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‘Made in the Black Country, Sold around the world’

Foreword

Businesses and councils brought together by the Black Country LEP, have an ambitious vision for the future of the Black Country at the heart of which is a globally competitive economy with global manufacturing companies. Based on a business-led analysis of the barriers to growth, our Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) is intended to enable us to move further towards achieving that vision.

Our SEP builds on firm foundations. We have a strong manufacturing base including, for example 20% of the UK aerospace output. We have a long-established, evidence-based economic strategy. And our powerful core strategy (the largest joint strategy in the country) is focused on enabling economic growth and environmental improvement.

Our LEP has the benefit of over a decade of business-led partnership working. Our City Deal sets out an ambitious package of measures to support the growth of high value manufacturing and grow our GVA by an additional £1bn. The commitment of the four councils to establish a statutory joint committee is the latest step in the development of effective governance arrangements at a Black Country level.

We have a detailed understanding of the challenges we face. We are determined to make faster progress towards our vision between 2015/16 to 2020/21 and this SEP is designed to enable us to do so.

Our goal is to achieve an increase in GVA of £6.7bn by focusing on three key sectors: aerospace, automotive and construction. These are sectors in which our evidence suggests that there are the greatest potential for growth in the Black Country and the best opportunities for us to develop local supply chains. This focus reflects the high density of high value manufacturing jobs and businesses in the Black Country. It is in line with the UK Industrial Strategy and will enable us to become an important partner with government in delivering that strategy.

In order to ensure that the interventions we are proposing have the maximum impact we have identified a priority growth network. This includes areas with the highest density of businesses in this sector and locations in which high quality sites and premises can be delivered. The network also provides the potential for developing the Black Country as an attractive place in which to live, work and invest through our strategic centres, visitor economy and creative industries.

The programme we are proposing is structured around three core areas of activity which form the golden thread of our SEP:

- Business, competitiveness and the economy;
- People, skills and employability;
- Place, including sites for employment and housing, infrastructure and the environment.

Based on a robust assessment of our progress to date and building on our City Deal, our SEP identifies priority actions and targeted programmes in each of these “golden threads”.

10 years ago we painted a picture of the Black Country as an area which attracts and grows entrepreneurs, has a high quality urban environment, is economically competitive and has some of the country’s best schools. This SEP is intended to provide the ingredients for an ambitious local growth deal with government to enable business, councils and our partners to do more to realise that ambition.

Stewart Towe CBE
BC LEP Chairman
Introduction

The high density of jobs and businesses in high value manufacturing in the Black Country provides us with a unique opportunity to enable growth in our local economy and contribute to the implementation of the Government’s Industrial Strategy. The scope for repatriating the supply chain in this sector, evidenced by the Automotive Council, is critically important. In order to seize this opportunity the focus of our strategic economic plan is to enable growth in three key sectors – aerospace, automotive and construction – with a particular focus on building local supply chains, creating local job opportunities and building local resilience.

The Black Country SEP (BCSEP) explains why we have adopted this approach. It also details the barriers businesses in these sectors face in seeking to expand and the steps we are proposing to take to enable those barriers to be overcome.

The BCSEP includes:

- A summary of our long-term strategic framework in which the strategic economic plan sits (chapter 1)
- Evidence of the opportunities for growth in the three sectors we have identified (chapter 2)
- Evidence of barriers faced by businesses in those sectors (chapter 3);
- Our approach to addressing those barriers (chapters 4);
- Our proposed governance and delivery arrangements (chapter 5);
- Details of our engagement with partners in the development of the SEP (chapter 6).
Chapter 1: Black Country Vision and Strategic Ambition

1.1 Our Strategic Economic Plan 2015-16 to 2020-21

The primary goal of our SEP is to enable us secure an increase in GVA by targeting three key growth sectors - aerospace, automotive and construction - with a particular focus on building local supply chains, local job opportunities and local economic resilience.

There is growing evidence of sustained growth in Black Country businesses in these sectors. This means that it is essential that we act now in order to seize the supply chain opportunities that arise from that growth and work closely with our SMEs to enable them to benefit from this economic upturn by strengthening their capacity to innovate.

Over the lifetime of our local growth deal we envisage:

Increasing GVA by £6.7bn.

- £2bn additional GVA in the aerospace sector;
- £0.75bn additional GVA in the construction sector; and
- £4bn additional GVA in the automotive sector.

This will be secured through the:

- delivery of our City Deal - £1bn GVA;
- EU SIF - 1.7bn GVA; and
- the BC SEP - £4bn GVA

- The creation of over 20,000 new jobs within the first six years of the SEP;
- An significant level of private sector investment in our priority sectors
- At least 1500 additional high value manufacturing apprenticeships Intensive working with 3000 long term unemployed, moving at least 900 into employment via our City Deal;
- 90 hectares of additional brownfield land being brought into manufacturing use

Our SEP is intended to support the delivery of our long-established, evidence-based strategic framework and enable us to make faster progress towards achieving the ambitions set out in that framework. This chapter summarises that strategic context and our long term ambitions for the Black Country.

1.2 The Start of our Journey – The establishment of our 2033 Vision

In 2003 businesses and local authorities agreed an ambitious 30-year vision designed to challenge peoples’ perceptions of the area. We set ourselves the goal of becoming a location of choice for high value manufacturing companies, rebalancing the economy, achieving education excellence and creating a high quality urban environment. Our vision is deliberately ambitious and is intended to challenge people’s perceptions and assumptions about the area. Central to our approach in delivering this vision has been an integrated approach to spatial and economic development.

The essence of the vision remains the same; it continues to guide our work and forms the backbone of our strategic economic plan (SEP). The Black Country has both the ambition and opportunity to make

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a significant contribution to the growth and restructuring of the UK economy, and the delivery of the UK Industrial Strategy.

“In 2003 the Black Country needed to raise its ambitions. The Black Country vision was designed to do that. We painted a picture of the area as one which attracts entrepreneurs, which has a high quality urban environment, which is economically competitive and which has some of the country’s best schools. That vision set a direction of travel which is even more important than ever in the current economic climate.” Stewart Towe CBE, Chairman Black Country LEP

1.3 Establishing our Evidence Base and Quantifiable SMART Objectives

To strengthen the Black Country’s position in the macro economy, we commissioned The Black Country Study in 2004 that established the evidence base for assessing the performance of the Black Country in relation to the national and global economy and which provided us with a base line from which we would develop our long term economic and employment strategy. As a result we set ourselves an overarching economic growth goal, namely to double the GVA produced by the Black Country from £17bn to £33.7bn. This is an ambitious goal: today our GVA is £17.4bn and the output gap compared to the UK average is £6.2bn.

At the same time we identified two key drivers of change. They are:

- Raising employability, education and skills. This includes: increasing the number of people with degrees by 80,000 to 220,000, increasing the proportion of children achieving 5+A* GCSEs (including Maths and English) to 60% and increasing the number of jobs by 115,000, achieving an employment rate of 80%;
- Transforming the Black Country infrastructure and environment. This includes increasing the housing stock by 63,000 to 525,000 homes, delivering an additional 1,000 ha of high quality employment land and developing a sustainable low carbon economy.

Mobilising these drivers has been central to the Black Country’s approach to raising the competitiveness of the local labour market and providing a high quality environment to attract and retain higher earning households and grow knowledge-based businesses.

1.4 The Black Country Study also identified a number of changes which, if secured, would make a significant contribution to improving the Black Country’s economic performance. They are:

1. Population growth with house building rates to the 2030s in excess of those planned 10 years ago (but now adopted);
2. Structural changes to sectors which provide greater value per job
3. Occupational changes in the resident working population to higher paid activities, especially managerial and professional grades;
4. Skills and productivity improvements across the economy (including manufacturing) to close the gap with UK levels (since structural and occupational changes alone will not fully close the gap).

Through our work on the Black Country Study2 we developed a suite of technical reports setting out what we need to do to deliver our vision. This work provides a substantial evidence base for the SEP.

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2 The Black Country Study included reports across key themes: including: the economy; town centres; employment land; housing; environment; and transport. See: http://www.theblackcountry.com/intelligence/intelligence-reports
1.5 **Our Black Country Strategy for Growth and Competitiveness** seeks to deliver these goals. To do so it identifies that by 2033 Black Country business, councils and other partners will need to:

1. Raise incomes to the national average (+£3,430 per working resident);
2. Grow our population to 1.2m (+60,200 residents);
3. Achieve a better population balance (home to 60,000 additional A/B households, in line with the national average);
4. Transform the environment (a high quality, sustainable environment and a positive image of the area).

1.6 Our action to achieve these objectives has been structured around three areas of activity which will form the **core threads** of this strategy and have the potential to activate the drivers of change referred to above. They are:

- Business, competitiveness and the economy;
- People, skills and employability;
- Place, including infrastructure and the environment.

In pursuing this approach we have developed ways of working which are genuinely business-led and informed by evidence including a robust understanding of business needs and views.

In order to prioritise our actions we have over the last 10 years developed a set of priority indicators against which we measure progress in our politically endorsed performance management framework;

1.7 **Key strategic outcomes** set out under the Black Country Performance Management Framework include the following targets to be achieved by 2033 (Black Country State of the Sub Region, 2013):

**Business:**

- **Increasing GVA** created in the Black Country by £6.2bn in order to close the output gap with the national average. This equates to an increase from the baseline of £15,900 GVA per head in 2012 to £21,400 per head in 2033 (Office for National Statistics, Regional Accounts, 2012).
- **Raising the business birth rate** to 41 per 10,000 population; an increase of 1,400 businesses births, 70 businesses annually by 2033, increasing from 3,300 business births in 2011 to 4,700 in 2033 (Office for National Statistics, Business Demography, 2011).
- **Creating 115,000 new jobs** in the Black Country, 38,000 in knowledge intensive occupations, — increasing from a baseline of 429,000 jobs in 2011 to 544,000 by 2033 (Black Country Economic Model, 2013).
- **Raising average income levels** in the Black Country by £3,500, in order to match national average levels, increasing from a baseline of £23,000 per annum in 2012 to 26,500 in 2033 (Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2012).

**Transforming Place:**

- **Reducing CO₂ emissions** in the Black Country by 1.9 tons per capita to achieve emissions target - currently 5.5 tons per capita are emitted in the Black Country, the 2033 target is 3.6 tons per capita (Department of Energy and Climate Change, Local Authority Carbon Emissions, 2011).
- **Create or transform 980 hectares** of employment land to high quality employment land in order to provide space for future growth aspirations – the Black Country has 585 ha of high quality employment land meaning a further 980 ha is needed to achieve the 2033 target (Black Country Local Authorities, 2012).
- **Transform the Black Country environment** by increasing the proportion of people satisfied with the Black Country as a place to live by 7 percentage points to 78%. 71% of residents are currently satisfied with the Black Country as a place to live (Department for Local Government and Communities, Place Survey, 2008).
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✓ Increase office floorspace in Strategic Centres by a further 856,600sqm in order to grow the Black Country’s industrial offer – 23,400sqm has been developed since 2006 (Black Country Local Authorities, 2012).

