

**Employment Learning and Skills and Community Policy and  
Performance Board  
Business Planning 2014 – 17**

**LEP Single Local Growth Plan and EU Investment Plan**

***Emerging Priorities***

- 1.0** Work together with the Liverpool Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to develop the single Local Growth plan
- 2.0** Work with the LEP to develop the EU Investment Plan for the Liverpool City Region.
- 3.0** Combined Authority Proposals for the Liverpool City region

**1.0 LEP Single Local Growth Plan**

**1.1 Context**

The Government's response to Lord Heseltine's report on increasing growth has been to develop 'Growth Deals' with every Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). Currently known as 'Single Local Growth Plans' (SLGPs), LEPs are being tasked with identifying growth priorities, which will feed into investment plans to take effect from 15/16. The SLGP forms the basis of the City Region's bids to the Government's £2bn-a-year "single pot" of funds. The fund runs for five years from 2015/16. The Economy, Enterprise and Property Department have been working with the Liverpool City Region LEP to prepare the Plan.

- 1.2 A draft of the Liverpool City Region Local Growth Plan was submitted to Government before Christmas. Feedback and further consultation with a wide and diverse range of City Region Partners, and facilitated by the LEP, will take place early in 2014 and the final Local Growth Plan and Strategic Economic Plan will be submitted in March 2014.

**1.2 Emerging Priorities**

The Liverpool City Region Growth Plan & Strategic Economic Plan sets out the strategic, over-arching long term Growth Plan and ambitions of the Liverpool City Region. It builds on extensive work already undertaken in the City Region and will be complemented by the European Investment Plan for the 2014 – 2020 European Programming Period as well as a Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) which details key investments that are necessary for growth to occur.

Government has committed to a c. £2bn per annum Single Local Growth Fund (SLGF) from 2015/16 that will include housing, skills and transport resources that can be invested locally to maximise growth potential. Government will test the Growth Plan and Strategic Economic Plan of individual LEP areas with resources allocated to local areas based on the quality of their submission. This Plan therefore is of critical importance to the prosperity of our City Region.

The Strategy focuses on three areas:-

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- Business growth opportunities as we aim to **develop a more competitive business base**. As a City Region we need to close the deficit of 18,500 businesses that the City Region suffers from when compared to the rest of the nation. We need to renew focus on encouraging new-start businesses as well as assisting our established businesses to grow. This will focus not just on a limited selection of sectors but on all sectors – encouraging businesses of all types to grasp economic opportunities and create jobs.
- The strategy also focuses on market facing or asset based opportunities, which will allow us to:
  - build on our international connectivity and brand-recognition we will invest in being a **globally connected City Region** further enhancing the SuperPORT concept, our visitor economy assets, our ability to be a centre for trade and export led growth, and enhancing our attractiveness as an inward investment location.
  - maximise our economic growth opportunity and be a **centre for low carbon growth** by developing our energy potential and capitalising on our unique asset base.
  - Build on our status as a **hub for innovation, science and creativity** to ensure the acceleration of benefits. To exploit our science and innovation strengths at Daresbury, major companies, and in our Universities but by also developing the latent talent of our people in sectors such as advanced manufacturing and digital technology
- In addition investment will be needed in the necessary enabling infrastructure and environment so that growth can be achieved and benefitted from by all. In particular by investing in major employment sites to create growth but also in the regeneration of our communities such as through town centre regeneration and improvements to the City Region housing offer as well as through using transport as a stimulant to growth. The Plan also targeting our efforts on those who need re-engaging with the labour market, through up-skilling our workforce and through seeking flexibilities in delivery that support our local economy.

Only through taking such a broad 'whole systems' approach to impacting on our the economy can the City Region start to address the 90,000 jobs short-fall from which it currently suffers.

### **2.0 European Structural Funds**

#### **2.1 Context**

Alongside the SLGP each LEP has been given the responsibility for drawing up plans for how the European Structural Funds will be allocated in the 2014-20 programme period. It is expected that this work will continue into the first half of the financial year 2014/15.

In October 2013 the (Liverpool City Region) submitted a draft EU Investment Plan to Government that sets out how they intend to spend their allocation of EU funding which equates to approximately £185m over the seven year period 2014- 2020. After feedback has been received, the LEP will consult

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with partners before a final version of the Investment Strategy will be submitted to Government in January 2014.

Within the LCR European funding budget, Halton has an indicative allocation of approximately £17m. This is because Government allocated resources based on the regional geography of 2006 (when Halton was classed as part of Cheshire) and apportioned resources for Halton accordingly. Given that the Liverpool LEP will be required to distinguish between the resources set aside for Halton and the rest of the City Region, it is logical to develop a European Funding Action Plan for the Borough.

EU regulations require all EU funding to be spent on 11 thematic objectives, and the LCR priorities are focussed around these. Following discussion with partners and the LEP Post 2013 Sub-Group, it was agreed that proposals which cover the thematic objectives would be taken forward through five Portfolios. This will enable the LCR to present a programme that meets both European Commission (EC) and UK requirements in a way that reflects local priorities.

