

# **HYNDBURN'S REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC STRATEGY 2007-11**

*RENAISSANCE OF ACCRINGTON AND OUR TOWNS  
-MAKING OUR BOROUGH THE PLACE TO BE*

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# **HYNDBURN'S REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC STRATEGY 2007-11: RENAISSANCE OF ACCRINGTON AND OUR TOWNS - MAKING OUR BOROUGH THE PLACE TO BE**

## *Foreword*

*Every Borough has its time and this is ours....* Over the past year the Council, working closely with our various partners and stakeholders, has continued to drive forward initiatives that are contributing to the resurgence of the Borough and bringing an unprecedented level of investment into the area. Quality of life for local residents is improving quickly. The housing market remains exceptionally strong, crime rates are continuing to reduce, and the infrastructure for housing, education, health, retail, transport and employment are all undergoing major renewal.

In 2007, the Borough is on the verge of taking its place as an important centre in both Pennine Lancashire and in the North West of England. Accrington town centre is anticipating a bright new future with the exciting prospect of the scale of investment which has not been seen for generations- a new refurbished market, a significant expansion of the Arndale, a new health centre, new bus and rail stations, a new supermarket and many other developments coming to fruition.

The Housing Market Renewal programme is making a significant impact on transforming some of our most run down neighbourhoods with the first phase of the Keepmoat housing development in West Accrington commencing in Autumn 2007 while major strides are taking place to develop the major economic employment site creating many thousands of jobs at Whitebirk.

A new and dynamic image is being created for the Borough which is being embraced by the Borough Council, Lancashire County Council, our partners and business and the community to promote and market the Borough.

This Regeneration and Economic Strategy sets out how we will drive forward the regeneration of the Borough over the next 4 years.

Councillor Peter Clarke  
Deputy Leader of the Council

## Part 1: Introduction

The Borough's current Community Strategy already sets out an ambitious programme for driving forward the transformation of the Borough. Over recent years the Council, with our various partners and stakeholders, has continued to deliver initiatives that are contributing to the resurgence of the area and bringing in an unprecedented level of investment. The Borough is also benefiting immensely from the transformation taking place across *Pennine Lancashire* as a result of major investment opportunities now being generated.

However, we recognize there is still much to do. A new Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for the Borough is being developed, but in helping shape the new SCS it is important that we are clear about future regeneration priorities.

The purpose for producing this Regeneration and Economic Strategy is six fold:-

- To set a clear programme for delivering the major economic and physical regeneration projects being led or supported by the Council which will underpin the vision and priorities incorporated into the Borough's new Sustainable Community Strategy and also ensure the Borough plays a pivotal role in the exciting transformation of Pennine Lancashire;
- To help shape and influence complementary strategies by partners on transport, education and skills development, housing, social care, health provision, community safety and private investment;
- To outline the Borough's strengths that will be built on, challenges that must be addressed and opportunities exploited to create a more prosperous and sustainable Borough;
- To set the Council's regeneration actions within the context of sub-regional and regional priorities and provide a framework for discussions with strategic agencies and funding bodies we work with;
- To act as a catalyst for attracting significant private investment into the area; and
- To outline a planned approach to delivering the regeneration strategy and to provide the tool against which our regeneration successes can be measured.

This Regeneration and Economic Strategy has been developed in partnership with a range of agencies across all sectors and will be delivered through a partnership approach. There is a joint commitment to the actions outlined in the Strategy and its implementation will be kept under strong scrutiny to ensure successful impact. The Strategy is split into a number of sections:-

**Part 2 sets out the strategic framework** - the Regeneration Strategy fits in within a framework of local and regional plans and partner strategies. These provide the context which guides our investment priorities and plans.

**Part 3 sets out where we are now and the main drivers for change** - Major improvements are happening, but there are significant challenges still facing the Borough, which must shape the direction and priorities of this Regeneration Strategy. The District is one of contrasts, urban townships with some areas of significant deprivation, but set amongst some of the finest countryside in the north.

**Part 4** - This section looks ahead to what we want the Borough to be in 10 years time and our ten-year strategic objectives.

**Part 5 takes our ten year strategic objectives**, and sets out our regeneration investment framework and planned actions for the next 4 years thereby helping make major steps towards achieving these objectives.

**Part 6 sets out our approach to delivering the strategy and the performance framework** - Delivering projects and programmes successfully and on time is fundamental to the regeneration process. Section 6 describes the performance management framework.

## Part 2: Strategic Framework: Shaping the Vision

The overall vision for this Regeneration and Economic Strategy is to create a better economic, social and physical environment to make the Borough **the place to be**, but the primary emphasis for the Council has to be enabler or deliverer of physical and economic regeneration change.

The success of delivering regeneration involves bringing together the collective resources of the Borough Council of Lancashire County Council who are responsible for many services in the Borough, of the business community, of Government agencies and many stakeholders within the Local Strategic Partnership and through our strategic partnership with Blackburn with Darwen Council.

