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PLAN FOR PROSPERITY



A Fairer, Stronger, Cleaner Liverpool
City Region - Where no one is left behind



A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR OF THE LIVERPOOL CITY REGION, **STEVE ROTHERAM**

The Liverpool City Region is a place with a proud and storied history, the birthplace of countless pioneers and innovators, home to titans of industry, sport, music and invention, and integral to the success of the UK.

From public health pioneers like Kitty Wilkinson and Doctor Duncan, campaigners such as Eleanor Rathbone and William Roscoe, to visionaries like Sebastian Ziani de Ferranti, the inventor of the world's first commercial computer, many of the world's great successes started here.

But we are not content to dwell on our past successes.

Our region is already on a remarkable journey of transformation. Propelled by our ambition to build the fairest, strongest, cleanest, and most prosperous place possible, we are laying the foundations for a brighter future for our 1.6m residents.

This cannot be about economic wealth alone. It has to be about the social value we create, the opportunities we unlock for local people, and the improvements to health, life chances and wellbeing.

Our ultimate aim is to unleash our full potential, to build a place where no one is left behind.

The same relentless focus on fairness, innovation and social justice that has helped shape our past will be key to unlocking our future prosperity. Where trains, docks and canals spurred our success in the First Industrial Revolution, our advantages in wind, tidal and hydrogen and renewable energy will make us leaders in the Green Industrial Revolution.

We boast an abundance of natural assets on our doorstep to rival anywhere in the world.

Protecting and capitalising on our natural environment is key to ensure that we are creating a cleaner, more sustainable future for everyone. And we will be bolder in our ambition on the global stage, capitalising on our unique international reputation and strategic location to attract jobs and investment from around the world.

It is a long-term approach that will build on our underlying strengths to deliver inclusive economic growth and, most importantly, to help people to live longer, healthier, and more fulfilled lives.

Our Plan for Prosperity signifies the boundless opportunities on the horizon for the Liverpool City Region as we begin to write the next chapter in our illustrious story.



Steve Rotheram
Mayor of the Liverpool City Region

Steve Rotheram

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INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT: STRENGTHS, OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Introducing the Liverpool City Region

The Liverpool City Region (LCR) - Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, St Helens, Sefton, and Wirral - is a place of transformation.

The city region rose to prominence through transformation, pioneering the modern dock technology, transport systems and maritime buildings that enabled the first industrial revolution. That level of creativity, ingenuity and innovation continued in other aspects of economic and civic life: the world's first municipal public park in Birkenhead; the country's first municipal housing; the first industrial utopian model villages at Port Sunlight; the world's first tropical medicine research institute; and the world's first school dedicated to urban planning. The Liverpool City Region has always sought to lead the way.

Aerial shot of the Liverpool City Region



Today, its industrial transformation is led by world-leading high-performance computing capability at the Hartree Centre and trailblazing health and life science research. LCR is also at the forefront of global advancements in the prevention of infectious disease, the future of materials and consumer goods, and innovations within clean growth, glass manufacturing, fourth industrial revolution technologies and creative industries. It is this spirit of innovation that sets the Liverpool City Region apart and enables it to compete with the rest of the world.

But it is not just these industrial innovations that power the Liverpool City Region. We are also world renowned for our culture, creativity and our unique sense of place. Our heritage buildings, museums, and galleries, our contribution to music and sport, and the energy of our grassroots cultural organisations all adds to our distinctiveness.

This is set against a backdrop of inspirational natural landscapes: miles of coastline and open spaces, woven together by the River Mersey.

And it is powered by the Liverpool City Region's greatest asset: its people. It is their passion, their character and their ideas that forge LCR's success. The city region's economy, its culture and its continual spirit of transformation can only thrive when every person has the support, confidence, and opportunity to share in, and own this success.

We are committed to becoming a prosperous and economically, socially and environmentally sustainable city region. This Plan for Prosperity sets out our approach for achieving this. For us, prosperity is wider than traditional measures of economic growth. It is a blend of improving personal health, wealth and opportunity; creating thriving neighbourhoods and places; successful and productive businesses that create good quality employment; and a healthy and protected natural environment. It underpins levelling up and what this means to us, where no places or people are left behind.

Understanding our challenges and opportunities

Over the last century, the city region's economic position and purpose has been challenged by rapid change. As a result of deindustrialisation and shifts in global trade, areas of the city region suffered serious decline. Rebasement the economy is an intergenerational pursuit, but one that is now well under way and where considerable success has been achieved, although we clearly recognise the structural challenges we continue to face.

Areas of the city region have been regenerated successfully and further investment continues to be made to strengthen our already impressive asset base. Our business base has diversified significantly, and innovation has been nurtured across world-leading capabilities. Long-standing roots in social innovation have flourished into a thriving social economy. We have capitalised on our quality of place and wealth of culture to establish the region as an internationally popular visitor destination and we have made significant progress towards closing historical skills and employment gaps, helping to support more people access the opportunities the city region has.

Our population is now more skilled, our business base more diverse and we are better connected. In the last decade we have added over £2bn to the economy, which now stands at £33bn. In many aspects the city region was stronger than it had been for a very long time prior to the pandemic, and there is much to celebrate in the progress that has been made.

Looking forward, economic forecasts project some positive outcomes for our economy:

- Employment is expected to grow on par with the rest of the country and slightly ahead of the North West with strong growth in our health sector and in professional, scientific & technical services.
- Productivity gains are expected to be the main driver for growth with some sectors expected to make significant productivity advances, particularly in manufacturing.
- A progressive shift towards a higher skilled and more service-based economy with professional and technical services, information and communication, and health among the fastest growing activities.

The trajectory is positive but there is no complacency as we continue to face many structural challenges. We have a low economic baseline on a number of indicators compared with other areas and the economic impact arising from the COVID pandemic and lockdown was felt acutely in the city region.

Our forecasted economic growth will be at a slower pace than the rest of the country so there will be significant work to do to level up – to reduce the gap with the highest performing places nationally and internationally, and to address long-standing and deep-rooted socio-economic challenges that impact on our productivity, and ultimately, prosperity. Our ambition, therefore, is to bring the economy of the whole city region up to national and global levels of investment, innovation, and growth, and to do so in a way that is environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive. We can and will play a significant role in levelling up the UK economy, boosting national prosperity, and improving the lives of residents.

The Plan for Prosperity responds to this challenge. It is founded on a detailed understanding of our economy and informed by a comprehensive evidence base. We are a place that knows what it is good at, where the opportunities lie, and which areas must be strengthened in order to unlock its full potential. The structure of the Plan set out below makes clear that building on our distinctiveness, a clear set of priorities and strengthening the foundations of our economy will be essential in delivering our wider ambitions. It will build resilience to future shocks, support longer term renewal, and ultimately, help us in delivering shared prosperity to the whole city region.

Figure 1: Plan for Prosperity Summary



What the Plan for Prosperity does

The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Corporate Plan, published in July 2021, confirmed that a new Plan for Prosperity would be prepared to support the delivery of the Corporate Plan's objectives and to provide a long-term, high level, economic and place-based vision for the city region over the next decade and beyond.

The Plan sets the long-term strategic priorities for the city region. Our Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) was intended to do this, but the national economic policy shift away from Industrial Strategies to the Plan for Growth meant that our LIS was not formally published and so a primary economic and place-based strategy is still required. This Plan addresses this and acts as an anchor point - setting the strategic direction for city region policies on the economy, business environment, skills, transport, housing, planning, underpinned by an ambitious pathway to net zero carbon. The Plan supports the setting of our future priorities and investment decisions, ensuring the city region continues to invest its resources impactfully.

The Plan remains true to the tenets of our LIS and the evidence we gained from our previous engagement with 2,500 members of the public and over 300 stakeholders from industry, academia, and the third sector. The Plan also reflects our 2020 Economic Recovery Plan but in reflecting the new economic landscape, a fully updated evidence base of economic data and forecasts have been prepared to support and accompany this Plan.

This Plan offers a proposition to government on how we can work more collaboratively. Not only will this relate to the delivery of their Plan for Growth but also their levelling up agenda. This will require maximising the potential offered by devolution to deliver our transformational opportunities and distinctive assets, and to begin to make meaningful inroads into the structural challenges and inequalities that we face. The Plan supports exploring the role and potential of devolution and public service reform in addressing these challenges.

The Plan supports the city region in responding to fundamental long-term challenges. The next decade will be critical for the future direction of the country's economy, particularly through the combination of a post-COVID, post-Brexit environment, the climate emergency and rapid technological and digital change that will reshape the economy and labour market. It sets out our renewed long-term position, ambitions, and how the City Region will contribute to, and address these challenges.

The government's review of the Green Book undertaken in winter 2020 placed increased emphasis on the importance of strategic case-making and identifying the place-based impact of investment decisions. This Plan provides an up-to-date set of well understood strategic economic priorities with clear rationale which will be important as the City Region looks to secure funding to help it build further on our track record of successful delivery in partnership with government.

This Plan will enable the Liverpool City Region to market itself more effectively to government, the private sector, and the wider world, demonstrating how we can provide a stable, consistent, and confident investment environment, act as a reliable partner, and deliver impactfully through local, national, and international collaboration.

We know that we cannot do this by ourselves. Delivery of this Plan and the long-term sustainable transformation of the City Region economy will require real collaborative working with all partners across all sectors; through enhanced devolution and working closely with government; and linking with other neighbouring areas such as Cheshire and Warrington, North Wales, Greater Manchester, and other city regions across the north. We also recognise that given the long-term view of this Plan, it will be necessary to monitor the evidence and keep the Plan under review, so it remains relevant to the economic opportunities and challenges facing the city region.

OUR VISION: DELIVERING PROSPERITY THROUGH A FAIRER, STRONGER, CLEANER CITY REGION

Our vision is for a city region where meaningful prosperity, opportunity, and equality is shared by all communities. A city region that will build up the resilience and productivity of its economy and unlock its global potential. And a city region that will pioneer sustainable ways of living and working together which will safeguard and improve the health of our people and the environment.

Farm Urban



Being fairer, stronger and cleaner are not mutually exclusive objectives – they complement and support each other. We know that we have long standing and deep-rooted structural inequalities which continue to hold us back and prevent us from reaching our full potential. For too long, for too many people and places across the city region, our economy has not delivered meaningful prosperity. Many of our communities all too often remain excluded from economic opportunity, with deepening concentrations of extreme deprivation across the city region. This is intensified by a low business density and survival rates, with not enough businesses creating the high-quality jobs that people and places need to drive up productivity and thrive – productivity per hour worked is 92% of the UK rate. GVA per head is lower still and highlights not only the skewing of LCR's economy towards lower productivity sectors, but also the high rates of economic inactivity. Meanwhile, outdated, carbon-intensive ways of living, working, and getting around continue to pollute our natural environment and leave our communities on the frontline against an accelerating climate emergency. This means that we must reduce our energy consumption, supported by a shift to low carbon energy, to reduce our carbon emissions in line with our 2040 net zero objectives in a way that is just and fair to all residents. Moreover, the climate emergency means that we must improve resilience and mitigate its impact.

This combination of poverty and pollution contributes to a crisis of poor health and wellbeing among our residents, constraining access to economic opportunity, undermining quality of life, and unnecessarily cutting too many lives short. One in four people of working age in the city region have limiting health conditions, while life expectancy here is two and a half years lower than the England average. These challenges have been emphasised and exacerbated further by the COVID-19 pandemic.

A new approach to growing our economy, therefore, is required. One that proactively rebuilds the wealth of our communities and supports good businesses to innovate, grow, and flourish for the long-term. One that proactively promotes the health and wellbeing of people and communities but in way that reduces carbon emissions and enhances the natural environment. And one that proactively disrupts and dismantles the structural inequalities that have unjustly impacted the lives of too many residents for too long.

This Plan provides a pathway to achieving this. Delivering the Plan's priorities will result in us being recognised as:

- **Fairer:** a leader in social innovation and one of the most inclusive economies in the world. We will have taken proactive action to tackle inequality and provide more opportunities for all our residents.
- **Stronger:** a hub of good business and innovation on the international stage. We will have secured investment to continue to develop our distinctive specialisms and be known for our expertise in science and innovation. There will be significantly more businesses providing good quality jobs for our residents.
- **Cleaner:** as a pioneer in sustainable approaches to living, travel and doing business. With a clear focus on addressing the climate emergency we will place ourselves at the forefront of the Green Industrial Revolution. We will become a global leader in clean energy, generating power from tidal, offshore wind, and hydrogen.

The common themes within this vision - innovation, inclusivity, the drive toward net zero, digitalisation, and strengthening our place within a globalised world – pervade across the Plan and are the underpinning principles that will guide future decision making, how we collaborate across the city region as a whole, and how we work with government.

THE LIVERPOOL CITY REGION PROPOSITION: A PLACE OF PIONEERS

The Liverpool City Region is a place of innovation: of imagination, and invention. It is a place of creators, and of pioneers. A place where new ideas have, and can be made reality, and where we are leading the way toward a fairer, cleaner, and stronger future for all.

This chapter sets out our City Region's compelling and distinctive innovation offer, built upon the foundations of our key strengths, assets, and capabilities where our invention, creativity, and a willingness to do things differently is embraced at the interface of industry and academia, in our arts and culture, and across our communities.

This is innovation with purpose, directed toward solving the economy's and society's biggest challenges and, in doing so, create shared prosperity for all our people and places. It is this distinctive character that flows throughout this Plan and will enable us to make a key contribution to the UK's ambitions to level up, strengthen its global position, and achieve net zero carbon.

CNC Robotics



Innovative Ideas: world-leading innovation assets, capabilities and competitive strengths

We have a rich heritage of producing and delivering on world-changing ideas, including the birthplace of the world's first commercial wet dock, tropical medicine institute and first locomotive and inter-city railway. We were home to Beecham's first pill factory, Pilkington's pioneering float glass inventions and landmark corporate social responsibility projects such as Lever Brothers' 'making cleanliness commonplace'. This spirit of invention, enterprise and creativity remains today as we capitalise on opportunities associated with the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

We are home to several distinctive world leading specialisms. These exemplify our 'smart specialisation' approach to innovation-led growth and are underpinned by significant translational research capabilities, the intellectual power across our universities, major industry investment and by our wide range of cutting-edge innovation assets. The city region's most prominent strengths include:

- **High Performance Computing and AI:** STFC Hartree Centre – with the world's most powerful supercomputer dedicated to solving industrial R&D challenges, forming a unique long-standing partnership with IBM Research Lab; the National Centre for Digital Innovation; and leading computing sciences at the University of Liverpool, together with its Digital Innovation Factory & Virtual Engineering Centre.
- **Infection:** the world leading Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM), which is a principal Gates Foundation Recipient, and the city region's bio-manufacturing cluster which hosts the world's biggest pharmaceutical players.
- **Materials Chemistry:** University of Liverpool's Materials Innovation Factory (MIF), an international leader in computer and robotics enabled discovery/design; Unilever's global R&D base at Port Sunlight, and the University of Liverpool's UK-leading Chemistry Department.

In addition to the above, we have distinctive assets and strengths relating to our drive towards net zero innovation and maritime, which are further detailed throughout this Plan. Examples include the potential of Mersey Tidal and the transferable technologies that could emerge from it; offshore wind; hydrogen including HyNet North-West which the City Region is at the heart of; our Freeport and the innovation opportunities this provides for testing new low carbon technologies; Glass Futures, an industry-led global centre for R&D and innovation in glass decarbonisation; and sustainable packaging with our ambitions for a globally leading National Packaging Innovation Centre.

Our global capabilities, therefore, provide a foundation for us to lead the way in the transformational opportunities and competitive advantages identified in our Local Industrial Strategy. This includes the development of technologies and clusters to support our net zero 2040 target, and in supporting our leading manufacturers and dynamic supply chains through industrial digitalisation technologies, with trailblazing nationally recognised programmes like [LCR4.0](#) enabling advances in increasingly important areas such as digital supply chains. They also underpin health innovation, the strengths and scale of which were again recently illustrated through the opening of the [Pandemic Institute](#); in the City Region's role in the UK's integrated vaccine development and pandemic response; and through the development of the [iiCON infection innovation programme](#), a world leading consortium for infection and R&D – the only Strength in Places Fund project in the North of England which aims to deliver £1bn R&D investment over 10 years.

