

# Swindon and Wiltshire City Deal



## Executive Summary

The Swindon and Wiltshire City Deal is transformative, maximising the economic potential of the area through the provision of Higher Education to both Service Leavers and local employees.

It addresses the key economic challenge faced locally – its sizeable and growing higher level skills gap. At the same time, it addresses two national challenges. First, the City Deal will give Armed Forces Service Leavers in the area a guarantee of an opportunity to extend their skills to a full higher level qualification to support their transition out of the Armed Forces into civilian life, extending the Armed Forces Covenant and supporting local recruitment of Reservists. Second, help reverse the decline in part-time Higher Education participation, by providing part-time, flexible Higher Education, for Service Leavers and civilians (local employees), through the University Campus of Swindon and Wiltshire.

Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) has potential for significant future growth, reversing recent economic decline, with higher levels of productivity, increased inward investment, and significant jobs growth. Jobs growth forecasts to 2020 are 5.1% for the UK; 7.2% for the South West region; and even higher at 8.9% for Swindon and Wiltshire. This equates to the creation of 30,000 new jobs requiring Level 4 plus skills in the SWLEP area, and with the replacement of staff, 83,800 jobs requiring Level 4 plus skills. The driver of growth will be a move towards larger numbers of individuals employed in more skilled and higher value-added roles in the following growth sectors – digital technologies, life sciences, advanced engineering, and finance and professional services.

The flagship proposal for the Swindon and Wiltshire City Deal will be to establish a SWLEP Skills Brokerage for Armed Forces Service Leavers and local employees to benefit from Higher Education provision co-designed with local businesses. The SWLEP Skills Brokerage will increase support to Service Leavers as they transition into civilian life and provide learning opportunities to a wider set of learners through an innovative and customised model in the Swindon and Wiltshire area through collaboration with Higher Education Institutions and Further Education Colleges. The SWLEP Skills Brokerage will support and work alongside local employers to match skills to jobs and provide opportunities for local employees to gain access to part-time higher education provision. To complement this, a business growth support programme for SMEs with high growth potential will be established, including enhanced support for innovation and improved access to finance.

Over its lifetime, it is predicted that delivery of the City Deal will achieve:

- 18,000 individuals trained locally to Level 4 or higher (7,000 Service Leavers and 11,000 local employees) and extending the Armed Forces Corporate Covenant and support for the recruitment of Reservists locally;
- the development of a new University Campus of Swindon and Wiltshire, capable of delivering part-time flexible higher level provision from partnerships with best-in-class Higher Education Institutions and utilising existing local infrastructure and the latest distance learning technology;
- direct business support to 1,250 local SMEs with high growth potential, including up-skilling of their employees and recruitment of Service Leavers; and
- a strengthened local planning context to support local development and longer term plans for public service transformation.

## Introduction

The SWLEP covers two Unitary Authority areas – Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council. The Swindon and Wiltshire economy has two unique characteristics which support the need for a City Deal:

- Swindon and Wiltshire's Single Economic Challenge - a sizeable and growing higher level skills gap and limited Higher Education provision, being the only Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) that does not have a University Campus; and
- the greatest concentration of Army resources in the country with high redundancy levels in the short-term as the Army restructures under the Army 2020 strategy, and a higher base level of Service Leavers in the medium to long term from the 'super-garrison' to be located on Salisbury Plain with a quarter of all Army personnel (22,000) by 2018.

Swindon and Wiltshire has a population of 688,800, 25,500 businesses, 351,000 jobs. Swindon and Wiltshire has the potential for significant jobs growth, with 8.9% growth by 2020 (compared to 5.1% across the UK).

The SWLEP economy is strongly dependent on the private sector - with up to four private sector jobs for every public sector role, and a strong focus on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). 89% of businesses in the SWLEP area are micro-businesses, employing less than ten people. The area is also currently home to a range of prominent businesses with their UK headquarters or global operations based locally, such as Dyson, Nationwide Building Society, Zurich, Intel, Honda, BMW, Johnson Matthey, Cooper Tires, Knorr Bremes, Bath ASU, Herman Miller, Halcrow and Plantronics.

