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It gives us great pleasure to present the Agenda for Action for the West Midlands.



The publication of the Agenda is a milestone for this region. It is the product of a spirit of collaboration, openness and partnership working. A spirit that is helping to unite us in purpose, resolve and direction as we work to move the West Midlands centre stage as one of Europe's premier regions.

The Agenda defines the significant, priority actions that we in the region have agreed are key to delivering the West Midlands Economic Strategy. The actions detailed here represent the focused approach needed to make best use of around £30 billion of resources available to this region over the next 10 years. The actions capitalise on our undoubted strengths and opportunities. They also address our primary needs and challenges. The actions will be delivered by a large number of regional partners, working together with common aims.

The Agenda builds upon the three key focuses for regional economic regeneration that have developed since publication of the West Midlands Economic Strategy in October 1999: the six Regeneration Zones covering the most disadvantaged parts of the region; the ten target business clusters; and the three high technology growth corridors. There are 60 actions to support these areas and address other vital issues such as improvements to the transport system and the modernisation and diversification of our economy.

The Government has recently re-emphasised the importance it attaches to giving regions and Regional Development Agencies flexibility to determine their own priorities and solutions. The Government has also highlighted and strengthened the role of Regional Chambers. We welcome these developments, as they will help us to work more effectively together to deliver the Agenda for Action. Advantage West Midlands, the Regional Chamber and our partners the Government Office and the West Midlands Local Government Association, are working intensively to agree a Regional Concordat that sets out the respective roles of each party. It will define how we can best work together – each adding value to the other, rather than duplicating effort.

The Agenda for Action is not a new start. It is a continuation of wide-ranging progress made by the region in 'delivering through partnership'. Over the last 12 months this approach has seen:

- the successful launch of our West Midlands in Europe office;
- the creation of a new venture capital fund for the region www.advantage-vc.com;
- development of the implementation plan for the Rover Task Force and the allocation of substantial resources from DTI to progress the modernisation and diversification of our business base;
- record numbers of overseas investments into the region and the establishment of new overseas offices through a joint venture with the East Midlands Development Agency www.thebritishmidlands.com;
- the development and launch of the £550 million Objective 2 Programme for the region;
- the launch and adoption of regional strategies to promote ICT, innovation, sustainable development and the cultural life of the region;
- the creation and launch of www.2wm.co.uk – the region's e-portal;
- most recently we have set up a rural task force to tackle the widespread economic problems and suffering caused by Foot and Mouth Disease.

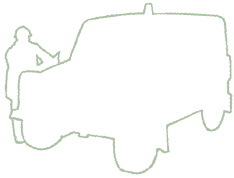
The Agenda now provides a focus for the future work of all those able to contribute to our 10 year vision. That is – to make the West Midlands a premier location in which to live, work, invest and to visit; regarded internationally as world class; and the most successful region in creating wealth to benefit everyone who lives here. Our collective challenge now is to deliver this ambitious Agenda. We commend it to you.



Alex Stephenson Chairman, Advantage West Midlands

Colin Beardwood Chairman, Regional Chamber

1. Economic Regeneration in the West Midlands



The West Midlands lies at the heart of the United Kingdom. It is the country's manufacturing and agricultural heartland and the hub of the national transportation network. The region has been, and remains, synonymous with innovation and change.

The economy has been transformed and continues to evolve but there are still tremendous challenges to face and opportunities to seize if the West Midlands is to realise its potential as one of the truly great regions of Europe.

In both urban and rural parts of the region, the business base must modernise and diversify to be globally competitive. The workforce must develop to offer new and higher levels of skills so that the region continues to attract and support the growth of value-added businesses.

An efficient regional transport network is vital to the West Midlands and, through geography, to the nation as a whole. Clearly there is great urgency for improvements in the network to ensure that economic growth is supported not stifled.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the pursuit of economic development and growth must generate real opportunities for improvement in all parts of the region. There should be a closer link between developing and exploiting opportunities, and addressing the needs and wants of the region's more deprived communities.

These are demanding challenges, but we can address them. Not least because the West Midlands, in many aspects uniquely, has numerous world-class strengths to build on and a robust offer to make.

- It remains the UK's manufacturing 'capital' – with a wide variety of global brands and world-class firms operating in the region.
- It has excellent universities and numerous research establishments to fuel the commercialisation of innovation and creativity (see figure1.1).
- It is a cosmopolitan region with vibrant multi-ethnic and multi-faith communities – with a vitality of community life expressed through local arts, culture, music festivals and events.
- It is home to a broad range of cultural and sporting 'icons' like The Royal Shakespeare Company at Stratford-upon-Avon, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Birmingham Royal Ballet, Walsall Art Gallery, the Ryder Cup at the Belfry and the Ironbridge World Heritage Site.
- It has the international city of Birmingham at its core, along with Birmingham International Airport, the National Exhibition Centre, the International Convention Centre and the National Agricultural Centre at Stoneleigh – a combination of facilities that rivals the best in the world.
- Its central UK location makes the region an attractive base for businesses serving UK and overseas markets.

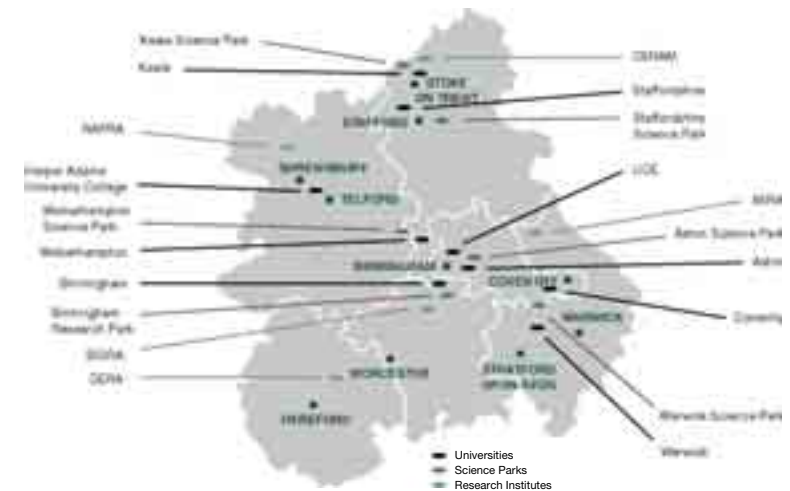


Figure 1.1: Research and HEI establishments in the region

2. The West Midlands Economic Strategy

The Government describes Regional Development Agencies as the 'strategic drivers of economic development' and has charged them with the task of co-ordinating the preparation and implementation of economic strategies for their regions. In October 1999, following an extensive consultation process, Advantage West Midlands published the West Midlands Economic Strategy (WMES). The strategy was produced over a short period of time and concentrated effort, to a timetable dictated by central government.

The WMES has been widely accepted as the framework for thinking about economic development in the region. It has already been used to inform the creation of the Objective 2 Single Programming Document that will determine the use of some £550 million of EU funding over the period to 2006. In particular the vision, themes and four 'pillars' of the Strategy have widespread currency, as do its twin aims of 'creating wealth through enterprise' and 'providing access to opportunity'. The structure of the WMES is summarised in Figure 2.1.

There is also widespread support for the four 'cross-cutting' actions set out in the WMES:

- building a sustainable future;
- developing a new and creative culture;
- supporting links between urban and rural areas;
- valuing equality of opportunity.

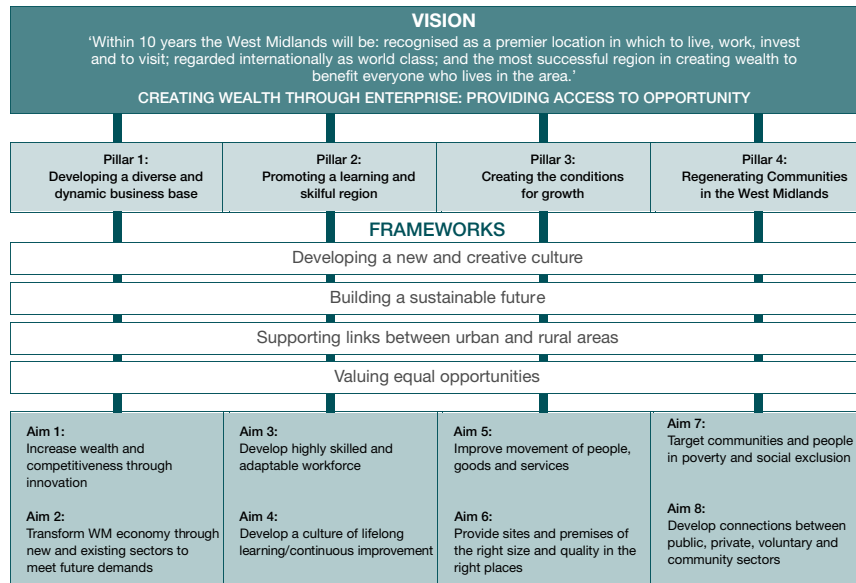


Figure 2.1: Summary of the West Midlands Economic Strategy

3. Key Developments Since Publication of the West Midlands Economic Strategy



Responding to economic challenges

The West Midlands has faced several major economic challenges over the last 12 months – a reminder of the potential vulnerability of the economic base.

In March 2000 the Rover Task Force was established, following BMW's announcement that it was to dispose of the Rover Group¹. The announcement highlighted the fragility of parts of the region's critical automotive sector, although the scale of job losses and knock-on effects on suppliers in the West Midlands have not approached the worse case scenarios envisaged at the early stages. The diversification and modernisation work of the Rover Task Force has been embraced fully by Advantage West Midlands and includes several strands:

Diversification

- Cluster support and research
- Support for new product development
- Improving access to finance
- Developing entrepreneurial skills
- Improved business support for management and e-business

Modernisation of the Auto Component Industry

- Supply chain collaboration and improvement
- Targeting high performance engineering businesses
- Support for international business development
- Raising the skills base through training and apprenticeship schemes
- Promotion of the regional automotive focus

Prior to the Rover Task Force, Advantage West Midlands set up a North Staffordshire Task Force in response to redundancies in the ceramics and rubber industries in the Potteries. This Task Force has concentrated on building partnerships and developing an action plan to revitalise the area. The Task Force has now been absorbed within a new North Staffordshire Partnership Board. The North Staffordshire Partnership and Task Force report has identified an area of growth opportunity along the A500, A50 and A34 (much of which is in the Regeneration Zone). This 'corridor' is built around brownfield land site opportunities but it may be possible to expand the scope to include technology and research links.

The work of both these Task Forces is embedded in the Agenda for Action.

¹ The Task Force was invited to submit proposals for £129 million of additional government support for the region, primarily to speed the process of modernisation and diversification. The Secretary of State approved an initial funding allocation of £15.7million in response to the RTF interim report, which was submitted in April 2000. An Action Plan was produced in June 2000. A package of projects was agreed by the DTI in March 2001. The amounts approved by the DTI are £17million for Modernisation, £19.7million for Diversification, and £22million for Regeneration (corridors).

Very recently, the outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease in the UK has affected the rural economy in the region very severely. Farms in the western part of the region were initially the most severely affected. However, all livestock farming and many rural businesses – especially rural tourism – face a very serious economic impact. In the agricultural sector this adds to the problems created by BSE and several years of depressed farm prices and agricultural incomes.

A Rural Response Team was set up in March 2001, chaired by Advantage West Midlands and involving the key agencies and organisations in the region concerned with the rural economy. The team has developed a 5-point action plan to drive the region's response to this extremely serious problem.

Action 1:

Provide clear and regular information to tourism operators/businesses, working closely to manage the involvement of the media.

Action 2:

Provide reliable and practical information to tourists and other users of rural businesses. Monitor the impact on tourism and the other economic consequences of the outbreak in the Shire Counties, with a view to providing the public/tourists with information on where they can go and what they can do.

Action 3:

Offer comprehensive support to businesses in difficulty including provision of advice (and training) in crisis management, and the possible development of advice surgeries to be rolled out through market towns in the region.

Action 4:

Direct help for individuals facing hardship. Putting together a package of support measures detailing the organisations that can help with debt counselling, redundancy etc. based on the Rover Task Force information booklet.

Action 5:

Make a detailed assessment of the long-term impact on the economy of the region, identifying those businesses that are affected and to what extent. Plan effective solutions and produce an outline recovery and re-structuring plan.

And a changing policy environment

Since last October there have been a number of key policy changes and announcements at UK and EU level that have helped shape the Agenda for Action. These include:

- **The finalisation of the Objective 2 map for the region** – It is now confirmed that the new Objective 2 area in the region covers 2.413 million people or 45% of its population². Following agreement of the map, a new Single Programming Document has been approved by the European Commission to guide the spending of £550 million of EU resources in the region, matched by £700 million in UK public and private funds. There is a further £300 million in Objective 3 resources also available to the region. The implementation of the Objective 2 Programme is being aligned closely to the Agenda for Action. There are four 'Pillar' groups responsible for the strategic direction of parts of the Programme corresponding to the four pillars of the WMES.
- **The six Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs)** in the region became operational from April 2001. The national Learning and Skills Council (LSC) was set up following the publication of 'Learning to Succeed'. The LSC replaces the Further Education Funding Council and Training and Enterprise Councils. The LSC is responsible for the funding, planning and quality assurance of FE colleges, work-based learning for young people, adult and community learning, workforce development, the integrated youth advice support service (Connexions), advice and guidance for adult learners and education/business links. The LSC will also take over responsibility for school sixth forms in the future. Responsibility for work-based learning for adults has been passed to the Employment Service. In the West Midlands there are six sub-regional LSCs covering Coventry & Warwickshire, Birmingham & Solihull, the Black Country, Herefordshire & Worcestershire, Shropshire and Staffordshire. They are likely to have a combined budget of around £700 million pa in 2001/2. Each is responsible for developing a strategic plan for its area by March 2002 covering skills, participation and learning. Local LSCs are expected to consult with key local and regional partners in preparing these plans and relate learning and skills action to wider employment, regeneration and social policies locally and regionally.
- **The six new Small Business Services (SBS)** also came into operation from 1 April 2001 to replace Business Links. The Small Business Service was set up nationally in April 2000. Several services are delivered nationally. There are also important local arrangements for delivery of SBS services to local SMEs. New SBS local areas are the same as the sub-regional LSC areas in the West Midlands.

The SBS has a regional co-ordinator who is based at Advantage West Midlands' head office and who is working with the Agency to ensure that SBS delivery arrangements work effectively in the region. The core funding from SBS for its 6 contractors for local service delivery is £13 million in 2001/02. The SBS is responsible for the co-ordination and delivery of a wide range of support for SMEs, including sector development, innovation, and e-business. Its remit also extends to social and community enterprise.

- **The 10 Year Transport Plan** for the UK was published in July 2000 and significant extra funding for transport has now been identified.
- **The Urban White Paper** was published in mid-November 2000. There are many important messages in it that are relevant to the Agenda for Action, Advantage West Midlands and its partners. These include:

- making urban areas attractive places to live, to stem the exodus of people from cities;
- improving urban design and design skills – creating centres of excellence in each region, developing urban masterplans and new Urban Regeneration Companies;
- managing the urban fabric more effectively and improving the street environment;
- improving the use of urban (brownfield) land and empty properties;
- creating Local Strategic Partnerships to help co-ordinate regeneration activity in local areas and tackle a wide range of quality of life issues;
- concentrating and targeting regeneration funds on the most deprived areas and the launch of the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund;
- encouraging more entrepreneurial activity in deprived areas;
- supporting cluster development to drive renewal.

