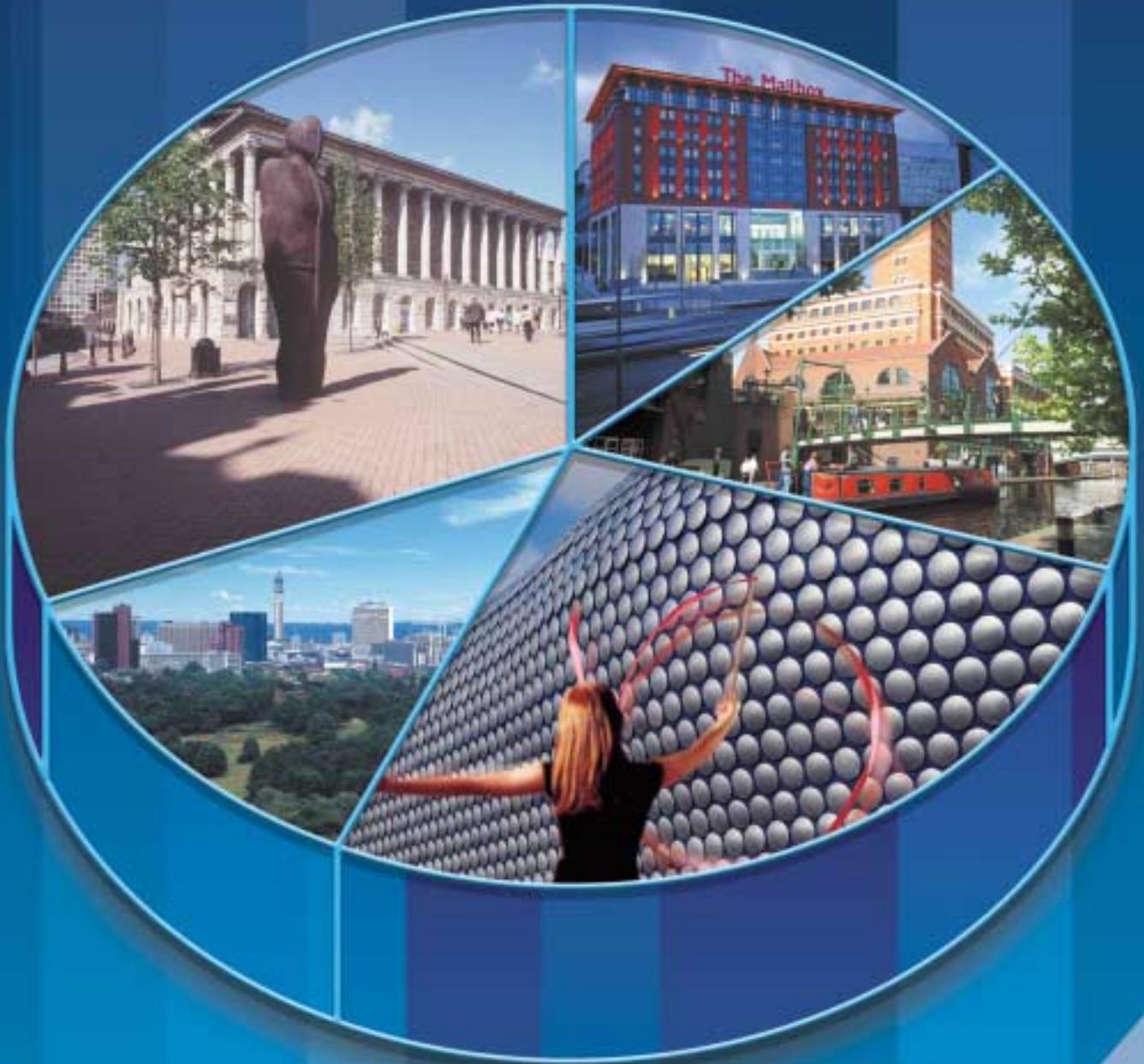


# Developing Birmingham

An Economic Strategy for The City

2005 - 2015

building on Birmingham's renaissance and securing a strong and sustainable economy for our people



This document has been prepared for the Birmingham Strategic Partnership by Birmingham City Council with the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council.



# Vision

A strategy to build on Birmingham's renaissance and secure a strong and sustainable economy for our people.

Whilst all reasonable care has been used in the preparation of this publication, the partners shall not be under any liability for loss or damage sustained by users of this document or their agents, as a result of the use of this publication.

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ED05083A/750/0405

## Foreword

Birmingham is a thriving, multi-racial, international city at the economic heart of the West Midlands. It has a diverse population of close to a million people and is home to a strong tradition of enterprise, with world-class companies, centres of academic and industrial excellence and first class international sport and leisure facilities. It is a city steeped in history and culture with a range of art galleries and museums and fast growing cultural industries and information and communications technology sectors. Birmingham has witnessed an amazing transformation over the last decade, with considerable economic growth and improvements in the City's competitiveness. Our aim is to sustain and build on this success, to continue to secure investment into the City and to ensure that all parts of the City flourish whilst its diverse communities benefit from this transformation.

This new strategy builds on the last economic vision and action plan for Birmingham published in 1998. It takes forward a vision of a strong and sustainable economy, which offers all citizens the opportunity to work towards a secure and prosperous future. The Economic Strategy makes a key contribution to the delivery of the Birmingham Community Strategy, which has a broader range, encompassing priorities to secure improvements in Birmingham's economic, social and environmental well-being.

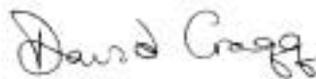
The City's core economic partners, the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Birmingham City Council and the Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council, will work closely with organisations in the business community and the voluntary and community sectors to deliver services in support of economic regeneration.

Partners will build on the recent successes of the City particularly in education, where there will be a particular focus on developing vocational education. Other core services will provide a bedrock of support to the creation, sustainability and development of business and enterprise.

The Strategy is aligned with the plans of the wider region identified in the West Midlands Regional Economic Strategy (RES). The RES emphasises the significant and critical role Birmingham plays in the economic success of the region. Similarly, the City-Region with Birmingham at its centre, along a central spine encompassing the Black Country and the rest of the metropolitan area and an arc of districts to the north, east and south west of the conurbation, has a crucial contribution to make to the national economic well-being. This role is emphasised in a report published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister - 'Competitive European Cities - Where do the Core Cities Stand?' (January 2004).



Chief Executive  
Birmingham Chamber of  
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Learning and Skills Council  
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*Birmingham Economic Development Partnership comprises:*  
Birmingham City Council  
Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry  
Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council

# Vision

By 2015 our Vision for Birmingham is of:

- a City of strong sustained economic growth and prosperity with attractive and accessible employment opportunities for all.
- a City of vibrant urban villages and communities, where people choose to live and which provide safe, secure and prosperous environments.
- a City which has made significant steps to address the inequalities between its diverse communities.
- a cohesive City celebrating the strengths and talents of its rich cultural diversity, proving that inclusion is a driver for economic success.
- a City of highly skilled people, committed to lifelong learning.
- a well-connected City with excellent international links, road infrastructure, public transport and communication services, enabling the efficient movement of people, goods and information into and around the City.
- a premier international business location and a major centre for professional services, with new and innovative enterprises in thriving sectors and high-technology industries.
- a vibrant City with extensive cultural and creative opportunities and a world-class sport, leisure and tourism infrastructure.
- a City at the heart of the West Midlands Region, radiating prosperity from its transformed centre and thriving local areas.



## Form and Scope

This Strategy provides a framework to secure the continuing renaissance and growth of Birmingham and sets down our plan for the next ten years. It is divided into four Key Areas:

- Development and Investment
- Creating a Skilled Workforce
- Fostering Business Development and Diversification
- Creating Sustainable Communities and Vibrant Urban Villages

A number of practical Strategic Objectives underpin each area and these are supported by Key Actions.

Reflecting the inherent complexities of economic development and regeneration there are significant linkages across the objectives and actions. For example, the development of a skilled workforce is critical to attracting investment, supporting business diversification, and enabling disadvantaged communities to benefit from Birmingham's economic growth. Partnerships will work to ensure that actions are developed and implemented to add value across all the Key Areas and are fully integrated.

A monitoring and evaluation process is being developed to enable the partnership to report on the achievements and impact of the Strategy on a regular basis. The Economic Strategy will therefore be a dynamic framework helping to shape and direct future economic growth in the City.

## Ownership

The new Strategy has been developed for the Birmingham Strategic Partnership by the City Council with the Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council and the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Agreeing the Economic Strategy for the City with key partners should ensure greater impact than work undertaken without the benefit of such a framework. Each of these organisations has individual action plans describing in greater detail their contribution to this broader Strategy. These documents include the:

- The Birmingham City Council Plan
- The Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council Strategic Plan
- The Birmingham and Solihull Business Link Delivery Plan

## Policy Context

Since the publication of the last Economic Strategy important changes in European, national and regional policies have occurred. The Government is particularly keen to encourage and facilitate private sector investment in regeneration activities and has issued consultations, policy statements and White Papers on a range of issues related to this. This priority is reflected in local actions to deliver economic and urban regeneration, including skills and employment development, neighbourhood renewal, transport and land-use planning. Most recently the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has issued its Sustainable Communities Plan, to support the development of local and regional responses to regeneration issues in areas of acute disadvantage and dealing with the pressures of growth in high demand areas of the country.

The 'Smart Growth: The Midlands Way' proposals being developed by the Regional Development Agencies of the East and West Midlands will provide a cross-regional contribution to the Sustainable Communities Plan, building on the opportunities of the regions' principal cities, including Birmingham, and contributing to the alleviation of the pressure on London and the South East of England. The Birmingham City-Region prospectus identifies its crucial contribution to the regional and national economic well-being. Furthermore within Birmingham, the City Council's 'Going Local' plans also have these issues at their core and address the future of many of the City's housing market areas and local centres.

The four Key Areas of the Strategy reflect the priorities identified by Government and the European Commission and mirror the four pillars of the current West Midlands Regional Economic Strategy.

# Issues to be addressed by the Economic Strategy

## Introduction

It is vital that the strategic partners' interventions are informed and evidence-based. This section of the Strategy highlights the key issues that need to be addressed in Birmingham, drawing on a variety of sources, including the annual Birmingham and Solihull Economic Review which sets out a shared view of how the sub-regional economy is likely to change in the future and identifies the key priorities for action.

It is widely recognised that the economic, social and environmental issues identified and targeted by this strategy are closely interlinked and can rarely be addressed in isolation. Partner organisations will seek where possible to recognise such relationships and to ensure that interventions provide an integrated and consistent means of supporting the City's future growth.

## Manufacturing

Manufacturing continues to be integral to Birmingham's economy although it has seen dramatic changes over the last 30 years. The City will continue to develop its manufacturing base, encouraging greater use of technology and innovation to maintain competitiveness, and taking all appropriate steps to retain its presence in key manufacturing areas.

a. Birmingham must consolidate its position as a manufacturing centre, building on its existing base by diversifying and modernising into high - technology, high value-added products and processes.

b. There is a need for more entrepreneurial activity within manufacturing and for more business spin-outs from the specialist research activities undertaken in Birmingham's universities.

c. Steps must be taken to encourage more local young people to aspire to scientific and

technological careers. A successful high-technology manufacturing sector will help the City to retain the specialist graduate output of its universities whilst drawing in high-level skills from elsewhere. This will build the City's own capacity and increase the local impact and sustainability of growth.

d. Birmingham needs to be successfully promoted as a location for new and relocating technology-based manufacturing businesses, offering a package of 'quality of life' features, including attractive environments, quality housing and growing leisure facilities which will appeal to any relocating employees.

