

CREATING A PROSPEROUS DISTRICT

City of Bradford MDC's Economic Statement: developing the economy of Bradford (to March 31st 2008)

1. Strategic Context

- 1.1 It is recognised that economic development falls within many strategic areas and delivery teams. This document does not attempt to cross reference all those documents but put simply the strategic context is as follows:-

**Regional Economic Strategy
Leeds City Region Development Programme**

Corporate Plan/Local Area Agreement/Economic Strategy

Economic Statement

- 1.2 This document (with the associated action plan) forms our response to section 33 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 which provides powers to promote economic development.

2. Defining Economic Development

- 2.1 Economic Development means different things to different people. The definition below sets a context for the development of the strategic aims of the Council's economic development activity throughout the District.

2.2 ***Economic Development is an ongoing process involving:-***

- ***Transformation to reverse economic and physical decline***
- ***Maintenance of the economy and infrastructure***
- ***Developing and preparing for new opportunities***

- 2.3 ***Through this process we aim to maximise the potential of the District's communities, businesses and the physical environment to bring about real improvements in people's quality of life.***

- 2.4 Delivering this agenda requires the targeting of public, private and community resources through partnership with Bradford Vision, the Local Strategic Partnership and other key agencies contributing to the 2020 Vision. As the local community leader, the Council has a key role to play in ensuring that the District maximises its economic potential. The Council and partners are working to deliver sustainable and long-term prosperity and in the process create conditions which leads to the strengthening of the District's communities. Economic development has much to contribute towards building cohesion and a sense of shared futures in Bradford District.

- 2.5 While we recognise that the economic management of the District requires economic, social and physical interventions, increasing prosperity for the people of the District is at the core of the 2020 Vision and will underpin our economic development activities. Using this definition we can set out the specific activities that are required to successfully transform and develop the District and focus attention on those that are either not being addressed or are currently under performing. The Council has ‘creating a prosperous District’ as one of its six corporate priorities. This economic statement articulates the specific actions we will take to support the creation of increased prosperity within the District.
- 2.6 Such specific actions can be best understood under the following three themes, which align explicitly with the Regional Economic Strategy’s objectives:
- People: Local people and communities linked to economic opportunities
 - Business: Effective sustainable business able to compete locally, nationally and internationally.
 - Place: High quality environments that function as places to live work and play.
- 2.7 A final cross cutting theme will be connections, which brings together elements of people, business and places. This theme identifies the contributions that other agendas such as housing and transport can make towards securing a prosperous economy.
- 2.8 Throughout this work, a critical factor will be to ensure that Bradford is connected effectively to the regional and global economies - this is the basis of the successful delivery of the 2020 Vision. If the Bradford District is to prosper economically then it must establish and work with the interrelationships between local, regional and global economies.
- 2.9 The success or failure of these linkages will be measured by their impact on jobs (both quantity and quality), productivity, enterprise and other pre-determined outcomes. Key performance indicators and milestones will be used to measure steps towards these and have been incorporated into the District’s Community Strategy, Local Area Agreement fourth block and the Council’s Corporate Plan. It is the Council’s unique role in ‘connecting Bradford’ that helps determine our contribution to regeneration and achieving the 2020 Vision.

3. Defining the Council’s contribution

- 3.1 The Council’s role is to ensure that the District punches its weight both regionally and nationally. We will use the following tests to decide when the Council should intervene:
- when strategic leadership and support is needed
 - when there is a need to address market failure
 - to deliver, directly or through third parties, efficient and effective high quality services where appropriate
 - to support environmental sustainability

PEOPLE

4.1 The Skills Agenda

To achieve our goal of a high skill, high value economy we will need to ensure that local people and local enterprise possess the right skills.

Raising educational attainment levels is one of the Council's key priorities and this will be a major factor in building a skilled workforce for the future.

We will work through the Learning Partnership, and with training providers, to increase participation in appropriate job readiness and skills development programmes based upon a thorough understanding of the District's current and future labour market.

