



BLACK COUNTRY LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

SUBMISSION TO GOVERNMENT

SEPTEMBER 2010



**THE BLACK
COUNTRY**

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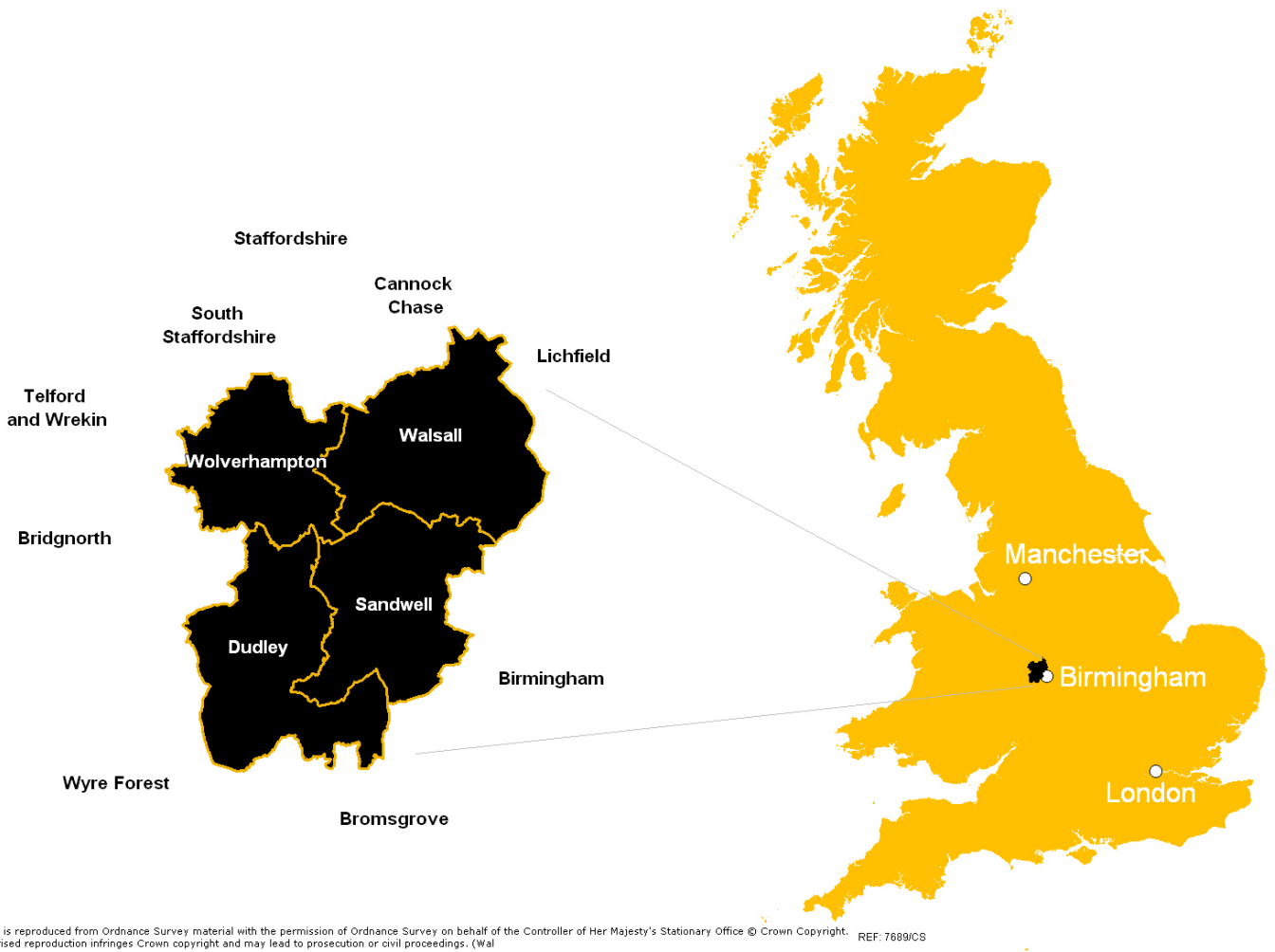
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APPENDIX 1

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The Black Country and Surrounding Areas



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a) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Black Country has well established, mature relationships between business, education and the four local authorities which have transcended changes in political leadership and enabled the Black Country to work collaboratively for a decade. With a strong evidence base, an agreed vision and strategy for growth and competitiveness for our future, and a Joint Spatial Strategy we are extremely confident of our ability to deliver economic growth to communities in the Black Country. It is from these foundations that the Black Country will build a Local Enterprise Partnership.

THE BLACK COUNTRY

The Black Country is proud to be a product of its industrial past. The Black Country pioneered the urbanisation of the industrial revolution and products made in the Black Country continue to shape the world today. Our employees are renowned for their strong work ethic, supporting some 33,000 businesses and generating £17bn of Gross Value Added.

We are a well recognised functioning economic area, home to over 1.1 million people and approximately half a million jobs. The diversity of our communities is reflected in the diversity of our business base, our strong trading links abroad and thus our commitment to develop the strengths of our BME economies and attract foreign investment.

Manufacturing remains a vital and central part of our economy. Outside London and the South East, the Black Country has won more London 2012 contracts than any other sub-region demonstrating the strength and depth of our industry. This manufacturing base is a powerful foundation that, we are extremely confident, will enable the Black Country to increase its contribution to the renewal and growth of the UK economy.

We recognise that real challenges exist for the economy of the Black Country. Leaders from private and public sectors strongly believe that delivering greater economic productivity will be best achieved by continuing to work as the Black Country, building from our economic strengths and maximising our shared opportunities.

BLACK COUNTRY PARTNERSHIP

In the Black Country, we have long recognised that the smarter use of combined resources adds value and delivers 'more for less'. The Black Country (as the Black Country Consortium and the Association of Black Country Authorities) has worked together in a voluntary public/private partnership for almost a decade. The Black Country Chamber of Commerce, as a founding partner of the Consortium, has been a key conduit in working with business leaders. Our partnership has produced a strong

evidence base for the Black Country setting out a shared vision, objectives and strategy for economic growth.

The emergence of Local Enterprise Partnerships is seen as a key opportunity to build on the work that has been done and to focus the innovation of the private sector on delivery, making the Black Country economy more competitive and its businesses more profitable. This evolution in partnership working will harness the expertise of business, and utilise private sector leadership to deliver more efficiently for the sub-region.

OUR LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

As Black Country businesses we have defined, alongside local authorities and other public sector partners, a core group of functions over which the LEP requires influence and/or control to create the right conditions for growth. These functions will remain focused in order to deliver the key targets of the Local Enterprise Partnership. Critically, our Partnership will be led by businesses working with local authorities who are committed to enabling private investment to improve the competitiveness of the Black Country. The Local Enterprise Partnership will provide the single voice for the Black Country on these issues, and will continue to work closely with neighbouring areas where there are clearly defined economic benefits.

