

WEST LONDON VISION FOR GROWTH

Action Plan

June 2016

Contents

- 1) Introduction
- 2) West London's growth objectives
- 3) The sub-regional economy
- 4) How we will deliver the vision
- 5) Principles
- 6) Approach
- 7) The Action Plan
- 8) Resources

1) Introduction: West London's Vision for Growth

The West London Alliance (WLA) is a partnership of seven London councils – Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon and Hounslow. The Alliance is responsible for driving forward delivery of the West London Vision for Growth, which has the goal of ensuring that the sub-region remains a thriving and prosperous part of a premier world city, with highly profitable businesses investing in it, successful residents and resilient communities.

This document sets out a clear plan for delivering the Vision in the years ahead. It has been developed in collaboration with WLA member boroughs and strategic partners.

2) West London's Growth Objectives

West London's Vision for Growth sets out six core objectives:

1. To achieve a **step change in partnership with business and industry** to facilitate sustainable economic growth
2. To **increase small business start-up and survival rates** through business support hubs, higher exports and focused **collaboration with higher education institutions**
3. To **remove the skills gap and support low-paid residents in work** to enable them to achieve pay levels that can sustain and improve their living arrangements
4. To radically **improve success rates for employment programmes for residents**, with all young people in education, employment or training
5. To **deliver at least 71,000 homes** as part of a housing programme that meets the needs of our residents and supports growth
6. To **create and maintain thriving town centres** which are hubs for work and living

3) The Opportunity

West London is a large and relatively affluent place with a growing population of over two million people and the second largest economy in the country. GVA per worker is the second highest in London. There are however a number of potential constraints to economic growth such as increasingly unaffordable housing, growing congestion, stubbornly high levels of economic inactivity, a wide variation of economic outcomes between different groups and, in line with much of the rest of the UK, weak productivity growth.

West London is well placed to address these challenges however. The sub-region makes a number of unique and significant contributions to the London and wider UK economies through its assets such as Heathrow Airport and Old Oak Common, as well as major growth opportunities such as the Golden Mile and Brent Cross amongst others. West London has excellent radial infrastructure in and out of the City,

and also out to the wider country. Its growing population is well-educated, enterprising, and flexible thanks to a high quality education and training system.

The forthcoming devolution of Business Rates combined with a wider shift of powers from national to local areas gives local government a direct and growing stake in the success of the wider economy, creating a greater imperative for councils to support economic growth, reduce unemployment, and encourage investment.

4) How we will deliver the Vision

The West London Vision for Growth is overseen democratically by the West London Economic Prosperity Board (WLEPB), a joint committee consisting of the Leaders of the different West London councils and supported by member chief executives. The WLEPB meets on a quarterly basis and is supported by a wider partnership of leaders from across the economy including business groups, major employers, the further education and high education sectors.

The day-to-day delivery of the Vision for Growth on behalf of the WLEPB is through the West London Growth Directors Group, which consists of senior officers from each of the WLA member boroughs. The Growth Directors Group provides regular updates to the WLEPB on progress against the Vision and is responsible for the delivery of this action plan.

