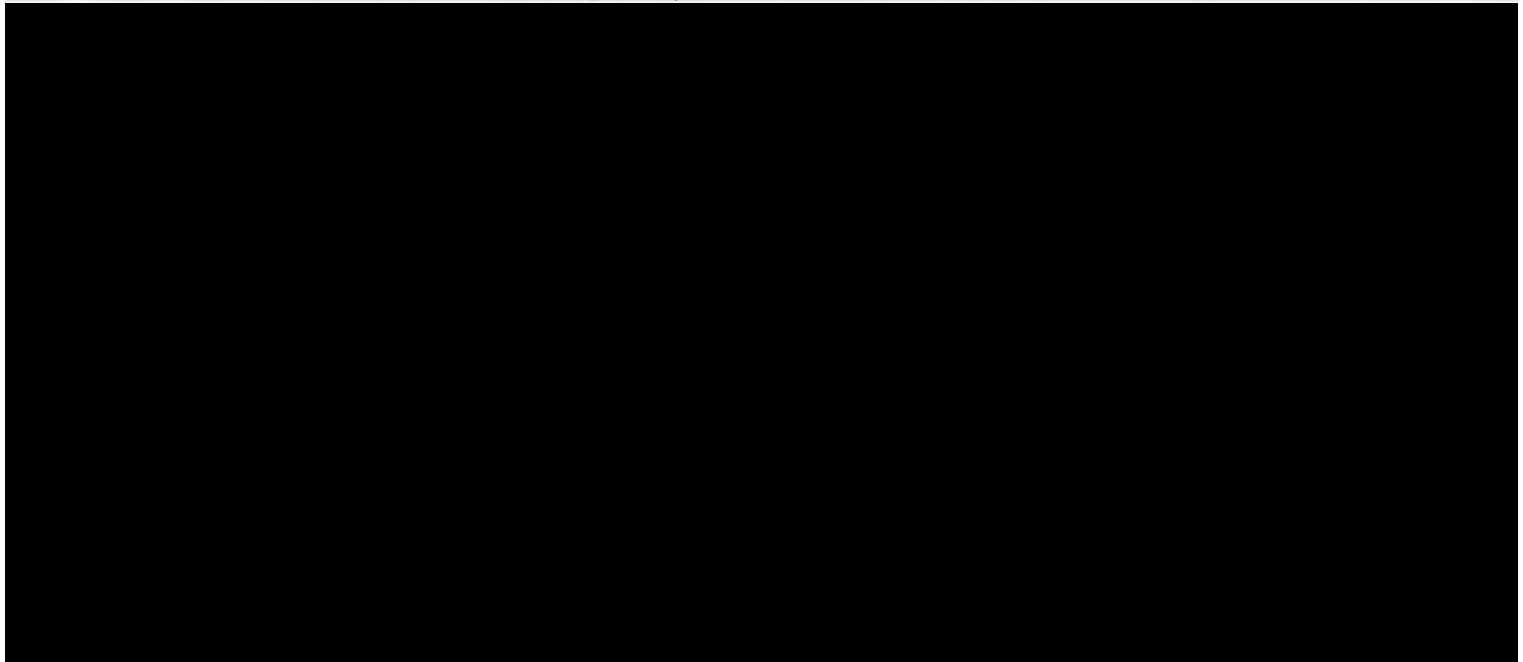
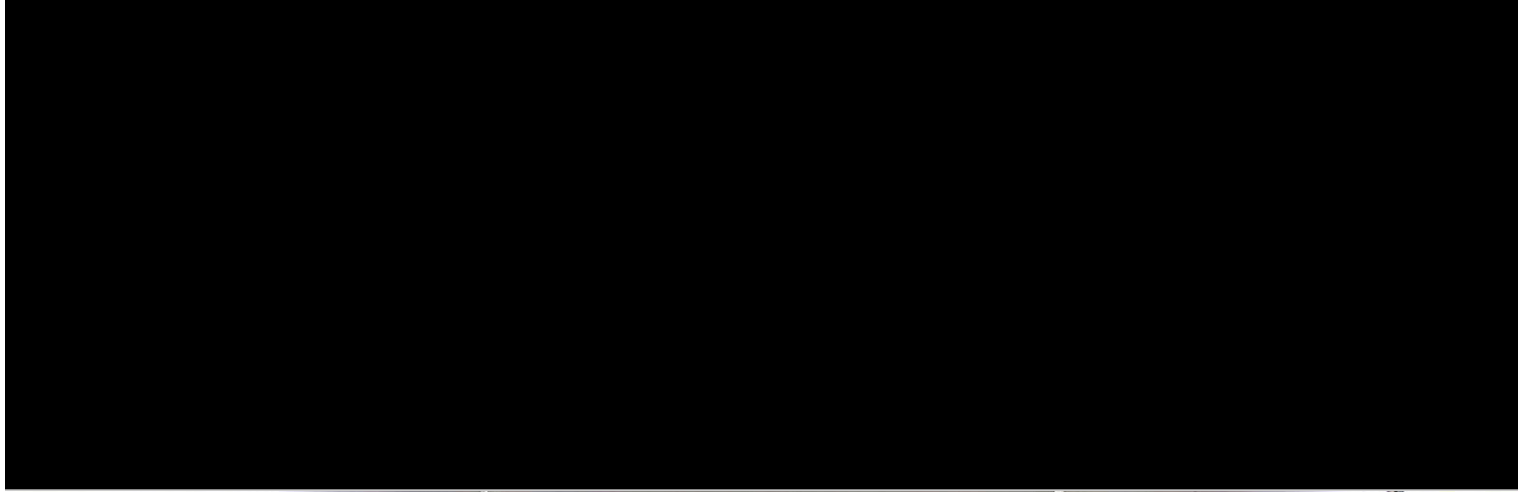