### Why do we need the City Deal?

#### ***The Higher Level Skills Gap***

In the absence of additional inputs to the local economy from inward investment, the gradual decline in productivity has been driven by a long-standing skills challenge within the SWLEP area. Skills levels in the working population have been identified as a long-term strategic weakness and SWLEP has consistently under-performed against the UK average in terms of the number of young people becoming undergraduates and also the Level 4 and above skills profile of the working population. Recent research conducted by SWLEP with local employers demonstrates the difficulties that are being faced in finding locally skilled employees.

#### ***The Armed Forces***

By 2018, the Ministry of Defence forecast that a quarter of the Army or some 22,000 personnel will be located in Swindon and Wiltshire. In addition, many will be accompanied by spouses / partners and other family members. Under the Army 2020 reconfiguration, SWLEP is seeing significant numbers of service personnel being made redundant, alongside a drive to recruit more Reservists; and in the medium and long term, a higher baseline of Service Leavers undergoing transition and resettlement in the area. In order that Service Leavers do not face any disadvantage in terms of seeking appropriate employment opportunities locally, their higher level skills development during transition is pivotal - underpinning a key element of the Armed Forces Covenant.

Service Leavers offer a highly desirable potential labour pool from which to address the local skills gap, however, analysis by Army Resettlement Centres has shown that Service Leavers often need to increase their current skills levels to a full higher level qualification to meet the needs of civilian employers. Service Leavers typically have low participation rates in uptake of higher level skills opportunities provided by the Ministry of Defence and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (Standard Learning Credits, Enhanced Learning Credits, and the Further Education and Higher

Education Support Scheme); with evidence suggesting that eligibility criteria are a barrier to uptake, along with a need for enhanced Information, Advice and Guidance.

The City Deal will help achieve Swindon and Wiltshire's long term vision for the local economy: greater numbers of individuals employed in higher skilled and higher value-add roles in the following sectors - digital technologies, life sciences, advanced engineering, and finance and professional services.

## The Deal

At the heart of the Swindon and Wiltshire City Deal is an ambitious strategy to initiate the higher level up-skilling of 18,000 people to address its sizeable and growing skills gap. This City Deal will support a reverse in the recent decline in part-time Higher Education and give local Service Leavers a guarantee of an opportunity to extend their skills to a full higher level qualification as they transition into civilian employment. The City Deal will also support extension of the armed Forces Corporate Covenant and the recruitment of Reservists locally.

To achieve this City Deal partners will:

- Establish a **SWLEP Skills Brokerage** to incubate stronger partnerships between local employers and Higher Education Institutions; and also to provide a centralised resource for **enhanced Information, Advice and Guidance** for local Service Leavers and other individuals to access information on part-time higher level skills development in the local area.
- Develop a **University Campus within Swindon and Wiltshire** that allows existing Higher Education Institutions (from outside the area) to deliver part-time provision for learners to study towards a higher level qualification. This will utilise **existing infrastructure available from the Armed Forces** (subject to appropriate availability), Further Education Colleges, University Technical Colleges (UTCs) and employer facilities.
- Provide a **guarantee to Service Leavers** of an opportunity to achieve a full higher education qualification, and **extend the Armed Forces Corporate Covenant, supporting Reservist recruitment locally**.
- **Widen participation** by ensuring that learners wishing to undertake part-time study for a higher level qualification have multiple **funding and financing options** available within the existing policy mechanisms. Focusing the offer initially on Service Leavers (facing redundancy and / or planned transition), but widening participation to local civilians who wish to study part-time for a higher level qualification.

The SWLEP Skills Brokerage will be complemented by a business support package designed to support local SMEs with high growth potential. City Deal partners will establish a programme to provide effective business support including better access to finance, innovation and national support programmes. Finally, City Deal partners will strengthen the local planning context to support local development, and plans for public service transformation.

City Deal partners estimate the City Deal will deliver:

- 18,000 individuals trained locally to Level 4 or higher (7,000 Service Leavers and 11,000 local employees) and extending the Armed Forces Corporate Covenant and support for the recruitment of Reservists locally;
- the development of a new University Campus of Swindon and Wiltshire, capable of delivering part-time flexible higher level provision from partnerships with best-in-class Higher Education Institutions and utilising existing local infrastructure and the latest distance learning technology;
- direct business support to 1,250 local SMEs with high growth potential, including up-skilling of their employees and recruitment of Service Leavers; and
- a strengthened local planning context to support local development, and longer term plans for public service transformation.