- **The Rural White Paper** was published in late November, also containing many important messages for the region and the Agenda for Action. For example, it specifies:

- Market Towns as the focus for growth in rural areas and as service hubs for the rural hinterland;
- tourism as an increasingly important business sector in rural areas;
- the need to raise business formation rates in remote rural areas;
- the need to increase the number of rural product and speciality food businesses;
- the importance of affordable high speed connections to ICT broadband and for residents and businesses to have adequate access to training and advice;
- the requirement for continued and enhanced support for farm business diversification including a 7 year £1.6 billion Rural Development Programme in England;
- that new regional joint tourism and recreation strategies should be developed.

- 'Opportunity for all in a World of Change' – the enterprise, innovation and skills White Paper has resonance with the Agenda for Action in its emphasis on:

- the importance of each region developing its own 'strategies for success' – focussing on successful development of its chosen clusters;
 - local employment action plans and regional full employment plans – ensuring all citizens are given an opportunity to participate in work;
 - the creation of university innovation centres (including one based at Warwick University) and help for spin-out from Higher Education establishments;
 - the importance of business incubation;
 - the importance to the e-economy of ready access to broadband communication, including support to help bring broadband links into more remote areas.
- The Comprehensive Spending Review, the November 2000 pre-budget statement and the Budget 2001 signalled a future with greater flexibility for Regional Development Agencies and highlighted a major increase in resources for RDAs over the next 3 years, both of which are welcomed. Advantage West Midlands' budget for 2001-02 has been increased by over 20% to around £150 million – although the great majority of it will be committed to existing schemes and programmes in that financial year. The Government has also announced a large spending increase for the new LSCs to use on post-16 education and training. The Spending Review also highlighted a new approach to tackling problems of deprivation set out in the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. The thrust of policy is to channel new funding for social and community regeneration through local authorities and local strategic partnerships. In addition a more favourable fiscal regime for investment in regeneration priority areas and in derelict land and property has been created.
- The importance of business clusters as a key regional and national economic development tool to improve competitiveness has been emphasised by the DTI and DETR. The Science and Innovation White Paper (July 2000) highlighted the process of developing clusters of innovation by improving links between universities, other research institutes and businesses.

² And a further 1.108 million or 21% of the population is covered by transitional areas.

4. Agenda for Action



Developing the Agenda

The essential framework and analysis contained in the WMES has been well received. Adoption of the Strategy has resulted in considerable progress. Successful partnerships have been created and strategically significant projects and programmes initiated – as described in sections 1-3 of this document. However, the WMES did not contain an explicit and thorough action plan to co-ordinate and catalyse the broader delivery of the Strategy.

To address this, in the autumn of 2000 Advantage West Midlands embarked on the development of this 'Agenda for Action' in partnership with the Regional Chamber. The agenda has been refined and developed through an intensive consultation process during January and February 2001 that saw more than 80 detailed responses being submitted to Advantage West Midlands³.

Characteristics of Actions

The Agenda aims to define the key priority actions needed to make progress towards achieving the aims of the WMES. It defines more clearly the priorities, remit and responsibilities of Advantage West Midlands and its regional partners in delivering those aims. It is not intended to be an all-embracing action plan for the region. The Agenda has three main focuses:

- first, above all it majors on actions which are of particular regional significance – they tackle major issues or opportunities which affect most of the region or feature very strongly in sub-regional areas. These are also areas where there is added value in working together at a regional level;

- second, it has a clear sustainable economic regeneration focus – it does not cover in detail the full holistic social exclusion and environmental agendas but is concerned with the areas where they overlap. The National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal picked out four priorities: jobs, crime, health and education. The Agenda focuses on the delivery of and access to jobs – key elements of renewal and regeneration. However the social and environmental dimensions of sustainability are not ignored, indeed their pursuit is critical for the long-term achievement of the vision for the region. Furthermore, the Agenda for Action promotes access to opportunity for all of the region's communities;

- third, it is based on a commitment to partnership working. Following widespread consultation it sets out the actions that partners in the region have committed themselves to lead on, or participate in, to secure the delivery of the economic strategy.

The Agenda sets the scene for Advantage West Midlands' own actions for the next 1-3 years and has become an integral part of the Agency's Business Plan.

Three Focuses for Action

There has already been considerable progress in developing three important focuses for action that relate to the targeting and concentration of resources. These focuses are:

- (i) Regeneration Zones
- (ii) Sectors and Clusters
- (iii) High Technology Corridors

In addition, the vital need for both modernisation and diversification of our traditional industries has been thrown into sharp relief recently. The region has faced serious economic challenges leading to the creation of the Rover and the North Staffordshire Task Forces. There has also been increasing and continued pressure across traditional manufacturing industry as well as the hard-pressed agricultural sector where Foot and Mouth Disease is the latest in a series of blows.

(i) Regeneration Zones

The purpose of Regeneration Zones is to:

- ensure the targeting of regeneration resources on the areas of greatest need in the West Midlands by Advantage West Midlands and all the other key funders of regeneration activity;
- improve linkages between need and opportunity;
- lead to improved co-ordination of regeneration activity in each area.

There are 6 Regeneration Zones (RZs) whose precise boundaries have been agreed. Collectively the 6 RZs include roughly one third of the region's population, half of its unemployed residents and nearly three fifths of its long term unemployed. Each RZ area has been defined to cover the areas of greatest need in the region (defined in several ways, but principally using indices of deprivation at a ward level). The boundaries deliberately include key opportunity locations for the short, medium and longer term. They also cut across local authority areas, partly to encourage cross boundary working.

The 6 zones are as follows:

Regeneration Zone	Population 1991, 000s	Area Covered
Marches	283	The most remote rural parts of the region, covering parts of Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire. Covers most of the rural parts of the Objective 2 areas. It adjoins mid-Wales, much of which is an Objective One area and with which there are some important links.
East Birmingham and North Solihull	424	Most of east Birmingham and small parts of Solihull, extends eastwards from City Centre.
North Black Country and South Staffordshire	292	Covers parts of Wolverhampton and Walsall and a small part of South Staffordshire. Contains several key regional inward investment sites.
North Staffordshire	255	Covers the Potteries areas, parts of Stoke and Newcastle-under-Lyme.
Coventry and Nuneaton	205	Parts of Coventry, Nuneaton and Bedworth.
West Birmingham and South Black Country	441	West of the City Centre into parts of Dudley and Sandwell.
Total	1,900	

³ A separate report on the consultation is available on Advantage West Midlands' web site www.advantagemw.co.uk and a list of organisations responding is contained in Annex C.

Figure 4.1: Regeneration Zone Locations



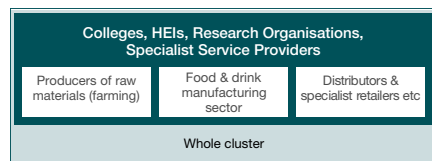
Most Zones are working through existing partnerships, although cross boundary working is encouraging new relationships to emerge. The Zones will need to link to the new Local Strategic Partnerships – required by central government for each local authority area.

Each RZ has a 'partnership board' comprising public, private and voluntary sector representation from the area. Each has developed a 'prospectus' to establish a vision and overall strategy for the Zone, its residents and businesses. The prospectuses are now being used to develop detailed action plans to help guide the investment and actions of key players operating in the Zone. These action plans will be completed by September 2001.

Advantage West Midlands and the RZ Partnerships are agreeing protocols for future joint working and to optimise partnership arrangements (which are likely to vary according to the particular characteristics and requirements of each area).

(ii) Clusters

The WMES originally identified three traditional and five growth 'target sectors' to drive the economic development of the region. Since then, the emphasis has shifted towards 'cluster development' as the most effective tool to achieve sustainable economic development.



Example of food & drink cluster – encompassing the food & drink sector

Clusters differ from sectors in the following ways:

- clusters are not defined by the Standard Industrial Classification – which relates solely to what businesses make or do. Rather they are about linked groups of firms built around a technology or an end product, but including supply chain linkages and the specialist education, finance, research and training support infrastructure. Many clusters consist of a mixture of manufacturing firms and specialist service sector firms;
- the essence of a cluster is some linkage and togetherness between the firms and a sense in which the cluster is firmly located in a place (local area, region or country).

The chosen clusters relate closely to the 8 sectors originally identified in the WMES, are market facing and build upon regional strengths. The rationale and definitions for the clusters are explained later in this section. The clusters fall into three groups:

- **Established:** Where the challenge is to help the cluster diversify and modernise, but not necessarily grow;
- **Growing:** Already showing signs of growth e.g. ICT software;
- **Embryonic or aspirational:** Which are small scale now, but where there are reasonable prospects for growth.

The ten clusters are:

Established

1. Transport technologies – transferable technologies from automotive, engineering, engineering design and materials management, rubber and plastics/polymers.
2. Building technologies – transferable and developmental technologies and products from ceramics, engineering, engineering design & architecture, materials management and recycling.
3. Food and drink.
4. Tourism and leisure – linked to food and drink (hospitality) and creative industries.
5. High value consumer products – tableware, jewellery, glass, leather – all linked by primacy of design.

Growing

6. Information and communication technology (ICT) – which has various sub elements including software and telecommunications.
7. Specialist business and professional services.
8. Environmental technologies – identified by recent DTI work as a regional cluster.

Embryonic or aspirational

9. Interactive media for education and entertainment – linked to creative and ICT.
10. Medical technologies.

Specialist business and professional services – design, finance, legal, consultancy etc., are spread across all the clusters as well as being a cluster in their own right.

Clusters have been identified on a region-wide basis. Some clusters are concentrated in particular parts of the region and sub-regional partnerships will need to be closely involved in their development. Different degrees of support, groups of organisations and approaches will be needed for each cluster.

Advantage West Midlands hopes to work with partners to promote cluster development by encouraging networking and linkages, and removing obvious impediments to growth. The process will be business led as the success of each cluster ultimately depends on the businesses involved.

Making Clusters Happen

There are links between the new clusters and the original target sectors. Some remain the same, but some clusters are 'new' (environmental technologies, construction technologies and ICT/software).

The approach to cluster development will be guided by:

- building on and working through existing structures that are largely developed around sectors – especially the Business Growth Task Groups whose remit will be redefined and extended to become cluster champions;
- acceptance that development will take place at different paces in different clusters;
- recognition that there is no 'one model fits all' approach;
- continuation of existing work on sector based projects, although in many cases it will migrate and widen to a cluster focus.

The process by which clusters are taken forward is a series of steps. The next 12 months will require a concentrated focus of effort to:

- strengthen the existing Business Growth Task Groups (BGTGs) and create new ones (such as environmental technologies) to help drive forward the cluster agenda;
- map each cluster and its opportunities (five by October 2001; five by December 2001) – work to be undertaken by Advantage West Midlands in conjunction with partners;
- undertake a market opportunities research & foresight exercise for each cluster (by March 2002);
- draw on the mapping and market research to enable the BGTGs and partners to identify and develop business networks for clusters (by March 2002);
- identify cluster champions in parallel with this work and appoint these over the period September 2001 to March 2002.

Clusters do not always make sense in a single region context. Advantage West Midlands will work with other RDAs on best practice and cross-boundary cluster working opportunities where appropriate.



Rationale for Selected Clusters:

Cluster	Definition and Scale (Core employment, 1998)	Why Chosen?
Transport technologies	Commodity metal and polymer component manufacture, metal processes/treatments, electrical/electronic/mechanical sub systems manufacture, vehicle manufacture. (175,000 employees)	High concentrations of activity in region centred on volume manufacture of motor vehicles. Opportunities for focusing on higher value added, based on new technologies and in luxury cars, motor sports and materials to improve products and product design. Technology transfer opportunities between different transport modes and also in use of new materials to lessen environmental impact.
Building technologies	Commodity materials (cement, timber, etc), commodity manufactured products (tiles, bricks, sanitary ceramics), sub assemblies (fire alarms, other safety, mechanical lifting and handling equipment, electronic sensors), equipment/tooling manufacture/ hire, design/ professional services, construction services. (200,000 employees)	Significant concentrations of activity especially in north of the region associated with commodity materials and low value added metal goods and ceramics. Need for modernisation. Shift from low value added commodities to higher value added systems, with scope to build on developments in materials such as polymers and recycling. Significant force for change in relation to urban regeneration and the transformation of the image of this region.
Food and drink	Agricultural commodities supply, primary produce processing, secondary processing, wholesaling distribution, food-processing machinery. (60,000 employees)	Employment growth recorded in cluster. Consumer tastes and concerns over food safety are the key drivers. Both create opportunities for value added through, for example, innovations in prepared ethnic foods and organics. Significant force for change in rural areas through a strengthening of supply linkages.
Tourism and leisure	Attractions, accommodation, catering, public realm management, information services, intermediary services, catering, supplies, leisure goods, presentational arts. (145,000 employees)	Significant employment growth potential – although highly concentrated in certain parts of the region around specific types of product. Potential for expansion of heritage-related, business and sports-related tourism.
High-Value Consumer Products	Tableware ceramics, jewellery, crystal glass, leather goods, clothing, carpets. (60,000 employees)	Longstanding concentrations of traditional consumer product industries in older urban core. Also craft based production an important component in some rural economies. Key influence played by design and marketing in the development of a future for these industries around improved value added opportunities. Process efficiency improvements important in sustaining volume manufacturers.
Specialist business and professional services	Legal, accountancy, market research, management consultancy, general business services, advertising, general research. (75,000 employees)	Significant forecast employment growth centred on Birmingham City Centre. Need for an adequate supply of skilled workers. Focus on specialist activity such as intellectual property rights and construction.
Information and communication technologies	Hardware manufacture, hardware consultancy, software, database management, associated components, associated wholesale, telecommunications. (60,000 employees)	Significant national growth and historic regional growth. Significant presence in software especially in southern part of region around Coventry, Solihull, Warwick. Recent successes in hardware but from a low base. Significant mobile investment opportunities. Incubation opportunities associated with region's universities around photonics, and nano-technology.
Environmental technologies	Environmental products, environmental services (utilities) and specialist consultancies, energy production technologies. (50,000 employees)	Significant economic growth potential worldwide led by global concerns over climate change, diminishing resources and waste management. Diversification opportunity related to skills available within region and technology transfer from existing sectors. Identified by recent DTI work as a regional cluster.
Education and Entertainment Interactive Media	Recorded media manufacture, media production, distribution, content developers, specialist business services, content creators (education community/ museums, etc). (10,000 employees)	Nucleus of highly successful internationally competitive production companies, including firms focusing on the under-5s market. Strong skills base from traditional broadcasting industry.
Medical technologies	Polymer/metal components, electronics/electromechanical sub assemblies, Medical instrumentation, pharmaceutical production, wholesaling. (10,000 employees)	High rate of growth but from a low base. Full role played by the medical market place on regional industry is understated given the role played by industries that supply multiple markets e.g. polymers. Higher Education based investments demonstrate a potential for spin off activity. Opportunities for diversification. Major training region in Medical Schools and UCE for the NHS.

Note: the definitions of clusters are not always mutually exclusive, some firms and some employment figures may appear in more than one cluster. (Employment figures based on best fit 4-digit SIC data.)

(iii) High Technology Corridors

The Rover Task Force report, published in June 2000 (see section 3), identified the promotion of three 'high technology' corridors as a way to diversify the economic base of the region. The corridors are areas where Advantage West Midlands and others are concentrating effort in the development of certain clusters and high technology business generally – for instance by university/business links. Projects in these areas will be eligible to access some Rover Task Force resources. The three corridors selected for further study had two common characteristics:



- first, they were seen as having some potential to attract and develop more high tech, high value added businesses by virtue of the presence of universities, research institutions or property opportunities;
- second, they were located in areas heavily dependent on the automotive sector – many of Rover's suppliers are located in these parts of the region.

