

The Greater Birmingham &
Solihull Local Enterprise
Partnership Strategy for Growth



**Greater Birmingham
& Solihull**
Local Enterprise Partnership

Delivering Growth



Strategic Framework

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Foreword

As Directors of the Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership we are proud to present our Strategy for Growth.

From day one our partnership has been unanimous about the need for a transformational vision, and a bold plan to address the challenges and opportunities unique to our area. We know that our LEP has the potential to be the engine of national growth, and that our two million residents will benefit from the prosperity we unlock.

We know historically there has been no shortage of economic strategies - yet none have fully delivered what they have promised. We will deliver. Underpinning our confidence is the fact this strategy that has been agreed rather than imposed, and is owned by the city region. Working with the private sector, local authorities, third sector organisations, universities and

colleges we have been able to set a strategy with those who are most closely involved in local growth and local employment.

As set out in this document, we will not squander resources by spreading our efforts too thinly. Our focus will be on those actions that have the greatest potential, and can create the biggest impacts towards our fundamental aim – delivering jobs and growth for the city region. This will mean a clear focus upon:

- Creating the conditions to increase the number of successful businesses
- Growing sectors around latent opportunities, and supporting sectors that underpin employment across the LEP
- Stimulating and supporting innovation
- Improving the skills and talent pool of the LEP to make it business-relevant

- Transforming physical and digital connectivity across the LEP
- Optimising the assets of the LEP area to create world-class place to live and work

What is different about this strategy? We believe our journey is the difference. Our partnership has demonstrated unparalleled political unity coupled with much greater private sector responsibility to work together to address the issues and exploit the opportunities that face our city region economy. Together we are committed to this journey.

The Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership Board

Our mission is simple: to create jobs and grow the economy - and in doing so raise the quality of life for all of the LEP's population.

Executive Summary

Our vision is to re-establish Greater Birmingham's role as the major driver of the UK economy outside London. This means overcoming the area's output gap, and establishing the preconditions for economic leadership on a worldwide scale.

Our strategy is built from the views and expertise of the area's businesses, universities, local authorities, third sector organisations and representative groups. It is designed to apply focus on those things that matter most to unlock the jobs and growth the region needs. Working as a partnership, between the private and public sector, this means a clear focus upon six strategic enablers.



Business

Growing the number of successful businesses

Building sector strengths and opportunities

Stimulating innovation in products, services & businesses

People

Improving our skills talent pool

Place

Improving physical and digital connectivity

Optimising physical, cultural and environmental assets

Underpinned by our cross cutting approach to our economy – which we see as being supported jointly by the three pillars of business, people and place - we believe these six enablers contain within them the keys to achieving our vision. To ensure that we are delivering, and that progress is transparent, we have committed to a set of stretching (yet deliverable) targets to evidence our progress:

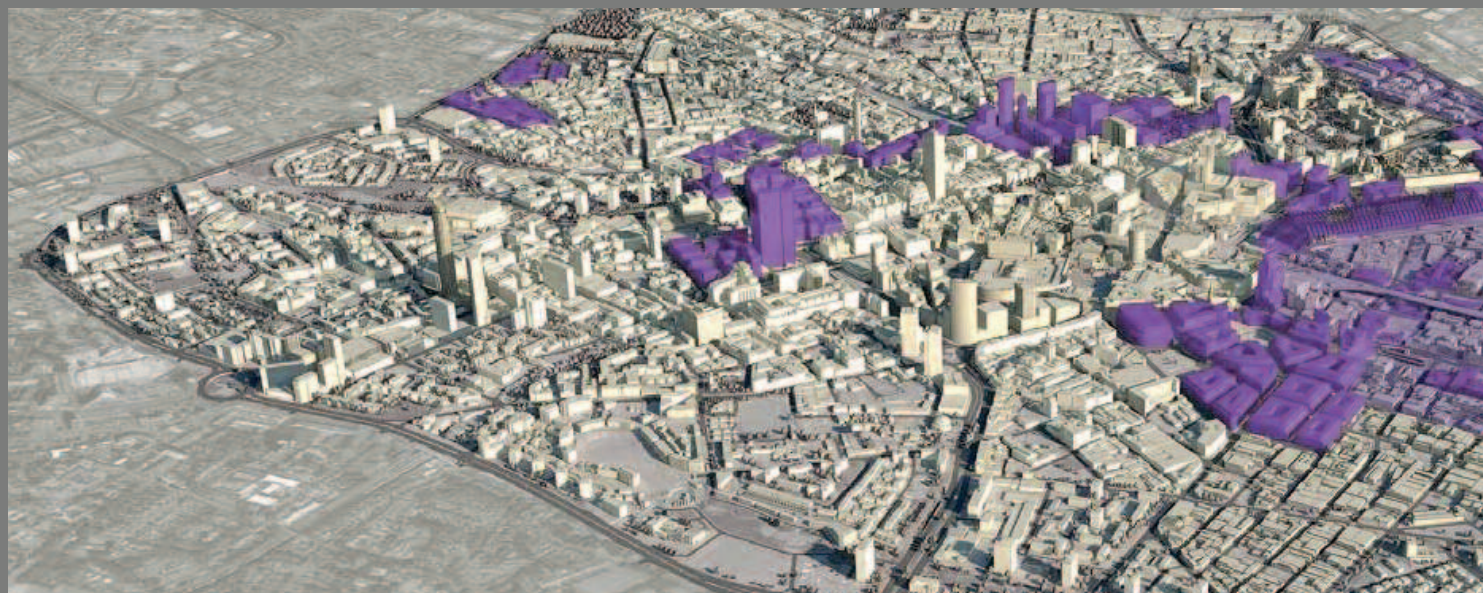
- A net increase of at least 100,000 private sector jobs between 2011 and 2020

