

SOUTH LANARKSHIRE ECONOMIC STRATEGY 2022 - 2027

Our Vision: - To make South Lanarkshire a flourishing, green, dynamic and equitable place for all.

1. Foreword

Our Economic Strategy will drive forward this vision and ensure that no matter what challenges lie ahead, we are well equipped to support our people, places and businesses to continue to thrive.

South Lanarkshire is a great place to live and work. Our businesses have been prospering, our economy has been performing well and our towns and villages are vibrant and steeped in history. We are strategically located within Glasgow City Region – Scotland’s economic powerhouse - with a wealth of opportunities for the future.

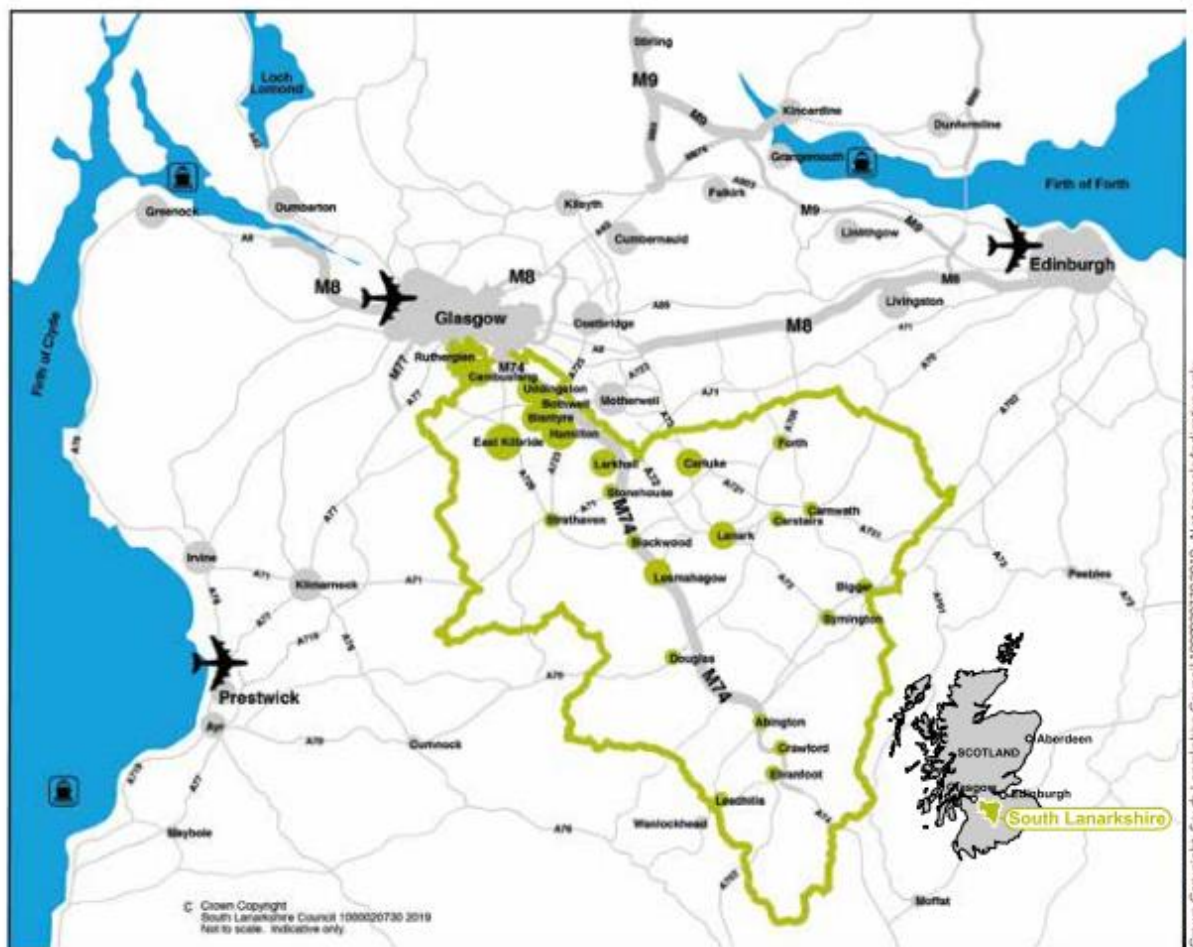
To maximise these opportunities, we will focus our activities around the 3 themes of sustainable, inclusive economic development – People, Place and Business, and specifically on: -

