

# BERKSHIRE

Local Area Assembly  
Local Policy Priorities Statement 2024





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## ABOUT THE THAMES VALLEY AND BERKSHIRE LOCAL AREA ASSEMBLY

We provide the independent voice of business for one of the UK's most consistently high performing, most productive and economically successful regions. We have a long and successful record of representing all businesses, whatever their size, and sit at the heart of a unique community of companies across all sectors doing business within the UK and around the world.

We are a respected voice of business for almost 80 years, with our opinions regularly sought by policy makers and Parliamentarian, providing purposeful regional leadership crucial to securing a thriving, green and healthy Thames Valley.

Berkshire has long been renowned as a hub for global brands and a focal point for technology-driven businesses across sub-sectors like Artificial Intelligence, Cyber-security, and Datacentres. The County boasts a significant concentration of high-growth start-ups and spinouts, fostering the development of a uniquely robust and vibrant local economy across various sectors.

Showcasing our wider versatility, Berkshire also stands out for its strengths in advanced engineering, health and life sciences, financial and professional services and, increasingly, high-end TV and film.



Central to the success of the Thames Valley economy is Berkshire's proximity to Heathrow, the world's most connected airport, the UK's largest port and only hub airport. Heathrow continues to be a key driver of foreign direct investment (FDI) and international trade activity.

For the above reasons, Berkshire is pivotal in the UK's ambitions to be a science and technology superpower.



## AIM AND OBJECTIVE

Developed in consultation with the business community of Berkshire, this LPPS outlines the key policy priorities our members will be actively championing this year.

Our aim is to sustain the momentum and emphasis on assisting decision-makers and key stakeholders, look, learn, and gain insights into the business needs of the County. Our objective is embedding trust, through effective, impactful partnership, that will secure our economic future and prosperity.

Most especially, we invite participation in our work, and involvement in the LAA, to help shape the future prosperity of Berkshire.

## LOCAL POLICY PRIORITIES

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

- As designated Employer Representative Body, deliver the next stages of the Berkshire Local Skills Improvement Plan.
- Champion the key infrastructure proposals that are crucial to stimulating investment and boosting growth in the Berkshire economy, including
  - (i) the timely delivery of the Western Rail Link to Heathrow;
  - (ii) promote wider use and availability of public transport to key nodes, such as Heathrow;
  - (iii) provide smart multi-modal mobility & simple ticketing;
  - (iv) optimise the provision of low carbon alternatives.
- Continue to support existing exporters and help other businesses grow their trade activity, by identifying and addressing the inherent trade challenges facing our business community.
- Encourage proposals that can help secure the appropriate mix of development and the highest standard of urban design, planning, and infrastructure provision across Berkshire.
- 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.
- Maintain our call for Local Plans and planning system to facilitate inward investment and businesses growth.
- Retain our focus on lobbying government and stakeholders to ensure there is sufficient power available to enable business to move toward zero emissions.
- Showcase the good practice and promote the initiatives being developed by TVCC's Sustainability Working Group to help business on their pathway to net-zero, help SMEs navigate the ESG landscape.
- Strengthen our systems leadership approach that fosters stronger partnership working and enables direct engagement with the Leaders and Chief Executives of our Unitary Authorities, anchor institutions and other key stakeholders.

- Support initiatives that will help re-imagine the County towns and attract the appropriate levels of investment to secure their future vitality, vibrancy, and employment opportunities.
- Work to help promote the County's key assets (e.g., Green Park, Slough Industrial Estate, and Thames Valley Science Park) and centres of excellence (e.g., Jealott's Hill, Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust Hospital and University of Reading) that will drive higher volumes and value FDI into Berkshire.

## A LOCAL ENGAGEMENT, REGIONAL REPRESENTATION AND GLOBAL OPPORTUNITY

The priorities outlined by the LAA are a crucial component of our wider work programme and the commitment to regional leadership detailed in our [Business Manifesto 2024](#). These priorities encompass 5 key focal points, serving as the foundation for the policies and actions we will collectively focus on:

1

### **Infrastructure network resilience and adoption:**

Promoting the opportunities of the technology and supporting investment that can future proof our region.

2

### **Shaping our future skills needs:**

Implementing the next steps of the LSIP and shaping the future of the Thames Valley Skills Unit.

3

### **Pathway to net zero (and climate change):**

Advancing the work around sustainability as outlined in our State of the Region report.

4

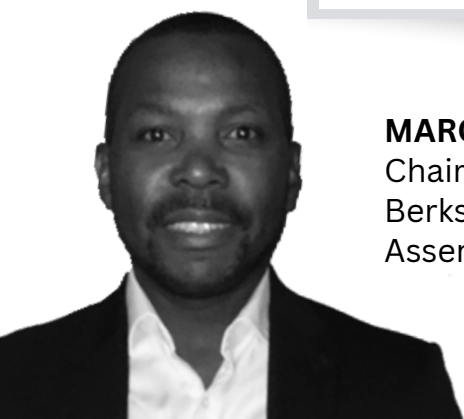
### **Trade and Inward Investment:**

Delivering services that enable high value and volumes of trade and inward investment continues to flow.

5

### **Delivering regional leadership, championing the Thames Valley:**

Putting and representing businesses at the heart of stakeholder engagement and political decision making, ensuring they invest in success, and that we promote our wider sector and market strength.



**MARCUS JOHNSON**  
Chair,  
Berkshire Local Area  
Assembly



**PAUL BRITTON**  
Chief Executive,  
TVCC