Our innovation strengths are enabled by nationally significant science and innovation campuses including Sci-Tech Daresbury and Knowledge Quarter Liverpool (see the case study below). Combined, this research and asset base provides the space to drive cutting edge research and to rapidly accelerate commercialisation, which will enhance our critical mass of scale-ups and R&D intensive firms. These firms are further supported by our interventions such as a Future Innovation Fund for SMEs with grants for near-to-market innovations, and LCR Ventures, a new dedicated commercialisation vehicle initially focused on life sciences.

Our concentration of innovative ideas, industry, and assets presents significant potential to deliver scalable and transferable innovation approaches and major R&D projects that aid levelling up and strengthen productivity and prosperity across our economy; help secure the UK's position at the forefront of global innovation; and develop novel solutions to society's most pressing current and future challenges, both here and around the world.

With £2bn investment in innovation infrastructure in the five years up to 2020, more than £1bn in live projects, and a £3bn+ innovation project pipeline providing a critical mass of distinctive, high impact activity, we are primed to fully contribute to the delivery of the UK Innovation Strategy.

Working with government, industry, national agencies, and research institutions, we can maximise this contribution through realising our target for R&D investment reaching 5% of the city region's GVA by 2030 - nearly double the UK target of 2.4% GDP (2.7% in GVA) that has been set for 2027. This reflects the fact that a number of other places outside the Greater Southeast that have the demonstrable potential to do so – LCR being one of these - will need to significantly over-deliver above the average on their own R&D investment in order to achieve the national target. In net terms, reaching our 5% target could create an additional £19.7bn in cumulative GVA, a 6.5% increase in jobs (44,000) and a 10% increase in productivity (an uplift of £3 GVA per hour), rapidly closing our overall productivity gap with national averages. The impacts for the wider economy could be hugely significant, with more businesses undertaking R&D, a strong innovation culture permeating across the wider business base, more employment in knowledge intensive/growth sectors, and increased inflow and retention of skilled workers.

Case Studies: The Knowledge Quarter Liverpool & Sci-Tech Daresbury

Knowledge Quarter Liverpool will play a crucial role in the future of the city region's innovation landscape. The 450-acre Quarter has grown rapidly and currently has over £1bn of new developments either recently completed or currently underway. It acts as a highly connected focal point for regional innovation activity, creating cluster network effects in vital innovation enabling areas including access to capital, supply chains, specialist support, infrastructure, talent, and community networking. Over £1bn of projects are complete or being delivered at the KQ, including the most recent £35m development, 'The Spine', which houses the Northern headquarters of the Royal College of Physicians and the Global Pandemic Institute.

Sci-Tech Daresbury similarly recognised as an internationally renowned hub of science and open innovation activity. The sister campus to STFC in Oxfordshire, it is home to nearly 150 high-tech companies in areas such as advanced engineering, digital/ICT, biomedical, energy & environmental technologies. The leading-edge research carried out at STFC's Daresbury Laboratory and Hartree Centre is of global significance and is done in partnership with some of the UK's foremost academics as well as an increasing number of industrial companies (e.g. IBM, Unilever, Bentley Motors, BAE Systems, Atos). Its national importance has recently been further emphasised through a £210 million investment from government and IBM into the Hartree National Centre for Digital Innovation (HNCDI). This brings together world-leading expertise in artificial intelligence (AI) and quantum computing to support the application of the cutting-edge technologies in industry and the public sector.

Innovative culture and creativity: optimising our strengths as a Global Cultural Capital

We are internationally renowned for our cultural vibrancy, creativity, and visitor economy offer, with the highest density of arts, entertainment, and recreation jobs outside of London. Whilst the pandemic deeply impacted our culture, creative and visitor economy sectors, the long-term foundations remain strong across the city region.

Hosting the 2008 European Capital of Culture in Liverpool demonstrated the truly transformational power that the combined contribution of culture and the visitor economy can have - as a catalyst for economic development, as a source of wellbeing, and a way to strengthen the national and international profile of the city region. It showed that investment in cultural infrastructure and sense of place pays economic and social dividends and creates new opportunities for people and places. Culture is the glue that binds communities together, it supports people's health, wellbeing, and can improve quality of life. It is a key to prosperity in the fullest sense. Harnessing this across the city region is already being driven by the Borough of Culture initiative which is aimed at enabling areas to focus on their cultural strengths and stories and deliver lasting outcomes.

We will continue to build on our wealth of distinctive assets and strengths which include:

- Our significant number and range of museums, theatres, galleries, and heritage buildings;
- A unique musical heritage and vibrant, international contemporary music scene, with UNESCO City of Music status for Liverpool;
- A leading role in the UK's film and TV industry, including significant studio and post-production facilities;
- World-renowned sporting venues and events from football and rugby league, to horse racing, and golf; and
- National and international prominence as a cultural and nature conservancy destination.

A cultural city region is a creative city region. Opportunities to engage with culture, heritage and the arts help to inspire creativity and confidence, enabling young people to succeed in their education and to excel in the industries of the future. We will nurture the talent pools that propel our cultural and creative sectors to grow, innovate and thrive. Investment in cultural infrastructure and into the visitor economy underpins wider regeneration and placemaking; can support public expenditure savings; attract and retain talent; and drive wider productivity growth in the economy. Most of all, culture continues to expose and connect the city region to an international marketplace, opening our people and businesses to global opportunities. We will continue to innovate in enhancing our culture offer and so further support the city region's attractiveness as a visitor destination; and we will support market demand, readiness, and resilience through the implementation of our innovative Visitor Economy Recovery Strategy.

Case Study: Shakespeare North, Prescott

The captivating and intriguing connections between Prescott, Shakespeare and Elizabethan theatre establish the historic foundations for what will be a vibrant and contemporary cultural asset for the north of England. Shakespeare North Playhouse, which opens in 2022, is already a beacon that has illuminated the power of culture as a driver for change and regeneration. Its high quality cultural, education and visitor programme will have wide appeal.

On the back of this cultural investment, Prescott town centre and the wider area is being rejuvenated, creating new jobs and opportunities for people to become actively involved in the life of their town centre community. A positive wave of regeneration, has seen an average of one new business opening each month, transformed the evening economy and attracted new private investors to be part of this transformational story of cultural led regeneration. Once complete the Playhouse will attract over 100,000 visitors which will have a significant economic impact on the town and wider city region.

Innovative society: a leader in social innovation

We embrace innovation with a social purpose – proactively responding to entrenched deprivation, public health challenges, and the need to transition to a more sustainable way of life in the face of the Climate Emergency.

We have a long-standing reputation for social innovation and placemaking. From the pioneering public health work of Dr Duncan, the UK's first council housing in Liverpool and the world's first public park in Birkenhead, to the philanthropic efforts of Eleanor Rathbone who championed women's and family rights. Today, we remain a centre of social innovation, nurturing highly innovative and nationally recognised organisations such as:

- **The Women's Organisation** - the largest of its kind that promotes women's economic development on an international scale;
- **Granby Four Streets Community Land Trust** - the first architectural housing project ever to be nominated for, and win, the Turner Prize;
- **Homebaked** - a bakery that is transforming derelict houses into affordable homes for the local community, whilst providing employment and training; and
- **Future Yard** – which is promoting live music, working towards being UK's first carbon neutral music venue and contributing to place shaping.

Our thriving social economy continues to produce ground-breaking innovations. These have ranged from new digital technologies that improve health and wellbeing; the development of land trusts which reinvest community spend back into neighbourhoods; social movements that celebrate the diversity of communities and promote equality; and service innovations that improve interactions between healthcare and patients. This sector will continue to play a critical role in building community capacity, managing assets and delivering services, and we will further deepen the relationship between the social economy, public services, and businesses.

We also continue to be at the cutting edge of new, systemic ways of supporting people and places, through asset based and integrated approaches, demonstrated by programmes such as Housing First and Households into Work. Working with government, we aim to make such innovations mainstream to deliver for people and places at scale, streamlining and simplifying the ways that help can be accessed to address the complex challenges that people and places can face. We will also continue to build on digital and data-led solutions to be at the forefront of transformation, exemplified by one of the first DCMS funded 5G Testbeds – Liverpool 5G – which can transform how health and social care services are delivered in the city region.

We recognise that economic, social, and environmental challenges are growing. Our heritage of social action and social innovation will be one of our greatest assets in addressing these. We will empower and mobilise the collective efforts of social innovators to solve these challenges. Furthermore, underpinned by our readiness to pilot new ideas and utilise technology and data focused solutions, we will continue to jointly explore how we can work with government to continuously innovate in driving public service reform.

Case Study: Kindred

Established in 2020, Kindred is an innovative and locally owned vehicle that seeks to help foster an inclusive economy by supporting Socially Trading Organisations (STOs) through investment and peer-to-peer support networks.

It provides a combination of financial and non-financial support to STOs at the stage where they are poised for growth, bringing together national and local social investment funders and support partners to provide loans, blended funding (loans & grants) and alternative business support. It also actively looks for the local thought-leaders who have ideas that have potential to generate community wealth, but who have not yet established an STO and so do not consider themselves to be entrepreneurs.

Importantly, the project aims to be a catalyst for scaling up and scaling out successful STO business models. Kindred provides an exciting opportunity to pioneer a new way of supporting STOs in the city region's social economy which can pave the way for other regions in the UK and internationally.

OUR KEY PRIORITIES: DELIVERING OUR VISION

Our granular understanding of our strengths and long term challenges, together with a relentless focus on innovation across all areas of economy and society as set out in the previous chapter, provides the building blocks for delivering our vision of a fairer, stronger and cleaner city region, and informs our main strategic priorities where we know we need to do things differently:

- An inclusive city region where levelling up means no one and no place is left behind;
- Being pioneers of the green industrial revolution; and
- A global, confident, and outward looking city region.

Here we set out our objectives across each of these priorities, how we intend to deliver, and the outcomes we expect to achieve by 2035.

School children at Gray Street/Peel Road wildflower site



An inclusive city region where levelling up means no one and no place is left behind

Our objective: to build an inclusive economy which proactively dismantles inequalities of health, wealth, and opportunity.

We will build a fairer economy that works for the whole city region. We will be a focal point for economic and social innovation which will provide all our people and places the opportunity to enjoy prosperity, good health, and wellbeing, while demonstrating the productivity gains that can be unlocked in doing so.

How we will deliver: the cumulative impact of delivery across all the themes within this strategy will contribute to developing an inclusive economy for the city region. But in addition to this, there are several key inclusivity principles which will need to be front and centre of future approaches to how we work together as a city region.

Equality and diversity at heart of everything we do

A central tenet of all our strategy, policy and delivery activity is to ensure equality of opportunity for all and improving equality of outcomes for all those with protected characteristics. This is particularly important in accessing work and employment. Doing so will deliver a more creative, innovative, and productive economy.

To help facilitate this and spread good practice, the Combined Authority's Equality Scheme and Equalities Strategy ensures that we will promote equality and diversity across the city region and play a leading role as an employer and commissioner of services. One component of this strategy is the [Race Equality Programme](#) - a range of complementary initiatives to tackle systemic injustice and inequality and drive forward positive change for our Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic employees and residents.

Ensure community wealth building becomes central to economic development policy and practice

To support the shift to a wider 'inclusive system' across the city region, we will act on community wealth building principles, changing how challenges are framed and addressed and how the benefits of economic opportunities are spread. Building on existing good practice already being established by partners in the city region will harness the power of our anchor institutions with a focus on plural ownership of the economy, making financial power work for local places, and driving social innovation. community wealth building offers an opportunity to empower places and people and arrest the long-standing and deep-rooted challenges that prevent too many communities realising their full potential. Several inter-related components of community wealth building, detailed below, will ensure that it embeds wealth, prosperity, and economic resilience.

To facilitate this, we will develop and convene a 'Living Lab' approach for community wealth building across the city region, bringing together, exploring, and piloting good practice, and identifying scalable activities with a focus on long term sustainability.

a) Common approaches to progressive procurement that supports our SME base

We will look to enable the procurement of goods and services that directs spend towards local businesses and will work with other local trailblazers to incentivise and encourage public and private sector anchor institutions to do the same by convening, influencing, and sharing best practice. Progressive procurement will be exerted as a key strategic driver to stimulate local economic activity and good job growth. This will be a holistic approach considered at all stages of the lifecycle from commissioning, through to tendering, award of contract and monitoring.

Through progressive procurement strategies, we can deliver more jobs and apprenticeships for local people, opportunities for 'hard to reach' individuals, and increase money circulating in the local economy. We will also use market intelligence to deepen the local supply chain – linking together local firms and suppliers with shared learning to build resilience and local wealth.

Another component of our progressive procurement will be to secure the most effective use of social value contributions. We will work to ensure that contributions help fund longer term labour market schemes, training, and reskilling – with a focus particularly on the transition to a low carbon economy – rather than simply short-term employment for duration of contracts.

b) Support good employment

Our Fair Employment Charter (see the case study below) will be rolled out across the city region to ensure that all work is good and fair. Those organisations that are already supporting these ambitions will be recognised, whilst others will be provided with encouragement and pathways to develop.

Case Study: Fair Employment Charter

Developed with businesses of all sizes and across all sectors, the City Region's Fair Employment Charter celebrates fair employment practices where they are in place and is designed to drive-up standards elsewhere. The intention is to recognise good quality and effective practice in fair employment and build the broader case amongst other employers for them to consider changing their practices. The Charter is about making our city region the fairest, most equitable place in the country to work or run a business in.

This is based on four key pillars: safe workplaces for a healthy workforce; fair pay and fair hours; inclusive workplaces that support staff to grow and develop; and offering opportunities for all and a collective voice for all staff.

c) Maximise the potential of publicly owned land for social purposes

The function and ownership of local assets held by anchor institutions will be re-appraised, so that social, environmental, and financial gain can be harnessed by communities. This is particularly important given that in recent years, many communities have experienced a loss of social and community infrastructure. Sites will be identified that have minimal value to public landowners but could provide important local facilities, community assets, or enable local/ social venture activities. The Liverpool City Region Land Commission's conclusions and recommendations published in July 2021, will inform this work (see 'Thriving, Sustainable and Resilient Places' section for more information).

d) Develop the base conditions for social innovation to thrive

During the pandemic we saw the extraordinary rise of social solidarity and mutual aid. This needs to signify lasting change for how the social economy is viewed and engaged. Tailored support will be provided to enable social enterprises to grow, scale and replicate. This will include access to finance and specialist, bespoke business support, delivered through a dedicated vehicle – Kindred - that enables socially trading organisations to thrive in the city region. Furthermore, direct financial support from the Combined Authority is being provided to the voluntary and community sector's grassroots organisations.

This will be a starting point to how the sector is supported. The social economy will also become a key focal point within our progressive procurement approach. More social economy organisations delivering for our anchor institutions will become a strategic marker, as will the development of their offer and involvement in critical issues such as supporting the transition to a low carbon economy – for example, through community energy initiatives and supporting green skills development.

As part of a wider strategic approach to engaging with the social economy, our Social and Solidarity Economy Panel and key infrastructure organisations such as the VS6 partnership, will further enable best practice, self-organisation, policy innovation and knowledge to be shared across the whole sector.

Provide high quality support for our business base to enable sustainable, good employment for our residents

- Our business density is 541 per 10,000 working age residents, the third lowest amongst all LEP/CA areas.
- In order to reach the national average business density (790 per 10,000 working age residents), another 24,000 businesses would need to be added to our business base.
- Business survival rates are consistently below other areas: more businesses close in their first three years in the city region compared to the England average.
- Our levels of self-employment have consistently lagged the regional and national rate and have dropped significantly in the last 12 months (in 2020 this was 6% compared to 10% nationally).

Our businesses are key to creating prosperity in the city region. Strengthening our businesses and promoting and supporting our entrepreneurial base is therefore critical. Accordingly, we will continually monitor and review the business and enterprise support landscape to ensure that it provides for the needs of businesses across their lifecycles, identifying existing good practice/what works well, and where there are gaps. Within this, there will be a focus on businesses across all sectors, the self-employed, and the social economy, so that fully accessible place-based support provides the right interventions to improve firm productivity and boosts the supply of good jobs across the city region.