The Council will also establish a clear internal lead and strategic leadership role in planning for future workforce skills delivery across the District.

4.2 Connecting local people to economic opportunity

The creation of new economic opportunities in this District must go hand in hand with action to ensure that local people secure the benefits. Our priority will be to support initiatives to prepare people for employment and help connect people to employment opportunities arising from major public and private investment in the district.

We will achieve this through initiatives such as the 'Jobs @' and Links 2 programmes, that will connect people to the estimated £1bn of construction activity forecast for the district over the next 5-7 years by bringing together employment agencies, trainers, construction companies and contractors into one forum to ensure social benefit. Our Jobs@ programme will work directly in communities working with local people and employers to get more residents into work.

We have established stretch targets focused on supporting young men and people on incapacity benefit into employment, in order to build on previous successes and challenge ourselves to do more.

4.3 Tackling worklessness

Regeneration and Economy Improvement Committee will conduct an in depth scrutiny of worklessness, considering the following objectives:

- Gain an understanding of the nature of 'worklessness' in the District
- Examine what is being done to address worklessness in the District
- Establish if the structures are in place to deliver an improvement
- Make recommendations which bring about an improvement in the way worklessness is tackled in the District.

The Council will also secure external resources to establish a commissioning programme supporting people into work. This will focus on the following thematic areas:

- Job brokerage

- Linking local labour to investment
- Initiatives targeted at specific ethnic groups
- Initiatives targeted at assisting people off incapacity benefit
- Sector focused activity: construction and creative industries
- Flexible approaches to addressing barriers

4.4 **Shared futures**

Shared Future has been coined as a term to refer to the next phase of community cohesion work in Bradford District. Its delivery will ensure connections to Council and District Priorities that are of shared importance to all communities. These include:

- Economic regeneration
- Education and skills training
- Employment

4.5 **Work ready**

The Council will support the delivery of the final stages of the Objective 2 Priority 3 programme, which is focused on community economic development, including actions to provide capacity building and assist residents from deprived communities to access employment opportunities. A team of locally based co-ordinators will support project development and delivery, thus maximising both resources into the District, and long term impact.

4.6 **Future Scoping**

The Council will also establish a clear internal lead and strategic leadership role in planning for future workforce skills delivery across the District. In doing so, a strategic commissioning group will be established with the key funding agencies, and a comprehensive mapping of existing provision and future sector skills needs completed.

4.7 **New wave immigration**

Migration can largely be seen as beneficial in economic terms – national figures show that migrants contribute more in taxes than they consume in benefits - and there is no doubt that the majority of migrants have skills and attitudes that present an opportunity to enhance local economic development. However immigrant communities also experience higher than average levels of economic deprivation and disadvantage.

A consultation by the Bradford Central & Eastern European Working Group (January 2006) identified the following issues recorded by recent economic migrant in terms of finding suitable employment.

- Many migrants are being employed illegally, and are therefore open to exploitative practices by employers.
- Lack of awareness and support means that people are at risk of undertaking illegal or unethical employment, as well as being vulnerable to discrimination by new employers.

- There needs to be better government regulation of this area, with heavy penalties for employers/agencies caught engaging in illegal or exploitative practices.
- Training for employers and employment services is recommended, as is more support for the community, including better information about how to access employment (available in different languages), information about employment rights and support in looking for appropriate work.
- A lack of awareness about vacancies could be combated by a regular jobs paper in appropriate languages.
- Problems in understanding the UK benefit, council tax and National Insurance system, as well as other official documentation. People experience difficulties when completing application forms and when communicating with benefit service and other council staff.
- This community needs language support, both by helping people to access English language courses and by providing information and advice in their own language.
- It would be useful to have a central information point where community members can get the help they need.
- Other ideas include information sessions held regularly with translators/interpreters involved, and for local services and agencies to target this community more proactively.
- Leaflets are needed explaining the position of EU Accession State migrants in the UK in appropriate languages, made available in community accessible venues.
- There is a lack of bilingual support services in agencies and job centres which mean people have to use illegitimate translator and interpreter services which they have to pay for. Bilingual support is required in key centres and agencies.