HIGHER EDUCATION VISION

HE TASKFORCE





A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND LEARN

Cheshire East is a great place to live, work and learn. This is as important to the Higher Education Taskforce, as it is to our local residents. We have one of the strongest economies in the country which is made up of a vibrant mix of businesses across a wide range of sectors.

Cheshire East is one of the most beautiful parts of the Northwest of England and aims to deliver much needed services that deliver good value for money to our local residents.

Our forward thinking Council is creating sustainable growth in the local economy that will support the health and economic wellbeing of residents. We will continue to develop the skills of our local population which will help them secure meaningful long-term employment as well as supporting our local businesses to grow.

In addition, we maintain a focus on the 'Quality of Place' in the borough - providing good quality transport and digital infrastructure, in turn this supports our economy to grow, and enables our local residents to access employment, education and leisure opportunities. Cheshire East has a tradition of education excellence, from the primary sector through our key stages. Education achievement rates for pupils remain as one of the highest in the country.

Locating in Crewe, provides the opportunity to work with proactive partners committed to collaboration; including Cheshire East Council, Cheshire and Warrington LEP, Skills and Growth Company, South Cheshire Chamber, South Cheshire College, Crewe Engineering and Design UTC and local businesses.

VISION

To grow our skilled population through a **strong performing, ambitious, forward thinking** higher education offer, which is rooted in the locality and directly **supports the local and sub regional economy**. This will place Crewe and the wider Cheshire East footprint firmly on the map as a beacon for higher education excellence and economic growth.

To boast a **vibrant campus with a strong identity** which capitalises on the opportunities linked to quality of place.

