

**West of England Local Enterprise Partnership
 Board Meeting
 Tuesday 2 April 2018, 16.00 - 17.30pm
 3 Rivergate, WECA Office, Bristol BS1 6ER**

LEP Board:

Prof Steve West, University of the West of England (Chair)

Cllr Tim Warren, Bath & NE Somerset Council
 Mayor Marvin Rees, Bristol City Council

Cllr Nigel Ashton, North Somerset Council
 Cllr Toby Savage, South Gloucestershire Council
 Mayor Tim Bowles, West of England Combined Authority

Christopher Grier, Airbus
 Martino Burgess, Gregg Latchams
 Mohammed Saddiq, Wessex Water

Neil Douglas, Viper Innovations

Dick Penny, Watershed
 David Brown, The Bristol Port Company

Jon Reynolds, GDS Digital
 Andrew Hodgson, KPMG
 David Pester, TLT Solicitors

Katharine Finn, PwC
 Prof Hugh Brady, University of Bristol
 James Durie, Business West

Agenda

	Subject	Presenting	Suggested timings
1.	Welcome and apologies Apologies from Neil Douglas, Prof Hugh Brady, Cllr Tim Warren, Mayor Marvin Rees, Cllr Toby Savage, Cllr Nigel Ashton.	Steve West	16.00 - 16.10 (10 mins)
2.	Minutes of the meeting of 18th January 2019 To approve minutes from the previous meeting.	Steve West	
3.	Declaration of Interest All Board members have a responsibility to treat all proposals/projects equally and impartially and must therefore declare whether they or their organisation has either a direct or indirect interest in any of the projects to be considered by the Board.	Steve West	
Items for discussion			
4.	Local Industrial Strategy Update ▪ Emerging themes [verbal update]	Steve West	16.10 - 16.30 (20 mins)

5.	Employment and skills plan [slide pack attached]	Stephen Bashford / Rachel Pykett	16.30 - 16.50 (20 mins)
6.	LEP Collaboration ▪ M4 corridor	Helen Edelstyn	16.50 - 17.05 (15 mins)
Business Items			
7.	LEP Assurance Framework	Pete Davis	17:05 - 17:15 (10 mins)
8.	LEP Board recruitment [verbal update]	Steve West	17.15 - 17.25 (10 mins)
9.	AOB	All	17.25

Next meeting:
 Friday 17 May - AGM
Location: TBC

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West of England Local Enterprise Partnership

Board meeting

Friday 18 January 2019, 9:30am – 11:30am

Kaposvar Room, The Guildhall, Bath BA1 5AW

Present:	
Prof Steve West, University of the West of England (Chair)	Neil Douglas, Viper Innovations
Cllr Tim Warren, Bath & NE Somerset Council	Ashley Ayre, Bath & NE Somerset Council
Mayor Marvin Rees, Bristol City Council	Mike Jackson, Bristol City Council
Cllr Nigel Ashton, North Somerset Council	Jo Walker, North Somerset Council
Mayor Tim Bowles, West of England Combined Authority	Amanda Deeks, South Gloucestershire Council
Christopher Grier, Airbus	Patricia Greer, West of England Combined Authority
Andrew Hodgson, KPMG	Martino Burgess, Gregg Latchams
Prof Hugh Brady, University of Bristol	Jon Reynolds, GDS Digital
Katharine Finn, PWC	
In Attendance:	
Helen Edelstyn, West of England Combined Authority	George Margesson, West of England Combined Authority
Jessica Lee, West of England Combined Authority	Menna Davies, West of England Combined Authority
Stephen Bashford, West of England Combined Authority	Chris Hackett, Bristol City Council
Melissa Houston, West of England Combined Authority	Ben Mosley, Bristol City Council
Pete Davis, West of England Combined Authority	Scott Bailey, PWC
Shahzia Daya, West of England Combined Authority	Jonathon Gillham, PWC
Apologies:	
James Durie, Business West	Mohammed Saddiq, Wessex Water
David Brown, The Bristol Port Company	David Pester, TLT Solicitors
Dick Penny, Watershed	Cllr Toby Savage, South Gloucestershire Council

