An Integrated Economic Strategy for Pennine Lancashire

Contents:

B3 Economic inclusion and increasing participation

Analysis	3.0	Multiple deprivation, worklessness, NEETS
Strategy	3.1	Addressing worklessness
	3.2	A healthy workforce

B4 Regional connectivity and influence

Analysis	4.0	Exploiting our proximity to growth centres
Strategy	4.1	Promoting a skilled and mobile workforce
	4.2	Investing in transport infrastructure
	4.3	Delivering Quality of Place
	4.4	Improving image and perceptions

B5 Investing in the future

Analysis	5.0	Changing the way we do things
Strategy	5.1	Raising confidence and encouraging investment
	5.2	Reorganising delivery and procuring resources
	5.3	Strengthening regional partnerships and influence
	5.4	Securing sustainable economic growth

Appendix:
Pennine Lancashire Integrated Economic Strategy – Proposed Delivery Plan 2009-12

Executive Summary

Pennine Lancashire, comprising the Boroughs of Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle, Ribble Valley and Rossendale, is an area with a long and proud industrial heritage. Once a key driver within the industrial boom of the 19th and early 20th centuries, the area has experienced continued decline of its staple industries since that time but has also seen a period of tremendous economic diversification. Today Pennine Lancashire remains a strong manufacturing area, with many examples of leading edge businesses. Aerospace, advanced manufacturing, advanced flexible materials, digital and creative industries all feature strongly in the make up of the area's economy.

However, all of the key economic indicators for Pennine Lancashire show that the area is underperforming, despite a number of inherent strengths. This is mostly relative to neighbouring areas, the Lancashire City Region and the North West, but in some parts, particularly in the most deprived wards, absolute decline is occurring.

This phenomenon sits alongside Pennine Lancashire's inherent asset of a marvellous natural environment. Flanked to the north by the beautiful Ribble Valley and to the east and south by the West Pennine Moors, each of the area's settlements is surrounded by open countryside. This has huge potential as a resource for the residents to enjoy, but also to develop as an asset to attract visitors from adjoining city regions – hence the emergence of the idea of the area being the 'Pennine Playground' for the region as a whole.

This strategy is designed to address the economic underperformance and to exploit the area's strengths and potential. It identifies and recommends Strategic Interventions to the area's leaders and their partners.

These need to be viewed as additional to, and not a replacement for, actions to improve the employment opportunities available locally. As such they sit alongside proposals to strengthen the business infrastructure; improve the competitiveness of the current business base; attract new investors; further stimulate new enterprises; and skills and learning initiatives aimed at improving employability.

This document is intended as a template within which the key economic development agencies within Pennine Lancashire and their partners in regeneration can work together to address the fundamental deficits in performance and to move towards the goal of a much higher performing economy.

It acknowledges that in order to achieve this there needs to be a new focus on the priorities for action; that the interventions adopted should be the ones which result in transformational change, and it recognises that there needs to be a fundamental re-examination of the way in which the delivery of economic regeneration is organised and managed.

The document has been produced by a Working Group of stakeholder organisations who have identified the key areas where action by the partners in Pennine Lancashire can influence a positive shift in trajectory. The strategy proposed is based on sound economic analysis and each section is prefaced by a presentation of the key economic indicators and trends.

For each policy area, the Strategic Interventions that have been proposed are the ones which will fundamentally improve the Gross Value Added contribution to the economy, or will significantly contribute towards greater economic well being.

In summary the strategy embraces the following objectives:

- Encouraging enterprise, creating more new businesses and helping small, young business to grow
- Working with companies to help them take up new opportunities, strengthen their long term competitiveness and develop their knowledge assets
- Developing economic and business infrastructure to encourage innovation, re-investment and new investment
- Promoting skills development at all levels – targeting those without level 2 qualifications; supporting those with intermediate qualifications in developing higher level skills; encouraging the recruitment and retention of graduate level workers
- Tackling urban deprivation across Pennine Lancashire and promoting the high quality neighbourhood environments needed to attract and retain skilled labour
- Tackling worklessness (through skills development and more targeted engagement as support activities) to ensure that all parts of Pennine Lancashire benefit from its economic growth
- Addressing image and quality of place to make Pennine Lancashire a natural place for new investment and a desirable place to live
- Promoting links with neighbouring economies (particularly Manchester and Preston) which can act as an additional employment destination for Pennine Lancashire residents, increasing their access to higher paid employment
- Increasing the influence Pennine Lancashire wields with government and within the region
- Reorganising delivery to enable key projects to be implemented within a robust management regime and to give funding bodies increased confidence in the ability of the area to deliver.

It is recognised that there needs to be a sustained effort in order to change the trend in many of the key areas for intervention, and that there will not be a short term 'fix'. The strategy is therefore intended to provide a framework for intervention for the 12 year period 2009-2020.

It is intended that this strategy will be taken forward by the key stakeholders and developed into a robust three year business plan which will be submitted to the Northwest Regional Development Agency to secure devolved regeneration funding for Pennine Lancashire. That plan will be reviewed and refined each remaining three year period to the 2020 target date.

A1 - Introducing the Integrated Economic Strategy

This document is an Integrated Economic Strategy for Pennine Lancashire for the period up to 2020. It examines the trajectory of the key economic indicators and identifies other related factors that influence the area's economic performance. It identifies the key areas of underperformance and proposes strategic interventions to improve the performance of each. Pennine Lancashire is not an island; the strategy therefore also examines how it can benefit from growth in other parts of the Lancashire City Region and neighbouring City Regions such as Greater Manchester and Leeds. It builds on previous work carried out by the East Lancashire Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder (Elevate) and the East Lancashire Strategic Economic Regeneration Group (ELSERG); it identifies those projects which are already being taken forward and those where future action is recommended.

In 2004 ELSERG began to research the area's economy in detail, and to identify actions that could have a positive economic impact. It recommended the following:

- Increase the share of Pennine Lancashire business participating in higher value activities
- Increase levels of enterprise and high quality new business start ups
- Invest in people to improve skills levels
- Increase levels of economic activity
- Better connect Pennine Lancashire to areas of growth
- Improve and capitalise on the Pennine Lancashire quality of place.

All of these are included in this strategy, work has begun on some of them, but further impetus is needed. For example, the drive to improve levels of enterprise resulted in the successful Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) bid in 2006; that programme is now fully operational in four of the six districts. This needs to be extended to the rest of Pennine Lancashire. The development of the Elevate Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder, the Pennine Lancashire branding and the 'Pennine Lancs Squared' initiative have begun to address the quality of place deficit; there remains, however, much to be done if the area is to become a popular and attractive destination with a thriving economy.

Three other related strategies are being prepared for the Pennine Lancashire Leaders and Chief Executives (PLLACE):

- Pennine Lancashire Housing Strategy
- Pennine Lancashire Skills and Training Strategy
- Pennine Lancashire Spatial Strategy.

Throughout this document the term 'Pennine Lancashire' refers to the six Boroughs of Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle, Ribble Valley and Rossendale. These share a common travel to work area and comprise a functional economic area against which coherent strategies can be developed.

Pennine Lancashire Today

From its historic strength as one of the main drivers of the industrial revolution and a powerhouse of the textile and engineering industries, the Pennine Lancashire economy has experienced relative decline for almost a hundred years. Much of the output of Pennine Lancashire today is founded on relatively low wage, low added value, low skilled employment. The housing stock has deteriorated in parallel with the traditional industries: the legacy of the past industrial success is an oversupply of two bedroomed terraced housing, much of it in very poor condition. The area's leaders are determined to reverse this trend.

The position is not all negative: there are signs of economic recovery and a number of economic drivers that can be harnessed. Many businesses stand out from the crowd in the quality and innovation of their products, and if this strategy is implemented Pennine Lancashire can once more be an economic force to be reckoned with.

The GVA gap between Pennine Lancashire and the national average illustrates the scale of intervention required: over £2 billion per annum of output is missing from the area's economy. Productivity must be raised to encourage new investment and to bridge the GVA gap. There is a wealth of evidence available to inform these proposals, due to recent research on the area's economy and housing market (commissioned by Elevate).

With a population of 522,000 spread across six Boroughs, Pennine Lancashire has the potential to play a significant role in the economic renaissance of the north of England. It borders the Manchester and Leeds City Regions, and is part of the Central Lancashire City Region, which includes Preston and Blackpool. Strengthening links with these areas is vital. Blackburn with Darwen is the most populous district and accounts for the largest proportion of employees. The area is however polycentric and significant employment is located in Burnley, Hyndburn and Pendle. The distributed nature of employment reflects both the strong industrial heritage of the major towns, and a strong rural economy in the north and east of the sub-region.

Pennine Lancashire's performance has steadily improved in recent years, after mixed performance in the eighties and nineties. Employment has increased every year since 2001 (by 3,000 to almost 200,000) and since 1997 the number of VAT registered businesses has grown by 10% to 14,000. This growth is, however, smaller than that of other northern economies, including Preston and Manchester. The challenge is to create the conditions that can support significantly accelerated growth.

Success will depend on a number of related factors. These include exploiting sub-sectoral strengths; increasing the skills of the workforce; developing new employment and sector opportunities, and helping local residents and businesses take advantage of economic growth in neighbouring economies.

The Economic Context

Pennine Lancashire contributes £6.1bn out of a total of £18.8bn to the Lancashire economy – more than any other part of the County - and employs 228,000 people.[1] This reflects the heavier concentration of manufacturing (including advanced sectors) compared to areas of higher employment growth elsewhere in Lancashire.

Manufacturing remains an important source of employment, with more than twice the level of employment nationally. Although manufacturing has been in decline for some time (as it has nationally), employment growth has occurred in some key sub-sectors (notably furniture production, basic chemicals, and food and drink). Pennine Lancashire's aerospace and advanced flexible materials sectors are of national significance.

Pennine Lancashire has experienced strong business services growth in recent years, but this has been from a low employment base. Consequently, absolute employment growth of higher value services has not fully offset employment decline in manufacturing. Supporting employment growth in higher value service sectors is both a challenge and opportunity: although difficult it could help Pennine Lancashire to attract skilled people and jobs. Other parts of the service economy, such as the visitor economy, offer further potential for business and employment growth.

Pennine Lancashire has an adequate stock of intermediate level skills in the workforce with the proportion of the adult population holding level 2 and 3 qualifications matching national levels. Graduate level skills (level 4) are under-represented, however. To improve economic performance significantly, Pennine Lancashire must develop a workforce with the skills that the economy will need in the future.

In developing a stronger economy it will be necessary to deal with the challenges associated with multiple deprivation, including high levels of worklessness, low incomes, and poor educational attainment. This affects many communities in the area and remains a barrier to attracting and retaining investment and skilled labour.

The City Regions and the Regional Context

City Regions are major drivers for economic growth. Pennine Lancashire forms the eastern part of the Lancashire City Region, which includes Preston. Preston is an important potential employment destination for Pennine Lancashire residents, particularly for those in the neighbouring districts of Blackburn with Darwen and Ribble Valley. The M65 motorway and the Blackpool-Leeds rail service give ready access to the Preston area from Pennine Lancashire. Forecast employment growth in Preston will create new opportunities for Pennine Lancashire residents and business.

The Manchester City Region, however, presents the greatest opportunities for the Pennine Lancashire economy: employment there is forecast to increase by 166,000 by 2026. Of this, 122,000 are forecast for the Greater Manchester Urban Core[2] and 15,000 for the three districts bordering Pennine Lancashire (Bolton, Bury and Rochdale). In

[1] The rate of employment and GVA growth slowed between 1990 and 2005, however.
[2] Consisting of the City of Manchester, Salford and Trafford

contrast, only 22,000 additional jobs are forecast for the whole of Blackburn with Darwen and the County of Lancashire.

Much of Manchester's forecast growth is in high value employment sectors, including financial and business services, which will expand by 90,000 jobs by 2026. Only 17,000 Pennine Lancashire residents worked in Greater Manchester in 2001, however. This is a surprisingly low number, no doubt greatly restricted by the relatively poor transport links between the two areas.

The Leeds-Manchester City Regions are now being seen as a northern growth pole, and Pennine Lancashire is well placed to benefit from this thanks to its location neighbouring the two. However existing commuting patterns show that links to Leeds City Region are even less exploited than those to Preston and Greater Manchester.

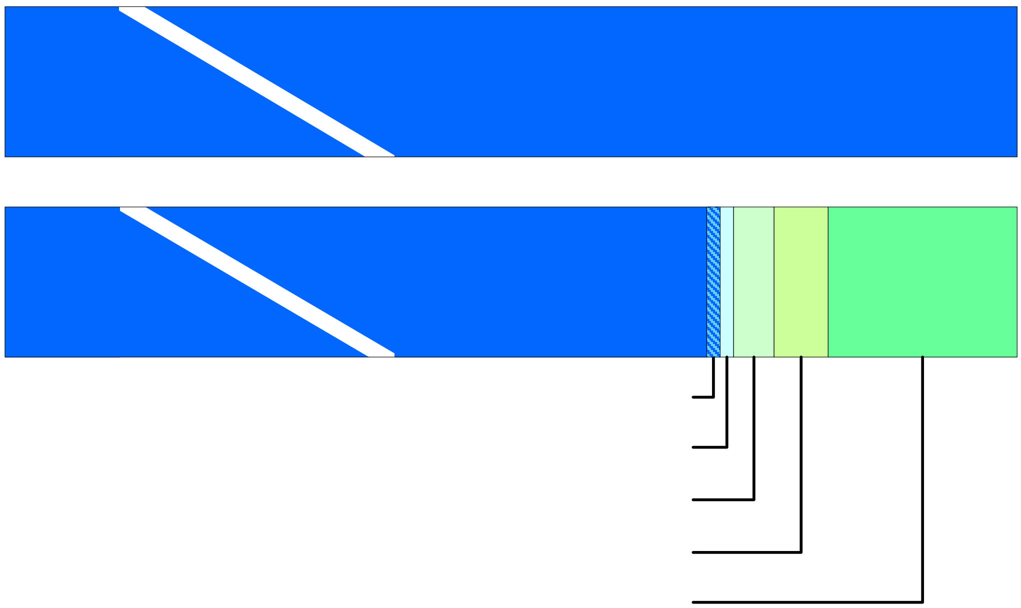
The Productivity and Prosperity Gap

The Northern Way identified that much of the north of England operates below its economic potential. It aims to close the productivity gap between the north and south of England. With GVA per head at only £13,000 compared to £17,200 nationally, the scale of the Pennine Lancashire output gap is considerable. If the area generated output per head in line with the national average it would amount to an additional £2.1 billion per year - equivalent to £4,200 per person or £8,400 per employee.