- A net increase of at least £8.25bn GVA between 2011 and 2020
- A decrease in unemployment across the LEP to fall in line with at least the national average by 2020
- An increase in GVA per-head across the LEP to meet the national average by 2020, and exceed the national average by 2025
- An increase in the percentage of the working-age population with NVQ3+ to be above the Core City LEP average by 2020, and out-perform the national average by 2025

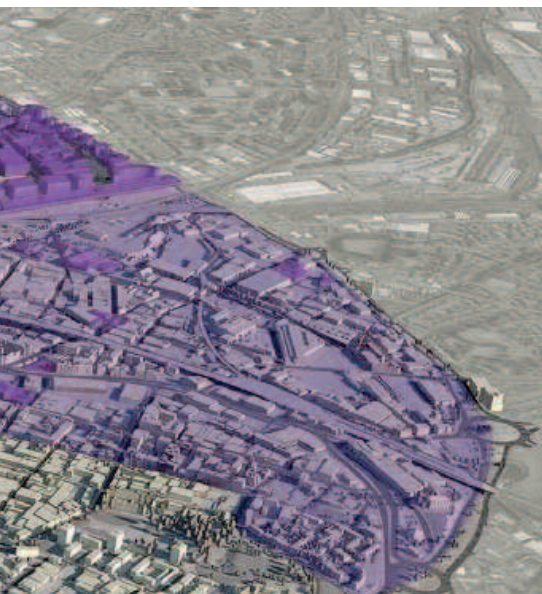
We will rightly be judged by our ability to deliver this ambitious strategy. We recognise the need to further develop and improve our delivery capability, and to do this we will provide the leadership and bring together the best of the public sector and the private sectors. We will openly publish our delivery plans via an online portal which will allow anyone access to the activity underpinning our plans.

The Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBS LEP) area is home to the UK's second city, the UK's largest city centre Enterprise Zone, and many of Britain's biggest development opportunities including the M42 Economic Gateway: we are an engine of business growth. Our two million residents enjoy a balance of high growth-potential urban centres and quality rural and semi-rural surrounds, typified by the E3I Belt, along with world-class cultural programmes and visitor facilities and areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Introduction



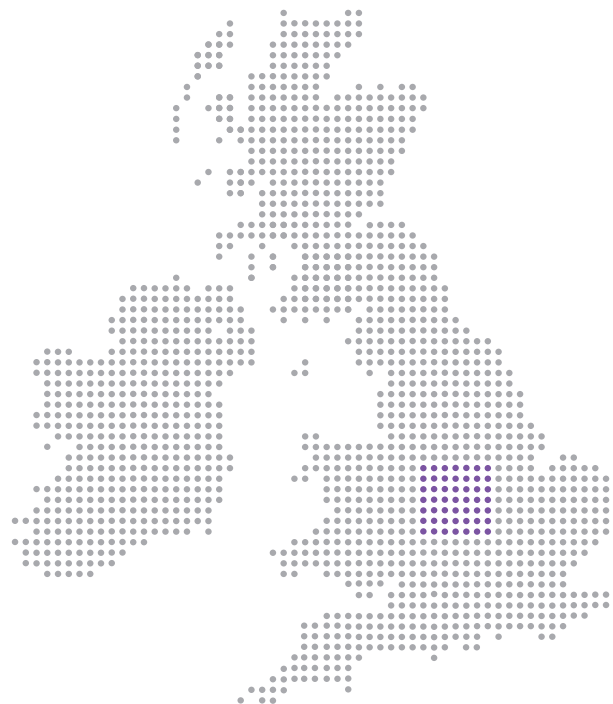
We are located at the heart of the country's transport network with one of the UK's most strategically placed airports, the 'new' New Street Station due for completion in 2015 and a further £2.5bn of investment in the transport infrastructure underway. Our unique connectivity by road, rail, and air has been key to attracting over 67,000 businesses ranging from start-ups to significant international businesses that include GKN, IMI, Modelez International, JLR, JCB, Molson Coors and many more.