Draft Minutes

1.	Welcome and Apologies	
	Steve West welcomed attendees and apologies were noted.	
2.	Minutes of the meeting of 16th November 2018	
	Steve West went through the actions from November's meeting: Branding: Patricia Greer provided a precis on ongoing LEP collaboration. This included a piece of work with LEPs along the M4 corridor to better understand the economic value of closer joint working. Talent Institutes and Review of LEP programme funding: Covered as part of agenda items 5 and 8. LIS timeline: This has been circulated to members. Feedback on Grand Challenge workshops: Jessica Lee gave a quick update following the series of workshops held. These were well attended and well represented by a range of sectors.	

	<p>Place and Wellbeing: In progress - a follow-up meeting with Steve Nelson is being scheduled.</p> <p>The minutes were approved as a true record.</p>	
3.	<p>Declaration of Interest</p> <p>All Board members have a responsibility to treat all proposals/projects equally and impartially and must therefore declare whether they or their organisation has either a direct or indirect interest in any of the projects to be considered by the Board.</p> <p>Steve West, Christopher Grier and Hugh Brady declared an interest on agenda item 5; Talent Institutes. Due to the agenda item being an update and not seeking a decision, it was felt there was no need for these board members to formally withdraw from the conversation.</p> <p>In future board members are to consider if they have an interest and take appropriate action.</p>	
4.	<p>Regional connectivity and opportunities for collaboration</p> <p>Steve West introduced the item and welcomed Scott Bailey and Jonathon Gillham from PWC who gave a short presentation on regional connectivity.</p> <p>To investigate the regional connectivity of the West of England, PWC were commissioned to conduct research into a number of key topics covering supply chains, labour markets, transport, and research and development. In particular, the research covered:</p> <p>Business linkages: key sectors and supply chain interactions, trade flows, and regional agglomeration patterns.</p> <p>Infrastructure connectivity: with strong evidence underway for the Joint Local Transport Plan, the new research focused on a literature review of the impact of toll removal on the Severn Bridge.</p> <p>Flow of ideas: relationships between West of England universities and counterparts elsewhere, and with business, levels of commercialisation, and assessment of wider research and development.</p> <p>Movement of people: migration and demographic flows, and commuting patterns.</p> <p>A discussion developed around the outflow of migrants and whether this will affect a specific sector. Members also touched on the business linkages around cross sector activity and how we might brand this, strength of supply chain and how it would be useful to map our connections in relation to international trade and export links.</p> <p>Steve West asked that the slides are circulated.</p> <p>ACTION: PWC presentation to be circulated to LEP Board</p> <p>ACTION: Regional connectivity to be an agenda item at the March LEP Board</p>	<p>WECA Office</p> <p>WECA office</p>
5.	<p>Business and Skills update</p> <p>Steve West introduced the item and invited Stephen Bashford, Head of Business and Skills at WECA to update members on the key interventions currently being developed.</p> <p>Stephen started by providing background information, explaining that the WECA business and skills team were responsible for designing, developing and managing a wide-ranging portfolio of projects and programmes against WECA's Operating Framework and associated objectives.</p> <p>Within this are three key themes for delivery: High Value Business and Skills, High Growth Potential & Progression and Inclusive Growth – Basic Skills & Entrepreneurship. Current and emerging interventions to address these themes are:</p>	

