

# **Economic Growth Framework 2022- 2027 and beyond**

**Autumn 2021**

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## 1.0 Background

This Economic Framework sets out the key priorities for the Economic Growth and Regeneration Team at Gedling Borough Council, providing direction and focus on key activities that should be delivered and worked towards. This Framework will not be delivered in isolation but instead brings together key activities that together promote the economic development and wellbeing of Gedling, whether through direct work or indirect benefit.

The Framework is also not an exhaustive list of projects. It provides, as its name suggests, a framework into which activities can fit without being prescriptive. This allows flexibility as priorities, circumstances and funding can change over time. Many of the longer term projects will last beyond 2027, but inclusion here keeps the projects moving forward as opportunities arise to access funding or link in with others.

This Framework provides focus and direction on key economic issues for Gedling Borough Council. It provides assistance in determining the activities of the Economic Growth and Regeneration Team and why these are important to the economy of the Borough. It also takes into account, and has been refreshed as a consequence of, the pandemic. The projects remain valid although their focus may have changed and their emphasis shifted.

## 2.0 Context

### Wider context

Gedling Borough Council does not work in isolation. It forms part of the Midlands Engine at supra regional level, D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership at a regional level, and Nottinghamshire County at the sub-regional level. Each of these tiers work together to provide structure and direction, linking back to central Government. GBC also works, on a needs basis, with neighbouring Local Authorities at a more local level.

Within each tier are increasingly detailed activities, of which this Framework provides the most local. Viewed together, the activities within the Framework link up to meet Government priorities; if they don't there is a question of why the Authority deems them important. The Framework does allow for this and there are local priorities included which, when viewed holistically, do strengthen the Borough.

More locally, activities dovetail with local partnerships. It is home to key employment sites, it is a growing Borough with many residents and its location at a key junction between city and country all play a part in making Gedling a special place to live, work, play and invest. We need to be clear where the Borough wants to go and what needs to happen to make this a reality. This Framework provides this and allows the Borough to work in partnership to achieve its aims.

### Gedling Borough

Gedling, located on the north-eastern edge of Nottingham City is a predominantly rural district with some 118,000 inhabitants. It has an older population although there are significant new housing developments attracting young families to the area. Although centred on Arnold its population is split across the urban areas of Carlton, Netherfield and Gedling, with significant rural populations in villages including Burton Joyce, Calverton, Lambley, Ravenshead and Woodborough.

The area does not sit on major transport routes although the Colwick Loop Road is a major entrance into Nottingham, along with the A60. It has a small number of minor railway stations. Its largest employment area, and indeed one of the most important for wider Nottingham, is Colwick Industrial Estate, home to over 100 businesses including Hillarys Blinds and Wilkin Print. A number of smaller employment areas can be found at Newstead and Calverton.

Education attainment and deprivation levels are average for this area although there are significant pockets of inequalities. Newstead and Netherfield particularly suffer from deprivation levels but there are also pockets around Arnold. The wards around Netherfield and Carlton are home to a significant number of young people. Due to the geography of the area, many of these look towards Nottingham for their services.

## Key statistics

The Gedling Borough is home to around 118,000 residents mainly living in the urban areas in the south of the Borough on the outskirts of Nottingham. This is around 14% of the Nottinghamshire population. There are a number of more rural areas dotted with villages. These rural areas are largely within the greenbelt. The Borough covers 46.3sq miles and is bounded by Sherwood Forest to the north and the river Trent to the south.

There are pockets of industry across the Borough with a number of small industrial areas sandwiched within largely residential areas. Some of the outlying villages also have significant areas of employment, such as at Calverton and Newstead. Aside from these, the most important Gedling, and indeed the wider Nottingham and sub region, employment site is at Colwick. The Colwick Industrial Estate is home to around 120 businesses employing in excess of 7,000 people. Its location and size make it one of the largest employment areas in Nottingham and it is home to key businesses such as Wilkin Print, Xylem and Hillarys Blinds. As a result, workers travel from the surrounding Boroughs to work here. Despite this, the job density level – the number of jobs within the Borough – at 0.47 is significantly below the East Midland and Great Britain levels, both in excess of 0.80. This shows that people travel out of the area for employment, most likely to Nottingham.

The working age population of the Borough is around 72,200. This represents 61% of residents and is comparable to the East Midlands average, although slightly below the Great Britain average. Unemployment is above both the East Midlands and Great Britain averages at around 6.1%. There are some areas of the Borough that are more affected by unemployment traditionally.

In terms of qualification levels in the Borough, only 6% have no qualifications which is better than both East Midlands and Great Britain averages. However only 32% have NVQ4 and above which is below the East Midland (37%) and Great Britain (43%) levels.

Overall, Gedling has a key role to play within the region, both as a place for people to reside on the edge of Nottingham, but also as an area with significant employment. The greenbelt curtails some forms of development by limiting the areas that can be developed and focussing development at urban areas. There are opportunities to redevelop some of the business unit stock and where new developments are brought forward these tend to be let quickly showing demand and desirability. The location of Gedling on the east of Nottingham can mean it is not as accessible for some businesses as it is circuitous to reach major road networks such as the A1, M1 and A56.