- Working in partnership with other key agencies- including Business Gateway, the Lanarkshire Economic Forum (LEF), Glasgow City Region and Skills Development Scotland
- Using intelligence and data to inform our actions
- Building business confidence - demonstrating that “South Lanarkshire Means Business”
- Supporting new businesses and social enterprises to be founded and existing businesses and social enterprises to innovate, grow, increase turnover, create and safeguard jobs
- Supporting all our residents to access skills and work
- Investment – creating attractive places where people and businesses want to work, visit and invest

This strategy is accompanied by a dynamic Action Plan which we will monitor, report and update on a regular basis to demonstrate progress and impact. We will support successful partnership working with colleagues, partners, businesses, social enterprises and communities to capitalise on our economic strengths and create a flourishing, equitable and sustainable South Lanarkshire that delivers opportunities for all, both now and in the future.

2. South Lanarkshire Means Business

South Lanarkshire is an outstanding place to live, work and visit, with thriving towns and villages, good transport links, a wide range of good quality, affordable housing, excellent schools, colleges & higher education institutions and a varied supply of employment land and commercial and industrial property. Our skilled and talented population continues to grow, and our central location gives access to a population of almost 3.5 million within a 40-mile radius. Our excellent transport links between South Lanarkshire and regional, national, and international markets reinforces our position as an attractive business location.



South Lanarkshire offers an unrivalled mix of locations and environments to live, work and relax. Our urban locations and historic towns include the Royal Burghs of Rutherglen and Lanark; East Kilbride - Scotland's most successful 'new town'; Hamilton - Lanarkshire's traditional 'County' town and historic Biggar, awarded numerous accolades including Best Tourist Town in Scotland.

- Food & Drink
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Human Health & Social Care
- Logistics

Our choice and range of housing in unrivalled locations is reflected in the fact that South Lanarkshire has consistently outperformed other local authority locations in Scotland on new housing completions each year and we continue to encourage new investment in housing through our Local development Plan policies. Despite being a popular location for new housing it remains affordable – we were rated 11th – moderately affordable, in a recent survey which compared house prices across Scotland.

(Insert a case study – web version only)

Insert some key positive infographics - what makes SL great

3. The Economic Strategy in Context

The UK, Scottish, Glasgow City Region and South Lanarkshire economies are all facing real challenges from the global pandemic; our country's new international trading position, and the climate emergency, all of which impact our lives now and in the foreseeable future.

It is in this context that South Lanarkshire Council is refreshing and launching a range of new key strategies and plans including our Council Plan 'Connect', our Community Plan, our Community Wealth Building Strategy, our Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy, our Tourism Strategy and this Economic Strategy 2022-2027. All of these documents are inherently linked and have been informed by what our communities have told us should be our priorities:

- **People** – we need to put people first and reduce inequality
- **Progress** – we need to recover, progress and improve
- **Planet** – we need to work towards a sustainable future in sustainable places

The need for *inclusive growth* - an economy in which everyone can participate and benefit from – is more acute than ever. Our young people and our citizens who live in deprived areas are more likely to be in less secure, low wage jobs that are most at risk, so *maximising opportunities across all our communities* must underpin our approach.

Similarly, whilst there have been improvements in greenhouse gas emissions due to changes in the way many of us work, live, shop and travel, the global *Climate Emergency* remains a very real threat. As we seek to achieve our vision for the future, we must intensify efforts to encourage active travel and other sustainable behaviours to avoid generating unnecessary carbon emissions, reduce consumption and promote a low carbon green economy.