	<p>Talent Institutes: The focus will be to bring business and education providers together, providing skills for residents together with research and innovation support for business (in particular SMEs) and at the same time making sure it aligns with the Local Industrial Strategy.</p> <p>WECA are currently seeking outline proposals for Talent Institutes and it is key that we do not duplicate what already existing - it is about finding the gaps and addressing market failure.</p> <p>Members discussed the challenges around how the institutes would measure success and within an already complicated landscape, how do we connect the things we're starting and thinking about with what already exists? There is also a need to really understand what we are trying to deliver.</p> <p>An open discussion also developed around resource and working together (UAs and universities) to ensure this ambitious proposal would be delivered. Members also spoke about the importance of inclusive growth and knowing where our investments flow are to help resolve this, as well as the potential opportunities with the Channel 4 creative hubs.</p> <p>Stephen is seeking three business representatives to assist WECA in prioritising the proposals received and would therefore welcome representation from the LEP Board.</p> <p>ACTION: Business members to email lepchair@westofengland-ca.gov.uk if interested in supporting the Talent Institutes proposal process</p> <p>Growth Hub: Stephen gave background details on what the Growth Hub is and explained that alongside Invest Bristol and Bath, the business support it provides will be organised under three tiers of account management: Universal support – available to businesses of all sizes High growth – specialist 121 for targeted high growth potential firms Strategic account management – regular account management that will require ongoing dialogue to understand barriers to growth.</p> <p>The Growth Hub is now moving to a 'Medium Intensity' model, making it more accessible and not just a website which will hopefully enable us to understand its impact and value.</p> <p>Future Bright: A one pager was circulated to provide information on this is 18-month government funded programme, with a request to circulate through their wider networks.</p>	Business members
6.	<p>Energy Strategy</p> <p>Steve West introduced the item and invited Helen Edelstyn to update the board on the Energy Strategy so far.</p> <p>To give context, Helen began by explaining that in Spring/Summer 2017 all LEPs were awarded grant funding to develop energy strategies as part of governments commitment to a diverse, resilient, affordable and clean energy system that enables economic growth and reduces greenhouse emissions. Members were then taken through a presentation that sets out the evidence narrative and strategy recommendations.</p> <p>An open discussion developed around the local evidence and objectives including the importance of a diversified energy mix to a resilient energy supply that supports economic growth. Chris Grier confirmed that Airbus are actively investing in low carbon technologies and would be keen to work together.</p> <p>Alongside the Energy Strategy is the South West Energy Hub, for which WECA is the accountable body. This was set up to identify and coordinate local energy projects across</p>	

	<p>the south west of England and members expressed an interest in hearing what project ideas would come from this.</p> <p>Members agreed the West of England Energy Strategy as presented.</p>	
7.	LEP Governance	
	<p>Steve West introduced the item and invited Shahzia Daya, Director of Legal and Democratic Services to discuss the role of the West of England LEP.</p> <p>Funding to the LGF (local growth fund), EDF (economic development fund) and the RIF (revolving infrastructure fund) is allocated by government to the LEP and WECA is the accountable body. The role of the LEP is to set the strategic context for funding made under each of these funding streams and then make recommendations through to the Joint Committee.</p> <p>The escalation process for monitoring schemes and project delivery is that projects go to the Investment Panel (made of the Chief Executives) who will advise the LEP Board, who then make recommendations to Joint Committee. The LEP has a responsibility to consider the recommendations of the Investment Panel but they must ensure that the right processes and controls are in place to provide them with that assurance as set out in the Assurance Framework they agreed last year.</p> <p>The agreed Assurance Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ sets out how the LEP will oversee the development of a pipeline of projects for that funding, ▪ sets out how you will monitor delivery of projects to inform future prioritisation and ▪ how you will work with the local authorities to ensure we have a transparent methodology to enable strategic decisions to be made for the region. 	
8.	LGF Monitoring	
	<p>Steve West introduced the item and invited Pete Davis to take members through the 'Growth Deal Dashboard'.</p> <p>Pete explained that a progress report on the delivery of the LGF programme is provided quarterly to the Cities and Local Growth Unit (CLOG). This report includes a dashboard which summaries progress with each project and the LGF programme overall.</p> <p>Recent guidelines require "before submitting to CLOG, you must have appropriate sign off (of the dashboard) by the LEP Board".</p> <p>Members agreed that progress reports should be signed off by LEP Board prior to submission to CLOG. However, exceptionally where this was not possible owing to reporting cycles, sign off could be via the LEP Chair and Chief Executive.</p>	
9.	AOB	
	<p>Steve West informed members that a LEP Annual Performance Review with CLOG was scheduled for Monday 21 January to discuss our performance, governance, delivery and strategy and prior to the meeting a self-assessment form was submitted.</p> <p>ACTION: Self-assessment form and feedback from the Annual Performance Review meeting to be shared with board members.</p>	WECA office
	Next meeting: Thursday 21 March 2019, 9:30-11:30am	