✓ Increase retail floorspace in Strategic Centres by 344,000sqm in order to support further expansion of the Black Country retail output – 348,000sqm retail floor space was in stock as of 2006 (Black Country Local Authorities, 2012).

✓ Increase the number of visitors to the area to make the Black Country a leading UK visitor destination utilising the Sub-Region’s cultural uniqueness and areas of natural beauty. 24.8m people visited the Black Country last year (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor, 2011).

Up skilling People

✓ Attracting and retaining graduates in the region, in order to increase the number of people with degrees by 80,000 people, in order to match national levels of 33% of the population holding a degree. This will be an increase from a baseline of 142,000 in 2012 to 221,000 in 2033 (Annual Population Survey, 2012).

✓ Reduce the number of people with no qualifications – 109,800 people in the Black Country have no qualifications, a fall of 40,000 is required to meet the 2033 target of 70,200 (Annual Population Survey, 2012).

✓ Reduce the number of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET) to zero; a reduction of 2,500 people (Prospects, 2012).

✓ Increase the local employment rate to 80%, supporting 96,000 additional people into employment – currently the Black Country employment stands at 65.9% (447,900), an increase of 14.1pp is required to meet the 2033 target. (Annual Population Survey, 2012).

✓ Reduce the number of people classed as workless – from the current rate of 17.8% to be in line with the national average will require 38,000 less workless residents in the Black Country. There are currently 120,700 workless people in the Black Country (Department for Work and Pensions, 2012).

1.8 Our sector focus
The strategy identified five growth sectors and five enabling sectors with specific contributions to the overall future of the Black Country economy.

‘Transformational Sectors’
The selection of our transformational sectors was informed by our economic model and builds upon our current strengths, particularly in manufacturing. They are: advanced manufacturing; building technology; transport technologies; business services and environmental technologies. These are the sectors which, on the basis of that modelling, we are confident have the potential to make the biggest contribution to economic growth in the Black Country by increasing our productivity, boosting the density of businesses in the area and creating supply chain opportunities. Sector action plans have been developed for each of the growth sectors.

The table below summarises the current economic contribution and our ambition for our five transformational sectors. The fifth growth sector, environmental technologies, cuts across all of the priority sectors.
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<th>Sector</th>
<th>Economic Contribution</th>
<th>Ambition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Transformation</strong></td>
<td>18,916 companies 248,000 jobs GVA contribution of £10.1bn 630 high turnover companies</td>
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1.9 Enabling Sectors

We have also identified a number of enabling sectors which are important in terms of both providing employment opportunities and providing the services which are important to local communities and businesses. They are: retail, visitor economy, sports, health and the public sector.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Economic Contribution</th>
<th>Ambition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Enabling</td>
<td>15,178 companies 247,798 jobs GVA contribution of £6.2bn</td>
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More detailed information on the contribution of our growth sectors is included in Annex 2.

1.10 Joint Core Strategy

In 2011 we adopted a joint Core Strategy\(^3\), one of the first of its kind in the country, which underwent rigorous testing at examination in public. The Core Strategy underpins the spatial dimension of our SEP; it identifies the scale of growth in our strategic town centres and growth corridors making provision for some 63,000 new homes, and an additional 1,000ha of high quality employment land. 10 Local Plans (Stafford Road, Wolverhampton CC, Bilston, Willenhall, Brierley Hill, Stourbridge, Halsowen, West Bromwich, Tipton and Smethwick) and a Local Development Order in our Enterprise Zone provide further planning certainty.

We recognised the need for a development strategy to guide the transformation of the Black Country infrastructure and environment that is fully integrated with the economic strategy. Our award winning spatial strategy provides the land use and transport framework (Map 2) necessary to shape the transformation of the living and working environment of the area.

The overall objective of the strategy is to enable the right mix of facilities, homes and jobs, set in a high quality built and natural environment, to attract significantly more people to live and work in the Black Country and to support/attract knowledge-led businesses. It presents our growth ambitions spatially in the form of a “growth network” (Map 1), which comprises:

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\(^3\) Dudley MBC, Sandwell MBC, Walsall Council, Wolverhampton CC, (2011). ‘Black Country Core Strategy’
Four strategic centres: Walsall Town Centre, Wolverhampton City Centre, West Bromwich and Brierley Hill (the newest strategic centre in England);

16 growth corridors: these form a network of development zones (involving significant land restructuring to provide for new housing or high quality employment sites) on key transport routes, criss-crossing the Black Country and the Strategic Centres;

The provision of a number of Technology Parks providing high profile, high quality environments and premises for the incubation and growth of knowledge-based businesses, particularly those associated with hubs of creativity and innovation.

Our ambition is that the strategic centres will be:

- The greatest concentrations of redevelopment and regeneration up to 2026;
- A focus to deliver significant growth in comparison retail, offices and high density housing;
- The principal locations for major cultural, leisure, entertainment and cultural facilities;
- Strong public transport hubs.

Our ambition is that the growth network of Centres and Corridors will support:

- 160,000 (90,000 net) new jobs;
- 880,000m² of office floor space;
- 345,000m² of new retail floor space distributed across the four centres;
- The redevelopment of over 1,000 hectares of brownfield land into high quality employment land including the provision of innovation-led Technology Parks;
- 63,000 new homes.

Map 1
1.11 Attractive, Distinctive Centres

The Black Country LEP recognises the importance of high quality, vibrant and distinctive places to live, attracting a larger population and a higher skilled population to the area, as an important driver for growth. This means we need to:

- Create attractive distinctive centres recognising the importance of high quality, vibrant places to live, work and learn. Develop specific local clusters across the Black Country, including the creative and cultural cluster in Wolverhampton, and the visitor economy in Dudley which can contribute to distinctiveness and quality of places to live across the Black Country.
- Capitalise on opportunities to invest in green and blue infrastructure in the Black Country, to improve quality of environment and quality of life, as well as supporting the use of more sustainable transport such as walking and cycling e.g. through improved canal path infrastructure.
- Address the major connectivity issues that are a barrier to growth.
- Realise the potential and benefits from delivering the Black Country Urban Park concept.
The Black Country has a challenging image based on historical notions of industrial Britain dominated by smoking chimneys, grime and unhealthy living and working conditions. The reality is that that is long gone. The Black Country Study found that the Black Country is rich in its natural and built heritage and environmental assets — including its canals, geology, wildlife and open spaces, and its network of communities (towns & villages) - but that too many of these assets are ‘hidden’, inaccessible or not celebrated by both residents and visitors alike.

‘Black Country as Urban Park’ is the strategy and programme for the transformation of the Black Country environment. At its heart lies the creation of a physical framework for rediscovering the distinctive settlement form of the Black Country (based on towns, villages and communities), integrating natural and urban environments and realising the potential of the sub-region’s natural, built and historical assets for living, for business and as a tourist destination. This will require a Landscape/ Green Infrastructure Plan putting the environment at the heart of defining the future urban form of the Black Country. However, the concept ‘Urban Park’ is more than its physical component – it is also about building greater choice and opportunity for a rich variety of healthy and fulfilling living styles in the Black Country and of a culture of sustainable living.

1.13 Our Partnership

The Black Country LEP has the advantage of building on the substantial achievements of a public-private partnership – the Black Country Consortium - established in 2000. We are now taking our collaboration to the next stage, establishing a statutory Black Country Joint Committee under the 2011 Localism Act, to take forward the SEP, EUSIF and City Deal agendas.

1.14 Working with other LEPs

A number of important aspects of our proposed programme are best addressed at a wider geographical area than the Black Country. This is particularly so in relation to connectivity and transport investment, but also applies to areas such as inward investment and support for innovation.
The Black Country LEP has worked closely with a number of other LEPs in developing our SEP and EU Fund plans, most notably with the five other LEPs in the West Midlands area. There are several areas of our strategy where we anticipate close-working with these LEPs. These include the following. Details of joint statements on areas of collaboration, prepared alongside the other West Midlands LEPs.

### Summary of Cross-LEP Delivery Plans

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<th>Other LEPs Being Collaborated With</th>
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<td>Innovation investment, Growth Factory, smart specialisation approach, Regulation for Growth Pilot</td>
<td>Greater Birmingham and Solihull, Stoke and Staffordshire, the Marches, Worcestershire, Coventry and Warwickshire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Carbon Environment - Low carbon economy interventions</td>
<td>Greater Birmingham and Solihull, Stoke and Staffordshire, the Marches, Worcestershire, Coventry and Warwickshire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Engineering Instruments for SME finance support</td>
<td>Greater Birmingham and Solihull, Stoke and Staffordshire, the Marches, Worcestershire, Liverpool, Coventry and Warwickshire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inward investment support and the Visitor Economy</td>
<td>Greater Birmingham and Solihull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connectivity and Integrated Transport</td>
<td>Greater Birmingham and Solihull, Stoke and Staffordshire, the Marches, Worcestershire, Coventry and Warwickshire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Enterprise</td>
<td>South West LEP and Leeds City Region</td>
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### 1.15 Alignment with the City Deal and EU SIF

Our SEP is intended to build on our City Deal, with its focus on high value manufacturing. It also provides the strategic context for our EUSIF and our SEP programmes are designed to be aligned with those in the SEP to ensure that we make best use of the resources available to us to secure faster economic growth in the Black Country. The key themes of our City Deal and EUSIF are summarised in the boxes below. Our approach to alignment of resources is set out in Chapter 6 and the projects details in Appendix 1 refer to specific alignments with City Deal and EUSIF programmes where appropriate.

**City Deal**

Over its lifetime the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership predict the City Deal will deliver:

- 80 hectares of brownfield land brought into manufacturing use within 4 years, with a further thirty sites for future development over ten years;
- The creation of 5,800 new manufacturing jobs within the first four years of the City Deal;
- An estimated £120m of private sector investment in high value manufacturing sites in the Black Country;
- At least 1,500 additional high value manufacturing apprenticeships and an investment of £18m from HVM employers in apprenticeships.
- The unlocking £13m of private sector investment in business support in the Black Country, creating or safeguarding over 700 jobs;
- Intensive working with 2,800 long term unemployed social housing tenants, moving at least 900 into employment, reducing welfare benefit costs by £1.1m and increasing wages by £19m.
The Black Country will seek to achieve the following objectives through investment of its European Structural and Investment Fund Strategy allocation, over the period 2014-20.

1) Growth of high value manufacturing (HVM) sectors and strengthening their local supply chains is a central focus for the strategy. Funding for business support, supply chain development, workforce skills and physical site development will contribute to achieving this growth.

2) Investment will support growth of the wider business base across the Black Country, and particularly in its identified key growth sectors, including HVM as well as building technologies, transport technologies, environmental technologies and business services, building supply chains and strengthening their connections with major businesses in the Black Country.

3) Black Country partners will drive innovation, building on existing research & sector-based assets and future technological opportunities, to make local firms more competitive, and to keep them competitive. This will be steered through a clear smart specialisation approach, aligning with national priorities.