## Geography

This City Deal sets out an initiative which will be delivered across the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership area in collaboration with both Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council.

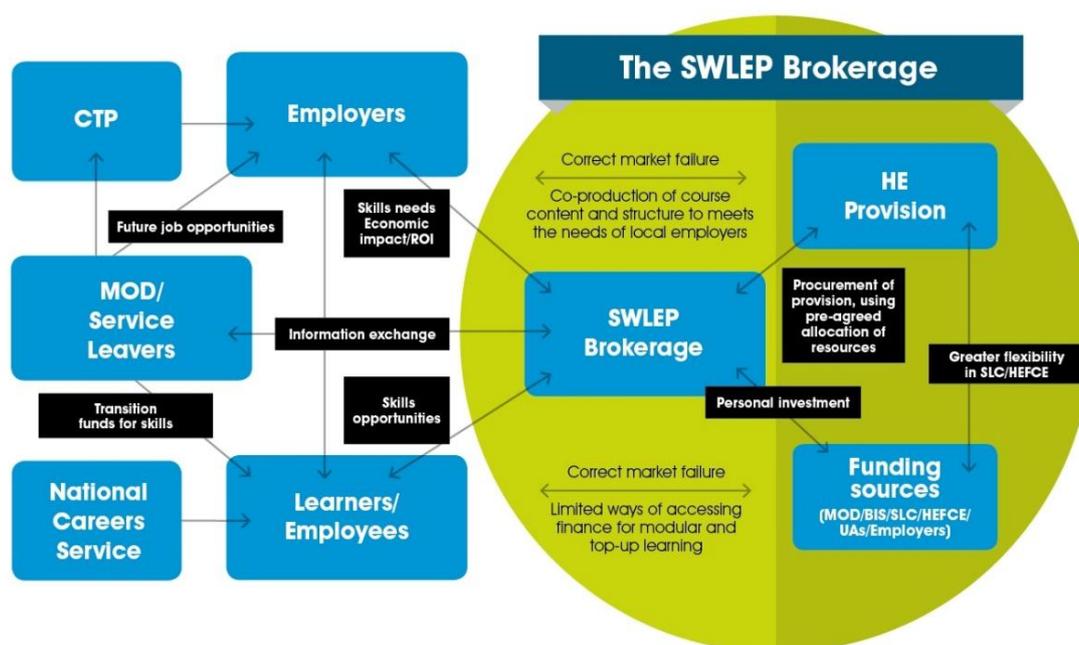
## Key Elements of the Deal

### Providing Stronger Information, Advice and Guidance

SWLEP will establish a new Information, Advice and Guidance service, **the SWLEP Skills Brokerage**, to generate learner demand and ensure appropriate local provision of higher level skills.

### THE SWLEP SKILLS BROKERAGE MODEL

#### The City Deal



Learner demand will be generated through close partnership working with the Armed Forces locally and local employers, and through the provision of tailored Information, Advice and Guidance to potential learners. The SWLEP Skills Brokerage will play a key role in supporting potential learners to achieve their career aspirations by providing:

- a one-stop shop for skills Information, Advice and Guidance, including funding and financing options;
- a co-designed (with Higher Education Institutions) framework for the accreditation of any prior experience and learning by using the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) and centralised efficient mechanism for that accreditation; and
- data sharing and sharing of information on local career options, in partnership with the Career Transition Partnership, Service Leavers nationally.

The SWLEP Skills Brokerage will work to understand the needs of local businesses and map these against current skills levels of Service Leavers to determine where an increase in skill levels is required. Having identified the skills gaps, the Skills Brokerage will seek to create partnerships between local employers (including groups of SMEs) and Higher Education Institutions to co-design part-time, credit based skills provision that can be used to address the skills gaps in the local area.

The process of accrediting prior experience and learning using the QCF framework is a key aspect of the SWLEP Skills Brokerage. The ability to accredit prior experience and learning is central to the

concept of providing part-time Higher Education provision to enable the learner to gain a full higher level qualification as quickly and cost-effectively as possible. This work is traditionally undertaken by Higher Education Institutions responsible for delivering the learning, however, it is time consuming and often complex for the learner and costly for the provider. The SWLEP Skills Brokerage will, therefore, make use of prior accreditation processes used by Higher Education Institutions.

