



Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Limited

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Strategic Marketing and Communications Update Report

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Executive Summary

This report updates the Board on the development and delivery of a strategic marketing and communications strategy for the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

Recommendation

The LEP Board is asked to:

- (i) Note and comment on the contents of this report;
- (ii) Approve the recommendation that Lancashire will attend the MIPIM International Exhibition and Conference in Cannes in 2018, as set out at point 3.3 in this report;
- (iii) Approve the recommendation to continue to develop a strategic marketing proposition for Lancashire, as set out in this report at point 3.10 by extending SKV Communications' PR and Media contract for a further 12 months; and
- (iv) Note that the Chief Executive of Marketing Lancashire, as the LEP's Media, Communications and PR lead, continues to provide regular updates to the LEP Board on strategic marketing outputs and activity.

Background and Advice

1. Context

The delivery of strategic marketing for the LEP continues with outputs from PR, media and communications, branding, events planning and the delivery and e promotion of the Lancashire narrative. This report outlines the continuing progress being made in each area.



2. Activity update

February and March has seen the LEP enjoy further sustained and positive PR based around some of its key initiatives and events which continue to reinforce the 'We Are Lancashire – the place for growth' positioning which was launched last autumn in the presence of the Northern Powerhouse Minister, Andrew Percy MP.

This strong and focussed messaging has enabled the LEP to take a lead role, underpinned by a collaborative approach, highlighting Lancashire's position as an integral part of the Northern Powerhouse through PR and communications activity in promoting the particular strengths and assets within Lancashire linked to the LEP's priorities of driving growth and prosperity.

Simultaneously, the LEP has continued to sustain the regular 'drum beat' of local and regional PR stories, and the supply of expert quotes/comment on key economic and business issues as well as acting as a consistent and unified voice for those inside and outside of the county to engage with.

Further details of some of this activity from a PR and positioning perspective are captured below, along with details of a number of forthcoming opportunities, events and milestones that which will help maintain this high-profile visibility.

3. Media and Communications Activity Overview

3.1 The Invest In Central Lancashire Conference, Preston, (February 7th)

In early February, the LEP, Marketing Lancashire, Lancashire County Council, Preston Council, South Ribble Council, the HCA and the City Deal communications team came together to deliver a special half-day conference about the investment opportunities linked to 'Central Lancashire'.

Working in partnership with the property, investment and news website Place North West, the event saw over 120 developers, investors and property professionals drawn from across the North West gathered at the Preston headquarters of accountants RSM to find out more about the investment potential offered by Preston, South Ribble and the Central Lancashire region via the City Deal scheme. Panellists included Maple Grove Developments, Muse Developments, Cushman and Wakefield, the LEP, the Chief Executives of Preston and South Ribble Councils, the leader of Lancashire County Council, the Chair of UCLan, the Chair of Marketing Lancashire and local businessman Simon Rigby.

The event was a great success which was captured in a post event press release issued by the LEP showcasing the main talking points and with supportive quotes from key partners involved in the conference, including Muse Developments. Bringing this private sector dimension to the story, with Muse praising the 'open for business' attitude of the local authorities involved in City Deal, gave the PR a newsworthy and relevant edge for other business media platforms.



As result the Invest in Central Lancashire conference, together with pictures, was reported on by the Lancashire Evening Post (both online and in print), Business Quarter, Business Lancashire, Blog Preston, Lancashire Business View and Downtown in Business.

Place North West themselves were so impressed by the quality and depth of the event press release they used it as the basis for their own-post event report which was heavily promoted through their website and email newsletters to all of their readership and in essence the LEP release was the “official record” of the event.

The Chief Executive of Marketing Lancashire is working with the City Deal team regarding the next stages of the Invest Central Lancashire proposition and how this can be launched at a series of events.

3.2 The Northern Powerhouse Conference, Manchester (Feb 21st -22nd)

The Invest in Central Lancashire event was quickly followed by Lancashire’s presence at the Northern Powerhouse Conference hosted at Manchester Central.

Exhibiting under the ‘We Are Lancashire’ banner, and lead sponsor of a special debate on manufacturing in the North, the event had attracted a degree of negative publicity due to a perceived lack of women speakers and panellists.

This meant much of the regional and national media attention during the conference was centred on the ‘women issue’, something Lancashire was not prepared to comment on.

Despite this, after some negotiations between SKV and the BBC North West’s Political correspondent Nina Warhurst, it was agreed that County Councillor Jennifer Mein would talk to the BBC but only about the key role a unified Lancashire was set to play in the heart of the Northern Powerhouse going forward. In this section of the BBC report only three spokespeople were featured (out of a pool of potentially thousands): Minister Andrew Percy, the Head of External Affairs for Manchester Airport Group, Adam Jupp, and County Councillor Jennifer Mein on behalf of the LEP.

