Economic Development Strategy consultation: Schedule of all comments and Cheshire East Council responses

Respondent	Comments	CEC Response
P. Hirst	SWOT weaknesses – add quality of service & supportive sector to list.	Not enough evidence to agree with this assertion. The forthcoming Local Business Survey will provide business support views.
	National/ Global trends – more emphasis on implications of climate change.	3.2 viii) references a summary of climate change implications. Detailed proposals to address climate change to be included in Delivery Plan.
	Spatial Priorities – Putting Sustainable Towns and Rural Areas together omits canals, tourism, and individual identities.	The canal network/tourism is recognised as a SWOT strength (3.10 xi). This will be reflected in specific actions proposed for individual towns/ rural areas in the Delivery Plan, building on and strengthening their identities.
	Approach to Sustainable towns -disagree. Congleton is a sizeable town, need recognition of importance of less intensive farming/more people working on the land.	The LDF will define the hierarchy of settlements – the issues & options paper for the Core Strategy defines Congleton as a Key Service Centre (2 nd tier) with a range of employment, retail, education services and good public transport. The transition to a low carbon economy/sustainable farming practices needs to be embedded more in the final strategy.
Mobberley Parish Council	There should be greater emphasis on rural areas.	The Sustainable Towns/Rural Areas spatial priority refers to threats to rural areas and the viability of settlements - building on the ongoing work on a sustainable framework for our towns and villages, and other strategy development, there will be a fuller exposition of priorities for rural areas in the final strategy /Action Plans.

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Emerson Group	SWOT weaknesses - Disagree - many apply to all parts of the country and creates more depressing picture than necessary. Sub divide into major and less major. In a rural area public transport cannot take place of the car -lots of interconnecting roads between settlements could be viewed as a strength. Ageing pop (over 65s) could be considered as potentially part of workforce. May be over supply of employment land - unlikely to be demand as increasingly many employees become less workplace based.	The weaknesses listed are all relevant to Cheshire East and some such as unaffordable housing, poor public transport, etc are undoubtedly shared by other parts of the UK. It would be difficult to effectively rank them as they all in total contribute to a less efficient and effective local economy. It is accepted that the car will continue to be important for rural connectiveness. The LDF will set out employment land requirements.
	SWOT opportunities - Disagree - too aspirational and dependent on outside decisions, funding, etc. Economic growth in S Manc/Media city likely to be concentrated in that area. Opportunities for growth in sectors could lead to greater dependency on multi nationals, who are considered a threat elsewhere.	Aspirations reflect longer term nature of some of the opportunities. Regular reviews of the strategy will dictate feasibility or otherwise of specific projects. Opportunities for linkages with Media City are already being explored. The market will dictate ownership/growth of firms in sectors.
	Global/national trends - Disagree - need to reflect new approaches by current govt. Trends assume a level playing field but lower cost regulated locations will erode our competitiveness.	Government policy still emerging and will be fed in to the development of the strategy. The strategy focus on high skill, high value growth sectors should help to maintain a competitive local economy.
	Approach for Crewe - Agree - but important to recognise that Crewe cannot function as a gateway to the NW whilst constrained by concerns for Stoke.	Cross border collaboration necessary to ensure potential growth is maximised for mutual benefit.