Building on the strengths and learning from the Local Growth Hub – a critical component of the landscape - support will include areas such as aiding SMEs to access finance and funding; helping businesses to understand what digitalisation means for them (critical for improving growth and productivity); supporting enterprises on the transition to net zero carbon; pivoting business models to take advantage of changing consumer behaviour; planning for progression routes; succession planning (particularly pertinent for family-owned businesses); developing the supply of relevant skill sets across the city region's labour force; facilitating improved career prospects and progression; and exploring leadership and management training requirements. Sector and cross sector networks will continue to be supported in the development of supply chains, with a greater focus on trade and investment.

To optimise the effectiveness of support, a joined up and long-term national approach is needed, underpinned by local and place-based flexibilities. We want to work (and seek to co-design) with government to deliver a clear, integrated, business led business support eco-system, which is fully accessible. This is essential given the challenges businesses have faced during the pandemic, and in ensuring that they have full confidence in the business support system.

This will link directly to the transition from EU Structural Funds towards the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The City Region's ERDF and ESF programmes have been, and continue to be, an important part of the business support, employment and skills landscape, providing help for businesses both within higher and lower productivity sectors. We will continue to work with government to clearly set out our priorities and highlight our place-based solutions which meet local need, underpinned by a key principle that our existing capacity and infrastructure for delivery needs to not just be maintained, but further enhanced.

Develop the city region as a centre for 'good business'

Our Fair Employment Charter offers the opportunity for a new, socially focused relationship with the business base, and for the city region to become a centre for good business. Additionally, hosting the Good Business Festival puts us at the heart of this paradigm shift. We will develop a 'good business' framework through our business support offer and sector-focused activities that will help embed principles into the operational processes of firms. This is particularly important at a time when responsible business practises lie increasingly at the core of the marketplace, and locally rooted businesses and social economy organisations will underpin the diffusion of local wealth.

Support sustained improvements in health and wellbeing through all policies

Health inequalities in the city region are stark, impacting not only our economic productivity but also on quality of life and on the provision of public services. We will therefore embed a focus on health and wellbeing in all policies and strategies, ensuring that narrowing health inequalities and promoting health equity becomes part of mainstream economic development planning and outcome measurement. Criteria and guiding principles will be drawn up to support this. This reflects our view that investment in health is an economic imperative. If we want to close the productivity gap between the city region and the rest of the country, then we must pay attention to the significant contribution made by poor health to this gap.

Create a shared drive to net zero and climate adaptation from all who live and work here

The transition towards a net zero carbon economy and society must avoid significant negative impacts on our most disadvantaged communities, so their needs will be considered.

It is imperative, therefore, to clearly and consistently articulate the behavioural and systemic changes required as a result of the climate emergency for all who live, work, and invest in the city region. The activities and interventions around our objective of being a net zero carbon city region by 2040 or sooner will include promotion of climate literacy, enabling people, organisations, and businesses to understand more fully the challenges and opportunities associated with achieving carbon neutrality and climate adaptation, and how all of decisions, investments, and actions can best contribute towards this goal.

We will support people and businesses to understand how the transition to a net zero carbon city region can most effectively be delivered across our communities without leaving the most disadvantaged behind; ensuring that it supports our wider goal to reduce inequality and improve people's lives. Forums such as the LCR Climate Partnership, will share best practice and sustain momentum as all people, communities, agencies, and businesses work towards addressing the Climate Emergency together.

Benefits of digital transformation across all our communities

- Despite almost universal superfast capability, only 55% of City Region premises have taken up superfast broadband.
- A large proportion of city region neighbourhoods are classified by low digital engagement. 23% of our neighbourhoods are 'e-withdrawn' compared to 10% nationally and these are generally in the more deprived areas of the city region.

Alongside the net zero carbon transition, the other key transformational shift for our economy, communities, and public services, will be technology and digitalisation. The AI and data revolution is bringing new product and process innovation, job creation, and market opportunities that will benefit the local and national economy. This technological innovation will also be fundamental to creating a healthier, greener, more inclusive economy. The delivery of the [LCR Digital Strategy](#) will build on our asset base to embrace all opportunities to use new technology and big data to improve economy and society.

Within this space, a central priority is digital inclusion, which is more important than ever as we emerge from COVID-19. Our ambition is to use technology to deliver benefits that extend to everybody within all communities and address digital poverty. However, there are barriers which currently prevent delivery of this vision across the entirety of city region, including varying levels of broadband accessibility, digital skills and confidence levels, and ability to afford digital services. We will work with the social economy, business, education providers, and government to support and enable affordable domestic broadband connections, access to laptops and other software, and digital skills development so that people are equipped to access the benefits. This will complement and be supported by [LCR Connect](#), which is providing the transformational upgrade to our digital infrastructure (see the Integrated Infrastructure section).

Set out new measures of success

Supporting the development of an inclusive economy requires a paradigm shift in how to measure success and understanding just what that success looks like. A broader basket of qualitative and quantitative indicators – an LCR Prosperity Index - that demonstrates an appreciation of long-term change and continual improvement, will therefore be developed. This process will be designed to help inform future commissioning and investment decisions.

By 2035:

The Liverpool City Region will have strengthened its position as a pioneer of inclusivity, having put in place the processes to address systemic disadvantage which has unlocked the potential of people and places. Having recognised both the complexity of the challenge and scale of opportunity, change will have been driven by whole systems, not discrete individuals, organisations, or programmes. This 'inclusive system shift' will have involved public institutions, community organisations and enterprises, and the business base. Together these actors will have provided the stewardship needed to create the right conditions for people and places to achieve the following better outcomes, and ensure that policies and programmes are working, as a system, to develop a truly inclusive economy:

- **Reduced inequality and deprivation:** reduction in the proportion of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) in the 10% most deprived LSOAs nationally, as headway begins to be made on those areas where stubborn disadvantage and discrimination have long been the norm.
- **Increased health equity:** improvement in population health, and progress is made towards the government's target of ensuring that people can enjoy at least five extra healthy, independent years of life by 2035. As a result of reduced deprivation, more people have an opportunity to be healthy, thereby supporting stronger communities, enhancing social and economic opportunity, and driving up productivity.

- **A resilient and thriving entrepreneurial base:** with continued consistent performance in start-up levels (already above the national average), and improvement in business survival rates to match or exceed the national level.
- **Increased levels of business density:** marked increase from 541 per 10,000 working age population, to significantly close the gap to the national level of 790 thereby increasing employment and income levels across the population, with more people accessing good quality jobs.
- **A fairer labour market supported by good business:** through a socially focused relationship with the business base which supports plural ownership of the economy.
- **More wealth being anchored in our communities:** as investments are increasingly channelled into local communities, and local businesses have greater access to local opportunities.
- **Stronger and more resilient social economy:** opening new possibilities to ensure the sector plays an increasingly central role in the local economy – a key marker being the volume and value of contracts being delivered by social enterprises.

Pioneers of the Green Industrial Revolution

Our objective: to be an internationally leading net zero Carbon City Region.

- Since 2005, the city region's carbon emissions have decreased by around 40% largely because of decarbonisation of the National Grid. However, nearly 7m tonnes of Co2 are still emitted each year, underlying the challenge and system shift required to get to net zero carbon by 2040.
- On average, the mean concentration of fine particulate matter in the city region is 8.4 PM2.5 per cubic metre compared to 9.0 nationally. However, this is uneven, with particularly poorer air quality in more deprived areas.
- There is a clear economic and employment opportunity that will help us in meeting the challenge and re-orientating the economy - 140,000 jobs could be supported in the low carbon sector in the city region by 2040.

By maximising the potential of our low carbon assets and strengths in advanced manufacturing, we will play a full and productive part in delivering the government's Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution (a key element of the Plan for Growth) and their net zero Strategy. Being a pioneer of the Green Industrial Revolution with the potential to become the country's Renewable Energy Coast, will deliver significant benefits for our residents through provision of high-quality jobs; warmer homes; better air quality; and improved health. The government estimate that their Ten Point Plan will support up to 250,000 jobs nationally by 2030. Our innovative approach to low carbon means that we can significantly benefit from this increase in employment and economic growth and in doing so, help the wider UK transition to a low carbon future.

The Green Industrial Revolution will mean more than just jobs and economic growth. We recognise the positive links between economic prosperity and health and wellbeing which are critical for a competitive, clean, and inclusive economy. An economy that is clean and that functions effectively for everyone is better for health and wellbeing and a population with better health and wellbeing is better for business, competitiveness, and inclusivity.

How we will deliver

Maximise the high quality and sustainable economic growth and employment opportunities created by the Green Industrial Revolution

Within the city region, the low carbon sector is estimated to support 140,000 jobs by 2040, representing a unique opportunity to create long term sustainable employment, getting more of our residents into quality and sustainable work, and to re-skill from industries that will become less relevant in a net zero world. Delivering the Green Industrial Revolution objectives will mean demand-led growth across the zero carbon economy - in businesses and their supply chains. We estimate there are already over 140 city region companies contributing to the offshore wind supply chain, with many now exporting their technology and expertise into expanding overseas markets. There is also an emerging supply chain cluster to support the hydrogen economy with new companies supplying hydrogen hybrid commercial vehicles, buses and trains establishing in the city region.

We will build on our experience and existing capabilities - for example, through the Low Carbon Eco-Innovatory project, a collaboration between Liverpool John Moores University and the University of Liverpool. This is an important starting point which needs to be accelerated to ensure we seize the opportunities that the transition to zero carbon offers through the provision of intensive support for skills development, innovation, and export led growth. Future support will need to include:

- Investment in skills (especially STEM skills) to ensure businesses anchored in the low carbon economy have access to a pipeline of skilled workers locally. This will include a focus both on skills for young people and reskilling within the existing workforce. To this end, our updated Low Carbon Skills for Growth Action Plan, sets out a series of initiatives to ensure that the supply of skills and labour meet demand arising from this dynamic sector;
- Developing clean growth focussed Knowledge Transfer Partnerships;
- Working with the Department for International Trade (DIT) to develop export plans for businesses in the low carbon economy;
- Working with universities and industry to facilitate commercialisation of research in the low carbon space into new products and services;
- Tailored business support centred on the low carbon economy; and
- Supporting interaction between sectors, in particular across manufacturing and construction.

It will be important to ensure that opportunities around net zero are complemented with supporting businesses around decarbonisation and helping them to understand what it means for them. We will therefore look to design support for businesses – SMEs in particular - to help them in understanding implications for their operating models, and to share experiences around challenges, opportunities, and good practice on the road to net zero.

Develop the City Region's distinctive renewable energy proposition to become the UK's Renewable Energy Coast

The market for sustainable energy is one of the fastest growing, both in the UK and globally offering significant opportunities for economic growth and environmental sustainability. We have one of the largest clusters in the UK for clean power generation with the transformation of energy infrastructure bringing sustainable power and heat to the homes and businesses of the city region and beyond.

Harnessing the power of the River Mersey and building on the strengths of the maritime cluster, Europe's largest tidal energy project can be operational in the 2030s. This will provide a significant amount of renewable electricity for years to come, meeting both the city region's energy needs and contributing to meeting wider UKs energy demand in a way that is renewable, sustainable, and secure. No other technology offers such a large and consistent contribution to the net zero carbon pathway from now until 2150. This is brand new technology that would make the city region and the UK a worldwide innovator, attracting business, investment, and research interest from across the globe.

Alongside tidal, we aim to triple the volume of renewable energy through offshore wind in Liverpool Bay by 2032, led by a well-established offshore cluster. Furthermore, the construction of the Morgan and Mona windfarms in the Irish Sea by BP and EnBW, could provide more opportunities for our local supply chains.

Case Study: Mersey Tidal Power

The City Region is developing what would be the UK's first tidal range energy project. A trailblazer for a new industry, it could mean generating enough power for up to 1 million homes. With an operational life of over 120 years, it could lock in low carbon generation for a century.

Mersey Tidal Power is a potential mega-project, using the energy from the tides in Liverpool Bay and Mersey Estuary to generate plentiful clean, reliable, and predictable energy. The City Region and wider North-West will require double the volume of power available today in order to switch its transport industrial use and heating to clean hydrogen or electricity. This project is therefore vital in meeting regional and national carbon targets.

Generating power four times a day, will complement and help balance more intermittent and unpredictable sources like wind and solar, helping to balance the grid locally and nationally. As well as generating green energy, the Mersey Tidal Power Project has the potential to generate thousands of jobs across design, construction, start-up, operations, and maintenance. Every stage of the project will create opportunities in the new green economy, with our city region becoming a centre of excellence in a vital industry of the future.

We will build on our advantages in the hydrogen sector. A transformational opportunity is HyNet North West – now formally backed by government as just one of two carbon capture, usage, and storage schemes nationally - which provides a deliverable and affordable pathway to eliminate industrial emissions and start decarbonisation of heat and heavy transport. The City Region is key to HyNet, from pioneering trials of new technology in St Helens and the Wirral, to carbon storage in Liverpool Bay. This game-changing project has the potential to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 10 million tonnes every year by 2030; cut the region's emissions by 25%; and produce 80% of the UK's clean hydrogen target for transport, industry, and homes for 2030. HyNet will help to create 6,000 new low-carbon jobs in the UK's industrial heartland, and protect the North West's 340,000 manufacturing jobs, enabling long-term sustainability for businesses and financial security for our communities.

Our vision for larger scale projects, like HyNet, are underpinned by a wide range of micro-scale opportunities for businesses and homes alike throughout the city region. From the creation of local-level microgrids to the widespread adoption of building-integrated solar installations, these projects are critical in not only supporting the city region in the transition to clear, renewable energy but also in making responsible clean energy choices visible to our people.

Case Study: 100% hydrogen fired at Pilkington UK; St Helens

In a world first, trials have started in the Liverpool City Region to produce float (sheet) glass using hydrogen. The natural gas fossil fuel, normally used in the manufacturing process, will be completely replaced with hydrogen – showing how industry can significantly cut carbon emissions and take a big step towards reaching net zero. The trials are taking place at Pilkington UK's St Helens facility, where the company first began making glass in 1826.

Embrace the opportunities relating to the transition to electric vehicles

Automotive will be central to the success of the Green Industrial Revolution. Within the city region we have a highly significant and important base to build on. This sector employs 7,000 people (15% of total manufacturing) and contributes roughly £1 billion in GVA to our economy. Key employers include Jaguar Land Rover, Ford Motor Company, and both Stellantis, (Ellesmere Port) and Toyota (Deeside) operate in close proximity to the city region, with strong employment and supply chain connections. It is a highly productive sector, and it is central tenet of our exporting base. UK automotive is fundamentally strong, but it needs sector specific measures to ensure that it remains competitive with the rest of the world, delivering growth and highly skilled jobs and helping bring to market new, greener technologies which will support the UK's net zero and wider recovery and renewal ambitions.

The transition to electric vehicles represents a huge economic opportunity. Ford's decision to produce electric power units at Halewood is a statement of confidence in the local automotive sector, and the facility could be an important part of electric vehicle manufacturing in the UK. Combined with Stellantis confirming that their Ellesmere Port site will become an electric van factory, and JLR setting out a new electric architecture for its plant, this signifies the scale of growth opportunities over the next decade. We will support our automotive businesses and supply chain adapt through skills programmes and key account management. We will leverage our innovation assets and focus interventions, in addition to lobbying government to secure wider support packages for the sector. We will also leverage the LCR Freeport through its tax and duty incentives that will provide significant opportunities relating to electric vehicle supply chains (potentially including drives, motors, and batteries) - a key component of our Freeport proposition to government.

Create a leading clean, green, and affordable London-style transport network across the City Region, with a focus on active travel

We know that the transport sector is critical to a successful and sustainable connected City Region. A sustainable and innovative transport system is a central pillar of our clean growth ambitions and is a key component of the Green Industrial Revolution.

With over a third of our carbon emissions coming from transport and "business-as-usual" projections forecasting only a minor reduction in transport-related emissions in the future, more radical action needs to be taken to promote the usage of non-carbon modes of transport. Accordingly, we will promote the use of active travel and low carbon public transport to meet demand. We have already started to significantly improve the sustainability of our public transport through the procurement of higher-efficiency Merseyrail rolling stock (including the potential of some battery operation) and low carbon buses (including those which are hydrogen powered).

We will support the transition to electric vehicles, accelerated through the delivery and extension of Liverpool City Region's Electric Vehicle Charging Point Network, whilst ensuring necessary grid capacity is in place. We will also support and facilitate a sharing economy approach to electric vehicles in order to minimise 'clean congestion' on the streets and make the transition to electric more affordable.