Employment & Skills Plan Update

2 April 2019

West of England Business & Skills priorities

There is clear alignment between priorities identified for our business and skills work and conclusions of the LIS evidence base. The development of a **regional Employment & Skills Plan** will be a key component of our work

LIS PRIORITIES

EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS FOCUS

1 Ensuring that growth is inclusive

Inclusive Growth: Ensuring opportunities for employment and progression are available for all. Addressing gaps in educational and training provision compared with future business needs, ensuring the jobs market works well for residents

2 Giving all businesses the conditions for growth

High growth potential and progression: Targeting high growth potential businesses, addressing the 'long tail' and creating progression opportunities for people in work. Ensuring skills provision reflects current and future business requirements

3 Fostering **innovation**

High value businesses and skills: Fostering innovation from research through to commercialisation. Supporting high value business, ensuring they have access to the skills they need to grow, encouraging diffusion of innovation across sectors

4 Investing in the right **infrastructure and housing** for future growth

Investing in infrastructure: Ensuring people across the region are able to physically access employment and skills opportunities. Ensuring we are developing the skills we need to deliver our infrastructure plans.

Conclusions from the LIS evidence base highlight regional strengths. It also sets out challenges to address if we are to improve outcomes for residents, employers and our regional economy

Supply of skills and labour

- Population is expected to continue growing, but **international migration may be slowing down**.
- Despite a lower than average unemployment rate, **there are approx. 50,000 people not currently in work, who want to be**. Key areas of focus: Young people, young men and BME groups and health (barriers to employment include health issues, skills, caring responsibilities, etc)
- Wages in the West of England are better than average, but there is scope to address inequality and geographical differences. **Low pay** is a particular issue for approx. 15% of the workforce. Key groups include those **working part time and those without Level 2** qualifications.
- Overall the workforce is well qualified. However, **128,500 people do not have level 2 qualifications**. Area of focus: older people
- **Educational attainment in schools** is below average, particularly for disadvantaged children
- **NEET levels** are particularly high in Bristol and North Somerset. With the exception of S.Glos, they are higher for those with **SEND**
- **Employers are more likely to train** than average in WoE

Demand for skills and labour

- Employers are more likely to report **vacancies and hard to fill vacancies** in the WoE, particularly in high skilled occupations
- There are also **skills gaps in the workforce**, which have implications for business growth
- Although businesses were **more likely to train**, the biggest barriers to training were releasing staff for training and cost of training
- A higher proportion than average are **under-utilising staff**, suggesting an opportunity for creating progression opportunities
- In the future, the labour market is expected to hollow-out, with reduced demand for middle ranking occupations
- Addressing the **shortage in technical skills** may provide opportunities to lift individuals from poverty, whilst addressing a skills shortage area

Our regional Employment & Skills Plan

Our draft ambition and objectives

“By 2035, the West of England will be internationally recognised for its sustainable, inclusive and creative economy, providing a high quality of life, prosperity and opportunities for all its residents. Our people will be skilled, healthy and able to access a ‘ladder of opportunity’ to achieve their potential and our businesses will be able to find the skills and talent they need to thrive”

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-  SO1: Ensuring our young people achieve their potential through improving educational attainment, careers advice and reducing NEETs
-  SO2: Ensuring everyone is able to work, has the support to do so, through tackling health, education and other barriers to work
-  SO3: Ensuring people can progress within employment to better, higher paid opportunities if they wish to do so
-  SO4: Ensuring employers are able to recruit and retain the skills and talent they need to thrive from within the region
-  SO5: Ensuring our employment, skills and education system is integrated and aligned with employer demand and responsive to changing patterns of employment

Our regional Employment & Skills Plan: Building on firm foundations & exploring opportunities

