



**Cheshire and Warrington
Local Enterprise Partnership
Business Plan 2012-15**

Chair's Foreword

I am delighted to introduce the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership's Business Plan 2012-15, which outlines our priorities to maintain and develop Cheshire and Warrington's position as the most productive economy in the North of England, and how we intend to continue to exceed national performance levels. Our economy has a diverse base: with genuine world class excellence from motor vehicles to pharmaceuticals, advanced science to logistics, financial and professional services to creative industries. It is essential that our businesses, large and small, continue to grow and prosper to secure long term prosperity and employment opportunities for all of our people.

The LEP Board is committed to maintaining our competitive advantage and ensuring that we create the best possible environment for business investment and growth. We are perfectly positioned as an investment location being within easy reach of Manchester and Liverpool John Lennon Airports and the Port of Liverpool, with mainline rail access to both London Scotland and North Wales. We also sit at the heart of the North West's Motorway Network with the M6, M62, M56 and M53 serving our businesses, customers and residents. However, we are not complacent and recognise the need to continue to develop our infrastructure to ensure we remain one of the premier locations to do business.

We have an excellent skills base, with a highly qualified workforce and an excellent education offer from our high-performing schools, excellent Further Education Colleges, to our two Universities; and excellent business and enterprise links to the universities in Liverpool and Manchester. The world-class Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus, a cutting edge facility for science and high technology businesses, is right on our doorstep. We want to support business to maintain excellent links with the education and research sector to develop the right skills to prosper in a 21st Century global economy.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Board for their energy, commitment and sheer hard work during our first twelve months. I would also like to offer sincere thanks to our business and public, voluntary and community sector colleagues who have worked with Board members in identifying the key policy issues and developing a response to these through our Stakeholder Forum. This has been invaluable.

Our Board is fully committed to deliver this business plan, very much in partnership with all of our businesses and key partner agencies. I hope you agree that we have got the focus right.

**Christine Gaskell, MBE
Bentley Motors Limited**

THE LEP BOARD

The LEP Board consists of 14 members, predominantly drawn from the private sector, together with representatives from the public sector, academia and the voluntary sector.

Christine Gaskell MBE, Chair
Bentley Motors Ltd

Howard Hopwood, Deputy Chair
Harman Technology Ltd

Martin Ashcroft
Tata Chemicals Europe

Robert Davis
EA Technology Ltd

Cllr Wesley Fitzgerald
Leader, Cheshire East Council

Cllr Mike Jones,
Leader, Cheshire West and Chester Council

Sara Mogel
West Cheshire College

Louise Morrissey
Peel Holdings Land and Property

Cllr Terry O'Neill
Leader, Warrington Borough Council

Graham Ramsbottom
Wheatsheaf Investments Ltd

Nigel Schofield
Northenden Travel and Uniglobe Diamond Travel

Pete Waterman
Pete Waterman Entertainments

Tim Wheeler
University of Chester

INTRODUCTION

The Local Enterprise Partnership was established on 11 March 2011 to drive the economic growth of Cheshire and Warrington. It is a private sector led partnership with the responsibility for speaking on and behalf of business, championing the issues that really matter with government and other key bodies.

In its first year of operation, time has been necessarily dedicated to developing a strong understanding of Cheshire and Warrington's economy, its challenges, opportunities, strengths and weaknesses so that there is a sound platform for business planning. The Board has wholeheartedly committed to this, developing a series of Focus Groups to increase knowledge, generate ideas and shape the business planning priorities for 2012/15. This process has fast-tracked the development of the Board, creating a cohesive, mature team with the knowledge and experience to move things forward.

This development period has now concluded and the results of many discussions with businesses, government and other key organisations have been distilled into the first Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Business Plan for the period 2012/15.

ABOUT CHESHIRE AND WARRINGTON

Introducing Cheshire and Warrington:

Cheshire and Warrington is a unique and diverse area covering approximately 880 square miles. It is bounded by the Liverpool and Manchester City regions, along with the Welsh border to the west, Shropshire to the south and Staffordshire and Derbyshire to the east. Aside from the historic city of Chester, the area is a diverse mixture of rural villages, market towns and industrial conurbations. Famous visitor attractions in the area include Chester Zoo, the Sandstone Trail, Cheshire Oaks, Jodrell Bank, Tatton Park and the Cheshire Peak District.

The total population of Cheshire and Warrington is approximately 890,000 providing some 480,000 jobs, with 75% of people both living and working in the area. In December 2011, the percentage of people claiming jobseekers allowance (JSA) across the area was 3.1%, significantly below the regional and national averages of 4.4% and 3.9% respectively (source: NOMIS, 2011). The area boasts the ninth largest economy in the UK delivering some £20 billion gross value added (GVA).