In September 2000, consultants were commissioned to work with three 'corridor partnerships' to examine the feasibility of these corridors by looking at their assets and their potential to support new cluster development activity. The corridors cover:

- the A38 Corridor from the centre of Birmingham, past Birmingham University and Longbridge out through Worcestershire to Malvern (and so DERA);
- the Telford/Wolverhampton Corridor running along the M54 axis;
- the Coventry, Solihull, Warwickshire area.

The three areas have deliberately not been tightly defined, as they are an approach to discovering and delivering opportunities. It is important to emphasise that although they have been styled 'corridors', the intention is not to pursue greenfield ribbon development along main arterial highways. Each corridor is identifying opportunities that in the first instance will be located on already designated sites and brownfield land. All three corridor partnerships have also identified areas for cross-corridor working – particularly on the medical technologies, ICT and transport technologies clusters. Only parts of the corridors overlap with the Regeneration Zones. This is because corridors are largely opportunity based and not defined to reflect social and economic need. A strategy has been identified for each corridor along with a number of potential projects to help take forward cluster development and support high-technology industry. The consultants and corridor partnerships are refining these strategies. The projects are a mixture of property based ones and those which aim to improve the interface between universities, research establishments and firms. These latter projects will benefit all firms in the region.

Working for the Benefit of the Whole Region

There have been some concerns expressed from parts of the region that fall outside Regeneration Zones, are not near a High Technology Corridor or are outside the Objective 2 area, about their role and access to resources. The implication of strategically focussing effort in some areas – based on greatest need and opportunity – is that other areas are given lower priority. However, all parts of the region will benefit from the Agenda for Action because:

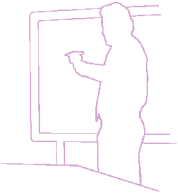
- the region is linked together – businesses and people in areas outside Zones and the High Technology Corridors can and will benefit substantially from extra activity in these areas. In short, improved success and opportunity can and will be spread throughout the region;
- great opportunities exist for economic regeneration throughout the region. All areas will need to pursue opportunities proactively. The mainstream funding for most types of economic development, business support and employment/skills development continue to be available throughout the region (see Annex B);
- Advantage West Midlands will continue to encourage regionally significant projects that deliver the Agenda for Action in all parts of the region. Indeed, many of the actions are pan-regional – for instance marketing the region, improving access to finance or promoting and sharing best practice;
- support for the 10 clusters will be available in all parts of the region and, for instance, work on supply chain development is not restricted to certain areas.

Maintaining the relevance of the Agenda

The publication of this Agenda for Action signals the development of enhanced dialogue, co-operation and consultation amongst partners in the region.

The Agenda is very much a 'live' document and, through regular review, will evolve over time – responding to changing circumstances and new spatial priorities that may emerge in the future.

5. Key Themes



There were a number of important issues raised during the consultation phase on the Agenda for Action which cut across the whole Agenda and need to be considered in a coherent manner.

Diversity and Social Exclusion

Diversity in its broadest context relates to differences in culture, ethnic origin, and religion but also relates to differences arising through age, gender, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status. Diversity is a strength that should be celebrated, encouraged and taken advantage of in the light of the new global economy. The West Midlands is the most diverse part of the UK outside London.

Social exclusion arises where individuals are unable to contribute to mainstream educational, social or economic activity. Their contribution to society is marginalized and they are unable to achieve their potential⁴. The Government has acknowledged that the causes of social exclusion are often deep rooted and require concerted, sustained and wide-ranging action.

The thrust of recent Government policy has been to tackle social exclusion through the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal and to encourage local authorities and the newly formed Local Strategic Partnerships to lead. New funding streams such as New Deal for Communities and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund are channelled through GOWM to local authorities and local regeneration partnerships.

There are currently many sources of funding and mainstream activity available to tackle social exclusion. As a priority, policy and funding must be really joined-up in the West Midlands. The Regional Chamber has acknowledged its lead role in this area. The creation of the Regional Chamber's Social Inclusion Policy Forum is a good step in this direction (AfA Action 53) as will be the Regional Concordat (AfA Action 60). The Agenda for Action aims to tackle diversity and social exclusion issues across all Pillars. One key to this is to ensure that 'grass roots' voluntary and community sector organisations are fully involved in the strategic overview, design and delivery of programmes to tackle social exclusion.



The Agenda tackles diversity and social exclusion through:

- the mechanism of Regeneration Zones (which contain 60% of the region's long term unemployed people) and then the co-ordinated programmes developed in each Zone (AfA Actions 42 and 43) – particularly bridges to success (AfA Action 44);
- improving the understanding and skills of regeneration practitioners (AfA Action 50);
- encouraging capacity building amongst the different communities in the region (AfA Actions 51 and 52).

The Regional Chamber and Advantage West Midlands are committed to ensuring that the Agenda for Action addresses the needs of all sections of the community and to check progress through output and outcome monitoring.

Sustainability

The idea at the heart of sustainable development is the simple notion of ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come. A widely used international definition is 'development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. The concept of sustainable development has been around for a number of decades. Although the idea is simple, the task is substantial. It means adopting the following principles concurrently, in the region, the UK and the world as a whole:

- social progress which recognises the needs of everyone; (social sustainability);
- effective protection of the environment and the prudent use of natural resources (environmental sustainability);
- maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment (economic sustainability or sustainable economic regeneration)⁵.

Figure 5.1 shows that the Agenda for Action is concerned with sustainability in its widest sense, but with a focus on economic sustainability.



Figure 5.1 Linkages between all elements of sustainability

⁴ Disadvantaged groups exist where social exclusion applies to communities in a particular area (e.g. inner city area, remote rural areas or coalfield areas), or communities across the region sharing a common characteristic such as ethnic background, age, gender, or disability.

⁵ Definition from www.sustainable-development.gov.uk.

However the Agenda clearly encompasses environmental sustainability as well. There a number of actions that will directly contribute to sustained improvements to the environment. These include:

- the programme of encouraging environmental awareness and better environmental business practices – business are becoming more aware of the impact of the environment and environmental legislation through new polices such as the climate change levy (AfA Action 11);
- the prominence of environmental technologies as a growing business cluster (AfA Actions 12 and 13);
- encouragement of new working practices to reduce work-related trips (AfA Action 36);
- the focus on re-use of brownfield land (AfA Action 38) and on mixed-use developments in urban areas (AfA Action 47).

The Agenda clearly recognises that a good quality environment will contribute to the success of the region. In particular it emphasises the role of regeneration in improving parts of the urban environment.

Economic development that reduces the quality of the environment is shortsighted and ultimately self-defeating. However, there are trade-offs and conflicts between economic, environmental and social outcomes.

A sustainability audit was carried out of the WMES and similarly, Advantage West Midlands and the Regional Chamber support the need for an ongoing sustainability review of the Agenda, reporting every 12 months. The responsibility for ensuring this is carried out and for the independence of the work will lie with the region's Sustainability Round Table. The review could look at the impact of the Agenda for Action against the sustainability targets developed in the Regional Sustainability Action Framework⁶. The framework will need to be agreed with the Sustainability Round Table.

Advantage West Midlands will ensure that all projects for which it provides funding will be assessed using the 'sustainability checklist' developed for the Objective 2 Programme.

The Rural Dimension of the Region

The rural and urban parts of the West Midlands are inextricably linked. The WMES did not develop a separate section on the rural economy but instead treated rurality and, in particular, rural-urban links as a cross-cutting theme. This approach has been adopted in the Agenda for Action, which tackles rural issues in a number of ways:

- the rural Regeneration Zone in the west of the region covers large parts of Herefordshire and Shropshire and parts of Worcestershire. This area includes the majority of the remoter rural parts of the region most dependent on traditional land-based industries. This is an area for priority investment by Advantage West Midlands and also encompasses the rural Objective 2 area of the region;
- two of the target business clusters are particularly important in rural areas – food and drink and tourism and leisure. But it is not only these clusters which are present in rural areas. Around 40% of employment in the rural Regeneration Zones is in the 10 target clusters⁷;
- most actions also apply to businesses and people in rural areas even if this is not explicitly stated;
- several actions have a specific rural focus or flavour:
 - the general principles of diversification and modernisation apply to industry in rural areas. However, recognising the special position of agriculture, there is a specific action for this sector (AfA Action 16);
 - the need to re-use and re-cycle assets also applies to rural areas and specifically to redundant agricultural buildings (AfA Action 38);
 - following earlier work in the West Midlands and a key theme in the Rural White paper, there is a specific market towns initiative which is intended to cover market towns in the rural Regeneration Zone and elsewhere in the region (AfA Action 46);
 - the action to upgrade the West Midland's ICT Broadband infrastructure has a strong rural focus especially in the western part of the region (AfA Action 37);
 - the development of the region's tourism product (AfA Action 59) is particularly relevant to rural areas.

Advantage West Midlands, the Regional Chamber and other region-wide bodies will continue to ensure that sufficient attention is given to the region's rural areas with their specific problems and opportunities. The Rural Accord will help in this regard.

Working Across Boundaries

The West Midlands is the only land-locked region in the UK. It is the crossroads of the UK – having borders with five other regions: the East Midlands, the South East, the South West, the North West and Wales. Most businesses and citizens are unconcerned with administrative boundaries. Where it adds value cross border working is eminently sensible. Within the region the same principle applies. Sub-regional partnerships have developed that incorporate a number of local authority areas. Regeneration Zones are deliberately designed to take this approach further, based on local needs and opportunities.

Areas where cross boundary working is already happening or needs to be promoted include:

- at a local level – between the outlying parts of the region and parts of adjoining regions. The West Midlands has traditionally worked closely with the East Midlands, but linkages between the rural economies and transport systems of mid Wales and the Marches need to be explored;
- Advantage West Midlands is leading collective work by all the Regional Development Agencies on cross boundary issues and priorities relating to road and rail (passenger and freight) transportation. The corridor of movement between the West Midlands and the North West is a particular concern to both regions;
- in business development the region is working with the South East and East Midlands on the motor sports cluster and with the East Midlands on food and drink promotion and supply chains. The scope for joint working on other clusters needs to be explored;
- in marketing and promotion, the West and East Midlands have joined forces to market the 'British Midlands' (www.thebritishmidlands.com) in North America. Similarly, through the Heart of England Tourist Board (which covers the West and East Midlands) there are examples of joint promotion of adjoining areas;
- the West Midlands is forging partnerships with other European regions – for instance the West Midlands in Europe Office is helping Lower Silesia prepare for future accession to the EU.

⁶The targets include:

- by 2003 all companies should invite local businesses to compete for the provision of products or services;
- by 2005 encourage all villages to implement a shared services strategy;
- by 2010 achieve 30% savings in household energy consumption;
- by 2010 on average only half the journeys made each week are by car;
- by 2010 ensure that delivery of the region's Biodiversity Action Plans is on target;
- by 2010 at least 50% of new buildings should incorporate grey water systems;
- by the end of 2010 aim for households and businesses to recycle or compost 30% of all waste and to ensure less than 50% goes to landfill;
- by 2010 aim to build 65% of new housing in the region as a whole on brownfield sites up to 2010.

⁷Employees in employment 1998 – source Annual Employment Survey.



6. Links to Other Strategies and Action Plans



The Agenda for Action has been prepared in full knowledge of other key regional-level strategies and action plans, whether completed or in development. There is a particularly crucial relationship between the Agenda for Action and the emerging work to develop the first draft of new Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) for the West Midlands (and the related Regional Transport Strategy which will be contained within RPG).

The Agenda for Action is already helping to inform the development of RPG. In particular, work is underway to look at the implications of Regeneration Zones, cluster development and the high technology corridors. Each region's new RPG is required to take account of the Regional Economic Strategy and, by implication in the West Midlands, the Agenda for Action. By the same token the Agenda is taking on board emerging conclusions from RPG work – such as the Urban Renaissance Strategy. The aim must be to 'align' the RPG and AfA as fully as possible.

The second key link is between the Agenda for Action and the region's Objective 2 Programme. The Single Programming Document (SPD) for the West Midlands' Objective 2 Programme 2000-2006 has been approved by the European Commission and sets out the framework for the allocation of around £500 million of EU resources in the region. The SPD was prepared, and will be implemented, using the WMES as its key framework. All partners involved in the implementation of the SPD are keen to ensure that it supports as far as possible the aims and actions of the Agenda with which there is a great deal of synergy.

Other strategies drawn upon include:

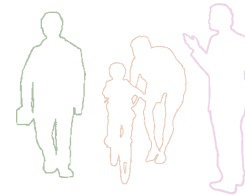
- the Regional Sustainability Framework;
- the Regional Innovation Strategy and Action Plan;
- the Regional International Trade Strategy;
- 20 Year Public Transport Strategies from Centro and Local Transport Plans;
- the Rover Task Force Report and the North Staffordshire Task Force Interim Report;
- the Regional ICT Strategy – launched on 14 December 2000;
- draft Regional Cultural Strategy – produced by the regional cultural consortium 'LIFE' (closely linked to the roles of several of the target clusters, tourism/leisure and promoting the image of the region in the Agenda for Action);
- the English Rural Development Programme (2000-06);
- the Regional Development Plan for Objective 3 in the West Midlands.

At a more local level work in the Regeneration Zones needs to link to Health Action Zones, Education Action Zones, Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies produced by Local Strategic Partnerships and other area-based initiatives such as New Deal for Communities.

The Agenda for Action is not intended to replace or even 'overarch' these strategies, or to replicate the ground they cover. Instead it draws on and develops certain actions or ideas where these are important to progress the WMES. There is, deliberately, some duplication with these other key strategies.

Although the Agenda for Action is clearly a regional-level strategy, and therefore focuses on region-wide actions or themes, all sub-regional partnerships were consulted during its development. This was the beginning of an on-going strategic dialogue – to identify how each part of the region can play a role in delivering this ambitious Agenda.

7. The Regional Actions



Introduction

The Agenda for Action is summarised in this section with a more detailed explanation of each action in Annex A.

Actions have been grouped under the four pillars and cross cutting themes of the WMES and time frames for their implementation are indicated.

Developing a diverse and dynamic business base...a £2.7 billion programme over 10 years

This part of the Agenda for Action addresses the economic structure of the region and performance of the business base.

The actions are interlinked around several themes to aid the modernisation and diversification of the business base:

- improving the **external image** of the region and helping the region, its people and business become more **international** in outlook – becoming an international region;
- tackling the **modernisation** of traditional sectors – in part using the model and programme devised by the Rover Task Force. All the Rover Task Force modernisation strands are included;
- encouraging **innovation and entrepreneurship** in the business sector, in part through improving HEI/business links and also by embedding e-commerce in business;
- using **clusters** as a tool to help drive business diversification and creation. Several of the actions are linked and complemented by actions in other pillars that support cluster development.

Significant progress has already been made towards tackling these issues and on a number of the actions.