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Emerson Group (cont)	Approach for Macclesfield - Disagree - premature until Economic Masterplan finished. Question whether Macclesfield is part of the Manchester City region. High quality transport links difficult to achieve given spending constraints.	The Economic Masterplan will be completed shortly and will set out the preferred approach for Macclesfield. The town, whilst physically separate from Greater Manchester by virtue of the North Cheshire Green Belt still has strong links to the conurbation via journey to work, recreational activities etc, The ability to provide higher quality public transport links to Manchester will depend on government funding and would be a longer term aspiration.
	Approach for Sustainable Towns - Disagree - Too crude a distinction to lump all other settlements into one category. Wilmslow, Nantwich, Middlewich, Knutsford, Sandbach have gone beyond market town function – should be separate category?	LDF will set out the settlement hierarchy. It is accepted the term 'market town ' needs defining (or omitting) as it currently covers towns as disparate as Wilmslow and Middlewich.
	Additional comments - Some updating required - govt policy, demise NWDA, etc.	Agreed
Adlington Parish Council	National Global Trends - Agree but global trends can change quite quickly.	Agreed - regular monitoring of the strategy will pick this up.
	Additional Comments - Document could be condensed without losing its emphasis and direction	There will be an Executive Summary of the final strategy.
Visit Chester & Cheshire	SWOT key strengths - Disagree - need to include visitor economy as having 4th highest GVA in Cheshire East.	Strong visitor economy is recognised as a key strength.
	SWOT opportunities - Disagree - need to note that visitor economy aims to grow visitor spend from £1.78bn to over £3 bn, and increase jobs to 37,000 by 2020.	Add growth potential of visitor economy to SWOT opportunities.
	Thematic Priorities - Agree - Marketing Cheshire would be a good delivery partner for 'Quality image, perception and leadership'.	Support welcomed
	Approach for Crewe - Agree - but Marketing Cheshire would be a useful delivery mechanism to help spatial priorities come to life through communications.	Support welcomed

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Congleton Town Council	SWOT strengths - More detail on local economies such as Congleton. Key issues are: Town economy performing below CE average, need to deliver quality employment land in /adj to the town, link Town Centre Plan to broader econ devpt in the town, uncertainty over delivery of Town Centre development, pressure to develop unviable employment land for housing/mixed use, new devpt slow to come forward, employment land allocations sometimes do not recognise commercial realities, west and north of Congleton most logical areas for employment devpt. Congleton reliant on manufacturing which has suffered badly in the recession, lower wage rates paid in the town, revenue from tourism is low, issues identified in Congleton Renaissance document still relevant, high house prices disadvantage young buyers.	The document sets out a strategic approach to economic development and therefore it does not go into a great deal of detail on the performance of individual town economies (although it does recognise the underperformance of the Congleton economy and lack of jobs). Add availability and/or quality of employment land in some settlements eg Congleton, Macclesfield, to the list of SWOT weaknesses (see below). The issue of employment land in Congleton is referenced in the strategy at para 3.12 (xi). The Sustainable Towns Framework and ongoing partnership development in the towns will set out the approach within individual settlements such as Congleton.
	SWOT weaknesses - Disagree - lack of employment development sites in Congleton Town, lack of a green sector to take advantage of need to move to low carbon economy.	Employment land as above. Development of the green economy is seen as a SWOT Opportunity.
Congleton Town Council (cont)	SWOT opportunities - Untapped potential of home based/micro businesses, Support to voluntary sector to get older people back into work.	This would come under the banner of development of the green economy and green technology but is a valid aspiration. The contribution of the voluntary sector to economic development needs recognising in the Strategy.
	Priorities for Objectives - Agree but add Liveability, Local Transport and Aspiration.	This is included as a Thematic Priority.
	Spatial priorities - Agree but too little emphasis on Sustainable Towns and Rural Areas.	The lack of detail reflects the limited work done to progress the Sustainable Towns spatial priority. A Sustainable Towns Framework which encompasses rural catchment areas is under development to establish approaches and priorities for individual towns.