We acknowledge the history of, current activity in and future opportunity for, joint working with our neighbouring areas, particularly Birmingham where strong partnerships already exist and also Staffordshire and Shropshire. But we really understand the scale of the challenge in the Black Country, as evidenced in this submission, and firmly believe that a Local Enterprise Partnership at the Black Country level will bring stronger focus for businesses and Local Government in our area.

We consider the contribution of further education (represented by the 'Black Country Colleges') and higher education (through the University of Wolverhampton) as pivotal to informing and delivering the skills priorities emerging from the Local Enterprise Partnership.

We recognise the need to maximise the value of existing staffing and financial resources. The Local Enterprise Partnership will provide the critical challenge and leadership role to ensure we most effectively use these resources against the core agenda set out below for the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership,

We are seeking to establish a strong Partnership with Government. We wish to agree our key objectives and economic outcomes with Government Departments and national agencies and will align investment programmes to achieve these outcomes. This will be critical to our success.

SUCCESS FACTORS

We will judge the success of the Local Enterprise Partnership by its ability to:

- Increase the Gross Value Added of the Black Country Economy;
- Make Business in the Black Country more profitable;
- Promote private sector led job creation; and
- Support economic diversity and sustainability.

FUNCTIONS

The Local Enterprise Partnership will have a strategic priority setting, leadership and commissioning role based on principles of subsidiarity and local accountability. Consideration will be given to the development of joint services as opportunities to secure efficiencies arise.

The Local Enterprise Partnership is the vehicle through which innovative funding/development mechanisms to drive major change and investment will be secured. As such, the Partnership seeks responsibilities for holding, disbursing and managing funds and directing the use of assets, including those currently held by Advantage West Midlands (Regional Development Agency), only in accordance with defined priorities.

The Local Enterprise Partnership will provide intelligence to monitor and evaluate performance using the already established Black Country Performance Management Framework.

Businesses will focus the Local Enterprise Partnership on its task of supporting actions to create wealth and the following are recognised as Added Value roles that a Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership will bring:

- Strategy and Policy setting
- Commissioning Research and Intelligence
- Investment Strategy
- Commissioning of Implementation
- Advocacy

Current views on the functions to be performed by the Local Enterprise Partnership are broadly set out below against three themes and explained in more detail in the tables that follow.

i) **Competitiveness**

To increase the number and productivity of our businesses, the Local Enterprise Partnership will:

- Own and maintain the Black Country Strategy for Growth and Competitiveness and the Black Country Performance Management Framework
- Engage with and support all strategically important companies contributing to GVA;
- Lead a concerted effort to define a world class Black Country Inward Investment offer and response mechanism to support UKTI promotional activities;
- Develop a programme of opportunities to drive forward our BME business base in recognition of the significant contribution they will make to our future economy;
- Develop programmes of support to encourage enterprise and business growth in agreed sectors such as low carbon technologies and high value manufacturing;
- Direct the shaping of solutions to increase sustainable employment and wealth generating opportunities as well as improving our export capacity;
- Develop a programme of profitable business, education and supply chain networking to stimulate innovation and support diversification;
- Develop a local business growth fund to solve short term cash flow issue for SME's;
- Lead on lobbying UK and EU policy makers regarding specific policies and programmes to support business competitiveness;
- Maximise investment in, and improvement of, the Black Country transport network;
- Direct the development of local procurement models; and
- Collectively promote the sub-regional tourism 'offer' and exploit key market segments.

ii) Education, Employment & Skills

To meet the skills needs of businesses, create jobs and rebalance the Black Country economy the Local Enterprise Partnership will:

- Establish, own and maintain an employment and skills strategy to influence curriculum and delivery to meet local business needs;
- Focus employment and skills investment on priority sectors and strategic companies to maximise return on investment;
- Strengthen relationships between businesses and skills providers, including schools, higher and further education, and co-operation between, employers; and
- Promote innovation and knowledge transfer between education, skills and business and promote enterprise and business in schools.

iii) Land Use and Transport Change

In areas of spatial priority, the Local Enterprise Partnership will:

- Increase delivery in agreed physical investment locations;
- Complete a detailed analysis of AWM and Local Authority Assets and identify a comprehensive case for their use to Central Government;

- Undertake a review of public and private assets to deliver our economic regeneration priorities;
- Provide Strategic Programme Management; and
- Identify, test and deliver innovative funding mechanisms.

GOVERNANCE

We propose that the existing Black Country Consortium Ltd., an established legal entity, provides the immediate secretariat support and facilitates the Black Country Local Enterprise Board. With a private sector chair, the Board will consist of prominent Black Country Business and local authority leaders ensuring the Local Enterprise Partnership provides a new perspective to addressing the unique issues faced by the Black Country.

In order to enable the Black Country to effectively meet the challenges we face, we would welcome government decisions to empower the LEP by:

- Recognising the LEP as the sole co-ordinator of bids for the Regional Growth Fund to deliver the Black Country Strategy;
- Delegating powers, where agreed, to the Local Enterprise Partnership to re-profile and switch funds won via the Regional Growth Funds to achieve agreed outputs more effectively;
- Allowing the Partnership to influence the distribution of Government investment in adult skills and employment support to meet the needs of companies across the Black Country - acknowledging that emerging Government policy is to fund colleges/providers directly;
- Enabling the Local Enterprise Partnership to fully inform the Integrated Transport Authority Plan for the Black Country and to use transport funds to achieve integrated transport provision at Black Country and sub-national levels;
- Acknowledging the Local Enterprise Partnership as lead on the strategy for development of those assets fundamental to the economic success of the Black Country currently in the ownership of AWM;
- Permitting the receipt, where appropriate, of locally selected AWM assets which will bring leverage and funding opportunities from the Private Sector to quicken the delivery of Local Enterprise Partnership priorities;
- Permitting the management of capital funding streams which facilitate Land and Property development – i.e. European Regional Development Funds;
- Endorsing the Partnership to establish innovative development vehicles and funding mechanisms such as Business Improvement Districts, Accelerated Development Zones, and Enterprise Zones;
- Transferring responsibilities from AWM on specific funding streams where local solutions to local problems have already been identified by members of the Local Enterprise Partnership – i.e. Priority 3 European Funding.

NEXT STEPS

The Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership will form its shadow Board by 1st October 2010 to oversee transition arrangements, undertake further engagement and refine priorities for action.

The full Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership Board will be established by end March 2011. We are building from a position of trust and mature working relationships and underpinned by successful delivery of a number of partnership led initiatives in the Black Country at strategic, political and project levels and as set out later in part 2 of this submission.

The Black Country has also prepared a single submission to the Regional Growth Fund Consultation and the Local Enterprise Partnership will lead the development of our submission to government for Regional Growth Fund allocation in December 2010.

