The Greater Birmingham Project: The Path To Local Growth

March 2013
My report ‘No Stone Unturned’ was published on 31 October last year. The Chancellor of the Exchequer welcomed the report and committed the Government to the devolution of a greater proportion of growth-related spending to local areas from April 2015.

The Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) asked the Prime Minister if I could help them in a project to explore the recommendations of my report as they might relate to their economy.

With the Prime Minister's agreement we started work on the project eight weeks ago.

Some of the basic analysis relevant to the work was already in place, particularly in the LEP’s ‘Strategy for Growth’ and the City Deal and Enterprise Zone agreements.

The concept of bidding for a Single Pot of central money leads on from this work and is intended to be implemented over the next year or so by which time the Government will have defined the size and scope of the single pot and the rules associated with it.

The GBSLEP cannot take forward its work without this clarity from Government. The Government intends to develop its approach around the time of the budget. It may be helpful therefore to make available this report on progress in the short time available.
I remember that when Sir Terry Leahy and I produced our report on Liverpool we asked: who was in charge, what could be done differently and how?

I have adopted the same approach in working with the GBSLEP.

I believe, allowing for the short timescale involved, they have demonstrated not only the practical steps that need to be taken to grasp the opportunities the change of approach involves, but they have brought enthusiasm and imagination to the task that cannot be replicated in Whitehall – however well intentioned Ministers and officials may be.

The first of my questions is about governance: who is in charge?

The GBSLEP has accepted the challenge and reached agreement on an implementation structure and strategy as set out in this report.

It is a give-give offer to Government and thus conditional on Whitehall being prepared to share its decision-making powers with local people. The GBSLEP can only finalise its position once the Government has made its position clear.

But I am satisfied that the determination to do this is there and that their proposals represent the basis of corporate governance essential for the Single Pot to work.

That leads to my other questions. What can be done differently and how?

This report illustrates the extraordinary opportunities and latent strengths of the GBSLEP economy. The precise answers to these questions will be the essence of any bid for a Single Pot and it would be unwise, if not impossible, to guess at the nature of the Single Pot when the Government itself will have to clarify the position within a short number of months.

I also have another memory. In 1979 I looked out over 6,000 acres of derelict land in East London. I had no idea – and could not have had – of the remarkable things that were to happen there once the appropriate machinery was put in place.

But the GBSLEP can and indeed are now talking of the sort of things they can do differently if they are given the chance to use their part of the Single Pot to exploit the strengths they know to be there on the ground and break out from the conformist disciplines designed to fit the ‘one size fits all’ approach of today’s practice.

The private sector has also recognised the need for change. Throughout my long career in business and politics, I have advocated the need for strong and coherent business support that brings together the best of the public and private sectors. This report sets out a major initiative that I believe provides the breakthrough we need to achieve this.
The scale of these opportunities is, in just eight weeks, already apparent in this report. Let me summarise just ten separate yet linked opportunities. They range from innovative and exciting growth proposals to ideas that in their way tackle circumstances that hold back growth or divert resources away from it. The first two proposals highlight how the GBSLEP and the wider private sector have risen to meet the challenge that my report poses.

1. More effective governance
The GBSLEP realises that the status quo is not an option when faced with the opportunities – and challenges – presented by a substantial Single Pot. The GBSLEP will therefore immediately establish a ‘Supervisory Board’ comprised of the nine elected local authority leaders. This will provide clear political accountability for the management of the Single Pot.

This move does not replace or challenge the private-sector led GBSLEP Board. Indeed it strengthens. The Supervisory Board will empower the GBSLEP Board through formal decision-making powers and a scheme of delegated authority. This means that the private sector-led Board, backed up by the democratic accountability vested in the nine elected leaders, will have the clear authority to make the decisions and write the cheques that will drive local growth in the GBS area. This will streamline and make more effective the implementation of the Local Growth Strategy.

The GBSLEP Board will also ensure that it is representative of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull area – reflecting the diversity of the population and key business interests.

2. Business Support
In a report circulated to the executives of the accredited Chambers of Commerce in Glasgow in March, the Birmingham Chamber recognised the need to change and to invite other business representative organisations to join them in creating a single signposting structure for business support services in the GBSLEP area.

The GBSLEP, together with the British Chambers of Commerce, will consult widely on this concept, particularly having regard to its relevance on a national scale. This is a major initiative and placed alongside the initiatives being taken by the Government in support of the overseas chamber movement, provides this country with the opportunity to match the scale of support available to our competitors overseas.
3. The M42 Economic Gateway
The M42 economic gateway in Solihull is a fantastic opportunity, not just for Greater Birmingham and Solihull but also for the UK.

The GBSLEP will develop a strategic framework and development plan, through a Development Corporation-type approach or similar, which combines targeted investment in local infrastructure ensuring that the M42 Economic Gateway can fully capitalise from the investment opportunities that the expansion of Birmingham Airport and High Speed 2 will bring.

The Single Pot will enable the far more effective pooling of local and central resources which can be used alongside other funding mechanisms – such as GBS Finance – and ensure that investment can be prioritised effectively and co-ordinated locally.

In addition, development will be facilitated by using proactive planning tools such as Area Action Plans or Local Development Orders and the extensive public assets in the area will be used to support the project.

4. Birmingham Airport
The UK has an air capacity crisis, with the South East operating at near maximum levels when there is untapped capacity elsewhere. With Government support, Birmingham Airport could relieve the immediate capacity problems without further investment in infrastructure, while generating wider economic benefits, such as creating up to 243,000 jobs as it grows to 36 million passengers.

Capacity could be increased from 9 million to 36 million passengers over the next 30 years, directly increasing sustainable employment, connecting the region's internationally-competitive exporters to the world's growing economies such as China and India to name but two, while maximising the growth opportunities of the M42 Economic Gateway and High Speed 2.

5. Sector Acceleration Zones
The approach to supporting the major engines of employment in the GBS economy, and the major areas of opportunity, has been fragmented and limited in effect. There is currently no easy way to link the LEP area’s physical assets, development sites, inward investment support, skills programmes, areas of worklessness, research and innovation and – critically – attract and align the private sector investment to unlock significant growth.
There is also a need for clear, empowered, leadership in key areas to help reduce duplication of effort and ensure a collaborative approach.

The Single Pot approach provides the LEP with the transformational ability to bring all of these issues together into bespoke systems of support to ensure strong growth across different areas of the GBSLEP and neighbouring LEP economies.