[Nomis - Official Labour Market Statistics \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](http://nomisweb.co.uk)

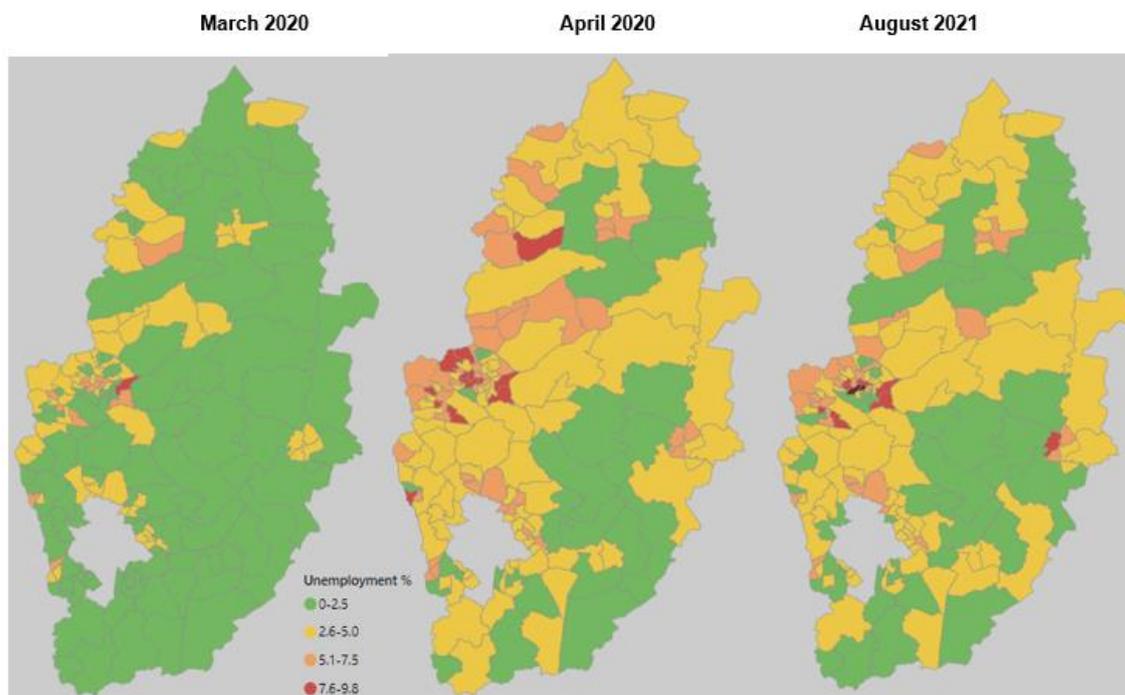
## Impact of Covid

Covid has brought about a number of changes nationally. With increased desire for home, or at least flexible, working, the unprecedented move to on-line services and shopping, and changes to travel patterns, some of these trends were in existence before the pandemic but have been accelerated. This has started to lead to looking at the places in different ways to try and seek solutions. Changes to Permitted Development Rights and the reclassifications seen in the Use Class Order will lead to longer term impacts and a focus on new aspects of our built environment. Gedling has not been immune from these impacts.

## Unemployment

In March 2020, the number of people in Gedling claiming JSA was 1,835; by May 2020 this has climbed to 3,860 as the pandemic took hold. This marked the zenith of claimants during the pandemic with the level having now decreased to 2,850 (August 2021). This level of increase and decline has been mirrored by all Nottinghamshire LAs over the same period. Around 2,500 people across Nottinghamshire were claiming JSA at the start of the pandemic compared to around 4,000 now (August 2021).

At ward level those areas with higher unemployment levels are generally in the south of the Borough – Carlton, Netherfield and Cavendish – with more rural wards including Dumbles, have the lowest levels. Across Nottinghamshire the levels of unemployment have increased since before the pandemic as the maps below show:



[Microsoft Power BI](#)

## Business resilience

During the pandemic there was a call for people to work from home wherever possible. This led to a dramatic shift for many people with the setting up of home offices; this shift is likely to be felt going forward too as there is some reluctance from people to come back into offices full-time. This will impact on IT provision and travel patterns for years to come.

In terms of businesses ability to manage this change and throwing light on the make-up of local businesses, D2N2 and the University of Derby highlighted 'Employment Risks' in a paper of June 2020. This looked at the businesses in Local Authority areas and their ability to work from home as a measure of what any impact might be.

This categorised major occupation groups by their ability to telework. Unsurprisingly it highlighted that administration and secretarial jobs could be delivered remotely (around 69%) and processing and plant the least (1%). It also highlighted the number of people in each occupation group across D2N2:

<b>Occupation Group</b>	<b>Percentage teleworkable</b>	<b>No. employed in D2N2</b>
Admin and Secretarial Occupations	69%	116,000
Managers, directors and senior officials	67%	96,000
Associate professional and technical occupations	66%	121,000
Professional Occupations	63%	174,000
Caring, leisure and other service occupations	51%	88,000
Sales and Customer Services occupations	26%	88,000
Skilled Trades	7%	93,000
Elementary Occupations	2%	136,000
Process, plant and machine operatives	1%	76,000

(Dr E. Michaels (University of Derby) and V. Epuri (D2N2) 2020: D2N2 Covid 19 Economic Recovery Analytical Group – Employment Risks)

As can be seen a significant number of people do work in professions that can telework but there are significant numbers in lower occupational groups who cannot. The report went on to look at the propensity of these occupation types by Local Authority area to highlight those that could have a serious impact locally. What it also shows is the business make up of local authority areas.

