

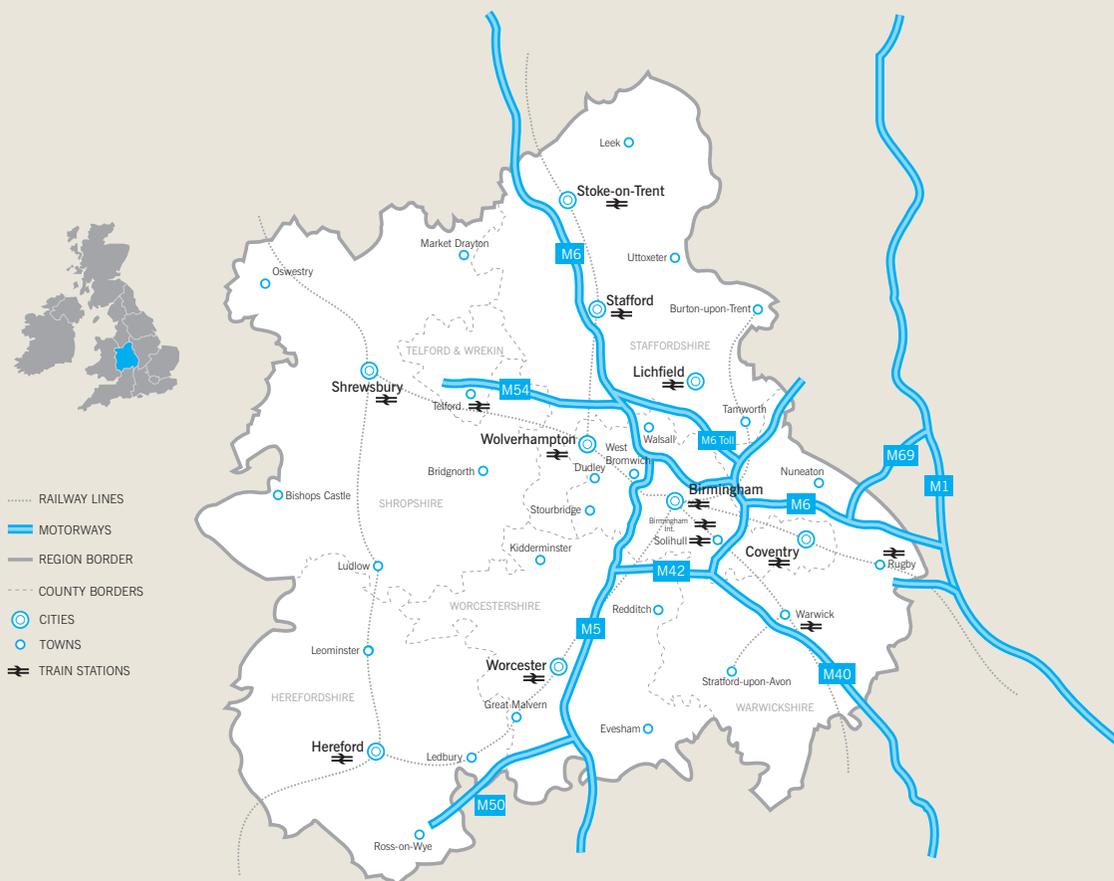


Connecting to

# Success

West Midlands Economic Strategy

Delivery Framework: Consultation Draft



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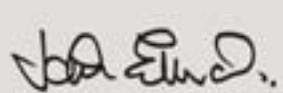
# Foreword

Connecting to Success, the new West Midlands Economic Strategy, was launched in December 2007. The new Strategy is the result of a comprehensive and participative review process which began with the building of a strong evidence base and has moved through two substantial phases of consultation, involving 12 major public consultation events across the region, numerous smaller meetings and approaching 400 written consultation submissions.

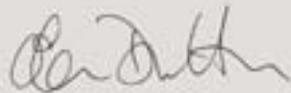
This draft Delivery Framework – also launched in December 2007 – sets the broad framework for delivery of the Strategy. It is a draft, for consultation, offering everyone the opportunity to contribute views on how the new Strategy should be delivered. Success, for the region, can only be achieved if we work together in partnership.

Consultation on the draft Delivery Framework runs until 22nd February 2008, we commence implementation of the new Strategy in April 2008 with the Delivery Framework reviewed and updated annually.

We look forward to hearing from you and to working with you to deliver the region's new economic strategy.



John Edwards  
Chief Executive,  
Advantage West Midlands



Olwen Dutton  
Chief Executive,  
West Midlands Regional Assembly

**Connecting to the future**  
**Birmingham is one of the UK's first city-wide**  
**wireless communication areas**

Central Square – Brindleyplace, Birmingham



# 1. Introduction

This Delivery Framework sets the broad framework for delivery of the West Midlands Economic Strategy (WMES). It is a rolling three-year framework, which is planned to be updated on an annual basis.

The consultation draft of the WMES was launched on 8 May 2007, with the period of consultation running to 31 July. The consultation draft proposed a number of objectives. Associated with each objective was a set of indicative actions. The set of indicative actions listed in the draft Strategy was the starting point for the work to develop this Framework.

The revised WMES comprises two main documents: the Strategy and the Delivery Framework together with a number of supporting documents. The Strategy sets out 'what' we need to do and 'why' we need to do it. The Delivery Framework deals with the 'how' and the 'who'. How will the Strategy be delivered? and What role do organisations and partnerships have in that delivery? The Strategy and the Delivery Framework are regional documents. They are concerned with the most important economic development issues for the West Midlands as a whole. This Delivery Framework focuses on the actions and interventions that are best taken at the regional level, as well as setting the strategic framework for local application of the key objectives and priorities. Further work is required to spell out the implications of the Strategy and how it will be delivered at sub-regional and local levels. In particular, this further work will need to take account of the recently announced outcomes from the Government's review of sub-national economic development and regeneration,<sup>1</sup> and the outcome of the Government's business support simplification programme.<sup>2</sup>

Progress against previous versions of the WMES Action Plan was reviewed on an annual basis. For this updated Delivery Framework we intend to expand that process, not only reviewing progress but also updating the Framework every year. This should allow the Delivery Framework to become more of a 'living' document, sufficiently flexible to take account of changing needs and circumstances. This process will also need to take account of the outcomes from the sub-national review, referred to above.

The remainder of this document is structured as follows: Section 2 provides more detail on how the Strategy will be delivered. Section 3 presents the actions themselves. Finally, Section 4 describes how we will monitor progress against this Framework.

The consultation period for this draft Delivery Framework runs from 10th December 2007 to 22nd February 2008.

Copies of the new West Midlands Economic Strategy, Connecting to Success, this draft Delivery Framework and further supporting information – including details of the sustainability appraisal process and associated reports – are available on the West Midlands Economic Strategy page of the Advantage West Midlands web site at: [www.advantagewm.co.uk](http://www.advantagewm.co.uk)

Please send your consultation response, preferably using the response form available on the web site, either by email to: [wmes@advantagewm.co.uk](mailto:wmes@advantagewm.co.uk) or by post to:

Gerald La Touche, Economic Strategy Manager,  
Advantage West Midlands, 3 Priestley Wharf, Holt Street,  
Aston Science Park, Birmingham B7 4BN.

The deadline for receipt of responses to this consultation is 17.00 hours on Friday 22nd February 2008.

<sup>1</sup> *Review of sub-national economic development and regeneration*, HM Treasury, Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform and Department for Communities and Local Government, July 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Actions will be consistent with the need to simplify business support activity.

## 2. Delivering the Strategy

The Strategy can only be delivered by a range of partners working together across the region. The tables in Section 3 set out the actions necessary to deliver the Strategy. The tables also identify the organisations and partnerships that have a role in the delivery of each action.

### Mainstreaming rural renaissance

The Strategy identifies the need to support rural renaissance as one of its underlying principles. The approach to be adopted in implementing the strategy is to “mainstream rural” which means that all boards, strategies, programmes and projects that contribute to the delivery of the Strategy, need to ensure they address the relevant rural circumstances. There is no overall separate rural programme, budget or strategy and partners designing and delivering regional or sub-regional interventions are expected to show how their plans take a balanced approach to meeting rural and urban circumstances, in terms of design, outputs and outcomes.

### Delivery at regional level

This delivery framework focuses principally on actions to be taken at the regional level. A number of partnerships or boards have been established at regional level to help address the West Midlands’ most important economic development and regeneration issues. These partnerships or boards have been assigned lead or supporting roles in the delivery of many of the actions set out in Section 3.

### Delivery at sub-regional and local level

The role of partnerships in delivery is equally important at sub-regional and local level. Sub-regional partnerships often bring together a range of organisations from the public, private and ‘third’ sectors. Their size, scale and precise remit vary across the region, depending on local circumstances, but they typically play an important role in developing and delivering strategy at a sub-regional level.

These partnerships also provide an important link between thinking at regional and local levels, and have a role to play in identifying the relevant objectives and priorities contained within this Strategy, and tailoring them to their own particular circumstances, issues and opportunities. Local Strategic Partnerships, through Sustainable Community Strategies, are best placed to identify and address specific local economic development issues. They have an important role in aligning and coordinating the activities of local partners and stakeholders. Local and Multi-Area Agreements provide a mechanism that could potentially help to improve the coordination of – and engagement in – economic development and regeneration activity between regional, sub-regional and local levels.

Further work is required to spell out the implications of the Strategy and how it will be delivered at sub-regional and local levels. In particular, this work will need to take account of the recently announced outcomes from the review of sub-national economic development and regeneration, referred to in Section 1 of this document.

### Regeneration Zones, High Technology Corridors and Business Clusters

The region has also identified Regeneration Zones, High Technology Corridors and Business Clusters as mechanisms for economic development and regeneration. They provide frameworks for multi-partner action either on a geographic or sectoral basis. The recently published sub-national review of economic development and regeneration, referred to above, has implications for the implementation of zone, corridor and cluster programmes. These implications are in the process of being worked through. The current thinking with regard to zones, corridors and clusters is set out below. This thinking is likely to evolve over coming months, through discussion with partners.

## 2. Delivering the Strategy

### Regeneration Zones

The Regeneration Zone programme is a spatial initiative that is unique to the West Midlands. The six zones were established in 2001/02 to:

- **Target** the resources of Advantage West Midlands and all other funders of regeneration activity in the region on the areas of greatest need;
- **Realise** physical regeneration opportunities to the benefit of indigenous local communities; and
- **Improve** the coordination of regeneration activity in each area.

The Zones include or adjoin the region's most socially deprived wards as measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation. They cover around one-third of the region's population, half the unemployed and two-thirds of the long-term unemployed.

The Six Regeneration Zones are:

1. North Staffordshire
2. North Black Country and South Staffordshire
3. South Black Country and West Birmingham
4. East Birmingham and North Solihull
5. Coventry and Nuneaton
6. Rural



While need is self-evident within Zone areas, so too is opportunity. Zone boundaries were defined in the context of wider travel-to-work areas, with associated access to employment opportunities. Zones also encompass significant physical development opportunities.

The prime purpose of the Zone programme is to connect need with opportunity, securing sustainable regeneration that directly benefits indigenous communities. The programme has become an established component of the region's regeneration infrastructure. As well as being a basis for targeting European and sub-regional resources, zone areas are a fundamental consideration in the Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands.

An independent review of the Regeneration Zone programme was undertaken as part of the evidence-gathering phase of the WMES review. Additionally, Advantage West Midlands was the subject of an Independent Performance Assessment by the National Audit Office, which published its findings in February 2007. Both studies confirmed that the programme was encouraging and facilitating a high degree of partnership working across the region and adding value at both a strategic and an operational level.

Partnerships responsible for delivering the Zone programme will increasingly operate as investment planning vehicles, influencing and coordinating sub-regional regeneration activity to achieve holistic regeneration solutions. Specifically, the following improvements are proposed:

- i. The Zone programme should operate within and contribute to broader sub-regional strategies and frameworks – For the Zone areas managed by the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Partnership, the Black Country Consortium, the North Staffordshire Regeneration Partnership and the Rural Zone, this will be taken forward through an evolution of current arrangements. For the two Zone areas in Birmingham and Solihull, currently managed by the Black Country Consortium and the East Birmingham North Solihull Regeneration Zone, further work will be undertaken with partners to identify ways to simplify and strengthen delivery of the programme. In all cases, there needs to be greater clarity about the contribution the Zone programme makes towards broader sub-regional economic development and regeneration aims.
- ii. The Zone programme should address social regeneration needs as well as physical regeneration opportunities – Zone Implementation Plans will evolve to become joint investment plans, demonstrating how capital investment in physical regeneration 'opportunities' aligns with and levers other resources to tackle socio-economic regeneration 'needs'.
- iii. The partnerships and secretariats responsible for managing Zone programmes must have the capability and capacity to deliver the improvements outlined above – Advantage West Midlands will clarify the functions and responsibilities that it expects partnerships to be capable of in order to secure future funding from the Agency. Formal guidance will be issued to partners in Autumn 2007.