This means bespoke sector skills plans aligned clearly to an asset strategy, inward investment support, worklessness programmes, areas of excellence and research and innovation. It links completely to a new business-led business support programme, strategic account management, and bespoke access to finance solutions.

This approach will focus on agreed economic zones such as the Advanced Manufacturing Hub in Aston and the Life Sciences Accelerator and other sites across the Enterprise Belt.

6. Skills and education

The GBSLEP needs to have a greater influence in directing skills funding locally. This will enable the supply of skills to be matched more closely to the needs of the local economy.

The GBSLEP will work with local employers to ensure that a coherent skills offer is provided through the Skills for Growth package. The potential for a further University Technical College will be examined.

There have been significant improvements in the educational achievements in the GBSLEP area over recent years.

To maintain this momentum the GBSLEP will work with teachers, governors and parents in the quest for yet higher standards. Private and public sector employers will be engaged in order to ensure that young people are introduced to the world of work at an early age. The potential for employers to provide careers advice, workplace visits, serve as governors or in other roles is well recognised.

7. Collaborative procurement

The nine Local Authorities in the GBSLEP have considerable procurement budgets totalling over a billion pounds per annum.

Although some of the local authorities operate procurement as a ‘shared service’, not all do. Each approach comes with its own challenges.
The GBSLEP will produce a single strategic procurement strategy that has the potential to stimulate local economic growth by encouraging innovation, with the dual purposes of (a) maximising efficiencies in terms of resources and expenditure on jointly-procured services and (b) sharing capacity and expertise to drive forward innovative procurement across the GBSLEP.

This approach will be driven forward in such a way as to allow local businesses to benefit from the opportunities it offers.

8. Sharing the benefits of success
The Birmingham Energy Savers Green Deal scheme for making homes and businesses more energy efficient will create or protect thousands of jobs.

It will generate savings in energy costs and it will generate savings in benefit costs – because it will target the employment opportunities it generates at people and areas that have high rates of unemployment.

But when local areas take action to support growth and jobs and to achieve better outcomes and save money in our public services, these benefits can be lost to the local economy.

Government has provided incentives to ensure that the benefits of growth remain local, for example through the New Homes Bonus and business rates reform.

The GBSLEP proposes to build on this ‘payment by results’ approach and will discuss with HMT the potential of piloting a system in which 50% of the benefit savings generated by the Birmingham Energy Savers scheme are guaranteed to be recycled locally into growth initiatives.

9. Maximising local potential
Throughout England there are centres of poverty and deprivation. They may be deep in the inner city or located on the outer fringes – but everyone knows where they are.

They represent a major impediment to growth for two reasons.

First, large sums of public money are spent every year in an attempt to alleviate the problems that arise.
Second, most of the energy of the many agencies involved is concentrated on coping with the deep-seated problems rather than releasing the talents and energies of local residents back into the active world.

A more coherent approach is needed to bring local people and resources involved within a common framework.

The GBSLEP will therefore identify such areas, use the Single Pot to deliver a strategy to end the concentration of underachievement and dependency, and create an executive decision-taking framework for the purpose with a nominated senior official to drive the approach.

10. Digital roll-out
The current approach to developing digital infrastructure is fragmented, uncoordinated and siloed. There are currently four separate funding pots that are aimed at broadband infrastructure roll-out, all with their own application and monitoring processes and criteria.

The Single Pot will render this bureaucracy obsolete.

The GBSLEP will exploit the Single Pot mechanism to create a single programme, not simply to build infrastructure (broadband and others such as smart grid, logistics and mobility) but also to work with businesses to drive up the use of the new infrastructure for innovative services and wealth creation.

The Rt Hon the Lord Heseltine of Thenford CH
CHAPTER ONE – Introduction: Beyond ‘No Stone Unturned’

The GBSLEP is committed to turning the recommendations made by Lord Heseltine in ‘No Stone Unturned’ into reality, rolling back centralism and taking greater responsibility for creating our own economic growth (within a clear national framework).

‘No Stone Unturned’ graphically sets out the full impact of the worst economic crisis in modern times. As a country:

- There has been a sustained deterioration in our share of the global export market
- Our current account deficit has remained uncomfortably high
- The previous decade of economic growth was sustained by debt
- Our productivity gap creates an ongoing competitive disadvantage
- There is a growing skills crisis
- Growth remains stubbornly slow

In the GBSLEP, we recognise these and many related issues that have resulted in a longstanding economic underperformance:

- We face high levels of unemployment (the unemployment rate for the LEP is 6.4%; for England as a whole the rate is 4.7%) particularly in our urban areas and it is highest in Birmingham
- Between 2005 and 2010, the business stock of the GBSLEP area rose by slightly more than 3%, much lower than the national average of 5%
- Over the period 1999-2009 Gross Value Added (GVA) per head growth was significantly lower than the national average (34% as opposed to 41.4%) and weekly earnings are low (£560 per week compared to an national average of nearly £620 per week)
- In the period 1995 – 2008 manufacturing employment almost halved, from 24.2% to 12.2%
- We have a relatively high proportion of our population with no skills qualifications (over 15%) and a low proportion with higher skills.
Put frankly, the approach taken to unlocking economic growth over the past decade or so has not served our area well.

During the decade when the UK and world economy was growing, economic growth was predominantly generated by the public sector.

We made very little impact on the skills gap with our key international competitor economies.

Our manufacturing base was hollowed out; supply chain capacity withered. Local economic growth has, over a long period, been surrendered to a failed model of national economic growth.

Funding and powers were increasingly concentrated at regional and national level, in silos controlled by Whitehall. These silos have thick walls. Local partners have progressively lost the discretion and flexibility to act in a timely and cohesive fashion to unlock growth.

The local economic development, transport, skills and worklessness interventions is nigh on impossible. It is equally difficult to get nationally commissioned programmes to link to European funding at local level.

We firmly believe we deserve better than this.

It is not tenable to the businesses and residents of the GBSLEP area that over a period of unparalleled global economic growth, our area did not share in this and worst still actually experienced a tangible deterioration.

Whilst we have seen welcome moves to redressing the balance, this must be taken further.

Our core cities became great on the back of strong political and business leadership empowered to deliver what was best for their area.

Their ambitions and agenda were clear and the leaders were not undermined or stifled in their efforts to deliver these by excessive centralist intervention.

We need to rediscover this approach.

Those that doubt the need for a Single Pot should be under no illusion.

The GBSLEP has experienced the inefficiencies and inadequacies of the existing operating model at very close quarters. We know we share this experience with all the other LEPs in the country.
The current model is not fit for purpose if we are going to respond to the needs of our businesses and residents and deliver the growth we need to generate.