4) Investment in skills and employability support for local people will create a workforce of people who are competitive, as employees for the new jobs created, and as entrepreneurs. This work will provide a strong labour force to underpin the growth of transformational sectors in the Black Country, and will also engage key neighbourhoods and groups furthest from the labour market to extend the benefits across the Black Country and support key neighbourhoods to become more vibrant and entrepreneurial places, reducing exclusion.

5) Investment will support the transition to a low carbon economy through targeted work with energy intensive sectors in the Black Country, and by stimulating growth of the low carbon and environmental goods and services sector, reducing overall greenhouse gas emissions in the area.

6) Local growth aspirations will be underpinned by investment in business-critical infrastructure, ensuring the supply of employment sites and business accommodation to meet the needs of growing sectors across the Black Country.

7) Key economic centres will be supported to grow their existing individual business clusters, creating local growth and greater distinctiveness in localised economies. Focus sectors will include the creative and cultural sector in Wolverhampton, food technology sector in Sandwell, visitor economy in Dudley and health and social care sector in Walsall.
Chapter 2: Black Country: The Opportunities

2.1 Located at the heart of the national transport network, the Black Country comprises the Boroughs of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and the City of Wolverhampton. It comprises 25 towns and four major strategic centres. The population of the area is 1.14m and growing (having reversed a previous decade of decline), and it is becoming increasingly diverse. In 2001 15% of the population comprised ethnic minority residents: by 2011 the proportion was 23%. The Black Country is home to 31,285 enterprises which contribute £17.4bn in Gross Value Added to the national and regional economies. These firms employ 432,300 employees which accounting for close to 20% of work force jobs in the West Midlands.

The Black Country LEP has identified the high value manufacturing sector as a key sector for growth which will act as a stimulus for further growth across the wider economy.

- The Black Country currently employs 90,000 people and generates £3.5 billion of GVA for the UK economy in HVM. A core strength is this very high concentration of jobs and businesses in the three related sectors.
- We have England’s largest cluster of businesses in high value manufacturing (they comprise 15% of our business stock compared with 8% nationally).
- We have the highest jobs density in HVM that any other LEP (Map 4).
- We have one of the highest densities of automotive businesses;
- We supply 20% of the UK’s aerospace output; and
- We contribute a £1bn share of the £90bn generated by the construction industry.

Map 4

We are proposing to focus on three sectors (aerospace, automotive and construction - a sub-set of the transformational sectors identified in the Black Country Strategy) which we believe have the most potential in terms of delivering economic growth in the Black Country between now and 2020-21.
These sectors are among the 11 identified by the government in its Industrial Strategy as offering significant growth opportunities for the UK economy. We share the government’s view that focussing on a small number of sectors is important to ensure that our proposed interventions are most likely to enable significant economic growth.

JLR have said “Not being able to source in the UK adds incremental logistics costs which can add up to 10% onto the component cost. There are some components that should absolutely be sourced from the UK, for example engine parts and alloy wheels. Being located in the Black Country enables us to capitalise on bigger supply chain opportunities within the UK.”

This aligns with recent findings from the Automotive Council’s including for example only 43% of Jaguar F-type contracts are sourced in the UK and the Mini 15%.

‘A leading property consultant reports there have been as many enquiries in the last 6 months of 2013 as in the previous 5 years for design / build premises in the Black Country.

The Black Country has seen considerable investment in recent years from major international manufacturing companies such as Pargat and CAB Automotive with Regional Growth Fund supported expansion plans and most notably Jaguar Land Rover (JLR), whose UK engine centre of excellence is located in the Black Country’s Enterprise Zone. JLR has announced its plans to grow from £2bn in 2013 to £2.75bn in 2014 and their commitment to just-in-time manufacturing creates a unique advantage for local, Black Country supply chain companies.

The Black Country Enterprise Zone site is one of the top performing Enterprise Zones nationally, having already secured a £355m investment from Jaguar Land Rover in a new plant to manufacture low emission engines, and a major investment by aerospace company Moog in a new plant at the site. The rapid development at the enterprise zone site reflects the opportunities that new employment site development could open up for growth in the Black Country.
The aerospace sector is growing in the Black Country by 6.8% a year. 20% of UK output is generated by four leading Black Country companies based in Wolverhampton including Moog and the American owned UTC Aerospace. Black Country companies manufacture and test aerospace actuation systems and aerospace fluid transmission systems. No other companies in the UK make this family of components.

**Global**
- Manufacture more than 1,000 commercial aircraft made each year - but order backlogs are increasing.
- Market forecast is for 30,000 aircraft over next 20 years (c50% increase in current rate of production)
- Aerospace industry globally grew 7% in 2012.

**Black Country**
- Nationally important cluster of actuation sub-systems (UTC (both Goodrich & Marston) + Moog.)
- Black Country supply all leading commercial & military manufacturers of planes (Boeing, Airbus, Embraer, Lockheed, Irkutsk)
- Large cluster of SMEs in specialist aerospace production processes (e.g. complex CNC machining, alloy processing & metal treatment, etc.).
- Development of bearings required for high speed, temperature variations and aircraft thrust.
- Moog designs and manufactures primary and secondary flight control actuation for a number of commercial and military programs, including high-lift actuation systems for the Boeing 777 and 787 and the Airbus A330 and A380. The operation also provides primary flight controls for the European fighter, Typhoon, and a main engine lift system for the Rolls-Royce engine on the STOVL version of the U.S. Joint Strike Fighter.
The JLR investment in the enterprise zone has given a major boost to our automotive sector which employs 29,000 people and is worth £430m to the economy in our area alone.

Photograph: JLR UK Engineering Plant in the Black Country Enterprise Zone
Companies that have recently decided to invest in the Black Country are unequivocal about their reasons for doing so and the area’s potential.

CAB Automotive is a tier one supplier to the automotive industry including Aston Martin, Bentley, McLaren, and Toyota. Its competitors are largely based elsewhere in Europe. It has invested £3m over the last three years in the Black Country and has taken a strategic decision to stay “due to the skills of the workforce and also the proximity of the automotive supply chain and our customers. We believe the area can benefit hugely from more investment in manufacturing.” (Richard McCulloch, Finance Director).

Similarly privately owned Pargat, a global manufacturing company and the largest aluminium and cookware manufacturer in the UK, describe the Black Country as “an ideal location for any new enterprise. Its accessibility must make it one of the best industrial hubs. Further investment in the area would only be good for Pargat.”

These companies are competing internationally, and so is the Black Country as a place – attracting inward investment and enabling the expansion of existing companies. Almost half the businesses in the Black Country are foreign owned. Key decisions are taken by international boards, and brave confident action – such as that by the Black Country councils to borrow over £72m to fund infrastructure and remedial work in the enterprise zone – is needed to influence those decisions.

Work commissioned by the Automotive Council concluded that 80% of components required by vehicle assembly operations in the UK could be supplied by UK suppliers, but UK-based automotive, commercial vehicle and yellow goods manufacturers currently spend 36% (£7.4bn) of their global purchasing budget in the UK. The same study showed that proximity is a key competitive advantage of UK suppliers and supply chain development. This reflects the complexity of modern production processes, the prevalence of “just in time” ways of working and the weight businesses give to quality and reliability. Companies are placing great emphasis on supply chain resilience. These factors, trends such as the depreciation of sterling, rising transport costs and rising wage levels in the Far East, combined with the density of businesses in the Black Country in these sectors mean that we are well-placed to use supply chains as a key driver of growth.

Photograph: Black Country Bullet Car
✓ 63,000,000 cars are built globally each year; 12,000,000 cars built in Europe each year; 1,500,000 cars built each year in the UK.
✓ Black Country companies supply all 16 of the developed world’s largest car makers. (VW, PSA, Renault/Nissan, Ford, GM, BMW, Tata(JLR), Chrysler, Fiat, Mitsubishi, Toyota, Honda, Mercedes, Volvo, Hyundai, SAIC.)
✓ 2,500,000 engines built each year in the UK. (21% of European production); UK is Major Engine Manufacturing Centre in Europe for Ford, Toyota, Honda, BMW, Nissan and JLR.

Terry Somerfield – Managing Director, ZF Lemforder UK Ltd:

“The West Midlands is an important location for ZF with close proximity to the key UK Car manufactures of Jaguar Land Rover, Aston Martin, Toyota and BMW Mini. Our safety critical and high performance suspension components and assemblies require a range of skills from Design and Testing to manufacture using high cost machining centres. These skills and the support services for such processes are available in the West Midlands with a flexible workforce who have “Engineering in their Blood”. The “can do” spirit of the workforce combined with their flexible approach in a challenging environment have been key factors in growing our business since the 1980s”.

Vikki Wilkes – Managing Director, Phoenix Calibration and Services:

“The nature of our business is that we manufacture specialised, high-end test machines that HVM companies use to carry out R&D on new materials and components. The reason we located in the Black Country was due to this area having a strong history of test machine manufacture and therefore some of the very specialised skills that we require, we also work collaboratively with other small but highly specialised companies in the area. We support customers all over the UK, the central location is also a huge advantage to us”.
Our leading construction companies, including Carillion also compete globally – we have 3,700 businesses in this sector employing 44,000 people. The potential growth is enormous.

The high level of manufacturing in the Black Country makes it very well placed for high levels of exporting. The LEP area has the 6th largest employment in export intensive sectors out of 39 LEPs, reflecting the significant export potential. At present, 21% of all Black Country firms report exporting at least some of their products and services. Nationally, it is estimated that 20% of all SMEs are involved in exporting.

Photograph: Housing Development West Bromwich

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Chapter 3: Black Country Barriers to Growth

3.1 We cannot assume that the potential referred to in the previous chapter will be realised. Indeed, while the opportunities for growth in high value manufacturing are strong we estimate that without the action set out in this SEP and our City Deal the high value manufacturing sector will lose 32,000 jobs by 2030. Between 1995 and 2008 the manufacturing sector lost 64,800 jobs. In common with many other areas, the 2008 recession has hit the Black Country hard. The area’s GVA has been volatile in recent years. It is currently £17.4bn and the output gap relative to the national average deteriorated recently and is currently £6.2bn.

3.2 From work we have commissioned over the last two years via the Black Country Economic Intelligence Unit, in conjunction with local partners - ‘Research on fast growth SMEs’\textsuperscript{6}, ‘Skills Provision Relevant to High Value Manufacturing in the Black Country’\textsuperscript{7}, ‘The Black Business Survey’\textsuperscript{8}, ‘The Black Country Advanced Manufacturing Survey’\textsuperscript{9}, The Black Country Enterprise Zone Skills Action Plan .a recent Telephone survey etc. - we have a good understanding of the barriers that businesses face. Information from other business representation organisation e.g. FSB, IOD, EEF, Chamber, MAS etc. are also utilised. The LEP and partners have also engaged directly with over 400 companies in response to various funding projects - Advanced Manufacturing Supply Chain Initiative, Black Country Expansion of Interest Funding Stream, Black Country Property Investment Programme, Growing Places Fund and the Regional Growth Fund.

