



About the Thames Valley and Swindon Chamber of Commerce

Thames Valley is the UK's true turbo-economy; the most successful region outside of London for attracting inward investment and a significant origin of goods and services exported. Swindon Chamber represents businesses of all sizes across an array of sectors, including significant clusters of financial and professional services, life sciences and technology companies.

Aim and Objective

Endorsed by the region's only accredited Chamber, the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce, this statement summarises the core local policy priorities the Swindon Chamber will support throughout 2020.

The objective is to ensure that politicians, public policymakers and other key stakeholders understand what the business community in the area consider important and decision makers should focus on delivering. It is also an invitation to those partners to engage with business and the Swindon Chamber to help shape, frame and deliver solutions that will secure the economic prosperity of the local area and wider Thames Valley region.

Local Policy Priorities

The Swindon Chamber has identified several local policy priorities:

- Advocate for the strengthening of regional infrastructure networks, specifically:
 - Communicating the benefits of Western Rail Link to Heathrow (WRLtH);
 - Maintaining support for the timely expansion of Heathrow Airport;
 - Calling for investment along the Great Western railway (GWR) line to free capacity and maximise the benefits to Swindon of being within 'the golden hour' of London;
 - Securing the commitment to deliver key local infrastructure projects and road safety improvement measures, including improvements to the M4, lobbying for the construction of a Junction 16A, a new Western link road with the A419 to the north of the town/south of Cricklade and the extension of Thamesdown Drive to connect with the town centre.
 - Reigniting discussions around the strategic road improvement of the A420 – including its re-trunking to a motorway standard.
- Ensure that Swindon town centre continues to have the appropriate financial injection and operational leadership to manage, maintain and improve services and associated infrastructure.
- Continue our calls for a long-term 'Vision' that aligns economic and land-use/spatial planning to help maximise impact and most effectively shape the area's future.
- To raise debate over the beneficial extension of the OxCam Arc Growth Corridor to include Swindon as an active contributor to the wider economic uplift envisaged.
- Identification and delivery of new strategic employment sites within or adjacent to the town to meet the needs of local business expansion and inward investment.

- Challenge the relevant public authorities to more actively engage in impactful foreign direct investment activity.
- Maintain support to existing exporters and help new businesses grow their trade activity.
- To support the principle of developing a knowledge-driven innovation led science park. Make the appropriate representations for the adoption of appropriate policy to support its delivery.
- Foster stronger business-focused relationships with all levels of education.

Strategic Policy Background

As part of the wider Thames Valley region the Swindon Chamber will support the activities and priorities of the TVCC's Business Manifesto 2020 and its five main priorities behind which the whole Chamber network will focus, summarised as:

- Continue our direct support for a business solution to securing the Western Rail Link to Heathrow (WRLtH).
- Promote the need for a comprehensive and resilient infrastructure network, inc. the expansion of Heathrow Airport, that will support the region's future and sustainable economic growth.
- Lobby for practical, real-world interventions to ensure any business impacts of BREXIT are mitigated by frictionless trade and investment and freedom of movement for the workforce.
- Showcase improved standards of skills development, education-business partnerships and life-long learning.
- Strengthen an awareness and the commitment to delivering mental health fitness, diversity and belonging in the workplace.



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www.thamesvalleychamber.co.uk

