



*“The Regeneration & Growth Team, provides expertise and support to help businesses achieve their goals and create jobs and training opportunities in Sandwell. We support Sandwell’s Vision 2030 and its ambitions, helping to make our borough a prosperous place in which to invest, work and live.”*

Expert business support from the Think Sandwell Business Growth service...

What we offer:

### **Strategic company support and Top 50 Growth**

Working with local strategic and growth companies to ensure they have a single point of contact to address their concerns and issues.

Top 50 Fastest Growing Companies Index, recognises and celebrates the top 50 fastest growing companies in Sandwell.

### **Support with funding**

Working closely with both public and private-sector organisations we offer help to identify the most appropriate funding sources. Giving advice on applying for appropriate funding and available sources of gap funding for business ventures (including any available grants, loan finance, equity partners and venture capital)

### **Property Expertise**

The team can advise, guide and assist in making the right decisions and choices about commercial property needs.

Support with finding larger or specialist premises in our borough for expansion.

### **Supply Chain support for growing businesses**

Advice and training relating to the council's procurement process and e-sourcing system and available council let contracts and on securing new contracts and identifying potential new clients.

Meet the Buyer and Procurement Events help to link the local supply chain businesses with major developments and procurements activities in and around the borough.

### **Inward Investment and Strategic partnerships**

As a partner of the Black Country Growth Hub and the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership, we work closely with a wide range of organisation giving us access to information, advice and support to deliver a seamless service to businesses. This allows us to be able to support not only Sandwell’s businesses to grow and prosper but those wishing to move into and invest in the area.

### **Chinese Delegation visits and Friendship Links**

Over the last 4 years, the team has supported the council to welcome a number of delegations from China giving us opportunity to highlight the attractions of China investing or doing business in Sandwell. Showcasing Sandwell’s diverse and sustainable economy with productive and innovative companies and a highly-skilled workforce and coupled with excellent transport links and a cost-competitive location.

### **Sandwell Business Solutions Centre**

Provides a collaborative and innovative approach to boosting businesses, and is designed to make a positive economic impact on Sandwell and our surrounding areas by offering a range of business support events and training.

SBSC is led by the University of Wolverhampton, in partnership with Sandwell Council, the Black Country Chamber of Commerce and Sandwell College and is there to help large and small companies improve their business performance by offering a drop-in facility to meet with staff as well as well as a place to attend and deliver events supporting the work and objectives of the Black Country Growth Hub and partners.

### **For start-up businesses, Social enterprise and small business support**

We offer basic advice for start-ups with signposting for more in-depth advice on business planning, market intelligence and accessing finance – including appropriate training.

Support with finding suitable premises in our borough through the Property Services team and our extensive database.

### **Help for growing businesses**

We can offer help with accessing new markets, securing new contracts and identifying potential new clients. As well as valuable links with strategic partners, universities and other business support organisations.

### **Social Value**

Sandwell Council's approach to Social value is to ensure that social, economic and environmental obligations are recognised from all investment and development in the borough. A key area is to improve and raise aspirations and inspiration to enable local people to gain jobs and skills from new opportunities created. Think Sandwell propose realistic targets set within an Employment Skills Plan, to ensure sustainable outcomes benefit people living in Sandwell and neighbouring area. Also, businesses working in transparency with their local supply chains, as well as enhancing diversity and inclusion, recycling, energy efficiency, lower fuel consumptions, are all examples for consideration of adding value to the local community.

### **Skills gap**

Working with the Area Employment Team, Sandwell College and other education partners, we help businesses to identify and bridge the skills gaps they have through apprenticeships, traineeships and general recruitment support. Working with the Area Employment Team allows the team to offer a wide-ranging service to employers that not only offers support to businesses but also to the local community by giving people access to local jobs, training and apprenticeships. Working across directorates and with a wide range of skills and education partners not only offers support to businesses but also to the local community by giving people access to local jobs, training and apprenticeships.

### **Sandwell Business Ambassadors**

The Sandwell Business Ambassadors programme was launched with the aim of determining how to utilise the strengths of local strategic businesses by acting as advocates to support the borough in its ambitions to develop its business base. All Sandwell Business Ambassadors are passionate about communicating just what Sandwell can offer as a business destination and the proactive and supportive work of the council.

Key objectives are to engage with the wider business community, establish links between different sectors and to help support solutions for bridging the skills gaps and raising aspiration levels of young people entering work, promoting Sandwell as a great place to live, work and do business.

### **Promotion of Sandwell**

Working to put Sandwell on the map through social media and ThinkSandwell.com, press, marketing and working with companies to utilise the power of social media through the #madeinsandwell campaign - celebrating everything great that has been manufactured, engineered, produced, grown, devised, dreamed up and delivered in the borough of Sandwell.

### **Award Recognition**

We have been successful in winning a number of awards for the projects we have delivered — Constructing Excellence, Federation of Small Businesses, Construction News, RTPI to name a few.

### **Planning Support and Links**

As part of the all-round service that the team offers, we work closely with our colleagues in Planning, linking businesses and the right officers within the team.

This ensures we offer links to **Planning Regeneration**; providing advice, guidance and dedicated officer support into future development proposals and major infrastructure schemes within the borough.

This includes working with prospective developers on a range of topic areas for major housing and commercial schemes as well as acting on the council's behalf for new council facilities such as schools, leisure centres and office development.

The team also provides a Development Ready service which has been established to proactively market sites, stimulating and providing confidence for the development market.

The **Strategic Planning and Transportation Team** provides the planning policy framework for Sandwell, on which any application for new development will be judged.

**Regeneration and Inclusive Growth Strategy** The work of the Business Growth Team is integral to the Regeneration and Inclusive Growth Strategy and will help to ensure that the borough's businesses continue to grow and prosper and bring opportunity to all Sandwell residents for training, skills, employment and economic prosperity. Working closely with local businesses and training and education partners helps to highlight the diversity of opportunity to local young people and helps to encourage them to take up the wide range of employment and training opportunities that are available to them through Sandwell's strong business stock. The work of the team also allows Regeneration and Growth to encourage the local businesses to work with local education providers, schools, community groups etc in order build the aspirations of Sandwell's young people, BGT work closely with the Area Employment Team to link employers, initiatives and local people together in order to all benefit from Sandwell's prosperity and growth. Through Social Value and Community Benefit Clauses, the team ensures that regeneration developments access the local supply chain and labour market, and support businesses to remain and prosper in Sandwell. The team helps to ensure that the Sandwell pound stays in Sandwell and its benefit is recognised within the borough.