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	Approach for Sustainable Towns – Disagree - spatial priorities should recognise uniqueness of towns and need for tailored solutions. Local Partnerships should play key part, incl. acknowledging existing local strategies such as Congleton in Transition/Congleton Town Centre Plan and incorporate these into Action Plans. More emphasis on environmental/social sustainability -towns to measure their carbon footprint. Need to be clear as to how to ensure Congleton does not become a dormitory town.	Approach to Sustainable Towns as above. It will be important to build on work already done prior to local government reorganisation, recognising that new government policy and resource constraints may dictate a different approach. Local Partnerships will play a key role.
	Additional Comments - Congleton town needs genuinely available and suitable employment land and premises, incl. a new key site on western side of the town to attract high value businesses, retain graduates, & address low wage levels. Develop Micro and Home based businesses.	The supply and location of new employment sites is a key consideration of the LDF. The Employment Land review is under preparation and will consider the need for employment land in Congleton and elsewhere. A broader approach encompassing quality of life issues, and skill levels needs to be factored in.
	Summary of Local Economy - Disagree - more detail about the local economies of smaller settlements such as Congleton. Make use of 'Congleton in Transition' and the Town Centre Plan to unlock the potential of the town. Acknowledge the ongoing work by the market towns.	The strategic nature of the document restricted the level of detail that could be included about individual settlements under the Sustainable Towns banner. The final strategy/Delivery Plan will address specific Congleton projects building on work done previously and recognising the new political/funding realities.
Congleton Partnership	SWOT strengths - Disagree - need to recognise contribution of voluntary sector via Congleton Partnership to economic regeneration of the town- example of 'Big Society' in action.	Agreed - recognition of the third sector contribution is needed.
	SWOT weaknesses - Disagree - lack of employment sites in Congleton. Work ongoing to reduce C02 emissions, spearheading hydro micro generation, extension of cycle ways as part of its transition town status, via Congleton Sustainability Group.	Add availability and/or quality of employment land in some settlements eg Congleton, Macclesfield, to the list of SWOT weaknesses. Recognition of ongoing work in Congleton and elsewhere to reduce C0 ² emissions to be included in final strategy/Action Plans.

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	SWOT opportunities - Disagree - would like to see reference to supporting home based and micro businesses, and social enterprises. The hydro scheme is an example of voluntary sector leading from the front	This would come under the banner of development of the green economy and green technology but is a valid aspiration.
	Approach to Sustainable Towns - Welcomes approach to sustainable towns as a balance to dominance of Crewe & Macclesfield, and recognition that smaller towns have no desire to become dormitories. Being a Transition town means there is a strong drive to encourage local job creation and reduce C02 emissions from commuting. Smaller towns need to retain medical and social services.	Support welcomed. Transition town status noted - the Action Plans for the individual towns will define approaches.
Congleton Partnership (cont)	Additional Comments - Congleton Partnership is intent on building on the local distinctiveness of the town, exemplified by its voluntary Beartown marketing team. Increased tourism to support retail sector is a target, stimulating entrepreneurs, incl. social enterprises, supporting local apprenticeship schemes to address lack of opportunities for graduates. Interested in attracting high value green technology companies - need to upgrade existing trading estates.	The final strategy will need to recognise and build on the work done by the Partnership.
Rainow Parish Council	Summary of Local Economy - Disagree - risk analysis of pharmaceutical industry moving work overseas should be carried out - knock on effect on allied services in the area.	Whilst there has been some relocation of activity to the Far East there are no indications that AZ will not have a long term presence in the area. If there are indications then it will be incumbent on the Council and partners to put an action plan in place. The strategy also emphasises the need to diversify the local economy to prevent over reliance on the fortunes of particular sectors.
	SWOT strengths - Disagree - transport links not good in rural areas, public transport is poor, heavy use of inadequate roads through towns and villages, poor road maintenance.	There is recognition of these in the SWOT weaknesses.

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	SWOT weaknesses - Disagree - town centres, especially Macclesfield in need of regeneration. Waste disposal policy is unsustainable. High C02 per head isn't necessarily a weakness.	Town centre regeneration considered as an 'opportunity' in the SWOT. High CO2 emissions can be seen as a consequence of a successful growing economy but government policy is to reduce emissions to combat the undesirable aspects of climate change. Although not covered by the EDS, waste strategy is centred on reducing the amount of waste produced, reuse of resources and increasing recycling and composting in order to minimise the amount of waste going to landfill.
	SWOT opportunities - Disagree -insufficient incentives for new businesses. Lack of funding for Town Centre redevelopment.	It is not clear whether this refers to financial incentives or an entrepreneurial climate in general. The Macclesfield economy became very entrepreneurial without any public subsidies. Evidence suggests that quality of life, education/skill levels, & connectivity, are more important. There is currently very little private/public funding available for town centre developments but this will change as and when the economy picks up.
	Global/national trends - Disagree - stated government policies are incomplete - once finalised these will affect the CE strategy.	Government policy is still emerging and will influence the final strategy.
	Priorities for Objectives: Connections & Linkages - locating jobs nearer homes will require a greater provision of affordable housing. How do we achieve a low carbon emission environment with a largely rural community? Quality Image - not clear what capturing the drive of our leaders means. Liveability - a priority should be a significant improvement in public transport in rural areas.	An adequate supply of affordable housing is crucial to maintaining a balanced and sustainable economy. The bulk of the population and carbon emissions (transport, housing & industry) are associated with urban areas. The poor public transport provision and lack of jobs/services in some rural areas encourages travel by car. Micro generation, broadband penetration, retention of community services are key to reducing emissions.