5) Principles

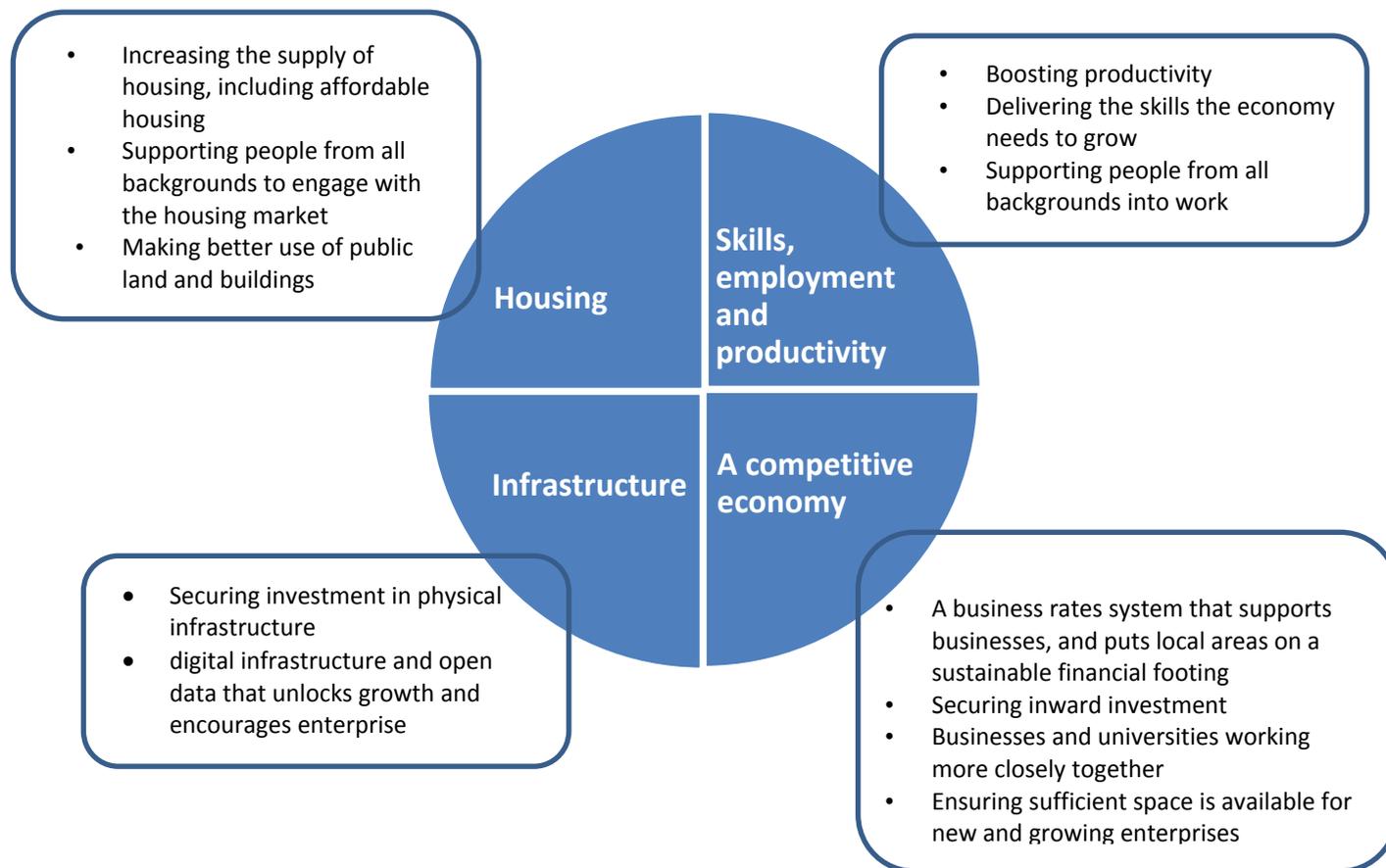
There is already a significant amount of work happening at both the borough level (e.g. town centres) and pan-London level (Skills Devolution, elements of housing). It is important that work to deliver the Vision for Growth positively supports the activity that is already happening at borough level, and adds value in the areas that are most effectively delivered by all west London members working together in a democratically accountable way. With these points in mind the following principles have been developed to guide the development of this action plan. They are:

- **Subsidiarity:** Sub-regional activity occurs where it either wouldn't otherwise happen or would be less efficient if undertaken at the national, regional or borough levels.
- **Additionality:** Activity occurs and is prioritised where action produces the greatest economic impact for the least resources.
- **Accountability:** Sub-regional activity has clearly defined objectives and outputs, is resourced, and has clear ownership.