Whilst the work comes with a number of caveats, and it was produced at speed, it shows that Gedling only had around 39% of its jobs being able to be delivered remotely (compared to Rushcliffe at 51% and Bassetlaw at 36%). This shows that the economic base in Gedling has significantly more lower occupations.

## Vacancy rates

There has been a lot of focus on vacancy rates within town centres and the impact the pandemic has had on shop closures. Whilst there has been a longer term trend of our high streets declining, the move to in-line shopping through the pandemic has

hastened this to the extent that Government has released various funds aimed at revitalising high streets.

At the same time as this decline there has also been a move to work with the changes affecting high streets. More residential development, a branching out from traditional high street uses to other uses have both been allowed to an extent through changes introduced to Permitted Development Rights and the Use Class Order.

In Gedling, work has been undertaken to track the changes more effectively on our high streets. Arnold and Netherfield have the highest levels of vacancies within the Borough, whilst other areas have seen vacant units brought back into use. Issues of long-term vacancies in Arnold and Netherfield have been included within the Council's Levelling-Up Fund proposal which seeks to include a shop front improvement scheme and as well as looking at new uses.

### Business Unit take-up rates

The pandemic led to a relatively settled spell regarding business unit take up and demand. The move to home working and the inability to build led to this lull. Innes England produce an annual update which showed this stable period. It did highlight there was a move to taking on buildings for 'other' uses, mainly leisure. [Market Insite Brochure 2021 final.pdf \(innes-england.com\)](https://www.innes-england.com/Market-Insite-Brochure-2021-final.pdf)

Whilst it identified a need for larger industrial units – over 100,000sq ft, at a local level there has continued to be more demand for smaller units in the start-up size category. People have started businesses or decided to make a move into business and are looking for smaller spaces, something that is always in short supply. A trend for smaller business units as people continue to hybrid work may be a trend that starts to emerge.

Business confidence is starting to rise once more as, anecdotally, businesses have held on to their buildings and are finding that business is reopening quickly. A number of units, such as those at Teal Close, are also coming forward for new investment. Other investment such as Sainsbury and a number of applications in the Colwick area also highlight that things may be getting back to normal.

### Conclusions

Whilst the information presented here is just a snapshot, the pandemic has provided more information about the types of businesses in the Gedling area. There is a need to work to ensure that future shocks can be absorbed. Whilst unemployment has risen it could have been far higher (although the rolling back of the furlough and other employment schemes are yet to be felt). The pandemic has provided Officers with a better understanding of the businesses and their health and needs than was previously known. Capitalising on this knowledge and using it to shape interventions going forward will be key.

### 3.0 Purpose of the document

#### A Golden Thread

Across the work of Government there are a number of key principles that have been adopted to ensure that activities meet national outcomes. Meeting these outcomes will also assist in securing external funding. However, there are also a range of activities that have a more local impact and should also be delivered. This Framework seeks to do both – recognising the national mood whilst also responding to local issues. The table and diagram below show how the various tiers line up to influence what Gedling Borough does at the local level.