To meet the duty set out in the Local Government Act 2000, the Borough's former Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), Hyndburn FIRST, prepared a Community Strategy running from 2003-08. An external review of the LSP carried out in 2006 recommended that a new Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) be developed to supersede this in line with the government consultation document "Local Strategic Partnerships: Shaping their Future". This establishes the SCS as the pinnacle of, and a beacon for, all current and future Council strategies.

Underpinning the new SCS are a series of key strategies. These include the Local Development Framework and the Regeneration and Economic Strategy (RES).

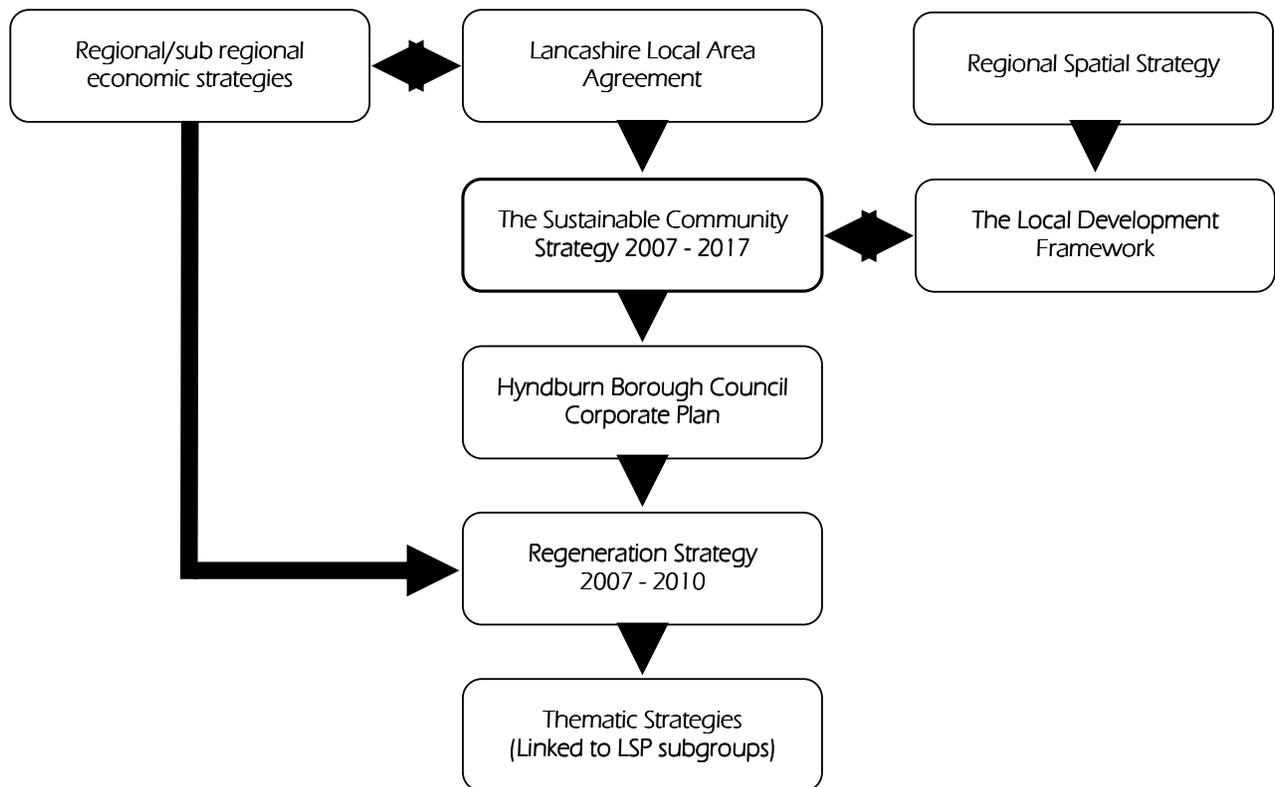
The SCS, Regeneration and Economic Strategy and Local Development Framework (LDF) are closely linked. The SCS sets out the vision and high-level priorities for the borough, linking into the Local Area Agreement between the Council and the County Council and Central Government. The LDF is the spatial expression of the SCS, ensuring that the planning framework enables delivery of the required projects in the appropriate places, and translating regional planning policies into the local context.

To this end regeneration programmes and projects will seek to promote the highest principles of sustainability by seeking the best standards of design and energy efficiency, resourcing local materials and services and by maximising employment and training opportunities for local people and businesses.

The RES is the principal means by which these projects will be driven forward and delivered and new opportunities evaluated. It represents the regeneration contribution to broader aims of the SCS. It also takes account of regional and sub-regional regeneration initiatives such as the Lancashire Economic Strategy, Central Lancashire City Region Development Programme, Pennine Lancashire Transformational Agenda and Elevate East Lancashire Housing Market Renewal Programme. A range of local strategies including the Borough Housing Strategy, Community Safety Strategy and other strategies all feed and influence the RES.

The advantage of this approach is that these documents, whilst having different time-scales, are being developed simultaneously. This ensures they align with the emerging vision being set out in the SCS. It also maximises the opportunity for the LSP to buy in to the performance management of the regeneration strategy, which is outlined in detail in Section 5.