## Services

The service sector will continue to be the largest source of employment and output growth in Birmingham. Many of the planned major development projects within the City will support this growth over the long-term.

a. A single European market in professional services is increasingly being developed. Birmingham should seek to be a European centre for professional services, taking advantage of this growth potential.

b. Birmingham must ensure it has a highly skilled workforce which can meet the needs of expanding service sector employment, including growth in public sector employment, such that local people are able to secure these well paid jobs.

c. Continued and targeted marketing of the City's 'investment offer' is needed if Birmingham is to be successful in attracting relocating office-based employment, including any potential Civil Service relocations, from London and the South East.

d. Birmingham needs to build on its strong business tourism position and to improve performance in its growing leisure tourism sector, promoting weekend

leisure breaks, special events markets and the City's creative industries sector.

e. The City must build on the Bullring's success to become a retail destination of national and European importance.

## Health

The health and care sector is a major employer in Birmingham accounting for over 10% of employment. Some of the City's major hospitals have ambitious development plans for the future which will have important implications for both health services and employment opportunities.

a. Birmingham must seek to maximise the employment and business benefits of the development activities planned for the City's health sector, not least through raising Birmingham's profile within medical research and technology.

b. Partner organisations must recognise the important links between health issues and the labour market, with health affecting the capacity and performance of the local workforce and individuals' ability to secure work itself contributing towards improved health.

## Skills

There is an increasing need for skills and qualifications within today's economy. In future years there will be fewer employment opportunities for those without basic skills, and growing demand for higher-level skills, including vocational skills.

a. Birmingham must continue to raise educational attainment amongst the City's young people, building upon the considerable improvements seen in recent years.

b. The City's education and training providers need to be fully informed about changing local labour market demands and able to adapt their training provision and advice accordingly. They must offer a flexible approach to the delivery of training, maximising the potential for excluded groups to access these opportunities.

c. It is vital that young people from all backgrounds are enabled to achieve high levels of educational

performance, up to and including degree level qualifications.

d. Lifelong learning must become a reality for all members of the workforce to ensure it remains appropriately skilled for the jobs that are on offer and able to adapt to a rapidly changing economy.

e. Further steps must be taken to tackle the poor qualification levels which are concentrated within some ethnic groups, alongside broader measures to improve access to employment opportunities for these communities.

## Inequalities

Despite economic growth and major developments there continue to be significant inequalities between Birmingham's diverse communities. Economic disparities are particularly evident and subsequently also result in differences in social and environmental development across the City. Understanding demographic trends will play a role in addressing inequalities, since in future years the workforce will be older and comprise a greater proportion of people from black and minority ethnic communities.

a. Further steps must be taken to identify and address inequalities to ensure that all of the City's communities can benefit from economic growth.

b. To address some labour shortage issues more work needs to be done to end age, gender, race and disability discrimination.

c. Partners must better understand why some groups continue to face severe economic and social exclusion, often despite interventions, and to build on established good practice to identify new and innovative means to engaging with 'hard to reach' groups.



## Transport

Effective transport infrastructure is key to future economic activity and regeneration, supporting access to learning and employment opportunities, attracting inward investment and boosting tourism. Birmingham acts as an important hub for the West Midlands region and its location at the heart of the country's transport network reinforces its position as the premier city outside of London.

- a. To support economic growth Birmingham must lobby for investment, beyond that for regional transport systems, to improve transport systems within the City and to other UK cities.
- b. Birmingham will take advantage of the funds made available by the Secretary of State for Transport (up to £1 billion within the West Midlands Metropolitan Area) to improve the accessibility of regeneration sites and the reliability of bus services, and to reduce traffic congestion.
- c. There is a need to encourage the geographical spread of the City Living housing market in order to reduce the number of people commuting longer distances to work and increase the vitality of the City Centre as a place to live and work.
- d. The further expansion of Birmingham International Airport is critical to attracting foreign inward investment and promoting the City as a centre for professional services, manufacturing and tourism.

e. To increase the City's attractiveness as a business location there must be improved rail links to other UK cities and the Continent and improvements to New Street Station. The redevelopment of the coach station and the provision of a coach park are also needed to enhance visitors' image of the City and to support growth in leisure tourism.

## Housing

Birmingham must be a place where workers of all income levels want to live because of its attractive, safe environment and superior quality of life. The City's Housing Strategy sets priorities for achieving decent homes; addressing changing patterns of housing demand; and securing a step change in the supply and choice of affordable housing.

- a. There is a need to ensure that the City offers an adequate provision of attractive and affordable housing within the City, including the City Centre.
- b. To be a location of choice for new and existing residents, Birmingham must be able to offer attractive environments and a full range of affordable housing choices, including social rented and intermediate market housing.
- c. Partners must recognise that economic restructuring creates challenges for the sustainability of some of the City's housing areas due to a decline or change in demand.



## City-Region

Work by the English Core Cities Group and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has highlighted that economically successful regions have a strong core city at their heart, and that modern cities such as Birmingham have a key role in supporting the national economy.

Birmingham will play a pivotal position in the emerging 'Smart Growth: The Midlands Way' proposals to support the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan. These proposals will be driven forward through three themes: 'Midlands as a Gateway'; 'Growth and Renaissance'; and 'Productivity and Competitiveness'. The Birmingham City-Region will be the main driver for growth within the West Midlands region, complementing and adding value to growth emanating from the wider conurbation and the principal cities of the West and East Midlands.

a. Birmingham must continue to play a significant role as an English Core City, driving growth for the wider region and supporting emerging growth proposals.

b. The City must work effectively with partners to improve both its own and the wider region's economic competitiveness, recognising the increasing appropriateness of sub-regional partnerships for some fields of activity.

c. Birmingham must continue to develop the six key factors considered essential for the competitiveness of Core Cities: economic diversity; a skilled workforce; internal and external connectivity; strategic decision-making capacity; innovative businesses and organisations; and quality of life.

d. To attract high value-added businesses and better enable the region to adapt to economic change, there is a need for the City to provide a strong transport hub with good connectivity for the region.

e. The City will need to offer an environment which fosters innovation and knowledge transfer, building upon its hub of knowledge institutions and strategic business and financial services.

f. It is vital that Birmingham continues in its key role of promoting the profile of the region both nationally and internationally, especially through its business and leisure tourism facilities.

## Further Information

Key information from the Birmingham and Solihull Economic Review is contained within each of the Strategy's Key Areas which follow. More detail can be found on the Birmingham Economic Information Centre's website: [www.birminghameconomy.org.uk](http://www.birminghameconomy.org.uk)



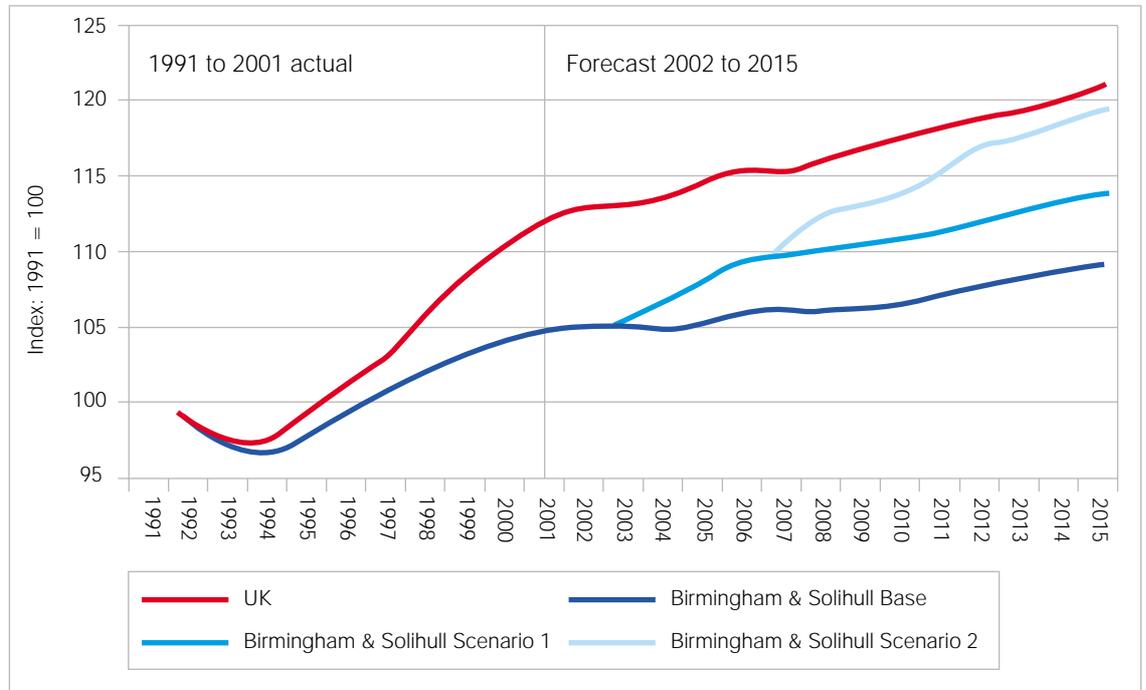
# Key Area 1 - Development and Investment

## Introduction

There are strong grounds for optimism regarding future economic and employment growth in the Birmingham and Solihull sub-region. Between 1991 and 2001 Birmingham's employment growth was below the national average, but if the current pace of development investment continues the sub-region's future employment growth will exceed that of the UK. This outcome is achievable if all of the development projects currently planned in the local economy come to fruition, building on recent successes such as the Bullring with major new developments including Eastside and the new superhospital in south west Birmingham. It is crucial that Birmingham has the appropriate physical infrastructure to attract and sustain such investment and employment growth.



## Comparing Employment Forecasts for the UK & Birmingham and Solihull: 2002-2015



Source: BEIC, Cambridge Econometrics, Birmingham & Solihull LSC

For the period 1991-2001 the chart above shows indices of actual employment change in the sub-region and UK. Employment is then projected forward to 2015 using our base and scenario forecasts for the sub-region as follows:

■ **Scenario 1** shows the employment effects of recently completed and ongoing and committed development projects such as the Bullring and early phase Masshouse projects.

■ **Scenario 2** shows the additional employment effects if all of the longer-term projects which are in the development pipeline are completed, including Arena Central and Paradise Circus.

A more detailed breakdown of the nature of employment changes is outlined in the following table, highlighting the continuing reduction in manufacturing employment alongside growth in service sectors.

