



Arun Growth Deal 2024-29

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Foreword

"Arun represents a significant and exciting opportunity for sustainable growth. Working in partnership will maximise opportunities for attracting investment and improving the quality of life for residents and visitors."

Cllr Steve Waight, WSCC Cabinet Member for Support Services and Economic Development

"Our vision for Arun is to create a dynamic, competitive, and sustainable place to live, work and do business. Arun has already attracted significant funding to support economic growth and we want this to continue. We recognise that working in partnership is the best way to create a dynamic new future and this document sets out clearly our shared vision for Arun and how we can work together to achieve this."

Cllr Matt Stanley, Leader of Arun District Council

Background

The Arun Growth Programme is a partnership between Arun District Council (ADC) and West Sussex County Council (WSCC). Our shared aim is to create better places for our residents by using public resources and assets more effectively and efficiently to support sustainable economic growth in Arun District.

Set within the context of great uncertainty from the ongoing cost of living crisis and economic and environmental conditions, the Deal sets out a set of shared principles to working collaboratively with public sector partners to deliver best value for West Sussex residents.

Engagement on the Growth Deal has been held with Cabinet Members from WSCC and ADC Political leaders briefings have been held during the last year which have kept Members informed about the developing Growth Deal.

Growth Deal Agreement

Arun District Council	West Sussex County Council
Matt Stanley (Leader of Arun District Council) Karl Roberts (Chief Executive Officer, Arun District Council)	Steve Waight (Cabinet Member for Support services and Economic Growth, WSCC) Becky Shaw (Chief Executive Officer, WSCC)
Signed by the Leader: and Chief Executive officer: 	Signed by the Cabinet Member: and Chief Executive officer:

Arun Growth Deal 2024-29

The Arun Growth Programme is a partnership between Arun District Council (ADC) and West Sussex County Council (WSCC). Our joint aim is to enhance Arun's economy, and support sustainable economic growth. As the first Growth Deal reaches the end of its five-year term, there is an opportunity to reflect and re-centre our collective focus.

The previous Growth Deal partnership supported and successfully bid for grants and funding and attracted significant investment from a range of funding sources. Consequently, the Programme supported the delivery of multiple projects across the district and spanning a range of themes, such as Bognor Regis Place Branding, The Track, Place St Maur, and Littlehampton Town Centre Public Realm Improvements.

Since the previous Growth Deal was signed in 2018, the country has faced unique social, environmental, political and economic challenges. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, town centres and businesses require greater support to recover, and organisations have been forced to review the way in which they operate. Businesses are adopting new, flexible working arrangements and the importance of digital connectivity has never been greater. The climate crisis requires a change to behaviours and for local authorities to promote carbon efficient strategies such as enhancing sustainable transport and examining its own assets. The new Growth Deal provides an opportunity to pool resources and funding to build momentum and sustain economic growth in Arun.

Therefore, a refreshed Growth Deal that prioritises investment in growth activities based on shared principles has been agreed by ADC and WSCC. The refreshed Deal will encourage sustainable growth through the coordination of effort and resources and will enable Arun to continue to attract investment, visitors, businesses and residents wishing to live in the district.

Identifying opportunities and risks derived from core challenges, as well as using key data insights, forms the basis for the new Deal. The Arun Growth Deal 2024-29 will support residents and businesses to navigate the continued Covid-19 recovery, economic challenges and environmental pressures. The partnership will respond to this need in line with wider strategies laid out in both Council Plans with a series of interconnected projects outlined in Appendix A.

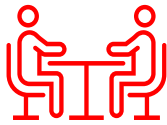
Documents, plans and strategies that have informed this approach include:

- Central Government initiatives such as 'Build back better' (2021), 'Levelling up the UK' and 'Bus back better' (2021)
- WSCC Our Council Plan 2021-25 priorities
- WSCC Economy plan 2020-24 priorities
- Arun Council Vision 2022-26
- Arun Local Plan 2018
- Arun Economic Development Strategy 2020-2025
- Arun Visitor Strategy 2023 -2028
- ADC's Carbon Neutral Strategy

Principles of a Growth Deal

The Growth Deal principles are the foundations for the Growth Programme to support strategic relationships and guide decision-making and project prioritisation.

There will be other statutory processes including planning, programmes and projects not covered by the Growth Deal, but the Councils will work together to achieve the most effective outcomes for communities.



Partnership

Bringing together various parts of the relevant Councils to collaborate and maximise resources under a shared vision.



Efficient and effective

Associated projects brought together and managed within an overall growth programme to be progressed over the next five years.



Social value

We will consider the principles of social value to provide local economic, social, and environmental benefit at all project stages.