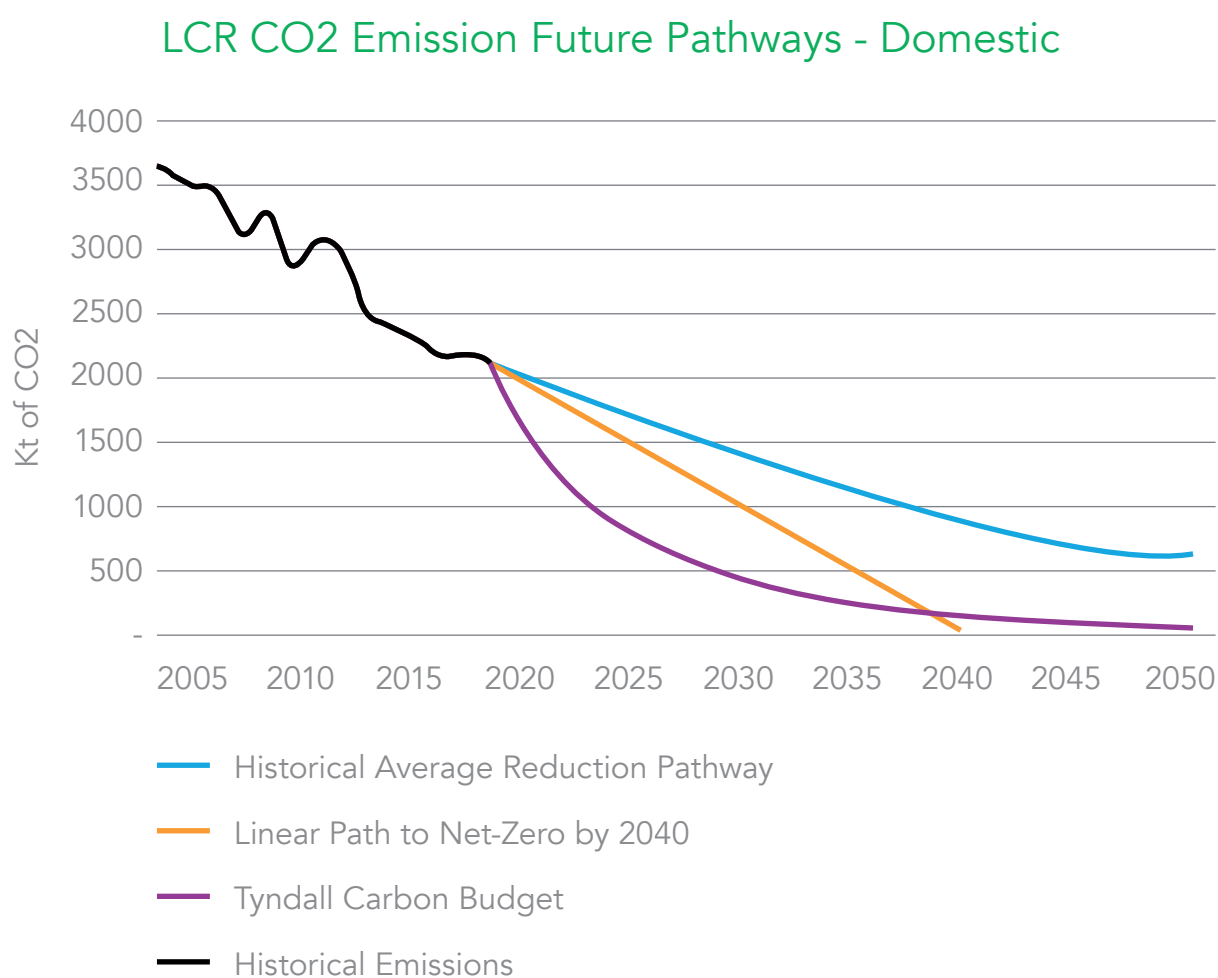
We are at the vanguard of developing infrastructure and vehicle solutions to enable the mass deployment of electric vehicles powered by batteries or fuel cells. Internationally significant projects including 'HyMotion' to deploy hydrogen vehicles and refuelling systems, and 'Project Charge' to model the impacts of mass deployment of electric vehicles place the city region in a strong position to exploit these new technologies for both internal use and external markets.

As the Port of Liverpool and John Lennon Airport continue to grow, the maritime, aviation, and associated logistics industries will be supported to transition to net zero carbon and improve the sustainability of global trade. In line with the Maritime 2050 Strategy, this will require the introduction of measures such as ship to shore power as well as emissions restrictions on marine and aviation turnarounds.

Decarbonise the heating of our homes and radically improve their energy efficiency so they are fit for the future

- Almost a third of the city region's carbon emissions comes from our housing stock as a result of how we heat our homes and their poor energy efficiency. This equates to just over 2 million tonnes of carbon every year.
- 44% of homes in the city region were built before 1939, compared to 36% nationally.
- 68% of the housing stock within the city region is classified as being in council tax band A or B - compared to 44% nationally.

Reducing carbon emissions from our housing to as close to zero as possible requires urgent action at both national and local levels. The scale of the challenge is underlined in the following figure.



We have an ageing housing stock which is inefficient and significantly contributes to the high level of emissions. Around two-thirds of our homes have an EPC Band below C (widely accepted as a measure of decent energy efficiency). We estimate that around 440,000 homes require some form of retrofit to improve their energy efficiency although, in reality, the energy of nearly all our homes will need to be changed to non-fossil and renewable sources. This will involve moving our homes off gas onto electric heat pumps and district heat networks, the potential of which we will look to maximise particularly in neighbourhoods where heat networks would provide economies of scale and would prove a more efficient method of decarbonising heating.

The scale of this challenge is immense requiring substantial investment. Evidence used to inform the development of our pathway to become a net zero carbon city region by 2040 or sooner estimates that decarbonising our housing stock will require an estimated £12bn of investment. We will continue to lobby government for more funding to deliver this agenda and will work with homeowners, housing associations and private landlords to improve the energy efficiency of their homes. In retrofitting the heating and energy efficiency of our homes, we will build on our track record of delivery including the government's Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery and Sustainable Warmth Fund programmes. But we must do more and will explore options for the acceleration of energy retrofit programmes of our homes.

The scale of the challenge in decarbonising our homes underlines the need to embrace innovation in sustainable construction and retrofitting utilising modern methods of construction. While the environmental benefits are clear, this innovation will be a source of long-term, high-quality jobs and we have clear ambitions to be a leading player in this dynamic and growing sector using our strengths in advanced manufacturing and will continue to work with government in exploring the significant benefits of this sector. Opportunities will also be grasped to connect to local supply chains, delivering opportunities for local businesses and residents.

It will also be vital to improve the energy efficiency of new homes and to ensure that they are future proofed to be zero carbon. Our emerging [Spatial Development Strategy](#) will examine the feasibility of requiring all new homes to comply with energy efficiency and environmental standards.

Embed the principles of a circular economy to get the most use and value out of material resources

Moving from a linear to a circular economy is critical to delivery of our objective of being a net zero carbon city region by 2040 or sooner. This means pioneering new approaches to production and manufacturing so that waste and carbon emissions are designed out of our use of material resources. The transition towards ever greater circulation and decarbonisation of materials in our economy means a system change for all sectors and a new way of thinking about our use of resources.

We will work to embed zero waste principles throughout the design, production and delivery of our goods and services across all sectors. Reusing and repairing products will help us consume fewer resources and an expansion of recycling services for all wastes will recover and return materials back into our economy. Improving our knowledge and understanding of resource flows through the city region, together with learning from those businesses that have already made investments in this area, will help prioritise actions, focus skills training and develop behavioural change educational campaigns to support a shift away from wasteful behaviours by all.

By 2035:

The Liverpool City Region will be recognised as a pioneer in sustainable approaches for living, travel and doing business, securing a just transition to low carbon for our people and places. We will have made significant progress along the pathway to be a net zero carbon city region. With a clear focus on addressing the climate emergency, we will have placed ourselves at the forefront of the Green Industrial Revolution. We will be a UK leader in clean energy, generating power from tidal, offshore wind, and hydrogen, and will have maximised the efficiency of our energy usage whilst meeting our energy needs. We will have taken progressive action in putting measures in place that support climate change adaptation and resilience in a way that is economically beneficial and socially just.

The sustainability of the industrial base will have been significantly improved which, through continuous innovation, will be forging new markets within a global low carbon and circular economy. This will be evident in the following outcomes:

- **Increase in the size of the zero carbon economy:** more growth businesses, good quality jobs, and high value supply chains in sectors that are part of the zero carbon economy and increase in public and private sector related investments.
- **Reduced carbon emissions in line with local targets and objectives:** we will have achieved significant falls in absolute terms from transport, domestic, industry and commercial sectors resulting from improved energy efficiency and increased use of low carbon fuel.
- **Improved energy efficiency in our homes and buildings:** in line with national policy objectives all our housing stock will be at EPC Band C where possible.
- **Transformation of energy infrastructure which has improved the supply of sustainable, affordable, and renewable power and heat to the homes and businesses of the city region and beyond:** through harnessing the power of the Mersey to deliver the Tidal range project, maximising our hydrogen assets, tripling the volume of renewable energy through offshore wind, and delivering district heating networks.
- **A growing circular economy:** measured by the overall amount of waste generated in the City Region, the proportion of this waste that is recycled or reused and the number of people employed in the circular economy.

A global, confident, and outward looking city region

Our objective: to maximise our position as a leading global gateway that benefits the whole of the UK. We will build upon our world-renowned strengths and reputation and will demonstrate that we are an open and outward looking global gateway. We will continue to be a leading asset for the country as the UK establishes new global commercial ties - continually investing to develop our high value offer and distinctive international brand.

How we will deliver:

Extend, engage, and develop the international networks of a truly global city region

We will continue to expand our global collaborations with other city regions, focusing not just upon on trade, investment, and international tourism - but also to develop strategic relationships with the aim of nurturing deeper economic, civic, and cultural links, and to foster mutual exchange of knowledge. The importance of this approach is amplified in a post-pandemic world, where progressive city regions like ours must seek to expand partnerships and connections, in order to develop solutions to global and local economic and environmental challenges.

A targeted approach will be used, starting with a small number of comparable regions. This work has already begun, with a focus on developing connections between the Liverpool City Region and a number of German cities. This marks the beginning of our reinvigorated globally networked internationalisation strategy.

Utilise a distinctive investment proposition that effectively positions and markets the City Region on the global stage

We are an outward facing city region, using our international networks to drive innovation, creativity and economic growth thus contributing to our wider prosperity. Through the globally renowned post-panamax Port of Liverpool and building on our cultural, entrepreneurial, and scientific strengths, we will capitalise on the opportunities of a rapidly changing global economy to deliver sustainable economic growth and wider prosperity. We will enhance our proposition by increasing our focus on several key international pillars. These include convergence of commercialisation of our global innovation excellence and knowledge assets; a set of value propositions across our key sectors where we have competitive advantage; maximising the potential of our port's strategic west-facing gateway position; building on our distinctive global cultural capital offer which is further articulated in our Cultural Internationalisation and Visitor Economy Recovery Strategies; promoting our renewable energy proposition including tidal power, offshore wind and hydrogen; and further developing our extensive international student base and growing array of alumni business networks.

We will capitalise on the profile of our 'One Front Door' Invest Liverpool approach to attract inward investment opportunities and develop a seamless investor journey through the City Region Investment Service.

Capitalise on the city region as the pre-eminent western global gateway to the UK economy

We will maximise the potential of our international gateways, in particular the Port of Liverpool, with its existing trans-Atlantic flows. It follows that our primary trade and investment focus will be on the United States given that the port handles 45% of UK container trade with North America, and that 21% of the city region's exports go to the US. The importance of the US to the city region was further evidenced in our recent Export Plan, and the LCR Freeport proposition is clear that it is a market that we intend to exploit further. We will work with government to ensure that the importance of the Port of Liverpool to the UK – and by extension the Freeport – is reflected in any future US trade deal.

Our location and assets are crucially important in the current period of major shifts in global supply chains coupled with potential future energy insecurity. Should there be future reshoring and restructuring of supply chains, we will position ourselves at the forefront of the agenda – with the combination of Port, Freeport, multi-modal infrastructure assets, digital supply chain expertise, and proximity to manufacturing and logistics activity, all providing significant competitive advantage that will also benefit the wider north of England and the UK.

In addition to the USA, the LCR Export Plan identifies other key markets in Germany, France, China, Ireland, and the Netherlands. But a more nuanced picture emerges depending on sectors, and our focus will be flexible - open to identifying opportunities that enables investment and supports our exporters across emerging global markets.

Case Study: LCR Freeport

The Liverpool City Region is one of eight places across England that has been granted Freeport status. LCR Freeport is a low carbon, multi-modal, multi-gateway trade platform with a network of sites which, through a range of targeted customs and tax benefits, will attract high value inward investment, support growth and employment to regenerate communities through industry, innovation, and collaboration.

Our Freeport is a unique proposition. Centred on a mix of infrastructure including the deep-water container terminal at the Port of Liverpool, multiple rail heads, other water-based access, and the airport, it's the key coastal access point to the UK's largest concentration of manufacturing.

Targeting key sectors including automotive, biomanufacturing/pharmaceuticals and maritime, LCR Freeport will also support advanced manufacturing, logistics and energy. It will also support digital integration of supply chains and of the wider port and logistics sectors.

Across the City Region, LCR Freeport will be transformative, creating nearly 7,800 additional jobs and with an estimated economic benefit of £409m.

Accelerate trade opportunities through building on an integrated approach to exporting

- Businesses that sell beyond local markets tend to be more productive, therefore increasing the number of businesses that sell products overseas could improve the productivity of the city region.
- Knowledge intensive firms based within the city region's knowledge clusters such as Sci-Tech Daresbury in Halton and the Baltic Creative in Liverpool, are growing contributors to our exports with research showing between 60% and 70% of firms based in these locations are actively exporting.
- But overall, just 7% of all city region businesses are involved in exporting activities, and currently only 20% of our businesses operate within tradeable sectors.

As set out in the LCR Internationalisation Strategy and Action Plan, the strong global trade potential of the city region and our business base is clear. Through strengthened engagement with the international business community, targeted support for businesses and effective collaboration across the city region, the opportunities offered by a fast-changing global economy can be realised to deliver economic growth and shared prosperity.

A central element of this strategy is global trade. The LCR Export Plan will deliver a range of practical interventions - better coordinating, aligning, and optimising existing resources, organisations, and structures to increase business export ambition, capacity, and opportunity. This will complement broader strategic and practical outreach approaches to targeting businesses and supporting our business base to innovate and develop new products and services that allow them to target new markets, which will also support productivity enhancements. We are also developing strong relationships with government through Department for International Trade (DIT) and working with them to increase their regional, long-term presence here, attract foreign investment, and enhance interaction with the local business community. Building on these strengthened relationships with DIT and other key central government departments will ensure that there is increased capacity for multi-partner collaborative learning on vital issues that impact the business landscape such as trade negotiations, product testing and subsidies, and other future changes relating to the post-Brexit environment.

Enhance enabling infrastructure so that we can deliver our global ambitions

The UK's departure from the European Union, together with global supply chain and energy challenges, makes it imperative that we enhance and maximise our infrastructure assets that support internationalisation. Our Maritime sector and the role of the Port of Liverpool will be central to this, as is building on our strengths and opportunities – including through the Freeport - to foster digital trade.

The Port and Maritime: partners are already investing in a number of programmes to ensure that the region continues to be at the heart of future maritime growth including an enhanced Liverpool Cruise Terminal at the heart of the iconic Liverpool Waterfront and expansion of Liverpool 2 container terminal - delivering a transformational step change in capability for the Port of Liverpool, allowing it able to handle the world's largest container ships. We recognise the combined importance of an expanded Port of Liverpool and a widening of the Panama Canal to create a globally competitive multi-modal port proposition comparable to New York, Dubai, and Singapore. Investment has been made in Port City Hub – a new platform for driving innovation across the Maritime cluster with internationally renowned partners and local universities working collaboratively to tackle the technology challenges of Maritime 2050, gearing up to support the needs of the Freeport and development of a new physical Knowledge Hub facility that will pioneer innovation across the sector.

