

Introduction from GBSLEP Chair and GBSLEP Chief Executive

Welcome to Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership's Annual Report for 2022-23 – our final 'regular' operating year. Since GBSLEP was established in 2011, we have successfully delivered programmes and projects that drive the inclusive and sustainable economic growth of our city-region. However, change is afoot. In early 2022, The Levelling Up White Paper set out the Government's decision to integrate Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) into local democratically elected bodies. Since then, we have assessed the implications of the decision and collaborated closely with key partners such as the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Birmingham City Council (BCC) and Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) to safeguard the impact of our work and secure the continuation of vital services for our region's businesses. After extensive deliberations, the GBSLEP Board made a decision to continue certain GBSLEP functions into 2023/24 and to fully closing down the company by the end of March 2024.

This Annual Report demonstrates the myriad of achievements and successes in a year of change. Our expert Executive Team and dedicated Board has shown a steadfast commitment to maximising the impact of our work in challenging circumstances and it has all been done with professionalism and efficiency. We have worked hard to secure the transfer of many of our functions to WMCA and local authorities and we are encouraged by the prospect of GBSLEP's legacy of driving positive change through partnership work continuing when our doors close.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to GBSLEP Board Directors for their vision and unwavering support. They have volunteered their time and expertise for which we are grateful. Our thanks also to the GBSLEP staff team who continue to meet ambitious standards and targets in very challenging circumstances.

Undoubtedly, the work that has been done by GBSLEP has made a huge difference to our people and places, communities, and businesses. The future is bringing change, but we hope our spirit of collaboration, and progress will be carried forward.



Anita Bhalla, GBSLEP Chair



Henriette Breukelaar, GBSLEP Chief Executive

During 2022-23, GSBLEP continued to focus on our key role of delivering against our mission to drive the inclusive and sustainable economic growth of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull area, creating jobs and increasing the quality of life for all our residents. Our key commitments were focused around:

Placemaking

Managing the Enterprise Zone programme and major capital programmes, including pipeline development
Developing and delivering Cultural Action Zones to reinvigorate local areas throughout the GBSLEP area.

Employment and Skills Business Support through the Skills Hub

Engaging in Employer-led skills activity Careers advice and apprenticeship support

Business and Innovation

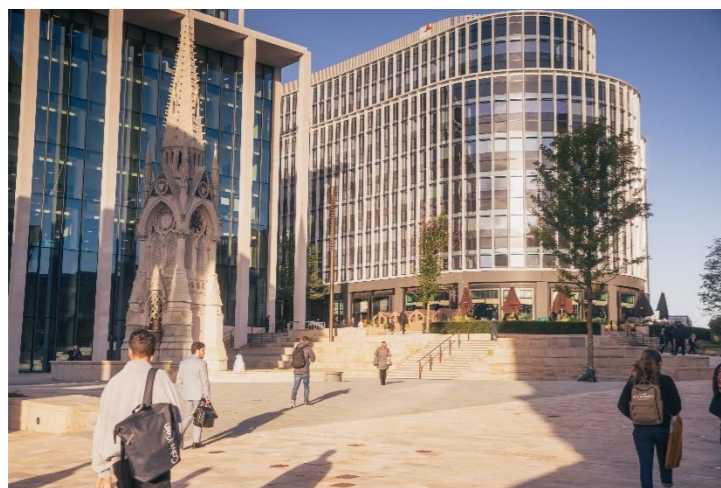
Providing Business Advice and Support to small and medium sized businesses
Setting up and running strong sector groups and industry-led clusters

Local Growth Fund

Monitoring and ensuring outputs and outcomes are up to date for the £207m capital investment fund

Growing Places Fund

Designing and delivering the Recycled Growing Places Fund to support further projects including up to £3.0m to invest in capital projects to support Young People and delivering Clean Growth.