This is the second time since January that Lancashire/the LEP has enjoyed positive BBC North West coverage and a name check (the first being the GD3 announcement) at a time when many other LEPs, LAs and city regions were also fighting for coverage over the same issue.

Another benefit of Lancashire’s presence at the NPH Conference included Mike Damms, on behalf of the LEP, leading on the Advanced Manufacturing session which was moderated by journalist John Humphreys and included delegates from Nissan and British Steel. When closing the debate Mike took the opportunity to reaffirm Lancashire’s lead role in advanced manufacturing and advocated the LEP’s partnership approach to driving growth.



Two substantial pieces about the LEP's presence at the conference appeared on the Lancashire Business View website during the week of the event, and a further article in the March/April print edition of the magazine. Other press coverage regarding Lancashire's presence at the conference was secured in the Blackpool Gazette and Business Lancashire.

Another key PR outcome from attending the conference was the chance to get some pictures taken of the Lancashire delegation/stand and some key influencers.

Whilst it wasn't possible to get a shot of Andrew Percy MP on the stand, due to the Minister's time commitments, it was possible to obtain shots of Lord Kerlake, chair of the UK Northern Powerhouse Advisory Board, with County Councillor Jennifer Mein on the We Are Lancashire stand. There were also pictures of Lancashire delegates with Max Steinberg, chair of the Liverpool-based International Festival of Business and Chief Executive of Liverpool Vision.

3.3 MIPIIM International, Cannes (March 13th - 17th)

A small LEP delegation attended MIPIIM, the world's largest property exhibition and conference, as a partner of Manchester. This first year's attendance was intentionally expeditionary with Lancashire never having attended before and not being ready yet to be able to "pitch" to the standard required.

The main objectives of the LEP's attendance was to get a better understanding of how the event operates and what the benefits and outputs are of attending MIPIIM; to strengthen relationships with Manchester who have been attending for over 20 years; to foster new relationships with developers and reconnect with contacts from both inside and outside of the county, to review the competition and improve links with the Department for International Trade (DIT). These are all considered important elements in year 1 to inform our decision as to whether a Lancashire presence at the MIPIIM event would be part of future inward investment activity plans and if so, to build on over the next 12 months in order to showcase more of what Lancashire has to offer in 2018.

Appointments were made both pre-event and whilst out at MIPIIM with meetings and dialogue taking place with GVA Grimley, DIT, the Housing Minister, the Chair of the HCA, Savill's, JP Morgan, RSM, Addleshaw Goddard, Pinnington's and many more. The team attended several presentations including "Driving forward Britain's world class manufacturing sector" and "Enterprise Zones – injecting life into regeneration". A Lancashire Dinner took place on the Wednesday evening with delegates attending from Capita, Sladen Estates, Seddon Construction, Mott Macdonald, Anderton Gables, Virtual Planit, Shakespeare Martineau, HOW Planning, Cushman and Wakefield, Conlon Construction, Network Space and Maple Grove Developments. A follow up note will be sent to those who attended with a suggestion to meet again in about 4 weeks to discuss plans for both MIPIIM UK and MIPIIM Cannes.

The most important image, in terms of PR value to promote Lancashire's first ever presence at MIPIIM was taken at the NPH event in Manchester which was the picture



secured with Sir Howard Bernstein and County Councillor Jennifer Mein on the “We are Lancashire” stand, specifically to help illustrate the partnership between Manchester and Lancashire at MIPIM. The image, which was accompanied by a supportive quote from Sir Howard, became the main driver behind the all MIPIM PR and positioning activity. This approach, making the endorsement and partnership with Manchester one of the main thrusts of the Lancashire at MIPIM piece, helped elevate it above just another “regional inward investment mission to MIPIM” announcement as well as highlighting Lancashire’s capability in standing shoulder to shoulder with Northern Cities due to its strong and comprehensive product offer.

Whilst out at MIPIM there were several references made to Lancashire attending the event as well as an exclusive interview with David Taylor representing the LEP with the Insider magazine and an interview on BBC News. Social media and digital coverage from the LEP’s attendance at the event was maximised.

Partnering with Manchester enabled the LEP to not only be part of a 230 plus Manchester delegation of leading professionals in the property development sector but also to raise Lancashire’s profile with international investors, UK institutions and government bodies. It was an opportunity to reaffirm that we indeed have a comprehensive product offer and are open for business on a global stage.