Climate change commands us to think and act more sustainably and move purposefully towards '*net zero*'. Our future economic development planning and actions needs to be imaginative, brave in our approach and robust in our delivery to develop and thrive.

Other factors likely to influence our economic development both nationally and locally will include:

- whether shifts in working and shopping practices lead to long-term/permanent changes in behaviour
- how our residents and visitors embrace opportunities to engage in active travel and utilise public transport services and infrastructure
- how the role of our town centres evolves particularly in relation to leisure and retail activity.

Policy Framework

To achieve maximum impact, the South Lanarkshire Economic Strategy is clearly aligned with key national, regional and local plans and strategies, including:

National	Scottish Government's Programme for Government The themes within the Programme for Government are: • National mission to create new jobs, good jobs and green jobs. • Promoting lifelong health and wellbeing • Promoting equality and helping young people to fulfil their potential.
	The Scottish Government National Economic Transformation Strategy This strategy sets out the vision for Scotland in 2032 as a wellbeing economy, thriving across economic, social and environmental dimensions, delivering economic prosperity for all of Scotland's people and places. Its programmes of action span across the following themes: • Entrepreneurial People and Culture • New Market Opportunities • Productive Business and Regions • Skilled Workforce • Fairer and More Equal Society

Regional	Glasgow City Region's Regional Economic Strategy The refreshed Regional Economic Strategy sets out the Regional Partners' commitment to transforming the economy so that: By 2030, Glasgow City Region will have the most Innovative, Inclusive and Resilient Economy in the UK.  MISSION 1 By 2030, the Region will have the most inclusive major city-region economy in the UK.  MISSION 2 By 2030, the Region will have the most productive major city-region economy in the UK.  MISSION 3 By 2030, the Region will have the most advanced city-region economy in the UK in the race to net zero and climate resilience.
----------	--

Local	South Lanarkshire Community Wealth Building Strategy This strategy sets out the councils' high-level aspirations to be achieved over the next three to five years structured around the 5 CWB pillars: • Spending - Utilise public sector procurement and commissioning to develop dense local supply chains of businesses likely to support good employment and retain work locally. • Workforce - Exercise fair employment practices and work to develop a more just labour market to improve the prospects and wellbeing of local people. • Land and property - Deepen the function and ownership of local assets held by anchor institutions, so that financial and social gain is harnessed by citizens. • Finance - Increase flows of investment within local economies by harnessing and recirculating the wealth that exists, as opposed to attracting capital.
-------	---

	• Building the generative economy - Develop and grow small, locally owned enterprises which are more financially generative for the local economy - locking wealth into place.
	South Lanarkshire Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy The new strategy will build on the extensive work already undertaken to achieve the vision: <i>Our Future is Now: building an environmentally sustainable, climate resilient and net-zero South Lanarkshire together in a fair and equitable way.</i> Activities are focused around four key themes: People • People are at the heart of a sustainable South Lanarkshire. Health and well-being are paramount, no one should be disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change, there should be a just transition to a net-zero future, climate inequalities and fuel poverty are reduced and there is harmony between society and nature Communities and Place • Communities are empowered and supported to create sustainable, inclusive and thriving places that are net-zero, climate resilient, well connected, with access to energy efficient, comfortable and affordable homes, local services, and local quality outdoor space The Natural Environment • South Lanarkshire’s natural environment, greenspace, and biodiversity is restored, protected, enhanced, and respected, enabling basic needs like clean air, clean water, and healthy soils, as well as many other health and wellbeing and economic benefits for the people of South Lanarkshire A Green Economy • South Lanarkshire demonstrates leadership and innovation in the transition to a thriving, net-zero, climate resilient, and circular economy. We should protect and enhance our natural resources and the health and wellbeing of citizens, building community wealth, providing sustainable, quality, green job opportunities, re-skilling and training, and leaving no one behind
	South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2 The plan promotes the continued growth and regeneration of South Lanarkshire, whilst at the same time protecting and enhancing the environment. Through its vision, objectives and strategy, the plan provides the framework to encourage development that will benefit communities and safeguard the environment. Our Local Development Plan should also be read in the context of the emerging focus of National Planning Framework 4 which will seek to deliver four key outcomes: • Net Zero Emissions • Resilient Communities • A Wellbeing Economy • Better, Green Places