We are building on a continuous rich heritage of innovation. Historically we were the founders of the industrial revolution and the codifiers of the modern English language. Today we are home to companies at the cutting edge of digital technologies, life science and creative fusion. We produce more graduates in creative disciplines and have more young people pursuing creative apprenticeships than anywhere in the UK outside London; we are home to one of the strongest

concentrations of social enterprises and third sector organisations anywhere in the country; we have one of the largest conferencing and events markets in Europe; and the resurgence of the UK's automotive industry has been largely driven by our continued excellence and innovation in this key sector.

We have the assets, the talent, the heritage, and the pedigree to meet our ambition to create a truly globally competitive city region.



LEFT: The City Centre Enterprise Zone



ABOVE: Baskerville House, home to the Birmingham Business Hub which includes the GBS LEP and its support team

The GBS LEP was formed in June 2011 as one of the UK's flagship new Local Enterprise Partnerships. Our partnership covers a Functional Economic Area generating £35bn of annual economic activity, which binds Birmingham, Solihull, North Worcestershire and South Staffordshire.

A partnership for growth

Focussed on delivering growth for one of Britain's most economically important city regions, our LEP was formed to create a dynamic partnership between regional, political and business leadership. We committed to dare to be different; to invite the world to be part of our success and to use the best of the private and public sector to create a powerful partnership that delivers.

Welcomed by the Government as their body of choice for the coordination of regional economic growth, in the short time we have been active significant progress has been achieved. We have:

- **Led for the UK** – Piloting initiatives on major policy developments (through the Greater Birmingham Project and City Deal) and leading on specific areas such as regulation and the Advanced Manufacturing Supply Chain Initiative
- **Led business and employment growth** – creating a Life Science accelerator, Business Support programme, Growing Places initiative, Advanced Manufacturing Supply Chain Initiative and City Deal which have the potential to bring forward over 50,000 jobs
- **Driven skills improvements** – with a Skills for Growth Compact which will have recruited 25% of businesses in the region to work with colleges and schools by 2015
- **Changed the way the region manages resources** – with 'GBS Finance' which brings a fund management approach to public finance to aggregate recycle and invest up to £1.5bn
- **Accelerated change** – creating the catalytic Enterprise Zone in Birmingham City centre and potentially bringing forward over £2.8bn of economic growth

However, in truth we have only scratched the surface. The challenge remains significant, and our strategy is the most important piece of work we have completed to date – the next, far more important piece, will be delivering it.

Our vision is to re-establish Greater Birmingham's role as the major driver of the UK economy outside London; to make our area the natural home for Europe's innovators, entrepreneurs and wealth creators. This means closing the per capita output gap with the national average, and simultaneously establishing the preconditions for economic leadership on a worldwide scale.

Our guiding vision



We are unashamedly focussed on growth, but we know the ultimate point of creating jobs and wealth is to improve the lives of all of the people who live in our area.

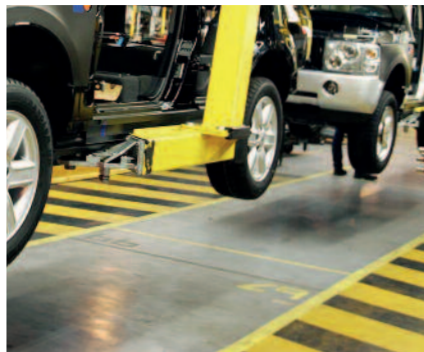
Core Values

- **Private and public sector is a powerful combination:** which is at the heart of the LEP partnership; together we can overcome issues which have so far stymied the region
- **Local knows best:** we know better than anyone our area's problems (and how to solve them), strengths, and opportunities. It's up to us to make the most of this knowledge.
- **Form follows function:** we are not prescriptive about models and structures, we do what is best to deliver the best results for the city region
- **Greater than the sum of our parts:** the constituent partners of our LEP share a common economic geography and by aligning together we are stronger and more innovative
- **Delivery is key:** translating the region's needs, and our vision, into tangible activity on the ground is paramount. Delivery needs to be rapid, cost effective and integrated
- **Partnership with the Government:** as the Government's partner of choice for the coordination of regional economic growth