Government will provide £1.40m of grant 'seed corn' funding in 2014/15. Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council will provide £1.00m of resource funding over five years from 2014/15 to 18/19. Once established it is expected that the SWLEP Skills Brokerage will become self-financing through charging businesses for support provided (estimated at £2.66m from 2014/15 to 2018/19). This includes:

- Membership Fees - an annual membership fee will be charged to local employers who wish to have 'access' to the Skills Brokerage and a pool of skilled Service Leavers, as well as information on part-time higher level skills development for staff using co-designed provision. Membership fees will vary depending on the size of business; and
- Job Placement Fees - a new joiners fee will be paid by an employer when an individual is recruited via the SWLEP Skills Brokerage, representing a cost-effective recruitment channel for many local employers.

### **Creation of Higher Education Provision in Swindon and Wiltshire**

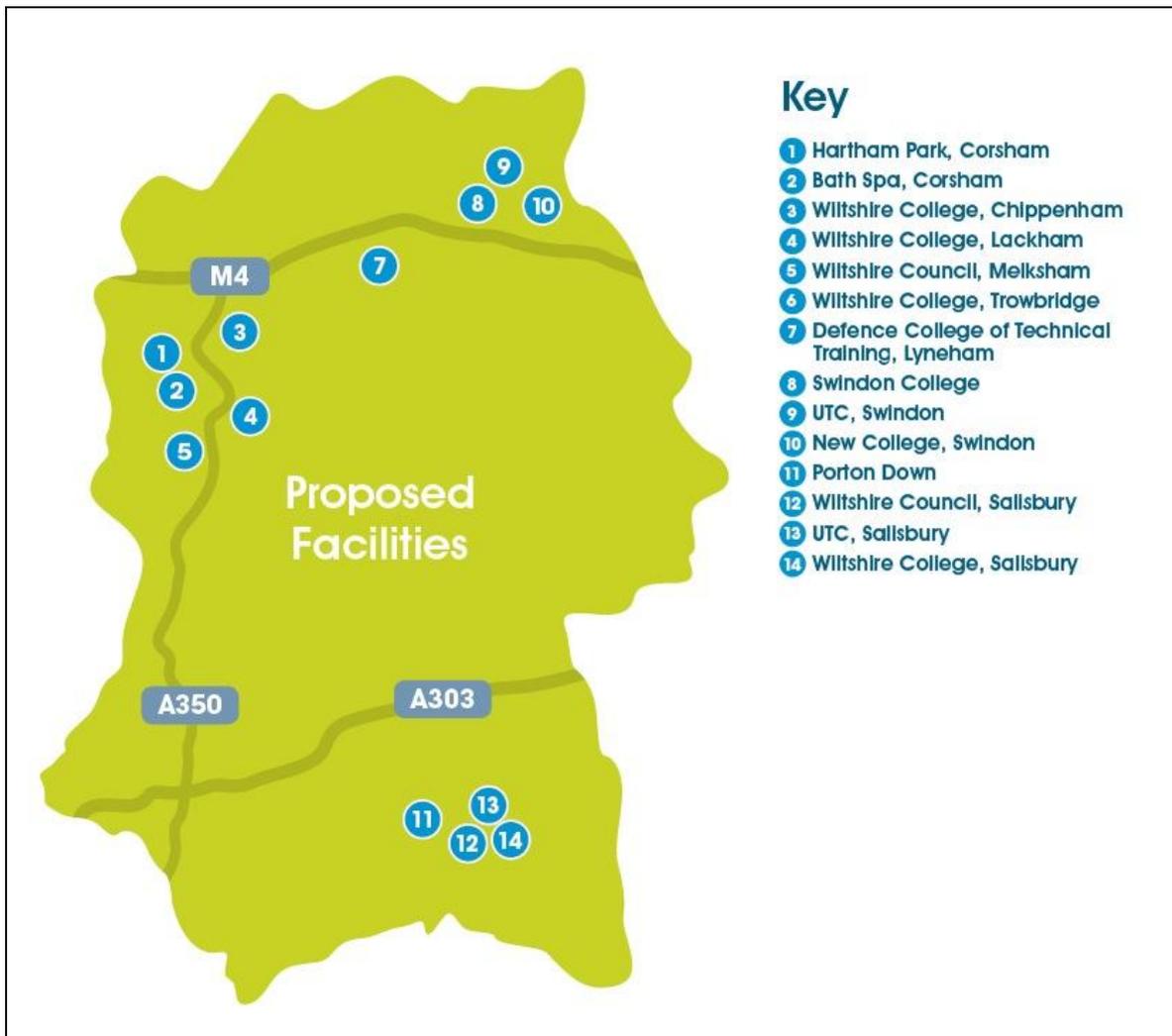
Central to the outcomes of this City Deal will be an innovative and customised model for Higher Education provision in the Swindon and Wiltshire area. This model will work within the existing policy context on part-time and flexible provision and through collaboration with a range of best-in-class Higher Education Institutions. Along with, Further Education Colleges and local employers, a collaborative multi-site University Campus will be implemented capable of delivering part-time courses aligned to Swindon and Wiltshire's growth sectors.