Businesses have told us that the main barriers to growth are:

- Skill deficiencies and recruitment difficulties - access to a suitably skilled workforce;
- Intense competition;
- Fuel and power costs
- Problems accessing finance;
- Cost of materials.
- A shortage of modern premises and accessible, clean well-located sites which are ready for immediate development

*Source: Understanding the Black Country Advanced Manufacturing Sector, M.E.L Research, March 2013*

3.3 This chapter sets out in more detail our understanding of the barriers businesses, particularly in our three target sectors, face in growing in three main areas:

- Business support and access to finance;
- Sites, premises and connectivity;
- Skills.

**Business Support**

A recent survey of local businesses highlighted that almost half of businesses felt confused by the current business support landscape and what funding or support is available to them\textsuperscript{10}. Black Country partners are currently developing a single gateway model – the Growth Factory, to ensure a single gateway for companies and individuals to be signposted to relevant support available to them for setting up, growing and improving their business.

\textsuperscript{6} ‘Research on fast growth SMEs’, Marketing Birmingham, (2012)

\textsuperscript{7} ‘Skills Provision Relevant to High Value Manufacturing in the Black Country’, Arthur D Little, (2013),

\textsuperscript{8} ‘The Black Business Survey’, MEL Research (2013)

\textsuperscript{9} ‘The Black Country Advanced Manufacturing Survey’, MEL Research (2013)

There is a wider need for enhanced business support to help address the current weakness in the Black Country business base, by supporting local people to set up new businesses, and to help improve the competitiveness of existing businesses:

- The Black Country has low business stock and low annual business birth rates (just 29 per 10,000 population, compared with 41 nationally\(^{11}\)).
- The Black Country is ranked 38th out of 39 LEP areas by level of self-employment, which is 6% in the Black Country, compared with 9% nationally\(^{12}\). This is a key weakness for the Black Country, and there is an important need to support greater levels of enterprise and business creation.

Given low output per head in the Black Country, there is also a clear need to support businesses to improve their productivity. One important area for this is around access to superfast broadband, where only 60% of businesses in the Black Country currently have access, and 7% of all businesses particularly highlight that they would like access, but that availability is currently a barrier.

Following the recent economic downturn, access to both equity and debt finance has been an increased challenge for companies nationally, with significantly reduced lending from banks and other investors, and this represents a significant constraint on growth. In the Black Country, 25% of companies in the advanced manufacturing priority sector described access to finance as being a ‘major barrier to growth’ both in terms of lack of bank lending and uncompetitive lending rates. The Black Country LEP is currently working with the five other West Midlands LEPs to undertake research looking at the need and potential for a cross-LEP financial instrument to support business enterprise and innovation.

### Sites, premises and connectivity

A key obstacle to enabling growth in our priority sectors is the availability of suitable sites and premises. Connectivity, internationally, nationally and regionally, is also crucial for the efficient movement of goods and people. We face a continuing challenge in exploiting the potential economic and social contribution of our strategic centres and in enabling the provision of a full range of housing.

We have extensive evidence of the needs of business in relation to employment sites and industrial premises. There is strong live occupier demand for 1.2 m sqm of floorspace.

In the Black Country as a whole there are currently\(^{13}\) 569 live property enquiries. 62% of all enquiries received by Invest Black Country are property related. The requirements range from plans to improve operational efficiency or deploy new equipment to expansion plans.

There is a pressing need for quality sites now to enable the growth of businesses in our key sectors. The sites must be clean, well-located, serviced and ready for immediate development. Our ambition is not only to provide suitable sites and premises for individual businesses, but to create business zones which provide access to innovation support, R&D clusters and scope for interaction between individual businesses and links to, for example, universities and catapult centres.

> “The biggest barrier we have this year is a lack of space to expand at our current site. We need to find new premises which we hope we can do locally”. Brandenburg UK Ltd

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\(^{13}\) December 2013
At present, allocated employment land totals 101.9Ha, a quarter of which is capable of being brought forward within 6-12 months. The quality of the existing stock of premises is dwindling and a significant amount of stock has been on the market for over 12 months reflecting issues such as eaves height, general quality, the power supply and other supporting infrastructure.

We know from our contact with businesses that in many parts of the Black Country they are concerned about crime, vandalism, fly-tipping and poor environmental quality. We also know that many companies in the area have the ambition and potential to grow, but there is a shortage of Grade A industrial premises.

The shortage of high quality sites and premises is having a real impact on the growth of the HVM sector in the Black Country. There is evidence of companies taking on sub-standard space, hindering their productivity and capacity to grow. There is also evidence of companies locating elsewhere because of a lack of suitable sites and premises.

"An energy company wanting to relocate to Wolverhampton required in the region of 7 ha at £54. The company acquired an Option in the land and progressed their discussions with the land owner and the planning authority. The project did not go ahead due to the access to and from the site and the requirement for an improved access onto the main traffic network. The site also required a substantial amount of ground remediation which added to the overall cost of the project and eventually created an unviable development."

The issues on which action is required in order to bring suitable sites forward are: In particular:

- There is a need to secure access to capital funding for development;
- There is a need to address the financial implications of the historic legacy from the first industrial revolution and subsequent industrial uses (including excessive abnormal and complex ground conditions) which means that we face a burden of high remediation costs and low value: these costs alone are often sufficient to make regeneration schemes unviable for the private sector;
- There is a need to improve the accessibility and infrastructure provision in the light of significant historic under-investment in site assembly and infrastructure;
- There is a need to counter-act the depressed market conditions given the surplus of old, vacant and under-used industrial stock;
- There is a need to address the challenge of fragmented land ownership and, in many cases, unrealistic land owner expectations, many of whom have owned sites for many years, some of which were acquired for artificially high values.

The main connectivity challenges we are addressing in order to meet these needs are summarised in the box below.

**The principal connectivity challenges for the Black Country are:**

- Radically enhanced public transport connectivity between the four strategic centres of Brierley Hill, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton so they operate as an integrated economic network each with a catchment extending over the whole of the sub-region and beyond – completing the proposed rapid transit network based on Midlands Metro and Rail network.
- Quality, reliable connectivity to Birmingham City Centre, Birmingham Airport and proposed High Speed 2 stations.

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The principal connectivity challenges for the Black Country are:

- Improving connectivity with the M5 and M6 and tackling localised congestion at the motorway junctions
- Improved road freight access to employment areas – vital for the growth of advanced manufacturing.
- Improved rail freight intermodal facilities and connectivity linking Black Country businesses to the national rail freight network, including early re-instatement of the Stourbridge to Walsall Freight Line proposed in the national rail freight strategy.

Skills

“The lack of skilled workers is holding our growth back” Understanding the Black Country Advanced Manufacturing Sector, M.E.L Research, March 2013

“Our business in Aerospace Industry depends on have Metallurgists at all levels – the shortage is limiting our growth in our company and amongst the supply chain. The system is simply not producing enough metallurgists at any level”

Doug Allen - Moog.

“We have had real difficulty in finding basic Metallurgy training for our workforce. We had been unable to find a credible training provider for our requirements. The Skills Factory sourced exactly the metallurgy training we needed. The subsidies really helped to make this affordable for a small business.”

John York Quality Manager BST Supplies Ltd.

“We would be interested in higher level programming CNC courses with Heidenhain Controls. The colleges only have ‘toy’ machines and can’t add any value for us”. Chris Johnson Managing Director, Phoenix Pattern & Tool Co Ltd.

We have extensive evidence of the extent to which skill shortages and associated issues act as a constraint on growth in our key sectors. We are driven by the fact that despite the £130m that the Funding Agency (LSC/SFA) invested in colleges since 2001 we are still not meeting business needs. Those colleges not in receipt of external support, such as Dudley and Halesowen, have continued to invest in their own estates. In addition to the £7.2m of funding agency investment, Dudley College has invested in the region of £47.5m since 2001. This has been done through disposals of assets, use of college reserves and prudential borrowing. Our first priority is to make best use of this investment. Significantly our evidence suggests that many companies are prepared to pay for training, as long as it is the right training. The problem is that in too many cases the right training is not available or businesses do not know how to access it.

There is a pressing need to improve skill levels within the existing workforce. Detailed analysis of the skills needs of high value manufacturing sectors has been undertaken by the Black Country Consortium and in the process of developing the Enterprise Zone Skills Strategy, and has identified a series of specialist skills gaps. There are a number of challenges to delivering these gaps, which need to be addressed:

- Upskilling provision needs to be provided in modules of suitable length and offering sufficient flexibility, to enable employers and employees to balance work needs and upskilling commitments
- Demand for specific training provision needs to be understood and aggregated across the business base, in order to generate sufficient demand for cost effective local provision of training by the University, colleges and other providers

In some areas, there is a need for investment in specialist equipment, or arrangements for access to such equipment to be made, in order for training providers to be able to deliver the skills development required.

In summary, we face a skills crisis in relation to our priority sectors, the main elements of which are:

- Our ageing workforce;
- Inadequate equipment and a shortage of trainers with relevant experience in colleges and other training providers;
- Poor access to provision to raise the skills of the existing workforce either because of poor signposting or a lack of aggregated demand;
- The lack of “bite-sized” delivery.
Chapter 4: Black Country – Our Approach

This Chapter explains the overall approach we intend to adopt to addressing the barriers to growth identified in the previous section and releasing the potential for growth in our three target growth sectors.

4.1 Our starting point is our LEP board’s identification of the areas in which they thought action is most important if we are to secure growth in those sectors and, in particular, exploit the supply chain opportunities to the full. They are: supporting innovation at our major science and business parks; using supply chains as a way of building business commitment to skills and growth; strengthening our work to secure inward investment; building a close relationship with our top 600 companies; developing a more entrepreneurial culture; doing even more to raise our skills levels; and exploiting the potential of the Black Country as a place to live, do business and invest focusing on our housing offer, the quality of employment land, and the distinctive role of our four strategic centres.

Given our desire to ensure that our interventions have maximum impact and respond to evidenced business needs and opportunities we have sought to prioritise in two ways:

- By giving priority to three target sectors (aerospace, automotive and construction) as explained in chapter 3;
- By focusing our activity in a priority growth network (see below).

We have also developed a series of programmes which are designed to help businesses in our target sectors and located in our priority growth network to grow by overcoming the barriers they currently face. Our approach reflects our market intelligence, builds on our successful enterprise zone and city deal and aligns with our EUSIF. The diagram below illustrates our approach.
4.2 Our growth network

In order to ensure that our interventions have the biggest possible impact on growth, as well as prioritising a small number of sectors we are also proposing to focus our activity in a Growth Network of corridors and centres. These form a sub-set of the four strategic centres and 16 growth corridors identified in our Core Strategy.

