

# Greater Birmingham & Solihull

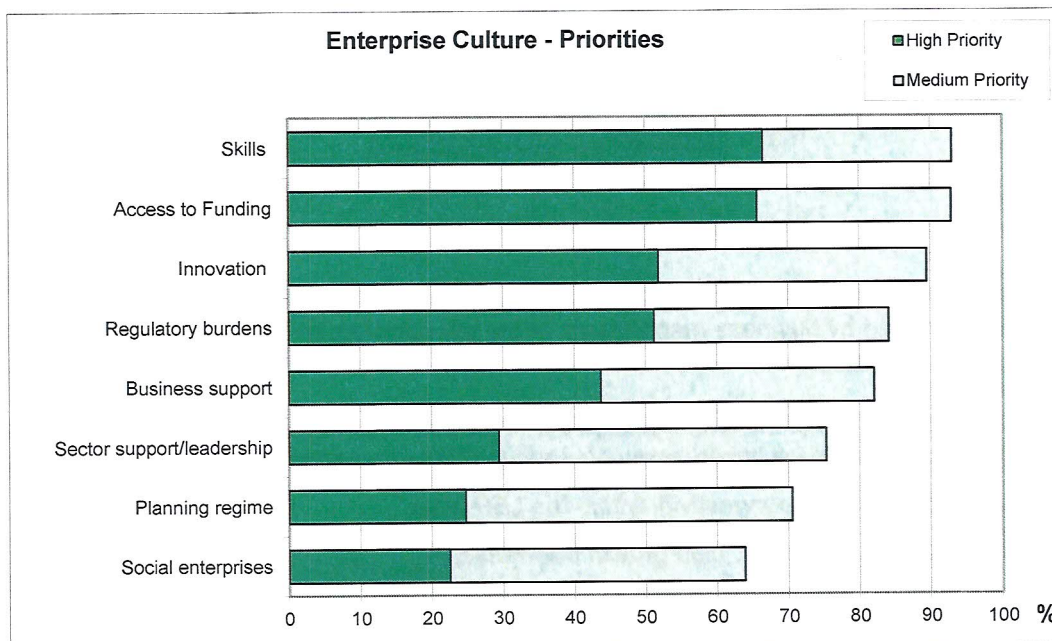
Local Enterprise Partnership

## Business Survey Results - Priorities for the LEP

In February 2011, the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce Group (BCCG) surveyed businesses and stakeholders from across the Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP. The survey asked respondents to identify **the** key priorities and activities which the LEP should undertake to achieve its twin missions of **creating an enterprise culture** and **investing in infrastructure that supports private development and business growth**.

Over 170 detailed responses were received and the headline results are provided below.

### Business Priorities: Creating an Enterprise Culture



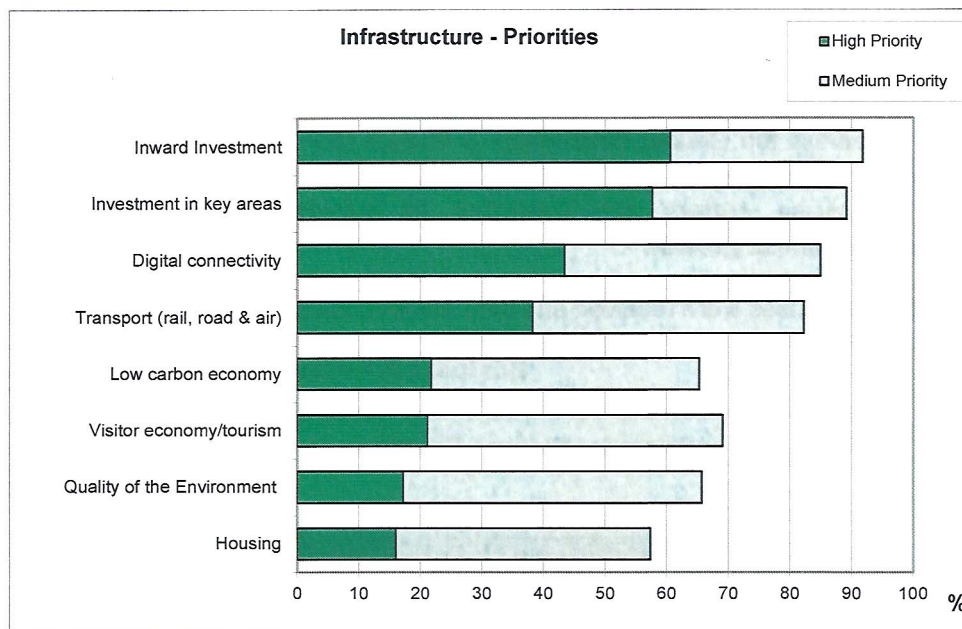
Skills Development and Access to Funding were accorded the highest priority by business respondents. Specific comments included:

- “Skills development at all levels in organisations - especially in areas of high redundancy”
- “100% grants for short-term graduate employees — something like the Graduate Advantage programme, but with (even!) less bureaucracy”
- “Funding learning and development for SMEs to develop the skills of our LEP area workforce”
- “Investment funding, long term and at attractive interest rates, for firms to invest in NPD, training, new plant and equipment and in bringing manufacturing back in house”.

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## Business Priorities: Investing in Infrastructure



Secure inward investment in the LEP area along with accelerating investment and growth in key areas were considered by business respondents at the top priorities for the LEP. Specific comments from respondents included:

- *“Great awareness of the world outside the West Midlands. If you want International world class companies to be based here you need to think International and Global standards.”*
- *“Improving transport connectivity within the LEP area.”*
- *“Investment in high value, high growth businesses.”*

### Responding to Business Priorities: Arising programmes of activity

LEP activities will be confirmed by the incoming Board over the coming months. In the meantime, we have used this survey and our extensive summer 2010 consultation of the private sector to identify five programme areas. These are:

**Supporting our businesses** (which will include: business support; reducing regulation; pro-growth planning regimes; access to finance).

**Supporting innovation and high growth companies** (which will include: targeted support to include mentoring and coaching; smart use of public procurement; green innovation).

**Skills** (which will include: demand / employer led-skills approach; apprenticeships)

**Connecting the LEP internally and to the world** (which will include: Birmingham Airport Runway Extension; integrated transport planning; Next Generation Broadband).

**Infrastructure** (which will include: the development of key assets to include National FA Centre; unlock investment through Enterprise Zones).

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### Your LEP needs you

LEPs are a joint-undertaking between Local Authorities and the private sector to deliver jobs and growth. The Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership has committed to creating 100,000 private sector jobs by 2020. The LEP will do this through combining effort and resource across its contributing Local Authorities and businesses. We need to develop effective working relationships with the private sector if the LEP is to flourish.

So today, we would like you to tell us how you can support the LEP. This could include:

- **Contributing to policy development** e.g. helping us understand how the LEP can improve planning to make it more business friendly
  - **Hosting meetings on your premises** e.g. the LEP's Board meeting and other workstreams
  - **Administering working groups** e.g. offering staff time to provide a working group secretariat
  - **Providing expert advice** e.g. on accessing European funding
  - **Private sector funding** e.g. a public-private partnership to deliver around a LEP infrastructure priority
  - **Contributing staff time and other pro-bono resources** e.g. seconding staff to assist in LEP delivery
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