

Regeneration priorities

Southend on Sea has become a thriving city by the Sea. New investment and confidence backed by a nationally recognised City Deal is giving Southend-on-Sea greater opportunity to attract investment and deliver growth in its economy.

Focus on strategic priorities set out over a period of years has proven a successful formula in gaining funding support from Government and provides clarity of purpose yet flexibility to adapt to opportunities.

Four strategic priorities highlighting future focus are outlined below which set out a direction for Southend-on-Sea to continue its journey of regeneration and provide opportunities for its residents and future generations..

Airport Business Park

The planned Airport Business Park and access to the site has been a critical feature in the success of recent funding rounds. The site will deliver 6,000 new jobs including the enabling of high value jobs in the advanced engineering sector and a focus on Medical Technologies building on an existing cluster and Anglia Ruskin University's county-wide ambitions. International kudos from London Southend Airport's expansion and investment will be built upon through continuing partnership work with the Stobart group.

- Inward investment focus in partnership with Anglia Ruskin University and Central Government connections through our City Deal status will prioritise this high value employment opportunity.
- A studio school concept will be prioritised to deliver change in the approach to preparing skilled young people that have career options without leaving or commuting out of the Borough.
- Focus on marketing initiatives around the international destinations will be delivered to encourage further investment and add value to value of visitor spend.
- Delivery of improved transport links on A127 will enable capacity for expanding airport activity including med-technology employment.

Central area

Building on the momentum provided by the Southend City Deal we will invest in Victoria Avenue as a key gateway to the town to return it to a high profile centre championing the cultural offer and a new mixed use of commercial and residential space.

The High Street and Seafront provide major windows on the vitality of the wider borough and will also be the focus of public realm investment.

- Develop Victoria Avenue and its environment into the appropriate mixed use space as set out in the SCAAP, working with Growth Deal funding opportunities and private partners.
- Greening / cleaning initiatives to increase appeal of the central area / high street
- Delivering Phase Two of Victoria Gateway to enable enhanced use of London Road and replacement of cobbled area of high street

- Implement new uses of the High Street factoring in the expected retail changes over coming years. Bringing closed units into operation and developing 'zones' to encourage new investment.
- Expansion of the College and University within a knowledge hub to accommodate increasing demand and provide a vibrant community living in the Town Centre.
- Delivery of Queensway as a new community serving the Central area with modern housing fit for future generations.
- Expand the central cultural space available for artists to enshrine Southend's credentials as a centre for the creative industry.
- Expand the City Beach public realm area eastward supporting hotel and leisure development.
- Queensway Regeneration – initial feasibility work is underway to regenerate 441 homes in the Town Centre together with adjoining land in the Council's ownership. This will also include changes to the highway and to try and more effectively bridge this site to the Town Centre.
- Local Housing Company – the Council is setting up a new arm's length housing company to explore financial freedoms and flexibilities which could provide an opportunity to build significantly more homes in the near future.

Culture led regeneration

Cultural and creative industries have been key sectors for Southend for many years. With significant physical regeneration now evidenced across the Borough, there will be a focus on cultural regeneration to exploit and build upon the existing creative credentials across Southend-on-Sea

- The City Deal funded business incubation centre will provide space to reach new business innovators and in particular provide a pipeline for the creative industries
- The Museum of the Thames Estuary should be pursued to become an attraction of national importance underpinning Southend's credentials as a year-round destination. Events and festivals to support the goal of developing this asset will be prioritised.
- Southend will be positioned through inward investment activity as the choice for cultural relocation for the migrating London creative community
- Southend –on-Sea to be recognised for its Jazz credentials through the rehoming of national jazz archive, events and festivals.
- Consultation and communication with the community will be high profile to ensure the 'culture' is at the heart of community thinking
- The Council along with Schools, colleges, business and cultural organisations will collaborate to raise the awareness of the cultural and creative sector for career choices.

Education & Skills –

Children will be given more opportunities and assistance with changing lives with focused approach to tackling generational NEET issues. Our schools will be linked with businesses and entrepreneurial opportunities creating choices for future generations to be matched to demand.

- Owning and running businesses / entrepreneurialism will be presented alongside careers advice throughout schools programme using the Better Start programme as one of the mechanisms to do this
- Tangible connections for the schools network to access business community and its needs.
- Future skills will be identified through insight programmes and access to central government contacts via our City Deal.
- Southend's business incubation centre will link to the school network
- Creative and cultural sector cluster will be linked to schools / education providers to underpin cultural regeneration
- Apprenticeship schemes will be linked to the real needs of business community and seen as a valuable part of the mix by families, children, schools and employers.
- Studio School will be pursued with partners to deliver specific skills required by employers in technical fields not currently served in the Borough.