4. Our Key Themes – People, Place and Business

The Strategy focusses on the three key themes of sustainable economic development: - ***People, Place and Business***. These themes align council activity with local, national and City Region strategies delivering the collaborative approach required to deliver long-term success.

People

South Lanarkshire's greatest asset is our people. Our success in supporting Fair Work opportunities and Skills for now and the future, are fundamental to boost our local economy, promoting innovation, supporting inclusive and sustainable growth and addressing poverty and inequality within our communities.

Our Ambitions for the Future:

- **Employment** - *A well-established, accessible employability pathway successfully removes barriers to employment and workplace progression enabling all South Lanarkshire residents to fully participate in the labour market.*
- **Workforce Skills Development**- *South Lanarkshire's workforce have the qualifications, skills and attributes required by employers to be more productive and prosperous.*
- **Health and Wellbeing** – *We reduce health inequalities, particularly in areas of greatest deprivation, and improve mental health across within our communities to enable people to contribute and develop social capital, resilience, financial independence and security.*

We will:

- Minimise unemployment and underemployment with a focus on disadvantaged communities through delivery of responsive employment support.
- Promote opportunities and careers to young people and those facing redundancy.
- Influence activity and skills investment to address skills gaps and the skills needs that have been identified as our economy grows and evolves.
- Maximise engagement with partners to develop a programme of skills alignment to match skills provision with the needs of learners, employers, and industry to drive sustainable and inclusive growth.
- Address educational and digital inequalities in our deprived communities.
- Increase digital access, training and creativity in our communities.
- Promote and support in-work training with local businesses and social enterprises that we engage with to encourage upskilling and progression to release entry level jobs.
- Assist our businesses and social enterprises to recruit locally as we develop our Community Wealth Building agenda.
- Promote opportunities for people who have suffered mental health problems to train for or return to employment.

What difference will this make?

Reduce inequalities and address local poverty: Tackling inequalities in employment and making sure that our economic growth targets those businesses, communities and residents who have been most affected by recent economic factors such as the pandemic and Brexit is critical. This will directly impact and improve the resilience of local communities and businesses and allow them to access the support and skills they will need to prosper in the future. It also highlights the importance of good health for our economic wellbeing. Key to success in this area will be linking closely with wider health partners and their strategies and action plans.

Tackling health inequalities must be a priority for action if we are to grow our economy sustainably. More inclusive, flexible, and supportive work environments are more creative

and improve productivity. The challenge to all employers going forward will be to support good workplace health and develop more inclusive employment, recruitment and fair work practices in the future. There are also significant opportunities to collaborate more across services to create 'active communities' - to create quality environments that encourage active lifestyles, encouraging walking or cycling, creating outdoor spaces which feel safe, welcoming and encourage play and quality social interaction.

Support our people to get the skills they need for the future: We will work with all our local partners and at the City Region level to develop a range of support and skills programmes that get our people ready for the future.

Build social value and community wealth: Working together with other large public, private and third sector partners we will encourage procurement approaches that deliver benefits locally wherever possible develop supply chains with the aim of keeping more of our spend in our local economy, supporting local employment and community enterprise.

Build our local partnership arrangements to ensure that our employability services meet the current and future needs of South Lanarkshire residents. The role of our local employability partnership will be key to ensuring that our employability service is tailored to meet the needs of residents and employers alike.

Work with stakeholders and service users to develop and design services, and engage proactively with local communities to ensure that their voice is heard

Target support and resources where it is most needed through the use of local labour market data and workforce planning intelligence.

