: **Digital Disruption**

Key factor of growth: **Sustainability**

Key factor of growth: **Securing Talent**

## Priority 1:

Creating secure & productive jobs

## Priority 2:

A skills system working for all

## Priority 3:

Regeneration & infrastructure unlocking growth

## Priority 4:

Enterprise & scale-up ecosystem

## Priority 5:

Inclusive & sustainable neighbourhoods

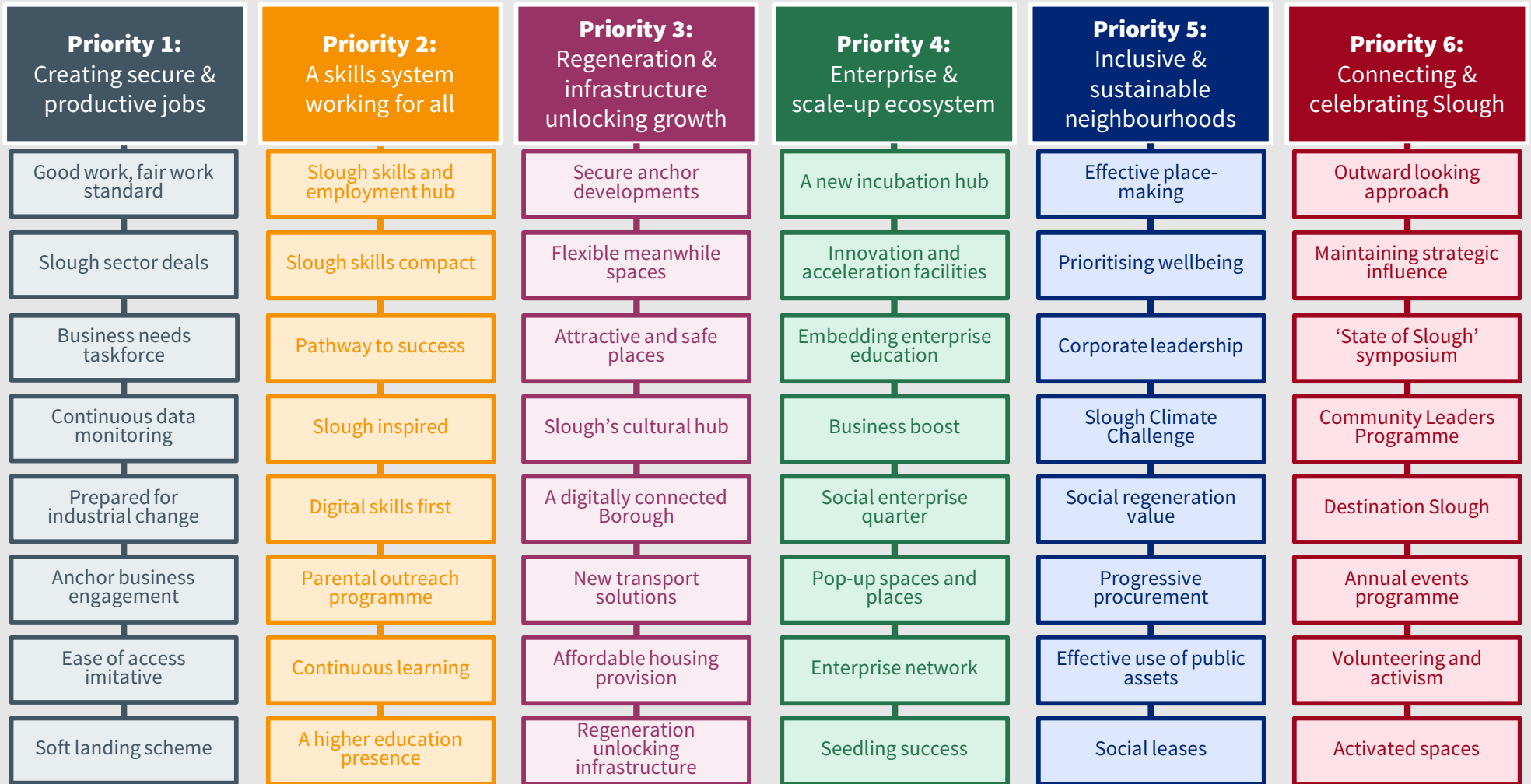
## Priority 6:

Connecting & celebrating Slough

Inclusive Outcomes

People ✓  
Place ✓  
Businesses ✓

# Our absolute focus on action



# Our commitment to **making it happen**

**Priority 1:**  
Creating secure & productive jobs

**Priority 2:**  
A skills system working for all

**Priority 3:**  
Regeneration & infrastructure unlocking growth

**Priority 4:**  
Enterprise & scale-up ecosystem

**Priority 5:**  
Inclusive & sustainable neighbourhoods

**Priority 6:**  
Connecting & celebrating Slough

**Clear Strategic Focus**  
Strategic priorities will target support in our:

- Largest Employment Sectors**
- Most Specialised Sectors**
- Fastest Growing Sectors**

And secure necessary investment in our thriving and regenerated:

- Town Centre**
- Industrial Hubs**
- Local Centres**

**Strength In Partnership**  
To deliver our strategic priorities we will **collaborate with key partners:**

**Being Accountable**  
Delivery of our strategic priorities will be underpinned by our commitment to:

- Put appropriate governance in place**
- Adopt consistent behaviours**
- Leverage collective capacity**
- Be prepared to change course**
- Connect with wider strategies**

**Tracking Performance**  
Monitoring progress and tracking our achievements will ensure our priorities are delivering lasting change through:

- A clear vision of what success is**
- Measurable performance indicators**
- Continuous and regular tracking**
- Transparent reporting**



# 02

## Introducing the Slough Inclusive Growth Strategy



This is  
**Slough**



## This is Slough

**Welcome to Slough!** A hub of industry, diversity, opportunity, growth and connectivity, Slough enjoys and capitalises on its preeminent location within the wider South East region and its proximity to the nation's capital city. The location of choice for business, from multinationals to start-ups, Slough is a future-facing place of prospects, opportunity and dynamism. **Slough is...**



- ▷ A powerful **symbol of national success**
- ▷ One of the **most productive places in the UK**
- ▷ On an **exciting growth trajectory**
- ▷ Home to over **149,000 people and rising**
- ▷ One of the **most diverse places in the country**
- ▷ Only **15 minutes by train to Central London**
- ▷ At the **heart of the Thames Valley region**
- ▷ The location of **Europe's largest trading estate**
- ▷ Globally connected **via Heathrow Airport**
- ▷ Known for its **high value employment**
- ▷ Increasingly **innovative and enterprising**
- ▷ Attractive to **domestic and global investment**
- ▷ Undergoing **transformational regeneration**
- ▷ A Borough **which is 'smart and tech enabled**



+  
**Voted  
No.1**

as the best  
location to  
find a job in  
the UK...

(Glassdoor data)

+  
**Ranked  
No.1**

level of  
economic  
output per  
worker...

(ONS GVA data)

+  
**Ranked  
No.1**

named as  
the small  
city of the  
future...

(fDi 2020/21 data)

Previous Page Image: Slough Ice Arena. Current Page Image: Observatory House

# This is Slough



## Connected

Slough lies in the middle of the UK's **high capacity rail and road networks**



## Influential

Slough is an anchor authority within the **TVBLEP sub-region**



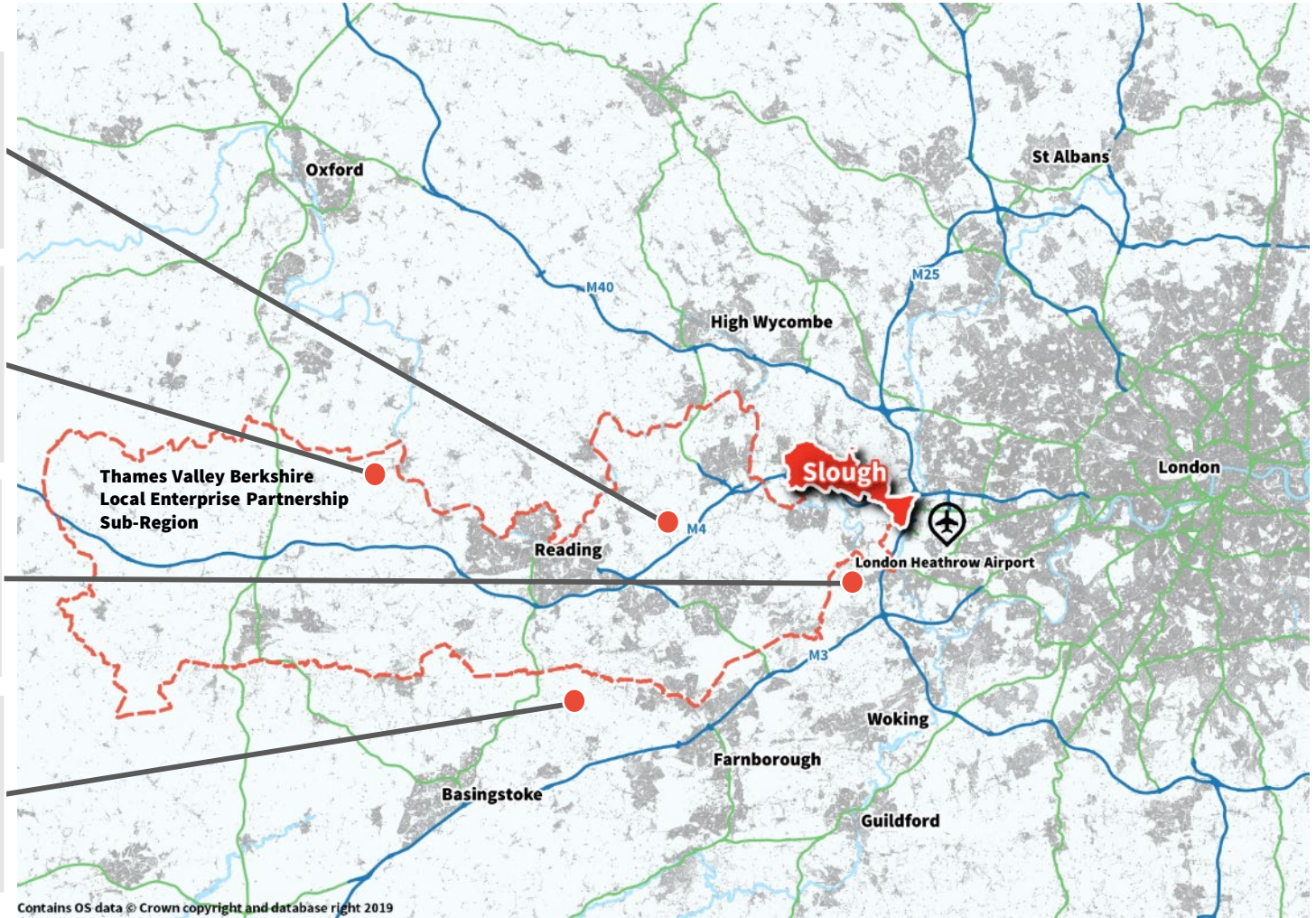
## International

Slough is adjacent to Heathrow – **a global hub and gateway to the UK**



## Green

Slough is blessed with open spaces, and surrounded by **quality natural assets**



Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2019

## The need for an Inclusive Growth Strategy

**Slough's Inclusive Growth Strategy 2020-2025** provides the foundation for a new phase of growth across the Borough. It is underpinned by an aspiration for all residents to share in opportunity and prosperity, to benefit from equal access to learning and employment, to have the chance to thrive in an environment characterised by fairness and safety and to be where the diversity of place and people are celebrated.

**The Inclusive Growth Strategy provides a framework for practical action, guiding policy choices and investment in coming years, whilst placing partnership and collaboration at its heart.**

This is an exciting and pertinent time from which to launch the next wave of Slough's economic growth, in the midst of rapid change, large-scale Borough-wide regeneration and an influx of investment in place and infrastructure. The recent legacy of continued economic success, a young and growing population and sharpened Borough identity provide an exceptional foundation from to build on and tackle the most prominent challenges holding the economy back.

Slough has maintained its position as one of the UK's most successful economies, cementing its reputation for productive employment, driven by a base of diverse and high value industries. The Borough benefits greatly from its connectivity, delivering outstanding proximity to domestic and global markets and the nation's capital city, ensuring it remains attractive to investors as a consequence of its locational advantages.

This direction is reflective of both the Council's desire to take a leading role in Borough growth and citizen outcomes, alongside a recognition from the business community and key stakeholders of the need to be progressive economic actors, shaping priorities and securing investment.

## A changing economic development context

The need for a new strategic approach to economic development is embedded within a number of contextual factors, which are dynamic and have been changing since the previous Economic Strategy was published.



In order for Slough to remain competitive, the Council and its partners must respond to these factors in a deliberate and strategic way. This will be achieved with a new focus on inclusivity, the environment and cementing Slough's relationships with its neighbours, the nation's capital and globally. It will also acknowledge the need to be responsive to change and be prepared for a shift in the health of the global economy. The sudden occurrence of COVID-19 has illustrated this in very stark terms and the case for building a resilient Slough economy is abundantly clear.

This Inclusive Growth Strategy is anchored by the Borough's recent success, but also its relative weaknesses. It is evidence-driven and action-orientated, encouraging collective accountability.

**It is also the start of a new economic deal for Slough, that will place equitable outcomes at the heart of decision-making and ensure that Slough's citizens are able to thrive and prosper through a more holistic approach to economic development.**



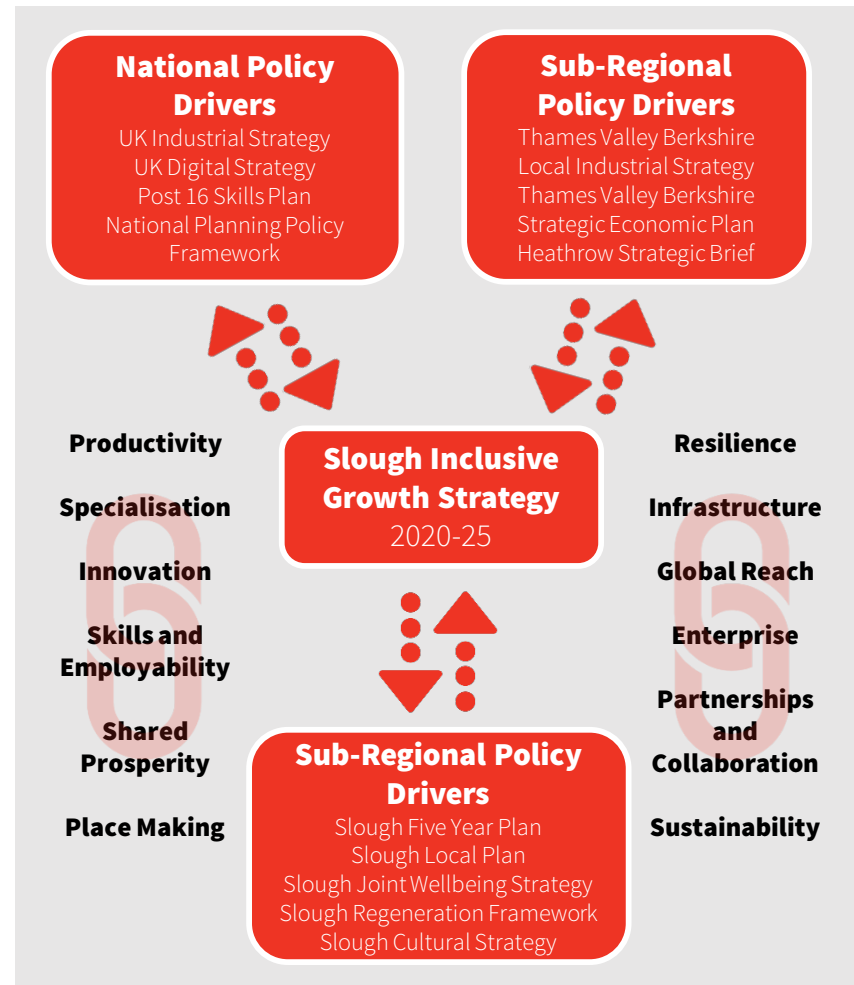
## A pressing strategic imperative

The Slough Inclusive Growth Strategy is orientated around a broader policy framework, which takes its cues from UK government and sub-regional bodies tasked with securing economic growth that is sustainable, tackles inequality and drives competitive advantage.