Administrative context:

Following local government re-organisation on 1st April 2009, the former Cheshire County Council and the six district councils were replaced by two new local authorities. Cheshire West and Chester Council - comprising the former district councils of Chester City, Ellesmere Port and Neston and Vale Royal and Cheshire East Council - comprising the former district councils of Macclesfield, Congleton and Crewe & Nantwich.

Cheshire and Warrington comprises these two new unitary authorities plus the existing unitary authority of Warrington Borough Council.

Economy:

Cheshire and Warrington has a vibrant economy with successful businesses operating in chemicals, pharmaceuticals, automotive, financial services, manufacturing, professional services and creative industries. The area is home to some world class companies who are also successful multi-national businesses, and include AstraZeneca, Bentley Motors, Bank of America and Vauxhall Motors.

Businesses benefit substantially from the area's proximity to Manchester and Liverpool and two major international airports. Tourism in Cheshire and Warrington is vital to its economy and is worth approximately £800 million, supporting around 15,000 jobs.

Transport:

Cheshire and Warrington has excellent access to the main transport networks in the region. There is direct access to the national motorway network (M6, M53, M56 and M62) and the strategic road network. In addition, there are direct train services to London from key towns and cities. Crewe Station, which is at the junction of six main rail lines, is of particular strategic importance. Warrington also has very strong rail links (both east-west and north-south).

International connections can be made at both Manchester International and Liverpool John Lennon Airports, both of which can be easily and quickly accessed.

Learning and skills:

Cheshire and Warrington offers a highly skilled and flexible workforce, with two successful and expanding Universities at Chester (University of Chester) with an additional campus in Warrington; and Crewe (Manchester Metropolitan University, Cheshire). It is also close to internationally respected universities in nearby Manchester and Liverpool. The area has established business and science parks offering outstanding opportunities for growth.

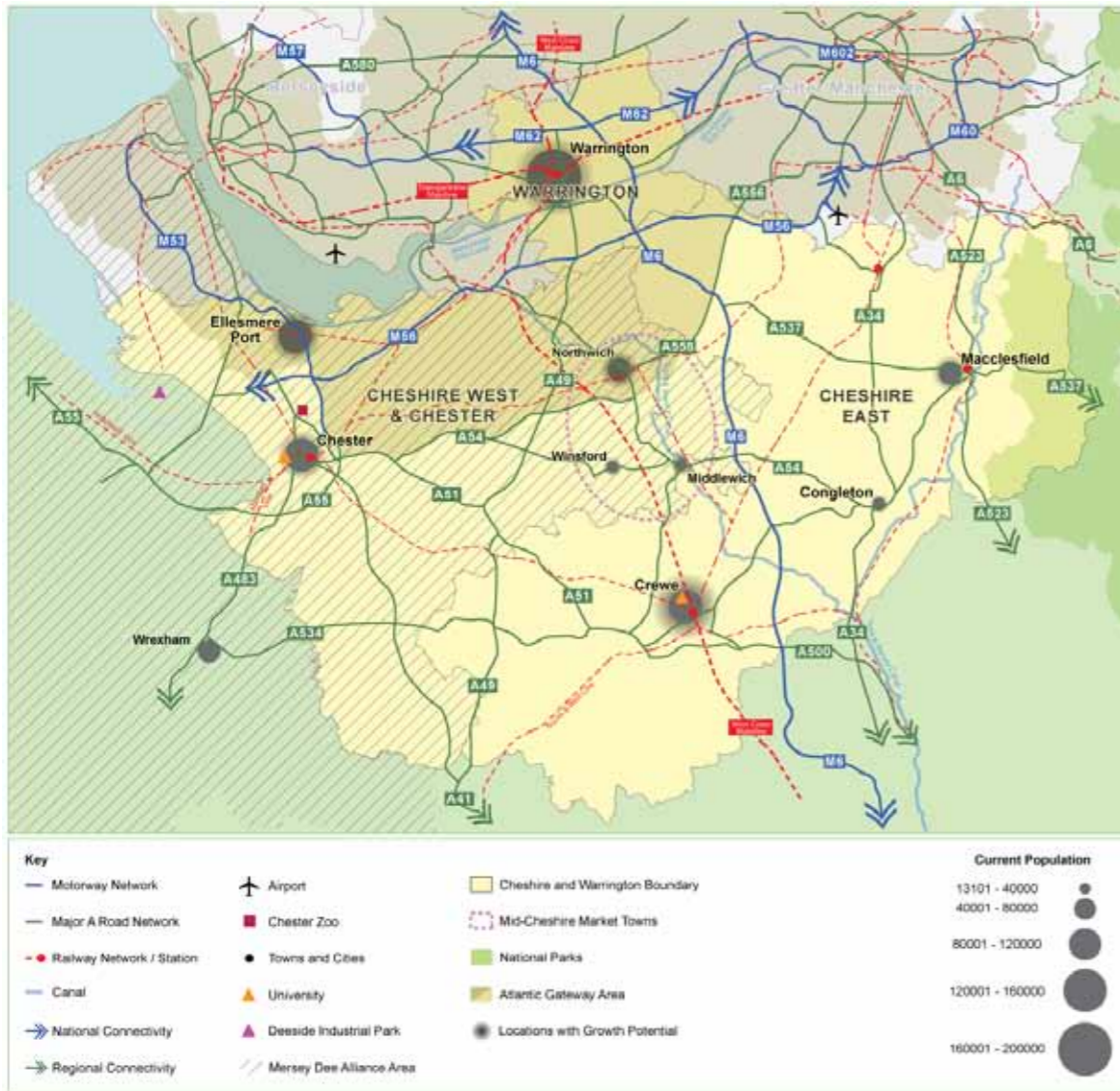
Each local authority area has a wide choice of schools and colleges, producing examination results which consistently exceed the national average. Skills, productivity and entrepreneurship levels are well above regional and national averages, and there is continuing growth in the creation of new jobs. Cheshire and Warrington's success is vital for the wellbeing of the North West as a whole, representing an eighth of the region's population but contributing a sixth of its economic output.