There is currently a lack of reliable data on the numbers and characteristics of recent economic migrants into the District, and there is a need for an assessment of the degree to which new and continuing patterns of inward migration are impacting on the local economy and the regeneration of deprived areas in the District.

4.8 Cross cutting:

Transport and communications

Within West Yorkshire support for Workplace Travel Plans is co-ordinated through the West Yorkshire Travel Plan Network. The Network is a joint venture between the five West Yorkshire Authorities and Metro, as the Public Transport Authority. The areas of support for Workplace Travel Plans available in Bradford include:

- Assistance with travel to work surveys and co-ordination of the annual snapshot Travel to Work Survey
- Postcode mapping and accessibility mapping
- Provision of information on cycling and walking to work to assist with promotion of Active Travel
- Discounted Annual Public Transport tickets for staff
- Provision of public transport information and assistance with site specific information
- Provision of a district wide Carshare scheme through www.bradfordcarshare.com and facilities for private employer schemes.

Membership of the network is renewable on an annual basis and the employer needs to demonstrate commitment and progress towards developing and implementing a Travel Plan.

Currently the support available to employers in Bradford is limited, in terms of staff time. However, following a successful bid to Yorkshire Forward, from April 2007, funding will be available to appoint four additional Travel Plan officers to work with employers throughout West Yorkshire.

BUSINESS

5.1 **Connecting business through networking and CRM**

Working with local business to encourage development, growth and retention. Our multi cultural community provides us with a potential economic driver to develop new businesses and establish connections and trade links beyond the region and to exploit international opportunities. Our priorities will be to support the development of manufacture and tradeable services and international trade and joint ventures.

5.2 **Attract new business providing good quality jobs**

Because Bradford's population is growing (and is predicted to continue growing) the District will need a net increase in jobs on an annual basis to meet the demand from the growing labour market. In addition to jobs created by new enterprise and local expansions, the Council will seek to attract inward investment from new organisations wishing to take advantage of labour availability and quality of life. It will achieve this through the Invest in Bradford Service delivering a high quality inward investment and local CRM service.

5.3 **Develop enterprise and new business**

Through our regeneration partnerships we will seek to address issues of Bradford's relatively low rate of new firm formation and new business survival rates. In particular we will support the development of businesses (new and existing) that are seeking to trade outside the District, connecting to the regional economy and beyond.

Through our community enterprise activities we will encourage the development of viable businesses that not only provide valuable local services but also provide a route to connect people into the broader economy.

The LEGI programme's central aims are to grow the District's VAT registered business base, increase business start ups surviving more than 12 months, and increase the number of workplace jobs. These goals will be delivered through a combination of quick win projects and thematic programmes, including the Be Enterprising Youth Programme, Become an Enterprise, and Social Enterprise Development.

5.4 **Developing cultural industries**

Building upon the work of the 2008 City of Culture bid, the *Cultural Strategy* identifies key initiatives and infrastructure to support cultural businesses and create new attractions for people to visit and work in. Initiatives we will progress include further development of the National Media Museum (Light Wave project), the creation of new city centre exhibition and performance space, and support for cultural enterprise (such as creating bespoke low cost accommodation and business skills development programmes).

5.5 Business and enterprise skills

The LEGI Skills Brokerage Service will provide an expert resource to source skills training and associated sources of funding for our target LEGI client groups, both prior to and after start of trading.

The service will gap fill the existing mainstream provision 'Train to Gain' (T2G) in a number of ways:

- It will target the self employed and companies with less than 5 employees (T2G's focus is 5+ employees).
- Pre-start clients will also be able to access the service.
- Clients of Jobs@ will be able to access the service.
- The service will not be product focused (T2G is very NVQ L2 focussed) but rather will focus on the skills training needs of the client.