LEFT: The Land Rover manufacturing plant in Solihull



“Translating the region’s needs, and our vision, into tangible activity on the ground is paramount”

- **Continuous engagement:** with regular communication with all of our stakeholders to consult, update, and inform policy and strategy
- **Working collaboratively with our neighbours:** because beyond our functioning economic geography lies other areas with whom we share key priorities and need to work together
- **Growth needs to be sustainably lead:** we will focus on sustainable solutions for growth across the LEP and champion sustainability and our considerable natural assets
- **Embracing the third sector:** as a significant partner with the potential to underpin growth across a number of our core priorities
- **Transparent and accountable decision making:** with a Board that is representative of the area, its political leadership and all its businesses, committed to clear outcomes and openly publishing decisions



ABOVE: In 2015 the NEC site will see the opening of the UK's first integrated destination leisure complex; Resorts World Birmingham



Building a strategy for the city region

We approached the creation of a regional growth strategy with three clear principles:

1. To ensure the complexity and inter-dependency of our economy is understood, and activity is cross-cutting:

At the outset the LEP established a framework for all our activity built around the existing idea that the economy can be divided into three pillars of activity:

- **'Business'** – i.e. the business environment across our LEP, including the critical issues which underpin growth such as; business support, access to finance, the regulatory environment and inward investment.

- **'People'** – i.e. the people resource within our LEP, including the LEP's talent pool and how it is aligned to business opportunities both now and in the future.
- **'Place'** – i.e. the sense of place and infrastructure that underpins our ambitions, including connectivity, the Enterprise Zone and Enterprise Belt, housing and employment land, planning, environment, cultural assets, and quality of life that create our appeal.

In doing so we made it clear that success will be dependent on our ability to drive improvements in

each and every one of the three pillars - and priorities will often touch all three pillars.

2. To base our decisions around clear evidence and local knowledge:

The GBS LEP evidence base was built initially in 2011, drawing upon several successive and significant pieces of local, regional and national research into the GBS LEP area. This has since been updated in 2012 for the Strategy for Growth White Paper, and again in 2013 for the Greater Birmingham Project. In fact, it is subject to continuous improvements and is available online at www.gbslep.com.



3. To build a strategy for the city-region based on local consensus about what matters most and needs to be addressed

Utilising the best of business, academic and local authority insight, our evidence base, and the extensive consultation to support it, has built upon the successes and failures of the past – and prepared them for the opportunities and needs of the future.

Our mantra is to be game changing, and as a Board the GBS LEP will act in the best interests of our functional economic geography as a whole, and not any one constituent part thereof.

Making it happen

To make delivery a reality the LEP has three primary roles:

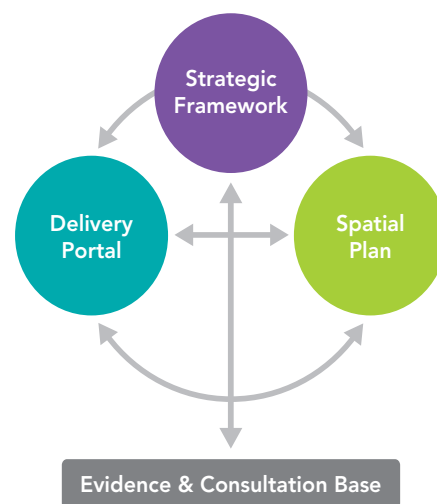
- Enabler – bringing together existing partners and organisations within the area, and supporting and guiding their activity to deliver the city region's priorities
- Agitator – shouting up for the city region, using influence to bring in greater support and devolution from the government, and greater investment from the private sector and internationally
- Commissioner – using resources, directly and indirectly aligned to the LEP, to strategically guide investment into priorities which support the strategy

The Strategy for Growth

Our Strategy for Growth ultimately guides the 'what' and the 'how' for making our vision a reality. It provides the framework under which we spell out our objectives, and how we prioritise the activity which is required to deliver the. It is made up of four inter-linked 'documents':

- The 'Strategic Framework' (this document) which sets out in simple terms the LEP's vision, six strategic enablers, and approach to delivering growth and jobs for the city-region.
- The 'Delivery Portal' which is an online tool containing the LEP's delivery plan, and providing local-level detail and KPIs for the breadth of all activity which is supporting the LEP and its priorities. Rather than being a fixed document this is dynamic and live, hence the decision to host this virtually rather than in print form. Available online at www.gbslep.com.

