

**Rother District Economic Recovery Action Plan
Priority areas**

General:

- Though we have a specific Ambition focusing on low carbon and energy efficiency we will aim to consider impact to the environment throughout.
- We anticipate that people’s mental health is considered in all aspects of project development and delivery.
- We would expect at all times to follow procurement processes and enter into dialogue with local suppliers wherever possible.

The order given for the Ambitions below reflects that of the East Sussex Recovery Plan: East Sussex Reset.

Ambition 1: Support businesses to recover, grow and ensure increased investment in the local economy

East Sussex Reset: Thinking local, acting local

Objectives:

- Create and safeguard local jobs
- Support local businesses to adapt, recover and grow
- Work to increase local public and private sector spend within the District.
- Capitalise on inward investment potential created by the Covid-19 crisis

Action	Plan	Timeframe	Outcome
Be ready for a second / further waves of Covid-19 and possible future local lockdowns.	<p>Much of the lockdown infrastructure has now been put in place and can be picked up again should further waves occur.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring of local infection rates. • Communications with Director of Health on local lockdown protocol. • Engage directly with businesses. • Be clear with any further public messaging vis communications team. • Work with Environmental Health on guidance and possible additional prevention support. 	Continuous from now – immediate conversations with relevant officers.	Speedy decisions.

Help promote training from external providers.	Direct information through the RDC website and social media platforms. Brief newly appointed communication officers to supply up to date information to local businesses.	Started and will be ongoing.	Local businesses accessing recovery support.
Push for increased capacity at the Business East Sussex Growth Hub	Work with other Districts and Boroughs to support additional funding for Growth Hub expansion. Signpost more local businesses to Growth Hub for bespoke advice. Be clear on Brexit in readiness for January 2021.	Already flagged as an issue and additional staff employed.	More capacity to support businesses.
Support businesses to reopen and trade whilst conforming to government guidelines on social distancing and safety measures.	Employ 2 communications' officers (6 month contracts) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor business feedback • Survey broadband speeds 	Started 1 st Oct.	Businesses are confident in their approach.
Work with Locate East Sussex to match premises to business relocating to Rother.	Propose to sponsors board research project to identify vacant buildings. Work with Locate to start discussion with leisure operators.		Maximise opportunity for inward investment.
Promote the 'Better Business For All' Toolkit on the Sussex Chambers of Commerce website	Toolkit adapted for local use - led by BES.	Continual promotion and adaptation.	

Ambition 2: Retain our skills infrastructure, support employment, build workforce resilience

East Sussex Reset: Building skills, creating jobs

Objectives:

- Expand our local skills base to increase employment opportunity

- Support young people into training and work
- Increase digital inclusion and digital skills

Action	Plan	Timeframe	Outcome
Future proofing with digital skills development.	Work with businesses who wish to develop or enhance their online presence. Work with James Wilkinson Digital Skills Partnership Co-ordinator to see what can be offered in Rother	Started and will continue	Digital awareness and increased skills. Retail moving online.
Work with LEP sub groups to develop sector skills funding binds.	Cultural bid being developed around high streets. Be mindful of Shared Prosperity Fund.	October deadline on SSF round 2 Poss Jan announcement	Maximise grant funding into the District.
Provision of affordable childcare	RDC supporting the provision of affordable childcare across the District to ensure parity of access to work.	To be picked up in the BTSSG meeting as a starting point	Equitable increase in employment by gender.
Opportunities for young people.	Work with Skills East Sussex and intermediary organisations: Sussex Chambers / Artswork, using the Kickstart scheme to develop 6 month job placements for young people. Encourage local businesses to get involved. Encourage local young people to apply. Encourage creative pathways through partnerships established in the Beeching Road studios.	Oct start applications Workspace from Spring 2021	Clear career pathways in creative industries.
Local Skills and Employment Plans alongside construction projects.	Implement RDC planning policy changes that introduce a standardised requirement for S106 to support skills and employment plans.	Currently working with RDC Planning Policy	Standardised method for S106 for employment and skills.

	<p>Encourage pathways into construction with on the job training.</p> <p>Increase number of CSCS (construction skills certification scheme) cards.</p> <p>Increase number of work placements and apprenticeships offered.</p> <p>Work with our most local communities first.</p>	on inclusion in next Local Plan.	Local construction opportunities improved through local development.
Ambition 3: Re-start the leisure, hospitality, tourism, retail and cultural economy to get people back into work			
East Sussex Reset: Fast-forwarding business			
<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support job in these sectors • Help freelancers to access advice, funding and guidance • Maintain the status of the District as a visitor attraction through safe and sustainable tourism • Sector skills development • Be mindful of local community health and wellbeing as key to growth and prosperity 			
Action	Plan	Timeframe	Outcome
Encourage and promote use of the kite mark: We're Good To Go to show business are Covid compliant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.visit1066country.com/visitor-information/were-good-to-go • RDC social media 	1-2 months	Businesses using kitemark as standard at 21/07/2020 = 59 signed up
Work with the De La Warr Pavilion to re-promote Bexhill as a visitor destination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with dlwp for safe reopening of public events with consideration for staff and public. • Ensure Pavilion avoids further lock-down by closely managing the amount of activity offered. 	Aug-March	Staff brought off furlough. Some small amount of risk assessed activity. Building up to events re-starting in March 2021.

