

Future North West: Our Shared Priorities

August 2010

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Foreword

Local authorities, private sector organisations, voluntary groups and partners from the length and breadth of the North West have come together to agree this statement of priorities and framework for activity over the next 20 years.

The North West embraces several distinctive and diverse localities which share a number of common aims and aspirations. Future North West reflects these and sets out clear priorities for making the North West, as a whole, more successful and sustainable.

We know that the economy must be rebalanced – from public to private sector, from services to products and from south to north. The private rather than public sector will be critical to future growth and employment in the North West. Global and national imperatives also require a stronger emphasis on advanced manufacturing, low carbon technologies, social enterprise, energy and food security, responding to climate change, plus a shift in behaviour towards more efficient use of natural resources.

Future North West therefore makes clear what needs to happen to ensure that private sector investment is supported and that places and people can prosper. We trust it provides confidence for that additional investment

to begin. It does not set out to repeat all that happens at a local level. Only where an issue needs to be tackled at the level of the North West, or where a proposed intervention will have significance beyond local boundaries, is it included.

Future North West is based on a sound and comprehensive evidence base. It has also benefited from a sustainability assessment and an analysis of the North West's environmental limits, as well as an extensive engagement process over the last two years.

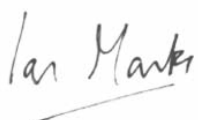
We believe it provides a compelling framework for local authorities, businesses, voluntary, community and faith sector and government bodies to work together to deal with issues which cross local boundaries and are critical to securing a sustainable and prosperous future for the North West. We trust that it will also inform emerging government thinking and decision making about rebalancing the economy and supporting action at the right scale.

Your comments are now requested by 8th October 2010.

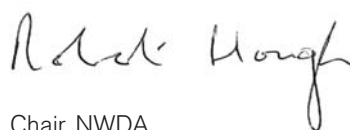
Our intention is to finalise Future North West, taking account of comments received, following the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review.



Chair, 4NW



Deputy Chair, 4NW



Chair, NWDA



Regional Director,
Confederation of British Industry



Regional Director,
Institute of Directors



Chief Executive,
NW Business Leadership Team



Chief Executive, North West
Chambers of Commerce



Chair, Private Sector
Partners NW



Chair, Voluntary Sector
North West

Future North West:
Our Shared Priorities

Section A

Setting the context

Setting the Context

Introduction

The North West of England is a great place to live, work, learn, visit and invest in. It is Europe's 12th largest economy with excellent international connections via our ports and airports. It is the UK's largest manufacturing region, home to some of the world's leading companies. It has exceptional strengths in the nuclear industry, with half the UK's civil nuclear workforce, as well as real strengths in the bio-medical and digital and creative industries, including the recent development of MediaCityUK.

We have a long and proud history. The North West was the birthplace of the industrial revolution and home to many inventions such as the splitting of the atom and the UK's first intercity passenger railway. We also have a strong and unique tradition of working together in partnership to achieve our shared goals.

The North West offers a diverse quality of life that is second to none. It has vibrant world cities such as Manchester and Liverpool, areas of outstanding beauty

England's North West

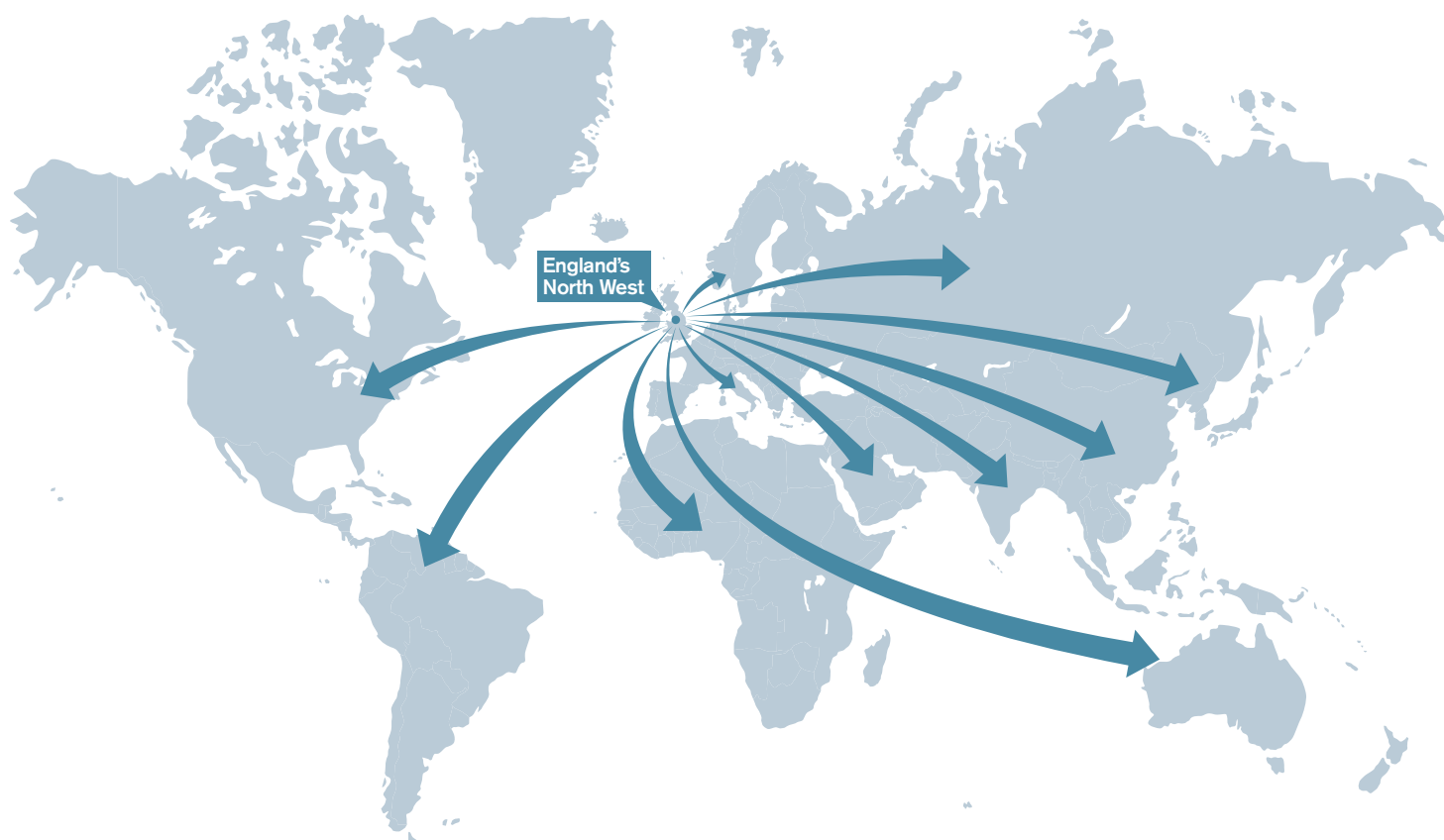


such as the Lake District, historic cities such as Chester, Lancaster and Carlisle and a superb coastline, including the iconic resort of Blackpool. The North West is also home to some of the best universities in the world and has fantastic cultural and sporting offers – for example, the largest number of Premiership football clubs, an international test cricket ground, as well as England's Golf Coast. But above all it is each and every one of the 6.9 million people who live here that make this place special.

However, we know that we have some specific, long-standing issues that we need to resolve if we are to build our economic prosperity and quality of life. Imperatives such as increasing skills, employment, enterprise and productivity levels, which are currently among the lowest in the UK, as well as tackling ill-health, poor housing and addressing areas of considerable deprivation. We know that we also face global challenges of long-term resilience, given ever scarcer natural resources (including food and energy) and the need to adapt to unavoidable climate change.

Future growth is likely to be driven far more by private rather than public sector investment and we will need to look primarily to the private sector to generate jobs in the coming years. The scale of this challenge is important to recognise. As our firms have increased their productivity, 20,000 private sector jobs have been lost in the last 5 years. Our economy will need to generate gains in the order of 200,000 jobs over the next few years to achieve government ambitions for UK growth and replace lost public sector employment.

In 2008, the North West set out to develop a strategic framework that would unite private, public and third sector partners behind a shared vision, outcomes and actions to bring together economic, environmental and social priorities in an integrated way. This looked to focus on how we can use the North West's major assets, strengths and unique offer to take advantage of future opportunities to drive mutually reinforcing sustainable economic growth across all areas. That is, economic growth that can be sustained and is within environmental limits but also enhances the environment and social wellbeing. Future North West is the result of that work.



Future North West: Our Shared Priorities

The building blocks

A substantial programme of work has been undertaken to underpin the development of **Future North West**. The key elements and outputs are set out below.

a. Evidence base

A comprehensive evidence base has been developed over the last couple of years, with wide engagement from partners and stakeholders across the North West. It has been subject to an independent peer review and found to be robust and fit for purpose. We have sought to ensure that all the priorities and action areas in this document are clearly linked to what the evidence base tells us. The evidence base can be found at the Research and Intelligence Unit website <http://www.nwriu.co.uk>

b. Assumptions

Future North West is based on a number of key underlying assumptions. Whilst it is impossible to forecast the next 20 years accurately, there are certain trends which are likely to continue and these must inform our thinking.

- Forecasted regional baseline growth of 1.7% per annum for 2008–2015 and 2.2% per annum for 2015–2030.
- Increased competition from other economies will need to be addressed with innovative and knowledge-based advances by a highly skilled workforce.
- Innovation and technological change will continue at a fast pace with new ideas spreading rapidly throughout the world.
- The cost of travel and movement of goods will increase and, correspondingly, so will the importance of digital connectivity, which will change the way we behave at work and home.
- Energy costs, driven by higher oil prices, will rise as finite resources of fossil fuels become insufficient to meet demand and the world begins a significant transition to low carbon energy sources.
- The climate will be different, with higher average temperatures, more storms and flooding, rising sea levels and less predictable seasons, with an increasing need for businesses, communities and individuals to adapt to these changes, and to protect those parts of our coastline and landscape most at risk. We also face water demand shortfalls over the next 20 years.
- Without intervention, increased demand for and pressure on natural resources may compromise the capacity of environmental assets to function effectively or to provide the services that we rely on and consider valuable.
- The proportion of retired people will increase versus a smaller working-age population, in contrast to the increasing working-age population in developing countries.
- Demand for housing and people's expectations for higher-quality homes will continue to increase, whilst the size of households continues to decrease.
- Health inequalities as evidenced by obesity and mental health problems will continue to increase without behavioural change and/or intervention.
- Public spending will decrease leading to less public sector employment and procurement, and a reduction in funding for projects.
- Over the long term, overall spending and employment is likely to grow in the education and health sectors, as well as financial and professional services, transport and communications, leisure and tourism.

c. Assets and opportunities

The North West has a number of key assets and opportunities on which to build its future success. The area developed as a result of its access to energy and raw materials, its climate and location (particularly in relation to the Americas), its wider trading links internationally, technical innovation and access to capital funds. Looking at the North West's current and potential strengths, our unique contribution to the future UK, European and world economy is based on the following.

- Our people – diverse culture, in-depth sports offer and strong heritage juxtaposed within huge metropolitan areas and high-quality landscapes.
- Our positive external image, with world-renowned brands such as Liverpool, Manchester, Chester and the Lake District.
- Being a welcoming place to live, work, invest, learn and visit with an increasing appreciation, here and elsewhere, of our very good quality of life.
- Being a relatively high skill, low cost business location able to service the world due to improving connectivity and time zones.
- The quality, variety and character of places and landscapes with the potential to provide essential environmental services for the economy and communities of the North West.
- A strategic transport network which puts us within two hours travelling distance of 60% of the UK.
- The potential of brownfield land to enable growth with minimal environmental impact.
- Very considerable potential for low carbon energy generation, including from large renewable schemes and new nuclear power.
- Our advanced manufacturing capacity, including knowledge-based industries such as engineering, electronics, chemicals and construction.
- A highly productive and growing bio-medical industry, as well as a fast-emerging, transforming, digital and creative sector.
- A strong commitment to, history in, and critical mass of innovation, science, research and university assets.
- The opportunity to boost enterprise and improve business start-up and survival rates.
- Manchester Airport and Liverpool Superport as access and exit points to serve the North of England in terms of international connectivity and trade.
- Outstanding natural assets, including National Parks, internationally important habitats and two World Heritage Sites, as well as coastal resorts and city centre heritage.
- The vigour of our rural areas in Cheshire, Cumbria and Lancashire, including farming, food and tourism industries.
- The strength of public, private and third sector partnership committed to maximising and sharing the benefits of the North West's future development.

Individually these elements do not make the North West unique, but each offers significant opportunities and together they offer real potential to make a step change in the future performance and direction of the North West.

Future North West: Our Shared Priorities

d. Engagement

Future North West has been developed in close consultation with an Advisory Group, containing nearly 60 organisations covering key public, private and third sector partners and stakeholders.

There have been two public consultation exercises. The first, in early 2009, was on the Principles and Issues to shape development and led to agreement on the outcomes to be achieved and the underpinning values. The second, earlier this year, was on a high-level strategic framework of thematic and spatial priorities. There was a strong and positive response to both consultations and we have taken the results into account in developing this document.

e. Sustainability Assessment

This document has been subject to ongoing Sustainability Assessment throughout its preparation, including specific consideration of environmental, health, equalities and rural impacts. This has sought to identify the likely impacts and how they might be addressed to ensure the effectiveness of this document in achieving economic, social and environmental goals. Sustainability Assessment has been used in a proactive way to help shape emerging themes, objectives and actions. The final report is being published alongside this document, and its recommendations will be addressed in finalising Future North West in autumn 2010.

Section B

Vision and Approach

Vision and Approach

Vision

We have a very clear vision of what we want the North West to be like in 20 years time, and what this means for different parts of the North West, and we are determined to achieve this vision by working together to achieve mutually reinforcing sustainable growth across the North West.

The quality of life for the people of the North West will be excellent and the area will become more prosperous, more equitable and low carbon. By 2030 it will be a better place to live, learn, work, visit and invest in, with:

- job opportunities for all in a highly productive, well-skilled, internationally competitive, knowledge-based and resource-efficient economy which is adapting to climate change and living within environmental limits; and
- high levels of health and social wellbeing, minimal deprivation and child poverty, good housing and excellent physical and digital connectivity.

and where:

- Manchester will be a key generator of wealth for the North West, and an important driver of growth across the North as a whole;
- Liverpool will be a world-class cultural city, a major driver of economic growth and an international gateway;
- the international potential of the Liverpool-Manchester corridor will have been developed;
- Preston and Warrington will be key growth centres for the North West.
- Crewe, Chester, Lancaster and Carlisle will play important roles as sub-regional growth hubs;
- the role of the Lake District, and other outstanding natural and built assets, in contributing to the North West's image and wellbeing of its residents will have been enhanced;
- those parts of Pennine Lancashire, Blackpool, Barrow and West Cumbria, as well as areas within the Manchester and Liverpool conurbations, which face substantial social and economic challenges will have been revitalised; and
- there will be thriving, economically and socially sustainable towns and communities in both rural and urban areas.

Approach

At the time of writing, in mid-2010, we are just coming out of a recession and face the prospect of large reductions in public expenditure in the coming years. Growth in the late 20th century and early 21st century was largely driven by consumerism, credit and the public sector. We are clear that there are many questions to be asked and lessons to be learned from the recent recession. There is a need to rebalance the economy and look at how we can use our assets in different ways. In particular, we will need to look primarily towards the private sector to generate jobs to replace those lost in the public sector. With a smaller role for the state, this will require the development of innovative approaches.

Future growth may be less dependent on the retail sector and financial services. It is likely to be driven far more by low carbon technologies and manufacturing, competing land use pressures, increased social enterprise, adapting to increased flood risk, energy and food security, a rapid shift in consumption patterns and by efficient use of natural resources. We do know that the future is very uncertain, with the likelihood of rapid technological and social changes, which themselves could drive growth. We need increasingly to look outwards to Europe and indeed across the globe for opportunities and solutions.

We have therefore developed **Future North West** to provide clear direction on how we intend to create a more adaptable and resilient North West and drive sustainable growth in a changing environment to achieve our vision. It is not and cannot be about everything that happens in the North West. It needs to focus on where it makes sense to advocate and address issues across the North West, and not attempt to replicate activity that is more appropriate for international, national, sub-regional or local levels.

This means we must focus on the most important strategic priorities for the North West, be aspirational and add value. These could be issues that cross boundaries or where action in one place will have an impact across the North West. The aim is to provide a clear framework to steer decision making at all levels across the North West, to drive complementary and mutually reinforcing (ie not competitive) growth in all areas.

