This prospectus provides an overview of Sandwell’s vision for the future direction of its economy. The prospectus identifies the sectors that are considered best placed to take the local economy forward. This is followed by an overview of the advantages offered by Sandwell as a location and an outline of the nature of the help that will be available to Sandwell businesses and potential investors. To support growth of these sectors Sandwell’s offer focuses on, land and premises, support for enterprise growth plus support for employment and skills.

The prospectus provides an overview of some of the key economic regeneration projects already underway and what the benefits are expected to be. Of course the council cannot deliver on its own and highly values the contribution our partners and our business community continue to make. Our aim remains to make the growth of the local business community as efficient and seamless as possible.

Economic regeneration represents a long term game for Sandwell. Our offer to business will help support growth and at the same time ensure that the Sandwell Partnership’s shared priority for, ‘getting educated and skilled people into employment’ is realised.

Sandwell Council and our partners are committed to the continued success of businesses of all sizes in Sandwell. This commitment is shown by Sandwell’s offer to business and the amount of contact between Sandwell businesses and organisations who work within economic regeneration at the various business networking opportunities that take place in the borough.
The borough is home to 289,000 residents including 20% from black and minority ethnic groups and is accessible to a large regional workforce with 48% of employees commuting in.

Sandwell is a vibrant local economy with around 9,000 businesses and a workforce of 127,000.

Sandwell has a strong and diverse economic base with around 20% of Sandwell’s businesses involved in manufacturing, increasingly higher value adding.

The borough has a young workforce with 41% aged between 16 and 34. Sandwell continues to generate both jobs and new companies.

Sandwell remains at the forefront of manufacturing technology and is home to one of the world’s first factories, the Soho Foundry built by Matthew Boulton and James Watt in 1795 to produce steam engines, still standing.

Excellent access to the national motorway network with five junctions feeding in to the M5 and M6 motorways serving the South West, South East and North West regions of the UK.

Our aim is to ensure that businesses have all the support they need to prosper and Sandwell residents have the right skills and knowledge to access new and exciting employment opportunities.

The Borough

Sandwell in the heart of the West Midlands Metropolitan area, neighbouring the UK’s second largest and international city, Birmingham.

www.sandwell.gov.uk/businesssupport

To find out more call: 0845 358 2200 Quote: EP0310
It is also important to diversify the markets that Sandwell’s businesses are supplying. The emerging economy will have a greater emphasis on higher value added, specialist products and be flexible in the face of changing customer preferences and technological capability. The trend towards a growing service sector is a feature of local economies in all western countries and to be a part of this expansion Sandwell continues to focus on expanding its existing business and customer service sectors.

Each of Sandwell’s priority market sectors have been evaluated against a number of factors such as potential to provide employment, increase the borough’s productivity and provide some protection against downturn in the economic cycle.

Because Sandwell has a long tradition in manufacturing, the borough is able to offer a considerable amount of skills and experience. This existing skills base offers major opportunities in terms of delivering new and innovative products and services. Businesses locating in Sandwell will benefit from strong existing supply chains and a wide range of businesses in the same or similar product markets.

The food sector is already well established and offers considerable opportunity for product development, the transfer of skills from other sectors and supplying the regional marketplace.

Business services are already well established and the regeneration of West Bromwich will provide new opportunities for office based activities.

Sandwell has been identified by the Regional Development Agency as a location for green industries as the market for environmental services in the West Midlands is already significant and growing. Some key markets for development locally are renewable energy, energy management and water treatment. There are considerable opportunities for linkage with construction.

Our approach does not mean that businesses falling outside the three sectors are discouraged, but simply that Sandwell’s focus will be on increasing growth in the output of businesses and their supply chains in these areas of activity.
SANDWELL CAN BENEFIT YOUR BUSINESS

MORE THAN NINE OUT OF TEN PEOPLE IN ENGLAND AND WALES POPULATION LIVE WITHIN TWO HOURS DRIVE OF SANDWELL, OFFERING A MAJOR ADVANTAGE IN TERMS OF MARKETS FOR GOODS AND SERVICES.

ALL THE ADVANTAGES OF BEING SITUATED AT THE HEART OF THE WEST MIDLAND CONURBATION, HOME TO 2.6 MILLION PEOPLE AND NEARLY 90,000 BUSINESSES.

