

**WMES DELIVERY FRAMEWORK – CONSULTATION DRAFT
PROPOSED RESPONSE TO STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS**

1. Proposed Strategic Priorities & Actions - WFDC Comments

1.1 Table 1, below, identifies AWM's 23 proposed Strategic Priority areas and the associated proposed Actions together with proposed Wyre Forest District Council comments.

Table 1

Strategic Priority	Action	WFDC Comment
Business : 1.1 - Developing Markets and Sectors with the most wealth and employment potential	1.1.1 - Facilitate business collaboration to address priority markets and sectors through a clustering programme and related market exploitation projects.	Several of the business clusters such as tourism and leisure, high value added consumer products (including carpets), environmental technologies and manufacturing are particularly relevant to Wyre Forest based businesses. The District Council supports the further development of business clusters and seeks to work in partnership with the respective Cluster Opportunity Groups.
	1.1.2 - Support manufacturing to become more knowledge-intensified by exploiting innovation, technology, design, high level skills and world class business techniques	Agree
	1.1.3 - Develop public sector procurement opportunities to encourage innovation and other beneficial economic change by building early collaboration on low carbon vehicles and assisted living	Agree

1.2 – Competing in the global economy	1.2.1 – Help businesses drive up their international competitiveness through a focused trade development programme and increase inward investment from both existing and new investors by more effective understanding and promotion of the region’s distinctive knowledge assets	The district is well placed to benefit from increased inward investment opportunities following the completion of recent modern business parks and future allocated employment land opportunities.
	1.2.2 – Increase participation in international networks and partnerships in order to exploit the knowledge and relationships gained, particularly in high growth markets	The Council supports the establishment of an international business forum. The district is the headquarter location for a number of international companies whose knowledge and experience could provide appropriate support
1.3 – Creating economically sustainable new businesses	1.3.1 – Enhance support to improve survivability and growth of new businesses, especially high-growth companies, university spin-outs and those in key target areas, markets and communities. Pro-actively promote the benefits and challenges of starting a business including ensuring there is access to appropriate sources of finance and related ‘investment readiness’ assistance	The District Council supports the drive to encourage and support new businesses. It aims to continue to provide its new business start up grant delivered in partnership with Business Links new business start up courses and ongoing programme of support.
	1.3.2 – Provide bespoke enterprise support, mentoring and training for social enterprises and groups and communities that face barriers to creating sustainable businesses.	Support
1.4 – Capitalising on sustainability and low carbon opportunities	1.4.1 – Create effective linkage between low carbon economic and climate impact opportunities for regional business to realise their wealth-generating potential	The District Council is home to a number of businesses who are committed to utilising the latest environmental technologies, including recycling

	and manage their risk	businesses
1.5 – Investing in business processes and enterprise	1.5.1 – Help businesses transform their performance by ensuring they have implied access to a streamlined range of high-quality market-facing business support services and appropriate finance	Support
1.6 – Stimulating employer investment in skills and training	1.6.1 – Engage businesses in the design of training and skills development; ensure that training and skills are more relevant to business processes and that the public sector is able to deliver what is required	The District Council supports this action and will work in partnership with local businesses, the Learning and Skills Council and training providers as appropriate and required
	1.6.2 – Work with businesses through the fully integrated skills and business brokerage service to develop and make more effective use of the skilled people they need to achieve sustainable improvements in performance	The District Council supports this action and will work in partnership with appropriate delivery partners and businesses
1.7 – Investing in high value skills for the future economy	1.7.1 – Increase the number of higher skilled people in private sector jobs	The District Council supports this action but suggests there is just as much a need for higher skilled people in the public sector as well as the private sector
1.8 – Stimulating innovation, creativity and knowledge regeneration	1.8.1 – Increase the volume of collaborative business-led research and development, leading to commercial exploitation and improved knowledge exchange between businesses and with the Universities and other knowledge providers	Support
	1.8.2 – Facilitate the creation development and commercialisation of new product and service concepts by providing access to appropriate sources of finance complemented by high quality support services	Support

Place : 2.1 - Birmingham competing as a global city	Support the continued investment in and promotion of, Birmingham as an international brand for the benefit of the region as a whole	Support
2.2 - Improving transport and communications to increase accessibility, efficiency and competitiveness	2.2.1 – Promote the early delivery of economically significant and strategic transport projects that improve accessibility, business competitiveness and visitor perceptions and encourage residents, visitors and businesses to adopt sustainable travel practices	The District Council welcomes the identification of this action as a strategic fit to address the identified highway infrastructure needs of the District and in particular of Stourport on Severn and the Stourport Road Employment Corridor
	2.2.2 – Encourage the adoption of existing and future technologic infrastructure in ways that improve the region’s competitiveness	Support
2.3 – Sustainable management and utilisation of our land and property assets	2.3.1 – Maximising opportunities for achieving economic growth by removing barriers that prevent the productive recycling and development of brownfield land and that restrict wider economic growth, broader regeneration and private sector investment	The District Council has identified a number of brownfield land opportunities for economic growth including the former British Sugar site in Kidderminster and continues to work with Advantage West Midlands and the site owners to bring forward development at the earliest opportunity
	2.3.2 – Safeguard and manage our natural and agricultural assets effectively while continuing to support the innovative use and management of our land in response to the region’s challenges, needs and aspirations	Support
2.4 – Supporting a secure, low carbon energy infrastructure for the region	2.4.1 – Support the development of secure, low-carbon energy and resource infrastructure that supports efficiency in energy use	Support