Summary Actions – Developing a Diverse and Dynamic Business Base

Innovation in Business

1. Implement marketing and image programme – selling our strengths nationally and internationally.
2. Deliver a co-ordinated programme to sell the region to investors.
3. Implement and continually enhance the region's e-Portal (www.2wm.co.uk) – especially for inward investors, business to business and business to consumer activity.
4. Develop regional knowledge sharing networks between HEIs, research centres and business through RIS.
5. Increase supply of regional Risk Finance (including Venture Capital www.advantage-vc.com) and improve access to finance for SMEs.
6. Integrate support to improve uptake of e-business opportunities in SMEs.
7. Encourage innovation and new product development in SMEs.
8. Support best practice and improve support networks in the social economy.
9. Develop a manufacturing best practice region.
10. Use graduates more effectively in SMEs.
11. Support environmental awareness and better business practices programme.

Developing Clusters

12. Develop clusters through mapping, scoping, then developing business-led cluster action plans.
13. Develop centres of cluster excellence in design and technology and business support – particularly in high technology corridors.
14. Diversify the region's economy through new developments within high technology corridors (to support clusters).
15. Support business start-up including spin-out activity from HEIs, research centres and firms in clusters and follow-through post-incubator support.
16. Support the continued diversification of the region's agricultural sector.
17. Target international trade promotion and inward investment activity on clusters.

Learning and skilful region...£16 billion of resources over 10 years

This part of the Agenda aims to address learning and skills issues to aid the creation of a 'dynamic and diverse business base' and to equip the region's residents with the skills needed to access opportunity. The Agenda focuses on learning and skills post-16. However, it is widely acknowledged that the delivery of a satisfactory basic level of education pre-16 is essential to secure a competitive region where all communities enjoy access to opportunity. In some parts of the West Midlands education standards are excellent. In others, attainment levels are amongst the poorest in the UK.

With funding for post-16 education, training and guidance changing radically, many organisations are in a state of flux. Therefore more work is needed to identify regional priorities, milestones and targets. The first action (AfA 18) is concerned with working across the region to pull these strands together. Over the next 12 months, Advantage West Midlands will pursue this with the sub-regional LSCs and other key players such as the Association of Colleges, the WMHEA and the Employment Service – in parallel with the development of local learning strategies by the LSCs.



The FE and HE sector as well as Industry Training Organisations (NTOs) have a key role in the development of skills for our target clusters and to help modernise the region's business base. We welcome the national DfEE initiative to develop FE Colleges as vocational centres of excellence. This is an excellent opportunity to build on our regional strengths and help support cluster development.

The Agenda works to promote learning and skills through actions to:

- improve the skills needed to support cluster development. Some of these are basic and fairly generic to all parts of the economy. Others are specific to each cluster and reflect the skills shortage situation in many parts of the region;
- improve innovation, entrepreneurship and management skills to support a more dynamic business base;
- tackle the region's poor performance in basic attainment and skills and address the 'poverty of aspirations' that exists – particularly in Regeneration Zone areas;
- improve learning infrastructure and the 'connectivity' between different learning deliverers as well as the ability of end users to access learning.

These are all areas where considerable progress is being made.

All sub-regional LSCs are charged with producing local learning strategies in consultation with others. Over the next 12 months, as these strategies are developed and a regional skills and learning strategy is produced, this area of the Agenda for Action may need to be refined.

Summary Actions – Promoting a Learning and Skilful Region

Highly Skilled Workforce

18. Develop and agree a regional skills strategy.
19. Ensure current business cluster skill needs are understood by funders/deliverers and provide tools to access information on cluster specific training.
20. Tackle current skills development needs in business clusters (e.g. in construction and building technologies).
21. Address ICT skills shortages and gaps.
22. Work with learning deliverers to increase longer term supply of skills in clusters.
23. Improve innovation skills in business clusters and HEIs.
24. Improve access to and suitability of training especially in management skills for SMEs (including not-for-profit organisations) to encourage greater participation.

Culture of Lifelong Learning

25. Promote awareness of and tackle basic skills issues in the region, particularly in RZs.
26. Develop and promote best practice case studies in businesses, including awards.
27. Promote and extend education/business links, particularly in RZs.
28. Support an enhanced regional learning network across HE, FE and other sectors.
29. Ensure a co-ordinated approach to the promotion of learning and to workforce development plans in all employers.
30. Promote careers and entrepreneur opportunities in clusters.

Creating the conditions for growth...building from an £8 billion planned programme over 10 years

(i) Transport

There must be significant improvements made to the region's transport system. This is a regional priority, but also of national importance given the high volumes of 'through traffic'. At present there is no one single agreed list of transport priorities for the region. Two major multi-modal studies looking at the West Midlands conurbation and at the M6 corridor are well advanced and due to report around the summer of 2001. In parallel, through the RPG review process, a new transport strategy is being developed which will form part of RPG. The West Midlands Regional Chamber Transport Policy Forum will provide a valuable sounding board to help identify regional transport agenda/investment priorities. When the current studies are completed, the Transport Policy Forum will need to press vigorously for radical improvements to accessibility throughout the region.

The actions proposed need to ensure these processes fully reflect the needs of sustainable economic regeneration and should be completed as quickly as possible. Ultimately the region's transport system requires:

- improvement in the current infrastructure: both road and public transport – particularly at the key pinch points and corridors of movement in the region. The recent announcement of funding for Metro extensions to Merry Hill and Five Ways are welcome. The completion of the tolled Birmingham Northern Relief Road (BNRR) will ease the situation along parts of the motorway network, but a continuing concern is movement around the western side of the conurbation and around Birmingham Airport on the M42;
- the long promised upgrade of the West Coast Main Line (WMCL) will ease movement in and out of the region. With the local rail network running at capacity in many of the urban areas and Birmingham New Street identified as a major bottleneck for intra and inter-regional rail journeys, investment in this work will also be essential;
- recognition of the important role of the main airports serving the region, particularly Birmingham, in supporting the region's economy and helping us be a truly international region;
- better use of existing infrastructure – we need to improve transport interchanges and traffic management and possibly look at ways of improving the existing scarce capacity;
- changes in travel patterns – the region needs to take a lead in exploring ways to:
 - reduce work-based journeys – especially given the potential impact of ICT and new working patterns;
 - reduce non-essential car journeys – by providing attractive alternative modes of travel.
- improvement in the capacity of our urban areas to meet future employment and housing needs.

ICT infrastructure is also considered here. The key issue is to secure as widespread access to broadband in the future as possible. This will open up the new opportunities offered by Internet communication to businesses, people and organisations in all parts of the region – particularly in rural areas.



(ii) Sites and Premises

The focus in the Agenda for Action is on the role of sites and premises as a facilitator for economic regeneration. However, tackling dereliction and re-cycling existing underused assets is also environmentally beneficial in its own right and very much in tune with the Urban White Paper. The key issues are:

- helping to establish and grow clusters and high technology corridors;
- creating jobs in Regeneration Zones.

Again, the Agenda for Action must be consistent with emerging RPG policy, but also influence that policy. A critical issue in emerging draft RPG is the need to increase the appeal and capacity of the region's main urban areas to accommodate future housing and employment needs.

Summary Actions – Creating the Conditions for Growth

Movement of People, Goods and Information

31. Support the development of the Regional Transport Policy Forum in its role of advocacy, research and support to improve the region's transport system.
32. Ensure the Regional Transport Strategy in new Regional Planning Guidance is consistent with the delivery of the WMES.
33. Carry out robust external advocacy and lobbying on current existing transport priorities to funding bodies and infrastructure providers.
34. Increase transport network capacity at key locations and along key routes agreed in the Regional Transport Strategy.
35. Invest in better traffic management and better transport interchanges.
36. Encourage new working practices and the use of ICT to reduced trips (e.g. car-pooling, home-working etc.).
37. Co-ordinate the upgrading of ICT infrastructure to ensure the delivery of affordable broadband services to everyone – especially in rural areas.

Sites and Premises

38. Review brownfield land supply and promote re-use opportunities across the region – including redundant rural buildings (consistent with new Regional Planning Guidance priorities).
39. Assess the suitability of the current property offer for clusters and business growth (consistent with new Regional Planning Guidance priorities).
40. Identify and assemble strategic land holdings to support a dynamic and diverse business base (consistent with new Regional Planning Guidance priorities).
41. Ensure that the WMES and the new Regional Planning Guidance are aligned.

Regenerating communities...working with a core programme of £2.5 billion and £21 billion of other public sector funding over 10 years

Economic growth is not a satisfactory end in itself. The benefits it brings and the opportunities it creates must be accessed and shared more widely. One of the Government's new targets for RDAs is to reduce deprivation in the 20% most deprived wards in each region. This focus is at the core of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal. The actions in this Pillar relate to four key themes:

- successful implementation of Regeneration Zones, which means engaging and working with key partners to ensure RZs help lead to 'joined up' approaches that develop:
 - 'bridges to success';
 - entrepreneurial communities and people;
 - local identity and local spirit.
- support for specific types of communities by re-vitalising market towns (a key dimension of rural policy), creating mixed-use communities (in urban areas) and encouraging balanced communities to develop, especially in the region's more deprived urban areas;
- spreading and sharing best practice across the region;
- working with different communities (both geographical and communities of interest) to share and promote best practice in community engagement and capacity building.



Summary Actions – Regenerating Communities

Creating Successful Communities

42. Set up RZ structures and mechanisms for measuring impact.
43. Deliver Regional Summit and agreement on strategy and resource alignment into RZs by major funding bodies.
44. Create a co-ordinated programme of 'bridges to success' in each RZ (covering training, business start-up support, transport, information, aspirations etc).
45. Develop the roles of the NHS and other large public sector bodies as a key employers and trainers in RZs.
46. Implement market towns initiative across the region.
47. Re-use brownfield land for mixed use development, including 'Urban Villages'.
48. Develop a regional housing strategy on the role of housing in regenerating communities.
49. Support regional Healthier Communities Strategy.

Linkages and Best Practice

50. Explore scope of and implement new regional centre of excellence in urban design, regeneration and community renewal.
51. Develop best practice and support networks for community empowerment and strategies.
52. Develop best practice and support to ensure effective engagement in partnerships by ethnic minorities.
53. Support the creation and work of the Social Inclusion Policy Forum.

Other regional partnership actions

There are a number of actions that do not fit neatly into any one Pillar. Several of these actions relate to improving and raising the region's image and profile:

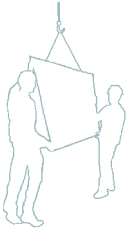
- 'punching our weight' in Europe;
- promoting and supporting key assets, including Birmingham as a world class city, for the benefit of the region;
- developing a more strategic approach to tourism and raising and improving the region's tourism profile.

In addition, across all Pillars there is the need to understand the region better by sharing information and intelligence, and to develop concordats to deliver Actions and the WMES's ten year vision.

Summary Actions – Agenda wide actions

54. Continue West Midlands in Europe partnership and lobby on post-2006 agenda.
55. Promote Birmingham International Airport as a gateway to the region.
56. Support the development of Birmingham as an international city for business and visitors – including City of Culture bid.
57. Advocate and promote the national and international assets of the region.
58. Set up Regional Intelligence Unit/Observatory and mechanisms to share information and intelligence.
59. Complete and agree an integrated sustainable regional tourism strategy and action plan – and a concerted effort to improve the tourism experience.
60. Develop concordats with regional partners setting out roles and responsibilities for implementing the Agenda for Action.

8. Working Together to Deliver the Actions



How can we work together to best effect?

The region has a long track record of joint working and our recent, collective response to new economic challenges has been exemplary. We will use these models to develop suitable working arrangements and partnerships for each of the actions. Many of these are mapped out in this document. But there is also a need to agree overall roles at a regional level. To this end Advantage West Midlands and partners are developing a series of 'concordats' which will provide clearer agreement on overall roles in delivering the Agenda for Action:

- **Regional concordat**

The Regional Chamber and its constituent partners, Advantage West Midlands, Government Office for the West Midlands and the West Midlands Local Government Association are developing a regional concordat, which will define how they will work together towards a shared vision for the region. The concordat will set out the roles and responsibilities of the different partners. It will explain how they will work jointly and individually in transparent, measurable and accountable ways.

- **Rural Accord**

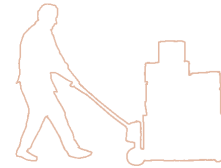
Advantage West Midlands, Government Office for the West Midlands, MAFF, The Countryside Agency and the West Midlands Local Government Association are developing a rural accord for the region. The purpose is to work together on major rural policy developments and issues, co-operate to shape joint priorities, and respond in a co-ordinated way to rural concerns and customer needs.

- The recent creation of the six sub-regional Learning and Skills Councils and Small Business Service contractors creates an opportunity and a need for a similar concordat approach. For instance, Advantage West Midlands has agreed with each sub regional LSC and SBS which sector/cluster they will lead on in the region.

The focus of the Agenda for Action is regional and the concordats and agreements set out above are pan-regional. However delivering the Agenda will require action by partners at a sub-regional and local level. The West Midlands has a complex set of sub regions and associated partnership arrangements. The partnerships involved in the consultation process on this document do not correspond exactly to the six LSC/SBS areas. Furthermore, some of our sub-regional partnerships, such as Coventry, Solihull & Warwickshire, are very well established with a strong track record of activity. Others were created more recently and need time and encouragement to develop⁸.

Where sub-regional partnerships have a clear role in taking forward an action this is indicated. However, looking ahead Advantage West Midlands has identified the need to engage them in a 'strategic dialogue' on the whole scope of the Agenda for Action, a process that could lead to concordats or sub-regional action plans in some areas. The regional concordat will seek agreement on the key sub-regional partnerships and a common approach to their role. This could be piloted first in areas with the most developed sub-regional partnerships.

9. Delivering the Actions



In Annex A each action has a single organisation designated as 'lead partner'. It is important to explain what is meant by this term, as it was a source of considerable debate and comment during consultation. No single organisation can 'make it happen'. All the actions are about collective effort. However, it is important that there is a clearly identifiable lead partner with overall strategic lead for the action and accountable for its progress.

The functional role of the lead partner will vary from action to action. In some cases the lead partner will be the primary deliverer and funder of the action. For instance in AfA Actions 1 and 2, Advantage West Midlands is resourced to market the region externally to attract inward investment and is a direct deliverer of this activity (with others). In other instances, the lead partner's role may be to catalyse and co-ordinate the actions of others – rather than being a major deliverer or funder of the action itself. For instance, the Regional Chamber and Transport Forum will not directly deliver transport improvements but can lead on lobbying and ensuring the region has an agreed set of transport priorities (AfA Actions 31-35). Lead partner roles will change over time. In particular, Advantage West Midlands has an early role to establish and encourage the process of cluster development (e.g. AfA Action 12). However, the key lead in taking forward cluster development should eventually migrate to the new cluster champions and action groupings

For each action there is also a range of **other key partners** suggested – although the list is not definitive or exhaustive. These are partners who may have a strategic role, be funders or represent the intended beneficiaries of an action. These partners will work with the lead partner in ensuring progress on the action. The other partners have been set out in alphabetical order, not in order of degree of involvement. There will be other bodies that also wish to contribute to the action, not currently listed.

Advantage West Midlands' Role in Delivering the Agenda for Action

As the development agency for the region, Advantage West Midlands is charged with developing a regional economic strategy and then ensuring it is implemented. However, its role is not to lead or fund all, or indeed the majority, of actions. The Agenda covers a broad spectrum of activities. Advantage West Midlands is the lead partner in roughly a third of the actions, has a funding/ supportive role in rather more and a general interest in the success of all the actions set out here.



⁸ The setting up of the North Staffordshire Task Force and subsequent work has seen rapid development of sub-regional partnership working in North Staffordshire.