1

Locally led activity

- **Mapping of locally led activity** (i.e. Bristol Works). This will cover: LA led activity, post 16 providers (including colleges, VCSE and broader provider landscape)
- Exploring **opportunities to broaden geographic** reach of activity delivering positive results
- **Alignment between activity in this plan and broader neighbourhood offers**, ensuring residents have access to integrated support

2

Devolution

- Impact of **existing devolution**
- Areas of **devolution agreed elsewhere**
- Are there **specific cohorts** we want to focus on (long-term out of work, 50+ workers, those returning to work, reskilling)
- Understanding **drivers of school outcomes**
- Exploring **transition points**

3

Broader regional activity

Focus and monitoring of regional developments such as:

- Skills Innovation Fund
- WECA Investment Fund
- Talent Institutes
- Growth Hub
- Careers Hub & Enterprise Advisor Network
- Skills Capital

4

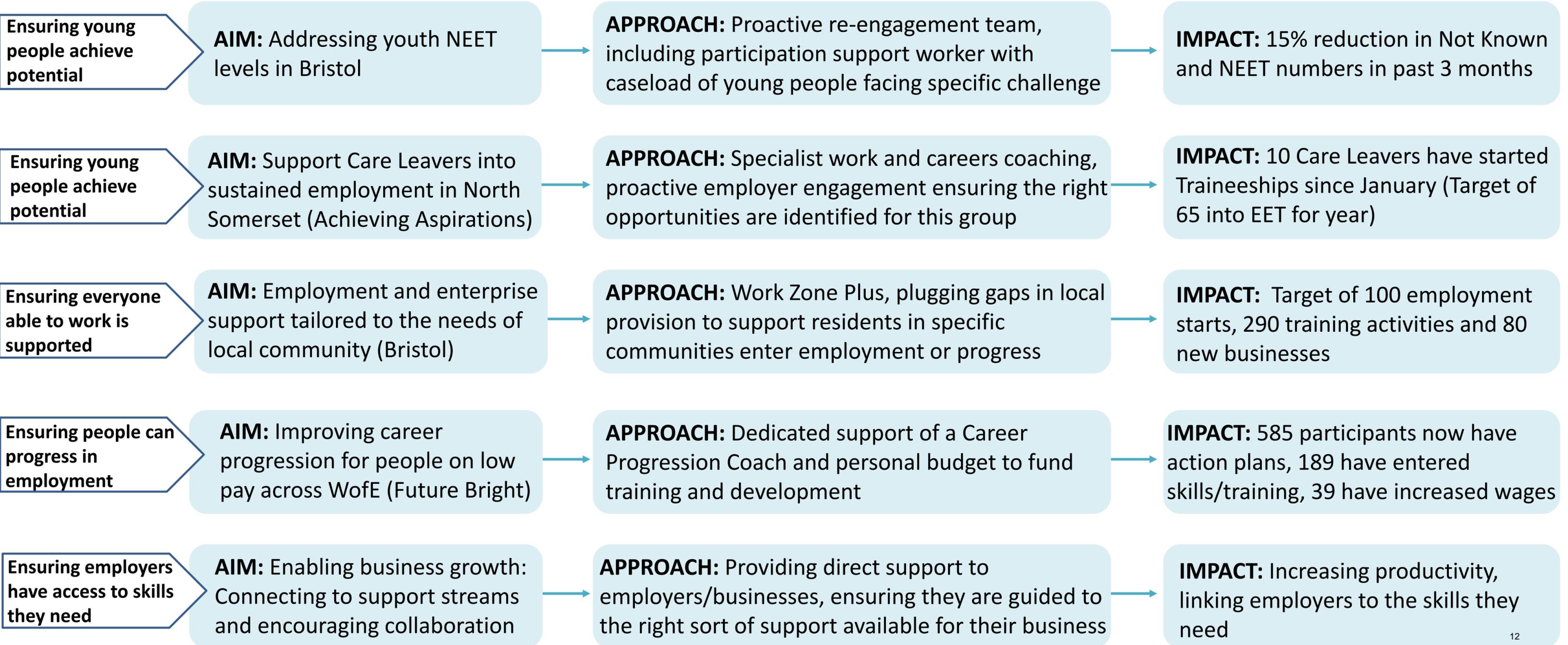
Nationally led activity

Understanding **outcomes achieved through national provision** led by DWP and JCP (and ESF funded provision)