The following diagram sets out how the various strategies and plans link together:



### Part 3: This is Hyndburn: Current Situation

Hyndburn is a compact district in the heart of Pennine Lancashire with a population of 81,600 residents, including a well-established and growing BME community comprising 8.3% of the population. With over 35,200 residents, Accrington is the main centre of population. Other key towns in the Borough are Church, Clayton le Moors, Rishton, Great Harwood, Oswaldtwistle, Altham and Huncoat consist of smaller populations. Our communities live in traditional urban environments, with stone-built terraces and suburbs built in Accrington red brick, nestling in the attractive foothills of Pennine Lancashire.

This location between Burnley and Blackburn ensures that the Borough's future fortunes are closely entwined with those of the Pennine Lancashire sub region. 100,000 people live in Accrington's immediate shopping catchment area, with a further one million people within half an hour's drive of the Borough through motorway links to Preston and Greater Manchester. The Transpennine rail route also puts Accrington within easy reach of West Yorkshire.

The strategy has been developed by recognising weaknesses and the strengths of the Borough and the sub region and the challenges and opportunities that are likely to affect our ability to influence the future of the area.

We have some of the most deprived wards in the country; a third of the older housing stock falls below the decency standard; there are sizeable areas of derelict land and outmoded industrial premises, 65% of the Borough's residents have low incomes exacerbated by high proportions of economically inactive people and health of the overall population is one of the poorest in the country. Appendix 1 summarises key facts about the Borough.

On the positive side, we know the District is a relatively safe place to live and the overall quality of life of our communities is improving. There is a strong manufacturing base; there are relatively good transport links and a high level of residents like living in the Borough.

In terms of the strategic context, Accrington and its district towns has the potential to reposition itself at the heart of the transformation of Pennine Lancashire and also take advantage of economic resurgence of the Manchester conurbation.

## **Economy and Employment**

The economic base of the Borough's towns and neighbourhoods, in common with that of our Lancashire neighbours, is rooted in textiles, engineering, chemicals and extractive industries, and it is from this that our communities have weaved their own distinctive identities.

Manufacturing is still one of the area's key strengths with 23% of employees working in this sector, offering a solid foundation for attracting higher value economic production. However, the legacy of canals, older industrial premises and industrial structure still bears witness to the County's and Hyndburn's fundamental contribution to the development of manufacturing industry in Britain. The decline and retrenchment of manufacturing industry is a background which we must constantly work within, alongside the need to develop a greater representation of higher value added businesses in order to raise our overall wealth generating potential.

Hyndburn has a low wage economy, a low skills base and low productivity. Although the proportion of people of working age in employment is higher in Hyndburn than both regionally and nationally, there are still significant pockets of unemployment and significant levels of need within Hyndburn's most deprived wards. Hyndburn has broken out of the list of the most deprived areas in the country. The interplay between poor economic conditions and poor housing/poor health has long been acknowledged and is at the heart of much of Hyndburn's work on Housing Market Renewal, Single Regeneration Budget, Neighbourhood Renewal and is at the heart of our contributions into the Lancashire Local Area Agreement (LAA).

A major initiative in the coming years identified in the Central Lancashire City Region Development Plan will be the development of the 32.6 Ha Whitebirk strategic employment site to create a "knowledge park" which will attract new employment sectors around the knowledge economy providing potentially 2000 high value jobs. Employment intervention initiatives will be developed to ensure that opportunities arising out of the Whitebirk development will be targeted to local residents. A high priority will be given to the accessibility of the site by public transport and the availability of appropriate skills training, to ensure that local residents are able to take advantage of new employment opportunities.

To attract new sectors we are mindful of the importance of having the right infrastructure in place for transportation and opportunities for the businesses themselves to come together and articulate their needs. The success of the Council and the LSP in achieving this at Altham Business Park has resulted in Altham being designated one of the first industrial estates being included in the national Business Improvement District (BID) pilot programme.

Our established regeneration partnership with Blackburn with Darwen BC is paying dividends. Through our joint LEGI "Great Goals" bid with the other Pennine Lancashire Councils, Hyndburn is benefiting from a share of £23.4m of LEGI money from April 2007. This provides a golden opportunity to address issues around enterprise and economic activity in the areas most deprived communities.

We will also continue to strengthen our partnership working across Pennine Lancashire recognising that many residents travel to work from outside the Borough. This collaborative working will help us to influence the plans which will ultimately shape the external resources required to improve life for local residents. Some of the key priorities of the Central Lancashire City Region development plan are enterprise, skills enhancement and expansion of higher education in central Lancashire, all of which link to existing Hyndburn priorities.

Our partnership working across Pennine Lancashire will help us to develop our response to the worklessness agenda, which is a key focus of the Local Strategic Partnership. In addition, practical actions are under way to address the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs), using enterprise as a focus for programmes of personalised activity.

The award of Assisted Area Status for 3 wards – Rishton, Altham and Clayton – brings with it access to business support and grant aid to stimulate job creation and further investment.