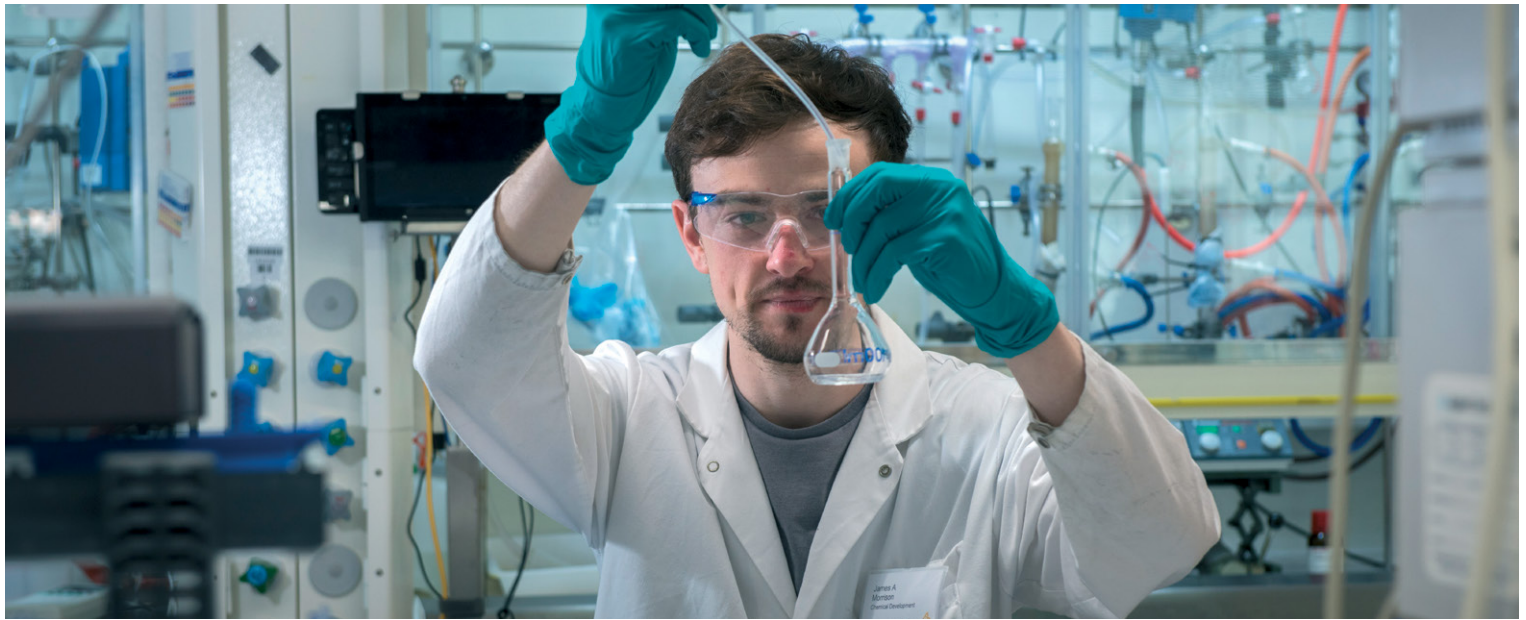
Curriculum focus will reflect the strengths of the local economy, maximising the benefits of **innovation and knowledge exchange** between business and higher education.

Employers will be at the heart of the offer – inspiring, informing and communicating to young people career pathways and progression opportunities. Working with universities, colleges and schools, employers can help shape the curriculum and offer placements, apprenticeships and jobs to young people who have the right skills and education to match their needs.

Trusted relationships will be built with industry, the local community, further education and stakeholders to achieve shared goals.

Aligning to the local economy, curriculum will provide a broad foundation of science, technology, engineering, maths and digital education and vocational training (including degree apprenticeships) leading to opportunities in:

- **Automotive, rail, engineering, manufacturing and science** (including life sciences, food and chemicals)
- **Energy** (including nuclear, and geothermal) and environment – under represented in the sub region
- **Creative and digital** – one of the fastest growing sectors in the borough
- These key opportunities will also need to be supported with business, management, administration and support skills – including **leadership and management**.



Given the unique and exciting opportunities linked to the arrival of HS2 and the transformational impact of the regeneration of Crewe, higher education will be **future proofed and progressive**, operating a culture of continuous improvement and market testing to ensure curriculum remains aligned to the changing local and regional landscape.

Higher education has a significant role to play in achieving the sub region's economic ambitions. The 'offer' will develop, support and promote excellence which results in a positive **impact to the local economy**.

Higher education will be committed to, and **fully embedded within, the local community**. The offer will be visible and inspirational; raising the aspirations of young people, specifically those in Crewe where academic achievement is good but progression into higher education is less than the national average.

Higher education provision will equip students with the skills and attributes for the world of work, specifically aligned to sub regional priorities and growth sectors where employers are reporting a lack of existing and future talent pipelines. Through developing strong links to businesses, **student employability** will be strengthened.

Cheshire East will be seen as an **attractive place to study** with unparalleled connectivity. Students not only locally but from the wider region, will have access to an offer which is aligned to employment opportunities. This will provide exposure to and experiences with local businesses. As a result, we will see a **pipeline of highly skilled young professionals** retained within the sub region.





