

Minutes of Enterprise M3 LEP Board Meeting no. 2

2.30 pm Wednesday 7 September 2011
Chute Room, Hampshire County Council

Attendees

Geoff French, Chair of Enterprise M3
John Copley, Vice Chair
Brig Neil Baverstock
Paul Bright
Cllr Patrick Burridge
Tim Colman
Peter Cowen
Kate Dean
Cllr Andrew Finney
Diane Hayward
Dr Malcolm Parry
Laura Pelling
Mike Rushworth
Cllr Ken Thornber

Apologies

Louise Punter
Cllr Moira Gibson

1. Welcome and update from Geoff French

Following introductions, KT explained that he was also a member of the Solent Board and was willing to liaise with them. He also expressed HCC's support for the action groups and asked the board to make him aware if they believed that any further involvement was required to assist any of the action groups.

a. Action Groups (Summary sheet attached)

Six groups have formed and two have presented to the Implementation Group. All have met apart from the Infrastructure Group who will meet on 7 October.

AF raised the importance of setting up sector groups for the LEP, particularly aerospace and space and to ensure that EM3 participated in emerging national sector networks in these areas. JC confirmed that FAC was providing support to these sectors within the LEP footprint and was in the process of aligning this activity to the LEP structures. He would be representing the LEP at both national sector LEP networks. Other sector groups to support the LEP's sectors of strength would be established as appropriate partners and resources are identified.

ACTION 2.1 - JC through FAC to represent EM3 on Aerospace and Space national LEP networks and formalised alignment of Aerospace and Space sector support groups.

AF also raised the issue of the Innovation and Growth Teams databases currently being held by SEEDA. Susan Priest should be in contact shortly to discuss how LEPs can use this data.

ACTION 2.2 - AF to maintain communication with SEEDA to ensure LEP gains access to SEEDA databases

ACTION 2.3 - DH to circulate Implementation Group notes to the board.

b. HEP Business Survey

HEP is carrying out a business survey across the whole EM3 area funded by the Capacity Fund from Government. 220 responses have been obtained so far with a target of 500. Summary of findings attached.

c. Start-up Fund

The LEP successfully bid into the BIS Start Up fund and received 100% of its request for funds at £210,000. This is from a total of some £5m over nearly 40 LEPs, so is above the national average and a strong achievement for an LEP in the south.

d. Additional Surrey districts and New Forest

GF has written to Ministers to clarify that the New Forest is part of Enterprise M3. Surrey districts of Elmbridge, Runnymede and Spelthorne have written to request membership of Enterprise M3. This was unanimously agreed by the board.

ACTION 2.4 - GF to write to Ministers to confirm Elmbridge, Runnymede and Spelthorne inclusion.

e. Enterprise Zone

EM3's bid for Enterprise Zone status was not successful. It was noted that the majority of the benefits of Enterprise Zone status can be implemented without formal status.

ACTION 2.5 - Implementation Groups to look at implementing Enterprise Zone benefits.

f. Links with other LEPs

GF and JC have met with neighbouring LEPs including Solent, Coast to Capital, Thames Valley, Swindon and Bucks. The British Chambers are co-ordinating a networking group and there is a conference in London on 15 Sept including ministers and civil servants from BIS and CLG. GF and JC are attending.

2. Identifying priority objectives - feedback

a. JC reported that around 200 people have been actively engaged in the six actions groups. The actions groups have been asked to identify a limited number of priorities for implementation. So far these can be summarised as :-

- Skills and Employability Group
 - Implementation of an Apprenticeship Training Agency - FE colleges across the LEP are working together on this to lower barrier for take up of apprentices by business, particularly SMEs.
 - Redeployment of armed forces/ defence leavers - including implementation of national Talent Retention Solution and ensuring full connection with armed forces outplacement activities.
 - Supporting graduates into employment.
 - Signpost all existing skills training activities through LEP website to raise visibility and accessibility to business.
 - Identify sources of EU funding.

- Rural and Broadband
 - Support county councils in nationally funded broadband activities.
 - Explore/unlock rural planning issues.
 - Support renewable energy technology.
 - Identify sources of EU funding.
- Finance, Innovation and Business Support
 - Map, support and make visible to business what already exists, through LEP website, as a first step.
 - Access to finance - meet the money and meet the buyer events are planned
- Infrastructure
 - Business survey in train to understand business' views on infrastructure issues. An open invitation meeting will be held on 7 Oct to define priorities.
- Land and Property
 - Build on Land Assessment carried out in Hampshire to establish an accessible database of business premises and sites with development potential across the LEP area.
- Leisure, Tourism, Place-shaping and inward investment - two subgroups:
 - Leisure and tourism to be defined
 - Inward investment
 - develop strong relationship with UKTI through a memorandum of understanding in order to access national inward investment opportunities.
 - develop sector propositions around aerospace/defence, and probably 1-2 other sectors where the LEP has national and international strengths.
 - develop network of partners across county and local authorities and other partners to deliver account management of inward investment opportunities.
- General Themes where a cross LEP approach is appropriate
 - EU funding - identifying and winning funding opportunities to provide a sustainable source of revenue for the LEP to enable implementation of business priorities.
 - Signposting of existing sources of business support through an LEP "one stop shop".
 - Communications channels to business to raise awareness of available support.
- Potential Quick Wins
 - Implementation of an LEP-wide Apprentice Training Agency (ATA)
 - Support the redeployment of armed forces/defence leavers - linking national programme with local employers
 - Inward investment structure to access and deliver opportunities
 - EU Funding - LEP central function

ACTION 2.6 - Implementation Group and Action Group Chairs to drive the implementation of the priorities above as resources permit.