Creating the right environment for new business forms a key part of the regeneration of Accrington town centre. Building on major regeneration and investment programmes that have already occurred in the town centre, proposals for £1m investment in the Victorian Market Hall will both create a high quality retail environment, but will also create an Enterprise Haven to encourage new business start ups. With the prospect of a thriving Arndale Centre looking at opportunities to provide enlarged units and more shops; the prospect of new bus and railway stations and a new masterplan for Accrington town centre, we anticipate that the awakening of Accrington town centre to be the catalyst for further development across the Borough.

Plans to build the first racecourse in Britain for around 80 years in Altham, which would deliver a further 500 permanent jobs, will also progress over the course of this strategy.

Enhancing our current assets offers potential for tourist growth. There are ambitious plans to build on Oswaldtwistle Mills' 1.2 million visitors a year, whilst Accrington Stanley – “the team that wouldn't die” – has achieved its goal of football league status.

With half of the Borough designated as greenbelt land, efforts have focussed on developing disused sites. We have made great progress in reducing the amount of derelict land – the amount has fallen by 13% in the last three years.

## **Population Trends**

In keeping with neighbouring authorities Hyndburn's population is expected to grow with official estimates suggesting at least an additional 1300 people will live here by 2013. However, current trends suggest numbers within the main economically active group (30-44 year olds) are predicted to fall, leading to the borough having a more polarised age structure with proportionally larger numbers of 65+ and 20-29 year olds. The younger generation population is predicted to grow. This potentially has implications for the economy and housing market due to the current below average education attainment of many younger people compared to the regional average.

## **A Renaissance of our Natural and Built Environment**

Hyndburn's rich heritage offers a host of exciting possibilities for the future. Ten conservation areas cover a range of historic buildings and land use, from parkland to village and town centres. Accrington in particular has immense potential as a Heritage Town, with the under-utilised Grade II listed Victorian Arcade sitting amongst an eclectic mix of independent shops in the Abbey Street area. The town's Victorian Market Hall will be refurbished within the next two years to provide modern market facilities and incubator units for small businesses, and the refurbished Broadway shopping area has recently been enhanced with impressive floral displays.

The Floral Markets Town initiative is designed to build on the success in regenerating the Borough, which will make a big difference in transforming neglected areas into attractive public spaces. A major programme of capital investment into Hyndburn's Parks supports this initiative. There are aspirations to develop additional Local Nature Reserves and development of a country park surrounding the Coppice thereby protecting and enhancing the natural assets of the Borough. We also aim to build on the success of the "Hyndburn Greenway" following completion of the national cycle route through the Borough.

Significant strides are being made to improve refuse collection and street cleaning across the Borough through implementing the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act thereby complementing targeted regeneration areas and initiatives.

The introduction of the new Local Development Framework is a main priority for the Planning service. The Framework will support the implementation of policies and proposals in the Regeneration Strategy and Community Strategy, particularly those with land use implications. Supplementary planning documents will guide regeneration projects on Housing Market Renewal and other areas of extensive physical change giving them statutory weight and through involvement of local residents, private, public and voluntary organisations, borough wide ownership.

## **Improving Homes and Creating Better Places to Live**

Housing and the environment are at the heart of the Council's plans for building sustainable communities. The Borough's housing stock is enjoying levels of investment not seen since the end of the Second World War.

Hyndburn is a partner in the Elevate East Lancashire Pathfinder established to tackle areas of housing abandonment and rundown housing. The overall approach of the housing market renewal programme is to transform neighbourhoods to help create places where people want to live. Our plans include a reduction in the oversupply of terraced housing and replacement with a range of quality modern housing. This is complemented by refurbishment and improvement where stock is retained.

Project Phoenix schemes 1 and 2 will clear around 320 low demand terraced houses and develop around 300 homes for sale and rent. The Princess Street project area, which has over 1,000 terraced houses, is being revitalised through a combination of refurbishment, selective clearance and the introduction of sustainable, managed open spaces. The Council has selected Keepmoat Ltd as the lead development partner to develop new high quality housing in West Accrington.

In 2006/7 the Council achieved full delivery of its HMR programme. We also continued the successful development of neighbourhood management activities, drew up a new masterplan for West Accrington and Church and relocated all households affected by clearance to better homes.

Independently of Elevate, the Clayton Triangle scheme will provide high quality executive homes, broadening housing options available in the Borough, whilst the Platt's Lodge scheme will provide "executive" apartments for those preferring a more urban lifestyle. Other brownfield sites are being brought forward by developers for new private housing reflecting a growing buoyancy in the local housing market. The joint venture partnership the Council has with Globe Enterprises Ltd and the Hyndburn/Barnfield Partnership provides vital financial muscle and capacity to tackle key strategic regeneration projects illustrated by the prestigious Globe office complex, the Vue cinema and Platts Lodge housing scheme.

3500 former Council houses – almost 10% of the total number of houses in the Borough – are being improved by Hyndburn Homes to meet Decent Homes Standard by 2010 via a £35m investment. This investment in social housing is complemented by investment in the poorest quality private sector housing generated through the Elevate Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder. Other Registered Social Landlords also play an essential role in providing affordable homes and contributing to wider regeneration activity.