2.5 – Developing sustainable communities	2.5.1 – Deliver a sustainable balance and pattern of development and growth throughout the West Midlands, including both urban and rural renaissance and complementing the priority of the Regional Spatial Strategy	Support
	2.5.2 – Improving the quality of our region as a place to live, work and invest	Support
2.6 – Regenerating our most deprived communities	2.6.1 – Encourage the sustainable regeneration of our most deprived communities by raising enterprise levels and increasing the development of community capacity building	The District Council works in partnership with two major initiatives within Kidderminster – the Oldington and Foley Park Pathfinder Project and the Horsefair, Broadwaters and Greenhill Partnership, both of which are developing programmes to encourage greater levels of enterprise
	2.6.2 – Ensure the physical environment of our region as value to our population’s quality of life and wellbeing via the forward planning of activity	The District Council is leading on the development of a Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus which will identify future redevelopment and development opportunities throughout the town together with the related opportunities for businesses and individuals to raise their skill levels
2.7 – Maximising our cultural offer and natural assets	2.7.1. – Attract and retain residents, businesses and visitors by providing an improved quality of life and offer	The district is fortunate to have a number of regionally and nationally significant visitor and tourist attractions and continues to support Destination Worcestershire – the Sub-regional Destination Management Partnership
People : 3.1 – Changing attitudes to sustainability and consumption	3.1.1 – Encourage people at work, through better information, advice and guidance to adopt new and	Support

	creative practices through improvements in technology etc.	
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	3.1.2 – Encourage people at home and at leisure through better information and awareness raising activities to demand low carbon housing, transport and consumer products	Support
3.2 – Raising aspirations of leaders and managers	3.2.1 – Work with businesses and business support networks to stimulate more employer investment in leadership and management skills	Support
3.3 – Drive up ambition and aspiration	3.3.1 – Establish a clear understanding of the barriers that prevent people in and out of work from seeking employment	The District Council works in partnership with the Learning and Skills Council and Job Centre Plus together with its key partnership and project areas
	3.3.2 – Employers need to provide more information about employment opportunities and the skills they value	The District Council liaises with the local Job Centre Plus and businesses as appropriate
3.4 – Skills for employment and enterprise	3.4.1 – Ensure young people and adults can access the skills and competencies they need to move it to work	Support
	3.4.2 – Enhance the vocational training and development opportunities for all adults and young people	Support
3.5 – Defining employability	3.5.1 – Employers to play a part by providing information and intelligence about their current and future skills needs and working	Support
	3.5.2. – Raise awareness among employers in key markets about the opportunities and challenges of an aging workforce,	Support

	increase patterns of migration etc.	
Powerful Voice : 4.1 – Improving the evidence base for policy	4.1.1 – Develop the evidence base needed to support regional strategies and delivery mechanisms	The District Council will provide any relevant and required information to contribute towards the development of evidence
	4.1.2 – Building an understanding of what does and doesn't work by sharing experience and best practice	The District Council is prepared to share its best practice as required and as relevant
4.2 – Engaging with U.K., European and International decision makers	4.2.1 – Develop a network of strategic contacts capable of engaging with and influencing national government etc.	Support
	4.2.2 – Use the networks to the benefit of the region by identifying areas for potential co-operation with neighbouring regions	Support
4.3 – Position the West Midlands as a global centre where people and businesses choose to connect	4.3.1 – Develop and implement a co-ordinated regional marketing and events strategy with support from key partners	Support
	4.3.2 – Position Birmingham as the region's capital for the benefit of every part of the region	Support

2. General WFDC Comments

2.1 In addition to the above Table, there are a number of more general comments which need to be considered as part of the overall response to the consultation.

2.1.1 As a major partner in Wyre Forest Matters, the Wyre Forest Local Strategic Partnership, Wyre Forest District Council has a key role to play in providing resources and capacity to assist the local community in delivering the West Midlands Economic Strategy. **In this regard some recognition of the role of local authorities (including lower tier authorities) would be welcomed in the Delivery Framework.**

2.1.2 In addition to the Primary Foci of Birmingham and the Regeneration Zones, the District Council is particularly encouraged to see recognition given for potentially additional investment, albeit 'more limited', in other locations such as the "local regeneration areas" identified in the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, which include Kidderminster. However, whilst aspects of the 'Focus' element, set out at Section 8 of the WMES, flow into Section 2 of the Draft Delivery Framework, it does not specifically deal with those other areas outside of the 3 primary spatial foci of Regeneration Zones, High Technology Corridors and Business Clusters

2.1.3 Kidderminster is responding to the challenges and opportunities faced in a town that continues to go through an economic transition and which contains pockets of acute deprivation.

2.1.4 Partners are proposing to tackle the challenges through a comprehensive set of regeneration programmes (under the umbrella of a Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus – "Connecting Kidderminster") that will take a targeted approach to deliver the actions necessary.

2.1.5 The work is also supported by the Worcestershire Partnership and follows on from the Kidderminster Economic Regeneration Strategy (2005) which was itself supported by AWM.

2.1.6 These actions will undoubtedly cut across the key Business, Place, People and Powerful Voice components of the WMES. **The District Council and its local partners would welcome any support and recognition that the WMES Delivery Framework may be able to offer for this kind of approach at a local level.**