The delivery of the service will differ from Train to Gain in that:

- It will source most of its clients through referral from LEGI's other delivery teams rather than proactive product selling to companies.
- Support will be closely coordinated with the client's LEGI enterprise or Jobs@ counsellor.
- There will be a bigger focus on the individual although still closely linked to the prime objective of improving enterprise sustainability and growth through skills learning.

The service will add value to the Skills Agenda in Bradford District by:

- Compiling data on the areas of skills training being sought by LEGI clients.
- Comparing skills training needs with availability of local provision.
- Working with local training providers to improve their provision.
- Providing information to LEGI's various programme delivery teams including training on assessing clients' skills development needs (linked to enterprise growth).
- Contributing content to the LEGI web portal on skills training opportunities and acting as a moderator for the skills forum on the portal.

5.6 Maximising impact through supply chain and LM3

Public sector expenditure in the District amounts to approximately £2bn per annum, a significant proportion of which will be on capital investment. We will work, both within the Council and with our partners, to ensure that regeneration priorities are taken account of when investment decisions are taken and that links to local jobs and supply chains are fully explored. Joined up or connected government can help us directly or indirectly influence investment decisions so that they support our regeneration priorities.

We will support local companies either singularly or jointly take advantage of opportunities arising from major contracts, public and private, through supplier development initiatives and the promotion of procurement opportunities.

5.7 Ensuring supply of land and premises

Due to the District's long industrial heritage and difficult geography there is a long standing problem in relation to the supply of suitable land and premises. The Council will seek to

address this supply issues through the reclamation of brownfield land, new allocations of employment land, and the regeneration of historic buildings for new economic uses.

A review of Employment Land will be conducted, as part of the development of the Core Strategy for the District.

5.8 **Develop priority sectors**

We will focus on business clusters identified in the Regional Economic Strategy and City Region Development Programme. Our priorities will be: electronics and digital media, specialist engineering, environmental management and food clusters. At the same time, we recognise the importance of supporting existing businesses, often in more traditional industries/sectors such as engineering, printing, chemicals etc. We will seek to increase the knowledge base of the local economy by the attraction of knowledge-rich businesses through the active promotion of the District and an enhanced role for Invest In Bradford.

We will continue to support and develop the Advanced Digital Institute (ADI). The ADI is a technology research and development centre which will assist local businesses to identify and develop new high value innovative products. Through advice and specialist technical support the ADI will stimulate innovation and encourage new companies to form around ideas that may have been incubated in the Institute or ideas introduced to the ADI and developed to become viable business proposals.

5.9 **Effective Infrastructure**

We will seek to support the provision of a business infrastructure for a connected economy by the development of high quality business accommodation and incubator units targeted at our priority clusters. In particular, we will work through the Airedale Partnership to secure high quality sites and infrastructure for digital media and electronics companies.

We will work with telecoms providers to increase the uptake of broadband connections across the District and to ensure the best possible ICT infrastructure for business. Where possible we will use our investment in projects such as 'Bradford-I' to lever in additional private and public investment to support ICT infrastructure and e- Commerce.

5.10 **Reputation as a business location**

The reputation of the district is mixed, there is an available workforce, however skill and educational levels are not, overall, as attractive as more successful areas. The Council is working with training partners to raise skill levels in the workforce.

There is a shortage of available "Grade A" office accommodation to attract larger organisations. Work is progressing to encourage such developments both in the city centre with Bradford Centre Regeneration and in the Airedale corridors.

Those long established organisations that are based in the District are generally pleased with location; Iain Cornish, Chief Executive of Yorkshire Building Society, commented "Yorkshire Building Society is delighted with the growth it has achieved since opening its

new office in the centre of Bradford. The Society continues to successfully recruit new, high quality staff from the District.”

The Bradford School of Management achieved a ranking of 8th equal in the Financial Times European Business Schools 2006.