- The 'Spatial Plan' which sets out the detail of how the integrated spatial aspects of the LEP's strategy are coordinated, particularly around the approach to housing and employment land. (end 2013).
- The 'Evidence & Consultation Base' which informs all of the LEP's priorities and activities. The latest version of this is available online at www.gbslep.com



“the GBS LEP can and indeed are now talking of the sort of things they can do differently if they are given the chance to use their part of the Single Pot to exploit the strengths they know to be there on the ground and break out from the conformist disciplines designed to fit the ‘one size fits all’ approach of today’s practice.”

Lord Heseltine, from his introduction to the ‘Greater Birmingham Project’ report

Measuring success

We must also be accountable for our actions and have clear KPIs that provide a measure of our progress. Within the Strategy for Growth the LEP maintains a number of milestones, KPIs and targets to help ensure progress and provide transparent accountability on delivery. They have been divided into three key areas:

- **Headline** – used to measure the overall performance of the LEP against its overriding mission and vision statement (contained within our executive summary in this document)
- **Strategic** – used to guide the Delivery Portal and measure the high-level activity taking place to support the strategic enablers (contained within the ‘Strategic Enablers’ in this document)

- **Activity** – used within the Delivery Portal to chart the progress of individual pieces of activity, or commissioned work from partners, designed to support the strategic enablers.

The Greater Birmingham Project & ‘No Stone Unturned’

During the course of the White Paper consultation on this Strategy for Growth, Lord Heseltine issued his report “No Stone Unturned” which has subsequently been endorsed by the Government. The GBS LEP agreed to pilot the recommendations in No Stone Unturned. Our report entitled “The Greater Birmingham Project – The Path to Local Growth” was issued on 17th March 2013 following an intense process of work over a few short weeks with input from a very broad

spectrum of private, public and voluntary sectors.

Our report was warmly received and provided a very informative insight into our future direction to supporting growth. In particular:-

- Our ability to engage a broad base of key stakeholders committed to working together to address LEP wide issues and opportunities;
- It confirmed the strategic framework set out in the Strategy for Growth is fit for purpose, and;
- In the context of the devolution of greater powers and a Single Pot, the output from the Greater Birmingham Project confirmed the significant growth dividend we have in our LEP area.





The strategic enablers of growth

1. Growing the number of successful businesses

Our aspiration

We want more businesses to start, grow and succeed in the LEP area. For this to be possible we need to build accessible systems of business support appropriate for all our companies (from early-stage, to SME, and through to global powerhouses), relevant to local challenges, sectors and opportunities, and reflective of the diversity of our business base and population (particularly including our vibrant third sector). We want to see business growth fuelled by access to fair and relevant finance, capable of supporting the differing

needs of businesses during their lifecycle across all sectors. We want regulation and procurement to be business friendly and tools for supporting local growth. By tackling these key issues we will see far more successful start-ups, attract more entrepreneurs, greater volumes of international trade, and overall have stronger businesses employing more people across the LEP area.

Our proposals

We will seek an overhaul of business support through a new GBS LEP Business Support Solution, built by the region for the region. Key

components will include greater representation, reduced duplication of effort, greater accessibility, utilisation of technology and networks, and the alignment of relevant expertise from all areas. This solution will be built upon the strengths and assets we already have, and utilise the region's business leadership to provide support and increase performance in our city region (particularly within individual sectors and supply chains). This solution will provide appropriate signposting for businesses to the range of support available.



Our commitment to delivery

We have highlighted the following from our delivery plan as being particularly important in evidencing progress against this enabler:

- Business start-up and survival rates to have increased to at least the national average by 2020
- Number of high-growth firms located within the LEP increased to above the national average by 2020

“We want more businesses to start, grow and succeed in the LEP area”

2. Building on our sector strengths and opportunities

Our aspiration

We need to make the most out of the opportunities we have, and ensure the LEP area reaches its potential to become a true leader – synonymous with excellence - in key areas of the economy. We want to see significant growth in high-value, high-potential, sectors to help to underpin long-term prosperity.