OPPORTUNITY

There is an exciting opportunity to create a new higher education offer in Crewe. This area will see significant economic growth and regeneration over the next 15 years, particularly through the enhanced connectivity that will be delivered through a HS2 hub station. The station will bring Crewe within an hour's reach of London and will act as a catalyst for the transformation of the way people live, work, study, visit and experience the borough.

The Higher Education Taskforce has identified a clear vision and strategic direction for higher education in Crewe and Cheshire East, responding to the needs of local businesses and aligned to council and LEP priorities.

The potential market opportunity to develop a new higher education academic and/ or vocational programme in Crewe is significant. Every year Cheshire and Warrington loses 5,000 young people to universities outside the area.

The appetite from local stakeholders and businesses is extremely high. Opportunities exist for higher education providers to work in strategic partnership with local colleges to deliver education and training that links world class university research facilities with the local expertise of colleges in delivering successful apprenticeships.

Through the Higher Education Taskforce there is the opportunity to work collaboratively to identify and, where possible, access funding to develop facilities, provision and curriculum.

The Cheshire Campus is situated between the town centre and the location of the new hub station. The campus site measures 14ha (35 acres) occupying a strategic location to the east of Crewe town centre opposite Crewe Business Park and within walking distance to the existing station, and proposed HS2 station.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

IMPORTANCE OF PLACE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

The opportunity to locate in Crewe – the largest town in Cheshire East – provides educational institutions with a number of unique and exciting opportunities linked to the arrival of HS2 and the impact of the regeneration of the town.

One of Crewe's major strengths is its location – not only its location as a gateway to the North and its proximity to the cities of Manchester, Birmingham and Liverpool – with connectivity to North Wales and the Midlands, but also its local location within the Cheshire plain and its beautiful landscape.

Crewe already has a strong business base and a well-skilled local labour force. The town is part of the Cheshire and Warrington sub-region which is the second highest performing economy outside of London (GVA per head). Workers in the sub-region generate over £8,200 each per year more than the North West average and £3,100 more than the UK average. The sub region is a leader in advanced manufacturing, life sciences and finance and business support sectors.

In November 2015, the government announced that Crewe would be the location for a North West HS2 hub station and that HS2 would be delivered to Crewe by 2027. The arrival of HS2 will bring a huge boost to the town bringing unparalleled connectivity – delivering more than 37,000 new jobs and over 7,000 new homes in the town itself, and will act as a catalyst for growth in the wider sub region.

Through the creation of a master plan, our vision for Crewe is that it will be a place of many distinct and well-connected places, appealing to a large number of potential residents, businesses and investors. Regeneration plans will deliver a revitalised town centre which leverages new retail, educational, residential and cultural offerings to create a vibrant local hub throughout the day and evening.

The twin strengths of Crewe's current and future connections to the major economic nodes of the Northern Powerhouse and Midlands Engine and its accessibility to the beautiful landscapes of the Cheshire Plains offer a springboard for growing a wider and more knowledge-focused economy, of which higher education will form a critical component.



SUPPORTING INFORMATION

LINKING THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY TO BUSINESSES

Crewe has a rich heritage and has been home to higher education since 1908, with the establishment of the Crewe College of Education and latterly becoming a satellite campus for MMU. In recent years, there has been a mismatch between curriculum and local priorities, business needs and skills demand.

There is an exciting opportunity to reshape and refocus the higher education offer, building on local strengths and opportunities and responding to national policy drivers such as the industrial strategy, government white paper 'Success as a Knowledge Economy', education and research Bill and the apprenticeship levy.

The opportunity also comes at a time when the Cheshire and Warrington LEP is launching its refreshed strategic economic plan, including Constellation. This is an initiative harnessing the opportunities presented by HS2, covering Cheshire and north Staffordshire (including Stoke on Trent, Crewe and Stafford and the A500 corridor). Constellation is set to drive substantial opportunities including; greenfield development, urban and city centre investments, with the combination of a low cost base and significant rental and capital growth.

Changes in government policy and the introduction of the apprenticeship levy provide an opportunity for increased collaboration between higher education institutions and employers – more than 150 businesses in Cheshire East will pay an annual levy bill in excess of £25m. There is also an opportunity for higher education institutions within the area to offer degree level apprenticeships.



