

**Enterprise M3 Board**

**24 May 2018**

**Enterprise M3 Directors Report – Item 16**

**1. Strategic Economic Plan/Industrial Strategy**

- 1.1. We are finalising the **Refresh of the Strategic Economic Plan** and have met with several key partners, LA CEs, Joint Leader's Board and as well as several board members and SEP Steering Group members. Government are still planning a phased approach starting in the Autumn. We are picking up renewed interest in the Industrial Strategy from Government and the Cabinet Office are working with us on case studies linked to the Industrial Strategy. The Cabinet Office are delighted with the case studies we have sent over linked to our Growth Hub and our Expansion and Equity fund run by FSE.
- 1.2. BEIS/Treasury are carrying out a **Business Productivity Review** and have put out a call for evidence. The review is considering different aspects and this next stage will look at low productivity businesses and the support and effectiveness of public interventions. We will be working with our Growth Hub on our response.

**2. Senior Sponsor**

- 2.1. We were notified that our new LEP Senior Sponsor will be Isobel Stephen. She is Housing Supply Director at the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government. The Senior Sponsor role is being re-established at an important time for LEPs. The Industrial Strategy reaffirmed the Government's commitment to Local Enterprise Partnerships, with rising levels of ambition for LEPs to act as a partner to inform national policy making (through new initiatives such as the Prime Minister-led biannual Council of LEP Chairs which is looking to meet for the first time in June). Government are further looking to strengthen the role of LEPs through the on-going Minister-led LEP Review, due to be published before Summer Recess.
- 2.2. The expectation is that the senior Sponsor will support and challenge their LEP to be as effective and ambitious as possible. The Cabinet Secretary has set out his expectations that the Senior Sponsor;
  - Engages directly with the LEP at least four times year (with at least two face-to-face meetings, in Whitehall or in the LEP);
  - Supports the LEP to identify opportunities to engage more strategically with central government, acting as a catalyst to action in Whitehall;
  - Gathers intelligence on the particular challenges and opportunities to economic growth in specific local economics across England and uses this intelligence to inform cross-Whitehall strategies and the PM-led Council of LEP Chairs.
- 2.3. The Area Lead will support engagement with the Senior Support, as will a central secretariat based in Whitehall. This will ensure that engagements are captured and actions are followed-up centrally and locally.

### 3. LEP Review

3.1. Joe Manning and Johnny Wright gave an overview of the LEP Review to date at a recent LEP Network meeting. LEP Chairs are meeting to discuss further on 29<sup>th</sup> May. The LEP Review will conclude in the coming months - continuing to strengthen LEPs. Cities and Local Growth Unit highlighted the following issues being considered as part of the Review:

- roles and responsibilities of LEPs;
- corporate form;
- leadership and governance, including consideration of training and induction of Chairs (as recommended by the PAC);
- performance and capability: refreshed MoU in development with the LEP Network, and where LEPs can provide peer support and self-govern;
- geography and the LEP interaction with CAs and MCAs.

### 4. Resourcing

4.1. I have spent much of my time recruiting new members to the team and drawing in support to cover gaps. I have now recruited two interim Assistant Directors – Sally Agass and Gary Thompson. Both come with considerable experience from across the country and have hit the ground running. Sadly Ganesh Selvarajah, our EZ Programme Officer died unexpectedly last month and we are now advertising to fill this post.

4.2. We have finished interviewing for Board members and there is an update in the Board papers. We are enhancing our induction material for Board members and have paired up new Board members with “buddies” to help them settle in.

4.3. 17<sup>th</sup> May saw the launch of the Tech Nation report and it was good to see Basingstoke, Aldershot (they include Farnborough and Surrey Heath in this term) and Guildford included. We have been lobbying Tech Nation hard all year on the strength of our tech cluster and it was good to see our efforts rewarded. A recent DIT event where we showcased our Gaming sector was also very effective and has resulted in much interest from DiT and links to companies.

### 5. Other Activities

5.1. **Innovation South** South held a key meeting to agree future actions. Pleasingly all 6 LEPs from Innovation South attended and work is in hand, along with Growth Hubs, to identify more coordinated working on exports and joining up with DiT.

5.2. The LEP continues to be closely involved in the work of **Transport for the South East (TfSE)**, where there have been a number of key developments recently as the scope and influence of the grouping has intensified. TfSE was brought together to promote the case for investment in strategic transport infrastructure across the South-East to unlock the potential for continuing growth where lack of transport infrastructure has been a barrier to sustainable development, including for housing and more world-class businesses.

5.3. Transport for the South East organised a Conference, Connecting the South East, which took place at **Farnborough International** on 8 May. As well acting as the formal launch for TfSE it also offered an opportunity for us to showcase our major investment at Farnborough International with over 200 leaders from business, government and transport attending. The event put the spotlight on how the South East’s transport network can power growth and opportunity and improve the lives of the travelling public.

- 5.4. It also acted as the occasion to formally launch the consultation on the first major piece of work carried out by TfSE; an **Economic Connectivity Review**. This is the first major component of TfSE transport strategy for the region and contains an analysis of current and future economic activity in the South East and its connections to major centres beyond the region. The review identifies the economic outcomes of transport in the South East and suggests an approach to understanding where investment in transport infrastructure may yield the greatest benefits.
- 5.5. Areas covered by the study include economic hubs and industrial clusters, high-value industries, connectivity needs and challenges, the shape of labour markets, international gateways and transport corridors within the South-East and regional scenarios for growth.
- 5.6. The review was produced for TfSE by consultants Steer Davies Gleave. It is available for comment until 19th June and whilst the LEP has been closely involved in the development and production of the study we still consider it will be of benefit to submit a full response. **The full report is available on the TfSE Website at:**  
<https://transportforthesoutheast.org.uk/strategy/ecr/>
- 5.7. Transport for South East has also received a strong endorsement by Government by way of securing substantial financial support. Initially TfSE has been funded through contributions from local authority partners, with staff resources being provided by East Sussex and Surrey County Councils. This has limited the work that can be carried out though has been sufficient to enable a road map and the Economic Connectivity Review to be commissioned.
- 5.8. In March TfSE secured an initial contribution of £100,000 from the Department for Transport for the 2017/18 financial year to aid the development of Transport for the South East's transport strategy. **Then at the TfSE launch event, Chris Grayling announced a further £1m grant to TfSE.**
- 5.9. TfSE has also been working hard to raise its profile amongst local MPs. Last year a parliamentary reception was organised for the emerging subnational transport body. This was followed in April this year by a Westminster Hall debate, called by Hum Merriman MP to enable MPs to demonstrate their collective support for the aims and objectives of TfSE. MPs showed cross-party support for TfSE during the debate and backed the work of in establishing a transport strategy for the whole region to support economic growth. Importantly they agreed that while each MP had their own constituency interests at heart, working together on a common transport strategy would be the most effective way to get results for everyone. The debate was attended by Transport Minister Jesse Norman on behalf of the Government who praised the programme.
- 5.10. Work on our **annual report** is progressing well and Board will see mock ups of the annual report at our meeting. We advertised **our AGM** (being held on 8<sup>th</sup> June at The Village, Farnborough) this week and already over 70 people have registered with 40% of people from business.
- 5.11. We are working with HCC and Rushmoor on an event for business at the **Airshow** on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> July. Unfortunately, we will only be able to involve a few Board members and will be in touch soon.

Kathy Slack  
17<sup>th</sup> May 2018