The introduction of Neighbourhood Management to over 9000 properties in West Accrington, Clayton-le-Moors, Peel and Barnfield ensures that the overall quality of life is considered alongside the need to reshape housing stock. This remit extends to all priority areas covered in this strategy, but particularly involves joining up the approach of organisations delivering public services.

### **Safer, Stronger Communities**

Community safety by its very nature is a cross-cutting theme. Crime levels and anti-social behaviour can have a profoundly negative affect on communities in terms of their quality of life, fear of crime and interaction with the environment for leisure activities. Deprivation, unemployment, poor housing; health, education and economic development are also contributory risk factors associated with high crime levels and anti-social behaviour.

The Community Safety Partnership is continuing to deliver real improvements on the ground, which has led to a 12.7% reduction in British Crime Survey Comparator Crime (BCSC) to the end of 2006/7 (2003/4 baseline). The Partnership has focused on Hyndburn's volume crime types, such as criminal damage, violent crime and vehicle crime, and in the majority of crime categories Hyndburn is achieving at least a 15% reduction. These top volume crime categories accounted for 70% of all BCSC crimes in the final quarter of 2006/7.

Improvements are having a positive impact on residents' perceptions of crime and anti social behaviour. Whilst residents still say these are their top priorities, surveys show that they recognise things have improved substantially over the last few years.

### **Encouraging Better Learning, for Longer**

Children in Hyndburn get a good education when they enter the state system. The percentage of children getting 5 or more A\*-C grade GCSE's has increased from 41% in 2003 to 56% in 2006, closing the gap with national figures. Through the new Sustainable Community Strategy, the Council and its partners are starting to focus on the development of skills in the home environment prior to formal schooling.

Post GCSE-level education, the proposals to develop Moorhead High School as a sixth form Academy would bring A-level provision back to the locality, offering students the opportunity to continue in Further Education without needing to leave the Borough. A second proposal from the neighbouring St Christopher's school in addition to this is also being developed. Hyndburn has higher than the national average amount of people qualified at NVQ levels 2 and 3, and this solid basis needs to be extended to further people's education to level 4. Equally, the number of people without formal qualifications is being tackled through the Accrington and Rossendale College, which has a national reputation as a centre of excellence for Construction related skills. The College is undergoing a major expansion programme to meet the increasing demand for higher level education in the area.

Education facilities in Hyndburn will be improved by the Building Schools for the Future programme in 2008-10, and the Primary Capital Programme, which commences in April 2009.

Further support for developing the needs of children and their parents is provided by Sure Start Hyndburn providing universal support services for children and parents with considerable emphasis on empowering parents to become economically active. The Park Child and Family Centre is located in Church ward in Accrington. Hyndburn's SRB6 funding specifically supported the community element of the centre. Subsequently ERDF funding was secured to develop three outreach centres with ICT suites, focusing on building the capacity of the local community to access employment and training opportunities.

### **A Healthier Hyndburn**

Hyndburn's population suffers from deep-rooted health problems. Life expectancy is below the national average, mainly due to high rates of death due to cancer and heart disease. Unhealthy lifestyles contribute to this, with 27% of the adult population smoking, 55% of the population being overweight, and 45% living a sedentary lifestyle. The new multi-million pound LIFT health centres, sited in some of the most deprived areas in the Borough, will act as a beacon linking people with healthy lifestyle programmes once open in December 2007 – whilst a dental school at the Paradise health centre aims to improve the provision of NHS dental care in Pennine Lancashire.

### **An Improving Council**

Over the last few years, whether it is measured by best value performance indicators, financial management, or though the scale of regeneration work in the Borough, the Council can clearly be seen to be improving. We aim to deliver excellent, value for money, customer focussed services in our priority areas that achieve improved quality of life and service delivery for stakeholders. We are committed to providing strong and effective political and executive leadership working together with our partners and stakeholders to translate the vision for the Borough into reality for the benefit of the whole community.

The Council has consistently increased the number of Best Value Performance Indicators that are in the top half of the national performance tables. In 2006/07 we doubled the number of Best Value Performance Indicators in the top two quartiles compared to 2000/01. Our commitment to ensuring value for money can be seen in our performance against our annual efficiency targets where for 2006/7 the Council achieved efficiency savings in excess of £2.9m against a target of £0.85m. Finally, our Regeneration achievements are documented throughout this document, although we recognise we need to keep adding to our portfolio of achievements for Hyndburn to become self-sustaining and the vibrant place we want it to be.

## Part 4: A Vision for Hyndburn

Objectives set out by the new Hyndburn Local Strategic Partnership Assembly Board have set out a vision to ***make the Borough the place to be***. Our ten-year vision is that by 2018 Accrington and the district towns will be:-

- A collection of distinctive and vibrant modern towns with attractive high quality and sustainable living environments;
- A place for everyone, that embraces and values diversity;
- A place where there is a strong and balanced housing market and where people choose to live;
- A place where it is good to learn, work and do business, with a thriving local economy and infrastructure; and
- A community with pride, confidence and high aspirations.