The identification of the Growth Network is based on a combination of evidence and data including:

- Our intelligence about the location of 400 companies which we know have definite plans to grow;
- The location of strategic companies in the three growth sectors;
- The evidence we assembled for our City Deal proposal on market interest in different sites and locations;
- The wider contribution of Wolverhampton City Centre and Dudley Castle Quarter to the attractiveness of the Black Country as a place to live, learn, work, visit and invest.
4.3 The map above shows the location of the corridors and centres in our proposed Growth Network together with the growth companies and strategic companies referred to above. The priority network includes:

- Areas with the highest density of companies in our target sectors;
- Areas with major opportunities for growth exploiting the potential of connectivity with the national motorway and rail networks and the opportunity presented by key enterprise zone sites including i54 and Darlaston;
- Wolverhampton City Centre, with the opportunities presented by the University of Wolverhampton, financial and other business services and the learning, creative and cultural offer;
The Dudley Castle Hill and its key role in the visitor economy and raising the perceptions of the Black Country as a place to live work and invest in.

4.4 Our SEP Programme

Our SEP programme, which is intended to enable businesses in our growth sectors are priority network to grow is summarised in the table below. More detail on each element of the programme is included in Appendix 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BC major contributor to National objectives</th>
<th>Local programmes complementary to national needs</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Place Theme</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PL1. Expanding the Availability of High Quality Employment Land and delivering a portfolio of strategic mixed use development opportunities.</td>
<td>PL5. Expanding the construction and renewal of housing stock.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PL3. Enhancing the Efficiency of Existing Business Premises &amp; Delivering New High Performing Energy Efficient Floor space</td>
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<td>PL4. Locally Distinctive Economies</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>People Theme</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Business Theme</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>B1. Maximising our Supply Chain opportunities and supporting SMEs</td>
<td>B5. Entrepreneurship and social enterprise.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B2. International Trade – Global Opportunities and Inward Investment</td>
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<tr>
<td>B3. Access to Finance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4. Innovation through materials</td>
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</table>
We are proposing a package of programmes to enable businesses in our target sectors – aerospace, automotive and construction - to grow and for local businesses to more effectively exploit the supply chain opportunities. These programmes, which are summarised in the table above, combine:

- Interventions aimed specifically at businesses in our target sectors which are designed to enable them to grow and to deliver the Black Country’s contribution to the implementation of the UK Industrial strategy (our national programmes);
- and interventions aimed at ensuring the Black Country has the economic, social and physical infrastructure in which these companies can locate and grow in order to underpin that national contribution (our local programmes).

The national programmes are structured around our commitment to meeting evidenced business demand for:

- The availability of high quality sites, improved business locations - i.e. safer, cleaner and more appropriate for modern industrial purposes - and good connectivity to enable them to access regional, national and international markets;
- Access to training and other skills provision to meet specific skill gaps;
- Easy access to support for international marketing and inward investment, innovation, business leadership and support for SMEs.

Our local programmes are designed to ensure that the Black Country provides an environment and context which is conducive to economic growth, including:

- The availability of a good housing mix, a high quality environment and a rich cultural and leisure offer;
- A commitment to school improvement, a focus on employability and an integrated approach on the part of schools, colleges and other providers;
- A focus on encouraging entrepreneurship and supporting social enterprise.

The following sections summarise our proposed programme in relation to the golden threads of our strategy: Place, People and Business.

4.5 Place

We have developed four place-related programmes to:

- Ensure the availability of high quality employment land and deliver a portfolio of strategic mixed use development opportunities;
- Improve the Black Country’s connectivity;
- Improve the quality of existing premises;
- Invest in our visitor attractions and creative industries.

Sites

We are proposing a programme to bring forward a third phase of 29 employment sites following on from our enterprise zone and city deal programmes. These sites, located in our priority growth network, would provide a further 90 ha of high quality employment land which we estimate would generate 9,943 jobs. We are also planning to create a land bank to enable subsequent development.

In order to support this programme we will align our business rate uplift and enterprise zone uplift in support of the programme. We are seeking a £264m upscale of the City Deal funding pot to support
the extended programme. We are also seeking an ability to retain a higher percentage of the business rate uplift and the rolling forward of enhanced capital allowances.

**Connectivity**

We are pursuing a programme of transport interventions. They focus in particular on improving the connectivity of our priority growth network including:

- Providing improved links with national road and rail infrastructure (including HS2);
- Improving inter-urban links to meet the connectivity needs of Black Country business, including access to and Birmingham Airport, Manchester Airport and sea ports;
- Schemes which unlock economic growth, support the creation of significant job opportunities, and improve the accessibility of key development and regeneration sites.

Transport is a key element of our work with neighbouring LEPs and with councils in the wider West Midlands.

Birmingham Airport is critically important to our attractiveness as an area in which to do business and invest. Our plans to improve our performance on international trade and inward investment hinge on our ability to easily access target markets. We are keen to work with the airport to secure direct connections to destinations in our target markets.

We are also committed to completing the Black Country Broadband Network and promoting the availability of public Wi-Fi in the area.

**Existing business premises**

We are seeking funding flexibility to enable us to establish a new Property for Growth Fund. The fund would be used to invest in the refurbishment of existing poor quality premises (both occupied and vacant). In return we are confident that we can leverage a significant private sector contribution through match funding investment – which we estimate could total £46m.

**Locally distinctive economies**

Investment in the creative and cultural economy and in the visitor economy is important both as a driver of growth and to enhance the attractiveness of the Black Country as place in which to live, work, invest and visit. Our target is to create 6,000 jobs in this sector (including the supply chain). This builds on achievements such as an increase in visitors to the Zoo (from 195,000 in 2010 to 260,000 in 2013) and the cluster of creative industries in the City Centre.

This will contribute to our ambition to develop our strategic centres in a way which secures their distinctive contribution to growth and better reflects their respective strengths and opportunities.

**Housing**

Our proposed local programme on housing reflects the importance of providing an improved housing offer (comprising an attractive mix of housing for sale and rent, including social housing) with priority being given to enabling development at 6 locations in our priority growth network, including residential development in Wolverhampton City Centre. Our primary challenge is to facilitate development on identified housing sites.

We are exploring a number of ways of delivering this programme including:
‘Made in the Black Country, Sold around the world’

- Establishing a joint land committee to focus on bringing forward sites for housing in a way which is most likely to secure actual development;
- Exploring new models of organisation, drawing on lessons from new town corporations and partnerships between the public and private sector, to speed delivery;
- Establishing a revolving loan fund;
- Revisiting s106 agreements for stalled/slow-selling sites.

We will also encourage residential development in our strategic centres as a potentially important element of a new future for them.

4.6 People

At the core of our proposed approach is the extension of the Black Country Skills Factory for a further four years until March 2019. This would enable the Skills Factory’s current activities to be continued and provide capacity to lead the implementation of our City Deal apprenticeship programme and key elements of this programme. In planning this next phase of activity we will begin with an assessment of the implications for the Black Country of recent developments nationally including the role of the tax system in financing apprenticeships.

The other elements include:

- The provision of bite-sized training to meet specific needs of companies in our growth sectors;
- Support for SMEs in the high value manufacturing sectors to help them meet the costs of this provision;
- Capitalising on the expertise of our older workers in upskilling the workforce;
- The creation of three new centres to meet the specialist requirements of businesses in our growth centres which are not being met by colleges and other providers:
  - A Foundry and Forging Training and Skills Centre;
  - A Toolmaking Training and Skills Centre;
  - A CNC Centre of Excellence.

We will work with schools, colleges, the University and business to ensure that there is a concerted drive to raise performance across the system and provide an integrated offer to businesses and learners that reflects the different strengths and capacities of the institutions. We will also develop an approach to skills capital which assesses proposals against three criteria – finance, property and education impact – with a particular focus on the latter.

4.7 Business

The objectives of this element of our programme are to:

- Design flexible business support based on first class intelligence and evidenced commercial opportunities;
- Strengthen our local innovation “ecosystem” and build local capability;
- Develop and enable the local supply chain, through indigenous business growth, and inward investment generated as a result of a growing economy;
- Promote the Black Country as a credible source of smart specialisation.

This will be delivered through four SEP programmes building on our Growth Factory:

- The maximisation of supply chain opportunities and support for SMEs;
- International trade and inward investment;
- Access to finance;
- Innovation through materials.
Supply chain and support for SMEs

The Growth Factory will enable us to co-ordinate all support to businesses in the Black Country. We will also access funds for innovation and competitiveness through our EUSIF. We also intend to seek funding through the single local growth fund to:

- Develop an education, research and innovation cluster in the City Centre;
- Develop a Supply Chain Innovation Centre in our Core Growth Axis;

We will develop an infrastructure for innovation to enable businesses to invest in innovation through improved networks, collaboration with educational institutions and increasing SME capacity. We will focus in particular on the potential for innovation in our transformation sectors.

All this activity will be informed by a programme to improve our business intelligence: We will implement a programme to identify and build appropriate relationships with companies of strategic importance. The first phase of activity will focus on 600 companies that have a turnover of over £1m and have headquarters in the Black Country.

Wherever possible we are aiming for synergy with the other programmes, including the implementation of DEFRA’s Catchment Management Plan.
## BC SEP Programme Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Summary Asks</th>
<th>Summary Offers</th>
<th>Government Departments</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **P1. Expanding the Availability of High Quality Employment Land and delivering a portfolio of strategic mixed use development opportunities.** | - Support to enable Local Authorities to acquire strategic sites to bring forward development in the short term.  
- Ability to retain greater % of business rate uplift  
- Enhanced Capital Allowances roll forward  
- Alignment of Defra investment to address water catchment quality  
- £33m upscale of City Deal funding pot over 5 years. | - This would be a 3rd phase of activity building on our Enterprise Zone and City Deal. Our contribution will include:  
- Business friendly planning service  
- Alignment of LA Business rate uplift  
- £20m City Deal Loan Fund + Circa £10m LA’s Land Development Fund  
- Enterprise Zone Uplift  
- Local Schemes (to be quantified) | - DCLG  
- HCA  
- Defra and Environment Agency |
| **P2. Connecting our Goods, Services and employees work and to International Markets.** | - We are asking Government to undertake a study into the case for electrification of the Wolverhampton –Shrewsbury line so that it can be considered for implementation in CP6  
- We are asking Government to consider multiyear allocations and the ability to move money between years in order to deliver transport priorities  
- Funding through the single local growth fund £70m starting in 2015/16  
- M6 Junction 10  
- A4101  
- Wolverhampton Interchange  
- M5 Junction 2 | - Work with partners in other LEPs and Government to progress schemes in line with the Control Period  
- We will develop a programme of “shovel ready” schemes which can be delivered effectively and with increased certainty | - DfT  
- Centro  
- BDUK  
- Highways Agency |
### PI3. Enhancing the Efficiency of Existing Business Premises & Delivering New High Performing Energy Efficient Floor space

There is a serious shortage of high quality industrial premises and evidence that this is reducing the productivity of existing businesses, causing businesses to relocate and discouraging inward investment.

Based on our knowledge of the requirements of specific businesses this demand-led programme will adapt existing business premises and identify new location opportunities so businesses are able to access premises that are more suitable for current industrial operator requirements.

We intend to create a recyclable £20m fund to be used as either a loan or grant fund to undertake works from feasibility to physical development on existing premises.

We envisage that this programme would:
- **Lever private sector investment of up to £94m**
- **Generate additional business rate income (potentially reinvested in a recyclable grant funding programme)**

### PI4. Locally distinctive economies

This programme is intended to address a number of objectives including:
- Creating local economic resilience;
- Improving the quality of life in the Black Country;
- Developing new roles for our strategic centres.