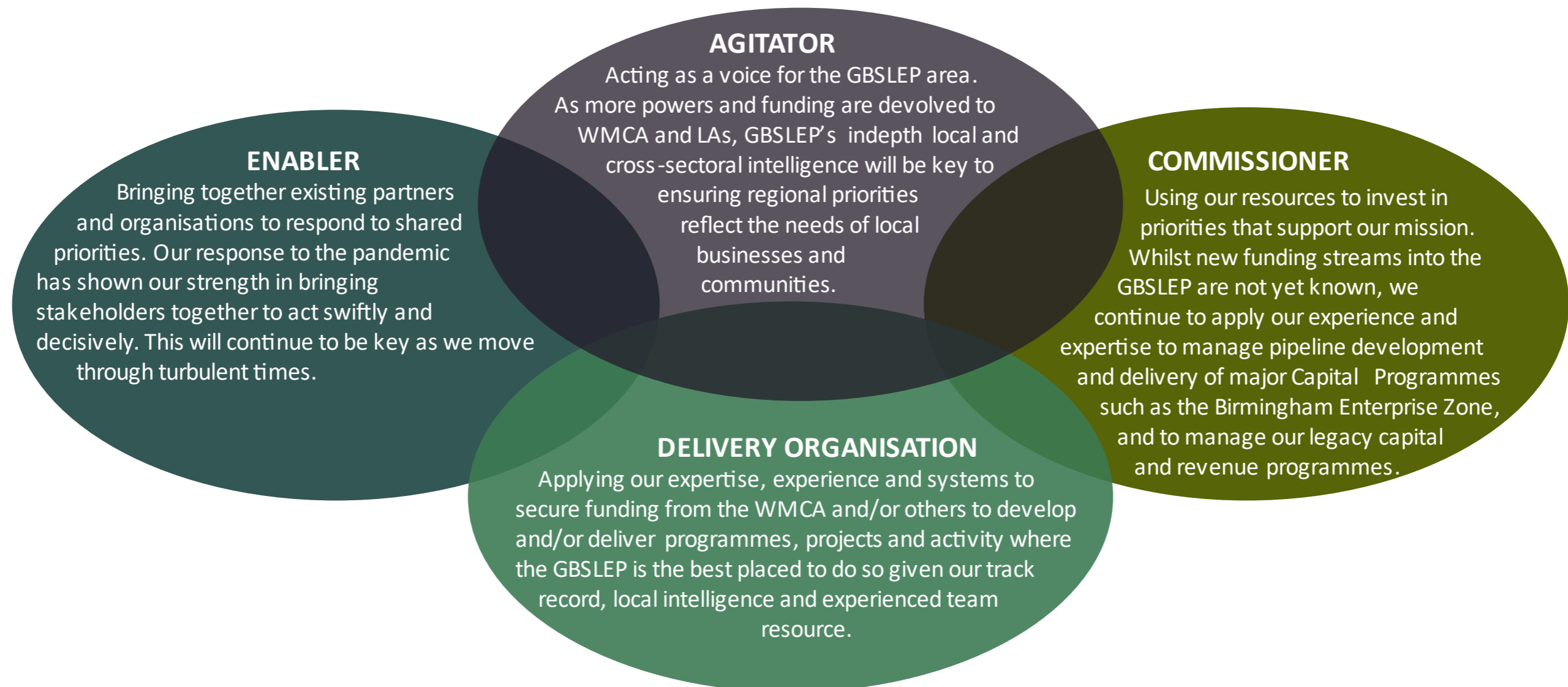


Our Mission and Roles

GBSLEP's Mission is:

Drive the Inclusive Economic Growth of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull area creating jobs and increasing the quality of life for all our residents.

In order to achieve our mission, GBSLEP has four main roles to play:



PLACE-MAKING [PLACES INFRASTRUCTURE INCLUDING CULTURE]

Delivering large-scale capital programmes as well as engaging in thought leadership actions to create vibrant and effective places is an important part of the GBSLEP remit.

In 2022-23 we continued to provide strategic thought leadership in the field of place-making, and to manage our main capital programmes. This included administrating the re-payment of so-called 'repayable grants' and recycling those funds to be used in line with our GBSLEP objectives towards continued impact on our communities.

This was against the back drop of Central Government's decision to transfer some LEP functions to local democratically bodies. For GBSLEP this meant that our place-making policy ceased to be a GBSLEP function from the end of March 2023. Place-making boards and committees that were facilitated by GBSLEP were therefore stood down and policy roles were made redundant.

The Programme Management Office function (including the Enterprise Zone management and the legacy programmes) transferred to Birmingham City Council (BCC) at the end of June 2023

The Programme Delivery Board that oversaw GBSLEP's capital investments and its function was taken over by the newly established 'Enterprise Zone Partnership Board' led by BCC.

£207m LOCAL GROWTH FUND

The programme has made excellent progress and has achieved its targets for jobs, housing units and new learners. The GBSLEP Programme Team has followed up on those projects sponsors who had not been submitting up to date project returns. This has resulted in more up to date and accurate reporting of outputs and outcomes. The learner target which has been forecasting not to be achieved has achieved nearly double its target. Learners reported from the Prince's Trust have contributed significantly to this. The figures shown below are as reported on 1st June 2023 ahead of the Programme Team's transfer to BCC.

	Actual achieved to 31 March 2023	Target	Progress Towards Target	Latest Forecast to 31 March 2025	Variance to Target
Jobs Created/Safeguarded	20,317	20,300	100%	25,944	5,644
Commercial Floorspace (sqm)	372,330	n/a	n/a	431,379	n/a
Housing Units Completed	6,160	4,900	125.7%	7,291	3,021
Learners Assisted in Courses Leading to a Full Qualification	24,514	12,500	196%	27,253	2,739
Training Floorspace Created/Refurbished (sqm)	136,300	n/a	n/a	136,373	n/a

Quarter 4 2022-23 Outputs and Outcomes Summary (Source Q4 2022-23 Return)

£66M GETTING BUILDING FUND

The WMCA area was allocated £66m from the Getting Building Fund (GBF), with two GBSLEP projects allocated £14.83m - University Station project (£3.97m) and the Precision Health Technology Accelerator (PHTA) project.(£10.86m).

All grants were claimed by the programme deadline. Details of the total forecast outputs and outcomes for both projects and the GBF funded proportion are shown in the table below. The balance of the outputs is forecast to be delivered in the Local Growth Fund (LGF) in line with the proportion of the approved LGF funding. The figures shown below are as reported on 1st June 2023 ahead of the Programme Team's transfer to Birmingham City Council.

Output/Outcomes	University Station		PHTA	
	Project Total Forecast	GBF Apportioned Project Forecast	Project Total Forecast	GBF Apportioned Project Forecast
Direct Jobs Created	30	20	502	389
Construction Jobs Created	100	100	310	310
Commercial Space Unlocked (sqm)	1,585	1,585	11,100	8,610
No of businesses / institutions assisted	0	0	955	741
Area of new/ improved learning/training floorspace	0	0	147	114
No of new learners assisted	0	0	1,080	838
No of retrofits delivered	1	1	0	0
CO2 Emissions Avoided (kg)	1,183,876	1,183,876	0	0
Public Realm or Greenspace improved or created (sqm)	5,000	5,000	0	0

Latest Project Output and Outcomes Forecasts and GBF Apportioned Forecasts (as published 1st June 2023)

GROWING PLACES FUND

In 2012, Government allocated £22.49m (£20.8m capital and £1.7m revenue) to GBSLEP for the Growing Places Fund (GPF). Part of this was distributed by GBSLEP in the form of loans and repayable grants, which are to be repaid when certain specific milestones are met in the project. The repaid grant funds are subsequently used as 'recycled' funding to support further activity and achieve further impact.

Recycled GPF has been used to support additional projects, including up to £3m prioritised to invest in capital projects to support Young People and delivering Clean Growth, and £1.0m to support a Clean Growth Programme.

The £3m Recycled Growing Place Fund programme supported the delivery of eleven projects, which are all fully contracted and mainly delivered.

