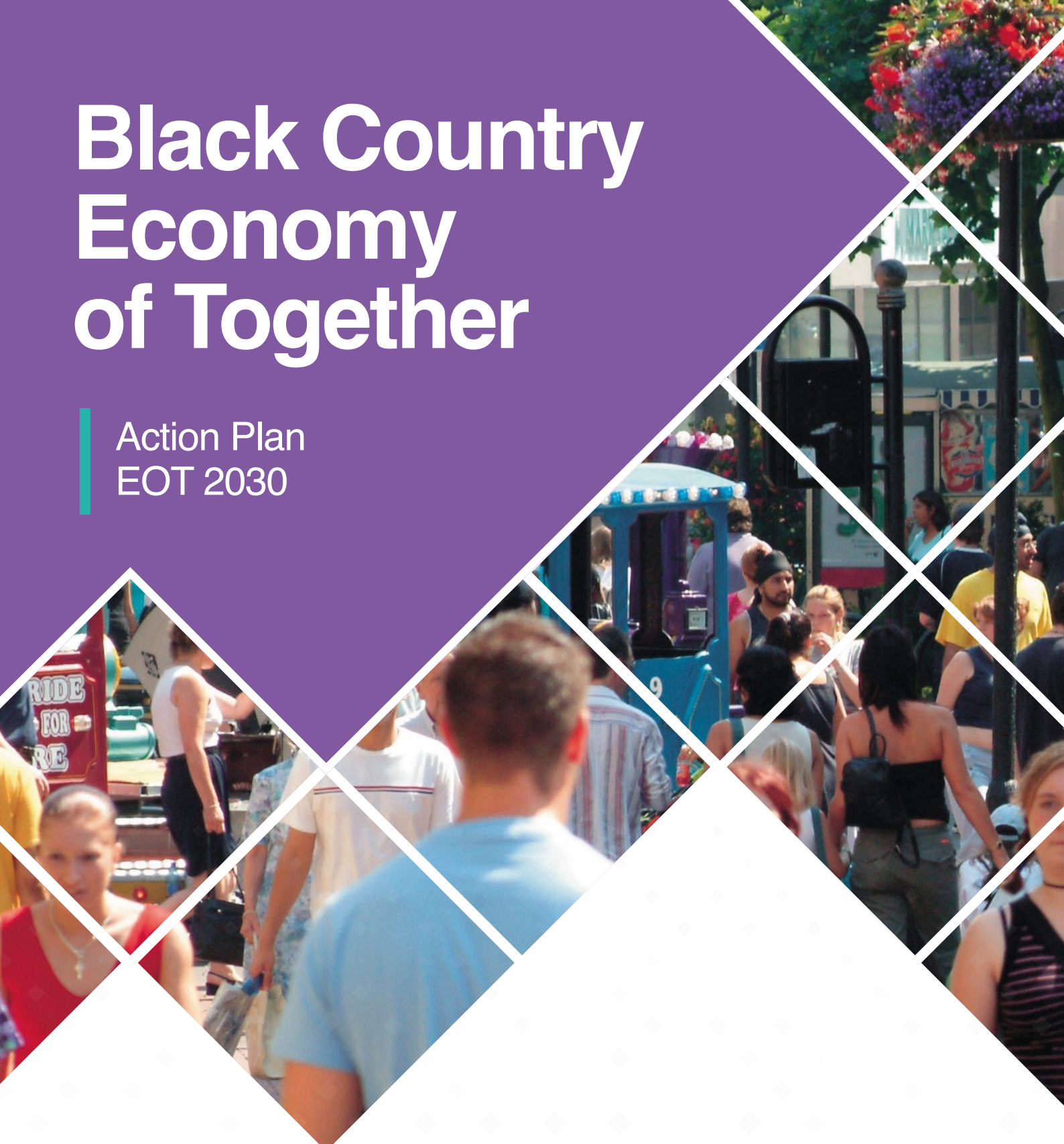


Black Country Economy of Together

Action Plan
EOT 2030



Black Country Consortium Ltd



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Foreword

Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is determined to play its part in supporting a local economy in which sustainable, healthy and inclusive communities are supported and barriers to employment are removed.

This collaborative ambition is built within our 30 year vision, and one within which we already work with key local stakeholders like local authorities, charities, and education / health providers.

Through their everyday work, these organisations drive equality, inclusivity and community cohesion in the Black Country; this action plan outlines the LEPs contribution and influence within this local priority.

By supporting and adding value to this cause, the LEP can support the levelling-up of the Black Country compared to other parts of the country, and the levelling-up within different parts of our sub-region.

Covid-19 has further highlighted inequalities in society and provided extra impetus to accelerate our focus in this priority area, supporting and adding value to the delivery of socio-economic benefits across the four Black Country boroughs.

This is reflected in this document: **the Black Country's Economy of Together Action Plan for 2030 (EOT 2030)**.

It defines our ambitious vision and collates the the short, mid-term, and long-term actions we and other key partners are undertaking to make a real difference to communities, by the end of the decade.

As the LEP's lead Board member for Social Mobility and Inclusive Growth, I am extremely proud of the action-oriented, collaborative vision we are setting. In particular to realise:

- A more equal and equitable Black Country
- A better educated Black Country
- A more enterprising Black Country, with greater social responsibility
- A healthier Black Country that is environmentally friendly

Every organisation and every individual have a role to play in achieving these aims in the next decade; and we want to harness the collaborative, hard-working Black Country spirit to do this collectively, for the benefit of local communities and businesses.

Every organisation and every individual, whether public, private or civil, have a role to play in achieving these aims in this decade; and we want to harness the collaborative, hard-working Black Country spirit to do this collectively, for the benefit of our local communities and businesses.

This action plan builds on recent developments through our Economy of Together working group and via the LEP Board, including engagement with local authorities, businesses, and the health and voluntary sectors.

I am particularly delighted that our close partners the four Black Country local authorities and Active Black Country support our EOT 2030 plan. The LEP looks forward to working with them, amongst many other organisations, closely to help make it a reality.

Kevin Davis

Board Lead for Social Mobility and Inclusive Growth, Black Country LEP, CEO, The Vine Trust Group

The principles and actions of Black Country EOT 2030 is supported by...



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. Tomlinson".

Amanda Tomlinson

Chief Executive of Black Country Housing Group
and Chair of Active Black Country



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Brookfield".

Councillor Ian Brookfield

Leader of Wolverhampton Council
City of Wolverhampton Council



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kerrie Carmichael".

Councillor Kerrie Carmichael

Leader of Sandwell Council
Sandwell Council



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Davis".

Kevin Davis

Board Lead for Social Mobility and Inclusive Growth,
Black Country LEP, CEO, The Vine Trust Group



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Bird".

Councillor Mike Bird
Leader of Walsall Council
Walsall Council



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patrick Harley".

Councillor Patrick Harley
Leader of Dudley Council
Dudley Council



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Westley".

Tom Westley DL
Chairman at Westley Group
LEP Board Chair
Enterprise Zone Board Lead

Introduction



A prosperous economy should be beyond the financial, characterised by an equality of inclusive opportunity for all its diverse citizens.

This is a key tenet within the Black Country's 30-year vision, underpinned by a more economically balanced, prosperous place. Collaboration to deliver an inclusive local economy that is green, fair and digitally enabled is at the centre of the LEP's ambitions, realising the achievable reality of an "Economy of Together" by 2030 (EOT 2030).

The LEP inherently convenes and enables action aligned to EOT 2030, working with local stakeholders and delivery partners to implement actions.

We also appointed a lead Board member for social mobility and inclusive growth in 2019, Kevin Davis, who leads a LEP working group dedicated to driving forward tangible action in this area. Kevin is our Board champion for EOT 2030.

Helping achieve an economy of together is a critical endeavour for the LEP, requiring strong collaborative working with partners and key local stakeholders.

EOT 2030 is an integral part of our recovery and growth plans, influencing every facet of our economy and society.

This reflects the diversity of our four pillars of focus for EOT 2030, the themes by which this action plan brings together actions we and key partners are undertaking:

1. Equalities: Enabling equality of opportunity

and local institutions that all reflect the diversity of our population, while championing economic growth that is inclusive and drives equitable outcomes.

2. Education: Integrating diversity, fairness and equal opportunities into the LEP's educational involvement, including outcomes from local educational institutions.

3. Enterprise: Investing responsibly and locally, enabling the growth and success of social enterprises and entrepreneurs.

4. Environment: Creating a healthier, active Black Country that delivers on net-zero ambitions and tackles structural inequalities within physical and mental wellbeing.

Our collaborative EOT 2030 action plan is built around the **4 E's**, building on existing work and new ideas across the sub-region. Importantly, these pillars will intersect each other in the local ecosystem, rather than operating in silos.

We have also highlighted one specific area – **health** – as having a particularly important cross-cutting influence. This is for a number of reasons:

- Evidence increasingly points to many health outcomes – everything from life expectancy to infant mortality and obesity – as being tightly linked to the level of economic inequality within a given population. The Marmot Review 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives' states that action on health inequalities requires action across all of the social determinants of health.
- The Covid-19 pandemic has provided the world with a reality check on the importance of health and how critical health systems are to human resilience and protecting life.
- The NHS is a key local stakeholder – a major employer, purchaser and deliverer of essential public services. As part of a wider local health and public service system, it can be used to catalyse wider action across all four pillars.



For instance:

- **Equalities:** Improving equity in health outcomes, such as through more equal access to services.
- **Education:** Supporting education initiatives, such as through literacy or by delivering career pathways.
- **Enterprise:** Working within anchor networks as a major local employer to support the delivery of social value.
- **Environment:** Harnessing and expanding on green networks to maximise healthy, active transport and participation.

This is why, in each pillar section below, health-related actions are present – in addition to a particular focus in the environment pillar.

It reflects the vital, cross-cutting nature of health in delivering a Black Country Economy of Together – as depicted in the EOT 2030 summary diagram.