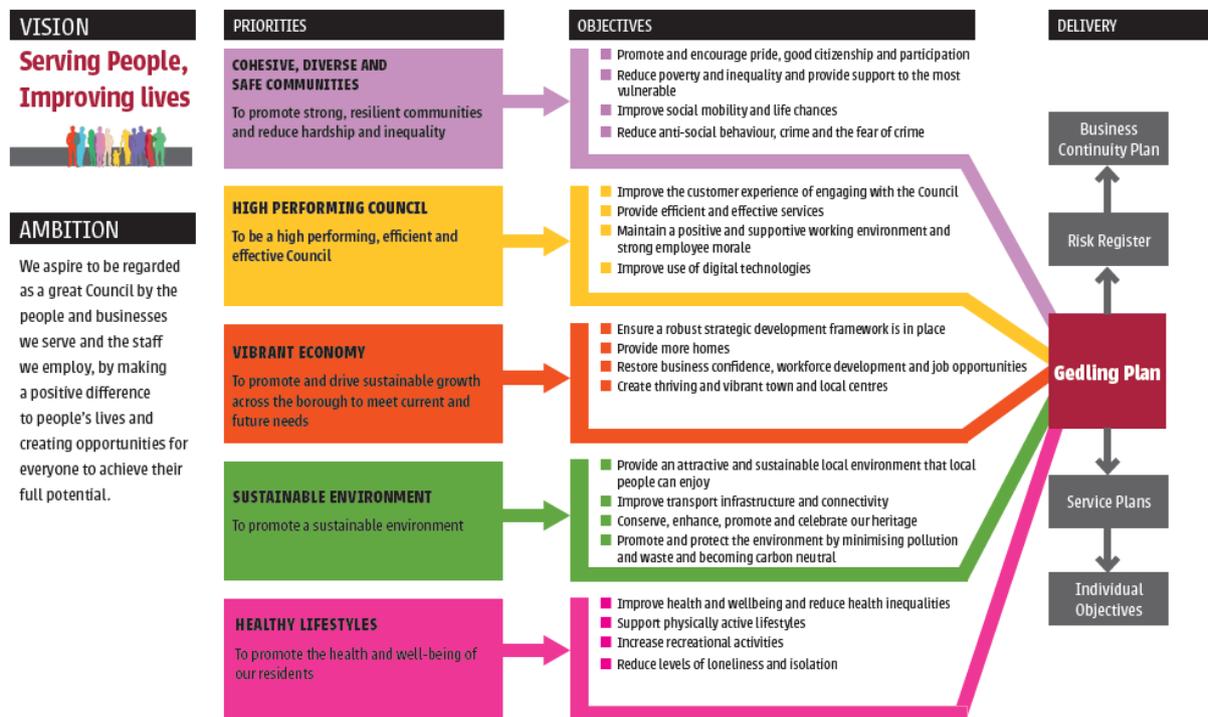
National level	
Building Back Better	Sets out the government’s plans to support economic growth through significant investment in infrastructure, skills and innovation.
Levelling Up Fund	Within Building Back Better, the Levelling-Up Fund presents an opportunity to reset the relationship between central and local government focussing spend on transport, town centres and cultural investments.
Shared Prosperity Fund	EU funding successor due to launch in 2022.
Supra Regional level (Midlands Engine)	
Vision for Growth	Connecting the Midlands, strategic infrastructure, growing international trade and investment, increasing innovation and enterprise, shaping places
Regional Level (D2N2 LEP)	
(Emerging) Local Industrial Strategy	Based on: ideas, people, infrastructure, place, business environment as well as AI/data, clean growth, ageing society and future of mobility
Strategic Economic Plan (Vision 2030)	Raising productivity, raising earnings, narrowing inequality, sharing prosperity
Strategic Investment Framework	Focused on delivering EU funding priorities around business growth, innovation, skills.
Recovery and Growth Strategy	Strategic document to 2030 containing a focus on: Low Carbon Growth, Productivity, and Connectivity and inclusion as a result of the pandemic
County level (Nottinghamshire County Council)	
Economic Development Strategy (2014-2018)	Creating conditions for growth, raising wages, unlocking development, enabling jobs, infrastructure provision
Covid 19 Crisis Economic Recovery Action Plan 2020-2022	Document focussing on what has happened and what the County needs to focus on to recover, around people, place, visitor economy, infrastructure and place, identifying a range of actions
Local - Bounceback Plan (Gedling BC)	Internally, the Council has developed a range of documents to assist reopening. In EGR this has brought together work

through various funds as well as support offered to businesses

Gedling Borough Council Economic Framework

All of the activities of the Economic Growth Team should deliver key Council services and work towards the aims of the Council. The Council’s Gedling Plan outlines the strategic overview of the Authority. Beneath this sit Actions that together deliver the Gedling Plan. This Economic Framework sits below this, feeding into a number of the actions to deliver or part deliver these. The image below shows this:

**Gedling Plan 2020-23 structure & golden thread**



The Council has a number of strategies and plans that will impact on the economic development of the Borough and impact on how this happens. A key one is the Council’s Carbon Management Strategy 2021-2030 which outlines a number of priorities, a number of which mirror those in the Economic Framework. Where there is overlap these have been reflected within the document.

**The Economic Framework**

There are a range of actions across a vast range of Council services and many are interdependent or only move projects forward rather than completing them whilst others form complete programmes of work. The reason for this is that this Framework

is a collection of activities that together benefit the Gedling Borough area, focussed on those elements creating economic benefit.

Some sections are more rounded than others where the work is mainly economic; other parts have a more passing relationship to economic development. However, none of the activities are less important as all benefit the economic wellbeing of Gedling. For this reason users of this Framework are encouraged to look at other Plans and Strategies from other teams in order to get the full measure of the works outlined herein.

The Framework remains a living document and one that should provide the economic 'hooks' for your work and, as its name implies, a framework on which to hang a range of projects. It provides a key link back up into more regional and nationally relevant strategies.

## The Structure

The structure of this Framework is around five key priorities, all of which are intertwined with the others:

- i. **The opportunity for future economic growth**, focussing on businesses and development
- ii. **The need to work with partners**, focussing on maximising the opportunity working with others across the Borough can bring
- iii. **Visitor, heritage and leisure opportunities**, focused on exploring the Borough and the visitor offer
- iv. **Increasing an enhancing the labour market**, focussing on the skills and employment opportunities
- v. **Infrastructure improvements**, focussed on the transport and infrastructure requirements

These themes have been developed through consultation with other Council services and reflect their input into the economic wellbeing of Gedling Borough.

Officers undertook a critique of the area and tried to identify key themes that are emerging and/or will impact on the way the Council functions and the way it provides services. This considered everything from ageing population and greening the Borough through to how digital and future technologies need to be addressed. Responding to these helped with

It should be noted that there is a lot of cross-over and interaction between the various themes and they should not be read in isolation.

At the back of this document is an action plan of identified activities. This outlines broad themes and work that should be useful to 'hook' into as required.

