



## **LEP – Sub Committee**

### **LEP - Business Support Management Board**

**Private and Confidential: No**

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### **Business Support Management Board - Work Programme 2017**

(Appendices A and B refer)

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#### **Executive Summary**

This paper is intended to support a discussion within the Board to consider those areas of work which should be a focus for the group through 2017.

At present it is scheduled that BSMB should meet four times through the year 7 March, 8 June, and 11 October and the LEP itself is looking to focus activity within an existing or smaller number of sub groups.

This report highlights those key tasks and responsibilities with which the group is already involved and emerging areas of work where it is likely to be asked to oversee activity in the coming year.

#### **Recommendation**

The Board is invited to note the content of the suggested work programme for 2017 and to contribute other ideas and issues for consideration.

## **Background and Advice**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 It is likely that 2017 will present a range of opportunities and challenges for the co-ordination and delivery of programmes which will contribute to economic growth and well-being in Lancashire. The LEP itself will take this opportunity to renew its own Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) but the wider work programme will undoubtedly be influenced by factors such as the Growth Deal 3 settlement we receive, the emergency of a new, national Industrial Strategy and the course and impacts of the Brexit process.



- 1.2 The terms of reference of the BSMB (Appendix A) identify the following areas of work as priorities:

*Develop and promote business support strategy, initiatives and programmes aligned with agreed priorities, as part of the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan.*

*Seek to co-ordinate and commission a publicly funded business support offer which is clear, fit for purpose and which complements both commercial and national offers.*

*Commission and maintain an evidence-base to help understand key business support demands in the LEP area;*

*Identify and work with other LEP areas on business support issues of strategic and cross-boundary significance; and*

*Advise on the deployment of business support funding directly accessed or influenced by the LEP and make best use of public investment in this policy area.*

## **2. LEP Work Streams Relevant to BSMB**

- 2.1 Within the portfolio of activity set out above, some key tasks will continue as recurring reporting items for the Board chiefly the oversight and impact of publicly funded business support programmes.
- 2.2 The plans to spend the core Growth Hub funding from BEIS will also continue to come to the LEP Board for ratification.
- 2.3 With the refresh of the SEP taking place through the Spring, the BSMB's role to develop an evidence base for activity and to develop an explicit business support strategy will be important in contributing to that process. Current research on productivity (UCLAN) and Innovation (currently being commissioned) will be reported the Board and preparatory work by the Chambers on an International Trade Strategy should be bolstered by the imminent release of HMRC Trade data for each LEP area. All three streams are vital components of the new SEP.
- 2.4 It is anticipated that a consultation draft of a new national Industrial Strategy will be published in late January, followed by a 12 week consultation process. The LEP's Science and Innovation Audit has already begun to identify cross LEP supply chains for key Energy and Advanced Manufacturing sectors and to sketch out the capital assets and revenue programmes which will support their growth. The BSMB should use part of its meeting in March to review a LEP response to the Industrial Strategy consultation.



- 2.5 In terms of wider events, the path taken by the Brexit process and its impacts on business competitiveness and the availability of European Structural Funds will need to be monitored. As part of the LEP's Regional Research Collaboration activity a Brexit Monitor is now being produced (at Appendix B), this will be circulated to Board members.
- 2.6 Finally, the unique role of this sub group to facilitate two way communication between the LEP and business community will remain critical. As some activity and functions potentially migrate to the Combined Authority we will aim to keep business networks fully apprised of these developments.

### **3. Conclusions**

- 3.1 Members of the Business Support Management Board are invited to note the content of the suggested work programme for 2017 and to contribute other ideas and issues for consideration.