The vision establishes our approach to the place-shaping agenda. This strategy has a key role to play alongside the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Development Framework, being one way in which the ambitions and overall approach articulated can be turned into practical outcomes. As such, it reflects the Borough's identity and aspirations, safeguarding and promoting residents' well-being and prosperity.

The focus of regeneration priorities will be towards:

- Supporting the development of a vibrant economy, with continuing low levels of unemployment, an increased proportion of higher value employment, and improved transportation;
- Create high quality public realm in our town centres (including floral and landscaping schemes), tackling environmental blight through physical regeneration of heritage buildings and new developments;
- Create self-confident, inclusive and cohesive communities;
- Encourage the development of a strong and balanced housing market with quality homes and promote the area within and outside the Borough as a great place to live;
- Improve the range of educational and learning facilities and raise standards of educational attainment and skills development with good access to employment and education;
- Make Hyndburn a more enjoyable place to visit, increasing the range and depth of recreational opportunities and maximising benefits from the Borough's countryside, heritage and culture; and
- Promote healthy living and reduce health inequalities.

We know that because of existing needs, ongoing projects and resource availability there are defined priority areas for intervention over the next 3 years. The Regeneration Strategy will broadly concentrate on 7 geographical or themed areas of activity, which will act as the hub for the regeneration of the District and achieve critical mass of intervention benefiting the whole Borough and our neighbouring districts.

- We will seek to recreate an economically and culturally vibrant Accrington town centre and key gateways into Borough which will help drive forward the economic prosperity of the whole Borough. The town centre and “gateway” regeneration will also directly complement the regeneration activity happening or planned in the adjoining Housing Market Renewal areas;
- The main focus of Housing Market Renewal activity will continue to be in West Accrington and Church, around the Oswaldtwistle/Church Gateway, Clayton Le Moors with next area of HMR intervention being in Peel and Barnfield;
- In the north west and north of the Borough the main emphasis will be focussed on delivering strategic employment sites such as at Whitebirk and Huncoat and supporting the development of the nationally prestigious Pennine Lancashire Racecourse;
- We will create a cleaner and greener Borough and provide facilities and activities which better meet the needs of both local communities and also attract tourists and visitors;
- We will encourage the ongoing skills development of our work force and residents and deliver the LEGI Great Goals Programme promoting business enterprise and economic activity in the most disadvantaged communities;
- At the township level a co-ordinated approach will be adopted to promote smaller scale regeneration interventions by developing overarching township regeneration plans in tackling physical improvements and accessing employment opportunities; and
- We will maximise the Council’s enabling role by creating a positive climate for private investment and delivering up development opportunities.

In working towards this vision, the strategy focuses on 3 core themes that contribute to achieving the physical and economic transformation of the Borough which the District Council is most able to influence or deliver and also correspond to the Council's Corporate Plan: -

- *Creating a vibrant economy*
- *Improving Housing and the Environment*
- *Improving Culture and Leisure*

There are strong interconnections with those elements required for creating sustainable communities which the Council does not have direct responsibility for – health, education and skills development, social care and crime which are led by other Local Strategic Partnership partners and which will be covered in the new community strategy action plan.

## **Part 5: The Regeneration Investment Framework: What we will do**

This section sets out how we will fulfil the potential of the Borough through understanding the needs of business and investors to the opportunities of location and local people can offer and by pursuing a rigorous and entrepreneurial approach to making regeneration happen. This will set out how we will create a culture of making things happen and securing the funding opportunities available to the Borough.

Through the extensive consultation on regeneration priorities for the Borough there was general consensus amongst consultees that the added value role and purpose of the Regeneration Strategy should be to support projects which will transform the economic performance of the Borough as a whole and in particular improve the quality of life of our most deprived communities.

This will be achieved through greater collaboration with our partners working within the Borough, but also with our neighbouring authorities and strategic agencies such as Lancashire Economic Partnership and Elevate.

A description of the main regeneration programme for the next 3 years under these themes is summarised below and set out in more detail in Appendix 2.

### **Theme 1: To support the creation of a vibrant economy**

The overall aim of the economic theme of this strategy is to foster business growth to create sustainable well-paid jobs for residents both from the Borough and across Pennine Lancashire.

Key initiatives will include:

- Implement the Government's Local Enterprise Growth Initiative in collaboration with Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley and Pendle Councils to promote business start-ups and expansions. An "Enterprise Haven" providing business incubator units will be created on the upper floor of Accrington Market as part of the plans for refurbishing the market;
- Use the success and good practice learned during the collaborative LEGI process, to secure additional resources to support business development in Hyndburn. A key example of this is a transnational economic development project which is under development with other Pennine Lancashire districts as part of the European Union INTERREG programme. This project focuses on innovation within SMEs, not only relative to product/process development, but also linking this with innovative management;
- A major initiative for employment creation will be the development of the Whitebirk strategic employment site to create a knowledge park attracting new employment sectors around the knowledge economy providing high value jobs. This site will provide much needed freehold development space to help us meet the development and expansion needs of many local Hyndburn and East Lancashire companies thereby supporting inward investment activities;
- Bringing forward other key designated employment sites notably at Huncoat and as part of the review of employment land provision and seek to consolidate and improve designated employment sites where existing conditions adversely effect business operations;
- Supporting the development of modern business parks;