## 4.0 Theme 1: The opportunity for future economic growth

### What do we already know?

This theme is primarily focussed on work which Economic Growth lead. It is therefore driven by creating the conditions for business growth and investment, encouraging businesses to consider Gedling as a location for their business and the mechanism to provide the support to enable this to happen. This has become all the more important after the pandemic which has shown a number of weaknesses in the local economy:

- Some sectors have been worse affected and this has had an impact on communities
- Business preparedness has been patchy
- Business knowledge by the Council has been patchy
- Business needs and indeed the needs of commuters and communities have changed. These changes may need to be reflected in developments going forward.

There are three main elements to this theme:

- Development opportunities
- Business support
- Use of Council Assets

### Key statistics and information

- Of the four identified employment sites, one is being developed and two are actively being brought forward.
- Council assets being developed in Arnold through development of Arnold Market Place for retail units and business space.
- A Small Business Advisor has been retained to provide businesses moving into or located within the Borough, operational until March 2023.

### How we aim to improve

#### Development opportunities

The Local Plan outlines the areas for all types of development, including for economic growth. There are currently a host of existing employment areas identified across the Borough, large and small at which redevelopment for employment would be permitted, as well as four allocated employment sites at:

- Top Wighay Farm (currently being brought forward)
- Gedling Colliery (dependent on the completion of the Gedling Access Road being constructed)
- Teal Close (currently being brought forward through the neighbouring housing development)

- Hoyle Road, Calverton (an expansion site for an existing business who no longer require it).

These four sites lie in a rough arc across the Borough and are all being brought forward or are immediately available. This means that new sites need to be identified to accommodate future growth. In order to ensure sustainability a good range and type of development sites need to be identified to appeal to a wide range of businesses in sustainable locations.

For this reason Economic Growth will work with colleagues to identify key sites that offer a range of opportunities in a range of locations. As well as this EGR will work to secure redevelopment opportunities to renew, change and intensify business uses on existing sites whilst maintaining their long term future.

A greater range, diversity and location of sites is required, rather than a small number of large sites. The current allocations make it difficult for smaller businesses to move on to sites and a small number of businesses that have wanted to relocate within the Borough have struggled. As trends change and there is more local development of business, there will continue to be a need for smaller and grown-on space to come forward requiring smaller sites, a trend as a result of the pandemic.

This will take place through working with the Planning Policy team as part of the preparation of the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan (Part 1 Plan) which will look at the strategic need for employment land to 2038. EGR will work with the Planning Policy team on the review of Part 1 and Part 2 Local Plan to identify a range of employment sites are available in the future.

Opportunities to redevelop vacant buildings, such as retail units, into enterprise space and other uses should also be explored. This sort of change can help to bring life back to high streets as well as keeping units in commercial use. The changing nature of high streets needs to be more dynamic and receptive to new uses. Similarly, under used/unused buildings could be repurposed into commercial spaces.

Work has already commenced to explore how vacant units could be brought back in to use especially in the town and district centres through the Levelling-Up Fund, which is also looking at a shop front improvement scheme. Similarly in rural areas the use of existing premises to better support local people and their needs is also being considered and explored.

At the same time there are likely to be impacts of the change to Permitted Development Rights and the changes in the Use Class Order which will have an impact on high streets over the coming years and which need to be factored in and adapted to.

## Business support

The business support offer is crucial. Not only will it assist in encouraging business to locate to the area, it will also assist local businesses to thrive and grow. The support offer includes not just direct business support but also the web page for the Service, supporting businesses through business visits as well as partnership opportunities of where businesses can engage.

The current offer includes the use of a Small Business Advisor. This role, through a contract, provides ad hoc and independent advice to businesses in the Borough or seeking to move to the Borough. This role has developed over a small number of years and the on-going nature of it is now reaping rewards.

A dedicate web page to promote and sell the area to inward investors is still required. This will bring together a range of information as outlined above into one more easily understood place. It will also allow a better image of the area to be portrayed, one that is attractive to businesses. The site will also contain links to support available and that offered by the Council and its services.

The use of hubs in the community for service provision for both businesses and residents has been explored. Rural communities and residents, without a need to travel far may find that social interactions decrease. These rural hubs provide a way for people to get together whilst also allowing businesses to meet and thrive.

## Use of Council Assets

This final element supports the business of the Council, through identifying opportunities to increase income, but also where the Council can support business growth through acquisition of sites and premises either for its own portfolio or to encourage development by third parties.

The Council does have a small portfolio of business premises including two sets of small business units. There is a 'shovel ready' project to expand one of these with additional units, as well as potential to consider taking a headlease on new premises being developed. The development of such smaller units is something that commercial owners are often reluctant to do but which are required if Gedling seeks to 'grow its own'. Given the pandemic and the impact this has had there is a real opportunity to provide for business needs.

Developments by the Council should consider how they can be made energy efficient and include low carbon technologies where possible. This technology use should also be promoted to other businesses to also adopt, something that will be easier of the Council is seen to lead on this. Any initiatives and opportunities can be promoted through business support channels.

## Town Centres

Within Arnold and Netherfield particularly, vacancy rates have climbed and there are notable gaps left by vacant shops. Work is being undertaken to see how these gaps can be mitigated, which has also led to an examination of the wider of fabric, offer and feel of centres across the Borough, looking to identify projects that can assist with these.

