

Suffolk Business Board

4th June 2026

Agenda Item 3 - Intervention review and future priorities

Purpose: This paper provides an overview of the Suffolk Economic Strategy interventions landscape and seeks to support a Business Board discussion on future priorities, focus and investment approach. The paper:

- Summarises how the intervention pipeline has evolved
- Highlights live intervention activity
- Identifies emerging opportunities
- And seeks the Boards views on strategic priorities, investment approach, future opportunities and the role the Board can play in supporting and championing them.

The Board is invited to: Review the intervention landscape, future priorities and investment approach, with reference to the key questions set out on page 3.

Current Intervention Landscape

From Strategy to Intervention Pipeline

The Suffolk Economic Strategy sets the long-term direction for Suffolk's economy and positions Suffolk as a nationally significant economy that powers, feeds and connects the UK.

At the centre is EPIC Suffolk: long-term goals for Economic Wellbeing, Productive, Inclusive and Clean growth.

Since the Strategy launched, the focus has been on turning strategy into delivery. A growing pipeline of interventions and investment opportunities has emerged across investment, infrastructure, enterprise, innovation, talent and place. Key metrics are set out below.

Since April 2024 to end Dec 2025				
Businesses supported	Learners Supported	Investment leveraged	Grants awarded (no.)	Grants awarded (£)
3382	4956	£13,121,019	296	£3,230,385
Jan 2026 to end May 2026				
Businesses supported	Learners Supported	Investment leveraged	Grants awarded (no.)	Grants awarded (£)
700	1230	£3,734,303	177	£2,086,624
Totals				
Businesses supported	Learners Supported	Investment leveraged	Grants awarded (no.)	Grants awarded (£)
4082	6186	£16,855,322	473	£5,317,009

Over the last 18 months, the intervention pipeline has evolved, bringing together live interventions, emerging concepts and future opportunities. Many were already underway. The pipeline comprises 37 live interventions, 13 completed, 21 concepts and 5 priority next-wave

interventions identified to be brought forward, with the live interventions being delivered across partners to support foundational growth across the county and wider region.

A pivotal intervention has been the development of the Cluster Plans, helping define Suffolk's transformational growth opportunities and identify where Suffolk has genuine comparative advantage.

The Clusters Plans have highlight where targeted interventions, investment and technology convergence could create long-term competitive advantage and deliver the greatest economic impact. This work has identified 31 interventions across Suffolk's priority clusters and are set out in Cluster Intervention Cards which are in addition to the 21 concepts.

Together, this work reinforces the need to move beyond "business as usual" and build a stronger pipeline of investable, high-impact interventions.

Strengthening Suffolk's National Positioning and Investment Proposition

More recently, the Norfolk and Suffolk Joint Growth Proposition, launched at UKREiF to a national audience, has strengthened the regional growth narrative. It articulates why our economy matters nationally and how Suffolk and Norfolk's combined strengths support UK growth, resilience and competitiveness.

It also provides strategic context discussions on any future Mayoral Combined County Authority and its priority projects, positioning Suffolk's economic opportunities and long-term growth ambitions within a wider regional and national context.

Shaping Suffolk's Growth Priorities

Together, the Strategy, Cluster Plans, intervention pipeline and the Norfolk and Suffolk Growth Proposition have shaped core areas of focus:

- Strengthening Suffolk's national positioning and investment propositions;
- Sharpening focus on transformational growth opportunities through cluster plans, strategic interventions and technology convergence;
- Enabling foundational growth by supporting the wider economy through skills, infrastructure, business support, innovation and inclusive growth activity.

Technology convergence remains an important golden thread, with emerging technologies and cross-sector collaboration offering significant potential to boost productivity, competitiveness and future growth across Suffolk.

Focusing Future Effort and Investment

With the Business Board now operating for two years, and national funding opportunities becoming increasingly limited and competitive, there is a need to review what is delivering the greatest impact, where activity should evolve, stop or be reprioritised.

