

HotSW Joint Committee 1 October 2021

Coastal Productivity Plan Theme Update

Context

The purpose of the Heart of the South West (HotSW) Coastal Productivity Plan (CPP) is to articulate the unique challenges and issues which face the seaside towns and coastal resorts across the local geography, and to co-ordinate and drive action to address the same.

Since the presentation of the CPP to the HotSW Joint Committee in January 2021 both the Coastal Delivery (officers) and Strategic Groups (elected members) have been setup, the recommendations within the CPP have been reviewed and prioritised, along with the development of outline business cases (OBC) for each identified priority. These are:

- Digital Tourism Business Hubs
- Centres of Excellence for Training
- Coastal Action Zone (CAZ)
- Centres of Excellence for R&D
- Lobbying Central Government

Both groups are also considering how to tackle rail and road transport infrastructure in coastal areas and this was discussed at the meeting of the Delivery Group on 17 September 2021 where it was agreed that further work was required before lobbying the Peninsula Transport Board.

Update on Progress

The next step for the five identified priorities is the development of full business cases in preparation for any appropriate upcoming funding opportunities. At the meeting of HotSW CEO Group on 11 August a paper was presented that set out that an estimated £240k was required to support the development of the five identified priorities so that full business cases can be developed. No solution to funding these priorities has been identified.

The LEP has reviewed the opportunities but are unable at this stage to support the funding required to develop these outline business cases due to the reasons listed below. The feedback from the LEP identified the following areas for the group to consider as it further develops its outline business cases:

- More development required around low productivity and poor social mobility
- Greater focus required on health as per the Chief Medical Officer Report
- Increased emphasis on housing stock and digital connectivity
- Need to link OBCs to existing initiatives and work being undertaken in the area.

In relation to the lobbying work the coastal delivery group have been informed that whilst no funding will be forthcoming to support a public affairs campaign the issues pertinent to the coastal work will be represented in the wider lobbying being undertaken by the LEP throughout the autumn.

The coastal delivery group considered the feedback at their meeting on 17 September and resolved to:

- To make contact with organisations such as the Innovation Board and Skills Advisory Panel to explore what work they are undertaking on coastal issues and how the coastal group could work with them moving forward

- Undertake a mapping exercise across the HotSW local authorities to understand what each local authority is doing or plans to do in relation to coastal issues. The group will then review this mapping to understand what next steps it needs to undertake.

The delivery group will reconvene on 20 October and will consider the outcome of the above actions and will then consider the next steps that it will propose undertaking so that these can be considered by the strategic group that meets on 29 October.