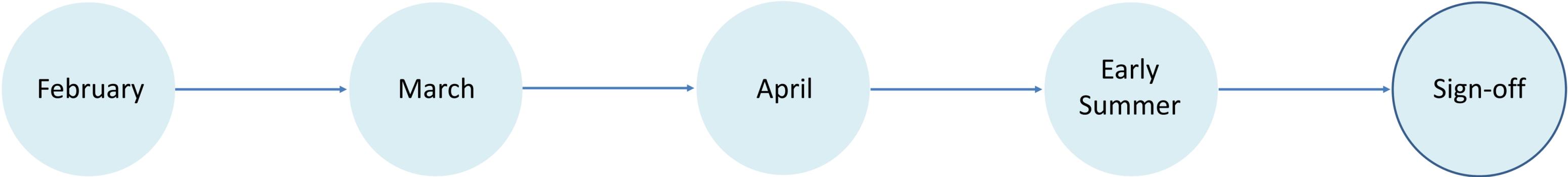
Exploring opportunities to better align DWP and JCP activity with local priorities

Initial mapping has highlighted activity achieving positive impact

To inform the development of the Employment and Skills Plan we will aim to identify key characteristics of successful interventions
(i.e. do place-based interventions have better results, are integrated programmes having greater impact, do different payment models have a bearing on results, does the timescale for an intervention have an impact on outcomes)



The plan will be developed over the coming months, drawing on broad engagement with regional partners



Skills Officers Group
(acting as a Steering Group for this work)

FE Principals

Skills Advisory Board

VCSE representatives

Skills Expert Group
(including reps from HE, FE, training providers, employers (including LEP Board representatives), business networks, UAs, and the voluntary and community sector)

Regional Chief Executives

Further engagement on emerging strategic narrative with:

- Skills Advisory Board
- Skills Officers
- FE Principals
- LEP

Public Engagement

Key groups will be engaged in drafting, including a final meeting of the Skills Expert Group

Joint Committee Sign-off

**West of England Local Enterprise Partnership
Board meeting – 02/04/2019**

Collaboration

Purpose of the report

The purpose of this document is to begin to present the case for greater LEP collaboration along the M4 corridor; it is work in progress and presents a summary of existing economic analysis and potential areas for greater LEP collaboration.

For the purposes of this report the M4 corridor includes the areas of: West of England, Newport, Gloucestershire, Swindon and Wiltshire and Dorset. Collaboration refers to the process of working together, and not to changing governance structures or geographies.

Recommendation

To consider the report and provide a steer on next steps, as set out below:

In collaboration with the M4 corridor region the following next steps are recommended:

- Better attract government funding or private finance through the development of a common brand or market strategy that highlights a greater economic scale [*this would be developed on a partnership basis and would not involve any new governance or organisational structures – like the ‘Northern Powerhouse’ model*].
- Develop joint pitches for improved medium-distance infrastructure that reduce congestion and improve journey times [road and rail]
- Consider the advantages of joint service provision or activity e.g. a joint internationalisation strategy that promotes Foreign Direct Investment, trade and capital investment
- Consider the advantages of workforce development through increased skills planning across a wider area [*linked to sectors of interest e.g. engineering and digital*]

Background

This paper is based on the idea that there are three reasons for cooperation along the M4 corridor:

1. Being near to each other (geographic proximity) – being close can help facilitate a wide range of economic benefits
2. Having a similar profile – where similar specialisations and expertise can build on each other
3. Having a dissimilar profile – where there are different specialisations and expertise that complement each other

In this context, the benefits of building collaboration between LEPs within a wider region might fall into four categories:

- Better attracting government funding or private finance through common branding or marketing that highlights a greater economic scale
- Improved pitch for improved medium-distance infrastructure through co-ordination of activity
- Higher quality of service through simplification of offerings (reducing numbers of similar schemes, and removing sharp borders in provision) e.g. a joint strategy internationalisation
- Workforce development through increased skills planning across a wider area

The data

Economic potential

The economies along the M4 corridor are home to a diverse range of innovative and high-value businesses, from engineering and advanced manufacturing to banking and professional services. Our economies have continued to grow and make an above-average contribution to tax revenues.