This includes capitalising on the concentration of social enterprises and trading third sector organisations which already exists in various parts of the LEP area.

Simultaneously, we must address the unacceptable levels of unemployment by promoting

growth in areas where significant sustainable job creation can be achieved, and where significant proportions of the LEP workforce are already employed. Finally, it is important that we attain the best possible results from Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) by linking our FDI strategy to sector opportunities.

Our proposals

Our focus will be around developing a ‘triple-track’ approach to creating and sustaining growth within those areas of biggest opportunity and natural strength, as we have identified through our development, analysis and consultation. We appreciate that

within all of our categories there will be particular opportunities and relevant sub-sectors, however, as a guideline our focus will be upon the components of the sectors listed in the table below:

“We want to see significant growth in high-value, high-potential, sectors to help to underpin long-term prosperity”

High Growth, High Value Add	High Volume, High Job Creation	High FDI potential
1. Advanced Manufacturing	1. Tourism & Hospitality	1. ICT
2. Life & Health Sciences	2. Business, Professional & Financial Services	2. Automotive & Manufacturing
3. Digital & Creative	3. Food & Drink	3. Food & Drink
4. Business, Professional & Financial Services	4. Healthcare	4. Logistics
5. Low Carbon & Environmental Technologies & Services	5. Construction	5. Life & Health Sciences



We know that companies have different support needs based on the level of development of their particular industry's cluster within a city region, and the stage of the company, with interventions needing to be tailored based on differing requirements. We propose that sectors will be supported via bespoke programmes of activity – for example building on our Life Sciences Sector Accelerator as part of the City Deal. These will incorporate co-ordinated business support, skills support, identification of development land, provision of incubation facilities, grow-on space, clustering and access to finance. Strategic Relationship Management will support the identification and

removal of barriers to growth. Our inward investment approach will focus upon the coordinated approach towards targeting those areas of greatest opportunity supported by a clear set of key 'selling' messages, including our creative skills, quality of life and global connectivity, to promote the unique strength of the LEP area.

Our commitment to delivery.

We have highlighted the following from our delivery plan as being particularly important in evidencing progress against this enabler:

- Creation of net private sector job growth in priority sectors of 70,000 by 2020
- Creation of 12,500 new private sector jobs through FDI by 2020
- 20% growth in the value of the visitor economy by 2020



3. Stimulating innovation in products, processes, services and business structures

Our aspiration

We will develop a thriving innovation ecosystem and stimulate innovation in a variety of ways, building on existing activities of the local Science Parks, Universities, sector support organisations, service businesses Birmingham Science City and other partners and businesses.

Our proposals

We will recognise that innovation can emerge broadly from three directions: a wish to commercialise new discoveries from the knowledge base; a commercial challenge or opportunity to improve or develop a new product or offer;

and end user/ customer demand for new or improved products and services. Each of these drivers of innovation needs a different mix of stimuli, so we will develop a range of actions to encourage innovation in products, processes, services and business processes, including:

- Putting in place the key enablers/infrastructure
- Marketing the GBS region as an innovative place
- Developing effective business networks, including funders
- Stimulating demand for new products and services
- Promoting best practice in the management and governance of innovation.

The principles of collaboration, alignment, and mobilisation will be applied in taking actions forward. We will encourage and enable collaborative working between our universities and colleges, public sector and innovative business, to align our sector strengths and opportunities to the potential created by strong RDI, and to stimulate new market opportunities by encouraging the development and adoption of new ideas, technology, design and business practices. We will use of public drivers, such as procurement and access to public data, to increase innovation and encourage investment in research and innovation in the public and private

sectors. We will also mobilise business support which encourages innovation, for example via the transfer and commercialisation of ideas from academia, or the inter-sector transfer of knowledge and technology. We will seek alignment to create a compelling offer for innovative business to start or relocate in the LEP area, by ensuring the volume and quality of suitable incubation and innovation space with associated businesses services and access to finance.

Our commitment to delivery

We have highlighted the following from our delivery plan as being particularly important in evidencing progress against this enabler:

- Community Innovation Survey increase in new products and processes of 20% by 2020
- 30% increase in claims for R&D tax credits (in both number of companies claiming, and the volume of claims) by 2020





ABOVE: The 'Skills Show' which is held within the GBS LEP annually in 2012, 2013 and 2014. Free to attend, it is the UK's largest skills and careers event inspiring young people with exciting opportunities in further education, skills and Apprenticeships. For details see www.theskillsshow.com

4. Improving our skills talent pool

“Our Skills for Growth Compact will commit employers, colleges and schools to build a best-in-class skills service to link pupils and learners with real-world work opportunities with at least 25% of local businesses signed up by 2015.”