The approach to date has focused on maximising leverage, with the ambition of attracting £4 of investment for every £1 invested. However, as funding opportunities become more competitive and targeted, there is an increasing need to consider where Suffolk Economy should prioritise direct investment, intervention development and strategic capacity to unlock future growth opportunities.

The Board needs to consider how the pipeline should evolve, where effort, resources and capacity should be focused, and how Board sponsorship and influence can best support Suffolk's priority growth opportunities.

Given the scale of the pipeline, interventions requiring further review will be taken through the Strategic Intervention Group for deeper assessment with final recommendation back to the Board. Doug Field and John Dugmore are the current Board representatives on this group and it is proposed to formalise this further. New private sector Board appointments create an opportunity to broaden representation.

Strategic Discussion

The Board is invited to consider whether the interventions landscape remains aligned to Suffolk's long-term economic ambitions, and where greater focus, challenge, reprioritisation or future review is needed.

The Board should also consider whether the pipeline sufficiently reflects the Suffolk Economic Strategy, particularly inclusive growth, placemaking and Suffolk's wider cultural offer.

Key Questions for the Board

1. Where should future focus, investment, influence and delivery capacity be directed, and are there interventions that should be reviewed, scaled or deprioritised?
2. Does the Board remain committed to the 4:1 leverage ambition, or is it prepared to back strategically important interventions where leverage lower?
3. Where could stronger Board sponsorship and influence unlock investment, partnerships and delivery?

Annexes and Supporting Information

The following section support discussion around future priorities, investment focus and the evolving intervention pipeline.

The annexes group interventions and opportunities into five broad areas:

Annex A – Strategic Influencing Activity

Annex B – Leveraged Programmes

Annex C – Locally led interventions

Annex D – Next wave of strategic interventions

Annexe E summarises the financial envelope the Board continues to work in, with the Board having overseen £11m of new investments, and £8m of government funded programmes.

An additional document A has been included with Board papers – the Intervention Impact Report setting out current impact, delivery progress, next steps and intended long-term outcomes across live interventions. This is the regular report that is circulated every other Board meeting.

Annexe A: Strategic influencing activity

Strategic activity where Suffolk Economy plays an influencing, advocacy or convening role rather than leading delivery, and where the Suffolk Coordination Office in particular leads lobbying efforts.

Intervention	Strategic Purpose	Funding	Strategic Focus	Lead Partner
Freeport East	Drive investment, trade & innovation linked to ports, clean energy and logistics growth.	Government-backed model with retained business rates - opportunity to align investment and co-deliver shared interventions	Trade growth, logistics, inward investment and scalable site delivery	Freeport East with East Suffolk as accountable body.
Growth Junction Rail improvements	Improve rail capacity & connectivity while shifting freight from roads to rail to support clean regional and national growth.	Seeking central government rail infrastructure investment	Continue joint advocacy with neighbouring partners to secure government funding.	Transport East
East West Rail	Improve east-west connectivity and regional economic integration	Seeking central government rail infrastructure investment	Continue strategic engagement and advocacy.	East West Rail Co.
Strategic Road Network – A14 (J55 Copdock), A11 Fiveways, Orwell Bridge	Remove critical freight and connectivity constraints, improving resilience and enabling ports, energy and logistics growth.	Government Road Investment Strategy (RIS) pipeline	Joint regional advocacy (including Transport East and Freeport East) to secure prioritisation and funding for schemes that enable trade, productivity and decarbonisation	National Highways
East of England Investment Fund (British Business Bank)	Address regional finance gaps and unlock SME and scale-up growth	£140m East of England allocation launch expected 2026)	Influence fund design and deployment, convene regional partners, and position Suffolk to maximise access aligned to priority sectors	British Business Bank
Ipswich Town Deal	Drive regeneration, skills and economic growth through targeted town centre investment	£25m Government Towns Fund investment, leveraging wider public and private sector funding	Town centre regeneration, skills infrastructure and place-based growth	Ipswich Borough Council