## Sector Employment Changes 2002-2015

### BEIC Forecasting Model for Birmingham and Solihull

| Change in Thousands   | Base                                 | Scenario 1                              | Scenario 2                              |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| Manufacturing<br>Of which Vehicles & Parts  | -27,800<br>-8,900                    | -26,200<br>-8,800                       | -25,000<br>-8,700                       |
| Energy & Water  | -1,200                               | -1,200                                  | -1,200                                  |
| Construction  | -4,600                               | -1,000                                  | +2,900                                  |
| Distribution & Catering<br>Of which -<br>Retailing<br>Wholesaling<br>Hotels & Catering                          | +10,000<br>+6,200<br>+2,900<br>+900  | +14,300<br>+8,400<br>+4,100<br>+1,800   | +26,600<br>+9,500<br>+14,100<br>+3,000  |
| Transport & Communications  | -300                                 | +900                                    | +2,300                                  |
| Financial & Business Services<br>Of which -<br>Financial Services<br>Professional Services<br>Computer Services | +37,000<br>-500<br>+9,800<br>+16,400 | +48,000<br>+2,100<br>+15,400<br>+17,000 | +61,800<br>+3,500<br>+20,500<br>+22,300 |
| Public Services<br>Of which -<br>Public Administration<br>Education<br>Health & Social Services                 | +7,800<br>-4,000<br>+5,900<br>+6,000 | +10,200<br>-3,700<br>+7,200<br>+6,800   | +10,800<br>-3,800<br>+7,900<br>+6,600   |
| Other Services  | +3,400                               | +4,700                                  | +5,000                                  |
| All Service Sectors   | +58,000                              | +78,200                                 | +106,500                                |
| Total Employment  | +24,200                              | +49,500                                 | +83,100                                 |

Source: BEIC, Cambridge Econometrics, Birmingham & Solihull LSC

The activities identified within Key Area 1 will have important links to other parts of the Strategy, offering employment opportunities and economic prosperity for the City's disadvantaged communities (Key Area 4); improving residents' accessibility to training, jobs and services (Key Areas 2 and 4); and providing sites and premises for economic diversification (Key Area 3). This Key Area's actions will also be

somewhat dependent on those from other Key Areas with, for example, Birmingham's capacity to attract inward investment linked to its ability to offer an appropriately skilled workforce (Key Area 2) and suitable sites for new and growing businesses (Key Area 3), as well as communities in which employees wish and are able to live (Key Area 4).

## 1.1 Securing Employment Opportunities

The long-term development of the local economy is dependent on the availability of employment land. Across the City there are derelict and contaminated sites which, if brought back into use, could provide additional employment opportunities, often within the City's most disadvantaged areas. However the City Council's 2003 Industrial Land Review recognised that brownfield developments are becoming increasingly complex and can be impeded by a number of problems including size, inadequate infrastructure and poor access, development costs, image and location, and the age and condition of the existing building stock.

Birmingham's industrial land supply also includes a number of long-standing sites (those which have remained undeveloped for five years or more), which are underdeveloped due to a variety of constraints based on the relationship between land values, development costs and landownership. Unique responses by owners, agencies and investors are needed to overcome the constraints to using industrial land within the City. In certain exceptional circumstances and to ensure the provision of a portfolio of opportunities, greenfield land releases will be required.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

***To secure adequate provision of employment land to meet the local and regional economies' future growth needs, consistent with the Regional Spatial Strategy and the Regional Economic Strategy, and accelerate the regeneration of sites in priority areas to bring land back into productive use and to facilitate employment growth.***

The **Key Action** is:

***1.1.1 To work proactively with property developers, landowners and agencies, and communities, using legal powers and resources, to secure the provision of employment land to meet future needs.***

## 1.2 Protection of Industrial Land

To ensure the City's industrial base can grow and new employment opportunities are created, existing industrial land supply and industrial redevelopment opportunities must be safeguarded from competing uses, such as retail and housing. The 2003 Industrial Land Review raised concerns over the rate at which industrial land is being lost to alternative uses and highlighted the pressure on industrial land, particularly from housing. The protection of industrial land policy in the Birmingham Unitary Development Plan Alterations has been strengthened to resist these pressures and the Government appointed Inspector who considered objections to the Plan supported this policy.

There may be occasions when the most appropriate proposals for an area involve using previous employment land for housing and releasing some of the cleared housing land for employment uses, e.g. as part of the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder initiative (see Key Area 4). Such strategic land swaps should not be contrary to the overall objective of providing sufficient employment land within Birmingham.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

***To protect the City's industrial land to secure a sufficient, long-term supply of employment land to meet future needs, including those of major investors, and to facilitate growth.***

The **Key Action** is:

***1.2.1 To use Planning and other powers to protect the supply of employment land from being lost to other uses.***

## 1.3 Delivering Transportation Investment

Birmingham's central location is a considerable competitive advantage which must be exploited. The City's role as a key transport hub for the West Midlands is also vital to supporting regional economic competitiveness, through improved connectivity. The quality of the City's 'arrival points' is critical to giving visitors a good impression of the City, and potentially the wider region. The train stations, particularly New Street, and the coach station in Digbeth, do not currently provide a good introduction to Birmingham and must be improved. Due to Birmingham's strategic location, there has to be an ongoing commitment to investment across the transport network including routes through and within the City.

The transport infrastructure within the City is vital to its economic well-being and it must be maintained and further developed to enable access to training, employment and leisure facilities, and to ensure the efficient delivery of goods and services. The difficulties of travelling around the City on 'radial' routes are of concern due to their impact on access to employment. It is also important that sustainable means of movement within the City are encouraged, including cycling and walking, which may be viable for shorter journeys to work and to access local services, reducing the need for car-based journeys.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

*To ensure Birmingham has a high quality transport system that meets the aspirations and needs of all of its citizens, visitors and businesses, helping the economy to thrive, improving the environment and enhancing quality of life, in a safe and sustainable way.*

The **Key Actions** include:

**1.3.1 To ensure there is a significant increase in passenger handling capacity and an improvement in the quality of the passenger experience at New Street Station.**

**1.3.2 To support a significant increase in train capacity at New Street Station and on the West Coast Mainline.**

**1.3.3 To seek to have Birmingham directly connected to any possible high-speed line between London and Scotland.**

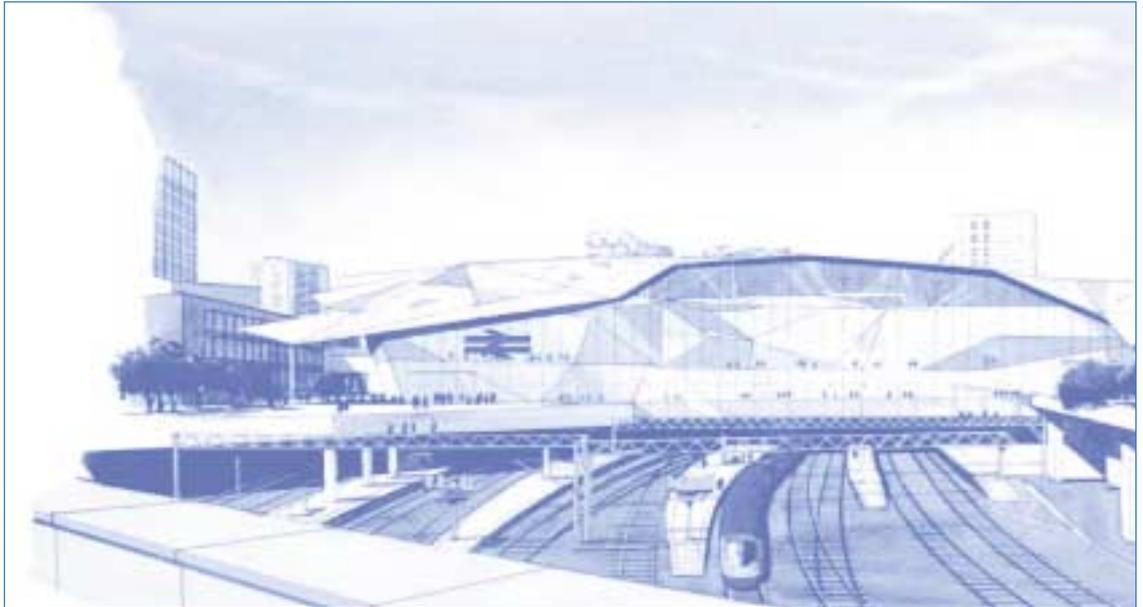
**1.3.4 To redevelop Birmingham's coach station, improving the 'welcome' to the City for those arriving by coach.**

**1.3.5 To improve and promote access to the NEC and Birmingham International Airport through better public transport, particularly widening the M42, as well as improvements to local traffic infrastructure which will enhance visitor access/egress and contribute towards improving access to employment for local people and the visitor experience.**

**1.3.6 To invest to increase the reliability of road journeys to all employment locations, in particular to improve deliveries and radial road routes.**

**1.3.7 To reduce traffic congestion and improve bus services, by improving travel quality and reliability through traffic management, red routes and high occupancy vehicle lanes; encouraging operators/Centro to develop express radial and circular bus routes and consider the return of conductors/bus wardens; building additional metro routes focusing on the busiest areas of the City; and addressing key hotspots such as the City Ring Road and the A38.**





*1.3.8 To improve park and ride facilities and public transport links to key employment opportunity areas such as the City Centre, Birmingham International Airport and the NEC, recognising the growing need for services outside peak times given the growing diversity of working hours.*

*1.3.9 To increase the number of journeys on foot or by bicycle, promoted through local Walking and Cycling Strategies.*

*1.3.10 To reduce the number of trips which need to be made by the City's residents by supporting sustainable development within local centres and along major transport corridors.*

*1.3.11 To further develop transport services which enable vulnerable groups, including older people and people with disabilities, to access services.*

*1.3.12 To encourage greater use of public transport provision and participation in TravelWise schemes, including area-based schemes.*