5.11 Acting regionally, nationally and internationally

Regionally the Council works with Yorkshire Forward on its “Key Account Management” project to maintain contact with key businesses around the Region. The Council, together with its local partners, Bradford Centre Regeneration and Bradford Chamber of Commerce, participates in Regional networking events such as the Yorkshire International Business Convention.

Nationally the Council works with its partners to raise the profile of the District as a location for investment.

Internationally The Council works with local organisations to promote the District at such events as MIPIN. In conjunction with the National Media Museum the City is applying to UNESCO for City of Film status. In conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce the council encourages international trade ventures.

The population of the District is ethnically diverse; the table below gives selected figures from the 2001 census for residents by country of birth.

	All People	Working Age
All People	467678	280072
Germany	1349	938
Italy	1002	368
Netherlands	132	89
Poland	935	181
Africa	3132	2707
Middle East	1083	873
Far East	1504	1279
Bangladesh	2516	2052
India	6249	4796
Pakistan	27603	22872
Canada	289	179
Caribbean & Jamaica	1480	930
Jamaica	889	561
USA	359	220

The significant proportion of people of South Asian ethnicity provides an opportunity to work with that economically fast growing part of the world. Our partners Yorkshire Forward are increasing the attention they pay to trade and investment with that area.

5.12 Future scoping

The recently published (Sept 2006) West Yorkshire Strategic Economic Assessment includes district-based industry sector employment forecasts to 2016 derived from a model developed by Experian (Regional Econometric Model). The main industries identified for growth are included in the table below. This forecast assumes current levels of economic growth and investment.

The majority of industries identified for growth are in the service sector with just two production industries – paper, printing & publishing and construction. Over recent years these industries have mostly experienced employment growth within the District.

Industries forecast to grow in Bradford District between 2006 and 2016

Industry	Employment change 2006 - 16		Industry	Employment change 2006 - 16	
	No.	%		No.	%
Paper, printing & publishing	815	12.0	Business services	2,932	14.7
Construction	920	7.5	Other financial & business services	789	21.0
Retailing	1,611	8.7	Education	706	4.9
Hotels & catering	1,438	23.7	Health	4,740	24.6
Communications	1,198	50.4	Other services	4,320	49.3
Banking & insurance	1,950	22.9			
All industry sectors				18493	10.2

Source: Experian Employment Forecast in W Yorks Strategic Economic Assessment, 2006.

Note: These forecasts must be treated with caution, they are not outcomes, and as with any economic forecasts there are no guarantees as to their accuracy. In addition, looking at recent past trends, the overall growth in employment for Bradford seems to be over optimistic (+10.2% over the next ten years, compared with -1.3% over the past five years).

This forecast doesn't take into account development schemes in place within the District which may stimulate additional employment growth. An "unconstrained growth" scenario has also been modelled using the Regional Econometric Model by Leeds City Region which indicates that employment growth in the District could be as high as 50,380.

In addition to the industries identified above seven priority clusters have been identified by Yorkshire Forward: food and drink; chemicals; bioscience; creative and digital industries; advanced engineering and materials; environmental technologies and healthcare technologies. These have been selected to reflect their importance to the regional economy, in terms of current strengths and competitive advantage and their future growth potential. Within the West Yorkshire sub-region, all these clusters are anticipated to increase in terms of output between 2006 and 2016 but only two clusters are forecast to increase in employment, namely creative and digital, and environmental technologies.

5.13 Cross cutting:

Visitor Economy

Tourism and the cultural industries present major opportunities for the District, not least because of our multi cultural community, our heritage and strength of our built environment. It is estimated that there are over 11m visitors to the District each year. Our focus will be to capitalise on this opportunity to help create jobs and wealth in the district. Our objectives are to: work with the tourism industry and partners to develop both infrastructure (such as Tourist Information Centres, marketing initiatives and training programmes), and products (both the development of existing attractions and products and the creation of new attractions, events, products and facilities). We will prioritise our support to those initiatives that celebrate our heritage and our rich and varied culture to provide a distinctive experience for visitors.