10. Measuring Progress and Next Steps

The Agency has been clarifying its own role in part because of a clearer steer from central government and partly as result of identifying where it can add most value to the region to really make a difference. In summary, Advantage West Midlands' future focus is on 'sustainable economic regeneration'. This represents a clear shift in focus, reflecting both the clearer roles for RDAs perceived by central government and the gradual reduction in historic commitments for funding certain activities.

Advantage West Midlands has three key roles, working in partnership with others to offer strategic leadership as:

- **Regional Champion**

An external advocate for the region, working on behalf of the region to secure funding and investment and to influence policy and external perceptions of the region – for instance in helping to set up 'West Midlands in Europe', the regional Transport Policy Forum, and marketing the region;

- **Regional Catalyst**

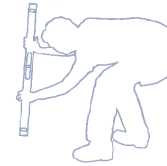
A broker of action, bringing others together to deliver actions of regional significance or to work together better – such as the Advantage Technology Fund, or the Regeneration Zones;

- **Regional Co-ordinator**

A shaper, influencer and encourager, using its funding and strategic overview to align the strategies and programmes of others with the WMES. This is particularly important in helping shape the direction and delivery of the new Learning and Skills Councils and Small Business Service to meet the needs of the region's businesses.

Advantage West Midlands' particular focuses in policy terms are to:

- help drive forward the modernisation and diversification process in the region's businesses, particularly through cluster development;
- ensure better linking of need and opportunity – using Regeneration Zones as a catalyst to make this happen by creating and bringing opportunities to areas of need;
- ensure the region recycles its assets – securing brownfield regeneration to support the development of growth clusters and create opportunity in Regeneration Zones.



Measuring Progress

We can and will measure progress at three levels:

1. At the Overall Level

Against the vision contained in the West Midlands Economic Strategy. The driving force in the vision is that of 'closing the gap' on other better performing European regions. There are three main elements to the vision which aims for the West Midlands to be:

- a premier European location in which to live, work, invest and to visit;
- regarded internationally as world class;
- creating wealth to the advantage of all its citizens.

2. At Pillar Level

There are targets for collective effort across a range of actions within each Pillar of the WMES;

3. At Action Level

Specific milestones and targets will be developed for each of the actions.

The proposed Regional Observatory (AfA Action 58) will be developed in partnership and will have a key role in tracking progress and reporting this to partners.

Overall Progress

At the overall level of the WMES and Agenda for Action, ten headline targets have been developed that relate to the achievement of different strands of the overall vision. The targets consist of progress in 'closing the gap' between this region and others over the next 10 years as well as 'closing the gap' within the region between the most and least advantaged areas and communities. The targets have been developed taking cognisance of the past trends in the region. They represent targets that are both realisable and demanding. They will have to be regularly reviewed in light of new targets set by Government for regional economic development and RDAs⁹.



⁹ DETR 'Strengthening Region's Accountability' Consultation Paper www.local-regions.detr.gov.uk/consult/strength/index.htm and DETR press release 9 March 2001.

Table 9.1: Agenda for Action – Measuring Overall Progress in the West Midlands

Headline Indicators	Baseline (England = 100)	Targets by 2010
1. GDP per head	91 (9% worse) (1998)	GDP per head provides a measure of the relative size of an economy. Over the last decade ¹⁰ GDP per head in the West Midlands grew at a slower rate than nationally. Consequently, between 1994 and 1998 the gap between the West Midlands and the UK average widened from almost 7% to over 8%. The target for the region is to raise trend growth rate of GDP per capita above EU average to close gap by 2.5%.
2. GVA per employee	91 (9% worse) (1997)	GVA per head is a measure of the competitiveness of the manufacturing sector of an economy. Due to the types of industry located in the West Midlands (those that need high levels of labour input and produce relatively low value output) productivity has always been below the national average. But the region has been making up ground. Since 1991 the region has closed the gap from being 13% below the England average to being 9% below. Over the next ten years the region needs to build on this success through programmes of modernisation and diversification. By 2010 the region should have productivity levels to equal the national average.
3. Employment rate (employed as a % of working age population)	98 (2% worse) (2000)	The proportion of the population in work indicates the ability of the economy to create and sustain jobs and reflects the extent that the skills of the population are being put to use in the economy. Over recent years the employment rate in the West Midlands has declined and is now below the national level. The region must aim to raise employment rates to at least the UK average.
4. Value of export of goods and services per head	88 (12% worse) (1999)	Government has only recently collected regional trade statistics so it is difficult to identify historic trends. International trade is important as a measure of comparative advantage of our economic activities and demonstrates the extent to which wealth is brought into the region. Over the next ten years the region needs to boost its levels of sales in the global markets so that the gap between exports per head in the region and those nationally is halved.
5. Share of overseas inward investment into UK	11%	An open economy helps technology transfer, spread best practice and opens up international markets. The level of foreign inward investment is one measure of the openness of an economy. Historically the West Midlands has performed very well in attracting inward investment. Over the next ten years the region must maintain or increase share of inward investment and assist inward investors embed themselves into the regional economy.
6. Share of tourism expenditure by overseas visitors in the UK	3.4%	The number of visitors to a region and the amount of time they stay can be an important indicator of the international 'reputation' of the region. Whilst the region does relatively well in terms of the number of visitors many of these are day trips which do little to support good quality jobs. Over the next ten years the region needs to aim to increase the share of overseas tourism expenditure in the region by 50%.
7. Income support claimants (as % of population over 16)	106 (6% worse)	There are many measures of deprivation but from an economic standpoint income support is perhaps one of the most important. It demonstrates the extent that the economy is failing to support people in the region. Since the industrial restructuring of the mid-1980s the West Midlands has had an above average proportion of income support claimants. We must aim to reduce the proportion of people in the region dependent on income support to less than the national average.
8. ILO unemployment rate	113 (GB) (13% worse) (2000)	An efficient labour market is both necessary for a successful economy and essential to share the wealth created in the region amongst all those who live here. Since the decline of manufacturing industry in the 1980s the West Midlands has struggled with labour market problems. Unemployment rates have been constantly above the national averages. The region needs to halve the difference in regional and national unemployment rates by 2010.
9. Ratio of unemployment rate in RZs to regional average	1.6 (on average unemployment in RZs is 60% higher than the regional average) November 2000	Whilst overall we need to raise employment levels across the region we have identified Regeneration Zones as areas of need and opportunity. To achieve our vision we need to bring conditions in the Zones into line with regional averages. As a starting point the next ten years should see the gap in average unemployment rates within Zones and the rest of the region halved.
10. Ratio of employment rate for Black and Minority Ethnic groups to regional average	On average minority ethnic unemployment is 130% higher than the regional average unemployment	There are stark disparities in the region in the labour market position of different ethnic groups. There are major differences across different Black and Minority Ethnic groups and the relatively poor performance is by no means uniform. A narrowing of the gap in rates would indicate that good progress was being made to tackle the problems of social exclusion in some of the most deprived parts of the region. As a starting point the next ten years should see the gap in average employment rate for Black and Minority Ethnic groups and the region average halved.

¹⁰ Up to 1998 – GDP data at regional level is always two to three years out of date.

Progress in each Pillar

These response targets fall into two groups:

- result indicators measure the direct achievement of activities over the period of the Agenda for Action – up to 2004;
- impact indicators measure the indirect consequences of the activities. These indicators relate closely with the headline indicators.

Outlined below are a series of some of the more important¹¹ result indicators for each of the four pillars of the WMES.

Pillar 1: Developing a Diverse and Dynamic Business Base

Indicator	Baseline	Targets by 2004
Value of R&D (in manufactured products) as % GVA	WM 3.1% Eng. 7.5% (1997)	Innovation is one of the key elements to building a competitive economy. This requires the successful development of new products and production processes. The West Midlands appears to do relatively poorly in terms of the level of expenditure on Research and development. However, the England average is skewed by the Eastern and South East regions whose industrial structure (particularly biotechnology) are in development stages requiring high levels of research and product development. Over the next three years the region needs to capitalise on its science and engineering base to increase its levels of innovation and by 2004 the level of expenditure needs to have increased to more than 4% of GVA.
% of firms introducing new products to the market	WM 14% (1999)	Successful innovation requires not just expenditure on R&D but also design, marketing, training and equipment. This can be captured by the rate at which new products are introduced to market. There is little benchmark data against which to judge the West Midlands' performance, but we must do better. By 2004 the region should aim for 18% of firms to be bringing new products to market.
Business formation rates (VAT registrations as % of business stock)	WM 11.2% Eng 12% (1998)	The number of new business formations is an indicator that the economic environment encourages and promotes enterprise. New businesses provide new jobs, new products and new ideas. Over the next 3 years the region must aim to do at least as well as the national average on new firm formations.

Pillar 2: Promoting a Learning and Skilful Region

Indicator	Baseline	Targets by 2004
% economically active adults with NVQ 4 or equivalent qualifications	WM 22% Eng. 26% (1999)	Investment in people through lifelong learning is becoming increasingly important. In order to improve performance firms increasingly require workers who can adapt to new technologies and processes, generate new ideas and adopt best practice. Whilst we recognise the difference between skills and qualifications, NVQ4 or equivalent level qualifications still give a good indication as to the higher level skills of the region's workforce. In line with national targets we should aim to increase the proportion of adults with NVQ 4 by 5.5%.
% adults with basic skills deficiency	WM 13.9% UK 12%	Every job now requires some level of basic skill. To compete in the changing labour markets people increasingly need higher levels of numeracy and literacy. Over the next 3 years the region should aim to bring down the proportion of adults with basic skills deficiencies to at least the national average.
% employers reporting hard to fill vacancies (1998)	WM 17% GB 15%	Whilst there are benefits to learning and skills development, it is important that the skills of the workforce match industry requirements. We need to avoid skills mismatch, which could lead to higher unemployment or slower economic growth. The number of firms reporting hard to fill vacancies should be no higher than the national average.

¹¹ Many of the key delivery agents have, or are negotiating result indicators with their sponsoring departments. Where this is the case we have used these targets as the appropriate pillar targets. So, for instance, much of the lead responsibility for the learning and skills pillar rests with the LSC and Local Learning Partnerships. They are funded from central government with agreement to deliver the National Learning Targets at a regional level. Consequently the results for the learning and skills pillar reflect the national learning targets.

Pillar 3: Creating the Conditions for Growth

Indicator	Baseline	Targets (by 2004 or 2010)
Car as main mode of transport to work	WM 76% Eng. 70% (1999)	Transport infrastructure is a key component of regional competitiveness. It is important for the efficient movement of people (from home to work or leisure) and goods (to market for finished products or between production centres for raw materials and intermediate goods). The West Midlands has a particularly high proportion of trips to work made by car that contributes to peak hour congestion and environmental pollution. By 2010 the region needs to reduce by 2% the gap between the West Midlands and England proportion of car journeys to work.
Hectares of land reclaimed	3824 ha derelict land (1999)	Encouraging economic growth and development will have implications for the physical infrastructure of the region. It is important that the right types of sites are supplied in appropriate locations to allow firms to reach their potential. But the pattern of physical development must be carried out in a sustainable way. The region should aim to have reclaimed 5% of brownfield land by 2004.

Pillar 4: Regenerating Communities

Indicator	Baseline	Targets by 2004
Employment rates in Regeneration Zones	In order to build a sustainable economy and society it is important that everyone in the region has an opportunity to contribute to and share in the wealth of the region. Regeneration Zones have been identified as areas where there is significant need and considerable opportunity to address that need. We must aim to close the gap between the conditions within the Regeneration Zones and the wider region.	
Unemployment rates in Regeneration Zones	These targets will be developed as part of the process of developing Action Plans for RZs during 2001 based on local priorities and regional targets set by DETR.	
Business formation rates in Regeneration Zones	These targets will be developed as part of the process of developing Action Plans for RZs during 2001 based on local priorities and regional targets set by DETR.	

Delivering the Agenda

The Agenda for Action has been fully adopted by Advantage West Midlands in its Business Plan for 2001-02 and in its longer term planning. The Regional Chamber also fully supports the Agenda and there has been positive feedback during the consultation period. Work is already underway to take forward many of the individual actions, particularly those with clear milestones for the short term. There are four main areas where further work is needed to refine the Agenda and ensure its delivery:

- the targets presented in this document have not been the subject of detailed consultation. They will need to be reviewed in 2002 when progress on the Agenda is reviewed – in part to be consistent with targets in other regional strategies;
- there is a particular requirement to develop joint working in the area of learning and skills – possibly leading to memorandums of understanding/concordats;
- the role of sub-regional partnerships needs to be clarified and sub-regional strategies linked to the Agenda for Action;
- in some areas, especially where Advantage West Midlands or the Regional Chamber is not in the lead, further work is needed to develop and agree the milestones and early actions.

The Agenda for Action is a 'live' document. Advantage West Midlands and the Regional Chamber will ensure that it is updated and refined. We propose to carry out a formal review of progress and of the action every 12 months by February of each year.