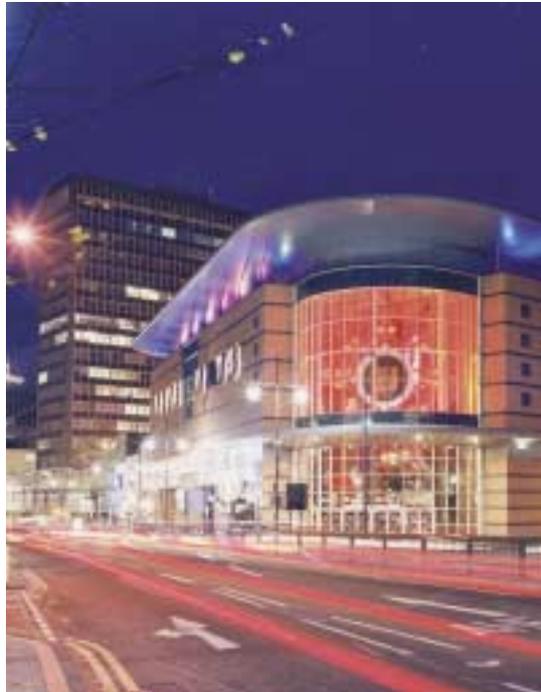
## Area-Based Development Opportunities

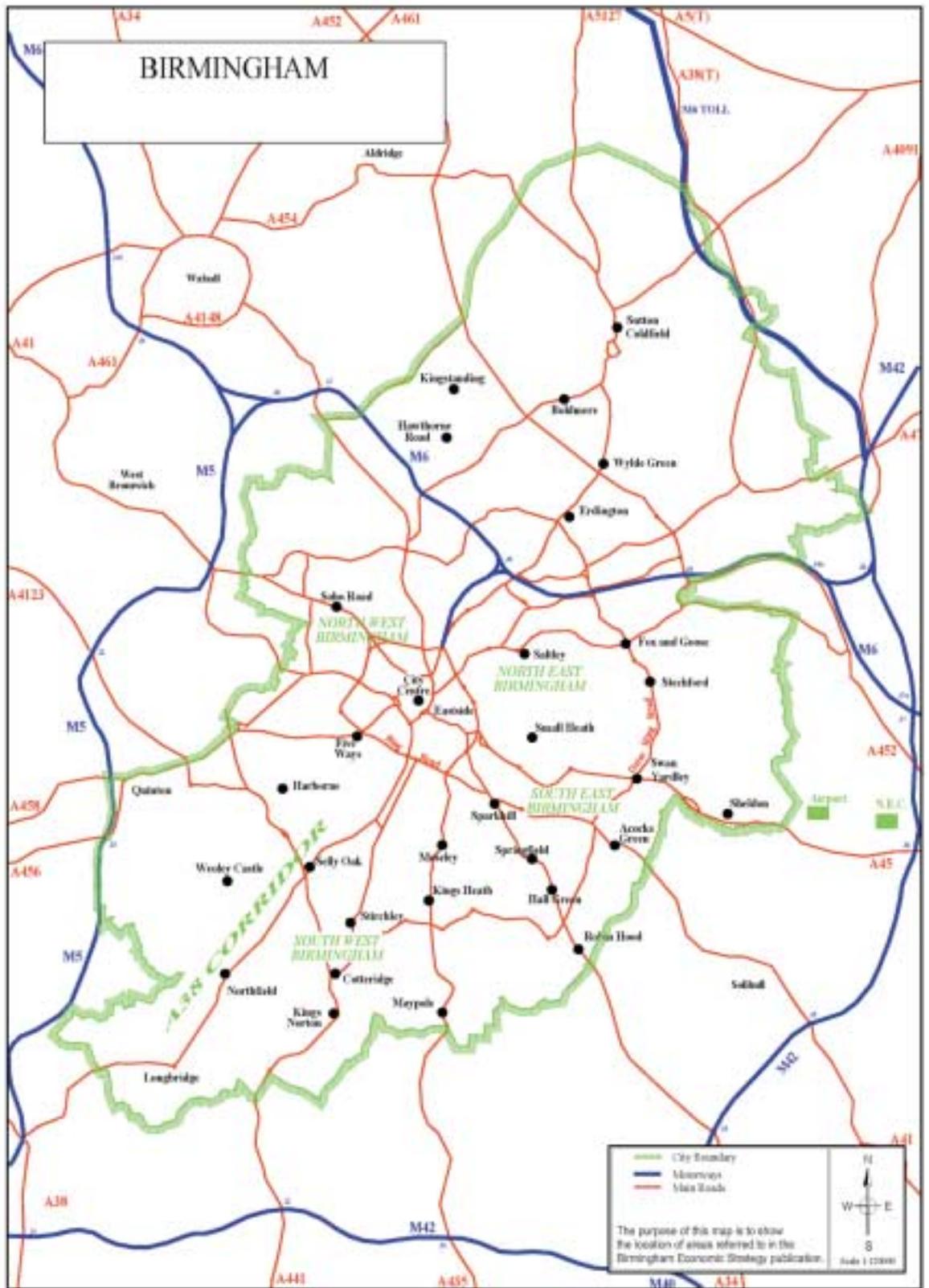
There is a vast range of locally-specific investment taking place across Birmingham. Currently considerable development activity is taking place in the City Centre and Eastside. There are also a number of area-based regeneration and development initiatives in other parts of the City, including the two New Deal for Communities areas of Kings Norton and Aston, the Single Regeneration Budget Round 6 area in the north west of the City, the Enterprising Communities area in the south east of the City and the Central Technology Belt in the south west of the City. In addition, the Urban Living Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder, covering parts of north west Birmingham and Sandwell borough, is seeking to revitalise local housing markets. A further 'Eastern Corridor' Housing Market Renewal Area has been agreed covering a broad area from Birmingham City Centre through to North Solihull.

Over-arching many of these areas are two *Regeneration Zones* within Birmingham: the *East Birmingham and North Solihull Zone* (covering an area stretching east from the centre of Birmingham to the north of Solihull) and the *South Black Country and West Birmingham Zone* (including parts of north west Birmingham and the Sandwell and Dudley boroughs). These Zones were identified by the Regional Development Agency, Advantage West Midlands (AWM), as areas of significant need and each has been linked to key areas of employment opportunity for the short, medium and longer term.

The job-generating potential of area-based regeneration activity must be captured at all stages to maximise impact and to help to address inequalities between the City's diverse communities. In particular the City must ensure local communities are appropriately skilled in adequate time to access the opportunities emerging from key development sites across the City (see Key Area 2). At the construction phase there are opportunities that have the potential to increase the capacity of the local construction sector. 'End user' employment provides longer-term opportunities and work has to be done to ensure that these are identified and captured for local people at as early an opportunity as possible.

The following sections set out actions for key parts of the City, as identified in the map overleaf.





## 1.4 City Centre

One of Birmingham's key strengths in recent years has been the City Centre's expansion and renaissance. This has created an infrastructure for supporting sustainable economic diversification into sectors such as professional services, tourism, leisure and hospitality, all of which bring money into the local economy, as well as making the City an increasingly attractive place to live.

The Birmingham City Centre Partnership works to make the City Centre one of the cleanest, safest and most welcoming places in the UK. The Partnership includes representatives from the City Council, Police, local business, and the property, retail and leisure sectors. It secures considerable expenditure over and above that committed by the City Council.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

*To develop the City Centre as a major European office location, retail growth area and tourism destination.*

The **Key Actions** include:

**1.4.1** *To promote the City Centre as a regional centre for headquarters and for professional*

*services investors through Locate in Birmingham and through initiatives such as Advised in Birmingham, which aims to promote the City as a legal capital.*

**1.4.2** *To secure commitment from investors and developers to key pipeline projects such as Paradise Circus and Arena Central.*

**1.4.3** *To actively build upon Birmingham's role as an international capital for business tourism; further its growing reputation in leisure tourism; and identify sustainable opportunities for arts, culture and sports-related developments.*

**1.4.4** *To lobby for decentralised Civil Service functions from London and the South East of England to relocate to the City and to ensure that the property stock to meet likely requirements is available.*

**1.4.5** *To pilot two Business Improvement Districts in the City Centre, whereby businesses devise, manage and fund coordinated programmes to improve their local operating environment and promote business and investment.*

**1.4.6** *To capitalise on recent major investment and employment growth in retail by securing further investment and redevelopment of older City Centre retail stock, for example Martineau Galleries Phase 2.*



## 1.5 Eastside

Eastside is of great significance to Birmingham and the wider Region. The area has considerable scope to pool public and private sector investment to develop an exciting, creative, mixed-use quarter to the east of the current City core. Eastside is based around the themes of learning, technology and heritage, the latter having particular potential to add to the City's tourism offer. The area's extensive canal network will be integral to many of the developments.

Eastside will be an exemplar of sustainable development within the City. Significant work is on going to improve accessibility to the area and the opportunities within it, and to accelerate development, including through links to the University of Central England, Aston University and Aston Science Park. Eastside will be permeated by pedestrian and cycling access as a key feature, maximising the sustainability of the Eastside project.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

*To attract investment and employment opportunities to Eastside through the development of clusters of creative activity in a Learning, Technology and Heritage quarter, regenerating the eastern side of the City Centre.*

The **Key Actions** include:

**1.5.1** *To manage the framework for Eastside development through the delivery of the Design and Movement Framework and the Sustainability Action Plan.*

**1.5.2** *To manage the portfolio of sites to accelerate Eastside redevelopment, including the Masshouse and City Park Gate sites.*

**1.5.3** *To secure commitment to and bring forward major landmark projects such as the new Library for Birmingham, the development*



*of a new urban City Centre Park and the construction of the new Matthew Boulton College.*

**1.5.4** *To increase the level of investment in heritage, leisure, arts and creative cluster activities to provide complementary attractions at Millennium Point and boost levels of visitors to the area.*

**1.5.5** *To encourage adherence to the principles of sustainable development within all development undertaken in Eastside, including CO<sup>2</sup> demand-neutral buildings.*

## 1.6 North West Birmingham

North west Birmingham includes Aston, Handsworth, Soho, Ladywood, Perry Barr, Edgbaston and Sandwell, with major centres along the Birchfield, Dudley, Rookery, Villa, Lozells and Soho Roads. It is well connected to opportunities within the City Centre and the Black Country. The area comprises significant manufacturing activity as well as some of the most deprived communities in the country, including many people from disadvantaged ethnic communities. The area has received major regeneration funding in recent years through the Single Regeneration Budget and New Deal for Communities programmes, both of which are ongoing, encouraging much needed investment and employment opportunities. More recently the area has been included within one of the Government's Housing Market Renewal Pathfinders to address concerns about housing issues.

North west Birmingham has a strong network of local centres, the development of which will help to create a sense of identity for local communities and an attractive environment, which is conducive to new investment and an increased confidence in the local economy. It will also increase the potential for short journeys which are ideal for walking and cycling, improving health and alleviating

congestion. The north west area also includes the City's Jewellery Quarter, a centre of creative clusters building on the area's long history of design and manufacturing, and also a popular 'city living' residential area.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

***To stimulate new industrial and commercial activity and employment opportunities in north west Birmingham, by improving commercial centres along key transport corridors; completing reclamation and infrastructure works; and bringing forward refurbishment and redevelopment projects, leading to an enhanced quality of life for local people.***

The **Key Actions** include:

**1.6.1 To work with the private sector to improve and bring forward land and property to create local opportunities for investment,**



*development and employment, and to encourage business development, diversification, productivity growth and competitiveness amongst local firms.*

*1.6.2 To introduce industrial modernisation programmes for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in order to unlock private sector investment, continuing the progress made in areas such as the Jewellery Quarter and expanding this success into other parts of the north west.*

*1.6.3 To improve the operational conditions and general environment of SMEs located in industrial estates through the Industrial Modernisation Programme. The areas that are identified for support include Middlemore, Sycamore, Hive, Hockley Brook and Soho Pool Wharf.*

*1.6.4 To bring forward development and infrastructure projects, such as: the redevelopment of the IMI site in Witton, the mixed-use Icknield Port Loop; the redevelopment of Great Western Business Park; the demolition and redevelopment of Middlemore Road Industrial Centre/Skills Centre; and transportation improvements.*

*1.6.5 To create long-term viability of local centres through a programme of works for upgrading the public realm, redeveloping derelict sites and improving and refurbishing property in private, City Council and other public sector ownership.*

*1.6.6 To support the implementation of the Urban Living Pathfinder programme, delivering improvements to the housing stock in the context of a wider programme which reaches into Sandwell, and ensuring an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures to support and encourage economic growth.*

## 1.7 South West Birmingham/Central Technology Belt

The south west of Birmingham includes almost one third of the City's population. It includes Bartley Green, Billesley, Bournville, Brandwood, Edgbaston, Hall Green, Harborne, Kings Norton, Longbridge, Moseley, Northfield, Quinton, Selly Oak and Weoley. The area's main centres are Selly Oak and Northfield. Despite its size, the area is predominantly residential and only includes around 15% of the City's employment. Major employers include Cadburys and the University of Birmingham. There are hospitals in Moseley and Selly Oak, with the health and education sectors accounting for around 34% of all jobs. Manufacturing represents 20% of employment and business services less than 10%. Strategic measures are required to restructure and diversify the economy.