This framework includes a renewed emphasis on the sectors, assets and people that make places different, advocating specialisation and tackling the fundamental issues that hold back the UK’s ability to forge ahead on a global stage. Whilst these wider strategies share a focus on economic development, they also embrace wider drivers of productivity and growth:

- ▶ The importance of pitching economic growth in broader terms, going **beyond traditional indicators and measures of success**
- ▶ The need to ensure that people have the skills and ambition they need to **succeed in locally-important and growing sectors**
- ▶ The role of modern infrastructure in providing **improved access to the labour market and securing investment**
- ▶ The value of local assets in creating a sense of distinctiveness and **supporting an ecosystem of enterprise and innovation**
- ▶ The need to ensure that the power of digital technologies are fully harnessed, **unlocking new forms of economic and social value**
- ▶ The growing recognition around the pace of climate change as an economic and existential threat **coming into ever sharper focus**

This Inclusive Growth Strategy has been structured to establish clear links with relevant policies, thereby shaping the focus of local priorities.



## Our strategic focus – delivering inclusive growth

**Building on the prevailing policy narrative and strength of local stakeholder sentiment, this strategy reflects the need to deliver growth and prosperity that all Slough residents can benefit from.**

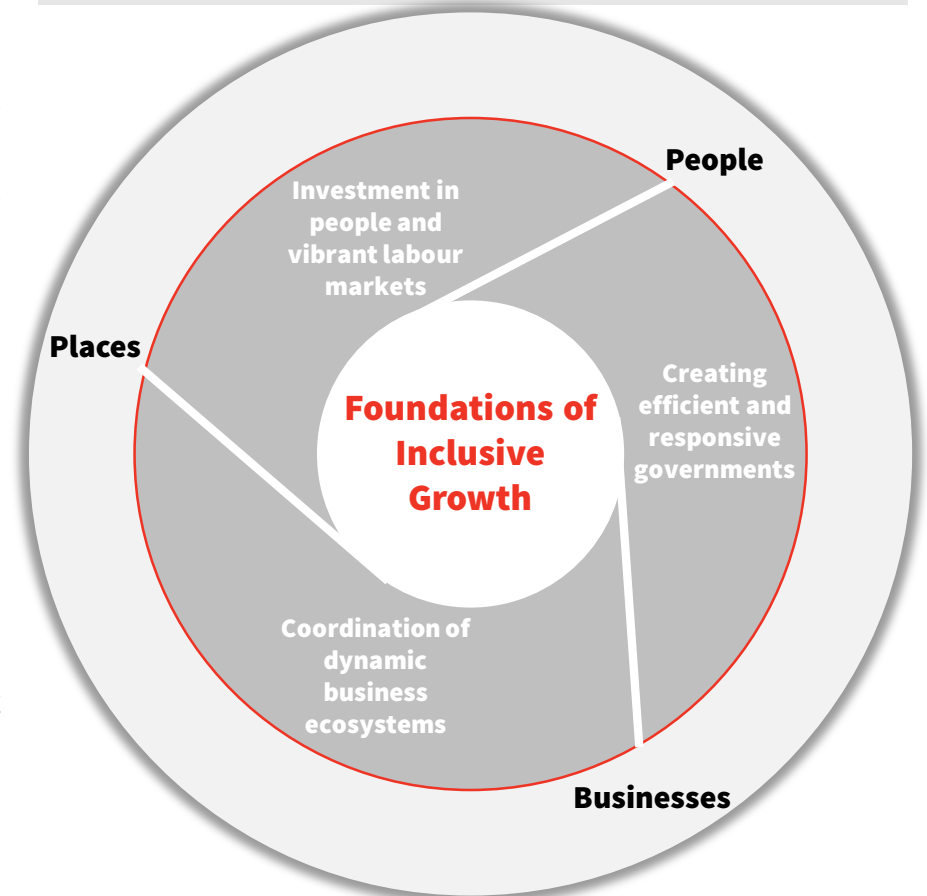
Through its delivery, we will maintain a relentless focus on delivering and being accountable for inclusive growth outcomes. As such, the Council and partners will work towards a series of common goals, to ensure that the benefits of inclusive growth are fully capitalised. These are:

- ▷ **Tackling inequality** – bridging the gap between those who benefit most from Slough’s economic stature and those who don’t.
- ▷ **A broader view of growth** – viewing economic success through a broader lens, including quality of life, health and participation.
- ▷ **Collective ownership** – civic, business and community leaders sharing in the responsibility of building a prosperous future for Slough.
- ▷ **Thinking one step ahead** – being prepared for the trends and technologies that will shape Slough’s economy in years to come.
- ▷ **Building trust** – leadership founded on transparency, integrity and putting the people of Slough first.
- ▷ **Environment first** – recognising that economic growth can be achieved in harmony with a more resilient and sustainable Borough.

In this context, the Council has shifted towards a decision-making approach which is evidence-driven and embeds inclusive outcomes throughout. This includes the adoption of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s (OECD) definition of inclusive growth, which provides a clear embodiment of the need to focus attention on the foundations of inclusive growth – **People, Places and Businesses**.

### (OECD) Inclusive Growth definition...

*“Inclusive growth is economic growth that is distributed fairly across society and creates opportunities for all”*



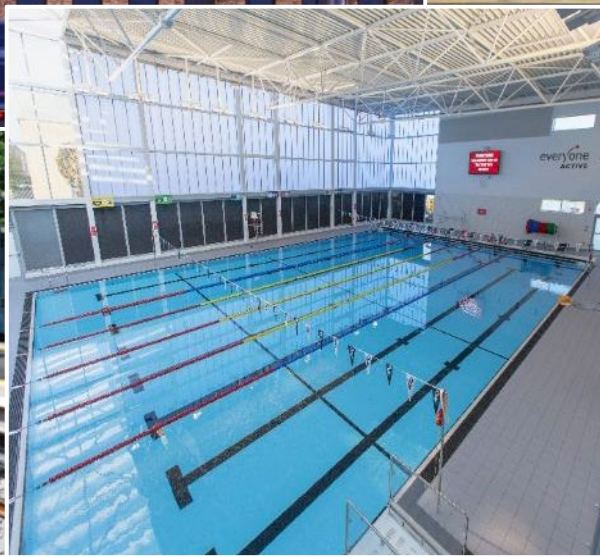


# 03

## The Slough Story



# The changing face of Slough



Images (clockwise from top): Porter Building, Future Works, Slough Ice Arena, The Centre, Horlicks Development

## The Slough Story: Reflecting on the Borough today

**This Strategy is a reflection of what Slough is today – prosperous, dynamic, multi-cultural, industrious and ever-evolving.**

The Borough's locational advantages are obvious, whilst the profile of employers and businesses are an immediate showcase of Slough's characteristics as a place to invest. There is much to celebrate and progress to reflect on, as Slough continues to thrive by being a champion for growth, forward-looking and actively embracing what makes it distinct.

Slough's momentum has been built on an exceptionally strong base of credentials, both tangible and intangible, which are at the core of what makes the Borough both different and exciting. These will resonate with those who call Slough home and also those that spend time in the Borough to work, shop and access its many amenities. **Slough today is:**

- + One of the UK's most **multicultural places**
- + An exceptionally **well-connected Borough**
- + Home to **globally-important companies**
- + A hotbed for **innovation and creativity**
- + Embracing innovation and **'smart' tech**
- + A hotbed of **talent and entrepreneurship**
- + One of the **country's youngest places**



## An evidence-based Inclusive Growth Strategy

**It is vitally important economic development strategy, prioritisation and investment decisions are built upon a robust base of evidence.** The Borough's future success and the ability for partners to affect positive change will be reliant on a full and accurate understanding of the factors driving economic growth and the issues that are preventing Slough from reaching its full potential.

This Inclusive Growth Strategy draws upon a broad base of up-to-date information, which tells a compelling story about the local economy. A suite of documents have been compiled that reflect on key indicators of economic performance, combining quantitative and qualitative evidence:

- ▷ **Socioeconomic statistics and datasets**
- ▷ **Secondary research and intelligence**
- ▷ **Consultations and interviews with strategic stakeholders**
- ▷ **Perspectives from local businesses and investors**
- ▷ **Sentiments from young people and families across the Borough**

Collectively, this evidence base provides a compelling picture of Slough's relative strengths, weaknesses and future prospects for growth. A summary of the key findings is provided overleaf, which builds upon the key foundations of inclusive growth, drawing from the OECD definition:

- ▷ **Business Enterprise and Innovation**
- ▷ **People**
- ▷ **Place**
- ▷ **Infrastructure**



NOTE: All data presented in this report has been sourced from the evidence base documents and associated consultation material. Full evidence base reports are available separately.

Image: Slough Bus Station

## Slough's main economic centres

Economic activity in Slough is defined by its geographical location and the relationships that the Borough has with London and neighbouring towns and regions. Slough's success is predicated on the exploitation of its locational assets, excellent access to labour markets, connectivity and its base of sectors which trade across the UK and internationally. These factors, alongside a strategic planning approach, have helped to shape the main clusters of economic activity across the Borough. Slough today is defined by a series of areas where economic activity predominates, investments are being made and regeneration is laying the foundations for future growth. These also act as the focus for economic development and spatial planning policy.

### Slough Trading Estate

As Europe's largest single ownership trading estate, it is home to a large and growing cluster of warehousing, factory and workshop uses and is a major employment centre.

### A4/Bath Road

This is a key economic corridor straddling the Bath Road, which is home to multinationals, high grade office, flexible business units and warehousing space.

### Slough Town Centre

Slough's town centre will be the Borough's economic heart and primary office and retail location, currently undergoing large-scale regeneration creating a broader mix of uses.

### Farnham Road

An important retail and commercial corridor servicing local communities and providing important north/south connections across the Borough.

### Langley

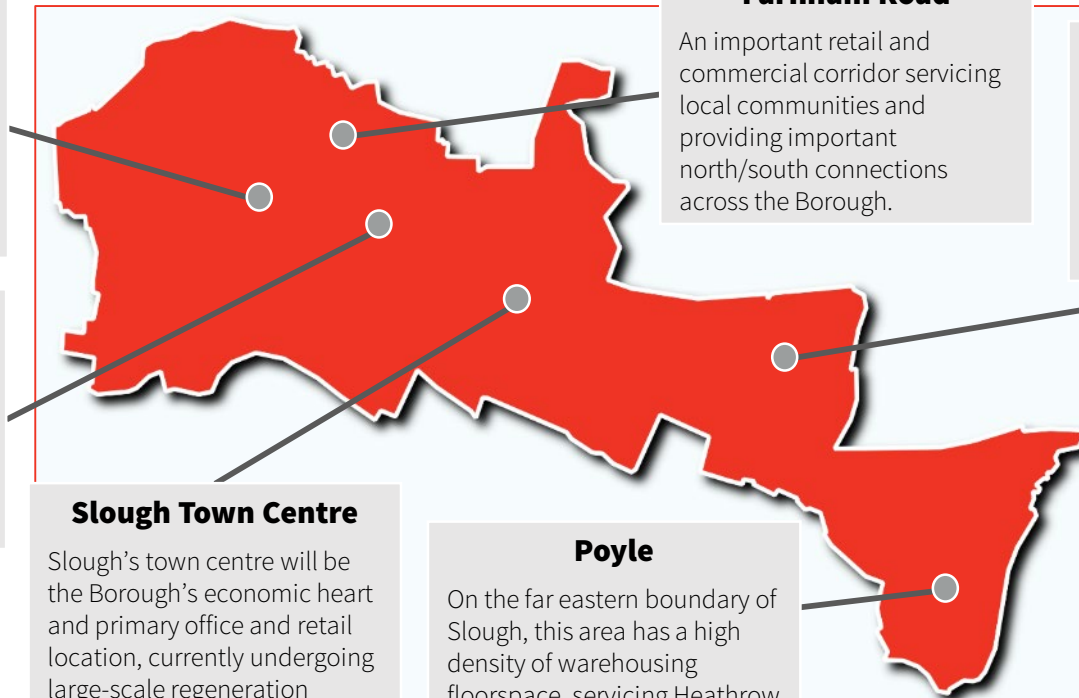
A key neighbourhood centre which offers a mix of retail, office and warehousing space, adjacent to key transport corridors and residential areas.

### Poyle

On the far eastern boundary of Slough, this area has a high density of warehousing floorspace, servicing Heathrow airport and surrounding motorway connections.

### Slough lies within the Eastern Berkshire Functional Economic Area

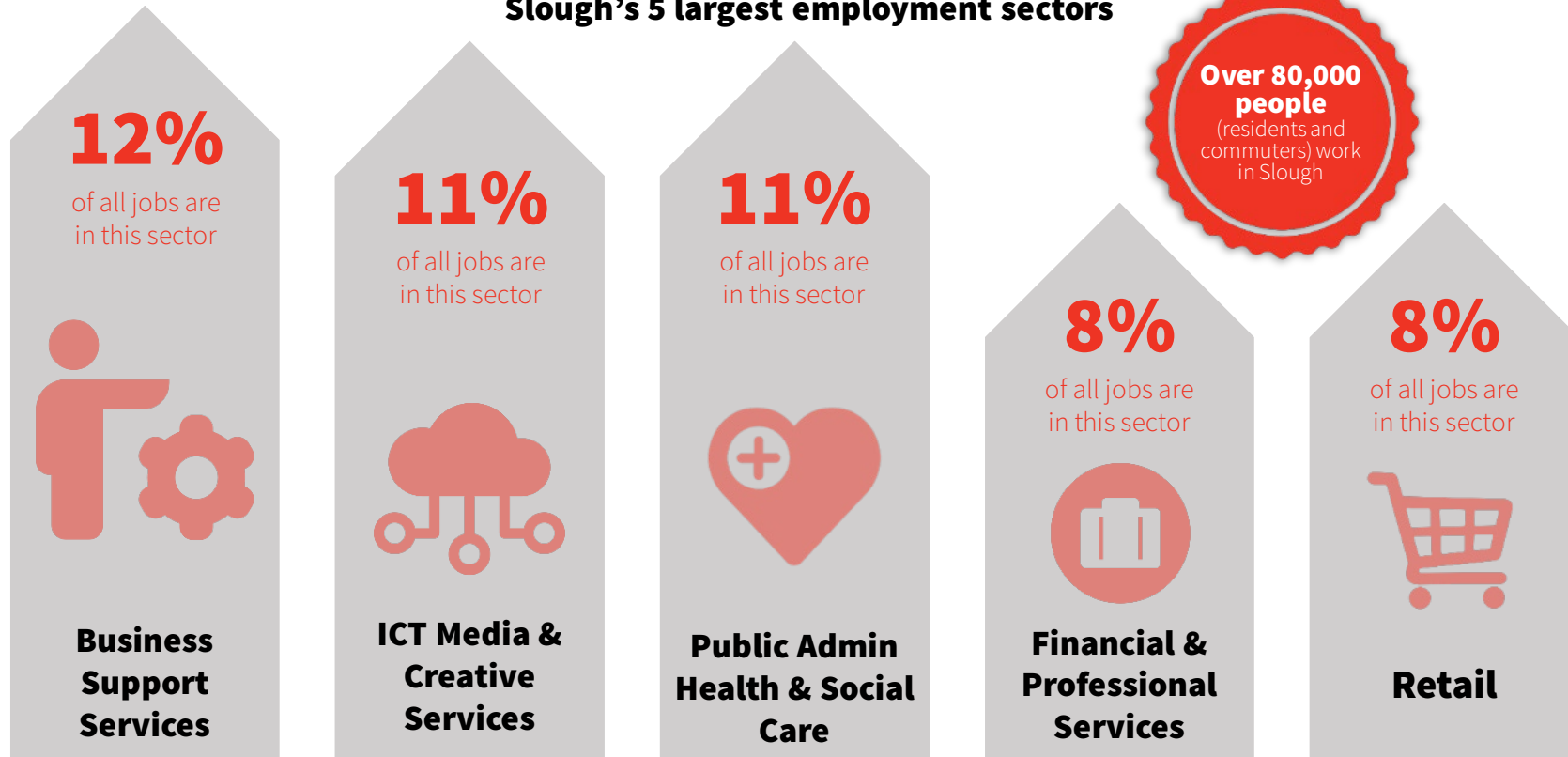
the Borough has strong links and economic relationships with Windsor and Maidenhead and South Bucks



## The sectors anchoring Slough's economy

**Slough's economy is defined by its industrial makeup**, which informs the types of businesses trading and the shape of jobs that provide employment to local people. The local economy is anchored by the sectors that provide the greatest number of jobs and generate considerable economic output. Combined with data on trading businesses, this generates a picture of Slough's relative strengths, sectors that should be prioritised and those that are emerging in stature. Whilst the sectors are constantly evolving, shaped by market forces and technological disruption, they are the bedrock of employment across Slough.