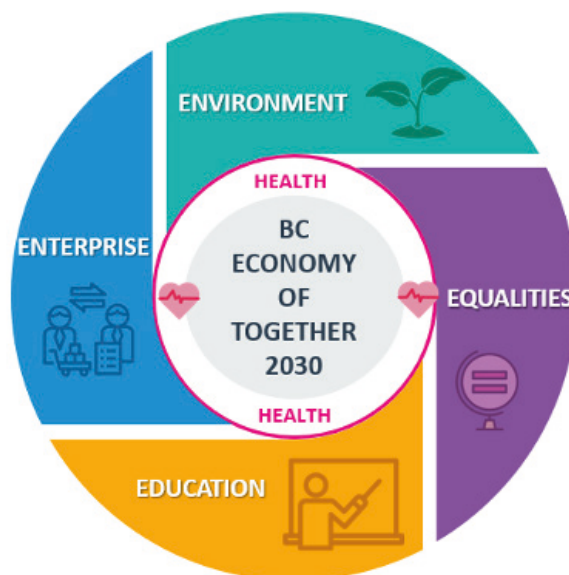
The wider local health and public service system can be used to catalyse wider action across all four EOT 2030 pillars.

For instance:

- **Equalities:** Providing equity in health outcomes, such as by working with NHS and local authority partners to deliver equal access to services and social prescribing; helping shift economic and social inequalities long-term.
- **Education:** Supporting educational initiatives at all age levels to reduce critical skills gaps: encouraging careers in health and care, delivering skills pathways with employers and providers, and helping managers to upskill.
- **Enterprise:** Working within anchor networks to support the delivery of social value through local health recruitment and procurement; particularly through buy-in from NHS trusts, CCGs, the ICS and local authorities.

- **Environment:** Harnessing and expanding on green networks to maximise healthy, active transport and participation, reversing high levels of physical inactivity, obesity and poor health outcomes in general.

Black Country Economy of Together: Summary Diagram



Outlined actions across the pillars will help tackle the structural issues highlighted by Covid-19 and enable positive change for all communities.

The pillars suggested reflect areas the LEP is able to add most value given its resources and expertise. Importantly, delivery is already underway by the LEP and partners.

The Action Plan is an opportunity to reflect on the leading areas we and partners are taking action on, while understanding future measures of success for supporting an EOT 2030.

Evidence Base and Measuring Success

Covid-19 has accelerated the need to look beyond simply growth as a measure for a successful economy. It is critical to understand how economies affect all people and communities, integrating social and environmental indicators to track progress.

This is also about enabling the social enterprise sector to thrive, building community cohesion, and transforming the health fortunes of local people.

An evidence-based approach underpinned by inclusivity and equity ensures we can measure the success of implementing our Economy of Together vision.

This, most evident through our interactive **Intelligence Hub**, supports the emerging Black Country Plan for Growth and the delivery of a prosperous, healthy economic recovery. This is tracked by our Black Country Performance Management Framework.

In addition, we are working with local experts to deepen the evidence base. For example:

- We are developing a proposition with the Centre for Research in Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship (CREME) at Aston University to capture data and strategic oversight related to support for ethnic minority-owned businesses.
- At the Midlands Engine level, we are working with Social Enterprise UK to profile the strength and scale of this part of the regional and local social economy.
- We have also been working with the WMCA's Inclusive Growth team to develop a "Doughnut Economics" framework for the West Midlands.

Headline Challenges

Despite progress in recent years, stark challenges still remain in the Black Country, exacerbated over the last 2 years by the COVID-19 pandemic. This has caused significant disruption to health and also to the education system, transitions into employment, workplace training, skills development and skills deployment.

While more broadly, the Black Country remains behind national comparators on prosperity, life expectancy (including healthy life expectancy) and levels of deprivation.

With GVA per head growing at a slower rate than the national average, the Black Country output gap stands at £13.97bn. This reflects high unemployment, poor skills attainment and an economy lacking in dynamism.

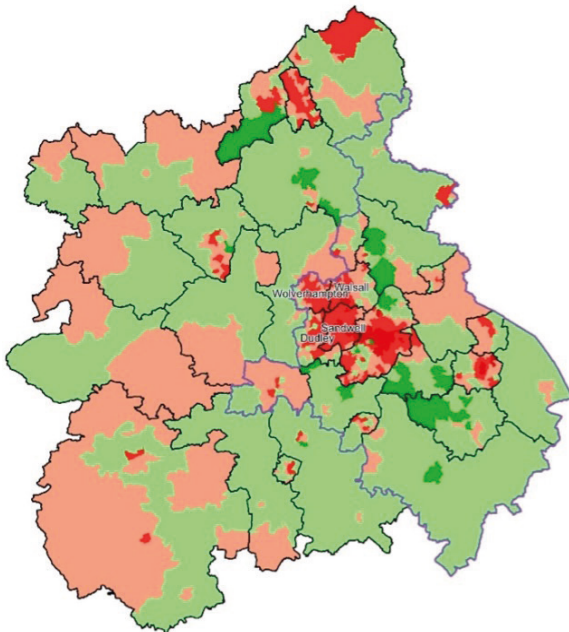
Qualification levels in the Black Country have improved significantly in recent years:

- NVQ Level 4+ qualifications increased by 16.8% (+30,300) over the year to 210,600 people (from 180,300 in 2019) compared to a national increase of 7.2%.
- The number of people with no qualifications decreased from 121,800 in 2019 to 91,600 in 2020.

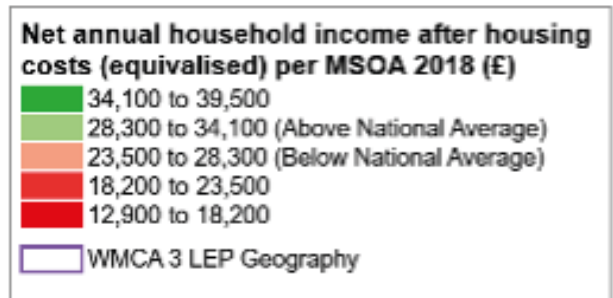
But there is still a considerable shortage of qualified people in the Black Country compared to national averages.

Unfortunately, the combination of low skills, low employment and a lack of opportunities pushes people and families into poverty.

A region wide problem that reflects widespread relative deprivation locally is the high levels of child poverty. Some of these issues also translate into lower life expectancy and poorer health and environmental outcomes.



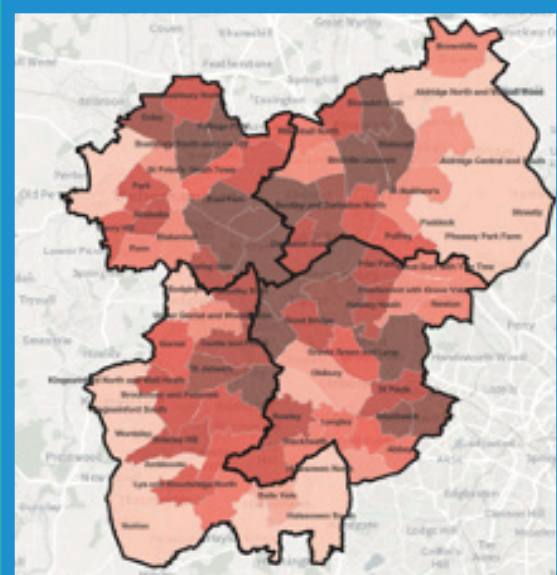
The Black Country falls behind on many measures in this regard, both compared to national and regional comparators, as demonstrated by the map across of Midlands Engine net household income. There is clearly a high concentration of low-income households in the Black Country and Birmingham compared to the wider Midlands region. (See map to the left)



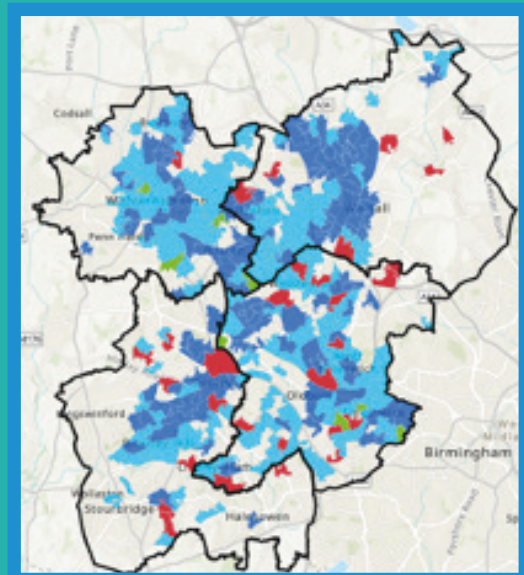
It is also critical to recognise the inequalities that exist within the Black Country. To truly deliver levelling-up, all parts of our locality must enjoy the benefits of economic growth and prosperity, regardless of the place they live, their ethnicity, age or gender. The level of claimants across the Black Country is shown below, drawing out

the differences in opportunity and prospects in the region. Alongside it is a map of indices for deprivation, reflecting the large pockets of high deprivation, particularly in central areas of the Black Country.

Black Country Claimants



Black Country Deprivation



Evidence Base and Measuring Success

Measuring Success

Black Country LEP has a long-established, politically endorsed Performance Management Framework (PMF) in place against which we monitor progress on key targets. The PMF sets out our clear ambitions for the area. It provides a comprehensive knowledge base over the period of our underpinning strategy so that initiatives and interventions can be tracked and aligned.

Black Country Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU) is continuing to review and update the Black Country PMF and wider **State of the Sub Region report** to ensure they are inclusive. This includes measures that go beyond traditional growth indicators such

as GVA to understand the social, health and environmental outcomes of the population.

It will also reflect the outcomes experienced by different communities and inequalities in society. Demonstrating our commitment, measures are aligned with indicators within the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's).

We will measure our EOT 2030 progress by integrating and enhancing the Black Country PMF so that it aligns with EOT. This is reflected across all four pillars, as detailed in Appendix 2, which shows the measures of successes used. A summary of some of the indicators we will use to track progress on EOT are included in the table below.