The recommendation is for Lancashire to attend MIPIM Cannes in 2017 and use the next couple of months as a planning process to determine how Lancashire increases its presence and promotes its offer whilst at MIPIM; agree and review how best to engage with the private sector, local authorities and the shadow Combined Authority to create a Lancashire delegation; review how a Lancashire MIPIM presence can be financed and understand the costs of working with Manchester as a partner in 2018.

3.4 The LEP’s Key Achievements Report

Due to the many events and tactical activity taking place, it was decided that the PR activity around the launch of the LEP’s “Our Achievements” report would be delayed until early March.

Further, to mitigate against the risk of the PR being seen as largely a ‘self-reporting’ exercise, the communications piece was framed as both a positive progress report and a ‘vision of the future’ from the LEP and the long-term mission to close the productivity gap with the rest of the UK was highlighted as the LEP’s overarching, strategic objective going forward.

Giving the press release, this ‘visioning’ angle greatly helped secure coverage about the report in Insider, Lancashire Business View, Lancashire Evening Post, Downtown In Business and the Blackpool Gazette. Lancashire Business View are also using the report and press release as the basis for a feature on the LEP’s progress in the eyes of local businesses. SKV has proposed to the LBV editor that the Chair of the LEP should be part of any such feature, and they have concurred. A potential phone interview is currently being explored.



Another opportunity to communicate to media the success, achievements and ambition of the LEP is a proposed mail-out of hard copies of the report to key regional and national journalists. From a media engagement perspective, this exercise will demonstrate that the LEP has the confidence to produce a bold, hard-hitting and evidence-based account of its direct impacts on the county, together with an overall 'state of the nation' summary of all of Lancashire's social and economic KPIs.

Such a wide ranging and in-depth report is also something that cannot be conveyed in a two-page press release. SKV has provided details of over 40 potential recipients for the first wave of mailings, with more to follow.

3.5 Skills, employment and education activity

Community Clothing

A very positive story was secured in the Lancashire Telegraph about this initiative, which highlighted the role of the LEP's Enterprise Advisor Network in improving skills in the textiles industry and placed it in the context of the work of the LEP to improve skills in certain key sectors of the economy. It included a positive quote from Dr Michele Lawty-Jones which also highlighted how the work of the Enterprise Advisor Network was improving employment prospects and life chances for young people.

Digital Advantage

SKV has been in discussions with Lancashire Business View, Blackpool Gazette/Lancashire Evening Post and Lancashire Telegraph about covering the roll out of this innovative initiative which provides training in high-level digital skills to young people. Key messages are about the strength of Lancashire's creative and digital sector and the LEP's support for improving skills, as part of its strategic drive to fuel economic growth.

Apprenticeships

Five of Lancashire's Young Apprenticeship Ambassadors joined young people across the country in a visit to the House of Commons as part of National Apprenticeships Week. This PR opportunity is currently being used to pitch positive messages in regional and local media about the benefits of apprenticeships, supporting the LEP's strategic priority to increase awareness of the benefits of apprenticeships and work-based training. In addition, Dr Lawty-Jones' quotes from her interview with North West Insider about what the apprenticeship levy means to local businesses appeared in the March edition.

Energy Skills & Employment

The 500-word comment piece, drafted by SKV on behalf of Dr Lawty-Jones from the Lancashire Skills Hub, which related to the county's energy sector, new types of emerging jobs within the sector, and the need for increasing vocational training has



still yet to appear in the Lancashire Evening Post and Blackpool Gazette but it is due to run sometime before Easter.

Lancashire Skills Hub's Social Value Toolkit

SKV has now had feedback from Dr Lawty-Jones and is currently refining the messaging in a social value toolkit PR piece to clarify both the importance of social value as a guiding principle in LEP procurement, and with a view to weaving social value messaging (when appropriate) into all future City Deal, Growth Deal and LEP-related PR activity.

University of Cumbria Lancaster campus visit

A story regarding the Chair of the LEP's visit to the University of Cumbria's Lancaster campus, highlighting the LEP's investment in the campus including support to help create more health and social care training places was covered in the Lancashire Evening Post and Lancaster Guardian.

3.6 Partner PR Activity

Supportive and insightful quotes for partner press releases continue to be provided. Such quotes highlight the key support LEP funding has made to partner projects, and how in turn these local projects support the LEP's overall strategic aims of driving economic growth.