### Slough's 5 largest employment sectors





## The sectors driving growth and competitive advantage

Beyond the business that generate the most employment, there are other sectors that are intrinsic to Slough's economic success and prosperity. These define Slough's economic distinctiveness, its competitiveness and also the scope for future growth and specialisation, whilst also rapidly evolving.

### Warehousing & Logistics

Slough's concentration of these businesses is **4.1 times** greater than the UK average

### Slough's top 3 specialised employment sectors ...

### Utilities & Waste

Slough's concentration of these businesses is **2.6 times** greater than the UK average

### ICT Media & Creative Services

Slough's concentration of these businesses is **1.8 times** greater than the UK average



**93%**

job growth between 2012-17

### Utilities and Waste

...accounts for 3% of total employment in Slough Borough...



**80%**

job growth between 2012-17

### Creative Industries

...accounts for 2% of total employment in Slough Borough...



**39%**

job growth between 2012-17

### Business Support Services

...accounts for 12% of total employment in Slough Borough...



**36%**

job growth between 2012-17

### Other Services

...accounts for 2% of total employment in Slough Borough...



**27%**

job growth between 2012-17

### Warehousing & Logistics

...accounts for 8% of total employment in Slough Borough...

## The Slough Story: Business & Enterprise

Slough's businesses are a defining characteristic of its economy. They are the engines of growth, the focus of entrepreneurship, the fulcrum for global trading relationships and the generator of high value jobs. The Borough must create an environment that will allow businesses to flourish, attract investment and specialise.



A business centre...  
**Over 6,000 active firms**



Expanding base of firms...  
**45% growth since 2013**



Supporting enterprise...  
**178 start-ups per 1,000 firms**



Home of small business  
**99% of firms are SMEs**



Business density...  
**5 key business hubs**

## The Slough Story: People & Skills

People are the lifeblood of the Slough economy. They shape places, drive business growth, foster innovation and underpin a productive society. Slough must ensure it has access to people with the right skills, ambitions and mobility in order for prosperity to be shared equitably, whilst also adapting as the workplace evolves.



Productive employment...  
**~£95k of GVA per FTE**



Skilled residents...  
**35% NVQ4+ qualified**



Growing population...  
**5% increase 2012-17**



Engaged workforce...  
**79% active economically**



Buoyant labour market...  
**4% of people unemployed**

## The Slough Story: Places & Communities

Places that are attractive, sustainable, safe and offer a high quality of life are highly sought after and are a key measure of competitiveness. Slough must build around its communities, develop liveable places and ensure homes and amenities are in place to attract the best talent.



Housing in demand...  
**£825 monthly average 1-bed rent**



An industrial hub...  
**2% vacant space**



Strong local linkages...  
**attracting commuters**



Valuable property base...  
**9+ times annual wages**



Community cohesion...  
**evidence of equality**

## The Slough Story: Infrastructure

Infrastructure is a key foundation of prosperity; driving the movement of people, goods and information. It enables communities to interact, innovate and play a more active role within the local labour market, whilst also opening up markets and trade opportunities across the globe.



Broadband enabled...  
**99% 30Mbps coverage**



Supporting mobility...  
**83% 4G coverage**



An important rail hub...  
**5.5m riders per year**



Public transit options...  
**Slough Mass Rapid Transit**



Sustainable energy...  
**Slough Heat and Power**

## Digging Deeper: Business & Enterprise

There are a number of wider indicators that help to define Slough's business and enterprise characteristics. These offer a richer sense of which businesses and sectors are flourishing and propelling the Borough's growth. The presence of rapidly scaling firms, young business base and high value sub-sectors are key differentiators.

A place for SMEs to scale...

**Over 50 scaling businesses based in Slough**



Entrepreneurial characteristics...

**1/3<sup>rd</sup> of firms established in past 2 years**



Dominant sub-sectors...

**Showcase the value of ICT and Digital**



## Digging Deeper: People & Skills

A series of additional indicators hint at the factors that have driven economic growth, through the supply of skilled labour and the response to business demand. This highlights momentum in terms of apprenticeship delivery, residents engaging with education and Slough's success in attracting skilled migrant labour from far and wide.

Vocational upskilling...

**Track record of apprenticeship delivery**



Further Education participation...

**Exceptionally strong and growing**



Drawing on global labour...

**Attracting international talent**



## Digging Deeper: Places & Communities

Slough's qualities as a place are integral to the Borough's push towards inclusive growth and symbolise what businesses and people increasingly value. Slough exhibits characteristics that set it apart from comparators and play a key role in its attractiveness, including quality of life factors and its exceptional ethnic diversity.

Deprivation levels receding...

**Improvement in community prospects**



Slough is a thriving place...

**Some quality of life measures are strong**



Defined by diversity...

**BAME accounts for +50% of population**



## Digging Deeper: Infrastructure

The density and quality of infrastructure assets within the Borough is a key part of the Slough story and plays an important role in communicating strengths. The Borough is developing and strengthening its business critical infrastructure, with key investments in business support provision, digital connectivity and transport solutions.

A strengthening ecosystem...

**Business support and workspace offer**



UK's data centre hub...

**7 data centres located in the Borough**



Improving personal transit...

**A4 corridor cycle scheme and modal shifts**



## The Slough story: Exceptional assets propelling growth

**Slough's competitiveness and economic vitality are underpinned by an exceptional base of assets – organisations, institutions and employers that make an invaluable contribution to the Borough's ecosystem.** Each are important job and wealth creators in their own right, but combine to act as powerful drivers of growth, with a unique commitment to Slough and the people who call the Borough home.

### World-Class Employers

Slough is the preferred location for global brands, a number of which are headquartered in the Borough. Each provide valuable jobs, invest in upskilling local people, have extensive supply chains and are a symbolic of Slough's international profile. These employers have a pivotal role to play as part of a renewed focus on inclusive growth.



### World-Class Skills Providers

Slough benefits from a network of skills and training providers, who are responding to business need and giving local people the soft and technical skills to succeed. These offer access to further and higher education and are also actively delivering apprenticeships, creating clear pathways to employment and providing the inspiration to stay in Slough.



### World-Class Assets

The Borough also benefits from a rich tapestry of assets, which are key attractors of investment and champion the Slough brand. Each is geared to support growth, accelerate resident progression and to enable equitable outcomes across Slough diverse communities. By virtue of this, all will play a major role in delivering Slough's inclusive growth vision.



### World-Class Investors

Slough's physical landscape is being rapidly transformed. Landmark regeneration projects are being spearheaded by a number of developers, who are helping to reposition Slough, enhance its image and create new homes and trigger valuable employment. These projects will provide opportunities to deliver lasting inclusive outcomes and shape new, prosperous places.



## The Slough story: Layering local perspectives

**Whilst the Slough story is inherently told through data and the analysis of statistics, a fuller picture is painted by understanding the perspectives and experiences of people who live and work in the Borough.**

Through extensive grassroots engagement, it is clear that Slough means different things to different people but all are passionate about its success. Local perspectives provides a powerful reference point and help to generate a clearer sense of what our economic development priorities should be and how they should combine to create a place that is both prosperous and inclusive, that is attractive, sustainable and progressive, whilst also offering genuine quality of life.



## The Slough story: Future growth prospects

### Slough's 3 key drivers of future growth...



**Crossrail** is set to open in 2022 and will make Slough even more accessible, attractive to investment and encourage skilled labour to locate in the Borough...

#1



**Heathrow**  
Making every journey better

**Heathrow as a global transit hub** will create direct and indirect economic benefits and create job opportunities for local people...

#2



**SUR** SLOUGH  
URBAN  
RENEWAL

**Large-scale regeneration**, including that delivered by Slough Urban Renewal, will deliver the homes and workspaces that are needed to support growth...

#3

NOTE: Slough Local Plan evidence draws from the emerging Plan and existing Core Strategy.

### Slough's Planning Focus – Facilitating Growth

Slough's economic prospects and growth ambitions are crystallised in the Local Plan – both in its existing form (Core Strategy) and through the emergence of a new Local Plan that will guide development and land use in the future.

Within the context of national housing supply constraints and the planning system being used to unlock economic growth, Slough is working towards delivering against a series of targets. Each will have implications for Slough's future economic success, its ability to attract skilled labour, retain talent, address deprivation and ensure that businesses have the space and facilities they need.

- ▷ By 2036, Slough will need to deliver an **additional 20,000 homes**
- ▷ This means the Borough will build **over 900 new homes** per annum over a 20-year period
- ▷ Proposals for a Northern Extension garden suburb, could see a further **10,000 new homes** to the north east of the Borough

The Council's evolving **Town Centre Regeneration Framework** is also expected to play an important role in shaping the Masterplan, creating the policies needed to deliver a vibrant, accessible and sustainable Centre of Slough. Within this are a series of bold ambitions, which would transform the town centre. This includes a £3.5bn programme that will create an estimated **10,000 jobs** and **9,000 new homes**.

## The Slough story: Future growth prospects

### The next generation – propelling Slough’s fortunes

As one of the youngest local authorities in the UK, Slough benefits from the presence of a youthful and dynamic population. This cohort will be key to the Borough’s future prospects and have a pivotal role in activating and delivering the ambitions set out within this strategy.

Collective aspirations for Slough’s young people are equally high, such that they are afforded the best opportunities and allowed to flourish, through a quality and balanced education and access excellent employment prospects. This strategy also strives to ensure future generations are armed with the skills needed to make informed choices, retain a strong sense of Slough’s identity, adopt a global view and have respect for the communities and environment around them.

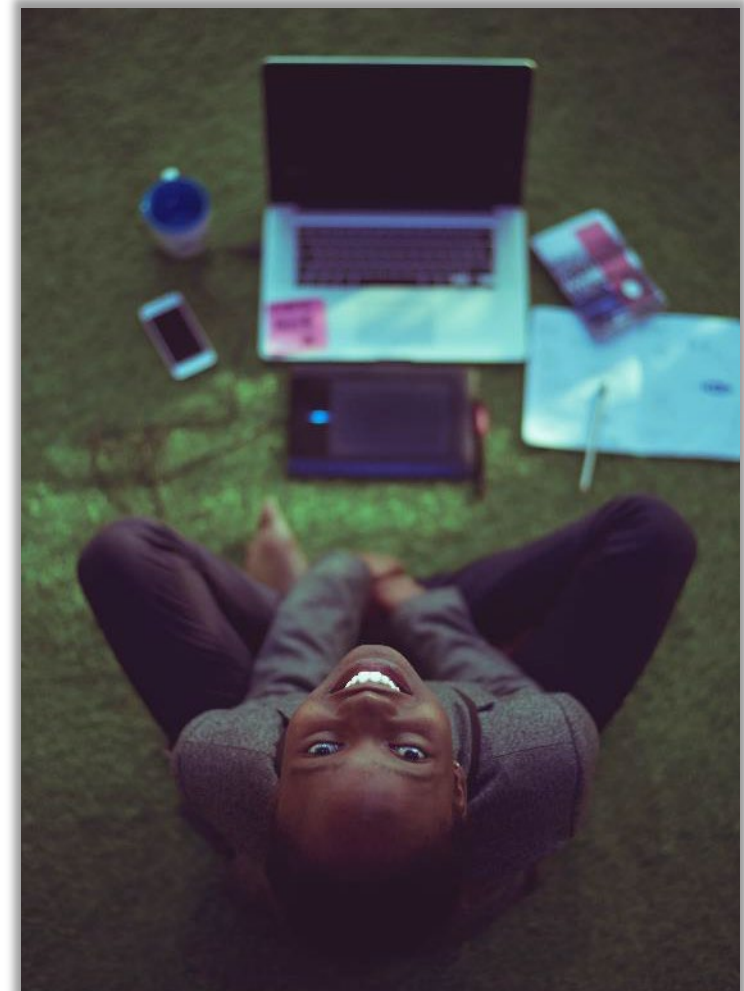
The cornerstone of young people’s prospects will be predicated on the following and is embedded in the call for action within this document:

Having the **ambition needed to succeed**

Being prepared to **adapt and reskill**

Seeing Slough as a **place of opportunity**

Adopting an **entrepreneurial mindset**



## The Slough story: Challenges to overcome

### People

#### **Increasing the base of skilled residents**

particularly NVQ3 and above to remain competitive and secure productive jobs

**Addressing educational issues and a lack of skills participation** which are at the heart of the Borough's deprivation challenges

**The occupational structure of the Borough is likely to change** and resident employability will rely on a forward-facing skills ecosystem

**The gig economy and insecure employment** are a threat to shared prosperity and job security

**The productivity gap** between Slough's workers and residents needs to be urgently bridged

### Business

**Sectors such as retail are exposed to structural changes** and have seen a continued downturn in fortunes

**An appropriate balance of sectors and industry** will be key to Slough's economic future resilience and productivity

**The longer-term survival of businesses** is undermining the Borough's entrepreneurial characteristics

**SMEs are the bedrock of the Slough economy** and those growing and scaling need to be retained

**The supply of skilled labour** is constraining business growth and holding back investment

### Place

**The cost of living in Slough** is challenging for many residents, observed in house and rental values and relative affordability

**The town centre is failing as an office and retail centre** and is a key driver of Slough's sometimes poor outward image

**In some areas the quality of the environment is poor** and is a barrier to health and economic participation

**Slough has a number of entrenched deprivation hot spots** where life opportunities are poor

**Actual and perceived safety** shapes opinions and is holding back the full potential of places

### Infrastructure

**The race to be digitally connected is accelerating** and Slough will need connectivity to support AI, and smart technologies

**Congestion and access remain key challenges** which need a sustainable response to support trade and movement of people

**Renewable heat and energy supplies** must be the cornerstone of a prosperous and sustainable Slough economy

**Public transport access is lacking in some areas** and is a barrier to people interacting and working

**Improved green infrastructure** must be key component of the Borough's regeneration



## The Slough story: Challenges to overcome

### Key Challenge: Providing the space to grow

To date, Slough's physical growth has been enabled through the availability of land, brownfield and greenfield, which has allowed development to occur, supporting the creation of new jobs and homes. This will need to continue, but in the context of significant demand for space, Borough growth targets and a finite stock of allocated development land, there is a risk that Slough's economic potential may not be fulfilled. As such, it will be important that the Local Plan makes a compelling case for growth and puts policies in place that will ensure that the supply of employment land will meet expected demand. This will require a strong read across between the Local Plan and the Inclusive Growth Strategy, such that the Borough's priority sectors, industries that are expected to grow and key economic hubs are reflected in the quantum and location of proposed land allocations.