Sustainable and net zero

Working together to deliver carbon efficient, sustainable projects and initiatives.



Attracting funding

Agree opportunities for aligning and prioritising funding from all available funding streams. External funding can provide capacity and professional capability to support and deliver projects.



Arts, heritage, culture

Capitalise on culture's economic contribution and role in community place-making, identity, resilience, and cohesion – delivering a creative coastline, countryside and town narrative that reflects the uniqueness of place and enhances civic pride.

Themes

Following a thorough analysis of Arun's demographic, wider context and census data, six themes have been agreed which will be underpinned by a commitment to prioritise sustainability and net zero initiatives.



Sustainable travel and digital connectivity – Local insight data shows high levels of out commuting in 2021. Meanwhile, transport trends in 2022, showed the most common reason for travel was leisure rather than commuting. Improving sustainable transport in Arun will provide greater accessibility for residents and visitors, increase leisure trips into town centres and crucially decrease carbon emissions and other associated pressures on the highway network. Digital innovation is becoming increasingly critical following the Covid-19 pandemic and businesses reviewing their ways of working, however the average download speed in Arun is low comparison to the UK average.

Enhancing natural capital and transitioning to net zero - Enhancing and utilising Arun's natural environment will create a coastal destination, build the visitor economy and boost business rates. Pre-Covid 2019, coastal tourism generated £1.18 billion in West Sussex supporting 22,977 jobs. Rebuilding and enhancing Arun's year-round visitor economy is a priority and a substantial opportunity for the district. The culture, creative and digital sector is growing five times faster than the UK average and contributes £109 billion to the UK economy annually, employing over one million people. Arun's strengths in this sector means it is a growth hub for culture and therefore, new jobs, upskilling opportunities and investment.

Sustainable development and best use of assets - Since ADC declared a climate emergency and WSCC pledged to become carbon neutral by 2030, sustainability has become a priority for the partnership. The Growth Programme, alongside other partners in the West Sussex One Public Estate (OPE) Partnership, will review its assets to identify opportunities to work together more efficiently and release surplus or brownfield sites to

deliver affordable housing or commercial opportunities, in line with the strategies of both councils.

Enhancing built environment- Improving the built environment will support businesses and vulnerable people by increasing accessibility. Footfall data suggests trends remain below pre-Covid levels. The Deal will continue to drive growth through public realm improvements and improving community safety, meeting both Councils' objectives to support coastal economies and continue supporting vibrant places.

Skills, education, recruitment, and retention - A large portion of Arun's residents work in lower paid roles in comparison to the national average and regarding qualifications, Arun residents are 8% less likely to have gained a degree despite hosting a university campus (source: ONS census 2021). Through working with external partners, including the University of Chichester, the Growth Deal will support upskilling Arun's residents identifying and developing opportunities to improve and build student infrastructure.

Boosting productivity growth, innovation, and investment - Providing stability for investment will mean understanding the sectors we want to engage and growth trends, convening new business voices, bringing together groups of businesses sharing common ideas. Ensuring the right infrastructure supports innovation, clusters of businesses and sectors. Supporting inclusive growth for residents – improving employability delivery with Department for Work and Pensions, encouraging better job and career path creation in lower value sectors – especially hospitality and social care, and using own levers as employers and commissioners of services.

