

**Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership  
LEP Board Paper 6d.**

**Report title:** Business Leadership Group restructure

**Date:**

**Purpose:** This paper is for **decision**

(overwhelming papers should be for decision)

**Link to LIS (or Recovery Plan?):** Indicate by **bolding** which area the paper links to.

Inclusive Growth		Clean growth		
Energy		Engineering		Digital
Ideas/ Innovation	People/Skills	Infrastructure	<b>Bus. Environment</b>	Places

**Non- LIS purpose:** (if not connection to LIS, explain it's purpose. Again overwhelmingly papers should link to the delivery of LIS)

**Timing:** (when will the recommendations, if agreed, take effect) immediately

**Financial Impact:** (cost or cost saving) no change

**Decisions requested:** Board to agree proposal and next steps detailed in paper.

**Author and contact details:** Richard Stevens/ Julia Blaschke

## **Summary**

As laid out in the Terms of Reference dated November 2017, the Business Leadership Group (BLG) had an advisory role, supporting the following objectives in the SEP. In addition, the group has recently agreed to become the Programme Board for the ERDF Inward Investment programme and intends the same for the new Growth Hub support programme.

Membership has been drawn from the HotSW area and aims to reflect the spirit of a balanced partnership by inviting members from all across the public, private and voluntary sector. The membership is being limited to 20 members and the majority should come from the private sector.

The group currently has only an advisory function, without any decision-making powers. Its activities so far have centred around providing specialist advice, being a conduit, and providing advice to SIP and the Board on matters such as Growth Hub, European and national funding and Growth Deal and UGF prioritisation.

The LEP has recently developed two regional economic strategies, the Productivity Strategy and the Local Industrial Strategy. The LEP has worked with Government to co-develop a Local Industrial Strategy. The focus of the LIS is on three themes, Energy Futures, Engineering Futures and Digital Futures, as well as five foundations, including Business Environments and Ideas.

At the last LEP Board meeting, the Board has agreed the recommendations from the LEP Board effectiveness review, which included a suggested restructure of the groups, including the creation of a fourth group to cover Innovation, and setting new objectives for each group, centred around LIS delivery.

In addition, recent communications from BEIS (as part of the additional funding that was allocated at the last Budget) have demonstrated a change in what Government defines as Growth Hubs. Rather than being an individual business support service, the Growth Hub has become an ecosystem of support services and functions. While some of these are already overseen by the LEP, such as the Scale-Up support service, others so far had only little connection to the Business Leadership Group (see Annex 1 for ecosystem). In addition, BEIS wants to hold co-design meetings with each Growth Hub to discuss their individual proposals. BEIS has suggested 17 July as a proposed meeting date for this.

These recent changes require a restructure of the group, its remit and membership.

#### Proposal

BLG will take an active role in the identification, commissioning and delivery of the business theme and oversee the delivery of the LIS' Business theme including being the "intelligent client" for the delivery of the Growth Hub. This will include stronger links to the sectors (including regular updates from the leads as part of the Business Board update) and overseeing and measuring the LEP's engagement with the business community. BLG will put forward proposals using the existing decision making structure of the LEP.

Activities will include overseeing the Growth Hub ecosystem, e.g. identifying current provision and gaps in delivery, opportunities for simplification, as well as identifying and recommending projects for delivery and overseeing projects and programmes to deliver the theme.

In order to be able to become the programme board for externally funded projects, the membership of BLG will need to comply with requirements by the funder. In addition, its membership should have a majority of private sector members, adequately reflecting the economic geography and business stock of the area, and it should be limited to a maximum of 20 members. The Chair should come from the private sector. Meetings should be held quarterly. All members will continue to sign Declarations of Interest.

Therefore the following next steps are required:

- Agree ToR
- Agree annual work programme
- Review membership and invite new members, as necessary
- Work with Opportunity leads, Inward Investment manager and Partnerships manager