Annex A – Details on Actions: Next Steps and Longer Term Actions

Action	Lead Partner	Other Partners	Next Steps	Longer Term Actions	Resources	Action	Lead Partner	Other Partners	Next Steps	Longer Term Actions	Resources
Developing a Diverse and Dynamic Business Base											
1. Implement a marketing and image programme – selling our strengths nationally and internationally	Advantage West Midlands	BMP; Chambers of Commerce; local authorities; RCC; sub-regional partnerships; TPUK; WME; West Midlands First	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue overseas work in selling the region, including joint work with the East Midlands (www.thebritishmidlands.com) – ongoing Agree with regional partners a more coherent and persuasive presentation of the regional offer and to articulate this in a formal marketing plan by November 2001 Launch new regional campaign (2002 and ongoing) 		Advantage West Midlands Objective 2, private sector, sub-regional investment partnerships	6. Integrate support to improve uptake of e-business opportunities in SMEs	SBS-B.Link	Advantage West Midlands; EMBA; '2WM' partnership; TPUK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit of take-up and supply of e-business initiatives by June 2001 Implement RTF framework e-business uptake project covering information, advice and e-Smart awards by September 2001 Provide a coherent e-Business Programme to all SMEs – 2002 onwards 		RTF, Objective 2, SBS, Advantage West Midlands
2. Deliver a co-ordinated programme selling the region to investors	Advantage West Midlands	Sub-regional inward investment partnerships and agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue working with sub-regional partners in delivering high quality inward investment support, to new and existing investors in the region – ongoing Develop terms of reference for a regional Inward Investment Development Group to actively target inward investment by November 2001 Deliver sub-regional partnership inward investment packages (2002 and ongoing) 		Advantage West Midlands Objective 2, private sector, sub-regional investment partnerships	7. Encourage innovation, 'foresight' and new product development in SMEs	SBS-B.Link	Accelerate; Association of FE Colleges; Advantage West Midlands; EMBA; research organisations; WMHEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery plan for RTF supported framework project agreed and launched by September 2001 (subject to State Aids clearance) Deliver 'foresight' events and launch a 'foresight' strategic planning toolkit for SMEs in October 2001 Deliver RTF programme 2002 to 2004 		RTF, SBS, Advantage West Midlands, Accelerate, Objective 2, private sector
3. Implement and continually enhance the Regional e-Portal (www.2westmidlands.com) – especially for inward investors and business to business and business to consumer activity	Advantage West Midlands	'2WM' partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree e-Portal project extension by June 2001 Develop additional 'Business to Business' sites covering a number of industry sectors matching sector/cluster priorities by December 2001 Develop a 'Business to Consumer' portal site for West Midlands' businesses by December 2002 Explore links to other sites Continually enhance and improve e-Portal and ensure it is used as a tool to improve trade within the region 		Advantage West Midlands DTI, private sector, Objective 2	8. Support best practice and improve support networks in the social economy	Enterprise in the Community	Advantage West Midlands; local authorities; RAWM; SBS-B.Link	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission baseline research to establish and map best practice by May 2001 Launch event for SRB 6 programme 'Social Economy Strategies' by June 2001 Improve support networks for Social Enterprises (2002) 		Advantage West Midlands, SBS, Objective 2
4. Develop regional knowledge sharing networks between HEIs, research centres and business	WMHEA	Advantage West Midlands; Association of Colleges; RIS Steering Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bid to EU 'RIS III' programme by May 2001 Run regional pilot programme for SMEs May 2001 to December 2001 Start RIS III programme January 2002 Roll out pilot across SMEs region-wide (2002 onwards) 		LSCs Advantage West Midlands, private sector, Objective 2 and Objective 3	9. Develop a manufacturing best practice region	Advantage West Midlands	CBI; EEF; SBS-B.Link; trade associations; TUC; WMHEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send regional proposal on manufacturing advisory service following partner consultation to DTI by June 2001 Establish new advisory service by March 2002 Prepare and run regional manufacturing summit and conference by April 2002 Deliver and improve advisory service (ongoing) 		Advantage West Midlands, DTI, Objective 2, private sector
5. Increase supply of Regional Risk Finance (including Venture Capital www.advantage-vc.com) and Improve access to finance for SMEs	Advantage West Midlands (supply) SBS-B.Link (access)	Clearing banks; community investment trusts; FTM; SBS; venture capitalists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore ways of improving access to loan funds by November 2001 DTI-backed funds in place by March 2002 Community Venture Capital Fund to be launched by March 2002 Property Development Fund to be launched by March 2002 Enhance existing funds – ongoing Develop further suite of risk capital (including coalfields venture capital fund) 2002 to 2004 		Advantage West Midlands, SBS, venture capitalist, banks, RTF	10. Use graduates more effectively in SMEs	SBS-B.Link	Association of Colleges; Advantage West Midlands; WMHEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and agree a region-wide approach by March 2001 Review existing schemes by December 2001 Implement a region-wide programme (2002 to 2006) 		SBS, HEIs, Objective 2
						11. Support environmental awareness and better business practices programme	SBS-B.Link	Advantage West Midlands; Business in the Environment; Environment Agency; Groundwork; Sustainability Round Table; West Midland Environmental Business Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch 'Environmental Economy' report April 2001 Set up Environmental Business Growth Task Group by May 2001 Agree Action Plan for Group by October 2001 Implement better business programme (2002 to 2004) 		SBS, Objective 2, Environment Agency

Action	Lead Partner	Other Partners	Next Steps	Longer Term Actions	Resources	Action	Lead Partner	Other Partners	Next Steps	Longer Term Actions	Resources
12. Develop clusters through mapping and scoping, then developing business-led cluster action plans	Advantage West Midlands	Business Growth Task Groups; LSCs; sub-regional partnerships; TPUK; WMLGA; WMHEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen Business Growth Task Groups by May 2001 Work with other RDAs on best practice and cross-boundary cluster working opportunities by June 2001 Complete ten action projects mapping each cluster and its opportunities (five by October 2001; five by December 2001) Develop and enhance cluster supply chains through BOPs by December 2001 Market research and foresight exercise completed for each cluster by March 2002 Identify and develop business networks for cluster by March 2002 Identify cluster champions and appoint by March 2002 Implement cluster development networking projects (2002 onwards) Implement cluster supply chain (2002 onwards) 		Advantage West Midlands, RTF, private sector, Objective 2	16. Support the continued diversification of the region's agricultural sector	MAFF	Advantage West Midlands; Countryside Agency; CLBA; FRCA; GOWM; HETB; NFU; Rural RZ; SBS-B.Link; TPUK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree and start implementing the food and drink cluster Action Plan by May 2001 (Advantage West Midlands) Implement the 5 point action plan of the regional rural response team to the Foot and Mouth Disease epidemic by May 2001 Review the linkages and effectiveness of the England Rural Development Plan in the region by October 2001 Continue to implement the England Rural Development Plan (2002 to 2006) 		MAFF; Countryside Agency, SBS, Advantage West Midlands, farmers
13. Develop centres of cluster excellence in design and technology and business support particularly in high technology corridors	Advantage West Midlands	Association of FE Colleges; LSCs; SBS-B.Link; WMHEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete investments in advanced CAD/CAM at Jewellery Innovation Centre, Birmingham and the Hothouse, Stoke – to provide design capability for SMEs by March 2002 Complete a feasibility study on the development of an incubator to support nano-technology related companies by March 2002 Implement findings of feasibility studies into new centres of excellence (2002 onwards) 		Advantage West Midlands, HEIs, RTF, private sector	17. Target international trade promotion and inward investment activity on clusters	BTI	Advantage West Midlands; SBS-B.Link; Sub-regional inward investment partnerships and agencies; TPUK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify priority overseas markets for key sectors and clusters and develop a plan of action to pursue these markets by December 2001 Develop a programme of sector/cluster focused overseas trade missions, trade fairs and exhibitions by December 2001 Ongoing 		BTI, Advantage West Midlands, SBS, Chambers of Commerce, private sector
14. Diversify the region's economy through new developments along high technology corridors (to support clusters)	Advantage West Midlands	Corridor partnerships; sub-regional partnerships; WMHEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete High Technology Corridor study Phase 2 by May 2001. Agree priority development proposals for submission to Secretary of State by June 2001 Develop a cross-corridor approach to medical technology, ICT and transport cluster development Implement phased programme of agreed Corridor projects (2002 onwards) 		Advantage West Midlands, RTF, local authorities, HEIs, private sector	Promoting a Learning and Skilful Region					
15. Support business start-up including spin-out activity from Higher Education Institutions, research centres and firms in clusters and follow-through post-incubator support	SBS-B.Link	Association of Colleges; Advantage West Midlands; sub-regional partnerships; WMHEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review need for regional 'commercialisation spin-out' support by July 2001 Identify existing commercialisation capacity in HEIs by October 2001 Agree a regional incubation strategy by December 2001 Review post-incubation needs and current support by December 2001 Complete 3 incubator developments to support clusters at Aston Science Park (Photonics Cluster), Warwick Technology Park (ICT) and Malvern Hills Science Park (DERA spinouts) by March 2002 Develop comprehensive regional mechanism to support spin-out, covering incubator and commercialisation support (2002) 		SBS (Incubator Fund), Advantage West Midlands, RTF, local authorities, HEIs, Objective 2	18. Develop and agree a regional skills strategy	Advantage West Midlands	Association of Colleges; CBI; Chambers of Commerce; EEF; Employment Service; LEAs; LSCs; SBS-B.Link Regional Chamber; WMHEA; WMLGA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a concordat approach to skills development on region-wide issues between Advantage West Midlands, LSCs and other partners by December 2001 Work in parallel with LSCs' work on local learning strategies to agree regional skill priorities, building on the work already carried out, by March 2002 Review regional skills strategy every 2 years 		Advantage West Midlands, LSCs
						19. Ensure current business cluster skills needs are understood by funders/deliverers and provide tools to access information on cluster specific training	LSCs	Advantage West Midlands; Association of Colleges; business organisations; NTOs; TPUK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree local LSC champion roles for clusters and sectors by June 2001 Communicate cluster development issues to funders/deliverers in each sub-region, by March 2002 Develop and implement business friendly tools to access information on training opportunities in cluster (2002) 		LSCs, Advantage West Midlands, private sector, Objective 2 and Objective 3
						20. Tackle current skills development needs in business clusters (e.g. in construction and building technologies)	LSCs	Advantage West Midlands; Association of Colleges; NTOs; TPUK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree priorities for sub-regional actions to tackle skill needs by May 2001 Explore need for skills task forces in automotive and construction by December 2001 Implement agreed programme (2002 to 2004) 		LSCs, Advantage West Midlands, private sector, Objective 2 and Objective 3

Action	Lead Partner	Other Partners	Next Steps	Longer Term Actions	Resources
21. Address ICT skills shortages and gaps	LSCs	Advantage West Midlands; Association of Colleges; ITNTO; LEAs; WMHEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete 'e-audit' covering skill needs by June 2001 Develop and initiate projects identified in e-audit as being necessary by October 2001 Refresh e-audit (2003) Ongoing implementation of projects 		LSCs, Advantage West Midlands, private sector, Objective 2 and Objective 3
22. Work with learning deliverers to increase longer term supply of skills in clusters	LSCs	Advantage West Midlands; Association of Colleges; LEAs; WMHEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a pilot project to map current FE cluster skills provision, in consultation with deliverers. Contract to be awarded by September 2001 Agree centres of excellence in region for cluster skills development (2002) Create centres of excellence (2003) 		LSCs, private sector, Objective 2 and Objective 3
23. Improve innovation skills in business clusters and HEIs	RIS Steering Group	Advantage West Midlands; WMHEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop 'Understanding Innovation' programme and development plan by December 2001 Implement Programme (2002 onwards) 		LSCs, Advantage West Midlands, private sector, HEIs, Objective 2 and Objective 3
24. Improve access to and suitability of training especially in management skills for SMEs to encourage greater participation (including not-for-profit organisations)	LSCs	Advantage West Midlands; Association of Colleges; Chambers of Commerce; Federation of Small Businesses; RAWM; SBS-B.Link	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot a management development research project to be completed by September 2001 In consultation with partners and deliverers, contract a new management development programme by December 2001 Investigate need for a 'virtual' SME management school (2002) Possible implementation of 'virtual school' 2003 		LSCs, Advantage West Midlands, private sector, HEIs, Objective 2 and Objective 3
25. Promote awareness of and tackle basic skills issues in the region, particularly in RZs	LSCs	Advantage West Midlands; Basic Skills Agency; LEAs; RZ partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish and disseminate an awareness raising leaflet by June 2001 Establish a West Midlands basic skills workplace network by December 2001 Implement basic skills improvement programme – ongoing 		LSCs, ES, Basic Skills Agency, Objective 3
26. Develop and promote best practice case studies in businesses, including awards	SBS-B.Link	Advantage West Midlands; LSCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and produce a minimum of 4 case studies of business and education partnerships by September 2001. Continue to support and existing awards such as the Lord Stafford Awards – ongoing Evaluate impact of awards (2002) 		SBS, Advantage West Midlands, private sector
27. Promote and extend Education Business links, particularly in RZs	LSCs	Business in the Community; CBI; Chambers of Commerce; Connexions; Enterprise in the Community; LEAs; LLL Partnerships; RZ partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure smooth transition to new funding mechanisms for Education Business Partnerships ongoing Continue operation of EBPs in all areas – ongoing Ongoing 		LSCs, private sector, local authorities

Action	Lead Partner	Other Partners	Next Steps	Longer Term Actions	Resources
28. Support an enhanced regional learning network across HE, FE and other sectors	WMHEA and AoC	Advantage West Midlands; LSCs; Ufi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage shared understanding and responses to skills training needs and issues across the region Co-finance through WMnet a regional broadband network for schools. Connect 20% of schools by April 2002 Ensure that all learning locations are connected to broadband by 2003 		HEIs, colleges, local authorities, Objective 2 and Objective 3
29. Ensure a co-ordinated approach to the promotion of learning and to workforce development plans in all employers	LSCs	Advantage West Midlands; Association of Colleges; local education authorities; NTOs; TUC; WMHEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint a Promotions Co-ordinator (through NAICE) to bring together a number of campaigns that promote adult learning by July 2001 Ongoing 		LSCs, Objective 3
30. Promote careers and entrepreneur opportunities in clusters	Connexions and Careers Service Partnerships	Business Growth task Groups; LSCs; Prince's Trust; RZ partnerships; SBS-B.Link	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare information map on opportunities with businesses by March 2002 Ongoing 		LSCs

Creating the Conditions for Growth

31. Support the development of the Regional Transport Policy Forum in its role of advocacy, research and support in improving the region's transport system	Regional Chamber	Advantage West Midlands; WMLGA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and agree research programme to address Forum aims by July 2001 Ensure Forum's establishment as the regional conduit for transport priorities by end 2001 Ongoing 		Advantage West Midlands, Regional Chamber, WMLGA, private sector
32. Ensure the Regional Transport Strategy in new Regional Planning Guidance is consistent with the delivery of the WMES	Transport Policy Forum	Advantage West Midlands; Chambers of Commerce CBI; WMBPG; WMLGA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the review of Regional Planning Guidance and associated Regional Transport Strategy, providing a strategic steer on the role and future policy development of transport modes for both passenger and freight up to and including Examination in Public in Spring 2002 Publish and promote agreed Regional Transport Strategy (2002) 		Advantage West Midlands, Regional Chamber, WMLGA, private sector

Action	Lead Partner	Other Partners	Next Steps	Longer Term Actions	Resources	Action	Lead Partner	Other Partners	Next Steps	Longer Term Actions	Resources	
33. Carry out robust external advocacy and lobbying on current existing transport priorities to funding bodies and infrastructure providers	Transport Policy Forum	Advantage West Midlands; business organisations; WMLGA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-ordinate the production of national RDA strategic and cross-regional transport priorities by June 2001 (Advantage West Midlands) Achieve regional consensus view on priorities for transport investment and management across all modes by July 2001 Advocacy to funders and infrastructure providers on major regional issues including WCML upgrade; re-modelling of Birmingham New Street Station; M6/M5/M42 box upgrade (taking account of emerging Multi-Modal Study conclusions), Metro extensions, Birmingham International Airport/NEC gateway access) and market towns transport issues – ongoing Continue to promote regional interests through the multi-modal study tranches and related studies, ensuring integration with the emerging Regional Planning Guidance and Regional Transport Strategy by mid 2002 Launch Regional Transport Strategy and lobby Government and infrastructure providers (2002) Review progress on investment and commitments – ongoing 		Advantage West Midlands, Regional Chamber, WMLGA, private sector	38. Review brownfield land and promote re-use opportunities across the region – including redundant rural buildings (consistent with new Regional Planning Guidance priorities)	Advantage West Midlands	Environment Agency; Groundwork; local authorities; RZ Partnerships; sub-regional partnerships; WMLGA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree location of new URCS (where appropriate) with partners by June 2001 Explain and promote new fiscal regime and partnership funding for brownfield regeneration by July 2001 Undertake review of brownfield land in partnership with local authorities to determine status and potential by October 2001 Establish database for each site by December 2001 Identify and agree with partners' priority projects for development from December 2001 onwards which support clusters and RZs Set up URCS structures (where appropriate) by March 2002 Deliver new employment projects on brownfield sites – ongoing Agree URCS masterplans (2002) Implement masterplans (2003-2010) 		Advantage West Midlands, local authorities, private developers and occupiers, Objective 2	
34. Increase transport network capacity at key locations and along key routes agreed in the Regional Transport Strategy	WMLGA	Centro; Highways Agency; local transport authorities; Railtrack; Transport Policy Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assemble transport investment strategy, based on Regional Planning Guidance, to underpin regional priorities by end 2002 Complete all key regional priorities schemes by 2011 		Railtrack, SRA, Highways Agency, local transport authorities, train and bus operators	39. Assess the suitability of the current property offer for clusters and business growth (consistent with new Regional Planning Guidance priorities)	Advantage West Midlands	SBS-B Link; sub-regional partnerships; WMHEA; WMLGA;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint consultants to identify options and adopt strategy by September 2001 Implement agreed key projects – ongoing 		Advantage West Midlands, Objective 2	
35. Invest in better traffic management and better transport interchanges	WMLGA	Centro; local transport authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish transport investment through Local Transport Plans – on-going Ongoing 		Local transport authorities, train and bus operators	40. Identify and assemble strategic land holdings to support a dynamic and diverse business base (consistent with new Regional Planning Guidance priorities)	Advantage West Midlands	local authorities; sub-regional partnerships; WMLGA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review implications of RTF Corridors study work and Regional Planning Guidance employment land review for need for new strategic land holdings in the region by September 2001 Progress availability of major investment sites at Wobaston Road and Pedimore Complete delivery of major investment sites (2002 to 2003) Agree on regional priorities for additional strategic sites (2002) 		Advantage West Midlands, local authorities, Objective 2	
36. Encourage new working practices and the use of ICT to reduced trips (e.g. car-pooling, home-working etc.)	Transport Policy Forum	Advantage West Midlands; business organisations; local authorities; NHS and other major public sector employers; TUC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners to devise a strategic approach to Green Travel Plan design and usage by March 2002. Promote new approaches to all employers (2002) Support pilot and demonstration projects (2002 to 2003) 		Advantage West Midlands, local transport authorities, private sector	41. Ensure that the WMES and the new Regional Planning Guidance are aligned	WMLGA	Advantage West Midlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete research into implication of RZs and property issues for RPG by May 2001 Produce preliminary draft RPG for consultation by July 2001 Produce draft RPG for submission to Government by September 2001 Complete in short term 		Advantage West Midlands, WMLGA, GOWM	
37. Co-ordinate the upgrading of ICT infrastructure to ensure the delivery of affordable broadband services to everyone – especially in rural areas	Advantage West Midlands (as initial broker)	CBI; local authorities; ICT Strategy Steering Group; NHS; WMHEA; WMLGA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish gaps in existing broadband provision by April 2001 Create Broadband stakeholder group to oversee delivery plan by May 2001 Delivery Plan agreed by June 2001 Complete roll-out of broadband access to all parts of the region (2003) 		Advantage West Midlands, telecommunications providers, FE Colleges, HEIs, local authorities, NHS							