Rural Development

Two thirds of the District is rural. We will seek to connect the rural parts of the District with opportunities and services traditionally available only in urban centres through the implementation of the Rural Development Plan. We will work with telecoms providers to promote access to high speed ICT. Our priorities will be to work with communities to develop solutions to accessibility issues, such as the in the Haworth Community Creative Industries Centre

PLACE

6.1 Masterplans for areas of proposed change

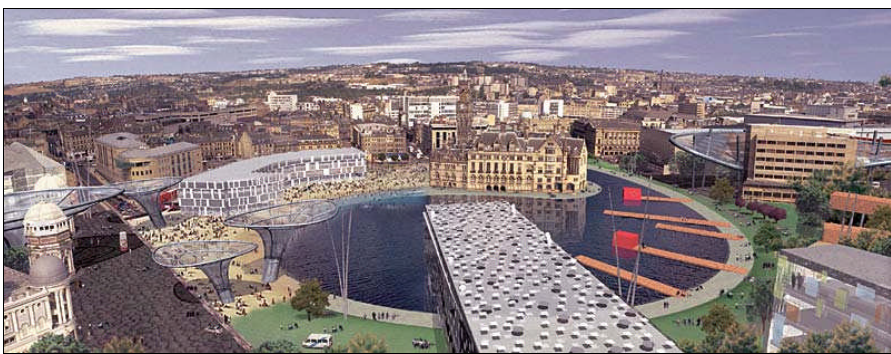
The Council's regeneration priorities remain linked to the masterplans for the City Centre, Airedale and Manningham, as well as the development of the Canal proposals. Having focused on identification of opportunities and priorities through the development of the masterplanning exercises, attention is now turning clearly to delivery.

'Airedale Corridors: A Masterplan and Strategy for Airedale' focused on the economy and sets out a new role for Airedale. At its heart is the regeneration of the three inter-connected town centres of Keighley, Bingley and Shipley and the enhancement of the rural landscape, the 'raw material' to be harnessed to deliver future change. To create a deliverable masterplan, a vision has been developed to reflect the importance of the Airedale's diverse economy, its connectivity and as a place to live. In the vision Airedale can be a creative, connected, lifestyle corridor set in a rural backdrop. Delivery is currently focussing on the five priority project identified in the masterplan and in better connecting the 3 towns to their 'rural backdrop.'

'Manningham Masterplan – Mending the Fabric' aims to produce a strong and sustainable future for the area, with prospects as rich and diverse as the past. Building on the catalyst of the regeneration of Lister Mills by urban Splash, the masterplan includes a range of initiatives to establish Manningham as a cohesive, culturally diverse neighbourhood; secure Manningham as high quality residential neighbourhood: encourage enterprise and learning and maximise Manningham's linkages with the wider District.

The Urban Regeneration Company (URC), **Bradford Centre Regeneration**, was established in February 2003 by Bradford Metropolitan District Council and Yorkshire Forward, the Regional Development Agency, to tackle the significant challenges faced by Bradford City Centre.

The principal aim of Bradford Centre Regeneration is to engage the public and private sectors in a sustainable regeneration strategy. As a key first step, Alsop Architects were appointed to present a clear Strategic Vision and Masterplan Framework, providing a pivotal focus for the future development of the City.



The company's objectives are to:

- Transform the city centre as the heart of a great northern destination
- Promote investor confidence
- Develop and diversify the economy of the city centre
- Create employment opportunities for the people of Bradford
- Improve transport, parking and linkages
- Act as an exemplar in creating a safe and enjoyable centre

The Masterplan represents the aspirational start of an on-going dialogue with Bradford's many communities, organisations, institutions and all those looking to be involved in the future of the City. The Masterplan focuses on creating Four Neighbourhoods or fingers of intervention; 01 The Bowl, 02 The Channel, 03 The Market and 04 The valley.