- In collaboration with the Groundwork Trust and local businesses continue to support and develop the Business Improvement District at Altham, replicating where appropriate across other business areas of the Borough and promoting the good practice developed within Hyndburn to other areas in the North West;
- Continue the proactive engagement with local businesses which is essential to understanding their needs and their particular business models;
- Pursue a policy of relocating and supporting the relocation of inappropriate businesses from HMR neighbourhoods;
- Promoting the district and its attractions at a regional and sub regional level with a detailed action plan for marketing the district as a tourist destination, as a place to invest in, do business with or live in;
- Developing Accrington town centre as a heritage town and the civic heart of the Borough through firstly the development of a visionary masterplan for the town centre and secondly, ensuring a viable delivery plan follows the master plan approval;
- Facilitate the development of key development opportunities in the town centre including the refurbishment of the Market Hall, potential retail developments at the Arndale shopping centre and at Eagle Street and the restoration of town centre heritage buildings through a Townscape Heritage Initiative;
- Undertake a retail and business study of Blackburn Road as part of the HMR strategy for West Accrington and Church and from the conclusions of the study develop a design framework to create a specialist shopping and business gateway seeking North West Development Agency funding to assist with implementation;
- Working collaboratively with partners particularly the Pennine Lancashire authorities, Lancashire County Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council to ensure transport infrastructure, roads and public transport is improved at a sub regional level and that poor transport connections, which hinder employment and business development within the Borough, are prioritised. Public transport facilities will be improved through the provision of new bus and rail interchanges and rapid transit bus routes;
- Globe Enterprises, the joint venture company, will continue to look for significant regeneration opportunities following the completion of the quality housing schemes at Platts Lodge, Accrington and Brookbond at Great Harwood;
- Supporting Accrington and Rossendale College's future development in particular the Enterprise Centre currently being developed at the Globe Centre site in Accrington. This will offer an enterprise focus to a group of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) category. The Centre will serve as a base for learners to undertake personalised learning programmes based on running real enterprises, and will have synergy with the development of the planned Market Enterprise Haven.

- We will continue to address the worklessness agenda within the borough. As well as developing targets and an action plan for the borough. Hyndburn is working with Pennine Lancashire authorities to develop a sub-regional worklessness initiative. This would offer a much more comprehensive package of actions aimed at moving the borough from its current position to achieve the 'ideal' in terms of generating jobs easily, local labour markets. A key aim of this initiative is establishing a common Pennine Lancashire wide level of service for job seekers and employers in relation to bringing workless people into economic activity;
- Supporting and helping to shape the development of LCC's "Building Schools for the Future" programme to ensure maximum benefits are achieved for children's education and neighbourhood renewal; and
- Within the district towns a co-ordinated and planned approach will be pursued to boost the towns as service centres by promoting smaller scale regeneration interventions. Overarching township regeneration plans similar to the Great Harwood Regeneration Plan will be produced to target investment priorities for tackling physical improvements, accessing employment opportunities and harnessing potential sources of both public and private investment.

## **Theme 2: Improving housing and the environment**

Pursuing a physical investment strategy will provide an integrated approach to building sustainable communities, improving the quality of housing and the environment. The physical investment strategy will attempt to integrate actions, plans and strategies through area based planning encompassing Housing Market Renewal, investment plans for schools, health centres, green spaces and other public facilities.

Key initiatives will include: -

- The development of the Local Development Framework for the District will set out the planning policies for the district and lay out a planning and design framework by providing supplementary planning guidance for areas of major regeneration intervention and for the provision of employment sites;
- Building on the Floral Market Town initiative, transform the public realm of town centres across the Borough to create a sense of civic pride and pleasure amongst residents and businesses, which in turn is expected to stimulate further investment;
- Continuing the implementation of the HMR programme in West Accrington and Church and Clayton Le Moors;
- In the autumn of 2007 Keepmoat, the Council's development partner will kick start its £50m redevelopment plan for West Accrington;
- Commence a regeneration and housing market renewal plan for Peel and Barnfield;
- Continue the development of the Borough Housing Strategy through the adoption of the Private Sector Renewal Strategy and Empty Property Strategy and other housing interventions in tackling disrepair and housing market decline;

- Establishing a strategic housing partnership with Registered Social Landlord partners and other housing partners to ensure even better targeting of housing initiatives and investment against housing and regeneration priorities;
- Promote the reuse of brownfield sites for attractive, high quality sustainable new development or open space through an area based strategy focused on regenerating communities and neighbourhoods;
- Delivering high quality key mixed developments: Platts Lodge, Rishton Bridgefields, Clayton Triangle, Brooke Bond at Great Harwood, Woodnook Mill and Church Canal Gateway;
- Continue the development of neighbourhood management in order to improve and develop services that meet community priorities within Housing Market Renewal neighbourhoods;
- Collaborating with a range of partners to develop a programme of community based environmental projects which tackle derelict and under utilised land and improve community amenities to help foster a sense of local pride;
- Implementing the Wilson Livesey “Transforming Pennine Lancashire” projects for a town square in Accrington and delivering the “Chic sheds” healthy living allotments scheme in Baxenden.