In practice, this means that activity has to:

- be clearly grounded in the evidence;
- focus on the most important strategic priorities for the North West and the supporting actions required;
- add value and be specific (ie not simply be an aggregation of sub-regional/local activity or a disaggregation of national activity);
- promote a joined-up approach based on partnership working, alignment of funding and stakeholder involvement; and
- support the integration of economic, environmental and social priorities, and not breach environmental limits.

Using these principles, we have developed a framework which sets out a strategic approach for the North West based on four overarching themes.

Theme 1: Capitalise on the opportunities of moving to a low carbon economy and society, and address climate change and resource efficiency.

Theme 2: Build on our sources of international competitive advantage and distinctiveness.

Theme 3: Release the potential of our people and tackle poverty.

Theme 4: Ensure the right housing and infrastructure for sustainable growth.

For each theme we have developed a set of outcomes, objectives and measures, together with areas where we intend to focus action. These are set out in the following four sections. The themes are not in priority order as all will be important to successful delivery of the vision.

Progress will be achieved by a strong and continuing commitment by private, public and third sector partners to:

- collaborate to achieve mutually shared goals;
- use their powers, resources and influence to achieve common standards;
- encourage and promote behavioural change by businesses, households and individuals; and
- influence national and EU policy development.

Future North West: Our Shared Priorities

'Big Ticket' Issues

Future North West: Our Shared Priorities establishes a clear and compelling course of action to achieve our vision over the next 20 years, based on four themes and supporting objectives and action. However, we cannot tackle everything straight away with equal priority, particularly in the early years when we face substantial public expenditure constraints. It is clear that we must prioritise a small number of absolutely fundamental issues for North West partners to put their collective weight behind.

Through our integrated analysis of the economic, social and environmental issues underlying the four themes, we have identified twelve priority areas in which we believe progress must be made if we are to achieve our aspirations to develop a world-class and resilient sustainable economy, attractive to private investment, with an excellent quality of life. In some cases, they are cross-cutting issues which are important to delivering across all four themes. Others are critical to the future success of the North West in their own right. In delivering them, we will seek to maintain our successful record of physical and economic renewal of our cities and towns while improving the economic and social sustainability of smaller communities.

The 'big ticket' issues to be addressed across the North West.

1. Develop the **enterprise capabilities** of our people through education and skills.
2. Develop our world-leading **advanced manufacturing, biomedical and digital and creative** industries.
3. Develop our world-class **research, science and innovation** capability, particularly at Daresbury.
4. Develop our **low carbon energy** offer, especially in nuclear and marine renewables, for example through the Energy Coast initiative.
5. Develop **Next Generation Access** digital connectivity.
6. Improve rail **connectivity** across the North West and tackle **transport pinch points**, especially the Northern Hub and securing High Speed Rail access.
7. Improve **international connectivity** via Manchester Airport and Liverpool Superport.
8. Reduce levels of **ill-health, health inequalities, poverty and worklessness**.
9. Increase the number, and quality, of **private and third sector jobs and social enterprises**.
10. Develop our **sport, culture and quality of place** offer, based on our world-famous places, heritage and environmental assets, particularly Manchester, Liverpool, Chester and the Lake District.
11. **Enhance our natural environment** and resolve emerging pinch points in our **critical (utilities) and green infrastructure**.
12. Ensure high-quality, energy efficient and affordable **housing** in the right locations.

The Focus and Ambition section sets out just why these issues are the most critical to the future of the North West, including the scale of the challenge and potential benefits.

Securing substantial progress in these areas will help to build a more adaptable and resilient North West. It will not only focus on the importance of wealth creation, but also on the importance of having a strong North West identity, based on its people and physical, environmental and cultural attributes.

Environmental Limits

We are committed to securing economic growth within environmental limits, since this is a fundamental requirement of sustainable development. Our health, wellbeing and prosperity are dependent on the provision of a wide range of environmental services, and the natural environment is also highly valued by the people of the North West for its own sake. It is therefore essential to ensure that all actions under the four themes are delivered within environmental limits.

There are various descriptions of environmental limits, but at the heart of the concept is the idea that many of our natural resources are under multiple pressures and need to be protected or restored and enhanced if society is to continue to benefit from them. An understanding of environmental limits is therefore crucial to securing sustainable economic growth in the North West.

We have identified the following key issues which need to be addressed if we are to ensure sustainable economic growth within environmental limits.

- Reduce harmful emissions to air to sustain the current downward trend in air pollution and reduce impacts on communities and sensitive environmental areas.
- Ensure no deterioration of the **water** environment and minimise the risks to people, property and critical infrastructure from flooding.
- Conserve and utilise **soil and mineral** resources.
- Conserve and enhance statutory sites designated for their international and national **biodiversity** importance, as well as wider biological resources and ecological networks.
- Identify, protect, manage and enhance natural, historic and other distinctive features that contribute to the character of **landscapes, townscapes and visual amenity** in the North West.
- Manage the **marine and coastal** environment in line with the European Water Framework Directive and shoreline management plans.
- Protect, enhance and provide improved access to **informal open space**, such as regional parks for recreation and relaxation; recognising that alternative recreational space can help attract recreational users away from sensitive sites.

The approach to environmental limits approach is essentially restorative, aiming to progressively improve environmental conditions, with no net loss of resource. It first of all seeks to avoid loss or damage to assets, then to mitigate any unavoidable damage, and finally to compensate for loss or damage through offsetting actions.

The most important limits and the pressures and tensions they collectively generate will vary in different localities. In the North West, work is underway to map the tensions and synergies around natural environmental assets to build a picture which takes account of multiple limits. The main pressures arise from new and existing built development, transport infrastructure and use, energy production, recreation, agriculture, woodland, climate change adaptation, and minerals and waste operations. Work is in hand to collate North West environmental limits through development of 'Pinch Points', a methodology that assesses a range of risks or limits in a specific area. It has been used to identify possible green infrastructure interventions at local level to alleviate environmental pressures. This can be accessed via the Research and Intelligence Unit website <http://www.nwriu.co.uk>.

The Sustainability Assessment of this document has helped to identify the key issues around environmental limits. In practice, environmental limits will be addressed through the strong national policy and legal framework, supported by a number of established mechanisms at local authority level, for ensuring that the implications for the natural environment are fully addressed in decision making.

Support for specific projects and actions in this document is made in the knowledge that proposals which have the potential to have significant adverse impacts on biodiversity and on European sites in particular, will be subject to appropriate statutory assessments at local planning and project delivery levels to identify approaches to the avoidance, mitigation and compensation of any adverse impacts.

Future North West:
Our Shared Priorities

Section C

Themes

Theme 1 – Low Carbon, Climate Change and Resource Efficiency

Introduction

Climate change is our biggest single economic, social and environmental challenge. The Climate Change Act 2008 commits the UK to an 80% reduction in carbon emissions from 1990 to 2050, with an intermediate target of a 34% reduction by 2020. We know this means reducing our 'carbon footprint' in the North West from 63 million tonnes a year in 2008 to 54 million tonnes by 2020. 'Do nothing' is not an option and could potentially cost the North West £70 billion over the next 12 years alone. We need to forge real and rapid solutions to lead us towards a sustainable low carbon economy.

Tackling the challenges and opportunities presented by climate change, and increasing the efficiency with which we use natural resources, will require effective action at local level, as well as international and national. It will also require significant changes in behaviour by organisations, businesses and individuals, particularly in relation to household, industrial, commercial and transport emissions. The North West needs to position itself to make the most of the huge business opportunities arising from the potential demand for low carbon and resource efficient energy, goods and services.

We also need to be clear about the economic, environmental and social impacts of unavoidable climate change, and ensure that we are well placed to respond to the challenges, risks and opportunities they present.

We need to set the North West on a clear course towards the goal of a low carbon and resource efficient economy and society by pursuing the following **objectives**.

- 1a: Make the North West a world-class place for nuclear technologies, accelerate the deployment of renewable energy and exploit opportunities in other low carbon and environmental goods and services.
- 1b: Ensure the North West understands and adapts to the implications of unavoidable climate change.
- 1c: Stimulate key sectors, including housing, transport and industry, to develop low carbon and resource efficient solutions and alternatives.

These objectives will help deliver the following **outcomes**.

- A leading low carbon economy, using resources sustainably and adapting to the impact of climate change.
- Increased productivity, capitalising on the North West's innovation, science and research assets and exploiting potential in worldwide opportunities from low carbon technologies.

To monitor progress we have established the following **measures**.

- Reduce carbon emissions.
- Increase percentage of energy generated from renewable sources.
- Reduce waste rising per head.
- Reduce flood risk.

Other **indicators** which should be tracked are:

- CO2 emissions by GVA;
- Increase in the number of companies and employment in low carbon technologies;
- Renewable energy capacity;
- Amount of waste recycled.

Objective 1a: Make the North West a world-class place for nuclear technologies, accelerate the deployment of renewable energy and exploit opportunities in other low carbon and environmental goods and services

The North West benefits from a number of existing assets which provide a strong platform for responding to the opportunities presented by low carbon energy and environmental technologies. Despite having relatively high energy consumption, we are a net exporter of energy and home to some of the UK's most significant facilities. We have a strong nuclear tradition, with 50% of the UK's civil nuclear workforce and all stages of the nuclear cycle, from fuel manufacture through to decommissioning, present throughout the North West. We therefore need to take full advantage of the opportunities from new nuclear power generation and waste facilities, whilst also recognising that nuclear waste must be handled and disposed of safely.

Currently we generate around 5% of our electricity from renewable sources, with even lower proportions for transport and heat. We need to step this up if the North West is to make an effective contribution to the UK target of generating 15% of our energy from renewables by 2020. Our extensive rural areas, coastline and other assets provide potentially significant opportunities to

develop wind, marine, energy from waste and other renewable energy technologies. These are supplemented by a strong research base at our universities and research/innovation centres. However, the electricity network will require considerable upgrading if it is to support our low carbon energy aspirations.

There are significant opportunities from the development of low carbon and environmental goods and services. This sector has a number of emerging activities, such as low carbon transport, carbon capture and storage, renewable energy, as well as more 'mature' traditional environmental goods and services, such as waste management, water treatment and land reclamation. There are potentially significant economic gains from North West businesses leading the design and implementation of new products and services. Currently, around 10% of the UK's £106.5 billion low carbon and environmental goods and services sector are based in the North West, with 5,000 companies and 87,000 employees, and we will be looking to significantly grow this sector in the coming years.

Key issues we must make progress on to achieve this objective.

- i Secure new **nuclear power stations** in Cumbria and Lancashire, and develop nuclear supply chains.
- ii Develop **marine and offshore wind energy** generation, including related supply chains, port facilities, marine science and advanced engineering opportunities.
- iii Secure the development of strengthened **electricity transmission networks**, and improved strategic transport links.
- iv Develop **knowledge transfer, research and innovation capacity and capability** at our universities and key research centres, including the Dalton and Joule Centres at Manchester University.
- v Support the development of new **low carbon products and services** such as solid state lighting.

A full range of areas for action is set out in the Annex.

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Objective 1b: Ensure the North West understands and adapts to the implications of unavoidable climate change

The UK Climate Projections issued in June 2009 show how the North West's climate could change under different global greenhouse gas emissions reduction scenarios. The central estimate projects that, by 2080, average summer temperatures in the North West will increase by 3.7°C whilst summer rainfall will decrease by 21%. Meanwhile, average winter rainfall will increase by 16%, sea levels will rise by 30 centimetres and there will be more extreme weather events. Even by 2040 summer temperatures will have increased by 2.2°C and there will be 13% less rain. In winter there will be 10% more rain and sea levels will be up 15cm higher.

Over the next 20 years, the changing climate will start to impact in a number of areas, including industry, health and wellbeing, biodiversity, water resources, agriculture, forestry, energy use and infrastructure. For example, over 200,000 properties in the North West are already at risk of flooding, and changes in rainfall patterns and the rise in sea levels will increase this number in future. We have seen the extensive physical and emotional damage that floods can cause in local areas. Coastal habitats important to tourism may come under pressure. There is also potential for increased instances of very high urban temperatures which could impact on business productivity and personal wellbeing.

Key issue we must make progress on to achieve this objective.

- i Ensure that the risks and opportunities from climate change for North West businesses and communities are clearly understood, and potential responses developed and applied to increase the resilience of services, transport, critical infrastructure, green infrastructure, natural systems, landscapes, habitats, land use and urban fabric.

A full range of areas for action is set out in the Annex.

Objective 1c: Stimulate key sectors, including housing, transport and industry, to develop low carbon and resource-efficient solutions and alternatives

Reducing energy demand and increasing efficient use of energy and other resources is part of the sustainable consumption and production agenda aimed at using our increasingly scarce resources in a more sustainable way. Moving to a low carbon and resource-efficient economy not only challenges North West companies to develop more efficient production methods with less waste and less dependence on limited raw materials, but also provides the potential for significant economic benefit in terms of increasing resilience and competitiveness. We also need to recognise that we face likely water supply challenges in the coming years.

We face significant challenges and opportunities in improving energy efficiency, demand management and low carbon generation, particularly in retrofitting our existing housing stock and when considering the number of energy-intensive industries in the region. We have around 3 million dwellings in the region, many of which are older housing stock, often located in deprived areas with a consequent risk of fuel poverty.

Reducing carbon emissions from transport, and the need to travel, is another major issue that needs to be tackled. Promotion of public transport, cycling, walking and behavioural change will be important as will planning our towns and cities in order to reduce the need to travel. However, private vehicle use is likely to continue to be essential over the lifetime of **Future North West**, particularly in rural areas, so we also need to look at how we make best use of our roads and how we can encourage decarbonisation through the development of low carbon and electric vehicles and supporting infrastructure.

In order to support the growth of the economy and make best use of our environmental assets, it is important to recognise that the North West has a role to play in supplying various minerals and aggregates both nationally and locally. The North West contains a number of significant national resources including salt, silica sand, gypsum, peat and clay. It also has significant reserves of building stone, clay, shale and coal, as well as aggregates.

The UK's geology means that they only occur in specific locations. Although there is an increasing emphasis on maximising the reuse of aggregates and minerals, it will be necessary to ensure that supplies are safeguarded and managed to meet expected development requirements.

Key issues we must make progress on to achieve this objective.

- i Improve energy and resource efficiency and tackle fuel poverty in the domestic sector by:
 - encouraging all new build housing to be zero carbon;
 - encouraging **retrofitting of existing housing**, including stimulating activity by private households in energy and water efficiency measures; and
 - encouraging adoption of **smart grids and meters**.
- ii Reduce emissions from transport by:
 - reducing the need to travel, including through **increased digital connectivity**;
 - encouraging **sustainable forms of travel**, including public transport, walking, cycling and smarter travel choices;
 - encouraging use of **rail and waterborne freight**; and
 - stimulating the development and adoption of **electric/low carbon vehicles, technologies and fuels**.
- iii Reduce emissions from businesses by:
 - stimulating **energy and resource efficiency in business operations** and
 - improving **energy efficiency and resource efficiency of commercial premises**, including achieving zero-carbon for new build and solutions for multi-occupancy buildings.

A full range of areas for action is set out in the Annex.

Theme 2 – Competitive Advantage and Distinctiveness

Introduction

We must retain and build on the North West's world-class assets, to provide a focus for driving international competitiveness and action by the private, public and third sectors. In an increasingly global market, exports and direct investment by foreign companies already play a major role in the North West economy and there is opportunity to further develop trading links with established markets such as USA and Europe as well as emerging high-growth markets, such as Brazil, Russia, India and China. .

Over the next 20 years the North West's industry will have to become increasingly energy and resource efficient, and adapt to changes in climate and global demand as noted in Theme 1. It will be important to be at the forefront of these changes, using innovation and enterprise to ensure we maintain our internationally competitive status and sustain economic growth.

There are a number of specific sectors and technologies where the North West is well placed to compete internationally, and we need to build on the benefits of agglomeration to develop opportunities in these areas. Our strong manufacturing base is supported by a history of innovation and world class research and universities.

The North West is well connected and has a wide-ranging quality of life offer that retains and attracts people and talent. In this way, the North West can continue to make a unique contribution to the UK, European and world economy. We intend to focus on the following objectives:

- 2a: Develop our strength in internationally competitive manufacturing, biomedical and digital and creative industries.
- 2b: Strengthen our concentration of knowledge-based assets driven by our universities and research, science and innovation base.
- 2c: Improve our international connectivity through Liverpool Superport, Manchester Airport, and high speed airlinks.
- 2d: Develop our world class cultural, heritage, sporting and quality of place offer and the attraction of Manchester, Liverpool, Chester and the Lake District as international destinations.

These objectives will help deliver the following **outcomes**.

