

Speech: West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy

Ladies and gentlemen

It's great to be at the Advanced Propulsion Centre to launch the West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy.

Just up the road is WMG (Warwick Manufacturing Group) founded – of course – by Professor Lord Bhattacharyya to whom this Local Industrial Strategy is dedicated.

And it didn't take long before WMG became the envy of the world.

In 1993, the French government sent a team to this campus – who hailed WMG as:

Europe's most outstanding example of how a university should interact with industry.

Four years later, the German government called WMG:

A future role model of German universities.

While Singapore were even more direct, saying that:

Singapore should look at WMG and clone it.

Our Local Industrial Strategies are all about building on local strengths like these.

And this morning I was delighted to visit the site for the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre in which WMG is playing a central role.

Announcing 28 million pounds of additional funding to make sure that this centre has the best possible equipment to develop the processes which will make electric cars part of everyday life.

The West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy is the very first such strategy to be launched.

And I'd like to congratulate Andy Street and everyone who has been involved on this remarkable achievement. But far from being the end of the journey this is just the beginning.

By next year we want every person in England to be covered by a Local Industrial Strategy.

So 3 million down – only 53 million to go!

Local Industrial Strategies are about doing things differently.

And in the last 18 months we've seen exciting conversations taking place between central government and places across our country.

Not government telling places what they're good at.

Or regions coming to Whitehall begging bowl in hand.

But central and local working together as equals, from the outset.

Combining the clout and convening power of central government with the expertise and energy of local places. We are now working with all Mayoral Combined Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships to develop Local Industrial Strategies.

And we're looking beyond the 'usual suspects'.

With the second wave of strategies including places like Leicester and Leicestershire, Cheshire and Warrington, and even my Secretary of State's old stomping ground of the Tees Valley.

So ladies and gentlemen,

Last November, Professor Lord Bhattacharyya ended one of his last speeches with the words:

Together, we can honour our past triumphs ... by investing in our future success.

Today, through this Local Industrial Strategy we are investing in the West Midlands' future success.

So now let's work together and inspire others to follow in your footsteps.