Activity undertaken at the sub-regional level should also be deliverable, evidence-based, and focus on jointly agreed outcomes.

6) Approach

This action plan identifies four categories that allow the objectives set out in the Vision for Growth to be organised and for specific activities and areas of work to be identified for each. **The four categories are: 1) Housing 2) Productivity, Skills and Employment 3) Infrastructure and 4) A Competitive Economy.** The diagram below sets these out along with some additional detail about the associated activities which are all explained in more detail in the following section:



7) Vision for Growth Action Plan

The action plan sets out proposed activities for the short term (next twelve months), medium term (1-3 years) and long term (3+ years). The lead director for each theme is highlighted under each section. Information on the resourcing of this action plan is set out in section 8.

THEME 1) HOUSING

Core narrative: West London will only thrive if people can live and work here: we need more housing that residents can afford.

| Short Term | Medium Term | Longer Term |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with delivery of wider housing devolution in London and consider a West London development vehicle if required as part of the devolution Develop and initiate delivery of the One Public Estate Programme to create space for housing and employment Explore opportunities to give councils first refusal on buying land for housing at the existing value when other parts of the public sector are selling it | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refreshed and aligned local plans across West London to ensure consistent position on Housing, and coordinated influencing&lobbying activity at sub-regional level to increase housing supply. London Plan reflects Sub Regional housing priorities and opportunities, including those identified through the OPE programme Developments on OPE sites start on site. Menu of options developed to support people who are unable to engage with the housing market. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher net growth in the housing stock and more affordable housing Continue delivery of West London Public Land Development Pipeline |

Theme lead director: Pat Hayes

THEME 2: SKILLS, EMPLOYMENT AND PRODUCTIVITY

Core narrative: *To remain competitive we need to drive up productivity, enabling people to access the labour market and boosting their skills level.*

| Short Term | Medium Term | Longer Term |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake Area Review of Further Education provision, based on best possible labour market forecasting • Finalise a skills devolution deal for West London • Complete the current employment pilots for Working People Working Places, the Skills Escalator, and the Mental Health Trailblazer • Lobby DWP to properly fund activity Local Authorities are leading to support welfare reforms and Universal Credit • Lead design work and commissioning of the Work and Health programme to maximise opportunities for people in West London from all backgrounds to gain employment and secure housing. • Support development of West London Apprenticeship Training Agency (led by West London colleges) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of Area Review and implementation of recommendations • Refine labour market information and develop approaches to help businesses understand and describe their future skills needs • Design and develop devolved skills commissioning function for the sub-region • Evaluation of pilots and, if impact is found to be positive, establish framework for a wider roll out • Ongoing coordination with government and DWP to secure sufficient resources to implement Universal Credit • Deliver sub-regional Work and Health programme • Undertake analysis and research to support evidence-based and targeted approach to Work and Health Programme • Develop an approach to the Apprenticeship Levy to ensure that West London Councils and Businesses make a net gain. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission skills provision that meets the needs of employers. • Overall programme of employment support and a skills offer that enables people from all backgrounds to find employment, boost productivity, and support business growth |

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modelling future household income levels to understand what level and distribution of income will be needed across West London and in individual boroughs for people to be able to live in the area in the future | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify required income growth levels and embed them into sub-regional activity relating to skills and work | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing minimum household income requirements incorporated into sub-regional employment activity so that people are able to live and work here in the future |
|--|---|--|

Theme lead director: Cath Shaw

THEME 3: INFRASTRUCTURE

Core narrative: Physical and digital Infrastructure in West London need to keeps pace with population and housing growth in order to enhance the competitiveness of the sub-region and its attractiveness as a place for businesses and entrepreneurs to invest and grow in.