- Vibrant and attractive cities, towns and rural areas, capitalising on the North West's rich cultural, heritage, sporting and university assets.
- Increased levels of enterprise, trade and foreign direct investment and excellent conditions for sustainable business growth, including a thriving SME sector. Capitalising on the North West's strengths and assets in international trade, intellectual property and advanced manufacturing, bio-medical and digital/creative industries.
- Increased productivity, capitalising on the North West's innovation, science and research assets and exploiting potential in worldwide opportunities from low-carbon technologies which make the North West attractive to the private sector and maximise our natural and built environmental assets.

To monitor progress we have established the following **measures**.

- Improve productivity growth.
- Increase business start up rates.
- Increase % of GDP invested in R&D.
- Increase visitor stays.

Other indicators which should be tracked are:

- Increase in foreign direct investment;
- Increase in business stock;
- Growth in GVA per head;
- Growth in GVA per hour worked;
- Growth in total GVA and GVA per head in manufacturing;
- Increase in levels of innovation;
- Increase in the number of companies exporting;
- Increased percentage of GDP invested in R&D;
- Number of domestic and international visitors;
- Number of international students.

Objective 2a: Develop our strength in internationally-competitive manufacturing, biomedical and digital and creative industries.

The North West has a major opportunity to grow its economy, building on its existing industrial strengths and generating increased wealth. It hosts the largest manufacturing sector in the UK: manufacturing and its supply chain is the only sector in the North West which has an average GVA per head higher than the national figure. Furthermore, it employs over 400,000 people directly and makes a significant contribution towards the North West's balance of trade.

The North West has a number of sectors where we are, or have the potential to be, internationally competitive.

Energy (including nuclear and renewables) and low carbon and environmental goods and services have already been covered in the first theme. In addition, we have advanced manufacturing/engineering (including aerospace, automotive and chemicals), biomedical, and the digital and creative industries. These sectors have shown considerable resilience in the recent recession and have emerged as highly skilled, innovative industries. These internationally competitive sectors are supported by a strong Higher Education Institution (HEI) and skills base, together with a high concentration of research and development activity undertaken across the North West.

Key issues on which we must make progress on to achieve this objective.

- i Support the **advanced manufacturing/engineering**, including aerospace, automotive and chemicals, **biomedical, digital and creative** sectors and supply chains, creating the conditions to support and grow businesses.
- ii Attract **global companies and knowledge-based businesses** through the promotion of the North West's assets, developing the right skills and ensuring sustainable housing and infrastructure development to meet inward investor needs.
- iii Increase the number of **start-up companies** in internationally competitive sectors.
- iv Support NW businesses in understanding and targeting **strategically important export markets**, including traditional EU and US markets as well as high growth markets in China, India, Brazil and Russia.
- v Ensure there is a wide range of business finance with actions in place to fill any gaps in commercial provision and provide **easy access to funding** for businesses and individuals starting and growing a business.

A full range of areas for action is set out in the Annex.

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Objective 2b: Strengthen our concentration of knowledge-based assets driven by our universities and research, science and innovation base.

Innovation, science and technological development are fundamental to building an internationally-competitive, knowledge-based, low carbon economy. The North West has exceptional, globally-recognised, science and knowledge assets in its universities and research centres such as Daresbury and we must strengthen their links with international companies. We need to ensure there is flexibility to respond to new industrial and technological developments (eg composites, solid-state lighting, nanotechnology, biotechnology and printable electronics) where there is a growing research base and potentially

strong end-user markets. This requires us to build the North West's capacity to innovate and to exploit the results of that innovation to compete in the global market place.

We need to develop, retain and attract skilled people, and encourage aspiration among the young with a particular focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects. These high-level skills combined with an entrepreneurial culture will act as building blocks for success in industry, research and innovation.

Key issues we must make progress on to achieve this objective.

- i Develop science parks, technology centres and centres of research excellence.
- ii Promote partnerships between higher and further education providers and key sectors to ensure that the workforce have the right skills to meet future needs, including developing skills and behaviours for increased innovation and enterprise.
- iii Encourage technology transfer between sectors and supporting inter-disciplinary and inter-university developments
- iv Develop an enterprise culture in schools, colleges and universities to stimulate high growth added value start-up businesses.

A full range of areas for action is set out in the Annex.

Objective 2c: Improve our international connectivity through Liverpool Superport, Manchester Airport, and high speed rail links.

Maintaining and developing the North West's competitiveness requires excellent connectivity with the rest of the country and the world. Within the context of national policy on aviation and ports, the sustainable development of Manchester Airport and Liverpool Superport (including Liverpool John Lennon Airport) to facilitate international trade and inward investment is essential to realising the North West's aspirations.

We need to find ways of balancing the need for international connectivity with reducing carbon emissions. Opportunities for strengthening low carbon global connections will be secured through development of the high speed rail network through the North West to London (and onward connections to Europe) and Scotland, which will also provide significant economic benefits.

Key issues we must make progress on to achieve this objective.

- i Support the sustainable growth of Manchester and Liverpool Airports in accordance with airport master plans and strengthen strategic transport links including surface access and interchange facilities.
- ii Support the sustainable growth and expansion of the Port of Liverpool, as the North West's key international seaport through the implementation of the port master plan and development of strategic transport connections.
- iii Secure the proposed High Speed Rail line from London/Birmingham to Manchester initially, and subsequently to other parts of the North West
- iv Secure improvements to the Northern Hub to improve rail connectivity and capacity into and across the North West.

A full range of areas for action is set out in the Annex.

Objective 2d: Develop our world-class cultural, heritage, sporting and quality of place offer and the attraction of Manchester, Liverpool, Chester and the Lake District as international destinations.

Through the reputation of our cities, towns and rural assets, our industrial heritage, the excellence of our sporting and cultural offer and the high quality of our natural and historic environment, parts of the North West are known throughout the world. We should not underestimate the strength of these assets, which support a strong visitor economy; are a major attractor of investment, business, workers and students; and contribute to the quality of life of residents. Nor should we lose sight of the benefits that arise from this in terms of opportunities for employment and enterprise across the North West.

Liverpool and Manchester are world-class cities, their football clubs are major international brands and the pop/rock music heritage underpins the strong tradition we have in culture and arts. We have a number of world-class golf courses, first class cycling facilities, horse racing, international rugby and cricket venues and an emerging adventure sports sector. We have shown through the Capital of Culture, the 2002 Commonwealth Games and recent British Golf Opens how we are capable of hosting highly successful major international events which attract investment and create a legacy of sustainable business opportunities.

We have an outstanding natural environment. One-third of the region is designated for its landscape quality. We have a host of internationally-designated wildlife sites,

important woodland and upland resources, and an extensive and unique coastline. This resource is within relatively easy reach of the North West's large urban population. It is widely acknowledged that these natural assets benefit the North West not only through their intrinsic value but also by underpinning the prosperity and wellbeing of our communities and economy.

We have a strong agricultural tradition which maintains a high-quality landscape and wildlife, as well as contributing to food security. We have a green belt system which helps protect the countryside, prevent urban sprawl and support regeneration. The North West also benefits from an outstanding historic environment which includes two established World Heritage Sites – Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City, and Hadrian's Wall. There is also the potential for further World Heritage Site designations.

Sport, culture and the natural and historical environment are all important in their own right, and must remain so. However, it is the combination of this distinctive, high quality sporting, cultural and environmental offer which contributes to a high quality of life for those who live here and for those who wish to visit, learn and invest. This presents opportunities for presenting and marketing the North West as a place able to provide a high quality of life in an increasingly competitive global environment.

Key issues we must make progress on to achieve this objective.

- i Develop the offer of **Liverpool, Manchester, Chester and the Lake District** as internationally and nationally important destinations.
- ii Develop **Blackpool** as a modern, twenty-first century resort and national visitor destination and **Carlisle, Chester and Lancaster's** role as 'heritage cities'.
- iii Exploit the North West's internationally renowned **sporting, cultural and environmental brands and assets** to market the North West as a place to visit and do business, and as the venue of choice for high profile international events.
- iv Promote the **adventure tourism** offer of Cumbria and Pennine Lancashire.

A full range of areas for action is set out in the Annex.

Theme 3 – Release Potential and Tackle Poverty

Introduction

Resilient and productive individuals and communities are essential to building a successful economy, addressing the challenges of climate change and improving health and wellbeing. In addition, addressing poverty and reducing worklessness are also essential if a high quality of life is to be shared more widely.

We wish to ensure that the public, private and third sectors support people through targeted and joined-up interventions, so they have the education and skills, as well as health and opportunities to enjoy life and make a positive contribution to the economy and their communities. A 'localism' approach – bringing together agencies at a local authority and community level to address linked social issues – as well as a more personalised approach to service delivery will be key to progress.

We need to release the potential of our people by achieving the following **objectives**.

- 3a: Increase the potential of the workforce by improving employment levels and skills.
- 3b: Build on our strong third sector and strong tradition of social enterprise.
- 3c: Revitalise areas with deep-seated economic and social challenges and build strong communities.
- 3d: Tackle the serious challenges raised by multiple disadvantage.
- 3e: Address the implications of demographic change for our workforce and services.

These objectives will help deliver the following **outcomes**.

- Developing communities and places which are sustainable and safe, less deprived and less disadvantaged.
- Creating a world-class skills base, improving education, attracting and retaining talent as well as tackling gaps in basic, intermediate and graduate level skills.
- Having a healthy population, with a reduction in health inequalities and capitalising on economic opportunities from changing health issues.
- Improving the range and depth of quality employment opportunities for all. Linking areas of opportunity and need, significantly reducing low employment rates and improving the supply of labour to businesses.

To monitor progress we have established the following **measures**.

- Increase % of workforce with degree level qualifications.
- Increase numbers studying STEM subjects.
- Increase number of apprenticeships and those with intermediate skills.
- Reduce no of households with below average income.
- Increase levels of health and wellbeing.
- Achieve improved employment rate across North West, and improve employment rate for those areas and disadvantaged groups with lowest employment levels.
- Decrease % of workforce with no qualifications.

Other **indicators** which should be tracked are:

- Reducing the numbers with long-term limiting illnesses;
- Increasing the number of people with entrepreneurial attitudes;
- Achieving 75% employment rate across North West;
- Improving employment in lagging areas;
- Increasing the number of students studying and staying in the region;
- Reducing the number of 16-24 years olds not in employment, education or training.

Objective 3a: Increase the potential of the workforce by improving employment levels and skills

Having an effective labour market and enterprising capabilities is essential for a healthy economy. Ensuring there is a sufficient supply of labour, with the right skills, enterprising attitudes and ambition to meet the demand from employers is essential to attract inward investment, expand high-growth sectors, increase innovation and drive enterprise. Our ability to achieve a more inclusive society is also ultimately dependent upon levels of employment and productivity. Skills are essential to both.

The skills developed in the North West will not only respond to current demand in the labour market to support economic recovery from the recession but also focus on sectors and markets we expect to sustain future economic growth. This will include not only the high-performing sectors in terms of productivity, as identified in Theme 2, but also those high-employment sectors with growth potential and high-replacement demand such as healthcare, education, leisure and tourism, food and drink, retail, construction, logistics and financial and professional services.

Despite reductions in employment, the public sector will still remain a significant employer, but the focus must shift to private sector job creation. With North West employment rates not forecast to recover to 2008 levels until 2018 and an employment rate below the national average (71% compared to 74%), it is imperative to provide the conditions for businesses to grow, to address the relatively low level of start-ups and continue to strengthen the links between employment and skills. Over

the last ten years only 27,000 net private sector jobs were created in the region and business start ups are just 37 per 10,000 people compared to 42 nationally.

However, jobs created must deliver an improved range and depth of sustainable employment opportunities for all, including entry level and higher skilled jobs. There remains a challenge to ensure individuals have the necessary employability skills including Skills for Life where employers have identified numeracy as a particular issue. There are still 15% of people with no qualifications compared to 12% nationally and there is an estimated shortfall of 85,000 without technician skills at Level 3 and less people hold a Level 4 qualification than the national average. With increasing levels of skill demanded in the future, up-skilling the workforce and enabling individuals to progress into sustainable jobs therefore remains of paramount importance.

Furthermore business leaders and managers have a key role to play in developing their workforce and maximising their existing skills. Elevating the North West to the top quartile for leadership and management performance would add £1 billion to the economy. There are also significant opportunities to be gained in encouraging organisations to utilise family friendly, flexible working policies not only to support increased employment but also to create a culture where innovation and enterprise can thrive.

Key issues we must make progress on to achieve this objective.

- i Improve skills for employability and enterprise:
 - basic and key skills, especially numeracy; and
 - enterprise capabilities and innovative skills to increase business start-ups.
- ii Improve skills of young people:
 - raising aspirations of young people particularly in STEM subjects;
 - stimulation of apprenticeships; and
 - improved retention and utilisation of North West graduates.
- iii Develop skills to meet the future needs of the North West economy, particularly:
 - up-skilling the workforce with a focus on technician and higher level skills, particularly in STEM subjects, to meet the needs of North West growth and high-employment sectors;
 - developing specialist low carbon skills and 'greening' of existing skills; and
 - leadership and management to ensure workforce skills are optimised.

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- iv **Create the conditions to support and grow sectors and businesses**, and their supply chains, which have not been identified as internationally competitive in Objectives 1 and 2 but which make an important contribution to regional employment and GVA such as:
 - food and drink;
 - financial and professional services;
 - logistics;
 - leisure and tourism; and
 - construction.

A full range of areas for action is set out in the Annex.

Objective 3b: Build on our strong third sector and strong tradition of social enterprise

We have significant social issues to tackle but also a strong platform of strengths on which to build. The North West was the birthplace of the industrial revolution and of the Co-operative Movement. This was, in large part, due to the entrepreneurial and innovative nature of its people.

This radical and creative tradition has been a thread running through the North West since that time. Now in the North West there are 416 co-operatives and/or mutuals, employing more than 20,000 and with a turnover of £2 billion; and over 30,000 third sector (voluntary, community and faith) groups, of which 8,500 are social enterprises (engaged in some type of trading activity), contributing £3.3 billion to the North West economy.

The North West's strong third sector and social enterprise sector provides a vital resource in developing well being

at grassroots level, and has excellent access and up-to-date knowledge of the issues which affect communities and neighbourhoods. For example 95% of North West social enterprises work in urban areas and 45% in the areas of greatest deprivation; third sector delivery of training and learning has significantly greater reach into communities of deprivation, including proportionally greater engagement of ethnically diverse communities.

Local authorities through local partnerships, as well as the wider public and private sectors, have a leading role in helping develop a thriving third sector focused on the challenges the North West faces including help develop social enterprises as an alternative model to delivering goods and services and promoting a volunteering culture that enhances quality of life in the North West.

Key issues we must make progress on to achieve this objective.

- i Support the **social enterprise** sector to grow, delivering business support from a wide range of partners including business support organisations, member owned networks, mentoring and through building the social enterprise skills and capabilities of individuals and communities.
- ii Develop a **financial inclusion strategy** that includes policies that facilitate community ownership of community finance services (including support for credit unions and micro-enterprise funds).
- iii Promote **volunteering** as a way to support people back into employment, to develop new skills, improve health, and strengthen communities, and as a critical success factor in attracting and facilitating major sporting and cultural events as part of our North West sports and cultural assets offer.

A full range of areas for action is set out in the Annex.

Objective 3c: Revitalise areas with deep-seated economic and social challenges and build strong communities

Regeneration is defined as: “A set of activities that reverse economic, social and physical decline in areas where market forces will not do this without support”. Evidence suggests that significant progress has been made in regenerating the North West’s towns and cities over the last decade. However, although the North West has become less deprived overall, over the past 20 years some of our poorest areas have actually experienced further relative decline. Of the 39 local authority areas in the North West only 13 have more than 75% of those of working age in employment (the EU target). Six local authorities have employment rates where for every two people of working age in employment one is not – in other words employment less than 66%.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) measures deprivation at rural and urban neighbourhood level. IMD data shows that Liverpool is the most deprived local

authority in the country and another 14 North West Local Authorities feature in the worst performing 50 authorities in England (according to rank). The evidence shows that rural areas rank as less disadvantaged than the region’s most deprived urban areas. However, there are clearly problems of rural disadvantage in some areas, not only in terms of access to services but also regards lack of affordable housing and low household incomes.

Even in a time of reduced public expenditure, the public sector will remain significant in terms of regeneration. It has a critical role to play not only as a catalyst for action but as a significant employer and through the delivery and procurement of key goods and services. However, the impact of declining public sector finances will require tough choices in co-ordinating and prioritising public investment.

Key issues we must make progress on to achieve this objective.

