

HotSW Joint Committee

Meeting date – 25 May 2018

GREAT SOUTH WEST UPDATE

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1. Summary

- 1.1. This report updates the Joint Committee on the progress in establishing cross LEP area regional working through Great South West and requests support for the key agendas that Great South West should initially focus on.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. **The Joint Committee agrees to continue to support the establishment of Great South West and confirms the key agendas it feels the region should focus on as momentum builds.**

3. Reasons for recommendations

- 3.1 The South West of England is a great place. It is poised for a step change in productivity and prosperity, taking advantage of the opportunities presented by the UK's Industrial Strategy. When productivity in the South West matches current levels in the South East, we will add over £18 billion a year to the UK economy. Local Authorities, Businesses, LEPs and Universities in the region have been coming together over the last 18 months to build the narrative and momentum for a region that is world class and of national and international significance;

- Our economy is already bigger than that of Greater Manchester and more than two and half times that of Birmingham
- We are home to the single largest infrastructure project in Europe, generating £billions of business opportunities
- We have the best natural capital in the country, attracting more visitors than anywhere outside London

The recommendation will enable the Heart the South West Partnership to promote shared objectives and progress shared opportunities through the new Great South West partnership with our neighbouring areas.

4. Background

- 4.1 The publication of the South West Growth Charter (<http://www.pennon-group.co.uk/system/files/press/south-west-growth-charter.pdf>) in 2016 by a group of businesses led by the Pennon Group was the starting point for the conversation between businesses, education establishments and LEPs to build momentum towards greater collaborative working across the South West to promote regional economic growth.
- 4.2 There have also been two South West Growth Summits to promote the journey so far to key stakeholders including MPs and central government. Sajid Javid MP encouraged progress on this work. Support for joint working also has come from South West Council members and Kate Kennally (CEX of Cornwall Council) was nominated to represent authorities in initial discussions.
- 4.3 There continues to be support and commitment from authorities, a number of businesses, LEPs and academic institutions from three LEP areas to building further momentum towards a formal recognition from Government of the “Great South West” brand. The three LEP areas are Cornwall, Dorset and Heart of the South West. The three LEPs in those areas have been working to develop the proposition and have outlined some key activities to move it forward. The Heart of the South West LEP Board in January reaffirmed our enthusiasm for the establishment of Great South West and supported:
- An early meeting of a new Steering Committee to include Local Authority and Education members
 - The appointment of a new Partnership Executive to facilitate progress (Rob Dunford from Dorset LEP is now undertaking this role on a two days a week basis)

5. Current position

- 5.1 The new Steering Committee met for the first time on Weds 16 May. Members of the committee are:

	Cornwall	Dorset	Heart of the South West	Other SW reps
LEP Chair	Mark Duddridge	Jim Stewart	Steve Hindley	Deborah Fraser (CBI)
Business Rep 1	Toby Parkin (Chamber of Commerce/ Headforwards)	Ian Girling (Chief Executive, Chamber of Commerce)	Stuart Brocklehurst (Applegate)	Ken Owen (EDF)
Business Rep 2	James Staughton (St Austell Brewery)	John Sutcliffe (Atlas Elektronik)	Karl Tucker (Yeo Valley)	TBC
Business Rep 3	Michael Beadel (Stephens Scown LLP)	Luke Rake (Principal & CEO, Kingston)	Sarah Heald (Pennon Group)	TBC

		Maurward College)		
Local Authority	Kate Kennally (Chief Executive, Cornwall Council)	Rebecca Knox (Leader, Dorset County Council) Or Gary Suttle (Leader, Purbeck District Council)	David Hall (Member, Somerset County Council) Or David Thomas (Leader Torbay Council)	TBC
Education	Mark Goodwin (Deputy Vice Chancellor, University of Exeter)	John Vinney (Vice Chancellor, Bournemouth University)	Judith Petts (Vice Chancellor, University of Plymouth)	Veronica Hope Hailey (Vice President, University of Bath)

It should be noted that Swindon & Wiltshire LEP have indicated they are considering a paper at their next board meeting discussing how they enhance their involvement in regional matters.

5.2 The committee adopted detailed terms of reference based on a vision to:

- **Promote the South West’s great opportunities** for increasing the prosperity of our businesses, our people and our communities and huge potential to contribute to the wealth of the country
- **Developing shared propositions, attracting investment** and tackling barriers to productivity by working collaboratively across our cities, towns and rural communities; making the whole of the South West a prosperous region.

Additionally the Committee’s terms of reference agreed:

- This is not about a fixed geography, it’s about working on areas of common interest across the South West with a “**coalition of the willing**” where our combined efforts can make a real difference.
- Our activities will be **driven by our opportunities** and directed by the steering committee of leaders from business, education and local authorities who believe in this vision.

5.3 Steve Hindley, HotSW LEP Chairman was elected to be the Chairman of the Committee and Jim Stewart Chairman of Dorset LEP as Deputy Chairman. It was agreed that the Steering Committee Chairman should write to the new Secretary of State for MHCLG in June to formally request ministerial support for Great South West. Further letters to follow to Ministers for DIT, DEFRA and DFT. An early priority identified was for a PR and marketing strategy o raise the profile and increase business awareness.

5.4 The following tangible actions for progressing this agenda were discussed by the Steering Committee as the initial areas of focus:

- i. Transport: The clear preference was for one Sub-National Transport Body for the SW of England (and some members flagged they would be continuing to lobby for this). However the Committee supported the work of our Local Authorities establishing a Sub-National Transport Body based around a '**coalition of the willing**' in the Great South West area - working collaboratively with other neighbouring STBs on common agendas.
- ii. Rural Productivity: The Committee supported a three tier approach to progressing the agendas of the SW Rural Productivity Commission; National – where we need all rural areas across England to lobby Govt; Regional – where there were common GSW agendas around Digital, Food and Drink and Tourism; Local – where agendas only applied to one area.
- iii. Trade & Investment: The Committee agreed a set of objectives: to engage with DiT and agree priority targets for trade activity and develop our narrative of how our area can prosper in a post Brexit economy

5.5 The Committee also agreed that it would be important to set some milestones. The initial milestone being an event for Ministers and MPs to be organised in London towards the end of September, ahead of Autumn Budget Statement.

5.6 Further work areas were identified to be considered, subject to resources, at the next meeting:

- Developing our knowledge base of the region's strengths and opportunities. The Universities offered to lead on this work.
- Innovation – an MOU has been signed with Innovate UK and once developed the MOU's delivery plan will provide an easy route map for future investment opportunities

6. Next Steps

6.1 Subject to Joint Committee agreement, the Policy & Technical Support Group, working with the LEP and other key partners, will liaise with the GSW Partnership Executive to aid the ongoing work developing the regional opportunities.

7. Equalities Implications

7.1 There are no equalities implications associated with this report.

8. Other Implications

8.1 Legal:
There are no specific legal implications associated with this report.

8.2 Financial:

The work of great South West is currently being funded by the LEPs. As plans crystallise partners across the Business and Educational and Local Authority communities will be approached to support its work. As the detail on this emerges it will be brought to Joint Committee information at a future meeting.

8.3 HR
No implications.

8.4 Risk
The key risks to the Joint Committee and the wider partnership working agenda of a failure to progress the regional activities as planned would be to hinder the delivery of some of our ambitions set out in the Productivity Strategy where these extend across boundaries.

8.5 Health and Well-being
No implications.

8.6 Health and Safety
No implications.

8.7 Sustainability
No implications.

8.8 Community Safety
No implications.

8.9 Privacy
No implications.

9. Background papers

9.1. None