Once such project, included with the Levelling-Up Fund submission of the Council, is a Shop Front Improvement Scheme. Following the traditional concept of providing part funding to private owners to improve the appearance of shop fronts, this could be rolled out more widely.

Town centres also present a great opportunity for further investment and re-use of vacant premises for economic / commercial purposes. They should be regarded as economic centres and therefore should be priority investment areas.

### Suggested further reading

- Gedling Local Plan
- Carbon Management Strategy 2021-2030

## 5.0 Theme 2: The need to work with partners

### What do we already know?

This theme is focussed on the range of work undertaken in the various localities in Gedling, focussing on community works, activities and geographically based works. There is a focus on a number of areas already including Netherfield, Carlton, Arnold, Killisick and Newstead, activities across the wider Borough that impact communities are included here.

There are three main elements to this theme:

- Civic Pride
- Localities
- Partnerships

### Key statistics and information

- Arnold and Netherfield centres have been identified as key areas within the Levelling-Up Fund bid submitted by Gedling Borough Council.
- Work to engage with and improve communities in rural areas is at an early stage. If approved this will seek to engage with local partners to work together with the Council to provide local services.
- Work to get a better understanding of the Borough through statistics and information is underway.
- Close working with other agencies to deliver local events such as through DWP and Employment and Skills Group.

### How we aim to improve

#### Civic Pride

Gedling Borough encapsulates a wide range of communities from those on the edge of Nottingham to rural villages based on mining and affluent later suburbs. The unique nature of these should be brought out and the identity of these areas in their own right promoted whilst also feeling an integral part of Gedling Borough.

#### Localities

Three areas are currently covered by Locality Workers – Netherfield, Newstead and Killisick, to the north of Arnold. These have been identified as priority areas within Gedling where there are significant areas of deprivation. A number of initiatives are already focussed here and these will be built upon and they continue to be a focus for activity. However, the rural areas of Gedling have also come under closer scrutiny, especially in relation to changes caused by the Covid pandemic.

The use of high street shops has been impacted by the pandemic with footfall reducing markedly. This has exacerbated a long-term decline, creating noticeable holes in high streets, further highlighting underlying issue of build quality in some of Gedling's high

streets. Reimagining the high streets is likely to be a key activity moving forward as we seek to diversify town centre uses, look to bring units back into use and generally consider what shape and role town centres should have.

Work is also taking place to ensure that rural areas of the Borough have access to services and utilities required to work successfully. A paper has been produced outlining the issues faced, focussing specifically on IT issues, access to services and support for rural areas and seeking to find ways of providing local access points.

Thought and action also need to be given to employment opportunities across all Borough areas, especially those that are more remote from opportunities, or that are within our most deprived communities; access to employment opportunities need to be available to all. Targeted activities in more deprived communities that encourage access to employment through training and support should be supported and opportunities for local creation of jobs provided.

Alongside these, all localities in Gedling should be engaged to ensure cohesive communities and prosperity and a feeling of Civic Pride. Activities that span the Borough should be considered with the uniqueness of areas accentuated.

### Partnerships

In order for our communities to thrive and prosper a number of the activities, not only in this theme but across them, need to be undertaken in partnership. This is especially important for communities where there are often instances of the Council working alongside community and voluntary groups to deliver activities locally. New partnerships have been nurtured through the pandemic with positive working taking place to build relationships. These need to continue to be nurtured as we move into the post pandemic phase

### Suggested further reading

- Gedling Local Plan
- Communities' links
- Emerging work on Gedling statistics
- Carbon Management Strategy 2021-2030

## 6.0 Theme 3: Visitor, heritage and leisure opportunities

### What do we already know?

This theme focusses attention on why people come to the Borough and what they can experience or be involved with when here. The Borough has a rich history, a number of attractions as well as leisure facilities serving its populace.

There are three main elements to this theme as well as a small number of individual projects:

- Borough-wide heritage and visitor route
- Arts and Leisure provision
- Events and Festivals

In addition there are small unique projects focussed on providing public facilities across the Borough where possible as well as input into national schemes such as tree planting.

### Key statistics and information

- Work on leisure facilities in Arnold included within Council Levelling-Up Fund proposal.
- STEAM figures assess that some 15,000 FTE jobs are supported by tourism in Nottinghamshire (excluding City) and that visitors bring in £1.24bn to the local economy. An average day visitor spends £38 (2019 figures).
- Gedling has a number of tourism sites that could be developed and supported further including various country parks, Patchings and the annual art event, and historic properties such as Newstead Abbey and a number of Pumping Stations.
- Gedling has been named as one of the top 50 places to live in Britain (2020).

### How we aim to improve

#### Borough-wide heritage and visitor route

There has been a long-standing desire to promote the heritage of Gedling Borough and to encourage visitors to come and experience it. Whilst there are a number of existing heritage assets across the area, these are not necessarily coherently connected to form a compelling whole that can be promoted for people to enjoy.

The Borough-wide heritage and visitor route specifically tackles this by working, over the long term, to create a circular route around the borough. Along it may be attractions or other visitor economy functions, helping to provide much needed employment and business opportunities. Overall, such a route also provides good opportunities for the residents of Gedling to experience the area in which they live and learn about things they didn't know.