GBS LEP City Deal

Our aspiration

We know that our skills eco system needs radical reform. We need to create far more alignment between employers and providers within a partnership that helps create a demand-led skills system. An important part of our aspiration is for business to take a full and meaningful role in supporting educational success in the region, and as a result work closely with schools colleges and universities and help inspire success. We want to see aspiration increased, and far more opportunities created to reduce inequality and promote inclusion. In particular we want to ensure young people and adults within the LEP are given the skills to succeed in employment.

This should include higher level skills, as offered by our colleges and universities, which are key to business growth and the economy.

Our proposals

Through the development of our Skills for Growth Compact, agreed as part of the City Deal, we will inspire our employers, colleges and schools to build a best-in-class skills service to link pupils and learners with real-world work opportunities. Our efforts will be focussed upon creating business engagement and support for local schools to ensure employers gain a stake in their potential employee's future and are supporting the success of all schools across the GBS LEP. Simultaneously, we will work with our local employment base

to substantially grow the number of apprenticeships and access to employment schemes offered.

Our commitment to delivery

We have highlighted the following from our delivery plan as being particularly important in evidencing progress against this enabler:

- Youth unemployment rate to decrease to the LEP Core City Average by 2020
- Employers in the LEP area reporting skills gaps to be reduced by 15% by 2020
- Individuals with qualifications at NVQ 3 and above to increase to Core City average by 2020

5. Improving physical and digital connectivity

Our aspiration

We want to significantly improve the quality and reliability of connectivity both within the LEP, and from the LEP to the region/nation/world. We see road, rail, air and digital connectivity being key components of this mix and believe they need to work effectively together to better connect people to jobs, and businesses to markets. We need to cut congestion and uncertainty over travel times, and reduce the average time taken for people to get to their place of work, or to visit for business or leisure tourism.

Our proposals

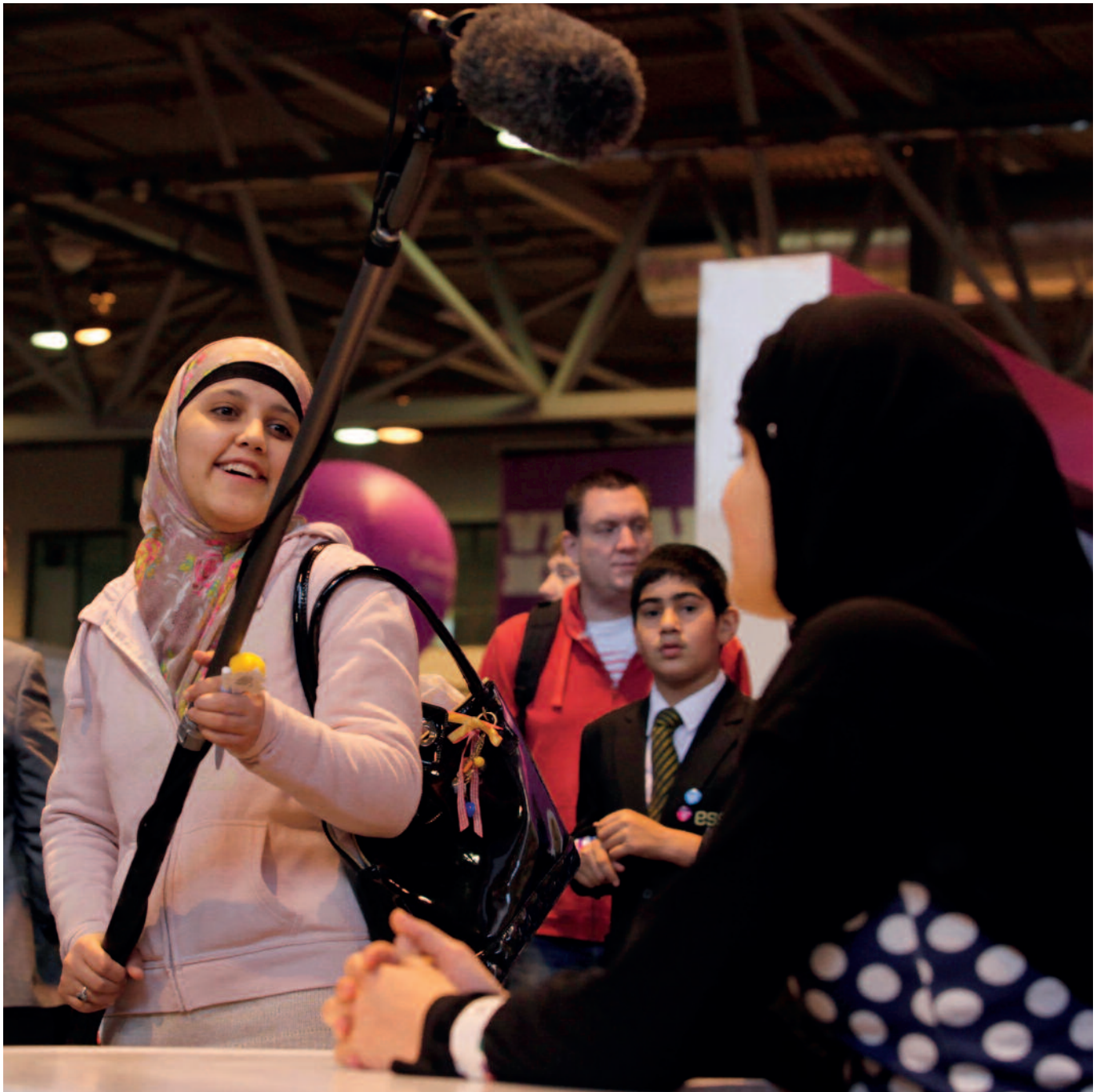
To achieve this we will commit to the creation of a new Strategic Alliance of local LEPs to ensure the wider travel to work area is supported by strong transport governance. Working with Birmingham Airport we will increase route development East and West. We will develop the means to ensure improved digital connectivity is available for urban and rural locations. We will focus on reducing journey times for employees, and for businesses. Championing HS2 we will ensure a complimentary package of investments ensures the wider LEP geography will be connected to this key development.