Challenges:

Although Cheshire and Warrington enjoys excellent communications links, there are some critical congestion points that cause increased costs to businesses and could be a constraint to future economic growth.

Parts of Cheshire and Warrington suffer from high levels of deprivation, with some pockets of significant poverty. 113 of the area's Lower Level Super Output Areas (LLSOAs) are ranked in the most deprived 30% of LLSOAs in England in terms of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), including 28 LLSOAs ranked in the 10% most deprived and 42 in the most deprived 10.1% to 20%. In contrast, the area also has a relatively large number (222) of LLSOAs ranked in the least deprived 20%.

Health inequality between communities in Cheshire and Warrington is high. 141 of Cheshire and Warrington's LLSOAs rank in the most deprived 30% of LLSOAs in England in terms of Health deprivation and disability, including 32 ranked in the 10% most deprived and 53 ranked in the 10.1% to 20% bracket. There are 97 LLSOAs in the area that rank in the 20% least deprived LLSOAs in England in terms of Health deprivation and disability (source: Indices of Deprivation 2010).



2011/12 ACHIEVEMENTS

Although 2011/12 was about establishing the Board, the small Executive team and extended virtual teams, much was achieved on the delivery front. The LEP is proud to have:

- Developed the Apprenticeship Promise
- Seriously informed and influenced the HS2 debate
- Developed a proposal to wholly broadband enable Cheshire and Warrington
- Achieved pilot status for mid-sized businesses
- Worked actively with the finance sector to ease lending constraints
- Influenced the deregulation debate via our seat on the Local Business Regulation Office (LBRO) Working Group
- Successfully presented a case for extended eligibility for European Regional Development Fund
- Secured funding to understand the key constraints to further economic growth

OPERATING CONTEXT

During the first year of the LEP's operations the UK economy was hit by a series of financial shocks which weakened the economic and fiscal outlook; higher than expected inflation, driven by a sharp rise in global commodity prices; clarity on the impact of the 2008-09 financial crisis, resulting in OBR significantly reducing growth projections; and the ongoing Eurozone crisis.

There is little evidence that the challenges are abating, following Standard and Poor's downgrading of the ratings of nine Eurozone countries, including the reduction of France and Austria's AAA rating to AA+, with Portugal and Cyprus consigned to junk status.

HM Treasury and Department for Business, Innovation and Skills produced "The Plan for Growth" in March 2011 outlining how government intended to tackle the economic challenges. The Autumn Statement in November 2011 outlined the further action that government was taking to accelerate its supply side reforms to invest in infrastructure, support enterprise and build a stronger and more balanced economy.

The RT Hon Lord Heseltine CE and Sir Terry Leahy released an independent report "Rebalancing Britain: Policy or Slogan? Liverpool City Region – Building on its strengths" on Thursday 20 October 2011. This report on our near neighbour provided a series of recommendations to facilitate Liverpool's growth over the next 10-20 years. The report identified some of the key determinants of growth, and as such was a valuable contribution to the business planning process.