## 2. Delivering the Strategy

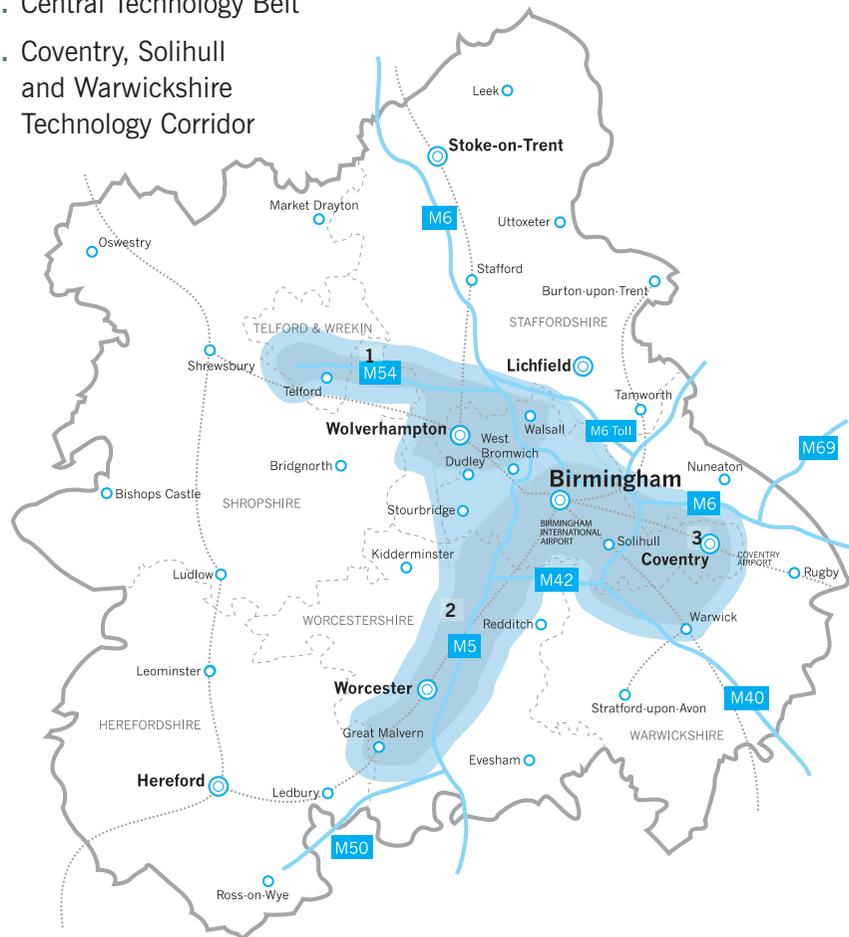
### High Technology Corridors

The region's three High Technology Corridors were established in 2001/02 to:

- **Consolidate** and grow the existing base of technology-led enterprises.
- **Develop** sites and infrastructure to benefit leading-edge companies.
- **Attract** new, high value added businesses through inward investment.

The three High Technology Corridors are:

1. Wolverhampton to Telford Technology Corridor
2. Central Technology Belt
3. Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Technology Corridor



The corridors have 'fluid' boundaries that encompass concentrations of technology-led businesses, research organisations and business-facing academic institutions. Initially, Corridor partnerships were charged with managing and delivering a prescribed portfolio of projects. All three proved very effective in this 'project management' role, meeting or exceeding all spend and output targets. In 2004 their role evolved and the partnerships took on responsibility for devising and implementing strategies that would secure the long-term future of the corridors. The underlying nature of the partnerships was therefore transformed, and the demands on them changed.

Recent developments, driven by the Innovation and Technology Council and Science City, reflect and reinforce the rationale for corridors. The independent assessment of the corridors as 'delivery vehicles' during the evidence-gathering phase of the WMES review acknowledged that the Corridor partnerships' form and functions have evolved. It also concluded that they had developed a track record of delivery and started to acquire a measure of strategic and investment planning capability.

In future, as with Regeneration Zones, Corridor partnerships will increasingly operate as strategic investment planning vehicles. Specifically, the following improvements are proposed:

- i. The Corridor Programme should align more strongly with and be driven by the Innovation and Technology Council and Science City agendas – The corridors' future investment plans should more strongly reflect Innovation Technology Council and Science City strategies. Advantage West Midlands will provide guidance to partners on preparing Corridor Investment Plans.
- ii. Businesses should be more directly engaged in each corridor's development – Corridor partnerships will be asked to demonstrate how they will help to connect businesses with technology and actively promote the 'corridor offer' to a broader business audience. These will be core priorities in their revised Investment Plans for the period 2008–11.

- iii. Corridor partnerships and secretariats must have the capability and capacity to deliver the improvements outlined above. Advantage West Midlands will clarify the functions and responsibilities that it wishes to procure through its funding for Corridor secretariats and will issue guidance to partners.
- iv. Corridor locations should be consistent with the accepted rationale and policy drivers for their establishment – Work is currently in progress or planned to examine the rationale, in geographic and governance terms, for the current configuration of the Wolverhampton–Telford Corridor and to explore whether there is a case for a corridor in the North Staffordshire area.

## Business Clusters

Business Clusters were established as the third key delivery mechanism in the last version of the West Midlands Economic Strategy, *Delivering Advantage*, published in 2004. Their objectives are:

- To grow the competitive advantage and reputation of the region in key markets and industries in order to increase our long-term wealth creation capability, and
- To do this by facilitating businesses in each of the priority clusters (there are 13 priority clusters, including the division of Transport Technology into sub-clusters) to collaborate to exploit strategic opportunities.

Clustering is about growing industries, as opposed to business support activity which aims to grow individual companies.

A three-year programme began in April 2005 and is now well advanced. There has been a growth in business confidence and industries are winning new orders. Achievement to date has been confirmed by the independent assessment of the clusters as ‘delivery vehicles’ in the evidence-gathering phase of the WMES review. The assessment concluded that clusters have made a good start in delivering strategic advantage and have the capacity to do more in the future. They have grown networks, and developed programmes for market exploitation and technology and innovation take-up.

They have achieved high private sector engagement, and have engendered significant business confidence amongst participating businesses. In future it is proposed that there should be a sharper focus on winning target markets. The intention is to concentrate decision-making and prioritisation, give a more explicit concentration on higher GVA opportunities within each market, and generate greater critical mass. The following specific improvements are proposed:

- i. The existing 13 clusters will increasingly focus on a few (6 to 8) large attractive markets – Each cluster will focus on those market segments where the region is strong (many of these segments are already focuses of individual clusters). These markets also reflect priorities identified by the Innovation & Technology Council and by the national Technology Strategy Board. Examples of target market segments are: renewable energy generation equipment, low-carbon vehicle power train, offsite-manufactured buildings, advanced materials, new niche foods, serious games and assistive living.
- ii. Market focus groups will be formed to help clusters and other regional business bodies to collaborate in exploiting these major markets, and in addressing cross-cutting opportunities – This will help to achieve the critical mass needed to make an impact in the chosen markets. The first market groups to be formed are likely to be in the areas of Environmental/Energy, Transport Technology, Business Competitiveness Services, and Health Technology markets. The scope and names of further groupings in the areas of consumer products and entertainment/education/digital content have still to be finalised.
- iii. Cluster Opportunity Groups will progressively channel their business support and skills initiatives through mainstream delivery channels so they are free to concentrate on more specific market initiatives – These are likely to be mainly in the areas of innovation and market exploitation.

## 2. Delivering the Strategy

### Priority business clusters in the West Midlands

#### **Building Technologies (204,000\*)**

Strengths in materials manufacture and technologies and offsite manufacturing. This cluster is well placed to lead innovation in these areas for climate-proofing of new and existing buildings.

#### **Business & Professional Services (100,000\*)**

One of the fastest-growing clusters. Birmingham is second only to London as a services centre for professional services and there is considerable strength in the counties.

#### **Environmental Technologies (33,000\*)**

Covers products and services used to minimise society's environmental impact and is a growing marketplace with legislation as a main driver. Regional strengths in renewable energy and waste, which offer particular opportunities for growth.

#### **Food & Drink (58,000\*)**

A growing sector as manufacturers increasingly look to add value. The region has substantial strengths in red meat, dairy, fruit and vegetables, bakery products and confectionary, alcoholic drinks, and food equipment. Its position at the hub of UK logistics is an asset as low-carbon issues press for more localised food chains.

#### **Screen Image & Sound (21,000\*)**

Comprises film, TV, video, radio, music, gaming, interactive media, e-learning, serious games, digital imaging & photography. Sector has high levels of business formation and innovation, and sub-sectors of national significance such as gaming and serious games.

#### **Tourism & Leisure (195,000\*)**

Generates visitor spend, SME business creation, and high employment. It helps to build an attractive environment and an international profile, and to attract inward investment. Particular strength in business tourism.

#### **High Value Added Consumer Products (37,000\*)**

Strengths in ceramics, glass, jewellery, clothing & textiles, leather goods, furniture and carpets. The cluster focuses on adding value through product design, innovation in materials and exploiting international market opportunities.

#### **ICT (62,000\*)**

Contributes to overall regional productivity growth. Strengths in the development and application of products and services particularly in cyber-security, photonics & LEDs, open-source software, artificial intelligence, and mobile and wireless technologies.

#### **Medical Technologies (7,000\*)**

Healthcare is a growing market as populations age. The region is strong in the development and application of medical devices, building on its manufacturing, engineering and ICT strength. The cluster focuses on intelligent health, assisted living, human engineering and infection control. (Statistics substantially understate cluster size)

#### **Manufacturing (362,000\*– overlaps other clusters)**

Particular strengths in design and product engineering, new materials, supply chain concentration and concentration of world-class inward investors. Generates 27% of regional GVA. GVA per employee is 30% above regional average. It invests 77% of business R&D.

\*Estimated employees. Estimates based on 2005 data. For comparison, these calculations are made on the same basis as in the previous Strategy – Delivering Advantage. As cluster development has proceeded, however, some original definitions have become less appropriate. The figures by cluster are therefore indicative.

### **Transport Technologies (111,000\*)**

Now divided into Aerospace, Automotive and Rail (see below).

Much of this industry is characterised by globalised markets, high levels of technology innovation and R&D investment and high productivity growth.

- **Aerospace**

Serves a market forecast to experience sustained growth over the next 20 years. The region has strong capabilities in actuation and engine control systems and specialised materials, and a major supply chain focused on aero engines.

- **Automotive**

A strong concentration of product design and engineering firms, and vehicle and component manufacture. Strengths in luxury and specialist vehicles, in high-performance engineering (incl. motorsport) and in applying new technologies (esp. low carbon and low weight.)

- **Rail**

A growing market worldwide. The region is at the heart of the UK rail network and has strong capability in consultancy, project management and engineering, as well as infrastructure and component supply, and offers expertise gained from privatisation and operation of one of the world's busiest rail networks.

### **Connecting to the UK**

**Infrastructure developments, such as the M6 Toll, put 75% of the UK population within a 5 hour drive**

M6 Toll, Staffordshire



### 3. The Actions

The actions to deliver the Strategy are set out in the tables that follow, organised under the themes of Business, Place, People and Powerful Voice. The tables are structured in the following way:

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
Sets out the strategic objective and priority to which each action relates and summarises the associated rationale.	Describes the action to be taken.	States which organisations or partnerships will be responsible for overseeing and/or delivering the action.	Describes the desired outcome as a result of the successful completion of the set of actions related to each priority. Identifies which indicators will be used to monitor progress towards achieving the desired outcome.

The organisations and partnerships responsible for carrying out the actions are broken down into three categories according to role:

#### **Lead**

The lead organisation(s)/partnership(s) has/have responsibility for overseeing delivery of the action, though they may not directly deliver the action. They will monitor progress in the delivery of the actions for which they have lead oversight.

#### **Support**

Supporting organisations/partnerships also have an important part to play in taking the action forward though, again, they may not directly deliver the action. In some cases they may provide the source of funding on the basis of which the action will be delivered.

#### **Delivery**

Delivery organisations/partnerships are the entities that will actually deliver the actions and, in some cases, may be the accountable bodies for that area of activity.

### 3. The Actions – Business

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>Strategic objective – Seizing market opportunities</b></p> <p>In order to increase regional wealth, businesses in the West Midlands need to keep winning profitable orders. This means increasing the region's penetration of existing, attractive markets and capturing share of developing, growth and high-value markets. The region must build upon existing strengths, in its businesses and its people, and focus on areas where it can develop or maintain a distinctive competitive position. It needs to increase businesses' engagement in global markets in order to drive up their competitiveness and provide wider opportunities. The West Midlands must step up its performance in developing new products and services, implementing new processes, generating new businesses, and developing entrepreneurial business leaders. The public sector must support these goals through high-quality services.</p>			
<p><b>1.1 Developing markets and sectors with the most wealth and employment potential</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Develop the region's priority markets and sectors, building on its particular strengths in both manufacturing and services, through a clustering and related market exploitation programme.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The prosperity of the region depends on growth in those markets which offer the greatest prospects for long-term wealth creation and employment, and where we can build competitive strengths. The region must adopt a far-sighted approach to developing new services and products which will flourish in the target markets and which exploit distinctive regional strengths. The West Midlands' 13 business clusters will increasingly direct their activity at a number of evolving market focuses. Both the clusters and the market focuses are described in more detail in Section 3 of the Delivery Framework.</p>	<p><b>1.1.1</b> Facilitate business collaboration to address priority markets and sectors through a clustering programme and related market exploitation projects. This will be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit focusing by clusters on specific markets, and on maximising market share</li> <li>• Developing and implementing the next 3-year plan for each cluster to include / extend programmes in key areas: process &amp; product innovation; the use of ICT; technology transfer, demonstrators &amp; centres of excellence; acquisition of market-specific skills; business collaboration, and international market engagement.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Cluster Chairs Group</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Innovation &amp; Technology Council; Regional Skills Partnership; Cluster Opportunity Groups, Rural Skills Partnership</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Business Link West Midlands; Universities, Colleges, HEFCE, Research &amp; Technology Organisations; Learning and Skills Council; UKTI; Individual cluster-specific organisations</p>	<p>Overall growth in the regional economy, with particular growth in sectors identified as offering the greatest potential.</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GVA per employee (possibly disaggregated by sector)</li> </ul>

