

# Arun Growth Deal review (2018-23)

---

## Purpose

The purpose of this document is to review the Arun Growth Deal (2018-23). The review will highlight key investments and successes in Arun as well as areas for improvement and reflection on the delivery of intended priorities and projects over the Growth Deal period. The document will set out key recommendations for working in partnership with Arun District Council (ADC) and others to support delivery of the Council's strategic aims into a new Growth Deal period (2024-29).

## Background

The Arun Growth Deal sets out a joint commitment between ADC and West Sussex County Council (WSCC) with the aim of aligning resources to deliver sustainable growth. The programme seeks to unlock opportunities for new homes, infrastructure, employment floor space - preserving and creating new jobs, and rejuvenated town centres.

## Key outcomes

By working in partnership, the Growth Deal has delivered and supported key projects and is coordinating significant levels of funding and inward investment into Arun District. These initiatives support growth outcomes in the coastal West Sussex community and economy, particularly at key locations such as Bognor Regis and Littlehampton.

The 2018-23 Growth Deal supported the leverage of significant public investment and grants with a further investment from the private sector.

From 2018, **five** key projects have been completed with a further **eleven** projects, that were outlined in the original Growth Deal, started or on-going and will support key outcomes for Arun. A further **four** initiatives being undertaken as part of an investment package in Growth and One Public Estate (OPE) funded opportunities.

Completed projects will continue to foster the renaissance of our seaside towns and provide a base from which Arun can build future strategic alliances and attract investment from public and private partners. More broadly, the Growth Deal will continue to support the aims of the Arun Local Plan and the WSCC Corporate Plan.

Projects that are now mobilized account for £98.4 million in public investment and are either due to be completed in the period 2024-29 or are subject to a key decision point as to whether the project will continue. There is therefore a need for these programmed initiatives to be coordinated and managed to maximise resources and optimize benefits realization.

Arun's ability to attract funding and coordinate resources to enable projects and initiatives should not be underestimated. The ability to bid for external funding whilst matching this with wider grants and capital funding has been the result of careful planning, pipeline development and astute political collaboration and decision making, all achieved in a complex environment.

The Partnership navigated key threats and challenges over the Deal period including the cost-of-living crisis, inflation to borrowing and construction and the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent recovery which has included new ways of working, social and economic challenges. Being able to adapt and be flexible enough to respond to threats and opportunities will be a key consideration for a refreshed Deal.

Whilst some deliverables and activities have been completed over the Deal period, there are some that have either been missed or unclear how they are been measured and accounted for. This could be a key area of consideration for a refreshed Deal.

Ensuring resources and decision-making processes from both organisations and those of others are co-ordinated and aligned in a strategic way is essential to a successful new deal. The Councils' professional services including Planning, Highways, Transport, Education, Estates and Legal and Finance will be required to provide support to the progression of projects. Projects will only progress beyond key decision points when the appropriate governance processes have been completed within each authority.

## **Recommendations**

- ADC and WSCC should agree opportunities for aligning and prioritising funding from all available funding streams and their own budgets/programmes, when appropriate, to support the delivery of priorities identified within a refreshed Arun Growth Deal.
- A focus of the Growth Deal should be the development and delivery of priorities identified in an action plan over the next five years (2024 to 2029) with a view to meeting key challenges facing the region, County and District.
- The Councils should commit to developing proposals in a timely manner with clear responsibilities for leading and delivering projects and managing their benefits.
- Other programmes and projects, not covered by the Deal, where the Councils can work together to achieve the most effective outcomes for communities should be identified and exploited.
- Establish clear principles in a refreshed Growth Deal that may be helpful in developing working practices in the future.
- Ensure appropriate project management and quality management systems are in place to support the delivery of the Growth Deal priorities.
- Work together to identify new opportunities and undertake pipeline planning in relation to the development of business plans, programmes and projects.
- Review the refreshed Deal after six months and then annually.

## **Key risks for a new deal**

### Political -

- The impact of the upcoming General Election and the subsequent implications of a potential change in Government.
- WSCC elections in May 2025.