We will continue to work closely with the Port of Liverpool to encourage development of the infrastructure required for growth and expand on the innovation programmes already underway across the buoyant maritime cluster with the international opportunities this opens – ensuring that future infrastructure development reflects our commitments to sustainability, decarbonisation, and climate change resilience.

Air connectivity: the global aviation industry has been deeply impacted by the pandemic. Liverpool John Lennon Airport, however, remains a vital strategic infrastructure asset, supporting an estimated 6,000 local jobs and providing £250m annually in economic impact. More than a local airport, it attracts increasing numbers of passengers from across the North-West. The airport has ambitious plans to expand the range of destinations served and adding long haul services to key business and leisure destinations. Delivering this is already underway with confirmation that Lufthansa will operate scheduled flights to Frankfurt, thus opening up more than 150 global destinations which will be hugely important for both business and tourism. The airport's recovery has already been aided by a £34m loan from the Combined Authority during the pandemic, and its longer-term ambitions - as outlined in its Masterplan – will continue to be supported, particularly its plans to decarbonise through new technologies, in order to build a sustainable future for an important regional asset.

Digital trade and supply chains: reflecting that we are now in a (post) digital age, digital needs to be pervasive in everything we do around trade and supply chain processes. We will work to ensure that trading experiences are seamless, with 'smart', future-focused approaches leading to digitally driven ports and logistics. Supported through our key digital assets such as STFC/Hartree and capabilities driven by leading programmes such as LCR 4.0 and LCR Holistic, this will build resilience into supply chains. LCR Freeport has a key role in this. Supported by regulatory innovation flexibilities, it will be a critical enabler to improved use of digital technologies to reduce cost, increase competitiveness of the city region for both national and global trade, and in developing integrated digital supply chains.

By 2035:

We will have fully established a nationally leading position in supporting the UK's global trading ambitions. This will have been founded on our historically strong international connections, multi-modal infrastructure and assets, global innovation and digital excellence, and highly focused approaches to key and emerging markets. We will have fully leveraged opportunities such as the Freeport to maximise our trade and investment and will have supported extensive and thriving high value local supply chains to fuel our continually expanding global ambitions. Our universities will have played a key role in attracting students from around the world and in building global knowledge networks that will benefit both the city region and the UK.

This will be evident in the following outcomes:

- **The city region is a pre-eminent global gateway for the UK:** maximising the potential of our nationally significant international assets such as the Port of Liverpool, fulfilling its potential of being the leading port for trade with core and emerging markets.
- **Enhanced levels of exports:** progress towards an increase in the level of exports up to 35% of our GVA (£11.8bn), the long-term aim set out in our Export Plan. Based on an increase in inward investment, a progressively innovation-led business base and a targeted focus across our key markets.
- **Increased percentage share of UK foreign direct investment (FDI) coming into the city region:** as set out in our Internationalisation Strategy. This is as a result of strengthening of the foundations of our economy, a highly targeted approach based on our sectoral strengths and global assets, leading distinctive innovation clusters, and successfully implementing distinctive transformational opportunities such as the Freeport.
- **An established network of international city regional partnerships:** creating a system for maintaining contact and encouraging knowledge, commercial, cultural, educational, and civic connections. This will enable us to play a dynamic and distinctive role in addressing global challenges.

Spotlight: LCR's Global Maritime sector

The Liverpool City Region is focussed on building upon its strong maritime innovation capabilities and heritage which saw the region become home to the world's first ever steel hulled ship, lifeboat station, radar-controlled port, and commercial wet dock.

Today, our maritime sector directly supports 7,900 highly productive jobs and generates £650m in GVA with a wider economic impact of £1.7bn GVA annually, with shipping and ship building, making up its largest industry.

We are the major west facing port city, one of top 5 UK container ports and a leading transatlantic port handling 45% of trade with North America. Liverpool 2 container terminal provides opportunities for future growth and has seen recent investment in further capacity. 65% of the UK population is within 150 miles radius of the Port of Liverpool.

The Liverpool City Region is also home to a diverse range of world class maritime companies providing national and global expertise in the ports industry, marine engineering, leisure marine, and maritime financial and professional services served by a strong regional cluster network. The city region is well placed to handle the likely reorientation of UK trade following Brexit, with its ideal location on the UK West Coast, on the transatlantic trade route to North America and via the Panama Canal to Australasia and the Far East. The Port of Liverpool is the critical trans-Atlantic hub for the Irish Sea Region, a crucial asset in a post-Brexit world.

Maritime is clearly a key sector for the region, which is why through the collaboration platform - Port City Liverpool – an innovation hub will enable its maritime ecosystem to be at the forefront of developing and adopting cutting edge technologies in areas such as smart shipping, robotics, clean growth, and ship-tech digitalisation – ensuring the region, and the LCR Freeport, plays a leading role in the fourth industrial revolution as it did for the very first.

IMPROVING OUR PERFORMANCE ACROSS THE PILLARS OF OUR ECONOMY

The long term vision, pioneering strengths, and key priorities for the city region as set out in the earlier chapters, all need to be supported by strengthening the following core pillars of our economy that are critical to driving productivity and wider prosperity:

- Maximising the impacts of innovation for people, places, and businesses (ensuring our innovation and knowledge assets benefit the whole city region).
- Turning people's potential into prosperity (health, skills, and the labour market).
- Building thriving, sustainable, and resilient places (place making).
- Developing integrated infrastructure for a connected city region (integrated infrastructure).

New train for the Merseyrail network



Maximising the impacts of innovation for people, places, and businesses

Our objective: maximise the full potential of our innovation and business ecosystem so it can benefit the whole city region.

The COVID-19 pandemic has driven a period of unprecedented change for our city region's business base and innovators. Throughout this period, businesses, public sector, and higher education and research institutions have further demonstrated their ability to enable and deliver innovation to support economy and society, despite the many challenges brought about by the pandemic. We will maintain this momentum so that our business base and research centres continue to build on existing strengths and rapidly adapt to important current and future challenges and opportunities through innovation - from digitalisation and zero carbon, to supply chain resilience, and threat of future pandemics. And we will ensure that the benefits of innovation are spread across all of our communities.

How we will deliver:

Develop an integrated approach to helping higher growth businesses innovate through high-intensity support, seamless access to finance, and networks

- We have relatively low numbers of high growth enterprises (HGEs). Combined with lower business survival and high business death rates, this indicates that our new business starts struggle to grow quickly and sustainably. HGEs as a proportion of our resident population are also lower than national and regional levels.
- Only 25% of our business base is made up of knowledge intensive businesses, which compares to 29% nationally.
- Therefore, supporting the formation, growth, and investment of HGE's, scaling, and knowledge intensive businesses will support our economy to become more productive and innovative.

We will look to support more higher growth businesses that create greater opportunities for good work and drive competitiveness. This will increase employment, wages, and investment, ensure the inflow and retention of a skilled workforce, enable more exports, and generate greater productivity. This will build on our key assets and clusters, such as Sci-Tech Daresbury, Knowledge Quarter, and the Baltic Triangle. And although we will support businesses within traditionally higher growth sectors, we will help enable growth and innovation wherever opportunities arise, particularly given the increasing convergence of digital technologies across the whole business base.

a) Increase the provision of high intensity support

We will develop a bespoke and targeted approach to supporting our higher growth and scaling-up businesses, working with them closely over the long-term to shape future support provision across key components such as product and service innovation, their net zero ambitions, talent and skills access, market intelligence, leadership and management, and financing.

We will pilot new approaches, taking lessons learnt from international best practice and innovative local support programmes, such as LCR4.0 and Gather (a scale-up programme for SMEs in the digital, creative and technology sector) to deliver effective interventions at pace and at scale. We will develop a benchmarked evidence base to determine 'what works' to enable innovation-led growth, especially when considering businesses within different industry sectors and at varying levels of business maturity. Our support will directly align with our priority to 'level up' opportunities for our local business leaders so that they can receive the very best, industry-leading advice and support at critical times within their growth journey. This requires a coherent process of using business intelligence to identify who the higher growth businesses and potential higher growth businesses are across each sector, and meaningfully engaging with them so we can understand their needs and tailor our support accordingly.

This expert guidance is crucial in ensuring that our businesses and the local economy can continue to adapt, innovate, and develop in a globally competitive world, delivering not only successful, resilient enterprises but also in providing high quality and sustainable employment opportunities for local residents in every community.

b) Strengthen the framework of our innovation finance ecosystem

The availability of accessible early stage and long-term patient capital is critical to the future growth of our innovation ecosystem, and in fuelling the growth of our scale-up firms which are vital in driving forward our economic growth and closing the productivity gap. Our interventions in supporting access to finance aim to stimulate a culture of private investment, incorporating start-ups, early and expansion stages, and beyond. Increased private capital will also bring more mentoring and management support to investee businesses which is key, especially at the earlier stage of the growth cycle.

We will therefore work collaboratively across the city region, through interventions such as our emerging LCR Angel Network and LCR Seed Fund, which are aligned to local priorities to ensure our innovators have seamless access to a wide range of industry-leading investment products which are relevant at all stages of the innovation lifecycle. Such interventions will be imperative to help lever private funds to create coherent and locally recognised funding pathways, and we will continue our dialogue with government to explore how local interventions can be further scaled up.

We will work to improve both the demand and supply side of funding – providing support opportunities for innovators to help develop levels of investment readiness and forging new networks with established and emerging funding partners seeking high value investment opportunities.

Ultimately, we will work to ensure that barriers to funding do not limit the full economic potential of our city region – and that our innovators are not limited by the nature of their geographical location or personal background. Instead, our ambition is to provide a supporting framework that will help finance and support the growth of our diverse ideas and people so that they can thrive within a global marketplace.

Case Study: Future Innovation Fund

It is well evidenced that there is a dearth of innovation funding in less developed business ecosystems, despite no shortage of innovative firms with pioneering ideas. At the height of the pandemic, the Liverpool City Region and Growth Platform launched a Future Innovation Fund pilot, drawing on £3m of devolved funds.

Delivered through competitive calls, the pilot provided repayable grant finance to SMEs in the Liverpool City Region with close to market innovations aligned to the opportunities set out in the draft Local Industrial Strategy. Projects included an app that utilises the latest thinking in habit building technology to encourage people to choose and sustain a healthy lifestyle, a platform to support the hospitality sector to continue trading throughout the pandemic, and a revolutionary new technology in Liverpool: mobile robotic scientists for which there is global demand.

The fund is inherently scalable – for instance with a £20m investment the pilot could be scaled up so that it can meet demand, support hundreds of SMEs in the city region, create more than 2,000 jobs and, importantly, contribute to levelling up the regional imbalances in innovation funding.

Drive forward an ‘innovation first’ culture that promotes the adoption and diffusion of innovation to drive productivity-boosting practices throughout the business base

- We will improve commercialising innovation and absorbing best practice. Only 32% of city region business sales comes from innovative products or services, compared to 50% in many other LEP areas.
- This is driven by the lack of firms undertaking product or service innovation, with fewer businesses introducing new products or services to the market.

For many of our businesses, innovation is much more about embracing current technologies and processes than it is about creating new ones. Subsequently, we are committed to taking steps to support, promote and expand new and existing pilot programmes which focus directly upon the rapid diffusion and adoption of innovation across our entire business base, thus helping to de-risk business investment and adoption. We are well placed to enable this, given our leading capacity in applying AI solutions to industrial challenges, and with programmes such as LCR4.0 having already delivered diffusion support to SMEs to spread innovations.

Our ‘whole-system’ strategy, which will also embrace those from industries that may have been traditionally slower to innovate, is critical in achieving increased productivity and capability growth for businesses throughout the city region.

Not only will this inclusive approach to innovation aid in our aim to deliver ambitious levels of R&D investment - 5% of the Liverpool City Region GVA by 2030 - but it will also be key in unlocking the creation of many more high value jobs, investment opportunities and multi-discipline partnerships which underpin future growth.

Central to accomplishing this step-change within innovation diffusion will be maximising the leverage of our globally renowned innovation assets to translate innovation into actionable and achievable steps for businesses. Working with anchor institutions and supply chains to help bridge the gap between theory and implementation will be central to forging a lasting innovation culture for our businesses so that they have the confidence, leadership, and the tools to continuously innovate, whether through developing new advanced products, or using technologies for improved forms of organisation, business structures and practices.

Case Study: LCR Ventures Commercialisation Vehicle

LCR Ventures will be established as a new central vehicle to drive commercialisation of research. It will provide incubator services and associated proof of concept funding to support high growth start-ups and spinouts in the city region. Initially the project will focus on the Health and Life Sciences sector (H&LS) but with the ambition to expand to other sectors in future as and when funding becomes available.

Ventures will provide a specialist venture builder (incubator) and a highly targeted proof of concept funding to support the development of high growth potential businesses in knowledge intensive sectors within the city region. Once established, the incubator team will seek to secure additional investments from other investors. A second phase is in development to expand the model beyond Health and Life Sciences – as a Research Technology Organisation - to provide significant commercialisation and R&D activity across multiple sectors.

Deliver on our innovation project pipeline that reflects our distinctive strengths

It is critical now, more than ever, for city regions like our own to demonstrate the importance of 'place' and innovation clustering. Furthermore, COVID-19 has acted to fundamentally change the fabric of where our innovators can choose to live and work. We recognise this shift and will work together as a collective innovation community to fully promote and leverage the value our city region's distinctive innovation assets, networks, and international reputation to provide compelling reasons to locate and invest here. Demonstrating a strong existing and future pipeline of innovation activity is central to this.

We are in a strong position of having a host of major schemes already in varying stages of development, to maximise our smart specialisation and other competitive advantages. Our priority is to secure investment and operationalise these projects as a mainstay of commercialising knowledge assets and meeting our 5% of GVA R&D target. Our current and future pipelines have a focus on our core differential strengths and on industry collaboration. There is currently more than £1bn of live projects including major recent industry-led investments aimed at solving challenges and unlocking market opportunities. Examples include:

- £210m STFC Hartree National Centre for Digital Innovation, comprising supercomputing infrastructure, business diffusion and permanent consolidation of the IBM global research lab at Sci-Tech Daresbury.
- The Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine-led iiCON programme: in less than a year £18m worth of UKRI grant has leveraged over £150m, and the project has hit a 5-year UKRI targets.
- Glass Futures: (see case study below) an industry-led global centre for R&D, innovation and training in St Helens funded by the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund and the Combined Authority (a funding model which could be repeated).
- LCR Ventures Phase I (see the case study above): incubator services and proof of concept funding to support high-growth start-ups. This will mark the foundation of a dedicated commercialisation vehicle for the city region.

Other notable opportunities relate to Freeport innovation; creation of a Medical Glass Manufacturing and Innovation Centre; a National Packaging Innovation Centre which would be an internationally significant open access innovation facility; building on the LCR's leading role in integrated vaccine development and pandemic response (see a 'Place of Pioneers Section'); and LSTM's Translational Facility – a planned major national facility for translational R&D infection work which will become a key asset not only in responding directly to the threat of future pandemic outbreaks but also in attracting further ground-breaking levels of regional investment.

These, and other future propositions contained within our ambitious innovation pipeline will help to forge a distinctive innovation brand built around established innovation clusters and showcasing our city region as a leading place for innovators to live, work and share ideas.

Case Study: Glass Futures; St Helens – decarbonising the global glass industry

Glass Futures, located in the traditional centre of the UK glass making industry in St Helens, will put the Liverpool City Region at the forefront of decarbonising the global glass industry, as demonstrated at COP26.

The £54m project will create the world's first openly accessible test and trial furnace facility, which will be used to deliver industry and government-backed research and development projects focused on decarbonising glass production. It will provide a platform for the industry to test and trial its own commercial ideas – both collaboratively and individually. It will also provide a platform for the industry to test and trial its own commercial ideas - both collaboratively and individually.

Glass Futures is an industry-backed Research and Technology Organisation, leading collaboration across some of the largest companies in the global glass industry and its supply chain, together with academia and local and central government.

Generate opportunities for our innovation ecosystem to deliver locally relevant impact

The effect of our innovation extends far beyond mere financial gain. Instead, many of the solutions that our innovators are working on directly address vitally important social and environmental issues. We will build on the increased sense of societal relevance for innovation that has resulted from COVID-19 and will take steps to foster greater collaboration between local anchor institutions and innovators.