Sources of funding

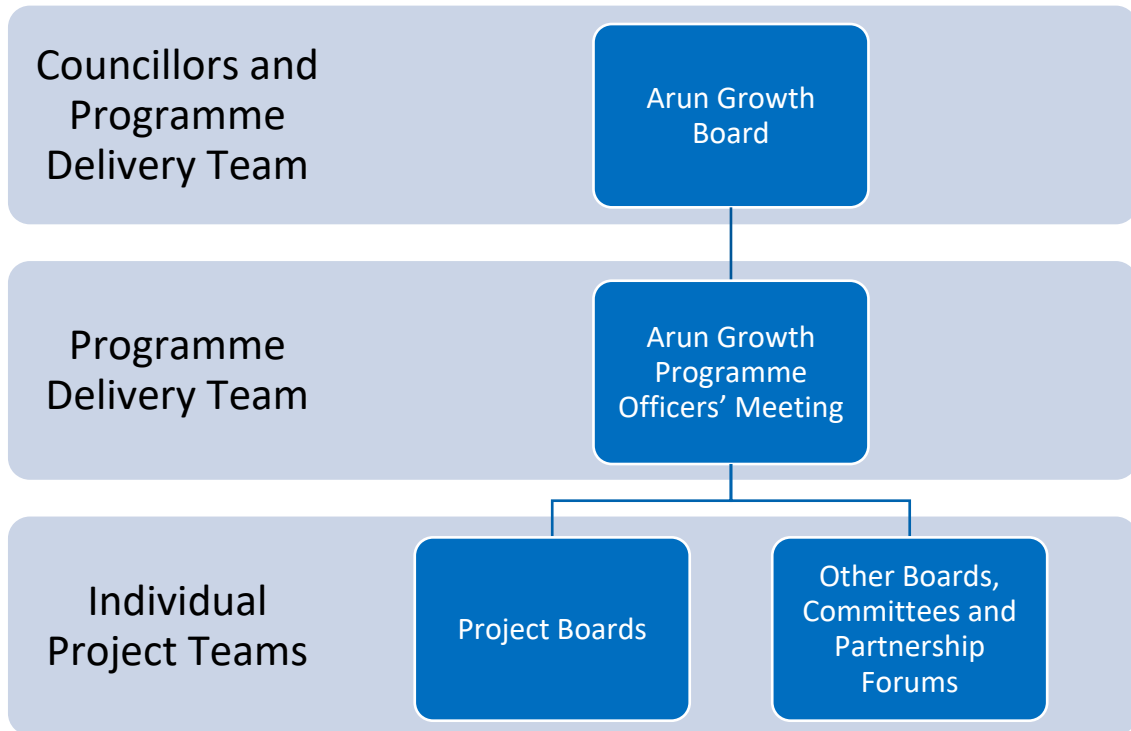
Possible sources of funding include (but not limited to):

- Section 106 and or Community Infrastructure Levy monies
- Central Government allocations from sources such as UK Shared Prosperity Fund
- Levelling Up Fund (LUF)
- Department for Transport bus improvement strategy and active travel funds
- Partnership revenue and capital contributions
- Heritage lottery grant
- Business rate retention scheme
- OPE Programme and Brownfield Land Release Fund
- WSCC and ADC capital programmes
- Capital or revenue funds prioritised by partners
- Arts Council England

The previous Arun Growth Deal helped to attract over £105 million of funding to support delivery of Growth and OPE projects (including major highways projects). This funding includes a successful Levelling Up Fund bid of £19.4 million which is boosting and improving seafront locations in both Bognor Regis and Littlehampton. The Deal helped to successfully attract two grants from the Brownfield Land Release Fund to unlock disused, inefficient land for re-development. This partnership aims to be effective and proactive in attracting investment and facilitating growth across Arun to the benefit of its residents.

Governance

The Governance Framework will ensure that the Growth Deal principles are achieved, and the Growth Deal priorities are effectively progressed. The diagram below reflects the hierarchy of programme governance and Appendix B outlines the role of each layer.



Priorities and ways of working highlighted in this Growth Deal do not remove or alter the Council's statutory duties and do not suggest or represent any pre-determination with respect to planning issues. The statutory planning process will be progressed as required for all proposals identified.

Some issues and items will be commercially or politically sensitive and, in such instances, handled within each of the Council's established internal procedures.