There are a number of opportunities that directly exploit local “place based” assets e.g.: land, heritage, knowledge and culture located in the growth network, including:

- Wolverhampton - £10m for physical infrastructure to support the growth and expansion of successful creative industries in the City Centre
- Black Country Box Office – £200K start-up costs
- Black Country Capital grants for workspaces, building adaptations, specialist equipment and technology in key strategic Centres - £2 million
- Dudley Geopark and Trilobite Centre: £5 million
- Single Growth Fund request £17.2m in total including secured:

We are seeking support for:
- We are committed to adopting a more integrated approach to this area, making better use of the resources available to us and focusing action on areas with the strongest assets and greatest potential.

**Secured:**
- Black Country Creative People and Places Arts Lottery Funded Programme (Accountable Body people in Partnership) £2 million
- Heritage Lottery Funds £3M
- English Heritage £170K
- HCA Growth point £191K

**Government Departments**
- DCLG
- Defra
- DECC
- DCMS
- Arts Councils
- Lottery Funders
### Made in the Black Country, Sold around the world

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Summary Asks</th>
<th>Summary Offers</th>
<th>Government Departments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o Cultural and creative industries (with a nucleus within Wolverhampton City Centre).</td>
<td></td>
<td>DZG £270K</td>
<td>DCLG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Heritage and visitor attractions (with a nucleus around Dudley Castle Hill).</td>
<td></td>
<td>LEP Growing places £300K</td>
<td>HCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The Food and drink sector (in Sandwell’s spatial corridor) We envisage this could create of 6,000 new jobs over the lifetime of the SEP.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dudley MBCE8.7M</td>
<td>Housing Associations</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**PI5. Expanding the construction and renewal of housing stock.**

The objective of this programme is to provide an improved housing offer (comprising an attractive mix of housing for sale and rent, including social housing) with priority being given to enabling development at 6 locations, providing 3,000 new homes in our priority growth network, including residential development in our strategic centres.

We envisage this could create of 6,000 new jobs over the lifetime of the SEP.

- Support to release public sector assets including:
  - Defer capital receipts
  - An ability to Dispose of sites in bundles of low value and better sites
  - Utilise a Revolving Loan Fund
  - Joint exploration of the possibility of sharing risks between local authority and landowner based on the Deferred Development Contribution model
  - Give local authorities greater freedoms, powers and resources to assemble and develop land
  - £50m funding ask (over 5 years)

We will:

- Purchase units off plan from sites that have stalled
- Explore the possibility of establishing a “Help to Buy” product for the Black Country
- Revisit S106 Agreements/Planning Obligations for stalled/slow selling sites
- Contribute to gap funding for land remediation, site access, clearance, demolition

- 1 billion of GVA
- Window of opportunity to lead nationally
- More than 20 revenue-generating projects
- Up to 645 jobs in growing markets
- Quick results

**PI6. Overall quality environment and low carbon.**

We will pursue a wider programme of environmental infrastructure improvements, with a particular focus on action in our strategic centres, the M5 junction 2 gateway, and the role that canal restoration can play in supporting

- De-risk, unblock and maximise LA revenue
- Support local leadership development
- Acceleration and delivery
- Central hub of specialist expertise
- Technical
- Legal

We will:

- 1 billion of GVA
- Window of opportunity to lead nationally
- More than 20 revenue-generating projects
- Up to 645 jobs in growing markets
- Quick results

**Government Departments**

- DCLG
- HCA
- Housing Associations
- DEFRA
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<tr>
<td>new housing and business development, restoring and connecting our ecological networks, supporting an environmental visitor economy and facilitating a step change in walking and cycling facilities across the sub region.</td>
<td>☐ Procurement and commercial Financial ☐ Risk management ☐ Business/LA partnerships and brokering ☐ Coherent national/global ‘brand’ and focus for investment markets ☐ Costed programme under development.</td>
<td>☐ Accessible jobs and skills ☐ Builds on manufacturing and construction strengths ☐ Deliverable from existing assets using LA powers ☐ Income for LAs and benefits to residents (reducing fuel poverty)</td>
<td></td>
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### People Theme

**P1. Skills for the Supply Chain – Building on the Skills Factory (Skills Offer from schools to FE to HE)**

There is substantial evidence that low skills remains a significant constraint on growth. We have detailed information on the specific skill gaps reported by Black Country Businesses in our three key sectors. This programme will build on the work of our Skills Factory, offer as brokering role for the provision of bespoke bite-sized training and provide independent engineering apprenticeship advice.

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ Further details of the program being developed by the Skills Taskforce</td>
<td>☐ We will work with the colleges in the Black Country to ensure that there is an integrated offer which makes best use of their different capacities and expertise to meet the needs of businesses and learners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Extension of the Skills Factory pilot for the 3 priority sectors</td>
<td>☐ We will capitalise on the presence of the University of Wolverhampton and networks with other universities to help provide the high level skills required by many companies in our growth sectors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Costed programme under development.</td>
<td>☐ LEP involvement with CIPD Network</td>
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**P2. Further Education Skills – Capital Opportunities and Needs.**

To meet the evidenced skills needs of the businesses in our target sectors we are proposing:

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<th>Summary Asks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ programme being developed, some potential example include:</td>
<td>☐ New FE apprenticeship &amp; higher level training /skills centre in Black Country using latest technology for aerospace and automotive supply chain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ A Training and Skills Centre allied to the proposed Supply Chain Innovation Centre</td>
<td>☐ Expand specialist activity of the AMRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ £5m for training and skills centre alongside Supply Chain Innovation centre (MTC) (see B1)</td>
<td>☐ BIS ☐ DfE ☐ UKCES ☐ SFA</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ £200K capital cost from FE capital fund</td>
<td>☐ UKCES</td>
</tr>
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<td>Description</td>
<td>Summary Asks</td>
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<td>(see B1) which will focus on new technology and higher level skills required by the auto &amp; aerospace industry using the latest technology equipment in the centre. The centre will be a satellite of the 3 AMRC in the country and will use their staff expertise to facilitate this requisite training.</td>
<td>for Foundry 2015 Additional £150K capital for Forging in 2016. £100K start-up costs in 2015 £400K capital for building &amp; equipment for tool room in 2015 (Could be support from AFRC in Strathclyde) £150K start-up costs in 2015 £250K capital for building &amp; equipment for CNC centre (Could be support from AMRC Coventry) £200K start-up costs for CNC centre £250K for LBCLEP led FE Capital Organisation Full costed programme under development.</td>
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</table>

To establish additional specialist centres as required to meet the needs of Black Country growth businesses in our priority sectors, for example (a) a Foundry and Forging Training and Skills Centre; (b) a Toolmaking Training and Skills Centre; and (c) a CNC Centre of Excellence.

That the existing FE providers (4 main college) for HVM will expand their engineering provision for primarily the 16-21 year old apprenticeship and associated technical training by a program of FE capital expenditure focussing on Dudley Advance, the creation of new engineering facilities at Walsall College and the replacement of some of Wolverhampton College facilities.
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<th>Government Departments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>P3. Schools and college statutory education provision.</strong></td>
<td>☐ Program being developed</td>
<td>☐ Organisation structure to sub-regionally manage the allocation of FE capital to meet business needs.</td>
<td>☐ DfE, Ofsted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ We will establish a Black Country Schools collaborative to drive school performance across all age-ranges. We will work to address the Ofsted primary outcomes and look at specifically increasing the number of young people including girls taking STEM subjects and studying physics and engineering in line with our growth sectors.</td>
<td></td>
<td>☐ We are establishing a task group chaired by the chief executive of Wolverhampton to develop a more collaborative approach to addressing these issues.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ We will build on our partnership between further and higher education, schools and businesses to maintain a concerted focus on the destination of people leaving full-time education</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ We will review what is currently not being provided and establish a Skills Task Force led by a Local Authority Chief Executive, Simon Warren.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>P4. Securing and upskilling the Black Country residents and employees</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Talent Match</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ Building on the skills proposals in our City Deal submission to improve the skills of the Black Country workforce.</td>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Programs being developed via EUSIF Black Country City Deal</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Provision of £5.6m to support the delivery of the demonstration project. Agreement to examine a mechanism to share the financial benefits of the programme.</td>
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"Made in the Black Country, Sold around the world"

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>B1. Maximising our Supply Chain opportunities and supporting SMEs</strong></td>
<td>We have substantial evidence of gaps in the current business support offer. There is also evidence of the impact that supporting the creation of clusters of businesses can have on economic growth. Under this programme we will:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>○ Use our Growth Factory to become the portal to all business support in the sub-region;</td>
<td>○ City Centre Programme request in SEP</td>
<td>BIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Develop a Supply Chain innovation Centre in our grow network;</td>
<td>○ Develop Supply Chain Innovation Centre. Develop £50m Supply Chain Innovation centre with MTC and University of Wolverhampton, £12.5m request in SEP, £12.5m Private Match &amp; £25m RGF Application summer 2014</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>○ Develop an education, research and innovation cluster in Wolverhampton City Centre</td>
<td>○ SEP overall request £17.5m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B2. International Trade – Global Opportunities and Inward Investment</strong></td>
<td>Our objective is to develop a programme of activity which adds value through rigorous targeting (of sectors and countries) and alignment and collaboration neighbouring LEPs and national programmes. This will include:</td>
<td>○ £3m secured through RGF with £7.1m of private match, £1.9m for BC Gold and funds allocated through the EUSIF innovation and competitiveness strands.</td>
<td>UKTI</td>
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<td></td>
<td>○ We will take the Black Country supply chain to target markets including India, China, Japan, USA and South America exposing them to £94bn of export opportunities.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>○ Attracting new investors in our key sectors of Automotive, Aerospace and Construction by establishing high level and challenging lead</td>
<td>○ Contribution to dedicated member of staff, providing direct link to Auto Inv Organisation and supply chain development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>○ Support for presence at major auto shows</td>
<td>○ Support for presence at major auto shows</td>
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<td></td>
<td>○ Auto marketing and collateral, including Bullet Phase 2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>○ Contribution to enable development of an Aerospace proposition</td>
<td>○ Contribution to enable development of an Aerospace proposition</td>
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<td></td>
<td>○ Attendance at 2 Aero shows and Development of Black Country Plane Supply chain missions to major projects - 3 no per annum</td>
<td>○ Attendance at 2 Aero shows and Development of Black Country Plane Supply chain missions to major projects - 3 no per annum</td>
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</table>
### Description

- Establishing an Aerospace proposition and having a presence at key automotive and aerospace events.

We envisage that this programme will bring an additional £5m GVA per annum to the Black Country economy and we will create 170 new jobs per annum and 200 new exporters per annum for the Black Country.

### Summary Asks

- Overall Growth Fund ask £1.6m over 3 years.

### Summary Offers

- Support to generate an additional £15m that is required to secure AWM legacy funding and establish a regional FEI on a sustainable footing.
- £8M has been set aside in EU Investment Strategy to improve access to debt and equity.