There is the potential for Cheshire East to become the regional centre for professional, scientific and technical activities. Increased research expertise as well as teaching will drive business growth in particular sectors. Those research centres most closely linked to Cheshire and Warrington growth sectors are based outside of the sub-region in Manchester or Staffordshire.

Furthermore, Cheshire East is at the heart of the Cheshire Science Corridor - a fertile location for academic and industrial research and development. Cheshire has some of the most significant science based assets in the north of England, some of which are of global importance. Collectively these assets form the Cheshire Science Corridor, which secured enterprise zone status in April 2016. There is significant opportunity for a high quality research institution to further support the development of a critical mass of activity within the area.

Further development of research expertise in and around Crewe, building upon existing strengths in automotive, engineering and manufacturing and the opportunities arising from HS2 could also act as a catalyst supporting economic growth.

Key assets in the private sector and industrial research base include the Waters Corporation's new Mass Spectrometry (MS) Facility near Wilmslow, the National Nuclear Laboratories and AMEC Laboratories in Warrington, Birchwood Park Nuclear Cluster, Bentley Motors in Crewe and AstraZeneca.

In terms of emerging growth sectors, creative and digital is one of the fastest growing sectors in Cheshire East and is starting to make an increasingly important contribution to the local and regional economy in terms of both growth and GVA. It is currently estimated to include around 2,000 businesses which employ 5,000 people.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

LINKING THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY TO BUSINESSES (cont)

A recent commission by the Skills and Growth Company identified a number of existing sector strengths and growth sectors which require and/ or would benefit from higher education provision and collaboration. These include, but are not limited to:

- Business, management, administration and support skills to support all sectors in the economy and address the need for replacement skills in leadership and management.
- Rail, engineering and advanced manufacturing - quality teaching and research in this sector would support wider objectives to develop jobs and address the decline in process based manufacturing jobs and move to a more knowledge-based economy.
- Energy (including nuclear and geothermal) and environment - currently these priority sectors are relatively under-represented in terms of the courses offered within the sub-region.
- Science, including life sciences, food and chemicals - the research and innovation base could be strengthened to attract students and businesses to locate to the area seeking collaboration benefits.

FURTHER EDUCATION

There are six further education colleges in Cheshire and Warrington – three of which are located in Cheshire East, these are South Cheshire College (Ofsted good), Reaseheath College (Ofsted good) and Macclesfield College (Ofsted satisfactory). Crewe also hosts the Crewe Engineering and Design UTC, which opened in 2016 and works in partnership with companies including; Bentley Motors, Siemens, Air Products and Network Rail.

Cheshire and Warrington has recently undergone its area based review of further education. The outcome included the merger of South Cheshire College (located in Crewe) and West Cheshire College (Chester and Ellesmere Port), generating a large college spanning a significant footprint across the sub region. The merger delivers area-wide curriculum planning, eliminating nugatory competition, giving greater collaboration opportunities, reduction in duplication, shared services and increased specialisms.