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	Approach for Macclesfield - Disagree - Macclesfield needs to retain its identity so it doesn't become a dormitory to Manchester. Need to see the outcomes of the Economic Masterplan.	The continued presence of the Green Belt to the north of Macclesfield will enable it to maintain an identity. However there will be mutual benefit to both Macclesfield and Gtr Manchester economies by encouraging and facilitating better connectiveness, by train and public transport. The Masterplan will be used to inform this strategy.
	Additional comments - Well written strategy and if achieved will enhance the living standards of the Cheshire East community and make it a better place to live. It is ambitious and probably not fully achievable, so further prioritisation required.	Agreed that further prioritisation will be required in the short to medium term economic climate.
Nantwich LAP	Summary of Local Economy - Disagree - More about the agricultural sector and difficulties for farming needed. Changes in subsidies and schemes could have a significant effect. Problems of image & quality of place for Crewe are not acknowledged, otherwise it will not attract more investment.	The role of the agriculture sector in providing food production and sustainable farming is referenced in para3.10 (xiii). However it is agreed that the economic aspects need to be further explored. Para 3.9 refers to Crewe's image problems.
	SWOT strengths - Disagree - add canals to visitor economy, add award winning Crewe Business Park as strong environmental credentials, add farming.	Add canals to visitor economy SWOT strengths Add strong green credentials : Crewe Business Park, (others?) Add strong agricultural sector.
	SWOT opportunities - Disagree - need to build on reputation Crewe Business Park/employers in Macclesfield area where quality of place for attracting businesses is important. Promote green infrastructure to development sites, recognise value of open space - biodiversity, cooling/climate change mitigation, settings for companies, etc.	Add to SWOT list of opportunities: build on and promote the quality of places in CE to attract investment.
	SWOT threats - Disagree - threats to farming not mentioned.	Add to SWOT threats: Climate change and changes to subsidies are threats to the farming industry.

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	Global/national trends - Agree - but reference to farming, need for diversification, green infrastructure, impact of bio fuels needed.	Add para on trends in agriculture.
	Key objectives: Connections & Linkages - add rail connections with other north west cities. Quality Image - add more about quality of place for employment sites and green infrastructure approach. Unlocking development opps - refer to environmental attractiveness to investors.	Connections & Linkages: A broad priority is to improve public transport and enhance our existing transport connections to other areas. There is uncertainty about the levels of investment that will be available to improve the quality and reliability of rail travel to Manchester/Liverpool. Quality Image: Para 4.7, fourth bullet point is essentially about 'place making'- using the assets (which would include green spaces, quality of sites, open space etc) to attract and retain investment. Unlocking Development Opps: This is hinted at in para 4.8 but could be brought out more to emphasize that development should not detract from quality environments and seek to enhance less attractive environment to attract investors.
	Spatial Priorities - Agree - but needs to relate more specifically to the hierarchy of towns - how are sustainable towns defined?	The LDF will define the hierarchy of towns. Sustainable towns in this context means ensuring that towns (other than Crewe/Macclesfield which are dealt with separately) are allowed to develop their potential as Key Service Centre/ Local Service Centres.
	Approach for Crewe - Disagree - addressing the negative image is crucial. Need to provide right infrastructure for growth - green areas for flood management and recreation - no country parks nearby. Strong emphasis on design quality and green infrastructure approach needed.	The image of Crewe is a major disincentive to invest in the area – this is recognised in the Crewe Vision strategy which details the specific projects to be taken forward. Improved infrastructure and quality of development, including 'green' aspects, is essential to realising the Vision strategy.