www.sandwell.gov.uk/businesssupport

- Major regeneration with the redevelopment of West Bromwich town centre representing a £1 Billion investment.
- Excellent access to the national motorway network with five junctions feeding into the M5 and M6 motorways serving the South West, South East and North West regions of the UK.
- Located only six miles from the centre of Birmingham, Sandwell provides access to all the benefits of an international city, including world class restaurants and entertainment.
- Good access to international travel through the airport, just fifteen miles away in which Sandwell is a major investor.
- A long tradition of entrepreneurship, with companies of all sizes involved in the production of a wide range of goods and services. These include world class companies such as East End Foods, one of the largest producers of ethnic foods in the UK and Hadley Industries which produces rolled steel and allied products. The service sector includes the AA and utilities include Npower.
- Sandwell is home to companies producing a whole range of products ranging from ladders and door handles, to the nuclear industry. Local companies have also helped build Wembley Stadium, the roof for Hong Kong Airport, several premier league football grounds and components of Sydney Harbour Bridge in Australia.
- A state of the art college is being established in West Bromwich and eight universities including Aston, Wolverhampton and Birmingham, lie within a 30 mile radius of the borough. These provide a wide range of business support, advice and joint working opportunities.
- An ethnically diverse community and excellent community relations which are well reflected in the composition of the local business profile and present major new opportunities for innovation and marketing of goods and services.
- Competitive accommodation costs compared to the West Midlands region and particularly the country as a whole.
- Ground breaking 21st Century telecommunications network delivered in partnership with BT, enabling customers access to coverage, next generation communications and ‘cloud’ services.

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Our focus on Land and Premises

A collaborative approach between the council and private sector to the development of fit for purpose employment sites.

A pro-active land disposal strategy that maximises the use of assets, with a view to supporting the economic development of the borough. Use of innovative funding opportunities to support future development.

A portfolio of land, suitable to retain current employment activity, allow existing businesses to expand, relocate and to attract inward investment. A property and site search service for prospective investors and existing businesses seeking to expand or change location. Access to a range of council owned facilities such as managed workspace and industrial units.

Our focus on Employment & Skills

A fully integrated offer of support for businesses taking on people, based on the needs of both employers and their employees. Sandwell works with neighbouring boroughs to fulfil the employment and training needs of business and residents.

A fully comprehensive workforce preparation package for investors to ensure that businesses have the right people with the right skills. A placement service for the health care and construction sectors.

Our focus on Support for Enterprise

An individual needs analysis to ensure that business needs are met. Complete aftercare service for new investors.

Specialist support for businesses operating within the borough’s three key sectors.

Rapid access to supply chain networks and procurement opportunities through FindItInSandwell, Sandwell’s online business community.

Business ambassadors who help maximise investment opportunities via local, national and international networks.

Established local network and partnership support including the Chamber of Commerce and Business Link.

Support for growth in exports of local companies.

Sustainability and resource efficiency support for local companies.

Communications and e-commerce advice support and services to local companies via the Transform Sandwell Partnership (Sandwell Council, BT Liberata and other strategic partners).

Customised recruitment support to meet employer needs. Support for business start up.

SANDWELL’S OFFER TO BUSINESS

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OUR FOCUS ON
LAND AND
PREMISES

THE PROVISION OF QUALITY SITES THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF A FULL RANGE OF POTENTIAL BUSINESS INVESTORS, PARTICULARLY THOSE FROM THE THREE PRIORITY SECTORS, IS ESSENTIAL TO SANDWELL’S FUTURE ECONOMIC WELL BEING.

The council and its partners look forward to working creatively with potential investors, developers and funding agencies to develop sites and premises that will provide future opportunities. Investors will be able to access site information such as property and site search via a single access point. This will be available to new and existing businesses that are seeking to expand or relocate for any reason.

Key Projects

West Bromwich Town Centre
The location of a £1 billion plus regeneration programme including a number of major projects such as All Saints. Located at Junction One of the M5 motorway, All Saints is about to become a premier office location. The site will provide 50/75,000 square feet of Grade A office accommodation offering a range of sizes and footplates.

Sandwell Hospital
Construction is due to start on a new £380 million acute hospital in 2013. The hospital will provide a state of the art facility located on 12 hectares of newly regenerated land. The site which is a key gateway location between Birmingham and Sandwell, will provide a platform from which to lever major investment in the surrounding area and bring increased employment at all levels into Sandwell.

New Sandwell College
Located in the heart of West Bromwich, an £80 million, state of the art further educational college, designed by leading architects Bond Bryan in setting the benchmark in design excellence. One of the largest colleges in the region, it will accommodate over 10,000 students.

Tesco investing in one of the largest stores in Europe.

Sandwell chosen by BT as a location for its new regional business centre.

Caparo recently relocated its head office to Sandwell.

www.sandwell.gov.uk/businesssupport to find out more call: 0845 358 2200

Quote: ep0310

Our vision

- Provision of the infrastructure, land and workspace for existing businesses and potential investors.
- Retention of businesses with changing requirements.
- West Bromwich as a thriving centre.
- An integrated and coherent approach to land development within the borough and across neighbouring local authority areas.

Our vision
This includes provision of access to skills and training for local people, job preparation and placement services for businesses in the care and construction sectors. Services include job brokerage and client mentoring, which ensure arrangements between recruits and employers are problem free during the transitional period.

