

Press release: New boost for UK ambition to lead the world in zero emissions vehicles

- Coventry based UK Battery Industrialisation Centre will be a new national centre of excellence creating high skilled jobs and attracting inward investment
- Comes as the West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy is launched to drive growth and create opportunities across the region – the first in the country

Coventry will be home to a new national centre of excellence in developing the latest electric car battery technology, backed by millions of pounds in Government investment.

Business Secretary Greg Clark will today announce a new £28 million investment in the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre, providing a stepping stone for our ambition for a Gigafactory in the UK – a large-scale battery technology factory for electric vehicles.

The investment, through our modern Industrial Strategy's Challenge Fund, comes on top of £80 million initial investment in the centre, which will provide world-leading testing facilities for new battery technologies. This investment will also provide practical training to upskill people in battery manufacturing.

The Business Secretary will make the announcement on a tour of the UKBIC site to mark new funding alongside Mayor of the West Midlands Andy Street, as they also unveil the new Local Industrial Strategy for the West Midlands – the first in the country.

The Local Industrial Strategy sets out a long-term vision for the region to increase productivity – including how the West Midlands can harness the next developments in automotive technologies, such as electric vehicles and driverless cars.

Business Minister Andrew Stephenson said:

Putting the UK at the forefront of the design and manufacturing of zero emission vehicles is at the heart of our plans – creating jobs, growth and opportunity across the country.

Driven by the potential of fast-paced development of battery technology, this investment puts the UK – amongst a handful of countries around the world – on the next step to meet the challenge by the future of mobility.

Our investment of £28 million in this new facility will support the UK's world-leading automotive industry to compete internationally, attract further investment and establish supply chains for new electric vehicle battery design and development.

Mayor of the West Midlands Andy Street, said:

For Coventry to boast the UK's Battery Industrialisation Centre is a major coup for the city and the wider West Midlands.

This £108 million facility will give the city and the region a huge boost in the race to lead the world in the production of electric vehicles, which is an increasingly important market as we look to tackle air pollution and climate change.

The Local Industrial Strategy being launched today also highlights advanced manufacturing, medical research and the creative and digital industries as distinct strengths of the West Midlands. The Strategy will build on these strengths and other opportunities so we have a strong and resilient economic future that can benefit all communities across the whole region.

Jeff Pratt, Managing Director of UK Battery Industrialisation Centre, said:

It is fantastic to see construction starting on UKBIC and we are looking forward to working with all our partners on this project which will have huge significance on the next generation of battery systems.

Tony Harper, Faraday Battery Challenge Director at UK Research and Innovation, said:

This new world-class facility will allow the UK to rigorously prepare our home-grown battery technologies for global competitiveness. This additional investment will mean its ambitious facilities will be expanded and improved to meet the soaring demand of the electric vehicle global market.

Jonathan Browning, chair of the CWLEP, said:

This is an exciting step in creating the UKBIC which will have a vital role in helping the UK to become a global leader in the

design, development and manufacture of batteries through collaborative research and development between industry and academia.

Coventry and Warwickshire is renowned for our innovation and expertise and this is an important milestone in establishing a new centre which will influence this sector throughout the world.

Coventry City Councillor Jim O'Boyle cabinet member for jobs and regeneration, and a director of the CWLEP, said:

The petrol engine changed the world in a way people would not have thought possible. And now the march of electric vehicles is about to do the same again and I'm delighted that Coventry is once again leading the way.

The construction of the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre puts Coventry and the wider area at the heart of this new technology which will transform the way we travel, create skilled jobs for local people and help to protect the environment.

West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy launched

The West Midlands is a region currently going through a renaissance. Designed in the West Midlands in collaboration with government, the West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy builds on the region's core strengths, sectors at the heart of the region like automotive and advanced manufacturing and life sciences, and aims to create new opportunities for people and businesses.

Together, government and UK Research and Innovation, have provided extensive support to businesses and groups in the West Midlands, including investing over £1 billion in the region since 2016.

Productivity in the West Midlands grew at twice the rate of the UK average in 2018 and this new strategy sets out how leaders from across the West Midlands will work in partnership with Government to:

- deliver on our Future of Mobility Grand Challenge, which aims to be at the forefront of the development of cleaner, safer, easier and more reliable future modes of transport, cementing the West Midlands' position as the UK's automotive heartlands;
- play a leading role in the UK's trials of connected autonomous vehicles, with the West Midlands aiming to deploy the first fully operational connected autonomous vehicles in advance of the 2022 Commonwealth Games;
- drive investment into electric vehicle manufacturing in the region, completing the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre and maximising the

impact of the Faraday Battery Challenge;

- put the West Midlands at the heart of transport innovation in the UK by delivering the UK's first large-scale 5G testbed;
 - help meet the Artificial Intelligence and Data Grand Challenge by supporting the development of a West Midlands Translational Medicine and Med-Tech commission to accelerate the 'lab to patient' ecosystem; and
- Grow the strong creative and digital industries and business and professional services sector.

The West Midlands is the fastest growing UK region for goods exports and this Local Industrial Strategy will help accelerate the economic growth in the area. The Government's national Industrial Strategy is further supporting economic growth and boosting local businesses through investments including:

- £20m for the West Midlands towards it becoming the UK's first Future Mobility Zone, covering Birmingham, Solihull and Coventry – introducing new technologies to encourage more seamless and efficient journeys;
- Up to £50m to put the region at the forefront of 5G developments as the innovative new home to the UK's first multi-city 5G testbed. This trial of new high-speed connectivity will pave the way for a rollout across the country;
- £332m from the government's Transforming Cities Fund which is working to extend the city-region's metro system, with an initial focus on extending the system to connect cities with the towns between Wednesbury and Brierley Hill in the Black Country; *A Skills Deal with the government that could unlock up to £69m to help equip people in the region with the right skills for the jobs and industries of the future; and
- The most funding for any UK region from the government's flagship fund for research and development, the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund, which has so far invested £286m into projects in the region.

This is the first Local Industrial Strategy in the country – Greg Clark will be showcasing this ambitious plan alongside Mayor of the West Midlands Andy Street and other local leaders from across England at our first-ever Industrial Strategy Conference, at London's Mansion House. Those attending will include representatives from the 38 Local Enterprise Partnerships, and young entrepreneurs from each of these areas.

The Strategy also comes as the Government holds the next round of bidding for its flagship Strength in Places Fund, a £236 million fund bringing together research organisations, businesses and local authorities to develop pioneering ideas that will deliver local economic growth and create high-value jobs.

Notes to editors

UKBIC

- UKBIC is one of three strands of the Faraday Battery Challenge, part of the government's Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund programme to develop cost-effective, high-performance, durable, safe, low-weight and

recyclable batteries. The other strands are Innovate UK's collaborate R and D and the Faraday Institution.

- UKBIC was established after a national competition run by the Advanced Propulsion Centre (APC) and supported by Innovate UK, which was won through a joint bid by Warwick Manufacturing Group (WMG), at the University of Warwick, Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Coventry City Council.

JCB electric digger

- The battery packs inside JCB's first electric digger, the 19C-1E, are designed and manufactured by Hyperdrive Innovation. The High Energy Density Battery Project, in partnership with Nissan and funded by the Advanced Propulsion Centre, enabled the latest battery technology to be brought to market.