Indicator	Where We Are Now	Change Over Year	Change Since 2004	Scale of Challenge
Annual Average Resident Earnings	£28,169 (2021)	+£405 (+5.7%) (Eng. +40.3%) +£3,321	+£8,906 (+47.4%) England: £31,490	England: £31,490 +£3,321
No Qualifications	Aged 16-64: 12.5% (91,600)	Aged 16-64: -24.8% (-30,200)	Aged 16-64: -31.8% (-42,800) (Eng. -53.8%)	England: 6.2% -46,315 people
Attainment 8	43.8: Average (2018/19)	+0.7	-	England: 46.7 Improve by 2.9
	Eligible for Free School Meals: 35.1 (2018/19)	FSM: +1.8	-	England: 35.0
	Looked After Children: 20.6 (2018/19)	LAC: +0.9	-	Stay Above England: (19.2) & end inequity.
	SEN: 10.9 (2018/19)	SEN: +0.1	-	England: 13.7
Healthy Life Expectancy	Males: 59.3 Years (2017-19)	Males: +1.4 Years	Males -0.2 Years (Eng. Males +0.2 Years) (2009-2011)	England Males: 63.2 Years
	Females: 59.9 Years (2017-19)	Females: +1.9 Years	Females -2.6 Years (Eng. Females -0.6 Years) (2009-2011)	England Females: 63.5 Years
Carbon Dioxide Emissions	4,495 kt CO2	-243kt CO2 (-3.8%)	-2,892 kt CO2 (-39.1%) (Eng. -36.5%) (2005)	Net Zero
Number of VCSEs	Approx. 5,700	-	-	Target 12,000 by 2030
Physically Active	Adults Active: 50.7% (May 2020/21)	Adults Active: -0.7pp (May 2019/20)	-	England Adults Active: 60.9% +96,892 Active
Ethnic Diversity of LEP Board	Ethnicity: 20% BAME Board Members	-	-	25% target; roughly 1 additional BAME Board members
Claimants	Aged 16-24: 12,920 (May 2021)	Aged 16-24: -210 (-1.6%) (May 2020)	Aged 16-24: +5,950 (-85.4%) (Eng +107%)	No Claimants

EOT 2030: Our Vision

All the above presses the need of an approach of EOT 2030: a place that **brings communities together, provides opportunities for all and is underpinned by fairness, inclusivity and community cohesion**. Success will mean a more prosperous Black Country, but growth that brings together rather than divides communities.

Our core EOT 2030 aim is to help enable:

- A more equal Black Country
- A better educated Black Country
- A more enterprising Black Country, with greater social responsibility
- A healthier Black Country that is environmentally friendly

This is why we are focusing on four pillars, the **four E's**, while also reflecting health as a key cross-cutting area.

Equalities

Enabling equality of opportunity and local institutions that all reflect the diversity of our population.

Education

Integrating diversity, fairness and equal opportunities into the LEP's educational involvement.

Enterprise

Investing responsibly and locally, enabling the growth and success of social enterprises and entrepreneurs.

Environment

Creating a healthier, active Black Country that delivers on net-zero ambitions.

Health

The next sections of this report delve into each respective pillar, outlining Black Country LEP actions to support driving an economy that is characterised by equality of opportunity and inclusion.

In doing so, we can support the levelling-up of the Black Country compared to other parts of the country, and the levelling-up within different parts of our sub-region.

Delivering an inclusive local economy that is green, fair and digitally enabled is at the centre of the LEPs ambitions, realising the reality of an "economy of together" (EOT) by 2030.

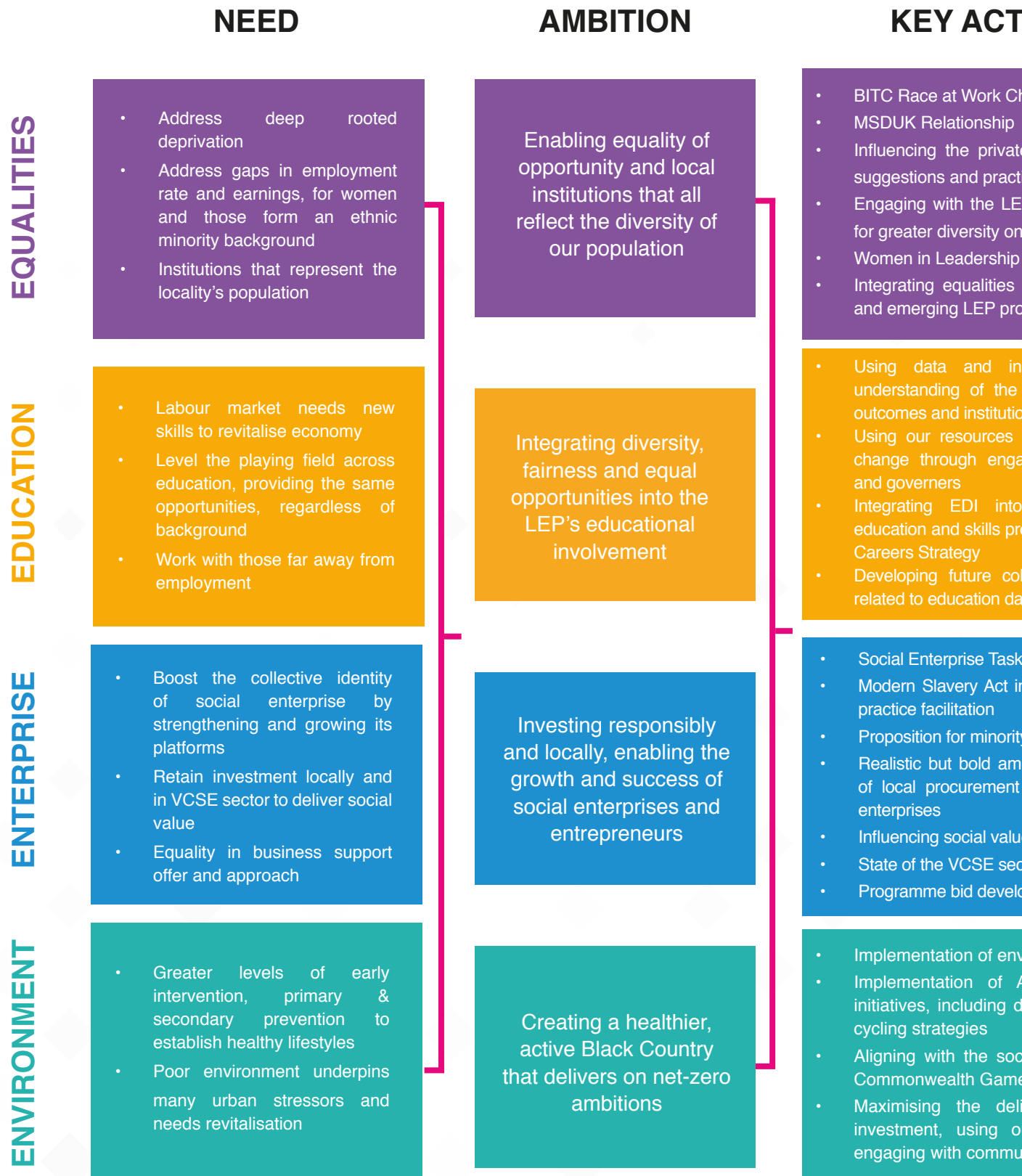
Importantly, EOT 2030 complements rather than opposes our recovery and growth plans, particularly the emerging Black Country Plan for Growth, influencing every facet of our economy and society. Also, we will not deliver the four E's in silos, but work across priorities for the most impact.

This is reflected in the Economy of Together Logic Chain displayed on the next page, summarising the rationale, ambition, key action and outcomes across the 4 pillars – together with measures of success, as set out in each individual sub-section later. Detailed monitoring and evaluation, integrated within our existing PMF process, will be critical to tracking progress.

Achieving an economy of together is a critical endeavour for the LEP, requiring strong collaborative working with partners and key local stakeholders. We will also work with relevant expertise to ensure the successful implementation of our approach.

This will include learning from other places, such as the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) and their work on the 'Preston model' and anchor networks development locally, and Social Value Portal's work – particularly the success of Solihull Council in this space. We will also be sure to align indicators with international best practice such as the UN SDGSs.

EOT 2030 Logic Chain



ACTIVITIES

Charter
 the sector to adopt EDI
 rises
 P Network on its drive
 boards
 Commission
 principles into existing
 programmes

sight to extend our
 skills and educational
 ons
 and expertise to drive
 engagement with teachers
 current and future
 programmes, such as our
 collaborative propositions
 ta

force
 implementation and best
 y-owned businesses
 bition for the proportion
 spend going to social
 e delivery
 ctor commission
 pment

environmental pipelines
 Active Black Country
 delivery of walking and
 social value goals of the
 es
 very of towns fund
 ur cultural offer and
 nity groups

MEASURES

- EDI performance of local institutions and business
- Deprivation
- GDHI
- Jobs, earnings and unemployment, including by ethnicity, age, gender & disability
- Affordable Housing
- Claimants

- EDI performance of colleges, providers and schools
- Qualification levels, including by ethnicity, gender, location
- Performance and outcomes of alternate provision pupils and looked after children
- Progress 8 / Attainment 8, including by ethnicity, gender
- Apprenticeships

- Business births and survival
- Minority-owned businesses, including women and BAME
- £ spend on VCSEs through public procurement
- Social value policies and implementation of local institutions
- Social enterprises and activity

- Fuel Poverty
- Access to green space
- Air quality
- CO2 emissions
- Healthy life expectancy
- Physical activity / inactivity, including by gender, location & ethnicity
- Obesity levels

OUTCOMES

- Diversity in the leadership and operations of key local organisations
- Fairer society with equality of opportunity regardless of age, gender, ethnicity and disability
- Levelling-up of the population to close the gap between the haves and have-nots

- Colleges and organisations that are representative of local people
- An education system that provides the same opportunities for all
- Careers and employment initiatives that inspire disadvantaged and underrepresented groups to fulfill their potential

- A thriving, well-supported social enterprise sector
- A consolidated approach and tangible implementation of social value delivery
- A business support system that maximises engagement with minority-owned businesses

- A more physically active and community engaged population
- Environments characterised by cleaner air, reduced emissions and strong access to green space
- Places that put the health, safety and enjoyment of citizens first

1. Equalities

What is the challenge?

This pillar focuses on enabling equality of opportunity and local institutions that reflect the diversity of our population, while championing economic growth that is inclusive. Through the EIU, the LEP has a robust evidence base regarding the diversity and inclusion of our public sector institutions and our strategic companies, while wider data reflecting the stark inequalities within society.

For example:

- **High Deprivation:** Overall deprivation is high in the Black Country with 19.1% of its areas in the 10% most deprived in England (ranking the Black Country LEP as 7th most deprived out of the 38 LEP's).
- **Low Employment and Disparity in Outcomes:** In 2020, the employment rate in the Black Country was 71.9%, compared to 75.7% for England overall, while economic inactivity is considerably higher in some ethnic groups, young people and disabled people.
- **Gender Inequalities:** Like the national average, full time-earnings for Black Country females are lower than full-time male earnings. Full time-earnings for Black Country females were £24,700 in April 2020 compared to £30,231 for men.
- **Lack of Representation:** Despite the Black Country's very diverse population, this isn't always well reflected in decision-makers of representative organisations (both in the private and public sectors).
- **Poor Health Outcomes:** Despite progress in recent years, life expectancy in the Black Country is lower than the national average, reflecting higher rates of inactivity, obesity and deprivation.