The international and national economic position will clearly present challenges for Cheshire and Warrington, and it is essential that the LEP Board takes decisive action to address the impact of these.

WORKING WITH OUR PARTNERS

Cheshire and Warrington enjoys a strategic location as the gateway between the Midlands and the Northwest of England, with the M6 Motorway and west Coast Mainline running north-south through the length of the sub-region. The Trans-Pennine railway, M62 and M56 Motorways run east-west strengthening our pivotal position. It is essential therefore that we continue to engage in meaningful dialogue with our adjoining sub-regions and North Wales on key strategic issues such as transport infrastructure, broadband provision and the rural economy.

There are exciting growth opportunities on our immediate "doorstep" and it is imperative that we retain our influence in shaping their development programmes.

A network of place based economic development teams has been established within Cheshire and Warrington in those locations with the best prospects for economic growth. Dedicated teams operate in: Chester; Crewe; Ellesmere Port; Macclesfield; Warrington; Weaver Valley; and our Rural Areas. This business plan has been compiled to reflect their development aspirations and to help shape their future plans.

We have the benefit of a business community that is committed to supporting the objectives of the LEP with precious resources, time and in many cases, funding. We have fully engaged higher and further educational establishments who integrate well into the business community and actively seek alignment. We also have local authorities that understand business and are motivated to adopt the localism agenda. An ongoing challenge for the LEP will be to seek out

the resources it needs from all of these partner groups, as well as to influence central government to empower it through the provision of authority and additional resource.

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Cheshire and Warrington continues to perform over and above both England and North West averages on all key economic and employment performance indicators, as outlined in Annex 1 . However, there is no room for complacency if the LEP is to remain the best performing LEP economy in the North of England, and meet our ambition to be the best performing outside the Greater South East. This economic analysis therefore focusses on the key issues and challenges facing Cheshire and Warrington.

The Local Economic Assessment (LEA) for Cheshire and Warrington was completed in October 2010, identifying the latest intelligence on the key issues impacting on economic performance. The LEP Board has carefully analysed the LEA to inform its business planning process, and the strategic themes, priorities and activities flow from this.

The key challenges and opportunities for Cheshire and Warrington are:

GVA and jobs growth

- **Ensuring that high growth industries and businesses realise their potential** - economic output (GVA) growth is likely to be relatively strong in the pharmaceuticals, computing services, communications, banking and finance and professional services sectors; with scope for further development of the creative, digital and media sectors, building on the Southern Greater Manchester / Northeast Cheshire area and Salford's MediaCityUK.
- **Creating better conditions for private sector investment** - Cheshire & Warrington as a whole is an attractive location for economic activity. However, some areas are less attractive to would-be investors, so there is an opportunity to bring forward new employment sites, improve or expand existing sites and regenerate less successful town centres. In the current economic conditions, accessing finance can be a challenge. Assistance needs to be provided in finding the right sort of finance to facilitate business growth, particularly for many SMEs.
- **Fostering an improved enterprise culture in some geographical areas** - particularly the former District of Ellesmere Port & Neston. Both the District's business birth rate and its business density are well below the North West and UK averages. Crewe & Nantwich also falls slightly short of the North West and UK figures.
- **Supporting and harnessing the economic potential of Cheshire & Warrington's market towns and rural areas** - there is scope for increasing the economic contribution of market towns and rural areas, and also a need to make key services more accessible to rural communities.
- **Improving links and collaboration between research institutions and other bodies** – there is a flourishing education sector, including highly regarded FE colleges, Manchester Metropolitan University's Cheshire campuses, the University of Chester and centres of excellence including Reaseheath College, internationally renowned for its agricultural, horticultural and animal management teaching. The links between these institutions and business could be further developed.

Skills and Worklessness

- **Reducing the likelihood and the impact of large-scale job losses** - major industries, such as motor vehicle manufacture, have shed significant jobs, over time. These trends could continue as global competition forces firms to restructure and constrain labour costs. Some very high-skill sectors, like pharmaceuticals, have undergone redundancies, including AstraZeneca, a key contributor to GVA.
- **Creating employment opportunities in areas of Cheshire & Warrington where jobs are scarce and there are limited prospects for future employment growth** - specifically, the former Districts of Congleton and Ellesmere Port & Neston (and to a lesser extent Vale Royal) have low job densities.
- **Addressing worklessness among young people** – the unemployment rate for 19-24 year olds compares favourably to the North West and UK averages for this age group, but is still considerably higher than for other age groups. In some parts of the sub-region, more than 7% of 16-18 year olds are not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- **Improving skills and qualifications throughout the sub-region**, so that Cheshire & Warrington can take full advantage of future industrial and occupational change. Local economic forecasts suggest that higher-skill occupants will become increasingly important over the next decade, so it's critical that skill levels rise to match this.
- **Attracting and retaining more high-skill labour** - a large proportion of the best qualified residents commute to jobs outside the sub-region, lessening their contribution to the Cheshire & Warrington economy. There is also a need to retain graduates within the sub-region, given our ageing population.