### Key Challenge: Disruption of business practices

The nature of business practices have and continue to rapidly evolve, particularly as a result of the widespread adoption of technology. The workplace is changing, in terms of the increasing presence of online trading and e-commerce, a shift to more flexible working practices, the widespread introduction of automation and robotics and the adoption of technologies which have heralded new ways to inform and interact with customers. This change is an opportunity for Slough, helping to unlock new IP, increase productivity and accelerate the transition towards a low carbon future. However, the pace of change is also a risk, as policies, funding mechanisms and the skills and training ecosystem must react accordingly. Slough will need to offer an environment which is conducive and responsive to this change, with an ability to adapt at the core of the Borough's economic resilience.

### Points for consideration...

- ▷ Supporting Slough's key sectors
- ▷ Responsive to evidence of demand
- ▷ Anchoring Slough's economic hubs
- ▷ Leveraging brownfield sites
- ▷ Reflecting on workplace trends and employer requirements

### Points for consideration...

- ▷ Considering the skills and training implications of working shifts
- ▷ Investing in the infrastructure to maximise impacts and benefits
- ▷ Understanding and monitoring the scale of home-based working



# 04

## Strategic Vision and Delivery Roadmap



## Responding to the evidence: Our strategic vision

Building on the case for change and need for a shift towards a more inclusive and sustainable approach to growth, we have set a bold and stretching vision to define the work we will undertake in the coming years:

***“Slough will be an economy which is defined by its inclusiveness, diversity and resilience – where small businesses flourish, large employers invest, and residents have the opportunity to aspire and prosper. The Borough will harness the value of its international connections and the potential of redevelopment and regeneration to present a confident and dynamic image to the world, where a rounded and sustainable approach to growth is intrinsic to our success.”***

This vision will drive all that we will strive to achieve through the delivery of this Strategy and will ensure there is an underlying momentum to the collective efforts of the Council and its partners.

In July 2019, the Council declared a climate emergency. Climate change represents the greatest global challenge facing humanity and will fundamentally reshape the way we live our lives and how our economy functions. We therefore want to create a more sustainable economy which prioritises growth without increasing emissions, which in turn will drive competitiveness and secure prosperity for future generations.

Climate change is a truly global challenge but we realise there are many other issues that are holding back the true potential of human capital. As such, we see the opportunity for this Strategy to deliver against a series of international priorities, with an understanding that we can play an important part in actuating change beyond the boundary of our Borough.

## United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: Delivering Global Priorities

- ★ Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all...
- ★ Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, and foster innovation...
- ★ Make cities and settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable...
- ★ Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all...
- ★ Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages...
- ★ Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts...
- ★ Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls...
- ★ Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy...

**This Inclusive Growth Strategy will make a direct contribution to the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals, which are at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.**

We regard the goals listed above as being the most relevant and important to the challenges facing Slough. Through our monitoring of progress and commitment to accountability, we will be able to assess the extent to which the Borough is contributing towards these goals.

## A delivery roadmap: Building on success to date

**In delivering our vision, it is also important to reflect on what has been achieved to date and the things that Slough has done well.**

Slough has changed greatly in the last decade and this has been delivered by instilling good practices that must inform our way forward.

By working effectively with partners, leveraging external funding, making informed decisions and assured policy-making, we have established sustained momentum. This approach has culminated in the successful realisation of a range of ambitious and impactful outcomes:

- ▶ **The delivery of improved transport infrastructure** – such as the building of a new bus station and improvements to the railway station.
- ▶ **Flagship town centre developments** – including the iconic Porter Building, Future Works, The Curve and emerging hotels.
- ▶ **Residential-led regeneration** – a new townscape created through the completion of Mile Stone, the Old Library and Wexham Green.
- ▶ **Exciting new amenities** – enhancing Slough’s destination offer, with the completion of a new Ice Arena and The Centre leisure facility.
- ▶ **Slough Trading Estate buoyancy** – the continued success of the Borough’s industrial hub, with record-high tenancy levels.
- ▶ **A new Business Improvement District (BID)** – which will oversee the delivery of £2m of projects aimed at improving the town centre.
- ▶ **Establishing flagship projects** – such as the Slough Academy which has seen the Council take a leading role in apprenticeship delivery.
- ▶ **Unlocking external investment** – the Borough has benefitted from investment secured from TVBLEP to support economic development.



Image: Horlicks Redevelopment

## A delivery roadmap: Our strategic priorities

**To realise our vision and respond to the issues and opportunities presented within the socioeconomic evidence that has been gathered, we have developed six strategic priorities.**

Each is reflective of Slough's relative performance and the need to deliver positive change by being honest about the areas where the economy is failing to meet the needs of residents, businesses and the environment. These priorities are the fundamental starting point for action, collaboration and investment and for delivering against our Vision for sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

Evidence and views gathered from local stakeholders have identified a number of key factors that influence Slough's economy and will continue to play an important role in the Borough's future prospects. These are:

- ▷ **Digital technology disruption**
- ▷ **Environmental sustainability**
- ▷ **Securing the best talent**

Each is instrumental to the delivery of productivity, growth, high value employment and innovation; and cannot be ignored if Slough is to reach its full economic potential.

As such, these cross-cutting factors are non-negotiable and will be integral to our decision-making and judgement of the scale and type of outcomes that collective action will deliver.

These priorities, and the actions that flow from them will be supported by our commitment to monitor, review and respond to progress and to be accountable for driving success.

**Digital disruption:**  
digital technologies are shaping economic activity and how people interact with goods and services – the primary drivers of this are automation, artificial intelligence and big/open data.

**Priority 1:**  
Creating secure & productive jobs

**Priority 4:**  
Enterprise & scale-up ecosystem

**Sustainability:**  
responding to the climate emergency is no longer a choice and environmental considerations will be both regulated and increasingly as a factor of economic competitiveness.

**Priority 2:**  
A skills system working for all

**Priority 5:**  
Inclusive & sustainable neighbourhoods

**Securing talent:**  
skilled labour is increasingly mobile, globalised and attracted to places that offer good job prospects and an excellent quality of life – Slough must position itself as best-in-class.

**Priority 3:**  
Regeneration & infrastructure unlocking growth

**Priority 6:**  
Connecting & celebrating Slough

## A delivery roadmap: Our sector and spatial focus

To frame our strategic choices and ensure we target our efforts where inclusive growth can make the greatest contribution, we will focus on the sectors and locations that will safeguard the Borough’s competitiveness.

Whilst we will continue to champion business investment and enterprise and understand the importance of Slough’s economy being resilient as a result of its diversity, we will principally focus on those sectors that will support sustained growth and are the foundation of our distinctiveness. These are:

- ▶ **Sectors that we rely most on for jobs and wealth creation**
- ▶ **Sectors that are growing and have scope for further expansion**
- ▶ **The sectors that define Slough’s relative distinctiveness**

We will work to create the right environment and platforms for success in the face of changing markets, the opportunities presented by widespread digital disruption and other macro-level factors. We will be future-facing and flexible in our approach; recognising that new sectors will arise and existing sectors will need to respond to challenges and opportunities, be it automation, AI or the presence of new global competitors.

We will prioritise places where there is a strong density of economic activity and where our Local Plan is likely to support future growth. Our spatial focus for growth and regeneration will therefore be:

**Our economic heart...**

Slough Town Centre

**Our industrial core...**

Slough Trading Estate

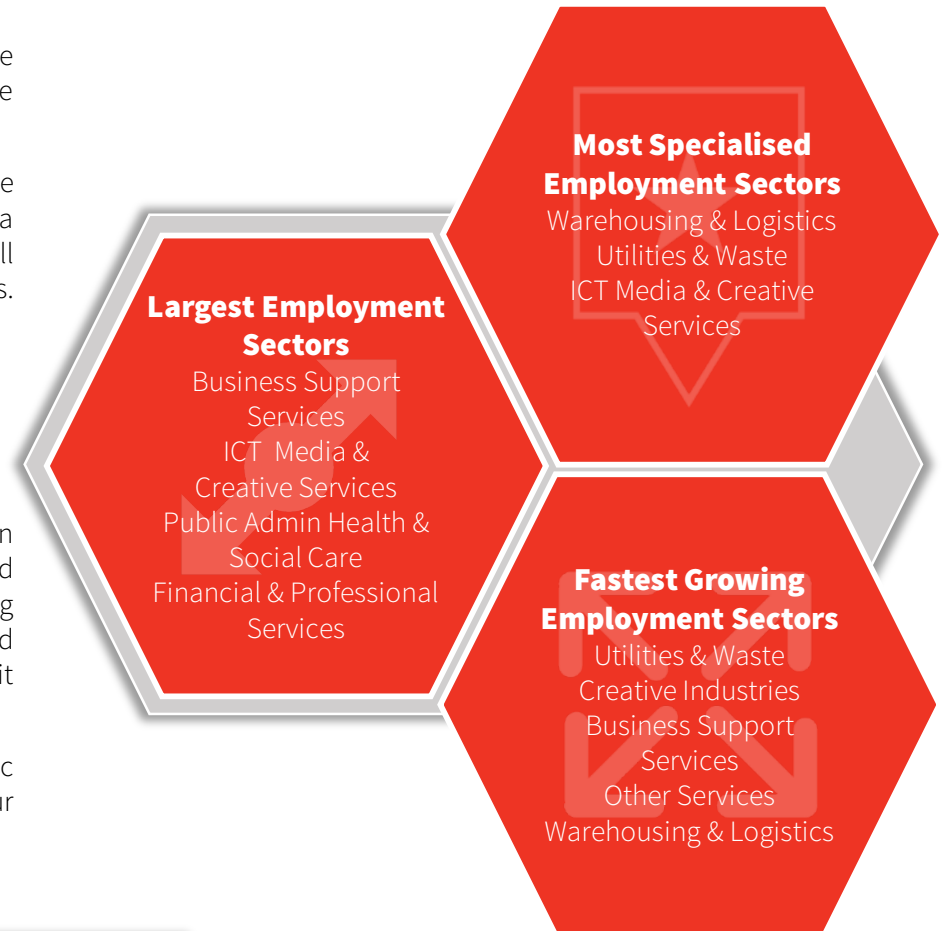
Bath Road (A4)

**Our local centres...**

Farnham Road

Langley

Britwell



## An economically resilient Borough

Whilst we are eminently positive about the prospects for the future and will focus our energies on achieving ambitious and lasting outcomes, we are also aware of the need to be adaptable and respond to inescapable change. This Inclusive Growth Strategy will need to offer flexibility and the adaptability required to pivot where unforeseen events inevitably arise.

The 5-year longevity of this Strategy has been designed with this in mind, acknowledging the potential for change and for globally significant factors to come to the fore, having a direct impact on the inclusivity and vitality of the Slough economy. **Indeed, recent events, such as the growing threat of climate change, the unknown outcomes of Brexit and the global spread of COVID-19 demonstrate the pace of change and how quickly these effects are felt, and the need to be prepared.**

In this context, our strategic choices will be measured and deliberate:

- ▶ **We will be intelligence-led**, by responding proactively to what is on the horizon and where data offers a sense of emerging and relevant trends.
- ▶ **We will focus on making sure that impacts on our communities and businesses are understood**, should and where threats emerge.
- ▶ **We will emphasise the core values that will power our economy forward** in terms of the quality of place, education and the spirit of enterprise.
- ▶ **We will work closely with government and partners** to understand and react to threats that will affect our people and places.
- ▶ **We will support an environment which is driven by innovation** and seeks to respond positively to the challenges we will face.



## Delivering in unison: Our partners

The strategic intent set out within this document will only be realised if the collective will to develop it is transferred into longer-term commitment and action. As such, a broad group of stakeholders will need play a pivotal role in delivering the Strategy.

Organisations that we expect to be critical partners moving forward are:

- ▶ **Business community** – large/small employers and entrepreneurs
- ▶ **Economic anchors** – SEGRO, Heathrow Airport, O<sub>2</sub>, Mars, Osborne, Equinix, Lonza, Ipsen, McAfee, AkzoNobel, HTC, LG
- ▶ **Government departments** – Business Energy and Industrial Strategy, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
- ▶ **National agencies** – Innovate UK, Arts Council England, Catapults
- ▶ **Sub-regional bodies** – including TVBLEP, Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce and neighbouring Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire LEPs
- ▶ **Adjacent local authorities** – such as Buckinghamshire Council, Windsor and Maidenhead and the London Borough of Hillingdon
- ▶ **Skills and training providers** – the Windsor College Group, sixth form schools, adult education providers and Royal Holloway University
- ▶ **Community and voluntary groups** – Slough Business Community Partnership, Slough Council for Voluntary Service
- ▶ **Town centre groups** – Town Centre Partnership, Slough BID
- ▶ **Developers and landowners** – Slough Urban Renewal, British Land, Berkeley Group, U+I, Muse, Morgan Sindall, Future Works, Landid
- ▶ **Infrastructure providers** – digital rail, road, environment



Top Image: The Future Works. Bottom Image: The Centre





# 05

## From Strategy to Action





# Priority 1

Creating secure & productive jobs



***We will seek to create employment that provides people with jobs that offer a good wage, clear career development pathways and are within sectors and industries offering strong prospects for future growth, and will ensure the Borough maintains its productivity benchmarks...***

**Action 1.1 Good work, fair work standard:** Establish a Slough 'good work, fair work' standard, which all local employers sign-up to, providing a consistency in approach to delivering a living wage, addressing the gender pay gap, modernised contracts and flexibility in work practices.

**Action 1.2 Slough sector deals:** Ensure Slough is fully aligned with the government's commitment to award sector deals, by ensuring the case for investment in Slough's key sectors and clusters is clearly made, underpinned by evidence and a powerful inclusive growth story.

**Action 1.3 Business needs taskforce:** Establish a task force to work with existing employers and those seeking to invest to gain a consistent and real-time view of employer needs, commercial threats, investment triggers and labour force requirements, targeting policies accordingly.

**Action 1.4 Continuous data monitoring:** Collect socioeconomic analytics to track trends and gain deeper insights into the factors that may be hindering inclusive employment, help establish a view of demand and the need to provide space to accommodate growth and to also understand how the economy is likely to change in the future.



### What does success look like?

- ▷ Fewer zero hour employment contracts
- ▷ People benefitting from improved wages
- ▷ Increase in proportion of full time employment
- ▷ Imbalance between Slough residents and workers lessening
- ▷ Target sectors growing and investing in Slough

### Local people employed in productive jobs



### Select Delivery Partners

- ▷ BEIS
- ▷ DwP
- ▷ Employers
- ▷ Slough BID
- ▷ Thames Valley Chamber
- ▷ Town Centre Partnership
- ▷ TVBLEP

### Measuring Performance

- ▷ Employment breakdown
- ▷ Resident/worker wages
- ▷ Zero hour employment levels
- ▷ Full time employment levels
- ▷ Target sector performance
- ▷ Indices of Multiple Deprivation
- ▷ Economic activity levels

**Action 1.5 Prepared for industrial change:** Work with sectors that are most exposed to digital disruption and the transformational effects of AI and automation, to ensure employment is protected and new job opportunities are exploited as the nature of work changes.

**Action 1.6 Anchor business engagement:** Enact bespoke and regular engagement with Slough's largest employers to consider opportunities to enhance work practices, recruit locally and support growth and investment aspirations, delivering more jobs within Slough.

**Action 1.7 Ease of access initiative:** Consider interventions that support people from harder-to-reach backgrounds and the Borough's diverse communities to enter work, which offer flexible employment and introduce opportunities to be more economically active.

**Action 1.8 Soft landing scheme:** Develop and launch a scheme which encourages businesses to locate in Slough, make investment decisions that balance commercial interests with the needs of the Borough and streamlines the relocation of firms who demonstrate a commitment to fair and equitable employment.



