
**GREATER CAMBRIDGE, GREATER PETERBOROUGH LOCAL
ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP**

Committee: Corporate Governance and Finance Committee

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1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To provide an update on the Greater Cambridge, Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership (GCGP LEP) and recent funding announcements.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That members note the contents of this report.

3.0 BACKGROUND/OPTIONS

3.1 The GCGP LEP was established in October 2010 with a private/public sector board appointed alongside a small core management team.

3.2 The geography of the GCGP LEP covers the cities of Cambridge and Peterborough together with the neighbouring market towns of East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire Districts which make up the core local authority sponsors. Beyond these administrative boundaries, the real economic geography extends into parts of North Hertfordshire, Uttlesford, St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath; South Kesteven, South Holland, Rutland and Kings Lynn & West Norfolk.

3.3 The LEP has five priority-streams;

- Enabling the development and occupation of Alconbury Enterprise Zone in line with partners' vision for the site.
- Advocating and influencing improvements to our area's transport infrastructure.
- Promoting business-led skills provision and improving the work readiness of school leavers.
- Promoting enterprise growth and innovation.
- Improving international promotion, increasing inward investment and exporting.

3.4 The GCGP LEP has recently submitted its Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) to Government in order to benefit from Local Growth Funding for the area. This strategy aims to build on the area's international recognised research and technology base and ensure that the growth agenda benefits the whole area. As part of this process East Cambridgeshire District Council was invited to put forward a number of project bids for infrastructure improvements, commercial schemes and skills projects. Two of the six priority transport projects included in this plan are located in East Cambridgeshire including (Ely Southern Link Road and Soham Rail

Station.) An announcement on the first round of Local Growth Funding was made on July 7th and the GCGP LEP was awarded £21.1 of funding which comprises £17.1 m of investment in projects from the SEP and £4m major transport investment that is being handled by the Local Transport Board. The focus of funding in this first round was on projects that could be delivered in 2015/16. As a result, East Cambridgeshire District Council did not benefit directly from this first round of funding. However, Government has stated that negotiations for the next round of Growth Deals will start imminently.

- 3.5 The GCGP LEP is also the coordinating body for a £3.2 million Regional Growth Fund Agri-tech scheme. An application for the innovation strand of this scheme was submitted to the GCGP LEP in March this year. The economic development team facilitated a bid with the National Institute of Agricultural Botany (NIAB) and G's of Soham. This bid was successful and £500,000 has been awarded to NIAB to convert a former packing plant in Hasse Road Soham into a new waste commercialisation research centre. A planning application is expected to be submitted shortly for this project.
- 3.6 The economic development team has also worked very closely with both Grovemere Property Ltd and James Graven and Sons Ltd on two separate bids for Loan Funding from the LEP's Growing Places Funding Round 2. These bids have also been successful and will be awarded £1,000,000 and £500,000 respectively which will allow 9 new starter units to be constructed on Lancaster Way Business Park and the first phase of up to 42,000 sq ft of new office space on the Littleport Eco-Business Park.
- 3.7 As the GCGP LEP was set up as a private sector led body, public sector places on the board were limited which resulted in ECDC not having any direct representation. However, a local East Cambridgeshire business, Whizzle Ltd, based in Sutton has recently been accepted onto the board. The Managing Director of this company (Mark Read) is also the chairman of the Ely Chamber of Commerce and has a very good understanding of the needs of local businesses. The economic development team will continue to liaise with Mark on a regular basis and ensure that local issues are raised through the LEP Board.

4.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 East Cambridgeshire District Council continues to play an active role in the Greater Cambridge, Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership and the Business Development Manager currently attends the LEP Management/ Growth Strategy Group Meetings.
- 4.2 There have been a number of recent successes for grant and loan funding from the GCGP LEP with a strong return on investment provided for the Council's subscription. It is hoped that this can be increased further through Local Growth Funds in future years.

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 2014/15. This has been met from the Council's core budget.

5.2 Equality Impact Assessment (INRA) not required.

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
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