Much work has been undertaken by preparing our 30 year vision for the area and associated integrated economic and spatial strategy (The Black Country Study and The Black Country Joint Core Strategy). The Black Country is very enthusiastic about this opportunity and is keen to help Government shape its thinking on the development of Local Enterprise Partnerships and the proposed Regional Growth Fund. To this end, an early dialogue with Government would be welcome.

b) THE CASE FOR A BLACK COUNTRY LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

The Black Country has a £5.3bn output gap, which continues to grow each year. Without decisive action to transform the Black Country, this output gap is anticipated to grow to over £8bn by 2031. We know what we need to do and it is the function of the Local Enterprise Partnership to provide leadership and drive to meet this challenge. The scale of the challenge warrants special attention and for that reason a Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership, working with others where appropriate, is agreed to be the most effective and likely to make a real difference to these challenges, which we set out below:

| The Challenge | |
|--------------------------|---|
| THE PEOPLE | |
| Low Pay | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Increasing average earnings by £3,971 each year. |
| High Unemployment | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Bringing 33,000 people out of 'worklessness'. |
| High Deprivation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">We have poor community balance – only 15% are affluent A/B socio economic households compared to 22% nationally.20% of Black Country communities are in the 10% most deprived nationally; 42% in the 20% most deprived (2007). |

| | |
|--|---|
| Poor Qualification Levels | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing skills progression through all academic and vocational levels in line with business needs e.g. 50,000 more with any relevant qualification and 63,000 more with degrees. |
| THE PLACE | |
| Poor Image | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capitalise on the 545 hectares of derelict land, our unique Canal network (177kms) and our 740ha of designated nature reserves. |
| THE ECONOMY | |
| Low Levels Business Stock | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve 250 more viable businesses per annum. |
| Low Levels Entrepreneurial Activity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase business start-ups per 10,000 population from 41 to 57. |
| Low Survival Rates | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve one year and five year business survival rates. |
| Weak Knowledge Economy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target Employment creation in knowledge-intensive sectors especially in the following industries: Creative and Digital, High-value Manufacturing, ICT and Financial Services. |
| High Public Sector Dependence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rebalance local economy, halting decline in Private sector employment and growth in Public Sector employment. |
| Declining Manufacturing Sector | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create new jobs to replace potential loss of 65,000 low value jobs by 2030. |

c) WHAT THE BLACK COUNTRY LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERHSIP WILL DO

COMPETITIVENESS

The Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership will address the need to rebalance the economy by focusing on activities that support business start-ups, enable businesses to grow and that create employment opportunities by developing strategic approaches to attracting inward investment, both foreign direct investment and the visitor economy.

| WHAT THE LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP WILL DO | HOW IT WILL BE ACHIEVED | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | WE WILL DO | WE WILL INFLUENCE | WHAT WE WOULD LIKE GOVERNMENT TO DO |
| <p>Own and maintain the Black Country Vision and Strategy for Growth and Competitiveness to transform the medium/long term economic performance of the Black Country.</p> <p>Provide active support for our businesses specifically within added value and growth sectors and those of strategic importance (e.g. Aerospace, Low Carbon Technologies, Food and Drink and Building Technologies).</p> | <p>Continuously review and update The Black Country Study to take account of changing economic circumstances and Local Economic Assessments.</p> <p>We will use business intelligence to inform and shape policy that supports our employers and influences the use of available funding in support of business sustainability and growth.</p> <p>We will provide a single approach to Business Account management through one CRM system.</p> | <p>The policies and funding programmes of ministers and governmental departments to deliver the Black Country Strategy.</p> <p>We will influence partners to set up open and shared client management systems.</p> | <p>To acknowledge and sign up to the Black Country Strategy and hold departments and agencies to account to support its delivery.</p> <p>Remove barriers to sharing data between public and private sector agencies.</p> <p>Remove the need to deliver all support services through the single business support model to keep support localised and specialised.</p> |

| WHAT THE LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP WILL DO | HOW IT WILL BE ACHIEVED | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| | WE WILL DO | WE WILL INFLUENCE | WHAT WE WOULD LIKE GOVERNMENT TO DO |
| | Provide a single point of access for Land and Property enquiries to provide a responsive and speedy service. | | |
| We will develop and utilise our evidence base to shape activities in support of business growth and economic sustainability. | We will develop a Black Country Local Economic Assessment and use this to support and funding to our growth and added value sectors. | The use of available employment land, targeting the use for the growth and added value sectors. | Government will endorse our evidence base and assist us to secure funding and inward investment opportunities. |
| Define and market a world class Black Country Inward Investment Strategy and Investment offer. | <p>We will identify 'winners' in industry sectors and channel support and/or funding to help them develop commercially.</p> <p>We will Target marketing alongside UK Trade and Industry's (UKTI) new international and sector marketing campaigns.</p> <p>We will co-ordinate inward trade delegations and ensure key partners are involved to market the Black Country effectively.</p> | <p>Local Enterprise Partnership to influence the provision and take up of R&D and develop embryonic markets through specialisation.</p> <p>Focus our Inward Investment activities on targeting the sectors which bring the most added value to the Black Country.</p> | <p>Government will consult with the Local Enterprise Partnership on commissioning of innovation and product development programmes in the Black Country.</p> <p>Government will delegate funding for Knowledge Transfer Partnerships and innovation to the Local Enterprise Partnership for distribution at local level.</p> <p>Government will provide a sub-national UKTI contract with West Midlands Chambers of Commerce LLP.</p> |

| WHAT THE LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP WILL DO | HOW IT WILL BE ACHIEVED | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| | WE WILL DO | WE WILL INFLUENCE | WHAT WE WOULD LIKE GOVERNMENT TO DO |
| | <p>We will maximise overseas links of our BME communities and international University.</p> <p>We will market the Black Country as the 'Supply Chain to the World'.</p> <p>We will develop a 'Find it in the Black Country' procurement portal for public and private sector tender opportunities.</p> | <p>We will influence Tier 1 suppliers and large public sector opportunities (e.g. London 2012) to engage in the Find it in the Black Country procurement model.</p> | <p>Government will give the Local Enterprise Partnership powers to direct, receive and disburse appropriate funds – e.g. ERDF Priority 2.</p> |
| <p>Foster an enterprise culture throughout the Black Country economy to increase business stock and start-up survival rates.</p> <p>We will reduce business failures.</p> | <p>We will support start-up businesses, including 1:1 coaching.</p> <p>We will design interventions for businesses post 18 months – 3 years, including a rigorous programme of mentoring for priority growth businesses and sectors.</p> <p>We will develop a sustainable business parks support model.</p> | <p>Developing pre-incubation space for new start-ups, particularly in conjunction with the Further Education sector.</p> <p>We will make sure there is a good supply of virtual office, incubation and managed workspace provision to encourage and support business start-up and early growth.</p> | <p>Government will consult with the Local Enterprise Partnership to define the start up service required in the Black Country.</p> <p>Support submissions for enterprise business support to be delivered locally.</p> |