### What does success look like?

- ▷ Technology trends and impacts are fully understood
- ▷ Businesses are preparing for the future and expected change
- ▷ Large employers are vanguards for inclusive policies
- ▷ All backgrounds and communities see the value of work
- ▷ New and relocating businesses committed to inclusivity

### Thriving in a future workplace



### Select Delivery Partners

- ▷ BEIS
- ▷ DwP
- ▷ Employers
- ▷ Slough BID
- ▷ Thames Valley Chamber
- ▷ Town Centre Partnership
- ▷ TVBLEP

### Measuring Performance

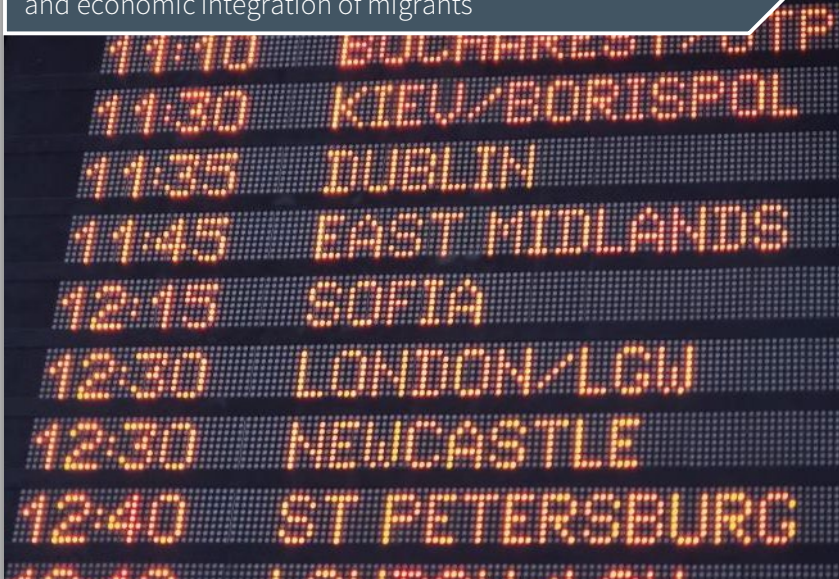
- ▷ Employment breakdown
- ▷ Resident/worker wages
- ▷ Zero hour employment levels
- ▷ Full time employment levels
- ▷ Target sector performance
- ▷ Indices of Multiple Deprivation
- ▷ Economic activity levels

## Foundation for action and drawing inspiration

### Slough in action:

#### Migration Achieves & Chalvey 360

Initiatives seeking to support the successful social and economic integration of migrants

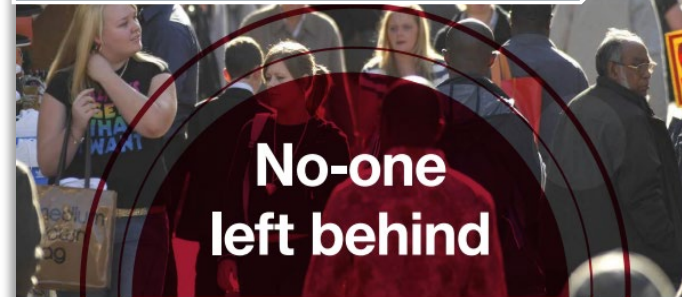


**Why relevant?** This initiative is a great example of integration in action, helping to mobilise people who are new to Slough and to ensure they are work ready. The scheme reflects Slough's attractiveness and openness to people from across the world and imbues the values of shared prosperity and opportunity.

### Farther afield:

#### London Borough of Barking

Transformational Council-wide commitment to deliver inclusive outcomes for all people



**No-one  
left behind**

Corporate  
Plan

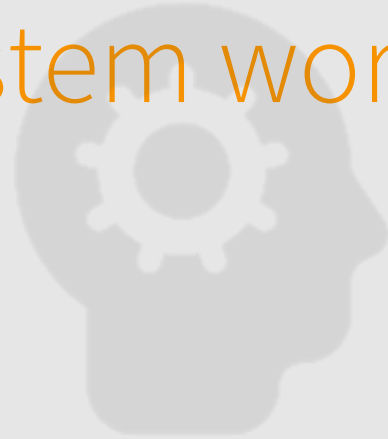
2018/2022

**Why relevant?** The Council has embarked on a bold restructuring of its operations and services, to orientate around delivering the best possible outcomes for its residents. It offers inspiration as to how Councils can drive an inclusive agenda.



# Priority 2

A skills system working for all



***We will forge inclusive learning, skills and career development pathways, which align education, communities and business, and fit for purpose to support the sectors and industries that are key to future growth...***

**Action 2.1 Slough employment and skills hub:** Deliver a new facility in the town centre, to provide direct access to objective and professional skills and training support, aimed at helping individuals to make informed choices, interrogate pathways and understand opportunities, including those for continuous learning and adult education.

**Action 2.2 Slough skills compact:** Launch a reimagined employment and skills partnership, providing an evidence-driven structure for employers and skills providers to assess and respond to demand for skills, the changing nature of work; and support local people into jobs.

**Action 2.3 Pathway to success:** Deliver a high profile scheme that seeks to deconstruct skills and employment pathways to all generations and people at differing life events, providing impartial information and making clear the touch points available within the Borough.

**Action 2.4 Slough inspired:** Design a new careers education programme which seeks to inspire the Borough's existing and future workforce by sharing information about the economy, jobs and pathways, to inspire professional development and ignite ambition.



### What does success look like?

- ▷ Town centre facility offering objective skills and training support
- ▷ Partnership established which has accountability for action
- ▷ Slough-based employers engaged and recruiting locally
- ▷ Apprenticeships and vocational pathways on the rise
- ▷ Retention of skilled local people through improved career education

### Skills to support local need



### Select Delivery Partners

- ▷ College/schools
- ▷ Department for Education
- ▷ Employers
- ▷ Higher education institutions
- ▷ Learning to Work
- ▷ Private training providers
- ▷ TVBLEP

### Measuring Performance

- ▷ Apprenticeship completions
- ▷ Apprenticeship take-up
- ▷ T-Level take-up
- ▷ Indices of Multiple Deprivation
- ▷ Prevalence of skills gaps
- ▷ Prevalence of hard-to-fill jobs

**Action 2.5 Digital skills first:** Establish a Borough-wide scheme which brings together relevant skill providers and employers at the forefront of technology to embed digital skills proficiency, on a continuum from school students to employees who are seeking to upskill and retrain.

**Action 2.6 Parental outreach programme:** Launch a programme which brings secondary schools, colleges and partners who provide career-based education together, to engage with parents, with the intention of promoting Slough-based employment and career pathways.

**Action 2.7 Continuous learning:** Develop an initiative that seeks to better understand the training needs of employers and nature of local vacancies, with a view that businesses are investing in and delivering training, whilst people understand the vital importance of lifelong learning, resilience and continued professional development.

**Action 2.8 A higher education presence:** Secure a new higher education presence in Slough, in either a teaching capacity or through the delivery of business support, to increase the dynamism of the Borough as a student destination and increase the pool of skilled labour.



### What does success look like?

- ▷ Digital skills are prevalent across all Slough residents
- ▷ Parents are willing and able to advocate local opportunities
- ▷ Continuous learning is seen by all as a necessity
- ▷ Employers are investing in training to address recruitment barriers
- ▷ Pathways are understood and well communicated to all

### Committed to lifelong learning



### Select Delivery Partners

- ▷ College/schools
- ▷ Department for Education
- ▷ Employers
- ▷ Higher education institutions
- ▷ Learning to Work
- ▷ Private training providers
- ▷ TVBLEP

### Measuring Performance

- ▷ Apprenticeship completions
- ▷ Apprenticeship take-up
- ▷ T-Level take-up
- ▷ Indices of Multiple Deprivation
- ▷ Prevalence of skills gaps
- ▷ Prevalence of hard-to-fill jobs



## Foundation for action and drawing inspiration

### Slough in action:

#### Learning to Work

A Slough-based charity, set up to facilitate links between education and the world of work



**Why relevant?** This local charity has worked to strengthen links between educators and the Borough's broad base of employers and is helping to inspire the next generation of workers. Initiative such as this will help Slough to address skills gaps, retain the best talent and ensure people are ready for the future workplace.

### Farther afield:

#### Boston Skills Compact

Local government using local leadership to make provision of skills more efficient and tailored



**Why relevant?** The compact is the embodiment of a strong partnership between the public and private sectors and educators, to deliver outstanding skills outcomes to support inclusive growth. It has helped to deliver stronger collaborations and individual outcomes.



# Priority 3

Regeneration & infrastructure  
unlocking growth



*Slough will become a beacon of economic strength, providing an enhanced public realm, a broad and high quality mix of spaces, with first-class connectivity, 'smart' credentials and improved appeal as a leisure and night-time destination...*

**Action 3.1 Secure anchor developments:** Support the delivery of developments that are key to the prospects of the town centre, improving its vitality, the quality of the public realm and commercial attractiveness (i.e. North West Quadrant, Queensmere, Horlicks).

**Action 3.2 Flexible meanwhile spaces:** Develop policies that allow for the flexible use of vacant spaces, including the meanwhile uses, to provide opportunities for start-ups, cultural enterprise and to secure higher and more consistent footfall across the town centre.

**Action 3.3 Attractive and safe places:** Deliver a programme of town centre improvements that create new social spaces, improve the quality of public realm materials and design and are provide a greater sense of security for businesses and visitors.

**Action 3.4 Slough's cultural hub:** Establish a new cultural presence in the town centre, which will act as an anchor destination for visitors and residents, with close ties to Slough's industrial heritage, community diversity and creates a space to bring people together and deepen an appreciation for what continues to shape the Borough.



### What does success look like?

- ▷ Wider mix of uses attractive to businesses small and large
- ▷ Public realm and pedestrian connectivity is transformed
- ▷ Balanced regeneration delivered across the axis of the town centre
- ▷ Increased footfall and visitor numbers at all times of the day
- ▷ New leisure and cultural assets introduced or in development

## Transformation through regeneration



### Select Delivery Partners

- ▷ BEIS
- ▷ Developers/landowners
- ▷ MHCLG
- ▷ Slough BID
- ▷ SUR
- ▷ Town Centre Partnership
- ▷ TVBLEP

### Measuring Performance

- ▷ New office space created
- ▷ New leisure space created
- ▷ New cultural space created
- ▷ Unit vacancy rates
- ▷ Public realm investment
- ▷ Town centre footfall levels
- ▷ Indices of Multiple Deprivation

**Action 3.5 A digitally connected Borough:** Deploy private and public investment and practical policy to provide best-in-class fixed/mobile connectivity across the Borough, prioritising speed and consistency of service across key employment areas and residential neighbourhoods, whilst also linking with the Borough's data centre capacity.

**Action 3.6 New transport solutions:** Harness the power of Crossrail, digital technologies and investing in solutions to alleviate traffic hotspots, allow for the more efficient movement of people and goods and encourage modal shifts where appropriate.

**Action 3.7 Affordable housing provision:** Ensure all housing developments deliver a quantum of affordable housing that reflects demand signals and policy, providing spaces from which people can maintain a quality of life, and maximise economic participation.

**Action 3.8 Regeneration unlocking infrastructure:** Make effective use of S106, the Community Infrastructure Levy and other mechanisms to secure investment from developers, helping to address infrastructure pinch points and increase capacity where there is a clear deficit which is holding back the vitality of the local economy.



### What does success look like?

- ▷ Near ubiquitous gigabit fixed and mobile connectivity across Slough
- ▷ Modal shifts towards sustainable and mass transit taking place
- ▷ Slough is meeting or exceeding housing delivery targets
- ▷ Greater range of affordable homes and tenancies available
- ▷ Congestion and A4 north-south barriers have been addressed

### A 'smart' and connected Borough



#### Select Delivery Partners

- ▷ BEIS
- ▷ DCMS
- ▷ Developers/landowners
- ▷ DfT
- ▷ MHCLG
- ▷ SUR
- ▷ TVBLEP

#### Measuring Performance

- ▷ Full fibre connectivity
- ▷ 4G/5G mobile connectivity
- ▷ Public transport usage
- ▷ Road congestion levels
- ▷ Pedestrian/cycling levels
- ▷ S106/CIL invested
- ▷ EV charging point coverage

## Foundation for action and drawing inspiration

### Slough in action:

#### North West Quadrant

A landmark development in the town centre that will create a new living-working community



**Why relevant?** This site is vitally important to the regeneration of Slough town centre, both in its scale and the ambitious elements within its design specification. Under the auspices of Slough Urban Renewal, the Council has the opportunity to extract maximum value from the scheme, for local benefit.

### Farther afield:

#### Roeselare Town Management

A new approach to town centre planning creating a 'trendsetting' and leading retail city



**Why relevant?** This Belgian city has taken adopted a progressive approach to transforming the fortunes of its retail core, which can help to inspire similar success in Slough. This entails bold use of space, practical design and developing a destination-based city centre offer.



# Priority 4

## Enterprise & scale-up ecosystem



***We will make Slough one of the best places to start a business and to commercialise ideas, by establishing an ecosystem of space, support, finance and talent that will reaffirm the town as a centre for enterprise...***

**Action 4.1 A new incubation hub:** Develop an expanded start-up space offer, which provides space for entrepreneurs and early-stage enterprise to grow in an environment which is affordable, flexible, offers amenities and provides a platform for interaction and innovation.

**Action 4.2 Innovation and acceleration facilities:** As a core component of the enterprise ecosystem, a comprehensive innovation and accelerator programme should be developed providing intensive support and mentoring to businesses with strong growth prospects and a desire to scale in Slough.

**Action 4.3 Embedding enterprise education:** Enterprise and the qualities needed to flourish as an entrepreneur will feature prominently within the education curriculum and be a core component of careers advice, clearly advocating the opportunities to thrive in Slough.

**Action 4.4 Business boost:** A reimagined mentorship and leadership programme which draws on the Borough's most prominent business leaders to coach the next wave of talent (new/existing labour market participants) share experience and help them pitch for investment.



### What does success look like?

- ▷ Contemporary and affordable start-up space in flourishing
- ▷ A comprehensive and clear support ecosystem is functioning
- ▷ A new wave of entrepreneurs are being inspired in education
- ▷ Slough's major employers are investing in the best entrepreneurs
- ▷ Stronger higher education business support links established

### Developing future business leaders



### Select Delivery Partners

- ▷ BEIS
- ▷ College/Schools
- ▷ Innovate UK
- ▷ SUR
- ▷ TVBLEP
- ▷ Universities
- ▷ Workspace providers

### Measuring Performance

- ▷ Incubation space created
- ▷ Accelerator space created
- ▷ New business formations
- ▷ Business survival rates
- ▷ Scale-up business base size
- ▷ Angel investment secured

**Action 4.5 Social enterprise quarter:** Explore and develop proposals to introduce a social enterprise quarter to the town centre, which would introduce non-retail uses and spaces, encourage greater footfall and act as a trigger to encourage socially-minded businesses to start and thrive.

**Action 4.6 Pop-up spaces and places:** Develop pop-up and meanwhile spaces at strategic locations and sites that link town centre assets together, creating a new dynamic and mix of uses that provide a natural home for start-ups and innovative business ideas.

**Action 4.7 Enterprise network:** Establish an enterprise network which functions in physical and virtual form, acting as the bedrock for start-ups and entrepreneurs to interact, co-develop ideas, innovate, attract investors and raise the finance needed to grow.

**Action 4.8 Seedling success:** A competitive programme which seeks to unearth the best entrepreneurial talent and ideas that have the greatest commercial potential, providing early-stage sponsorship, funding and exposure required to transition a proposition into a business with significant growth potential.



### What does success look like?

- ▷ A defined cluster of social enterprises are flourishing
- ▷ The Borough is punctuated by pop-ups and interesting spaces
- ▷ There is an ecosystem of self-support amongst entrepreneurs
- ▷ Start-ups are able to access the finance needed to grow
- ▷ Businesses are able to sustain and accelerate their expansion

### Always embracing innovation

 A black top hat is shown with a white rectangular sign attached to its front. The sign has the words "THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX" written in blue, bold, capital letters. The background is a blurred, light-colored surface.
 

