



Economic Growth Review - Key Themes, Values & Key Asks

Theme:
**Supporting Local
Businesses Key
Findings**



- Providing comprehensive business support services to include resilience planning, debt management and simplified access to funding and finance, international trade guidance for small businesses
- Support new and existing employment markets and sectors (including new key sectors and the green sectors)
- Support business workforce and well being
- Support businesses to adopt corporate social responsibility
- Peer to peer support
- Facilitate sector growth to support supply chain



- 1. Evolution of the Business Support Offer – 'one front door', simplification & consistency of 'the offer' and its ability to be agile as local business needs change.**
- 2. Value of 'intermediary' / professional services businesses in supporting business growth and driving investment & county advocacy role.**
- 3. Desire for peer to peer mentoring opportunities for betterment of Shropshire with like minded businesses, in a 'trusting' environment. Value of coworking opportunities to physically interact.**
- 4. Support businesses to reduce their carbon footprint, using case studies and practical solutions.**
- 5. Short sharp "do this" or "don't do this" – advisor role**
- 6. Supporting Businesses through the statutory planning & development process**

Theme:
Strategic
Locations key
findings



- Creating vibrant market town opportunities, town centre resilience, healthy towns
- Investing in infrastructure
- Attracting inward investment
- Improving connectivity
- Enhancing the visitor economy
- Sustainably connected communities including housing provision and allocation



- 1. Importance of rural market towns support to enable relevant growth - Balance growth against the character of Shropshire.**
- 2. Sustainable homes & businesses + a need to create high quality / eco friendly sites for business units – raise the bar with design quality policies.**
- 3. A real sense of place is necessary; need to improve synergies across the county to promote more collaborative & Co-working between businesses.**
- 4. Shropshire’s uniqueness & local offers are both an opportunity & threat, we need to strength these attributes. Lifestyle is driving the market.**
- 5. Addressing key worker affordability to live & work in Shropshire is critical, including the rental market.**
- 6. Supporting all residents to access employment & business creation opportunities.**
- 7. Work with businesses to deliver their social corporate responsibilities.**

Theme:
**Employment &
Skills key
findings**



- Support pathways to employment and employment progression
- Improvement in learning and employment outcomes specifically for 16-24 year olds and over 55 year olds
- Develop skilled and productive workforce through upskilling, re-skilling and developing transferable skills
- Successful recruitment and retention approaches



- 1. Access to funding and the time to undertake training and upskill staff.**
- 2. Absolute clarity of the skills needs of businesses to understand what's available to match already, and what needs developing.**
- 3. Infrastructure for skills development – travel & digital availability.**
- 4. 'Jobs of the Future' are key – need to be responsive & flexible to requirement & need.**
- 5. Funding bespoke training when national policy don't centrally fund this activity.**
- 6. Understand recruitment difficulties and what solutions could be provided.**
- 7. Support for 'second chance' education (funded) for the benefit of Shropshire.**
- 8. Raising the profile of the vocational option within careers provision / advice in schools.**

Enabling a better Shropshire

Through our proposed core values of

Resilience

For Shropshire's businesses and organisations to **strengthen their connectivity and partnerships**, demonstrating both continued resilience with the capacity to absorb, and **optimising opportunities to quickly recover from, and contain, adverse shocks**, acknowledging the vital role and contribution of the voluntary sector.

Inclusivity

To **create a more prosperous economy** with access to opportunities allowing people to find work, stay in work, succeed in work and enjoy life out of work while **recognising Shropshire's rurality and the need for physical and digital connectivity** and access to facilities and infrastructure for all.



Sustainability

To **support the continued innovation and ability** of Shropshire's businesses and economy to develop practices that **support long-term economic growth** without negatively impacting social, environmental, cultural and historic aspects of the current communities or future generations **as we work towards net zero**.

Wellbeing & Health

To **create places through local economic policy** and enabling infrastructure, education, skills, lifelong learning and labour market programmes to **maximise opportunities to reduce health inequalities**, improve health across the County and to seize opportunities to create economic growth.

KEY ASKS FROM OUR BUSINESS COMMUNITY

- 1. Digital connectivity remains critical to the Shropshire economy – broadband & 4G / 5G.**
- 2. Transport connectivity for employment, learning, leisure & night time economy opportunities is a necessity.**
- 3. The ‘green agenda’ provides massive opportunities to position Shropshire nationally.**
- 4. Potential new employees place greater emphasis on their work location now (including remote working) choosing businesses that best meet their values – the offer of ‘why Shropshire’ must be stronger than ever.**
- 5. We need to use our strategic location positioned adjacent to Wales, the North West and West Midlands to drive cross-border business opportunities & collaboration.**
- 6. Unlocking & communicating 'in-demand' skills shortages & upskilling requirements – what do businesses need & what is available?**