- i Ensure that regeneration investment is:
 - highly targeted on socio-economic and environmental outcomes via an evidence based approach;
 - driven at the right spatial level – and as close to communities as is practicable – making the most of opportunities that already exist;
 - catalytic – not trying to transform everywhere and not a permanent subsidy – but investing where it will have most impact by supporting those communities where the most severe poverty and worklessness persists and where there is opportunity to deliver long-term change;
 - co-ordinated, with a suite of mutually reinforcing interventions, eg delivering public and private investment, housing, skills, entrepreneurship, health, critical and green infrastructure; and
 - linked to, and reinforcing wider priorities for example tackling climate change by ensuring regeneration takes place in sustainable locations, improves competitiveness and delivers infrastructure.

A full range of areas for action is set out in the Annex.

Objective 3d: Tackle the serious challenges raised by multiple disadvantage

A quarter of all children in the North West – 199,000 in total – live in poverty (defined as less than 60% of median income). Every local authority area has children living in poverty although the vast majority are in the cities and conurbations.

Unemployment has significantly increased in the last two years but the North West has historically had lower than average numbers of people in employment. The current employment level is 71% – 2.6% below the national average – which means unemployment and worklessness are widespread problems. Nearly 10% of the population is claiming incapacity benefit/employment support allowance compared to 6.7% nationally: almost half of these are accounted for by those with mental health problems. The North West also falls below the England average for numbers of disabled people in employment, BME employment and over 50s in employment, although it is equally true that under employment and under achievement affects all sectors of society in the North West.

Significantly improving employment rates, in the medium term to the England average and then to 75% – through investment and new enterprise formation, as well up-skilling and better health – would undoubtedly have a transformational effect on the prospects for the North West as well as improve the life chances of individuals and communities. In the long term, both education and healthcare will be sectors with high employment potential (although the balance between those employed in public and private sectors to deliver these may change.)

The Marmot Review has raised the profile of the social determinants of health – the conditions of everyday life that lead to health inequalities – for example health issues related to deprivation. Just as the North West was at the forefront of global thinking on public health from the mid-nineteenth century onwards the North West needs to be at the forefront of a new public health agenda. This will need to address 'modern' health issues such as alcohol abuse, obesity and mental health problems. Such a radical new approach is needed if more people in the North West are to live healthy lives – and reduce the burden on the NHS. At the centre of this approach will be the need to build services around the individual.

Key issues we must make progress on to achieve this objective.

- i Tackle the long-term roots of deprivation by investing in the development of **children and young people**, especially in their early years, prioritising not just education but health and children's experiences outside of school – especially for hard to reach groups in the most deprived areas and those young people not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- ii Build upon the experiences of first and second generation **worklessness** initiatives in the North West; by sharing best practice to ensure a more comprehensive, integrated and personalised approach that better reflects the needs of workless people and groups.
- iii Equip **under-employed groups** – BME, disabled, older people, women and young people – with the skills and tools to access employment opportunities.
- iv Improve the **health and wellbeing** of all by reducing inequalities and by supporting social conditions that reduce obesity, alcohol consumption, and tobacco use and improve mental health.

A full range of areas for action is set out in the Annex.

Objective 3e: Address the implications of demographic change for our workforce and services

Over the next 20 years the population of the region is forecast to increase from 6.9 million to 7.6 million. By this time, those over 65 will number 1.7 million in comparison to 1.1 million now and those aged over 85 will double from 145,000 to 296,800. Shifts in population will not be evenly distributed across the North West. In some places those over 50 will outnumber those under that age whereas in other areas – particularly city centres – the average age profile will remain significantly lower. Overall, however, the impact of demographic change will be transformational.

In the longer term, businesses and organisations in the North West will need to employ increasing numbers of 50+ year olds to make up for the shortfall in the 18–50 age group. This has profound implications for skills development, tackling negative attitudes to ageing and the need to adopt flexible working and career patterns. This includes recognition of the contribution older people make to quality of life for example through childcare for family members. Interventions will need to be adopted now in order to prepare for such change.

Women have come to play an increasingly important role in the workforce but are too often confined to a number of lower paid occupations. The pay differential with men remains stubbornly high and opportunities to contribute at the highest level – as evidenced by board room representation whether in public or private sector – remain stubbornly low. Evidence suggests that boards should aim for at least 30% female participation, as best practice.

There are approximately 835,000 disabled people living in the North West (20% of the total North West population). Just over 60% of disabled people in the North West are of working age but employment rates are low at 43%, compared with a national average for disabled people of 50%.

Meanwhile, the ethnic minority population (currently 8%) will increase reflecting increased numbers of mixed marriages, traditions of larger families in some ethnic minorities and inward migration. It will be important, however, to recognise that in some places the figure is far higher than 8% and that although all areas will become more ethnically diverse the projected increases will not be evenly distributed across the region. Ethnic minority-led companies already add an international dimension to many sectors, in others they are at the forefront of innovation.

An estimated 6% of people are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT). Due to discrimination and misunderstanding, it has only recently been possible to map out LGBT needs, aspirations and contributions to the North West's economy and culture in a systematic way. Future service provision to meet LGBT people's requirements will need refocusing.

In summary the North West is becoming increasingly diverse and there is considerable evidence that those places that embrace the social, cultural and economic benefits of diversity are more innovative and more successful.

Key issues we must make progress on to achieve this objective.

- i Harness the contribution an **ageing population** can make, through employment, commercial and leisure opportunities targeted at older people, the creation of a health and social care growth sector, as well as within extended family life and sustainable communities.
- ii Discourage **gender stereotyping** in employment and promote flexible working, female entrepreneurship and develop strong and diverse boards across the public, private and social enterprise sectors.
- iii Support **disability groups** to realise the potential of disabled people to contribute at all levels of the economy in the North West.
- iv Recognise **ethnic diversity** as an economic as well as a social and cultural asset by actively promoting good relations, spreading best practice and ensuring responsive and accessible public services.

A full range of areas for action is set out in the Annex.

Theme 4 – Housing and Infrastructure

Introduction

Housing and infrastructure have vital roles to play in supporting economic growth and developing social capital. Increasingly, demand for houses, workplaces and services will need to be met in a more sustainable fashion, making the best use of land and existing infrastructure, and managing resources prudently and efficiently.

In doing so, we need to meet the aspirations of residents by helping to create vibrant communities in places where people actively choose to live and work in both urban and rural areas. Sustainable communities will also need to meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, promote cohesion and equality and diversity, be sensitive to the environment, and provide a high quality of life.

Therefore, we need to ensure that we have the right infrastructure in place for delivering both sustainable communities and sustainable economic growth, by pursuing the following objectives.

- 4a: Secure high-quality housing in locations which support sustainable economic growth and communities.
- 4b: Ensure high-quality digital connectivity to stimulate enterprise, improve service delivery and reduce the need to travel.
- 4c: Improve internal connectivity through a sustainable transport infrastructure which better connects opportunity and need.
- 4d: Develop the critical infrastructure the region needs to support sustainable economic growth.
- 4e: Safeguard the natural environment and develop green infrastructure to provide economic, environmental and social benefits.

These objectives will help deliver the following outcomes.

- Creating balanced housing markets across the North West that support economic growth, strengthen inclusion and ensure that everyone has access to well-designed high-quality, affordable housing in mixed, sustainable communities.
- Delivering a high-quality, reliable and efficient infrastructure, transport and digital networks which contribute to sustainable development and ensure that the North West is better connected, locally and internationally.
- Ensuring high-quality, efficient and responsive public services.
- Protecting, enhancing and developing the quality of the North West's outstanding environmental, natural and coastal assets.

To monitor progress we have established the following measures.

- Increase in new housing provision.
- Percentage of North West homes and businesses with NGA access.
- Improve water quality.
- Improve journey times between major conurbations.
- Improve the condition of sites of special scientific interest.

Other indicators which should be tracked are:

- Proportion of vacant dwellings;
- Number of passengers using the rail stations;
- Increase in number of journeys by public transport; and
- House price/income ratio.

Objective 4a - Secure a high-quality housing offer in locations which support sustainable economic growth and communities

Our core ambition over the next 20 years is to improve the North West's offer of high-quality, well-designed, affordable and aspirational homes in locations which support sustainable economic growth and vibrant, mixed communities in places people choose to live.

There is consensus that around 23,000 new homes will be needed on average every year to support the North West's growing communities and economic ambitions. The scale, distribution, phasing and nature of this growth will vary across the North West and will be determined at a local level to reflect local circumstances and opportunities. A substantial element will need to be affordable. Although achieving this level of growth in supply will be very challenging, work in the North West will be about more than the pursuit of overall numbers alone. Consideration of the nature of new supply which takes account of environmental impact, the type, size, affordability, tenure and location of new homes will be

needed. Homes need to be built in places that enhance quality of life with good access to employment, leisure opportunities, education and other key services

With 90% of homes for the next two decades already built, maximising the function and use of our existing stock is critical. The age, nature and quality of the housing stock in some parts of the North West presents difficult challenges, particularly improving energy efficiency. Notably, there is an acute need to tackle the number of empty homes and develop measures that improve levels of under-occupancy. Progress is now being made in raising the quality of new provision, for example through achieving higher code levels for sustainable homes, but there still remains much to do in improving raising standards further. This needs to be achieved in partnership with business in a way that make the end product more attractive to customers and, indeed, puts a premium on quality.

Key issues we must make progress on to achieve this objective.

- i Joint working within and across **Housing Market Areas** to better understand the housing offer, future requirements and land supply, including relating new housing provision to the wider economic, social and environmental priorities set out in this document.
- ii Ensure the availability in the right locations of land (including Brownfield sites) for **new housing** that supports sustainable economic growth, and is consistent with the phasing of critical infrastructure and transport provision.
- iii Raise the **quality standards of new homes** incorporating good design and water and energy efficiency standards, accessibility, sustainable homes and lifetime homes standards and appropriate provision of quality green space.
- iv Increase access to **affordable housing**, particularly in rural areas by encouraging public bodies to make sites available at low cost.
- v Promote wider regeneration activity that will help to **restructure housing markets** to create places with a strengthened attraction for private development.
- vi Improve the condition, quality and functionality of **existing housing stock** including energy and water efficiency.

A full range of areas for action is set out in the Annex.

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Objective 4b - Ensure high quality digital connectivity to stimulate enterprise, improve service delivery and reduce the need to travel

In a global, internationally-competitive and low carbon economy and society, where connectivity is often via the internet, we need to ensure companies, communities and people are not 'remote' from markets, work or learning. High-speed Next Generation Access (NGA) digital connectivity increasingly offers opportunities for all to achieve this, particularly those in remote rural areas. It will be important for the North West to have access to super fast broadband NGA at the earliest opportunity. Ideally we should seek to exceed 90% coverage by 2015, and have 100% coverage by 2020. Improved NGA coverage will help to support increased productivity, higher skill levels, science and innovation, employment opportunities, and more cohesive, empowered and active communities.

Particular benefits of NGA will be felt across the North West's competitive information-intensive sectors such as

digital and creative industries, advanced engineering and manufacturing, biomedical and business and professional services. Global companies view access to high-speed telecommunications as a critical factor in determining new investment. The opportunity cost of businesses failing to effectively deploy ICT in the North West is estimated to be 3% of GVA per annum, between £3 billion and £4 billion per annum.

NGA will also improve the ability of individuals to access employment and connect to online networks for a range of entertainment, social and educational content. It will give consumers the ability to use new 'tools' at work and home, and, in allowing for economies of scale and cost reduction in online delivery of government services such as healthcare and education, will improve quality of life and promote social inclusion.

Key issues we must make progress on to achieve this objective.

- i Encourage the building of innovative, high quality, interconnected and world-class digital networks to deliver transformational economic, social and environmental benefits.
- ii Promote broadband take up including the delivery of more accessible and effective public services, particularly in rural areas in Cheshire, Cumbria and Lancashire.

A full range of areas for action is set out in the Annex.

Objective 4c - Improve internal connectivity through a sustainable transport infrastructure which better connects opportunity and need

If the North West is to grow its economy sustainably and improve productivity, it must ensure that its places are well connected and that goods, services and knowledge can move between places with relative ease. The change from manufacturing to services in the last couple of decades has increased commuting flows into urban centres from suburbs and rural areas. Limited rail and road investment means that the motorway and rail networks are reaching capacity, with for example, certain North West motorways suffering from the highest trunk road congestion outside London. In addition, rail journey times between city centres are relatively long, compared to the South East for example, which reinforces the trend towards private car use and resultant congestion.

Focusing future economic growth on knowledge-based sectors is likely to further increase in travel to the urban centres, congestion on the motorway network and more parts of the railway network operating in excess of capacity. On the other hand, the renewed emphasis on manufacturing is likely to result in more dispersed travel patterns. It will therefore be important to develop an integrated approach to transport so that each mode contributes to future travel needs in an efficient and complementary way which:

- recognises not only the rebalancing of the economy but also the need to reduce carbon emissions and ensure better safety, health, quality of life and equality of opportunities; and

- is clear about the key interventions which need to be made to support economic growth and increased quality of life across the North West.

Greenhouse gas emissions from transport represent 21% of total UK domestic emissions, so decarbonising transport is a key aim. Transport underpins the North West's quality of life and economic prospects; hence, we need to provide people and businesses with more low carbon choices about when, where and how to travel, or to transport goods both within the North West and also nationally and internationally. Local authorities, the Highways Agency, the rail industry and other transport providers, as well as the private sector, will need to work together to ensure that decisions on locating new development along with those on how the North West's

transport networks are planned, managed, operated and improved is done in an integrated way.

It is now widely accepted that constructing lots of new roads to accommodate future traffic growth is neither environmentally nor economically sustainable. The emphasis now needs to be on making facilities more accessible by location of development, changing the way services are delivered, increasing the role of public transport, walking and cycling together with making best use of existing highway infrastructure (including the strategic road network) through the development of effective strategies for network and demand management. In doing so, the differences between rural and urban areas need to be recognised.

Key issues we must make progress on to achieve this objective.

- i Facilitate delivery of Network Rail's **Northern Rail Hub** proposals and **Electrification** of the Liverpool to Manchester (Chat Moss), Manchester to Preston via Bolton, Huyton to Wigan via St Helens and Preston to Blackpool North lines.
- ii Encourage the development of a **coordinated approach to managing travel demand**, aimed, where appropriate, at:
 - changing employment shift patterns to reduce car-borne commuting during peak periods;
 - tackling the most congested parts of the motorway and strategic road network including the M6, M56, M60, M62 and A556;
 - major tourist areas where visitor pressure is threatening the local environment, sensitive habitats and quality of life;
 - discouraging private car use through the introduction of 'smarter choices' and other incentives to change travel behaviour, alongside improvements to and facilitation/promotion of public transport, walking and cycling; and
 - promoting the transfer of freight to road and water through the use and development of inter-modal freight terminals.

Objective 4d: Develop the critical infrastructure needed to support sustainable economic growth

We need to ensure new and existing development is serviced by well-planned and phased critical utility infrastructure: energy, water and sewerage (transport is dealt with under the previous objective). As our communities and economy grow, it is vital the North West manages growth by planning for critical infrastructure for the longer term, reducing demand on resources and services. Growth will place additional pressures on our critical infrastructure, with particular 'pinch points' in the Liverpool and Manchester conurbations. These are exacerbated by an elderly water and sewer infrastructure system, together with the urgent need to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill and the unavoidable impacts of climate change including increased risks of

droughts and flooding. We therefore need to take the opportunity to reconsider how we manage the planning and provision of critical infrastructure.

It will be important to support continuing development of a quality environment for business in key areas with potential for business growth and investment. We also need to ensure an adequate supply of high-quality employment land and buildings and sites for regionally significant economic development. Linking employment opportunities with housing will be important. A limited number of strategic sites will have a significant role to play in the growth of the regional economy and in supporting sustainable growth.

Key issues we must make progress on to achieve this objective.

- i Establish and maintain a **strategic dialogue between utility providers, regulators, local authorities and key public sector agencies** to support the provision, management, security of supply and resilience of critical utility infrastructure for gas, electricity, water, waste water and sewerage in ways which support the delivery of future growth and new development without harm to the environment.

This dialogue should seek to:

- provide mechanisms to resolve significant short term provision issues which arise in the next five years;
- align strategic infrastructure planning and delivery for the next five to 20 years, focusing on identified 'pinch points'; and
- ensure that future strategic business planning and price reviews support the delivery of this strategic framework.

- ii Identify and develop a range of **strategic sites** for the North West which, together, will:

- provide a portfolio of attractive opportunities for future investment across the region;
- encourage the development of knowledge-based industry and internationally competitive sectors;
- provide inter-modal freight facilities and terminals to encourage sustainable freight distribution; and
- support economic growth and economic restructuring across the region.