Collaborations, such as the [Liverpool Health Partners research](#) - will provide major possibilities for research, trials, and early adoption - resulting in widespread benefits for people in our community as well as those throughout the country and around the world. A recent example of this is the ground-breaking [Civic Data Cooperative](#) programme that could revolutionise how anonymised health and social care data is used to deliver better care for residents and create new health technology jobs in the city region. Wider, data led solutions and real time data can help address societal issues, support prevention and help drive public service reform.

Citizen engagement will go together with this focus on addressing local needs, in order to develop an innovation ecosystem that reflects our commitment to delivering an inclusive economy. This will help innovators to unlock the insight, experience, and knowledge of our diverse communities, ensuring that representative co-creation lies at the heart of future innovations. Instruments such as hackathons, living labs and real-world testbeds will be deployed to realise this vision and will not only improve our reputation as a place to do 'good business,' but it will also help to write a new chapter in post-pandemic rebuilding to help inspire numerous future generations of local innovators.

Determining new ways to make innovation far more accessible to people from disadvantaged backgrounds will be vital to these attempts to inspire future generations. We will work together with organisations such as our schools, universities, skills providers, museums (including the recently established Eureka! Science + Discovery (see case study below) and innovation clusters to build upon existing outreach work and will help ensure that the progress made through the innovation ecosystem spills over positively into all our neighbourhoods.

Case Study: Eureka! Science and Discovery

Eureka! Science & Discovery centre will provide a world-class attraction at Seacombe Ferry Terminal as part of the Wirral's transformational regeneration programme along the Left Bank of the River Mersey.

The new attraction will be run by Eureka! the educational charity which has operated the UK's iconic and successful National Children's Museum, bringing an attraction of national significance to the city region, with the exciting ambition to be the UK hub of science and discovery for young people. It will help to create the next generation of innovators, creating and encouraging young people's aspirations and joining them up with pathways to skills development and future work.

Eureka! has developed the attraction in partnership with Wirral Council and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and has used a unique "co-creation" process, bringing 120 local young people together with local employers and academic partners to co-design exhibition content. Unique exhibits and interactive experiences will harness arts and creativity to explore and interpret broad themes linked to key economic growth sectors across the city region, including low carbon and health and life sciences.

Alongside major refurbishment of the Seacombe Ferry infrastructure and future high-quality landscaping and public realm, this new, diversified and vibrant waterfront offer will increase visitor numbers to the city region, and significantly improve the perception of Birkenhead as a more investable offer as part of the wider Left Bank programme.

Provide the enabling conditions for innovators to grow

We will continue to support the ongoing development of our key knowledge clusters. This is critical not only in ensuring that there is access to the right mix and provision of quality incubator space, accelerators, labs, and business accommodation, but also in maximising agglomeration effects and knowledge spill-overs.

We will use successful examples of landmark innovation regeneration developments, such as recently completed northern headquarters of the Royal College of Physicians - 'The Spine' – to help drive a critical mass of private sector investment. This will be underpinned by public sector investment within transport, energy, and digital infrastructure.

Providing the right conditions for business growth and innovation in this way is critical in supporting:

- The emergence and commercialisation of high value research from local innovation assets (aided by programmes such as LCR Ventures);
- Growth of authentic, high value business networks; and
- Development of a burgeoning reputation amongst world-class talent – helping to attract and retain talent to the city region.

Case Study: The Heath, Runcorn

The Heath Business and Technology Park in Runcorn is a leading business and science park accommodating over 120 businesses and helping to provide over 2,000 jobs. It is currently home to a number of world-leading scientific and high-tech companies from across more than 20 different business sectors and is driven by its 'Heath Park' vision to become a state-of-the-art sustainable hub for businesses, residents and the wider community.

By 2035:

The city region's business base will be driven by an established 'innovation first' culture where we have increased the scale, speed, and scope of innovation across the whole business landscape. This has been achieved through supporting businesses in the development of their processes, services, products, operating models, and culture; leading the way in product design and application; and seamlessly applying our world-class innovation assets to commercialise ideas, delivering above average productivity and growth levels. This will be evident in the following outcomes:

- **Marked increase in R&D investment with associated economic impacts:** specifically, 5% as a proportion of GVA, nearly double the national target of 2.7%. This could create an additional £19.7bn in cumulative GVA, a 6.5% increase in jobs (44,000) and a 10% increase in productivity (an uplift of £3 GVA per hour), rapidly closing our overall productivity gap with national averages.
- **An established culture of commercialisation of knowledge in our HEI base:** with more businesses and entrepreneurs combining with the research excellence and intellectual capacity within our HEIs.
- **Marked increase in the number of scale-ups:** in particular, matching and exceeding national levels.
- **Innovation-led business base:** where we can increase the proportion of knowledge intensive businesses (25%) to significantly close the gap with the national level (29%). There will be a higher proportion of businesses engaging in innovation activities and more businesses bringing new products and services to market, and a higher level of business expenditure on R&D. An innovation culture will become embedded across all sectors.
- **Enhanced levels of institutional investment across the business base:** with an established investment runway and networks that enable an increase in the levels of finance and critical mass of support for our innovative businesses.

Turning people's potential into prosperity

Our objective: ensure our people have the skills and opportunities to realise their full potential and meet the needs of a rapidly changing economy.

We will remove the multiple barriers to prosperity and provide the opportunity for all people to have a good quality of life and be able to use their potential to lead prosperous lives. Through working to improve educational attainment, upskilling, reskilling, supporting people into employment, systemically improving health outcomes, and attracting and retaining talent, we will develop a deep pool of skilled labour and innovative entrepreneurship that maximises our productivity.

- The high prevalence of illness within the City Region has a substantial negative impact on residents' quality of life; they are expected to live two and a half years less than the national average.
- Instances of poor health and work-limiting illness & disability is common, with almost half of our neighbourhoods in the top 10% most deprived nationally, in terms of health deprivation and disability.
- 32% of our economically inactive residents report that their limitations in employment are due to long-term sickness; this is the third highest share of all LEP areas.

How we will deliver:

Improve health equity through collaboration and prevention

Investment in the determinants of health is an economic and social imperative and a necessity for developing the labour force. If we want to close our productivity gap with the rest of the country, then a fundamental part of this means focusing on the significant contribution made by our poor health outcomes to that gap. Furthermore, during the pandemic, the close connection between sustaining and improving population health and sustaining the economy was brought into sharper focus.

We will seek, therefore, to make rapid progress in integration across the health and employment and skills agendas, linking and translating relevant policy across portfolios and connecting to funding opportunities. A recent achievement in this area is a successful collaborative City Region bid for resources from the Health Foundation for an 'Economies for Healthier Lives' programme. This will support a redesign of employment services and evolution of an enhanced approach to labour market programme delivery with public health more intentionally at its core.

Prevention will also be a central pillar of our approaches to improving health equity, particularly given that it is one of the key priorities for the health and care system in achieving NHS savings, increased productivity, community prosperity and resilience. We will work with health agencies and other partners – such as the University of Liverpool’s Department of Public Health and Policy and LJMU’s Institute for Public Health, both of which are World Health Organisation Collaborating Centres - to identify opportunities for preventative interventions at scale which will have long term benefits for our population.

There will also be increased engagement and collaboration with Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and NHS providers to ensure future commissioned activities provide the right provision for systemically disrupting embedded health and wellbeing issues across the City Region, particularly with regards to mental health.

Work with government to determine how we can intervene early to improve education and learning outcomes, and ultimately the life chances of young people

- The City Region has poor educational attainment, with 62% of our pupils achieving grades 4 or above in English and Maths GCSEs, compared to 65% of pupils nationally. The same attainment figure falls to a low as 41% in Knowsley.
- As of 2020, 6.1% of 16-17-year-olds in the City Region were considered Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) compared to 5.5% nationally.

Education holds the key to our long-term prosperity by underpinning the success of all aspects of our economic performance. While the school environment can improve the life chances of children, the educational performance of young people across parts of the City Region has been an issue of concern for many years. COVID-19 is likely to have exacerbated these challenges.

We will work with government, therefore, to determine how we can intervene early to improve education and learning outcomes across the whole City Region – and ultimately the life chances of young people. Further interventions are needed to address persistent gaps. These should focus on capacity development amongst teaching and leadership staff, enabling systemic shifts, through increased levels of collaboration between school leaders within the City Region and embedding best practice. We will also focus on exploring how we can support and expand family learning.

Early years experiences are also critical, deeply affecting children's future physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development. We will explore the most effective ways to work with households in a targeted way to ensure that the best possible provision is in place for parents so that young children are school ready. This will include working with health and care services, nursery schools, children's centres, and others, to improve support for families, together with innovative ways to focus on hard-to-reach parents. Approaches will link in to, and connect with, the national network of Family Hubs announced in 2021.

Improve the employability of residents to give them the best chance of accessing, sustaining, and progressing in employment

- Despite significant progress in closing the gap, our residents are still more likely to be economically inactive (24%), and less likely to be in employment (73%), with national rates standing at 21% and 76% respectively
- These gaps are longstanding and driven by a range of complex factors including poor health and wellbeing, poor skills, and a high prevalence of deprivation.

Supporting economically inactive people on pathways into work through highly targeted support remains a central priority. Building on what works will be important to this approach, such as the people centred and devolved Households into Work Pilot (see the case study below) and the Ways to Work Programme. Ways to Work is a large-scale programme delivered since 2016, supporting 25,000 people and helping over 11,000 into sustainable employment. We will continue work to support the sustainability, and importantly the scaling up, of such pilots and programmes.

We also know that the pandemic had a detrimental effect on mental and physical wellbeing of many people now unable to find work or were previously struggling to hold down work. The scale of the challenge is significant, and we will continue to work with government to ensure the right provision is in place – at scale – to develop person centred approaches to help those disengaged from the labour market.

Alongside this, we will support residents in acquiring basic skills including access to entry level English, Maths and Digital Skills through the Adult Education Budget, and will place particular focus on narrowing gaps in employment, unemployment and economic inactivity for specific groups, including women, people from ethnic minority backgrounds, people with disabilities and those with experience of care system.

Tailored support will be available for people who are returning to work from career, caring or other breaks, to ensure that they develop the skills and confidence required to re-enter the labour market. Employers will be encouraged to provide flexible and responsive working conditions and contracts to enable them to diversify their talent base and attract a more diverse range of candidates and staff.

Case Study: Households into Work

Households into Work helps people with complex needs enter or re-enter full time employment. It operates across the City Region, with the aim of providing intensive support that goes beyond those simply searching for work and instead extends to those people who face multiple challenges in thinking about full time employment as a realistic option.

What makes Households into Work truly significant is developing a full appreciation of the underlying issues for each of the programme participants. This allows the team to construct a personalised long-term action plan of support that is tailored to the unique needs and circumstances of each participant, structured around an innovative model, which takes a 'whole household' approach to support.

Further increase technical and other education opportunities for young people and adults, building on our established record of delivery

- Since 2004, the number of people with no qualifications within the City Region has more than halved.
- We have also experienced the third fastest growth in the country within the number of residents with at least degree level qualifications.
- However, despite this progress we still have a high proportion of residents with no qualifications, 9% compared to 6% nationally, and a low proportion of residents with at least degree level qualifications, 38% compared to 43% nationally.

Developing higher level digital and technical skills will be essential to the future success of employers and people within the City Region. This includes embracing the implementation of T-levels locally as part of a cohesive technical education offer. We will also continue to work with government and partners to build long term change, ensuring that residents with no or low-level qualifications are not left behind.

Building on the delivery of the recently expanded Be More Apprenticeship Portal, and of Gold Standard and degree-level apprenticeships, we will radically improve the quality and breadth of apprenticeships. As part of this, we have developed a 'Young Person's Guarantee' that will support young people out of work for more than six months into a job, training, or an apprenticeship opportunity. This localised approach is designed to complement our commitment to effectively optimise national interventions such as 'Kickstart'.

We will also continue to work with government and local partners to build long term change within the system and continue to successfully implement our apprenticeship levy transfer brokerage system, which has successfully repurposed over £1 million of funding back into the region to support over 200 new apprentices across a variety of key sectors. As well as maximising the impact of Be More, the LCR Skills and Apprenticeship brokerage service will support firms to identify the right courses and providers to suit their current and future staff needs.

We will also continue to build on the success of our Adult Education Budget to help people both get into, and progress, in work. This will involve expanding test and learn activities, embedding agility and flexibility in the model, to develop new training offers to respond to a change in the pattern of demand, and supporting improved local collaborative networks between learning providers to ensure continuous skills progression. This will be a baseline for further discussions between us and government on how to ensure continuous improvement and growth of this key devolved power – this is particularly important given that demands upon the UK's adult education and skills system are likely to increase significantly through pandemic recovery and beyond.

Supporting all of this will be improved careers advice - which starts earlier and is characterised by career insights and pathway analysis - allowing young people to better understand the workplace. Furthermore, changing demographics mean that there will also be support for those in mid-career to understand and plan for their futures.

Develop a balanced system that helps employers effectively articulate their current and future skills needs

Working with employers, we will continuously develop and update our clearly focused and business-led Skills for Growth Action Plans which audit and set out current and future skills needs in the City Region, allowing skills providers to align their learning and training to those needs. We will work with employers to accelerate this process, through the Skills for Growth brokerage service and improved leadership and management training. Our Skills for Growth activities will be flexible, with a full appreciation that demands and needs of several sectors have changed and are changing in the aftermath of the pandemic.

As part of our approach, we will address gaps in labour market intelligence by developing work focussed on specific sectors to better articulate job role level skills needs and demystify progression pathways. More employers will also be involved in identifying and developing technical curricula and qualifications. Alongside this, we will continue to work with our education providers so that they can provide responsive training provision through new and updated curriculum and facilities.

We have worked with Cogent (Sector Skills Council for Science) to help science focused employers articulate their skills needs (see the below case study) and this could provide a template for future action in other sectors.

Case Study: Science Industry Partnership (SIP) Liverpool Plus

SIP Liverpool Plus is an employer-led partnership that provides clarity and leadership on the employment and skills needed locally to support the Life Sciences and Industrial Sciences priority skills needs. It brings together the science-based sector to focus on skills in the area and support local companies to develop and sustain the appropriate skills they need to innovate and grow, through partnership. Sectors embraced include chemicals, pharmaceuticals, medical technology, biotechnology, advanced materials and downstream oil and gas. The group will drive a local approach to sharing best practice, addressing skills challenges, growing the skills pipeline, and developing specialist STEM training provision. This type of engagement has enabled employment and skills priorities to be better reflected in the City Region's Local Skills Report and our Local Skills Action Plan.

Promote business investment in upskilling and reskilling

Supported by consistent labour market intelligence, we will work with businesses across the economy to make the case for progression in the workplace and to explore practical solutions such as sector-based skills escalators, sharing best practice, links to business-to-business peer support, and promoting increased uptake of leadership and management training. There will be an expectation of career progression with businesses, which is aligned to the City Region's work on continuous education and lifelong learning. We will raise the ambition of people and businesses so that skills, continual learning, and development are perceived as the norm.

Reskilling, upskilling and in work progression, are increasingly crucial within a rapidly evolving economy, allowing people to move from sectors or roles which are declining to sectors or roles which are growing, and to prepare for the future of work. We will promote reskilling and retraining for people and employers through the Adult Education Budget funded provision; utilise sectoral approaches based on input from businesses on specific skills gaps and opportunities; and ensure continual promotions of traineeships and apprenticeships. Within this, we will also work to continually deliver on the National Skills Fund, ensuring it meets local needs, supports retraining across the economy, and addresses skills gaps.

Retention and attraction of talent and innovative entrepreneurship

- In 2018, 57,000 potential skilled workers were studying at Liverpool's universities, and 39,000 of these were attracted from outside of the City Region.
- However, almost 60% of these graduates left the City Region upon completion of their studies.

Alongside reskilling and upskilling, we will focus on enhancing the retention and attraction of talent. We will work across sectors to make the case for higher level skills and employment of graduates within graduate level roles; promote undergraduate placements, knowledge transfer partnerships and internships in businesses; and influence provision within the higher education base to ensure it is relevant to local needs.

As well as having more higher skilled people and graduates working in the area, a key priority for us will be on innovation entrepreneurship, building on the City Region's entrepreneurial foundations to both attract and retain those people who can transform innovative ideas into high-demand, marketable products, services, or technologies – whether they are graduates or other existing residents who can further provide critical mass that will then enhance investment from private investors.