| WHAT THE LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP WILL DO | HOW IT WILL BE ACHIEVED | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| | WE WILL DO | WE WILL INFLUENCE | WHAT WE WOULD LIKE GOVERNMENT TO DO |
| | <p>Maintain and develop the UKTI Cluster model to develop embryonic markets and new products.</p> <p>Encouraging and supporting diversification of indigenous companies.</p> | <p>We will influence the use of public sector and EU funding in support of the creation and sustainability of new businesses.</p> | <p>Government will work with us to facilitate the proactive and eligible use of EU funding in support of business growth and enterprise development.</p> <p>Support the delivery of the UKTI Cluster activities locally.</p> |
| <p>Develop and escalate cross sectoral, Business with Further Education and supply chain networking to stimulate innovation and support diversification.</p> <p>Encourage enterprise and entrepreneurialism in schools and amongst young people.</p> | <p>Develop a programme of business engagement and Knowledge Transfer with Universities through Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs), graduate placement and graduate retention schemes.</p> <p>Tailored support for young people/ graduates drawing on the advice of the private sector.</p> <p>Build on existing business networks that engage with the education sector to develop a critical mass.</p> | <p>Appropriate flexibility in eligibility criteria to improve take up of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships by business and individuals.</p> <p>Influence the inclusion of enterprise and business skills in the National Curriculum.</p> | <p>Government will delegate Further investment in Knowledge Transfer Partnerships through Wolverhampton University.</p> |
| <p>Develop local business growth/investment fund and move to a loan, rather than grant culture, to address the reduction in public funding.</p> | <p>Develop a Board of private sector investors / venture capitalists to be matched to opportunities in the Black Country.</p> | <p>Pilot new ways of working to fund activities in support of creating the conditions for growth and providing businesses with the transport and environment they need to prosper.</p> | <p>Provide Local Authorities with the ability to ring-fence and utilise Business Rates generated locally as a result of key projects and development to fund infrastructure development according to local needs.</p> |

| WHAT THE LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP WILL DO | HOW IT WILL BE ACHIEVED | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| | WE WILL DO | WE WILL INFLUENCE | WHAT WE WOULD LIKE GOVERNMENT TO DO |
| | Partial ring fencing of local Business Rates used to fund enterprise projects. | | Maintain role of Manufacturing Advisory Service. |
| Work with partners to improve investment in Black Country transport networks and its connectivity to the national network, to improve accessibility, travel times and flow. | <p>We will agree the key transport priorities for the Black Country and work with local and national partners and funding bodies to agree the potential funding mechanisms.</p> <p>We will work with Integrated Transport Authority to identify and secure funding for investment priorities, particularly the strategic road network.</p> | <p>The priorities accepted for the Black Country and ensure that these are nationally recognised and where possible supported.</p> <p>Department for Transport, to ensure that their funding allocations take into account the strategic transport priorities for the Black Country.</p> | Empower the key funding bodies and agencies responsible for administering the funding to set strategy and commission projects in accordance with Local Enterprise Partnership priorities. |
| <p>Set the overall strategic framework and investment priorities for tourism.</p> <p>Collectively promote the sub-regional tourism 'offer' and exploit key market segments.</p> | <p>Ensure each locality maximises their unique local assets to the benefit of the wider sub-region.</p> <p>Capitalise on tourism as an economic driver within the sub-region Maximise tourism as a mechanism to promote physical regeneration.</p> | Agree a common framework in line with the visitor economy policies outlined in the Black Country Joint Core Strategy and local strategies. | |

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS

The Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership will bring clarity of purpose, as partners understand the economic importance of raising levels of education, employment and skills. We outline below how the Local Enterprise Partnership will build on our current position and remove any mismatches between the employment and skills provision and economic/business requirements, to build the competitiveness of the sub region, develop its economic rebalancing and close the productivity gap.

| WHAT THE LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP WILL DO | HOW IT WILL BE ACHIEVED | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| | WE WILL DO | WE WILL INFLUENCE | WHAT WE WOULD LIKE GOVERNMENT TO DO |
| <p>Establish, own and maintain an employment and skills strategy to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Influence and drive the curriculum implementation to ensure it meets local business needs. - Influence and make the most of European funding available to the Country / Region, linked to business needs. | <p>Incorporate existing private sector led Employment and Skills Board into the Local Enterprise Partnership and strengthen representation from strategic companies, priority sectors and sub sectors. The Local Enterprise Partnership will also work closely with the City Region Employment & Skills Board, that is private sector led and chaired, utilising the powers and capacity at its disposal to increase skills levels and employability.</p> <p>Subsume the existing Sub Regional Group (SRG) into the Local Enterprise Partnership, strengthening representation from the private sector and building on the work of the Employment & Skills Board.</p> | <p>Provide a single voice on Black Country requirements to influence nationally and locally commissioned provision including apprenticeships and Knowledge Transfer Partnerships.</p> <p>Provide a stronger voice on behalf of the Black Country in influencing / drafting specifications for and where appropriate the use of both ESF and ERDF funding throughout the Black Country.</p> | <p>Consult with the Local Enterprise Partnership on major Government employment and skills strategies.</p> <p>Give the Local Enterprise Partnership influence over relevant agencies including the Skills Funding Agency, the Department of Work and Pensions and the Higher Education Funding Council.</p> |

| WHAT THE LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP WILL DO | HOW IT WILL BE ACHIEVED | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| | WE WILL DO | WE WILL INFLUENCE | WHAT WE WOULD LIKE GOVERNMENT TO DO |
| <p>Focus employment and skills investment on priority sectors and strategic companies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maximise return on investment. | <p>Pooling similar funding and people across 4 boroughs and targeting activity on those sectors holding the greatest wealth generation capacity.</p> | <p>Providers (including schools) by generating robust intelligence on forecasted employer need / prosperity through economic assessments and sectoral analyses.</p> | <p>Align employment and skill investments in our area with the Local Enterprise Partnership's strategies and priorities, through Joint Investment Plans and other mechanisms.</p> |
| <p>Strengthen relationships between businesses and skills providers, including schools, higher and further Education, and co-operation between, employers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote innovation and knowledge transfer between education, skills and business. - Promote enterprise and business in schools. | <p>Increase range and nature of placements and apprenticeships, including establishing the attitudinal qualities employers seek in potential employees.</p> <p>Private sector Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership members will serve as ambassadors for private sector involvement in employment and skills.</p> | <p>Support schools to run more like businesses deploying commercial techniques and acumen.</p> <p>Businesses having direct access to support pupil development.</p> | <p>Access finance (loans) to support employer-led workforce training.</p> <p>Black Country Knowledge Transfer Partnerships across all levels of education.</p> |

LAND USE AND TRANSPORT CHANGE

The Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership will provide leadership to facilitate the development of the network of Strategic Centres and the right land assets in the right order to speed up the rebalancing and improve the competitiveness of our economy and to lead our role in supporting the national economy.