- **Clean Energy & Sustainability Accelerator (CESA) (£0.32m grant).** The refurbishment works for this incubation space at Tyseley Energy Park will be complete and ready for occupation in June 2023. The University of Birmingham and HyProMag are working together to create the world's first short loop rare earth magnet recycling facility. The fit out will commence in December 2023 with the equipment expected to be installed in March 2024.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Scaffolding and Roofing Construction (£0.30m grant) The training facility at Walsall College King’s Norton Site has been completed and is now open (July 2023). • Birmingham City Council’s Whole House Retrofit Pilot Project Phase One (£0.32m grant) This Birmingham City Council (BCC) pilot project will implement an innovative approach to retrofit and financing based on the Energiesprong model to deliver carbon reduction for the city, economic growth and reduced energy costs, health and wellbeing benefits to residents. The full pilot project will deliver Whole House Retrofit (WHR) to 300 units of the BCC social housing stock in Bromford, East Birmingham. • Dolphin Centre Youth Hub – Birmingham City Council (£315,000 grant) - The works will ensure the creation of an inclusive Youth Hub with full disabled access, integrating Jobcentre Plus services with the local East Birmingham Community Anchor Network to deliver engagement of young people after a period of not being in employment. The grant will enable the delivery of a fully fitted out social enterprise café, a lift and WC with disabled access, upgraded digital connectivity technology; and Internal building infrastructure to enable the effective functioning of youth employment coach. • Crafting the Future – Redditch Construction Centre - Heart of Worcestershire College (£60k grant) - The grant was used for the internal refurbishment of the space created from their recent Brick Workshop space, supported by GBSLEP’s Local Growth Fund allocation, to increase their capacity for craft trades. The space has been designated to specialist areas for Plumbing, Plastering and Carpentry. • Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator Tyseley Energy Park Ltd Phase 2 (£309,552 grant) - The project will address environmental risks posed by flood risk to 0.6ha of land. The flood mitigation works will support the future release of land for development at Tyseley Energy Park and provide land for further expansion. • The Greater Birmingham Ladder Enterprise Hub (BCTG Ltd) (£0.21m grant) - The GB Ladder Enterprise Hub forms part of the Ladder legacy in developing a City Centre one stop shop. The facility will focus on supporting young people and the unemployed through the development and expansion in key sectors: Business & Professional, Low Carbon, Digital and Advanced Manufacturing, to develop the next generation of skilled workers, leaders and entrepreneurs. • Solihull Youth Hub Digital Skills and Capability Development Solihull Council (£60.4k grant) This grant will go towards enhancing the digital offer for unemployed young people at the Solihull Youth Hub in Chelmsley Wood. The project is aimed at providing laptops, software and training at the Youth Hub, • Tomorrow’s People (Cadburys College / Sandwell College (£215k grant) - The Scheme will create a new model for engagement and delivery of apprenticeships, traineeships, and work experience through a new partnership between the College and private sector partner Right Time Recruitment. It will provide a new business engagement and matching service between employers and prospective apprentices. The Scheme will provide opportunities for the college’s 6,800 16- to 18-year-old student body, as well the opportunity to market to NEETs and others not enrolled within the college. • The Greater Birmingham Institute of Technology ‘For the Win’ (£0.274m grant) The STEM Digital Platform is complete, and the launch and awareness campaign will run for several months. This will include marketing collateral to schools and stakeholders with lots of exciting video and interactive material. • Engineering and Sustainable Construction Centre (University College Birmingham) (£325,000 grant) - Creation of a bespoke learning environment within the Camden House and James Cond building to deliver STEM curriculum across a range of levels from 2-6 focusing on sustainable construction, retrofit, offsite construction methods such as modular homes, process manufacturing, civil engineering, surveying, and planning, mechatronics, robotics, cyber and digital skills.
<p>ENTERPRISE ZONE</p>	<p>Building on opportunities such as High-Speed Rail 2 (HS2) and the Commonwealth Games, the Birmingham Enterprise Zone has focussed on delivering key projects such as Paradise and investing in HS2-related projects such as the redevelopment of Digbeth High Street and Curzon. Business rates income growth from the 39 sites in the Birmingham Enterprise Zone is used to invest in projects that will improve the quality of life for our residents. This programme runs until March 2026.</p> <p>The establishment of the City Enterprise Zone in 2019 also provided opportunity, due to the potential value of Business Rates Income (BRI), to allocate funding and support projects in the wider GBSLEP region. In the Enterprise Zone Investment Plan (EZIP) 2019, this was allocated to the EZ Regional Investment Fund (RIF) with up to £20 million commencing in 2024/25 at £5 million per annum. Funding from the EZ will be available as the business rates income becomes available from 2024/25 onwards at a value of £20m.</p> <p>The Enterprise Zone continued to support key capital and revenue projects. Highlights of some of the projects are as follows:</p>

Progress against 2022-23 Delivery Plan - Annual Report

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Snow Hill Public Realm (Delivery) EZ Capital Investment £2.9m. Public consultation on Phase 3a (Traffic Management Newhall Street and Colmore Row) commenced on 6 March and concluded on 9 April 2023. A programme to re-commence Project 2.3 (Steelhouse Square) will be developed potentially in Summer 2023 when the work of the strategic review of the Snow Hill area has concluded. 2. Digbeth High Street (Approved) EZ Capital Investment £15.7m. Tree, shrub and herbaceous planting on the Northern side is almost complete. Construction works to deliver the tram infrastructure and public realm are well underway on the southern side of the high street (coach station), due to complete at the end of 2023. 3. HS2 Curzon Station Enhanced Public Realm EZ Capital Investment £29.5m. Additional funding of £0.7m to enhance the public realm. Works will be delivered by HS2 as part of the Curzon Station development. 4. Digbeth Public Realm Phase 2 (Development Funding £0.15m). Procurement for a consultant to support the completion of the Outline Business Case (OBC) has started with appointment expected in mid-July and the OBC due to be complete in February 2024. 5. Paradise Phase Three (Development Funding £0.9m). Contracts now finalised. 6. Paradise Phase Three, (FBC EZ Investment Requested £71.5m): It is anticipated that an investment report (subject to ITE) will be ready in in May/June 2023 and presentation for approval towards the end of the Summer. 7. Birmingham Smithfield (Total EZ Investment requested £131.4m (Development Funding £2.9m). The first full business case (FBC) for funding of the development enabling works is expected to be submitted in November 2023. 8. EZ Business, Professional and Financial Cluster Support (Delivery) EZ revenue approved £0.45m. The delivery of the BPFS project has commenced and because of the planned closure of GBSLEP and a new delivery partner, Birmingham City University has been approved to take over the project from the beginning of July 2023. 9. Former Typhoo Building Redevelopment (Approved) EZ Investment Funding £14.3m. The main works contractor has been agreed and will commence works when all contracts are in place. 10. Discussions are underway with SMBC and the District Councils to identify their schemes to take up the allocation of the £20m EZ Regional Investment Fund (RIF) and discussions are taking place with BCC on how this will be resourced, and funding allocated.
<p>PLACE-MAKING [PLACES INFRASTRUCTURE INCLUDING CULTURE]</p>	<p>Cultural Action Zones (CAZ) – reanimate local centres, drive footfall and grow business whilst stimulating innovative uses of the High Street space and citizen and community engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nine CAZs GBSLEP designed and delivered, so far, have exceeded expectations; they have engaged local communities, provided many individual opportunities, driven footfall, tested new business models. • The projects have leveraged in over £1.5m of additional funding. • The CAZs have also fostered strong lasting local partnerships which have found innovative ways of continuing activity beyond the end of projects, such as continuing new monthly festivals and street markets. • The concept of CAZs is now being added to several regional bids, including a potential £1.8m Enterprise Zone version for Birmingham City Council. Analysis done for this bid shows the potential to return a benefit cost ratio (BCR) of 1.7, which equates to a £30.7m benefit to the city. • These projects align well with the levelling up agenda and funding like UKSPF. For example, the way they catalyse the re-development of high streets.

