

# SWINDON

Local Area Assembly

Local Policy Priorities Statement 2023



## ABOUT THE THAMES VALLEY AND SWINDON LOCAL AREA ASSEMBLY

The Thames Valley is a true turbo-economy - the 'Silicon Valley' of Europe and one of the UK's most productive regions. Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce (TVCC) remains the independent voice of business, providing the regional leadership that is helping secure the future economic prosperity of the Thames Valley.

Swindon businesses are shaped by looking east, toward the Thames Valley and London economies, and connectivity to Heathrow. It is part of a wider growth corridor, aimed at capitalising on the opportunities within the Thames Valley region and delivering significant economic growth. The Swindon Chamber represents businesses of all sizes across an array of sectors, including advanced engineering, environment, infrastructure and low carbon technology, health and life sciences, and technology.



## AIM AND OBJECTIVE

As the independent voice of local business in Swindon our LPPS outlines the core policy priorities our members will be mobilised in supporting this year.

We aim to maintain the momentum from past LPPSs to ensure we remain focused on helping decision makers, and key stakeholders, understand and listen to what Swindon businesses want, enabling them to succeed and prosper.

Our objective is to present a clear and coherent message on what are the right local conditions to enable businesses to invest, plan for the long-term, work towards meeting net zero targets and secure the County's future economic, social, and environmental well-being.



It is also an invitation to engage with the Local Area Assembly, and our wider membership, who are keen to represent the voice of business and to work alongside you to help shape, frame and deliver solutions that will secure the future well-being of Swindon and the wider Thames Valley region.

## LOCAL POLICY PRIORITIES

The Swindon Local Area Assembly has identified the following local policy priorities:

- Engage our key stakeholders and anchor institutions to help deliver the wider aims of our own, and their, policy, economic and investment aims and objectives.
- Showcase the good practice and promote the initiatives being developed by the TVCC's sustainability working group to help business on their pathway to net zero and help SMEs navigate the ESG landscape.
- Endorse proposals that will bring long-term sustainable economic growth and increase productivity, including knowledge-driven, innovation-led science park as part of a long term 2060 Vision for the town.
- Be an active partner with industry and key stakeholders in the education and training sector to support initiatives that will help secure skills development and training.
- Work to help promote the assets, centres of excellence and key sectors that will drive higher volumes and value investment into Swindon. Challenge public stakeholders to invest more in their efforts to secure foreign direct investment.
- Continue to support existing exporters and help raise the awareness of the commercial benefits to business of trading internationally.
- Support initiatives that re-image Swindon town centre, encourage appropriate levels of investment and active town centre management that will help secure its future vitality and vibrancy, strong sense of place and create and employment opportunities.
- Promote the need for an ambition, clear and long-term vision for the future economic growth and prosperity of Swindon.
- Retain our focus on lobbying public authorities to identify and deliver additional new strategic employment sites, within or adjacent to the town, that will meet the present and future needs of business, building a stronger, more resilient, economy.
- Promote efforts that forge stronger infrastructure links with the Thames Valley, including:

i) continuing calls 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.

ii) Supporting appropriate new infrastructure projects and road safety improvement measures, including the expeditious completion of improvement works on the M4 junction 15, lobbying for the construction of a Junction 16A, a new Western link road between the M4 (J16A) and the A419 to the north of the town, south of Cricklade and the extension of Thamesdown Drive to connect with the town centre, thereby facilitating regeneration of the Cheney Manor area.

iii) Reigniting discussions around the strategic road improvement of the A420 – including its re-trunking to a motorway standard.

## A LOCAL ENGAGEMENT, REGIONAL REPRESENTATION AND GLOBAL OPPORTUNITY

The LAA priorities form an integral part of our wider work programme and commitment to regional leadership detailed in our Business Manifesto 2023. This includes focus on four main priorities. Together, they form policies and actions behind which the whole Chamber network will focus:

1

**Secure investment in resilient infrastructure and utility networks:** promote the continued investment in key digital and transportation networks to ensure they remain resilient to the future needs of business.

2

**Expand the depth of our support and services to enable trade and inward investment flows to continue:** provide our members with the relevant, direct, practical support and policy information required to operate efficiently and effectively.

3

**Deliver regional leadership:** support initiatives and promote the contribution our members are making to deliver the region’s future sustainable economic well-being, productivity growth and pathway towards net zero.

4

**Put employers at the centre of the skills system and build a stronger and more dynamic partnership between employers and further education providers:** through our leadership of two Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs).



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Swindon Local Area  
Assembly



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