Pennine Lancashire has a significantly lower employment rate than nationally - closing this gap would generate an additional £220 million. The benefits would be highest where the employment shortfall is most acute: parts of Blackburn with Darwen, Hyndburn, Pendle and Burnley. This shortfall only accounts for a small proportion of the output gap, however, which largely reflects the sectoral composition of industry and overall levels of productivity in the Pennine Lancashire economy.

As manufacturing employment steadily declines (although output and productivity may increase), replacement employment has been predominantly in the lower value service sectors. Higher value services, including financial and business services, are still under represented, and this contributes £355 million to the output gap.

The Pennine Lancashire Output Gap, 2004



Supporting the growth of higher value service employment is vital if the productivity gap is to be closed, and will be a major help in attracting highly skilled individuals. Lower than average productivity in all sectors is a feature of industry in the north of England. In Pennine Lancashire it accounts for almost three quarters (or £1.5 billion) of the output gap. The performance factors that underpin this include:

- The skills base of the workforce
- The occupational distribution of the workforce
- The level of business competitiveness
- The level of capital investment per employee.

Each of these areas must be tackled to improve economic performance. Promoting employment should remain a priority (particularly given the potential benefits for the most deprived neighbourhoods) but it must be part of a broader approach that improves competitiveness across every sector.

Skills and Employment: The Fundamental Challenge

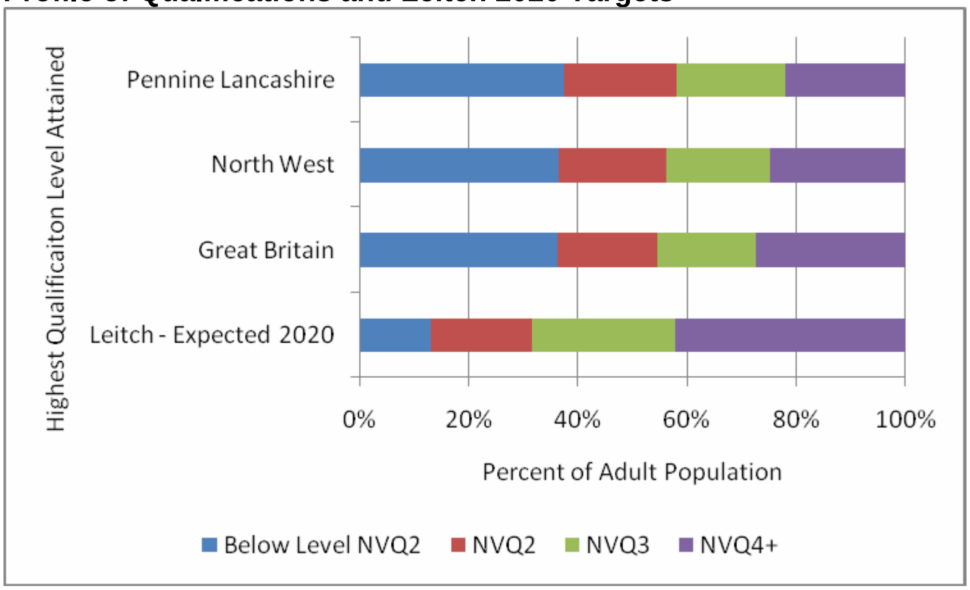
The Leitch Report[3] examined the UK long term skills needs and set ambitious goals for 2020, which if achieved would make the UK a world leader in skills. The report highlights that in a rapidly changing global economy, with emerging economies such as China and India, the UK cannot afford to stand still. It identifies that despite good recent progress

[3] Leitch, S., *Prosperity for all in the global economy - world class skills*, (HM Treasury, December 2006)

the UK's skills base remains weaker than other developed economies. The Leitch targets for 2020 include:

- 95% of adults to have basic skills in both functional literacy and numeracy
- 90% of adults to hold at least level 2 qualifications or equivalent
- 500,000 apprenticeships delivered each year
- 40% of adults to hold at least level 4 qualifications or equivalent.

Profile of Qualifications and Leitch 2020 Targets



Source: Annual Population Survey / Leitch Review of Skills: Final Report, 2006

Skills must be improved at all qualification levels across the workforce. Level 2 qualifications have become the minimum needed to get a job, yet 37% of the Pennine Lancashire workforce does not hold them.[4] The situation is much worse in deprived neighbourhoods, where serious effort is needed. Pennine Lancashire currently performs well for mid-level qualifications but has a serious shortfall at higher levels: meeting the Leitch targets would require the proportion of adults educated to level 4+ to be almost doubled, compared to a 55% increase nationally. This is the greatest skills challenge the area faces. The poor access to Higher Education resources and the lack of higher value employment opportunities are the main barriers to resolving this; without these it is difficult to attract and retain skilled individuals.

Skills development must be promoted at all levels of the workforce if Pennine Lancashire's economy is to meet the Leitch targets. They may not be met if the strategy relies on skilled younger workers replacing older people with lower qualifications. The proportion of 20 to 29 year olds without level 2 qualifications (41%) is broadly in line with

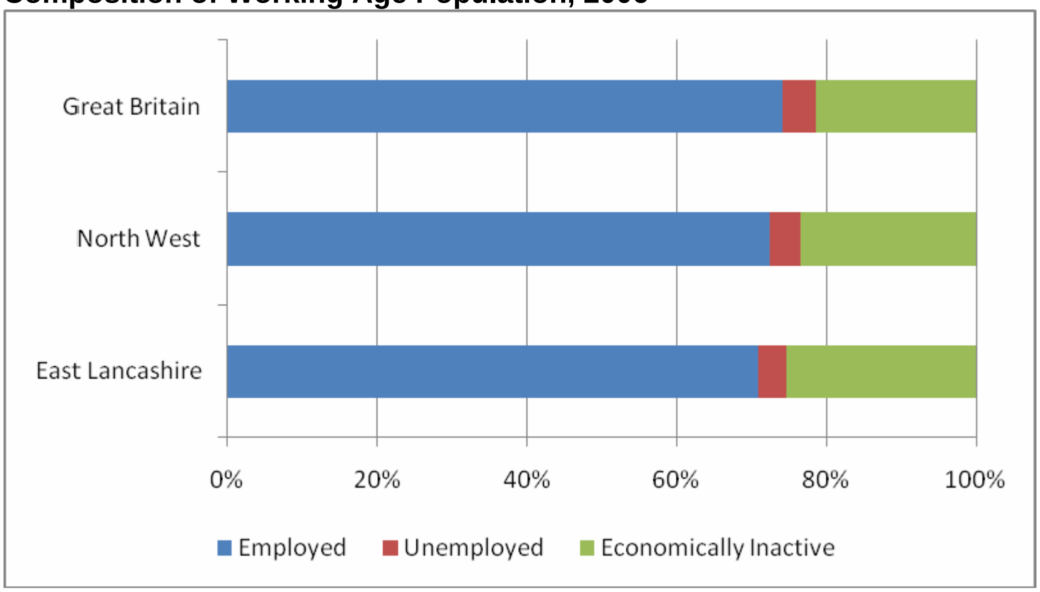
[4] Compared to 36% nationally.

the proportion for older people (40% for those aged 50 to retirement and 34% for those aged 30 to 49). The level of poorly qualified younger workers must be reduced.[5]

Registered unemployment is low, in line with the national average (4% in 2006). The main employment challenge is the high levels of economic inactivity (25% of the working age population compared to 21% nationally), particularly the 33,500 individuals in receipt of Incapacity Benefit.

Economic inactivity is spread unevenly across the area, ranging from 16% in Ribble Valley to 30% in Hyndburn. Reducing its extent will require long term and targeted support to address the barriers preventing people from getting a job. Those most isolated from the labour market will also require tailored assistance to overcome additional barriers.

Composition of Working Age Population, 2006



Source: Annual Population Survey

The Government has set an ambitious target of getting 80% of the working age population into employment In Pennine Lancashire this would require supporting an additional 28,000 people into work – coincidentally, this is equal to the total number of unemployed (12,000) plus the economically inactive individuals that state that they would like a job (16,000). This is only likely to be achieved by engaging the economically inactive, creating more jobs locally and promoting travel to access work in neighbouring areas.

[5] The high levels of poorly qualified young people may be connected to the limited opportunities for skilled employment: without these it is difficult to motivate young people to take up training.

A2 – Pennine Lancashire SWOT analysis

Pennine Lancashire's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are quite balanced. This strategy addresses the weaknesses and builds on the strengths.

<table>
<tr>
<td>

Strengths

- World class Aerospace sector
- A strong and innovative advanced manufacturing sector
- Recent growth in services
- Access to attractive and extensive countryside
- Recent investment in regeneration initiatives
- Heritage assets in the built environment
- Recent investments in improved FE/HE facilities
- Good lifestyle choices
- Strong internal connectivity
- Proximity to and good communications with the Preston area
- A culturally diverse population.

</td>
<td>

Weaknesses

- Six small Boroughs with the lack of a single large centre
- Poor commuter access by both road and rail to key growth centres of Preston, Manchester and Leeds
- Low skill levels and fewer high level skills
- Low confidence and aspiration
- Poor educational attainment and lack of higher level skills
- Some declining town centres; retail floorspace exceeds demand and does not match retailers' requirements
- Few high income households in the inner towns
- Low consumer spending power
- Limited housing choice and quality
- Low wage rates and GVA
- Below average rates of self employment and business formation
- High levels of worklessness
- Loss of high quality manufacturing jobs not offset by growth in services
- Limited industrial structure, reliance on a number of sectors
- Lack of identity in a national and regional context
- Poor life expectancy and ill health.
- Lack of opportunity for accredited skills training in the workplace.

</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>

Opportunities

- Quality of Place attributes: town centres, historic environments, the Leeds-Liverpool Canal, countryside
- Relatively low property values offering potentially high growth for investors
- A growing visitor economy
- Elevate Housing Market Renewal programme
- Relatively affordable housing
- Building Schools for the Future
- Whitebirk Strategic Employment Site and other key employment areas
- Development of BAe Aerospace Park
- Proximity to Manchester, Preston and Leeds
- Ready access to growth in the Preston economy
- Recognition from public sector funders of the need to regenerate the local area
- The Manchester congestion charge
- Potential new rail links to Manchester
- Potential high growth of tourism sector
- Strong support within the Sub National Review for functional economic areas
- The development of the Multi Area Agreement (MAA) for Pennine Lancashire
- The opportunity to increase HE numbers within Pennine Lancashire Colleges
- Potential to access additional RDA resources.

</td>
<td>

Threats

- Poor external image and perceptions of the area
- Growth of the Manchester City Region and its potential domination of the region
- Potential changes to the aerospace supply chain
- Globalisation and potential further decline of the manufacturing sector
- Competition from growth centres
- Reducing public sector funding
- Credit squeeze
- Lack of funding for rail links
- Negative media perception or a lack of perception
- Communities living parallel lives.

</td>
</tr>
</table>

A3 - The Strategic Framework: RES, LES and SNR

The proposals set out by Government in the Sub National Review (SNR)[6] support this strategy. They include:

- Managing policy at the right spatial levels
- Enabling places to reach their potential
- Empowering all local authorities to promote economic development and neighbourhood renewal
- Supporting collaboration between local authorities across economic areas.

The SNR advocates devolving decision making and delivery of economic development to the most appropriate level, based on economic geography. There is ample evidence that Pennine Lancashire is a reasonably self-contained economic area, demonstrated through patterns of commuting[7] and the research carried out for the development of the Lancashire Economic Strategy[8] (LES). The Local Government Association (LGA) in their report, *vive la dévolution*[9] examined data on labour markets and travel patterns, housing markets, markets for goods and services, transport infrastructure, industrial clustering and economic performance to identify sub-national economic geographies. Pennine Lancashire was identified as a functional economic area.[10]

The SNR proposals include a more strategic role for Regional Development Agencies, with funding for economic delivery being devolved to economically appropriate levels and a programme rather than project approach to management of RDA budgets. This strategy and action plan will provide the opportunity for this to happen in Pennine Lancashire; the action plan will be the framework for funding over a three year period.

All the local authorities operating in Pennine Lancashire have worked together since before the establishment of the East Lancashire Partnership over ten years ago. However, due to a number of constraints this has been done informally. The SNR provides the framework to formalise this collaboration, with its proposals for reforms to allow pooling of resources, responsibilities and targets across local authority boundaries. Pennine Lancashire Leaders and Chief Executives (PLLACE) are currently developing an MAA for the area and some are also joining together to establish a new delivery vehicle.