THINK  
OUTSIDE  
THE BOX

### Select Delivery Partners

- ▷ BEIS
- ▷ College/Schools
- ▷ Innovate UK
- ▷ SUR
- ▷ TVBLEP
- ▷ Universities
- ▷ Workspace providers

### Measuring Performance

- ▷ Incubation space created
- ▷ Accelerator space created
- ▷ New business formations
- ▷ Business survival rates
- ▷ Scale-up business base size
- ▷ Angel investment secured



## Foundation for action and drawing inspiration

### Slough in action:

#### Pre-Accelerator Programme

A Growth Hub fully-funded intensive course to help launch a new wave of businesses



**Why relevant?** The TVBLEP Growth Hub is an important conduit for advice and information and the beating heart of the business support ecosystem. Beyond its role as an information portal, the Hub has the capacity to deliver and is helping start-ups and SMEs on the journey towards locally-rooted growth.

### Farther afield:

#### SETsquared Partnership

The global no.1 business incubator and enterprise partnership between 5 UK universities



**Why relevant?** SETsquared is a globally renowned incubator, which harnesses the expertise and experience of some of the UK's best universities. It has an exceptional track record of supporting rapid business growth and attracting investment.



# Priority 5

## Inclusive & sustainable neighbourhoods



***We will work to ensure that existing and newly-created neighbourhoods are organised and curated to deliver the best quality of life, where safety, integration and environmental sustainability is paramount and access to greenspace is within easy reach of all...***

**Action 5.1 Effective place-making:** Maximising the potential of new developments to become exemplars of community centric and sustainable place-making, where planning is used to facilitate new technologies and partnerships that place people at the heart of design.

**Action 5.2 Prioritising wellbeing:** Responding to the prevalence of health conditions within the population that are holding back life prospects and economic participation, through the delivery of public amenity and greenspace to encourage physical activity and wellness.

**Action 5.3 Corporate leadership:** Working with industry and local business leaders to engender consistent corporate climate responsibility and set a progressive and ambitious agenda for decarbonising economic activity within Slough with appropriate accountability.

**Action 5.4 Slough Climate Challenge:** Introduction of an annual Climate Challenge which provides a platform to showcase climate change progress and activate local innovators to tackle pressing issues, leveraging local entrepreneurs and established businesses, positioning Slough as progressive in its pursuit of a net zero footprint.



### What does success look like?

- ▷ New developments adhere to the highest environmental standards
- ▷ Renewable heat and power capacity is increasing across the Borough
- ▷ Planning system enshrines sustainability measures within policy
- ▷ Place-making has created safe and integrated neighbourhoods
- ▷ Emissions and environmental quality is greatly improved

### Exemplar place-making across Slough



#### Select Delivery Partners

- ▷ BEIS
- ▷ Developers/landowners
- ▷ Housing associations
- ▷ MHCLG
- ▷ SUR
- ▷ Thames Valley Police
- ▷ TVBLEP

#### Measuring Performance

- ▷ Air quality
- ▷ Emissions levels
- ▷ Thriving Places Index
- ▷ Crime incidence data
- ▷ Indices of Multiple Deprivation
- ▷ Creation of greenspace
- ▷ Renewable energy provision

**Action 5.5 Social regeneration value:** Securing maximum social value by placing this at the heart of regeneration schemes, including the opportunity for co-design, effective use of consultation, drawing on community capacity to secure the provision of public places and spaces that integrate neighbourhoods.

**Action 5.6 Progressive procurement:** Using the buying power of the public sector and special delivery vehicles to build social value into procurements, supporting the delivery of community assets, and a greater level of interface with people furthest from the labour market.

**Action 5.7 Effective use of public assets:** Leveraging the public sector estate portfolio to drive uses that have a positive social consequence and respond to local needs, orientated around the Borough's cultural diversity and where deprivation is most pronounced.

**Action 5.8 Social leases:** Within all new developments establish progressive and socially-orientated contracts which stipulate the need to drive positive economic and social outcomes, with clear links to local people and the needs of adjacent communities, advocating behaviours that can be transferred to locations across the Borough.



### What does success look like?

- ▷ New developments have delivered substantial social value outcomes
- ▷ Slough has invested in cultural assets that reflect its communities
- ▷ Public sector buying power has improved resident employability
- ▷ Public assets are harnessed as spaces for community interaction
- ▷ Private sector playing an increasing role in positive place-shaping

### Securing meaningful local impacts



#### Select Delivery Partners

- ▷ BEIS
- ▷ Developers/landowners
- ▷ Employers
- ▷ Housing associations
- ▷ SUR
- ▷ TVBLEP

#### Measuring Performance

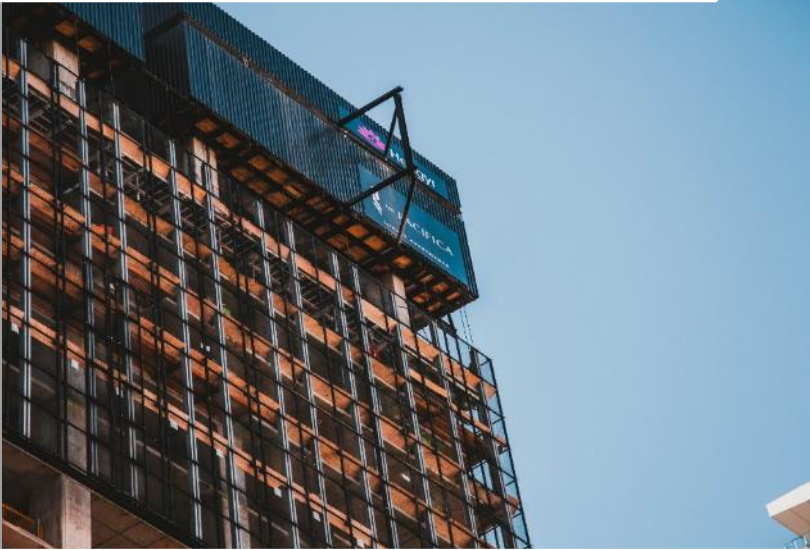
- ▷ Community facilities created
- ▷ Community events delivered
- ▷ Place-making interaction
- ▷ Assets in community use
- ▷ Social lease penetration
- ▷ Procurement expenditure

## Foundation for action and drawing inspiration

### Slough in action:

#### Slough Urban Renewal

A joint venture which is regenerating Slough with a commitment to social value at its core

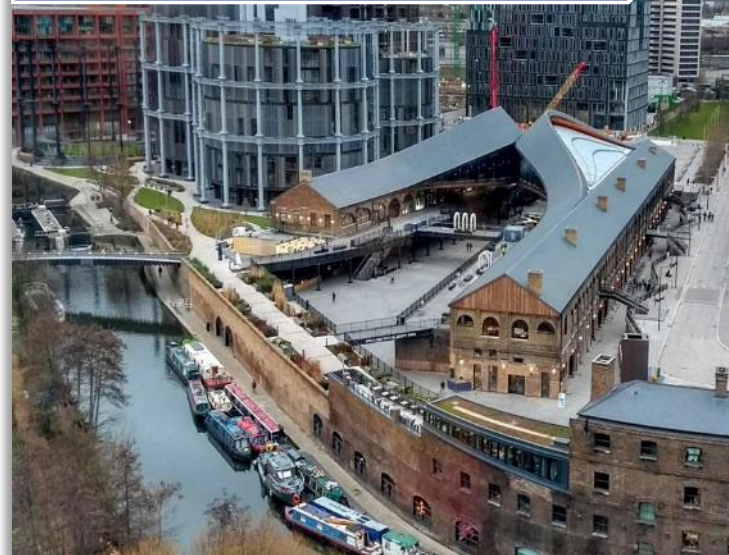


**Why relevant?** Slough Urban renewal is a unique partnership between the Council and Morgan Sindall, which is tasked with delivering transformative regeneration. This relationship provides the basis for brokering a new kind of civic deal, with a legacy of local skills and employment benefits at the heart of this.

### Farther afield:

#### London King's Cross

A landmark regeneration project delivering wider social and economic value by design



**Why relevant?** King's Cross, as one of Europe's largest brownfield regeneration projects, has set new standards in its pursuit of social value and locally-led design. The development is also notable for its long-term commitment to track and monitor its achievements.



# Priority 6

## Connecting & celebrating Slough



***Collaboration will be core to our approach to delivery – we will achieve more through the collective pooling of knowledge and resources to deliver change and we recognise that there is a need to provide a platform from which Slough residents and businesses can celebrate the Borough’s rich history and distinctiveness...***

**Action 6.1 Outward looking approach:** Work to ensure that the maximum economic benefits are derived from assets and partners that lie outside of the Borough boundary but play an important employment role, with a particular focus on Heathrow Airport.

**Action 6.2 Maintaining strategic influence:** Maintain a prominent role as an anchor partner within TVBLEP and work closely within strategic alliances where relevant, to ensure investment is secured for the Borough and wider policy is shaped around Slough's priorities.

**Action 6.3 'State of Slough' symposium:** Embed an annual conference which focuses on Slough's socioeconomic performance and progress achieved, reflecting on the issues shaping economic activity and providing a platform from which to showcase the Borough's success and competitiveness.

**Action 6.4 Community Leaders Programme:** Bring together community leaders from across Slough's neighbourhoods and ethnic backgrounds, to understand localised challenges, inequalities, success stories and promote the opportunity to extend economic activity.



### What does success look like?

- ▷ Local people are aware and benefitting from large-scale projects
- ▷ Slough is securing funding from TVBLEP and government
- ▷ Slough's local priorities are driving sub-regional strategy
- ▷ Slough is driving a proactive conversation about inclusive growth
- ▷ A broad base of stakeholders are accountable for Slough's success

### Always seeing the bigger picture



### Select Delivery Partners

- ▷ College/schools
- ▷ Community groups
- ▷ Crossrail
- ▷ Employers
- ▷ Government departments
- ▷ Heathrow Airport
- ▷ TVBLEP

### Measuring Performance

- ▷ External funding secured
- ▷ Local Heathrow jobs
- ▷ Local Crossrail jobs
- ▷ Slough Symposium events
- ▷ Community leaders engaged

**Action 6.5 Destination Slough:** The development of a compelling and locally-shaped Slough brand, which triggers a new conversation about the Borough, its identity, appeal, diversity and the prospects for transformative growth in the future, that can form the basis for a new and confident marketing campaign.

**Action 6.6 Annual events programme:** Development of an events programme that helps to promote Slough as a destination for culture, music, creative industries and innovative expression, with a centrepiece event at the heart of a year-round calendar.

**Action 6.7 Volunteering and activism:** Creating a programme of opportunities that enable local people from all backgrounds and faiths to volunteer, offer positive community contributions and interface more effectively with public institutions across the Borough.

**Action 6.8 Activated spaces:** Designate a series of spaces across the town centre and key employment areas, prioritised for events, performance and gatherings, to inspire cultural awareness, increase footfall and activate areas that have suffered from a lack of safety.



### What does success look like?

- ▷ Slough is making a bigger contribution as a regional destination
- ▷ The outward perception of the Borough is greatly improved
- ▷ Slough's cultural offer is defined and well communicated
- ▷ Slough has a network of active spaces across the Borough
- ▷ Residents and businesses are engaged in activism and promotion

### A culture-led destination



### Select Delivery Partners

- ▷ Chamber of Commerce
- ▷ College/schools
- ▷ Community groups
- ▷ DCMS
- ▷ Employers
- ▷ SUR
- ▷ TVBLEP

### Measuring Performance

- ▷ Slough brand awareness
- ▷ Public events organised
- ▷ Town centre footfall
- ▷ Volunteer participation levels
- ▷ Visitor numbers
- ▷ Cultural centre entries



## Foundation for action and drawing inspiration

### Slough in action:

#### Slough Bonfire and Fireworks

An annual fireworks display which features a 60-foot bonfire, world food court and large-scale fun fair



**Why relevant?** This is an example of a popular annual event which draws people from across Slough, brings cultures together and showcases the best of the Borough. Through regeneration and civic engagement, Slough has the chance to build on this and celebrate its distinctive character.

### Farther afield:

#### Bolton Food & Drink Festival

Bolton's biggest festival which showcases local food and drink and encourages people to buy local



**Why relevant?** Bolton's food and drink festival has helped to showcase the local cultural and leisure offer and greatly enhanced the town's image. It has gained national recognition by showcasing the quality of local produce whilst encouraging new visitors to Bolton.



# Our immediate priorities for action



## Immediate opportunities for action

### Slough employment and skills hub

#### Priority 2: A skills system working for all

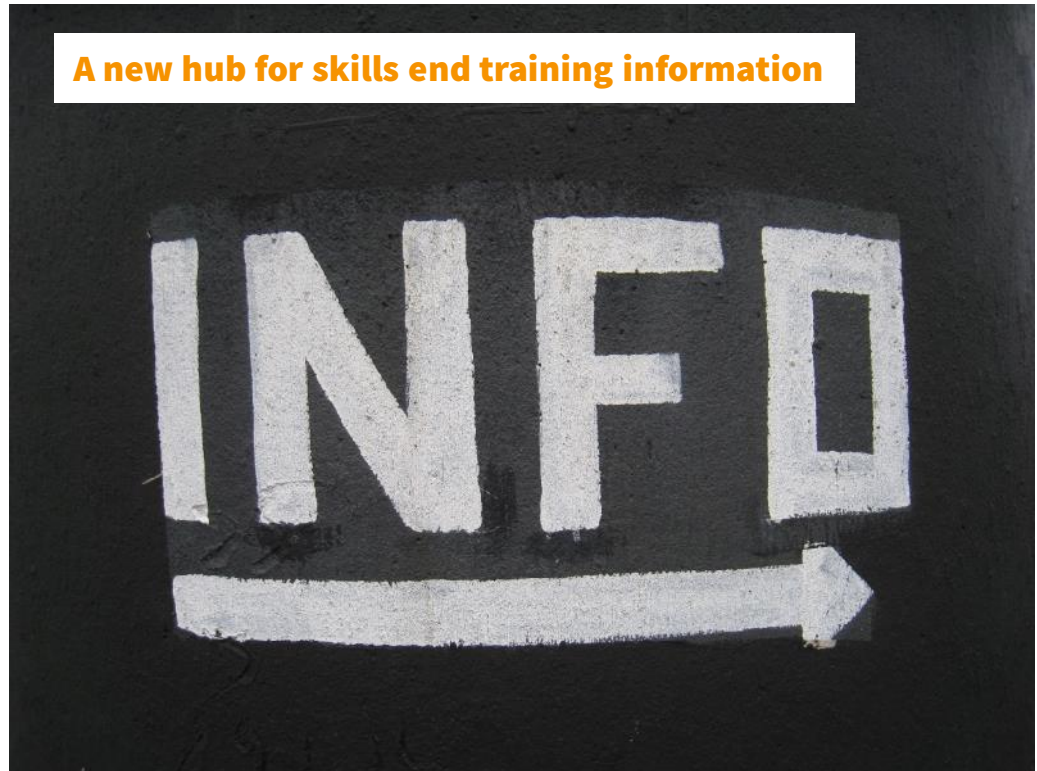
This project will see the creation of a new facility in an accessible, town centre location. The hub may be located within a publicly owned asset; delivered as part of a meanwhile use arrangement; or as a component of emerging developments (particularly those being delivered through SUR).

The hub will:

- ▶ Act as a one-stop-shop for objective and informed skills and careers advice, reflecting the academic and vocational pathways available in Slough, across all age groups.
- ▶ Offer professional support to school leavers, graduates, new residents, parents and those professionals who are seeking to re-train.
- ▶ Support local employers who are recruiting and will help them to map and plan career pathways.
- ▶ Provide initial access to enterprise and start-up support and signposting to other schemes.

The hub will be managed in coalition with key skills and training providers, with the potential for co-location. Close links will also be established with relevant agencies and universities within proximity to Slough, supplemented with a virtual online hub.