Bradford Canal and Canal Road Masterplan – Two inter-related studies have been undertaken which looked at the feasibility and regeneration benefits of re-establishing the Bradford Canal together with a masterplan which considers the comprehensive regeneration of the Canal road corridor which incorporates the Bradford Canal. A collaboration agreement is in place between the Council, BCR and British Waterways and work is now ongoing to dovetail both initiatives to include canal route resolution and protection, design, consideration of delivery mechanisms, funding plans, stakeholder consultation and seeking public comment. The principles around land use changes contained within the masterplan will be refined and incorporated into the emerging planning process. It is anticipated that phase one of the Bradford Canal could be completed by 2012 and the target for completion is currently 2017.

6.2 Urban Centre Management

We will work with the private sector and other agencies (in particular Yorkshire Forward and the URC) to deliver effective city and town centre development to bring people back into our urban centres for work, leisure and living. In Bradford City Centre, for example, this will be achieved by establishing clear relationships with the URC and supporting the implementation of the Urban Renaissance City Centre Master plan, corridor and gateway development and high quality urban design and public realm. Physical development will be supported by Town Centre Management initiatives, working with businesses and other agencies to promote our centres and to make them a safe and welcoming environment to visit, work and shop.

Priority will be given to improving transport routes within the District to connect people and businesses to the opportunities in our city and town centres.

6.3 Animation of urban centres through events and cultural expression

A key ingredient in making urban centres places where people would want to live, visit, work and shop is a degree of animation which makes them interesting places. This can be achieved through the development and organisation of an events programme supported by the appropriate infrastructure. The Council, working independently and in partnership, will develop a series of cultural events in the key urban centres, to include sporting, educational and commercially focused activity.

6.4 Visitor Economy and Leisure

We will work directly with operators and facilities in the district through local tourism public/private partnerships, such as: Destination Bradford, Bronte Country Partnership and Ilkley Wharfedale Partnership, to maximise the economic benefit of the visitor economy. We will assist new operators and facilities to invest in the district and support those wishing to expand their businesses. We will continue to work with the other 4 local authorities, (in the West Yorkshire Tourism Partnership), Yorkshire Tourist Board and the strategic tourism body, Yorkshire Forward. The partnership aims are to grow the visitor economy across West Yorkshire, by improving: the visitor offer, both for business and leisure visits, encouraging day visits to become overnight stays and by improving joint marketing, Tourist Information Offices, destination management and internet e-commerce systems.

6.5 Reputation and pride

The Council will continue to work with Bradford Centre Regeneration and other partners to build on the successful marketing campaign to encourage investment in the city centre. The City Centre co-ordinator will work to maximise promotional opportunities.

6.6 Protecting the built and natural environment

Bradford has a wealth of fine Victorian buildings, many of which are listed, that we will seek to bring back into productive use. Where appropriate we will support the creative and productive re-use of buildings for commercial, cultural and residential purposes. Our priorities will be those buildings in our city and town centres where we can maximise private sector investment and job opportunities (such as Lister Mills). We will also work with developers to enhance the built environment through master planning exercises (Urban Renaissance) and the establishment of design standards. We wish to see new buildings adding to the quality of our built environment through innovative approaches to design and procurement.

Bradford is located at the heart of the UK and our city centre is just 9 miles from Leeds. Our focus is to maximise the potential of our location for our citizens and for business.

6.7 Creating our place regionally and nationally and internationally

We will work to develop a distinctive and complementary relationship with Leeds and the region. Bradford is increasingly taking an active role in the development of the economic functional areas known as 'Leeds City Region' that encompasses ten Local Authority areas, including Bradford. To maximise the potential this offers the people of Bradford we need to work with Leeds and other Districts to promote the enhancement of transport links between the two cities, through improving rail connections and establishing new connections through LRT and Super Tram systems. As an economic unit, an understanding of the city region labour market only serves to emphasise the centrality of improving skills in Bradford to the creation of a successful future economy.