	Thought Leadership	<p>GBSLEP’s significant contributions have helped advance place-making in the region, as well as improve the cultural and creative landscape which in turn creates better places for our residents to live and work in, as well as employment opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBSLEP co-funded the <i>Birmingham Science & Industry Museum Feasibility Study</i>, now completed, which is enabling the city to move towards the development of a new Science & Heritage Museum for Birmingham, to open potentially c. 2027. • GBSLEP continued to collaborate closely with partners on new cross-regional thinking around the value of culture in placemaking and driving opportunity for disadvantaged communities. It has helped maximise the cultural legacy of the Commonwealth Games, for example, by helping develop the £15m <i>Cultural Legacy Fund</i> ask within the WMCA’s Devo Deal. • GBSLEP commissioned a <i>Young People and Place study</i> and a <i>Workplaces study</i>. Both are now complete, and the findings are available on GBSLEP’s website.
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Employment and Skills

Improving our higher-level skills attainment to close the gap with the UK average, is a key strategic goal for GBSLEP. Through our Employment and Skills Pillar Board, we focused on data-driven skills delivery, based on labour market intelligence and employer demand.

SKILLS SERVICE	Training Needs Analysis through the Skills Service Team and advisors to be carried out as part of ESF project match funded by GBSLEP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To March 2023 the Skills and Apprenticeship Hub assisted 507 unique businesses with 1,039 hours of support delivered. • This workstream is delivered through ESF funding and GBSLEP. It is due to finish delivery in December 2023. • At the time of reporting (September 2023) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 100% of targets have been achieved. ○ 213 business Training Needs Analyses (TNAs) have been completed against a target of 174. ○ 99 employer reviews completed against a target of 88. ○ 100 employee reviews completed against a target of 100. • The MarComms Department has worked with the Skills and Apprenticeship Hub to align branding and renamed the offer as ‘Skills Service’ to present an integrated offering from the Growth Hub. Referrals are now cross-fertilised for maximum benefit to businesses and achievements of outputs. • A telecommunications campaign led to an increase in referrals for TNA. This was accompanied by consistent communications to businesses and stakeholder networks via GBSLEP channels such LinkedIn, Twitter and newsletters. This coupled with the
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		<p><i>Better Your Business</i> event resulted in a pipeline of TNAs. All targets were met or exceeded by September 2023.</p>
	Deliver Birmingham City Council's Apprenticeship Levy Transfer and make referrals to apprenticeship and placement opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBSLEP manages the Apprenticeship Levy transfer on behalf of BCC. Up until the end of March 2023, 94 levy transfer applications were received with 59 approved equating to £2.4m of Levy support. Apprenticeships are currently approved monthly by BCC.
	Work with Ladder for Greater Birmingham to support apprenticeship starts for young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBSLEP continued to support and fund the <i>Apprenticeship Ladder for Greater Birmingham</i> which, since its launch in 2018, has resulted in the creation of over 3,000 new apprenticeship starts across the GBS geography. • Around 40% of these starts are from B.A.M.E communities. • At least 70% of businesses engaged are from GBSLEP priority sectors and most apprenticeships created are at Level 3 and above (over 80% in the most recent phase) in line with GBSLEP's <i>Plan 10,000 Plus</i> strategy. • A further fourth phase of Ladder activity will see the number of new apprenticeships starts increase to over 4,500 by mid-2023.
	Deliver Reverse Mentoring programme to address the Labour Market Disconnect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBSLEP supported the DLUHC funded, Birmingham City Council Partnerships for People and Place (PfPP) pilot project for 150-200 disadvantaged young people in East Birmingham area. This project looked at their transition from full time education into work or further training via one-to-one progression coaching. • GBSLEP added value to the project by delivering an innovative reverse mentoring pilot scheme, which met the aims of the wider project and GBSLEP's young people's strategy 'You(th)Matter'. Young people mentored up to 20 SMEs to shape the way employers engage, attract, recruit and retain young candidates. The Growth Hub Skills Service worked with the GBSLEP MarComms team to design and deliver 'Better Your Future'. • A separate reverse mentoring session was designed and delivered as part of the Better Your Business event in November 2022 where employers (SMEs and Anchor Institutions such as Microsoft, BBC) met with undergraduates to exchange knowledge and impart careers advice.
	Carry out Skills Sector Analysis in the Enterprise Zone to inform skills interventions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis was commissioned by GBSLEP, but the resulting strategy was not completed due to policy functions coming to an end in March 2023 as part of the Government's decision to integrate some LEP functions into the local democratic elected bodies. Policy was not an area that was needed by WMCA. The lead for this project left in early 2023.
	Young People's Job Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Greater Birmingham & Solihull <i>Young Person's Job Fund</i> was launched in July 2022 with a decision made by the GBSLEP Board to end the project early due to the risk of underperformance and LEP integration and close down. This £1.5m programme was funded by £1m ESF/Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), and £500k from (mainly) private sector match. • The programme provided 4 businesses with wage subsidies to employ 11 young people (16 to 29) and NEETs (not in employment education or training) in the form of a wage contribution for both accredited and non-accredited training. NEETs were supported by the GBSLEP Skills Service as well as by partners who provided pre-employability training including support with CV writing and interview techniques.