A full range of areas for action is set out in the Annex.

Objective 4e: Safeguard the natural environment and develop green infrastructure to provide economic, environmental and social benefits

The North West has a high-quality natural environment when compared with other parts of the country, containing a higher than average area of designated landscape, SSSI and biodiversity habitat. This resource is also within relatively easy access of the North West's large urban population, contributing significantly to quality of life. However, there is continuing pressure on these assets and the quality and extent of the natural environment varies between different parts of the North West. Much of the resource is concentrated in Cumbria, the Pennines and along the coast, while in the lowlands, subject to greater pressures from development and intensive agriculture, the resource is more degraded and restricted to small fragmented areas.

While conserving and enhancing the region's valued environmental assets is of the utmost importance, we also need to recognise and develop the role of the environment in achieving social and economic objectives and adapting to and mitigating climate change. The environmental economy makes a significant direct contribution to the North West's GVA, and its contribution to quality of place is a major factor in making the North West an attractive place to live, work, visit, study, and invest. Therefore we need to take an integrated approach to protection and enhancement of the North West's environmental assets.

One valuable tool for utilising the natural environment to deliver social and economic objectives is Green Infrastructure, the physical environment within and between our cities, towns and villages. It is a network of multi-functional open spaces, including formal parks, gardens, woodlands, green corridors, waterways, street trees and open countryside. The North West has significantly developed and advanced the Green Infrastructure concept, for example by identifying 'pinch points' where investment in the natural environment may be able to release the potential for significantly increased growth. It is vital that green infrastructure is linked with other topic areas, for example healthy lifestyles, neighbourhood amenity, social inclusion, leisure, transport, and industry. Green infrastructure needs to be planned, like any other critical infrastructure, to ensure that benefits are delivered, in particular with regard to identified strategic regional needs.

Green infrastructure encompasses rivers, canals, docks, reservoirs, lakes, riverside paths, towing paths and associated waterway infrastructure. Such 'blue' infrastructure performs a multiple range of functions being: a leisure, recreation and tourism resource; a source of water and integral part of the land drainage system; a sustainable transport route for walking, cycling and waterborne freight and passenger transport; and regionally significant heritage and environmental resource.

Key issues we must make progress on to achieve this objective.

- i Encourage the maintenance and provision of **Green Infrastructure**, particularly in areas of future development and growth, and aim to promote the multiple benefits it can bring through:
 - conserving and managing existing green infrastructure and creating new green infrastructure;
 - enhancing its functionality, quality, connectivity and accessibility; and
 - maximising the role of green infrastructure in mitigating and adapting to climate change through providing solutions for such issues as air quality, flood risk, 'heat islands', coastal change, loss of habitats.
- ii Protect, enhance, create and manage landscapes, habitats and biodiversity through:
 - promoting use of the North West Landscape Character Framework;
 - supporting the development of robust ecological networks, particularly in the Pennines, Solway Firth, Mersey Estuary, Dee Estuary and Cheshire Meres and Mosses; and
 - Supporting delivery of the North West Forestry Framework to double woodland cover by 2050.

A full range of areas for action is set out in the Annex.

Future North West:
Our Shared Priorities

Section D

Places

Places

As our evidence work makes clear, there is no single clear economic geography but places are where economic, environmental and social priorities can be brought together in an integrated and balanced way to deliver the outcomes we seek. In moving forward, we therefore need to consider the role of places and the relationship between them.

We must recognise the need for variable geographies in looking at particular issues such as economic development, housing, transport and the natural environment, which do not map neatly onto recognised groupings of local authority boundaries. We must also recognise that, as already indicated, this document cannot and does not set out to capture everything that goes on in local areas. It focuses on those **North West priorities which are relevant to particular places, or where action in local areas will help deliver North West priorities**. It therefore provides a strategic framework to guide and assist decision making in local areas: it is not a top-down framework but has been developed jointly with the key local area partnerships.

For many issues, local authorities and the private and third sectors already come together in a variety of partnerships on a county or functional economic area basis. Locally-driven action will be a primary means of addressing the priorities set out in this document, and our local partnerships have strong track records of successful delivery for their areas. We therefore need to recognise our key local area groupings and their important role in supporting the delivery of Future North West.

Cheshire and Warrington

The Cheshire and Warrington economy is worth £21 billion per annum in GVA and contributes some 18% to overall North West GVA. The area's key strengths are: its knowledge economy linked to the high proportion of graduate skills; its geographical location with train journey times of under two hours to London from its key towns, as well as connections to the main airports, Manchester and Liverpool, the Midlands and North Wales; and its high quality of life. Cheshire and Warrington also has the economic capacity in terms of underutilised assets that could enable it to develop and grow significantly more without compromising sustainability and its high quality of development.

Cheshire and Warrington has a unique role in the North to attract private investment and jobs into high value, 'knowledge economy' sectors and is able to achieve high private sector leverage from relatively small public investments.

Cumbria

The Cumbrian economy is worth just over £7 billion, which is some 6% of North West GVA. Cumbria is geographically large (7000 square kilometres) and has a relatively small and dispersed population of just under 500,000 people living mostly in small towns and villages. Whilst recent economic growth has exceeded North West levels, Cumbria is still behind the North West and UK in terms of GVA and there continues to be significant disparities in economic prosperity within Cumbria, particularly between East and West. The economic challenges that Cumbria faces are largely due to its geography, an overdependence upon declining industries, the need to travel long distances to access services and facilities and structural changes to agriculture and the rural economy.

Cumbria has a number of assets and opportunities which present the potential for a significant transformation in the economy: energy and low carbon technologies in West Cumbria and Barrow; the growth potential of Carlisle; strengths in agriculture and food production, and marine and offshore engineering; an outstanding natural environment including the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks, Solway Coast, North Pennines and Morecambe Bay; and a high quality of life offer.

Greater Manchester

At £46 billion, Greater Manchester comprises almost 40% of North West GVA and is the central driver of the North West and wider Northern economy. In labour market terms, 38% of the North West's jobs are in Greater Manchester. With a population of 2.58 million, it is a coherent economic geography, with substantial travel across local authority boundaries for work, education, and recreation. Its economic influence extends to parts of the High Peak, Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cheshire and Warrington. The economic geography of the area has a number of distinct permutations reflecting local housing markets, business linkages, travel to work movements, administrative areas, and travel to learn patterns. The area has extensive public transport, road and motorway networks which provide a high level of connectivity between places and allows for significant cross boundary travel.

The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) has a strong track record of collaborating on a wide range of issues, including the Statutory City Region Agreement. This included an agreed scheme for Greater Manchester to become a Combined Authority, which is currently awaiting endorsement and follows a government consultation. Central to this is the Greater Manchester Strategy which aims to accelerate economic growth, secure the active participation of residents in the economy and present a framework for making choices about Greater Manchester's priorities for investment.

Lancashire

Lancashire's economy is the second largest in the North West, worth approximately £22.5 billion (19% of North West total) and employing some 625,000 people. The economy is a sophisticated mix of advanced manufacturing firms, an emerging high-value office economy, a significant visitor economy and a significant future in low carbon/energy technologies. The county has a diverse geography with an inter-linked network of cities, towns and settlements, within an extensively rural context and a high-quality natural environment in places such as Morecambe Bay and the Forest of Bowland.

It is well placed to capitalise upon and develop links with adjoining areas particularly opportunities in Manchester,

Liverpool, South Cumbria and West Yorkshire. In addition, there are opportunities to exploit its higher education institutions, green infrastructure and the environment, and its attractiveness as a place to live, work and invest. Three Multi-Area Agreements have been developed covering Pennine Lancashire, the Fylde Coast and Mid-Lancashire authorities.

Liverpool city region

The Liverpool city region has experienced significant improvements to its economy over the last decade. The total GVA is £19 billion, just over 16% of the North West total. Significant public and private investment, particularly in the City of Liverpool itself, has transformed the image of the city region and increased investor confidence. However, despite this strong growth in the past decade there are still significant gaps in the employment base, business density and productivity rates relative to the North West.

The Liverpool city region Multi-Area Agreement covers the local authority areas of Halton, Knowsley, Sefton, St Helens, Wirral and the City of Liverpool and sets out the approach to achieving a step change in the city region's economic performance based upon established strengths in culture and the visitor economy, ports and logistics, the low carbon economy and the knowledge economy.

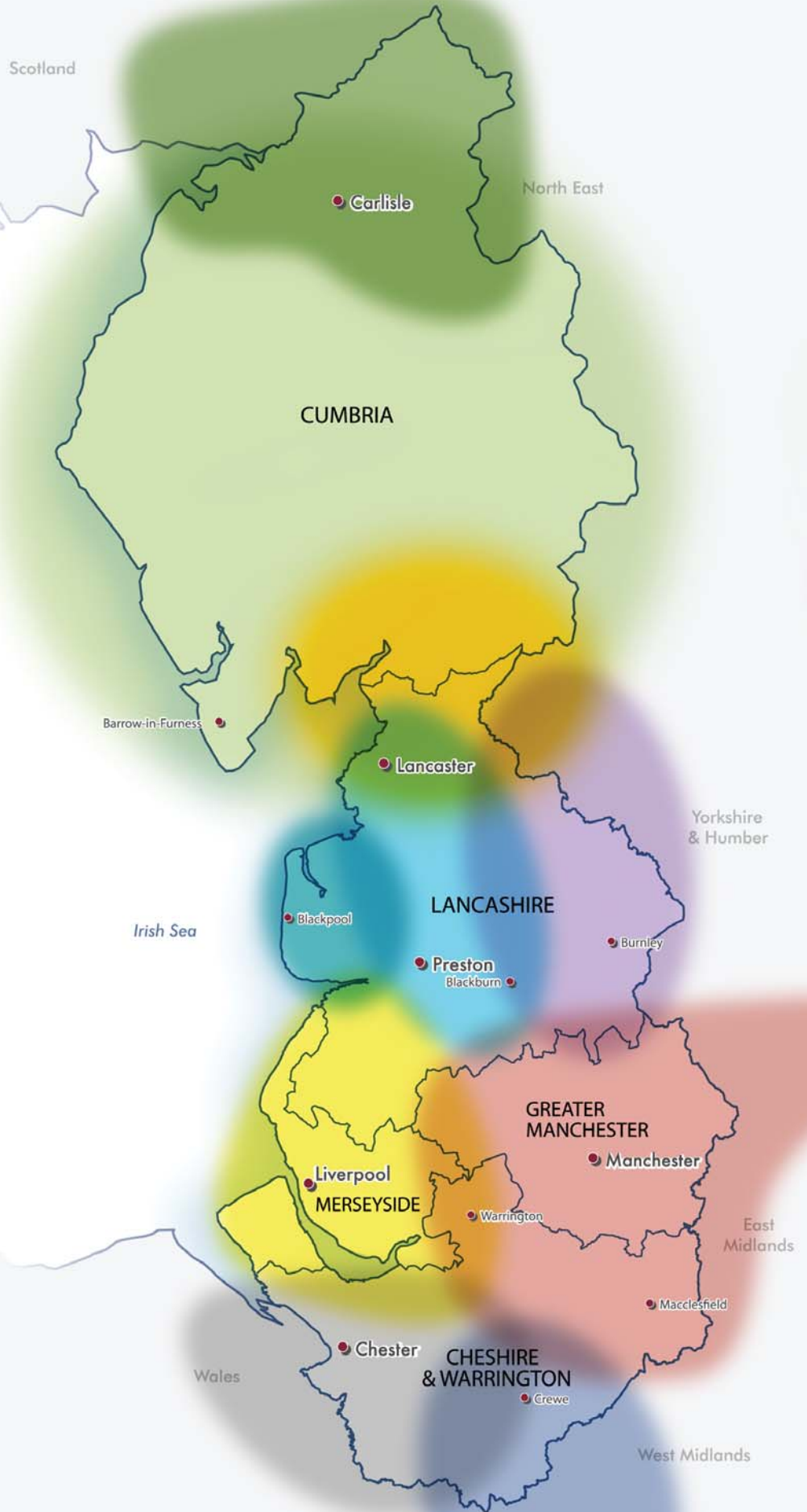
Links between areas

These recognised local area groupings provide a good foundation for action to secure a sustainable and prosperous future for the North West. In practice, many issues do not lend themselves to being tackled on the basis of local administrative boundaries and it is essential therefore to recognise the links with neighbouring areas and the importance of collaborating across boundaries on certain issues such as economic development, transport, housing and infrastructure.

The map overleaf illustrates the dynamic nature of the relationship between places. It shows the indicative functional economic areas and how they overlap between local areas and extend to neighbouring countries and regions.

Future North West: Our Shared Priorities

The Indicative Economic
Geography of the North West



Priorities for places

The key priorities for places from a North West perspective, taking account of the vision, themes and objectives, include the following.

a. Build on the role of Greater Manchester as a key generator of wealth for the North West, and as an important driver of growth across the North as a whole, by:

- expanding and diversifying the economic base through digital infrastructure, including the opportunities provided by MediaCityUK, and growing science and innovation capacity;
- improving transport connectivity through, into and within Greater Manchester, including enhancement of public transport links to enable inner and northern areas to capture growing levels of investment and reduce disparities;
- creating quality places and high-quality housing to replace obsolete stock and where appropriate refurbish existing properties, to meet the needs of existing residents, and attract and retain new population in order to support economic growth the needs of a competitive sub-region;
- achieving a rapid transformation to a low carbon economy, focusing on the built environment, particularly the need to retrofit existing housing stock to improve energy efficiency;
- delivering critical infrastructure such as digital infrastructure, energy and water supplies, and new waste facilities;
- considering the relationship with the Peak District, East Cheshire and rural Lancashire which act as recreational destinations and as attractive locations for commuters, working in Greater Manchester; and
- supporting the sustainable growth of Manchester Airport, in accordance with the airport master plan, including strengthening strategic transport links, improving surface access and interchange facilities.

b. Realise Liverpool's potential as a world-class cultural city, a major driver of economic growth and international gateway, by:

- exploiting low carbon economic opportunities through the development of the low carbon and environmental goods and services sector and major initiatives such as Power from the River Mersey, offshore/onshore wind energy schemes, waste-to-energy and biomass energy projects and the environmental technology sector;

- developing Liverpool Superport, including associated linkages with the airport and logistics/distribution sector;
- developing the knowledge economy through growing international research capability and greater commercialisation, by building on the strong bioscience base, focusing on providing business incubation and growth facilities, improving graduate retention; attracting new international investment, high-value jobs in tourism and port-related developments;
- developing the culture and visitor economy to build upon international interest from European Capital of Culture 2008, the World Heritage Site and international sporting events, including investment in infrastructure (eg hotels) and new markets (eg business tourism);
- creating quality places and high quality housing to replace obsolete stock and where appropriate refurbish existing properties, to meet the needs of existing residents, and attract and retain new population in order to support economic growth the needs of a competitive sub region including the opportunities at Liverpool and Wirral Waters;
- delivering critical infrastructure such as improving transport connectivity into and within Liverpool, including enhancement of public transport links to enable inner and surrounding areas to capture growing levels of investment and reduce disparities, digital infrastructure, energy supply to key employment sites and new waste facilities; and
- supporting the sustainable growth of Liverpool Airport, in accordance with the airport masterplan, including strengthening strategic transport links, improving surface access and interchange facilities.

c. Develop the international potential of the Liverpool-Manchester corridor, through the Atlantic Gateway concept, by:

- promoting complementary and mutually reinforcing growth through appropriate cross-boundary initiatives which:
 - drive international trade through innovation in key sectors of transport and logistics, digital and creative, life science and health, green technology and renewable energy;
 - create a globally-connected gateway;
 - create sustainable infrastructure for a less carbon intensive economy;

Future North West: Our Shared Priorities

- create places that attract and retain talent;
- create new green infrastructure at the heart of and between the two cities; and
- harness the role of Daresbury as a world-class research and innovation resource.

d. Capitalise on Preston's opportunity to become a key regional growth centre, by:

- encouraging greater private sector investment in the city centre to strengthen Preston and its surrounding area's role as a key centre in the North West for the nuclear industry, advanced manufacturing and aerospace, professional business services and knowledge-based employment in creative, ICT, and new media business;
- ensuring higher education assets support growth in key sectors; and
- enhancing the role of Preston as a public transport gateway/interchange to the North West through improved rail connectivity with Manchester, Liverpool, Blackpool and Pennine Lancashire.

e. Capitalise on Warrington's opportunity to become a key regional growth centre, by:

- encouraging the expansion of Warrington as a business and commercial centre, building on opportunities to regenerate and restructure its older urban areas, capitalise upon its central location in the emerging Atlantic Gateway and its key positioning on both the strategic road and rail networks particularly in relation to Manchester, Liverpool, Preston, St Helens, Runcorn, Widnes and Wigan; and
- promoting the role of Warrington as a regional public transport gateway/interchange to the North West and a key hub between Manchester and Liverpool.

f. Recognise Crewe, Chester, Lancaster and Carlisle's role as key sub-regional hubs (and in the case of Chester and Carlisle, the substantial links with Wales and Scotland respectively) by:

- reinvigorating the dynamic contribution of Chester to the cultural, heritage and visitor economy of the region, as well as extending its offer as a high quality office location and important retail destination. In doing so it will be important to capitalise on the potential for significant residential and employment growth in Ellesmere Port.