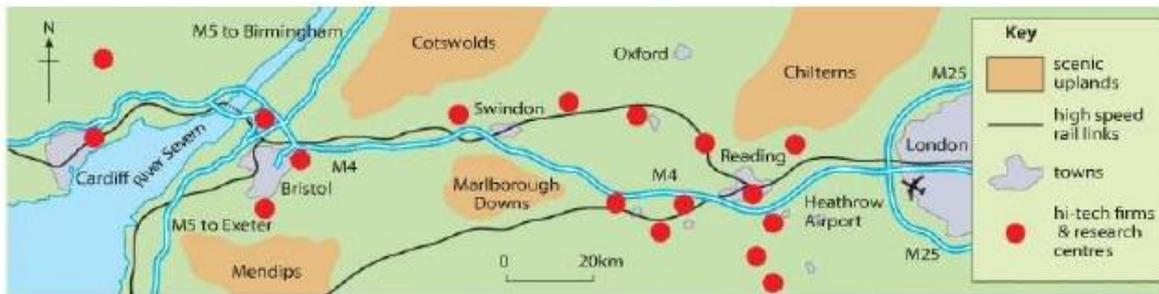
However, our rate of growth could be much higher still. Unlocking additional value both for the wider region and the UK economy, is an important priority for us all. Evidence shows that greater collaboration and connectivity between regions, effectively brings firms closer together, which could give rise to several productivity benefits [PWC 2018], including improving knowledge flows and innovation, and enabling more effective matching of supply and demand.

Infrastructure

This section provides a high-level overview of how well the region is connected. *[further work will be required including the ports and airports]*

We know that connectivity is crucial to the success of our economies. It is associated with agglomeration and facilitates a wide-range of economic benefits these include: • labour market supply and better labour market matching; • labour productivity; • knowledge spill-overs; • business efficiency, such as through reliability savings; and • competition, by access to suppliers and markets. In addition, economic modelling undertaken by Peter Brett Associates has shown that a 20-minute reduction in journey times would result in a 60-year present value figure of welfare benefits of £1.38 billion.

The below image provides a visual representation of the connectivity of the major transport hubs / cities and towns along the M4 corridor including both road and rail.



[Note this is an old map from the TechNation report and will need to be updated to reflect the purposes of this report]

The M4 Corridor is well connected by both road and rail, but there is room for improvement [especially when compared with the rest of the UK ‘PWC 2018’]. This improvement might include measures to decrease journey times, particularly by rail, and to connect less well-connected areas of the M4 corridor region such as Bath and Gloucestershire.

Research undertaken for Great Western Cities shows that more people commute between the Cardiff and Bristol metro areas (2,466), than some of the Northern cities. Removal of tolls on the M4 Severn River Crossing has been welcomed by the region as it will increase road connectivity and better enable the movement of employees, freight and goods, as well as remove barriers to markets.

Delivering high speed digital infrastructure across the wider region will be critical to growth.

Ideas

Analysis shows that M4 universities work well with each other but also with other national institutions. There are strong links with Higher Education providers across the country: the top six collaborating institutions are Oxford, Cambridge, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Cardiff.

There are also several innovation assets across the M4 corridor region including National Composite Centre, Bristol Robotics Lab, GCHQ, Aerospace R&D.