(Insert People Case Study – web version only)

Place

South Lanarkshire is a great place to start, grow and locate a business. A place where all our people can access opportunity and achieve success. A place which is the best connected area in Scotland, supported through improved digital, sustainable and green infrastructure. A place leading the nation in low carbon and renewable technology, and climate resilience on our journey to net zero.

Our ambitions for the Future:

- ***Support new and established business locations***
- ***Successful development of our town centres and the role they play in our society***
- ***Maintain and increase capital spending programmes through attracting external funding***
- ***Grow the visitor, leisure and tourism economy in our area***

We will

- Utilise our property assets and work with private sector land owners and developers to maximise sustainable development opportunities in our area including the promotion of vacant & derelict land sites as locations for investment.
- Establish a web/marketing/ social media presence with up-to-date information promoting South Lanarkshire as a business/investment/ leisure/tourism destination.

- Adopt more flexible regulatory approaches that seek to maximise the sustainability and potential of our town centres to generate positive social, environmental and economic outcomes and reduce inequalities.
- Work with local business, social enterprises and community-based organisations to address issues and support initiatives to create the right conditions for our town, village and neighbourhood centres to thrive, to diversify and share spaces to provide a better offer for users.
- Make our centres truly accessible for all by embracing the principles of “20-minute neighbourhood” while at the same time making a major contribution towards net zero.
- Secure additional financial resources through our Funding team with specific focus on Scottish and UK Government funding streams.
- Deliver an updated Tourism Strategy and work with tourism-based operators and communities to develop a forum for South Lanarkshire based tourism businesses.

What difference will this make?

Diversifying our towns will also provide partners with opportunities to increase the supply of suitable, affordable housing. More places for people to live good lives within our towns will also help us re-invigorate our towns

Develop Sustainable Towns: Our towns will become vital sustainable economic hubs that support thriving diverse, independent local businesses and a rich cultural life that builds on South Lanarkshire’s heritage and unique setting.

Expanding our tourism offer and developing better sustainable travel options through effectively working with all our partners to realise the enormous potential we have in South Lanarkshire

(Insert Place Case Study – web version only)

Business

South Lanarkshire’s many and diverse businesses are resilient and continue to thrive. Our business base has grown and start up rates remain among the best in Scotland. We have strengths in a number of key sectors including Food and Drink, Tourism, Construction, Health & Social Care and Manufacturing. In addition, we have an emerging strength in Logistics, Warehousing and Distribution. This is supported by improvements to the transport network.

Our ambitions for the Future:

- ***Digitally empower businesses and social enterprises***
- ***Increase and sustain new business survival rates as we transition to a net zero economy***
- ***Develop resilient, local supply chains***
- ***Link business success, fair work and improved productivity***

We will

- Work with business and social enterprises to become digitally confident and digitally competent, highlighting the need to utilise digital tools to grow and the benefits of a digitally empowered workforce.

- Increase digital participation, competence and creativity in our communities.
- Maximise engagement with Business Gateway and local business sectors (including social enterprises) to provide help, advice and professional support as well as access to financial assistance in key sectors and activities.
- Create and build collaborative partnerships between local government, public sector partners, businesses, business organisations and social enterprises as we embark on our journey to net zero, to enable the creation of sustainable businesses that thrive, grow, innovate, diversify and support our local communities.
- Improve our Enterprise Rate, Business Birth and Business Survival rates in South Lanarkshire.
- Establishment of a responsible, resilient, equitable and locally based procurement framework that maximises opportunities for local and third sector businesses to bid for and win contracts in our area.
- Increase the proportion of contract spend we place with local SME's and implement new community benefits monitoring systems to improve the scope and quality of benefits being delivered as we achieve our Community Wealth Building targets and ambitions.
- Work with business and social enterprises to improve productivity and innovation through progressive workplace policies.
- Work with businesses and social enterprises to support recognition that fair work drives success, wellbeing and prosperity for individuals, businesses, organisations and society.
- Increase the number of organisations accredited as Living Wage Employers.

What difference will this make?