Our commitment to delivery

We have highlighted the following from our delivery plan as being particularly important in evidencing progress against this enabler:

- A Strategic Transport Alliance for the wider area, to be embedded by end of 2013
- Identify a comprehensive list of transport infrastructure requirements needed to deliver the GBS Strategy for growth by 2013





6. Optimising physical, cultural and environmental assets

Our aspiration

We need to work collectively and sustainably to optimise the development and deployment of our physical, cultural and environmental assets. We need housing to meet the needs of future growth and aspiration, developed in coalition with plans for growth and employment land. We want to see all of the assets within the region, particularly the public sector, utilised to their full potential to support economic growth. We also want to see the strength, and diversity, of the LEP environment enhanced as part of a coordinated approach to grow the creative sector economy, and through improvements to infrastructure to make the LEP area a vibrant place to live, work, visit and invest.

Our proposals

Our focus will be around targeting areas of greatest potential economic benefit, and accelerating development within them aligned to our sector and skills plans; the flagship programmes being our City Centre Enterprise Zone (EZ) and Enterprise Belt (EB) with the M42 Economic Gateway at its heart. We will work across the LEP to create a stronger pro-growth environment with a new planning offer, and LEP spatial plan, created with the consensus of the private and the public sector and focussed upon sustainable growth achieved through continued successful urban and rural renaissance.

Using the LEP's role as custodian of the region's economic strategy we will support the alignment of housing provision to areas of

growth, and ensure suitable employment land is available to meet priorities. We will also conduct a thorough audit of all the land and assets owned by the public sector across the LEP area, focussing on bringing derelict land back into use to support growth.

We will prioritise raising the quality of life for all the LEP's residents, with access to high quality and locally responsive cultural programmes, recognising and enhancing the LEP's considerable and varied natural assets and different local centres. Through the Creative City Partnership we will encourage participation in the full breadth of the LEP's cultural offer, building a strong shared sense of identity and purpose and increasing engagement in civic life

Our commitment to delivery

We have highlighted the following from our delivery plan as being particularly important in evidencing progress against this enabler:

- A Spatial Plan published by December 2013
- EZ delivery - 1.3m² of new floorspace, create 40,000 new jobs, contribute over £2bn to the economy in GVA per annum and generate in excess of £700m in additional business rates.
- EB delivery - create the framework for the creation of over 25,000 jobs through the lifetime of the EB
- 10% increase in the economic output of the cultural sector by 2020

In July 2012 the Enterprise Zone, established by the GBS LEP in Birmingham City Centre, was recognised as one of the top 50 of global free zones by fDi magazine joining an elite list of the world's top development areas.



Local Authority Members



Business Representative Members



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