We need a new way. The size of the prize is significant not only for our LEP but for the UK as a whole.

We have seen this Government introduce opportunities to help stimulate growth, such as the Regional Growth Fund (RGF) and Employer Ownership Programme (EOP) for skills. In their original guises neither of these programmes paid any heed to the local economic strategies being developed by LEPs to help guide funding decisions: they were wholly informed by national perspectives.

More recently we have seen RGF recognise the potential role of LEPs in both helping to stimulate private sector-led bids and also lead on strategic bids for their local economy. This is a very welcome change.

In contrast, the EOP absolutely precludes LEPs playing an equivalent leadership role in fronting bids for our areas. Decisions and the distribution of funding are made by a quango and officials without reference to the strategic priorities of the area.

LEPs cannot bid on behalf of groups of employers who are reluctant themselves to bid but who would otherwise take part in a locally led programme.

This is ridiculous.

We welcomed the Chancellor’s bold step announcing the Single Pot in the Autumn Statement and have used his words as guidance:

“Government spending should be aligned with the priorities of the local business community…. from April 2015, the Government will place more of the funding that currently goes to local transport, housing, skills and getting people back to work into a Single Pot that LEPs can bid for.”

The GBSLEP has demonstrated the opportunity to drive transformational change by conjoining public, private and voluntary sectors.

Localism is at the heart of this. We are serious about generating growth and jobs in the GBSLEP area and we recognise the need to up our game and change, alongside the national culture change required to make a success of a Single Pot.
In this report we set out further steps that we are taking to ensure we have democratically accountable governance across the GBSLEP, allied to continuing to grow our strategic enabling role. We are making a significant agreement to change the way we do our business: enabling greater action between nine Local Authorities towards a common cause.

We have risen to Lord Heseltine’s challenge on business support. As part of our work, the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce recognised that they need to change if they are to play a more central role in unlocking growth.

The British Chambers of Commerce commended this approach and as part of the next steps in our work we will consult widely, potentially as part of a national discussion, on the nature of a more locally driven business support system.

With a Single Pot we will not focus on tackling issues in isolation. We have seen and set out in this report how the central, siloed approach has consistently failed to deliver.

Our approach will be radical for Government, but seen as “business as usual” by the private sector. We will address the areas presenting the greatest opportunity and in need of the greatest attention as a package.

The role of our civic and business leaders is to bring together the necessary skills and resources to best exploit those opportunities and address these needs.

To drive this transformational change, we will:

- Develop and implement a best-in class strategy focused on growth, wealth creation, innovation and job creation in all sectors that support the GBSLEP’s economic geography
- Enable delivery through an integrated approach to local growth that will be outcome driven and grounded on a deep understanding of place
- Dramatically enhance the speed at which major strategic interventions will be made. This will ensure that public investment unleashes private sector growth opportunities in an effective and timely manner.

We all need a new way of growing our local economies. We are committed to be at the vanguard of this change. Together, we can make this change happen.
CHAPTER TWO
Local Place and the Single Pot

2.1 The Importance of Place

We care about place. Understanding place means understanding local integration, which is at the very heart of ‘No Stone Unturned’.

If the UK wants to continue to spend a little on transport, a little on skills and little on housing – to name a few examples – and simply hope it all works together, then we have a system to do that.

But this is wasteful and does not deliver the impact it could.

For the UK to grow, and seriously tackle the issues and opportunities affecting local areas, it needs to conjoin the significant existing resources into a Single Pot and trust local leaders to make the best investment decision for that place.

The GBSLEP area encompasses Birmingham, Solihull, Bromsgrove, Redditch, Wyre Forest, Cannock Chase, East Staffordshire, Lichfield and Tamworth.

Home to almost 2 million people the LEP links a strong urban core (which includes the UK’s second city) and the surrounding cathedral cities and market towns. Our geography incorporates a number of ‘shared districts’ with the counties of Worcestershire and Staffordshire.

The GBSLEP area plays a pivotal role in the wider West Midlands and we need a strong, collaborative work with our neighbours. We are also a member of the Core Cities network and a strong Core Cities partnership is essential to UK growth.

Our vision for the GBSLEP is shaped around an integrated set of spatial enterprise opportunities and needs with the Birmingham City Centre Enterprise Zone at the heart linked via the M42 Economic Gateway to an Enterprise Belt that reaches out into Worcestershire and Staffordshire. Our spatial and economic growth plans are underpinned by a quality of life offer, with a variety of high quality and affordable places to live, visit and invest.
Our approach - to our City Deal, Enterprise Zone, Enterprise Belt, Strategy for Growth and the Greater Birmingham Project – has been built upon a continually refined evidence and consultation base (to be published as part of our full report).

This tells us we have big issues to overcome. With low employment rates, weak skills profile, high unemployment in specific areas, high levels of youth unemployment, employers struggling to find appropriately skilled staff, a low proportion of high growth firms and low business survival rates.

It also affirms we have a considerable amount to work with and build upon.

We have strong economic assets (e.g. major internationally competitive companies; excellent universities; world-class cultural offer) a diverse economy (manufacturing, professional and business services, digital media and ICT, health and life sciences, food and drink production, transport and storage, wholesale and retail, visitor) and a young and diverse population.

We are strategically located at the heart of the UK’s transport and logistics network, and have the third busiest UK airport outside London and the South East, with High Speed 2 providing a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform our connectivity.
CASE STUDY 1: New Street Gateway

The New Street Gateway project is a regionally agreed scheme of national significance. It replaces an outmoded railway gateway and support significant city centre regeneration of Birmingham, delivering £2 billion of economic benefits and creating over 10,000 new jobs.

Currently under construction, it is due for completion in 2015, although it has been a recognised priority since 2000.

One of the key difficulties with the current compartmentalised approach is that projects come to be seen narrowly as transport or economic development projects rather than as local growth schemes. This is well illustrated by the history of the New Street Gateway project.

Having recognised that there was a need to replace the station and understand the wider impacts this could have, it required five years to simply agree the project concept and parameters with Government and other local and national partners (e.g. Network Rail).

A further four years were needed to secure the relevant funding, land and consents; and then over five years was required to construct the development (without closing the station).

Significant time was taken by the complicated nature of the funding package, which required contributions from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, the Department for Transport, local authorities, prudential borrowing, Network Rail and the West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority. Each partner had their own incompatible processes, which required separate applications and due diligence, with several routes leading ultimately to the Treasury.