Work with our business community to grow and improve resilience: Wider global trends such as the increasing importance of the digital economy, changing exports and import markets and the impact of leaving the EU, but also societal shifts in work and employment, lifestyle and travel will require all our local businesses to diversify, adapt and evolve in coming years. Together we need to position our economy so that we can thrive in the future.

Work with employers to create the good jobs and fair work opportunities that are essential for an inclusive society: Health and wellbeing of staff has a massive impact on productivity and performance. We aim to engage with employers to tackle health and wider inequalities.

Jobs, training and upskilling for a low carbon economy: The transition to a low carbon economy will unlock significant economic benefits, new jobs, training and upskilling opportunities and a range of new business opportunities. It will also reduce harmful emissions, help nature to recover and improve our longer-term climate resilience. We will work with our local business to identify the new jobs for the future and invest in innovation to create new products and services which are more sustainable and meeting the future needs of the climate and the economy.

Act on the climate emergency: We will grow by creating and supporting opportunities for a greener economy; job, skills, homes, and transport which will deliver an economic future that is carbon neutral. It is vital that we position South Lanarkshire firmly at the heart of regional plans to build an economy that is sustainable and net zero.

(Insert Business Case Study – web version only)

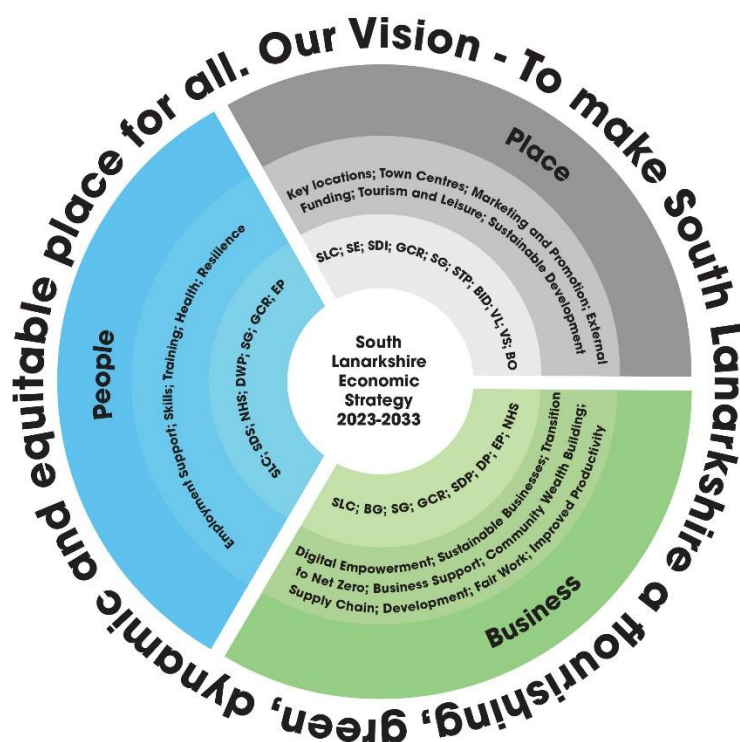
5. How we will deliver on our ambitions

➤ With Focused Priorities

A dynamic Action Plan accompanies the Strategy, centred around our People, Place and Business themes, and within this we have identified specific priorities:

- the importance of a clear focus on jobs through support for the growth of our existing businesses and social enterprises; scaling up our business start-up programmes; a renewed focus on inward investment; and ensuring that our capital projects and other procurement deliver more community benefits for local businesses and residents;
- maximising future learning, employment and progression prospects for priority groups;
- tackling the digital divide between our most and least affluent communities and residents; and developing the role and contribution of the social enterprise, voluntary and community sectors to each of the Economic Strategy themes, building on the effective, cross-sector partnership working which has developed over the last 10 years.
- Creating effective partnerships between public and private sector organisations and businesses that work effectively and maximise opportunities as we transition to a net zero economy and a sustainable future.