Liverpool's universities will also play an important role in developing entrepreneurial capacity and capability, including spinout businesses. The universities and other local partners will work together to determine how the ecosystem can be developed over the long term to encourage spinouts as part of a wider approach to commercialisation of ideas.

Progress future focused skills development

We will develop targeted programmes that provide the skills needed to transform our economy, which will be clearly communicated through career progression pathways. This will be linked directly to our key sectors, innovation clusters, and the competencies and opportunities identified in this Plan. For instance, clean growth and an increasingly digitally and technologically enabled economy requires specific skills sets and competencies, which we are planning towards.

This will involve enhanced collaboration with schools, colleges, private training providers, and universities to better align the skills pipeline – particularly in relation to a renewed focus on technical skills - with our transformational opportunities and key sector ambitions. This will produce a City Region of creatives, of environmental scientists and engineers, of data scientists and entrepreneurs. But, most importantly, in a rapidly changing world with changing skills requirements, working with schools, colleges, and skills providers will deliver a City Region of confident, independent learners, with transferable skills across all industries of the future.

Whilst it is not always possible to protect jobs impacted by technological change, key traits such as agility and adaptability can be nurtured. This will be a core focus for us in working with employers and providers, particularly with regards to pivotal attributes that automation will not address namely leadership, design skills, innovative capacity, creativity, and adaptability.

By 2035:

By 2035, people living in the City Region will be equipped to succeed in work, and a well-aligned employer led skills system with improvement in skills performance across the board will ensure that businesses and the labour market have been able to successfully adapt and embrace the fundamental shifts within the economy. This will be evident in the following outcomes:

- **Increased labour market participation:** with a drastic fall in the proportion of people who are classed as economically inactive and who are at risk of worklessness, so that our economic activity rate increases from 76% to meet the national level (currently 79%).
- **Improved levels of health equity:** with evidence showing improvements in population health, healthy life expectancy (progress towards government's target of at least five extra healthy, independent years of life by 2035), and a lower prevalence of mental health disorders.
- **Transformed education and skills outcomes:** with enhanced attainment through each of the Key Stages, less young people who are NEET and improvements of the proportion of residents with NVQ Levels 1 to 4 – in particular, matching the national level in the proportion of working age people with NVQ4+ qualifications from 38% (current national level is 43%), and those with no qualifications, from 9% (currently national level is 6%).
- **Enhanced demand for skilled labour is matched by supply:** the business base can draw on the talent that it needs to succeed and to enhance productivity.
- **Talent is nurtured and retained:** as many more businesses maximise their innovative potential, the ability to attract highly skilled people into labour market, as well as draw on an increasing pool of skilled indigenous talent, is exponentially increased.

Thriving, sustainable, and resilient places

Our objective: for the Liverpool City Region to be a desirable place to live, go to school, start a family, work, and call home.

We will strengthen the vitality of our communities through developing and enabling a high-quality housing stock that meets need, provides choice, and supports good health and wellbeing; and ensuring our neighbourhoods are sustainable and designed to enable people and places to flourish. From reimagined and thriving urban spaces, to a wealth of culture, high quality, accessible and attractive natural spaces, utilising the strengths of community-driven place-making we will use our distinctive international brand to be a truly excellent place to live, work and invest. This will ensure we attract and retain the best of local, national and international talent.

How we will deliver:

Ensure everyone has access to environmentally sustainable, quality, affordable homes within thriving and well-designed neighbourhoods.

- Our housing stock is typically older, lower value and less energy efficient, which has implications on the ability to attract and retain talent, as well as having implications on quality of life. Overall, 44% of LCR properties were built before 1939, compared to 36% nationally.
- However, housing affordability has remained relatively stable over recent years, in contrast to the national trend.

Our strategic housing objectives are focused on ensuring housing contributes to economic growth, improves environmental sustainability, and helps deliver better social outcomes, including improved health, within a wider place making context. These will be delivered by accelerating delivery of new homes, widening housing choice, improving housing quality (including retrofitting), place-based neighbourhood regeneration (including alignment of funding programmes to deliver improvements in outcomes) and addressing homelessness.

Building on the objectives of the LCR Housing Investment Strategy (2020), we will continue to work in partnership with government (including Homes England), the private sector, and our housing associations to deliver new, high-quality homes to meet need and support economic development. A key foundation for this is our £45m Brownfield Land Fund allocation, where we are delivering land suitable for between 3,000 and 4,000 new homes.

We will also look to support the upgrading and modernisation of our housing stock - ensuring that homes are fit for the needs of residents, both now and for the future. The age and condition of much of our housing stock means that this is a significant challenge requiring significant investment and we will work with government and look to secure resources from funding programmes. Of increasing importance, we will look to ensure that our homes are environmentally sustainable and contribute to net zero carbon objectives. We will seize the opportunity to redefine, regenerate, and revitalise our most deprived communities, supporting health and wellbeing, social and economic outcomes.

We will be innovative. We will build on the legacy of model communities in the City Region, such as Port Sunlight and Granby 4 Streets, as well as developing cutting-edge approaches through modern methods of construction as we look to become a national centre for excellence. We will explore options - both locally and with government - to improve housing quality, provide effective strategic infrastructure and key amenities, enhance the public realm, develop skills and opportunities for employment locally (particularly as many of our deprived communities are immediately adjacent to areas of economic opportunity), and demonstrate smart and sustainable ways of living for the future which improve population health outcomes.

We will adopt a long-term approach to place-making and redefining the function and purpose of places. This will include the regeneration of our more deprived neighbourhoods to ensure that they are not left behind but where more direct intervention and funding programme alignment is required. Participatory models of community engagement and consultation will be used to ensure that people can shape the future of their communities and take meaningful ownership of this process. The recent LCR Land Commission (see the case study below) demonstrates how we will do things differently within place-making.

Within this context, the LCR Spatial Development Strategy is being prepared. This statutory planning document will detail how we will consolidate and enhance quality of place, with focus on ensuring communities are sustainable, connected, accessible, complement the value of the natural environment, and promote health and wellbeing. Through the strategy, we will work with sector leaders, including the Metro Mayor's Design Champion, to develop policies and standards that underpin the high-quality homes and neighbourhoods of the future.

Case Study: Left Bank Birkenhead

Since 2019 Wirral Council has developed a framework for a transformational regeneration programme along the Left Bank of the River Mersey stretching from New Brighton to Bromborough, with a particular focus on the creation of sustainable, waterfront urban garden community in Birkenhead. This is one of the largest and most ambitious regeneration programmes in the UK with the potential to create up to 20,000 new homes over the next 20 years through a radical re-use of neglected and brownfield sites, underpinned by the emerging Local Plan.

The spatial regeneration programme has been developed alongside a comprehensive plan to create a strong economy for Wirral. This plan builds on the inherent strengths of the borough incorporating skills, business support, inward investment, innovation and town centre recovery, focusing on building resilience in the shadow of the economic impact of COVID-19 and capitalising on new opportunities for growth. Wirral Council and its partners are ambitious to deliver regeneration at scale and at pace, with high quality urban design and sustainability throughout, and a strong and resilient local economy. This is a truly integrated regeneration programme ensuring local communities are at its heart, focusing on the here and now not just the future change.

The scale of Birkenhead's regeneration programme presents a once in a generation opportunity to transform the town through an integrated "One Place One Plan" approach drawing together economy, environment and people. This is of benefit to local communities and businesses, the wider Wirral economy and to the Liverpool City Region as a whole.

Case Study: Land Commission

The Liverpool City Region Land Commission report was published in July 2021, facilitated by the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES). This report thinks imaginatively about democratic land reform and sets out several recommendations to review and make best use of land across the City Region for community wealth building, with a focus on publicly owned land and is the first of its kind in England.

Progressing forward, the Combined Authority and partners will review policy recommendations set out in the report to determine how best use of publicly owned land (in the first instance) across the City Region can be achieved to help deliver fairness and social inclusivity for City Region residents. The following policy recommendation areas will be considered:

- New visions, frameworks, and governance for publicly owned land in the City Region.
- Methods to advance land use in terms of social, environmental, and economic agendas.
- Improved use of data on land use in the City Region, and
- Lobbying government on making best use of publicly owned land in the City Region.

Revitalise town centres and community hubs so that they are renewed focal points for social infrastructure, communities, entrepreneurs, and businesses

High streets and town centres form the hearts of communities. We will develop a holistic 'whole place' approach, recognising that the interaction between business growth, housing, health and wellbeing, skills, culture, tourism, connectivity, and transport affects the success of a town centre. We will look to support town centres to maximise their economic and social potential, ensuring they can continue to thrive as the economy evolves, and explore their economic relationships with the regional centre. Cultural activities, creating attractive local amenities that play to the City Region's distinctiveness, and the potential to reimagine the role that our wealth of historical buildings can play in communities, will all be crucial to developing the distinctive identities of towns. This will ensure they enhance quality of life and access to opportunity for local people, whilst further instilling civic pride and adding to the diversity of the tourism offer.

We will look to build on the recommendations of the Liverpool City Region Town Centres Commission, launched in 2020 by the Metro Mayor. The remit of the Commission was to create a new vision for town centres in the City Region, identifying ways to secure their long-term prosperity and stability, and achieve social and economic transformative change for their communities, particularly important given the structural challenges facing our town centres.

Actions flowing from this will directly dovetail ambitious plans from local authorities for their town centres. To date, our local authorities have been successful in being awarded £115m in Towns Fund monies across St Helens, Southport, Runcorn, and Birkenhead. The impact of this fund is already tangible in terms of stakeholder collaboration between public, private and third sector groups, greater focus on strategic and holistic business planning, and leveraged investment into new projects. This will in turn create additional revenues through additional visitors, generating wealth and further building investor confidence.

Case Study: LCR Towns Fund

St Helens: nearly £39m of funding will unlock £140m of investment across 6 Priority Interventions: Glass Futures Ph.2; Town Centre Living and Regeneration; St Helens Heritage World; Healthy Communities; Connected Places; and Digital Infrastructure.

Southport: £37.5m of Towns Fund awarded to a range of projects across 3 Priority Areas: Strengthen the Visitor Economy; Diversifying our Economy; and infrastructure to Underpin Growth. Projects include Southport Market repurposing including new business development; Marine Lake Events Centre – a high quality, distinctive entertainment and business events venue; the Light Fantastic -spectacular light and water show and international and national visitor attraction enhancing the viability and attractiveness of development sites in the waterfront area; The Enterprise Arcade – a new business incubator space for creative, digital and tech sector; and Les Transformations de Southport – a public realm programme to create a more accessible and well-connected, high quality public spaces, providing priority for walking and cycling to support of clean growth, businesses and improving the health and wellbeing of communities as well as encouraging longer dwell times.

Runcorn: £25m of funding, matched with £35m local investment will deliver 7 investment propositions: Runcorn Station Quarter; Creative and Digital Skills Centre; Brindley Theatre Enhancement; recreating the links between Bridgewater and Manchester Ship Canals; Town centre new homes; High Street Connectivity; and a Health and Education Hub.

Birkenhead: £25m Towns Fund bid to deliver a range of projects including the Transport Shed (transport-based heritage attraction); Waterfront Animation and connectivity project; Education Engagement Network; Egerton House repurposing for small businesses; Wellbeing and Opportunity Hub; StartYard creative biosphere; Future Yard music skills venue; Sustainability Central; Argyle Street Creative hub; and Expo Village.

Ensure that the city centre remains a key hub for our economy, continuing to provide the key interface for exchange of ideas, driving innovation, and culture

- Economically, the city centre is of central importance to the City Region. Estimates indicate that it generates around a fifth of the City Region's GVA.
- It is our largest employment generating area - around 112,000 jobs are located there representing nearly one-in-five jobs in the City Region.
- The city centre is also home to nearly 6,000 business – more than 10% of the total City Region.

The city centre is a focal point for innovation and fuelling our knowledge intensive business activity. It is a regional, national, and increasingly international innovation location centred on the Knowledge Quarter which is home to a concentration of knowledge economy assets. With the location of the universities and world class facilities, the focus on a city centre that catalyses innovation and drives up productivity will grow.

Our policy and investment activity will therefore continue to support the City Centre – as it will other locations of knowledge intensive activity across the City Region – so that clusters of knowledge intensive business and employment are accelerated, together with continued support for key enabling sectors such as finance, legal, and other professional services. This will foster agglomeration effects, develop a critical mass of investment, scale up activity, and support commercialisation from key innovation assets. This focus will be central to creating sustainable, high-quality jobs, and in attracting and retaining world class talent.

The city centre is the focus for our cultural and visitor economy offer – ranging from the iconic Waterfront, and our extensive museums and galleries, to our music venues, Arena and Convention Centre Liverpool, and the ongoing supply of hotel stock that adds to the character and overall critical mass of the city centre. The cultural and visitor economy sectors have been hugely impacted by the pandemic, however, and so must also adapt to the long-term impacts of COVID-19 in terms of visitor sentiment and the way tourism services will be consumed in the future.

In the long term, however, the city centre retains the ability to draw in large numbers of domestic and foreign visitors, and the base conditions that form the attractiveness of the city centre have not changed. We will continue to ensure that it is a leading asset for our 'global cultural capital' offer and anchors the visitor economy. Complementing this will be the need to ensure the growth of our creative and digital industries, both in the city centre and across the City Region, recognising that these industries can be catalysts for wider change.

We recognise the importance that the city centre has not only in attracting investment, but also in helping facilitate and complement wider activity around innovation, culture and the visitor economy that is happening across the City Region. Through key projects such as Eureka! Mersey, Shakespeare of the North and other new assets supported through funding streams such as Levelling Up Fund and Town Deals, we are already building on the city centre's world class offer to attract visitors and create new experiences for residents across the city region.

We will continue to develop public transport and active travel to and within the city centre, with an overarching focus on sustainability. People and places are generally well connected into the city centre, and with our focus on hydrogen buses, a new fleet of trains, minimising car journeys and therefore improving air quality, there is a clear long-term plan for the shift to lower carbon, multi-modal transport options that will in turn create a clean and attractive city centre, further enhancing its liveability and vibrancy.

Harness our unique global cultural capital to support economic development, improve the quality of place, be a source of wellbeing, and strengthen our international profile.

Building on unique cultural strengths and through rebuilding the visitor economy, we will continue to capitalise on the legacy of the European Capital of Culture and the ongoing Borough of Culture experience, building sustainable destination partnerships to invest in product and the promotion of the city region. We will develop initiatives that weave culture and place-making together, further enhancing the profile, branding and investment opportunities of places. This will also create shareable reasons for local people, as well as domestic and international tourists, to visit and reconnect with places within the city region and provide an enhanced sense of ownership and belonging.

By 2035:

Our innovative place-making approach to developing our economy will have consolidated and enhanced the quality of place throughout the city region. Our communities will be healthy, sustainable, and connected, with access to the natural environment - making us a highly distinctive and desirable place for residents, visitors, and businesses alike. This will be evident in the following outcomes:

- **Increased supply, and choice, of quality, sustainable housing:** good quality homes will help attract and retain talent, improve health and wellbeing and in doing so, boost economic and employment growth.
- **Thriving high streets and town centres:** achieved through sustained town centre employment, reduced vacancy rates, increased footfall as a result of diversification, and engagement with the local community.
- **A city centre that is a hub of prosperity and innovation for the whole city region:** as part of a wider approach to support our key clusters of knowledge intensive activity, culture and visitor economies, retail offer, and distinctive living environment.

Integrated infrastructure for a connected city region

Our objective: to adopt a fully strategic approach to infrastructure that delivers clean, sustainable growth and shared prosperity for all our communities and businesses.

We will transform our energy, transport, and digital infrastructure to deliver sustainable economic growth, protect the environment, improve public health, attract investment, and link people and businesses to opportunities across the city region and beyond. A modern, low carbon infrastructure system will be the underpinning enabler for us to deliver these ambitions.

How we will deliver:

Future ready the city region's infrastructure and develop an overarching strategic, integrated approach across transport, energy, digital, and grey infrastructure

A shift towards a truly integrated, strategic, clean infrastructure approach through connected policy, planning, investment, and delivery, will result in an inclusive infrastructure system. One that maximises its role as an economic enabler, connects people to employment, services, and amenities; that helps to create resilient, healthy, active communities, addressing social inclusion through access to transport and digital services; and one that supports a shift to a low carbon economy. It will require enhancing collaborations across agencies, with landowners, and with those who deliver. It will also challenge some historic assumptions and conventions about how we plan for movement.