| WHAT THE LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP WILL DO | HOW WILL IT BE ACHIEVED | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | WE WILL DO | WE WILL INFLUENCE | WHAT WE WOULD LIKE GOVERNMENT TO DO |
| Work to increase the scope and the speed of implementation in support of our agreed priority investment locations. | <p>Lead an integrated approach to the development of high quality planning processes that enable fast, effective decision making across all Local Authorities.</p> <p>Investigate, identify and test innovative financial mechanisms collaboratively with the private sector.</p> <p>Lead the programme of development of Area Action Plans and Development Plan documents.</p> | <p>Influence the development of an integrated Transport Strategy for the West Midlands to deliver a new level of accessibility across the Black Country.</p> <p>Support the sub national West Midlands Commission for Integrated Transport (WMCfIT) by providing a Local Enterprise Partnership Board member to negotiate on behalf of the Black Country.</p> | <p>Government will give appropriate support to enable local decision making on relevant projects, potentially through localised planning powers.</p> <p>Government will give the appropriate delegated powers and authority to complement agreed new ways of funding or piloting funds that support key development activities.</p> <p>Government will give delegated authority to the LEP to receive, hold and disburse EU and Government funding.</p> |
| Complete a detailed analysis of Regional Development Agency and Local Authority Assets and identify a comprehensive case for their use to Central Government. | We will direct partners to determine the economic case for delivery of those assets most likely to return significant economic benefit. | We will influence the future use of RDA and other public and private sector assets. | Government will give authority to the Local Enterprise Partnership to either receive and/ or direct assets to maximise local economic development opportunities. |

| WHAT THE LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP WILL DO | HOW WILL IT BE ACHIEVED | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| | WE WILL DO | WE WILL INFLUENCE | WHAT WE WOULD LIKE GOVERNMENT TO DO |
| Provide Strategic Programme Management and Co-ordination. | <p>We will develop Centres, Land Use and Transport Implementation Strategy for the Black Country aligned to need and opportunities.</p> <p>We will direct appropriate funding to agreed investment opportunities and hold implementation partners to account.</p> <p>We will hold to account the delivery of the two £12m European Priority 3 Programme across the Black Country.</p> <p>We will work closely with the Homes and Communities Agency to deliver four Local Investment Plans.</p> | <p>We will influence local partners to enable projects to be delivered at the right time in accordance with market conditions and availability of money.</p> <p>We will utilise the private sector to come up with innovative solutions to deliver challenging sites.</p> <p>We will influence partners to match core public and private sector funding to emerging local priorities.</p> <p>We will influence the programme of delivery to align it to economic development opportunities.</p> | <p>Government will give the Local Enterprise Partnership authority to receive and disburse appropriate funds and to pilot innovative ways of funding large scale key initiatives.</p> <p>Transfer the AWM role in ERDF Priority 3 to the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership.</p> |
| Identify, test and deliver innovative funding mechanisms. | <p>We will investigate financial mechanisms with the private sector to deliver priority programmes.</p> <p>We will seek to create an 'evergreen' investment fund in the Black Country linking physical development to innovation, skills and product development.</p> | <p>Local partners in being more innovative with capital programmes.</p> | <p>Government will give the Local Enterprise Partnership powers to receive and disburse appropriate funds.</p> <p>Government will support the development of bespoke funding solutions in the Black Country.</p> |

PART 2



**THE BLACK
COUNTRY**
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a) WHAT THE BLACK COUNTRY LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP WILL LOOK LIKE

With a track record of successful partnership working, an established business-influenced Vision, 30 Year Economic Strategy and an Implementation Plan in place, a Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership would be in a strong position to focus its activities immediately on action to support business investment and jobs growth.

Our Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership will:

- Be led by businesses, supported by local authorities who are already committed to a radical programme to enable private investment to improve the competitiveness of the Black Country; The Local Enterprise Partnership Board will be made up of 10 members.
 - 4 Local Authority Leaders;
 - 4 Prominent Strategic Black Country Business Leaders;
 - 1 Education Representative;
 - 1 Private Sector Chair.
- Include representation of HE/FE at the highest level.
- Communicate to wider interested parties through our Annual Stakeholders Conference.
- Receive political steers from the Association of Black Country Local Authorities.
- Be supported by Task and Finish private sector led groups, including
 - Employment and Skills Board - The Local Enterprise Partnership will work closely with the City Region Employment and Skills Board utilising the powers and capacity at its disposal to increase skills levels and employability.
 - Private sector policy groups on each of the Local Enterprise Partnership functions
 - This will expand on the groups already managed by the Black Country Chamber of Commerce and will incorporate membership from across the Black Country business community.
- Ensure ongoing dialogue with our most prominent companies through a Black Country Business Council
- Be supported by a formally constituted Joint Advisory Group for Planning and Transportation created from the local authority regeneration and transportation Cabinet portfolio holders. – *Strategic Investment and Planning Group*.
- Ensure that implementation responsibility remains with the most appropriate organisation.

b) WIDER PARTNERSHIP

The Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership is committed to working with adjacent Local Enterprise Partnerships and neighbours. We are already developing strategic

alliances with neighbouring Local Enterprise Partnerships/authorities with the express purpose of securing private sector growth and jobs

In addition and in agreement with Local Enterprise Partnerships in the vicinity (particularly Birmingham, where we are already working in partnership, Staffordshire and Stoke and Telford) we reserve the option to explore the opportunity to be part of Partnerships where the strategic and/or economic arguments for working in collaboration are clear and unambiguous.

There will be issues where we will need to come together as a group of Local Enterprise Partnerships to work together on single projects which transcend Local Enterprise Partnership boundaries, for example the implementation of the strategic i-54 development will require close collaboration between the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent partnership and our own. We are actively exploring the opportunity to work mutually as a confederation of Local Enterprise Partnerships – where the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Local Enterprise Partnerships, come together to discuss matters of shared importance. We expect to use this mechanism to deliver outcomes collectively only where there is efficiency through economies of scale or a clear need for specific expertise or capacity.

We will particularly seek to collaborate formally with neighbouring Local Enterprise Partnerships on the key issues of transport, skills and inward investment. Together with the other adjacent Local Enterprise Partnerships, we will agree mutually acceptable mechanisms for co-ordinating activities and priorities within each of these areas. An example of how we intend to work together on transport issues is defined below.

INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

Improved connectivity to, from and importantly within the Black Country through better transport infrastructure is important in creating the right “quality of place” and a new map of accessibility (particularly connecting up our 4 Strategic Centres) to regenerate the Black Country by securing more jobs, generating inward investment and growth and reducing carbon emissions.

We recognise the importance of the travel to work area and therefore are committed to co-operating on transport matters with Birmingham/Solihull, Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent and Coventry/Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnerships to ensure a coordinated and integrated approach to the delivery of transport and regeneration priorities is assured. The publication of an **Integrated Transport Strategy** reflecting the package of distinct challenges and opportunities across the Metropolitan and Journey to Work area is essential to delivering this.