Other opportunities include the development of an Airedale Strategy to provide a growth corridor connecting the District, from Leeds to Craven, re-establishing other connections

between the cities including opening up the canal from Bradford to Shipley and onto Leeds for development.

6.8 Future scoping

The Leeds/Bradford Commuter Corridor is an area of potential major economic importance connecting the cities of Leeds and Bradford and has been identified as an area of potential growth in the Leeds City Region Development Plan.

Economic conditions in the corridor are not as strong as they could be. Transport connections could be significantly improved and housing provision is in need of refurbishment and remodelling in some areas and may not be of a range and quality sufficient to support future economic growth.

A regeneration programme for the Leeds-Bradford Corridor will be clearly located within the strategic context of the Northern Way and Leeds City Region Development Plan. This would link the aims and objectives set out in both the Vision for Leeds and Bradford 20-20 Vision.

The regeneration programme will use as its basis the unique proximity of Leeds and Bradford (the 3rd and 6th largest cities in the UK) and their potential as a combined economic powerhouse, and would seek to build on the promotion of 'cross-border' initiatives by the Yorkshire and Humberside Housing Board and Yorkshire Forward and, in particular, the clear interest shown by Yorkshire Forward in encouraging and achieving greater links and cooperation between Leeds and Bradford and the strong political representation in the two areas at a senior level.

A Leeds/Bradford Corridor Group (LBCG), consisting of elected members and representatives from both local authorities and other stakeholders, has been established to develop a co-ordinated and integrated strategy. This strategy will identify and deliver opportunities to improve the quality of life, develop economic prosperity, enhance transportation and connectivity, achieve sustainable improvements to housing and the environment and create cohesive communities within the corridor area. The group will commission consultants to undertake a study to assess the feasibility of a joint approach towards the effective regeneration of the Leeds-Bradford Corridor and the development of a regeneration framework and programme for the period 2006 – 2016.

6.9 Cross cutting

Transport and communications

We will work to create an integrated and sustainable transportation system which supports our regeneration ambitions and supports the Leeds City Region Transport Vision. A key challenge is to facilitate increased economic activity without exacerbating existing transport problems or creating new ones. In particular we will focus on the key components in the Airedale masterplan for transport which will include:

- Strategic highway improvements through Shipley East Link Road, improvements to Canal road and the dualling of Hard Ings Road to open up employment land and create the opportunity for sustainable public transport options;
- regenerating the three principal railway stations of Keighley, Bingley and Shipley creating quality public transport hubs which encourage a shift of modal patterns from car to bus and rail
- Work with partners in the City Region to create a rail link to Leeds Bradford International Airport via Guiseley and Horsforth to Leeds

7. How we will use the Economic Statement

- 7.1 The Economic Statement will be used within the Council to assess what and who is already addressing these issues and to establish their effectiveness and any gaps in provision. This will lead to a realignment and reprioritisation of services, policy and investment. The changes arising from this assessment will be reflected in the Council's Corporate Plan.
- 7.2 At the same time, by setting out its approach to and role in economic development, the Council will use the statement as a vehicle for consultation and participation with partners and stakeholders. Through this process we will seek to ensure a better understanding of the Council's role and alignment between all of the partners' contributions to the achievement of '2020 Vision'. This will allow others to add their contributions to this debate as well as the regeneration effort as a whole.
- 7.3 The Council has recently established a Corporate 'Creating a Prosperous District' Board to pull together regeneration services and activities from across the Council. The Economic statement will set the agenda for that group and become the basis for the Council's Corporate Plan. We recognise that other Council priorities will also make a contribution to the regeneration of the District (in particular education). Services across the Council will be asked how they can contribute to the agenda set out in the Economic Statement. These contributions will be reviewed and monitored by the 'Creating a Prosperous District' Board.
- 7.4 The Council's Economic Statement will also provide a key input into both the "Creating a Prosperous District" sections of the District's Community Strategy and the development of a new Economic Strategy for the whole District.