

## Bullets For SNR Speech

- Thank you. I'm very pleased to be able to say a few words to get proceedings going.
- In politics and public policy it's helpful to start with a simple objective. In today's debate, we have one. Our country would be £80 billion richer if the performance of the weaker regions was as good as the present national average.
- So, how do we make that happen?
- If you study basic growth theory, there's a single maxim. Over time, in a free market, growth rates will converge, come together, coincide. Yet, study regional economic performance since the war, and the gaps between regions aren't closing.
- So something is going wrong. And that's what SNR sets out to change.

- Now nationally our economy has had a great 11 years.
- 62 quarters of uninterrupted economic growth.
- Employment up to record levels. Compared with 10 years ago there are 2 million more people in work nationally and 100,000 more in the West Midlands.
- Wages up – up every year.
- Productivity up
- That is a unique triple. And the result is GDP per head of around £20 thousand nationally. That's third in the G8, when we used to be second last in the old G7.
- [ my regional performance economic stats]
- But we're still not at the national average. There's an output gap of £10 billion and we know what we need to do to close it.
  - getting 44,000 extra people in a job

- creating 1,900 new businesses each and every year
- putting 110,000 more employees through training
- lifting 75,000 more people up to level 2+ qualifications
- creating 70,000 more graduate jobs
- boosting business expenditure on R&D by £420million
- reducing carbon emission by 23million tonnes by 2050

- But steering our delivery to hit those targets will take a different kind of leadership, and that's the meat of the consultation on the SNR.
  
- We are asking:
  - How do we go about developing a new integrated, regional strategy to replace the existing Regional Enterprise Strategy and Regional Spatial Strategy?
  - In the context of the Single Integrated Regional Strategy how do we ensure that we join-up planning for new homes, new jobs and new infrastructure (including transport) in a coherent way.
  - How does local government exercise collective but transparent leadership of the region?
  - What kind of duty should be given to the LAs to boost growth
  
- We have to get the answers to these questions right.

- As I go around the region, I am struck by the consensus that exists about how to power new jobs and better wages and new homes in our communities.
- Four big ideas stand out:
- Firstly, we must put science at the heart of growth and new jobs. Our universities must take centre stage in our plans for growth. Their expansion is to be welcomed. Science-based growth will be key to powering forward high-quality, high-skill, high-value manufacturing, and blazing a trail for the region in new sectors, like medical technologies, environmental technologies and services, and IT and digital media.
- Secondly, we must revolutionise our skills. We need access to lifelong learning in a world where there are few lifelong jobs. There must be a seamless link between schools, colleges and universities. There must be a revolution in vocational education. It must start earlier. It must last a lifetime. It must become a real choice for the aspirational. Apprenticeships must

be expanded. And our new schools and colleges must not be fenced off from the communities they serve, they must be their lifeblood.

- Thirdly, we want balanced, new communities which not only give people a choice of home, but put that choice within easier reach. We want to give those who need homes a choice of tenure. Affordability must be a reality, but it is an idea that demands clarity. A big share of the new homes we build must be genuinely in reach of those on low and medium incomes. New homes must be high quality. Growth across the region must be balanced. We should build on brownfield land first. Local leaders must ensure health, education and transport are built in to plan upfront. And we need more power over developers to ensure affordable homes are delivered.
- Fourthly, we must transform the region's transport to help fuel growth. We need investment in our major infrastructure projects – like New Street, Birmingham Airport and the Metro, along with sub-regional projects. Service quality must be high. Affordability – especially for young people and on short journeys – must be addressed. Transport must link us to and

from work – at the times we work in the modern economy. We need to make green travel easier. We need to transform integration between bus and rail.

- Attached is a lot of money. £ 120 billion. If we properly coordinate the way we spend this cash, we will have served taxpayers and the public well. We will unlock a different future for our region. And we will help our country become an even better place to live.