	<p>Young People and Skills other interventions through SEP Fund</p>	<p>The GBSLEP SEP Enabling Fund supported several innovative skills interventions with significant impact on the local economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serendip Ideator, has engaged 350 young learners across 5 education providers and 10 employers to meet future skills and employment opportunities. • Digital Innovators Launchpad has created 62 new job opportunities, 27 apprenticeships and 5 business start-ups within the high growth digital sector • Generation 2022 sees 6000 new jobs and 1000 social value action placements for young people as a legacy of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games • Creative Alliance Headspace programme has reported 35 young creatives already in sustainable employment (18 in full time jobs and 17 sustainable freelance work) and aiming for an overall 80% 'into employment' rate.
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Business and Innovation - Business Advice and Support

Supporting the businesses in our city-regions is a primary focus for GBSLEP.

In 2022-23 we continued to support our SME communities to mitigate against the many operational challenges they continue to face (rising energy prices, cost of running a business and geopolitics) , and to maximise opportunities coming to our area.

This was against the back drop of Central Government's decision to transfer some LEP functions to local democratically elected bodies. For GBSLEP this means some functions transferring to West Midlands Combined Authority and Birmingham City Council from April 2023 onwards as the company winds down its activities with full closure due by the end of March 2024. In August 2023 Government confirmed that it would end funding to all LEPs.

Sections	Key deliverables/Activities 2022-23	• Progress & achievements
<p>Business and Innovation Business Advice and Support</p>	<p>Continue to support business recovery and growth, particularly in sectors where GBSLEP has a role in the region and as identified in the Industrial Strategy and now Plan for Growth.</p>	<p>The Growth Hub has continued to demonstrate a flexible approach to business support by adapting to economic changes and the needs of businesses. In December 2019, £1.9m of ERDF funding was secured in funds to support the capacity of the Growth Hub to September 2022. This was followed by a project extension until June 2023. The Growth Hub has most recently responded to the primary economic challenges and opportunities presented by the post Covid recovery and post EU trading against a back drop of the rising cost of living.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector Recovery and Growth Plans - The Growth Hub continues to focus on 5 growth sectors as set out in the original Industrial Strategy and now Plan for Growth by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) - Health Technologies and Life Sciences, Creative Industries, Low Carbon and Energy Technology, Advanced Manufacturing :Food and Drink and Business, Professional and Financial Services. • Expert Advice - Each growth sector has an Account Manager and activities have included one-to-one, group-focused and sectors specific events.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong Support Statistics - 1,910 business have been supported in 2022-23, with 8,038 hours of business support delivered, 15,107 interventions have been executed and 1,640 referrals have been made. • LEP Geography Statistics - 1,796 businesses supported have been based in the GBSLEP area and they have received 7,718 of support hours with 541 diagnostics delivered. • LEP Lifetime Statistics - 9,700 businesses have been helped since the Growth Hub was set up (Feb 2015 – July 2023), a total 41,000 hours of support has been delivered with over 63,000 individual interventions/support tasks recorded. Furthermore, 3,000 diagnostics have been delivered to businesses. Over 15,000 external referrals have been made. • Outreach/Events 8,000 event attendance hours recorded and over 1,200 businesses have attended our events.
	<p>Continue specialist advice in Access to Finance through 2 dedicated account managers.</p> <p>Continue to develop access to finance services.</p>	<p>GBSLEP's Access to Finance service has focused on fostering financial growth, creating funding opportunities and demystifying investment opportunities for SMEs across the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £8.2m of funding has been accessed since 2020, as a direct result of GBSLEP's Access to Finance service. • 1-2-1 interventions have taken place. • 2 dedicated Access to Finance Account Managers have designed and delivered The Founders Collective programme which continues to deliver investor readiness. Over 100 attendees from SME businesses have attended the programme so far to develop their skills in financial planning, funding platforms, types of investors, the legal aspects of heads of terms, shares & agreements, corporate governance, R&D opportunities and pitch deck development. • Group 3 supported over 30 black founder businesses which was a great success, with programme attendees having raised £475,000 to date. • Due to demand, GBSLEP allocated one of its business advisers to deliver a specific Access to Finance diagnostic to determine the level of support required by a business. This diagnostic delivers an understanding of their business, barriers, access to finance etc. Support at this stage was sometimes delivered by the business adviser or where relevant referred to the specialist account managers for consideration of joining a future cohort of the Founders Collective. • The programme was well supported by regional partners, Midven VC & Maven Capital, BBB Funders, & ISQ Crowdfunding. • GBSLEP was represented on the Board of <i>VentureFest</i>, the region's annual innovation event.
	<p>Continue specialist advice in Intellectual Property and expand the offer.</p> <p>Extend the pilot Innovation Enabler, in conjunction with IPO, to support SMEs in key growth industries to recognise and realise the value of their intellectual property (IP) through R&D and innovation collaboration</p>	<p>GBSLEP remained dedicated to bolstering inclusive and sustainable innovation and growth by working with SMEs on their Intellectual Property.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBSLEP's <i>IP Support Framework</i> has been led by an Intellectual Property (IP) Officer embedded within the Growth Hub. This has ensured GBSLEP as an exemplar of best practice in providing IP support to businesses whatever their stage of growth and