Where do we want to get to?

A critical outcome to this underpinning pillar is a fairer society with equality of opportunity regardless of age, gender, ethnicity and disability.

It is also vital that we close the gap between deprived communities and the rest of the local population, supporting people into better health outcomes, jobs, education and the ability to own their own homes.

The LEP's work with local partners has always driven these aims, but now is the time to move further and faster to support – within our remits - the creation of inclusive and healthy communities, particularly given the impact of Covid.

We recognise the nuanced difference between equality and equity, strongly observed in healthcare – including in the NHS.

- Equality is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents.
- Equity recognises that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.

Our approach is centered on supporting equality of opportunity to maximise equality of outcomes; as enshrined in law through the Equality Act 2010.

A key ingredient to realise this is through the equitable allocation of resources, of which the LEP can help influence locally and nationally. In this regard, a conscious focus on equitable policy and decision-making is an essential ingredient for delivering equality at the same time as delivering equity in society.

The outcomes at the heart of this pillar – an end to the endemic issue of high deprivation and societal discrimination - are what we all want to achieve for the Black Country and wider West Midlands.

The LEP cannot do this on its own, but is ambitious in its ability to set a Black Country framework for delivery, while working closely with organisations that already contribute massively to this space on a day-to-day basis.

This pillar also recognises the social determinants of health and the positive impact of equality interventions on people’s physical and mental health.

As a key local institution, we appreciate the need to continue to look inward at our own Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) practices and performance. We want to work with other local organisations and anchor institutions in a non-confrontational way about progressive initiatives to maximise inclusion.

This is because it’s essential that the diverse Black Country population is served by diverse leaders, educational institutions, public services and businesses.

How are we going to get there?

The LEP has actively reformed its own processes to maximise inclusivity and continues to work with partner organisations on this subject in multiple forums. Many of our programmes are also inherently progressive in driving equity and equality outcomes; for example Black Country Garden City and Active Black Country.

However, it is the ambition of the LEP to have an influence on EDI as far across the economy as possible. Within this, we are progressing the following current and future actions, focusing on both the LEP and other organisations as institutions, and the projects we deliver.

Importantly, maintaining an equality lens across the actions in the other EOT pillars is absolutely vital. Whether they be education, enterprise or environment focused, ultimately the collection of equitable actions in these areas will together drive positive change with regard to overall equality and inclusion. Meanwhile, the positive impact on health of reducing inequalities issues such as deprivation is now widely known, something we will keep at the front of our minds.



1. Equalities

Period	No.	Equalities
Current / Existing Action	1a)	<p>The LEP has become a signatory of the Business in the Community (BITC) Race at Work Charter. We are the first LEP signatory, joining City of Wolverhampton Council and Birmingham City Council in signing it (and Active Black Country is also actively looking at this). The Charter includes five commitments / calls to action to ensure that ethnic minority employees are represented at all levels; we are now actively working with BITC to implement and track our progress.</p>
	1b)	<p>Encouraging local authorities and other partners to sign the Race at Work Code.</p>
	1c)	<p>Developing a relationship with Minority Suppliers Development UK (MSD UK) to support future action that helps minority-owned businesses in the Black Country.</p>
	1d)	<p>Working through the Midlands Engine to commission further work on Women in Leadership, including recommendations for driving forward change.</p>
	1e)	<p>Utilising the equalities pillar as an EOT 2030 anchor to deliver actions in the other 3 pillars – education, enterprise and environment - with a clear focus but without silos. Successful action across pillars is the only way progress will be made on the key inequalities within society.</p>



Period	No.	Equalities
Prospective / Future Action	1f)	Developing an understanding of the economic and social impact of local health inequalities, and how we can work with partners to help reverse them; for example through equal access to services and social prescribing
	1g)	Exploring the viability and possibility of the LEP becoming signatories of other codes or best practices, such as the Race Equality Code 2020.
	1h)	Harnessing government re-locations, such as MHCLG to Wolverhampton, to maximise EDI in recruitment processes.
	1i)	Exploring how the LEP can influence the private sector to adopt the above suggestions and practices.
	1j)	Engaging with the LEP Network on its drive for greater diversity on LEP Boards, going beyond just gender to include representative levels of young people, disabled people and people from a BAME background. This will include working with local anchor institutions to deliver equal representation across the region.
	1k)	Integrating equalities principles into existing and emerging LEP programmes, for instance Black Country Garden City.
	1l)	Setting standards for the LEP and local partners for monitoring the impact of interventions / projects on equality and equity, driving positive outcomes for all different groups of society.

2. Education

What is the challenge?

This pillar focuses on integrating diversity, fairness, and equal opportunities into the LEPs educational involvement, including outcomes from local educational institutions, and supporting influence across the four Black Country boroughs.

Black Country LEP has a strong history of working with educational sector partners, local authorities and businesses to improve the careers, skills and life chances of people in the Black Country. However, disparities remain:

- **A less qualified population:** Despite recent positive improvements, a further 102,011 of working age Black Country residents are required to obtain NVQ4+ qualifications to equal the national average (42.8%).
- **Unequal school performance:** Poor outcomes for children from more deprived places or particular characteristics such as looked after children. When looking at Attainment 8, analysis shows that the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils in the Black Country was 7.8 points.
- **Inequalities in outcome across different genders, ethnicities, disabilities and social backgrounds across the educational journey.** For example, children eligible for free school meals perform at a generally lower level than their peers at school, translating in poorer education and job opportunities into adulthood. While white and black children generally lag behind their Asian classmates.
- **Knock-on effects of a less educated and qualified population:** Resulting in a long-standing higher unemployment rate compared to regional and national averages, as well as lower earnings and sustained skills gaps for key industries.

Where do we want to get to?

The key ambition is to help enable a level-playing field in the Black Country's education system, providing the same opportunities for all whatever stage in one's career and regardless of their characteristics.

This is inherent to the work of the Black Country Skills Factory and Black Country Careers Hub, with EDI embedded within major initiatives such as the Black Country Careers Expo and through enterprise advisor networks – in which we have achieved a 50 / 50 gender split and continue to score highly against the Gatsby Benchmarks. This reflects the ability of the LEP to bridge the private / public sector divide while also prioritising inclusive processes and outcomes.

Our LEP programmes should be representative in terms of EDI, while, working with partners, interventions should aim to support poor performing areas and characteristics. In a complex system in which the LEP has limited influence, we will act as a facilitator and driver of targeted interventions that creates fairness and equality of opportunity in schools, colleges, universities and through careers and training.

Given the skills shortages experienced by industry, there is great opportunity to match skills supply and demand for the next generation, including by tapping into



underrepresented and disadvantaged groups – whether that be based on deprivation, ethnic minority, gender or disability.

It is particularly important to provide opportunities for young people – heavily impacted by Covid – giving them confidence in their future careers, but also confidence in that the Black Country can provide them with a good, sustainable and skilled job. Retaining this talent is critical to our future economy.

There are many overlaps between the equalities pillar, including the need for institutions such as colleges and universities to be representative of local populations and inclusive in their approach to the curriculum. Additionally, opportunities must be provided for young people in challenging circumstances, such as those in alternative provision and living in care.

How are we going to get there?

In order to maximise equality, diversity and inclusion within our existing skills programmes and to influence local partners, we will build the following actions into the EOT 2030 Action Plan.

They will require cross-organisation working, particularly with the four Black Country local authorities, education providers and the private sector. Our varied role on education, encompassing a range of different sectors and levels, will always have inclusivity built in and will be driven by the latest available data.

For example, as a legacy of our involvement with the West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy, we are working with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) to develop and deliver a strategy for the health &

care sector in the West Midlands, focusing on nurturing skills through dedicated pathways in partnership with the NHS, care providers and local authorities. We have similar arrangements in place for the construction and metals / materials sectors.

We will extend our engagement with local authorities on the schools' agenda, capturing evidence on attainment, exclusion and representation to inform collaborative decision-making to drive improvements. Equal representation in school leadership is important too, supporting Black Country schools lead the way on poor governor diversity in the UK.

There is also a huge role for businesses to play in engaging with schools, colleges and universities; we will harness the cornerstone employers through our careers work to maximise partnership working and connect the next generation with industry need. This will involve connecting key industries with the labour market through apprenticeships, T-Levels and degrees while maximising the possibility of the jobs of the future including green and digital.

Much of our activity will be a continuation and acceleration of existing LEP work in the education space, doubling-down on the importance of inclusive outcomes within this.

For example, through the Black Country Enterprise Advisor Network and Careers Hub, and working with industry and provider partners to support the filling of skills gaps – including those new to the labour market or long-term unemployed. Furthermore, we will work with other anchor institutions such as the NHS, universities and colleges to harness their procurement and education power.

2. Education

Period	No.	Equalities
Current / Existing Action	2a)	<p>Using data and insight to extend our understanding of the skills and educational outcomes of different groups in the Black Country, including the outcomes of people from minority backgrounds, other protected characteristics and circumstances (such as Looked After Children).</p>
	2b)	<p>Using our resources and expertise to drive change through engagement with teachers and governors in Black Country schools, and identifying the diversity of teachers and governors – suggesting ways to improve where appropriate.</p>
	2c)	<p>Integrating EDI into current and future education and skills programmes, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting representation and inclusion at the heart of the Black Country Careers Hub Strategy, including SEND. • Aligning Black Country Skills Factory interventions to EOT outcome targets. • Working with partners – e.g. colleges and other providers – to review and update practices so that they maximise EDI



Period	No.	Equalities
Prospective / Future Action	2d)	Harnessing sector skills work, such as within construction, metals and materials and health and care to drive inclusive outcomes in tandem with fulfilling industry needs.
	2e)	Developing a better understanding of the EDI practices and performance of local institutions , particularly in the public / education sector. This will include collecting data and insight on EDI performance where possible, for example on the level of ethnic diversity reflected in apprenticeship programmes or Kickstart. Led through the EIU, we will also gather evidence from secondary sources, such as a recent report that put the University of Wolverhampton in the Top 10 of an index on higher education social mobility performance.
	2f)	Developing future propositions related to education data and collaborative working with anchor institutions – such as encouraging universities and colleges to develop curriculums that reflect the diverse needs and experiences of the population; and harnessing major employers like the NHS to drive inclusive apprentice employment.
	2g)	Engaging with a diverse set of University / College students as role models for the next generation, demonstrating what can be achieved
	2h)	Working directly with all four local authorities on evidence-led actions related to school attainment and exclusions, and inequality impacts within this. Black Country LEP already engages with all four boroughs, and is somewhat active: directly contributing to Wolverhampton’s working group in this regard, helping establish Dudley’s new Employment and Skills Board. We will use our rich data at the local level to support stakeholders embed effective solutions.