The most exciting growth opportunity for the area is the Central Technology Belt (CTB), one of three high-technology corridors established in the region to encourage economic diversification into high-technology, high-growth sectors. The CTB runs from Birmingham city centre, through south west Birmingham into Worcestershire ending in Malvern. It holds significant investment and innovation potential linked to key sites such as Pebble Mill, Longbridge and research facilities including those of the University of Birmingham and the University Hospital Trust.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

*To promote high-technology, knowledge-based industries in south west Birmingham, including the Central Technology Belt, to diversify the local economy and generate new employment opportunities for local people.*

The **Key Actions** include:

**1.7.1 To accelerate the implementation of the Longbridge Development Framework, to deliver a high-technology business park.**

**1.7.2 To secure further high-technology development opportunities, including business incubator space and grow-on units at the Battery Park site in Selly Oak.**

**1.7.3 To encourage the long-term high-technology development programme at the Pebble Mill site, including the vacated BBC premises.**

**1.7.4 To develop, in association with the University of Birmingham, a new regional hospital with teaching and research facilities, which will strengthen employment opportunities.**



## 1.8 North East Birmingham

North east Birmingham includes the Erdington, Kingstanding, Stockland Green, Sutton and Tyburn wards, comprising the parts of the City to the north and east of the M6, and south of the motorway to the A45. It includes the former Heartlands Development Area and potential development and investment sites alongside the M6, including Fort Dunlop. The area also hosts the Heartlands and Good Hope Hospitals and key centres include Sutton Coldfield, Erdington, Minworth and Castle Vale. Whilst just outside the City's boundary the National Exhibition Centre and Birmingham International Airport provide important employment opportunities for people in this area.

Long-term and intergenerational unemployment is prevalent in certain parts of north east Birmingham, although this is often very localised and not always evident in local level data. There are significant and growing employment opportunities within the area and along key routes to the north and east. However, physical barriers, such as major roads and railway lines, pose particular problems for local people in accessing employment within neighbouring areas.

This area's housing market has been subject to recent study to determine how improvements might be made to secure its future stability and function. Critical to the area's success are interventions through the East Birmingham and North Solihull Regeneration Zone, which seeks to link new employment opportunities with people living in areas of highest unemployment.

The M6 Toll Road will continue to be encouraged mainly as a corridor of movement, alleviating congestion on key transport routes into and around the City. It has considerably improved accessibility to that part of the Minworth Sewage Works which was declared surplus to operational requirements for Severn Trent and is now identified as a significant opportunity for employment development on the eastern edge of the City.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

***To modernise the industrial stock of north east Birmingham by redeveloping and improving existing premises and bringing forward opportunities on new and previously used land.***

The **Key Actions** include:

**1.8.1 To accelerate development of a new business park at Minworth.**

**1.8.2 To support the expansion and modernisation of indigenous manufacturing businesses.**

**1.8.3 To further the development of the Bromford Industrial Area.**

**1.8.4 To progress Heartlands Hospital's plans to develop a Medipark on their site, and Good Hope Hospital's redevelopment plans.**

**1.8.5 To consider options to improve the performance of local housing markets.**

**1.8.6 To support local communities in accessing employment opportunities, in particular recognising the physical constraints faced by residents in travelling to work.**



## 1.9 South East Birmingham

South east Birmingham, which includes Springfield, Sparkbrook, Small Heath, Nechells and Washwood Heath, suffers from extensive multiple disadvantage and widespread high unemployment, particularly amongst the area's black and minority ethnic communities. Despite a long history of regeneration activity in this area, there are ongoing challenges in terms of physical and environmental decline and the performance of the area's local housing market is the subject of analysis. Nevertheless the area's communities are excellent examples of local centres, providing shopping facilities for the local people.

There are currently limited employment opportunities in south east Birmingham or in the development pipeline and many individuals would need to overcome perceived and real barriers to access those opportunities outside the area. A significant European funding package, '*Enterprising Communities*', aims to stimulate local economic activity and provide accessible employment opportunities in the area, by supporting social enterprise, entrepreneurship, skills and training and building the communities' capacity to enable them to access emerging employment opportunities across the City.

In terms of development investment, the Tyseley Business Area in south east Birmingham currently employs around 2,000 people, and has the potential to create 1,500 new jobs through the building of an additional 300,000 square feet of workspace. However to preserve existing employment and secure future potential growth the weight limits placed on Tyseley Hill Bridge, the area's only access route, must be increased.

Building on the existing focus of the Irish Quarter, around Bradford Street, to the south of the City Centre, the City Council is working with a range of agencies requesting the Irish Community to further develop the area. Following a marketing exercise, developer interest in the area is strong and there are proposals in the pipeline, which, over the next three to five years, will bring forward a range of new residential accommodation along with a significant level of new commercial space and employment activity.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

***To promote local development and employment opportunities within the most deprived areas of south east Birmingham, along the A45, A34 and A41 corridors which link the City Centre with development activity alongside the M42.***

The **Key Actions** include:

***1.9.1 To deliver the Enterprising Communities programme to achieve a significant reduction in unemployment and an increase in local communities' skills, training and capacity, particularly amongst disadvantaged groups.***

***1.9.2 To bring forward further development at Hatchford Brook and Tyseley Wharf.***

***1.9.3 To further develop the success of the Balti Triangle as a tourism attraction within the wider City and regional food offer.***

***1.9.4 To deliver high quality, mixed-use development in the Bradford Street area, sympathetic to the Irish character and building on its existing strengths and distinctiveness, encouraging access and enhancing its attractiveness to future employers, investors and the local community.***

***1.9.5 To maintain existing employment and improve the potential for employment growth by securing improvements to Tyseley Hill Bridge, enabling access to the Tyseley Business area for heavy vehicles.***

***1.9.6 To improve commercial centres on the key corridors in south east Birmingham.***

## 1.10 National Exhibition Centre/NEC Group

The National Exhibition Centre (NEC) receives up to four million visitors a year, generating income for the local and regional economy. With 20 exhibition halls and 200,000 square metres of floorspace the NEC is currently the biggest exhibition centre in Britain and the seventh largest in Europe. It is also the busiest in Europe. However, the exhibition market is very competitive and the NEC facilities must be enhanced and improved over time to retain its position.

The NEC Group also includes the 13,000 capacity National Indoor Arena (NIA), the International Convention Centre (ICC), and the Symphony Hall. All of these world-class facilities have acted as development anchors generating employment and visitor spending as well as attracting complementary investment to the City. They have also, alongside Birmingham's other tourism and leisure facilities, contributed significantly to the economic competitiveness of the wider city-region, by raising the national and international profile of the City and the West Midlands.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

*To secure the future of the NEC Group managed assets as a premier UK and European destination for exhibition, conference and event-related activities and to build upon other business and leisure-related opportunities in order to maintain their continued regional significance.*

The **Key Actions** include:

- 1.10.1 To promote the NEC Group managed facilities as a regional asset.**
- 1.10.2 To stimulate and support measures to maintain, improve, enhance and expand the facilities in order to maintain their premier position.**
- 1.10.3 To identify and support new opportunities to enhance the current venues 'offer'.**
- 1.10.4 To encourage and, where appropriate, support business and employment opportunities within industries supporting NEC Group facilities.**
- 1.10.5 To work with NEC Ltd and Birmingham International Airport Ltd to facilitate and, where appropriate, stimulate development opportunities.**
- 1.10.6 To lobby government agencies to improve and promote access to the NEC Group venues through better public transport, particularly widening the M42, as well as improvements to local traffic infrastructure which will enhance visitor access/egress and contribute towards improving access to employment for local people and the visitor experience.**
- 1.10.7 To work in partnership with regional and other bodies as appropriate to achieve this strategic objective.**
- 1.10.8 To grow the NEC Ltd business.**

## 1.11 Birmingham International Airport

Birmingham International Airport (BIA) is vital to the region's transport infrastructure, providing links to international markets, supporting improvements in regional competitiveness and attracting inward investment. The airport is a significant employer for Birmingham residents and provides business for a large number of enterprises in the City. The Airport is also critical to growing the City's business and leisure tourism sectors.

The Government's Aviation White Paper supported the need to develop regional passenger air travel growth at Birmingham, supporting the extension of the existing runway and the addition of a second shorter runway in due course to meet demand. The Government assumes this will give sufficient capacity for the Airport's growth in demand up to 2030 and beyond. A key determining factor in the Government's decision was the case made for the economic significance of BIA to the regional economy. The Government suggested that careful consideration be given to reducing the environmental impacts of the expansion on the local area, and to the pressure that will be placed on the surrounding road and rail infrastructure, with the need to considerably increase the use of public transport access to the airport.

Key issues to consider for the Airport's future include strengthening its existing service network to European cities and developing additional long haul services to business destinations in North America and the Far East. The Airport is a major local employer, and steps must be taken to improve public transport access to the Airport for passengers and workers.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

***To deliver the long-term future and expansion of Birmingham International Airport, adding routes to increase the City's number of international connections and improving surface access to the Airport.***



The **Key Actions** include:

***1.11.1 To work in partnership with Birmingham International Airport and other bodies to develop a masterplan for the future of the airport as requested by the Department of Transport.***

***1.11.2 To promote Birmingham International Airport as an alternative to airports in the South East of England and Manchester, and as a direct gateway to the City and the wider region for business and leisure tourists, encouraging a greater number of people to it as a point of entrance to as well as an exit from the region.***

***1.11.3 To improve and promote access to Birmingham International Airport through better public transport, particularly widening the M42, as well as improvements to local traffic infrastructure which will enhance visitor access/egress and contribute towards improving access to employment for local people and the visitor experience.***

***1.11.4 To work with the Airport to secure access to employment opportunities for local people.***

***1.11.5 To work with the NEC Ltd and Birmingham International Airport to facilitate, and, where appropriate, stimulate development opportunities.***

## Key Area 2 - Creating a Skilled Workforce



The skills of our people are one of Birmingham's most critical assets. They not only help individuals to enhance their employability but also allow businesses to improve their competitiveness, flexibility and sustainability. Between 2000 and 2002 an average of 35% of working age adults in Birmingham were qualified to NVQ Level 3 and above (a measure of a world class workforce), compared to 39% in the region and 43% in England. Clearly further progress is required if Birmingham is to have a more knowledge-based economy.

Increasingly employment opportunities will be dependent on a minimum level of skills and there will be fewer jobs for those without skills or qualifications. Alongside providing higher-level skills, there is a need to focus on meeting demand for vocational qualifications and reducing deficiencies in basic skills. The West Midlands Household Survey estimated that over 90,000

working age adults in Birmingham and Solihull have basic skill needs.

Encouraging and supporting Birmingham's young people through education and vocational training to aspire to emerging employment opportunities will be key to the development of both individuals and the City. In recent years the City's schools, have made considerable progress in raising educational attainment. In 2003 49.5% of Year 11 pupils gained five or more GCSEs at grades A-C, an increase from 35.3% in 1997. However Birmingham's attainment rates remain below national averages.

There is a broadening skills base amongst Birmingham's school leavers, with increasing routes to vocational qualifications, including opportunities in Birmingham schools. In line with the recommendations of the Tomlinson working group on 14-19 reform, the City will continue to strengthen its offer of academic and vocational learning opportunities for young people. Through partnership working and collaborative networks, calling on the combined resources of schools, colleges and work-based training, providers will seek to avoid unhealthy competition and encourage the pooling and sharing of resources.