This strategy incorporates feedback from employers and business organisations relating to current frustrations and their future needs. These centre mainly on accessibility to markets, the labour supply and future skills. There is an established network of employers' forums which articulate the needs of local businesses and the private sector is well organised on a Pennine Lancashire footprint through the Chamber of

[6] HM Treasury, DBERR and CLG, *Review of Sub-National Economic Development and Regeneration,* (July 2007)
[7] East Lancashire Partnership, *Review of the East Lancashire Economy* (May 2005), p.17
[8] Lancashire Economic Partnership, *Shaping the Future of Lancashire, Lancashire Economic Strategy & Sub-regional Action Plan* (2006), p.7
[9] Local Government Association, *Prosperous Communities II, vive la dévolution*, (February 2007)
[10] PACEC & LGA, *Thriving Local Communities, Mapping Sub Regions* (January 2007)

Commerce.[11] The voluntary and community sector has recently formed a Pennine Lancashire Group to co-ordinate strategic engagement across the area.

The SNR introduces the idea of creating a focused statutory economic development duty for local authorities, which will require upper tier authorities to carry out an assessment of the economy in their area. In the light of discussions at a Lancashire sub-region level regarding an approach to the proposed economic assessment duty that meets differing requirements, within a statutory framework, there is a need for Blackburn with Darwen and Lancashire County Councils to jointly address the needs of Pennine Lancashire.

Regional agencies recognise Pennine Lancashire as an underperforming economic area, remote from areas of economic growth. This is acknowledged in the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) by the inclusion of a transformational action focused on the area:[12]

> **RES Action 47**: *Develop and implement an integrated economic plan for East Lancashire including support for advanced manufacturing and improved accessibility to growth in Preston and Manchester.*

This strategy directly addresses that action. When implemented, it will increase the Pennine Lancashire contribution to the Northwest economy by improving productivity and increasing the size and capability of the workforce. The Action Plan references each action against the transformational actions in the RES.

Pennine Lancashire is one of five relatively self contained economic areas that make up the Lancashire economy. The LES[13] shows that in 2005 it made the largest contribution of the five (£6.1bn). Reductions in both employment and GVA growth rates, however, show that this is reducing in real terms. It is essential for the Lancashire sub-region economy that these trends are reversed; consequently, the transformation of the Pennine Lancashire economy is one of three spatial priorities in the LES.

This strategy supports the LES and uses the same drivers to address its economic challenges:

- Higher value activity and investment
- Investing in people
- Employment generation and entrepreneurship
- Investment in Quality of Place.

The LES acknowledges that Lancashire, especially Pennine Lancashire, has a particular issue in the low value transfer of employment from the manufacturing to service sector businesses. Interventions which help increase private sector investment and employment opportunities in other sectors will be vital, as will those that support the growth of sustainable businesses and the knowledge economy.

---

[11] The East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce
[12] Northwest Development Agency, *Northwest Regional Economic Strategy 2006*, (2006)
[13] Lancashire Economic Partnership, *Shaping the Future of Lancashire, Lancashire Economic Strategy & Sub-regional Action Plan,* (2006)

A4 – A Vision for Pennine Lancashire in 2020

Improving the Pennine Lancashire economy will take many years of sustained effort. By 2020 it is intended that it will:

- Have narrowed the gap in economic performance between itself, the Lancashire sub-region and the Northwest region
- Demonstrate confidence and dynamism, mirrored in the attitudes and ambitions of the community
- Have high rates of new business start-ups and low business failure rates.
- Be supported by an education and training system that reflects the economic needs of the area
- Be responsive to external economic pressures and new opportunities; technology and innovation will feature strongly
- Feature successful major projects and role models
- Have much lower levels of deprivation, and a much narrower gap between the more and less prosperous areas.
- Have strong links to other neighbouring economies, with local residents readily able to access a wide range of employment opportunities
- Enjoy a business support infrastructure of the highest quality.

Baselines are being established for each of the key indicators. These will be tracked through an annual performance plan within a framework of four three-year Delivery Plans over the 12 year period 2009 to 2020.

The Strategic Imperative - Bridging the GVA gap

If Pennine Lancashire improves output per head to regional levels, it would generate an additional £1 billion. Even greater gains would result if it can move output per head further towards national levels. Raising levels of competitiveness and productivity across the entire business base is the most significant challenge to achieving this. If achieved, it would increase wages and profits, allow for more re-investment by companies, and increase the quality of life for communities across the area.

Achieving this requires a step-change in the growth rate of higher value services, building on existing growth in business services and employment strengths in the healthcare sector. This employment growth will be supplemented by high value and niche manufacturing employment sectors, where Pennine Lancashire has a number of strengths.

In the medium term, highly competitive firms that employ highly skilled individuals will drive increased productivity. Promoting employment growth of this type and of the necessary scale will require a range of interventions that make the best use of Pennine Lancashire's existing employment and business base, retaining skilled people and attracting new investment opportunities.

Raising GVA is the foundation of the strategy; improving business competitiveness, skills, economic activity, connectivity and economic infrastructure are the corner stones. The following sections take each of these in turn and propose strategic interventions that will help bridge the GVA gap.

Policy Area B1 - Productive and competitive businesses

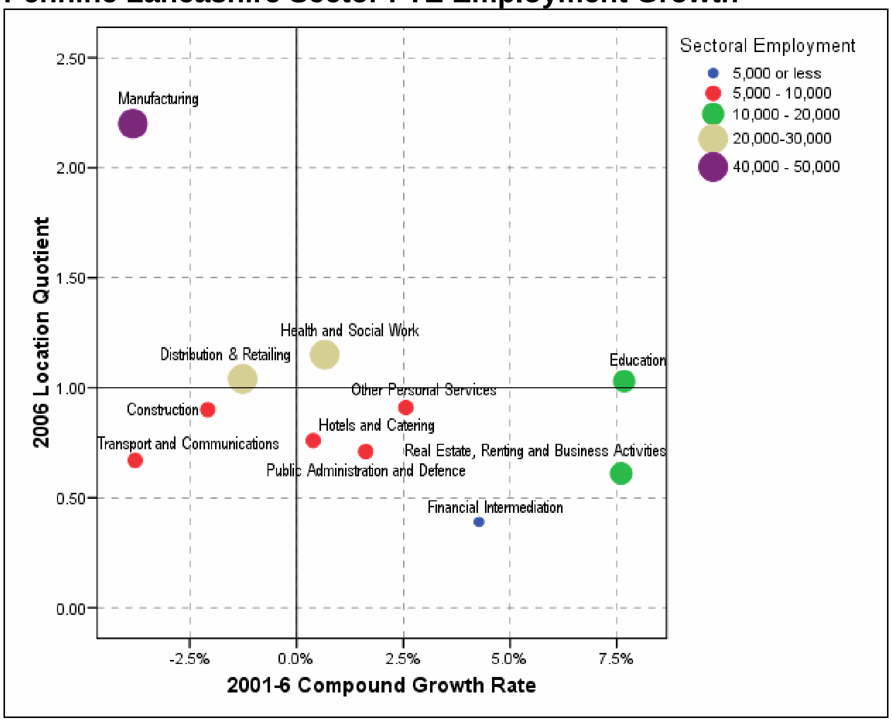
1.0 Analysis - Enterprise, employment, sectors

Pennine Lancashire has not kept pace with neighbouring economies over the last generation: employment increased by just 1% between 1986 and 2006, compared to 10% in the Manchester City Region and 11% in Preston. Things have improved, in relative terms, in recent years: full time equivalent (FTE) employment has increased steadily. This is forecast to continue to 2016, albeit at a slower rate.

The area has also experienced strong recent growth in a number of higher value service sub-sectors, although it remains under-represented in higher value employment. The latest employment trends suggest that these sectors have significant growth potential.

Unlike many other northern economies, Pennine Lancashire has maintained its industrial and manufacturing base, which includes a number of growing sub-sectors. Manufacturing still accounts for a significant proportion of local employment (25% in 2005), despite experiencing steady decline.

Pennine Lancashire Sector FTE Employment Growth



Source: Annual Business Enquiry

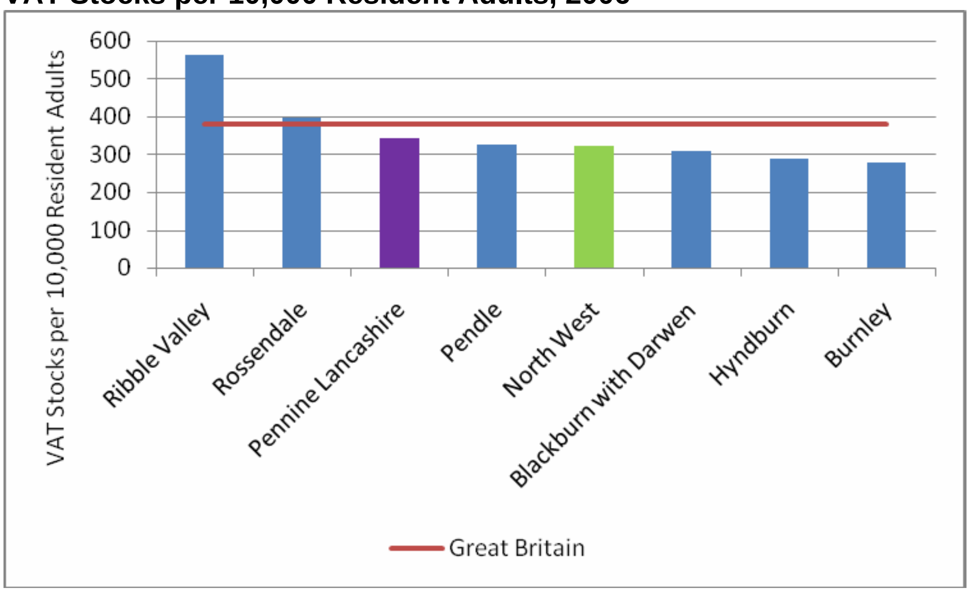
In the figure above a Location Quotient (LQ) greater than one implies that a sector accounts for a greater proportion of total employment in the area than nationally. An LQ of less than one suggests that a sector is under-represented. Sectors on the right hand side of the axis are growing, while those on the left hand side have experienced employment decline.

The growing sectors of education, health and social care are strongly represented in Pennine Lancashire. The role of manufacturing is clearly highlighted in the top left quadrant; as this sector declines, generating appropriate replacement employment is a major challenge.

A number of sectors that are experiencing healthy levels of growth (see the bottom right quadrant of the chart above) are under represented in the area. Financial intermediation and real estate, renting and other business activities are particularly important. In conjunction with the healthcare sector, these represent a valuable potential source of higher value employment. The business services sectors are well placed to benefit from the strong employment growth forecast within Greater Manchester, particularly if they can specialise in sub-sectors important to the neighbouring sub-region.

The strength of the Pennine Lancashire's business base (as measured by VAT stocks per 10,000 resident adults) is in line with the regional average, although the region underperforms compared to Great Britain. The picture is uneven across the area, with Ribble Valley and Rossendale both outperforming the national average, whilst Hyndburn and Burnley (where employment has historically been dominated by medium and large companies) underperform significantly. The evidence shows that with a stock of 14,000 VAT registered businesses, there is a shortfall of 1,500 in Pennine Lancashire.

VAT Stocks per 10,000 Resident Adults, 2006



Source: ONS Vat Registrations

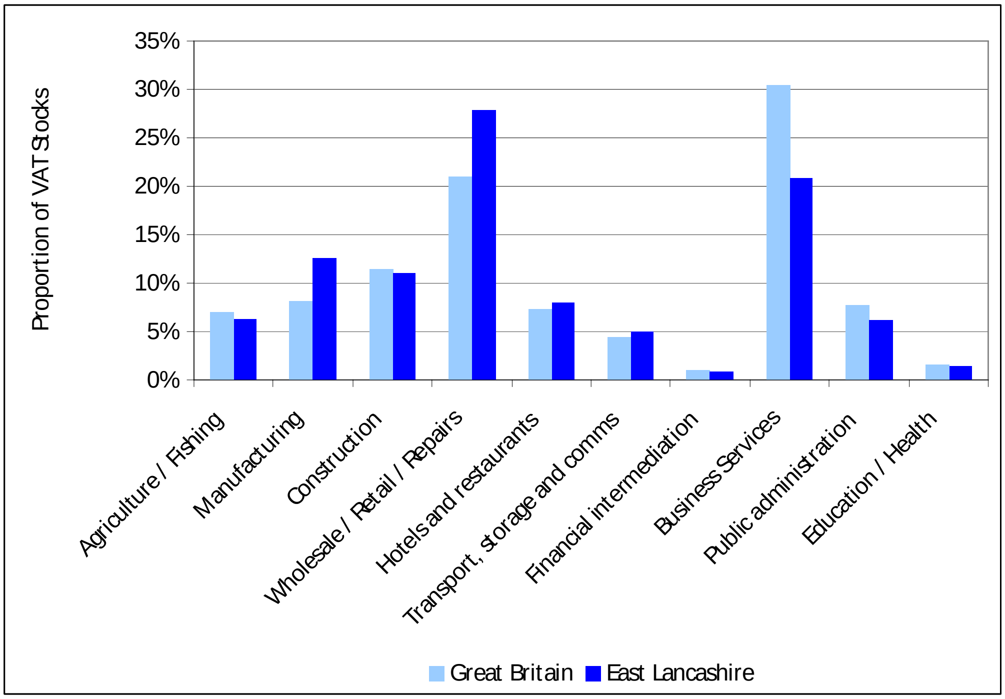
The evidence also suggests that the business stock in Pennine Lancashire is more stable than nationally, with 34 registrations and 27 de-registrations per 10,000 adult residents, compared to 37 and 32 respectively for Great Britain. A lower churn of businesses may demonstrate the strength of the local business base, although when it is associated with a shortfall in business stocks it also points to a lack of competitive pressures, which may be contributing to lower levels of productivity.