### 3. The Actions – Business

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
	<p><b>1.1.2</b> Support manufacturing to become more knowledge-intensive by exploiting innovation, technology, design, high-level skills and world-class business techniques. This will be done by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing the new regional manufacturing support strategy, agreed with regional partners.</li> <li>• Implementing the Productivity Alliance to develop a shared culture of quality within extended supply chains.</li> <li>• Taking forward the National Skills Academy for Manufacturing and the Foundation Degree Forward manufacturing programme to ensure employers are actively involved in the development and delivery of the skills they need.</li> <li>• Investing in application of generic manufacturing technologies, e.g. in advanced materials and metal forming.</li> <li>• Investing through the manufacturing clusters in application of sector-specific technologies.</li> <li>• Promoting the use and take-up of ICT by manufacturing businesses.</li> </ul> <p><b>1.1.3</b> Develop public sector procurement opportunities to encourage innovation and other beneficial economic change, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building early collaboration on low-carbon vehicles and assisted living.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Beacon Group</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Innovation &amp; Technology Council; Regional Skills Partnership; Sector Skills Councils; Cluster Opportunity Groups, Rural Skills Partnership</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Manufacturing Advisory Service; Universities; Colleges; HEFCE, Research &amp; technology organisations; National Skills Academy for Manufacturing; Learning and Skills Council; Business Link; UKTI; Foundation Degree Forward; IT Advisory Service</p> <p><b>Lead:</b> Local Authorities, NHS West Midlands</p> <p><b>Support:</b></p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Regional Centre for Excellence, NHS Procurement consortia (HPC)</p>	

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>1.2 Competing in the global economy</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Increase the value of international trade carried out by West Midlands businesses, expand the number of businesses succeeding in overseas markets and generate a stronger flow of inward investment into the region.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The growth of the West Midlands economy depends on greater numbers of its businesses operating internationally and investing in the region. Although manufacturing already has a high level of direct foreign investment, as the pressures from emerging economies grow and the barriers to new markets fall away, international trade and inward investment will become more vital aspects of the economy. Building networks, developing international partnerships and establishing global supply chains will be essential success factors for highly competitive markets and companies in the future. The West Midlands has some unique strengths to build on, with its diverse population and high-profile businesses amongst some black and minority ethnic communities. It needs to expand the base of sectors and businesses which are capitalising on international opportunities and stimulate growing levels of investor interest in the region.</p>	<p><b>1.2.1</b> Help businesses drive up their international competitiveness through a focused trade development programme and increase inward investment from both existing and new investors by more effective understanding and promotion of the region's distinctive knowledge assets. This will be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing and implementing an integrated International Business Framework.</li> <li>• Improving companies' export readiness.</li> <li>• Supporting visit to overseas markets to exploit identified opportunities.</li> <li>• Refocusing the region's cluster proposition on key overseas markets.</li> <li>• Providing overseas market assistance for West Midlands companies.</li> <li>• Harnessing knowledge of university alumni.</li> </ul> <p><b>1.2.2</b> Increase participation in international networks and partnerships in order to exploit the knowledge and relationships gained, particularly in high-growth markets. This will be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting companies to form partner relationships, both outward and inward, to create opportunities to meet overseas buyers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> International Business Forum (to be established)</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Local Authorities, City Region Board, Cluster Opportunity Groups</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> UKTI, Advantage West Midlands, Business Link, Chambers, Universities</p> <p><b>Lead:</b> International Business Forum (to be established)</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Local Authorities</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> UKTI, Advantage West Midlands, Business Link</p>	<p>Increased investment by foreign companies and more international trade involving a wider range of companies.</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of regional GVA generated by foreign-owned companies.</li> <li>• Exports of goods as a percentage of GVA.</li> </ul>

### 3. The Actions – Business

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>1.3 Creating economically sustainable new businesses</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Drive up the creation, growth and survival of economically sustainable and competitive new businesses (including social enterprise), particularly high-growth companies and new enterprises from under-represented groups and communities. This will require innovative approaches, recognising that the definition of business needs to be flexible enough to capture a wide range of models and recognising the role of the voluntary and community sector.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The West Midlands economy generates fewer new businesses than the average for the UK as a whole and our enterprise performance is not bridging the wealth gap. The region needs to increase levels of entrepreneurship, tap into favourable attitudes among potential entrepreneurs, address barriers to sustainable business start-ups and boost economic prospects for new business. The region needs to raise its enterprise capability to increase the creation, growth and survival of new businesses in two key areas:</p> <p>(i) High-growth companies: the current make-up of newer businesses does not suggest sufficient numbers of these important wealth creators; and</p> <p>(ii) Among under-represented places and groups: enterprise performance varies significantly across the region, with notable underperformance in the region's most deprived urban areas, among women, disabled people and in certain BME groups. We also need to recognise the potential that exists among 'grey economy' entrepreneurs and in the social enterprise sector.</p>	<p><b>1.3.1</b> Enhance support to improve survivability and growth of new businesses, especially high-growth companies, university spin-outs and those in key target areas, markets and communities. Proactively promote the benefits and challenges of starting a business including ensuring there is access to appropriate sources of finance and related 'investment readiness' assistance.</p>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Enterprise Board</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Regional Finance Forum</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Business Link West Midlands, Business Link Delivery Contractors, Finance providers, Learning and Skills Council, Sector Skills Councils, HEFCE, Universities and colleges</p>	<p>Increased numbers of new businesses and fewer business failures within the first two years. Particular growth in businesses in high-growth sector and from under-represented groups.</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New VAT registrations per 10,000 of population.</li> <li>• 3-year survival rates for new VAT registered enterprises.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>1.3.2</b> Provide bespoke enterprise support, mentoring and training (including those activities set out in 1.3.1 above) for social enterprises and also for those groups and communities that face barriers to creating sustainable businesses, such as women, BME groups and young people.</p>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Enterprise Board</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Regional Finance Forum, Minority Ethnic Business Forum, West Midlands Social Enterprise Network, relevant Centres of Expertise, Learning and Skills Council, Sector Skills Councils</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Business Link West Midlands, Business Link Delivery Contractors, HEFCE, Universities and colleges, Finance providers</p>	

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>1.4 Capitalising on sustainability and low-carbon opportunities</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Stimulate a proactive and ambitious business response to the economic opportunities of the low-carbon agenda by exploiting new markets and ways of working, and by responding ambitiously to the challenges of energy and resource efficiency and climate change adaptation.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The low-carbon and resource efficiency agendas present both opportunities and challenges to the West Midlands economy. Business generates one-third of the region's carbon emissions and has a crucial role in developing new services and products in these markets. Businesses must adopt a far-sighted approach to the wealth-generating potential tied up in this agenda and respond proactively to growing pressure to reduce their own total carbon emissions and adapt to the changing climate. The public and regulated sectors, with a focus on improving overall quality of life, must be prepared to consider seriously the imaginative procurement of new technical solutions.</p>	<p><b>1.4.1</b> Create effective linkage between low-carbon economic and climate impact opportunities for regional business to realise their wealth-generating potential and manage their risk, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping identify low-carbon economic and climate impact opportunities for regional businesses.</li> <li>• Developing a programme of targeted support for key sectors for growth and diversification into these markets, and supporting at-risk sectors to make the transition required.</li> <li>• Encouraging local markets and local sourcing to minimise carbon footprint.</li> <li>• Helping reduce regional business costs and ensuring security of supply. This will be through greater decentralised energy production and efficiency, waste minimisation and reprocessing opportunities. This will be achieved by mapping of energy, heat, waste, grid connections and renewable potential in the region to target development and deployment of low-carbon technology (energy &amp; waste) and developing a regional resource efficiency (energy, waste &amp; water) reinvestment fund.</li> <li>• Helping businesses improve resource efficiency (energy, transport, waste, &amp; water), by reducing their risk through environmental management systems &amp; realising their opportunities to diversify into environmental goods and services markets, through specialist advice and support as an integral element of mainstream business support.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Advantage West Midlands and EnergyWM</p> <p><b>Support:</b> ITC, SWM Climate Adaptation Partnership, West Midlands Regional Assembly, Climate Change Partnership, Regional Technical Advisory Body</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Business Link, Utilities, Local Authorities, Carbon Trust, Envirowise, BREW programme, Environmental Technology Cluster, Energy Saving Trust, WRAP, Environment Agency, Universities, Country Land Owners, National Farmers Union, Rural Hubs, The National Trust</p>	<p>Growth of businesses in environmental technology and energy sectors. Improved energy efficiency in regional businesses.</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <p>Carbon emissions per £10,000 GVA</p> <p>Total industry and commercial energy consumption (GWh) per £billion GVA</p> <p>Industrial and commercial waste indicator (to be developed)</p>

### 3. The Actions – Business

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>Strategic Objective – Improving competitiveness</b></p>			
<p>Productivity performance, measured by GVA per employee, is low in the West Midlands compared with the UK average and the most prosperous regions of Europe. For the West Midlands to grow its economy at a faster rate than the UK average, businesses will need to improve their competitiveness, productivity, market profile and local supply chain linkages so they can take advantage of new product and market opportunities. Regional partners must create the right operating environment which provides access to appropriate financial and human resources as well as customers, suppliers and associated support.</p>			
<p><b>1.5 Investing in business processes and enterprise</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Drive up productivity by boosting levels of process and product effectiveness and innovation, quality design, ICT adoption, supply-chain and inter-firm collaboration and market-facing enterprise. These processes need streamlined business support services that are simple to access so they become hallmarks of the West Midlands economy.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The West Midlands has low business productivity compared with the national average in terms of GVA per employee. All the region’s businesses need to be ready to improve their key business proficiencies e.g.:</p> <p><b>Enterprise</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategy formulation and longer-term planning</li> <li>• Development of new markets</li> </ul> <p><b>Innovation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generating orders</li> <li>• Creating new and improving existing products and services</li> </ul>	<p><b>1.5.1</b> Help businesses transform their performance by ensuring they have simplified access to a streamlined range of high-quality market-facing business support services and appropriate finance. This will be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giving businesses access to high-quality, market-facing, business support services that will help them understand their strategic strengths and weaknesses and respond ambitiously to the challenges and opportunities they present.</li> <li>• Helping businesses access expert external support to help them diversify, develop new markets, generate orders and enhance their competencies. This will include providing access to bespoke support packages to overcome barriers to innovation, exploiting intellectual property, promoting the benefits of design, increasing the adoption of ICT as a means of achieving added value sales and addressing business crime.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Enterprise Board</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Regional Finance Forum, ITC, ICT Steering Group, Cluster Opportunity Groups, WM Regional Business Crime Forum</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Business Link West Midlands, Manufacturing Advisory Service, Finance providers, IT Advisory Service, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, Local Strategic Partnerships</p>	<p>Increased productivity levels brought about through greater innovation, increased adoption of ICT, more collaboration and entrepreneurial attitudes.</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of businesses which are ‘innovation active’.</li> <li>• Total Entrepreneurial Activity.</li> <li>• ICT adoption by businesses indicator (to be developed).</li> </ul>

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>Operations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource efficiency</li> <li>• Fulfilling orders</li> <li>• Financing growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting the role of ICT in business process improvement and enterprise to raise productivity and competitiveness. Provide specialist business support giving independent ICT advice and expertise, and skills training for end users targeted on those businesses most likely to benefit from ICTs.</li> <li>• Helping businesses generate and fulfil new orders by supply-chain initiatives and other innovative inter-firm collaboration to elicit customer needs and develop solutions to meet them.</li> <li>• Building on the strengths of the formal management systems in many manufacturing businesses by encouraging the adoption of more service-oriented and environmentally sound activity.</li> <li>• Raising awareness of sources of finance and providing effective ‘investment readiness’ services to improve access to and take-up of appropriate external finance.</li> <li>• Addressing clear market failure in the provision of both debt- and equity-based finance for both early-stage and established businesses seeking to adapt to change and achieve long-term growth and improved productivity.</li> <li>• Increasing awareness of the need for fixed capital investment and providing capital investment grants to help reverse one of the major weaknesses of the West Midlands economy: its lack of capital investment in manufacturing processes.</li> <li>• Assisting West Midlands businesses maximise public procurement opportunities, specifically the multi-billion pound contracts available as a result of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.</li> </ul>		

### 3. The Actions – Business

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>1.6 Stimulating employer investment in skills and training</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Increase employer investment in training and skills development whilst raising employer awareness of the business case for workforce development.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> A skilled workforce allows businesses to be more competitive and productive, but current employer investment in skills is far too low. For businesses in the West Midlands to acquire the right skills and knowledge to grow, they need to understand and act upon the business case for greater investment in relevant skills training. The West Midlands has the lowest proportion of its staff undergoing training of any region in England, whilst there are 12,000 vacancies (21% of all vacancies) in West Midlands businesses which are identified as hard to fill due to skills shortages.</p>	<p><b>1.6.1</b> Engage businesses in the design of training and skills development; ensure that training and skills are more relevant to business processes and that the public sector is able to deliver what is required. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise business awareness of the bottom-line benefits of investing in skills.</li> <li>• Increase the number of businesses working with Sector Skills Councils and training providers in the design of qualifications.</li> <li>• Ensure effective feedback to training providers about training needs identified through business link and Train to Gain services.</li> <li>• Capacity building to ensure that colleges, universities and other training providers have the skills and capacity to deliver a quality, consistent demand-led service now and in the future – including the ability to deliver flexible bite-sized modules in the workplace.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Regional Skills Partnership</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Advantage West Midlands, Learning and Skills Council, HEFCE, Local Authorities</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Employers, Business Link / Train to Gain, HE, FE, Chambers and SSC network, Regeneration Zones, Foundation Degree Forward, Specialist training providers</p>	<p>More employees will add greater value to the business they work for. More employers will be investing in relevant training for their staff.</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of staff trained by their employer over the last 12 months.</li> </ul>

What & Why?