Economic Strategy Action Plan summary



KEY			
SLC	South Lanarkshire Council	STP	Scotland's Towns Partnership
SDS	Skills Development Scotland	BID	Business Improvement Districts
NHS	National Health Service	VL	Visit Lanarkshire
DWP	Department Work and Pensions	VS	Visit Scotland
SG	Scottish Government	BO	Business Operators
GCR	Glasgow City Region	BG	Business Gateway
EP	Education Providers	SDP	Supplier Development Programme
SE	Scottish Enterprise	DP	Digital Providers
SDI	Scottish Development International	EP	Education Providers

➤ Working in Partnership

This Strategy highlights the council's pivotal role as the democratically elected body for South Lanarkshire, acting not only in its own right as an "anchor institution" (employer; developer; property owner; landowner and procurer of services) but also as a coordinator and facilitator of economic development activity delivered in partnership with a range of other partners. Through close strategic partnership working enhanced with the development of links with other key stakeholders including the University of the West of Scotland, NHS, New College Lanarkshire, Scottish Enterprise, and Business Gateway, we aim to influence and inform the setting of social and economic priorities and proposals and to support and add pace to the development and implementation of Economic Strategies and Plans across these partnerships to create the right conditions for long-term sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

The purpose of our Economic Strategy is to provide strong leadership, build confidence, encourage investment and growth, and to set out how the Council and its partners can directly support economic development and define and deliver our priorities on how we support sustainable jobs and deliver a prosperous future for our economy, businesses, local communities and their residents and collectively support the vision:-

'To make South Lanarkshire a flourishing, green, dynamic and equitable place for all.'

Together, we and our partners have a vital role to play through our investment, procurement, engagement and support to our local businesses and the use of our key assets.

➤ Using an Evidence Based Approach

We have been engaging directly with our partners, local business and community-based organisations to gather information to help gauge which interventions will help create the South Lanarkshire we want to see in the future and ensure we deliver positive outcomes. This is also supported by statistical evidence, including those provided by the Glasgow City Region Intelligence Hub. These statistics, compiled from a range of publicly available sources, provide an overview and baseline which will help us track and monitor progress, and identify any changes we need to make to our targets and actions as we progress with our economic development programme.

This economic baseline allows us to measure incremental change over time. The data focuses on six broad areas and provides a useful starting point to determine areas that we can choose to focus activity on:

Demographic factors - population change over time and what that means for the economy.

Socio-economic factors - employment, skills, jobs, wages, business levels and productivity

Place- place factors, including housing, town centres and vacant and derelict land.

Vulnerability analysis – key factors which may impact on future economic success

Future opportunities – opportunities for growth and future employment

Conclusions and look ahead - areas to consider in the strategic plan– including growth sectors, the benefits of Infrastructure projects and the growth of sustainable jobs.

The forecasts we currently have for the suggest that there will be growth and opportunities created in the labour market.

- **Sectors:** Driven by an ageing and growing population, the Human Health and Social Work sector is forecast to have the greatest growth. Working with employers to improve job quality and pay in the sector will be key to ensure the sector remains attractive to the local workforce.
- **Occupations:** There will also be changes in the types of roles as new technologies are introduced. This will support growth in IT and technological-based roles across a broad range of sectors. Our workforce requires to have access to digital infrastructure, education and training opportunities.
- **Skills Demand:** The greatest requirement will be for people with higher education level qualifications.

Our Action Plan will respond to these opportunities and be flexible in order to respond to changes that take place in our economy, our labour market and our business base.

6. Monitoring and Reporting Progress

This Strategy is a high-level statement of intent, demonstrating how South Lanarkshire Council will lead in building and growing the local economy. The Action Plan which accompanies the Strategy will be subject to regular review to ensure we are maximising benefits realisation for as many of our residents as possible.

Where this Economic Strategy refers to other associated strategies and action plans (e.g. Community Wealth Building Strategy), existing arrangements to monitor those action plans will remain in place to report to avoid duplication and ensure consistency in reporting.