Birmingham's residents must be able to gain the vocational qualifications which can lead to the growing employment opportunities in construction and building maintenance (created by the City's significant pipeline of property development and housing market renewal activities); professional services; health and care; retail; tourism and hospitality; and the creative industries. Through initiatives such as the centres of vocational excellence, the City's further and adult education providers are contributing to curriculum development, to ensure individuals are prepared for such new and existing job opportunities and to raise participation and achievement levels.

Furthermore Birmingham's three universities continue to up-skill the local workforce and help to attract a skilled workforce and related investment to the City. Given the growing demand for higher-level skills, Birmingham must increase the number of young people entering higher education, whilst retaining more of the large number of students graduating from the City's universities each year.

The City's labour market benefits from increasing numbers of working age people from minority ethnic communities, countering some of the challenges arising from an ageing workforce. It is vital that economic inactivity amongst these and other groups is minimised, by encouraging participation in lifelong learning opportunities which will support them in accessing jobs. This is particularly important for older workers for whom the development of new skills will offer greater employment opportunities. The new entitlement for Level 2 learning and Level 3 in priority areas as outlined in the National Skills Strategy will support these objectives. A greater flexibility amongst employers and the removal of the barriers currently restricting disadvantaged groups' participation in the labour market, will increasingly allow them to access opportunities.

The Key Actions identified in this Key Area will undoubtedly have implications for other sections of the Strategy. Increasing the number of people with higher-level skills will support the City in attracting inward investment (Key Area 1) and contribute to higher levels of innovation and enterprise within local businesses and research facilities (Key Area

3). Similarly steps to raise educational attainment in disadvantaged communities and to reduce worklessness will help to address inequalities and social exclusion (Key Area 4).

The Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council is responsible for funding post-16 education and training within Birmingham and will lead on activities supported under Key Area 2. Where appropriate the LSC will work with partners to support the delivery of activities, engaging, for example, with organisations such as Jobcentre Plus, Connexions, further and higher education institutions and schools.





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## 2.1 Skills for Competitive Businesses

Birmingham is increasingly becoming a knowledge-based economy, both in terms of modernised manufacturing and a growing service sector. This has led to an increasing demand for people with higher-level qualifications and vocational skills. There is also a growing recognition by the public and private sectors of the importance of an enterprise culture in both supporting economic growth and employment. Skills such as creativity, risk-management and financial and business understanding can foster self-employment and help individuals to understand how they can best contribute to the enterprise of others.

Recruiting and retaining employees and investing in their ongoing development are critical to business competitiveness, and the City must encourage employers to commit to workforce development, supporting a culture of lifelong learning. Work-related learning is increasingly a part of young people's education, and the Birmingham and Solihull Education Business Consortium actively promotes education-business activities within the City's schools and colleges. There are also a growing range of work-based learning opportunities available across the City for both young people and older workers, including Modern Apprenticeships. Continued steps must be taken to identify innovative ways to develop and promote work-based learning, linking into key policy initiatives such as school-building and housing growth where appropriate.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

***To improve the Birmingham economy's competitiveness and growth by increasing the supply of appropriately qualified workers and continuing to develop vocational skills to meet the needs of employers and enterprise.***

The **Key Actions** include:

***2.1.1 To improve the quality and availability of local labour market analysis covering developments in the City's economy, emerging and declining sectors, occupational change, and demand for qualifications/skills.***

***2.1.2 To further the development of a world-class education and vocational training infrastructure (from schools through to apprenticeships, further and higher education) which through its flexibility, responsiveness and 'joined-up' approach can provide residents, and particularly young people, with choices which meet their identified needs and employment demands, and encourage people to participate in learning and enterprise opportunities.***

***2.1.3 To encourage employers and learning and training providers, including higher and further***

*education institutions, to engage with schools to promote career paths and vocational qualifications appropriate to Birmingham's key growth sectors.*

*2.1.4 To develop enterprise learning as part of a coherent programme of vocational and work-related learning.*

*2.1.5 To continue to work with the Centres of Vocational Excellence (for hospitality at the College of Food, printing at Matthew Boulton College, engineering at Sutton College and retail at Solihull College) and the construction Centre of Excellence at South Birmingham College to improve the quality of the City's vocational training.*

*2.1.6 To increase the number of people gaining degrees, intervening through education, advice and guidance to raise the aspirations of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and assist them to access emerging opportunities.*

*2.1.7 To increase graduate retention, especially within SMEs, by making the City a place where well-paid, highly-skilled workers want to live and work, and are provided with a sufficient supply of attractive, affordable housing and a pleasant, safe environment with superior amenities and cultural facilities.*

*2.1.8 To continue to raise the workforce's skills and attainment levels, including customer service and basic skills, through programmes such as train2gain, which develops basic skills and skills at NVQ Level 2, and by encouraging more employers and individuals to commit to lifelong learning.*

*2.1.9 To maintain the flexibility of older workers by facilitating their participation in learning, and encouraging employers to invest in their older workers' skills development.*



## 2.2 Increasing Employment

Birmingham's adult population has a particularly low rate of employment, with the 2001 Census showing that only 64.4% of men aged 16-64 and 55.6% of women are employed compared to 74.1% and 64.0% in England and Wales. This is a waste of Birmingham's workforce potential and could hold back the future growth of the local economy by causing labour shortages.

There is more to do in terms of identifying and reducing the barriers faced by some individuals and groups in accessing employment opportunities. The partners of the Birmingham and Solihull Employment Strategy Group, its network of locally-based Access to Employment Groups, and the City Council's development of Children's Centres and extended schools, will play a critical role in this work.

Self-employment is one of the options available to workless residents and can play a key role in helping people to move from the informal economy. Self-employment could be increased by a greater development of enterprise skills and specifically targeted business support and guidance.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

*To increase Birmingham's employment rates by removing the barriers preventing some people from participating in the workforce.*

The **Key Actions** include:

**2.2.1** *To encourage employers to provide fair terms and conditions of employment and to adopt flexible working policies and practices so that groups with special requirements, such as single parents and those with caring responsibilities, are encouraged to remain active in the labour market.*

**2.2.2** *To improve provision of and access to child and dependant care services to enable people to access job opportunities and to*

*provide business opportunities.*

**2.2.3** *To increase the employment rates of certain minority ethnic communities by ensuring employers recognise the competitive advantages of equal opportunity recruitment policies for accessing the skills offered by Birmingham's growing minority ethnic workforce.*

**2.2.4** *To develop policies and programmes to tackle all forms of discrimination such as the DiverCity initiative, the Public Sector Compact (involving employers in health and other public services) the Eastside Hub and other job link actions.*

**2.2.5** *To promote the rights of people with disabilities in the workplace by removing barriers that prevent workforce participation and improving employment prospects.*

**2.2.6** *To proactively promote and support the significant opportunities of self-employment and entrepreneurship, particularly amongst under-represented groups.*

**2.2.7** *To improve transport links between areas of high unemployment and key employment opportunity areas, such as the City Centre, Birmingham International Airport and the NEC, recognising the growing need for services outside peak times given the growing diversity of working hours.*

**2.2.8** *To improve the understanding of the impact of the informal economy and develop programmes and actions to encourage people into formal work, including self-employment.*



## 2.3 Reduce Worklessness

There is a need to re-engage workless people in the labour market, where necessary by upgrading their skills. It is estimated that 32% of all unemployed people in Birmingham and Solihull have basic skills needs that prevent them from accessing and keeping a job.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

*To provide access to basic skills training and progression to work for those people who need this support to enable them to participate in the labour market.*



The **Key Actions** include:

**2.3.1** *To raise the education and skills levels of unemployed and workless people.*

**2.3.2** *To close the gap between the educational attainment of young people from priority group and communities and the City's average, so increasing their chances of gaining employment.*

**2.3.3** *To maximise the flexibility in funding regimes for labour market interventions, to enable the development of local solutions to local issues, using the New Deals, Step-Up, Progress 2 Work, Employment Zones and Action Team for Jobs, etc.*

**2.3.4** *To identify measures and resources to help those furthest from participation in the labour market, including improving basic skills through the activities of the Core Skills Partnership.*

**2.3.5** *To engage with people on incapacity benefits and offer support and training to get them into the labour market.*

# Key Area 3 - Fostering Business Development and Diversification



To achieve strong and sustainable economic growth Birmingham must modernise and diversify its economy by attracting inward investment and promoting enterprise and innovation amongst local businesses in order to increase their competitiveness.

Birmingham's business creation rates are above the national average, reflecting the City's significant entrepreneurial spirit. However, Birmingham has a higher than average business failure rate, highlighting the need to focus business support interventions on increasing the stability and growth of local business and training growing businesses within the City. Securing business survival, accelerating growth and adapting to change places great demands on management, which has to respond to a wide variety of challenges, including staff development, accessing investment finance, capturing new business and identifying suitable locations and premises.

Birmingham's businesses face significant challenges as a result of the City's decline in its mature manufacturing markets. There are opportunities to support businesses, such as those within the manufacturing sector, in using their traditional skills for new uses, and there are increasing prospects arising in new high-technology sectors. In addition, high value-added traded services are a focus of growth, particularly in the City Centre. These growing markets face intensive competition from outside the City and from global markets, placing pressure on existing business in the City to retain and increase their competitiveness.

The Government is developing a Business Growth Incentive Scheme, recognising the role local authorities and their partners play in developing local business. The Scheme will reward those authorities which increase, above an agreed threshold, the number of businesses operating in their area. They will retain a proportion of the resulting additional business rates to be spent locally, while placing no additional burden on business ratepayers.

Birmingham's share of foreign direct investment (FDI) has fallen and Birmingham does not currently feature in the top 30 cities identified by the well respected Healey and Baker business attitude survey, which emphasises the importance of innovation, workforce skills and external connections, as the factors determining the best places to locate. Attracting new investment into the City is an essential part of diversifying its employment base and increasing competition for mobile inward investment means Birmingham must work harder to compete with other locations. There will be strong links between activities under Key Areas 1 and 3, particularly with major developments such as the Central Technology Belt and Eastside, offering sites and premises which will foster and support the City's diversification into more high-technology and high-growth sectors.



development of appropriate skills will be crucial for the innovation and enterprise activities of this Key Area, both in terms of developing new skills and in identifying modern uses for traditional skills. Furthermore measures within this Key Area which specifically target disadvantaged communities and the development of local enterprise, will support Key Area 4 in developing more sustainable communities and addressing social exclusion.

The Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry will play a lead role for activities under Key Area 3, particularly through its delivery of Business Link services within Birmingham. The Chamber will work with a range of organisations to deliver these activities, engaging where appropriate with organisations such as the Learning and Skills Council, local universities and Birmingham City Council's inward investment team.

### 3.1 Encouraging the development and growth of new enterprise

New enterprises are crucial to achieving economic transition, as they have the flexibility to move quickly into new markets and products. Without them the economy would be slower to adapt to changing conditions, economic growth would fall and there would be fewer employment opportunities. Locally-owned small businesses often increase the amount of money circulating in the local economy and provide employment opportunities for local residents.