However in order for this integrated approach to economic growth to happen we recognise that we need to reform the way transport and regeneration is delivered and therefore are considering the role of a commission for transport that will bring in capability to strategically plan transport incorporating economic development, regeneration, skills, planning and housing considerations (e.g. **Commission for**

Transport) and assume the role of strategy setting, planning and commissioning delivery 'agencies' to implement transport and regeneration interventions across the Metropolitan Area and into the journey to work area by serving and taking its membership from more than one Local Enterprise Partnership. This approach is advocated by Centro, supported by the Association of Black Country Authorities and Business Leaders. (Centro correspondence attached as Appendix 1).

c) WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP: OUR TRACK RECORD

In the Black Country, we have long recognised that the smarter use of combined resources adds value and delivers 'more for less'. The Black Country (as Black Country Consortium and the four councils as the Association of Black Country Authorities - ABCA) has worked together in a voluntary public/private partnership for almost a decade. The Consortium partnership came together in recognition of the sub-region's distinctiveness, its shared history, economic and community challenges and desire to establish shared values and future vision. It is a 'vision-led' body, which focuses on economic strategy and actions to raise the competitiveness of the sub-region to 2030. It has been instrumental in establishing a strong unified voice for the Black Country through collective leadership. It now has a mutual trust and shared view of what needs to be done to grow the Black Country (The Black Country Study). These views transcend changes in political leadership and enable each local authority to look beyond its individual boundaries at what is best for the Black Country and its communities as a whole. From these foundations, the Black Country will build a strong Local Enterprise Partnership.

The private sector has played an active role engaging on education, skills and physical regeneration and provides chairmanship of the Black Country Consortium.

Support to the Consortium from the local authorities includes dedicated time and funding from the highest political and executive levels. Financial contributions have over the past decade amounted to some £15m and the examples below of hard choices, decisions and successes we have secured in the Black Country are illustrative of a strong partnership with a track record;

- Establishing the 30 year Black Country Vision, we are truly 'Vision-Led';
- Developing the integrated economic and spatial strategy through the Black Country Study, which included decisions to;
 - Change the role of strategic centres to support economic growth with Brierley Hill replacing the role of Dudley town centre.
 - Commission partners outside the local authorities such as the University of Wolverhampton to co-ordinate a joint response to accelerating school improvements with strong links into Black Country private sector strategic businesses.
- Black Country Joint Core Strategy recently completed its Examination in Public with positive commendations made as to the unification of the four LA planning functions.
- An ongoing strengthening of private sector engagement on the Black Country Employment and Skills Board joined by FE and HE engagement.

- Securing global private sector partners to deliver in the Black Country such as Microsoft through their Unlimited Potential programme.
- Establishing a best in class sub national intelligence unit – the Black Country Observatory.
- Increasing GCSE pass levels and numbers through the Black Country Education Challenge
- Delivery of multi million, cross border regeneration programmes to support development of skills for business – including the recently opened Walsall College and the Sandwell College, currently under construction.

The Black Country Consortium operates within the legal framework of the Companies Act 2006 as a company limited by guarantee in which the leaders of key companies, the university, and the four Local Authorities continue to develop a shared view of how to attract private investment to secure economic growth, creating and maintaining a shared and integrated economic and spatial strategy to achieve these goals.

d) OUR EVIDENCE BASE

THE BLACK COUNTRY TODAY

| THE PLACE |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The Black Country sits at the heart of England and covers 356 sq kilometres. · We comprise of the Metropolitan Boroughs of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and the City of Wolverhampton. · We are at the heart of the West Midlands transport hub and the M5 and M6 motorways. · We are proud to be a product of our industrial past. The Black Country pioneered the urbanisation of the industrial revolution and products made in the Black Country continue to shape the world today. |
| THE PEOPLE |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The Black Country is home to over 1.1 m people and approximately half a million jobs; and after years of decline, the population is increasing. · We are a very diverse community with some 15% of people from Black, Minority and Ethnic (BME) origins. |
| THE ECONOMY |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Today, some 33,000 businesses generate £17bn of Gross Value Added. The area has a relatively vibrant private sector, including many family owned businesses. · Until the 1980s the Black Country was a key player in the powerhouse of Britain's manufacturing and metals industry economy. With the on-set of globalisation and the emergence of low cost competition globally many of the traditional industries have declined. · However the existing manufacturing base (18% total emp.) is a powerful foundation that will enable the Black Country to contribute more to the renewal and growth of the UK economy. The Black Country has won several major London 2012 contracts when compared to other areas outside London. |

A FUNCTIONAL ECONOMIC AREA

- The Black Country is a **functional economic area**. Over **75% of working Black Country residents now travel to work within the Black Country** and a similar proportion of managers and professionals from Black Country companies also live in the area.
- Many Black Country manufacturing companies are part of major **supply chains** and jointly serve domestic and international markets. The Black Country remains distinctive because of its concentration of manufacturing, a mixture of basic metals manufacture and an increasing presence of niche manufacturing capability. The Black Country is in a unique position to diversify from traditional manufacturing methods into specialist manufacturing techniques and is well-placed to service industry with a robust logistics infrastructure.
- The Black Country has substantial retail and leisure facilities that are regularly used by residents and visitors. Recent analysis of Sub-Regional Dynamics in the West Midlands undertaken by the West Midlands Regional Observatory identified a complex pattern of inter-relationships in and around the Black Country, concluding that the Black Country operates as an economic area – unsurprising considering its size and scale which is bigger than both Cyprus and Estonia.

THE BLACK COUNTRY STRATEGY

At the beginning of the millennium, leading business figures and local authority leaders sat down together as the Black Country Consortium and in 2003 established a shared **30 Year Vision**:

- *By 2033, we aim to make the Black Country a confident ‘**we can do it**’ place, where our skills, work ethic and diversity are key to our prosperity.*
- *The Black Country will be made up of a **polycentric network** of four centres Wolverhampton, Walsall, West Bromwich and Brierley Hill/Merry Hill – each offering a distinct, wide range of shopping, leisure and cultural facilities, office employment and housing.*
- *A **transport revolution** will have taken place with our bus, Metro, rail and road networks making it easy to move around the Black Country, into Birmingham and the rest of the City Region.*
- *Our manufacturing companies will be prospering, at the **cutting edge** of technological innovation but our high quality environment – not our industrial legacy – will dominate the urban landscape.*
- *Our canal system links our communities together and provides a clean and safe environment for visitors and residents.*
- *All Black Country citizens will have a deep **sense of belonging** and will be enabled to contribute actively to the social, economic and physical well being of the area.*
- *The Black Country will be **genuinely inclusive** and integrated in residential, economic, social and educational terms’.*

THE BLACK COUNTY STUDY

The Black Country Study: Our Strategy for Growth and Competitiveness provides the vision, direction and evidence base for the integration of our economic strategy and our spatial strategy, **The Black Country Core Strategy** (prepared jointly by the four local authorities and recently considered in an Examination in Public), and the **Black Country Placed Based Investment Plan**. We will draw upon the evidence base within these key documents to inform the future decisions of the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership.