- promoting the roles of Chester and Crewe as public transport gateways/interchanges to the North West;
- building upon the strong cross border relationships between Chester and Wrexham and the Deeside Hub in North East Wales where the combined strengths of communities and economies should be capitalised upon;
- encouraging growth and investment in Crewe to significantly increase its economic prosperity, whilst ensuring that Macclesfield and North East Cheshire maintain their contribution to competitiveness and their role as an important local economic driver;
- encouraging growth and investment in Lancaster building upon its heritage city offer, linkages with Cumbria, strengths in environmental technologies, nuclear and ICT, growth in small and medium-size enterprises and assets such as Infolab at Lancaster University and Lancaster Science Park; and
- supporting Carlisle to achieve its growth city aspirations and realise its potential by building on its strengths as a sub-regional growth point for business, shopping, leisure, culture and tourism (including Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site), recognising opportunities to deliver housing growth together with the Higher Education offer and utilising its position as a regional transport gateway with links to Scotland and the North East (and onto Northern Ireland and North Europe).

g. Enhance the role of the Lake District and other outstanding natural and heritage assets in contributing to the North West's image, the success of its visitor economy and the wellbeing of North West residents by:

- improving the tourism offer through investment in the natural environment, high quality accommodation, public realm improvements, sustainable transport solutions and visitor/cultural attractions;
- supporting the case for a Lake District World Heritage Site and raising the profile of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site as a visitor attraction; and
- building upon the opportunity to further capitalise on landscape and heritage assets including:
 - the Lake District, Yorkshire Dales and Peak District National Parks;
 - Solway Coast, North Pennines, Forest of Bowland and Arnsdale & Silverdale Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;

- Morecambe Bay; and
- other outstanding natural environment and biodiversity assets in the North West.

h. Recognise those parts of the Pennine Lancashire, Blackpool, Barrow and West Cumbria, as well as areas within the Manchester and Liverpool conurbations, which face substantial social and economic challenges, by:

- continuing support for Lancashire's internationally-recognised advanced manufacturing sector, including building upon existing assets to capitalise on the potential to be a major player in nuclear, renewable energy, and environmental technologies and services, and better linking these opportunities to areas of need;
- supporting regeneration priorities within Pennine Lancashire, including support for housing market renewal activity to secure a better balanced housing market linked to economic growth and supporting the strengthening and diversification of its economy building upon strong existing supply chains in aerospace and advanced manufacturing;
- developing Blackpool as a 21st century resort building upon its profile as a national tourism destination and address the socio-economic challenges and opportunities it faces;
- increasing skill levels, educational attainment and aspiration through increased further education/higher education participation, particularly in parts of Pennine Lancashire and the Fylde Coast;
- improving rail connectivity between Pennine Lancashire and Preston and Manchester;
- supporting Barrow and West Cumbria to strengthen and diversify their economies through delivery of the Energy Coast initiative to exploit opportunities and expertise in areas such as nuclear, off-shore and marine engineering, civil defence, gas exploration, storage and import and onshore/offshore renewable technologies; and
- within the Manchester and Liverpool conurbations, providing high-quality housing to replace obsolete stock and where appropriate refurbish existing properties, to meet the needs of existing residents, and attract and retain people in order to support economic growth.

i. Recognise the contribution of the North West's rural areas, as well as the challenges and opportunities they face by:

- maximising the economic potential of rural businesses;
- ensuring innovative solutions to providing NGA broadband in rural areas;
- supporting the delivery of social goods and ecosystem services that contribute to climate change, environmental, recreation and economic objectives including the opportunities in upland areas for carbon storage and water resources, as well as management for agricultural, landscape and tourism purposes;
- supporting the modernisation of agriculture and the North West's significant strengths around food production and processing; and
- addressing the social and economic needs and opportunities for rural communities through measures such as:
 - more equitable access to services;
 - affordable housing provision;
 - supporting organic incremental growth of settlements to sustain rural communities as viable places to live and work; and
 - developing a transport network that meets the needs of local communities.

j. Secure excellent physical and digital connectivity, both within the North West, with other parts of the UK and internationally, including between:

- Manchester, Liverpool and Leeds/Sheffield;
- North Cheshire and Liverpool and Manchester;
- Pennine Lancashire and Preston and Manchester ;
- Preston and Liverpool and Manchester;
- rural areas and nearby towns and cities;
- the North West and Scotland, Wales and West Midlands; and
- the North West and the South East, Europe and the rest of the world.

Future North West: Our Shared Priorities

Links with places outside the North West

The North West is not an area in isolation. It has important linkages with other parts of the UK and other parts of the world, and has a strong tradition of collaboration with partners across the North of England and across the European Union. However, there are opportunities which exist for better collaborative working with our neighbours in two respects.

Irish Sea

Covering parts of the North West, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland and the Isle of Man, the Irish Sea Region could be said to be the 9th largest economy in Europe, worth approximately £393.6 billion. It is home to seven international airports, 23 universities, 20 major ports and nine World Heritage Sites. The population has increased by 7.5% since 2000, now standing at some 18.7 million people.

The Irish Sea can be viewed as a 'common resource' and an opportunity for all surrounding regions to work together for mutual benefit within a wider European context as a maritime cross border area. Opportunities to develop renewable energy, marine and coastal planning, tourism, connectivity through ports, airports and NGA, entrepreneurship and mitigation/adaptation to climate change on this scale, offers the chance to secure integrated and consistent solutions to new challenges and opportunities. There is also the potential to create a unified and powerful 'voice' for the Irish Sea region on the national, European and international stage. Equally, opportunities to strengthen the growth and development of the Irish Sea region as a whole exist by working collaboratively.

North of England

It will be important to build upon the linkages between the Liverpool, Greater Manchester, Pennine Lancashire and South and West Yorkshire. The prosperity of the North as a whole will be increasingly driven by the economic performance of the Manchester and Leeds areas and the connections from them to Sheffield and Liverpool, York, Chester, Preston and Tyne and Wear. Improved transport connectivity will be important in unlocking productivity gains across this area.

In the recent past, the Northern Way has provided a framework for the collaboration on shared priorities to promote the sustainable economic development of the North. Work has focussed on areas where we can gain a greater competitive advantage by investing, influencing and researching jointly to maximise value from nationally significant assets and opportunities. Current priorities are innovation (where our achievements have received national recognition as a successful model of cross-regional working), transport, energy and regeneration. We will want to explore with the North East and Yorkshire and Humberside where there might be added value in taking forward the priorities on a joint basis.

Section E

Focus and Ambition

Focus and Ambition

As noted earlier, **Future North West** cannot be about everything we need to do in the North West. It seeks to provide a framework to create the conditions where our people can prosper, businesses can thrive and places can become successful. It has a clear vision and outcomes, as well as a clear strategic framework for achieving them. However, the Northwest is not homogenous, its different places have different needs and opportunities in a global environment.

The overall challenge is to drive mutually reinforcing (rather than competitive) growth, where growth or actions in one part of the North West can support other parts – such as the nuclear industry where different parts of the supply chain are strong across the North West; the visitor economy where investments benefit the region's residents as well as visitors; or by recognising that flood risk in Greater Manchester is directly related to upland management in Pennine Lancashire and the Peak District.

Future North West establishes a clear and compelling course of action to achieve our vision over the next 20 years. However, we cannot tackle everything straight away with equal priority, particularly in the early years when we face substantial public expenditure constraints. It is clear that we must prioritise a small number of absolutely fundamental issues for North West partners to put their collective weight behind if we are to become a truly world class over the next 20 years – things that future generations will thank us for tackling because of their impact and the difference they have made.

The development of the four themes and underpinning objectives has highlighted a number of issues which are critical to achieving the vision. In some cases, these are issues which are essential to ensure the successful integration of economic, environmental and social priorities and deliver across several objectives. Others are absolutely fundamental in their own right to our aspirations to develop a world-class sustainable economy with an excellent quality of life for people in the North West.

We have therefore identified 12 priority areas ('Big Ticket Issues') on which we believe the North West should focus action if we are to achieve our aspiration of making this a truly world class place to live, work, and invest. These are set out below, with an explanation of just why they are so important to the North West together with an indication of the scale of the challenge and potential benefits in each case. In delivering these Big Ticket Issues (BTIs), we will seek to maintain our successful record of physical and economic renewal of our cities and towns whilst improving the economic and social sustainability of smaller communities.

Achieving our aspirations and aims in these areas will help build a more resilient North West, by not only focussing on the importance of commercial wealth creation, but the importance of having a strong North West identity, capitalising on its people and physical, environmental and cultural attributes. Key to a resilient economy are high levels of innovation, creativity and business growth; having a flexible and adaptable workforce and business base; and innovative public, private and third sectors which build effective partnerships for the delivery of core aims.

Big Ticket Issues (BTI)

BTI 1: Develop the enterprising capabilities of our people through education and skills

Why?

- Business starts in the North West are 37 per 10,000 people compared with 42 nationally.
- Fewer people are thinking about being an entrepreneur and believe they have the skills to start an enterprise (42% compared with 52% for London).
- 26% of the working population is qualified to degree level, but still behind the national average of 29%.
- 15% have no qualifications, worse than the UK average of 12%.

Benefits

Encouraging greater take-up of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, as well as equipping people with enterprise skills, and retaining more of our HE graduates from North West universities, will be essential to make the most of opportunities in our world-leading knowledge-based and advanced manufacturing industries and encourage more business start-ups. Elevating the North West to the top quartile for leadership and management performance would add £1 billion to the economy.

BTI 2: Develop our world-leading advanced manufacturing, biomedical and digital and creative industries

Why?

- The advanced manufacturing sector contributes 13% GVA to the North West economy, the biomedical sector is 2% of our GVA, and digital and creative sector currently 7% of GVA.
- The North West is the UK's largest manufacturing region, and North West manufacturing is more productive than nationally.
- Although employment in manufacturing reduced by more than one fifth between 2000 and 2006, its share of GVA has been maintained, illustrating improved productivity. The digital and creative sector has also seen increased GVA share and productivity.

Benefits

Building on our considerable assets in these areas will be essential to rebalancing the North West economy to develop highly productive industries capable of exploiting the massive national and global opportunities likely to arise over the next 20 years. Wealth-creating employment and productivity depends upon improving our manufacturing to lead nationally and at European and international level. We also need to make the most of our already strong biomedical industry and use MediaCityUK to develop the international potential of our digital and creative industries.

BTI 3: Develop our world class research, science and innovation capability, particularly at Daresbury

Why?

- The North West has the highest R&D growth in Higher Education Institutions of any region, standing at £500 million and the 3rd highest business R&D.
- 79% of business R&D is from large businesses.
- The North West is home to 15 universities, several of them world-leading in particular areas, as well as a number of world-class facilities led by Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus.

Benefits

Developing our research, science and innovation capability, including by establishing stronger links between universities and business, will be essential to not only supporting our existing world-leading industries but creating the conditions in which new ideas, products and services to meet new demands can be developed and successfully brought to the market place.

Future North West: Our Shared Priorities

BTI 4: Develop our low carbon energy offer, especially in nuclear, and marine renewables, for example through the Energy Coast initiative

Why?

- The North West has the second highest consumption of energy after the South East.
- The North West is a net exporter of energy and home to some of the UK's most significant facilities, as well as half the civil nuclear workforce (providing 23,000 jobs across the region and one in four jobs in Cumbria) and all stages of the nuclear cycle.
- Currently we generate only 5% of our electricity from renewable sources.

Benefits

There are major opportunities both from nuclear decommissioning and from the next generation of nuclear power stations, including associated supply chain and related development. Given our extensive coastline, there are significant potential opportunities in developing marine renewables, including tidal and wave power (with the potential to generate as much energy from the Mersey and other estuaries as from the Severn Estuary) as well as offshore wind and associated port and engineering facilities.

BTI 5: Develop Next Generation Access digital connectivity

Why?

- Businesses with the highest levels of ICT adoption have the highest growth prospects and highest average turnover per employee – £87,000 against £25,000 for non-adopters.
- Nearly 90% of businesses use broadband for their connectivity.
- The opportunity cost of North West businesses failing to effectively deploy ICT is estimated at 3% of GVA per annum.

Benefits

It will be essential to future North West competitiveness to ensure access to super fast NGA broadband at the earliest opportunity. This will be particularly important to developing our world-leading and information-intensive advanced manufacturing, biomedical and digital and creative industries. NGA will also have important social benefits, including improving the ability of individuals to access employment and learning opportunities and key services, particularly in more remote rural areas, and empowering local communities.

BTI 6: Improve rail connectivity and tackle transport pinch points across the North West, especially the Northern Hub and securing High Speed Rail access

Why?

- Traffic on the region's roads has increased by 16% since 1996 and is expected to increase by a further 27% by 2020.
- Transport accounts for a quarter of carbon emissions in the North West, mostly from road transport, which is facing increasing congestion.
- Rail journeys have increased by 20% since 1990, mainly into and between Manchester and Liverpool, and rail networks are operating at near or over-capacity. There are currently over 2.5 million rail journeys from the North West to London each year.

Benefits

There are clear economic benefits associated with increased rail connectivity and capacity both within the North West and with other parts of the country. Dealing with congestion and overcapacity in central Manchester, through Northern Hub proposals, are the key to unlocking improvements in the speed and reliability of train services across the North West and with neighbouring Yorkshire and Humberside. Equally important will be ensuring that new High Speed Rail comes to the North West at the earliest opportunity, and to maximise the economic benefits for the North West as a whole.

BTI 7: Improve international connectivity via Manchester Airport and Liverpool Super port**Why?**

- Manchester Airport handles over 20 million passengers and 170,000 tonnes of cargo each year. It is the 4th largest airport in the UK, and the largest outside the South East.
- Liverpool Airport has undergone significant growth over the last decade and is now the 10th largest in the UK with five million passengers.
- Liverpool is by far the biggest port in the North West, and is the only northern port with a national trade catchment.

Benefits

One of the greatest drivers of growth is proximity to major airports and employment hubs, so the sustainable growth of our two major airports is critical to the future economic prosperity of the region and enabling us to take full advantage of global opportunities. The Port of Liverpool is now accessible for all container freight trains, and has full consent for a new 'post panamax' berth which would be capable of handling the world's new generation of giant container vessels.

BTI 8: Reduce levels of ill health, health inequalities, poverty and worklessness**Why?**

- Average life expectancy in the North West is improving, but it continues to lag behind the national average (North West 78.2 years, England 79.7 years) with significant disparities across the North West.
- The North West has 9.4% of its people on incapacity benefit compared with 6.7% nationally, with deep-seated concentrations of worklessness, and this is reflected in the region's higher than average economic inactivity level.
- In 2007, 25% of children in the North West were living in low income households, compared with 22% nationally.

Benefits

The choices people make about their lifestyles can have a major impact on their health and well-being: despite significant recent progress, mortality rates including infant, coronary heart disease and cancer rates in the North West remain above national averages. Levels and concentrations of worklessness and poverty act as a brake on the regional economy. Successfully addressing these issues will be essential to releasing the potential of our people, to ensure they make an active contribution to the workforce and economy, as well as ensuring that the benefits of economic growth are widely shared across the people of the North West.

BTI 9: Increase the number of private and third sector jobs and social enterprise**Why?**

- Over the last ten years, 162,000 public sector and 27,000 private sector jobs have been created in the North West.
- Forecasts suggest that 84,000 public sector and 30,000 business services jobs could be lost in the next five years, and this will impact particularly on certain parts of Lancashire and Merseyside which have high proportions of public sector employment.
- The third sector in the North West already employs over 64,000 people; with social enterprises contributing £3.3bn to the North West economy.

Benefits

Supporting the private sector, as well as the third sector, to generate jobs to replace those lost in the public sector will be essential to the future economic and social prosperity of the North West. We also need to build on the North West's strong tradition of co-operation and social enterprise

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BTI 10: Develop our sporting, cultural and quality of place offer, based on our world famous places, heritage and environmental assets, particularly Manchester, Liverpool, Chester and the Lake District

Why?