To increase impact and efficiency of interventions into the labour market, Sandwell has formed a Multi Area Agreement with its neighbours. This will deliver a single strategy, a commissioning plan for employment and skills and integration of these with a wider range of services on offer.

Key Projects

**Future Jobs**: aimed at 18 to 24 year olds where unemployment has been for approaching 12 months. Six month funded position within a public/provide or voluntary sector organisation.

**Local Employment Partnerships**: a painless training package for investors based on the needs of employers. Potential trainees are placed on a work preparation course and candidates selected as appropriate.

**Public Care and Social Care Hub**: a regional employer engagement project lead by Sandwell Council. The partnership includes partners from local authorities, sector skills councils, colleges, PCTs, NHS Trusts and training providers. The hub will work with employers in the health care and related sub sectors to increase the use of Local Employment Partnerships and Skills and Jobs Pledges.

**Black Country Higher Skills Framework**: improving the way colleges work with employers and their communities.

**The Integrated Client Journey**: preparing people for work through personal support, training and mentoring. The council’s Joblink then matches and places candidates with appropriate employers.

**Community Benefits Clauses**: are now built into major public sector contracts, these encourage the use of local labour and supply chain resources.

**Transform Sandwell Schedule 10**: a programme of job creation, work placements and apprenticeships being provided by the partnership of Sandwell Council and BT.
The council’s Economic Regeneration and Skills Division works closely with key partners such as the Chamber of Commerce and Business link. This can be used as an introduction to valuable resources, business networks, useful people and a full range of supporting services and advice. All are accessed through a single point of contact to avoid any confusion or duplication of effort for the client.

Key Projects

Single Integrated Support Package
Using a branded approach, the single integrated offer for inward investors, new start-ups and expanders, covers premises/site search, recruitment support, customised training support and procurement/supply chain support.

Incubation Centre – McKean Road
A Sandwell Council/ private sector project developing a business enterprise centre to house business start-ups.

Finditinsandwell.co.uk
‘Findit’ is Sandwell’s on-line business community linking buyers and suppliers. It supports the growth of the local economy by giving local businesses social enterprises and the voluntary sector the support and contact they need to pitch for and win bigger contracts. Findit was recently a Municipal Journal Award Finalist.

Sandwell Business Brokers
A valuable asset for local businesses. This service provides free confidential and impartial advice and can introduce you to valuable resources, business networks and other people who can help your business.

BISNES
The Business in Sandwell Network of Environmental Support works to help local companies improve energy efficiency and acts as a central point of contact for all business queries relating on environmental issues.

OUR FOCUS ON SUPPORT FOR ENTERPRISE

OUR FOCUS ON SUPPORT FOR ENTERPRISE

www.sandwell.gov.uk/businesssupport
Our residents and business community have contacts all over the world. They serve export markets and have links with Sandwell’s twin towns, Le Blanc Mesnil in France and Amritsar in India. We are working to increase the value of these relationships and to ensure that potential benefits are maximised for local businesses and residents.

Nationally, Sandwell’s Members of Parliament hold quarterly meetings with the council’s leader, chief executive and executive directors to discuss important issues. At regional level, Sandwell aligns its strategic economic objectives with those of the Regional Economic Strategy.

At regional level, Sandwell aligns its strategic economic objectives with those of the Regional Economic Strategy. The City Region, which comprises Birmingham, Solihull, Sandwell and its three Black Country neighbours, provides a sub regional basis for adding value through joint activity, particularly in relation to employment and skills.

SANDWELL COUNCIL AND ITS REGENERATION PARTNERS RECOGNISE THAT INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL PEOPLE CAN ONLY BE DELIVERED BY PROVIDING AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE BUSINESSES PROSPER. TO ACHIEVE THIS, SANDWELL’S REPRESENTATIVES SEEK TO INFLUENCE DEVELOPMENTS AT A NUMBER OF LEVELS.

Our vision

- Leadership and commitment to grow priority sectors and support for the growth of all business contributing to Sandwell’s economic and social well being.
- A clear and informed voice contributing to economic decision making at national, regional sub regional, local and increasingly international levels.
- Increased engagement with potential partners and businesses abroad.

Additional work takes place through the Black Country Consortium which coordinates and represents the shared interests of Sandwell and the adjacent boroughs of Dudley, Walsall and Wolverhampton. At borough level, Sandwell’s Economic Regeneration and Skills Partnership brings together key stakeholders such as the Chamber of Commerce, Jobcentre Plus, Business Link and Sandwell College to oversee the delivery of our economic objectives.

“...Our aim remains to make the growth of the local business community as efficient and seamless as possible...”

www.sandwell.gov.uk/business support

To find out more call: 0845 358 2200 Quote: EP0310
SANDWELL ECONOMIC PROSPECTUS

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