Strategic objective and priority

How?

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Lead, support & delivery partners

Expected outcome

and related indicators

**1.6.2** Work with businesses through the fully integrated skills and business brokerage service to develop and make more effective use of the skilled people they need to achieve sustainable improvements in performance. For example:

- Building on existing business networks and encouraging more businesses to use the networks to benchmark and promote good practice in up-skilling and workforce development.
- Encouraging more employers to commit to the skills pledge and jobs pledge.
- Enabling more businesses to overcome barriers to training their workforces.
- Increasing the number of businesses improving their performance and investing in skills as a result of support from Train to Gain.

**Lead:** Regional Skills Partnership

**Support:** Regional Equality and Diversity Partnership, Advantage West Midlands, Learning and Skills Council, HEFCE, Local Authorities

**Delivery:** Employers, Business Link / Train to Gain, HE, FE, Chambers and the SSC network

### 3. The Actions – Business

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>Strategic objective – Harnessing knowledge</b></p> <p>The UK and West Midlands economies need to maximise their use of knowledge and creativity in order to compete in new and globally competitive markets. The region must harness and expand the diverse knowledge assets and the competitive advantage tied up in the skills and attitudes of its people. The West Midlands’ universities, with their complementary research, training and knowledge transfer skills, are well positioned to support these objectives and must develop an even greater focus on the commercial needs of business.</p>			
<p><b>1.7 Investing in high-value skills for the future economy</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Increase the number of people with graduate-level skills employed in the West Midlands economy by up-skilling the current workforce and recruiting and retaining more people with the skills needed to develop and deliver higher value added products and services.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The region must compete more effectively on the basis of its skills, ingenuity and know-how. To be more competitive globally we need more people with higher-level skills in the private sector. A further 70,000 people with graduate-level skills need to be employed (or self-employed) in the West Midlands economy. Part of the answer lies in encouraging greater numbers of the graduates produced by our universities to stay and work in the West Midlands but this needs to be combined with efforts to ensure that employers are aware of the business benefits of higher skills and where appropriate up-skill their workforce into higher skilled jobs. At the same time, we need to ensure the skills and abilities of graduates who are already in employment are utilised effectively.</p>	<p><b>1.7.1</b> Increase the number of higher-skilled people in private sector jobs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raising awareness of the business case for higher-skilled people in the regional business community, through the use of networks, case studies and the integrated business brokerage service.</li> <li>• Enabling more people with graduate-level skills to start businesses – for example through business start-up foundation degrees and courses.</li> <li>• Improving the enterprise and employability of graduates through employability training (integrated into courses) and work experience placements.</li> <li>• Working with employers to up-skill their workforce through workforce development and increased take-up of foundation degrees.</li> <li>• Creating a service that will link people with higher-level skills to employment opportunities, especially in SMEs.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Regional Skills Partnership</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Learning and Skills Council, HEFCE, Advantage West Midlands, Rural Skills Partnership</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Universities, FE Colleges, Business Link/ Train to Gain, Specialist training providers, SSC network</p>	<p>More businesses employing the higher-skilled people needed to produce higher value added goods and services.</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of people employed in knowledge-based occupations in the private sector who have qualifications at NVQ Level 4 or above.</li> </ul>

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>1.8 Stimulating innovation, creativity and knowledge generation</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Take the West Midlands to the forefront of intellectual property development and drive forward the commercialisation of technical and non-technical knowledge and creativity within the region’s research institutions, the public sector and businesses.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The region has a strong research and development base within its universities, hospitals and other public sector institutions as well as its business and private sector R&amp;D facilities. These are underpinned by the Innovation and Technology Council and Birmingham’s status as a Science City supporting the common themes of transport technology, advanced materials, energy, medical technologies and digital media. We need to better utilise these knowledge assets and those of the region’s creative economy. Currently year-on-year spending on R&amp;D is falling and levels of total R&amp;D investment in the region are now the lowest of all the English regions. Our objective is to increase the commercialisation of opportunities generated by research institutions and businesses in the West Midlands, supported by increased development of intellectual property, access to appropriate finance and increased potential for public procurement to stimulate innovation.</p>	<p><b>1.8.1</b> Increase the volume of collaborative business-led research and development, leading to commercial exploitation and improved knowledge exchange between businesses and with universities and other knowledge providers. This will be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving business access to sources of knowledge and expertise through effective new mechanisms.</li> <li>• Increasing the capability of the research expertise in the region to meet the developing needs of business; where possible, aligning regional support and Science City activity with national funding opportunities through Research Councils and the Technology Strategy Board and with European Union Framework 7 funding priorities.</li> <li>• Developing Science City demonstrator projects to provide pre-procurement feasibility for new technology.</li> <li>• Increasing the number of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships and similar schemes that encourage transfer and placement of staff and students with businesses.</li> <li>• Developing simple ways to encourage businesses to engage with universities, e.g. the INDEX project, providing innovation vouchers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Innovation &amp; Technology Council</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Birmingham Science City Partnership Board, HEFCE, WMHEA, Research Councils, High Technology Corridors, UKTI, NHS West Midlands</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Universities, Research Associations, Local Authorities, High Technology Corridors, Business Clusters, Business Link, MAS</p>	<p>Increased turnover generated by new products and services. Increased R&amp;D collaboration between business and with universities.</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business expenditure on research and development as a percentage of regional GVA.</li> <li>• Percentage of turnover attributable to innovation (new/improved products or processes).</li> <li>• Total HEI income from business and community interactions.</li> </ul>

### 3. The Actions – Business

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing an Innovation Advisory Service that provides high-calibre support to identify and overcome barriers to innovation in target companies with significant growth potential.</li> <li>• Encouraging open innovation where business-to-business collaboration increases innovation, for example by encouraging confidential knowledge exchange at early stages of technology development.</li> <li>• Developing the West Midlands' first Academic Medical Centre for research, teaching and medical services.</li> </ul>		
	<p><b>1.8.2</b> Facilitate the creation, development and commercialisation of new product and service concepts by providing access to appropriate sources of finance complemented by high-quality support services. This will be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing regional Proof of Concept funding for early-stage enterprises and universities, ensuring finance proposals are 'investment' ready.</li> <li>• Increasing take-up of appropriate sources of finance including Grants for Research and Development (GRD) and R&amp;D tax credits.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Regional Finance Forum</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Innovation and Technology Council, High Technology Corridors</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Finance providers, Universities, Business Link</p>	

### 3. The Actions – Place

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>Strategic objective – Increasing Birmingham’s competitiveness</b></p> <p>Birmingham, and its surrounding urban area, is a key driver of the West Midlands economy with a concentration of economically significant assets (such as universities, an internationally recognised financial and business services sector, and internationally recognised business tourism attractions). This agglomeration of assets, including major transport interchanges, brings people not just to the city but to the West Midlands as a whole and opens up international markets in which the whole of the region can compete. It therefore plays an important role in shaping the perception of the region as a gateway for visitors, investors, business and potential new residents. We need to support the ongoing development of Birmingham to ensure that it remains economically competitive; we also need to promote the city as a regional capital and global city that aspires to a resource-efficient and low-carbon economy capable of taking advantage of, and resilient to, climate change.</p>			
<p><b>2.1 Birmingham competing as a global city</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Promote Birmingham to encourage investment and development and improve its competitive standing as a global city and asset for the region as a whole.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Many of the images and associations of the West Midlands in the UK and internationally are based on Birmingham. The city has a concentration of economically and culturally significant assets that attract people to the region. However, perceptions amongst outsiders are often weak, partial and outdated. As the leading city in the region and our one internationally recognised economic powerhouse, Birmingham plays a hugely important role in shaping more up-to-date perceptions of the region among visitors, investors, business and potential new residents. Supporting Birmingham will therefore enable the city to function as a competitive hub and gateway to the region, which will need to evolve with time to meet changing needs, so that Birmingham can continue to be a globally significant city for the benefit of the region as a whole.</p>	<p><b>2.1.1</b> Support the continued investment in, and promotion of, Birmingham as an international brand for the benefit of the region as a whole, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognising and supporting Birmingham as a key economic driver for the benefit of the region as a whole through, for example, promoting its major investment sites (e.g. Longbridge and Eastside), and its international connections.</li> <li>• Building on our reputation as a global player in business tourism.</li> <li>• Promoting Birmingham as a regional centre for leisure, residential and business investment.</li> <li>• Developing the creative and cultural offer of the city to differentiate it nationally and internationally.</li> <li>• Raising the quality of the environment and existing and new landmark developments, attractions, events, public realm, and facilities and implementing the City Centre Action Plan.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Birmingham City Council</p> <p><b>Support:</b> City Region Board, Chamber of Commerce, Regional Assembly, Advantage West Midlands, Birmingham Economic Development Partnership, City Strategic Partnership, Regeneration Zone Board, Tourism West Midlands, Birmingham Forward, UKTI, Culture West Midlands</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Birmingham City Council, BEDP/BSP, Marketing Birmingham, UKTI</p>	<p>Birmingham to be recognised internationally as a leading centre for investment, financial and business services, and business tourism.</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitors from outside the UK staying overnight in the former West Midlands county (thousands).</li> <li>• Visitors from outside the UK staying overnight in the former West Midlands county (thousands).</li> </ul>

### 3. The Actions – Place

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrating Birmingham’s role and potential as the region’s financial and business centre of international significance.</li> <li>• Promoting Science City to demonstrate the capabilities of the city and the surrounding region in research and learning.</li> <li>• Striving for a city that takes advantage of a low-carbon future and increases its resilience to environmental change.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Delivery:</b> Birmingham City Council, BEDP/BSP, Marketing Birmingham, UKTI</p>	
<p><b>Strategic objective – Improving infrastructure</b></p> <p>Competitive regional economies require a comprehensive portfolio of infrastructure to support economic growth, which must be invested in and continuously improved to maintain competitiveness. Provision of transport, housing, land and property, and encouraging the use of technology, must be aligned with the economic needs of the region while recognising the impact and responses required to meet the growing environmental challenge. More effective management and use of our infrastructure, including both transport and ICT, as well as more efficient use of our resources, including our natural environment, water and energy, is therefore key to ensuring that the region remains a competitive place to visit, live, work and do business.</p>			
<p><b>2.2 Improving transport and communications to increase accessibility, efficiency and competitiveness</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Enable business and people to access markets, opportunities, jobs and services by improving the efficiency, reliability and capacity of the region’s transport and communication networks. This will mean making the best use of existing networks, increasing the availability of public transport for example, and maximising the use of technology and new infrastructure where required and appropriate. This will not only improve internal and external connections, but will help the region achieve its aim to be more efficient in its resource use.</p>	<p><b>2.2.1</b> Promote the early delivery of economically significant and strategic transport projects that improve accessibility, business competitiveness and visitor perceptions and encourage residents, visitors and businesses to adopt sustainable travel practices. This includes the strategically important gateways into the region (e.g. improvements to Birmingham New Street Station and the extension of the runway at Birmingham International Airport to support business-to-business travel).</p>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Regional Transport Partnership</p> <p><b>Support:</b> West Midlands Regional Assembly, Department for Transport, City Region Board, Local Authorities, PTAs, Midlands Architecture and Designed Environment (MADE), Rural Access to Services Partnerships</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Network Rail, Rail franchises, Airport, Dept of Transport, Local Authorities, Highways Agency</p>	<p>The West Midlands will be a well connected region. Adoption of transport and ICT technologies will support improved competitiveness.</p>

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>Rationale:</b> The West Midlands is located at the centre of the country's transport network and has excellent air, rail and road links. However, this advantageous central location is being threatened by increasing congestion on the road networks and overcrowding on the rail networks leading to longer journey times and a drop in the reliability of transport services. This is limiting the opportunities for business and people to reach markets, services and jobs, increasing costs to business and negatively impacting on our environment. Our focus will therefore be on more efficient use of the existing network to improve competitiveness while reducing the impact of a major source of carbon emissions. The West Midlands now has comprehensive access to entry-level broadband, and second-generation access is being delivered where it is commercially viable to do so. These and other available technologies can play a crucial part in reducing pressure on the transport system and promoting the region's competitiveness, if more businesses can be encouraged to adopt and exploit them.</p>	<p><b>2.2.2</b> Encourage the adoption of existing and future technology infrastructure in ways that improve the region's competitiveness, in particular by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Driving up the take-up and use of the current ICT infrastructure, including broadband.</li> <li>• Encouraging the use of new technologies that will enable businesses to maximise efficiencies, access new markets and respond to new opportunities.</li> <li>• Looking to pioneer new technological transport solutions that will improve the efficiency of the transport network and help achieve a low-carbon future.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> ICT Steering Group, Regional Transport Partnership</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Rural Affairs Forum, Local Authorities</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Department of Transport, Individual cluster-specific organisations, Local Authorities, Private sector providers</p>	<p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average vehicle delay (minutes per 10 vehicle miles) for the slowest 10% of journeys on the strategic road network.</li> <li>• Percentage of all trips made by public transport.</li> <li>• Total fuel consumption for road transport per head of population (Kg per person).</li> </ul>