The Black Country has **ambitious shared objectives** to drive our Local Enterprise Partnership.

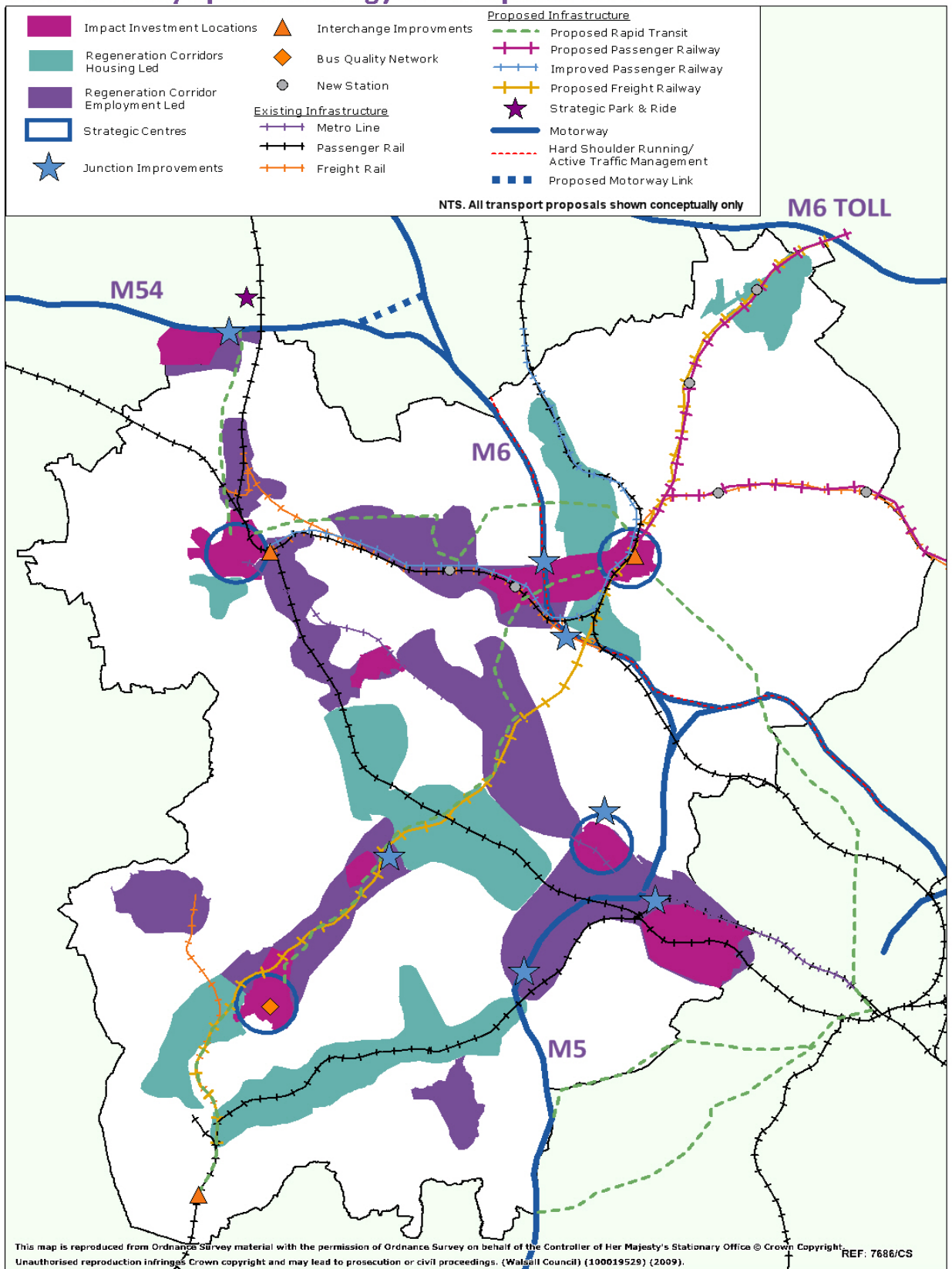
| WE NEED TO: | THIS WILL: |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Raise GVA output by £8bn · Raise incomes to national average · Create 160,000 new jobs (90,000 net) · Create a skilled workforce – 60,000 more people with degrees; 100,000 more with qualifications. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Raise incomes to national levels and enable our businesses to become more competitive, modernise, diversify and up skill the workforce. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Provide at least 61,000 more homes for up to 120,000 more people. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Grow the population of the Black Country with the economic growth that this will bring. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 22% of households from the A/B socio economic group. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Build balanced communities with greater proportion of higher income households. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Transform our environment in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Increase our chances of competing for the best people and businesses |

The Black Country has also integrated its Spatial Strategy and has **an agreed Planning Framework** and policies (subject to Examination in Public Panel Report due at the beginning of October 2010). This integrated approach – nationally unique explains the **scale of change** being undertaken. A summary of this is set out below and in the attached map of our Spatial Strategy and Transport Priorities:

| WHAT WE WILL DO: | RESULTING IN: |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · We will grow and link our 4 Strategic Centres (Wolverhampton, Brierley Hill, Walsall and West Bromwich) as | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · A truly functioning multi-centred sub-region with a shared catchment of over 1 million people with |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>a multi centred economic and social network with a shared catchment to lead our economic restructuring.</p> | <p>880,000 sqm more office floor space and 345,000 sq m more retail floor space and 7,500 new homes in Centres.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · A focus for new office and retail floor space accommodating 95,000 new jobs and generating £4.85bn in increased output, reducing the Black Country Output Gap by 57% by 2031. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · We will undertake major land restructuring to create new environments for both homes & business growth through redeveloping brownfield land in 16 Regeneration Corridors linking and serving the Centres. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Redevelopment of over 1,000ha of brownfield land over 20 years to create new residential environments. · Enhancement of 1,000ha of employment land to create the high quality land & locations required by future knowledge-based manufacturing & logistics. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · We will improve accessibility and connectivity in the Black Country. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · High quality, reliable public transport network that provides each of the 4 Centres with optimum access to whole Black Country catchment of over 1 million people. · Climate change challenges being placed at the centre of economic development. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · We will undertake a major environmental transformation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Greening of the sub-region. · Maximising canals and former quarries & foundries. · The creation of the 'Black Country as Urban Park'. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Ensure the Black Country workforce and those in education are job ready. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · We will achieve a step change in education and skills to improve the available workforce. |

Black Country Spatial Strategy & Transport Priorities



OUTCOMES – WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE.