### A new hub for skills and training information



#### Key characteristics

- ▶ Town centre location, maximising accessibility for Borough residents
- ▶ Consolidation of existing support, services and information into a one-stop-hub
- ▶ Sponsorship secured from employers, skills providers and public sector

## Immediate opportunities for action

### Slough skills compact

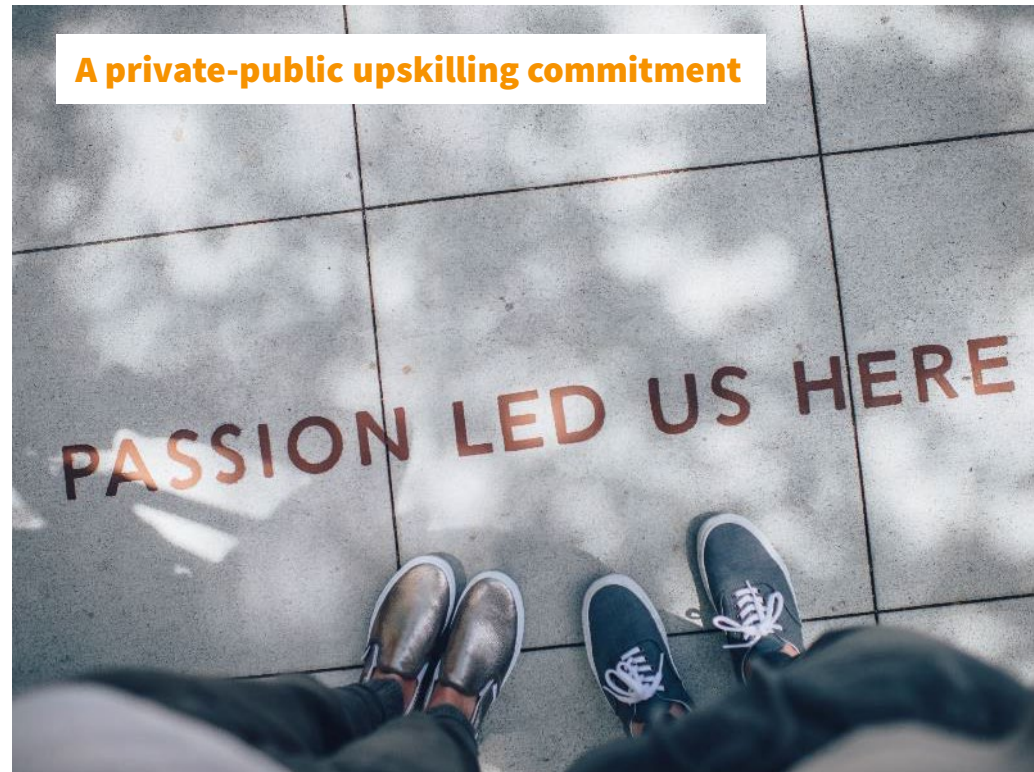
#### Priority 2: A skills system working for all

This action responds to the need to create a clearer and more effective interface between employers and skills providers. There is a need to establish a body which champions opportunity within Slough, addresses skills gaps and develops solutions based on sound and repeatable evidence.

The compact model would see a reworking of governance and collaboration where the Council plays a convening role, encouraging stakeholders to sign up to a Skills Compact. Drawing on the Boston model in the USA, the Compact will support the coordination of activity in their cities, facilitating collaboration between employers, skills providers and other stakeholders.

The Compact would use data and evidence to outline its priorities and define the interventions needed to address key issues. It would also have a strong focus on accountability, with a commitment to monitoring and evaluating impact. The Compact should be focused on measurable targets which reflect latest socioeconomic data and business perspectives.

### A private-public upskilling commitment



#### Key characteristics

- ▷ Representation from Slough's most prominent employers and skills providers
- ▷ Data driven using latest insights to inform decision-making and targets
- ▷ A focus on labour market issues in the present, with a view on the future also

## Immediate opportunities for action

### Pathways to success

#### Priority 2: A skills system working for all

This action is closely aligned to the development of an Employment and Skills and with the strategic intent and wraparound governance of the Skills Compact. The action requires the development of a tool and accompanying information that clearly maps out the skills pathways to employment.

As a standalone activity, the Pathways to Success project would entail the coordination of information, support and programmes that support Slough residents along their career and skills development timeline, guided by a series of key life events. Over an assumed career continuum, the project would provide information and material to assist young people in being connected to Slough as a place, making effective career choices, considering professional development, responding to changes in personal circumstances and making lifestyle-based choices, post the working life apex.

Information would be deliberately accessible, with a visual focus and more detailed material prepared to map across to each life event, pinpointing the agencies and programmes which are there to help.

### Brokering ambition with opportunity



#### Key characteristics

- ▷ Reflective of the skills and employment pathways across life events
- ▷ Tells a coherent story about careers, opportunity and prospects in Slough
- ▷ Inspires those young and old to make deliberate and healthy choices

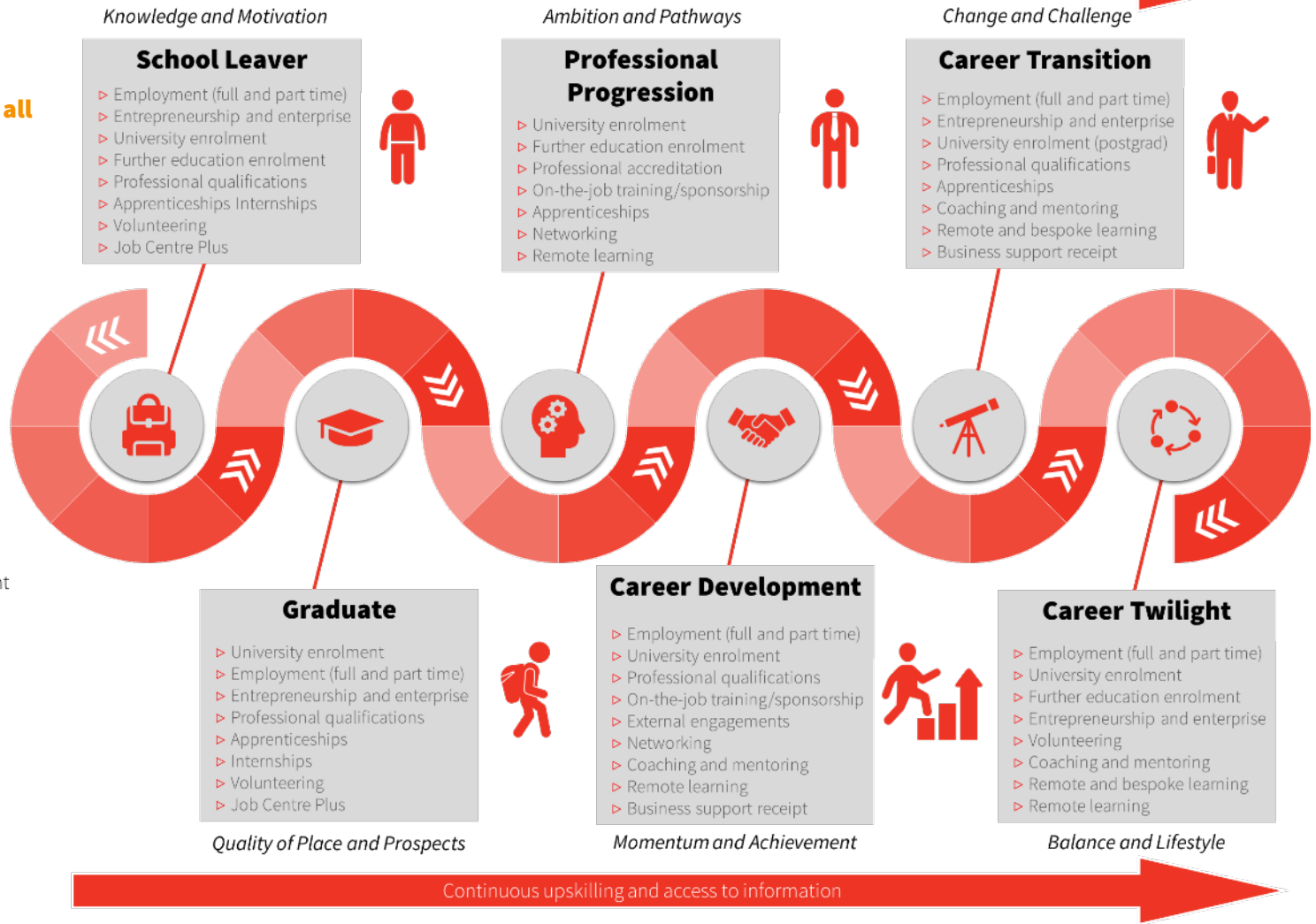
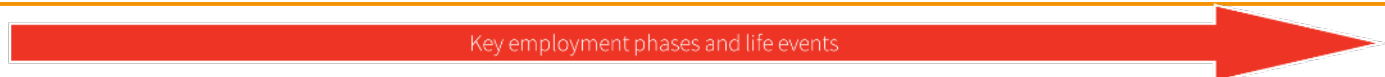
# Pathways to Success

**Priority 2: A skills system working for all**



## Informed Skills and Employability Progression

- ▷ Career education
- ▷ Local insight
- ▷ Employer interaction
- ▷ Future thinking
- ▷ Technologically focused
- ▷ Lifelong ambition
- ▷ Continuous improvement



## Immediate opportunities for action

### Flexible meanwhile spaces

#### Priority 3: Regeneration & infrastructure unlocking growth

Whilst the medium to longer-term prospects for the town centre are strong, based on a significant regeneration and development pipeline, its vitality and quality needs to be addressed in the short-term. The effects of online trading and changing consumer preferences have bitten hard.

This action would see the Council, with the support of landlords and asset managers, develop and implement a meanwhile use policy, designed to incentivise and attract new tenants into units that are not commercially viable or have remained vacant. Alongside other measures, such as rate relief and more flexible lease conditions, the policy would allow the high street and shopping centre to be rejuvenated.

The Slough BID would play a key role in selecting spaces and sites which would benefit most from the policy and act as a natural interface with landlords. The Council would monitor the effectiveness of the policy on the basis of town centre vitality and attractiveness to SMEs and development pipeline.

### Dynamic and thriving town centre spaces



#### Key characteristics

- ▷ Town centre focused seeking to reactivate areas which are lacking footfall
- ▷ An opportunity to house start-ups, entrepreneurs and creative industries
- ▷ Will be orientated around assumed transition to large-scale regeneration



# 06

## Delivery and Accountability







# Securing an **inclusive future**

## Embedding our commitment to delivery

**A focus on participatory democracy, along with an ethos of partnership and collaboration will be needed to deliver this strategy. It will require long term commitment, agility and an appetite to try new things to deliver on the full potential of Slough.**

This strategy marks an evolution in Slough's economic development approach and will require a refocusing of delivery approaches. It will require collective action and partnership working, drawing on the capacity and expertise of the public and private sectors and civil society. It will also require innovation, with a commitment to testing new ideas, and taking managed risks to ensure the Borough reaches its full potential.

The delivery of our Strategy sets a new focus for Slough's growth which will require consistent deployment of the following behaviours:

- ▷ **Economic leadership**
- ▷ **Evidence-led decision-making**
- ▷ **Future-facing and global thinking**
- ▷ **Confident collaboration with colleagues**
- ▷ **Partnership building within and externally**
- ▷ **Commercial case-making**
- ▷ **Proactive engagement beyond the Borough**

Successful implementation of our Inclusive Growth Strategy will call upon a set of essential skills. These skills will be intrinsic to making sound decisions, working transparently, building capacity and speaking confidently about Slough with a collective voice.

## Essential delivery skills



## Collective ownership and accountability

**Our Inclusive Growth Strategy will need to be managed within a robust and accountable governance framework. It cannot be delivered in isolation and must leverage collective energy.**

We envisage this will take the form of a new **Regeneration, Economy and Skills Board** and the membership of this group should balance representation from business, education, the third sector and public bodies. Collectively, the Board will provide necessary experience, insight and decision-making responsibilities.

The Board will have a key role in the following activities:

- ▶ **Agreement of key performance indicators:** SMART targets
- ▶ **Recruitment:** Building expertise and capacity
- ▶ **Action and business case sign-off:** Adopting a commercial mindset
- ▶ **Monitoring the delivery of actions:** Accountability and control
- ▶ **Evaluation of investments:** Learning from what works
- ▶ **Strategy refreshes:** Updating the strategic imperative
- ▶ **Annual reporting:** Transparency and consensus building
- ▶ **Horizon scanning:** Monitoring trends and change
- ▶ **Maintaining strategic dialogue:** Building positive relationships
- ▶ **Collective influencing:** A unified voice

Alongside this, the Board will provide challenge and to question the rationale of decision-making. Representatives will also act as champions in their everyday capacities, telling a coherent story about the Borough and helping to project a new and bold image for Slough.



## Anchoring Council initiative and delivery

**Slough Borough Council will have a key role to play in the active deployment of this strategy. The Council has already shaped the content and focus within, whilst its momentum and the delivery of priority actions will be driven by the departments and teams that all interface with the Borough's inclusive growth agenda.**

Whilst the strategy will require collective ownership and be endorsed by a broad range of organisations who can propel shared prosperity across Slough, the Council will undoubtedly play a pivotal role. This will be seen in terms of the strategy's initial activation, through to its ongoing monitoring and investment in projects that are within the Council's remit.

The overarching principle that will define the Council's interaction with the strategy, will be that of accountability, with the document acting as the primary link between a clear strategic rationale and subsequent internal decision-making and reporting.

Moving forward, the strategy will act as the lynchpin for the Council's economic development activity by:

- ▷ **Being the conduit for reporting to Cabinet, members and the Corporate Management Team**
- ▷ **Forming the basis for regular performance monitoring and KPIs**
- ▷ **Acting as the 'hook' from which to develop detailed business cases and funding bids linked to priority actions**
- ▷ **Being a 'golden thread' that makes the links with the Council's teams and services that are helping to deliver inclusive growth**
- ▷ **Facilitating wider partnerships and unlocking new investment opportunities, such as those guided by the LEP**



### Key performance and monitoring forums:

- ▷ Cabinet
- ▷ Full Council
- ▷ Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- ▷ Corporate Management Team
- ▷ Economic Development Directorate
- ▷ Skills and Education Directorate
- ▷ Regeneration Directorate
- ▷ Planning Directorate

## Our critical success factors

Alongside skillsets and effective governance, there are a series of critical success factors that must be in place. These will ensure that accountability, responsiveness and agility are enshrined so that Slough is best placed to thrive in a dynamic environment.

As a Council and a key economic actor and strategic partner **we will be prepared to adapt our role**, which will change at various stages of the delivery journey. We understand that we must be ready to initiate, deliver, encourage and participate in the priorities and actions that will be implicit to the strategy. we must learn; and respond to what learn in our approach.

We also acknowledge the **importance of making investment decisions founded upon transparent business cases**, that demonstrate value for money and a clear economic impact. We will embrace appraisal practices that advocate the importance of case making in a style and language that resonates with government and we will place emphasis on impacts that align with our priorities.

We will commit to **regular monitoring and reporting on the outcomes our actions and investments**, built around SMART measures of performance. This will also extend to evaluations and longitudinal studies (as appropriate to the project/action), to understand the impacts of our interventions and to shape future decision-making

Partnership is key – **we must work with all agencies and stakeholders who can offer support, insight and capital**. This will allow us to continuously learn, share experiences, benefit from collective strength and be ready to balance the needs of our economy with the tough decisions that need to be made around equality, competitiveness and the environment.