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	Approach for Sustainable Towns - Disagree - there is not a definition of sustainable towns -are these all other settlements or just second tier ones?. Reasonably priced public transport in rural areas and green transport routes are important.	The LDF will define the hierarchy of towns. Sustainable towns in this context means ensuring that towns (other than Crewe/Macclesfield which are dealt with separately) are allowed to develop their potential as Key Service Centre/ Local Service Centres. The emphasis on sustainable economic growth will ensure that , subject to resource availability, sustainable transport will be a key consideration, recognising that there will still be a heavy reliance on the car for transport needs.
McDyre & Co	SWOT weaknesses - Disagree - lack of quality housing to attract inward investors/employees close to major business areas eg southern side of Crewe.	The development of the Basford sites need to go hand in hand with provision of a range of housing accommodation. The need to raise the bar in terms of skills in the Crewe area suggests that higher quality housing will be required.
	SWOT threats - Agree - but more emphasis on importance of good quality housing to attract inward investment.	There is reference to the supply of housing acting as a constraint – this could be further qualified to reflect this point.
	Approach for Crewe - Disagree - Fundamental requirement to provide good quality homes for all sectors of the housing market near to new/expanding areas of business on south side of Crewe. Para 4.15 last bullet point should be expanded to identify development land opportunities eg in Shavington which is the most sustainable village settlement near to Crewe, with excellent sustainable modes of transport to business areas of Crewe and the town centre.	This is an issue for the LDF.
	Additional Comments - Generally well thought out and excellently presented. Would like to see the link between quality homes in a sustainable environment and encouraging new business investment brought out more strongly, partic in the Crewe area.	Crewe Vision takes this on board

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CEC Spatial Planning	LDF timetable to be updated.	Noted
	Include section on high housing costs and impact on availability of key workers/lower paid service sector/care/retail jobs.	Include in final strategy.
	More references to the Visitor Economy strategy needed.	Cross referencing to all Council Strategies required.
CEC Housing	Include the NI 155 for affordable housing in para 2.15.	NI indicators to be dropped by new government.
	Include reference to need for affordable housing to enable retention/recruitment of lower paid professions eg care sector, which are set to increase due to ageing population.	Include in final strategy.
	You need around 6 times the average income in the Cheshire East area in order to buy a property – employees in lower paid jobs are commuting in from less expensive areas such as Stoke on Trent.	Noted
Congleton Town Council (Community & Environment C'ttee)	Deplore lack of emphasis on any action appertaining to Congleton.	The Sustainable Towns framework and ongoing partnership development work will provide the evidence base to inform, prioritise (subject to resources), and enable project development in Congleton and other Sustainable Towns. This will be detailed in the Action Plans for individual towns.
	Should be maximising employment opportunities in Congleton.	LDF will consider supply/demand for employment land.
	What resources are there for regeneration in Congleton?	Project prioritisation will dictate resource allocations.

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	Why is Congleton identified as an area where there is less affordable housing compared to Wilmslow or Alderley Edge?	The reference to affordable housing relates to the former Congleton and Macclesfield Districts.
	Where is the evidence to show lack of GVA growth and a shortage of jobs?	This is official data from ABI/ONS and would be appropriately referenced in the final strategy.
Manchester Airport	Pleased that the strategy recognises the importance of increasing the global competitiveness of the local economy. To do this there is a need to exploit the area's connectivity – Manchester Airport, West Coast Mainline, national motorway network.	Connectivity is recognised as a thematic priority but needs to be tied in with the airport.
	However the international connectivity of the sub region's firms is fairly low – we need innovative business support to drive this - imports/exports, languages, etc, with a focus on outward facing knowledge intensive start ups. Manchester Airport can play a key role in helping to open up new markets in emerging economies.	More explicit recognition of the role of the Airport in supporting the knowledge economy and links with global markets needed.
	More support for the growth of the airport should be expressed – to attract investment and talent through regional supply chains (underdeveloped compared to competitor European airports). Modify SWOT to reflect these comments.	Agreed
Voluntary Sector (CAB North)	Need to also focus on Public sector, Health, Care and Voluntary Sectors – employs approx 3,500 in Cheshire East in 2002 (Hidden Power report) and estimates £10m brought into the local economy. Need to reflect the Social Enterprise sector.	More up to date evidence? Agreed that the strategy should reflect the contribution of the third sector.

