



## **Black Country Business Competitiveness and Enterprise Theme Advisory Group**

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **1. Remit**

The role of the Black Country Business Competitiveness and Enterprise Theme Advisory Group (Theme Group) is to:-

- a) Act as the leading strategic support body to the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership providing a forum for the engagement of private sector employers, intermediaries and liaison with public sector agencies to develop, formulate and co-ordinate policies and proposals relating to:-
  - strategic company engagement;
  - innovation;
  - sector development;
  - social enterprise;
  - exploiting global opportunities;
  - business support; and
  - access to finance.
  
- b) Support the Black Country's strategic aim of enabling businesses in our key sectors to grow and deliver our contribution to the implementation of the Black Country Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) through the development of our economic, social and physical infrastructure.

#### **2. Scope**

The Theme Group will cover the whole spectrum of business growth and support and other related areas to support the Black Country SEP's objective of growing the Black Country supply chain and becoming globally competitive. The Group will advise on activity to support a significant number of leading manufacturing companies and facilitate a significantly higher number of business births in order to achieve the challenging growth aspirations of the Black Country Strategy.

#### **3. Terms of Reference**

- Work with and engage Black Country businesses and intermediaries to champion workstreams in respect of strategic company engagement, innovation, sector development, social enterprise, exploiting global opportunities business support and access to finance on behalf of the Black Country LEP.

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- Develop and advise the LEP and, as necessary, the Black Country Joint Committee, on bespoke interventions and meaningful support for local companies that will increase their growth and business competitiveness focusing on transformational and enabling sectors.
- Bring together the work of employers, Government and its agencies, local authorities and business intermediaries to champion the application of funding opportunities to maximise impact on Black Country businesses and work toward the development of a pipeline of projects and forms of collaboration that ensure continued and sustained progress towards the objectives of the Strategic Economic Plan and
- At the request of the LEP the Group will make observations on individual applications for funding where they fall within the Group's terms of reference.
- To receive reports from the relevant informal or other time-limited Groups, the Black Country Consortium Intelligence Unit and the Accountable Body on the progress and impact of ongoing Growth Deal, City Deal, EU and other relevant programmes and policy initiatives to inform discussion and development of future projects and programmes, to develop a pipeline of projects towards the objectives of the Strategic Economic Plan
- To act as a vehicle for engaging a wide range of employers through strengthening links with established intermediaries and sector networks
  - to promote collective understanding of the global opportunities, investment and access to finance challenges facing Black Country businesses and social enterprises especially for the Black Country sector priorities
  - to improve the responsiveness of Government, public agencies and financial investment institutions to the needs of business in the areas of investment, growth and export opportunities.
- To receive management or other reports from such projects within the framework of the Strategic Economic Plan, Growth Deal, City Deal or other relevant funding streams as may be requested or agreed from time to time by the Local Enterprise Partnership or Joint Committee, but including. for the time being, the Growth Hub and Invest Black Country
- Scrutinise the current direction of delivery partnerships, relevant to these terms of reference discussing and making recommendations for future activity working towards the objectives of the Strategic Economic Plan;

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#### 4. Membership

The Membership of the Theme Group will not exceed 20 Members drawn from:-

Private Sector Chair nominated by the Local Enterprise Partnership

Private Sector LEP Board members (ex officio)

7 Employers (drawn primarily from priority sectors)

One private sector member of each of the Engineering Employers Federation, Black Country Chamber and Black Country Federation of Small Business

1 Black Country Social Enterprise Cabinet Member

2 Black Country Local Authority Cabinet Members with responsibility for the relevant theme area.

A Black Country Local Authority Head of Regeneration or Executive Director with Responsibility for Business Support

Black Country Consortium Ltd Chief Executive

#### 5. Theme Group Advisors

The following Government Departments, organisations and agencies shall be entitled to nominate appropriate advisers to attend meetings to report, support and advise as necessary on relevant issues, themes, proposals and projects within the Board's terms of reference:-

- Other Local Authority members and offices,
- University of Wolverhampton
- BIS Local
- UKTI
- Manufacturing Advisory Service
- Invest Black Country
- Growth Hub Director

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Any other organisation and agency which wishes to inform the work of the Board, which has an official presence within the Black Country or engagement with business development and support in the Black Country, subject in any case to the agreement of the Chair.

## **6. Qualifications**

Unless otherwise specified all Members and Board Advisers will be expected to be senior postholders at either Managing Director, Chief Executive, Principal, Regional Director or Board of Director or Executive Management Team level within their respective organisations.

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