We have in place a well-developed **Black Country Performance Management Framework** and we advocate that Local Enterprise Partnership activity and its outcomes should be evaluated on a tight series of economic added value performance measures as agreed by the Local Enterprise Partnership Board. These support the coalition Government’s objectives of rebalancing the economy and providing economic stability.

| OUR MEASURE OF SUCCESS The Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership Performance Management Framework | | | |
|---|---|---|---------------------------------|
| SUCCESS CRITERIA | WHERE ARE WE NOW | WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE | SCALE OF THE CHALLENGE |
| In the Black Country by 2033 we will have: | | | |
| Increased Gross Value Added Reduced Output Gap | £5.3bn | GVA Impact No output gap | -£5.3bn |
| Raised the number of local jobs → Promoted private sector led job creating. | 447,000 335,000 job (Decline 6% 1998-2007) | +94,000 net jobs More private Sector jobs | +92,500 jobs |
| Supported Economic Diversity and Sustainability - Increased % of knowledge workers | 34% | Greater economic diversification 44% | +42,000 knowledge workers |

SIGNATORIES



THE BLACK COUNTRY



see it in colour

Cllr Anne Millward
Leader
Dudley MBC

Cllr Darren Cooper
Leader
Sandwell MBC

Cllr Mike Bird
Leader
Walsall MBC

Cllr Neville Patten
Leader
Wolverhampton CC

Mike Dell
Rubber Astic Ltd
President
Black Country Chamber of Commerce

Peter Mathews CMG
Black Country Metals Ltd
Chairman
Black Country Consortium Ltd

The Albion Foundation
Assa Abloy Ltd
Black Country Reinvestment Society
Centro
Chamberlain Plc
Churchill Office Solutions
Dudley Zoological Gardens
East End Foods
Eurocraft Enclosures
Express & Star Ltd
George Green LLP
Hadley Group
Higgs & Sons
Malthouse Engineering Co Ltd
Marston's Plc
The Midcounties Co-operative
A & J Mucklow Group Plc
C.G. Murray & Son Ltd
Nachural
Nacro
Phoenix Calibration & Services Ltd
Richardsons Capital LLP
Robinson Brothers
Rubery Owen Holdings Ltd
Select Business Finance
Simworx
Targeted Training Projects Ltd
Tarmac Limited
Timmins Whittaker
University of Wolverhampton
Walsall Endeavours
Wardell Armstrong
William King Limited
ZF Lemforder UK Ltd



Mr Paul Sheehan
Secretariat of ABCA
c/o Black Country Consortium

Our Ref GI/SK/GD/434872
Your Ref
Telephone (0121) 214 7001
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Date 3 September 2010

Dear Paul

Many thanks for your invitation to Centro to help develop effective transport governance arrangements within the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) proposals. Good connectivity through better and improved transport will be a key enabler in delivering your jobs and growth strategy. We both recognise this connectivity will need to embrace the "travel to work" area to access a skilled workforce which is increasingly important to inward investors. This will enable the transport needs of the travel to work area to be integrated into the Black Country and other LEP strategies for jobs and private sector led growth helping drive up transport delivery and efficiencies.

We therefore believe that transport strategy needs to cover a number of LEP areas and wish to work closely with you and other Local Enterprise Partnerships to develop the Commission for Integrated Transport and ensure your transport needs are met in the most effective way.

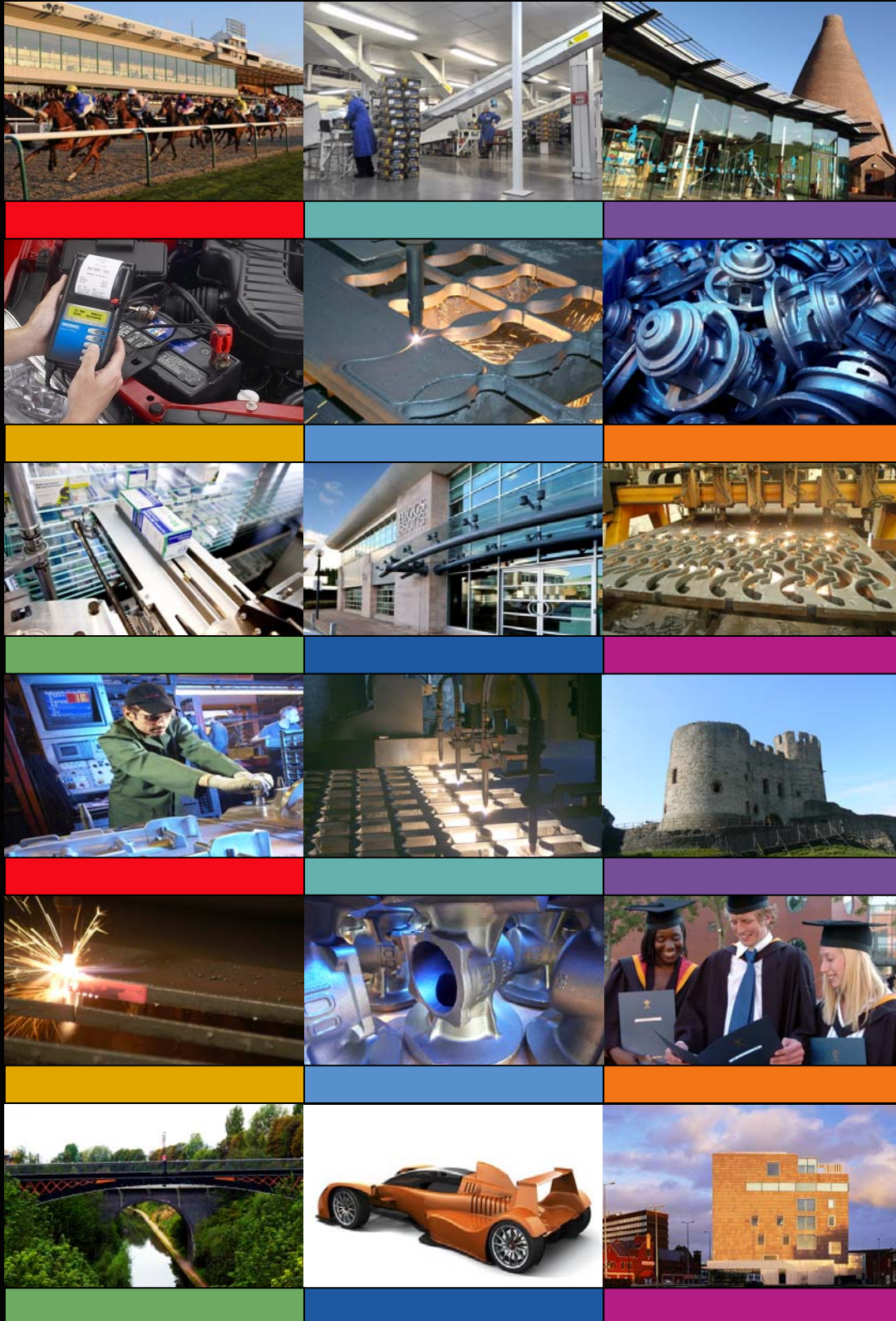
In recognition of this, please accept this letter offering Centro's support for the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership.

We wish you the best of luck with your proposal and look forward to continue working together to ensure the Black Country reaches its full potential.

Yours sincerely



Geoff Inskip
Chief Executive





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