The five portfolios are:

- Blue/Green Economy
- Business Economy
- Innovation Economy
- Inclusive Economy
- Place and Connectivity

The priority of these Portfolios will be to deliver the following across the LCR:

- Creation of 90,000 new jobs
- Creation of 18,500 new businesses
- Get 49,000 residents into employment

### **2.2 Emerging Priorities**

Halton has mirrored the five Portfolios in developing its own set of projects under the same themes. Portfolio leads from Halton Borough Council have been identified and draft Portfolios produced which identify key projects to be delivered via the Programme. Drafts have been shared with LCR leads for each Portfolio area.

#### **Halton Priority 1: - Blue Green economy**

To develop significant growth and value by exploiting the commercial opportunities for low carbon and the marine economy associated with the port, river, off shore renewables, hydrogen resources, specifically for decentralised low carbon energy, transport and resource efficiency.

#### **Halton Priority 2:- Business Economy**

To tackle head on the economic gap between LCR and England by engaging with the business sector to create 90,000 jobs and 18,500 businesses, harnessing the burgeoning entrepreneurial spirit, openness and historic capability in international trade through collaboration, skills development,

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clusters and social enterprise. It will also support activities to develop and grow existing business in Halton including links to national initiatives such as UKTI and MAS.

### **Halton Priority 3:- Innovation Economy**

To support the translation of our inherent strengths in Big Science, Life Sciences & Bio-Medical, High Value Manufacturing, Green and Blue economy technologies, and Creative & Digital into opportunities for innovation, economic growth and employment within our key knowledge hungry sectors.

### **Halton Priority 4:- Inclusive Economy**

To apply ground breaking innovative approaches to entrepreneurship, skills, social innovation, and local employment to overcome exclusion and capitalise on the latent strength and capacity within Halton's population and communities.

### **Halton priority 5:- Place and Connectivity**

To build on the unique strength of LCR's vibrant historic culture, natural assets, and geographic location by focusing investment on economic infrastructure – such as digital, power, transport, sites & premises - that will support economic growth in strategic locations across the city region which are supported by the private sector. Activity in this Portfolio will complement and enhance activities within the other four Portfolios.

Work is currently ongoing to further develop projects in consultation with partners. This will include identifying match funding and where appropriate delivery partners. The projects identified under each theme for consultation are listed below:-

### **Blue/Green Economy**

**Project 1: *Heat Networks*** – decentralised energy network East Runcorn

**Project 2: *Retrofit*** – development of a domestic and industrial energy efficiency programme

**Project 3: *Hydrogen Fuel Network*** – an infrastructure project that is part of a wider plan to develop Ultra Low Carbon transport capability in the City Region

**Project 4: *Green Networks*** – helping businesses to take up micro technologies/renewable technologies

### **Business Economy**

**Project 1: *Winning new business*** via Government manufacturing advisory service networks, such as MAS and UKTI; develop new market/investment opportunities; support to increase sales; business to business networks

**Project 2: *Business start-ups support and Entrepreneurial Culture programmes***

**Project 3: *Business Support and Investment Readiness***

**Project 4: *Skills Development*** – support to develop current and future workforce via higher level apprenticeships and higher level skills/qualifications

### **Innovative Economy**

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This Portfolio currently focuses on further developing the Sci-Tech Daresbury site to enable more business start-ups and expansion; to support the continued commercialisation of science; to deliver an enhanced business support offer to Campus companies to support growth, including continued access to venture capital, loans and grants.

### **Inclusive Economy**

**Project 1:** Tackling Youth Unemployment – NEET (Not in Employment, Education, Training) 16-24 year olds

**Project 2:** Helping adults back into work 24+

**Project 3:** Skills Development: 'Knowledge Economy Pathway'

**Project 4:** Social Growth & Connectivity

**Project 5:** Halton Community Services: Supported Employment Project, Assistive Technologies Project, SureStart to Later Life 'Age and Opportunities' Project

### **Place and Connectivity**

**Project 1:** To kickstart the delivery of the Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy via the delivery of a turn up and go Rapid Transit Public Transport Network which will also provide for a range of other sustainable transport schemes, including an improved cycle network linking Halton and the wider LCR, to enable residents to better access employment opportunities.

**Project 2:** The Realtime/Smartcard/Intelligent Transport System (ITS) aims to complement Project 1 by enabling seamless travel through smart ticketing and the development of a realtime network information system to facilitate well informed travel choices.

## **3.0 Combined Authority for LCR**

### **3.1 Context**

On 30<sup>th</sup> Sept 2013 the Liverpool City Region submitted its Governance Review to Government. The submission recommends that we create a Combined Authority for the Liverpool City Region, including Halton. The conclusion of the Governance Review is that a Combined Authority is the best model to support economic growth and secure more jobs, in Halton and across the LCR. The Combined Authority will help us signal to businesses and Government that we are serious about working together. It is expected that it will also be able to attract devolved powers and funding from Government.

The proposals were subject to extensive consultation with Members, businesses, partners and the public, and were supported by LCR Cabinet and Council in each of the six City Region boroughs and the Merseyside Integrated Transport Authority.

If there is support for the proposal, an order will be laid before Parliament to create the Combined Authority from April 2014.