Good Work and Health	Improve workforce health, reduce absence and increase productivity in SMEs	Public health funded programme (extended to April 2027)	Improves workforce productivity and supports business resilience	SCC Public Health
Retrofit Assessment Vouchers	Support domestic retrofit by funding property assessments and building local supply chain capability	£128k (£200 per voucher) funded by Suffolk Public Sector Leaders	Enables home decarbonisation and strengthens local retrofit supply chain	SCC
Warm Homes Suffolk Loan	Improve energy efficiency of homes through interest-free loans (up to £15,000 per household for retrofit measures)	£3m MHCLG	Supports net zero, reduces energy costs and improves housing quality	SCC
SZC Tourism Mitigation Programme	Mitigate the impact of SZC on the visitor economy and support tourism resilience	Funded through SZC mitigation funding	Supports the tourism economy during major infrastructure delivery	East Suffolk Council

Annexe B: Leveraged Programmes

Programmes and investment opportunities that bring external funding into Suffolk to support strategic priorities. These are often nationally funded, partner funded or competitively secured, and typically require local coordination, match funding or delivery support to maximise impact and leverage.

Intervention	Strategic Purpose	External Funding	Suffolk Economy Contribution	Strategic Value	Lead delivery partner
Skills Bootcamp – Suffolk and Norfolk	Supports workforce upskilling in priority sectors aligned to employer demand.	DfE to March 2027 £1.5m	Local programme management across Suffolk and Norfolk, delivery oversight and staffing liability	Core skills delivery programme enabling workforce development and supporting growth across priority sectors	Suffolk Economy – accountable body for DfE
Made Smarter - Suffolk and Norfolk	Supports manufacturing businesses to adopt digital technology and improve productivity.	DBT funded £9.6m to March 2029	Co-delivery and integration with local business support	Strengthens manufacturing competitiveness and supports priority sectors	NCC – accountable body
Growth Hub - Suffolk and Norfolk	Provide business support, advice and growth navigation services	DBT funded £406k to March 2027	Suffolk Economy co-funding £317k alongside NCC £317, plus programme oversight, integration and governance	Core business support platform enabling SME growth and connecting businesses to the wider support ecosystem.	NCC – accountable body for DBT
Asset Skills Enhancement and Capability Fund (SZC)- East of England	Support long-term skills infrastructure and workforce capability linked to Sizewell C	£7.8m SZC linked investment programme to 2035	Funded through SZC DCO allocation, Suffolk Economy programme oversight, investment coordination and pipeline development support	Significant long-term leverage and skills legacy opportunity	Suffolk Economy
Space East – East of England	Grow the East of England space cluster and attract investment, innovation and	UK Space Agency funding £160k (commitment for 4 years)plus wider partner	Host of core staff, contributing £100k	Strengthens cluster growth, leverage investment, enabling innovation and tech convergence	Suffolk Economy – accountable body

	skills into the sector	contributions across the East of England			
Adult Learning	Improve adult skills, employability and progression, prioritising disadvantaged and economically inactive residents	c.£3.8m DWP grant funding	Strategic alignment and oversight role	Strengthens workforce capability and supports inclusive growth and progression into employment	Suffolk Economy – accountable body
GENERATE – Suffolk, Essex & Norfolk	Accelerate growth and innovation in the clean energy sector	Partner Funded – Norfolk CC, Essex CC and Suffolk CC	Host staff and overseeing programme delivery and operations	Builds clean energy capability, supports business growth and strengthens the inward investment proposition	Suffolk Economy
Norfolk and Suffolk Careers Hub	Improve careers education and employer engagement to better prepare young people for employment	DfE funded via CEC match by NCC and Suffolk Economy funding to august 2027	Suffolk Economy £ 88K	Strengthens talent pipeline and improves links between education and employment	NCC
SZC Outreach Fund	Support disadvantaged individuals into employment linked to SZC and wider infrastructure opportunities	Delivery underway: fund launched with proposals received and projects moving through approval to delivery	£800k DCO funding (with project-level match)	Improves access to employment and strengthens inclusive workforce participation linked to major infrastructure	East Suffolk Council / SZC / Partners

