

# Heart of the South West local enterprise partnership

## LEP Board Paper 5.3

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Heart of the South West LEP Communications Strategy 2018/19

**Report theme:** Board

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### Summary

#### Purpose of the report

To outline the HotSW LEP Communications Strategy for 2018/19

#### Recommendations

The Board notes this paper

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### Background

The Productivity Strategy is highly ambitious: to double the size of the economy over 20 years by raising productivity, enabling all parts of the Heart of the South West to become more prosperous, for people to have a better quality of life and higher living standards.

As a key partner in delivering this ambition, the mission of the HotSW LEP is: *To reposition the Heart of the South West's profile and reputation, nationally and globally. Connecting people, places, businesses and ideas to transform our economy, securing investment in infrastructure and skills to create higher value jobs and enable rewarding careers.* Note that the LEP review gives LEPs a single mission: *to deliver Local Industrial Strategies to promote productivity.* This has not yet been adopted by the Board, so this paper will be updated when this has been considered as part of HotSW's implementation of the review.

To achieve its mission, and in turn the ambition of the Strategy, the LEP must have the confidence of its stakeholders and be empowered to speak on the area's behalf to effectively influence decision makers at local and national levels; both the current mission and potential updated mission require this fundamental point. The Communication strategy is therefore a key way to gain and retain that confidence and empowerment for the LEP.

## Aims, Messaging & Channels

The aims of the HotSW LEP communications strategy are therefore:

- To enhance and protect the reputation of the LEP as a transparent, effective, influential delivery organisation.
- Promote services and initiatives delivered through the LEP to benefit businesses and people, demonstrating the value the LEP is achieving.

These aims and the mission of the LEP mean all communications will have a single-minded proposition to run throughout all activity. More work will be done to develop this, and a starting point will be:

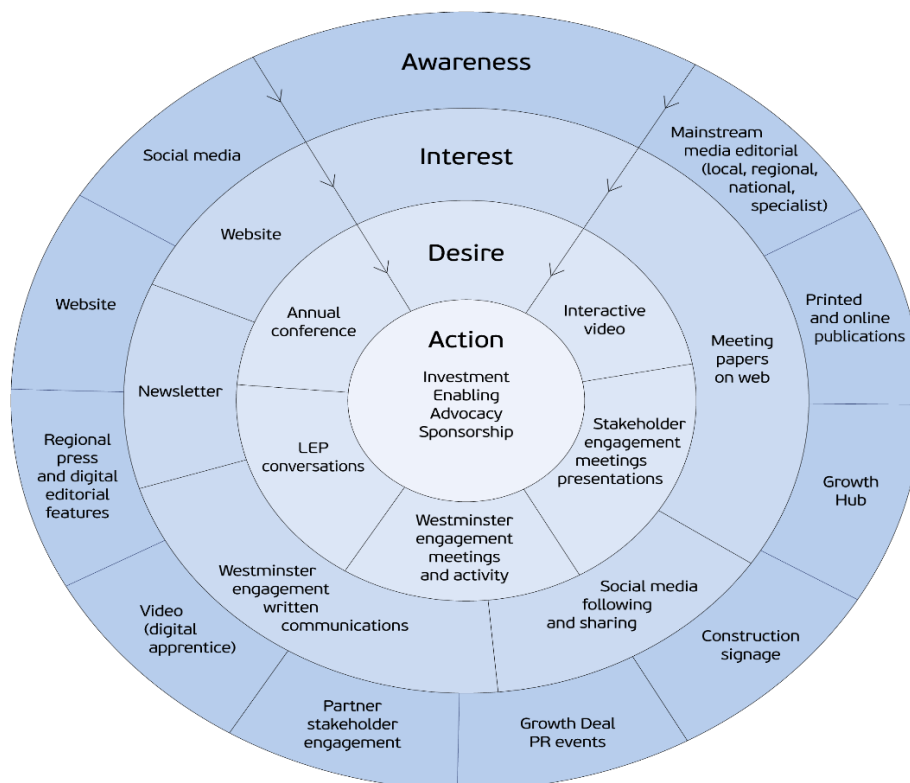
- “The Heart of the South West is an outstanding leader in the field of economic development”.