Duplication of effort created uncertainty, which led to increased delays.

With a Single Pot we have identified that the time taken before construction began on New Street could have been reduced by at least 50% and the value for money and impacts of the development could have been significantly increased.

The Single Pot could potentially also have helped further improve the impact by aligning associated developments (such as enhanced transportation links across the GBSLEP, and the bringing forward of adjacent regeneration schemes) and the local benefits further enhanced by linking associated skills and training needs (with the scheme creating over 1,000 jobs on site).
CASE STUDY 2: Paradise Circus

Paradise Circus is a major early element of the Birmingham City Centre Enterprise Zone Investment Plan. We will invest £61.3 million now to leverage a further £400 million of private sector investment in a project that will transform a key part of our city centre.

A joint venture between Birmingham City Council and Argent plc (British Telecommunications Pension Scheme) will enable the assembly of land interests, the creation of a development platform and the realigning of the highway network. Development plots will be created for Argent and other developers to subsequently build out in accordance with the masterplan for the site.

Local decision-making, backed up by local resources (Growing Places Fund and borrowing) have allowed us to take quick and effective decisions. In the current climate this is imperative. Our decision making is backed by rigorous value-for-money and deliverability tests.

2.2 The importance of the Single Pot

The GBSLEP is nationally important because of the size and importance of Birmingham and its economic fortunes flow directly through all corners of our area and beyond. The UK needs a second city that can be decisive and responsive to the needs of all residents and businesses in the West Midlands and further afield. Consider the New Street Gateway project (see Case Study 1). This is a major regeneration project that clearly illustrates the issues that conspire to delay project delivery and create barriers to better economic performance. In contrast, the GBSLEP quickly set up the largest Enterprise Zone in the UK in 2012 and following this public and private sector colleagues have worked together on a number of major projects that will:
- Leverage significant private sector investment. The Single Pot means that the total amount available to invest is greater than the sum of its parts because of the ability to draw in finance from external sources.
- Move from concept to decision swiftly
- Create LEP wide and UK opportunities. One of these is the Paradise Circus development (see Case Study 2).

The contrast between the New Street and Paradise Circus examples is stark.

Both are complex projects with multiple stakeholders. But when the decisions and funding are controlled locally we can react in time to take advantage of highly mobile private sector investment.

The complexity we summarise on the New Street project is a microcosm of the complexity of our relationship with Government in seeking to deliver local growth.

To illustrate this, the Greater Birmingham Project mapped the inter-departmental relationships (looking at funding, policy, programme management, investment and business development). Our findings, which just scratch the surface and only take into account a small number of the region’s businesses, is set out below (and if more than 60% of the lines reported are mapped the picture becomes completely unreadable!)
Where Whitehall might see a transport project, a skills programme, a school project or an environmental scheme, we will see only elements of a truly integrated local growth strategy.

The project and programme ideas outlined in the pages that follow would all benefit from the Single Pot approach:

- Some would simply not happen without a Single Pot and the flexibility it will give to the GBSLEP
- Some would be delivered more quickly, saving money and generating extra economic benefit, and
- Some would benefit from the way in which a Single Pot enables connections between different projects and the outcomes they will achieve.

The GBSLEP Directors are very clear that we must provide the leadership to make this happen. We must formulate a strategy that improves confidence in the GBSLEP.

Our Strategy for Growth has broad-based support across the area. We recognise the enormity of the opportunity. The LEP political leadership have demonstrated political courage from the outset.

The evolution of the GBSLEP’s governance structure, described in Chapter Three, takes this to a new level and, subject to a substantial Single Pot being agreed, this is a major breakthrough that will benefit the GBSLEP, the Midlands and the UK.

2.3 Bringing funding streams together

The creation of the Single Pot is not about localising discreet budgets or functions. It is about creating a completely new way of delivering support for growth through taking a fully integrated and flexible, locally-focused approach to investment.

Neither is it just about the better and more effective use of public money for infrastructure projects. Local ownership enables a far greater set of local stakeholders, many of whom may have previously been unengaged, to be part of decision-making and priority setting.

This breadth of engagement, combined with the fact there is a Single Pot, led by a single body, creates far clearer accountability than is currently the case with a myriad of anonymous funding streams and opaque decision-making.

The examples we have used in this chapter are both large infrastructure projects that clearly show the inefficiency of the existing model and the opportunity to significantly improve this through a Single Pot approach.
It must be stressed that this Single Pot approach will permeate all corners of the GBSLEP where the New Street Gateway experience is replicated in equal measure.

So, the argument for bringing funding streams together and passing them down to local leadership is a powerful one:

- It will give local leaders the incentive and confidence to work together and truly drive progress locally and in turn improve accountability to local residents and businesses
- It will enable projects and programmes to be brought forward quickly and delivered with increased energy and commitment
- It will make it much easier to make the connections between different types of project
- It will support the leverage of much larger sums from the private sector.

This is not a time for incremental change.

A substantial and genuine Single Pot, unfettered by separate departmental caveats and rules, designed to deliver the Government’s overall growth policy is needed. Creating the Single Pot will require courage. There will be many doubters advocating the status quo: change never comes without pain and discomfort. In the private sector, this translates into the continuous search for sustainable competitive advantage.

We need this in our local economies.
CHAPTER THREE – Moving Forward: Local Leadership & the Single Pot

3.1 Application of the Single Pot: delivering our priorities

The GBSLEP’s mission is simple: to create jobs and grow the economy – increasing local prosperity and quality of life.

Our vision is to re-establish Greater Birmingham’s role as the major driver of the UK economy outside London. This means closing the per capita output gap with the national average and establishing the preconditions for economic leadership on an international scale.

Our priorities with a Single Pot will be set out in our Strategy for Growth, identified from the views and expertise of the area’s businesses, universities, local authorities, third sector organisations and key representative groups.