### Financial -

- Limitations on capital funding and availability of grant.
- Construction and maintenance costs increasing with inflation.
- The Government's sponsorship and funding of Local Enterprise Partnership to end in April.
- Existing or committed projects over run/ over budget.

Deliverability -

- Insufficient resources to deliver the number of projects in the programme.

Environmental -

- The impact of climate change on the deliverability and benefits of projects.
- Challenge for new developments to meet environmental standards.

## Appendix A – Review of projects from the Arun Growth Deal 2018-23

No.	Project	Note/ comments
1.	Establish a 'Creative Digital Hub'	Complete – The Track provides business start-up support and accommodation at Bognor Regis Railway Station.
2.	New STEM Park at the University of Chichester Bognor Regis campus	Complete – delivered by the University of Chichester. £35m public / private investment
3.	Place St Maur, Bognor Regis	Complete – Public Realm space adjacent to Alexandra Theatre - £1.8m investment
4.	Bognor Regis Place Branding	Complete and implemented
5.	Littlehampton Public Realm Improvements (Phases 1-3)	Complete - £5.3m investment
<b>Projects progressing</b>		
6.	Regis Centre Site – new hotel, leisure, theatre and restaurant facilities	Regis Centre redevelopment TBC. Theatre regeneration / refurbishment started - £13m Levelling Up Fund (LUF) funded. Premier Inn planning consent 107 bed hotel. Expected to start on site summer 2024. Viability and feasibility of proposed Royal Hall being progressed. Master planning remainder of the site now planned.
7.	Littlehampton Seafront and Riverside Public Realm	LUF funded (£7m) public realm improvements and associated regeneration at the seafront and riverside.
8.	A284 road improvements	Live project supporting strategic housing and commercial allocations
9.	A259 road improvements	Live project supporting strategic housing and commercial allocations
10.	A29 road improvements	Live project supporting strategic housing and commercial allocations
11.	Enterprise Bognor Regis	Mostly developed for employment uses.
12.	Barton's Infants School redevelopment	OPE Brownfield Land Release Fund sponsored live project
13.	Bognor Regis Arcade refurbishment of upper floors for residential units	OPE Brownfield Land Release Fund sponsored live project. Creation of 35 residential apartments, £7m investment
14.	Cultural Vision Bognor Regis	Live project – starting Spring 2024
15.	Bognor Regis Esplanade Public Realm improvements	Live project – progressing through detailed design
<b>Projects yet to start</b>		
16.	Hothampton Car Park	No available funding
17.	Fitzalan/Maltravers Road and East Street	Two feasibility studies carried out and both proved the proposed development options to be unviable
18.	Littlehampton West Bank development	Identified in ADC Local Plan
19.	River Arun Cycleway	No available funding
20.	A27 Arundel Bypass	Project paused

**Appendix A** – New priorities scored against criteria.

Rank	Priority	Score
1	Littlehampton Seafront and Riverside Public Realm (LUF)	152
2	Visitor Economy	136
3	Barton's Infants School site redevelopment	135
4	Alexandra Theatre (LUF)	135
5	Bognor Regis Arcade refurbishment	135
6	Cultural Vision (Bognor Regis)	122
7	Bognor Regis Masterplan	120
8	Bognor Regis Esplanade Public Realm Improvements	115
9	Supporting Strategic Developments (awaiting list from KR)	113
10	Regis Centre Car Park (masterplan)	105
11	Digital Innovation and Infrastructure	102
12	Former Brewers Fayre (Royal Hall)/Regis Centre	102
13	Public services accommodation requirements (Maltravers/Fitzalan Road, Littlehampton and East Street Fire and Rescue Station, Littlehampton)	99
14	Littlehampton Masterplan (St Martins Car Park, Harvester pub and Windmill site)	98
15	Littlehampton Town Centre	91
16	Enterprise Bognor Regis	84
17	Littlehampton Town Centre Public Realm Improvements Phases 4 & 5	81
18	Developing student infrastructure, skills, retention, talent pipeline (out commuting/University)	79
19	Active Travel (Littlehampton to Arundel Cycleway and Arundel to Ford Station)	78