A well-developed part of this is the Mineral Line, seeking to reuse the former railway line to link up communities, some of our most deprived, with countryside and employment. At the same time it provides a leisure link for residents to enjoy.

### Arts and Leisure provision

The Council owns and operates five leisure centres across the Borough. These provide communities with much needed leisure opportunities and physical activity without the need to necessarily travel very far. They also allow the Council to promote healthy lifestyles and exercise through memberships.

A longer-term ambition exists to redevelop and renew facilities in the Borough. This includes reviewing the facilities at Arnold Leisure Centre, part of the recent Levelling-Up Fund proposal submitted. This would seek to provide new leisure facilities in the same location and act as a hub for a leisure quarter in Arnold. Similarly, the Richard Herrod Centre is also under scrutiny to ensure it provides for local communities.

Both of these link in to a wider look at Council buildings and their use to ensure that the Council provides, more widely, the services residents and businesses need in a way that is effective and efficient. There are therefore opportunities to work with communities on local provision. This work is still in its infancy but is one that could impact communities and provide employment and skills opportunities.

As well as this, Gedling is home to the Bonington Theatre. Part of the Arnold Leisure Centre, this space provides for theatre performances as well as a very popular cinema. The facilities, whilst small, are well used and popular and form a key attraction in encouraging people to visit Arnold town centre.

The relatively new Gedling Country Park, based at a former colliery, has quickly become a popular attraction for residents and visitors alike. A small café overlooks the site which is traversed by paths popular with walkers and runners. The location, on the edge of Arnold, affords fine views over the city but also the greenbelt to the north of Nottingham. This attraction's popularity will continue to increase, as demonstrated by the recent car park expansion. It again provides a unique selling point for Gedling.

In addition, the Gedling Country Park is part of the Green Lung Corridor footpath project, linking it to Mapperley Golf Course. This is one of the corridors within Gedling that form part of the Greater Nottingham Blue and Green Infrastructure Strategy (GBI). The GBI seeks to integrate blue and green infrastructure provision with the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan.

### Events and Festivals

Underpinning a range of activities within this Framework is the need to promote the area and encourage visitors and residents to return. A key feature of this will be the co-ordination of events and festivals. Whilst there are already a wide range of events throughout the year these are not necessarily co-ordinated, promoted and integrated

to best effect. A healthy range of events, cleverly and consistently promoted helps to show residents the vibrancy on offer and instil pride in Arnold.

Arnold Town Centre already has a number of annual events aimed at drawing in visitors to the town centre. From the Christmas Market and lights switch on to events held during the summer holidays and at the market place, all combine to create an events calendar.

### Additional Projects

In addition small number of projects do not neatly fall into the themes. This section here picks up projects that will ultimately help to provide infrastructure or support to help the Borough develop and provide for its residents, businesses and visitors. A key project is the provision of public toilet provision. Utilising external funding where possible, provision of safe secure and well managed toilet facilities assists in encouraging people to visit places and spaces. Projects to bring forward in town centre conveniences also supports work to get people to reengage with their High Streets.

### Suggested further reading

- Link to Heritage Way
- Greater Nottingham Blue and Green Infrastructure Strategy
- Leisure Strategy
- Play pitch strategy
- Levelling Up Fund link
- Annual STEAM figures ([STEAM model | Tourism Research | UK | Global Tourism Solutions \(UK\) Ltd](#))

## 7.0 Theme 4: Increasing and enhancing the labour market

### What do we already know?

This theme is solely focussed on ensuring that the workforce within Gedling Borough is well trained, well skilled, with opportunities for personal growth, all ensuring that the residents in the Borough are well placed to access employment now and in the future as business needs change and develop. This theme therefore brings together schemes currently operating and seeks to be ready to develop as skills change over time.

The emphasis of this theme has changed over the course of the pandemic and there is a need to work with partnerships that have grown closer, work in methods not previously anticipated, and to target interventions better. There is also a long-term dimension to ensure that the skills businesses require in years to come are nurtured and provided and set in place at a relevant time.

For this reason, this theme provides actions in two ways:

- Firstly, it looks at how we need to change the way we work and the skills and provision required to do this
- Secondly, the medium and longer term activities that need to be put in place, covering the end of the Framework period and beyond.

The timeous nature, coupled with the not knowing precisely how skills needs will change or in what direction, means that this Theme seeks to raise awareness that changes will happen and will be acted upon without knowing specifically what. It is understood that there will be different effects on different groups e.g. working age people may require re-skilling or upskilling whereas new entrants are likely to come with the right skills but not the experience.

### Key statistics and information

- The number of people with no qualifications in the Borough is falling
- Nearly 89% of residents have NVQ1, higher than both the regional and national averages, however only 32% have NVQ4, significantly below regional and national levels.
- All the secondary schools in Gedling are involved to a degree within the well received and respected Schools programme. This provides students with exposure to employers through mock interviews and networking sessions.

### How we aim to improve

#### Immediate Actions

The Covid pandemic has changed, very rapidly, how people engage with skills, training and employment, and also highlighted some additional issues as people get used to the new way of working. From an employment point of view, the needs and wants of employers is also changing. The Brexit issues have created skills shortages

and the pandemic has also exacerbated this, and we need to be ready to embrace these changes.