### 3. The Actions – Place

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>2.3 Sustainable management and utilisation of our land and property assets</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Ensure an appropriate supply of employment land and premises which accords with the region’s economic and spatial priorities as well as meeting the needs of business and communities.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The geography of the West Midlands is one of our greatest assets, performing a variety of roles from commercial to residential purposes, and from agricultural production to culture and leisure. This environmental diversity is a critical factor in helping us realise the region’s future growth objectives. In order to make optimal use of its physical resources, the region needs to remove the barriers to the re-use of brownfield land and rejuvenation of premises, while supporting attractive communities and competitive business locations.</p>	<p><b>2.3.1</b> Maximising opportunities for achieving economic growth by removing barriers that prevent the productive recycling and development of brownfield land (and waste materials associated with such land), and that restrict wider economic growth, broader regeneration and private sector investment – particularly those barriers relating to site assembly and finance.</p> <p><b>2.3.2</b> Safeguard and manage our natural and agricultural assets effectively while continuing to support the innovative use and management of our land in response to the region’s challenges, needs and aspirations.</p>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Advantage West Midlands</p> <p><b>Support:</b> West Midlands Regional Assembly, Local Strategic Partnerships</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Advantage West Midlands, Developers, EP, Local Authorities</p> <p><b>Lead:</b> Natural England, Advantage West Midlands, Environment Agency</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Rural Affairs Forum</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Rural Hubs, Advantage West Midlands, Forestry Commission, SSFF, RDPE, Community and voluntary organisations, AONBs, National Park</p>	<p>The portfolio of land and property will be responsive to demand and we will have utilised our brownfield land as an asset in meeting that demand.</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of land used for developments which was previously developed.</li> </ul>

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>2.4 Supporting a secure, low-carbon energy infrastructure for the region</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Encourage more efficient use of resources and promote economic growth through the secure development, production and efficient use of our energy infrastructure.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The environmental impact of a changing climate will place considerable strains on our economy. The security and cost of our energy supply, carbon constraint, and the threat of increased demand from people and businesses in the region, pose particular risks. Managing the impact of climate change, and responding to threats to future growth in a sustainable way, is key to ensuring that the region can prosper in the long term.</p>	<p><b>2.4.1</b> Support the development of secure, low-carbon energy and resource infrastructure that supports efficiency in energy use, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting decentralised energy infrastructure that enables efficiency in energy production, supply and use.</li> <li>• Encourage the uptake of low-carbon forms of energy, reflecting the geographical constraints and opportunities in the region, through a positive approach to planning and procurement.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Energy West Midlands</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Local Authorities, Utility providers, Advantage West Midlands, Energy Saving Trust, Carbon Trust</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Local Authorities, Utility providers</p>	<p>The West Midlands will have a secure supply of energy, with efficient transmission and use within the region resulting in increased competitiveness and reduced climate impact.</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carbon dioxide emissions (kg carbon) per resident.</li> </ul>

### Strategic objective – Sustainable communities

Successful, thriving and growing economies require a network of high-quality, sustainable urban and rural communities which attract and retain a diverse and thriving workforce, encourage enterprise, provide access to services and are designed to the highest quality.

<p><b>2.5 Developing sustainable communities</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Encourage a network of high-quality, attractive, and sustainable urban and rural communities which attract and retain a diverse and thriving workforce contributing to, and prospering from, the region's growing economy as well as having access to necessary amenities and a good quality of life.</p>	<p><b>2.5.1</b> Deliver a sustainable balance and pattern of development and growth throughout the West Midlands, including both Urban and Rural Renaissance, and complementing the priorities of the RSS, to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to services, employment, and skills throughout all our communities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Advantage West Midlands, Regional Planning Body</p> <p><b>Support:</b> West Midlands Local Government Association, Local Strategic Partnerships, City-region Board</p>	<p>The West Midlands will consist of a range of urban and rural communities that will retain and attract residents, workers businesses, and investors to the region.</p>
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### 3. The Actions – Place

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>Rationale:</b> Successful, thriving and growing economies require a balanced and coordinated approach to housing and employment land development. This balance must be achieved across the region’s diverse pattern of urban and rural communities in a way that reduces transport demands and energy use, meets people’s evolving residential needs, and contributes to an environmentally efficient and well designed physical environment. Families and businesses will be attracted to communities which offer access to services, where all crime, including that against the person and business is low, and which are welcoming to all sections of society.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing in the way it will contribute to place-making; creating vibrant communities; improving the environment; and facilitating economic growth and regeneration.</li> <li>• Transport systems that will connect our people with opportunity and services, as well as our physical places.</li> <li>• Our market towns that act as hubs of enterprise, skills and service delivery in ways that support the delivery of wider Rural Renaissance and tackle dispersed disadvantage in rural communities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Delivery:</b> LAs LSPs CENTRO, Local Planning Authorities, Highways Agency, Network Rail, Home Builders Federation</p>	<p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional variation in the ratio of gross weekly pay of those living in a local authority area to that of those working in the same area.</li> <li>• Regional variation in Housing Affordability Index.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>2.5.2</b> Improving the quality of our region as a place to live, work and invest in by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating a quality physical and built environment.</li> <li>• Raising design, building and environmental quality standards in the design of buildings and of space and settings.</li> <li>• Encouraging sustainability through the efficient use of our resources.</li> <li>• Bringing under-utilised buildings back into use.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Advantage West Midlands, Regional Planning Body</p> <p><b>Support:</b> RegenWM, EP, Housing Corporation, Midlands Architecture and Designed Environment (MADE), Urban Vision North Staffordshire (UVNS), Learning and Skills Council, Local Strategic Partnerships</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Local Authorities, English Partnerships, Housing Corporation, RegenWM</p>	

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>2.6 Regenerating our most deprived communities</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Regenerate and support the sustainable development and growth of our most deprived areas, developing links with economic and employment opportunity and bolstering cohesion. Our aim is not to deliver short-term benefits but to plan interventions that meet the regeneration challenge and achieve long-term economic goals.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The region has a significant number of highly deprived communities which demand a co-ordinated and holistic approach to regeneration. Business performance, poor environmental conditions, low-quality housing, lack of affordable housing, limited transport links, and a lack of enterprise (including social enterprise) commonly stand out as key factors holding these areas and individuals back from achieving their potential. Low educational attainment and skills, poor health, low levels of employability and limited aspirations tend to compound these physical challenges. The diverse and changing nature of the population in our deprived areas poses a specific challenge in addressing economic inclusion, ensuring community cohesion and providing equality of access to facilities and services. To deliver economic growth and prosperity for the benefit of all, we must focus on the sustainable growth of our most deprived areas, developing links into economic and employment opportunities and ensuring the engagement of local people, communities and employers in the process.</p>	<p><b>2.6.1</b> Encourage the sustainable regeneration of our most disadvantaged communities, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significantly raising overall opportunity enterprise levels, including social enterprise, especially where current levels of enterprise and investment are low.</li> <li>• Increasing the development of, and access to, community assets that enable community capacity building, access to, and greater community ownership for the benefit of local people.</li> </ul> <p><b>2.6.2</b> Ensure that the physical environment of our region adds value to our population's quality of life and wellbeing via the forward planning of activity, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting the current and future needs of local people by ensuring that their aspirations are recognised and met in the development process.</li> <li>• The masterplanning and innovative design (e.g. designing out crime) of key areas where dedicated regeneration resources are required.</li> <li>• Encouraging the use of local labour and investment in the skills and training of local people in the building of new developments and also in the end-use of those developments, to deliver sustainable regeneration outcomes for local communities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> West Midlands Local Government Association, West Midlands Regional Assembly</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Local Strategic Partnerships, City Region Board, West Midlands Social Enterprise Network, Regional Action West Midlands, Regional Economic Inclusion Panel, CultureWM, Business Link</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Local Authorities, Advantage West Midlands, Regeneration Zones, Development Trusts Association, Business Link</p> <p><b>Lead:</b> West Midlands Local Government Association, West Midlands Regional Assembly, RegenWM</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Regional Skills Partnership, Learning and Skills Council, Advantage West Midlands, LSPs, Regional Economic Inclusion Panel, Midlands Architecture and Designed Environment (MADE), Urban Vision North Staffordshire (UVNS)</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Local Authorities, Regeneration Zones, Learning and Skills Council, Job Centre Plus, Advantage West Midlands</p>	<p>Our deprived communities will have benefited from a holistic approach to regeneration. The approach will have improved the physical infrastructure of our deprived areas and will have improved quality of life and access to services and opportunities.</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of working age benefit recipients who live in the most deprived 20% of super output areas.</li> <li>• Proportion of super output areas in the 10% most deprived nationally on the new economic deprivation index.</li> <li>• Rural disadvantage indicator (to be developed).</li> </ul>

### 3. The Actions – Place

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>2.7 Maximising our cultural offer and natural assets</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Accelerate the attraction, relocation and retention of visitors, people and businesses into the region by promoting our high quality of life, strong heritage and cultural offer, as well as our tourism and rural assets, to maximise benefits for the region as a whole.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> The drive to attract ambitious people and businesses is becoming more intense and is increasingly driven by quality-of-life factors as well as the commercial market. Drivers such as the natural environment, our woodlands, rural areas, our heritage offer, visitor attractions, and cultural pursuits are all increasingly important in attracting visitors, new residents, and businesses to a region. The West Midlands’ cultural, heritage and natural assets, taking in the Royal Shakespeare Company, CBSO, Alton Towers, the Peak District, Cotswolds and Wye Valley all represent assets that the region can promote. Along with its social and ethnic diversity, these are significant elements of the region’s competitive offer which can support economic growth, if they are championed and continually supplemented.</p>	<p><b>2.7.1</b> Attract and retain residents, businesses, and visitors by providing an improved quality of life and offer, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a cultural, sporting and quality-of-life offer that brings people to the region and encourages people to stay.</li> <li>• Utilising beacon tourism assets to significantly enhance and add value to the region’s visitor economy.</li> <li>• Promoting and developing major business tourism destinations and events that advertise the region, highlight business growth opportunities, and attract secondary visits.</li> <li>• Packaging our assets in an appropriate way that adds value to key attractors, creates a more enticing visitor offer and leads to increased lengths of stay and increased visitor spend.</li> <li>• Capitalising on the region’s natural assets, particularly where they coincide with public interest and economic opportunity.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Tourism West Midlands</p> <p><b>Support:</b></p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Advantage West Midlands, Destination Management Partnerships, Culture West Midlands, Art Council for England, NEC Group, City Region Board, Marketing Birmingham, Screen West Midlands, Film Birmingham, National Park, Natural England, Wildlife Trust</p>	<p>The cultural offer and natural assets of the West Midlands will retain and attract businesses and people to the region.</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of adults engaging in more than one cultural sector during the year.</li> <li>• Amount spent (£million) by visitors to the region for holiday/leisure purposes.</li> <li>• Natural environment indicator (to be developed).</li> </ul>

### 3. The Actions – People

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>Strategic objective – Sustainable living</b></p> <p>Long-term shifts in the region’s environmental impact must be driven by changes to underlying patterns of consumption and demand. Changes in patterns of travel, waste production, energy use and overall consumption will encourage businesses to adapt their methods and stimulate the supply of lower-impact goods and services.</p>			
<p><b>3.1 Changing attitudes to sustainability and consumption</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Encourage and help people at home and at work to shift choices and patterns of consumption, procurement, and travel and take advantage of goods and services which are sustainable into the long term.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> To meet UK targets for reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, the West Midlands must consider the three key sources of emissions: the home, transport and the economy. The region must take a proactive lead in shifting business, consumer and public sector consumption and procurement to meet the growing supply of low-impact products and processes. For the West Midlands to be at the forefront of the low-carbon agenda, attitudes and choices need to focus on alternative patterns of travel, new consumer products, increased use of technology, changes in working practices, promotion of healthy working practices, small-scale energy production through renewables and investment in energy reduction.</p>	<p><b>3.1.1</b> Encourage people at work, through better information, advice and guidance, to adopt new and creative practices through improvements in technology, changes in working culture and new approaches to procurement which support greater sustainability in energy and resource consumption, including water and waste management, and more healthy lifestyles (e.g. through Science City and other public sector demonstrator projects and procurement driving demand on housing, etc.).</p>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Sustainable Development Commission, Sustainability West Midlands Centre for Excellence</p> <p><b>Support:</b></p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Local Authorities, Envirowise, Carbon BITC, Travelwise, Universities, Community and voluntary sector</p>	<p>People and employers are making daily positive choices that result in lasting economic, social and environmental benefits for themselves and the region.</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of people usually working from home or travelling to work using sustainable means of transport.</li> <li>• Percentage of household waste which is recycled or composted.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>3.1.2</b> Encourage people at home and at leisure, through better information and awareness-raising activities, to demand low-carbon housing, transport and consumer products. Encourage lifestyle changes which shift the region towards more sustainable patterns of energy consumption, to support regional supply chains and improve overall efficiency and accessibility (e.g. through Science City and other public sector demonstrator projects and procurement driving demand on housing, etc.).</p>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Sustainable Development Commission, West Midlands Regional Assembly, Sustainability West Midlands</p> <p><b>Support:</b></p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Local Authorities, Energy Savings Trust, Tourism West Midlands, Travelwise, Universities</p>	