Commercial Land & Property

- **Regeneration of town centres and other strategic locations** - key opportunities include the development of Basford East and Basford West sites, improvements to Crewe Station, other elements of the Crewe Gateway University Quadrant, redevelopment of the town centre and the regeneration of the West End; in Warrington major sites in the town centre (Bridge Street area, Central Hub/Wire Works, Bank Park and Warrington Waterfront) and the Omega site; in West Cheshire, Chester City Centre, Ellesmere Port, the Weaver Valley and Weaver Towns (Middlewich, Northwich and Winsford), and smaller market towns and settlements in rural areas.
- **Development of major employment sites** – ensuring that the thirteen sites identified in the 2009 Cheshire & Warrington Employment Land & Sites Study can be developed out in the medium term.
- **Rebalancing commercial land & property demand and supply** in some parts of the sub-region. At some sites, vacancy rates are high, whilst in other areas there is a lack of suitable and immediately available employment land and premises.

Transport & the Environment

- **Ensuring that major transport improvement projects proceed and realise their potential** - including the Northern Hub rail project, the re-opening of the Middlewich railway line, new stations such as Chapelford in Warrington and a tram-train service on the Chester-Manchester line. The Halton Curve would improve rail links between North Cheshire/North East Wales and Southern Merseyside/Liverpool John Lennon Airport. HS2 represents a key opportunity, in the second phase which includes a spur to Manchester, which is highly likely to pass through Cheshire and Warrington.

- **Tackling congestion** - Peak time congestion affects the M6, M56, A500 from the M6 into Crewe, A534 (Nantwich Road/train station in Crewe) and A556 In Cheshire East; the M53, M56, A49 and A55 in Cheshire West & Chester; and the A49, A50, A56 and A5061 in Warrington. Also affected are Chester, Congleton, Knutsford, Macclesfield, Northwich and Warrington town centres, parts of Disley and some of the major routes in and out of Crewe.
- **Reducing the impact that industry has on climate change** -CO₂ emissions per capita are above the UK and North West averages, with emissions per capita particularly high in the former Districts of Ellesmere Port & Neston and Vale Royal, in part reflecting these areas' industrial composition. There may be opportunities for more freight to be transported by water or rail – which could reduce direct CO₂ emissions – and the sub-region's advanced engineering expertise could be employed in the development of renewable energy schemes.
- **Ensuring there is adequate housing provision, particularly affordable housing** - the ratio of median house prices to median earnings (a measure of housing affordability) is above the England and North West averages, and in some areas there is a lack of available and suitable sites for housing development.

A summary of the key, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats is provided at Annex 2.

VISION FOR CHESHIRE AND WARRINGTON

The LEP's ambition is for Cheshire and Warrington to be the best performing sub-regional economy outside the Greater South East – the preferred location for business because of our investment locations, connectivity, highly-qualified workforce and excellent quality of life. The aim is to create an economic brand that transcends the local and is truly national and international, with strong recognition of our location and offer. Atlantic Gateway and Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus both offer real prospects for economic growth. Cheshire and Warrington LEP will maintain its presence on their boards.

We have identified six strategic objectives which are critical to delivering on our ambition, which will be underpinned by a series of short, medium and long term actions. These are outlined in Appendix 1.

- **A skilled and productive workforce**
- **Business Growth**
- **Infrastructure and connectivity**
- **Deregulation**
- **The Rural Economy**
- **Promoting Cheshire and Warrington**

We have also identified three underpinning values, which will define the way that we operate:

Leadership: We will provide the voice of business, determining and communicating the economic growth strategy for Cheshire and Warrington.

Influence: We will use our unique relationship with Government and other key decision makers to make happen those things most critical to economic growth.

Leverage: We will lever in the necessary finance to deliver on our ambitions and work with our key partners to mobilise resource to deliver these.

Put simply,



LONGER TERM PRIORITIES

Planning for economic growth is not a short term business and the LEP recognise that it must plan for the long term to ensure that future generations continue to experience the same opportunities and quality of life currently experienced.