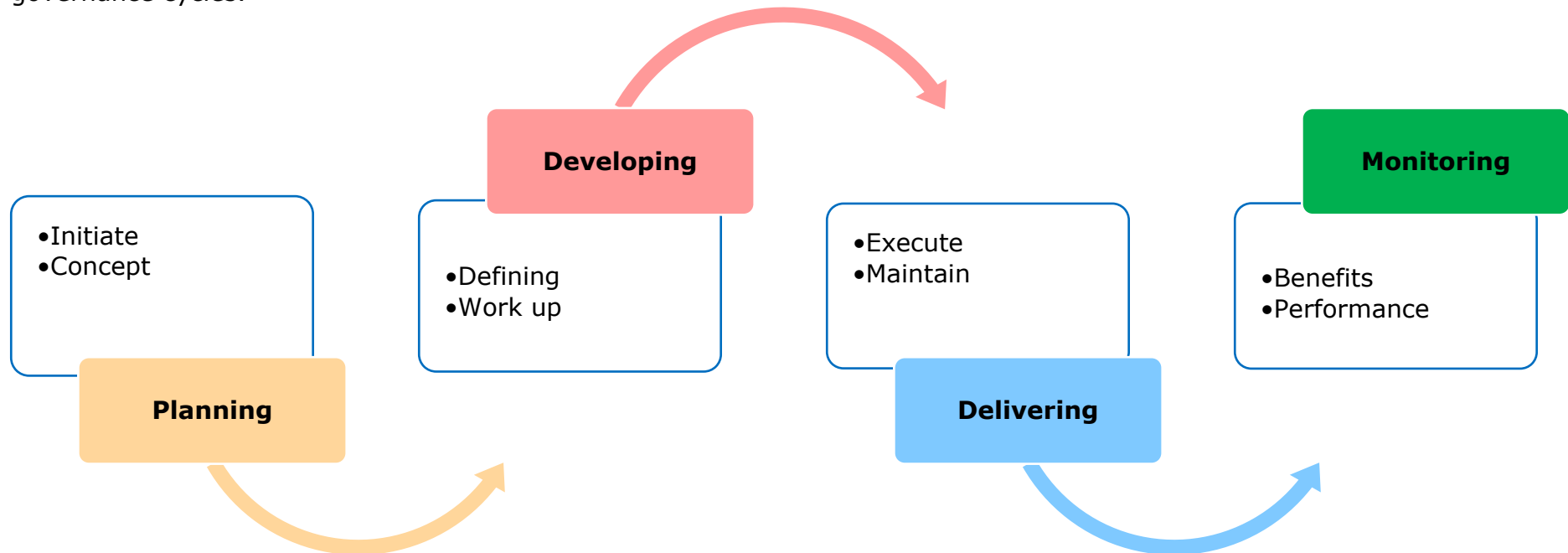
A joint communications strategy will be agreed to ensure that the Councils work jointly to keep media, partners, stakeholders, and residents informed of progress. Press releases and external communications will be jointly agreed prior to issue. The Growth Deal will be reviewed initially after six months and then annually with any proposed amendments being agreed by Leaders, Cabinet Members and Chief Executive Officers. Local Councillors will be engaged on a project basis.

Appendix A – The priorities

The Action Plan in **Appendix A** identifies key stages and steps used to progress the priorities identified within this Growth Deal. A range of service areas within the councils may be responsible for the delivery of a particular project and they may also their own prioritization process. The overall aims of each priority are outlined in the Action Plan alongside the shared approach the Councils will take to support and, where appropriate, manage and monitor the progression of associated projects.

The Action Plan identifies key decision points – projects will only be progressed beyond key decision points when the appropriate governance processes have been completed within each authority.

Each project will be at a different stage, as illustrated below, and will be developed in accordance with respective Council’s governance cycles.



Bognor Regis

Project	Objective	Action Plan	Lead Authority
Barton's Infants School site	Deliver homes on surplus brownfield land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demolish the vacant school building and prepare the site for the construction of new homes. 	WSCC
Cultural Vision	Highlight Arun's position for Bognor Regis as a regional cultural hub.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Culture Vision and subsequent strategy for Bognor Regis that will utilise built and natural environment within the town and enhance the cultural offer. Utilise Arts Council England funding to develop strategy and identify funding to support activities highlighted in the vision document. 	ADC
Alexandra Theatre (LUF)	Regenerate Alexandra Theatre to support Bognor Regis as cultural hub, boosting visitor numbers and creative industries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete procurement exercise. Commence construction in 2024. Work with local community groups and the Arts Council to establish a successful creative hub in Arun. Complete construction and open refurbished and improved venue with operating partner. Monitor benefits. 	ADC
Former Brewers Fayre (Royal Hall) /Regis Centre	Regenerate Regis Centre (former Brewers Fayre premises) to support Bognor Regis as a cultural hub.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess and explore options to develop an indoor events space in the current vacant restaurant / pub, to the South of the site. Develop and deliver viable options. 	ADC
Regis Centre Car Park (masterplan)	Consider development options for this site and make best use of public spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the car park requirements in Bognor Regis town centre. Commission an options appraisal. Investigate potential funding sources. 	ADC

Bognor Regis Masterplan	Identify key opportunities for regeneration in Bognor Regis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess wider social, environmental, and economic requirements in Bognor Regis town centre. Identify key town centre Council assets and commission an options appraisal. Conduct public and political engagement to understand community needs. Source funding. 	ADC
Bognor Regis Arcade refurbishment	Rejuvenate brownfield site delivering up to 35 new homes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop detailed designs. Deliver homes. 	ADC
Bognor Regis Esplanade Public Realm Improvements	Improve accessibility, public realm, and connectivity along the seafront.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint a contractor via a Key Decision and prepare the site for construction to commence in Autumn 2024. Complete construction in Spring 2025. 	WSCC
Enterprise Bognor Regis	Delivery of employment / commercial space for job growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the private sector to bring forward strategic employment site with significant business / job opportunities. 	ADC/WSCC