## Sample key performance indicators

Strategic Priority	Example Performance Metric	Data source	Reporting Frequency
Priority 1	Increased business density in economic hubs	ONS Business Counts	Annual
Priority 1	% and growth in knowledge economy and target sectors	ONS Business Counts/BRES	Annual
Priority 1	Number of businesses in target sectors	ONS Business Counts	Annual
Priority 1	Number of jobs in target sectors	ONS BRES	Annual
Priority 1	Increase in the number of businesses (250+ employees) moving into Slough	ONS Business Counts	Annual
Priority 1	Number of businesses in Slough	ONS Business Counts	Annual
Priority 1	Resident and work-place based wages	ONS ASHE	Annual
Priority 2	Number of local people directly benefitting employment or training as a result of regeneration schemes	Procurement frameworks, Business Survey	Annual
Priority 2	Number of residents NVQ4+ qualified	ONS NOMIS	Annual
Priority 2	Apprenticeship starts and completions	ONS, Department for Education	Annual
Priority 3	% of premises with 4G mobile connectivity	Ofcom Connected Nations	Annual
Priority 3	% of premises with Full Fibre connectivity	Ofcom Connected Nations	Annual



## Sample key performance indicators

Strategic Priority	Example Performance Metric	Data source	Reporting Frequency
Priority 3	% of vacant units within town centre boundary	Slough Borough Council	Annual
Priority 3	Loss of office floorspace through Permitted Development in town centre	Slough Borough Council	Annual
Priority 3	New office floorspace in the town centre (sqm)	Slough Borough Council	Annual
Priority 4	Number of businesses supported to grow into new premises within Slough	Slough Borough Council	6 months
Priority 4	5-year business survival rate	ONS Business Demography	5 years
Priority 4	Sqm of affordable workspace delivered	Slough Borough Council	Annual
Priority 5	Number of affordable units	Slough Borough Council	2 years
Priority 5	Crime, environment and neighbourhood-based data	Multiple Index of Deprivation	Annual
Priority 5	Number of businesses supported to have later opening hours	Slough Borough Council	6 months
Priority 6	Cultural space delivered as part of residential-led development proposals	Slough Borough Council	2 years
Priority 6	Number of major events (10,000+ attendees) held	Slough Borough Council	Annual



# A

## Appendix



## What key national policies are shaping the Inclusive Growth Strategy?

Our Inclusive Growth Strategy will make a **key contribution to national, sub regional and local policy**, whilst being shaped by these too, where there is a strong alignment with our priorities and the need to address common challenges holding back Slough's economic potential. National policy frameworks are constantly evolving, but the current government has published a variety of reports that are the thrust of economic development and growth ambitions.

Some of the most influential and pertinent to Slough are set out below and showcase a national drive towards growth underpinned by productivity, place-based distinctiveness and the importance of skilled people and digital technologies in a contemporary and thriving economy.

Key Policy Drivers	Growth Emphasis
<p><b>UK Industrial Strategy</b></p> 	<p>The aim of the <b>Industrial Strategy</b> is to boost productivity by backing businesses to create good jobs and increase the earning power of people throughout the UK with investment in skills, industries and infrastructure. It is orientated around the five foundations of productivity - Ideas, People, Infrastructure, Business Environment and Places. The Industrial Strategy also sets out Grand Challenges to put the UK at the forefront of the industries of the future and improve productivity - these are Artificial intelligence and Data, Ageing Society, Clean Growth and the Future of Mobility.</p>
<p><b>UK Digital Strategy</b></p> 	<p>The <b>UK Digital Strategy</b> applies the principles outlined in the Industrial Strategy specifically to the digital economy, building on the nation's legacy of digital innovation and continued global competitiveness in technology driven industries. It is focused on seven strands that will drive a digital economy - Building World Class Infrastructure, Giving Everyone Access to Digital Skills, A Great Place to Start a Digital Business, All Businesses a Digital Business, Safest Place to Live and Work Online, A World Leader in Serving Citizens Online, Unlocking the Power of Data in the Economy.</p>
<p><b>UK Post 16 Skills Plan</b></p> 	<p>The <b>Post 16 Skills Plan</b> sets out an ambitious framework to support young people and adults to secure a lifetime of sustained skilled employment and meet the needs of our growing and rapidly changing economy. The plan sets out a series of ambitious reforms, designed to enhance technical education levels which reach the highest skills levels, has a focus on shared prosperity, engages closely with providers, whilst balancing short and longer-term skills requirements.</p>

## Where does the Inclusive Growth Strategy fit in a sub-regional context?

Slough's economic agenda is also being shaped by the priorities set out within key sub-regional strategies, which include overlapping growth themes (such as a focus on productivity and a place-based emphasis), whilst also highlighting the importance major economic assets on the Borough's borders:

**Thames Valley Berkshire LEP (TVBLEP)** is a business-led, multi-sector partnership mandated by government to lead activities that drive local economic growth. The LEP has a focus on setting the direction of economic development policy and channeling investment across the sub-region.

The LEP is now orientating its growth ambitions around a new **Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)** which, in line with national policy, is targeting improved productivity and economic inclusivity.

The LIS is structured around a series of Overarching Priorities (1: Enhancing Productivity, 2: Supporting Ecosystems which are Maturing and Evolving, 3: Encouraging International Trade, Collaborations and Investments, 4: Building Vibrant Places and Supportive Infrastructure, 5: Making Berkshire and Inclusive Area, 6: Ensuring Economic Growth Contributes to Berkshire's Economic Performance). These frame a series of actions structured around the five foundations of productivity, supporting the LEP's commitment to responsible economic growth.



**Heathrow** is the UK's busiest international airport and a major driver of economic output. Given the airport's value as a national asset and retained ambitions to extend its capacity and reach, it has developed an **Strategic Brief** to set out Heathrow's future high-level aspirations.

Acting as a brief to stakeholders and partners and as a basis for cooperation, the strategy aims to balance the needs of airport, its passengers, the people who are key to its operation and the communities that surround it..

The strategy is highly influenced by Heathrow's role as an employer and major contributor to economic output, creating thousands of direct jobs and a extensive supply chain. A series of propositions anchor ambitions, with people, communities and the environment crucial. Within this, employment opportunity, new business investment and world-class connectivity are integral and is reflected in the desire to reinforce links to local communities and people.



## What local policies are shaping local economic ambitions?

Local policies also acknowledge the need for an integrated approach to coordinating economic growth, coalescing with Council-wide policies:

**Slough's Five Year Plan (2020-25)** presents the Council Leadership Team's vision for Slough. It strives to make sure the growth Slough is enjoying is inclusive and residents are able to access the opportunities and services to help them build good lives for themselves and their families. The Plan sets out a series of priorities, including those with an economic development focus:

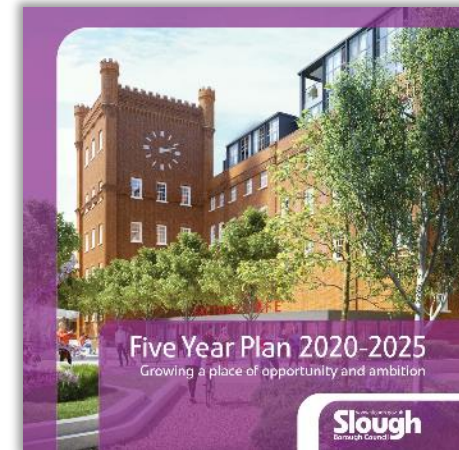
- ▷ Slough children will grow up to be happy, healthy and successful
- ▷ Slough people will be healthier and manage their own care needs
- ▷ Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay
- ▷ Slough residents will live in good quality homes
- ▷ Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities

The Plan affirms the Council's commitment to the promotion of inclusive economic growth, ensuring the benefits from the regeneration and investment in Slough are shared by all residents.

**The Council's Emerging Local Plan** will set out how to guide development in Slough through to 2036. The plan will contain policies to guide business and residential development to meet the needs of Slough's expanding population and support sustainable economic growth. It will provide a crucial reference point from which regeneration and development will be delivered and support the creation of more sustainable and liveable neighbourhoods.

The emerging Local Plan aims to address some of the key challenges facing Slough. In particular, meeting the need for new homes, continuing to provide for locally and nationally important businesses, make the most of Heathrow's planned expansion and tackling congestion on the Borough's roads.

Importantly, the Plan will guide the spatial focus of development and set out where employment and business can be accommodated. It will also set out parameters within which inclusive growth outcomes will be achieved through the development of new and brownfield sites.

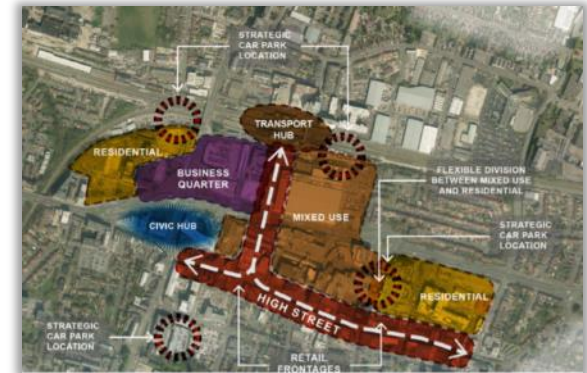


## What local policies are shaping local economic ambitions?

The Council is in the process of developing a **Centre of Slough Planning Framework**. The Framework will be a key document that will underpin the Local Plan. It will start the process of producing a Masterplan for the Centre of Slough which will work to resolve some of the key issues afflicting the town centre, including its retail and commercial vitality, safety and image.

The Framework is expected to promote sustainable growth and support a pipeline of investment. It will be based upon an activity and culture-led strategy which seeks to maximise the opportunities for everyone to use the centre and provide footfall to support new investment.

The Framework is driven by economic ambition and the need to create a town core which is thriving and providing opportunities to the Borough's residents. In doing so, the centre will become a major transport hub, a thriving business area and accommodate new housing.



**The 2020-25 Slough Wellbeing Strategy** is an overarching plan which seeks to improve the wellbeing of residents and reduce health inequalities across the Borough. It has strong links to an inclusive growth agenda and strives to improve outcomes for those who are furthest from the labour market. The Strategy is focused on four key priorities to improve health and wellbeing, which have been developed by the Slough Wellbeing Board:

- ▷ Starting Well
- ▷ Integration
- ▷ Strong, Healthy and Attractive Neighbourhoods
- ▷ Workplace Health

The document's intent reflects the presence of neighbourhoods across the Borough that include households facing multiple challenges, such as unemployment, low incomes, pervasive poverty and poor quality housing. All are barriers to shared prosperity and inclusive outcomes.





## Slough Story: Business, Enterprise & Innovation

### Key strengths and opportunities...

- ▷ There is a higher density of large employers
- ▷ Total employment levels have increased
- ▷ There is a diverse base of important sectors
- ▷ Important sectors offer high value employment
- ▷ Slough is attractive to international investors
- ▷ The Borough has well-defined employment clusters
- ▷ Many businesses are new with growth potential
- ▷ Business are investing in research and innovation
- ▷ Sub-sectors drive economic competitiveness
- ▷ Considerable growth projected in some sectors

### Key weaknesses and threats...

- ▷ Employment hasn't kept pace with business growth
- ▷ Significant presence of lower value sectors
- ▷ Longer-term business survival rates are poor
- ▷ Public sector employment subject to shocks
- ▷ Certain sectors are projected to contract
- ▷ Business report issues in sourcing skilled staff
- ▷ Some businesses are exposed to global labour
- ▷ Businesses face fierce sub-regional competition
- ▷ Some sectors threatened by automation and AI

NOTE: Messages drawn from a variety of sources including multiple ONS datasets, which are analysed in detail within the evidence base document.



## Slough Story: People & Skills

### Key strengths and opportunities...

- ▷ The Borough has a young and growing population
- ▷ Slough residents reflect its ethnic diversity
- ▷ Students have strong GCSE/A level attainment
- ▷ The Borough has many well-qualified residents
- ▷ Slough is attractive to workers across the globe
- ▷ Slough jobs deliver highly competitive wages
- ▷ Workers generate high levels of economic output
- ▷ Further education participation is very strong
- ▷ Slough has high levels of full time employment
- ▷ Slough is identified as a social mobility hotspot

### Key weaknesses and threats...

- ▷ Slough workers earn more than Borough residents
- ▷ Some people are not earning a living wage
- ▷ Zero hours contracts create insecure work
- ▷ Part time employment has been increasing
- ▷ Some ethnic groups are less economically engaged
- ▷ Skills gaps are holding economic growth back
- ▷ Hard-to-fill vacancies reflect a lack of skills supply
- ▷ Qualification levels are unequal across Slough
- ▷ Economic restructuring poses skills challenges
- ▷ Health issues may be holding back participation

NOTE: Messages drawn from a variety of sources including multiple ONS datasets, which are analysed in detail within the evidence base document.



## Slough Story: Places & Communities

### Key strengths and opportunities...

- ▷ Slough can be characterised as a thriving place
- ▷ Place-making is central to regeneration projects
- ▷ Strong housing growth agenda being pursued
- ▷ By certain measures, quality of life is good
- ▷ Overall deprivation is lower than a decade ago
- ▷ Commercial property investment is improving stock
- ▷ Some signals of strong demand for business space
- ▷ Strength through geographic connections
- ▷ Housing market is buoyant with strong demand
- ▷ Ethnic diversity shapes neighbourhoods

### Key weaknesses and threats...

- ▷ Slough's town centre is no longer fit for purpose
- ▷ Areas of high and entrenched deprivation remain
- ▷ Housing affordability a significant barrier
- ▷ The quality of the environment is low in some areas
- ▷ Pollution and air quality are significant challenges
- ▷ Crime is a major concern for the local residents
- ▷ The office market is underperforming relatively
- ▷ The perception of Slough and its image is poor
- ▷ Slough lacks a cohesive and confident identity

NOTE: Messages drawn from a variety of sources including multiple ONS datasets, which are analysed in detail within the evidence base document.



## Slough Story: Infrastructure

### Key strengths and opportunities...

- ▷ Slough is well connected by road and rail
- ▷ Crossrail to enhance rail links and journey times
- ▷ Proposed Heathrow expansion will improve access
- ▷ Trend of increasing rail station usage
- ▷ Western rail link will encourage modal shifts
- ▷ Slough is Europe's data centre capital
- ▷ Digital connectivity is strong and improving
- ▷ Significant investment in central bus station
- ▷ Improved links between town centre and SEGRO
- ▷ Planned Slough Mass Rapid Transit extension

### Key weaknesses and threats...

- ▷ Road congestion and capacity is a prominent issue
- ▷ Air quality heavily influenced by private car use
- ▷ A4 acts as a barrier to north-south connectivity
- ▷ Gigabit capable digital connectivity still limited
- ▷ Some fixed/mobile 'not spots' remain
- ▷ Relatively low public transport usage
- ▷ Green infrastructure lacking in some locations
- ▷ Need to deliver more renewable heat and energy

NOTE: Messages drawn from a variety of sources including multiple ONS datasets, which are analysed in detail within the evidence base document.



## Acknowledgements

**We would like to thank our partners and stakeholders who have contributed to the development of this Inclusive Growth Strategy.**

This document is the reflection of a collaborative effort and we have built a Strategy which is predicated on consensus, knowledge and the passion of those who are committed to making Slough a thriving place.

We would like to express particular thanks to those organisations and individuals who took the time to shape this report and inform the research that underpins it. Your inputs, attendance at meetings and participation at workshops have been invaluable and your insight, ambition and commitment are all embodied within this Strategy.

The Inclusive Growth Strategy has been developed such that it can be owned and delivered collectively, acknowledging the value and momentum that will be extracted through partnership. We look forward to working with organisations across the Borough, sub-region and nationally to secure an inclusive and prosperous future for Slough.

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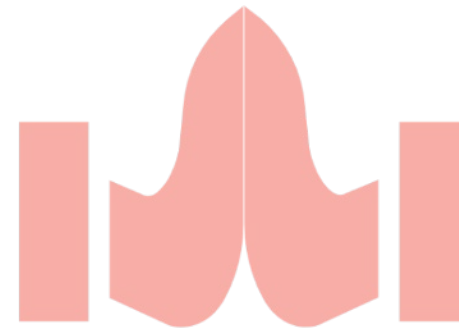
## More information

For more information on the Inclusive Growth Strategy, the evidence base and to find out how to get involved in its delivery, please contact:

**Shabnam Ali – Slough Borough Council**

Service Lead Economic Development (Regeneration Directorate)

[Shabnam.ali@slough.gov.uk](mailto:Shabnam.ali@slough.gov.uk)



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# Slough

## Inclusive Growth Strategy

2020-2025

