

Business and Innovation Strategy Action Plan 2017 to 2020

VALE 4
BUSINESS

shaping the Vale's
economic future

1

Business Support

WHY?

- to make businesses aware of opportunities to grow their business
- to ensure businesses benefit from the support that the Vale Council and its partners can offer.

HOW?

- re-launch Vale4Business and website
- recruit Vale4Business ambassadors
- hold bi-annual business forum events
- create programme of workshops on relevant business support topics
- improve and monitor the Vale Council's business engagement through use of a customer relationship management system with an accurate and up to date business database
- develop a business engagement and communications strategy
- strengthen links with OxLEP, Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses.

2

Skills and Labour Force

WHY?

- to support businesses struggling with attracting and retaining skilled staff, particularly young people and graduates
- to facilitate ways to address skills gaps in key sectors.

HOW?

- proactively promote SME career opportunities
- strengthen links with O2i connecting business and education
- engage with education providers, recruitment agencies and professional bodies to raise awareness and improve alignment with the SME community
- hold workshops and events, such as careers fairs, to link business and education providers and identify gaps which the Vale Council can help address
- promote apprenticeships in SMEs and demonstrate local stories of success
- promote career opportunities in SMEs, including focus on young people and graduates.

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3

Infrastructure and Planning

WHY?

- to support businesses concerned with parking and congestion, frequency and accessibility of public transport and the effect on their businesses
- to improve access to high speed broadband which is having an impact on the operation of businesses.

HOW?

- clearly identify where superfast broadband gaps are, particularly for the business community, and review opportunities to provide solutions to address these gaps
- investigate how support can be given to improve local transport infrastructure and lobby partners to address funding cuts to public transport, highlighting the effect it is having on local SMEs and their staff.

4

Business Space

WHY?

- to address businesses concerns with lack of available, good quality and affordable workspace
- to raise awareness of available business space.

HOW?

- improve signposting of available workspace
- strengthen links with existing business space providers, developers and OxLEP to understand current availability and provide accurate information to any businesses seeking to find premises
- provide easy to use commercial property search facility on the Vale4Business website
- identify and promote opportunities for flexible business space provision as part of new developments
- advocate the retention of business space and work with planning colleagues to ensure appropriate employment land is provided for SMEs.