- Half of UK opinion leaders rate the quality of life as better in the North West than in other regions.
- Our historic and cultural assets contribute £1.6 billion to GVA.
- Sporting assets are amongst the greatest in the world and the industry has an annual turnover of £6.5 billion.
- We have world-class environmental assets, including internationally renowned landscapes and wildlife habitats, as well as cities known all over the world.

Benefits

A high quality of place is essential in attracting international investment and events as well as people to live, work, learn and visit. While equally important in their own right, combining the strong sporting, cultural and environmental offers will be essential to selling the North West as a fantastic place to live, visit and do business in, and attracting global events.

BTI 11: Enhance our natural environment and resolve emerging pinch points in our critical utilities and green infrastructure

Why?

- The natural environment provides 109,000 jobs and £2.6 billion of GVA in the North West.
- One third of the North West is nationally designated for its landscape quality and we have over 200,000 hectares of internationally recognised wildlife sites.
- Constraints on our critical infrastructure could inhibit growth potential, with particular 'pinch points' in the Liverpool and Manchester conurbations.

Benefits

Green Infrastructure makes areas attractive for investment, as well as providing other multiple benefits such as improved flood management, recreation and summer cooling in cities. Serious consideration will need to be given to ensuring investment in the energy supply, water supply, sewerage and waste handling infrastructure to support sustainable growth.

BTI 12: Ensure high-quality, energy-efficient and affordable housing in the right locations

Why?

- There is a broad consensus that we need around 23,000 new homes a year to support the North West's growing communities and economic aspirations.
- Housing affordability has decreased sharply since 2003, and markets in Cumbria, North Lancashire and Cheshire have very high price/income ratios, so we will need to ensure a high provision of new homes are affordable.
- With 90% of our homes in 2030 already built, improving our existing stock is critical. Around a quarter of carbon emissions in the North West come from housing.

Benefits

Housing plays a critical role in a well functioning economy. New housing will therefore need to support the North West's aspirations to grow high value added industries. Ensuring new homes are low or zero carbon, as well as retrofitting existing housing to improve energy efficiency, will be major challenge to the North West moving forward but will also offer significant skills and employment opportunities.

Section F

What happens next

What happens next

We are publishing **Future North West** as a 'living document' ahead of the government's Comprehensive Spending Review this autumn. We are therefore inviting feedback and comments over a two-month period until 8 October 2010. We will take these into account in the final version to be published after the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review is known.

We are excited about the future of the North West and believe that the clear strategic direction provided by **Future North West** will ensure a globally-competitive, exciting and vibrant place in which to live, learn, work and invest in 20 years time. It is based on a sophisticated knowledge base and insight into the shape, size and geography of the North West. It is both strategic and penetrative in identifying the issues we must address to make our region a success. This cannot be done by any business, one agency or group in isolation. Making the North West great will depend on building on our already exemplary tradition of strong and effective partnership working. We hope that partners will therefore consider just how they can help deliver the shared priorities for the North West in the coming years.

Your views and comments on this document would therefore be extremely helpful. They should be sent by email, by 8th October 2010, to:

Future.NW@nwda.co.uk

If you have any questions, or need any further information, please contact Brenda Buckley on 01925 400279 or use the websites www.4nw.org.uk or www.nwda.co.uk/futurenorthwest

These websites carry the key supporting documents including a summary of the evidence base and the Sustainability Assessment.

Annex

Annex - Comprehensive Listing of Potential Action Areas

Themes 1–4, and their objectives, identify the key issues which we must make progress with if we are to achieve our vision and outcomes. In the course of developing this document, North West partners have put together a longer list of issues and areas on which we might focus action, subject to the necessary resources and commitment being available.

Successful implementation will come from the strong and continuing commitment of private, public and third sector partners to:

- collaborate to achieve mutually-shared goals;
- use their powers, resources and influence to achieve common standards;
- encourage and promote behavioural change by businesses, households and individuals; and
- influence national and EU policy development.

We have used this categorisation to develop the potential areas for action identified in this Annex. In many cases, the proposed action areas fit under more than one category but we have listed them under the main one. Some of these action areas may be taken forward following the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review 2010. Action areas shown in bold have already been identified in Themes 1–4.

Theme 1: Capitalise on the opportunities of moving towards a low carbon economy and society, address climate change and improve resource efficiency

Objective 1a: Make the North West a world-class place for nuclear technologies, accelerate the deployment of renewable energy and exploit opportunities from other low carbon and environmental goods and services

Collaborate to achieve mutually-shared goals by:

- developing knowledge transfer, research and innovation capacity and capability at our universities and key research centres, including the Dalton and Joule Centres at Manchester University;
- developing marine and offshore wind energy generation, including related supply chains, port facilities, marine science and advanced engineering opportunities;
- supporting the development of new, low carbon products and services such as solid state lighting;
- developing land-based renewable sources such as onshore wind, wood fuel, biomass (including plant and animal biomass, energy from waste and co-firing with fossil fuels) and hydropower;
- embedding the skills required across both the public and private sector workforce and stimulating the development of new specialist skills in low carbon sectors;
- stimulating the take-up of science, technology, engineering and mathematics across schools, and low carbon specialism within further and higher education; and
- retaining and growing existing expertise in areas such as engineering and nuclear, and encouraging re-skilling into low carbon priorities.

Use powers, resources and influence to achieve common standards to:

- take full advantage of the opportunities from nuclear decommissioning in Cumbria and Lancashire; and
- stimulate the uptake of environmental and low carbon goods and services through public and private procurement and design/grant specifications.

Encourage and promote behavioural change by businesses, households and individuals through:

- stimulating low carbon leadership across all sectors;
- assisting North West businesses to identify and exploit market opportunities at home and abroad;
- encouraging the deployment of micro-generation and community-scale decentralised power and heat systems, including those integrated with waste management;
- encouraging knowledge transfer, research and innovation, particularly for the development of low carbon products and services; and
- stimulating eco-innovation through the development of low carbon manufacturing, low carbon materials by our construction and building technologies sector, production of alternative low carbon base products by our chemicals and industrial biotechnology sector and opportunities for our waste/recycling industries.

Influence national and EU policy development to:

- secure new nuclear power stations in Cumbria and Lancashire, and develop nuclear supply chains;
- support any bid by Cumbrian communities to host the proposed national nuclear waste repository; and
- secure the development of strengthened electricity transmission networks, and improved strategic transport links.

Objective 1b: Ensure the North West understands and adapts to the implications of unavoidable climate change

Collaborate to achieve mutually shared goals by:

- safeguarding and optimising the role of our natural systems and green infrastructure in adapting to the unavoidable impacts of climate change.

Use powers, resources and influence to achieve common standards to:

- develop and apply design standards to 'climate change proof' – in terms of both flood risk and increased temperatures – new and existing development, buildings and infrastructure;
- use strategic flood risk and coastal erosion appraisal and management to identify areas at risk and where investment and action is needed;
- ensure that account is taken of natural coastal change, the impacts of rising sea levels, and the potential for managed realignment;
- promote the use of sustainable urban drainage schemes (SuDS) to reduce the risks of flooding and impact on surface flow and quality at times of high rainfall; and
- establish a long-term land management policy in upland and rural areas to mitigate carbon loss, particularly in relation to peatland management, and flood risk and maintain water quality.

Encourage and promote behavioural change by businesses, households and individuals by:

- ensuring that the risks and opportunities from climate change for North West businesses and communities are clearly understood, and potential responses developed and applied to increase the resilience of services, transport, critical infrastructure, green infrastructure, natural systems, landscapes, habitats, land use and urban fabric.

Objective 1c: Stimulate key sectors, including housing, transport and industry, to develop low carbon and resource efficient solutions and alternatives

Collaborate to achieve mutually shared goals by:

- ensuring that opportunities presented by the changing climate are maximised and threats to food security reduced through a responsive agricultural sector and an innovative food and drink industry.

Use powers, resources and influence to achieve common standards to:

- accelerate energy and resource efficiency, and tackle fuel poverty in the domestic sector by:
 - encouraging all new build housing to be zero carbon;
 - encouraging retrofitting of existing housing, including stimulating activity by private households in energy and water efficiency measures; and
 - encouraging adoption of smart grids and meters.

- reduce demand for, and encourage more efficient use of resources (including energy, materials and water) by businesses and households by:
 - encouraging key sectors which are important in terms of their contribution to regional GVA and their use of resources to develop new approaches and solutions;
 - encouraging sustainable production, through embedding resource efficiency and eco-innovation into product design and development;
 - using the public sector and public procurement to model and promote resource-efficient practices.
- ensure adequate facilities for collection, sorting, treating and disposing of waste to meet the long-term objective of achieving zero waste to landfill, by:
 - managing residual waste that cannot readily be reused, recycled or composted to reduce its environmental harm and recover value;
 - maintaining a minimal amount of landfill capacity for disposal of residues from which no further value can be recovered;
 - locating primary reception, treatment and transfer facilities near to the sources of arisings;
 - encouraging waste authorities to collaborate to determine the most sustainable location of significant secondary treatment and disposal facilities that benefit more than one waste authority area;
 - exploring opportunities to manage municipal, commercial and industrial waste together, and to contribute to energy supply by developing energy from waste alternatives; and
 - maximising the recycling of aggregates and increasing the use of secondary and recycled aggregates
- ensure minerals extraction takes account of:
 - the national significance of the region's reserves of salt, silica sand, gypsum, peat and clay (including fireclay);
 - specific requirements to safeguard high-specification road stone; and
 - retaining unexploited peat reserves as important carbon sinks and biological resources.

Encourage behavioural change by businesses, households and individuals by:

- reducing emissions from businesses by:
 - stimulating energy and resource efficiency in business operations; and
 - improving the energy efficiency and resource efficiency of commercial premises, including achieving zero-carbon for new build and solutions for multi-occupancy buildings.
- reducing emissions from transport by:
 - reducing the need to travel, including through increased digital connectivity;
 - encouraging sustainable forms of travel, including public transport, walking, cycling and smarter travel choices;
 - encouraging use of rail and waterborne freight;
 - stimulating the development and adoption of electric/low carbon vehicles, technologies and fuels.

Theme 2: Build on our sources of international competitive advantage and regional distinctiveness

Objective 2a: Develop our strength in internationally-competitive manufacturing, biomedical and digital and creative industries

Collaborate to achieve mutually shared goals by:

- supporting the advanced manufacturing/engineering, including aerospace, automotive, and chemical, biomedical, digital and creative sectors and supply chains, creating the conditions to support and grow businesses;
- supporting knowledge transfer, research and innovation;
- ensuring there is a wide range of different types of business finance with actions in place to fill any gaps in commercial provision and provide easy access to funding for businesses and individuals starting and growing a business;
- developing supply chains and infrastructure;
- increasing the number of start-up companies in internationally-competitive sectors;
- identifying and supporting emerging sectors where the North West can have competitive advantage, eg unmanned aerial vehicles and solid state lighting;
- supporting North West businesses in understanding and targeting strategically important export markets, including traditional EU and US markets, as well as high growth markets in China, India, Brazil, and Russia); and
- attracting global companies and knowledge-based business through the promotion of the North West's assets, developing the skills and ensuring sustainable housing and infrastructure development to meet inward investor needs.

Encourage and promote behavioural change by businesses, households and individuals by:

- encouraging enterprising behaviour; and
- encouraging the acquisition of skills in internationally-competitive and emerging sectors, and raise the image and aspiration to work in these sectors.

Objective 2b: Strengthen our concentration of knowledge-based assets driven by our universities and research, science and innovation base

Collaborate to achieve mutually shared goals by:

- developing science parks, technology centres and centres of research excellence;
- encouraging technology transfer between sectors and supporting inter-disciplinary and inter-university developments;
- supporting technology and research specialisms in the growing North West higher education sector;
- supporting international collaboration between research partners;
- promoting partnerships between higher and further education providers and key sectors to ensure that the workforce have the right skills to meet future needs, including developing skills and behaviours for increased innovation and enterprise;
- attracting, developing and retaining skilled people through the creation and promotion of high quality employment opportunities; and

- focusing business support on product and service innovation, investment readiness and access to finance to support high value activity, ensuring that SMEs are not impeded by minimum thresholds.

Encourage and promote behavioural change by businesses, households and individuals by:

- developing an enterprise culture in schools, colleges and universities to stimulate high growth added value start-up businesses; and
- encouraging young people to aspire to higher skilled jobs through the acquisition of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subject skills and other subject areas relevant to the region's sectors.

Objective 2c: Improve our international connectivity through Liverpool Superport, Manchester Airport, and high speed rail links.

Collaborate to achieve mutually shared goals by:

- developing the Liverpool 'Superport' concept as a vehicle for marketing and promoting the port's national role and supporting Merseyside's wider maritime economy.

Use powers, resources and influence to achieve common standards to:

- support the sustainable growth of Manchester and Liverpool Airports in accordance with airport master plans and strengthen strategic transport links including surface access and interchange facilities; and
- support the sustainable growth and expansion of the Port of Liverpool, as the North West's key international seaport through the implementation of the port masterplan and development of strategic transport connections.

Influence national and EU policy development to:

- secure the proposed High Speed Rail line from London/Birmingham to Manchester initially, and subsequently to other parts of the North West;
- maximise the benefits to the North West of High Speed Rail through connections to major cities and other transport hubs; and
- secure improvements to the Northern Hub to improve rail connectivity and capacity into and across the North West.

Objective 2d: Develop our world-class cultural, heritage, sporting and quality of place offer and the attraction of Manchester, Liverpool, Chester and the Lake District as international destinations.

Collaborate to achieve mutually shared goals by:

- developing the offer of Manchester, Liverpool, Chester and the Lake District as internationally and nationally-important destinations;
- developing Blackpool as a modern 21st century resort and national visitor destination and Carlisle, Chester and Lancaster's role as 'heritage cities';
- exploiting the North West's internationally-renowned sporting, cultural and environmental brands and assets to market the North West as a place to visit and do business, and as the venue of choice for high-profile, international events;

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- promoting the adventure tourism offer of Cumbria and Pennine Lancashire;
- developing and promote the North West's cultural offer built around its extensive museums, art galleries and theatres;
- promoting and enhancing the North West's distinctive historic and natural environments, in particular its:
 - outstanding natural and semi-natural landscapes;
 - rich biodiversity and geodiversity;
 - industrial, commercial, maritime and faith heritage assets;
 - unique coastline; and
 - historic inland waterway network of inland docks, canals and associated infrastructure.
- raising the profile of the Liverpool and Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Sites as visitor attractions so that they contribute to tourism development and re-imaging, whilst protecting and enhancing their cultural significance; and
- ensuring a transport infrastructure which supports sustainable tourism.

Influence national and EU policy development to:

- develop the case for a Lake District World Heritage Site.

Theme 3: Release the potential of our people and tackle poverty

Objective 3a: Increase the potential of the workforce by improving employment levels and skills

Collaborate to achieve mutually shared goals by:

- improving skills for employability and enterprise:
 - basic and key skills, especially numeracy; and
 - enterprising and innovative skills to increase business start-up.
- developing skills to meet the future needs of the North West economy, particularly:
 - up-skilling the workforce with a focus on technician and higher level skills, particularly in STEM subjects, to meet the needs of North West growth and high employment sectors;
 - developing specialist low carbon skills and greening of existing skills; and
 - developing leadership/management and work organisation skills to ensure workforce skills are optimised.
- All underpinned by information, advice and guidance informed by demand.
- Drive enterprise and innovation skills to increase the number of business start-ups.
- Articulate skills requirements and encourage the provision and acquisition of skills in the following internationally competitive sectors:
 - advanced manufacturing/engineering, including chemicals, aerospace and automotive;
 - biomedical;
 - digital and creative;
 - chemicals and automotive; and
 - nuclear and other low carbon and environmental technologies.

- Create the conditions to support and grow sectors and businesses, and their supply chains, which have not been identified as internationally competitive in Objectives 1 and 2 but which make an important contribution to regional employment and GVA such as:
 - food and drink;
 - financial and professional services;
 - logistics;
 - leisure and tourism; and
 - construction.
- Address replacement demand in high employment sectors – healthcare, education, leisure and tourism, retail and construction – through measures to improve progression within organisations, including up-skilling, improve retention of staff and ensure sectors are attractive to young people.
- Ensure the advisory services for young people and adults are fully informed, both sectorally and spatially, on existing and future skills needs required to meet economic development requirements and to enable individuals to make informed choices linked to employment opportunities.
- Tackle barriers, such as low aspirations and poor connectivity that prevent individuals, especially young people, from obtaining numeracy and literacy skills.
- Provide the support the workless need to gain sustainable and rewarding employment with skills, especially those from groups and communities most adversely affected by unemployment, a lack of work or underemployment.
- Continue focus on Skills for Life activity for both potential and current workforce to address the long 'tail' of North West population without these skills particularly numeracy.
- Bring together job search activity and workforce development to ensure career progression.
- Develop a core competency set around generic employment skills like 'oral communication, customer handling and team working'.
- Work with schools, colleges and training providers to ensure more young people leave school equipped for work.
- Tackle youth unemployment through effective advice and guidance and promotion of apprenticeships.