Regional Skills Coordination Function (SZC)	Coordinate skills provision to maximise local employment benefits from major infrastructure (including SZC)	Delivery underway: coordinating partners, workforce planning and development of Annual Skills Implementation Plan and regional skills partnerships	£1.3m DCO funding	Strengthens skills alignment, reduces gaps and maximises local access to jobs	Suffolk CC (working with SZC, East Suffolk Council and regional partners)
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Annexe C: Locally led interventions

Locally interventions driven by the Business Board where there is the strongest ability to influence priorities, investment and delivery including joint activity with Norfolk and wider regional partners.

Intervention	Strategic Purpose	Current Activity	Current Funding Position	Strategic Value	Lead Partner	Recommended Position
Site Development - Enterprise Zones	Attract and grow businesses through place-based incentives and sector clustering	Working with partners to deliver sites, manage retained rates and reinvestment, and support wider economic interventions	Retained business rates and reinvestment mechanisms for economic development activity to 2042	Unlocks investment and reinvestment, supporting business growth and wider economic interventions	Suffolk Economy	Continue – income generator
Site Development - AME Centre	Address market failure by providing start-up premises for advanced manufacturing to support innovation and business growth	In construction	Suffolk Economy committed £4.49m (£2,000,000 capital grant £166 p/a over 15 years) total project £17.2m	Strengthens advanced manufacturing capacity and accelerates cluster growth	West Suffolk Council	Continue – commitment in place
Business Support - Suffolk Economy Grants	Support SME investment in innovation, productivity and clean growth	Grants supporting SME investment in capital, R&D and technology adoption	£1m for 26/27 delivery	Direct SME impact and leverage opportunity	Suffolk Economy	Review and refine targeting to maximise impact
Business Support - Innovation Martlesham	Re-power the innovation cluster around Adastral Park	In procurement	Suffolk Economy have committed £270k, BT match fund via hub refurbishment and IM membership fees	Strengthens cluster performance, innovation and inward	Suffolk Economy	Continue

				investment linked to ACT		
Business Support - Online Business Support Platform	Provide digital access to business support, triage and diagnostics	Adviser-led digital diagnostic platform in development, with launch planned for Summer 2026	Funding in place via current business support programme	Improves access, reduces drop-off and strengthens the business support pipeline	Suffolk Economy	Completion due Summer 2026
Business Support - North Star High Growth	Support high-growth SMEs to scale through tailored advice, investment readiness and growth planning	Delivery of tailored advisory support, growth planning and brokerage into funding and support programmes	Suffolk Economy through 2 advisors	Supports acceleration of growth and productivity in high-potential firms	Suffolk Economy	Continue - targeting priority sectors
Inward Investment Service – Suffolk and Norfolk	Attract external investment, businesses and jobs into area, supporting growth in priority sectors	Live service engaging investors and supporting business location and expansion decisions	Suffolk Economy and NCC	Drives inward investment and business growth across priority sectors	Shared team across SCC and NCC	Continue
Infrastructure-Integrated Water Action Plan - Suffolk and Norfolk	Address water constraints to enable sustainable growth and resilience	Joint plan in development with partners, including analysis, stakeholder engagement and identification of interventions	Suffolk Economy 50k, NCC 50k, Reclaim the Rain 50k	Unlocks growth by improving water resilience and infrastructure planning	NCC – accountable body but Suffolk Economy is joint delivery lead	Due to complete early 2027
Infrastructure - Norfolk and Suffolk Energy Plan	Provide a strategic evidence base to support net zero and enable infrastructure investment	Plan in development with partners, including modelling, data analysis and stakeholder engagement and	Suffolk Economy 100k and NCC 100k	Aligns energy infrastructure with growth, identifies key projects and influences	NCC – accountable body but Suffolk Economy is	Due to complete end August 2026