At the same time, the Skills Brokerage will work with Higher Education Institutions to encourage stronger partnerships with local employers. This will lead to the co-design of part-time courses to better align with the needs of local employers, the learner, and the Higher Education provider. This will address a key gap in the current model of Higher Education and address the concerns raised by employers that current provision does not align closely enough with their needs.

The SWLEP Skills Brokerage aims to utilise local existing infrastructure with support from distance learning technology to deliver this provision. Best-in-class Higher Education Institutions will be selected to work with local employers to co-design part-time courses which will allow learners to increase their current skills and experience leading to a full higher level qualification as quickly and cost-effectively as possible. Local Further Education Colleges in Swindon and Wiltshire will contribute their facilities for Level 4 provision, and where physical infrastructure is required to deliver Level 5 and Level 6 provision, employer facilities will be used where appropriate. In addition, Ministry of Defence will look positively and constructively at opportunities for enabling SWLEP to use Ministry of Defence infrastructure and facilities, such as Defence Academy Shrivenham, the in-development Defence Technical Training College at Lyneham as well as other estate / facilities in the area (at a charge).

To date, seven Higher Education Institutions, three Further Education Colleges and two University Technical Colleges have collaborated in the development of this City Deal, along with engagement with over 40 employers. All are committed to the provision of part time higher level accredited courses. The planned model ensures quick delivery without the need for infrastructure development. As demand increases the range and number of course provision will be extended, and we will open up access to the facility to a wider audience including individual learners who wish to study on a full-time as well as part-time basis.

## MAP OF PROPOSED LOCATIONS



### Supporting Local Service Leavers

The City Deal will increase support to Service Leavers' transition. The initial focus of the strategy is to support Service Leavers, both those facing immediate redundancy, as well as service personnel who are two to four years away from resettlement by supporting the Armed Forces policy of lifelong learning.

Initial work with the Armed Forces in Swindon and Wiltshire has easily identified a set of potential learners. Obtaining a recognised higher level qualification will support Service Leavers to gain higher skilled, better paid employment on leaving the services – supporting a key tenet of the Armed Forces Covenant.

Service Leavers are highly attractive to employers, however some:

- do not hold the full higher level qualifications demanded by many local employers;
- find their skills and qualifications gathered during their time in the Armed Forces are not fully recognised in civilian life; or
- realise they have not taken full advantage of the Armed Forces skills development processes available during their service career.

At the same time Service Leavers are unable to access Higher Education funding if they:

- do not enrol in the Enhanced Learning Credits scheme during their first year after enlisting in to the Armed Forces (or between eight and eight and a half years);
- already hold a qualification at an equivalent or higher level; or
- are unable to study at a 50% intensity level.

Through this City Deal, local partners will:

- Provide a guarantee that all Service Leavers have an opportunity to participate in (additional) part-time Higher Education skills training that will lead to a full higher qualification.
- As part of its marketing plan, the SWLEP Skills Brokerage will act as a single point of contact to liaise with businesses, proactively sign-posting and supporting businesses to sign-up to the Armed Forces Corporate Covenant, including information on Reservist recruitment. Business engagement use existing networks such as The Wiltshire 100 (i.e. the 100 largest employers) and the Rural Growth Network.