3. Enterprise

What is the challenge?

This pillar focuses on harnessing the diversity of our business base, and ensuring local organisations invest responsibly and locally, enabling the growth and success of Black Country businesses.

Although the power of social enterprise and the voluntary sector is crucial to create opportunities for new jobs, services and engagement in the Black Country, this pillar is also about getting the private sector on board with our Economy of Together vision.

A healthy, dynamic and diverse business base is a critical enabler of a strong local economy.

Businesses also play a critical role in communities, providing good jobs, opportunities and cohesion. However, there are challenges in the Black Country related to:

- **Too few businesses:** There were 328 enterprises per 10,000 residents in the Black Country area in 2019, compared to 469 per 10,000 in England. The Black Country requires an additional 16,870 active enterprises to reach the national average.
- **Low business survival:** Of the 4,570 births in 2014, 41.1% (1,880) of Black Country enterprises were still active after 5 years, which is below the England average of 42.5%.
- **Maximising the experience and expertise of our social enterprises and VCSEs,** increasing their access to opportunities and achieving local impact.
- **Harnessing the diversity of our business base,** in particular better engaging and unleashing the potential of ethnic minority

owned businesses (EMBs) and female-led businesses.

- **Working in partnership with major local organisations to prioritise procurement and employment in a coordinated way to deliver positive social and environmental change.**
- **Low levels of innovation, including social innovation**

Where do we want to get to?

The Black Country LEP sees private sector growth as an essential ingredient to realise an economy of together. Local businesses create jobs, opportunities and confidence within communities while their innovation moves society forward.

A key part of the LEP's role is to work with partners to facilitate this growth by supporting the right economic conditions locally; we do this in our everyday work, for instance supporting businesses directly through the Black Country LEP Growth Hub, setting the strategic and delivery framework via our Competitiveness Advisory Board, while working with other key representative bodies such as the Black Country Chamber of Commerce, Make UK and FSB.

More important than ever is reinforcing the local pride Black Country businesses have, encouraging them to deliver social and environmental value as part of their recovery and growth journeys. This means realising a business base that supports good local employment reflective of the diversity in our communities, being responsible to local places and the environment, and where possible retaining money in the Black Country through their purchasing decisions.



The public sector and other major local organisations have a key role in leading from the front in these regards. We want to capitalise on the strong foundations laid by local institutions, including local authorities and NHS bodies, to bring together the spending power of key players locally for economic, social and environmental good.

This should primarily focus on maximising local employment and retaining procurement spend locally, providing fair opportunities for local firms, reducing carbon emissions and training opportunities for their employees.

Two areas of particular focus for greater engagement and investment are social enterprises / the VCSE sector and ethnic-minority owned firms.

Social Enterprises / VCSEs

The LEP has demonstrated its commitment to supporting social enterprise and maximising social value through the appointment of a Board level champion, and a consolidated set of recommendations emerged from work through the WMCA Social Economy Taskforce.

This has helped set the Black Country vision for social enterprises and social value – as demonstrated in the table below and logic chain in Appendix 3 – but now being driven through the recently setup Black Country Social Enterprise Taskforce.

Ethnic-Minority Owned Businesses (EMBs)

The LEP is determined to reduce barriers to growth for all businesses, including those with specific engagement issues and growth potential. For example, there are gaps in support for ethnic minority-owned businesses which we want to fill.

There is a particular opportunity in the Black Country given the diversity of our business base and the general untapped potential of EMBs.

Research by FSB suggests that EMB firms in the UK are more innovative and more likely to export than average, and yet they face greater barriers in terms of access to finance and other support. Future activity should be aligned to the ongoing Business Support review at the regional level.



3. Enterprise (Continued)

WMCA Taskforce Recommendation	Black Country Key Outcome Target / Vision
1. Boost the collective identity of social enterprise by strengthening and growing its platforms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise the profile of social enterprise in the Black Country.
2. Develop a collaborative, ten-year business case for social enterprise business support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support learning that builds leadership capacity in social enterprise
3. WMCA Office of Data & Analytics to develop and disseminate a consistent approach for data collection on social enterprises.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Intelligence Unit capturing data at a precise geography and analysing regularly to inform decision-making
4. WMCA will use its convening role to encourage all regional public sector bodies and publicly-funded projects to spend at least 5% of their commissioning and procurement budget with social enterprise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make it easier for social enterprises to win contracts (public and private), delivering social value. • Understand the social value attributed to LEP-funded projects
5. WMCA and partners to lead a campaign to encourage closer links between social enterprises and the wider private sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure more people are empowered to create positive change • Create positive change in local communities
6. Work with social finance and investment partners to assess gaps, barriers, and improvements that could boost the impact of social investment, as well as increasing demand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain the Social Investment Tax Relief (SITR) • Improve access to finance for social enterprises



How are we going to get there?

In order to meet these outcomes, the LEP is progressing the actions set out below. They focus on workstreams in a number of specific areas, including social enterprise via our Taskforce and working with Aston University on developing an action plan for uplifting our support and engagement with EMBs.

Furthermore, our direct business support channel for all businesses – the Growth Hub – will continue to reflect our EOT ambitions, for example by supporting businesses to access local contract opportunities and educating businesses / local projects about modern slavery, net zero and social value.

Critically, a key underpinning part of maximising our enterprise pillar ambitions is harnessing the power of large Black Country organisations through anchor networks. All four Black Country local authorities either have functioning anchor networks or are setting them up, including working with CLES on driving community wealth building.

For example, Sandwell and Wolverhampton already have active anchor networks, bringing major local employers together to particularly look at driving good recruitment and procurement practice that maximises local value. Walsall and Dudley are currently working with CLES to set up anchor networks in the near future.

The LEP sees these anchor networks as an important way to drive social value across the Black Country, principally through retaining investment in local places to support the jobs, skills and opportunities of businesses. It is our intention to work with key anchor network stakeholders locally – local authorities, major

employers, the NHS, WM Police, Secondary, Further and Higher Education etc – to develop an additional overarching regional anchor network that could provide cross-authority linkages and realise efficiencies through economies of scale.

By putting Black Country enterprise first in elements of local control, we can start to shift the dial on inclusive growth and levelling up. The proposed Black Country level network, of which we are already working up with CLES, is to support the local authority level networks in joining up opportunities and strategic priorities.

Within this, there are specific opportunities to improve the outcomes of the local health system and care sector by engaging collaboratively with key stakeholders such as the NHS – particularly the new Black Country Integrated Care System (ICS), Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), care providers and local authorities.

Anchor networks will be an important mechanism for collaborating with these organisations on effective local procurement and employment that maximises population health. This should be centered around meeting community need with appropriate services, including from communities themselves.

3. Enterprise (Continued)

Pillar	No.	Enterprise
Current / Existing Action	3a)	<p>Black Country Social Enterprise Taskforce. This group actively considers, implements and helps drive positive action for social enterprises across the Black Country. As the group develops, it will allow priority actions, outlined in theory of change, to be taken forward, and when relevant, informing wider regional forums such as the WMCA Social Economy Taskforce. Membership of the group –launched in Autumn 2021 includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Black Country LEP - All 4 Black Country Local Authorities - Social Enterprise UK - The School of Social Entrepreneurs - Access to Business - SWEDA - Local social enterprises
	3b)	<p>Understanding the level of Social Value Act compliance and excellence within local procuring organisations. The Social Value Act, focused on achieving wider benefits from public spend, has recently been strengthened, with greater procurement rules for central government departments.</p> <p>We are working through regional and national structures - including the WMCA Social Value Taskforce - to influence procuring authorities in the Black Country to maximise the delivery and measurement of social value; including on key projects such as the emerging Willenhall and Darlaston train stations.</p>
	3c)	<p>Working directly with Social Enterprise UK to understand the regional implications of their latest State of the Nation Survey (2021), profiling this sector in the Black Country and across the region while highlighting major challenges and opportunities</p>
	3d)	<p>Working directly with experts from CREME at Aston University to develop a proposition for minority ethnic-owned businesses, including uplifting support for access to finance, innovation and winning contracts.</p>
	3e)	<p>Using the Black Country Growth Hub’s contract aggregator to support local businesses to win more local contracts, retaining investment locally.</p>



Pillar	No.	Enterprise
Prospective / Future Action	3f)	<p>Working with CLES and key local partners (NHS, local authorities, key employers) to setup a Black Country-wide anchor network, providing oversight and connectivity across the four local authority anchor networks – maximising local procurement and spend in the sub-region and identifying cross-border synergies. This will build on strong foundations locally, such as the Wolverhampton Pound project and Sandwell’s work on Community Wealth Building.</p>
	3g)	<p>Utilising the emerging Black Country Anchor Networks and emerging Integrated Care System to champion and advocate the role being active can play in contributing to wider outcomes across the health system. Particularly focused on the procurement of local services and training, skills and good jobs for Black Country people.</p>
	3h)	<p>Setting a realistic but bold ambition for the proportion of local procurement spend going to social enterprises. While 5% has been a previous targeted through the WMCA, this will be reviewed reflecting greater ambition and need.</p>
	3i)	<p>Developing programme bids with partners for business support and other projects to support social enterprise. Utilising emerging funding streams such as the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).</p>
	3j)	<p>Exploring ways to understand the implementation of the Modern Slavery Act and associated practices by our business base. Work with partners on mitigatory action, particularly expertise via the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA).</p>
	3k)	<p>Developing a unified approach to encouraging and inspiring all Black Country businesses to buy into the EOT 2030 approach, adapting their practices to deliver local social, economic and environmental value where they can.</p>

4. Environment

What is the challenge?