Event strategy paper from OVSC to Nov Cabinet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devolve events budget to towns and roll over unallocated funds from 2020. • Towns (Rye & Bexhill) to programme own events in 2021. 	Nov Cabinet Implement by spring 2021 onwards	Events budget devolved to Rye & Bexhill (Battle already devolved)
Christmas Campaign to encourage people to shop in local high streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If viable in line with government social distancing measures -work with 18hrs for a 'Streets of feel using the 2019/20 events pot. • Work with Town Councils to animate high streets for Christmas. • Web site to direct traffic. • Christmas markets (local suppliers). 	2-3 months	Officer lead in partnership with 18hrs and town/parish councils.
Enhancing the 1066Walk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the project as detailed and agreed in the EAFRD funding application. 	By summer 2021	Renewed attention on the 1066 walk.
Pudding and Pathways Marketing Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Led by 18hrs event company this project supports the RDC led 1066 pathways project by marketing businesses along the route. • Discussion with restaurants and eateries along the route. • Ensure all participating businesses support the 'Were Good to Go' kitemark. 	Spring 2021	Direct support to local business on 1066walk.
Support events spring summer 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call out to promoters early 2021 – work with neighbourhood services to manage expectations with regards use of RDC land. • Cabinet approval for S106 funds to support railways station poster campaign. 	Jan 2021	Events budget
Re-start of live performances / cinemas / outdoor markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support events with licences as necessary and use of RDC spaces. 		Promote the area with live events

Review of tourism businesses at the end of the summer season	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with 1066 Country on a members survey to understand where tourism businesses find themselves at the end of the season. 	Nov 2020	Understand how businesses are likely to fare over winter.
Promote Julie's Bicycle accreditation to creative businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certification scheme, Creative Green, is the recognised benchmark for sustainability achievement within the creative industries. 		Ensure environmental impact is considered in adaptation strategies.
Ambition 4: Adapt and improve places			
East Sussex Reset: Better places, fuller lives			
Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support high street changes and adaptation Create safe social spaces Maintain strong community led change working with community leaders and the voluntary sector 			
Action	Plan	Timeframe	Outcome
Monitor the impact of the temporary road changes made by County under the Emergency Active Transport Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Footfall counts Business interviews Local surveys 	6 months	Have a clear understanding to the impact of the scheme
Bexhill Town Centre strategy development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint Resident Reps. Bexhill Town Centre SG to relook at consultant brief and appoint consultant to undertake work. Share the learning from this piece of work with other Town Centres. 	Interviews Sept 1st SG meeting Sept 29th	Resident voice on the SG Consider changes in High Street post Covid.
Reopening the High Streets Safely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Banners for Bexhill / Rye/ Battle. 	Waiting on grant	Towns highlight their open for business message

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment of 2 x communications officers. • Monitor impact on high streets through footfall. 	Start 1 st Oct	Bespoke guidance for businesses across Rother.
Push for investment in public realm to improve town centre environments	Keep aware of funding streams as they become available and make bits as and when appropriate.	Ongoing	Grant funding investment into Rother.
Work with communities to maximise the benefits of rural areas of Rother.	Work with Environment Officer to assess the viability of improving places' aesthetics through greening and rewilding, with associated wellbeing and health benefits as well as benefits for the wildlife.	Spring 2021	
Ambition 5: Expand low carbon transport and energy infrastructure			
East Sussex Reset: Cleaner energy, greener transport			
Objectives:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware in all projects of the RDC carbon neutral target by 2030 • Encourage clean methods of transport 			
Action	Plan	Timeframe	Outcome
Local Growth Fund (LGF) walking and cycling infrastructure packages in growth corridor areas.	Work with the County Council's 2020/21 and emerging 2021/22 capital programme for local transport improvements, supporting design and delivery of LGF funded walking and cycling packages for Bexhill.	12 months+	
Match economic goals with environment objectives already specified in the RDC environment strategy.	RDC Environment Strategy 2020-2030 (currently in draft) https://www.rother.gov.uk/consultations/draft-environment-strategy/	Awaiting adoption of strategy and subsequent action plan	Aligning this action plan and subsequent regeneration strategies with the RDC Environment Strategy.

Reduce unnecessary commuting.	Supporting people to work at home bring life back into local village communities and reducing carbon emissions.		People supported to work from home.
Grow public transport network.	Lobby for continued – improved public transport service.		Public transport as a viable option across Rother.
Local Plan	Work with officers to highlight areas where carbon neutral areas of economic growth could feed into the Local Plan.		All future growth is considered for its environmental impact.

Ambition 6: Capitalise on digital connectivity

East Sussex Reset: The future is digital

Objectives:

- Embrace the new digital landscape and use it to best advantage
- Ensure our communities; businesses and residents, are digitally skilled
- Work for digital access to all areas of the District

Action	Plan	Timeframe	Outcome
Support push for 100% ultrafast broadband cover for the area	Promote the government Gigabit voucher scheme (rural premises with broadband speeds of less than 100Mbps can use vouchers £1,500 per home and up to £3,500 for each small SME to support the cost of installing new fast and reliable connections).	Scheme runs until end 2021	Communities encouraged to collaborate and apply to the scheme.
Support push for 5G rollout across the District	With 5G now available in Brighton and Eastbourne we will continue to lobby for roll out in Bexhill. Look for government schemes to be involved with 5G opportunities.		5G roll out in Rother