Some of the projects that the LEP has been referenced and quoted in since the end of January include:

- The commencement of work at Spinning Point to transform the centre of Rawtenstall;
- The first HCA-backed Starter Homes Scheme in the UK getting underway in Burnley, kick-started by Growing Places funding;
- The start of work on Burnley Vision Park, which will support businesses and create jobs in the advanced manufacturing and technology sector; and
- The British Business Bank's Lancashire's launch of the Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund at Brockholes.

3.7 Other PR items to note:

- Lancashire's aerospace sector was highlighted in a recent George Osborne interview in the New Statesmen. Under the heading "The Cities of the North can rival London", the former Chancellor said: "You can go from the wildest, remotest countryside, the Yorkshire Dales and the North Yorkshire Moors, to deprived inner-city communities in Liverpool, to some of the most successful manufacturing centres and financial centres in Britain, whether it's hedge funds in Leeds or aerospace factories in Lancashire."



- Another piece of positive feedback came from one of Estates Gazette's reporters who was pitching the MIPIM story who said: "We're hearing a lot of positive things about Lancashire" and went on to enquire about a possible podcast interview with the Chair of the LEP for their popular EGi website which is to be confirmed.
- Downtown in Business recently produced a video statement recently about Lancashire and in it they specifically praise the work of the LEP and Marketing Lancashire as having brought the county a long way in terms of unity and cohesion, again reinforcing the point that the LEP remains a unifying voice for the county.
- Nina Warhurst, BBC NW Political Correspondent's feedback at the NPH conference in Manchester was that although initially sceptical about the 'Northern Powerhouse' as an inward investment strategy, she now understands that it is gaining real traction and recognition internationally. She then added she can now see why Lancashire has been so quick to embrace the NPH brand, and has skilfully aligned itself to this much wider (and government-backed) initiative with an enthusiasm/commitment some other Northern regions seem to lack.

3.8 Forthcoming PR Opportunities & Milestones

- Post-MIPIM success PR story – March
- New members for the LEP board - April
- Insider editor's one-to-one briefing with Edwin Booth (April 6th)
- 'The Value of Experience' Skills Conference - 25th April
- Insider Business of Lancashire conference – June
- Place North West proposed Transport summit – June
- Place North West events to promote Invest Central Lancashire July and October
- Paris Airshow - June 19-25
- MIPIM UK – October 18-19
- Launch of new "Invest in Lancashire" brand and web platform, new EZ collateral and Lancashire Ambassadors dates tbc

3.9 Digital Communications

The number of subscribers for the Lancashire Business Brief (LBB) has grown to 1,040 with around a third of subscribers opening the mail. The LBB continues to be a key source of positive economic stories and business news on a weekly basis. The plan is to now incorporate contacts made from the Place North West, MIPIM, BOOST and NPH events into the LBB database.



The LEP website www.lancashirelep.co.uk has received over 7,500 visits in the last 6 weeks. In the last 12 months the site overall has had 160,000 views +10% and 114,000 unique visits +12.5%. The LEP priorities and the news sections have seen increases versus prior year but the homepage and the City Deal have decreased.

The LEP twitter account *@lancslep* number of impressions has reached almost 100,000 with 1,431 followers, having added over 250 followers in the last 6 weeks. Marketing Lancashire continues to regularly tweet positive LEP news, promoting links to key stories and retweeting partner news daily.

A refreshed LEP website will be developed over the coming months.

3.10 SKV Communications

SKV Communications were initially appointed in June 2015 to;

- generate the LEP's PR strategy;
- deliver a stream of positive inward investment, business news and destination features with messages and stories targeted at local, regional and national media;
- build the reputation of the LEP through the positive coverage of key initiatives being delivered through the LEP with a regular flow of case study stories; and
- to change the image perception of a "passive" LEP/dormant Lancashire.

SKV's current contract is due to expire at the end of April 2017.

This combination of maximising the PR value of specific news and targeted events, together with a continued flow of tactical PR pieces aligned to the LEP's priorities, has meant the LEP's external reputation as a credible and ambitious organisation is stronger than ever and as a result Lancashire's reputation as a place to invest in, and do business with, has similarly been enhanced.

There is considerably more activity planned in the coming months and there is also a requirement to build on the momentum that has evolved over the last 12 months through projects like Aerospace Lancashire at the Farnborough Airshow; Lancashire's debut at MIPIM UK; being the first LEP to sign up to the Northern Powerhouse Partnership; the launching of the Lancashire Narrative; the 'We Are Lancashire' promotional film; the LEP's high profile GD3 deal announcement; the Invest in Central Lancashire/City Deal event with Place North West; the LEP's presence and sponsorship of the Northern Powerhouse Conference; Lancashire's MIPIM international mission in partnership with Manchester; and the recent publication and promotion of the LEP's five-year 'Our Achievements' report.