This pillar focuses on creating a healthier, active Black Country that delivers on net-zero ambitions. In the context of EOT 2030, it incorporates aspects of work on health, a critical outcome of the local environment, and also reflects on the needs of the Black Country as a place. This includes in respect of our cultural and town centre offerings to local people and visitors. The Black Country has multiple environmental, health and centres related challenges, particularly:

- **Co2 Emissions:** In 2018, the Black Country produced a total of 4,643Kt CO2 emissions, equating to 3.9 tonnes per capita. While this is slightly below the England average, in order to reach net zero by 2041, emissions need to reduce by 36% every year.
- **Air Quality:** The Black Country and wider West Midlands is one of the worst hit areas outside of London for illegal levels of nitrogen dioxide pollution.
- **Fuel Poverty:** 19.5% of Black Country households live in fuel poverty, reflecting a combination of low energy efficiency ratings and low disposable income. This rate, reflecting almost 100,000 households, is considerably above the national average of 13.4%.
- **Waste:** The Black Country produces a total of 524,311 tonnes of waste only 36.3% is recycled. This has been steadily declining in the past few years.
- **Physical Inactivity:** Compared to a national average of 27.1%, an estimated 36.5% of adults in the Black Country are classed as physically inactive. A similar story is reported within children: for the Black Country to reach the national less active percentage of 33.1%, requires 6,520 less children and young people to be classed as less active.
- **Threats to High Streets / Cultural Economy:** The impact of Covid will have a long-term impact on high streets and the cultural economy,

aspects of which were already in decline before the pandemic.

Where do we want to get to?

Reflected in our Recovery Strategy, the LEP is committed to nurture green growth and create vibrant, safe and healthy places. These are major factors in delivering communities that are fair, inclusive and great places to live, including work on town centre reinvigoration and maximising our cultural offering.

There is also a key underpinning commitment to improving the health of our people, driven through the work of Active Black Country, while linking in with the major opportunity of the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham and national delivery bodies such as Sport England.

Altogether, we want to help create a Black Country that has the health, safety and enjoyment of local people at its centre. Realising this will mean achieving strong access to services and green space through active travel like walking and cycling, while reducing the effects of air pollution and carbon emissions. Focus on the environment and climate change is as high as it's ever been; the Black Country LEP needs to play its part in encouraging and driving local climate resilience.

How are we going to get there?

The LEP is involved in a multiplicity of work on improving the environment and decarbonisation:

- The Repowering the Black Country project will decarbonise the industry across the area by developing zero carbon hubs with embedded circular economy activities, reducing total emissions by 24%.
- Our Urban Park concept aims to bring the natural environment to the forefront of residents and visitors minds through enhancing, and adding to the natural capital in the Black Country. We have developed a pipeline of projects to bring

about environmental transformation in our towns and city centres.

- We are currently undertaking an assessment of the tree canopy via our Black Country iTree Eco project, which includes surveying the number, species, size, health and distribution of trees across the Black Country to help us calculate their value for health and wellbeing, biodiversity, reducing flooding, urban cooling and all the other benefits of trees. It will also help us work out where best to plant trees in the future for maximum benefit.
- Our Garden City housing project encourages housebuilders to follow our Garden City principles, creating houses fit for the future, capitalising on our low carbon heating assets such as the canals, creating new greenspaces

for communities and encouraging active travel.

On active lives and health, Active Black Country operates as the strategic lead for Sport and Physical Activity across the Black Country, integrating itself within other projects such as the Commonwealth Games and leading on the Black Country’s walking and cycling strategy. Harnessing the natural environment as a key resource to get local people active is an important aspect of the work.

Ongoing and future environment and health actions will be integrated within the Economy of Together action plan, recognising the wider LEP mechanisms and personnel that are delivering some this activity. This also includes place-based interventions that harness our cultural offering and provide a new vision for town centres.

Pillar	No.	The Environment
Current / Existing Action	4a)	Implementing the current pipeline of environmental projects to help the region achieve net-zero. This will include Repowering the Black Country project, the iTree project and Black Country Garden City.
	4b)	Implementing Active Black Country’s core day-to-day practices, including the delivery of walking and cycling strategies.
	4c)	Building on our Urban Park concept to develop and realise a series of natural environment-based projects for local people to enjoy.
Prospective / Future Action	4d)	Delivering locally priorities of partnership organisations and major bodies. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport England • West Midlands net zero vision for 2041 • Outcomes of COP 26
	4e)	Aligning with the social value goals for the Commonwealth Games, maximising opportunities for Black Country people and businesses
	4f)	Maximising the delivery of towns funds in the Black Country and wider regional initiatives, including the use of our cultural offering and engaging with community / faith groups for meaningful local change.
	4g)	Through our regional lead on the construction sector, we will develop and deliver an action plan for retrofit – supporting the reduction and eradication of fuel poverty in a sustainable way.

5. Stakeholder Engagement, Communications and Governance

This Action Plan intends to set a framework for EOT 2030 for the Black Country. We want stakeholders from across the locality to buy into its underpinning vision and priorities, supporting the delivery of tangible actions together.

This builds on the endorsement provided by our close partners at all four Black Country Local Authorities and Active Black Country.

In doing so, EOT 2030 has the potential to bring together great existing work across the Black Country in this space, helping us all maximise our impact rather than reinventing the wheel.

This is why we have already engaged widely with key stakeholders, the vast majority of which have wholeheartedly supported our approach and intentions.

These include (as above) all four Black Country local authorities - official supporters of the plan - colleges, universities, employers and other anchor institutions such as the NHS. However, we do not want to stop here: the strategy must transition into tangible action for Black Country communities.

Through our vast networks, the LEP will continue to engage with partners and provide updates on progress. Principally this will be through Board and officer leadership via:

- The Black Country LEP Board and advisory boards for Place, Education, and Competitiveness.

- The Black Country Social Enterprise Taskforce.
- The emerging Black Country Anchor Networks.
- Representation at the regional level through the West Midlands Social Value Taskforce.
- Directly with partners and flexibly in other groups / conversations with communities, businesses and public sector organisations.

Our ask of Black Country organisations and partners in return is for active engagement with the LEP where relevant, in order to help us deliver an Economy of Together by 2030 collectively.

Through a dedicated working group, Black Country LEP is already active in delivering many of the actions outlined, working with multiple local and national partners. As the work evolves, it will continue to be embedded within our wider strategic and delivery frameworks – including:

- The emerging Black Country Plan For Growth
- Our Performance Management Framework, particularly for monitoring and evaluation

The monitoring, delivery and stakeholder engagement associated with EOT 2030 will be managed by Black Country Consortium, primarily through the LEP's monthly working group, chaired by Board champion Kevin Davis.



The EOT Action Plan will be periodically reviewed for updates in line with progress and wider developments, while success measured through the metrics in each section.

Furthermore, the LEP is developing possibilities to hold an Economy of Together conference to bring partners to together and launch our vision.

This would raise the profile of EOT 2030 and provide an opportunity for partnerships to develop and opportunities to form between the public sector, private sector and voluntary organisations.

In this vein, we will continue engaging with relevant stakeholders outside of our boundaries, including the WMCA, CLES and Social Value Portal.



Black Country EOT 2030: Summary of Actions

This section summarises all 44 actions we have outlined in this action plan. As the work develops, we will build in robust performance management processes including measures of success. This will ensure progress is tracked at an action-level while the LEP and partners can understand the impact of EOT 2030 activity on Black Country communities.

The table below provides an expected start timescale too: short-term reflects action to start in the next 6 months; medium term between 6 months and 2 years, and long-term 2 years plus. This provides a general idea rather than being set in stone; the LEP will be reactive to needs and demand while balancing resources.

Pillar	Action No.	Action	Expected Start Timescale
Equalities	1a)	The LEP has become a signatory of the Business in the Community (BITC) Race at Work Charter. The Charter includes five commitments / calls to action to ensure that ethnic minority employees are represented at all levels.	Commenced and ongoing: short-term
Equalities	1b)	Encouraging local authorities and other partners to sign the Race at Work Code.	Commenced and ongoing: medium-term
Equalities	1c)	Developing a relationship with Minority Suppliers Development UK (MSD UK) to support future action that helps minority-owned businesses in the Black Country.	Commenced and ongoing: long-term
Equalities	1d)	Working through the Midlands Engine to commission further work on Women in Leadership, including recommendations for driving forward change.	Commenced and ongoing: medium-term
Equalities	1e)	Utilising the equalities pillar as an EOT 2030 anchor to deliver actions in the other 3 pillars – education, enterprise and environment - with a clear focus but without silos.	Commenced and ongoing: All
Equalities	1f)	Developing an understanding of the economic and social impact of local health inequalities, and how we can work with partners to help reverse them.	Medium to long-term
Equalities	1g)	Exploring the viability and possibility of the LEP becoming signatories of other codes or best practices, such as the Race Equality Code 2020.	Medium-term
Equalities	1h)	Harnessing government re-locations, such as MHCLG to Wolverhampton, to maximise EDI in recruitment processes.	Short-term
Equalities	1i)	Exploring how the LEP can influence the private sector to adopt the above suggestions and practices.	Medium-term
Equalities	1j)	Engaging with the LEP Network on its drive for greater diversity on LEP Boards, going beyond just gender to include representative levels of young people, disabled people and people from a BAME background. This will include working with local anchor institutions to deliver equal representation across the region.	Medium-term
Equalities	1k)	Integrating equalities principles into existing and emerging LEP programmes, for instance Black Country Garden City	Medium-term
Equalities	1l)	Setting standards for the LEP and local partners for monitoring the impact of interventions / projects on equality and equity, driving positive outcomes for all different groups of society.	Short-term
Education	2a)	Using data and insight to extend our understanding of the skills and educational outcomes of different groups in the Black Country.	Short-term
Education	2b)	Using our resources and expertise to drive change through engagement with teachers and governors in Black Country schools.	Medium-term
Education	2c)	Integrating EDI into current and future education and skills programmes, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Putting representation and inclusion at the heart of the Black Country Careers Hub Strategy, including SEND. - Aligning Black Country Skills Factory interventions to EOT outcome targets. 	Commenced and ongoing: short-term
Education	2d)	Harnessing sector skills work, such as within construction and metals and materials, to drive inclusive outcomes in tandem with fulfilling industry needs.	Commenced and ongoing: medium-term
Education	2e)	Developing a better understanding of the EDI practices and performance of local institutions, particularly in the public / education sector. This will include collecting data and insight on EDI performance where possible.	Medium to long-term

