

ECDC AND GREATER CAMBRIDGE, GREATER PETERBOROUGH LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Committee: Corporate Governance and Finance

Date: 1st December 2016

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[R139]

1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To provide an update on the ECDC and Greater Cambridge, Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership (GCGP LEP) Memorandum of Understanding.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That members note the contents of this report.

3.0 BACKGROUND/OPTIONS

3.1 ECDC signed a Memorandum of Understanding agreement with the GCGP LEP in July 2016. The agreement replaced the team's annual service plan and is linked to the delivery of the Council's Corporate Priorities. The agreement has a three-year delivery timeframe and can be amended when projects are successfully delivered or new priorities are identified. A copy of the MOU agreement is attached in appendix 1.

3.2 The overall aim of the agreement is to work closely with the GCGP LEP in order to deliver economic growth initiatives and jointly share resources and/or expertise.

3.3 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress on the key projects included within the MOU and to highlight some important milestones moving forward.

3.4 ECDC is the first local authority within the GCGP LEP area to have such an agreement in place and it has been identified as a model of good practice for other Local Authorities to follow by the Chair of the LEP, Mark Reeve. The agreement has a number of distinct advantages for both the ECDC and the LEP;

- a) It provides a platform for funding bids to Government, with our District wide needs discussed, prioritised, clearly set out and agreed within the LEP's broader regional agenda. It also facilitates joined up thinking with other bids or projects that we may otherwise not be aware.
- b) It allows both organisations to benefit from shared resources and expertise enabling the progression of often complex projects that require a multi-disciplinary approach to delivery.
- c) Linked to the above, it also allows the LEP to forward plan with partners within its current economic geography and allocate resources at a local level for the delivery of strategic economic development projects.

3.5 Appendix 2 provides a review of MOU activities and outputs. This progress report

Illustrates both ECDC's and the GCGP LEP's combined reach and fast developing influence within the East Cambridgeshire Economy. 3.6 Within this positive assessment is the back drop of a defined and developing economic opportunity for the area, and ECDC is now at a point where it must consider the overall resources that will be needed to deliver continued economic development growth within the District during the next phase of the MOU and beyond.

4.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The MOU with the GCGP LEP is making excellent progress despite being less than six months into the programme. The Economic Development Team is meeting with the Chief Executive of the GCGP LEP on a quarterly basis to review progress on key projects and to refine the document as and when required.
- 4.2 In addition to the outputs included in Appendix 2, the team have also been the main sponsor of the Ely Standard Business Awards in 2016 which generated excellent press coverage for the Authority and significant exposure for the allied "Enterprise East Cambridgeshire" brand. We also continue to deal with a large and varied range of economic development related enquiries including business start up, commercial property/land and funding requests as part of target indicators included in previous service plans. The team is also awaiting the outcome of three high profile Local Growth Fund Round 3 bid proposals submitted in September 2016 for East Cambridgeshire including Ely Station Gateway, A10 Growth Corridor (North Ely/Littleport) and Soham Station. An announcement on the overall £70m bid from the GCGP LEP to Government is expected as part of the autumn statement on the 23rd November and a verbal update will be provided at the meeting and next steps for these bids.
- 4.3 The MOU has some extremely complex and challenging projects included within it which have brought considerable successes to date for both ECDC and the LEP, including progress on a number of significant economic investments across the district estimated in excess of £50million.
- 4.4 However, as highlighted above ECDC's economic development function will now need to consider its future resources to continue to see progress in this area. The MOU initiative has been a helpful collaborative approach to partly remedy this problem but given the scale of the growth agenda for the area, additional investment will be required. The Economic Development Team is addressing these issues and is looking closely at reorganising its activities as a result. It is recommended therefore that a focussed paper concentrating on resourcing Economic Development is brought back to this committee at the earliest opportunity. It is anticipated that the devolution proposals with regards to economic development will be made clearer by February 2017 and the team is now working towards these timeframes with a view to having additional resources and a new structure in place from April 2017.
- 4.5 The purpose of this report was to update on the MOU agreement. After just six months the positive benefits highlighted and ongoing potential to translate this into a post Devolution platform for shared Economic Development activity are very encouraging.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 A subscription of £13,286 has been paid to the Greater Cambridge, Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership for the financial year 2015/16. This has been met from the Council's economic development budget.

5.2 Equality Impact Assessment (INRA) not required.

6.0 APPENDICES

GCGP LEP/ECDC Memorandum of Understanding - Appendix 1

GCGP LEP/ECDC Memorandum of Understanding Progress Report - Appendix 2

Background Documents

GCGP LEP/ECDC
Memorandum of
Understanding Appendix 1

Location

Room 002
The Grange,
Ely

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GCGP LEP/ECDC
Memorandum of
Understanding Progress
Report Appendix 2