## 3. The Actions – People

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>Strategic objective – Raising ambitions and aspirations</b></p> <p>To become a higher value added, more inclusive region we need to create a more positive attitude to work and a stronger culture of life-long learning and continuous development throughout all people of the West Midlands. This involves raising the aspirations of people at all skills levels, in and out of work from cradle to grave. This change has to be driven by inspirational leaders, and the removal of barriers that prevent investment in skills, employment and continuous development leading to a general rise in the aspirations and ambitions of everyone in the region.</p>			
<p><b>3.2 Raising aspirations of leaders and managers</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Ensure that the region has the highest-quality leaders and managers who are able to inspire people to drive innovation, enterprise and productivity and make the most of their skills and talents.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> In the highly competitive global markets where West Midlands businesses need to succeed, attracting, retaining and utilising high-quality leaders and managers who reflect the diversity of the region and its changing demography is absolutely critical. Knowledge-based businesses and those in competitive and highly complex markets need to call upon world-class leadership and decision-making skills. The UK economy has some world-class business leaders but a long tail of weaker-performing business leaders and managers. The West Midlands is no different; indeed average earnings for managers are markedly below UK levels. The region's pockets of excellence need to be exploited and extended in order to reach into those sectors, markets and local communities which currently fall short.</p>	<p><b>3.2.1</b> Work with businesses and business support networks such as Sector Skills Councils to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and deliver communications, marketing and employer engagement strategies that stimulate more employer investment in leadership and management skills and address key barriers to investment, through raising awareness of the business benefits and creating a demand-led, more responsive provider base.</li> <li>• Establish a demand-led training, gateway and brokerage “offer.” Fully integrate the leadership and management support within the new business and skills brokerage service and improve access. Build the capacity of the brokers and training providers to enable them to offer a flexible and responsive service.</li> <li>• Work with employers to gain a better understanding of how investment in leadership and management skills can improve business performance and disseminate evidence to employers and training providers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Regional Skills Partnership including Chambers, SSCs, EEF</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Advantage West Midlands, Enterprise Board, Learning and Skills Council, HEFCE</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Business Link/Train to Gain brokers in partnership with FE, HE, SSCs</p>	<p>An increase in business performance as a result of more leaders and managers gaining the inspirational skills they need to make the most of opportunities in the global market and get the best results from their people.</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No suitable indicator currently available.</li> </ul>

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>3.3 Driving up ambition and aspiration</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Create a culture of employment, enterprise and learning throughout the region, remove the barriers that prevent investment in skills; raise aspirations and ambitions for skills, employment and continuous personal development that meets the growing demands of the economy and inspires all young people and adults to grow and make the best of their talents and opportunities.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Too many people in the West Midlands either have low ambitions and aspirations or encounter too many barriers preventing them realising their ambitions and contributing to economic prosperity. As a result too many people are out of work, too many people both in and out of work do not have the higher-level skills needed to raise productivity and there is an insufficiently entrepreneurial culture.</p>	<p><b>3.3.1</b> Establish a clearer understanding of the barriers that prevent people in and out of work from seeking employment, becoming more enterprising and acquiring the skills they need for employment and continuous professional development. Use this knowledge to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove barriers to progression for vocational learners.</li> <li>• Support intensive approaches in the workplace. Raise aspirations and enable everyone in work to continue to grow and add more value.</li> <li>• Tackle identified barriers to economic activity and enterprise, in particular, in the most deprived areas and communities focusing on care and health factors alongside skills and aspirations and travel-to-work hurdles.</li> <li>• Use good practice and innovative methods to communicate effectively with adults and young people across the region and to influence their decision-making processes concerning their careers and training choices. Focus more on exposing people to interesting career opportunities and opportunities to progress.</li> <li>• Communicate more effectively and engage better with local communities to build their capacity to influence and change attitudes.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> (Regional) Regional Skills Partnership and Economic Inclusion Panel (to be established) (Local, specialised or sectoral) Employment &amp; Skills Boards, Ethnic Minority Business Forum</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Learning and Skills Council, Jobcentre Plus, HEFCE, Local Education Authorities, Regional Action West Midlands, Aim Higher, SSCs</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Local Authorities, Local Strategic Partnerships, Regeneration Zones, Community &amp; voluntary sector, Rural Access to Services Partnerships, Youth organisations</p>	<p>People and employers in the region are interested in and committed to learning and progression. There will be more people in higher value added jobs (in particular an increase from under-represented groups), a reduction in worklessness/economic inactivity, and more young people will leave school and enter a job with training or further education having been inspired to reach their full potential.</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of people who are already, or have thought about becoming, self-employed/business owners.</li> <li>• Percentage of working-age population qualified to NVQ level 2 or higher.</li> <li>• Percentage of 16- and 17-year-olds participating in education and work-based learning.</li> </ul>

### 3. The Actions – People

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
	<p><b>3.3.2</b> Employers need to provide more information about employment opportunities and the skills they ‘value’ and more information about the range of choices available to young people and adults already in work.</p>	<p><b>Lead:</b> (Regional) Regional Skills Partnership and Economic Inclusion Panel (to be established) (Local, specialised or sectoral) Employment &amp; Skills Boards, Ethnic Minority Business Forum</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Learning and Skills Council, Jobcentre Plus, HEFCE, Local Authorities</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Local Authorities, Local Strategic Partnerships, Regeneration Zones, Community &amp; voluntary sector, Rural Access to Services Partnerships, Youth organisations, SSCs</p>	
<p><b>Strategic objective – Achieving full potential and opportunities for all</b></p> <p>Raise the skill levels of all to increase employment opportunities and meet demand for higher-level skills in the workplace, by providing better information and intelligence about the current and future skills needs of employers and better access to appropriate training at work and in local communities.</p>			
<p><b>3.4 Skills for employment and enterprise</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Increase levels of employment in higher value added jobs and reduce economic inactivity – particularly in the region’s most disadvantaged areas – by ensuring that, once people’s aspirations have been raised, and barriers removed, they are better able to gain the skills they need for employment and progression to the higher value added jobs of the future.</p>	<p><b>3.4.1</b> It is essential that people are better informed about the opportunities for work and progression. Key actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure young people and adults can access the skills and competencies they need to move into work and to improve their productivity and opportunities for progression in work.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> (Regional) Regional Skills Partnership and Economic Inclusion Panel (to be established), Local and specific target groups, Employment &amp; Skills Boards and Ethnic Minority Business Forum</p>	<p>There is an appropriate mix of skills available for the employment opportunities in the region and to allow for future developments.</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of jobs subject to either a skills gap or a skills shortage.</li> </ul>

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>Rationale:</b> Too many are under-qualified, particularly when compared to other regions. The West Midlands has the highest proportion of non-qualified workers in England and a deficit is apparent across all qualification levels from NVQ Level 2 to level 5 and beyond. These trends are creating poor productivity in the region as well as feeding the low level of economic activity which accounts for around 20% of the region's £10bn output gap. The West Midlands must ensure that every adult and young person has basic skills for employability and opportunities to progress to higher value added jobs and skills. There must be a particular focus on worklessness in the region's urban centres, particularly around Birmingham, the Black Country and Stoke-on-Trent. Overall, the West Midlands needs to reduce the number of adults of working age with no formal qualifications by 230,000, play its part in meeting the national goal of improving the basic skills of 2.25m adults by 2010 and increase the overall numbers of people with intermediate and higher skills at levels 3, 4 and 5.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respond proactively to evolving demographic patterns to ensure a strong match of skills and education alongside recruitment and retention practices to create appropriate and attainable employment opportunities for all – with a particular focus on deprived areas including through City Strategy.</li> </ul> <p><b>3.4.2</b> Enhance the vocational training and development opportunities for all adults and young people. Implement the 14/19 diploma. Provide easier access to more flexible learning opportunities for people in and out of work.</p>	<p><b>Support:</b> Learning and Skills Council, European Structural Fund Monitoring Committee, Local Authorities, City Region Board, Rural Skills Partnership</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Local Authorities, Jobcentre Plus, PCT, Regeneration Zones, Sector Skills Councils, Community and voluntary sector</p> <p><b>Lead:</b> Regional Skills Partnership</p> <p><b>Support:</b></p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Local Authorities, Jobcentre Plus, LSC, Regeneration Zones, Sector Skills Councils</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Skills Performance Index.</li> </ul>

### 3. The Actions – People

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>3.5 Defining employability</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Respond proactively to evolving economic needs and demographic patterns to ensure a strong match between skills requirements and learning opportunities by ensuring that employers articulate their current and future skill needs and make full and effective use of all the skills and talents within our diverse and dynamic population.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Economic opportunities and employer requirements are continually evolving and becoming more complex. At the same time, demographic and social changes will have a profound impact on the scale and quality of the region's workforce. Better intelligence is required to ensure the supply of and demand for human resources stays in balance. Employers need to play their part by providing information and intelligence about their current and future skill needs. They also need to be supported to tap into the talents and competencies in the region, to promote healthy workplaces and to champion equality and diversity in the workplace.</p>	<p><b>3.5.1</b> Employers must play a part by providing information and intelligence about their current and future skills needs and working through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved career advice, guidance and job brokerage services to enable a better match between supply and demand.</li> <li>• Work search and preparation activities, including work experience placements.</li> <li>• Playing an active role with Sector Skills Councils in the development of qualifications that meet their business needs.</li> </ul> <p><b>3.5.2</b> We also need to raise awareness among employers in key markets about the opportunities and challenges of an ageing workforce, increased patterns of migration, emerging young entrants to the labour market and an increasingly ethnically diverse employee base. We need to support programmes aimed at encouraging employers to promote healthy workplaces and champion equality and diversity in the workplace.</p>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Regional Skills Partnership</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Learning and Skills Council, Advantage West Midlands, HEFCE</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> WMBC, SSCs, Chambers, JCP</p> <p><b>Lead:</b> (Regional) Regional Skills Partnership and Economic Inclusion Panel (to be established), (Local and sector specific) Employment &amp; Skills Boards, Ethnic Minority Business Forum</p> <p><b>Support:</b></p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Local Authorities, Business Link, Chambers of Commerce, Regeneration Zones</p>	<p>A culture of continuous professional development will be established in businesses across the region that will drive up business competitiveness and productivity.</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difference between working age employment rate for white and non-white ethnic groups.</li> <li>• Difference between employment rate for people aged between 50 and retirement age and for the rest of the working-age population.</li> <li>• Difference between employment rate for people with a disability and for the rest of the working-age population.</li> </ul>

### 3. The Actions – Powerful Voice

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<b>Strategic objective – Powerful Voice for the West Midlands</b>			
<p>The West Midlands’ prosperity and growth requires articulate and convincing advocacy of its needs, challenges and priorities. With a strong voice and a compelling evidence base, the region can begin to attract increased investment, stimulate greater levels of ambition and animate support for its economic vision.</p>			
<p><b>4.1 Improving the evidence base for policy</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Understand, share and deploy information about the development of the region to help refine, monitor and evaluate strategy and the implementation of policy.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Successful regions are able to understand and articulate the factors that influence their development at local, sub-regional and regional scale. They use this information to develop, refine, monitor and evaluate strategy and the implementation of policy. A strong and shared evidence base is also vital in developing common approaches to regional issues and in influencing important decision-makers within and outside the region.</p>	<p><b>4.1.1</b> Develop the evidence base needed to support regional strategies and delivery mechanisms by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Producing a full update of the State of the Region report by the West Midlands Regional Observatory.</li> <li>• Developing an effective and integrated framework for monitoring progress against regional strategies at regional and sub-regional level.</li> <li>• Developing a programme of research to extend and deepen the evidence base.</li> <li>• Enhancing the region’s capability to realistically model the impacts of proposed policy developments.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Advantage West Midlands and West Midlands Regional Assembly</p> <p><b>Support:</b> All support and delivery partners</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> West Midlands Regional Observatory</p>	<p>Policy and strategy development at regional, sub-regional and local levels is evidence based, informed by a common understanding of the current situation in the region and experience of ‘what does and doesn’t work.’</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No suitable indicators currently available.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>4.1.2</b> Building understanding of what does and doesn’t work by sharing experience and best practice to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote collaborative working in the development of the evidence base.</li> <li>• Improve access to the growing regional evidence base.</li> <li>• Evaluate progress against milestones, targets and measures of success for key strategies and interventions.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Advantage West Midlands and West Midlands Regional Assembly</p> <p><b>Support:</b> All support and delivery partners</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> West Midlands Regional Observatory, RegenWM</p>	

### 3. The Actions – Powerful Voice

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>4.2 Engaging with UK, European and international decision-makers</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Pursue effective engagement with, and seek to influence, decision-makers in government, business and other organisations at national and international levels to benefit the region.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Successful regions are able to articulate and deploy information about the factors influencing their development to decision-makers in government, business, the third sector and other organisations at national and international levels. Whilst recognising the need for different parts of the region to make the most of their own individual assets or to argue their specific case, successful regions also know when to speak and act collectively, with one voice. For the West Midlands this is about a diverse region working together to realise its potential by maximising the value of its recognised assets in attracting business tourism, events and inward investment into the region.</p>	<p><b>4.2.1</b> Develop a network of strategic contacts, including the Regional Minister, capable of engaging with and influencing national government, the EU, other key strategic bodies and the broader business community through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The creation of coherent communication channels with West Midlands and national MPs, MEPs and other key influencers in line with regional strategic priorities.</li> <li>• Coordination of existing channels of communication with Europe, business and the third sector.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Advantage West Midlands</p> <p><b>Support and Delivery:</b> Business Council, European and International Affairs Partnership, West Midlands in Europe, West Midlands Regional Assembly, West Midlands Local Government Association, Local Authorities, Government Office for the West Midlands, UKTI, Rural Affairs Forum</p>	<p>The priorities for the region are effectively communicated to decision-makers and influence the decisions they take to the benefit of the region.</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No suitable indicators currently available.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>4.2.2</b> Use the networks to the benefit of the region by identifying areas for potential cooperation with neighbouring regions, or regions with shared interests, on issues of importance to the development of the West Midlands through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration on opportunity-led and needs-led projects that contribute to the development of the region (e.g. RFA submissions).</li> <li>• Partnerships that maximise the use of European funding within the region.</li> <li>• Joint working to influence local, regional, national and European policy and legislation to benefit the region.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Advantage West Midlands</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Business Council, European and International Affairs Partnership, West Midlands in Europe, West Midlands Regional Assembly, West Midlands Local Government Association, Local Authorities, Government Office for the West Midlands, UKTI</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Programme and needs led</p>	