A 'Benchmarker' process, used by Birmingham and Solihull Business Link, measures 16 separate components of competitiveness, against which individual companies can be assessed alongside their sectoral peers. This concluded that in Birmingham businesses established since 2000 and employing less than five people were on average 10% less competitive than the local SME average. There are some specific issues for Black Caribbean and Pakistani-owned businesses, which are as much as 13% less competitive than the City's SME average. For these groups, access to finance is a key factor limiting competitiveness and there is a perceived need for additional management support.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

***To raise the local economy's competitiveness by increasing business formation rates, particularly in new and emerging sectors and within priority groups, and securing the survival, growth and retention of these enterprises.***

The **Key Actions** include:

**3.1.1 To provide pre-start-up support to address key business planning issues such as financial management and marketing.**

**3.1.2 To provide ongoing, comprehensive business and management development support, particularly to fast growth companies and priority groups, by strengthening and building on existing provision and increasing awareness and take-up, especially amongst under-represented groups, including young people.**

**3.1.3 To secure and promote access to development finance to facilitate business growth, including specialist sources such as the Arrow Fund and Aston Reinvestment Trust.**

**3.1.4 To retain the City's growing businesses by ensuring local provision of suitable premises and other facilities, thus avoiding the loss of employment to neighbouring areas.**

**3.1.5 To improve access to local procurement by large purchasers, particularly in the public sector, bringing business opportunities to local firms.**

## 3.2 Innovation and creativity

Innovation, which is critical for business survival and growth, ranges from discovering new markets or applications for existing products to introducing new designs. More challenging innovation is often built on technical progress in products and processes including the production and use of renewable materials and products. Birmingham's three universities all contribute towards technological innovation in the City, providing specialist support to business and promoting Birmingham's strong knowledge base both nationally and internationally. They provide a good base for developing a stronger relationship between higher education institutions and local business, particularly through facilities designed to develop and 'spin out' technological and research advances through small business, such as the Aston Science Park, Birmingham Research Park and the University of Birmingham's Business Outreach Programme.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

*To encourage business innovation and accelerate the conversion of technological progress into new commercial opportunities.*

The **Key Actions** include:

**3.2.1** *To encourage local businesses to pursue innovation in their products and services as a key part of investment planning for future development and growth, incorporating creativity and design into these plans.*

**3.2.2** *To encourage the development of facilities, such as science parks, which accelerate the commercialisation of research and product and process innovation, in order to increase interaction between local businesses and universities.*

**3.2.3** *To provide specialist business and workforce development services to encourage the growth of targeted emerging technology*

*sectors, including photonics, nanotechnology, new materials, new power sources and environmentally sustainable technologies.*

**3.2.4** *To raise vocational skills and qualifications within firms, in particular improving ICT skills and the adoption of ICT systems that are beneficial to modernisation, efficiency and performance.*

## 3.3 Diversification and modernisation of the City's business base - key sectors and clusters

Birmingham's manufacturing sector has been slow to diversify into industries with current or potentially high output growth. The Birmingham economy's ability to move quickly into fast growing, technology-based sectors will depend on its record in investment, enterprise, company relocations, and in developing the workforce's skills, including management skills.

Companies in all sectors must modernise to ensure their competitiveness. The 'Benchmarker' process has identified a number of sectors which would particularly benefit from targeted support to improve their competitiveness, including health and care, and tourism and hospitality.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

*To accelerate economic diversification and modernisation by encouraging the growth of new and existing businesses in target sectors and clusters and other areas of growth, and by encouraging existing businesses to move into new products and markets.*

The **Key Actions** include:

**3.3.1** *To provide specialist services to accelerate the modernisation of existing*



**businesses, including enhanced management skills, improved planning, better human resource management skills, peer group learning networks and management team building.**

**3.3.2 To provide specialist business support and skills development services to encourage the growth of the key service sectors, including professional services; computer services; health and care; tourism and hospitality; retail; and creative industries.**

**3.3.3 To provide targeted business support and skills development services to key high-technology sectors, including electronics and instrument engineering; advanced automotive technology; and medical technologies.**

**3.3.4 To increase local businesses' export activities by promoting exporting services, providing specialist training and advice, and supporting and undertaking trade missions with local businesses.**

## 3.4 Inward Investment

Inward investment can bring new employers or sectors to Birmingham, or see the expansion of businesses and sectors already in the City. In 1997-98 there were 15 inward investment projects in the City and Birmingham attracted 19.3% of the region's total FDI, but in 2002-03 Birmingham only attracted seven projects and 10% of the region's total FDI.

There is much to do to improve the City's attractiveness to investors, including improving the City's 'offer' in terms of key quality of life issues, such as housing, schools, cultural facilities and the environment.

Through the emerging 'Smart Growth: The Midlands Way' proposals Birmingham will play a key role in providing regional economic growth and helping to ease the 'over-heating' of London and the South East of England. There are opportunities for Birmingham to attract office employment in professional services and the public sector that may be 'crowded out' of London by the capital's high costs, including potential Civil Service relocations. The development pipeline, in particular proposals for Eastside, Arena Central and Paradise Circus, will provide considerable levels of high-quality office accommodation in the City Centre. Such investment will support Birmingham's Core City role, providing the wider region with a hub of knowledge-based institutions and strategic business and financial services providers.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

***To make considerable progress in becoming the UK location of choice for investment in traded professional services, relocating public sector jobs and technology projects.***

The **Key Actions** include:

**3.4.1 To raise the external profile of Birmingham, targeting promotional activity at public sector and traded professional services currently located in the over-heated South East of England, including London.**

**3.4.2 To accelerate the development of speculative high-quality office space on City Centre development sites and Eastside, which will deliver an ideal combination of a business park environment in a City Centre location.**

**3.4.3 To secure investment from medical and transportation technology sectors, particularly focused on the Central Technology Belt.**

# Key Area 4 - Creating Sustainable Communities & Vibrant Urban Villages

Sustainable and vibrant communities are those where people choose to live and work. They offer high quality housing and services and contribute to and benefit from economic growth through good quality, well-paid employment. Their residents are in good health and have high levels of educational achievement and economic activity. Currently there are large parts of the inner city and remoter City estates that perform poorly on many of these factors and there are significant differences between unemployment and household income levels across the City. The most disadvantaged areas have poor physical environments and higher levels of crime and residents have difficulty accessing services. This situation is not just unacceptable in itself, but also hinders the economic growth and prosperity of the whole City and the wider region.

The City wants to ensure that all of its communities are a part of future economic growth by creating a network of strong local centres and communities across the City in which residents and businesses have pride and confidence. Activities will build on the undoubted success of the City Centre and focus on the development needs of the City's most disadvantaged local areas and communities, raising their overall economic performance and well-being, building the capacity of local people, and reducing issues of deprivation.

The Vibrant Urban Villages agenda is a key element of Birmingham's Council Plan, reflecting its commitment to devolving a range of services to locally-controlled District Strategic Partnerships through its 'Going Local' agenda. These Partnerships will engage with local people and businesses to identify and address locally-specific needs and priorities. As fundamental parts of the community, local business and voluntary and community organisations have key roles to play in

identifying and addressing local regeneration issues. Funding commitments to address many of the issues within this Key Area can encourage the private sector investment which is essential to the long-term sustainability of improvements. Particular examples of where this is being encouraged include the Northfield and Erdington Town Centre Management schemes.

There are strong links between this Key Area and the development and business-related activities of Key Areas 1 and 3, particularly in terms of enabling Birmingham's residents to access the employment opportunities that arise, linking also to the skills activities promoted in Key Area 2. This Key Area will have a role in ensuring local centres and communities can provide an environment which will attract investors and be a location of choice for both new and existing residents.



## 4.1 Increasing employment opportunities

High unemployment indicates the relative poor economic position of particular areas and community groups within the City. Access to employment for such people, and in particular 'hard to reach' groups such as ethnic minority women, asylum seekers, people with disabilities, non-English speakers, the long-term unemployed and single parents, is critical to securing both their economic inclusion and the City's future economic growth. Enabling this requires a package of complementary interventions, which can support their transition from welfare into sustainable employment.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

*To reduce unemployment and increase economic activity and employment sustainability within priority areas and groups.*

The **Key Actions** include:

**4.1.1** *To capture significant employment opportunities through Employment Hubs and ensure they are proactively marketed to disadvantaged and 'hard to reach' groups, evaluating and replicating good practice in this field.*

**4.1.2** *To support the Local Access to Employment Groups (AEGs) in matching employment support and vocational training to individual and community needs, and promote the provision of appropriate follow-up support to ensure the sustainability of employment.*

**4.1.3** *To encourage developers and employers to commit to recruiting from local communities, capturing opportunities from a variety of development and investment projects, and to tackle discrimination issues.*



**4.1.4** *To improve educational attainment within disadvantaged areas and groups including the development of basic skills and, where appropriate, the teaching of English as a second language.*

**4.1.5** *To reduce the 'digital divide' in disadvantaged areas, promoting the take-up of ICT facilities and training, the infrastructure for which is widely available in the City, which can support residents in accessing services and training and employment opportunities.*

**4.1.6** *To improve transport between areas of high unemployment and key employment opportunity areas, such as the City Centre, Birmingham International Airport and the NEC, recognising the growing need for services outside peak times given the growing diversity of working hours.*

## 4.2 Improving the physical environment of local areas

In areas of the City the potential for economic growth lies within sites and premises that have become derelict due to changes in economic circumstances. Bringing these back into use enhances local confidence, investment potential, and in some areas tourism, as well as improving local residents' quality of life.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

***To support physical improvements that will offer both enhanced economic opportunity and high quality of design, leading to increased confidence in priority areas.***

The **Key Actions** are:

**4.2.1 To engage local businesses and communities in identifying priorities for physical improvement in their areas, including through the development of the district plans emerging from the City's 'Going Local' agenda, and to increase their awareness of planned developments for their area.**

**4.2.2 To focus on those priority sites and premises in need of renewal and redevelopment which have the potential to generate employment opportunities for local people.**

**4.2.3 To prepare and implement plans for the re-use and improvement of previously used land and premises as integral parts of area-based regeneration programmes for priority areas.**

## 4.3 Improving local centres



Flourishing local centres offering quality goods and services are at the heart of vibrant local communities and can play as important a role as the City Centre in attracting investment and residents to the City. Many of the City's priority areas contain poor quality centres, which are physically unattractive, offer inadequate services and feel unwelcoming and unsafe. This results in high levels of business turnover and vacant properties, long-term under investment and poor access to services for local people. The City Council's Local Centres Programme prioritises particular centres across the City for intervention to address such issues. Current priorities for action include Alum Rock Road and Coventry Road in the east of the City, Birchfield Road, Soho Road and Dudley Road in the north west, and Frankley and Stirchley in the south west.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

***To create viable and stable local centres where people will want to live, work, shop and invest and in which residents have confidence and pride.***

The **Key Actions** include:

**4.3.1 To secure business growth in priority local centres by providing comprehensive packages of physical improvements and support, including crime reduction measures, hence**

**confirming their critical role in area-based regeneration.**

**4.3.2 To support the development of sustainable local centres, offering a diverse range of businesses, facilities and services which are appropriate and accessible to local residents, including vulnerable groups.**

**4.3.3 To continue to coordinate investment, environmental improvements and the overall management of Erdington and Northfield town centres through the Town Centre Managers who have been appointed to improve business confidence and trade in these areas.**