With the exception of the Ribble Valley and Rossendale, new business formation is well below the national average (around 300 per 10,000 population compared with 385 nationally). The same differential applies to rates of self employment – (6.7% compared to 9.4%).[14] This relatively low level of indigenous enterprise is being addressed by the Pennine Lancashire LEGI programme within the 4 eligible districts.

The sectoral distribution of VAT registered businesses reflects the patterns of employment. A greater proportion of businesses are in the manufacturing (13% in Pennine Lancashire compared to 8% for GB) and the wholesale, retail and repairs sectors (28% compared to 21% in GB), with real estate, renting and business services under represented (21% compared to 30% for GB).

Inward investment will help generate jobs, but long term success will depend on a Pennine Lancashire developing strong businesses in sectors with long term growth potential.

Distribution of VAT Registered Businesses, 2006



Source: ONS Vat Registrations

Strategy 1.1 - Developing an Enterprise Culture

Pennine Lancashire is underperforming in relation to the levels of enterprise, self employment and new business formation. Over the past 18 months, however, steps have been taken to foster a new culture of enterprise in the area. The LEGI programme was developed after an extensive evaluation of the barriers to enterprise in the local communities; this strategy builds on that programme.

The vision is to manufacture high value ideas rather than low value products. To do this, the ‘employee’ culture (especially in lower value manufacturing) will be replaced by ‘home grown enterprise’, Developing local innovation, creativity and talent will lead to a more sustainable and resilient future. Over-reliance on an employee culture has

[14] ONS

exposed significant structural weakness in the economy as work has increasingly shifted overseas. Pennine Lancashire can become an epicentre of enterprise, where innovation, creativity and flair are celebrated.

Social enterprise will be important in achieving this vision, especially in deprived neighbourhoods. It has the potential to make a significant contribution to new business formation rates, especially among those not traditionally involved in business start up. Businesses in the sector disproportionately involve women and people with disabilities in their formation, governance and management and therefore make a positive contribution to social and economic regeneration.

The LEGI Programme has three 'Great Goals':

1. Enterprising Individuals: developing a stronger enterprise culture
2. Enterprising Communities: building the capacity for enterprise
3. Enterprising Businesses: accelerating business growth.

From 2007-2011 the programme aims to create an additional 1500 businesses across Pennine Lancashire. The impact of this on the business formation rates and the overall VAT stock will be measured over the period. To make a transformational change, however, a more refined approach is needed. Individuals and businesses with the potential to achieve growth (and therefore help reduce the GVA deficit) must be identified and encouraged. It will also be important to work with the NWDA to co-ordinate these interventions with Regional Enterprise programmes, including exploring joint commissioning.

Strategic Intervention: ***Change the enterprise culture of Pennine Lancashire by systematically removing barriers to enterprise and encouraging entrepreneurship at all levels and investing in entrepreneurial skills.***
Impact: This will increase the rate of new business formation, reduce worklessness and raise prosperity levels.

Strategy 1.2 - Promoting Growth Sectors

The Pennine Lancashire economy already contains significant employment in sectors with significant potential for growth. These include:

- Aerospace
- Advanced manufacturing/advanced flexible materials
- Medical/health/fitness/social care and well being
- Creative industries.

There are other sectors growing nationally that could be targeted. These include:

- Business services
- Visitor and tourism.

Each of these has potential to increase wage levels and to reduce the GVA deficit. Strengthening the competitiveness of the existing manufacturing base is also vital.

Aerospace

The aerospace sector demonstrates all of the key attributes that Pennine Lancashire is aiming for. It is a high value, high knowledge industry, characterised by high wage rates and high investment in R&D and training. Pennine Lancashire has two prime contractors – BAe Systems and Rolls Royce, together with a significant number of subcontractors and support companies. The BAe order book alone is estimated to exceed £2 billion, with work for the next 10-15 years. The Aerospace sector is recognised within the region as a growth sector, and the NWDA has committed support to helping BAe Systems to create an Aerospace Park at Samlesbury.

It is vital for Pennine Lancashire that the aerospace sector is successful and that the benefits cascade through the local supply chain. The work of the North West Aerospace Alliance should be encouraged and real effort needs to be devoted to understanding the mechanisms that operate within the sector, and how the local economy may benefit.

Strategic Intervention: ***Recognise the strategic importance of the aerospace sector to the Pennine Lancashire economy and actively promote knowledge transfer across the local economy.***
Impact: This will cascade the knowledge and skills embedded in the prime contractors down the supply chain, to secure real added value throughout the aerospace engineering and support sectors. It will help to make those companies more competitive and help to raise GVA.

Advanced Manufacturing and Advanced Flexible Materials

Pennine Lancashire is one of the most manufacturing dependent areas of the UK: 25% of all employment is in the sector, with many more employed indirectly in support services. In recent years very many jobs in low wage, low value, high volume sub-sectors have been lost, although a sizeable sector still remains, often to be found in outdated premises and operating at the edge of health and safety and legislative frameworks.

However, there are also numerous local companies which are not only beacons of innovation and best practice, but also leaders in their sectors worldwide. They are engaged in a range of activities – advanced engineering, electronics, advanced flexible materials (high performing materials and composites) – that can increase productivity and investment. These, together with the remaining traditional companies which are capable of making the transition, are the businesses that must be nurtured and there will need to be some tough decisions on the targeting of support, for example whether to give access to all or whether to concentrate on the highest GVA return. While BAe and Rolls Royce provide big company leadership on supply chains, and to a lesser extent the neighbouring Springfield site has the potential for a similar role for the nuclear sector, the vast majority are SMEs and therefore fragmented. The Advanced Manufacturing Group (AMG) has been formed as a network to encourage innovation and the sharing of best practice and to showcase the unbeatable engineering capability of the area; however, the group, while widely complimented, is under-resourced given the scale of the task and is struggling to extend its influence.

Advanced Manufacturing is one of Pennine Lancashire's unique assets. It must be prioritised far more through a sector approach, dedicated resources, skills development, innovation and technology support. In this effort it will be necessary to work more closely with the NWDA to ensure that the sector features strongly within the RES and receives appropriate levels of support.

Strategic Intervention: ***Promote the development of the Advanced Manufacturing sector, focusing on innovation and knowledge transfer within the economy. Support growth companies.***
Impact: This will directly impact on GVA and wage levels within the local economy. It will help to encourage new investment and build on the strengths within the manufacturing sector to help secure its long term future.

Medical/health/fitness sector/social care

There is a critical mass of businesses in Pennine Lancashire which support the health and social care industries. They cover both the manufacturing and service sector, ranging from producers of precision components for body implants, surgical dressings and uniforms to those producing software for health management and the delivery of health care. The sector is growing, but the challenge is to channel that growth into the higher value added activities. Work has already started in Blackburn with the creation of a Medi-Knowledge Park adjacent to the Royal Blackburn Hospital. The creation of the Health Tech Hub, supported by UCLAN and the Health Trusts, is an attempt to direct the purchasing power of the health care industries into the local economy; however like the AMG, the initiative is woefully under-resourced. The bio-medical sector is a RES priority and the NWDA needs to be encouraged to recognise the potential of the Pennine Lancashire economy to support the regional effort. Working with the agency to support the development of the Health Tech Hub on the Medi-Knowledge Park would provide a strategic focus for medical related businesses, Higher Education institutions and health authorities, thereby increasing direct investment and employment in this sector.

Strategic Intervention: ***Recognise the growth potential of the medical manufacturing sector within Pennine Lancashire and dedicate appropriate resources to encourage investment and employment creation including the establishment of the Medi-Knowledge Park.***
Impact: This will directly impact on job creation and investment in this high value area of the economy. It could help to establish Pennine Lancashire as an area of expertise.

The health sector directly provides 11,000 jobs within the local economy and has potential to grow, with significant investment in the pipeline by the Hospital Trust and the two Primary Care Trusts. The sector is typified by a higher than average level of skills and qualifications and could contribute significantly to the employment needs of the area.

Strategic Intervention: ***Harness the employment growth potential of the health care sector within Pennine Lancashire to narrow the skills and GVA deficit of the area.***
Impact: This will directly impact on job creation, productivity and skills.

The creative and digital media sector

This has been a growing sector nationally and regionally in recent years. Pennine Lancashire has experienced a rapid growth of small businesses, especially in the creative sectors associated with IT and in a wide range of design applications. Today there are dozens of small media, digital and design businesses but also companies which have been able to secure a niche in the market through specialist knowledge or in quality of offer; a number of these have been able to expand significantly, to employ in the region of 30-50 staff. This is still a growing sector, based on the relatively low cost of entry to the market, and the size of the market itself. These small companies provide natural outlets for the media and IT graduates from local colleges and offer some hope in securing the retention of the more able students and graduates from Pennine Lancashire.

There is however a need to work with government and IT infrastructure providers to ensure that the area is not held back by the lack of availability of high speed broadband connectivity upon which many businesses depends. This is particularly applicable in many rural areas, but also affects many companies in the urban areas of Pennine Lancashire not located close to main telephone exchanges.

There are advanced proposals for the creation of Media City:UK, an innovative, creative hub, on 200 acres within Salford's waterfront area. This will house the relocated parts of the BBC and aims to create employment opportunities for 15,500 people. In theory, these jobs will be just 40 minutes' drive from Pennine Lancashire, but the intervening roads are highly congested and public transport links are tortuous and slow. The challenge will be to identify interventions to open up access to these jobs to the residents of Pennine Lancashire or to ensure that the area can take full advantage of the potential supply chain development. The possible introduction of congestion charging to Manchester and the associated improvements in public transport may impact on this ambition.

The Creative Lancashire initiative has recently established a full time resource for Pennine Lancashire, to work with local digital and media companies, supported by the LEGI programme.

Strategic Intervention: ***Develop the support infrastructure for digital and media companies, building on the Creative Lancashire initiative. Identify specific opportunities for collaborative working with Media City:UK.***
Impact: This would have the potential to accelerate employment creation in this national growth sector and to encourage growth in higher level skills.

Business Services

Pennine Lancashire is a functional economic area with a population of over 500,000 - equivalent to the size of many cities elsewhere in the UK. Unlike those centres, it does not have a single large city at its heart. Its towns are smaller and more dispersed, and there is no single centre with a well developed range of professional and business services. This is a gap in the area's economic profile, because these services – particularly in the financial and legal sectors - are generally of higher value to the economy. Whilst the area has no large commercial sector, it does have a good base of potential customers for such service industries. However, on the doorstep, other parts of the Lancashire City Region, the City Regions of Manchester and Leeds, as established and growing service centres, offer the potential to create thousands of job opportunities in this sector. Opening up access to those jobs for Pennine Lancashire residents is vital for the area's economic future.

The analysis of employment trends indicates that strong growth is forecast for Preston and Blackburn with Darwen in financial and business services over the next twenty years. These jobs will be accessible to many Pennine Lancashire residents, as well as to residents in surrounding areas. Employment growth in the other Pennine Lancashire districts will be modest, and will not be sufficient to offset the decline in local manufacturing employment.

However, the financial and business services growth in the City of Manchester is expected to be significantly higher than for any other district in Greater Manchester or Pennine Lancashire, to nationally significant levels. Accessing this market could be an important source of higher skilled and higher paid employment opportunities.

Excellent transport links to the City of Manchester and neighbouring districts is essential if Pennine Lancashire is to benefit from this employment growth. The area is well positioned to service this market and to contribute labour, although relatively slow journey times would constrain the potential benefits.

Strategic Intervention: ***Encourage the growth of financial and business services and take steps to access the growth opportunities in adjoining City Regions.***
Impact: This would encourage employment growth in a high value sector within the economy and help to develop a higher skill base for Pennine Lancashire.

The Visitor Economy

Compared with other areas, the potential of Pennine Lancashire to attract visitors and visitor investment is largely unexploited. The area has a wealth of natural resources. To the north, the Trough of Bowland and the Ribble Valley offer beautiful countryside. In the east and to the south are the rugged beauty of Pendle Hill and the West Pennine Moors. Visitor facilities however are scarcely developed. There is huge potential across the accommodation and catering industries, and in the retail sector within both urban and rural areas to benefit from the development of the visitor and tourism sector.

The Adrenaline Gateway in Rossendale is a project that could help to change the way in which the rest of the region views Pennine Lancashire and there is growing support for the notion of a 'Pennine Playground' – the co-ordination of outdoor activities including adrenaline sports, taking advantage of the countryside, quarries, rivers and canals together with other leisure facilities within Pennine Lancashire to offer recreation opportunities for the residents of adjoining City Regions.

Pennine Lancashire is also assembling an impressive array of organic and locally produced food and drink, which is becoming increasingly appealing to a wide audience. Add to this existing visitor attractions such as the Haworth Art Gallery, Clitheroe Castle and the Rossendale Ski Slope, and it can be seen that Pennine Lancashire could have much to offer to visitors. There is the potential to create many thousands of additional jobs in this sector alone.

Strategic Intervention: ***Exploit the potential of the wealth of natural resources in Pennine Lancashire to promote tourism and the visitor economy.***
Impact: This will help to create direct investment in visitor infrastructure, and to generate considerable employment opportunities. It will also help to change external perceptions of Pennine Lancashire and improve the area's image.