		already influencing UKPN future network investment		investment decisions	joint delivery lead	
Infrastructure - Suffolk Co-ordination Office	Lead a coordinated campaign to prioritise and advocate for Suffolk's key infrastructure projects	Driving advocacy with national and regional partners, aligning messaging and securing support for priority projects	Suffolk Economy 50K per year funded to January 2027	Strengthens influence and aims to unlock investment by aligning partners and driving coordinated advocacy	Suffolk Chambers of Commerce	Continue – review annually
Inward Investment - Suffolk Ambassadors	Raise Suffolk's profile locally, nationally and internationally to support investment and growth	Ongoing development of a strategic ambassador network to promote Suffolk through business, events and external engagement	Suffolk Economy funded £30K funded to January 2027	Strengthens Suffolk's profile and supports inward investment and growth	Suffolk Chambers of Commerce	Continue – review annually
Innovation - Suffolk Showcase Programme and toolkit	Promote Suffolk's strengths, opportunities and investment offer through a coordinated campaign and toolkit	Delivery of events, marketing campaigns and toolkit assets, including development of AI Penny to enhance engagement	Suffolk Economy £30k	Raises profile and strengthens the investment proposition through coordinated promotion	Suffolk Economy – Overseen by Coms group	Continue – review annually
Innovation - Knowledge Exchange Vouchers	Enable SME access to research, innovation and technical expertise	Live pilot programme supporting business-led projects with university collaboration	Suffolk Economy funded £30k	Supports innovation and business growth through	University of Suffolk	Review on pilot completion

				knowledge transfer		
Innovation - Connected Innovation – Norfolk and Suffolk	Strengthen the regional innovation ecosystem and support business growth	Delivery of a collaborative network of innovation hubs, programmes and partner activity across Suffolk, Norfolk and Essex.	Suffolk Economy, NCC and Essex – Funded to March 2027	Supports innovation capability and sector growth	Norfolk County Council	Review annually
Innovation - Grant Mentoring Programme - Innovation Grant Mentoring Programme	Support businesses to secure innovation funding and develop high-quality bids	Delivery of mentoring, coaching and bid support to innovative SMEs	£139k total Suffolk Economy and NCC funded to March 2027	Unlocks external funding and strengthens innovation capability	Norfolk County Council	Review annually
Skills - Apprenticeships Suffolk Amplify	Reposition apprenticeships as a strategic driver of skills and growth, including Levy Transfer to SMEs	Early delivery underway with initial engagement of employers and participants, and Levy Share scheme launched	Suffolk Economy funded £256K to March 2027	Strengthens skills pipeline and supports workforce development in priority sectors	Suffolk Economy	Continue – service lead, SBB approve Nov 2025
Skills - Thrive Young People	Support young people into employment, education and training	Delivery of targeted support and engagement for young people	£383K Suffolk Economy to March 2027	Improves participation and supports inclusive growth	Suffolk Economy	Continue – service lead, funding committed in Nov 2025
Skills- Energy Readiness Programme	Provides training needs assessments and provides targeted training to	Phase 2 of project in delivery	£130k Suffolk Economy	Build local business capability to access supply	Delivered by West Suffolk College	Continue - funding committed in Nov 2025

	prepare local businesses to be supply chain ready and secure opportunities from SZC			chain opportunities from Sizewell C and the wider energy sector		
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Annexe D: Next Wave Strategic Opportunities

Priority interventions and opportunities identified through the Clusters Plan and wider strategic work that are considered key opportunities and requires great focus, mobilisation and development over the next phase of delivery.