The Ministry of Defence has agreed through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Swindon Borough Council, and Wiltshire Council to:

- Remove Enhanced Learning Credit scheme registration from April 2015 for all Service Personnel, and hence, provide automatic entitlement to the Further Education / Higher Education Support Scheme after four years of service. In addition, it will be necessary to amend the Statutory Instrument in which the Enhanced Learning Credit programme is contained.
- Explore reducing the course intensity requirement for Service Leavers who have transitioned out of the Armed Forces for part-time study to 25% from the current minimum level of 50%. This would facilitate increased participation in studying alongside family, work and financial commitments.
- Assess the impact of widening the existing Further Education / Higher Education Support Scheme to apply for a second qualification at an equivalent of lower qualification level if the first qualification held is not aligned to a local growth sector. This assessment will be aligned to timescales for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to amend “Equivalent or Lower Qualification” policy from 2015/16 in part-time courses aligned to engineering, technology and computer sciences.

Through the accreditation of prior experience and learning, this model provides a quick and cost-effective pathway.

## **Widening Participation**

Delivering Higher Education provision to Service Leavers and civilians in the same cohort has the potential to aid the transition of Service Leavers into civilian life. It also has the benefit of increasing the number of learners for each Higher Education course, supporting the business model for Higher Education Institutions and creating more stability for course provision.

The SWLEP Skills Brokerage will bring in local employers who are seeking to support the up-skilling of their employees and provide funding. It is estimated that private sector investment will be over £5.80m between 2014/15 and 2018/19 based on employers meeting 35% of tuition fees for 11,000 local employees. In practice, the proportion and amount may vary, but it is expected that larger firms will provide a higher proportion of funding for their employees. The remaining funding for tuition fees will be provided by the civilian learner, with the majority expected to be sought from the Student Loans Company requiring no additional policy flexibilities in 2014/15. Businesses will be engaged through proactive marketing of the benefits of the scheme making best use of existing networks such as the Wiltshire 100 (the largest employers in Wiltshire) and the Rural Growth Network (a network of local businesses with a focus on Service Leaver business start-ups).

A number of local employees will not be eligible for Student Financing from the Student Loans Company if they hold an equivalent or higher qualification (i.e. they intend to study towards an

equivalent or lower qualification than held). From 2015/16, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills is proposing exemptions from the Equivalent and Lower Qualification policy to courses aligned to high value growth sectors nationally with forecast skills gaps – computer sciences, technology and engineering. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the SWLEP Skills Brokerage will work together to identify how the exemptions can apply to courses which align to Swindon and Wiltshire's growth sectors of digital technologies, life sciences and advanced engineering.

Once established, the SWLEP Skills Brokerage will seek to extend its services to Service Leaver spouses, civil partners and dependants, other residents, and learners from outside of Swindon and Wiltshire. It is also a model which could be replicated nationally. In addition, the Ministry of Defence will also consider piloting a joint operating model between the SWLEP Skills Brokerage and the Career Transition Partnership for the South West as part of its forthcoming re-procurement. This City Deal builds upon long term Higher Education Skills Strategies developed by Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council.

## **Direct Business Support**

The SWLEP has received £1.00m of Regional Growth Fund (Round 4) allocation as part of their City Deal from the University of Lancaster Business Support Programme. This programme will support approximately 1,250 local SMEs with high growth potential. The programme has been designed locally to support growing businesses access new markets, implement new processes, or strengthen their market share. This service will build on and complement existing national provision (e.g. Growth Accelerator, UKTI, Manufacturing Advisory Service, Technology Strategy Board) and is supported by BIS national assets (e.g. the national helpline).

The business support programme will signpost businesses to the SWLEP Skills Brokerage where relevant so that businesses can benefit from the service provided, including up-skilling employees or recruitment of highly skilled staff.

Similarly, both the business support programme and SWLEP Skills Brokerage will work with the Swindon and Wiltshire Rural Growth Network, which provides incubator units to start-up businesses, including those established by Service Leavers.

## **Local Planning and Development**

The Local Planning Authorities within the City Deal area have up-to-date Local Plans which are either approved or are currently with the Planning Inspector for final approval. These plans set the local policies and strategies for local development, and are consistent with national policy. They contain robust five-year housing supply forecasts to maintain affordability for existing and new residents. Each Local Plan contains targets for the percentage of affordable housing as part of each housing development or an allocation of land for affordable housing. The Local Plans also contain monitoring systems, and under-delivery will be addressed with appropriate measures.