The Board will therefore develop a programme of horizon scanning to identify those key issues that will have the greatest impact on our long term growth prospects. This process has started and the impact and opportunities related to the following issues are currently being explored:

- What opportunities are presented by the low carbon agenda, including how do we tackle higher than average levels of emissions?
- How do we ensure that economic growth benefits all of our communities?
- Explore how global challenges such as energy security; food security; water supply; waste disposal; and flood risk will impact on Cheshire and Warrington.

These issues will be developed over the coming year, to inform the annual refresh of the Business Plan.

BUSINESS PLANNING PRIORITIES 2012/15

STRATEGIC THEME	Ref No.	PRIORITY	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	LEAD	OUTCOME	Delivery Partners
Business Growth	1.1	Growing our Business Base	<p>Develop Cheshire and Warrington's offer as the best place to do business.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a comprehensive investment offer for all inward and indigenous investors outlining available sites, skills availability and business support available. Support Atlantic Gateway in its priority to maximise the potential of DSIC. <p>Develop a robust Cheshire and Warrington supply chain capability for our key sectors/Top 20 companies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify which sectors are most suitable for repatriation. Develop strategy to attract and finance supply chain development. 	Dec 2012	Nigel Schofield	Comprehensive investment package produced and readily available	Marketing Cheshire Atlantic Gateway/DSIC Local Authorities, Sector leads
Business Growth	1.2	Growing our Business Base	<p>Support the growth and well-being of our Top 20 businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish LEP Board relationship managers for each of these organisations Identify the issues most critical to their ongoing growth, and future investment in Cheshire and Warrington Develop an agreed agenda for business investment and growth. <p>Grow Cheshire and Warrington's mid-size business base</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the key determinants of growth for this size of business Produce and deliver a work programme for the Cheshire and Warrington BIS mid-sized business pilot. 	Apr 2014	Cllr Mike Jones	Increased procurement from local businesses by major companies and local authorities and attract new suppliers to locate in the sub-region	Local Authorities, Sector leads
Business Growth	1.3	Growing our Business Base	<p>Support the growth and well-being of our Top 20 businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish LEP Board relationship managers for each of these organisations Identify the issues most critical to their ongoing growth, and future investment in Cheshire and Warrington Develop an agreed agenda for business investment and growth. <p>Grow Cheshire and Warrington's mid-size business base</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the key determinants of growth for this size of business Produce and deliver a work programme for the Cheshire and Warrington BIS mid-sized business pilot. 	Apr 2013	Christine Gaskell	Reduced risk of "economic shocks"	IoD, CBI, CBL, UKTI
Business Growth	1.4	Growing our Business Base	<p>Support the growth and well-being of our Top 20 businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish LEP Board relationship managers for each of these organisations Identify the issues most critical to their ongoing growth, and future investment in Cheshire and Warrington Develop an agreed agenda for business investment and growth. <p>Grow Cheshire and Warrington's mid-size business base</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the key determinants of growth for this size of business Produce and deliver a work programme for the Cheshire and Warrington BIS mid-sized business pilot. 	April 2013	Robert Davis	Bespoke business support provided to identified companies	IoD, CBI, FPB

Business Growth	1.5	Business Start Up and entrepreneurship	<p>Develop business support services for Start Ups and SMEs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a framework for business support and start up advice, including access to finance Launch website for all business support services. <p>Develop an integrated Network of Business Centres providing consistent standards of support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map all centres currently involved in delivering these services Investigate establishing an accredited network to ensure high quality provision to all users. <p>Develop a bespoke Cheshire and Warrington Investment Fund, to respond to gaps in the investment market.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map availability of existing 'venture' funds and define market gap. Explore availability of finance including Cheshire and Warrington Pension Fund. 	Dec 2012	Robert Davis	Portal established and fully operational	LAs, High St Banks, Marketing Cheshire
Business Growth	1.6		<p>Develop an integrated Network of Business Centres providing consistent standards of support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map all centres currently involved in delivering these services Investigate establishing an accredited network to ensure high quality provision to all users. 	July 2013	Cllr Mike Jones	Accredited network established	LAs, Private sector workspace providers
Business Growth	1.7		<p>Develop a bespoke Cheshire and Warrington Investment Fund, to respond to gaps in the investment market.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map availability of existing 'venture' funds and define market gap. Explore availability of finance including Cheshire and Warrington Pension Fund. 	April 2014	Graham Ramsbottom	Fund operational	"Angel Investors", LAs
Business Growth	1.8	Exporting	<p>Develop 'how to' export support package</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map level of existing activity (what size businesses, to which markets etc) Establish evaluation and reporting model for C&W exporting performance Analyse activity and develop models which can be replicated by other businesses. 	April 2013	Howard Hopwood	Export support package developed and operational	UKTI, Chambers of Commerce
Business Growth	1.9	Inward investment	<p>Produce a high quality property offer and associated marketing collateral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake an audit of Cheshire and Warrington's offer of the most frequently sought properties Work with private and public partners to address gaps Produce high quality marketing collateral Undertake study into Cheshire and Warrington' key sectors and promote via UKTI 	September 2012	Nigel Schofield	Inward investment offer operational	UKTI, LAs, Commercial property agents and developers, Marketing Cheshire