SUPPORTING INFORMATION

SKILLS OPPORTUNITIES

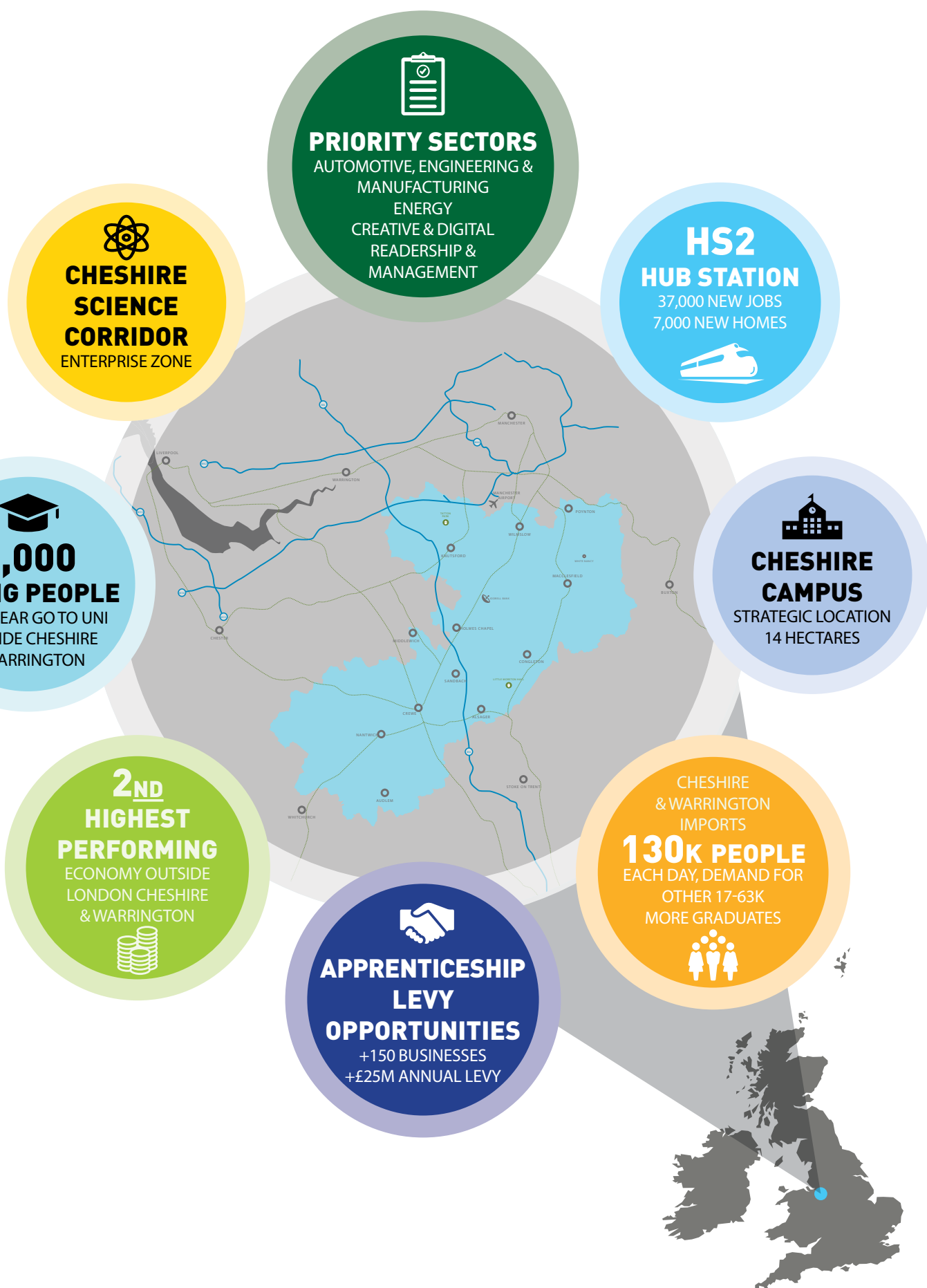
There are a number of skills challenges identified by the LEP in its refreshed strategic economic plan, which provide significant opportunity for higher education institutions to drive progress and change.

There is a considerable opportunity to address and capitalise on the existing disconnect between skills and education and the needs of local growth sectors, specifically related to higher level and technical skills in STEM subjects.

Cheshire and Warrington imports 130,000 people every day and still needs between 17,000 to 63,000 more graduates to support its existing and future economy. In addition, over 5,000 young people go to university outside the sub region each year but do not return following graduation. Clear and visible progression pathway to higher level qualifications would support the retention of young talent to the sub region.

There is a substantial need to increase the number of higher level and degree apprenticeships delivered in Cheshire and Warrington, particularly in STEM subjects (85% of current apprenticeships are non STEM). Local employers are articulating a demand for local provision which is currently not met.

There is a role for higher education in the transformation of local careers education advice and guidance. Currently too many young people and their parents/ carers, and adults in work, do not understand the career and progression opportunities available to them. Many do not link education and training with future job opportunities.





Further information contact:

Roz Atherton
Head of Skills and Employment

The Skills & Growth Company
Sandbach Enterprise Centre,
Wesley Avenue, Sandbach,
Cheshire, CW11 1DG

T: 01270 685911
M: 07816 606753
roz.atherton@skillsandgrowth.co.uk
www.skillsandgrowth.co.uk