The advent of the Single Pot will enable us to accelerate economic growth by applying all resources to this shared strategy endorsed across the sub-region:

- Taking an all agency approach to stubborn problems
- Acting quickly through new governance and delivery mechanisms
- Ensuring decisions are taken closer to the action
- Gaining the multiplier effect by leveraging private sector resources
- Removing competing and sometimes contradictory decisions taken in silos

This will apply focus on those things that matter most to unlock the jobs and growth the region needs. Working as a partnership, between the private and public sector, this means a clear focus upon six ‘strategic enablers’ of growth:

1. Growing the number of successful businesses – with a new system of business support, better access to financial products and better business regulation
2. Building sector strengths and opportunities – targeting areas where the biggest job creation is secured now, and where the biggest long-term growth and high value-add can be delivered in the long-term
3. Stimulating innovation – as an area where knowledge is both generated and applied, where research, development and innovation effectively drive growth
4. Improving our skills talent pool – linking skills provision to business need and raising the educational standards across the GBSLEP area
5. Improving physical and digital connectivity – transforming connectivity within the region – particularly between businesses, employees, and markets – and outside of the region to the rest to the UK and internationally
6. Optimising the economic value of our assets – aligning assets to support coordinated development of infrastructure, housing and employment land, whilst maximising the potential and appeal of the LEP area as a place of culture and creativity

Within each of these areas the Single Pot would be used to support the programmes and activity required to unlock their potential, as demonstrated in the next part of this report.

3.2 Making it happen: Rising to the Leadership Challenge

Through the Greater Birmingham Project the GBSLEP Board has agreed to put forward a major enhancement of our governance arrangements as a response to the devolution of a significant Single Pot by the Government.

We have also developed a response to the proposal for Local Growth Teams in ‘No Stone Unturned’ which we believe will ensure stronger and more effective partnership working between the LEP area and Whitehall.

From the outset we gave the GBSLEP a legal personality and we established it as a company. We have run it as any other company would be run and with all the discipline that requires.

This has given us a solid structure for decision making and managing our business. However, we recognise that the next stage on our journey involves transferring powers from Whitehall and therefore requires serious and rigorous consideration.

We are a partnership that covers nine local authorities including parts of neighbouring counties, coming together through a strong sense of common purpose and opportunity. Our LEP came into being with no assets, no money, no powers, but with a significant amount of influence and ambition.

We have made real progress. But if the changes set out in ‘No Stone Unturned’ are to be taken forward, we recognise that we need a new governance structure to reflect this.

We believe that our proposal will settle the vital question asked of us by Lord Heseltine: “Who is in charge?”
3.3 Our Proposal: The LEP

Once the details of the Single Pot are announced we will immediately establish a Supervisory Board, comprised of the nine elected local authority leaders. This will provide clear political accountability for the management of the Single Pot. It will operate a cabinet style of accountability and will be a formal governance structure between a Joint Committee and a Combined Authority.

The Supervisory Board will empower the GBSLEP Board through formal decision-making and a scheme of delegated authority and so will further strengthen the partnership between business and civic leadership. The GBSLEP Board will continue to be responsible for development and implementation of the Local Growth Strategy.

In addition, we will strengthen the GBSLEP Board by appointing a CEO (probably the CEO or another senior manager from one of the local authorities). We will also ensure that its membership reflects the diversity within the region and the different business representative organisation.
The GBSLEP Board has also established a number of sub-groups to focus on specific aspects of the LEP’s agenda and delegated functions to them. For example the Employment and Skills Board has commissioned the City Skills Plan. Others include Access to Finance, Transport, Housing and Economic Growth. These will be reviewed to ensure they meet the growing role of the GBSLEP.

3.4 The Greater Birmingham and Solihull Growth Team

We recommend that Lord Heseltine’s concept of a Local Growth Team (LGT) brigading civil servants into a local area should be strengthened and enhanced. Core City LEPs are of sufficient scale to each warrant a LGT, rather than the cluster approach proposed in ‘No Stone Unturned’. We are clear that this must not become a new regional Government bureaucracy. We set out how we can be achieved below.

We believe that the LGT will be strengthened by embedding Whitehall civil servants within a wider virtual team that includes business secondees, local authority officers and other key delivery partners in the city region. This will be a new relationship in which the focus on place (rather than department or agency) is paramount. It is important none that the Whitehall members of this team have strong and direct links back to departments rather than a discrete regional body.

The LGT will be responsible for enabling the delivery of the GBSLEP’s strategy. This in turn will be supported by increased development of cross-LEP service delivery arrangements for example in regulation, inward investment, European programme management and strategic relationship management. We will build on existing sector networks where appropriate.

The design principles that should underpin the team, and thus ensure it is not a new regional tier of bureaucracy, are:

- It is functionally led, and not based upon a single set of solutions to be rolled out from Whitehall. Form must follow function. Officials should not be appointed to the team on a “one per department” basis but according to the priorities of each local area. It must be flexible to adapt to changing local priorities
- It is a ‘local team’ in which staff from local agencies and Whitehall work within a single structure
- The members of the team should be appointed to “new jobs” that are defined according to the needs of the local Growth Plan
- It should include some senior Civil Servants and senior local staff to provide it with strategic weight. They should be supported and linked sufficiently to key Ministers and Permanent Secretaries, to ensure a strong and knowledgeable voice in Whitehall.

As part of this closer joint working, it will be necessary to encourage secondments and external appointments between local and national public sector agencies and not just between the Civil Service and business, as proposed in ‘No Stone Unturned’. In our experience cross-sector secondments work best where there is a clear protocol or process agreed in advance, rather than having to negotiate on a case-by-case basis.

A standard set of secondment agreements should be created between Whitehall, the rest of the public sector and the private sector, to ensure that secondments can be efficiently set up without having to reinvent the rules each time.

We strongly urge government to consider the whole range of public bodies in terms of the potential for localisation, as proposed in ‘No Stone Unturned’. But decisions on what to localise must be made on the basis of emerging local opportunities and the logic of including functions within the growth strategies that LEPs develop, rather than creating an unbending national set of criteria.

We recognise that it will not be before the next Spending Review period that a Single Pot comes into operation. However, we would urge the Government to take rapid steps towards introducing more localism.

We should pilot the introduction of Local Growth Teams in Birmingham and other willing Core Cities as soon as possible.

This could be extended to Wave 2 City Deal areas as their City Deals are agreed.

Further, the Government should place a moratorium on any new business support and local growth products and funds that cannot be incorporated rapidly into a Single Pot, or which do not help to create the momentum towards joined-up local delivery mechanisms.

There should be no central contacts for services that extend beyond the current Spending Review period that erode the scale and impact of the Single Pot.

This will require strong discipline from the Government.
3.5 Conclusion: The compelling case for local leadership

There is an overwhelming case for creating and devolving a substantial Single Pot so that local leadership can bring together all those with a stake in their local place and accelerate the drive for growth.

We have shown the courage and determination to change and set out how we will create robust local governance in order to lead this transformation. We are genuinely committed to providing stronger local leadership as well as working more closely with our partners in Whitehall.

We are ready to go.