### **Theme 3: Improving Culture and Leisure**

By developing the Borough’s sporting, tourist and leisure attractions such as Oswaldtwistle Mills, the Haworth Art Gallery and Accrington Stanley we will better exploit the potential of the Borough as a vibrant tourist and cultural destination, improve its attractiveness as a place to live, boost the economy thereby adding the glue to the economic and physical regeneration plans. Planning for the aspirations of the younger generations has to be paramount in making the Borough more attractive and vibrant.

- Explore how tourism and leisure might widen the attractiveness of the Borough building on its heritage, visitor attractions and its position in relation to the Pennine hill country;
- Plans to build the first racecourse in Britain for around 80 years at Altham is expected to result in an outline planning application in spring 2008 with a possible commencement of the development of the racecourse in 2010;
- Development of improvement plans for upgrading Parks, playing fields and open spaces;
- Develop a business plan for creating the Haworth Art Gallery and Haworth Park as a green theme “Parks for People” and for hosting floral and cultural activities;
- In collaboration with neighbouring authorities pursue a strategy for transforming the Leeds Liverpool Canal as a significant tourist attraction and quality environment for mixed development;

- Exploring the potential for capitalising on the spectacular countryside and becoming an active participant in bringing outdoor activities and “extreme sports” facilities to the Borough through the Pennine Lancashire “Adrenaline Gateway” project;
- Exploring the potential for developing the town hall and other civic buildings as regional important conference and entertainment facilities;
- Support Accrington Stanley in their plans for providing a modern multi functional football stadium and;
- Improving the daytime and evening economy of Accrington town centre by exploring how best to develop a high quality cafe and restaurant society and improving the arts and leisure “offer” so the Borough begins to be recognised for its cultural and artistic potential;

## **Part 6: Delivery and Performance Management**

Performance management is an essential part of any strategic process and we will adopt the best practice on performance management. The Strategy and Action Plan in Appendix 2 reflects the commitment of partners working within the LSP to the regeneration of the Borough. It sets out a programme of specific projects and initiatives with lead responsibilities, which are being developed or will be brought forward over the next 3 years with new projects being subject to an evaluation appraisal.

A number of working groups/project teams of appropriate stakeholders will be responsible for undertaking the work required. Major projects will be championed by an advocate who will be responsible for ensuring the activities are progressed against the objectives.

As this strategy rolls out, and as new opportunities arise it will be possible to identify new initiatives and forge new partnerships with the private sector to harness their capacity and opportunities and as appropriate develop delivery mechanisms accordingly.

Mature regeneration partnerships such as with Globe Enterprises or for HMR are established while for other proposals partnerships are emerging for example for LEGI or Church Canal Gateway. The Council in committing to fulfilling our enabling role/working with a range of partners will make use of a range of powers, land assets, exploiting external funding, project management expertise fulfilling our role as statutory planning authority, use of CPOs, examining new delivery mechanisms and by developing our own regeneration skills and knowledge.

For Lancashire LCC the County will seek to strengthen closer working with Hyndburn/local agencies on regeneration priorities, more joint initiatives and using LCC funding.

### **Resources**

Funding for the projects will come from a range of sources namely HMR, SRB, LEGI and NWDA funding with the predominant funding coming from the private sector or by public investment from partners. The Council and LCC will continue to examine capital and revenue programmes to support projects although this will be balanced against funding availability and other priorities.

Securing pump priming and gap funding will be essential for bringing forward new regeneration initiatives. Support will be sought where practical from the NWDA, Heritage Lottery and other external funding opportunities although this is dependent on schemes meeting very strict funding criteria.

A strong element of resourcing will be from Council and other partner staff performing the Council's enabling functions which will unlock private and partner investment.

### **Performance Management**

Each project will be subject to the Council's or partner's Performance Management process so that we account for activities and deliver projects effectively. The major more complex projects will be led by a Core Project Team whilst all projects will have a clear project management and risk management plan. Overall monitoring and accountability will rest with the Lead organization. Within the Council internal officer/Member project teams will oversee specific projects with overall monitoring of the Strategy and its programmes/projects being undertaken by the Council's Corporate Management Team with reporting to the Council's Cabinet and Scrutiny Panels as appropriate.

There will also be reporting through the LSP Economy and Employment theme group or other LSP theme groups with overall responsibility for monitoring delivery by the Hyndburn LSP Assembly Board.

The overall impact of regeneration progress will be measured through the District Council Performance Management Framework.

The Council will keep under review its own structures and procedures so as to ensure its role in delivering the Regeneration and Economic Strategy is fully achieved. Proposals for a Pennine Lancashire City Development Company will feed into the future development of the strategy.