A skilled and productive workforce	2.1	Maximise the availability of Apprenticeships in Cheshire and Warrington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the Apprenticeship Promise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and market a shared public sector procurement policy that includes a requirement to appoint apprentices. Develop a 'peer' Network who will advise and support businesses new to apprenticeships Invite Top 20 businesses to increase their engagement with apprenticeships and promote these through their supply chain. 	April 2013	Sara Mogel	Increase in the number of apprentices recruited in 2012 Increase in the number of businesses employing apprentices	Chambers of Commerce, CBL, FPB.
A skilled and productive workforce	2.2	Maximise the availability of Apprenticeships in Cheshire and Warrington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simplify arrangements to deliver apprenticeships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify barriers to apprenticeships Submit a proposal to NAS/government proposing flexibilities that would result in increased take-up, and could be piloted in Cheshire and Warrington. Investigate establishing a company to act as a host employer of apprentices (and possibly graduates) and allocate them to participating companies, especially SMEs. 	April 2013	Sara Mogel	Increased engagement by smaller businesses New simplified model for delivering apprenticeships developed and implemented	Chambers of Commerce, FPB, FSB
Infrastructure and connectivity	3.1	Provide an excellent location to do business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a pipeline of employment sites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map existing sites, potential new sites and identify any potential barriers to development. Explore all funding options (Growing Places, RGF2, ERDF, TIF etc) to unblock barriers. Produce a prospectus of development sites. 	April 2013	Louise Morrissey	An excellent range of market-ready sites	LAs, commercial property agents and developers
Infrastructure and connectivity	3.2	Provide an excellent location to live and work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stimulate house-building activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify stalled sites and the barriers to developing these Develop a pipeline of residential development opportunities Explore access to mortgage finance 	December 2012	Louise Morrissey	LA new housing targets achieved	LAs, house builders
Infrastructure and connectivity	3.3	Ensure fully functioning sustainable transport infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Cheshire and Warrington benefits from HS2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strategic alliance with other LEPs and North Wales via Mersey Dee Alliance. Develop shared agenda to influence developments of HS2 	September 2012	Pete Waterman	Ensure fully functioning sustainable transport infrastructure.	Other LEPs, Mersey Dee Alliance

Infrastructure and connectivity	3.4	Ensure fully functioning sustainable transport infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that Cheshire and Warrington's transport infrastructure is capable of supporting economic growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map the existing infrastructure and its capacity to manage economic growth. Support Atlantic Gateway priorities to deliver Northern Hub and port infrastructure. Identify gaps and pressure points and develop proposals to address these. Produce transport infrastructure development proposal. 	September 2012	Pete Waterman	Capacity of existing infrastructure understood and key 'asks' identified	LAs, Highways Agency, Network Rail
Deregulation	4.1	Ensure that the regulatory framework does not inhibit economic growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the barriers and fix local issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the regulatory barriers that are frustrating local economic growth and advice LBRO, by hosting a Deregulation Conference. Invite LAs to consider how to apply regulations in a more pragmatic way, and to have a common approach to planning regulations e.g. on pre-application discussions Review progress on addressing barriers in the three local LEZs (LEP Economic Zones). 	December 2012	Cllr Wesley Fitzgerald	Regulatory burdens for business reduced	LAs, LBRO
Deregulation	4.2	Ensure that the regulatory framework does not inhibit economic growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Influence better regulation debate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain effective relationship with LBRO to influence agenda 	December 2012	Cllr Wesley Fitzgerald	LBRO focusing on key issues for business	LAs, LBRO
Rural Economy	5.1	Support the diversification and growth of the rural economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create the environment for rural growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broadband enable Cheshire and Warrington 	December 2015	Graham Ramsbottom	90% enablement achieved Rural Growth Network status achieved	Broadband UK Local Authorities CLG Private sector supplier