| Short Term | Medium Term | Longer Term |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model the current and future costs to the economy associated with inadequate orbital transport infrastructure and identify cost effective solutions • Compare boroughs’ work on “smart cities” and Open Data to identify opportunities and issues that are best addressed sub-regionally • Influence content of forthcoming Mayor’s Transport Strategy the Sub-Regional Transport Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree shared priorities for physical and digital infrastructure lobbying and investment in the sub-region, based on the needs and opportunities identified through modelling; and develop a business case for investment • Agree a “Smart West London” strategy; agree and implement any quick wins | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sub-regional infrastructure priorities embedded into WLA member local plans, a refreshed London Plan and the forthcoming London Transport Plan • Implement it and establish West London as a technologically forward-thinking and enabled economy. • Agreed investment pipeline with TfL and Government that addresses long-term WLA infrastructure priorities |

Theme lead director: TBC

THEME 4: A COMPETITIVE ECONOMY

Core narrative: Much of the work to make places great for businesses is already done at the Borough level. At the sub-region we need to focus on broadening and deepening the Business Rates base, boosting inward investment, and ensuring local enterprise benefits from public procurement.

| Short Term | Medium Term | Longer Term |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modelling projected Business Rate bases by borough across the sub-region to inform coordinated response to Business Rates devolution. Understand options for sub-regional pooling and redistribution of business rates. Align with existing national and London work on BR and wider fiscal devolution • Review approaches to inward investment and agree scope of work. • Align existing West London Procurement Strategy with Vision for Growth, particularly in relation to supporting local businesses • Identify approaches to supporting economic and business growth through developing closer partnerships between universities and business. • Map available workspace by use class and project this into the future based on development pipelines. Assess this against anticipated future growth sectors and mitigate the impacts of permitted development. Align with GLA incubator space project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop options for strategic response to BR and fiscal devolution that focus on delivering maximum benefit to West London and are consistent with wider London and national fiscal devolution activity • If there is evidence of positive economic impact then agree to develop an inward investment strategy for West London • Greater value of WLA procurement spend retained within the West London Economy • Working with the HE sector agree and develop a model for closer working between universities and business | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong west London economy underpinned by a supportive sub-regional approach to Business Rates retention. • West London Inward Investment function established and focusing on attracting major employers and investors to the sub-region in a targeted, evidence-based way • Higher levels of business satisfaction and improved business survival rates • Universities and businesses working together at the sub-regional level to stimulate innovation and create employment |

Theme lead director: Brendon Walsh

8) Resourcing the Plan

It is important that this action plan reflects the true priorities of the sub-region in terms of growth objectives, and that it is deliverable within the resources available to it. There are three categories of resource requirements associated with its delivery:

- 1) **Leadership resource:** At the sub-regional level there is a focus on influencing and lobbying at a high level with a range of external bodies including central government departments, the GLA and TfL. For this reason it is important for there to be sufficient leadership capacity in place to drive the broad vision agenda forward. In addition to the WLA Director and the WLA Head of Growth, Skills and Employment, a borough growth director has been named against each of the four categories above who are responsible for ensuring sufficient leadership is in place to drive forward that category at a chief officer level both within the WLA and externally with partners.
- 2) **Insight, research and Analysis:** A number of the activities set out in the action plan represent analytical research that can be commissioned on a case-by-case e.g. understanding the impacts of changes in commercial office space supply in response to permitted development, modelling the economic costs of insufficient orbital infrastructure, understanding the impacts and opportunities associated with Business Rates devolution, or developing a strong base of labour market information. It is anticipated that the WLA will commission between two and three significant pieces of research annually.
- 3) **On-going programme and project delivery:** Some elements of the action plan set out above are being delivered within existing resources, particularly in relation to the Productivity, Skills and Employment theme e.g. Area Review or the Work and Health Programme. Other aspects have been identified as priority areas by Chief Executives but are not included within the current budget envelope e.g. making better use of public land, developing a devolved skills commissioning function, developing a sub-regional approach to infrastructure, or developing closer ties with the university sector. If this action plan is approved these will need to be resourced effectively.