

Report title	Place delivery theme update – Agenda item 6c				
Purpose	This paper is for noting				
Link to LIS^b	Inclusive Growth		Clean growth ✓		
	Energy ✓	Engineering		Digital ✓	
	Ideas	People	Infrastructure ✓	Bus. Environment	Places ✓
Non-LIS purpose	N/A				
Timing	Report covers infrastructure and place related activity in period to end June 2020				
Financial impact	None				
Decisions requested	None				
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1.0 Summary

1.1 This report is an update about delivery against the LEP’s infrastructure and place theme. This report will form the basis of a regular update to the LEP Board on priorities and progress related to this delivery theme, as outlined in the recommendations of the recently undertaken Board effectiveness review. Consistent with this review the report also outlines below the current arrangements for the place leadership group which has overview of this area of the LEP’s activity and the steps we are taking to update these in line with the “blueprint” from the effectiveness review.

2.0 Place Leadership working arrangements

2.1 **Scope of the LEP’s infrastructure and place related activity.** The Place Leadership Group has overview and delivery responsibility for the infrastructure and place priorities of the Heart of the South West (HoSW) Local Industrial Strategy. This includes energy, natural capital, employment land and premises (including the portfolio of Enterprise Zones in the HoSW area), rural productivity

and coastal and market town matters. In the line with the broader agenda from the HoSW Productivity Strategy the Group also has a strategic overview on behalf of the LEP for the economic dimension to housing and transport, recognising that other key bodies including the HoSW joint committee and the peninsular transport board and other bodies lead on these matters.

2.2 Place Leadership Group terms of reference, membership and stakeholder groups.

At our July 2020 meeting the Place Leadership group was briefed about the conclusions of the LEP's board effectiveness review and we committed to updating the terms of reference for the group in line with the recommendations adopted by the LEP Board. We will therefore be preparing revised terms of reference for our next meeting and ensuring that these are consistent with the scope of the group as outlined above and the roles envisaged for Leadership groups. We will also be reviewing the membership of the group so that future proposals can be presented to our next meeting. Currently the membership of the group comprises the four tier one local authorities in the HoSW area, representatives for both the Devon and Somerset District Councils, private sector (both from individual businesses and business organisations), a representative for the Local Nature Partnerships in the HoSW area, Network Rail and the Environment Agency representation. Mel Squires represents the LEP Board and chairs the group – as part of this review we are keen to secure additional Board member involvement in the Group.

2.3 The Place Leadership group will be taking aspects of its work programme forward through working groups/task and finish groups. Through this we can ensure that experts in particular areas are involved in shaping the work programme and priorities and that bodies that represent particular networks can be appropriately involved. We have recently established an energy working group and will be convening task and finish groups concerning rural productivity and natural capital as next steps. In addition, a task group will be convened to support the commissioning of a policy "think piece" concerning the future economic prosperity of market towns in our area.

2.4.1 Key partnership relationships. The infrastructure and place "portfolio" is diverse and encompasses a range of policy/activity areas, each with their own technical specialisms. As a result, the Place Group works with a number of specialist partnership bodies and delivery mechanisms across different aspects of the infrastructure and place theme. This includes the HoSW Local Transport Board (established by the Local Authorities and the LEP and responsible for the local transport schemes in our Growth Deal programme), Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) across Devon and Somerset and the South West Energy Hub (regional body established via funding from BEIS as a partnership of LEPs

and local authorities to facilitate local energy schemes). In addition the Place Leadership group works closely with public bodies (including Local Authorities, National Park Authorities and Government agencies) given their statutory responsibilities for various aspects of the infrastructure and place theme. Because of this public bodies are more strongly represented in the work and membership of the Place Leadership group than is the case with the LEP's other leadership groups.

2.4 Place theme support and co-ordination. Somerset County Council (SCC) provides staffing capacity and expertise for the co-ordination and delivery of the LEP's place theme activity as part of the set of service level agreements with local authorities to support the delivery of the LEP's delivery themes. The service level agreement (SLA) for this activity was updated in 2019/20 and resources two dedicated posts: an Operational Lead (Anne-Marie Spalding) and a Rural Opportunities Lead (being recruited). In addition, the LEP retains on a consultancy basis a transport advisor (Ian Harrison) to provide specialist expertise with this part place activity.

3.0 Infrastructure and Place work programme

3.1 In the first quarter of 2020/21 key areas of work have included completing the process associated with the call for digital/mobile infrastructure schemes and working towards Growth Deal funding agreements for the three projects resulting from this – Boosting Mobile Connectivity, 5G Smart Sound Plymouth and Further Education Digital Accelerator Programme. In addition, we have inputted from a place perspective to the June 2020 submission to MHCLG for shovel ready projects and commenced work on refreshing our working arrangements post the Board effectiveness review.

3.2 Appendix A contains a detailed summary of priorities, progress and next steps for infrastructure and place activity in 2020/21. Looking forward priority tasks for the remainder of 2020/21 include:

- **Growth Deal programme**- monitoring and oversight of projects from the Somerset Rivers Authority, the local programme of local transport schemes across the HotSW area and digital/mobile investments;
- **Governance** – completing the refresh of the Place Leadership group membership/terms of reference and establishing relevant task and finish groups for natural capital and rural productivity;
- **Energy** – establishing with support of energy working group our key priorities and actions to progress. As part of the membership refresh securing energy sector involvement in Place Leadership group;

- **Natural Capital** – develop investment prospectus for natural capital opportunities in HotSW area;
- **Employment land** – finalise response to recently completed HotSW employment land study, including actions for the LEP;
- **Enterprise Zones** – updating with partners the implementation plans for each Enterprise Zone in HotSW area. Intention is to have updated plans in place for November 2020; and
- **Transport** – support efforts to rebuild confidence in the use of public transport post Covid-19. Contribute to the development of a transport decarbonisation strategy for the South West, in response to the climate emergency. Contribute to the development of strategic transport networks, including A303/A358 road improvements, strategic planning of rail network routes and proposals to reverse Beeching rail closures.