Pillar	Action No.	Action	Expected Start Timescale
Education	2f)	Developing future propositions related to education data and collaborative working with educational institutes.	Medium-term
Education	2g)	Engaging with a diverse set of University / College students as role models for the next generation, demonstrating what can be achieved.	Medium-term
Education	2h)	Working directly with all four local authorities on evidence-led actions related to school attainment and exclusions.	Medium-term
Enterprise	3a)	Black Country Social Enterprise Taskforce. This group actively considers, implements and helps drive positive action for social enterprises across the Black Country. As the group develops, it will allow priority actions, outlined in theory of change, to be taken forward.	Commenced and ongoing: All
Enterprise	3b)	Understanding the level of Social Value Act compliance and excellence within local procuring organisations.	Commenced and ongoing: All
Enterprise	3c)	Working directly with Social Enterprise UK to understand the regional implications of their latest State of the Nation Survey (2021), profiling this sector in the Black Country.	Commenced and ongoing: medium-term
Enterprise	3d)	Working directly with experts from CREME at Aston University to develop a proposition for minority ethnic-owned businesses, including uplifting support for access to finance, innovation and winning contracts.	Commenced and ongoing: short-term
Enterprise	3e)	Using the Black Country Growth Hub's contract aggregator to support local businesses to win more local contracts, retaining investment locally.	Commenced and ongoing: short-term
Enterprise	3f)	Working with CLES and key local partners (NHS, local authorities, key employers) to setup a Black Country-wide anchor network, providing oversight and connectivity across the four local authority anchor networks – maximising local procurement and spend in the sub-region and identifying cross-border synergies.	Commenced and ongoing: medium-term
Enterprise	3g)	Utilising the emerging Black Country Anchor Networks to influence health & care spending across key organisations, particularly the new Black Country Integrated Care System, other NHS stakeholders and local authorities.	Commenced and ongoing: medium-term
Enterprise	3h)	Setting a realistic but bold ambition for the proportion of local procurement spend going to social enterprises.	Medium-term
Enterprise	3i)	Developing programme bids with partners for business support and other projects to support social enterprise.	Medium-term
Enterprise	3j)	Exploring ways to understand the implementation of the Modern Slavery Act and associated practices by our business base.	Medium-term
Enterprise	3k)	Developing a unified approach to encouraging and inspiring all Black Country businesses to buy into the EOT 2030 approach, adapting their practices to deliver local social, economic and environmental value where they can.	Medium-term
Environment	4a)	Implementing the current pipeline of environmental projects to help the region achieve net-zero, including Repowering the Black Country project, the iTree project and Black Country Garden City.	Commenced and ongoing: All
Environment	4b)	Implementing Active Black Country's core day-to-day practices, including the delivery of walking and cycling strategies.	Commenced and ongoing: All
Environment	4c)	Building on our Urban Park concept to develop and realise a series of natural environment-based projects for local people to enjoy.	Commenced and ongoing: All
Environment	4d)	Delivering locally priorities of partnership organisations and major bodies. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sport England - West Midlands net zero vision for 2041 - Outcomes of COP 26 	Short-term
Environment	4e)	Aligning with the social value goals for the Commonwealth Games, maximising opportunities for Black Country people and businesses	Short-term
Environment	4f)	Maximising the delivery of towns funds in the Black Country and wider regional initiatives, including the use of our cultural offering and engaging with community / faith groups for meaningful local change.	Medium-term

Pillar	Action No.	Action	Expected Start Timescale
Environment	4g)	Through our regional lead on the construction sector, we will develop and deliver an action plan for retrofit – supporting the reduction and eradication of fuel poverty in a sustainable way.	Medium-term
Stakeholder Engagement	5a)	Continuing to engage with local partners to help us deliver an Economy of Together by 2030 collectivity	Commenced and ongoing: All
Stakeholder Engagement	5b)	Developing possibilities to hold an Economy of Together conference to bring partners together and launch our vision.	Short-term
Stakeholder Engagement	5c)	Continue engaging with relevant stakeholders outside of our boundaries, including the WMCA, CLES and Social Value Portal	Commenced and ongoing: All
Governance	5d)	Embedding the EOT 2030 Action Plan within wider LEP strategic and delivery frameworks, including the Plan for Growth and monitoring and evaluation via the PMF.	Commenced and ongoing: All
Governance	5e)	Periodically reviewing the EOT 2030 Action Plan in line with progress and wider developments.	Medium to long-term

Equalities:

Indicator	Where We Are Now	Change Over Year	Change Since 2004	Scale of Challenge
EDI performance of local institutions and business	In Development			
Diversity of LEP Board in terms of gender, ethnicity, disability and age (as per LEP Network collaboration).	Gender: 33% Female Board Members	-	-	At least 2 additional female Board members to close gap and get to 50/50
	Ethnicity: 20% BAME Board Members	-	-	25% target; roughly 1 additional BAME Board members
	Disability: in development	-	-	In development
	Age: in development	-	-	In development
Deprivation	19.1% of areas in the 10% most deprived in England (2019)	-	-	10%
Child Poverty	36%	-	-	England: 27% but target should be eradication
Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI) per Person	£15,591 (2019)	+£338 (+£2.2%)	+£5,002 (+47.2%)	UK: £21,433 +£5,842
Jobs	444,000 (2019)	-6,000 (-1.3%)	+5,000 (+1.1%) (Eng. +14.1%)	612,000 Jobs +168,000
Annual Average Resident Earnings	£28,169 (2021)	+£405 (+5.7%)	+£8,906 (+47.4%) (Eng. +40.3%)	England: £31,490 +£3,321
	Males: £30,012 (2021)	Males: +£303 (+1.0%)	Males: +£9,833 (+48.7%) (Eng. +36.8%)	England Males: £33,777 +£3,765
	Females: £25,475 (2021)	Females: +£888 (+3.6%)	Females: +£10,225 (+67.0%) (Eng. +50.5%)	England Females: £28,314 +2,839
	Gender Pay Gap 2021 (Work-based): 13.3%	-	-	UK: 15.4% but ambition to eradicate
Unemployment Rate	Aged 16-64: 5.5% (2020)	Aged 16-64: -0.3 pp	Aged 16-64: -1.7pp	England: 4.8% -4,130 Unemployed
	Aged 16-24: 12.5% (2020)	Aged 16-24: +1.8pp	Aged 16-24: -4.2pp	Stay Below England (13.7%)

Equalities Continued:

Indicator	Where We Are Now	Change Over Year	Change Since 2004	Scale of Challenge
	Male Aged 16-64: 5.2% (2020)	Males: -0.7pp	Males: -2.7pp	England: 5.1% -205 Males
	Female Aged 16-64: 6.0% (2020)	Females: +0.3pp	Females: -0.4pp	England: 4.3% -4,315 Females
	White: 5.2% (2020)	White: -0.3pp	-00.6	England: 4.1% -4,573 White
	Mixed Ethnic Group: 11.6% (2020)	-8.7pp	-	England: 7.9% -373 Mixed
	Indian: 6.2% (2020)	+2.1pp	-7.2pp	England: 5.4% -498 Indian
	Pakistani / Bangladeshi: 7.9% (2020)	+5.5pp	-19.7pp	Stay Below England: (9.6%)
	Black: 7.0% (2020)	-1.0pp	-7.8pp	Stay Below England (11.1%)
	EA Core Disabled Aged 16-64: 9.6% (2020)	EA Core Disabled: -2.1pp	-	England 7.6% -1,468 people
Total Additional Affordable Dwellings Completions	553 (2019-20)	-108 (-16.3%)	+310 (+127.6%) (Eng. +56.8%)	Affordable Homes for All
Claimants	Aged 16-24: 12,920 (May 2021)	Aged 16-24: -210 (-1.6%) (May 2020)	Aged 16-24: +5,950 (-85.4%) (Eng +107%) (May 2004)	No Claimants
	Male Aged 16+: 37,530 (May 2021)	Male Aged 16+: -1,930 (-4.9%) (May 2020)	Male Aged 16+: +19,420 (+107.2%) (Eng. +141.5%) (May 2004)	No Claimants
	Female Aged 16+: 26,305 (May 2021)	Female Aged 16+: +835 (+3.3%) (May 2020)	Female Aged 16+: +20,425 (+347.4%) (Eng. +388.2%) (May 2004)	No Claimants
Healthy Life Expectancy	Males: 59.3 Years (2017-19)	Males: +1.4 Years	Males -0.2 Years (Eng. Males +0.2 Years) (2009-2011)	England Males: 63.2 Years
	Females: 59.9 Years (2017-19)	Females: +1.9 Years	Females -2.6 Years (Eng. Females -0.6 Years) (2009-2011)	England Females: 63.5 Years

Education:

Indicator	Where We Are Now	Change Over Year	Change Since 2004	Scale of Challenge
EDI Performance of Colleges, Providers and Schools	In Development			
NVQ 4 + Qualifications	Aged 16-64: 28.8% (210,600) (2020)	Aged 16-64: +16.8% (+30,300)	Aged 16-64: +77.3% (+91,800) (Eng. +85%)	England: 42.8% +102,011 people
	Aged 16-24: 14.0% (18,200) (2020)	Aged 16-24: +11.7% (+1,900)	Aged 16-24: +34.8% (+4,700) (Eng. +73.2%)	England: 20.4% +8,279 people
	Aged 50-64: 24.4% (52,500) (2020)	Aged 50-64: +7.1% (+3,500)	Aged 50-64: +123.4% (+29,000) (Eng. +115.1%)	England: 39% +31,350 people
	Male Aged 16-64: 25.9% (95,500) (2020)	Male Aged 16-64: +14.6% (+12,200)	Male Aged 16-64: +51.1% (+32,300) (Eng. +68.4%)	England 40.5% +53,783 people
	Female Aged 16-64: 31.8% (115,100) (2020)	Female Aged 16-64: +18.7% (+18,100)	Female Aged 16-64: +107% (+59,500) (Eng. +102.9%)	England 45% +47,710 people
No Qualifications	Aged 16-64: 12.5% (91,600) (2020)	Aged 16-64: -24.8% (-30,200)	Aged 16-64: -31.8% (-42,800) (Eng. -53.8%)	England: 6.2% -46,315 people
	Aged 16-24: 11.7% (15,200) (2020)	Aged 16-24: -17.8% (-3,300)	Aged 16-24: -26.2% (+5,400) (Eng. -38.8%)	England: 8.0% -4,816 people
	Aged 25-49: 9.6% (37,200) (2020)	Aged 25-49: -33.8% (-19,000)	Aged 25-49: -37.5% (-22,300) (Eng. -60.3%)	England: 4.4% -20,234 people
	Aged 50-64: 18.2% (39,200) (2020)	Aged 50-64: -16.8% (-7,900)	Aged 50-64: -27.9% (-15,200) (Eng. -52.7%)	England: 8.2% -21,570 people
	Male Aged 16-64: 13.2% (48,500) (2020)	Male Aged 16-64: -23% (-14,500)	Male Aged 16-64: -23.4% (-14,800) (Eng. -47.5%)	England 6.7% -23,804 males
	Female Aged 16-64: 11.9% (43,000) (2020)	Female Aged 16-64: -27% (-15,900)	Female Aged 16-64: -39.5% (-28,100) (Eng. -59.5%)	England 5.7% -22,377 females
Progress 8	-0.12 Average (2018/19)	+0.06	-	England: -0.03 Improve by 0.09
	White: -0.26 (2018/19)	White: Improved by 0.07	-	England: -0.11
	Asian 0.26 (2018/19)	Asian: Declined by 0.02	-	England: 0.47