In the next part of this report we summarise just a flavour of the ambitious approach we want to take.
CHAPTER FOUR – The Future: Opportunities of the Single Pot

This section provides a flavour of some of the projects that would be supported through such a pot, demonstrating how they contribute to the LEP’s six Strategic Enablers as outlined on pages 20 and 21. This list is far from exhaustive, but is intending to provide an indication of the level of our ambition and the ‘size of the prize’.

4.1 Business Support

The current configuration of business support in the GBSLEP is fragmented, of variable quality, competes for participants and suffers profound lack of strategic vision.

Good business support would incorporate a primary focus on growth throughout the complete business lifecycle. This should be underpinned by an effective frontline triage system which is driven by digital solutions to enable all businesses to access support efficiently and effectively.

Over-lapping and open peer-to-peer business networks are critical to driving greater engagement from all sections of the business community.

As part of the input to this report the Birmingham Chambers of Commerce Group has developed a proposition that has recently been commended by the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC). The Birmingham Chambers’ proposition is clear that significant change is needed in order to grasp the very real opportunity.

Therefore, the GBSLEP has agreed to:

- Consult widely to develop a business support proposition drawing on inputs from a range of providers, including Higher Education Institutes
- Develop an a la carte menu of products and services that will deliver the maximum impact for businesses in the GBSLEP
- Provide a GBS Growth Fund, which will focus on the investment and working capital needs of smaller businesses.
The creation of the Single Pot will ensure a holistic approach to business support from start-ups through to high growth firms. It will help to join up the different elements of provision that exist in the marketplace, and provide a one-stop shop for business.

4.2 The M42 Economic Gateway

The M42 Economic Gateway (above) is one of the UK’s strongest economic bases and has the potential to create over 100,000 new jobs and create £14 billion of additional GDP for the region. This Gateway is ideally placed to capitalise from the investment opportunities of the expansion of Birmingham Airport and High Speed 2.

To realise this potential we will:

- Adopt a joined-up approach to development across the Gateway, with Government and local partners working together to deliver a single growth plan and access to resources
- Set-up an arms-length delivery vehicle to focus on delivery of major transport works, digital infrastructure, site and social infrastructure and promote and stimulate private investment in the core sites
- Provide significant upfront transport and economic infrastructure to maximise the impact of High Speed 2 and secure long-term investment
- Use public assets in and around the M42 Economic Gateway to support the project with development facilitated by using proactive planning tools such as Area Action Plans or Local Development Orders.

A Single Pot will enable pooling of local and central resources which can be used alongside other funding mechanisms such as GBS Finance to ensure that investment can be prioritised effectively and planned and co-ordinated locally in a timely fashion. A Masterplan and Implementation and Investment Plan are currently being finalised that create the roadmap for future growth.

Development will be accelerated by removing delays and barriers associated with accessing different pots of funding.

4.3 Birmingham Airport

Birmingham Airport is geared for growth and could double its passenger capacity (to 18m passengers per annum) overnight without the need for further investment in infrastructure. It is uniquely placed to be part of the solution to Britain’s aviation capacity crisis.

Birmingham Airport is a huge asset to the regional economy and has the potential to create up to 31,000 direct and 212,000 indirect jobs. It is also well located to take advantage of the large and fast-growing Indian, Pakistani and Chinese communities in the LEP by maximising inward investment opportunities.

In order to achieve this we ask Government to:

- Designate Birmingham as a national airport (as is the case in many of our competitor countries)
- Operate complete open skies, so any airline can fly from any location to Birmingham and vice versa, to encourage competition.
- Introduce transitional arrangements on Air Passenger Duty which will help drive increased passenger volumes. The airport has the capacity to accommodate up to 36 million passengers.

An expanded and empowered Birmingham Airport would also add value to HS2 and the M42 Economic Gateway. A single pot will allow these key strategic opportunities to be realised in a joined-up development approach, maximising growth and job creation across the GBSLEP and the wider region.
### 4.4 Sector Acceleration Zones

The approach to supporting the major engines of employment and opportunity in the Greater Birmingham economy has been fragmented. There is a need for clear, empowered leadership in key areas to help reduce duplication of effort and ensure a collaborative and joined-up approach across different sectors. There is also a potential to create Special Purpose Vehicles, such as that created for Tech City, to implement sector/spatial plans.

To do this, we will accelerate the current economic zones in the GBSLEP, for example:

- **The Advanced Manufacturing Hub** - a joint initiative with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) which will stimulate £80 million of private sector investment from Phase 1 alone, providing 3,000 new and safeguarded jobs and creating 100,000 sq m of new commercial floorspace
- **Life Sciences Accelerator** – building on our existing strengths and opportunities (such as the Institute of Translational Medicine) we will accelerate the development of a life sciences cluster. This involves the decontamination of a brownfield site adjacent to the QE2 Hospital and Birmingham University, the establishment of a new business incubator and bespoke innovation and company growth support as part of our localised business growth approach
- **Digital and Creative Accelerator** – we will adopt a package of initiatives to maximise growth in this sector. This includes stimulating co-investment from significant international Digital & IT companies; the creation of world-class digital infrastructure and the alignment of our inward investment strategy to create new offers targeted at areas of biggest opportunity
- **Enterprise Belt** – an area that is already home to high growth and innovative companies, in high quality of life surroundings. We will use the Sector Accelerator approach to drive further growth, with locally appropriate specialisation, unlocking key development sites.

### 4.5 Inspiring Skills for Growth

The GBSLEP has identified a number of priority sectors that provide the basis for strong growth and employment. We need to ensure skills provision in the area meets the needs of employers and employees in these sectors. Our ambition is to build a world-class skills system and enable skills development to reflect employer demand, driving up private sector engagement in skills and leveraging greater business investment.
We will develop the ‘Inspiring Skills for Growth’ programme comprising:

- **Compact** – A new and lasting partnership between business and education.
- **Inspiration** - Universal careers advice responsive to the needs of a growing and dynamic GBSLEP economy, creating a new gold standard for careers advice.
- **Leadership** – Growing the education and business leaders of the future and supporting the drive for excellence across all our schools
- **Targeted Response** – The rapid and flexible mobilisation and deployment of resources to address particular needs and challenges on a sector and geographic client group basis.

The Single Pot will allow the delivery of support to develop and enhance specific skills to meet our economic growth opportunities. It will enable us to ‘future proof’ our schools and businesses through leadership development, bringing future school and business leaders together to grow their entrepreneurial, management and leadership skills and ensure they have a mutual understanding that will underpin our future success.