Action	Lead Partner	Other Partners	Next Steps	Longer Term Actions	Resources	Action	Lead Partner	Other Partners	Next Steps	Longer Term Actions	Resources	
Regenerating Communities												
42. Set up RZ structures and mechanisms for measuring impact	Advantage West Midlands	GOWM; local authorities; RZ partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure businesses are engaged in the design and delivery of RZ projects – ongoing Approach agreed on baseline and impact measurement by September 2001 RZ Stage 3 Prospectuses (three year Action Plans from April 2002) submitted in September and agreed in outline by November 2001 and developed over the next 6 months Review Action Plans and monitor progress annually 		Advantage West Midlands and RZ partnerships	49. Support regional Healthy Communities Strategy	Health Development Agency	Advantage West Midlands; GOWM; local authorities; LSPs; RZ partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a regional Health and Regeneration Forum to gain commitment to tackle health inequalities and targets for improving health by July 2001 Regional summit to agree a 'Health in Regeneration' strategy by November 2001 Develop strategy to increase production, distribution and consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables to benefit RZ residents by March 2002 Develop and pilot health impact assessment toolkit in RZs by July 2002 Ongoing 		HDA, Advantage West Midlands, local authorities	
43. Deliver Regional Summit and agreement on strategy and resource alignment into RZs by major funding bodies	Advantage West Midlands	Employment Service; GOWM; Housing Corporation; local authorities; NHS; LSCs; RZ partnerships; WMLGA; SBS-B.Link	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summit with key regional partners and RZ partnerships by September 2001 Resource commitments to RZs by major funding bodies 		Advantage West Midlands, Employment Service, Housing Corporation, local authorities, LSCs, NHS, SBS-B.Link	50. Explore scope of and implement new regional centre of excellence in urban design, regeneration and community renewal	Advantage West Midlands	GOWM; RAWM; RCC; WMHEA; WMLGA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess consultancy research report findings and business plan and agree options by September 2001 Prepare detailed funding and business plan (2002) Develop and implement centre (2002 to 2003) 		Advantage West Midlands, GOWM, local authorities, private sector, Objective 2	
44. Create a co-ordinated programme of "bridges to success" in each RZ (covering training, business start-up support, transport, information, aspirations etc)	RZ partnerships	Advantage West Midlands; Employment Service; LEAs; local strategic partnerships; LSCs; SBS-B.Link	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for best practice in 'job to people links' by September 2001 Develop cluster employer to community employment link and training opportunity programmes in RZs by March 2002 Implement programmes (2002 and ongoing) 		Advantage West Midlands, local authorities (e.g. Neighbourhood Renewal Fund), Employment Service, LSCs, Objective 2 and Objective 3	51. Develop best practice and support networks for community empowerment strategies	RAWM	Advantage West Midlands; BTC; EMBRACE; WMLGA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research to map and investigate the potential generic voluntary sector activity across the region by July 2001 Start roll out of best practice on community empowerment to RZs and local delivery partnerships by March 2002 Provide ongoing support for networks 		Advantage West Midlands, local authorities, WMLGA, Objective 2, private sector	
45. Develop the role of NHS and other large public sector bodies as a key employer and providers of training in RZs	Employment Service	NHS Executive; NHS Trusts; local authorities; police services and others; RZ partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map and integrate existing activity in RZ action plans by September 2001 Integrate current activity, particularly with the NHS, into 'bridges to success' programmes in RZs Ongoing 		Employment Service, NHS Trusts, LSCs, other public bodies	52. Develop best practice and support to ensure effective engagement in partnerships by ethnic minorities	EMBRACE	Advantage West Midlands; CRE; Ethnic Minority Business Forum; local authorities; RAWM; Regional Chamber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research to map black & minority ethnic voluntary sector activity & opportunities within the West Midlands completed by June 2001 Launch the EMBRACE network June 2001 Launch pilot project 'Auditing BME Community Participation in Regeneration' by June 2001 Provide ongoing support for networks 		Advantage West Midlands, private sector	
46. Implement market towns initiative across the region	Advantage West Midlands	Countryside Agency; local authorities; MAFF; town and parish councils; WM Regional Market Towns Task Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First group of towns selected for initial regeneration activity by April 2001 Second group of towns selected for health checking process by April 2001 First group of towns produce revitalisation strategies by July 2001 Second group of towns produce Revitalisation strategies by March 2002 Implement revitalisation strategies 2002 to 2006 		Advantage West Midlands, Countryside Agency, local authorities, Objective 2	53. Support the creation and work of the Social Inclusion Policy Forum	Regional Chamber	Advantage West Midlands; RAWM; WMLGA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold Regional Social Inclusion Conference by November 2001 Ongoing 		Regional Chamber, Advantage West Midlands	
47. Re-use brownfield land for mixed use development	local authorities	Advantage West Midlands; housing associations; Housing Corporation; RZ partnerships; WMLGA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support development of current 'urban villages' in Nuneaton, Bilston, Wolverhampton (St John's) and the Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham Explore and agree further locations in RZs (2002) Implement new mixed-use schemes (2003 onwards) 		Local authorities, Advantage West Midlands, Housing Corporation, private developers, Objective 2	54. Continue West Midlands in Europe partnership and lobby for region in Europe	West Midlands in Europe	Advantage West Midlands; GOWM; MEPs; Regional Chamber; WMLGA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a European Policy Forum by December 2001 Produce a European Strategy that links European activities and resources to the Agenda for Action and other strategies by March 2002 Establish specialist working groups on EU working: marketing the region in Europe; promoting the region's business interests in Europe; post-2006 funding and further development of innovation activity; Inter-regional co-operation and networking Implement European strategy Lobby on post-2006 issues Develop stronger inter-regional links (all 2002 ongoing) 		Advantage West Midlands, WMLGA, private sector	
48. Develop a regional housing strategy on the role of housing in regenerating communities	Regional Housing Partnership	GOWM; Housing Corporation; local authorities; RZ partnerships; WMLGA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree strategy by March 2002 Complete in short term 		WMLGA, Housing Corporation, GOWM							

Annex B – Resources for the Agenda for Action

Action	Lead Partner	Other Partners	Next Steps	Longer Term Actions	Resources
Other Regional Partnership Actions					
55. Promote Birmingham International Airport as a gateway to the region	Birmingham Airport	Advantage West Midlands; BMP; local authorities; HoETB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Airport Economic Development Strategy (ongoing) Review strategy by March 2002 Ongoing, but review and evaluate strategy 2003 		Birmingham Airport, Advantage West Midlands, HoETB,
56. Support the development of Birmingham as an international city for business and visitors – including Eastside development and City of Culture bid	Birmingham City Council	Advantage West Midlands; Birmingham Forward; BMP; HoETB; Locate in Birmingham; Regional Chamber; Regional Cultural Consortium; WMLGA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit bid team for City of Culture and launch bid by May 2001 Submit bid and lobby Government by March 2002 Depends on success of bid Ongoing lobbying required before and after bid submitted 		Birmingham City Council, Regional Chamber, Advantage West Midlands, Birmingham Forward, HoETB
57. Advocate and promote the national and international assets of the region	Regional Chamber	Advantage West Midlands; Birmingham Forward; BMP; local authorities; NEC Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the UK Government is aware of the national importance of the major facilities in the region (e.g. the ICC, the NIA, the NEC and the National Agricultural Centre at Stoneleigh) Prepare economic impact document by March 2002 Ongoing 		NEC Group, Birmingham City Council, Regional Chamber, Advantage West Midlands, Birmingham Forward, HoETB
58. Set up Regional Intelligence Unit/Observatory and mechanisms to share information and intelligence	Advantage West Midlands	GOWM; Regional NHS; WMHEA; WMLGA; LSCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete extensive consultation with all partners by June 2001 Prepare 3-year Business Plan by August 2001 Create first stage of a web-site by September 2001 Ensure new unit operational by March 2002 Expand and enhance work of unit (ongoing) Review progress (2004) 		Advantage West Midlands, GOWM, WMLGA, LSCs, Objective 2
59. Complete and agree an integrated sustainable regional tourism strategy and action plan – and a concerted effort to improve the tourism experience	HoETB	Advantage West Midlands; Birmingham Marketing Partnership; Countryside Agency; local authorities; Regional Cultural Consortium and Forum; WMLGA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree new integrated sustainable tourism strategy by December 2001 Invest in improved tourism marketing, integrated information and ticketing and visitor attractions (ongoing) 		HoETB, Advantage West Midlands, RCC, Objective 2, local authorities
60. Develop concordats with regional partners setting out roles and responsibilities for implementing the Agenda for Action	Advantage West Midlands	GOWM; LSCs; MAFF; Regional Chamber; SBS-B.Link; sub-regional partnerships; The Countryside Agency; WMLGA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree regional concordat (Advantage West Midlands, GOWM, Regional Chamber and WMLGA) by May 2001 Agree Rural Accord action plan by September 2001 Explore the benefits of a concordat approaches between regional institutions and sub-regional agencies (SBS-B.Link, local LSCs and sub-regional partnerships) Review concordats annually 		Limited cost

An initial mapping exercise has identified the resources from the public sector that are or might become available to support the progress of the Agenda for Action. At present these resources are not mapped against each individual action but are summarised at the level of each Pillar. The following table and charts summarise the current best estimate of the future resource position for 'core' and 'non-core' funding related to economic development and the actions set out in the Agenda.

Core funding includes all expenditure that is central to economic regeneration (for example, this category includes EU Structural Funds, DTI funding for business support and community regeneration funding such as New Deal for Communities and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund).

Non-core funding includes expenditure that is related, but not central, to economic regeneration (for example pre-16 education funding, housing expenditure and National Lottery 'good cause' monies).

The figures do not include the value of any tax relief nor of the very major contribution of the private sector. To put the figures into context, total GDP was of the order of £65 billion in the region in 1999 and total exports from the region were around £12 billion and total private sector contribution to GDP around £55 billion.

In practice the boundaries between these two types of funding is inevitably arbitrary as the definition of 'contribution to economic development' is open to wide interpretation.

Key points are:

Core Funding

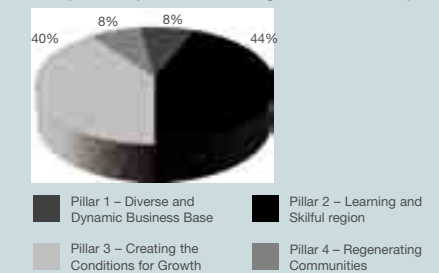
- The region will receive of the order of £3.2 billion towards economic development and regeneration in 2001/2.
- The great bulk of this funding (over 80%) has been identified as supporting actions in Pillars 2 and 3. This funding relates primarily to education/training and to transport. The resources directly available for developing a dynamic and diverse business base and regenerating communities are rather smaller.
- Relatively little funding supports Pillar 1 – investment in this area is largely by the private sector as is to be expected.
- Over a 10 year period, the funding available would be of the order of at least £29 billion (today's values) – over half the total is likely to relate to becoming a learning and skilful region.

Non-Core Funding

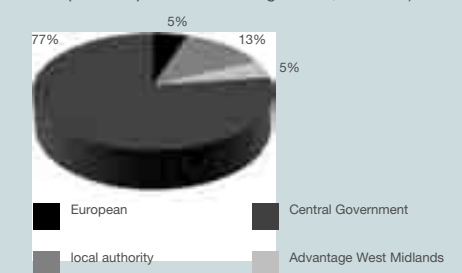
- Taking a broader view of resources for improving the region – including pre-16 education, housing expenditure and national lottery funding – the total available in 2001/2 rises to £7.5 billion and nearly £80 billion over 10 years.
- Non-core funding is particularly important in Pillars 2 and 4.

The scale of resources available to the public sector and the contribution – through investments – of the private sector to economic development may be perceived as inadequate for the task of achieving the WMES 10-year vision. By being clear on the steps we need to take – our Agenda for Action – we can marshal and use our resources more effectively. We should also look at the ways we use our resources and the leverage that can be secured. By collectively agreeing priorities we can focus on how best to use additional resources to unlock potential, promote innovation and secure investment. This clarity will provide organisations in the West Midlands with a well-defined rationale for the deployment of additional resources to achieve the Economic Strategy agreed collectively by us.