In essence, the communications strategy is the equivalent of the ‘corporate message’ a business may present to investors; in parallel with this will be required more of a ‘consumer facing’ messaging targeted at prospective businesses looking to invest in the area. This inward investment message is separate from but complimentary with the communications approach in this paper.

For the purposes of this paper, stakeholder engagement events such as LEP Conversations and the Annual Conference are covered in the communications mix as important platforms, however the cost and management of these functions are separate.

Resources need to be carefully focussed to achieve maximum impact with local and national decision makers and will therefore be focussed on the channels in the diagram below, with measures/ KPIs developed for each, and for the strategy.

The diagram shows the journey of audiences from unawareness to being directly involved with the LEP as an enabler, advocate or investor using the AIDA marketing model: Awareness, Interest, Desire, Action.



The primary activities over the next 12 – 18 months are Westminster engagement, social media, and website improvement by creating video content. These activities are considered to have the most impact in furthering the aims of the LEP. Social media is a cost-effective platform for increasing reach and awareness amongst all of our target audiences (listed in the table below) and influencing the key decision makers in Government through HotSW MPs and key Ministers is crucial to generating investment and strategic backing.

Ideally, the audiences should be on a journey towards the centre of the circle, where they are being effective to enable the delivery of the LEP’s strategies. This could be by providing investment or by acting as an enabler, advocate or by proposing a project to deliver in partnership with the LEP.

Each segment shows what communication tools are relevant for each level of engagement. The Budget table below shows the allocation of funds for the tools listed in the diagram.

## Measurement

- Double social media presence via Twitter and LinkedIn by December 2019
- Increase number of media enquiries and media coverage by 1/3 indicating wider media awareness and interest. Maintain good level of positive coverage and mitigated hostile enquires for reputation management.
- Other measurement factors reported to LEP board: number of press releases (can increase dependent on operational stories and achievements) quotes in partner press releases; web statistics, newsletter sign ups and social media followers.

The LEP Network Communications Group is to be consulted in September to consider what measurement and evaluation factors are used across LEPs nationally, and this paper will be updated with any new data ideas.

## Budget

18/19 indicative allocations of budget are shown though these remain flexible as priorities and opportunities will emerge during the year.

Digital marketing apprentice	£5,376*
Westminster engagement	£25,000
LEP web presence	£3,000
Design and print	£10,000
Content development	£5,000
Somerset press office cover	£500
Mailchimp newsletter license	£240

Vuelio CRM license	£1,500
Trinity Media feature every 2 months	£8,500
Total	£59,116

\*Six months' salary pro-rata

## Audience & Platforms

These are our main target audiences (not listed in any order of priority) with the purpose of communicating effectively with them explained, and the main platforms by which we communicate with them.

<b>Audience</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Main platforms</b>
District Councils	Strategic backing, funding, project sponsorship	Direct communications and transparency on web. Stakeholder engagement meetings with Partnership Manager Newsletter Website Social media
BROs	Strategic backing and advocacy	LEP Conversations Printed and online materials Website Social media
Potential project sponsors	Project sponsorship	Website, social media, newsletter, leadership groups
Internal audience	Common purpose and values	Core team management meetings and leadership groups Newsletter Social media
Government (MPs and Ministers)	Strategic backing – enabling, advocacy and investment	MP engagement – written & meetings (website, social media and newsletter secondary tools)
Government (Civil Servants)	Strategic backing – enabling, advocacy and investment	Board, written communications Website newsletter
Universal audience	Inspire confidence in the area and potentially move towards advocacy	Media, social media Website Site hoardings
Business community (not captured by BROs)		Media Social media Website Video Newsletter Growth Hub Site hoardings

**Recommendation**

That the LEP Board endorse the principle

**Next steps**

Next steps are therefore as below, with delivery through to March 19

Develop & agree LEP single-minded proposition	By end Sept 18
Develop content to support this	By end October 18 and continuing
Develop Westminster communications plan for remainder of 18/19	By end Sept 18
Review communications approach and refine/revise for 19/20	By end Jan 19