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	Para 2.6 reference to 'Single Conversation' with the HCA, should involve the voluntary sector as groups delivering on the ground are better informed as to where people's priorities lie and what is likely to work.	Role of HCA under new government still unclear. Big Society changes will shift more responsibilities/delivery to the community.
	Para 2.13 Total Place initiative should involve the voluntary sector.	New Government guidance awaited.
	Welcome recognition of key role of transport in enabling right people to get easily to the right place.	Support welcomed
CWEC	Introduction and state of the economy sections are excellent. Strategy needs to better reflect the changing political and funding landscape – we will have more control and influence over issue but little money to deliver. This suggests we should have a smaller list of priorities which we can deliver. The biggest priority will be 'place' issues and the sections ordering should be changed to reflect this.	Support welcomed and prioritising will evolve in the changing wider context
	The strategy aligns with Part 1: RS 2010 and 'Future Northwest: Our Shared Priorities' – the latter document should now be referred to in the strategy.	Noted – however the successor document has no formal status.
NWDA (Strategic Partnerships	The first theme of the new document concerns the transition to a low carbon economy and the strategy could usefully look at ways of capitalising on opportunities within Cheshire East.	Agreed

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Manager)	There is a need to capture the general direction of the new govt policies, including LEPs, Regional Growth fund, 'Big Society' localism.	Agreed
	The Infrastructure Planning Commission will be replaced by a major infrastructure planning unit via the Planning Inspectorate.	Noted
	Under the Thematic objectives, more could be included around Next Generation Access – how it will be implemented across Cheshire East and opportunities arising from Broadband delivery UK, the delivery vehicle for NGA policy, alongside opportunities for RDPE funding.	CE is leading on a Digital Development project for C & W which aims to provide the necessary digital infrastructure for business & community needs.
	The Crewe section needs to reflect the Crewe Vision Action Plan.	The All Change for Crewe document sets out actions and priorities derived from the work carried out on the Crewe Vision framework
NWDA (Energy & Environment Team)	Overall the strategy could be strengthened to achieve the object of a low carbon economy as laid out in the NW Climate Change Action Plan, and Future Northwest:	Noted – the strategy needs to be explicit on how the transition to a low carbon economy will be achieved.
	 Support opportunities for low carbon and Environmental goods sector – advice should be sought from Envirolink North West. Eco-innovation: Automotive, financial and IT sectors in Cheshire East could be supported to innovate low 	Need to build on the project development co-ordinated by CWEC over the past 3 years, and experience elsewhere Look at how business support required by companies in the
	carbon goods. • Further explanation required as to how businesses will be supported with regard to carbon reduction.	environmental/renewables sectors can be maintained in the light of likely cutbacks in support from national support organisations.

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	 Resource constraints: need to consider solutions for reduction in waste, water and primary materials. A third of the workforce will need to be retrained to some extent in low carbon skills – primarily construction and automotive sectors. Unlocking the Potential section: refer to adoption of low carbon standards for new build and retro fitting. Low carbon transport: expand to include development of low carbon /electric vehicles and infrastructure by the automotive sector. The strategy should lay out an approach to renewable and decentralised energy schemes – biomass and micro generation. Increased risk of climate impact on key sectors should be acknowledged – flooding, extreme weather and impact on international supply chains. Refer to Climate Change Act 2008 in policy context 	Need to build up our evidence base on capacity in Cheshire East for all forms of renewables (part of LTP preparatory work) Need to explore how low carbon transport opportunities detailed in the Local Transport Plan 3 can contribute to sustainable economic growth. CE are committed to achieving level 3 of NI188 (Climate Change Adaptation) by 2012. This will involve engaging with key sectors on a climate change adaptation strategy.