

# Economy and Skills

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This means:

- Developing and improving strategic sites (employment and housing)
- Modelling transport infrastructure and services to support future economic growth
- Supporting business growth and innovation
- Developing skills for employment opportunities, reducing worklessness and the impact of social reform

## Why is this a priority for the partners?

- ✓ The North Wales economy is at risk of lagging behind other regions of the UK. Major investments are needed in the region by Governments - the partners need to help make the case to secure those investments;
- ✓ Flintshire is the highest performing local economy in North Wales. We need to retain our competitive edge for the wider regional economy to grow and develop; and
- ✓ The partners are major employers and buyers of goods and services. We have influence over job creation and local business development.

## What is the evidence behind this story?

- The key sub-regional business sectors of advanced manufacturing, automotive, aerospace, food production and energy have proved to be resilient during the past decade but now face an uncertain future with political developments in Europe.
- Flintshire is the highest performing county in the region for Gross Added Value (GVA) - but the region as a whole lags well behind the UK with the GVA per head for North Wales being 86% of that of the UK (2015).
- UK Government investment in regional growth in England could be a threat to securing investment and trade in North Wales, as those regions become more competitive.
- There are skills gaps forecast for the region to grow both our key business sectors and to help employers (including PSB partners) with an aging workforce replace experienced employees over time. There is a replacement demand of at least 30% for skilled trades in each key business sector (energy and environment, advanced manufacturing, construction) across the region, and whilst 17% of employers across the region offered apprenticeships in 2016, this can still be increased.
- There are labour supply shortages in the region, for the needs of employers (including PSB partners), with the challenge to bring as many 'economically active' people into employment as possible.

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## What are we committed to doing?

- ✓ The North Wales Region is about to present a North Wales Economic Growth Deal Bid to the UK and Welsh Governments - we will support this Bid
- ✓ We will take local action to support the Bid in the areas of sites and premises, housing growth, transport infrastructure and services, business growth and innovation, skills and worklessness
- ✓ The Regional Skills Partnership has set out the current and future needs of employers for a skilled and ready regional workforce. We will support this strategy as employers

## What specific actions will we take to support these commitments?

- ✓ Assist the development of strategic employment and housing sites in Flintshire
- ✓ Review our land asset strategies to support the release of land for employment or housing development
- ✓ Support the case for investment in local transport services such as the North East Wales Metro
- ✓ Review our own transport policies to encourage employees to use public transport to get to work, and work more agilely, to reduce traffic congestion
- ✓ Review our own procurement policies to secure community benefits for local and sub-regional suppliers of goods and services
- ✓ Implement measures to promote the public and third sectors as positive career choices
- ✓ Work with our existing workforce and partner providers to provide skills and qualifications to enable career progression and development
- ✓ Protect and develop our own apprenticeship programmes as employers
- ✓ Work with the Careers Service, schools, further and higher education, and employers to give young people the widest range of career options to help meet the needs of employers for recruitment

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## Where should we see an impact?

- ✓ Levels of local unemployment reduced
- ✓ Numbers of apprenticeship places maintained or increased
- ✓ Access to employment improved
- ✓ Supporting inactive people to move into employment
- ✓ Access to and quality of careers advice services improved
- ✓ Business growth and new business investments on key employment sites
- ✓ Transport services connecting communities to places of work improved
- ✓ The numbers of people choosing public transport to get to work
- ✓ House building programmes for people to live locally for local jobs
- ✓ In-work poverty reduced
- ✓ Health inequalities reduced

## Links with other priorities:

- ✓ **Well-being and Independent Living** – building and strengthening the care sector
- ✓ **Resilient Communities** – further developing community ownership models including Community Asset Transfers (CATS), micro social enterprises and community shares
- ✓ **Environment** – reducing the impacts of climate change
- ✓ **Community Safety** – reducing re-offending