Use powers, resources and influence to achieve common standards to:

- encourage greater retention and utilisation of graduates in the region, particularly those in subjects, supporting them into new jobs, internships and entrepreneurial activity;
- develop support packages to help business and individuals to develop innovation and enterprise skills and increase the number of business start ups including: enterprise education in schools, Further Education and Higher Education, and enterprising behaviour in the existing workforce;
- support those starting up business; and
- work towards a universal Information, Advice and Guidance [IAG] service informed by economic demand with a particular focus on regional priorities, eg STEM.

Encourage and promote behavioural change by businesses, households and individuals by:

- encouraging young people to aspire to higher skilled jobs through the acquisition of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subject skills and other subject areas relevant to growth sectors; and
- developing the role of apprenticeships and foundation degrees for skills progression and to meet economic demand.

Objective 3b: Build on our strong third sector and strong tradition of social enterprise

Collaborate to achieve mutually shared goals by:

- developing the capacity of the third sector, including social enterprises and faith organisations to tackle worklessness, build healthier environments, further provide skills and training opportunities for people from areas of deprivation or other socially excluded communities and manage community assets;
- developing the North West Compact and associated action plans including developing a Community Group Code for procurement and commissioning;
- developing a financial inclusion strategy that includes policies that facilitate community ownership of public and community finance services; and
- supporting the third sector to engage with public sector procurement and commissioning.

Use powers, resources and influence to achieve common standards to:

- support the social enterprise sector to grow, delivering business support from a wide range of partners including business support organisations, member owned networks, mentoring, and through building the social enterprise skills and capabilities of individuals and communities.

Encourage and promote behavioural change by businesses, households and individuals by:

- promoting volunteering as a way to support people back into employment, to develop new skills, improve health, and strengthen communities, and as a critical success factor in attracting and facilitating major sporting and cultural events as part of our regional sports and cultural assets offer.

Objective 3c: Revitalise areas with deep-seated economic and social challenges and build strong communities

Collaborate to achieve mutually shared goals by:

- Ensure that regeneration investment is:
 - highly targeted on socio-economic and environmental outcomes via an evidence based approach;
 - driven at the right spatial level – and as close to communities as is practicable – making the most of opportunities that already exist;
 - catalytic – not trying to transform everywhere and not a permanent subsidy – but investing where it will have most impact by supporting those communities where the most severe poverty and worklessness persists and where there is opportunity to deliver long-term change;
 - co-ordinated, with a suite of mutually reinforcing interventions, eg delivering public and private investment, housing, skills, entrepreneurship, health, critical and green infrastructure; and
 - linked to, and reinforcing wider priorities for example tackling climate change by ensuring regeneration takes place in sustainable locations, improves competitiveness and delivers infrastructure.
- Determine the type of regeneration investment likely to be most effective on the basis of:
 - economic and social characteristics of the area as measured by levels of overall deprivation (IMD), including worklessness;
 - vulnerability of housing markets and health inequalities;
 - strength of the wider sub-regional economy, including whether the area is remote from growth;

- dynamics of the area (whether it's getting better or worse); and
- where investments will facilitate private sector investment.

Use powers, resources and influence to achieve common standards to:

- share best practice on regeneration models drawing on a co-ordinated approach based on a typology which identifies physical, social and wider economic development models. This will include the creation of new tools for investment, particularly equity products and the recycling of investments through loans rather than grants.

Objective 3d: Tackle the serious challenges raised by multiple disadvantage

Collaborate to achieve mutually shared goals by:

- equipping under-employed groups – BME, disabled, older people, women and young people – with the skills and tools to access employment opportunities;
- improving the health and wellbeing of all by reducing inequalities and by supporting social conditions that reduce obesity, alcohol consumption, tobacco use and improve mental health;
- building on existing strengths and assets in communities, encourage the active involvement of North West residents to influence changes to policies and practices that will tackle the barriers to wellbeing and health and will reduce the gap in health inequalities;
- working across sectors and drawing on best practice to ensure better early years co-ordination and improved support for families and individual children; and
- promoting the development of an integrated anti-poverty strategy for each locality to tackle issues of multiple disadvantage.

Use powers, resources and influence to achieve common standards to:

- tackle the long-term roots of deprivation by investing in the development of children and young people, especially in their early years, prioritising not just education but health and children's experiences outside of school, especially for hard to reach groups in the most deprived areas and those young people not in education, employment or training;
- develop employment and skills programmes that specifically support disadvantaged and underemployed individuals and groups across the region, helping to raise aspirations and achievement and ultimately leading to quality and sustainable work; and
- create physical and social conditions in all North West communities that make it easy for people to live well by focussing on the social, economic and environmental causes of ill health and ensuring high quality primary care services.

Encourage and promote behavioural change in businesses, households and individuals by:

- building upon the experiences of first and second generation worklessness initiatives in the North West, by sharing best practice to ensure a more comprehensive, integrated and personalised approach that better reflects the needs of workless people and groups;
- reducing inequality, including by removing the barriers to work for parents, by putting in place a focussed approach which delivers support to parents who are employed or in training and need assistance with childcare to enable them to access quality work;
- ensuring our workforces in public, private and third sectors reflect the diversity of the populations we serve (this will include activity within the North West around anti-discrimination and anti-racism);

- encouraging best practice within private, public and third sector employers in the North West to create sustainable job opportunities that offer a minimum level of quality, to include not only a decent living wage, but also opportunities for in-work development, the flexibility to enable people to balance work and family life, and protection from adverse working conditions that can damage health;
- ensuring all public, voluntary and private organisations focus on prevention of ill health, and that there is adequate provision of ill health prevention services;
- encouraging active travel to, and healthier lifestyle practices at, workplaces, schools and to retail and leisure services using smarter choices travel and accessibility planning included at the planning stage of development proposals;
- ensuring that all parents can, and do, take advantage of high quality early learning and childcare opportunities;
- encouraging active involvement of citizens across the North West in influencing changes to policies and practices to tackle the barriers to wellbeing and health and to reduce the gap in health inequalities – build on strengths and assets in communities;

Influence national and EU policy development to:

- continuing to value the role the public sector and public services play in tackling and preventing multiple disadvantage through activities such as Sure Start and other community-based services; and
- using 'Investment for health and wellbeing' tools and 'social return on investment' measures, encourage organisations to assess the health and equality impact of their policies, practices and procurement procedures so that all people, and especially children, young people and older people, in the North West can live well and the gap in health inequalities is reduced.

Objective 3e: Address the implications of demographic change for our workforce and services

Collaborate to achieve mutually shared goals by:

- harnessing the positive contribution an ageing population can make, through employment, commercial and leisure opportunities targeted at older people, the creation of a health and social care growth sector, as well as within extended family life and sustainable communities;
- discouraging gender stereotyping in employment and promote flexible working, female entrepreneurship and develop strong and diverse boards across the public, private and social enterprise sectors;
- supporting disability groups to realise the potential of disabled people to contribute at all levels of the economy of the North West;
- recognising ethnic diversity as an economic, as well as social and cultural asset by actively promoting good relations, spreading best practice and ensuring responsive and accessible public services;
- actively promoting good relations between people and communities in the North West and seek to harness diverse individual and community talents for the benefit of all; and
- delivering fair and responsive, integrated and accessible, public services that meet the needs of our diverse population and enable people to achieve successful life outcomes. This will include focused support to rural communities in terms of improved access to services.

Use powers, resources and influence to apply common standards to:

- meet the requirements of an ageing population. This includes increased flexible working and training to retain over 50s in employment, a wider choice of housing that both promotes independence and supports vulnerable groups when required, improved transport that meets the needs of older travellers and the delivery of health plans for long-term fitness;
- help realise the contribution of women at all levels of the economy using Single Equality Schemes and pay audits with other interventions for example supporting women returning to work after childbirth; and
- simplify the information, advice and guidance employers need to positively and proactively employ those with disabilities.

Encourage behavioural change by businesses, households and individuals by:

- developing a better understanding of individual needs, so that services can be tailored to remove economic and social barriers to participation.

Theme 4: Ensure the right housing and infrastructure to support sustainable economic growth and communities

Objective 4a - Secure a high quality housing offer in locations which support sustainable economic growth and communities

Collaborate to achieve mutually shared goals through:

- joint working within and across Housing Market Areas to better understand the housing offer, future requirements and land supply, including relating new housing provision to the wider economic, social and environmental priorities set out in this document;
- ensuring the availability in the right locations of land (including brownfield sites) for new housing that supports sustainable economic growth, and is consistent with the phasing of critical infrastructure and transport provision;
- promoting wider regeneration activity that will help to restructure housing markets to create places with a strengthened attraction for private development;
- increasing access to affordable housing, particularly in rural areas by encouraging public bodies to make sites available at low cost; and
- addressing the housing needs of rural areas through organic incremental growth to sustain rural communities, particularly taking into account the relationship between house prices, wages, accessibility, migration into rural areas, the ageing population, and accessibility to and support for rural businesses and services.

Use powers, resources and influence to achieve common standards to:

- raise the quality standards of new homes incorporating good design and water and energy efficiency standards, accessibility, sustainable homes and lifetime homes standards and appropriate provision of quality greenspace;
- improve the condition, quality and functionality of existing housing stock including energy and water efficiency;

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- address under-occupancy within the existing stock and bring more empty properties back into use, where appropriate;
- develop Local Investment Plans which highlight the scale and nature (type, size, tenure) of new housing development required to meet local ambitions and support sustainable growth; and
- encourage the provision of high quality support services that deliver positive outcomes and enable people to succeed at living independently.

Encourage and promote behavioural change by businesses, households and individuals by:

- improving and extend the use and role of the private rented sector as a provider of housing.

Objective 4b - Ensure high-quality digital connectivity to stimulate enterprise, improve service delivery and reduce the need to travel

Collaborate to achieve mutually shared goals by:

- encouraging the building of innovative, high quality, interconnected and world class digital networks, to deliver transformational economic, social and environmental benefits; and
- supporting innovation and development in the utilisation of NGA and connectivity particularly in knowledge based industries where this reduces the need to travel.

Use powers, resources and influence to achieve common standards to:

- prioritise public sector investment in new networks and support the development of creative solutions to deliver NGA to remote rural areas.

Encourage behavioural change by businesses, households and individuals by:

- encouraging businesses to become digital to improve market penetration and profitability;
- encouraging a range of competitive suppliers, to help drive innovation and lower costs for end-users;
- developing attractive applications and services for end-users, to encourage take-up;
- promoting broadband take up including the delivery of more accessible and effective public services, particularly in rural areas in Cheshire, Cumbria and Lancashire; and
- seeking to improve basic IT skills and understanding to allow take up of NGA.

Objective 4c: Improve internal connectivity through a sustainable transport infrastructure which better connects opportunity and need

Collaborate to achieve mutually shared goals by:

- facilitating delivery of Network Rail's Northern Rail Hub proposals and electrification of these lines: Liverpool to Manchester (Chat Moss); Manchester to Preston via Bolton; Huyton to Wigan via St Helens; and Preston to Blackpool North;
- integrating the management and planning of transport systems through encouraging the development of sustainable, integrated and accessible transport solutions for all users, which build upon multi-modal approaches to examining transport problems, issues, challenges and practical alternatives;

- encouraging the best use of existing infrastructure and capitalise on developments in intelligent transport systems and information and communications technology;
- focusing on improving journey time reliability and reducing congestion and existing or forecast overcrowding in the North West's main transport corridors;
- enhancing the accessibility of the North West's gateways and interchanges, particularly the international ones of Manchester Airport and Liverpool Superport; and
- encouraging measures to increase accessibility for all to key destinations, including for people with limited mobility and in isolated communities.

Use powers, resources and influence to achieve common standards to:

- encourage the better co-ordinated management of the highway network and rail network in the North West particularly to improve public transport connectivity into and between urban centres.
- encourage the development of a coordinated approach to managing travel demand, aimed, where appropriate, at:
 - changing employment shift patterns to reduce car-borne commuting during peak periods;
 - tackling the most congested parts of the motorway and strategic road network including the M6, M56, M60 and M62 and A556;
 - major tourist areas where visitor pressure is threatening the local environment, sensitive habitats and quality of life;
 - discouraging private car use through the introduction of 'smarter choices' and other incentives to change travel behaviour, alongside improvements to and facilitation/promotion of public transport, walking and cycling; and
 - promoting the transfer of freight to road and water through the use and development of inter-modal freight terminals.
- ensure resilience and maintain critical transport infrastructure in good order;
- determine priorities for managing traffic which focus on:
 - improving road safety;
 - reducing traffic growth;
 - maintaining a high-quality environment through mitigating the impacts of road traffic on air quality, noise, health and isolation of communities; and
 - encouraging traffic to use the most appropriate routes where possible.

Encourage and promote behavioural change by businesses, households and individuals by:

- capitalising on the opportunities available for increasing the proportion of freight moved by rail, short-sea, coastal shipping and inland waterways and encourage a shift from road-based transport; and
- promoting the transfer of freight from road to rail and/or water by the identification of sites for inter-modal freight terminals, and by encouraging greater use of existing terminals and private sidings.

Influence national and EU policy development to:

- encourage the improvement of surface access and interchange at the international and national gateways of Liverpool 'Superport' and Manchester Airport;
- promote the case for extending the proposed High Speed Rail line from London and Birmingham to Manchester initially, and subsequently to other parts of the North West; and
- maximise the benefits to the North West of High Speed Rail through connections to major cities and other transport hubs.

Objective 4d: Develop the critical infrastructure needed to support sustainable economic growth

Collaborate to achieve mutually shared goals by:

- establishing and maintain a strategic dialogue between utility providers, regulators, local authorities and key public sector agencies to support the provision, management, security of supply and resilience of critical utility infrastructure for gas, electricity, water, waste water and sewerage in ways which support the delivery of future growth and new development without harm to the environment. This dialogue should seek to:
 - provide mechanisms to resolve significant short term provision issues which arise in the next five years;
 - align strategic infrastructure planning and delivery for the next five to 20 years, focusing on identified pinch points; and
 - ensure that future strategic business planning and price reviews support the delivery of this strategic framework.
- identifying and developing a range of strategic sites for the North West which, together, will
- provide a portfolio of attractive opportunities for future investment across the region;
- encourage the development of knowledge-based industry and internationally competitive sectors;
- provide inter-modal freight facilities and terminals to encourage sustainable freight distribution; and
- support economic growth and economic restructuring across the region.

Use powers, resources and influence to achieve common standards to:

- support the establishment of the Atlantic Gateway Sustainable Infrastructure Commission, and similar bodies as appropriate in other parts of the North West.

Encourage and promote behavioural change by businesses, households and individuals by:

- encouraging the provision of new or upgraded critical infrastructure (including green and blue infrastructure) in locations with known problems, particularly focussing on the electricity supply for the city regions of Liverpool and Manchester, gas supply and storage, and strategic-scale network extensions to support the delivery of new energy generation.
- Influence national and EU policy development to:
- lobby for the current regulatory regimes to be revised to make it easier for utility companies to provide critical infrastructure linked to growth.

Objective 4e: Safeguard the natural environment and develop green infrastructure to provide economic, environmental and social benefits

Collaborate to achieve mutually shared goals by:

- encouraging the maintenance and provision of green and blue infrastructure, particularly in areas of future development and growth, and aim to promote the multiple benefits it can bring through:
 - conserving and managing existing green infrastructure and creating a new green infrastructure;
 - enhancing its functionality, quality, connectivity and accessibility; and
 - maximising the role of green infrastructure in mitigating and adapting to climate change through providing solutions for such issues as air quality, flood risk, 'heat islands', coastal change, loss of habitats.
- Protecting, enhancing, creating and managing landscapes, habitats and biodiversity through:
 - promoting the use of the North West Landscape Character Framework;
 - supporting the development of robust ecological networks, particularly in the Pennines, Solway Firth, Mersey Estuary, Dee Estuary and Cheshire Meres and Mosses;
 - supporting delivery of the NW Forestry Framework to double woodland cover by 2050;
 - delivering, where possible, a net environmental gain and avoid further fragmentation of habitats and species populations, by protecting, enhancing, expanding and linking areas of existing high biodiversity interest, to increase resilience to climate change.



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