Strategy 1.3 - Encouraging Innovation

The economy of Pennine Lancashire is diversifying, with over 1000 jobs each year being lost in traditional sectors, and being replaced by new jobs in a wide range of manufacturing and service sector activities. Experience has shown that there are many companies that are receptive to new ideas, new products and new markets. Blackburn Innovation and Technology Services (BITS) handles over 200 cases a year and in recent years has helped over 75 companies a year to adopt new technology or launch new products. This approach has helped to increase the number of technology based jobs in the borough and to generate many new companies. This approach is now being spread across Pennine Lancashire through the LEGI Programme as the Eureka initiative. This is a vitally important activity, at the sharp end of the economic intervention strategy. It is complemented by Ideas North West, a self help network of inventors and entrepreneurs, whose aim is to encourage individuals to develop new ideas and products, and to guide them through the period of finding commercial applications for their concepts.

Strategic Intervention: ***Actively seek out [including inward investment] and encourage businesses and individuals who have the potential to innovate, to create wealth and reduce the GVA deficit. Build on the Ideas North West model to help convert viable innovative projects from concept stage to reality.***
Impact: This will have a direct impact on GVA within the local economy.

Strategic Intervention: ***Secure business support mechanisms to enable businesses to innovate and to bring forward new ideas and products that can be exploited to the advantage of the local economy.***
Impact: This will have a direct impact on GVA within the local economy.

Strategy 1.4 - Growing the knowledge economy

High knowledge content jobs contribute significantly to GVA and generally are paid much higher than other occupations. In Pennine Lancashire a high percentage of all employment is in low value, low knowledge content employment – much of this in companies operating in unsuitable premises and with low skilled labour. Inward investment of high knowledge content employment must be encouraged, and the existing workforce improved.

This means investing in skills and training at all levels. It means being selective about the inward investment companies that are encouraged; it means helping existing companies to invest in activities such as design, research and development, knowledge mapping and knowledge transfer. It means seeking individuals and businesses with the potential to contribute to improved GVA performance and nurturing and encouraging them, to systematically remove the barriers to their growth and to anticipate their future needs. This must be a concerted effort over many years.

Strategic Intervention: ***Identify and promote the sources of higher value added activity within the economy and access routes to knowledge transfer from HE institutions. Promote these drivers***.
Impact: This will have a direct impact on GVA and higher level skills within the local economy.

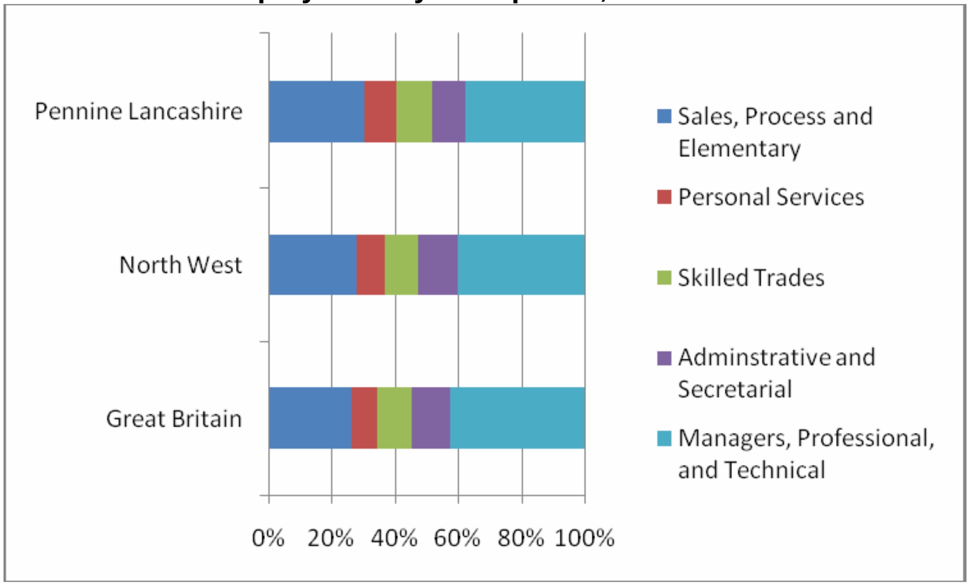
Policy Area B2 – Skills and training

2.0 Analysis - Education, skills (levels 1-5), occupational profile, forecast change

Pennine Lancashire has a skills deficit. Without a concerted effort to improve the situation, its and the Lancashire sub-region's competitiveness are likely to further deteriorate.

The skills distribution is reflected in the distribution of employment by occupation, with employment in Pennine Lancashire skewed towards less skilled occupations and a shortfall in the number of people employed in Managerial, Technical, or Professional roles (only 37% compared to 42% nationally). The importance of manufacturing is reflected in the proportion of employees working in Process, Plant and Machine related occupations, 11% compared to 7% nationally.

Distribution of Employment by Occupation, 2007



Source: Annual Population Survey

Occupational projections for Lancashire as a whole[15] suggest that employment growth will be skewed towards higher level occupations, with Managers, Professional, and Technical occupations forecast to increase by 11%, compared to 2% growth of total employment. In particular, employment growth will be strongest for professional occupations (+19%). Strong growth is also forecast within the personal services occupations (+24%), reflecting the structural shift towards service based employment.

Conversely, there are declining employment opportunities for elementary occupations (-24%), machine and transport operatives (-8%), and skilled trades (-4%) over the same period.

[15] Working Futures Data

The challenge is to ensure that the workforce has sufficient skills and development opportunities to meet the challenges identified here. If there is insufficient skilled labour able to fuel employment growth in higher value occupations, such employment opportunities may locate elsewhere within the region.

Strategy 2.1 - Raising attainment at all levels

Pennine Lancashire's economy is lagging behind the region and the UK. It is under performing on a wide range of indicators, most particularly on GVA (productivity), skills, economic activity and wage rates. Much of this relates to the performance of the area's workforce.

Recently, there has been considerable discussion about the needs of the future workforce. Serious concern has been expressed about the lack of planning for future skills and the difficulties predicting the kind of training needed to develop a highly skilled and productive workforce in growth sectors. The issues are complex and the timescales urgent, but it will take many years of sustained effort to make the required step change in attitudes and performance.

At this stage it is not known whether skills lead or follow the economy. It is important to resolve this, as it means that demand has to be extrapolated and supply has to find a market - hence the current situation, in which the learner or the Government, rather than the employer, becomes the customer.

Issues and perceptions

A number of issues (and perceptions) have emerged in discussions with local stakeholders including industry representatives:

- Many school leavers at 16 are not well equipped with the communication skills and confidence necessary to enter employment
- There is under attainment of basic skills (including I.T.) within the education system
- A lack of progression up the skills ladder (especially from level 2 to level 3)
- The need to tie in more closely information advice and guidance (careers) provision to the needs of the future workforce
- Many schools are not sufficiently bought into the employment agenda
- There is a shortage of 14,000 graduates across Pennine Lancashire
- Schools and Further Education establishments aren't working together sufficiently
- Education providers and local authorities must work together to predict demand, to ensure that appropriate supply can be provided
- The lack of a single accountable organisation for the skills agenda: all the key agencies and deliverers (LSC, Jobcentre Plus, schools, HE, FE, Third sector training & employment support providers etc.) must link together.

The overall impression is that the education and skills agencies do not act as a collective supply chain: each part is compartmentalised and communication between sectors could be greatly improved.

There need to be new interventions to raise attainment and develop closer links between education and the world of work. This should help to influence and support the development of the new Diploma programme and to inform Information Advice and Guidance services. This will help equip school leavers with the capabilities and opportunities to succeed within the workforce.

Strategic Intervention: ***Articulate the skills needs of the potential growth sectors, and review and improve the supply-side offer through development of 'route ways' to help individuals move into work and progress up the skill value chain.***
Impact: This will make the supply side more responsive to the needs of the economy and ensure that local growth is not constrained by inappropriate and inadequate skills.

Strategic Intervention: ***Develop strategic linkages with the education sector to ensure the curriculum and qualification available locally better reflect the economic and employment needs in the area.***
Impact: This will help schools and Colleges to more effectively contribute to the development of the future workforce.

Strategic Intervention: ***Improve GCSE, Diploma and A Level pass rates in Schools and develop effective programmes to link education and employment.***
Impact: This will both enhance the learning experience and produce better prepared young people who can contribute effectively to the economy.

Strategy 2.2 - Investing in higher level skills

The Leitch Review of Skills highlights the need for the significant upskilling of the UK workforce to 2020. By that date 40% of working age people should be educated to NVQ4+ and at least 90% hold at least NVQ2, in order to remain internationally competitive. This is partially demonstrated by the earlier sections which identify stronger growth with those sectors associated with higher level skills and strong growth of the professional occupations. It also reflects the upskilling of existing employment positions throughout the economy.

The scale of change over the next seven years will see the number of jobs available for those with below Level 2 and with Level 2 qualifications reducing considerably, as more employers demand a higher level of basic skills for entry level jobs. This will have an impact on those seeking employment, more than those already in employment. Minimum entry requirements are increasing, and it will become more difficult for those with limited numeracy and literacy skills to secure employment.

In Pennine Lancashire, those holding qualifications of NVQ4 and above are clustered around Blackburn with Darwen, which has a similar number of graduate level workers to Preston. The number of working age individuals holding NVQ4 in other parts of the area is low: for example, only 7,000 residents of Rossendale hold these qualifications.

In part this distribution reflects each district's population size. For example, while there are only 11,000 working age people that hold NVQ4+ in Ribble Valley, this accounts for 36% of its working age population. A key point to note is that in seeking to attract higher value employment opportunities, the availability of skills is crucial. The primary concern of an employer is the number of suitable candidates on which it can draw from an appropriate catchment area.

With smaller numbers of higher qualified people, Pennine Lancashire will find it increasingly difficult to compete for investment and employment opportunities which require large numbers and a large catchment area for a higher qualified workforce.

The low representation of those qualified to level 4 and above in many of the Pennine Lancashire districts reflects the low proportion of jobs available locally, while the challenges of commuting make it difficult to attract and retain highly qualified people.

Pennine Lancashire needs to retain skilled younger people qualified at Level 4 and above, although in the short term, this may mean encouraging commuting. There must be significant investment in skills at all levels, and it will be important for employers to be able to articulate both their current and future needs.

Strategic Intervention: ***Promote the attainment of skills and qualifications within the workforce. Encourage employers and individuals to invest in training and personal development that will result in higher skill levels across the workforce.***
Impact: This will raise skills and attainment levels across the economy and help to improve the competitiveness of the local area.

Strategic Intervention: ***Invest in leadership and management skills within businesses and public sector agencies.***
Impact: This will equip those leading key institutions to achieve greater added value and to improve the performance and competitiveness of the organisations.

Strategic Intervention: ***Establish a School of Business Management within one of the HE institutions within Pennine Lancashire.***
Impact: This will help to build higher level skills within businesses to equip them with the capabilities to develop and grow in a competitive environment.

Strategy 2.3 – Addressing the Graduate deficit

Pennine Lancashire has a population of over 500,000 – the size of many cities elsewhere in the UK, but it is split across six local authority areas. It is the only area of this size in England without a university. Whilst there are a limited number of HE places at the Further Education Colleges at Blackburn, Burnley and Accrington & Rossendale, and a small number at St Mary's Sixth Form College, the combined output is less than 1,000 graduates per annum.

At present most students from Pennine Lancashire seeking higher education leave the area to study at universities elsewhere in the UK. Most (two-thirds) do not return. The lack of a recognised Higher Education Institution also means that Pennine Lancashire doesn't attract students from outside the area who may settle here once they graduate.

The net effect of this is that the area has almost 14,000 less graduates living here than the UK average. This has a massive impact on the area's wealth, productivity and output. It is a huge deficit in terms of the knowledge capacity within the local workforce. All of the economic indicators reinforce this with four out of the area's six boroughs amongst the most deprived areas of the country.

Companies in Pennine Lancashire are disadvantaged by the lack of access to graduates and to the R&D capabilities in the universities, unlike other major towns and cities. The area does not have access to the knowledge transfer and spin-out activities associated with HE Institutions. A Pennine Lancashire university would have significant direct regeneration and economic impact. It would attract investment and generate higher paid jobs in management, research and lecturing.

Building on the offer of a quality lifestyle and the supply of affordable housing, there is strong potential for a Pennine Lancashire University College to attract undergraduates from elsewhere and hopefully retain them – this would make good the gap left by those who leave to attend university elsewhere. The ambition is to establish a critical mass of HE numbers within the area. Recent investment in UCLAN's campus in Burnley will add 250 full time equivalent students in 2009 to the current level at the College of 430. The intention is to grow this to 1000 full time equivalent students by 2011. Further significant growth is planned for Blackburn College with the opening of a new HE facility in 2009.

In conclusion, improving HE needs a three pronged approached: raising aspirations and participation in HE of existing residents, having an HE presence that attracts undergrads from elsewhere, and strategy to retain students and attract PL residents who have graduated elsewhere to return.

Strategic Intervention: ***Actively promote increased HE places within Pennine Lancashire Colleges to achieve University College status***
Impact: This will increase the proportion of people with level 4 skills and above within the local workforce.

Strategic Intervention: ***Develop a Graduate Retention Scheme to promote the retention and attraction of degree level workers.***
Impact: This will increase the proportion of people with level 4 skills and above within the local workforce.

Strategic Intervention: ***Widen the range and volume of local adult participants pursuing access routes to Higher Education through local institutions that will improve their employability. Both FE and local Third Sector organisations should contribute to this strategic intervention.***
Impact: This will achieve inclusion & cohesion goals and give local people the required skills set to participate in the knowledge economy. It will contribute to higher level skills development and lead to higher employment levels.