HCC could support application for EU funding and Hampshire wide priorities are being developed through the Hampshire Senate. GF confirmed that he had been invited to attend Senate meetings.

ACTION 2.7 - Implementation Group to engage with HCC in implementing an LEP EU bidding capability.

3. Future Activities

a. Whitehill / Bordon project

The background to the project is that the military are to leave the area over the next few years and there are a number of local people employed in training roles, mostly engineers. There has been about £12m of Government funding in the Ecotown project and a masterplan has been developed with a focus on the renewable energy sector. Access has improved since the opening of the Hindhead tunnel. It was agreed that there is a role for the LEP in helping to identify the offer for the area including looking at the space sector and also identifying further infrastructure improvements.

ACTION 2.8 - PB to arrange tour of the area and host Jan 2012 LEP board meeting.

b. Nokia

Nokia have set up a scheme to support 700 employees due to leave their Farnborough site by the end of 2012 and have sought LEP support. Three strands that the LEP is getting involved are :-

- Business start-ups - Nokia are actively supporting employees who want to start a business. Dialogue has been initiated between Nokia and Surrey Research Park who are liaising with Nokia and will be attending an event at Nokia on 20th September to explain the support to start-ups that they offer.
- Redeploy within the advanced engineering sector - the deployment of the national Talent Retention Solution which is intended to help individuals with technical skills to redeploy from declining sectors into growing ones.
- Access to opportunities in the Voluntary / social enterprise - Paul Bright leading on providing access to appropriate organisations in the third sector.

ACTION 2.9 - JC/LP to continue to coordinate support to Nokia and establish an enduring start-up support infrastructure through appropriate partners.

As part of the ensuing discussion it was mentioned that we need to make sure that business support is in place for the basics of running a business such as completing tax returns as this is usually why businesses fail. It was noted that Businesslink are providing workshops and that for armed forces leavers there is a business start-up centre in Aldershot.

It was also mentioned that the Government are looking at city regions as a way of driving economic growth. It was suggested by AF that we may need to revisit the south east hub approach.

4. Start-up Fund

£210,000 is available up to end March 2012 within the areas identified in the bid submission circulated as board papers. Following consultation with BIS, there may be some reasonable flexibility to vire funds between projects.

Scrutiny of spend under this fund would be carried by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council as the responsible accounting body, through the Implementation Group. The LEP Board would maintain an overview of activity.

To date one contract has been let for website development and four tenders have been received for consultancy support to assist in developing the business plan.

Other potential uses of funds that are being developed are from HEP to provide a central LEP funds bidding function; from FAC to research and set up an aerospace sector group and develop an inward investment proposition for the sector; and from HEP to support action group delivery. Overall usage of less than one third of available funds has been identified to date.

In addition, LP offered to lead a group to develop a communications plan for the LEP.

ACTION 2.10 - LP to lead on establishing a communications/PR plan for the LEP.

5. Business Plan

GF suggested that he saw the business plan as being relatively short, explaining what each group and level of the LEP structure did with a diagram showing the links and membership of each group with terms of reference.

There was also a discussion about key performance indicators and how they could be determined for Enterprise M3 and help us to focus on the priorities to provide top down direction from the board to complement the growing bottom up activity generated by the action groups. There was also a view that flexibility is required to enable us to respond to opportunities like the Nokia project. A business plan should outline aspirations and identify a value base.

GF outlined that the next few months were crucial in getting established and identifying ongoing funding from local authorities and the private sector, and placing increased emphasis on implementation. KT said that he was happy to receive and consider a request for funding from EM3 as HCC was contributing financially to the Solent LEP.

TC said that FSB had had discussion with BIS and concluded that a business levy was not an attractive proposition for most businesses. It was agreed that there would need to be strong evidence of the LEP starting to deliver value to the private sector before the private sector was approached for financial support to the LEP.

Funding was in place from the Start-up Fund to engage support for developing a business plan. This would be developed over the next few months and discussed in detail at the next board meeting in November. Individual discussions would be held with board members who wished to contribute to this process prior to the board and GF invited observations on the proposed business plan from board members.

ACTION 2.11 - Consultant to be appointed and briefed, meetings to take place with individual board members and business plan to be drafted as a priority. It is intended that a well developed and discussed draft plan will be ready ahead of the next board meeting.

6. Future Events

The LEP will be meeting with MPs from the footprint on 18th October in Westminster to brief on progress.

ACTION 2.12 - TC to support in getting attendance from MPs.

7. Other Issues

Discussion about whether or not the LEP should respond to consultation on the National Planning Policy Framework

ACTION 2.13 - GF to draft a response. Any board members with comments to email them to GF.

8. AoB

None

9. Next Meetings

9 November 2011 - Surrey Heath
18 January 2012 - East Hants