		<p>development. The rolling out this model framework has begun with the <i>West Midlands IP Routemap</i>, a supported network of IP professionals, forming the <i>West Midlands IP Forum</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 98 <i>Integrate IP reviews/ diagnostics</i> have been delivered. The IP programme includes several levels of service, depending on how rich the potential IP is that's being developed. We have had strong satisfaction across all these levels, for <i>Integrate IP Reviews</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Businesses identified their ability to recognise their potential IP at 86% after attending the programme (against 50% before). ○ Businesses said they had a 90% likelihood of taking action in developing their IP after the programme ○ 95% of participant businesses would recommend the scheme to others For <i>Enabler level</i> support, these are businesses with a greater amount of and potential in their IP. • GBSLEP also ran the IP Enabler Scheme which 18 businesses with access to strategic advice from an IP professional following the Integrate IP Review. This scheme granted further funding for a comprehensive IP Audit and follow-up funding with £102k of funding from the IPO. The IP Enabler was extended for a further 6 months (from April 23) to support 5 more businesses to a value of £30k. Both schemes have now closed.
	<p>Continue specialist sector specific advice</p>	<p>Dedicated Account Managers within GBSLEP Growth Hub played a crucial role in ensuring our SMEs in our 5 priority sector areas were supported.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HALSEC (health and life sciences huddle/networking event) continued to be delivered bi-monthly, specifically targeting SMEs in the life science and health tech sector, and relevant public stakeholders. • GBSLEP led on the opening of the Unit 9 Medical Technology Incubator at Birmingham Research Park – University of Birmingham. This was preceded by a GBSLEP commissioned regional workspace study that identified a shortage of lab space facilities for SMEs in the region. • The GBSLEP Growth Hub's Account Manager for Low Carbon Account Manager gave advice to entrepreneurs and business leaders actively wanting to make 'green changes'. • This Account Manager also supported the delivery of GBSLEP's Clean Growth Grant – that has delivered grants totalling £613,956 to help businesses become more energy efficient. The grants leveraged £961,095 of match funding towards a total cost of £1,572,519 for energy saving measures. The total of £961,095.56 of private match funding released represents £1.57 per £1 of programme grant spend. • The Low Carbon / Sustainability Account Manager has supported enterprises in identifying energy saving resources as part of his work which in turn will support the business to grow in a sustainable and cost-efficient way. • Energy efficiency projects supported include solar PV arrays, LED lighting and insulation improvements. Most applicants have stated that their energy efficiency projects would not have taken place without our assistance. The grants have provided additional support to businesses across the GBSLEP area with new buildings, training and skills

		<p>opportunities, and equipment which supports the Government's vision to level up the West Midlands.</p>
	<p>Continue Scale-up support</p>	<p>The Growth Hub's strategic collaborations have continued to contribute to the growth of businesses in the West Midlands.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Growth Hub mostly refers businesses to Aston Centre for Growth for various Scale-Up Programmes, including Aston for Small Business Growth, Goldman Sachs etc. • The Creative Scale Up Programme was a £1.3 million 2-year programme funded by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and delivered across the West Midlands. It was developed to help Creative Businesses in the West Midlands with targeted support including Access to Finance, Marketing and Branding, Value and Pricing, Intellectual Property and Contract Law and Sales, Pitching and Presenting support. GBSLEP Growth Hub referred clients to the programme. • Between December 2020 and March 2022, GBSLEP Growth Hub successfully delivered a BEIS funded programme bringing together cohorts of 11 owners. Managers of SME businesses learn through 18 hours of action learning peer to peer sessions and 3.5 hours of one-to-one mentoring. • 37 cohorts of businesses were brought together – 293 companies were supported through 141 peer sessions. 85% of participants reported they were satisfied and 44% very satisfied. GBSLEP helped safeguard 487 jobs in the region through this initiative.
	<p>Targeted Inclusive Business Support - Improve access to mainstream and specialist business support for businesses outside of existing support networks, particularly in some of our diverse communities</p>	<p>The Growth Hub has taken proactive measures to improve access to mainstream and specialist services to drive positive change and foster inclusive and sustainable economic growth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a fully embedded Growth Hub Adviser with a specific focus on delivering support to B.A.M.E communities. • A series of Female Peer Entrepreneurs masterclasses and a 6-week programme has been run to provide peer to peer support and unlock barriers. 303 hours of business support has been delivered to 47 businesses across a range of sectors that include Creative, BPFs, Manufacturing, Hospitality, Food & Drink and CICs. • Frontline advisers have an established process which includes capturing and recording business level data relating to EDI for equality monitoring purposes which is a key part of BEIS reporting requirements.
	<p>Sustainability Service/Hub Business support</p>	<p>GBSLEP recognises the importance of tackling the climate change emergency whilst unlocking the potential for the Clean Growth sector to expand so that it can benefit from the growing international markets for green products and services. A key development has been to integrate the LEP funded Clean Growth Grant into direct advice and support for businesses delivered through the GBSLEP Growth Hub and its specialist Sustainability Service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GBSLEP Growth Hub has a dedicated Account Manager who can offer specialist sustainable business advice to entrepreneurs and business leaders actively wanting to make changes resulting in a better future for all.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBSLEP has continued to facilitate the Low Carbon and Environmental Technology (LCET) Steering Group meetings on a quarterly basis. • <i>The Zellar Pilot Scheme, Low Carbon and Circular Economy Fund and Clean Growth Programme</i> have been offering support to businesses wanting to decarbonise or make their products and processes more sustainable. These programmes have been welcomed by businesses that have been struggling with the increase in energy costs. • <i>Clean Growth Grant</i> – The GBSLEP Clean Growth Grant project committed to deliver £613,956 of grant funding to 83 businesses across the Greater Birmingham and Solihull region, with an average offer of £8,000. GBSLEP Growth Hub’s Low Carbon / sustainability Account Manager has supported enterprises in identifying energy saving resources as part of his work which in turn will support the business to grow in a sustainable and cost-efficient way. Energy efficiency projects supported include solar PV arrays, LED lighting and insulation improvements. Most businesses surveyed state they would not have been able to put these processes and products in place without the grant.
<p>Cluster work and Growth Sectors GBSLEP had the regional lead role for five high growth sectors in the Local Industrial Strategy. Of these, four are priority Clusters in the WMCA Plan for Growth. We continued to strengthen our industry-led cluster and sector leadership groups to raise the performance and profile of these clusters, to attract investment and act as a catalyst for other sector growth in the city region.</p>		
BUSINESS, PROFESSIONAL AND FINANCIAL SERVICES/MODERN SERVICES	SuperTech cluster development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The focus this year has been on scaling the SuperTech Cluster for next generation services and exploring the regional proptech opportunity. <i>SuperTech</i> is now established in the regional narrative for BPFs which has a core mission to enhance the place proposition. The function was not part of the integration of some services to WMCA and in June 2023 it was transferred to Birmingham City University as part of GBSLEP’s Transition Plan.
	Serendip Financial Services cluster drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following an intense period of market research during the latter stage of 2019/ early 2020, we published our report on the burgeoning Fintech sector in the West Midlands, the most in-depth a far-reaching report exploring the sector in the region to date. Over 70 businesses and stakeholders were engaged in the process and remain involved to date. The FinTech Ecosystem Report provides significant in-depth analysis of the current state of the market and outlines steps that can be taken to promote the continued growth of the sector.
	No Code demand led accelerator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Community Renewal Fund No Code</i> project (£0.55m) was completed ahead of time in November 2022, overachieving on outputs and outcomes. Headlines include 9 new companies formed, 22 new products and 22 new products/ services introduced to the market and over £250k of investment raised
	ProfTech Accelerator and Hackathon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brum PropHack took place on October 10th, 2022 – the second hackathon focusing on property tech. • GBSLEP published a blue print to unleash the potential of PropTech in the West Midlands at the BPFs sector showcase day as part of the Commonwealth Games Business and Tourism Programme.