We will target funds where they are needed the most. This is crucial if we are to make the step change that is required to deliver the high quality provision we need. We will facilitate closer and better collaboration between public and private sectors, with employability and skills issues looked at in the round, not through a siloed perspective.

### 4.6 Collaborative and innovative procurement

Local Authorities in the GBSLEP have considerable procurement budgets totalling over £1 billion per annum. Each have their own individual procurement strategies meaning that across the GBSLEP purchasing power is not maximised and efficiencies and innovation are not built on.

The GBSLEP will:

- Share expertise and procurement across the GBSLEP to produce a single strategic procurement strategy to drive forward innovative procurement
- Co-ordinate an approach to procurement across the GBSLEP which will ensure opportunities for collaboration, innovation and efficiency
- Build on examples of existing good practice, such as the Smart Procurement European Alliance, which is implementing public procurement of energy efficiency in public buildings across a number of European cities
- Maximise the ability of SMEs to compete for and win supplier opportunities.
The Single Pot will be key to removing artificial silos of funding which prevent collaborative procurement across different functional areas. It will allow authorities to look at strategic procurement in its totality.

The approach will ensure the impact of procurement events are maximised, with the risks of investing in innovation being mitigated and reduced, where possible, for both contracting and supplying organisations.

4.7 A pilot ‘gain share’ scheme for the GBSLEP

‘Gain share’ or ‘earn back’ schemes have been developed as part of the City Deals process. These are similar to Payment by Results (i.e. the local area is given resources by Central Government when local investments lead to savings to the Treasury).

This then allows funding to be recycled into more investment, creating a virtuous circle of improvement in outcomes.

We want to conduct a pilot gain share project linked to the Birmingham Energy Savers (BES) Green Deal scheme. The pilot will focus on tangible outcomes - specifically jobs. BES will:

- Invest in making homes and businesses more energy efficient
- Generate 2,000 new and protected jobs by 2015 and 8,000 by 2020
- Generate savings in benefits as well as energy costs.

4.8 Maximising our Potential: A Neighbourhood Growth Project

Throughout the GBSLEP area there are centres of poverty and deprivation which represent a major impediment to growth. Currently, large sums of public money are spent across a number of agencies and interventions with little or no co-ordination. A more coherent model is needed to bring the people and resources together within a place based approach.

We will therefore identify areas and set a strategy to end the concentration of underachievement and dependency. We will do this by:

- Pooling resources across local partners and leverage additional investment
- Creating a socially and economically vibrant local area by making real improvements in the environment, education, housing, local employment and service provision
- Changing the way that local public sector staff operate by putting the citizen at the heart of everything we do
- Linking the local community and its services to the wider economic growth plans of the GBSLEP, for example through ensuring local people are able to access jobs from new investments.
- Providing clear executive leadership, with resources, to deliver each place strategy.

We already have good examples of using this approach and, particularly, in creating the conditions for private sector investment. But we need to make this the norm, not the exception.

### 4.9 Digital Roll-out

Digital and creative industries and ICT are a key sector in the GBSLEP area and wider West Midlands. However, if we are to retain this sector and ensure it is globally competitive we need to provide best-in-class digital infrastructure.

The current approach to developing digital infrastructure is fragmented, un-coordinated and siloed with four separate funding pots all aimed at the roll-out of digital infrastructure.

There is great potential for growth in this sector but the UK is falling behind its competitors that are investing heavily in infrastructure.

To maximise this opportunity the GBSLEP will adopt a more joined up approach that will include:
- Using capital from the Single Pot to roll-out ultrafast broadband and seek to stimulate competition and innovation amongst service providers
- Providing new platforms that will be used to develop projects and services
- Working with businesses to develop innovative services and new means of wealth creation
- Encouraging data sharing across businesses to produce innovative services
- Making the public funded fibre base networks more interoperable and serving aggregated demand. This will deliver greater capacity, cost savings, coverage and speeds and lead to the enhanced delivery of public services.

A Single Pot would lay the foundations for a new digital revolution – removing the barriers to providing access to previously unavailable or costly ultrafast broadband infrastructure and fostering the generation of new technologies reliant on these broadband speeds.

Speed is of the essence to these fast-moving industries, and by amalgamating all of the funding streams into one pot, access to vital funding will be accelerated.

This will further strengthen the area as a natural home for the country's burgeoning high-value digital economy.
4.10 And there is more….
During the course of the Greater Birmingham Project, we have identified over 100 separate initiatives that would drive growth. These will be appraised in detail as we develop our bid for the Single Pot, and include areas such as the following:

- **Creative High Street**: focus on areas with high levels of empty high street properties and free these up to enable use for cultural and creative means so reenergising high streets where retail has ebbed away. The Single Pot would enable the join-up between skills development funding, business support, access to finance etc and be facilitated by local authorities via temporary suspension of business rates. The scale of this would be much larger than is possible through current funding streams.

- **Driving Growth in the Enterprise Belt**: the Belt, lying 20-40km outside of the city, contains a series of development sites with the potential of creating 25,000 jobs. A Single Pot would help release this economic potential by securing infrastructure solutions; de-risking sites; providing business, innovation and enterprise support and linking assets in a co-ordinated way that supports enterprise.

- **Enabling Scale in the Green Deal**: using the Single Pot to provide up-front investment to retro-fit large scale projects, like neighbourhoods of high density energy need and industrial estates, which are challenging to do through the current system. This will reduce energy consumption and provide a revenue source to pay back into the Single Pot.

- **Family and Child Action Zones**: conducting a deep dive exercise in areas where there is high evidence of educational attainment gaps to give early help to families experiencing a number of difficulties, high obesity, drug and alcohol and other challenging issues. A ‘Total Place’ type approach will be used to tackle these issues and raise the attainment and life chances of the young people concerned.

- **Innovation in research and development**: the Single Pot will provide an opportunity to bring partners together to develop local innovations and solutions to stimulate local and national growth. It will also enable us to align research and innovation with business support, access to finance and skills development.
- **Integrated Transport Strategy**: The development of an integrated transport strategy will be a crucial pillar of our overall plan for growth. There are strong transport inter-connections across the West Midlands metropolitan area, so we have created an innovative Strategic Alliance with our neighbours the Black Country LEP to develop a joint strategy. We will use the Single Pot to establish a long-term joint transport investment fund for 2015-2025. A key objective of our strategy will be to maximise the benefits of HS2, which will arrive in Birmingham at the end of this period.