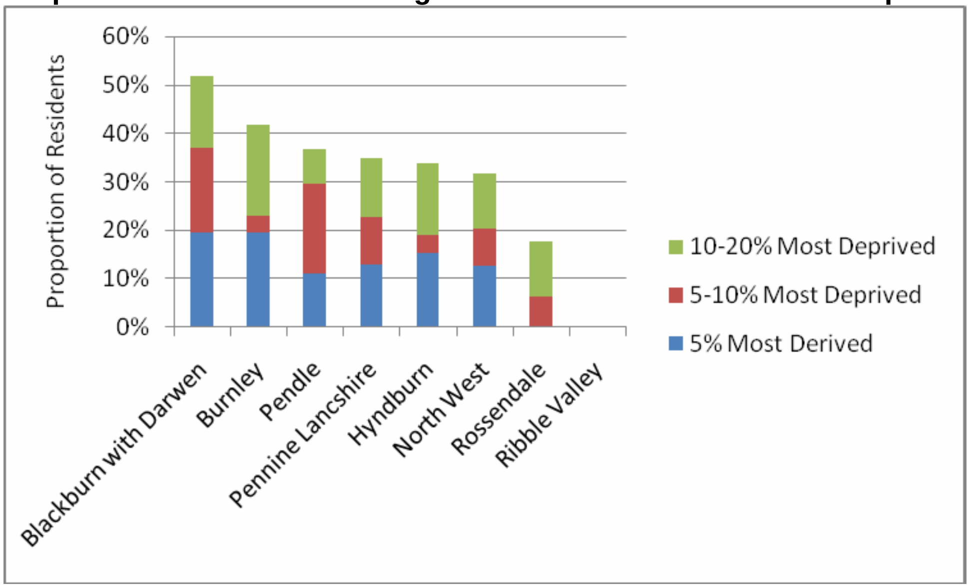
Policy Area B3 - Economic Inclusion and increasing participation

3.0 Analysis - Multiple Deprivation, worklessness, NEETS

Within Pennine Lancashire 35% of residents (182,000 people) live in areas ranked among the 20% most deprived nationally. This is considerably higher than the national average of 20%. 13% of these (67,000) live in areas ranked among the 5% most deprived, more than double the national level.

While the pattern of deprivation is uneven across Pennine Lancashire, it is widespread across several districts. Over half of Blackburn with Darwen residents live in areas ranked among the fifth most deprived nationally. Of these, 20% live in areas suffering from the most acute levels of deprivation (ranked among the 5% most deprived nationally). Burnley also suffers from similar levels of severe deprivation, although a much smaller proportion are in the worst 5%-10% category. Pendle and Hyndburn both have levels of deprivation higher than the regional average.

Proportion of Residents Living in Areas Ranked as the Most Deprived Nationally



Source: Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2007 (Lower Super Output Area Level)

Multiple deprivation is a serious issue for Pennine Lancashire. It is associated with low incomes, poor skills levels and high levels of worklessness and poor neighbourhood environments. High levels of poverty undermine efforts to attract and retain skilled people and higher value job opportunities. The most worrying feature is the direction of change, which suggests that deprivation is becoming more entrenched across Pennine Lancashire

In 2004 only 39,000 residents lived in areas classified as being among the most deprived nationally (i.e. in the bottom 5%), however by 2007 this had increased to 67,000. Whether this reflects an absolute deterioration or a decline relative to other parts of the country, it makes it increasingly difficult for the area to compete for high value employment opportunities.

Pennine Lancashire also underperforms in relation to the least deprived areas. Only Ribble Valley contains areas ranked within the 10% least deprived nationally (which account for 18% of its population) and only 9% of the area's residents live in areas ranked as within the 20% least deprived. This proportion ranges from 3.6% in Hyndburn to 6.9% in Burnley and 29% in Ribble Valley.

In the introduction to this strategy, the low levels of economic activity and high levels of benefit dependency were highlighted as key challenges facing the area. Worklessness is generally high across the North West, and improving the employment rate to regional levels would only require the generation of a net additional 1,800 residents into employment across Pennine Lancashire.

A considerably more challenging target would be closing the employment gap with the national average, which would require moving over 10,000 unemployed and inactive people back into employment. Such a target would still fail to close the gap if national government is successful in achieving its stated aim of an 80% employment rate for the working age population. Currently 25.2% of the 312,500 working age population of Pennine Lancashire are classified as economically inactive.

At May 2007, **46,580** people were claiming working age benefits within Pennine Lancashire, of which **33,115 were claiming Incapacity Benefit.** Residents of these deprived communities have access to less than 1% of the jobs in the local labour market.

	Number of people of working age	Economically inactive Number	Economically inactive %
Pennine Lancs.	**312,500**	**78,800**	**25.2**
North West	**4,105,200**	**958,400**	**23.3**
England and Wales	**32,436,200**	**6,997,300**	**21.6**

Strategy 3.1 - Addressing Worklessness

The relatively low level of economic activity in Pennine Lancashire contributes greatly to the GVA deficit, with an estimated 10,500 people missing from the workforce, compared to the national average. Improved strategies are needed to link the employment opportunities generated by Pennine Lancashire businesses with residents who are not in work.

Currently, many workless residents do not possess the relevant skills for the changing labour market. 47% of residents of the most deprived LSOA's possess no qualifications at all.

There is a need to foster a Pennine Lancashire community of individuals equipped with skills, knowledge and aspirations to compete for jobs in the labour market. This will be achieved by developing an infrastructure that generates 'job-ready' jobseekers from amongst the workless population and ensures that the support they receive focuses on the needs of the local labour market.

There continues to be a lack of strategic alignment between public and private investment in job creation and the supply side delivery mechanisms within the public and third sectors to help local people into work. This contributes to the gap between areas of economic growth and the residents of the most disadvantaged areas, exacerbating the economic exclusion, health inequalities and high levels of child poverty.

Both the Blackburn with Darwen and Lancashire LAAs have developed employment progression models that deploy the resources of partner agencies coherently. This helps progress people into work and, by linking to Train to Gain, move those employed up the value chain. Currently four out of six Pennine Lancashire districts undertake interventions to reduce worklessness. This would benefit from the development of a single approach and the sharing of best practice across Pennine Lancashire. This would reduce the time spent in each borough designing new interventions, reviewing performance and effectiveness and responding to new government initiatives.

Most councils and Local Strategic Partnerships are actively addressing worklessness through Local Area Agreement targets, but good practice and economies of scale must be implemented across the whole area. There is also an opportunity to build on Blackburn with Darwen's status as a DWP City Strategy Pathfinder and the work of the Lancashire LAA progression model to extend learning and best practice across Pennine Lancashire.

It is apparent from consultations with partner agencies that the groups identified experience a multitude of barriers relating to skills, lifestyle, culture and opportunities - a 'one size fits all solution' is inappropriate. The key to addressing these barriers is an accessible and flexible programme, with the full weight of public resource shaped towards those that need it most and where the greatest advantage is gained from engagement through community based organisations with a proven capacity to reach and engage the economically inactive residents.

Strategic Intervention: ***Develop and deliver an integrated approach to employment and skills across Pennine Lancashire, through a Joint Investment Framework agreed between key partners that agrees joint priorities and which targets existing and new investment and delivery to agreed priority areas.***

Impact: This will provide a much more effective and comprehensive intervention programme that will target resources where they can be most effective to reduce worklessness and to increase productivity within the workforce.

Strategic Intervention: ***Roll out best practice developed through the Blackburn City Strategy Pathfinder and Lancashire LAA, across Pennine Lancashire.***

Impact: This will streamline the employment support services across the patch and provide a more efficient work route model for all residents. It should help to reduce the numbers on Incapacity Benefit and increase employment rates.

This will secure a strategic, effective and co-ordinated approach to addressing worklessness across Pennine Lancashire, which adds value to existing mainstream provision provided by Jobcentre Plus and the Learning Skills Council.

Strategic Intervention: ***Establish a coherent employer offer and job brokerage service across Pennine Lancashire, which links inward investing and existing employers (public and private) with workless individuals***
Impact: This will impact directly on economic activity levels and reduce the levels of worklessness in Pennine Lancashire. This will have a knock on effect in improving GVA.

This will complement and add value to Jobcentre Plus Jobs Pledge and the Learning Skills Council Skills Pledge; and provide a targeted and customised programme for employers to enable them to successfully recruit, retain and train.

Strategy 3.2 - A Healthy Workforce

There is a strong association between health and the economy. Pennine Lancashire's deprivation levels over the years are entirely consistent with the health levels of its population. It is very difficult to change the association between economic deprivation and health experience. Areas that have improved their population's health – Aberdeen, for example - have also shown a dramatic change in their economy.

One of the significant factors in the low level of economic activity in Pennine Lancashire is the poor health of the population. High levels of obesity, coronary diseases and cardiovascular problems contribute significantly to absences from work and early retirement through ill health. Poor diet and exercise regimes compound the problems. Poor housing conditions and low household incomes also help create a vicious circle of poverty, poor health and poor living conditions for many thousands of Pennine Lancashire residents.

Volunteering can act as a key first step in helping people with health conditions to get out the house and improve their health and well being. Whilst volunteering, they will build their confidence, skills and experience and get into a regular routine from which they have the confidence to pursue employment opportunities.

DWP has embarked upon a targeted campaign to reduce the numbers on Incapacity Benefit, and the local health authorities have commenced a campaign to raise awareness of the links between health, diet and exercise, but it will take many years to overcome the extent of the current problems:

- Up to 50% of the residents of the most deprived communities are long term benefit dependants

- A significant number are suffering from mental health problems
- Long term unemployed people are three times more likely to have poor health
- Those on Incapacity Benefit for more than five years are more likely to die whilst on the benefit than return to work
- However, 90% of people beginning a claim for Incapacity Benefit do expect and want to return to work.

There is conclusive evidence that even the hardest to help can change their lives with the right interventions.

Supported by the two Pennine Lancashire Primary Care Trusts, a programme aimed to 'Save a Million Years of Life' in Pennine Lancashire is now established. Project areas include: heart disease, infant mortality, drug and alcohol misuse and geographic health equalities. The programme draws together work across a wide range of organisations and communities.

Strategic Intervention: ***Implement the Health and Well Being Operational Plan.***
Impact: This will reduce the high dependency on Incapacity Benefits and increase the economic activity rates within Pennine Lancashire.

Policy Area B4 – Regional connectivity and influence

4.0 Analysis – Exploiting our proximity to growth areas

In addition to looking within Pennine Lancashire for the solution to our economic deficiencies, it is vital that closer links are formed with neighbouring areas, to help make the most of the growth that is happening there. Improving connectivity and access to jobs is vital.

The Greater Manchester Urban Core (Manchester, Salford, and Trafford) is expected to grow by 122,000 jobs to 672,000 by 2026. This is driven by the City of Manchester, where an additional 92,000 jobs are expected to be created, accounting for 54% of the total growth across Greater Manchester and Lancashire. This is a remarkable and unprecedented concentration of employment growth.

In contrast, employment growth of circa 8,000 is forecast for Pennine Lancashire, and within this net figure there will be a significant reduction in manufacturing employment.
The area has experienced strong recent growth in higher value sectors, including financial and business services, which are well placed to benefit from supply chain linkages with Greater Manchester. Additional benefits will derive from Pennine Lancashire residents directly accessing Greater Manchester employment opportunities.

Pennine Lancashire is relatively self-contained in travel to work terms, with just 16% of its workforce working outside of the area. Preston is a significant employment destination, predominantly attracting employees from Ribble Valley and Blackburn with Darwen, but the highest numbers (over 16,000) travel to Greater Manchester. In particular, there are significant employment flows between Rossendale and the northern Greater Manchester districts of Rochdale and Bury.

Employment flows from Pennine Lancashire to Greater Manchester, in particular its Urban Core, are relatively low, given the scale of that sub-region's employment base. This reflects the poor connectivity between the two areas. While significant numbers commute from Blackburn and Rossendale to Greater Manchester, the most striking feature of the other districts is the low levels of commuting to the City of Manchester, a result of very long journey times by public transport and historical travel patterns.

Future employment will be driven by higher level skills and service sectors. While this will occur within Pennine Lancashire through the upskilling of the existing workforce and improved educational attainment, the scale of local employment growth will be insufficient to provide the number of jobs needed for residents. Greater connectivity provides an opportunity to develop an economy that complements one of the fastest growing and largest employment bases in the north of England.

Connecting with these growth economies is also key to attracting a more highly skilled workforce to the area. Skilled people are more likely to relocate to areas that provide more convenient access to the major labour markets, in particular areas located to the south of Manchester. Poor connectivity is the main constraint to greater interaction between the economies of Pennine Lancashire and Greater Manchester. Given the forecast scale of employment growth in Manchester, and its role as a centre for higher skills and paid employment, this is a serious weakness.

There is a high degree of road connectivity between the Pennine Lancashire districts, and commuting patterns reflect proximity to neighbouring economies. Both Blackburn with Darwen and Burnley employers provide over 10,000 jobs each for residents of other Pennine Lancashire districts, while Hyndburn provides over 9,000.

A recent Centre for Cities paper[16] identifies the importance of understanding the economic linkages between cities (as well as within them). It argues that a close relationship, such as that which exists between London and Reading, allows the smaller city access to the markets, skills and specialisations of its larger neighbour, which in turn gives it the opportunity to develop its own specialised growth momentum. It specifically points to the relatively poor connectivity between northern economies as one of the reasons for the growing output gaps. It cites the connectivity gap between Manchester and the towns of Blackburn and Burnley as a key example.