Littlehampton			
Project	Objective	Action Plan	Lead Authority
Littlehampton Masterplan	Explore options for key sites in and around the town centre and seafront to deliver mixed use, residential and commercial developments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess wider social, environmental, and economic requirements in Littlehampton town centre. Identify key town centre Council assets and consider an options appraisal. Conduct public and political engagement to understand community needs. Source funding. 	ADC

Littlehampton Seafront and Riverside Public Realm (LUF)	Transform the seafront area to boost visitor numbers and improve safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete detailed design and procurement in 2024. • Commence construction. • Monitor benefits. 	ADC
Littlehampton Public Realm Improvements (Phases Four and Five)	Support a vibrant town centre through increased footfall, dwell and spend time and pride of place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review existing concept proposals for the next two phases (Surrey Street, up to the Look and Sea Centre and the links with Pier Road and New Road, and the War Memorial roundabout on Beach Road) • Identify funding to support delivery. 	ADC
Littlehampton Town Centre	Support a vibrant town centre through increased footfall, dwell and spend time and pride of place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish mechanisms to improve community safety within Littlehampton Town Centre • Work with partners to support the economic vibrancy and investment in the town centre. 	ADC

Strategic Sustainable Growth			
Project	Objective	Action Plan	Lead Authority
Supporting Strategic Developments	Align wider council strategies by supporting major infrastructure projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree key sites and requirements. • Assess development plans and secure contributions for infrastructure improvements. 	WSSC/ADC
Public service accommodation requirements	Maximise use of public assets in order to deliver efficiencies and develop surplus land where appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify potential sites and explore options for public sector services through the OPE programme. • Continue to use the West Sussex OPE Board as a mechanism for discussion with partners and access to funds. 	WSSC

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify surplus assets and service requirements to commission options appraisals for sites. 	
Digital Innovation and Infrastructure	Support growth with improved digital connectivity and infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify requirements for businesses, residents and education providers. Support the roll out plans for digital infrastructure improvements in Arun. 	WSCC
Active Travel	Promotion and expansion of sustainable travel options in Arun.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with the WSCC Planning and Transport Policy team and the WSCC Local Transport Improvements team to understand their programme of works and support where possible. Develop options for upgrading sustainable transport options. 	WSCC
Developing student infrastructure, skills, retention, talent pipeline	Create a place for people to thrive. Support education more widely and attract and retain students and graduates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with the WSCC schools planning team to understand their programme of works and support where possible. Work with ADC strategic planning to mitigate emerging education priorities and needs. Work collaboratively with the University of Chichester to strengthen ties and understand its needs. Identify and progress opportunities for improvements to existing education infrastructure from primary to higher education. Work with businesses to establish links to upskilling and job growth opportunities. 	ADC/WSCC

Appendix B – Governance Roles

Arun Growth Board

The Growth Board will comprise of senior elected Councillors, nominated by the Leaders of the Councils, and officers of the Councils. The Board will meet quarterly to:

- Provide strategic leadership and direction to the Growth Programme.
- Ensure the alignment of investment to support the delivery of the Growth Programme.
- Monitor Growth and OPE projects, considering progress made and if required agreeing remedial action to enhance delivery.
- Examine new opportunities to progress strategic growth projects, ensuring joint governance decisions and project initiation are taken as appropriate where projects involve a clear partnerships approach.
- Be appraised of issues and obstacles affecting project delivery, agreeing action to boost progress where appropriate.
- Support the development of project teams to ensure the appropriate combination of officer input and expertise in key disciplines is achieved.

Arun Growth Programme Officers Meeting

The Arun Officers Growth Programme Meetings are comprised of senior officers and other officers of both Councils. This meeting will take place on a quarterly basis unless required to meet outside of this remit. The meeting will:

- Assess and steer all projects within the Arun Growth Programme.
- Consider the progress of projects across the Growth Programme to inform reporting to the Growth Board.
- Agree recommendations or risks being escalated to Growth Board, including on investment options and proposals during the design and development stages to provide, if required, directions and extra impetus for individual projects.
- Maintain partnership stability.
- Plan and monitor communication and engagement.

Individual Project Teams

The individual project teams will drive forward the delivery of the Growth Programme. The arrangements of individual project teams and project management techniques used will be determined by the relevant councils and service areas. Project Team lead officers, and other officers providing technical input, will feed back to and update the Growth Board via the Arun Officers Growth Programme meetings. Stakeholder engagement and communication, also proportionate to individual projects, will enable the effective communication, assist in timely decision making, support the Councils statutory, and input to other functions, where required.

Other Boards, Committees and Partnership Forums

A range of other wider Boards, Committees and Partnership Forums are likely to have an interest, function, or involvement in the progression of the growth projects identified within the Growth Programme.