- **Maximising Public Assets**: the LEP is committed to mapping and valuing publically-held surplus and/or derelict land assets by the end of July 2013 and is asking all public bodies to do the same. This work will be co-ordinated by the Homes and Communities Agency. This will enable the identification of opportunities for inter-public sector land assembly and/or joint ventures to help bring forward land for housing or employment use more effectively.

- **Mobile Investment Attractor**: creating a range of incentives to attract genuinely new investment to the GBSLEP area. We will create a co-ordinated programme of support for mobile investors based around: business rates, skills funding, recruitment support and property solutions. The current inward investment pipeline suggests that over five years this could generate 14,000 jobs and create £2.5 billion in economic impact.

- **Museum Quarter**: Developing a new visitor destination adjacent to the HS2 station site in Birmingham City Centre, comprising space for a national art collection, outdoor installations and a new permanent contemporary art museum. The Single Pot would remove the need to co-ordinate funding streams from a range of sources and would enable greater leverage from the private sector.

- **National Watersports Centre**: A proposed mixed-use scheme which spans both East Staffordshire Borough and Lichfield District. The Centre would include new national homes for British Rowing, Canoeing and Sailing Governing bodies and be located near to the FA’s Centre of Excellence. East Staffordshire Borough Council would implement a Local Development Order to support development and the Single Pot could support associated infrastructure costs.
• **Proactive Planning**: The GBSLEP is using its Planning Charter and tools such as Local Development Orders to support growth and create a positive and pro-sustainable planning process. East Staffordshire Borough Council has also been piloting a ‘clear and unbiased statement’ approach which measures the delays in the planning process by statutory consultees, developers and the planning authority. The GBSLEP will attempt to roll out this ‘statement’ approach and will also expand it to cover why planning permissions are not then implemented. We recommend to Government that it considers adopting this into its national performance management of the planning process. It should also consider the merit of a national planning charter which could bind support from developers and others to seek to improve the planning process.

• **Schools Infrastructure**: There is an urgent need to upgrade current buildings and build new schools to meet the demand for additional places. A Single Pot approach will secure a pipeline of construction work for 15-20 years, that does not rely on annual funding and can ensure opportunities for co-location of business, community and education facilities are maximised.

• **Strategic Relationship Management**: Instigating a SRM programme with major corporates in key sectors in conjunction with BIS and UKTI. Business Birmingham would deliver cross-LEP, sector focused programmes e.g. for Advanced Engineering, Business Professional and Financial Services, Meditech and Food and Drink.
CHAPTER FIVE
Conclusion

The GBSLEP Board extends a huge debt of gratitude to everyone who has contributed at very short notice to this Report. We are particularly grateful to the Core Executive Team that has, against all odds, pulled together a Report that the GBSLEP Board is proud to wholeheartedly endorse.

It would be remiss not to make particular mention of a very special human being.

Lord Michael Heseltine’s tenacity, passion and energy stimulated our thinking and helped muster our courage to explore previously unchartered waters. He has been both very challenging and hugely supportive.

The GBSLEP and the UK is blessed to have benefitted from his interaction and leadership.

What happens next?

This Report is but the start. Before engaging on this Project, the GBSLEP Board had a very good oversight of the untapped potential in our area.

We also had a clear picture of the difficulties we would face in realising and exploiting our potential to the full.

Lord Heseltine’s intervention could not have been more timely.

With the support of Government and the creation of a substantial Single Pot, the GBSLEP Board is committed to demonstrating the leadership that will be needed to make this growth a reality. We are on the brink of groundbreaking changes that will benefit not only the businesses and residents in our LEP area but those throughout the UK.

These are exciting times.

We urge Government and all key stakeholders to seize this opportunity. As we have said in our Report, change never comes without pain and discomfort, but it is through change that we will drive true and sustainable competitive advantage.
The GBSLEP Board is ready and waiting to drive this change.

We now need clear decisions from the Government. And we are also clear that we will have to make bold decisions of our own. If the Government will take this leap with us there is no limit to what can be achieved together.

The time has come for action.
APPENDIX ONE
Our review

A launch event for the Greater Birmingham Project was held on 3rd January 2013. Stakeholders from across the public and private sectors attended to hear Lord Heseltine, Greg Clark – Minister for Cities, Cllr Albert Bore - Leader for Birmingham City Council and Andy Street – Chair of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP outline the aims of the project.

A Steering Group was established to lead the Project, comprising of LEP Board Directors, political representation from across the three main parties and eminent business leaders.

A Core Executive group was also formed to undertake work as instructed by the Steering Group. This included representatives from local and national government, academia and business (see below for membership).

A series of workstreams were established to focus on the key themes of the report. They were based on the chapters of ‘No Stone Unturned’ and drew on the knowledge, skills and experience of a wide variety of stakeholders from across the private, public and voluntary sectors.

The LEP Board and Lord Heseltine would like to thank all those who contributed to this review from the private, public and voluntary sectors. This support came in many guises: participation in roundtable events; undertaking specific research projects; surveying clients; benchmarking performance with best in class; or identifying and assessing ways of improving current ways of working.
Steering Group Membership

- Philip Bennion MEP
- Cllr Albert Bore, Leader of Birmingham City Council
- Christine Braddock, GBSLEP Board Director and Principal Birmingham Metropolitan College
- David Eastwood, GBSLEP Board Director and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Birmingham
- Cllr Richard Grosvenor, Leader of East Staffordshire Borough Council
- Lord Michael Heseltine
- Steve Hollis, Deputy Chair of GBSLEP and ex-Midlands Chair of KPMG
- Cllr Ken Meeson, Leader of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
- Caroline Spelman MP
- Tim Pile, Vice President, Birmingham Chamber of Commerce Group
- Andy Street, Chair of GBSLEP and MD of John Lewis

Core Executive Group Membership

- Mark Barrow, Birmingham City Council
- Tony Bray, Dept for Business, Innovation and Skills
- John Bryson, Birmingham Business School, University of Birmingham
- Nigel Driffield, Aston Business School
- Matt Grainger, Dept for Business, Innovation and Skills
- Steve Hollis, Project Director
- Alun Hughes, Dept for Communities and Local Government
- Andy O’Brien, East Staffordshire Borough Council
- Mark Rogers, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
- Rebecca Pointon, Dept for Communities and Local Government
- Katie Trout, Birmingham City Council
Local Authority Members

Email: gbslep@birmingham.gov.uk
Phone: 0121 303 4369
Address: LEP Executive, Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP, Baskerville House Centenary Square, Broad Street, Birmingham, B1 2ND
Website: www.gbslep.com
Twitter: @gbslep
Join the Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership group on LinkedIn