Promoting Cheshire and Warrington	6.1	Promote Cheshire and Warrington's economic offer nationally and internationally	Create an agreed set of priorities that will support the increased recognition of Cheshire and Warrington as a key economic location	End of December 2012	Howard Hopwood	Increased awareness of Cheshire as a business location	Marketing Cheshire
Promoting Cheshire and Warrington	6.2	Promote Cheshire and Warrington's economic offer nationally and internationally	Generate increased national and international media coverage for both Cheshire and Warrington and its key priority regeneration and sectors	Ongoing	Howard Hopwood	Raised profile of our investment opportunities	Marketing Cheshire

ANNEX 1

DOMAIN	CHESHIRE AND WARRINGTON NUMBERS	CHESHIRE AND WARRINGTON PERCENTAGE	NORTH WEST PERCENTAGE	GREAT BRITAIN PERCENTAGE
Economically Active <i>June 2011</i>	452,100	78.7	74.6	76.2
Economically inactive <i>June 2011</i>	119,400	21.3	25.4	23.8
Qualifications				
NVQ 4 and above	199,100	35.5	28.7	31.3
NVQ3 and above	315,000	56.1	49.6	51.0
NVQ2 and above	409,700	73.0	66.8	67.3
NVQ1 and above	458,800	86.6	80.6	80.2
No qualifications <i>Dec 2010</i>	43,400	7.7	12.1	11.3
JSA Claimants All Ages <i>December 2011</i>	17,237	3.1	4.4	3.9
JSA Claimants 18-24 <i>December 2011</i>	5,010	7.0	8.9	7.8
VAT Registered Businesses	3,480	10.8	10.6	10.2
Registrations	2,200	6.8	7.5	7.3
Deregistrations <i>2007</i>				
Jobs Density <i>2009</i>	480,000	0.85	0.75	0.78

ANNEX 2

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A diverse and resilient economy – not too dependent on the public sector for jobs • High proportion of economic activity in “Knowledge Economy” sectors • Strong enterprise culture – high business birth rates and business densities • Strategically important employment sites, including Alderley Park, Basford (Crewe), Omega (Warrington), Warrington Central and Chester Central • High economic activity rate/employment rate and low unemployment rate • Well-qualified labour force – high % with graduate level qualifications • Attractive location and high quality of life • Motorway network and rail services from the larger towns and cities, particularly Crewe (rail) and Warrington (road and rail) • Proximity to Liverpool and Manchester • Unique visitor attractions – Chester (e.g. zoo, city walls, cathedral, “Rows” shops), Tatton Park, Jodrell Bank, Peak District • Highly productive rural area 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scarcity of jobs in Former Congleton and Ellesmere Port & Neston Districts • Youth unemployment/worklessness • Low skills levels in Crewe & Nantwich and Ellesmere Port & Neston • Lack of enterprise culture in Ellesmere Port & Neston • House prices are high compared to earnings • Local concentrations of severe deprivation/high unemployment in larger towns and cities, and some neighbourhoods with high levels of disability/poor health • Limitations of road and rail network in southern/central Cheshire, bus services throughout Cheshire and lack of connectivity between public transport routes • Congestion in major towns and on strategic routes • Lack of rural socio-economic data • Disparate leadership arrangements for rural agenda
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth of high tech, high skill sectors • Harnessing the contribution of migrant workers • New markets and services created by the needs of an ageing population • Regeneration and development of major towns centres, key employment sites and market towns/rural areas • Collaboration with research institutions in Cheshire & Warrington area • Improving the skills of local residents and local firms’ employees • Roll-out and take-up of superfast broadband • Development of low carbon economy and sustainable forms of travel • Benefiting from developments in neighbouring areas, such as Salford’s MediaCityUK • Major transport projects such as Crewe Green Link Road, the Halton Curve, a second High Speed rail line (HS2), the Manchester/Northern Hub and SEMMMS • Development of links with neighbouring areas • Influence Local Development Frameworks to facilitate rural economic growth 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of ageing population and declining numbers of young working-age adults • Weak economic climate and/or global competition lead to further job losses in key sectors and slow overall jobs growth • Relocation/ off-shoring of high tech sector activity • Inadequate support and advice for businesses • Skills and qualification levels do not keep pace with ongoing industrial and occupational change • More outward commuting of high-skilled residents • Insufficient appropriate new housing provision could lead to future shortages of labour and increased inflow of commuters • Rising levels of CO₂ emissions across Cheshire & Warrington • Business and economic growth held back because of low take-up or ineffective use of new broadband technologies • Sustainability of rural communities



Contact Us

Aidan Manley
Cheshire & Warrington LEP
c/o Cheshire & Warrington Enterprise Commission
Dalton House
Dalton Way
Middlewich
Cheshire
CW10 0HU

Tel: 01606 738083

Fax: 01606 841471

Email: aidan.manley@candwlep.co.uk

www.candwlep.co.uk