### Government Departments

- BIS
- TSB

#### B3. Access to Finance.

We are pursuing this objective at a West Midlands level, working closely with neighbouring LEPs. We are actively exploring the possibility of establishing a West Midlands Financial Engineering Instrument, based on a JEREMIE ‘Funds of Funds’ model. This would enable us utilise legacy funding from Advantage West Midlands, but recent work suggests that our contribution would need to be £15m (compared with the £8m currently set aside in our EUSIF). To overcome this and achieve a ‘win win’ outcome, the Black Country is advocating a ring fenced low carbon investment fund is included within the fund of funds portfolio.

- Establishment of a University Enterprise Zone at Wolverhampton Science Park
- Full costed programme being developed.

#### B4. Innovation through materials

This programme is a core element of our action to support growth in the Construction Industry in the Black Country. It will develop a **University Enterprise Zone** with a focus on Building Information Modelling (BIM) and open source innovation. This zone will offer business space to a range of new high-tech companies in the early
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<tr>
<td>stages of their development that will then be able to share the expert knowledge at the university, helping them to grow and prosper. The University of Wolverhampton has a national reputation for excellence in its Knowledge Transfer Partnership programme and is home to the Caparo Innovation Centre.</td>
<td>The creation of a number of pilot Social Enterprise Zones The provision of Equity and Loan Funding, through BC LEP Programmes and partner funding Creation of a new overarching structure — Black Country Social Enterprise — contracting with a number of agencies in each Social Enterprise Zone to deliver a range of services to support entrepreneurs The use of Business Mentors and support companies through the Social Enterprise Zone agencies to provide advice, guidance and encouragement Support for a series of “oxygenation events” for enterprise and social enterprise to be rolled out in each social enterprise zone within the Black Country The creation of an access portal for information and sign-posting of potential start-up individuals and groups, marriage brokering with mentors and advisors and other private and social business willing to provide shadowing and shelter within their structures</td>
<td>Promotion and awareness raising of the value of enterprise and Social Enterprise, including an Enterprise and Social Enterprise Prospectus Creation of 300 new start-ups and with these 1,200 jobs per year to meet a significant part of the output gap problem around business start-ups. Exploring establishing a Black Country Social Enterprise Academy</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

85. Entrepreneurship and social enterprise. | Action to support SMEs including social enterprises by implementing a programme to develop a more entrepreneurial and dynamic economy including: growing existing businesses; providing enterprise support for new business creation; and SME access to finance. We aim to increase Business Births by an additional 1,368 from base of 3,310 and to increase the size of the social enterprise sector in the Black Country. |  |  |
### Funding support for the social enterprise infrastructure agencies – eight working jointly across the Black Country to support each of 8 social enterprise zones – of some £1.5m per year for three years (total investment of £4.5m), and thus aligning the current and funding of each of the agencies into a cohesive and coordinated single Black Country wide support services.
ECONOMIC IMPACT

Increase GVA £6.7 Bn:
City Deal £1 Bn
EUSIF £1.7 Bn
SEP £4 Bn

NOW

2020 / 2021
Chapter 5: Governance, Management and Delivery

The four Black Country councils have agreed to establish a **statutory joint committee** to provide political leadership for the delivery of the strategic economic plan and the city deal. This is an important step – reflecting the political priority the councils give to economic growth – and builds on over a decade of collaborative working at a Black Country level.

This chapter sets out our proposals for the governance, management and delivery of our strategic economic plan. They build on the proposals we have already developed for our City Deal and EU Structural and Investment Fund Strategy.

### 5.1 Enduring Partnership

**Enduring Partnership**

The Black Country LEP is founded on a strong track record of successful partnership working over more than a decade. In 2000, the four Black Country Local Authorities and other key partners, founded the Black Country Consortium, which was established as a limited company in 2006. The Consortium provides co-ordination and economic intelligence across the Black Country, and facilitates cross-authority economic development activities.

The evolution of robust partnership working in the Black Country has been crucial both in developing and implementing our economic growth strategy. This was very much a local initiative – predating Government requirements for joint working – which has contributed directly to the progress we have made by improving perceptions of the area and the organisations that serve it. Also important has been the rigorous approach we have adapted to our evidence base and performance management.

Partnership working is never easy and in the Black Country it has involved both the development of an increasingly close relationship between the four councils and between the public and private sectors. Indicators of the strength of collaboration between the four councils include the agreement of the single Black Country-wide Core Strategy and the decision to locate the enterprise zone in a location which spans one of the councils and a neighbouring authority.

The key building blocks of our current arrangements are the Association of Black Country Councils and the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership. The latter had the advantage of over 10 years business-led partnership working. In our City Deal submission we have committed to strengthening those relationships by the creation of a statutory joint committee.

Our strategy is based on the detailed analysis and economic modelling we commissioned in 2003 supported by our performance management framework which measures progress on each of our priorities. The results are published annually in our State of the Sub-Region reports. Our Black Country Core Strategy was subject to a rigorous and successful examination in public.

It is important to note that these arrangements are the latest stage in over a decade’s experience of joint working between the business and the public and voluntary sector in the Black Country, between the four Black Country Councils and between the Black Country and the wider West Midlands (see box above). The main milestones in this journey of collaboration are:

- The establishment of the Black Country Consortium as a partnership in 2000 and its transition into a limited company in 2006;
- The formal creation of the Association of Black Country Authorities in 2008;
The more recent decision, as part of the City Deal process, to establish a statutory joint committee under the Localism Act 2011 to take forward the SEP, EUSIF, the Local Growth Deal and the City Deal.

We are proposing to strengthen those arrangements in order to:

- Continue to strengthen the effectiveness and depth of the collaboration between the four councils to enable us to secure better outcomes for the Black Country in the face of continued reductions in expenditure;
- Secure even closer working between the LEP and the four councils in preparation for introduction of the local growth fund, the development of the Black Country growth plan and associated developments;
- Ensure that our arrangements are fit for purpose to provide transparent and effective government of our city deal to enable it to be delivered.

5.2 At the core of our approach is the establishment of a statutory joint committee. The membership of the joint committee would comprise the leaders of the four councils and each council executive would delegate to the committee the powers, including financial responsibilities, necessary to implement the SEP and the city deal. A legal agreement between the councils would set out details of the management of the committee and the scope of its delegated powers.

In order to ensure that the LEP is fully engaged in the leadership of the City Deal and Growth Plan we are proposing that the Chair of the Black Country LEP should attend meetings of the joint committee to participate in the discussion of items on the city deal.

We are proposing to establish a number of groups to manage the delivery of the SEP and the EUSIF (see diagram below). Key roles and responsibilities include: The Black Country LEP Board with overall ownership and accountability for the delivery of the BCSEP. A new Black Country Joint Committee established to discharge the governance functions related to City Deal & Growth deal & to oversee the delivery & performance management of the BCSEP on behalf of the LEP Board. A new Advisory Board to the Joint Committee will oversee monitoring and evaluation, performance management & financial risk. The Programme Compliance & Delivery Director together with a small team will be responsible for overseeing the performance management and compliance of all Black Country LEP investment programmes and contracts. The Programme Business Development Director together with a small team will be responsible for the development of the project pipeline ensuring that funding is effectively used & that proposals are compliant. Three Commissioning Boards made up of key local partners & drawing on the expertise of the Consortium, local authority officers and partner organisations will be responsible for the detailed development, project pipeline and monitoring of the delivery of the Growth Plan, City Deal and EU investment programmes and projects. The Local Authority and Black Country Consortium Blended Team(s) will be responsible for providing strategic advice, information and intelligence, relationship management, internal communications support, and the marketing of the Black Country.

5.3 Cross LEP Collaborations

Recognising the shared challenges dependencies we have with other LEP areas, we are collaborating on a number of spatial and thematic issues. West Midland LEPs is a collaborative quarterly forum of LEP Chairmen sharing best practice and supporting initiatives such as the Regional Finance Forum. In the EUSIF we highlighted some specific areas of planned cross-LEP working around Research, Technology, Development & Innovation (RTDI) (i.e. smart specialisation), inward investment, the low carbon agenda and use of financial instruments to support SMEs access finance.
5.4 Greater Birmingham & Solihull, Coventry & Warwickshire and the Black Country LEP - Federation

The Black Country has particularly strong ties with Birmingham and the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP and we collaborate on a number of issues. For example, Marketing Birmingham is a collaborative ERDF programme between Birmingham and the Black Country in support of inward investment, the visitor economy and conference promotion. We also work with Staffordshire and Stoke LEP where there is a shared interest in the Enterprise Zone and the business rate uplift.

Collaboration on transport is a priority for all the West Midlands LEPs and our chairs have agreed to develop a transport joint statement and programme to identify schemes that no single LEP could deliver on its own.

Other LEP collaborations extend to challenges & opportunities we share with other areas. AMSCI (Advanced Manufacturing Supply Chain) is an RGF supported Initiative with the Black Country as a founding partner along with Liverpool, Greater Birmingham & Coventry LEPs. We also work other LEPs, including, for example, the Black Country’s work with the South West LEP to develop the Social Enterprise Cabinet.
5.5 Delivery Mechanisms and LA Alignment

Having established a clear way forward on governance we are now urgently addressing what improved arrangements need to be put in place to support the delivery of the SEP, including the organisation of the local authority contribution to securing economic growth in the Black Country. We believe there is considerable scope to make better use of the economic development and associated resource available to the four councils.

A group has been established to develop a way ahead. It is chaired by the chief executive of Walsall Council and includes the directors of regeneration (or their equivalent) from the four councils. We will be in position to include details of our proposed approach in our final submission.

As a first step towards pooling economic development resources we have mapped the current financial position across the four councils. See graphs below.
5.6 European Alignment

The BC SEP has been drafted concurrently with the Black Country European Union Investment Strategy. The Black Country EUIS for the 2014-20 programmes seeks to align to the BCSEP priorities approximately £152m of locally-allocated EU structural and investment funds to its priority investment areas.