Improving connectivity requires long term investment in the transport infrastructure, to allow Pennine Lancashire to make a greater contribution to the regional economy. It will also help to re-balance the wider economy, reducing pressure on social and economic infrastructure in the south, and helping to reduce inequalities to the north. This will benefit residents and businesses in both the Lancashire and Greater Manchester sub-regions .

There are a number of policy implications arising from this analysis, covering skills, transport, housing and quality of place, image and perceptions, and regional partnership.

Strategy 4.1 – Promoting a skilled and mobile workforce

For Pennine Lancashire to benefit from its close proximity to growth centres, there is a need to develop a more skilled and mobile workforce. Given the time and costs involved in commuting local residents are unlikely to commute to lower paid jobs, it will therefore be important to ensure that skills and qualification levels are improved to allow Pennine Lancashire residents to access the types of higher paid jobs that make the commute worthwhile.

Most employment growth will occur within occupations requiring higher level skills. Opportunities for those without NVQ 2 will be very limited. The growth of certain sectors (ICT / Communications, Financial and Professional services) will be driven almost solely by the growth of employment requiring higher level skills.

Strategic Intervention***: Understand the future skill requirements of the Manchester growth centre and ensure that local FE and HE provision is geared towards this need.***
Impact: This will widen the range of employment opportunities accessible to local residents including higher paid jobs in the service sector, business and financial services.

[16] Centre for Cities, *City Links: Integration and Isolation* (2008)

Strategic Intervention: ***Work with relevant stakeholders to improve the transport links within Pennine Lancashire and to adjoining City Regions, based on the need to improve the scale and quality of the labour market available to employers at the core of the conurbations.***
Impact: this intervention will lead to an increase in commuting, with residents taking up additional employment opportunities in adjoining City Regions. This will help to increase the employment rate of Pennine Lancashire residents, widen the range of skills, and increase average earnings and household incomes.

Strategy 4.2 – Investing in transport infrastructure

As set out in the Eddington Review, there is "clear evidence that a comprehensive and high-performing transport system is an important enabler of sustained economic prosperity". No more so is this the case than in Pennine Lancashire, and a recent report by the Centre for Cities (2008) highlighted the severity of the situation. The report found that although large cities like Leeds and Greater Manchester were booming, poor commuter transport networks and weak trade links were stopping this wealth from spilling over into Pennine Lancashire. Dermot Finch, Centre for Cities, noted that, "if the likes of Burnley and Blackburn can strengthen their ties with nearby larger cities – economic growth will spread across the north and beyond." The report paints a picture of an insular economy with journey times to Manchester that belie its close proximity.

Transport connectivity both within the Pennine Lancashire and the wider City Region, as well as neighbouring City Regions, is inadequate and is a significant barrier to economic growth and prosperity. Indeed, just 2.6% and 3.6% of resident employees in Burnley and Blackburn respectively commute to Manchester (Centre for Cities, 2008).

It is clear that without improved transport links the productivity and wealth gaps between Pennine Lancashire, other partners of the City Region, the North West and the rest of the UK will continue to widen. Addressing this issue is a fundamental priority in bringing about transformational change to the area.

The evidence detailed above puts the challenges facing us into sharp focus – we must devise interventions that integrate effectively with neighbouring areas, both in terms of transport connections and knowledge networks. The growing regional knowledge base must provide spin off benefits for businesses within Pennine Lancashire as well as providing accessible higher value employment opportunities for our residents.

Strategic Intervention: ***Invest in rail infrastructure to improve the frequency and journey times from the sub region to Manchester, with a high priority for increasing the frequency of the Blackburn to Manchester leg, re-instating a direct rail link with competitive journey times between Burnley and Manchester via the Todmorden Curve, and Rossendale and Manchester.***
Impact: this intervention will lead to an increase in sustainable commuting, with residents taking up employment opportunities in Greater Manchester, particularly the City of Manchester. This will help to increase the employment rate of Pennine Lancashire residents, and increase average earnings and household incomes.

Strategic Intervention: ***Evaluate the implications of the proposed Greater Manchester congestion charge for Pennine Lancashire commuters and businesses.***
Impact: the proposed new congestion charge is expected to increase the use of public transport and reduce the number of vehicular journey in to Greater Manchester. There are potentially some negative aspects to the congestion charge, such as increasing the costs for companies serving clients in Greater Manchester. A better understanding of the effects will allow stakeholders to develop interventions which will capitalise on the positive elements (such as more viable public transport routes) and offset negative effects.

Whilst external connectivity is very important, the need to improve internal communications within Pennine Lancashire should not be overlooked. The M65 provides good east-west communication across the patch for car owners but there is much scope for improving public transport routes and hubs. The MAA under development plans to develop an integrated transport strategy for PL; to increase public transport usage; and provide better links to employment opportunities.

Strategic Intervention: ***Secure the delivery of the Pennine Reach project to improve internal communications within Pennine Lancashire and to improve access to employment opportunities via public transport.***
Impact: the proposed Pennine Reach project will greatly improve access for residents from deprived communities to major employment sites and town centres, and will reduce dependency on private cars.

Strategy 4.3 - Delivering Quality of Place

Quality of Place has a profound effect on an area's confidence and ability to attract new residents and investors. Yorkshire Forward and the Northern Way have adopted the following definition of Quality of Place (QOP):

"The sum of all those factors – cultural, local environment, public realm, housing, community safety and health – which together make somewhere – whether town, city or region – an attractive place to live."

If economic growth is not to be constrained, high quality neighbourhoods must be developed, with access to high quality town centres, cultural and leisure facilities which are attractive to commuters and highly paid workers. This will help retain existing residents and attract people from elsewhere to move to the area. To do this there must be an emphasis on high quality and family housing, good local services and high quality schools. There is also a need for housing targeted at new graduates and younger professionals, including those commuting to Greater Manchester.

Low demand for housing remains a problem in certain pockets of Pennine Lancashire: there are significant levels of long term vacancy in Burnley and, to a lesser extent, Hyndburn and Pendle, concentrated around the town centres. Market performance in other areas has improved significantly in the last three years. This shows that the market is diverging, and demonstrates the need for continued investment in the inner urban areas. Without this there is a serious risk of increased social and economic exclusion, due to the links between housing market stress, worklessness and community cohesion issues. For these reasons, the Housing Market Renewal programme is crucial to the transformation of Pennine Lancashire.

Well performing schools are an important factor in Quality of Place and a key driver in housing and business investment decisions. Whilst significant improvements have been made to the education system over recent years, with £500m planned investment through the Building Schools for the Future programme, improving school performance is still a major challenge for Pennine Lancashire.

There is a need to accelerate the provision of new, better quality housing, as this is crucial to economic growth. Within this overall aim to improve quality, the quality of the public realm and of commercial and public sector buildings will be of significant influence.

Town centres are a key factor in Quality of Place, providing space for leisure and culture. They are also key economic drivers. More investment is needed in core infrastructure and the environment of most of the town centres in order to attract higher paying customers and a more diverse retail and leisure offer. Investment in town centres will raise the confidence of local residents and businesses and be more attractive to people visiting the area. This will need to include significant improvements to the public realm and to maintenance regimes within the town centres. It needs to include the enhancement of the built environment focusing on improving existing older buildings and greater emphasis on the quality and design of new buildings.

Key access points including arterial corridors and public transport hubs within the town centres are often overlooked in regeneration strategies and not enough emphasis is placed on the impact these corridors have on the overall perception of the area.

Strategic Intervention: ***Develop and implement a robust Housing Investment Strategy to deliver a balanced market and provide for the growth of the economy and economic migration in Pennine Lancashire.***
Impact: The development of a wider range of housing will attract families on higher incomes to locate within Pennine Lancashire, helping to raise income levels and to encourage increased spending within the local economy.

Strategic Intervention: ***Focus increased new investment in town centres and primary access corridors to have maximum impact on resident and visitor perception levels.***
Impact: This will help to raise confidence levels and to encourage much needed private sector investment.

Strategy 4.4 - Improving image and perceptions

Pennine Lancashire is fortunate to have a highly attractive natural environment and ready access to high quality countryside. However, this is largely unexploited and the visitor infrastructure is barely developed. In addition, much of the urban environment is extremely poor and many of the points of arrival into the area (rail stations, bus stations and town centres) present a poor image to visitors and potential investors.

"The truth is that identity defines us. It changes perceptions, markets, places. People are much more likely to choose to invest in places that have a clear and valuable identity." – Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment

To promote a positive image of the benefits of the Northwest as a location for business, visitors, investors and as a place to live (RES)

… the environment of East Lancashire, both built and natural, is a significant opportunity to strengthen the economic base. (LES)

Strategy 4.1 emphasises the importance of connectivity to adjoining City Regions, but exploiting Manchester's growth (and that of Preston and Leeds) is not just about rail links: the quality of place, housing offer and skills development are all vital. Pennine Lancashire's image and visibility must be improved, along with the visitor economy (a longer term investment in terms of real economic returns). It's about a new approach that does not look inwards.

Cheaper property and proximity to labour could also attract companies to relocate, wholly or partially, to Pennine Lancashire. The potential costs of a congestion charge to Manchester businesses could also present a real opportunity.

Pennine Lancashire lacks a distinctive external profile: research has shown that although some consider that the area has a poor image, many people have no perception of it at all. The towns are seen as more distant and less developed than they really are. The poor perceptions have appeared most strongly among the 26-40 year olds, perhaps the key group to attract as new residents. There is little difference in perception by ethnicity.

The internal profile of the area is better, but with plenty of room for improvement. Only just over half of residents surveyed would speak well of Pennine Lancashire as a whole. The key positive feature was seen as the accessibility of the beautiful countryside, countered by the difficulties of finding jobs with a decent wage. Residents are keenly aware that the area's external reputation is poor.

A recent series of focus groups (which included representatives from local business and economic development officers) concluded that in recent years a process of "image editing" had been taking place, where the only resonant images or stories emerging from the communities of Pennine Lancashire depicted conflict, economic decline or negativity. This is not a favourable backdrop for attracting and retaining an educated and skilled workforce, increased investment, business start-up and relocation.

To address these weaknesses, a place brand for Pennine Lancashire has been developed. The brand signifies a new confidence, collaboration and partnership across the area. It will be used to attract influence, investment, recognition and visitors, boosting the economic fortunes of the area, fostering pride and a sense of place. It will challenge previous perceptions and assumptions and promote a more positive image of the area.

The place brand was inspired by the late Anthony Wilson and his partner Yvette Livesey in their report, *Dreaming of Pennine Lancashire*. This proposed a number of activities to change perceptions, develop local pride, and to signal to the world that this formerly great industrial powerhouse was once again ready to play a significant part in the northern economy.

The first element was to create a new name for the area to signal a new way of thinking and working together. 'East Lancashire' was felt to be a bureaucratic entity, whilst 'Pennine Lancashire' delivers a strong sense of place, linked to the traditional county brand of Lancashire and rooted firmly in the geography of England with the prefix, 'Pennine'. The visual device that goes with the new name is an elegant graphic by the noted designer, Peter Saville.

The brand is being promoted through an integrated campaign including advertising, e-media, public relations, outdoor hoardings and a website. Future activity may include gateway signs, elements to build local pride and usage of the Pennine Lancashire name.

Future direction

The long term aspiration for Pennine Lancashire is that it should become an evocative place brand that invokes strong, positive images in the way that Northumbria, the Lake District or Bronte Country do.

Further resources are required to ensure the Livesey/Wilson proposals are fully developed and that the Pennine Lancashire brand is effectively promoted. A Destination Manager has been appointed to work with local authorities to develop the area as a place of choice to live, work and visit and to promote a positive image through culture and tourism.

There is considerable scope for joint working between local authority tourism officers, economic development units and communications staff to promote the Pennine Lancashire brand. The brand should be promoted thematically, not geographically. For example, rather than each district producing promotional material for accommodation, one district could take responsibility for accommodation guides, and others could promote food, outdoor activities, heritage, etc. across the area. Such an approach would lead to a much stronger offer and better value for money. A similar process could be undertaken for economic development marketing.

Shifting the perceptions that have built up over at least one generation will take ten or twenty years, but it is essential for attracting and retaining residents, businesses and investment.

Strategic Intervention***: Promote Pennine Lancashire as a destination that is readily accessible from adjoining City Regions emphasising an image which features the best of town and rural life, and the quality of life offer.***
Impact: This will encourage stronger economic links in particular with the Manchester Growth Region and secure additional direct and indirect investment in the Pennine Lancashire economy.

[References: Perceptions of East Lancashire report – Feb 2007, Living and Working in East Lancashire, Dec. 2006 and Marketing Burnley, Northern Design Collective, Feb 2007, Creative Concern, March 2008.]

Policy Area B5 – Investing in the Future

5.0 Analysis – Changing the way we do things

The development of the Northern Way has been instrumental in changing how economic development is planned and delivered in England. Further new approaches to the planning and delivery of economic development are needed to deliver the scale and pace of change required. This partly reflects the need to persuade national and regional agencies that increased investments will lead to real returns.

In spite of significant investment in economic development over many years, including several billion pounds of European support, only limited progress has been made in transforming the economies in the North West. Business as usual is unlikely to deliver the scale of change required, and the most notable national successes, such as Sheffield and East Manchester, have benefited from dedicated delivery agencies such as urban regeneration companies.

The Northern Way is working regionally and pan-regionally to secure changes in national policy and public sector budget settlements which reflect both the challenges and ambitions of stakeholders. This advocacy work needs to be underpinned by effective delivery, and new arrangements are now being put in place by, amongst others, City Regions, to accelerate progress and strengthen the case for the devolution of funding and decision making.