Education Continued:

Indicator	Where We Are Now	Change Over Year	Change Since 2004	Scale of Challenge
	Black -0.03 (2018/19)	Black: Improved by 0.10	-	England: 0.13
	Eligible for Free School Meals: -0.44 (2018/19)	Improved by 0.14	-	Stay Above England: (-0.53) & eliminate inequity
	Looked After Children: -1.15 (2018/19)	Declined by 0.12	-	Stay Above England: (-1.23) & eliminate inequity.
	SEN: -1.21 (2018/19)	Declined by 0.19	-	England: -1.17
Attainment 8	43.8: Average (2018/19)	+0.7	-	England: 46.7 Improve by 2.9
	White: 43.3 (2018/19)	White: +0.7	-	England: 46.2
	Asian: 48.3 (2018/19)	Asian: +0.4	-	England: 51.5
	Black: 42.7 (2018/19)	Black: +0.1	-	England: 45.2
	Eligible for Free School Meals: 35.1 (2018/19)	FSM: +1.8	-	England: 35.0
	Looked After Children: 20.6 (2018/19)	LAC: +0.9	-	Stay Above England: (19.2) & eliminate inequity.
	SEN: 10.9 (2018/19)	SEN: +0.1	-	England: 13.7
Apprenticeship Starts (Impacted from COVID-19)	8,160 (2019/20)	-2,140 (-20.8%)	-	Apprenticeship Starts Target: 23,000 +14,840
	Asian/ Asian British: 920 (2019/20)	-200 (-17.9%)	-	
	Black/African/ Caribbean/Black British: 450 (2019/20)	-110 (-19.6%)	-	
	White: 6,240 (2019/20)	-1,660 (-21.0%)	-	
	Males: 3,970 (2019/20)	-950 (-19.3%)	-	
	Females: 4,190 (2019/20)	-1,190 (-22.1%)	-	
NEETS – All, Care Leavers (Looked After Children) and SEN (Special Educational Needs)	Dudley – All 6%	Unchanged	-	Ideal target is for CL NEETS % and SEN NEETS = Overall NEETS%
	Dudley – CL 41%	+2pp	-	
	Dudley – SEN 15%	+4pp	-	
	Sandwell – All 6%	Unchanged	-	

Education Continued:

Indicator	Where We Are Now	Change Over Year	Change Since 2004	Scale of Challenge
	Sandwell – CL 50%	+6pp	-	
	Sandwell – SEN 10%	-3pp	-	
	Walsall – All 5%	-1pp	-	
	Walsall – CL 36%	-15pp	-	
	Walsall – SEN 9%	-1pp		
	W'ton – All 6%	-1pp	-	
	W'ton – CL 34%	-6pp	-	

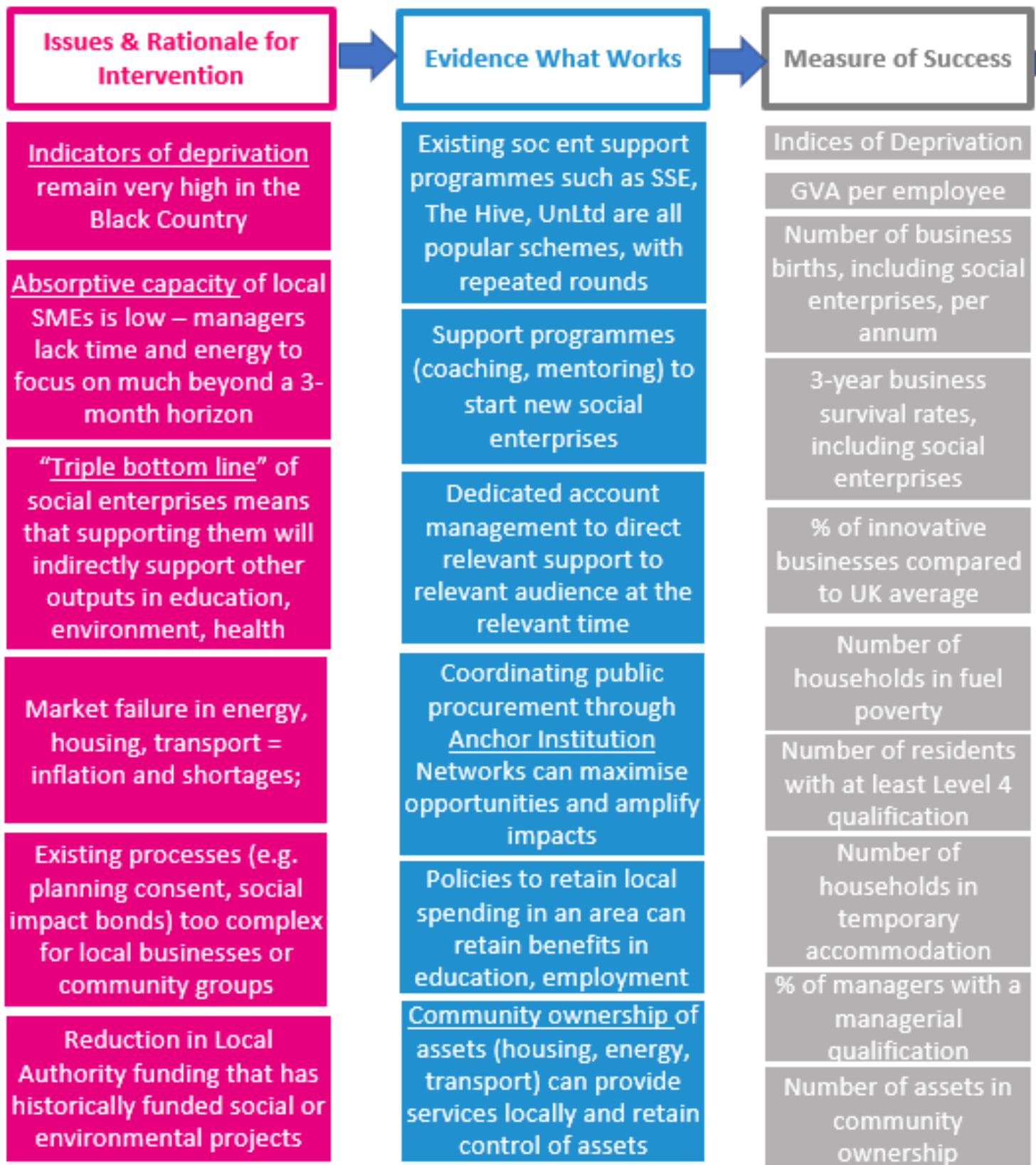
Enterprise:

Indicator	Where We Are Now	Change Over Year	Change Since 2004	Scale of Challenge
Enterprise Births	5,500 (2019)	+690 (+14.3%)	+1,325 (+31.7%) (Eng. +40.7%)	England 62 Enterprises per 10,000 Population +1,948 births PA
Five - Year Enterprise Survival Rate of Businesses Born in 2014	41.1% (2019)	+0.6pp (Eng. +0.1pp) Five-Year Survival Rates from 2013 Births	-	England: 42.5%
Minority-Owned Businesses	Approx. 77,000 across the West Midlands	-	-	Target 150,000 in region by 2030
£ Spend on VCSEs through Public Procurement	TBC	TBC	TBC	Target 10%+
Number of VCSEs	Approx. 5,700	-	-	Target 12,000 by 2030

Environment:

Indicator	Where We Are Now	Change Over Year	Change Since 2004	Scale of Challenge
Fuel Poverty	99,099 Households (19.5%) of Households (2019)	-	-	No Households in Fuel Poverty
Access to Green Space	22,234 people do not live within 600m of accessible quality green space (1.9% of total population)	-	-	All people live within 600m
Air Quality: fraction of mortality attributable to particulate air pollutions	Dudley: 5.5%	+0.3pp	-	England = 5.1% West Midlands = 5.3%
	Sandwell: 6.0%	+0.2pp	-	
	Walsall: 6.0%	+0.5pp	-	
	Wolverhampton: 5.5%	+0.4pp	-	
Carbon Dioxide Emissions	4,495 kt CO2	-243kt CO2 (-3.8%)	-2,892 kt CO2 (-39.1%) (Eng. -36.5%) (2005)	Net Zero
Physically Inactive	Adults Inactive: 36.3% (May 2020/21)	Adults Inactive: +1.4pp (May 2019/20)	-	England Adults Inactive: 27.5% -83,528 Inactive
	Children and Young People Less Active: 35.2% (2019/20)	Children and Young People Less Active: +1.1pp	-	England Children and Young People Less Active: 31.3% -6,520 Less Active
Physically Active	Adults Active: 50.7% (May 2020/21)	Adults Active: -0.7pp (May 2019/20)	-	England Adults Active: 60.9% +96,892 Active
	Children and Young People Active: 42.1% (2019/20)	Children and Young People Active: -0.9pp	-	England Children and Young People Active: 44.9% +4,727 More Active
Obesity Levels	Adults 16+ (Overweight or Obese): 71.6% Average (2019/20)	Adults 16+ (Overweight or Obese): +0.9pp	-	Stay Below England
	Children in Year 6 Overweight (inc. obese): 42.8% 2019/20	Children in Year 6 Overweight (inc. obese): +0.9pp	-	England 35.2%
Retail Floorspace	2,215,000 sqm	Unchanged	-	-

Appendix 3 - Social Enterprise & Social Value Logic Chain





Black Country Consortium Ltd