It is therefore recommended that SKV's contract is extended for a further 12 months to capitalise on the strategic marketing activity planned in 2017/2018 but also to ensure we continue with the momentum that has been created since SKV's appointment.



There was a revision to the original contract in December 2016 with SKV Communications continuing to deliver media and communications at a cost of £3,500 per month and Marketing Lancashire taking on responsibility for the LEP twitter account and the production of the weekly Lancashire Business Brief resulting in a fee saving of £2,000 per month. The 12 months cost of extending SKV's contract has been accounted for in the LEP's 2017/2018 marketing budget. The Chief Executive of Marketing Lancashire will continue to manage SKV on an operational level.

4. The Lancashire Advanced Manufacturing and Energy Cluster

4.1 Positioning and promotion

At the Enterprise Zone Governance Committee meeting on 6th March, a report proposed a set of principles and objectives to manage and co-ordinate strategic marketing activity and enquiry handling arrangements across Lancashire's four Enterprise Zone (EZ) sites, which combine to form the Lancashire Advanced Manufacturing and Energy Cluster (LAMEC).

A number of recommendations were approved which included;

- a) Authorising officers to engage with Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Development Company, NPL, BAE Systems and Lancashire County Council on the proposed strategic marketing activity and enquiry handling arrangements;
- b) Marketing Lancashire to act as the central co-ordinating function for strategic marketing activity and enquiry handling arrangements, supported by local public and private sector delivery partners;
- c) The appointment of a shared Commercial Agent on a fee-finding basis, with the LEP financing the appointment and local partners making supporting contributions;
- d) The LEP to finance initial development for the overarching LAMEC website, which will include the four EZ specific sites, supporting sector propositions and marketing collateral;
- e) To implement agreed enquiry handling arrangements from 1 June 2017, subject to agreement with local partners and landowners;
- f) Authorise Marketing Lancashire, supported by local public and private sector delivery partners, to develop a strategic Marketing Plan for consideration and approval at a later EZGC meeting;
- g) Authorise Marketing Lancashire to lead on the development of sector propositions for each EZ site, in consultation with national and local partners; and
- h) Agree the use of the Evolutive System as the CRM system for EZ enquiry handling.

The Lancashire Advanced Manufacturing and Energy Cluster (LAMEC) includes Samlesbury, Warton, Blackpool Airport and Hillhouse EZ sites, which combine to



provide a compelling offer to investors and occupiers in globally competitive sectors critical to the economic success of the North of England and the Country as a whole.

The Cluster has the potential to generate 10,000 new high value jobs over its lifetime and ensure Lancashire builds on its position as one of the UK's leading centres of excellence in advanced manufacturing and energy.

The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP), through its Enterprise Zone Governance Committee (EZGC), will work with all partners to ensure that the four EZ sites are developed, promoted and delivered in a way which:

- Establishes and develops the LAMEC brand, as part of the wider Lancashire offer to new investors and business occupiers, which recognises the differing sector characteristics and opportunities of each EZ site;
- Maximises employment and investment growth and generates productivity improvements in the local economy, as well as within Lancashire and the Northern Powerhouse;
- Attracts new businesses and sector capabilities to the Lancashire economy;
- Allows for the expansion and growth of indigenous businesses when no other suitable alternative local sites can be found; and
- Minimises unnecessary competition between EZ sites whilst maximising private investment opportunities; supporting contributions.

Discussions will now focus on the recommendations approved to deliver EZ marketing and promotional activity, enquiry generation and handling, regular communication to monitor progress and feedback sessions with all stakeholders, landowners and agents.

5. Developing an inward Investment proposition for Lancashire

With the development of the LAMEC marketing collateral and with the Lancashire narrative and events promoting Lancashire as a compelling location for inward investment there is a requirement to now make this a tangible showcase to set out the benefits, opportunities and advantages of what Lancashire has to offer from an inward investment perspective.

There is an element of improving recognition of Lancashire as an inward investment location at local, national and international levels and an opportunity to collaborate with local authorities across the county (similar to the EZ way of working) to present a more coherent inward investment programme.

An initial meeting has taken place with Mickledore, an organisation which has previously undertaken work for Lancashire County Council, the LEP and a number of local authorities in Lancashire as well as recently working with Ernst and Young on the potential impact of Brexit on FDI as well as working with the Department for International Trade overseas and UK based teams. A follow up meeting will take



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place over the next couple of weeks and progress will be reported at the next LEP Board meeting.