The pandemic has moved a lot of provision and support on-line. This has impacted on accessibility and led to consideration of work elsewhere in this Framework, such as hubs and assistance for rural communities. This change to on-line has meant that there is ever more content and support available and the difficulty comes from how to access it; from too little choice there may now be too much.

Activities like the annual Apprenticeship Fair, have moved on-line and are likely to have a hybrid provision in years to come with some activities being in person whilst others are virtual or pre-recorded. This sort of content also allows communities who previously struggled for access to be able to see it on-line.

Another element that has changed as a result of the pandemic is the way Local Labour Agreements are delivered. Developers have struggled to deliver in person training and opportunities and there is consideration of taking a financial contribution instead to enable training to be provided.

In all, the immediate change has been to one of being more targeted with interventions. The embracing of new working methods and technology means that we can target interventions more precisely. This means resources from the Council and partners can be more effectively targeted to help those people and communities most in need. This approach is being pursued with partners and is being developed in a broader Skills Plan at present. This uses data from wards to identify where partners should focus work, as well as linking in to the work on rural hubs.

### Medium and Long Term Projects

As business needs will change and develop, these projects are less specific and focussed on the development of the workforce to enable them to keep pace with the changes. Newer entrants will likely have updated skills but those already in the labour market may require additional support and training.

The longer term projects are very broad at present. They will be continually developed and refined as business needs and skills needs change. There will be a timeframe for this which will allow more specific actions to be developed, working alongside partners.

### Suggested further reading

- Data Hub link - [Information about our Borough - Gedling Borough Council](#)
- Employment and Skills Group documents and data
- Nomisweb - [Nomis - Official Labour Market Statistics \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](http://nomisweb.co.uk)

## 8.0 Theme 5: Infrastructure improvements

### What do we already know?

This theme is focussed on the transport and infrastructure needs of Gedling Borough, enabling the other themes to develop and making sure that the Borough remains well connected and attractive for residents, businesses and visitors alike. There is a timeous element here too as projects are developed and delivered.

There are three main elements to this theme:

- Gedling Access Road – making the most of the opportunities this affords
- Wider City Connectivity – bringing together wider transport and infrastructure projects
- Fourth Trent Crossing – work to bring forward a new crossing

### Key statistics

- GAR to open autumn 2021 and is 3.8km long.
- Gedling has four railway stations – Carlton, Netherfield, Burton Joyce and Newstead.
- c10 miles between Lady Bay Bridge and Gunthorpe Bridge meaning traffic flows through the City or neighbouring villages.

### How we aim to improve

#### Gedling Access Road

The Gedling Access Road (GAR) has taken many years to come to fruition. It provides a much needed link between the Colwick Loop Road and Mapperley Plain, effectively linking a major area of population to key employment sites along the River Trent. At the same time it opens up significant areas identified for new homes as well as a new allocated employment site.

The new road will also ease the traffic issues being faced making not only the new employment site but also existing sites more attractive to occupiers. As well as this, the significant number of new homes will provide a workforce. Gedling Borough Council needs to make the most of this and promote this unique offer to businesses whilst working to ensure long term sustainability.

#### Wider City Connectivity

This theme brings together a host of activities around public transport and services across the sub-region. Gedling Borough is fortunate to be on the edge of the Nottingham conurbation with a good workforce. It is also close to planned infrastructure through HS2. This position needs to be capitalised upon to provide good services for residents and businesses to make them attractive to employees, easy and convenient to reach, and for their products to reach the wider market. The activities in

this theme seek to ensure that Gedling is well placed to work with partners to achieve benefits for its residents and businesses.

### Fourth Trent Crossing

Similar to the work undertaken to develop the GAR, a Fourth Trent Crossing has been long spoken about. The floods of 2019/2020 showed the issues around crossing the Trent with the temporary closure of a number of popular crossing points causing travel disruption. A new crossing, linking the A52 with the Colwick Loop Road is thought to ease this situation. It would greatly benefit the residents and especially the businesses of Gedling through easier and more direct access to the major road network.

A significant amount of study, work and persuasion still needs to be undertaken to move this project forward. It has been included here to provide the aspirational link to work towards. As work on other projects continues, the consideration of this project in the background will ensure that the project moves to a conclusion.

### Suggested further reading

- Gedling Local Plan
- Links to GAR work
- Carbon Management Strategy 2021-2030

## 9.0 What next?

This Framework allows the Council to focus on delivering key activities that work towards achieving economic prosperity by focussing the work of Officers. The Framework provides a structured approach to this delivery whilst minimising work on activities that do not achieve the desired results. All activities undertaken, especially where there is a financial element included, should be making the most of public funds.

The Framework provides for this and allows flexibility to adapt and amend whilst holding true to underlying principles. It is meant as a living document; projects will be delivered and new ones added, priority will shift between projects as funds allow; but the underlying principle of delivering economic growth for the Borough remain.

The document will be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure it continue to be relevant, provide a work plan and, most importantly, remains relevant to Government legislation and strategies, so that it may continue to fulfil its role.