## 4.4 Growing local enterprise

New and growing local enterprises provide routes to employment for many people. Business formation and survival rates are relatively low within some of the City's disadvantaged areas and groups, such as the African, Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities, although their interest in enterprise is strong. Social enterprise has the potential for a much greater role in delivering public services, particularly within care services, and can make a particular contribution in disadvantaged areas, as it increases the local retention of wealth. Limited access to finance and support services, common to all small businesses, are magnified for those owned

by people from disadvantaged groups and communities, and also for social enterprises.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

***To increase the number of new enterprises created by people from disadvantaged groups and priority regeneration areas.***

The **Key Actions** include:

**4.4.1 To target business start-up services, including those supporting social and community enterprise, within priority regeneration areas and groups, working where necessary with local and specialist agencies to reach these key groups.**

**4.4.2 To facilitate an increase in the procurement of goods and services from local enterprise, including social enterprise, bringing local purchasers together with local suppliers.**

**4.4.3 To develop a Social Enterprise Strategy through the Birmingham and Solihull Social Economy Consortium, focusing resources on priority communities and developing mechanisms to secure increased business through local procurement.**



## 4.5 Low household incomes and high benefit dependency

Raising employment and economic activity levels can increase both household incomes and the City's overall economic performance. Currently household incomes vary considerably across the City with, for example, the average household income in Aston being £15,742 compared to a City average of £25,105. Low household incomes and high levels of benefit dependency are concentrated in the City's most disadvantaged areas and communities. This can have implications for individuals' ability to access training and employment opportunities due, for example, to the cost of childcare or transport.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

***To enhance the economic well-being of residents within priority areas and groups by increasing household incomes and reducing benefit dependency.***

The **Key Actions** include:

**4.5.1 To work with the Employment Strategy Group to implement active labour market policies to help people move from welfare to work.**

**4.5.2 To engage with people on incapacity and other benefits and offer support and training to enable their participation in the labour market.**

**4.5.3 To deliver the Credit Union Development Strategy, building on the City's successful network of credit unions, and enhancing the range of services on offer.**

**4.5.4 To identify additional measures and resources to help those furthest from the labour market to get into work, including improving basic skills through the activities of the Core Skills Partnership.**

**4.5.5 To ensure the take-up of benefits where this is appropriate.**

**4.5.6 To support steps to address fuel poverty, such that every home within Birmingham is adequately and affordably heated, and to reduce the number of residents who are suffering from cold-related ill health, particularly amongst vulnerable groups such as older people, young children and people with disabilities.**

## 4.6 Reducing crime and the fear of crime

Reducing crime and the fear of crime can raise community and business confidence and encourage employment and business growth. Addressing concerns about crime, particularly gun crime and drug-related crime, are a high priority for the Police and many other local agencies and feature in many regeneration programmes. For many local residents, tackling anti-social behaviour could significantly improve their quality of life.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

***To increase business and community confidence in priority areas by working within the Community Safety Partnership to reduce crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.***

The **Key Actions** include:

**4.6.1 To work with local communities, the Police and District Partnerships to identify priorities for action through inter-agency partnerships, in order to engage communities in activities, raise community confidence, and increase people's willingness to participate in employment and learning opportunities.**

**4.6.2 To invest in physical improvement measures, such as CCTV, Help Points and better urban design in key commercial areas, to make businesses more secure, increase business stability, and, over the long-term, reduce business costs, including high insurance premiums.**

## 4.7 Health and economic activity

There are strong links between health and both economic activity and the accessibility of services. Whilst good health can enable people to participate in employment and learning activities and to use public services, being in employment and accessing services can themselves contribute towards better health. There is an important role for raising the awareness and understanding of the health risks of smoking, drugs, stress, obesity and air and noise pollution, and the benefits of a healthy diet, exercise and well-heated homes.

Health and care services are part of the City's growing service sector. As well as requiring the resources and expertise of the public sector health agencies they provide considerable potential business and employment opportunities for local people, including social enterprises. It is important that partners work with health sector agencies, including the NHS and local Primary Care Trusts, to address poor health issues and maximise the benefits of health sector-related employment and business within Birmingham.

The **Strategic Objective** is:

***To address issues of poor health as they limit participation in work and learning and access to services.***

The **Key Actions** include:

**4.7.1 To ensure health improvement and awareness work is, where appropriate, undertaken as an integral part of regeneration programmes.**

**4.7.2 To improve access to services for vulnerable groups, including those with a long-term illness and older people, through improved transport facilities and innovative service provision.**

## 4.8 Responding to Changing Demand for Housing

Stable housing markets contribute significantly to the well-being of communities and make the City an attractive place to live, work and invest. Successful markets offer a range of housing to meet the needs of people at all stages of their lives. Birmingham's housing markets vary in their success and are greatly influenced by local economic circumstances and the quality of the housing stock.

In many parts of the City, housing has developed around areas of traditional manufacturing employment, and has seen changes in its function as the economy has evolved. This has exposed some local housing markets to the risk of failure as people choose to live elsewhere.

Other areas, such as the City Centre, are experiencing a growing demand for residential property. In these areas there is a risk that many people, including certain key workers, are not able to secure housing due to high prices and must live further away from their workplaces than they would choose to. Local and regional studies have shown there are people taking advantage of increased personal mobility to live further away from their workplace, often in more affordable areas outside the City. In areas which no longer appeal to younger families and more affluent people, there is a risk that pockets of concentrated disadvantage can become established. Those housing markets at risk of failing are priorities for regeneration and have been subject of particular study.

The Birmingham Housing Strategy sets out a framework to deliver on the strategic housing priorities of achieving decent homes; addressing changing patterns of demand; and securing a step change in the supply and choice of affordable housing. The Strategy refers to the 'Urban Living' Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder (in North West Birmingham and Sandwell) and to the Eastern Corridor market restructuring area (in East Birmingham and North Solihull). These large-scale initiatives will involve working with communities and landlords to create more sustainable housing markets and will offer training and employment opportunities for local people in terms of construction and future housing maintenance.



The *Strategic Objective* is:

*To ensure regeneration activity takes full account of issues identified through local research; responds to changing demand in housing markets; and makes improvements in the availability and quality of housing stock, creating more stable communities and reducing moves out of the City and commuting.*

The *Key Actions* include:

*4.8.1 To encourage and enable the provision of affordable housing stock, with a diversity of types and tenures, and clearance or remodelling of housing areas where investment in the existing stock would be inadequate to ensure their sustainability, hence encouraging housing relevant to the long-term economic function of particular areas and creating communities in which residents wish and are able to remain as their economic circumstances change.*

*4.8.2 To use Planning powers to secure the provision of affordable housing, including social rented, shared ownership and fixed equity housing, for those people, including*

*certain 'key workers', who wish to live and work in the City but are unable to afford market prices or rents.*

*4.8.3 To ensure that regeneration activity accords with the North West Birmingham and Sandwell 'Urban Living' Prospectus and Action Plan; a Prospectus for the Eastern Corridor area (East Birmingham and North Solihull); and the Birmingham Housing Strategy.*

*4.8.4 To encourage the incorporation of green and open spaces in housing areas and improved accessibility to services, in order to create sustainable communities and enhance quality of life.*

# Mechanisms for Delivery and Resources

There is a 'family' of partnerships and organisations involved in the delivery of economic development activities in Birmingham. The core economic partners of the Birmingham Strategic Partnership, **Birmingham City Council, the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council**, lead on the delivery of economic development services across Birmingham and on preparing this Strategy. Other important contributors to the success of this strategy include Advantage West Midlands, Government Office for the West Midlands, English Partnerships, private business and voluntary and community sector organisations.

## Partnership for Strategic Funding

The availability of external resources is critical to the delivery of economic development and regeneration activities in the City. A wide range of partnerships throughout the City are able to lever in investment to address socio-economic needs and opportunities by accessing public funding through European, national, regional and local mechanisms. Key to this process is the need for consultation and partnership working to avoid duplication and to ensure funding opportunities are maximised and add value to each other.

## Partnerships for Development

The City Council works to accelerate development through its services and property ownership, complementing the many innovative approaches adopted by private and public sector developers. There is a regular dialogue with key players locally through the **Property Agents Forum** and a **Development Charter**, which clarifies the mutual rights and responsibilities of all parties to the development process.

Key successes in recent years have been achieved through innovative private and public sector-led

arrangements. **The Birmingham Alliance** has made considerable progress in improving the City Centre's retail 'offer', initially through the refurbishment of **Martineau Square**, but most notably the **Bullring** redevelopment. In addition, **Brindleyplace** was brought about after the City Council worked to assemble the site. This was then comprehensively planned and developed by **Argent**, creating a single managed estate with a high quality environment. **The Eastside Team** coordinate development in Eastside and work with partners to attract investment to support this work.

## Partnerships for Marketing the City

Marketing Birmingham is an agency established to coordinate the City's promotion for business and leisure tourism. It is funded by the City Council and private sector contributors and works in partnership with a wide range of business and leisure tourism facilities and agencies.

## Going Local

The City Council aims to bring service delivery closer to service users and to enable closer working with other local service providers through its '**Going Local**' agenda, which sees the management of particular services at district level.

## Partnerships for Area Regeneration

Area-based regeneration activities are delivered through partnerships, with community representatives participating directly in decision-making. Examples include the **North West Corridors of Regeneration SRB6 Partnership** in the north west of the City, **Kings Norton New Deal for Communities** in the south west and **Aston Pride New Deal for Communities** in the north west. It also applies to structures established in the south east of the City for delivering the **Enterprising Communities Action Plan**.

The **East Birmingham and North Solihull Regeneration Zone** and the **South Black Country and West Birmingham Regeneration Zone** are two of the six Regeneration Zones established in the region by Advantage West Midlands. The Zones face significant socio-economic challenges and seek to link areas of need with key local employment sites and opportunities. The Zone Boards comprise of the public, private and voluntary sectors as well as community representation. The Enterprising Communities Action Plan is located in the East Zone, whilst the SRB6 and Aston Pride New Deal for Communities programmes are located within the West Zone, creating opportunities to draw down additional resources.

The **Central Technology Belt (CTB)** is one of the region's three high-technology corridors, running along the A38 from Aston University in the north to Malvern in the south of Worcestershire. Using sites along this corridor and drawing in public and private sector investment the CTB will foster growth in high-technology, high-growth sectors, building on key local research facilities.

## Partnerships for Employment

The Birmingham and Solihull Employment Strategy Group is a sub-group of the Birmingham Strategic Partnership and aims to increase the number of Birmingham and Solihull residents in work, particularly within those communities that are under-represented in the labour market. Jointly chaired by Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council

and the City Council (Economic Development) the Partnership also includes Solihull MBC, Jobcentre Plus, Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Birmingham Voluntary Services Council, Connexions, Pertemps Employment Alliance, Working Links and Working Directions.

The Group seeks to link local communities to employment opportunities. To facilitate these linkages, seven **Local Access to Employment Groups (AEG's)** have been established which plan and coordinate local employment support and vocational training in target communities. This linkage worked effectively for the Bullring opportunities and will continue in relation to other major developments and growth sectors, including the former IMI site at Witton (The Hub), the 'superhospital' development in Selly Oak, Eastside, construction, health and social care and public services.

If you require this document in another format please contact us to discuss your requirements by using one of the methods below:

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