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<th>EU Alignment</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Place Theme</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>PI1. Expanding the Availability of High Quality Employment Land and delivering a portfolio of strategic mixed use development opportunities.</td>
<td>3.1 Employment Sites Development and Enhancement - £8,000,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>PI2. Connecting our Goods, Services and employees work and to International Markets.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PI3. Enhancing the Efficiency of Existing Business Premises &amp; Delivering New High Performing Energy Efficient Floor space</td>
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<tr>
<td>PI4. Locally distinctive economies</td>
<td>1.6 Support for Local Growth Clusters - £4,000,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>PI5. Expanding the construction and renewal of housing stock.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PI6. Overall quality environment and low carbon.</td>
<td>3.3 Supporting Energy Efficiency and the Green Economy - £15,000,000 3.2 Improving and Exploiting our Green and Blue Infrastructure - £3,000,000</td>
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<td><strong>People Theme</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BC major contributor to National objectives</strong></td>
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<td>P1. Skills for the Supply Chain – Building on the Skills Factory (Skills Offer from schools to FE to HE)</td>
<td>4.1 Skills for Growth - £30,000,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>P2. Further Education Skills – Capital Opportunities and Needs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>P3. Schools and college statutory education provision.</td>
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<td>P4. Securing and upskilling the Black Country residents and employees</td>
<td>4.2 Young People and Unemployment (Ages 15-24) - £20,000,000 4.3 Employment Support for the Over-25s - £11,000,000 4.4 Promoting Social Inclusion Among Disadvantaged Groups - £15,000,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Business Theme</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BC major contributor to National objectives</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>B1. Maximising our Supply Chain opportunities and supporting SMEs</td>
<td>1.1 Growth Factory - £3,000,000 1.4 Business Support for Growth and Improved Productivity - £6,000,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>B2. International Trade – Global Opportunities and Inward Investment</td>
<td>1.2 Inward Investment and Exporting - £4,000,000</td>
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‘Made in the Black Country, Sold around the world’

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<tr>
<td><strong>B3. Access to Finance.</strong></td>
<td>1.3 SME Access to Finance - £8,000,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>B4. Innovation through materials</strong></td>
<td>2.1 Increasing SME Demand and Capacity for Innovation - £4,000,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2.2 Infrastructure for Innovation - £10,000,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2.3 Innovation Support Programme - £6,000,000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.5 Enterprise Support for Business Creation - £5,000,000</td>
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<td><strong>Local programmes complementary to national needs</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>B5. Entrepreneurship and social enterprise.</strong></td>
<td>1.5 Enterprise Support for Business Creation - £5,000,000</td>
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<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>£152,000,000</td>
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It is anticipated that a number of different delivery routes will be adopted as we implement the SEP and EUSIF programmes, these will include: competitive bidding rounds, direct commissioning of activities by national agencies (e.g. EUSIF opt-in programmes), cross-LEP commissioning, and local Black Country-specific commissioned projects. Milestones for delivery including the expected outputs and outcomes of projects will be established through the work underway in our sub-groups.

Delivery of the programmes in the SEP will require on-going programme management which will be undertaken according to the proposed governance structures and lines of accountability set out in the diagram above.

Aligning the multiple strands of funding that could be classed as ‘economic development’ is a major challenge, but one that will be necessary to deliver our growth ambitions in the current fiscal climate. A critical area of alignment is with the EUSIF, which been drafted concurrently with the SEP. By adopting a holistic approach to the SEP across the themes of People, Business and Place, we are seeking to overcome the often fragmented nature of public spending and differing incentives across public bodies. Partners across the Black Country are committing resources to a shared agenda for growth and we are identifying potential local contributions to our local growth deal. With respect to transport, our emerging priority investments are focused on enabling economic growth in key employment land corridors and strategic centres. These are already the focus of investment through other initiatives such as the Enterprise Zone, Regional Growth Fund, City Deal and Growing Places Fund and will be the focus for future FE capital investment. Our current work on the creation of an integrated Black Country Education Business Partnership is the most recent example of our commitment to making best use of local resources.

5.7 Evaluation

We recognise the critical importance of evidence-based policy and to this end the work of the LEP is supported by the Black Country Consortium and their Black Country Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU). The Unit provides high quality research and intelligence to inform decisions by the LEP Board and partners such as the Black Country Economic Assessment and the annual open reporting and publishing of the State of The Region report. The work of the EIU is significantly strengthened by input from officers from all local authorities. The team has worked with Oxford Economics to provide detailed spatial and sector forecasts up to 2030 and has access to a number of commercial databases and commissions a regular business survey.
The EIU is playing an important role in developing the program framework for our Strategic Economic Plan. The framework seeks to ensure that all programmes of activity in the BCSEP are underpinned by a clear logic chain and rationale, one which defines the problem (e.g. a market failure), the objectives and the scale of planned change, the level of investment required, and the target outputs and outcomes.

The programme templates for the Black Country Strategic Economic Plan were devised using Core Assessment Criteria as provided in the HM Government document entitled; Growth Deals: Initial Guidance for Local Enterprise Partnerships. To ensure the Black Country plan is a robust strategy for future local growth, it has been based around three core themes, as per Government guidance. These themes are:

**A – Ambition and rationale for intervention for the local area**
Within this theme the SEP has integrated evidence from a Black Country business with a list of strategic objectives and barriers for growth. Analysis has been provided relating to the scale of the challenge associated with each programme, including a baseline scenario and ambitions for future growth. A description of how the intervention will address the challenge is also specified with a list of projects associated with delivery.

**B – Value for money**
Levels of investment including secured, unsecured and match funding with sources is listed for each programme. A full listing of project activities and their resultant outputs, outcomes and economic impact along with Asks and Offers from the LEP is detailed accordingly.

**C – Delivery and risk**
An accountable body is listed for each programme along with a lead officer and key delivery partners. A full list of aligned local and European activity with funding amounts is also provided.

We have systems already in place to ensure we deliver value for money. The EIU has developed a methodology for a cost-benefit analysis which draws on frameworks developed by PWC trialled in the City Deal process. The outputs from an activity are inputted and quantified/monetised into gross benefits. Using established additionally ratios and accounting for deadweight, displacements and leakage, the net benefits are calculated. We then can calculate the costs benefit ratio based on the discounted net benefits and discounted public costs.

Longer term, the EIU will continue to maintain the evidence base and evaluate progress with the BCSEP. The Unit runs our unique Performance Management Framework, a dashboard of indicators to monitor progress against our vision and objectives. This information is reported to the LEP Board, ABCA and made available more widely such as at the Annual Stakeholders Conference to inform policy decisions. At a project level, as we begin to implement the SEP, the EIU will continue its role maintaining the economic evidence base, monitoring and evaluating progress, & reporting on the economic impact of interventions.

In addition to the evidence provided through the EIU, the BCSEP draws on expert advice through the sub-groups we have established. For example, the Black Country Strategic Transport Board received and endorsed the recommendations of a report from an independent panel of experts identifying schemes that are both strategic in merit and deliverable within the 2015 to 2019 timeframe. On housing, a private sector LEP sub-group, including the major house builders and registered providers, is feeding into the BCSEP process looking at ways to unlock housing development.
5.8 Programme Appraisal

The LEP Board has supported the need to develop a project appraisal process and set of protocols to develop an agreed approach to programme appraisal for the BCSEP which embraces a Multi Criteria Analysis (MCA). The techniques of project financial and economic analysis and impact assessment would support the BC LEP in choosing between projects where resources, both financial and human, are limited.

Multi-criteria analysis (MCA) will establish a preference between project options by reference to an explicit set of criteria and objectives. These would normally reflect policy/programme objectives and project objectives and other considerations as appropriate, such as value for money, costs, social, environmental, equality, etc. An MCA approach to appraisal incorporates multiple criteria and does not focus solely on monetary values. MCAs would require “scoring and weighting” of the relevant criteria reflecting their relative importance to the objectives of the project. In constructing a multi criteria analysis scorecard and determining the weightings to be given to criteria the aim should be to achieve an objective appraisal of project options and consistency in decision making.

The main steps in the MCA process to be defined would include:

1. Identifying the performance criteria for assessing the project
2. Devising a scoring scheme for marking a project under each criterion heading
3. Devising a weighting mechanism to reflect the relative importance of each criterion
4. Allocation approach to scoring each investment option for each of the criteria
5. Documentation approach to capturing the rationale for the scoring results for each option
6. Calculating the overall results and test for robustness
7. Reporting processes and interpretation of the findings

The importance of explaining the weights and scores fully, and interpreting the results carefully, is key. It is proposed to commission the development of this work drawing on the expertise and experience of LEP Board members including Access to Finance Group and the Growing Places and RGF Sub-Board. The task and finish group has also expressed a wish to discuss priorities and projects with the relevant Board leads, either collectively or individually with the appropriate officers for each Plan pillar, in advance of the LEP’s next Policy Planning session on 10th December.

All programmes will have an accountable body/named strategic programme managed. During January to March we will do an options appraisal of our programmes.

5.9 We have developed a risk analysis for the BCSEP, this is attached in Appendix 4.
Chapter 6: Strategy Development and Partner Engagement

6.1 Key private and public sector partners are being engaged in the process of developing the SEP through a number of different channels this reflects the well-established partnership arrangements which are summarised in Chapter 2. This section summarises the approach we have adopted and the steps we are proposing for the period between January and the submission of the final draft in late March.

Our LEP Board has been extensively involved in the development of the LEP. It brings together senior business representatives, the four council leaders, the University of Wolverhampton, the FE sector and a social housing. Our LEP Board is truly private sector led and has provided critical insight from a business perspective on the priorities for the SEP. This is combined with the input of Board representatives from higher education, further education, the voluntary sector, and the four local authorities. The four local authorities also provide input at Leader and Chief Executive level through the Association of Black Country Authorities (ABCA).

The board has had two away day sessions on the SEP (in July and December) and individual board members have led work on particular topics, including:

- Housing development;
- The low carbon economy;
- Access to finance;
- Social enterprise;
- The visitor economy.

This work often involved wider groups of people including, for example, a workshop with a number of leading house builders in the region.

6.2 In developing the SEP we have had discussions with a number of key stakeholders, as set out in the following table, including: the Black Country Further Education Colleges; private sector training providers; the University of Wolverhampton, the Black Country Wildlife Trust, Federation of Small Businesses, Black Country Chamber of Commerce etc. The process has been driven by a task and finish groups comprising senior council officers from the four Black Country councils with working groups on the three strands, People, Place and Business. A SEP Task and Finish Group has been established which meets fortnightly together with regeneration leads from the local authorities. For each priority area, a sub-group is scoping projects working with colleagues from the local authorities, private sector LEP Board Members, and other key stakeholders.

Our intelligence of specific business needs has been crucially important in informing our approach. This includes: detailed survey work and discussions with businesses undertaken as part of the Skills Factory work; a bespoke telephone survey of businesses in our transformational sectors; intelligence gathered through enquiries from businesses to the councils and the LEP. As well as informing the current draft of the SEP, the results of this work, particularly the telephone survey, will also be used to inform the next phase of engagement with business on the SEP.

As the SEP has developed updated drafts have been available on the LEP and Black Country Consortium Websites and links have been tweeted to our 2,120 twitter followers. Our
communications team uses new open source channels including social media. We will use this draft of the SEP to undertake wider consultation through our established channels of partnership working.

We have also exploited the feedback gathered during the engagement on the EU Investment Strategy. The table below sets out a summary of key partners and how they have been involved in the development of the Investment Strategy. This is broken down by:

- **Steering Group** – where organisations were directly represented on the main Steering Group responsible for developing and drafting the EU Funds Strategy.
- **Thematic workshops** – where organisations were involved in the thematic consultation workshops developing content for the strategy
- **Individual consultations** – where organisations were involved through specific one-to-one consultations with the team working on developing and drafting the bid
- **Wider information provision** – where organisations received information about the developing strategy and saw a draft version, on which they were invited to provide comments.

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<th>Type of Stakeholder</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
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### Summary of Stakeholder Consultation

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‘Made in the Black Country, Sold around the world’