	ProfTech branding and upscaling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GBSLEP, working closely with partners, has identified that an agile apprenticeships model could be the preferred mechanism to make the biggest impact in addressing market needs. An exploration grant was awarded during 2019/20 and a feasibility model exploration piece of work is now underway in the creative sector. Pending the outcome of that work, and assuming that a workable, scalable model is identified, the BPFSS sector will be the next target for implementation.
CREATIVE INDUSTRIES	WM Location and Production Services Pilot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development work with 'Old Print Works', a creative co-working centre in Balsall Heath, Birmingham has led to the organisation successfully winning £200K+ of funding through LGF to improve their sustainability by renovating more of their building for social and commercial use. We worked closely with the region's new screen industry body, Create Central, on a pipeline of essential new infrastructure, such as film studios and a 'Creative Hub', that will form part of the plan to bring major film and TV production and jobs back to the West Midlands.
	Create Central data portal development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GBSLEP led cross-regional work to develop the West Midlands AI driven data portal from Create Central. This will deliver a more intelligent selection of weekly info to creatives, including funding opportunities, events, conferences etc.
	Low Carbon support in creative industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GBSLEP wrote a Cluster Toolkit that identifies way to make trade and membership bodies more effective to increase the diversity, sustainability and growth of sector businesses. Publication of this and the cluster development fund has been delayed exploring how it could have greater impact by making it a cross-sectoral programme.
	Creative Sector Specialist support (proposed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GBSLEP launched a £90,000 18-month programme with Film Birmingham to pilot how best to create a 'one-stop' region-wide location and production service that will bring major national and international Film & TV production to the region. This work will form the basis of regional planning by <i>Create Central</i> on an optimised production service that can be marketed to Hollywood and UK producers. GBSLEP supported and co-wrote the development of a Screen Sector Development Plan for the region which resulted in £1m of funding being won from the British Film Institute, to stimulate the re-investment of screen-based production of all types across the region and to improve the quality and diversity of the sector's supply chain.
LIFE SCIENCES/DATA DRIVEN HELATH TECH	Deliver the MedTech incubator(lab space) pilot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GBSLEP provided funding to kit out <i>Unit 9</i>, an incubator at the University of Birmingham Research Park that now has five businesses in residence located in it.
	Continue to engage with SME in the sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Businesses from the sector came together in four <i>HALSEC huddle</i> meetings, which were convened by GBSLEP. A joint event was held with the <i>West Midlands Health Technologies Cluster</i> discussed with businesses the benefits of incubators.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very well attended investor event <i>Healthcare Unpacked</i> was held at the Exchange in Birmingham, bringing potential investors into the West Midlands who were interested in the MedTech sector. • Officer support was also provided towards the development of the MedTech/HealthTech element of the West Midlands Innovation Accelerator. This sector, however, is one example of the way that not all intended impacts from the delivery plan can be realised because of the lack of clarity on finding a 'new home' for activities, such as those around this cluster activity. This has meant that post March '23 brings a hard stop to these activities, with allocated funding being redistributed for other uses. • The LCET Steering group is the only business group in the West Midlands bringing together the voice of businesses in the low carbon and environmental technology sector. The group exist to inform the development, prioritisation and implementation of key interventions within the sector. 18 low carbon businesses located across the 3-LEP geography were part of the steering Group. In 2022/23 the group met on 4 occasions. The group has now been dissolved as part of the closure of LEPs.
<p>ADVANCED MANUFACTURING AND ENGINEERING – FOOD AND DRINK</p>	<p>Growth Hub specialist support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been a dramatic rise in requests for support surrounding the manufacturing in terms of the current climate and rising energy costs. Support has included the retention of staff.
	<p>Address failings in tailored business support for low carbon businesses through the development of a low carbon network and consideration of dedicated cluster support for the sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBSLEP continued to organise and chair the Food and Drink Manufacturers forum. This financial year four meetings were held. The GBSLEP team worked closely with partners such as DEFRA to highlight issues the manufacturers have raised. • The team have been involved in research to understand how the food system in Birmingham works, improving catering procurement at Birmingham City University (BCU) to maximise the use of regional products; and in the Commonwealth Games Food & Drink Consortium, which engaged the Department of International Trade (DIT) with regional food and drink manufacturing businesses. • The forum ceased operation as part of the closure of LEPs in March 2023.
<p>LOW CARBON AND ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES</p>	<p>Clean Growth Grant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBSLEP designed and delivered the Clean Growth Grant Programme - The project awarded capital grants of up to £10,000 to SMEs with a maximum intervention rate of 70% grant and 30% SME match-funding throughout the project. • 83 local SMEs are supported with a grant • £613.965k was paid out in grant funding • £961.095 of match funding was leveraged – £1.57 of private match for every £1 of grant invested. • £1,572,219.16 of energy saving measures were made because of the grant. • On average, the grants will save 1,211.69 KgCO2 per year for every £1k invested
	<p>Zellar Platform Pilot</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBSLEP funded 100 licenses for the Zellar Pilot Programme, of which 98 were delivered with 2 due to be delivered in 23/24. A series of webinars and 1-2-1 engagement were offered to meet the target. Below are some impact statistics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 22 tonnes of CO2 reduction ○ £28,400 energy costs saved ○ 230 sustainability actions were taken