As part of the infrastructure planning process to support the delivery of growth within the Local Plan, both Local Planning Authorities are preparing to become Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Authorities. Swindon's CIL timetable is aligned with that of their Local Plan, which is currently at examination. Wiltshire's CIL Charging Schedule, is planned to be in place July 2014. Also, as part of ongoing processes, Local Authorities will also consider pooling of strategic economic development spend over a larger geographical area (e.g. Local Growth Fund, the pooling of business rates).

Local Authorities have or are in the process of uploading data regarding their assets onto Government's ePIMS database (complete due by spring 2014). In commitment to make best use of existing assets, Local Authorities are due to publish Asset Management Strategies during autumn 2014. As part of this process, Local Authorities are agreeing to mirror other requirements currently on Central Government of the Right to Contest and for land holdings to be open to challenge from the Government Property Unit. To further support development locally, all Local Planning Authorities are actively considering how local planning processes can be simplified for commercial and residential development, and are seeking to remove the 'gold-plating' of building regulations where appropriate. Local Planning Authorities will report back to Government on progress in spring 2014.

As part of the Local Growth Deal process, which will have a stronger focus on planning and development, the Local Enterprise Partnership is developing an overarching Strategic Economic Plan. The Local Enterprise Partnership commits to publish a short and accessible summary to engage with local people and businesses.

Finally, as part of the Local Enterprise Partnership and Local Authorities Commitment to transformation, SWLEP, Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council agree to work with the Public Service Transformation Network, to spread best practice and learn from other places. Swindon

Borough Council will publish its plan in March 2014 with a committed timeline for delivery. Wiltshire Council commits to developing a Local Public Service Transformation Plan by December 2014.

## **Governance**

### **Strategic Leadership**

Strategic leadership and governance will be delivered through an existing sub-group of the SWLEP Board, supported by officers from the Local Enterprise Partnership, and Wiltshire Council acting as the Accountable Body. Membership of the SWLEP Board Sub-Group will include:

- Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council with decision-making responsibility for the areas of skills and employment;
- representatives from the SWLEP priority employment growth sectors; and
- private sector LEP Board members.

The SWLEP Board Sub-Group will work in partnership with Higher Education Institutions in order to maintain information flows, and to access learning from providers to support the committee in its understanding and deliberations on future strategy.

The SWLEP Board Sub-Group will be responsible for:

- making strategic decisions on the SWLEP Skills Brokerage throughout the City Deal lifetime (e.g. as a procured contract or through in-house delivery), and its development into the Local Growth Deal;
- monitoring the delivery and performance of the City Deal against Key Performance Indicators for expenditure, outputs and outcomes;
- making strategic recommendations to the SWLEP Board on actions to be taken should performance deviate from these targets; and
- taking advice from the Central Government on matters of policy and delivery and responding to these.

### **Operational Oversight**

For delivery and operational monitoring of this City Deal, SWLEP will establish a Strategic Practitioner Group.

This Strategic Practitioner Group will have practical responsibility for the delivery of the City Deal and will include representatives from employers, local business, business representative, Further Education and Higher Education Institutions, the Careers Transition Partnership, learners and funders.

This group's responsibilities will include:

- driving forward the delivery of the activities set out in the City Deal in accordance with the decisions of the SWLEP Board Sub-Group;
- considering how to use commissioning and bidding approaches, according to which is most likely to meet the specific objectives of business-driven requirements;
- ensuring that the implementation of the City Deal promotes environmental sustainability and equal opportunities;
- looking for opportunities to use innovative approaches to delivery; and
- working closely with Central Government partners to bring forward future programmes that are compliant and fundable.