Interventions	Strategic Purpose	Current Position	Key Requirements	Strategic Potential	Recommended Position
Innovation Challenge Fund	Accelerate mission-led innovation through real-world solution development (Power Clean Growth, Sustain the Nation, Deliver Smart Logistics).	Identified as a flagship, transformative intervention; requires mobilisation.	£1m ringfenced fund; resourcing to operationalise; industry/specialists to shape & sponsor challenges; testbed facilities to trial solutions; comms/visibility via cluster networks.	Enables cluster convergence, drives innovation, attracts talent and creates scalable solutions with private lavage opportunities	Priorities & fund via Suffolk Economy and identify Board sponsor
Logistics Living Lab	Establish Suffolk as a testbed for smart, green logistics innovation	Early engagement with industry partners via the Clusters Plan (ABP, MSC, Cisco, University of Suffolk) with support to co-design the programme and identify use cases	Delivery capacity, confirmed partners, 2–3 priority use cases, testbeds and MoU to formalise collaboration	Positions Suffolk as a leader in logistics innovation and attracts investment	Prioritise and identify Board sponsor
Suffolk Start-up Programme	Increase business formation and support early-stage enterprises to grow, with a focus on priority sectors and tech convergence	Developed intervention with clear business case; delivery model and partner to be finalised; seeking funding	£200k funding, delivery partner(s) and programme mobilisation	Strengthens entrepreneurial pipeline, supports 120 start-ups, increases business formation and survival rates, and unlocks public and private investment into priority sectors	Progress to delivery by committing Suffolk Economy Funds

Suffolk Rising Talent Programme	Develop future business leaders and build a pipeline of talent aligned to Suffolk's economic priorities	Programme scoped with delivery model, structure and costs defined; ready for mobilisation	£25k programme funding plus delivery partners and mentors from business and sectors	Builds a cohort of future leaders through a structured programme of workshops, mentoring, innovation challenges and site visits, strengthening leadership, innovation and sector knowledge	Fund via Suffolk Economy and launch pilot and identify Board sponsor
Strategic Pipeline Development Fund	Accelerate the development investment ready interventions aligned to Suffolk Economic Strategy and ensure Suffolk has a strong, deliverable pipeline ready to maximise future mayoral, strategic authority and devolved funding opportunities.	Concept in development – Suffolk has a growing pipeline of strategic opportunities, but many require further development, feasibility and partnership work before they are ready for investment or delivery.	£500k Early stage funding for feasibility, business cases, technical studies, pilot design and bid preparation. Focus on strategic fit, leverage, deliverability and future investment potential.	Ensures sufficient 'shovel ready' projects	Agree in principle to fund and further develop proposal for fund including scope, governance, eligibility and prioritisation approach.

In addition to the interventions above, two high-impact opportunities warrant focused Board attention over the next phase.

First, strengthening links into the Oxford–Cambridge Growth Corridor, where there is clear evidence of 'halo' effects – with capital, talent and scaling businesses flowing beyond the core corridor into adjacent markets. Suffolk is well positioned to capture this spillover and plug into a high-value innovation and investment network.

Second, proactively engaging with the new regional DBT team, who are targeting a small number of significant investment opportunities across the East of England and South East. This presents a clear route to position Suffolk's priority projects, shape the pipeline early, and convert opportunities into investable propositions. We recommend prioritising both as immediate routes to elevate Suffolk's investment offer and secure future investment.

Annexe E – Financial Update

Summary of the financial envelope the Board continues to work in, with the Board having overseen £11m of new investments, and £8m of government funded programmes since May 2024.

Funding secured from government since May 2024	Suffolk Economy allocated funding since May 2024	What remains in the Suffolk Economy funding pot
Approx. £8.1m secured (Including Skills Bootcamps, Growth Hub, Norfolk and Suffolk Careers Hub, Space East and post-LEP transition funding)	Approx. £11m allocated (Including AME Centre, I-WAP, Suffolk Economy Grants, Innovation Martlesham Regional Cluster and related strategy investments)	£13m remaining Available for future Suffolk Economy Strategy investments

Figures are presented as a high-level summary for board reporting. Examples shown are illustrative rather than exhaustive, and some government funding figures are combined Norfolk and Suffolk totals.