The key features of the new arrangements are:

- Effective economic geographies, rather than administrative boundaries: these are the key building blocks for developing strategies designed to transform the economic prospects of many parts of the north.
- Investment plans based on clear, evidence based choices, including proposals with the scale and influence to transform internal and external perceptions, including both physical transformations, as well as improved performance with regard to enterprise and sector development, skills and learning
- Efficient management and delivery arrangements, as important as strategy documents, with new and specialist skills needed to implement transformational projects, many of which are complex
- Strong links to areas which are critical to sustainable economic development, including housing and affordable housing, neighbourhood and community services, childcare and schools provision, and actions aimed at addressing economic exclusion.

These features are now becoming the minimum requirements for effective sub regional delivery. The government is actively encouraging dialogue across functioning economic areas and seeking to engage with those areas responding to the challenges of the SNR. The emphasis has changed considerably, with national and regional agencies now focused on those areas most likely to deliver successful outcomes and not necessarily those solely in greatest need. This is an opportunity for Pennine Lancashire.

Strategy 5.1 - Raising confidence and encouraging investment

One of the prerequisites to economic growth is the right climate for investment. This means having the right level and scope of resources to work with potential investors, a physical environment that is conducive to new investment and a positive, confident ethos against which investors can judge the potential for their investment. Pennine Lancashire falls well short of the benchmark: a lack of confidence and ambition is holding the area back. There is a shortage of capacity and dedicated staff to drive forward major regeneration initiatives, and the poor quality of much of the urban physical environment deters new investment.

There are notable exceptions, particularly the various new business parks that have been developed along the M65 motorway. There is new investment in the pipeline in Blackburn, Burnley, Nelson and Rawtenstall town centres. There is an active programme by the Primary Care Trusts to develop LIFT centres in each of the key conurbations, and Building Schools for the Future will inject hundreds of millions of pounds into renewing the education infrastructure across the patch.

In addition a number of transformational physical regeneration initiatives have emerged as priorities over recent months which if successful could have major impact on the local economy:

- Whitebirk Strategic Site
- Samlesbury Aerospace Park
- Weavers' Triangle, Burnley
- Blackburn Knowledge Zone
- Education and Enterprise Park, Burnley
- Pennine Lancashire Racecourse
- Pennine Lancashire Playground/Adrenaline Gateway
- Michelin site, Burnley

Success breeds success and it is vital to capitalise on this momentum. Together, it is estimated that these initiatives have the potential to create over 5000 new jobs, and these should form the main focus of the physical regeneration effort over the next three to five years. The key will be to identify the project management resources and access to the key funding streams to pump prime the capital projects, and to ensure that these are integrated with the other economic development initiatives, so that maximum GVA can be levered, and local residents have ready access to the employment opportunities.

Pennine Lancashire also needs a full range of quality, sustainable employment sites with good connectivity to meet the needs of both existing businesses and to attract new inward investment, the latter being an area where there is real scope for improving recent performance. Pennine Lancashire needs to plan and deliver employment sites on a co-operative basis ensuring that sites in one Borough complement sites in other Boroughs, thereby maximising the potential of these sites. Better quality information on potential sites needs to be collected and kept up to date to maximise the potential for private sector investment.

Strategic Intervention: ***Establish a Pennine Lancashire Major Projects Team, a multi-disciplinary team with sound project management skills to develop and implement key capital projects.***
Impact: A dedicated highly experienced team will accelerate the development of major investments in Pennine Lancashire, including advocacy/research and case making, feasibility work, and management and implementation. This will include working with the private sector to secure new investment, as well as national agencies such as the Housing and Communities Agency and the Higher education Funding Council.

Strategy 5.2 - Reorganising delivery and procuring resources

The analysis of all the key social and economic indicators for Pennine Lancashire demonstrates that current strategies and delivery arrangements are not delivering the scale of change needed to reverse the trajectory. In the past year there has been a further deterioration in the ranking of the area in the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Pennine Lancashire is slipping further and further behind other parts of the country. In addition to investing in the physical infrastructure of the area there is a need to invest in the delivery structures. In simple terms, every penny of expenditure - capital investment, business support, learning and skills, and addressing economic exclusion - has to count.

The Heads of Economic Development for the six Pennine Lancashire district councils together with Lancashire County Council have been meeting over recent months to consider this issue and have concluded that there are a number of sound reasons why structured joint working on economic development matters should be considered:

- The need to take forward the Transformational Agenda for Pennine Lancashire and to implement the Integrated Economic Strategy

- The need to drive forward the new economic indicators for the Lancashire and Blackburn LAAs and the emerging Multi Area Agreement (MAA)

- The need to join up effective intervention in both housing market renewal and economic development, given the coherent economic footprint of Pennine Lancashire

- The potential of some specific activities to create economies of scale and additional capacity that will enable Pennine Lancashire to make a step change in delivery and achievement (particularly with direct funding from NWDA and English Partnerships)

- The sharing of good practice and fostering professional development within the economic development staff across the area which will significantly improve effectiveness and build capacity.

- Securing more effective links with major regeneration projects.

The SNR clearly articulates the Government's wish for local authorities to co-operate on common economic issues. The SNR makes the strong case for economic interventions to be made on the basis of functional economic areas. Looking at all of the economic indicators it is clear that Pennine Lancashire is a distinct, functioning economic area. Up to now the six local authorities have followed their own economic strategies devised at district level. There is a compelling case for economic planning and interventions to be made at the appropriate spatial level. Comprehensive, integrated service delivery, working through Local and Multi Area Agreements and Local Strategic Partnerships, will form a critical underpinning of such economic interventions. A joined-up approach to improving service delivery and tackling key issues in the areas of housing, economic decline and service delivery will be essential. Proposals for an economic development company for Pennine Lancashire are well advanced. If successful, this will address many of these issues.

One of the constraints to more accelerated regeneration for Pennine Lancashire has been the stop-start nature of previous regeneration funding and the postcode lottery attached to individual funding streams. Using the clear messages in the SNR regarding the opportunities for devolved funding from the RDAs to local economic partnerships, it is recommended that the Leaders of Pennine Lancashire develop a clear Business Plan to translate this strategy into an implementation framework for the next three years and beyond. This should be submitted to the NWDA in October 2008 in order to dovetail with the Agency's financial planning timetable.

There is real merit in looking at this regeneration funding in the round and directing it to the projects where it can have the maximum impact on GVA and the potential to lever in private sector investment.

In addition the strategic co-ordination of third sector involvement in the economic regeneration process through the newly established Pennine Lancashire Group can enable partners to utilise the skills and expertise of the third sector. This will aid in targeting the most deprived neighbourhoods and working with the most vulnerable members of society to pursue enterprise, employment and learning and contribute to the physical regeneration of our communities. This will complement the work being undertaken through the Blackburn and Lancashire LAAs to effectively engage and work with the third sector.

Strategic Intervention: ***Negotiate with the NWDA to devolve all appropriate regeneration spending to a Pennine Lancashire level.***
Impact: The NWDA has invested significantly in Pennine Lancashire and the opportunity to devolve more responsibility to the area will allow NWDA to focus on its strategic role. The result of this devolution will be more effective delivery as stakeholders are incentivised to take more responsibility for resource planning and delivery arrangements.

Strategic Intervention: ***The agreement of joint targets through the development of the MAA for Pennine Lancashire linked to sound delivery mechanisms***.
Impact: New arrangements will have a major impact on investment and service delivery, with shared, clear objectives, more effective monitoring, and the introduction of ambitious targets. The development of more co-ordinated partnership plans will lead to increased resource being allocated to the area.

Strategic Intervention: ***Co-ordinate and mobilise the resources of the third sector in the economic regeneration of Pennine Lancashire.***

Impact: Co-ordinating the contribution of the third sector across Pennine Lancashire will develop more effective engagement, delivery and monitoring mechanisms and will enable partners to share best practice and measure the added value and the economic impact of the third sector.

Strategy 5.3 - Strengthening regional partnerships and influence

The individual districts in Pennine Lancashire have very limited influence at regional level, compared to the major centres and sub-regional partnerships. Pennine Lancashire as a unit, whilst it figures within the RES, receives much lower priority than some of the other intervention areas within the region. Pennine Lancashire needs to increase its ability to influence major decision makers and to work more closely together to articulate the needs of the area. This applies particularly in relation to the external connectivity of the area and these needs must be articulated to government, regional bodies and the transportation funding bodies.

This ethos needs to apply also to the relationships with the rest of the Lancashire sub region and adjoining City Regions, recognising the potential mobility of labour and the links to growth areas and sectors within the regional economy.

Strategic Intervention: ***Influence government, strategic transportation bodies and the NWDA to improve investment in strategic transportation links.***
Impact: This will bring much needed investment in infrastructure to improve the economic connectivity of the area and this will help to improve GVA.

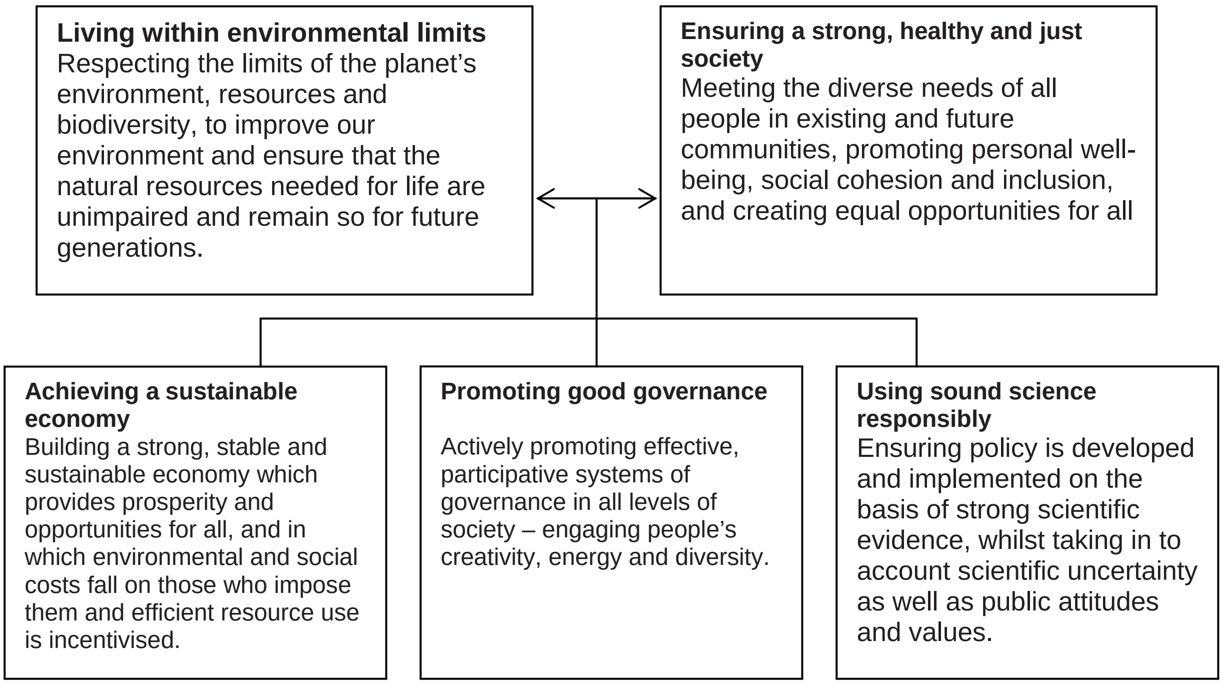
Strategic Intervention: ***Develop an influencing strategy to establish Pennine Lancashire as an area in need of intervention across a wide range of policy areas.***
Impact: This will help to bring additional resources and government support to deal with the high levels of economic and social deprivation faced by many of the residents of Pennine Lancashire.

Strategy 5.4 Securing sustainable economic growth

Pennine Lancashire is committed to delivering sustainable economic development, in line with the government's ambition of enabling all people to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations. The diversity of the area's people and communities as a real economic asset is recognised and the strategy seeks to deliver the opportunity of economic participation for all.

To achieve a sustainable economy this strategy needs to be underpinned by the principles of sustainable development. This means investing in the area's environment, culture and infrastructure (especially to link growth areas with more deprived communities), improving the quality of life, tackling deprivation, valuing diversity and social inclusion, and recognising and addressing the social and environmental implications of economic growth. Creation of sustainable communities where a thriving economy is matched by high quality natural and built environment, high quality local services, good transport connections and an active, safe and inclusive society is critical to the success of Pennine Lancashire and the wider region. The strategy must also recognise that there are a number of other important external factors, notably climate change and energy prices. The strategy will adhere to the shared UK Guiding Principles for Sustainable Development[17]:

- Sustainable Consumption and Production
- Climate Change and Energy
- Natural Resource Protection and Environmental Enhancement
- Sustainable Communities.



The strategy and individual actions arising from it will be subject to sustainability appraisals to ensure that economic development benefits local people without compromising the ability of future generations to enjoy a good standard of living in an attractive and high quality environment.

Strategic Intervention: ***Embed the principles of sustainable development in the strategy and in its implementation by all partners.***
Impact: The economic development of Pennine Lancashire will be to the benefit of local people and the environment. This will, over the long term, ensure that the trajectory of the key economic indicators can be changed and that the economy of Pennine Lancashire will be more robust without compromising the environmental sustainability of the area.
Strategic Intervention: ***Secure the commitment of the Pennine Lancashire partners and other stakeholders to a long term strategy of intervention that is economically and environmentally sustainable.***
Impact: This will, over the long term, ensure that the trajectory of the key economic indicators can be changed and that the economy of Pennine Lancashire will be more robust, output levels will be higher and the community will be more prosperous.

17 "Securing the Future – Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy" HM Government 2005