## Annex 1: Summary of Commitments

### SWLEP Skills Brokerage, Higher Education and Policy Flexibilities

Swindon and Wiltshire Commitments	Central Government Commitments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To establish a SWLEP Skills Brokerage model which provides a Guarantee to all Service Leavers in Swindon and Wiltshire that they will be able to increase their skills to a Higher Education qualification – ensuring that no Service Leaver is at a disadvantage when leaving the Armed Forces, and supporting commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant.</li> <li>• Unitary Authorities (Swindon Borough and Wiltshire Councils) to provide SWLEP Skills Brokerage Resource Funding: £1.00m over 2014/15 to 2018/19.</li> <li>• To put in place a mechanism to optimise private sector contribution (Tuition Fee Funding and SWLEP Skills Brokerage Membership and Placement Fees): c.£8.50m.</li> <li>• To establish a new multi-site University Campus in Swindon and Wiltshire that is capable of delivering part-time, co-designed Higher Education provision, using partnerships between Higher Education Institutions and local employers (with University Technical Colleges, Further Education Colleges and employers providing facilities).</li> <li>• Provide training to 18,000 individuals locally to Level 4 and above by 2020.</li> <li>• Deliver local jobs growth of 8.9% compared to the UK average of 5.1% by 2020, and the associated productivity and economic benefits of more people working in higher level jobs.</li> <li>• Stronger local relationships and understanding between employers and The Army which will support Reservist recruitment and Army 2020.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government to provide £1.4m of “seed corn” investment in 2014/15 to establish and operate the SWLEP Skills Brokerage.</li> <li>• Ministry of Defence and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Remove the need for Service Personnel to register for Enhanced Learning Credits in order to access them (and therefore extend access to the Further Education / Higher Education Support Scheme for all Service Personnel after four years of service). This will apply retrospectively to current Service Personnel, with a proposed state date of April 2015. In addition, amend the Statutory Instrument in which Enhanced Learning Credit is contained.</li> <li>▪ Explore reducing the course intensity requirement for Service Leavers who have transitioned out of the Armed Forces for part-time study to 25% from the current minimum level of 50%.</li> <li>▪ Assess the impact of widening the existing Further Education / Higher Education Support Scheme to apply for a second qualification at an equivalent of lower qualification level if the first qualification held is not aligned to a local growth sector from 2015/16</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to consider aligning proposed Equivalent or Lower Qualification exemptions for learners who study part-time towards a full qualification to include subject areas relating to Swindon and Wiltshire’s growth sectors – digital technologies, life sciences and advanced engineering.</li> <li>• Ministry of Defence to develop opportunities to provide physical infrastructure for Higher Education Institutions who wish to deliver part-time provision for Service Leavers, and consider allowing civilian learners to access these assets (e.g. Defence Academy UK at Shrivenham Campus, or The Defence College of Technical Training at Lyneham).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Defence and SWLEP to develop a Memorandum of Understanding between the SWLEP and Career Transition Partnership for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the promotion of SWLEP (Skills Brokerage) opportunities to Service Personnel nationally;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

- sharing of data (e.g. resettlement trends, skill levels, wider labour market information);
- sharing of local employer contacts; and
- exploring the opportunities to work together on employer / Service Leaver engagement events.

## Business Support Programme

Swindon and Wiltshire Commitments	Central Government Commitments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with 1,250 local SMEs with high growth potential.</li> <li>• Approximately 10% of these businesses receiving in-depth, direct support, and 20% referred to national direct support schemes.</li> <li>• £1.60m of private sector funding leveraged.</li> <li>• £0.50m of local public sector match funding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £1.00m of Regional Growth Fund (Round 4) allocation from the University of Lancaster Business Support Programme.</li> </ul>

## Planning, Local Development and Public Service Transformation

Swindon and Wiltshire Commitments	Central Government Commitments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Authorities to upload land / asset data to ePIMS (by end of spring 2014) and agree to the Right to Contest and challenge from the Government Property Unit.</li> <li>• Local Authorities to complete Asset Management Strategies during autumn 2014.</li> <li>• Local Planning Authorities will continue to review local planning process to simplify them for commercial and housing development, as well as review the potential to remove 'gold-plating' of building regulations, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Local Planning Authorities to review the potential for Community Infrastructure Levy and publish schedules by spring 2014, where appropriate.</li> <li>• Local Authorities to review potential for the pooling of strategic economic development spend.</li> <li>• The Local Enterprise Partnership will publish a short and accessible summary of its Strategic Economic Plan against which people and local businesses can judge progress.</li> <li>• The Local Authorities to publish Public Service Transformation Plans - Swindon Borough Council by March 2014 and Wiltshire Council by December 2014.</li> </ul>	