- £248,728 invested in green technology
- £8,960 offset investments
- £1.42 of energy saved to date for every £1 invested

Stakeholder Engagement and Marketing and Communications

MARCOMMS

Further increase the integration and alignment of GBSLEP and the Growth Hub communications, to enhance the reputation of the LEP as a credible delivery partner within the business community.

- Through 2022/23 work has progressed to further align the communication of GBSLEP and its Growth Hub. The Communications and Marketing Teams merged to form a MarComms Department led by the Director of Marketing, Communications and External Affairs. This enabled skills to be exchanged and messaging to be aligned.
- A data led approach to marketing also enabled the team to make some meaningful interventions to support the delivery of the Clean Growth Grant which was supported by business surveys.
- Thought leadership blogs were shared on GBSLEP channels to enhance the reputation of the LEP and reports were published in a timely manner to influence wider public policy.
- An annual AGM and Business event was delivered in November 2022 by the MarComms Department. The Better Your Business event was a showcase of the business support on offer in the region demonstrated through masterclasses and exhibits with Growth Hub partners. The AGM was used to inform stakeholder of the GBSLEP's commitment to continuing business support until Dec 2023 in the context of the Government's decision to integrate LEPs into local democratic bodies.
 - The Annual Report 21/22 was distributed at the Better Your Business event.
 - 256 delegated attended and 132 SMEs were represented by 143 delegates.
 - An average of 4 hours was spent at the event by SMEs. This represents 528 hours of business support provided as measured by GBSLEP Growth Hub.
 - BBC Midlands Today filmed a piece about the Autumn Statement and business reaction from the Better Your Business Showcase. There was a mention of GBSLEP.
- Press releases have continued to be issued to illustrate the impact of LEP activities and coverage has been secured in publication, online and TV.

Progress against KPIs to 2030

To track performance of the economy, GBSLEP in 2016 set several long-term key performance indicators(KPIs) in The Strategic Economic Plan. These indicators are shown in the table below. They provide measures of progress and change, and where appropriate they show a comparison with other Core City economies. GBSLEP's interventions are all designed to deliver against these KPIs whilst recognising that performance is determined by a various external factor such as changing social, political and economic circumstances and stakeholders beyond the control of GBSLEP. Throughout the 22-23 Delivery Year, progress against these KPIs was reported to the GBSLEP Board and Pillar Boards.

The Greater Birmingham and Solihull region achieved a strong upward trend across all the indicators until the onset of the Covid Pandemic in the UK in early 2020. Subsequently, many of these indicators experienced a downward trend or even a reversal due to the impact of the pandemic on the region's economy. Covid-19 has been followed by the UK's exit from the EU, escalating costs of living, energy prices soaring and the effects of the ongoing war in Ukraine. Many businesses have had to adapt to these multiple macro social, political and economic factors and this has had a notable impact on our KPIs.

For example, in 2019 we had successfully achieved 65% of our ambitious target of creating 250,000 by 2030. However, this trend has slowed down significantly. Likewise, in 2018/19 we reported an increase in GVA of £12.8bn amounting to 44% of our target of £29bn but subsequent growth has slowed down significantly with a modest 1% increase since that time.

Furthermore, there have also been updates and improvements in the collection of data related to private sector jobs. As a result, the number of private sector jobs as reported in 2020 has been revised downwards. These revisions are necessary to provide accurate and up-to-date information for economic analysis and planning. Progress against our key performance indicators can be seen in the table that follows.

Progress against 2022-23 Delivery Plan - Annual Report

Key Performance Indicator	BASELINE (2010)	MOST CURRENT DATA	PROGRESS TO DATE (since 2010)
Create 250,000 Private Sector Jobs by 2030 to be the Leading Core City LEP for Private Sector Job Creation	633,600	805,225 (2021)	+171,625 (since 2010)
Increase GVA by £29bn by 2030	£42bn	£55.01bn (2021)	£13.01bn 45% delivered towards target
Decrease Unemployment to the National Average by 2020	2.7% Point Gap with UK	1.7% Point Gap with UK (2022)	1% Point Gap with the UK
To have the lowest unemployment amongst the LEP Core Cities by 2030	5.1% Point Gap with Leading CC	2.6% Point Gap with Leading CC (2022)	2.5% Points Delivered towards this target
GBSLEP to be the Leading Core City LEP by 2030 for GVA per Head	£8,742 Per Head Gap	£6,204 Per Head Gap (2021)	£2,528 Per Head reduction in Gap
Increase the % of Working Age Population with NVQ3+ to the National Average by 2025	5.6% Point Gap with UK	3.7% Point Gap with UK (2021)	1.9% Point reduction in Gap with UK
Increase productivity rates to the national average by 2030	£2.15 GVA per hour gap with UK Average	£2.42 GVA per hour gap with UK Average (2021)	£0.27 increase in the GVA per hour gap
GBSLEP to be the leading Core City LEP for life satisfaction by 2030	Ranked 4/8 0.09-point gap with leading CC (2011/12)	Ranked 1/8 GBSLEP on life satisfaction (2021/22)	+3 Ranks +0.18 in Life Satisfaction



Progress against 2022-23 Delivery Plan - Annual Report

Glossary of Terms

GBSLEP – Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership

BCC – Birmingham City Council

WMCA – West Midlands Combined Authority

LGF – Local Growth Fund

GPF – Growing Places Fund

GBF – Getting Building Fund

IP - Intellectual Property

SMBC -Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

EZ – Enterprise Zone

RIF – Regional Investment Fund

CAZ – Cultural Action Zones