Estimated public sector resources: West Midlands Region (2001/02) – Percentage breakdown by pillar
(percentage relates to share of total core economic development expenditure in the region – £3,165million)



Estimated public sector resources: West Midlands Region (2001/02) – Percentage breakdown by Funding Source
(percentage relates to share of total core economic development expenditure in the region – £3,165million)



Estimated public sector resources: West Midlands region (2001/02 to 2010/11) – analysis by WMES Pillar (£ Millions)

Pillar		Year 1 (2001/02)	Year 2 (2002/03)	Year 3 (2003/04)	Year 4 (2004/05)
Pillar 1 – Diverse & Dynamic Business Base	Core	267	280	292	2,696
	(% of total core)	(8.4)	(8.7)	(8.8)	(9.3)
	Non-core	0	0	0	0
	All public sector	267	280	292	2,696
Pillar 2 – Learning and skilful region	Core	1,374	1,427	1,485	16,109
	(% of total core)	(43.4)	(44.4)	(45.0)	(55.7)
	Non-core	2,504	2,559	2,626	27,408
	All public sector	3,878	3,986	4,111	43,717
Pillar 3 – Creating the conditions for Growth ⁴	Core	1,260	1,228	1,233	7,608
	(% of total core)	(39.8)	(38.1)	(37.4)	(26.3)
	Non-core	5	5	5	50
	All public sector	1,265	1,223	1,238	7,658
Pillar 4 – Regenerating Communities	Core	262	281	291	2,522
	(% of total core)	(8.3)	(8.7)	(8.8)	(8.7)
	Non-core	1,921	1,966	2,006	21,105
	All public sector	2,183	2,247	2,297	23,627
All Core ¹	3,165	3,217	3,301	28,937	
All Non-Core ²	4,429	4,530	4,638	48,762	
All Public Sector ³	7,594	7,747	7,939	77,699	

Notes:

¹Core funding includes all expenditure that is central to economic regeneration (for example, this category includes EU Structural Funds, DTI funding for business support and community regeneration funding such as New Deal for Communities and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund). Some relatively small-scale expenditure (Intereg, DTI University Challenge Fund, DTI Regional Investment Grant) is currently missing from the data above.

²Non core funding includes expenditure that is related, but not central, to economic regeneration (for example pre16 education funding, and National Lottery 'good cause' monies). Expenditure related to 'early years' activities (Surestart, Early Excellence Centres) is currently missing from the data above.

³All public sector funding does not include funding which is (arguably) unrelated to economic regeneration (for example NHS funding and local authority funding for fire, police and social services).

⁴The resources under Pillar 3 include all the £1.7 billion allocated for West Coast Main Line improvements over the next three financial years.

Estimated public sector resources: West Midlands region (2001/02 to 2010/11) – analysis by funding source (£ Millions)

Sector		Year 1 (2001/02)	Year 2 (2002/03)	Year 3 (2003/04)	All Years (1-10)
European	Core	157	156	159	969
	(% of total core)	(5.0)	(4.9)	(4.8)	(3.3)
	Non-core	0	0	0	0
	All public sector	157	156	159	969
Central Government ⁴	Core	2,431	2,467	2,523	21,518
	(% of total core)	(76.9)	(76.7)	(76.4)	(74.4)
	Non-core	266	243	265	273
	All public sector	2,657	2,710	2,788	24,254
Advantage West Midlands	Core	158	168	185	1,882
	(% of total core)	(5.0)	(5.2)	(5.6)	(6.5)
	Non-core	0	0	0	0
	All public sector	158	168	185	1,882
local authority	Core	417	425	434	4,556
	(% of total core)	(13.2)	(13.2)	(13.1)	(15.8)
	Non-core	4,203	4,287	4,373	46,027
	All public sector	4,620	4,712	4,807	50,593
Charitable sources/other ⁵	Core	0	0	0	0
	(% of total core)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
	Non-core	0	0	0	0
	All public sector	0	0	0	0
All Core ¹	3,165	3,217	3,301	28,937	
All Non-Core ²	4,429	4,530	4,638	48,762	
All Public Sector ³	7,594	7,747	7,939	77,699	

Notes:

¹Core funding includes all expenditure that is central to economic regeneration (for example, this category includes EU Structural Funds, DTI funding for business support and community regeneration funding such as New Deal for Communities and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund). Some relatively small-scale expenditure (Intereg, DTI University Challenge Fund, DTI Regional Investment Grant) is currently missing from the data above.

²Non core funding includes expenditure that is related, but not central, to economic regeneration (for example pre16 education funding, and National Lottery 'good cause' monies). Expenditure related to 'early years' activities (Surestart, Early Excellence Centres) is currently missing from the data above.

³All public sector funding does not include funding which is (arguably) unrelated to economic regeneration (for example NHS funding and local authority funding for fire, police and social services).

⁴This is a broad category that covers all central government economic development monies deployed in the region – much of this funding will be channelled through a variety of regional and sub-regional intermediaries such as GOWM, the local Learning and Skills Councils and the various Small Business Service franchises. No Advantage West Midlands expenditure has been counted in this category.

⁵This includes funding from agencies such as the Coalfield Regeneration Trust and the Prince's Trust.

Estimated public sector resources: West Midlands region (2001/02 to 2010/11)
Funding sources included in data tables

Main Identifier	Sub Identifier	Core (●)/ Non-Core	Main Identifier	Sub Identifier	Core (●)/ Non-Core
Objective 2	P1: Developing Business Base	●	DETR ¹	Other trunk road improvements	●
Objective 2	P2: Creating Conditions for Growth	●	Railtrack	West Coast Main Line	●
Objective 2	P3: Regenerating Communities	●	DETR	Local Transport Plans	●
Objective 3	PF1 – Active Labour Market Policies	●	MAFF ¹	Rural Transport Fund	●
Objective 3	PF2: Promoting Equal Opportunities for All	●	MAFF	England Rural Development Programme	●
Objective 3	PF3: Lifelong Learning	●	Countryside Agency		●
Objective 3	PF4: Adaptability & Entrepreneurship	●	DfEE	Education Action Zones	●
Objective 3	PF5: Improving participation of Women	●	DfEE	NGFL	●
Objective 2 & 3	Technical Assistance	●	DfEE	New Deal for Schools	●
EU Community Funds	LEADER Plus	●	DfEE	Excellence in Cities	●
EU Community Funds	INTEREGG III	●	DfEE	Connexions Service	●
EU Community Funds	URBAN	●	DfEE	Careers Service	●
EU Community Funds	EQUAL	●	DfEE	Surestart	●
DfEE	Local LSC budgets	●	DfEE	Children's Fund ¹	●
DfEE	Employment Service budget	●	DfEE	Newstart ¹	●
GOWM	UK On-line program	●	DfEE	Early Excellence Centres ¹	●
HEFCE	Recurrent Grants (teaching and 'other' grants)	●		English Heritage	●
HEFCE	Recurrent Grants (research)	●		Groundwork	●
Research grants	ESRC, MRC, etc	●		Inland Waterways ¹	●
HE Fees ¹		●	National Lottery	Arts	●
DfEE ¹	University for Industry ¹	●	National Lottery	Charities Board	●
DTI ¹	University Challenge Fund ¹	●	National Lottery	Heritage	●
DTI ¹	Regional Enterprise Centres ¹	●	National Lottery	Millennium	●
DTI	Main SBS budget	●	National Lottery	Sports	●
DTI	Phoenix Fund	●	National Lottery	New Opportunities Fund	●
DTI	Enterprise Fund	●	Advantage West Midlands	Skills Development Fund	●
DTI ¹	UK High Technology Fund ¹	●	Advantage West Midlands	Rural Development	●
DTI	Competitiveness Development Fund	●	Advantage West Midlands	Regional Innovation Fund	●
DTI	Regional Innovation Fund	●	Advantage West Midlands	Inward Investment	●
DTI	Enterprise Grant	●	Advantage West Midlands	Regional Supply Office	●
DTI	British Trade International	●	Advantage West Midlands	Single Regeneration Budget	●
DTI	SMART	●	Advantage West Midlands	Land and Property	●
HEFCE	HEROBIC	●	local authority (cap)	Education	●
HEFCE	Science Research Investment Fund	●	local authority (cap)	Transport	●
	Rover Taskforce	●	local authority (rev)	Education	●
GOWM	Regional Selective Assistance	●	local authority (rev)	EPC Services (e.g. Libraries, Sports Centres, Environmental services etc)	●
GOWM ¹	Regional Investment Grants ¹	●		Environmental services etc)	●
	Heart of England Tourist Board ¹	●	local authority (rev)	Social Services	●
DETR	Neighbourhood Renewal Fund	●	local authority (rev)	Housing	●
DETR	New Deal For Communities	●	National Trust ¹		●
DETR	Birmingham Northern Relief Road	●	Princes Trust ¹		●
		●	Coalfields Regeneration Trust ¹		●

Notes:
¹Financial data is currently missing for these funding sources.

Annex C – Agenda for Action Consultation

Organisations Replying to the Agenda for Action Consultation

African Caribbean Business Forum
 Association of Colleges in the West Midlands
 Birmingham & West Midlands Print Initiative
 Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council
 Birmingham City Council
 Birmingham Economic Development Partnership Ltd
 Birmingham Forward
 Birmingham Marketing Partnership
 Black Country Consortium
 British Polymer Training Association
 Burden, Richard – MP for Birmingham Northfield
 Burton College
 Cannock Chase Council
 CENTRO
 City of Stoke on Trent
 Construction Industry Training Board
 Country Land and Business Association
 Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce
 Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire (CSW) Partnership Ltd
 CPRE
 Dept of Planning, Transport & Economic Strategy, Warwickshire County Council
 Directorate of Environmental Services, North Warwickshire Borough Council
 Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (Planning and Leisure Department)
 East Staffordshire Borough Council
 EEF West Midlands
 Employment Service (West Midlands Region)
 English Nature (West Midlands)
 Environment Agency, Midlands Region
 Farming and Rural Conservation Agency (FRCA)
 Federation of Small Businesses
 First Tuesday Midlands / Wired Midlands
 Forestry Commission
 Friends of the Earth, Midlands Office
 Further Education Funding Council (West Midlands Regional Committee)
 Government Office for the West Midlands
 Groundwork West Midlands
 Heart of England Tourist Board
 Hereford and Worcester Learning and Skills Council
 Herefordshire Partnership
 Highways Agency
 Inland Waterways Association (Lichfield branch)
 Kirwan, J
 Mahony, D
 National Urban Forestry Unit
 NHS Executive (Public Health)
 PATH WM
 Racial Equality West Midlands
 Regeneration and Transport, Wolverhampton City Council (for Wolverhampton Strategic Partnership)
 Regional Action West Midlands (RAWM) & Ethnic Minority & Black Regional Action for Community Empowerment (EMBRACE)
 RSPB
 Rugby Borough Council
 Sandwell MBC & Sandwell Civic Partnership
 Shrewsbury & Atcham Borough Council
 Shropshire County Council
 Shropshire Partnership
 South Staffordshire Council (Strategic Development Services)

Southern Staffordshire Strategic Alliance
 Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
 Staffordshire Training & Enterprise Council
 Sustainable Staffordshire (Staffordshire Environment Forum)
 The Church of England, Diocese of Lichfield
 The Competitiveness Centre Wolverhampton University
 The Countryside Agency, West Midlands Region
 The Housing Corporation West Midlands
 The National Forest
 The Wildlife Trusts West Midlands Region
 University of Birmingham
 Walley, Joan – MP for Stoke on Trent (North)
 Walsall Community Transport
 West Midlands Business Policy group
 West Midlands Centre for the Built Environment
 West Midlands Environmental Business Club
 West Midlands In Europe Office (Brussels)
 West Midlands Local Government Association
 West Midlands Low Pay Unit
 West Midlands Network of Rural Communities
 West Midlands Regional Churches Forum
 West Midlands Regional Cultural Consortium
 West Midlands Regional Group of Chambers of Commerce
 West Midlands Regional Museums Council
 West Midlands Regional Sustainability Forum
 West Midlands Round Table for Sustainable Development
 Williams, A
 Worcestershire County Council (for Worcestershire Partnership)

Organisations receiving a presentation as part of the Agenda for Action Consultation

- Sub-regional partnerships
- Birmingham Regeneration Partnership
 - Black Country Consortium
 - Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Partnership Ltd
 - North Staffordshire Partnership
 - Shropshire Partnership
 - Southern Staffordshire Alliance
 - Telford and Wrekin Partnership

Other Organisations

- Confederation of British Industry
- Federation of Small Businesses
- West Midlands Business Policy Group
- West Midlands Minority Business Forum
- Association of Colleges
- Learning and Skills Councils
- West Midlands Education and Training Forum
- West Midlands Higher Education Association
- Regional Cultural Forum
- Regional Innovation Strategy Steering Group
- West Midlands Churches Forum
- West Midlands Cultural Consortium
- West Midlands Rural Network
- West Midlands Sustainable Development Round Table
- Enterprise in the Community
- Groundwork West Midlands
- Regional Action West Midlands
- Employment Service
- Government Office for the West Midlands

Annex D – Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Abbreviation	Meaning	Abbreviation	Meaning
2westmidlands	Consortium running regional e-Portal	LEA	Local Education Authority
Accelerate	Programme to help the modernisation and diversification of the automotive supply chain in the region	LLL	Life Long Learning
AfA	Agenda for Action	LSC	Learning and Skills Council (there is one national LSC and, in the region, there are 6 sub-regional LSCs)
AoC	Association of Colleges (in further education)	LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
BITC	Business in the Community	MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
BGTG	Business Growth Task Group	MEPs	Members of the European Parliament
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic	NIACE	The national organisation for adult learning
BMP	Birmingham Marketing Partnership	NEC	National Exhibition Centre
BOP	Business opportunity partnerships	NFU	National Farmers Union
Broadband	Large capacity telecommunications connections capable of carrying large volumes of data (for instance video pictures)	NGfL	National Grid for Learning
BSA	Basic Skills Agency	NHS	National Health Service
BTI	British Trade International	NIA	National Indoor Arena
CBI	Confederation of British Industry	NOMIS	National On-line manpower Information System – a database of key statistics
Centro	Passenger Transport Authority for the former West Midlands County area	NTO	National Training Organisation (for each sector or cross-sector occupation)
CITB	Construction Industry Training Board	NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
CLBA	Countryside Landowners and Business Association	Objective 2	European Union Structural Funds covering urban, rural and industrial areas facing economic restructuring
Connexions	New Careers Service delivery bodies	Objective 3	European Union Structural Funds for training and upskilling industries and people in need
CRE	Commission for Racial Equality	ONS	Office of National Statistics
DERA	Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (based at Malvern)	R&D	Research and Development
DETR	Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions	RAWM	Regional Action West Midlands (voluntary & community sector co-ordination body)
DIEE	Department of Education and Employment	RCC	Regional Cultural Consortium
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry	RDA	Regional Development Agency
EAZ	Education Action Zone	RIS	Regional Innovation Strategy
EBP	Education Business Partnership	RPG	Regional Planning Guidance
EEF	Engineering Employers Federation	RTF	Rover Task Force
EMBA	Ethnic Minority Business Association	RTS	Regional Transport Strategy
EMBRACE	West Midlands Black Voluntary Sector Network	RZ	Regeneration Zones
EU	European Union	SBS	Small Business Service
FE	Further Education	SME	Small and Medium Sized Enterprise
FRCA	Farming and Rural Conservation Agency	SPD	Single Programming Document (sets out the strategy and funding for EU Objective 2 Programmes)
FTM	First Tuesday Midlands	SRA	Strategic Rail Authority
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	TPUK	Trade Partners UK
GOWM	Government Office for the West Midlands	TUC	Trades Union Congress
GVA	Gross Value Added	Ufi	University for Industry
HEI	Higher Education Institution	UN	United Nations
HAZ	Health Action Zone	URC	Urban Regeneration Company
HDA	Health Development Agency	WMBPG	West Midlands Business Policy Group
ICC	International Convention Centre	WCML	West Coast Main Line
ICT	Information and communication technology	WMLGA	West Midlands Local Government Association
ILO	International Labour Office (a UN institution)	WMIE	West Midlands in Europe
ITNTO	IT industry national training organisation	WMES	West Midlands Economic Strategy
HofETB	Heart of England Tourist Board (covers West and East Midlands)	WMHEA	West Midlands Higher Education Association
LAs	Local Authorities	WML	Wired Midlands Limited
		WMNet	A regional broadband network for schools