The first step in delivering this is the LCRCA's Strategic Infrastructure Plan developed alongside the Spatial Development Strategy. This outlines the principles and requirements for this approach. Future infrastructure developments will enable clean and low carbon solutions, as well as determining sustainable multi-modal transport that connects communities, employment centres, and amenities.

Prioritise a robust and joined up approach to green and blue infrastructure, fully accounting for the city region's natural capital assets and green spaces

- Stretching from our famous coastline to our estuaries, our urban parks and green spaces, the richness and diversity of the Liverpool City Region's natural environment is unique.
- The city region is 80% blue/green space, which is more than any other city in the UK.

Our industrial legacy has left us with a nature-deprived landscape despite having some of the most biodiverse areas in the UK within our borders. We are committed to nature recovery and will work with key stakeholders such as housing providers, community organisations, and the Mersey Forest to enhance the natural capital of the city region and create and sustain green spaces – with efforts informed by the pioneering Natural Capital Baseline Assessment produced for the Combined Authority and led by Liverpool John Moores University. This work is important given the strategic imperative around climate change mitigation, as well as air quality, improved health outcomes, and living environments – crucial for both for existing residents and as part of the wider quality of life offer for attracting and retaining talent. This ambition will be supported through the Spatial Development Strategy and the Strategic Infrastructure Plan.

Connect all homes, businesses, and communities to the ultrafast gigabit capability

The Combined Authority, through a joint venture (see LCR Connect case study below) is developing a core fibre network throughout the city region. The route, at over 220km long, will span all local authority areas providing the enabling infrastructure for full fibre connectivity. Combining this level of connectivity with our world-leading High-Performance Computing and AI capabilities, the Liverpool 5G testbed, and the Civic Data Co-operative, is an all-encompassing "Smart City Region" approach. This presents a transformational opportunity to create an integrated data ecosystem and innovation platform with huge potential, supporting the development of our data and AI ambitions. It will also be key to enabling an increase in hybrid working across significant segments of the workforce.

Case Study: LCR Connect

City Region partners are committed to a major increase in the proportion of domestic and commercial premises with access to ultrafast and gigabit speeds and the proportion of businesses and households with access to ultrafast connections.

The Combined Authority is leading on this work with LCR Connect, a £30m joint venture which is installing a 212km full-fibre, ultrafast, gigabit-capable network infrastructure across all six constituent local authorities of the Liverpool City Region. This is a transformational upgrade for the city region delivering a £105m boost to the local economy in its first phase, and it is estimated that with 100% full fibre coverage across the City Region, building on this network, the economic boost could be worth up to £1bn, creating thousands of local job and training opportunities.

The network will be aimed initially at businesses, institutions, and commercial customers, and will deliver a competitive advantage, including through improved cloud connectivity, putting them in prime position to lead the way in a range of sectors which are already growing steadily in the Liverpool City Region. From health and life sciences to artificial intelligence and advanced manufacturing, this network will supercharge growth and entrepreneurship in these areas and more. It will make the city region an even more attractive place to do business, start up, grow, relocate, and invest, and help to level up the City Region with a fibre network that matches the ambition of its residents and businesses.

Strengthen and improve the city region's public transport services and networks that support modal shift and serve our economic ambitions

- For those living near Merseyrail stations, the network quickly and efficiently connects residents with key employment areas and services in the city region. However, rail connectivity is much weaker away from the Merseyrail network. Those living away from the rail network commute by car or bus.
- Evidence and residents survey data shows that there is room for improvement, particularly by bus and those who wish to travel by bike.
- Therefore, mobility issues need to be minimised, so all our residents have the opportunities of full access to employment and services.
- Liverpool's rail connectivity with other UK cities is limited, given its lack of direct service links to many locations. This is especially true for a city of its size; of the 20 cities with better connectivity, 13 have a smaller population than Liverpool.

Effective transport infrastructure is fundamental to both levelling up and post-pandemic recovery. It is crucial to living, working, and getting around the city region. To be future ready, it must be clean, sustainable, affordable, and accessible; enabling all people and communities to thrive. These components are all interdependent and form part of the vision that will be detailed within the next LCR Local Transport Plan (LTP4) - to build a fully integrated and clean London style system, which also articulates our contribution to the national Transport Decarbonisation Plan and supports our ambitions for an inclusive economy.

The City Region also has a clear transport pipeline, in which delivery will be supported with £710m for major low carbon transport enhancements through the Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS), in addition to a further £37 million from the Levelling Up Fund. This will also directly support the development of an inclusive economy, with the funding helping to ensure that transport becomes a clear social and economic enabler through connecting people to jobs, learning, and leisure opportunities, and through increased social contact.

a) Local bus transformation

Bus provision across the city region will be efficient, fully integrated with the rest of the public transport system and deliver value for money. We are beginning the process of transforming bus journeys and transitioning to a zero-emissions bus fleet in line with the Metro Mayor's Vision for Bus – a plan to deliver a bus network that connects every part of the region, which is simple, punctual, reliable, and affordable. This became particularly important in the wake of COVID-19, in tackling fears over public transport use and ensuring a sustainable transport led recovery.

The Combined Authority has identified franchising as the leading emerging bus reform option to deliver bus services in the city region, and LCR's Bus Services Improvement Plan (BSIP) has been developed as required by the national bus strategy – 'Bus Back Better'. The key principles of the BSIP include the role of the bus in supporting clean recovery, access to work, leisure, education, and mainstreaming bus so it is not a last resort form of travel.

In 2021, the Combined Authority purchased an initial fleet of 20 hydrogen powered buses to run along the Liverpool-St Helens corridor, complementing a £30m investment in bus priority interventions along the same route, making the journey quicker, easier, and more comfortable. Both projects have been designed to be scalable depending on government support, and we have plans to roll the scheme out to further routes to complement wider investments within hybrid and electric buses.

b) New rail rolling stock and addressing rail capacity constraints

The Combined Authority's £460m procurement of a new fleet of efficient, clean, and higher capacity trains to serve the Merseyrail electrified network is a highly significant development. Seven of the trains have been fitted with batteries which could extend the network to reach more places across the city region and beyond. This will further build on the uniqueness of our local management of services, allowing opportunities for greater efficiency. Rather than leasing stock, it will be publicly owned, which is another first for our city region.

We will seek further control of the stations and infrastructure on the Merseyrail network. Of equal importance is the commitment to addressing capacity constraints and improvements for key stations, including Liverpool Central Station. This is the third busiest station in the North and is key enabling infrastructure to the prosperity of the city centre. We will also increase the reach of the network to new places in the city region, illustrated by proposed new stations in Headbolt Lane in Kirkby and the site of the former St James in Liverpool's Baltic Triangle.

c) Supporting walking and cycling across the Liverpool City Region

COVID-19 further underlined the importance of walking and cycling, and of its centrality to connecting people to their local district and town centres. We are committed to our active travel vision of enabling walking and cycling to be the most popular mode of travel for short, everyday journeys. We will work proactively to encourage people to use their cars less, delivering a transformative increase in walking and cycling across 31 key routes across three phases. This will make it easier, safer, and more attractive for people to get around by bike or on foot, supporting health uplifts and the city region's clean growth ambitions. This will build on foundations of the LCR Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and of the wider activities to develop walkable, attractive, and more productive town centres.

d) Securing HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail

The city region and our neighbours are unequivocally clear that a new twin-track line is required connecting the City Region to Manchester via Manchester airport, and also providing a high-speed link for services to London, meeting the stated transformational aspirations of Northern Powerhouse Rail. This position is shared by Transport for the North and by leaders across the North of England.

A Northern Powerhouse Rail would form a 'belt' between Liverpool / Manchester / Sheffield / Leeds / Hull, enabling increased service patterns and frequency, providing a stronger link to Manchester's international airport, and helping to ensure that we are central to, and fully contributing towards, the success of the wider northern economy. Critically, this will also free up capacity for freight and logistics, which brings national economic and environmental benefits. Enhanced capacity will also be crucial in maximising the benefits of the LCR Freeport and in decarbonising freight movements, and providing a strong connection to Humber Freeport, therefore further supporting the reality of a Northern Powerhouse based on tangible and seamless trade networks.

In light of the publication of the national Integrated Rail Plan and the downgrades to the original plans, we will continue to work closely with government and authorities from across the north of England to work up the most optimal solutions possible for our city region and the North, underpinned by key principles of extra capacity for both passenger trains and freight, the necessity for faster journeys, and minimising disruption from the upgrade of existing lines.

Support the clean growth of freight and logistics

Our multi-modal assets - including the port, inland ports, Liverpool John Lennon Airport, the Manchester Ship Canal, proximity to national arterial road networks, and the planned major intermodal freight interchange at Parkside in St Helens (also a Freeport tax site) - mean the city region will continue to build its infrastructure and capacity as a hub for freight and logistics that helps address national inefficiencies within the industry. We will ensure that the continued growth of this sector does not come at the expense of the natural environment or people's health and wellbeing.

We will explore the potential for freight and logistics to be served by alternative, clean fuels such as renewable electricity and hydrogen. A 'State of Freight' programme is building the granular evidence so urgently needed on freight movements, including understanding the movement of goods from the Port of Liverpool to inland destinations. This will help us develop the right solutions that support rationalising movements. Furthermore, with Freeport designation comes the opportunity to leverage funding streams and test new low carbon technologies, both within port settings and through movement across key sites and beyond.

Ensure that LCR's businesses have the right physical infrastructure to grow

A central enabler to the delivery of LCR's growth ambitions is to provide the right mix of sites, buildings and facilities across the city region, which are attractive to the market, facilitate investment and are essential to both employment and productivity. Key to this, is the right quality and variety of space to achieve businesses' growth ambitions.

LCR will ensure that employment sites - supporting all areas of the economy - are able to develop and grow to help maximise the volume of good jobs created and sustained. Mobility issues need to be minimised and many residents face challenges in moving between regional centres that are constraining access to employment and services. The actions set out in this Plan to improve the public transport system across the city region will ensure that there is full access to employment opportunities for all.

LCR policy and investment activity will also continue to support clusters of knowledge intensive business and employment, as set out in the 'Maximising Innovation for People, Places, and Businesses' chapter. This will foster agglomeration effects, develop a critical mass of investment, scale up activity, and support commercialisation of research emerging from local innovation assets.

Case Study: Knowsley Business Park & Mersey Reach, Sefton

Knowsley Business Park is one of the largest employment areas in Europe and the second largest of its kind in the North West. It is home to approximately 800 businesses – including some of the UK's most successful businesses including Amazon, Matalan, QVC and many others – and, with over 15,000 jobs, is a key employment hub for the Liverpool City Region.

It currently contributes £214 million per annum in Gross Value Added to the city region's economy – with key sectors include manufacturing, distribution and online retail, transport and communication, and banking, finance and insurance, reflective of the breadth of offer at the park encompassing industrial, warehouse and office uses.

The Business Park's strong transport links across the Liverpool City Region and wider North West Modern logistics alongside its dedicated, state-of-art, inter-modal rail freight terminal mean it is key asset to the city region's logistics sector – complementing the City Region's Freeport and natural geographic strengths.

Recent years have seen increased demand for space from end users in growth sectors – with new global business such as Contenur and Unlin investing in facilities and Amazon expanding its already sizeable presence. As successful city region's businesses grow, Knowsley Business Park has the capability to offer many types and sizes of accommodation, which has been the case for businesses such as Applied Nutrition, Dams and eStar. This strong demand is further encouraging speculative development of new units, offering new accommodation for the businesses of the future as the city region's economy evolves.

Mersey Reach is an award-winning 325m sq.ft. commercial development in Sefton. The scheme will support the creation of over 300 jobs. Phase 1, consisting of four units totalling 112,500 sq.ft. is already full let to a mixture of high growth SMEs and larger established firms. Phase 2, which will consist of 12 units totalling 102,000 sq. ft in a range of sizes, is set to be let upon completion in 2022. Mersey Reach is regarded as an exemplar project and demonstration of Sefton's and the city region's approach to engaging with development and investment partners to revitalise key logistics infrastructure through major gateway projects.

Deliver the energy infrastructure to power the ambitions of a Net-Zero City Region

Our transformative long-term ambitions require equally long-term planning on energy infrastructure to deliver a marketplace that connects the grid, suppliers, and consumers. Global population growth, an escalating increase in demand, and the volatility of transition to a renewables-led system is a real challenge for economy and society. The city region will step up to support the scale of response necessary. We will develop renewable energy assets, including offshore wind and tidal – the latter a “game changer” in predictable energy for the City Region and beyond - to power homes, businesses, and the clean growth of the economy. And we will work to create the infrastructure necessary to charge electric vehicles and supply shore to ship power to reduce ship’s emissions whilst berthed, supporting the delivery of the Maritime 2050 strategy ambition of zero emission shipping.

We will also build on existing working relationships with energy infrastructure providers to deliver connections for key projects such as Liverpool Waters and Knowledge Quarter Liverpool, and who can support investment ahead of need for the infrastructure to cope with electricity demand and to enable transition to a net zero carbon economy.

By 2035:

We will be a fully connected city region where all people, businesses and communities have access to the opportunities that our economy offers. Our infrastructure will be clean, sustainable, and accessible, supporting climate change adaptation and mitigation. This will be evident in the following outcomes:

- **Successful modal shift:** where transport reform has resulted in a sustainable and affordable London style system that means levels of walking and cycling, rail, bus, and ferry patronage are the primary modes for journeys (targets to be set out in the next Local Transport Plan).
- **Renewable energy generation that powers our ambitions:** with an increase in the level and proportion of energy generated in the city region from renewable sources.
- **World class digital infrastructure and connectivity:** through LCR Connect, an exponential increase in the proportion of domestic and commercial premises with access to ultrafast and gigabit speeds and the proportion of businesses and households with access to ultrafast connections.
- **Enrichment of blue and green infrastructure:** the process of nature recovery has begun, contributing to a marked improvement in air quality, health outcomes and living environments as well as biodiversity across the LCR.
- **Clean and highly efficient freight and logistics:** with a rebalancing of goods movements reflecting the importance and location of the Port of Liverpool and the city region’s proximity to supply chains and large urban conurbations.

HOW WE WILL DELIVER THE PLAN

The ambitions and objectives set out in this Plan will be delivered collaboratively, working as one City Region to deliver a prosperous and productive economy that is effective and inclusive for all people and places. By harnessing the potential of devolution and empowering communities to shape their own futures, this vision will be achieved together.

Aerial shot of Liverpool waterfront



Principles for delivery

Informing all activities – from developing policy and strategy, through to project development, pipeline progression and investment - will be the following guiding principles, ensuring the realisation of the city region's full potential, and embracing the opportunity to do things differently.

- **Collaboration by default** – we will deliver through constructive and effective partnerships, both within and across the city region, and with external stakeholders. Existing working relationships will be strengthened: between the constituent local authorities of the Liverpool City Region and the Combined Authority; with government; with the LEP/Growth Platform; and with delivery partners across the business base, industry, academia, and the social economy. Importantly, we will always seek to embrace opportunities to collaborate with near neighbours, the wider north of England, national government, and internationally, where places can work together to achieve common aims and overcome shared challenges.
- **Community empowerment** – communities have the best knowledge of places and how they can thrive. For this reason, the opportunities of devolution will be extended to all communities across the city region as much as possible, engaging with, and empowering them to shape, influence, and deliver on strategic aims in a way that will be most effective and most significant. These approaches will be underpinned by community wealth building and social value.
- **Agility and dynamism** – the city region will be willing to take risks and pioneer new approaches where there is a clear strategic imperative and a robust evidence base for action. Partners will maintain a responsiveness to events, innovation, and the specific needs of communities to ensure that interventions evolve alongside the city region.
- **Pragmatism** – to maximise the return on investment for public money, small, quick wins are considered, pursued, and valued as much as large-scale transformational interventions.
- **Accountability** – openness and transparency with partners, stakeholders, and people from across the city region, will continue to evolve across everything that we do, driven by a culture of strong governance and continuous improvement.

Most importantly, all collective efforts will reflect the key themes which pervade through this document – a clean and green economy, inclusivity, and globally projecting the city region's innovative economy.



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