Business environment

Through looking at growth sectors it is possible to identify where there is the opportunity to further develop collaboration. This section draws on data to identify sectors that are relatively more concentrated, in terms of employment, have strengths [in terms of assets and innovation] along the M4 corridor. It also draws on analysis previously undertaken by the South West LEPs on existing sector strengths and collaboration. *[nb. there are limitations to the data used in terms of currency and detail. Further granular analysis will be required to fully understand the scale, reach and potential of each sector].*

Based the analysis there are at least six potential sectors of interest:

- Financial services [West of England, Dorset and Swindon have high employment in this sector]
- Aerospace [Dorset and West of England have an interest and global assets [WoE Airbus and Rolls Royce]]
- Nuclear [Dorset, GFirst, West of England have an interest and assets in this sector]
- Health and Life Science [Dorset, GFirst, Newport and West of England have an interest in this sector]
- Manufacture of transport equipment [West of England and Swindon have an interest and assets in this sector [WoE National Composite Centre]]

- Cyber-security (defence?) [West of England, GFirst, Dorset have global assets [GFirst GCHQ]
- Digital tech [*‘productivity power path’ from London to the mouth of the River Severn, travelling along the M4 corridor and spreading to Southampton and Portsmouth. Turnover by employee ranges from £27,650 in Campbelltown to £320,000 in Bristol’*. <https://technation.io/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Tech-Nation-Report-2018-WEB-180514.pdf>]

Providing business support across a wider region might offer service improvements through simplification, and events that facilitate networking across a wider region.

People

Through looking at growth sectors it is possible to identify where there is the opportunity to further develop skills and workforce planning across a larger geographical area. [further analysis to be carried out by M4 corridor partners]

Next steps:

In collaboration with the M4 corridor region the following next steps are recommended:

- Better attract government funding or private finance through the development of a common brand or market strategy that highlights a greater economic *scale [this would be developed on a partnership basis and would not involve any new governance or organisational structures – like the ‘Northern Powerhouse’ model]*.
- Develop joint pitches for improved medium-distance infrastructure that reduce congestion and improve journey times [road and rail]
- Consider the advantages of joint service provision or activity e.g. a joint internationalisation strategy that promotes Foreign Direct Investment, trade and capital investment
- Workforce development through increased skills planning across a wider area [*linked to sectors of interest e.g. engineering and digital*]

Author: Helen Edelstyn

**West of England Local Enterprise Partnership
Board meeting – 02/04/2019**

Local Growth Assurance Framework

Purpose of the report

1. To update on the progress with the preparation of the new Local Growth Assurance Framework and seek views.

Recommendation

To approve the assurance framework, with any further changes required through the Government approval process to be agreed by the LEP Chair and CEO.

Background

2. Government have set out in guidance their requirements for the way that LEPs operate to ensure due accountability, transparency and value for money, in particular for funding streams overseen by the LEP. The way that these requirements are met are set out in the West of England LEP Assurance Framework which is published on the LEP website. This was last approved by LEP Board in July 2018.
3. Following Government's review of current guidance and practice, including the *Non-Executive Director Review into Local Enterprise Partnership Governance and Transparency* (2017) and *Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships* (2018), revised assurance framework [guidance](#) was published in January 2019.
4. The key changes in the new guidance which need to be addressed in our assurance framework are:
 - Bringing together the previously separate LEP and Single Pot (including the Investment Fund, Transforming Cities Fund and the Adult Education Budget) Assurance Frameworks under a new Local Growth Assurance Framework. This is welcome and reflects our current approach to use consistent processes where practical.
 - Providing further detail, or being more explicit, around aspects of LEP operation and transparency eg inclusion of reference to LEP hospitality and expenses register, LEP Board induction and succession process, publication of diversity statement, extension of publication of register of interest to CEO.
5. Given that it includes the Single Pot, the new assurance framework has to be signed off as compliant by MHCLG. With the agreement that this process could be completed in 3 weeks, a draft of the revised framework (see Appendix 1) was supplied to the Cities and Local Growth Unit on 15 February. Comments are now expected on 25 March, but from feedback received to date these as expected to be of a minor nature aside from those from DfT related to scheme appraisal and value for money.

6. Guidance requires the new assurance framework to be in operation by the end of March. Given delays in receipt of the comments from Government it has been agreed that this deadline can be extended into April.

Appendix 1: Draft Local Growth Assurance Framework

Author: Pete Davis