

# Horsham District Council

## Economic Development Team Workstream 24/25

### October 2024 Update

The team of five run a programme of time specific projects and campaigns alongside ongoing work including:

- Keeping the Council's [business web pages](#) up to date.
- Planning and generating PR and social media content for the Council's Communications Team to amplify the Council's Economic Development messages and initiatives.
- Scheduling and producing content for the fortnightly [Business Newsletter](#) (2,300+ subscribers).
- Content and contract management of the [West Sussex Business Hub](#) (WSBH).
- Distributing 'Welcome Pack' letters to all new business start-ups in the District.
- Monitoring and reporting vacancy rates on the high streets of our seven towns/villages.
- Providing economic development input to commercial planning applications and enquiries.
- Scheduling and commissioning content for Horsham Town Centre entry signage and banner sites.
- Monitoring and reporting on Horsham District's economic performance indicators.

In addition, the team are managing the Council's two-month consultation process on its Draft **Economic Development Framework and Business Charter** and will be formulating a final Cabinet approved suite of plan documents by February 2025.

### Current Projects and campaigns with live links to online resources

- [Business Training Programme](#) – Spring 2025 (part-funded by UK Shared Prosperity Fund [SPF])
  - Targeted at SME owners.
  - Procuring and organising [Horsham District Council's training programme](#).
  - Marketing and promotion of workshop bookings and [online video resources](#).
  - KPI and feedback monitoring.
  - Defining future programmes in context of local demand and existing provision by others.

- **LEAP 2024 – Small business grant programme including green business grants ([Success Stories](#))**
  - Applications require submission of a business plan and are approved by a Panel.
  - Fund currently closed whilst processing 32 applications with a value of £64,000 to be claimed.
  - Looking for approval to fund a further round of grants in the final quarter 2024.
  
- **SPF & [REPF](#) Government Grants programmes – nearly £2 million before 1/4/2025**
  - Developing and commissioning SPF projects that meet Government criteria to fully use funds.
  - Managing or supporting 3<sup>rd</sup> party run projects to maximise value and collaboration.
  - Supporting, recording, and reporting to Government on project outcomes (Until May 2025).
  
- **Buy Local Gift Happy – Christmas 2024**
  - Annual public campaign to promote [sustainable local shopping](#).
  - Grants to support Community Christmas Events across the District in return for campaign publicity.
  - [Christmas Display Magic competitions](#) across District High Streets and Markets, this year with 7 media partners to boost publicity.
  
- **[Sussex Six B2B](#) – funded until April 2025 (SPF)**
  - [Local food and drink campaign](#) run by Natural Partnerships, led by Horsham District Council
  - 91 businesses have now pledged to use or stock 6 new Sussex products.
  - 120 plus unique businesses have engaged in quarterly workshops.
  - Adopted by Gatwick Airport, Chichester and (soon) Mid Sussex District Councils.
  
- **Horsham District [Volunteer Support](#) Fund & Training (SPF)**
  - Collaborating with Horsham District Council's Voluntary Sector Support team to manage a Volunteer Support Fund offering grants of between £500 and

£4,000 towards projects that assist organisations upskill existing volunteers and recruit new ones.

- Monitor and report results and feedback to inform future work.
- **HD Visitor Experience Development Audit & Grants – (SPF) by end March 2025**
  - Manage contract with Experience Sussex to:
    - [Audit](#) existing Visitor Economy experiences and sector skills needs in Horsham District.
    - Manage a scheme to foster the development on new experiences including a [grant fund](#).
  - Audit completed Autumn 2024 listing 121 businesses operating in the sector.
  - 33 expressions of interest (to date) in developing a new Visitor Experience.
  - Economic Development are using feedback to help shape One Council Economic Development Framework support needs.
- **Drink Producers of Horsham District – 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Spring 2025**
  - [First edition in 2024](#) mapped all producers of alcoholic beverage producers in digital and printed formats and was widely acclaimed.
  - A second edition will be updated and include non-alcoholic beverage producers based on feedback.
  - Adds to our knowledge on how to support this growing sector.
- **Employment Hubs by Adam Knight & Associates (SPF) - funded till Spring 2025 (*under development*)**
  - Providing Employment Support across Horsham District to meet KPIs.
  - Manage contract and support publicity of resources.
  - Monitor and report results to inform Economic Development Framework employments and skills agenda.
- **Horsham Apprenticeship Fair – February 2025**
  - Follow up to [September's successful Jobs and Skills Fair](#) in Apprenticeship Week.
  - Organise, solicit business participants, publicise to public and run.
  - Opportunity to strengthen stakeholder partnerships.

- **Young Entrepreneurs Programme – funded to April 2025 (SPF) *under development***
  - Business support for aspiring entrepreneurs to help them test and plan their business ideas.
  - Manage and locally publicise the programme run by Digital Islands for Horsham District Council.
  
- **Environmental Health Training, Compliance and Support– funded to April 2025 (SPF) (*under development*)**
  - Market Traders gas safety audit and support towards compliance.
  - Commission the [SALSA](#) certification project to support up to 10 small businesses to meet contract requirements for larger scale customers.
  
- **Co-Working Space – (SPF) (*under development*)**
  - Use of £150k by Horsham District Council to create new co-working space within new Horsham District Council Offices potentially to be operated by [Freedom Works](#).
  
- **Bishopric & Carfax scheme development Market Operations input (*under development*)**
  - Provide input to infrastructure scheme development to drive functionality for market Operations and foster maximum economic benefit for businesses overall.
  
- **Prominent business visits for Cabinet Member**
  - Manage programme of visits, soliciting business appointments, member briefings and post event publicity.
  - Record any feedback that can help shape the Economic Development Framework’s effectiveness.
  
- **Kinder Business Directory**
  - A [directory of local businesses](#) that offer products or services that enable others to become more sustainable.
  - Underpins Horsham District Council’s green business strategy.
  - Support and monitor usage and development by Kinder Living CIC.

- **Horsham District Wine/Food & Drink Tours (SPF)**
  - Support development and publicity of [Horsham District based tour itineraries](#) by Great British Wine Tours and monitor results.
  
- **Green Business Strategy**
  - Collaborative working with sustainability team:
    - Webpage of resources.
    - Quarterly business climate action special e-newsletter.
    - Horsham [Business Climate Hub](#)
    - [easitHORSHAM](#).
    - [Sustainable stories](#) video series with Horsham District Council Sustainability Team.
  - Jointly develop case study videos of green business projects to be used in promoting our green business strategy.
  
- **Arun Valley Rail Line Audio Guide (SPF) (*under development*)**
  - Support South East Community Rail Partnership to deliver and publicise audio guides that highlight visitor and economic attractions for passengers passing through Horsham District
  - Support potential extension into neighbouring LA areas which would increase awareness, use and value.
  
- **Gatwick Diamond Regional Collaboration**
  - Quarterly updates with Gatwick that lead to joint working on initiatives that benefit the Horsham District workforce and businesses.
  - Commitment to and participation in, planning the collaborative [Gatwick Diamond presence](#) at the 2025 [UKREIIF](#) in Leeds to drive inward investment and understanding Horsham District's USPs in the regional context.
  
- **[Markets](#)**
  - Management of two market contracts in Horsham.
  - Support to Market operators across the district to facilitate easy access by new and young traders.
  - Create skills development for opportunities traders.
  - Support for Horsham's annual NMTF Young Trader competition.