What & Why? Strategic objective and priority	How? Action	Who? Lead, support & delivery partners	Expected outcome and related indicators
<p><b>4.3 Position the West Midlands as a global centre where people and businesses choose to connect</b></p> <p><b>Focus:</b> Develop and implement a strategy to promote the region and attract and retain potential new investors, businesses, visitors, students and residents.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> Successful places attract and retain people and businesses. One of the West Midlands' great strengths and opportunities is the diversity of people and place that comprise the region. We need to make the most of our local and sub-regional assets, but successful regions also know when and how to act collectively in a way that engages, reflects and energises all elements (for example by age, ethnicity and location) of the region's population. We need a strategy to ensure we achieve this.</p>	<p><b>4.3.1</b> Develop and implement a coordinated regional marketing and events strategy with support from key partners, which exploits all the region's branded assets and the developing West Midlands brand as appropriate by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing a regional marketing board.</li> <li>• Developing and delivering perception-changing campaigns targeting visitor, business, media and government audiences in the UK &amp; internationally.</li> <li>• Coordinating the marketing effort of partners and ensuring consistency of message and image.</li> <li>• Develop a federation of destination marketing services under the leadership of Tourism WM.</li> <li>• Maximising the international media profile and (business and leisure) tourism opportunities generated by the London 2012 Olympics &amp; Paralympics.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Advantage West Midlands</p> <p><b>Support and Delivery:</b> All members of the Regional Marketing Board (to be established) and any partner involved in the national or international promotion of all parts of the region</p>	<p>The region is widely perceived as a desirable place to invest, work, learn, visit and live, compared to relevant comparator regions.</p> <p>Progress to be measured using the following indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Perceptions Indicator (to be developed).</li> </ul>
	<p><b>4.3.2</b> Position Birmingham as the region's capital, for the benefit of every part of the region, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a proposition for Birmingham as the regional capital that demonstrates the city's value to every part of the region.</li> <li>• Applying proposition of Birmingham as regional capital across all appropriate campaigns and programmes, for the benefit of every part of the region.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Regional Marketing Board (to be established)</p> <p><b>Support:</b> All members of the Regional marketing Board</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Any partner involved in the national or international promotion of all parts of the region</p>	

## 4. Monitoring progress

Progress against previous versions of the WMES Action Plan was reviewed on an annual basis. For this updated Delivery Framework we intend to expand that process, not only reviewing progress but also updating the Framework every year. This should allow the Delivery Framework to become more of a 'living' document, sufficiently flexible to take account of changing needs and circumstances. This process will also need to take account of the outcomes from the sub-national review, referred to above.

### Components of the monitoring process

The monitoring process will comprise three main elements:

- i. An annual assessment of the progress made against each action – In the first instance, this will be undertaken by the lead partner(s) for each action but may be subject to third party verification. The assessment would also consider the need to modify the nature of the action itself.
- ii. An annual review of progress against the relevant outcome/contextual indicators – The Strategy identifies a set of outcome indicators to help assess progress. These indicators were selected on the basis of the 'expected outcomes' related to each of the Strategy's main priorities and detailed in the table of actions in Section 3 of this document. Wider contextual monitoring will also take place through the annual State of the Region Report. As with (i), this review of progress would also consider the need to modify the actions on the basis of progress against the outcome/contextual information.
- iii. Ongoing evaluation of programme and project impact – WMES Action Plan progress reporting to date has tended to focus on process rather than impact. In future, the monitoring process will also include results from evaluation of the impact of programmes and projects.

The monitoring information described above will feed into an annual cycle of progress reporting and review of the Delivery Framework. The proposed timetable is set out below. In addition to this annual cycle, the monitoring information will also be used to inform the overall review of the Strategy. The precise arrangements for this will depend on the timetable and process for developing the first single integrated regional strategy for the West Midlands.

### Proposed timetable

<b>December 2007</b>	Launch of revised WMES, comprising Strategy and draft Delivery Framework
<b>April 2008– March 2009</b>	First year of expenditure and activity against the framework
<b>April–June 2009</b>	Review progress against delivery framework and revise actions as necessary
<b>July 2009</b>	Publish 1st progress report and revised delivery framework
<b>April 2009– March 2010</b>	Second year of expenditure and activity against the framework
<b>April–June 2010</b>	Review progress against delivery framework and revise actions as necessary
<b>July 2010</b>	Publish 2nd progress report and revised delivery framework
<b>April 2010– March 2011</b>	Third year of expenditure and activity against the framework
<b>April–June 2011</b>	Review progress against delivery framework and revise actions as necessary
<b>July 2011</b>	Publish 3rd progress report and revised delivery framework

### Introduction

The West Midlands is a unique and diverse region. At its heart lie the major urban areas of Birmingham, Solihull, the Black Country and Coventry, with the North Staffordshire conurbation to the North. Surrounding the main urban areas are a series of Shire Counties with networks of towns and villages, some of which provide links and gateways to neighbouring regions. In practice, there are many and varied functional economic relationships between these different parts of the region – often overlapping in different ways and extending beyond the region's boundaries.

Whilst many areas across the West Midlands share similar characteristics and issues, there is also significant sub-regional variation in economic development. Moreover, different areas may require different approaches to achieve the same objective, based on local circumstances.

In recognition of these important sub-regional variations, the Strategy aims to:

- Provide clear leadership on the issues and opportunities affecting the West Midlands as a whole;
- Promote and support interventions that are best tackled at the regional level; and
- Provide a strong framework to guide and facilitate sub-regional economic development.

This appendix illustrates the contribution that sub-regions can make to delivering the Strategy. It is intended to be illustrative, not prescriptive. For this purpose, we have divided the region into five main sub-regions:

- Birmingham and Solihull
- The Black Country
- Coventry and Warwickshire
- Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin
- Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire

There is no presumption that these are the sub-regions through which the Strategy will be delivered in the longer term. Further work is required, in the context of the sub-national review of economic development and regeneration, to determine the most appropriate mechanisms for delivery at sub-regional and local level.

Stronger economic development and regeneration activity in every sub-region is crucial to the successful delivery of this Strategy. Beyond this, the specific contribution that each sub-region can make is summarised in the sections below. In each section, the most relevant related objectives of this Strategy are shown in italics.

### Birmingham and Solihull

#### Overview

Birmingham, at the heart of the City Region, is a major centre for economic activity and is heavy contributor to the regional and national economy. The city has a vibrant centre, a successful international airport acting as a key gateway to the West Midlands and many prosperous suburbs; but it also faces the challenge of social and economic inequalities and the need to regenerate many of its communities.

Birmingham's 20-year vision is to secure long-term sustainable growth in its population, rising from around 1 million people to a population of up to 1.1 million by 2026. Increased investment will provide 35,000 new employment opportunities from £13 billion worth of planned major developments over the next ten years. This will be achieved through the marketing and development of some 56 key investment sites, bringing a potential 370 hectares of land into economic use, and the delivery of the City Centre Masterplan, including the redevelopment of Birmingham New Street Station, and increased inward investment from China, India and North America.

Solihull plays a pivotal role within the region with strong links to both Birmingham and the surrounding area of Warwickshire. With Birmingham International Airport and the National Exhibition Centre within its boundaries, excellent access by both road and rail and a high quality of environment, the area is attractive to new investment which has helped Solihull experience rapid and significant economic growth.

### **Contribution of the sub-region to delivering the WMES**

#### *In relation to Business:*

- Sub-region wide activity capitalising on the low-carbon agenda, reducing business carbon emissions, exploiting markets and sectors with growth potential, harnessing process innovation and competing in markets. [Capitalising on sustainability and low-carbon opportunities]
- Promoting and developing Birmingham Science City, and the connection of UCE, Aston University and Birmingham University into knowledge transfer and business development (the Central Technology Belt). Increasing the number of graduates employed in the sub-region – particularly in the private sector and as start-ups (target of at least 1,500 additional graduates per year employed in smaller businesses in the sub-region). [Investing in high-value skills for the future economy and Stimulating innovation, creativity and knowledge generation]
- Driving up entrepreneurship and stimulating employer investment in skills and training, with extra effort focused on areas of need in the City Centre, Eastern and North West Birmingham, North Solihull. [Stimulating employer investment in skills and training and Creating sustainable new businesses]

#### *In relation to Place:*

- Supporting the development of the City Centre Masterplan and maximising the benefit of the BIA, ICC and NEC as prime assets for the region. [Birmingham competing as a global city]
- Emphasising the importance of New Street and BIA as gateways for the region, and the key part that they play in linking goods, people and services to markets. [Birmingham competing as a global city and Improving transport and communications to increase accessibility, efficiency and competitiveness]
- Targeting the most deprived areas of the sub-region, particularly in the City Centre, Eastern and North West Birmingham, and North Solihull. [Regenerating our most deprived communities]

#### *In relation to People:*

- Reducing worklessness and driving up levels of demand and supply of skills to achieve an overall increase in the numbers of people with the higher-level skills needed for the future economy of the sub-region. Focus action on worklessness on particular areas of need in Birmingham City Centre, Eastern and North West Birmingham, North Solihull. [Skills for employment and enterprise and Defining employability]
- Maximising opportunities for a highly diverse population. [Skills for employment and enterprise]
- Working with employers to develop the leadership and management skills they need to drive innovation and to improve business performance. A target of at least 800 additional leaders and managers each year to 2020 from private sector businesses aspiring to develop or grow their business, who increase their leadership and management skills and improve business performance. [Raising aspirations of leaders and managers]

## The Black Country

### Overview

The Black Country sub-region is composed of the four Black Country local authorities of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton. It is a multi-cultural community with a population of almost 1.1 million. The area has strong economic and transport linkages both with Birmingham and with the surrounding areas of South Staffordshire and Telford.

As the traditional industrial heartland of the region, the Black Country retains a strong manufacturing sector supporting 22% of total employment. However, over recent decades it has failed to attract the form of investment that is driving economic growth elsewhere in the UK and many people, particularly those with higher skills, have tended to leave the area. In response to this situation, a major in-depth study of the challenges facing the sub-region (the Black Country Study) was initiated in 2004 through a partnership of public and private sector interests, setting out a holistic approach to the regeneration of the area.

### Contribution of the sub-region to delivering the WMES

#### *In relation to Business:*

- Changing the occupational structure by creating more senior & professional occupations (60,000 more knowledge jobs in high value added businesses including manufacturing and logistics by 2031). Improve business performance through increasing employer demand and investment in skills and increasing the number of graduates employed in the sub-region – particularly in the private sector and as start-ups (initial target of at least 500 additional graduates per year employed in smaller businesses in the sub-region). [Investing in high-value skills for the future economy]
- Increasing the employment rate through the implementation of the Black Country Incubation Strategy and the creation of 63,000 new jobs and an 80% employment rate by 2031. [Creating sustainable new businesses and Skills for employment and enterprise]
- Diversifying the economy by attracting more knowledge-based industries; 160,000 new jobs by 2031 including 82,000 new jobs in Financial & Business Services. [Developing markets and sectors with most wealth and employment potential]

#### *In relation to Place:*

- Developing the four strategic centres (Wolverhampton, Walsall, West Bromwich and Brierley Hill) with 1.3 million sq m of additional office and a further 284,000 sq m of comparison retail floor space by 2031. [Sustainable management and utilisation of our land and property assets]
- Creating four Employment Land Investment Corridors to provide 2,200 ha of quality employment land including sites for future knowledge-based businesses. [Sustainable management and utilisation of our land and property assets]
- Creating new housing development along public transport corridors (served by rail, Metro and quality bus services) to address issues of low demand and social polarisation. [Improving transport and communications to increase accessibility, efficiency and competitiveness]
- Establishing the ‘Black Country as an Urban Park’ through the principles of beacons (highlighting the most distinctive characteristics) corridors (to facilitate sustainable movement) and communities (emphasising their distinctive character). [Developing sustainable communities]

#### *In relation to People:*

- Reversing population decline and achieving population growth to 1.2 million with 22% social class A/B (18% currently) by 2031. [Developing sustainable communities]
- Increasing the demand and supply of skills in the workforce. Improving the alignment between the supply and demand for skills with an overall upgrading of the skills of the workforce so that there are 100,000 fewer people with no qualifications and 60,000 more people with degrees by 2031. [Skills for employment and enterprise]

- Working with employers to develop the leadership and management skills they need to drive innovation and to improve business performance. A target of at least 650 additional leaders and managers each year to 2020 from private sector businesses aspiring to develop or grow their business, who increase their leadership and management skills and improve business performance. [Raising aspirations of leaders and managers]
- Establishing community cohesion as a central plank of the Black Country vision by treating diversity as a major opportunity, addressing the barriers to equality in education, labour and housing markets, health, policing, and the criminal justice system and tackling poverty as a theme in its own right. [Developing sustainable communities and Skills for employment and enterprise]

### Coventry and Warwickshire

#### **Overview**

With Coventry at its centre, this sub-region has strong structural and functional relationships running in a corridor from Nuneaton/Bedworth through Coventry to Warwick/Leamington. Within this North–South corridor there are significant contrasts between the less prosperous areas to the North and wealthier areas to the South. The southern part of the sub-region is one of the most economically buoyant parts of the West Midlands, being closest to the Milton Keynes/South Midlands Growth Area, London and the wider South-East region. This is reflected in strong growth pressures along the M40 corridor and to the South of Coventry where the expansion of Warwick University is acting as a catalyst for growth.

