

Heart of SW LEP CIC Board meeting

Paper 5.1 May 2018

Report title: Great South West

Report theme: Board

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Purpose of the report

To update the board of the progress in establishing cross LEP regional working and consider which agendas Great South West should initially focus on.

Recommendations

The Board agrees to continue to support the establishment of Great South West and confirms which agendas it feels it should initially focus on.

Background

The publication of the South West Growth Charter (<http://www.pennon-group.co.uk/system/files/press/south-west-growth-charter.pdf>) in 2016 by a group of businesses led by the Pennon Group was the starting point for the conversation between businesses, education establishments and LEPs to build momentum towards greater collaborative working across the South West to promote regional economic growth.

There have also been two South West Growth Summits to promote the journey so far to key stakeholders including MPs and central government. Sajid Javid MP encouraged progress on this work.

There continues to be support and commitment from a number of businesses, academic institutions and (explicitly) from three LEPs to building further momentum towards a formal recognition from Government of the “Great South West” brand. The three LEPs are Cornwall, Dorset and Heart of the South West. The three LEPs have continued to develop the proposition and have outlined some key activities to move it forward. Our January Board reaffirmed our enthusiasm for the establishment of Great South West and supported:

- An early meeting of a new Steering Group
- The appointment of a new Partnership Executive to facilitate progress

Consequently, Rob Dunford from Dorset LEP has been asked to carry out the role of Programme Lead (that was proposed in the Jan Board paper) for 2 days per week. The cost of this being met jointly by the LEP partners. Although Solent LEP have participated in some discussions they are not contributing financially at this time and are therefore not joining the Steering Group.

Emma Buckman, who led on the work for the South West Rural Productivity Commission has also just been appointed to support Rob and lead on the development of the rural productivity commission opportunity, again for 2 days per week

Our vision supported by the three LEPs is to:

- **Promote the South West's great opportunities** for increasing the prosperity of our businesses, our people and our communities and huge potential to contribute to the wealth of the country
- **Developing shared propositions, attracting investment** and tackling barriers to productivity by working collaboratively across our cities, towns and rural communities; making the whole of the South West a prosperous region.

Additionally the LEPs believe that:

- This is not about a fixed geography, it's about working on areas of common interest across the South West with a "**coalition of the willing**" where our combined efforts can make a real difference.
- Our activities will be **driven by our opportunities** and our work will be directed by a steering group of leaders from business, education and local authorities who believe in this vision.

The initial list of specific operational actions agreed between the three LEPs CEXs was to;

1. Establish a Steering Group of leaders – this is the initial priority – from public, private and education sectors
2. Put in place a Programme Lead to;
 - Draw up budget and resource plan
 - Commission work on a regional evidence base
 - Facilitate commencement of programmes of work
 - Produce letter from Steering Group to Government ministers to mark the commencement of regional work to "Back the South West" – initial priority
 - Encourage communications and events to highlight the work of Great South West
 - Seek sponsorship to support the work
3. Develop a small number of specific opportunities on rural productivity (Emma Buckman)
4. Ensure that existing work is 'on the radar to enable department support
5. Develop commercial propositions with LEP partners in key opportunity areas to promote and attract investment; eg (lead LEP partners in bold);
 - Aerospace and Space – **West of England, Cornwall**, Dorset, HotSW ,GFirst
 - Marine; Cornwall, Dorset, **HotSW**, Solent
 - Nuclear; Cornwall, Dorset, GFirst, **HotSW**, West of England

Our next Actions

Our focus going forward is structured around two threads:

A. Great South West Steering Committee

Meetings of a Steering Committee drawn from across our area have been arranged for:

16 th May	–	13:00 to 15:00
20 th June	–	11:00 to 13:00
24 th July	–	11:00 to 13:00

Members of the committee are:

	Cornwall	Dorset	Heart of the South West	Other SW representatives
LEP Chair	Mark Duddridge	Jim Stewart	Steve Hindley	Deborah Fraser (CBI)
Business Rep 1	Toby Parkin (Chamber of Commerce/Headforwards)	Ian Girling (Chief Executive, Chamber of Commerce)	Stuart Brocklehurst (Applegate)	Ken Owen (EDF)
Business Rep 2	James Staughton (St Austell Brewery)	John Sutcliffe (Atlas Elektronik)	Karl Tucker (Yeo Valley)	TBC
Business Rep 3	Michael Beadel (Stephens Scown LLP)	Luke Rake (Principal & CEO, Kingston Maurward College)	Sarah Heald (Pennon Group)	TBC
Local Authority	Kate Kennally (Chief Executive, Cornwall Council)	Rebecca Knox (Leader, Dorset County Council) Or Gary Suttle (Leader, Purbeck District Council)	David Hall (Member, Somerset County Council)	TBC
Education	Mark Goodwin (Deputy Vice Chancellor, University of Exeter)	John Vinney (Vice Chancellor, Bournemouth University)	Judith Petts (Vice Chancellor, University of Plymouth)	Veronica Hope Hailey (Vice President, University of Bath)

It should be noted that Swindon & Wiltshire LEP have indicated they are considering a paper at their next board meeting discussing how they enhance their involvement in regional matters.

B. Future activity

Board members views are sought on the following tangible actions for progressing this agenda which will be discussed by the Steering Group later this month:

- i. Areas of focus; Rural Productivity, Trade & Investment, Infrastructure and Innovation
- ii. Steering Committee to write to new Secretary of State for MHCLG in June to formally request ministerial support
- iii. Further letters to follow to Ministers for DIT, DEFRA and DFT.
- iv. An event with Ministers and MPs to be organised end of September, ahead of Autumn Budget Statement

C Garcia
6 May 2018