#### **Contribution of the sub-region to delivering the WMES**

##### *In relation to Business:*

- Developing the assets of the business base in the sub-region, in particular those linked to high technologies, digital technologies, high value added engineering and manufacturing, medical technologies and the creative industries. [Developing markets and sectors with most wealth and employment potential]
- Improving business performance by increasing employer demand and investment in skills and improving the alignment between the supply and demand for skills, with an overall upgrading of the skills of the workforce. Increasing the number of graduates employed in the sub-region – particularly in the private sector and as start-ups (initial target of at least 500 additional graduates per year employed in smaller businesses in the sub-region). [Stimulating employer investment in skills and training]
- Sub-regional activity supporting innovation and exploiting market opportunities in the climate change, environmental technologies and sustainable futures arena. [Capitalising on sustainability and low-carbon opportunities]

- Fostering enterprise and innovation, increasing the demand for higher-level skills and skills training, capitalising on the sub-region's reputation as the 'engine of growth' for the West Midlands. [Creating sustainable new businesses and Investing in high-value skills for the future economy]
- Developing and maximising the excellent knowledge base residing in the sub-region's two leading universities, particularly in respect of knowledge transfer to businesses and new business 'spin-outs', by supporting their work and growth ambitions and their contribution to innovation in helping SMEs embrace technology, innovation, enterprise and cluster growth. Both universities have significant roles to play in the Science City Agenda. [Stimulating innovation, creativity and knowledge generation]

***In relation to Place:***

- Focusing on vibrant city and town centres; supporting the development of Coventry city centre and Nuneaton town centre, along with support for the smaller market towns. [Developing sustainable communities]
- Helping to spread market confidence northwards through the Swanswell Initiative (which will help create 600 new jobs, 64 ha of mixed-use development and 2,000 new homes over the next 15 years). [Regenerating our most deprived communities]
- Supporting the modernisation and diversification of the sub-region through the proposed developments at Ansty, the promotion of key sites such as Browns Lane for high-value employment purposes, support for the creative sector in Leamington and Coventry as well as the wider development of Leamington as a high-value economy. [Developing markets and sectors with the most wealth and employment potential]
- Promoting the World Class Stratford initiative and the role of Stratford and the sub-region in the visitor economy; creating a positive image for the region. [Maximising our cultural offer and natural assets]
- Creating the conditions for sustainable communities by regenerating very deprived communities in the sub-region such as Camp Hill in Nuneaton. [Developing sustainable communities and Regenerating our most deprived communities]
- Promoting the added value of the linkages between the urban and rural economies and supporting the development of the regionally significant 'Home of Rural Excellence' at Stoneleigh Park. [Developing sustainable communities and Sustainable management and utilisation of our land and property assets]

***In relation to People:***

- Maximising the employment and enterprise opportunities created by the close proximity of the Coventry, Solihull & Warwickshire High Technology Corridor and the Coventry and Nuneaton Regeneration Zone. [Skills for employment and enterprise]
- Investing in skills to meet the demands of the future economy; developing a cradle to grave approach in key areas. Aligning the supply of training with the current and future skill needs of employers and the economy of the sub-region. Specific areas to be considered would be digital technologies, medical technologies, high-value automotive technologies and the emerging technologies associated with climate change. [Skills for employment and enterprise and Investing in high-value skills for the future economy]
- Working with employers to develop the leadership and management skills they need to drive innovation and to improve business performance. A target of at least 500 additional leaders and managers each year to 2020 from private sector businesses aspiring to develop or grow their business, who increase their leadership and management skills and improve business performance. [Raising aspirations of leaders and managers]
- Building on the opportunities created through Coventry's Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) programme. [Skills for employment and enterprise and Creating sustainable new businesses]

### Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin

#### Overview

The counties of Shropshire and Herefordshire make up the rural West of the region. Compared to the rest of the West Midlands, the population of the rural West is sparse and is generally accommodated in a range of different sized settlements in the form of market towns, villages and hamlets. The rural West has suffered economically as traditional rural industries and services have declined. A key challenge therefore is to secure a rural renaissance of both key settlements and the areas of countryside that surround them, i.e. as recognised by the designation of the Rural Regeneration Zone (RRZ) over much of the area.

Worcestershire is a mix of both rural and urban – towards the West it has a strong functional relationship with Herefordshire and is partially included within the Rural Regeneration Zone. The North and East of the county are strongly linked to Birmingham and the wider urban conurbation, providing a number of commuter towns along with key knowledge assets along the A38 corridor – culminating in Qinetiq in Malvern.

Telford is the largest urban area in the West Midlands (outside of the Major Urban Areas) and its function is generally one of a freestanding, self-contained employment area with localised travel-to-work and migration links to surrounding authorities such as Shrewsbury rather than significant longer-distance commuting patterns with the Black Country and Birmingham.

#### Contribution of the sub-region to delivering the WMES

##### *In relation to Business:*

- Supporting the burgeoning home enterprise sector by implementing bespoke enterprise support for groups and communities that face barriers to creating sustainable enterprises. [Creating sustainable new businesses]
- Learning the lessons from initiatives such as Herefordshire in Touch and Switch on Shropshire to increase the rural business take-up of broadband. [Investing in business processes and enterprise]
- Piloting a number of interventions that result in reduced carbon emissions in businesses and creating a sub-regional market for alternative sources of fuel. [Capitalising on sustainability and low-carbon opportunities]
- Diversifying the economy by building on knowledge assets at locations throughout the West of the region including the University of Worcester, Harper Adams College, University of Wolverhampton, Qinetiq and the Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Hospital. [Stimulating innovation, creativity and knowledge generation]
- Further development of the Wolverhampton–Telford Technology Corridor and building on the area's strengths in business clusters (notably automotive & electronic engineering, polymers, building technologies, business & leisure tourism and business & professional services) to transform the relatively low value added, low-skill economy into one with high employment in technology-driven, knowledge-based firms. [Investing in high-value skills for the future economy and Stimulating innovation, creativity and knowledge generation]
- Improving business performance by increasing employer demand and investment in skills and improving the alignment between the supply and demand for skills, with an overall upgrading the skills of the workforce. [Stimulating employer investment in skills and training]
- Capitalising upon the track record of excellence in local schools and further and higher education establishments by providing a package of employment, housing and cultural opportunities that will attract and retain home-grown graduates in high-value occupations and encourage the creation of sustainable enterprises. Increase the number of graduates employed in the sub-region – particularly in the private sector and as start-ups (target of at least 300 additional graduates per year employed in smaller businesses in the sub-region). [Investing in high-value skills for the future economy and Creating sustainable new businesses]

### *In relation to Place:*

- Capitalising upon the natural assets and character of the rural West including the World Heritage Site at Ironbridge, market towns and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty to encourage visitor access and attract new businesses and residents to the region. [Maximising our cultural offer and natural assets]
- Revitalising the industrial estates to ensure that the abundant supply of serviced employment land fully meets the requirements of the market and/or employment sectors targeted for growth. [Sustainable management and utilisation of our land and property assets]
- Meeting the needs of new, growing and incoming businesses in the market towns, larger towns and cities by ensuring an appropriate supply of serviced land and premises. [Sustainable management and utilisation of our land and property assets]
- Enhance the role of the sub-region's hierarchy of cities and shire towns, larger towns such as Kidderminster and Redditch and market towns as sustainable settlements providing access to employment, skills development, enterprise support, housing and services. [Developing sustainable communities]
- Promoting live-work developments where appropriate as a contribution towards the development of sustainable rural communities. [Developing sustainable communities]
- Transformation of Telford town centre to provide a vibrant heart to the town and its district centres, underpinning Telford's renewed sense of place. [Developing sustainable communities]
- Complementing the urban renaissance of the Black Country through a balanced portfolio of capital developments that form a major sub-regional resource for people and businesses. [Developing sustainable communities]
- Supporting investment in transport and technological infrastructure to overcome barriers to access to services and opportunities. [Improving transport and communications to increase accessibility, efficiency and competitiveness]

### *In relation to People:*

- Helping businesses and residents in rural areas overcome barriers to accessing employment, training and services through specific interventions such as Rural Access to Services Partnerships. [Skills for employment and enterprise]
- Working with employers to develop the leadership and management skills they need to drive innovation and improve business performance. A target of at least 560 additional leaders and managers each year to 2020 from private sector businesses aspiring to develop or grow their business, who increase their leadership and management skills and improve business performance. [Raising aspirations of leaders and managers]
- Tackle identified barriers to economic activity in the most deprived rural areas focusing on care and health factors alongside skills and aspirations and travel-to-work hurdles. [Skills for employment and enterprise]
- Developing business investment in skills through links with major developments such as Edgar Street Grid in Hereford. [Driving up ambition and aspiration and Stimulating employer investment in skills and training]
- Continued intervention in market town, district centre and other neighbourhood renewal programmes to tackle problems of deprivation and social exclusion and to create thriving sustainable communities [Skills for employment and enterprise, Regenerating our most deprived communities and Developing sustainable communities]

### Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire

#### Overview

The North Staffordshire Conurbation is made up of the combined urban communities of the City of Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme. With a population of 337,000 people, it is midway between the regional centres of Birmingham and Manchester with functional relationships with both the West Midlands and North West regions. The decline of North Staffordshire's traditional industries has led to a collapse in the local economy, with major implications for infrastructure and urban form as huge tracts of land have been left vacant and derelict. The need to restructure the inner core and help the area to become more competitive through extensive economic regeneration and diversification is a major challenge. The North Staffordshire Regeneration Partnership is a key driver in this regeneration and ensuring that essential economic, housing and transport investment is coordinated.

The decline of traditional industries has also had an impact on the rest of Staffordshire and a number of settlements have been identified as Local Regeneration Areas (i.e. Biddulph, Burton, Cannock, Leek, Rugeley, Stafford and Tamworth) where the aim will be to improve the longer-term economic prospects of the towns. Functional links between South Staffordshire and the West Midlands urban conurbation are strong through significant commuter flows.

#### Contribution of the sub-region to delivering the WMES

##### *In relation to Business:*

- Creating a dynamic enterprise start-up environment to increase new business formations and the proportion of high value added companies in Staffordshire, particularly in the North Staffs Regeneration Zone, by delivering a high-quality property offer for incubation, start-up and grow-on. [Creating sustainable new businesses]

- Diversifying the economy and maximising opportunities in the knowledge base through targeted investment to physically develop Keele and Staffordshire universities, particularly in respect to inward investment and science-based 'spin-outs'. Both universities have significant roles to play in expanding regional clusters including medical technologies, healthcare and creative industries. [Stimulating innovation, creativity and knowledge generation]
- Increasing the number of graduates employed in the sub-region – particularly in the private sector and as start-ups (target of at least 500 additional graduates per year employed in smaller businesses in the sub-region). [Investing in high-value skills for the future economy and Stimulating innovation, creativity and knowledge generation]
- Developing Staffordshire as a unique and diverse tourism destination which attracts international interest and continues to be a profitable growth sector. Economic success for the tourism sector will be strengthened by the Staffordshire Destination Management Partnership (DMP). [Developing markets and sectors with the most wealth and employment potential]

##### *In relation to Place:*

- Major investment to develop and create a strong and vibrant city centre in Stoke-on-Trent, and linked to this a new University Quarter – an education-led regeneration project that will also create a strong physical link between the railway station and the city centre. [Developing sustainable communities]
- Making Staffordshire a residential location of choice, aligning and connecting areas of major housing intervention with economic regeneration. Specifically the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder (RENEW) in North Staffordshire will provide a better choice of homes in appropriate locations, reducing outward migration and attracting new population to the area. [Developing sustainable communities]
- Promoting and investing in the physical assets of Staffordshire to develop vibrant and sustainable town centres, market towns and surrounding rural villages. [Developing sustainable communities]

- Promoting the importance of raising both design standards and sustainable construction techniques in the built environment and creating a positive image for the sub-region. [Developing sustainable communities]

***In relation to People:***

- Addressing economic inclusion by increasing employment rates in the most deprived communities and deprived groups within the labour market. Helping the most economically vulnerable to access the economic opportunities created in the North Staffs Regeneration Zone will remain a key priority and partners will spearhead a number of employability initiatives to encourage employment and reduce worklessness. [Skills for employment and enterprise]
- Working with employers to develop the leadership and management skills they need to drive innovation and to improve business performance. A target of at least 450 additional leaders and managers each year to 2020 from private sector businesses aspiring to develop or grow their business, who increase their leadership and management skills and improve business performance. [Raising aspirations of leaders and managers]
- Improving skill levels to support growth in high value added businesses and to maximise new employment opportunities for local people from the major capital investment projects in the North Staffs Regeneration Zone. [Skills for employment and enterprise and Defining employability]
- The sub-region will invest significantly to re-skill the most vulnerable people in the existing workforce to ensure they have the right training to take up new employment opportunities. Specific areas to be considered are professional services, logistics and construction. [Skills for employment and enterprise and Driving up ambition and aspiration]

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The consultation period for this draft Delivery Framework runs from 10th December 2007 to 22nd February 2008.

Copies of the new West Midlands Economic Strategy, Connecting to Success, this draft Delivery Framework and further supporting information – including details of the sustainability appraisal process and associated reports – are available on the West Midlands Economic Strategy page of the Advantage West Midlands web site at: [www.advantagewm.co.uk](http://www.advantagewm.co.uk)

Please send your consultation response, preferably using the response form available on the web site, either by email to: [wmes@advantagewm.co.uk](mailto:wmes@advantagewm.co.uk) or by post to: Gerald La Touche, Economic Strategy Manager, Advantage West Midlands, 3 Priestley Wharf, Holt Street, Aston Science Park, Birmingham B7 4BN.

The deadline for receipt of responses to this consultation is 17.00 hours on Friday 22nd February 2008.

**For further copies of this document,  
please contact:**

Advantage West Midlands  
3 Priestley Wharf  
Holt Street  
Aston Science Park  
Birmingham B7 4BN

Tel: +44(0)121 380 3500  
Fax: +44(0)121 380 3501



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