

LEP ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN



LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP DELIVERY PLAN

The West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is the voice of business and universities in the West of England Combined Authority. Through the LEP, we are funding projects that are benefiting businesses, schools, colleges, universities and residents across the region. This annual review of our 2019/20 delivery plan provides an update on the progress in delivery our Local Growth Fund and other projects delivered through our LEP.

We are committed to supporting our region's residents and businesses through Coronavirus. WECA is leading the regional response to the evolving situation and has established a taskforce to drive our region's economic recovery. Led by Regional Mayor,

Tim Bowles, this is a partnership between WECA, the Local Enterprise Partnership, business, universities and the region's councils. The Taskforce has developed a regional recovery plan, (<https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Recovery-plan-version-2.pdf>) which will include measures to help businesses adapt to the new economic landscape and improve resilience, as well as support for residents to develop new skills, training and employment opportunities. This report highlights where we have expanded and adapted our programmes to provide additional support to reflect the changing needs of businesses during this unprecedented time.

We will be reviewing our longer term forecasts in light of the impact of the pandemic in 2021.

Local Growth Fund

Through three competitive Growth Deal funding rounds, the West of England LEP secured a total of £202.1m from the government's Local Growth Fund that is being invested in the West of England from 2015-2021. This funding will be matched by over £300m of additional investment from local partners and the private sector, and together will create over 9,000 jobs. The projects and programmes funded through the Local Growth Fund are detailed on our [website](#).

Local Growth Fund - 19/20	Forecast 19/20	Actual 19/20	Total to March 2020	Forecast 2020/21	Total planned by 2024/25
Jobs created	1,212	1,302	4,315	2,220	11,351
Funding	£56m	£40m	£156m	£46m	£202m
Private Sector Match Funding	£14m	£12m	£40m	£19m	£59m
Public Sector Match Funding	£64m	£57m	£180m	£86m	£266m
Total Match Funding	£78m	£69m	£220m	£105m	£325m
Homes enabled	0	0	0	60	1683
New learner provision (m ²)	11,713	12,111	31,772	2,381	37,353
New learners benefiting	2,752	2,752	5,837	2,216	9,933

Careers Enterprise Company

The Careers Enterprise Company provides funding support for the West of England Careers Hub and Enterprise Adviser Network which are managed by the West of England Combined Authority and Local Enterprise Partnership.

The Careers Hub works with all 95 schools and colleges from across Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. The schools and colleges are supported to improve careers opportunities and work experiences for young people, allowing them to make more informed choices about their careers. The Enterprise Adviser Network recruits volunteers from local employers to support schools and colleges with their careers programmes, sharing their expertise to help improve careers advice and work experience opportunities for young people.

Careers Enterprise Company	Forecast 19/20	Actual 19/20	Total to March 2020	Forecast 20/21	Forecast 21/22	Total planned by 21/22
Grant Funding	£323k	£323k	£576k	£504k	£375k minimum	£1.46m
Public Sector Match Funding	£50k	£50k	£125k	£175k	£175k minimum	£475k
Total Funding	£373k	£376k	£701k	£679k	£550k minimum	£1.94m

Response to COVID19 in 20/21:

The Careers Hub has been supporting schools and colleges to adapt their careers activity in light of the challenges presented by COVID 19. This has involved supporting a range of virtual careers events, delivering training in how to deliver effective virtual employer engagement and facilitating strategic partnerships to deliver virtual work experience. We are also commissioning additional resources to be available to schools to support them to deliver relevant and up to date labour market information to their students and parents.

Growth Hub

The West of England Combined Authority's Growth Hub is instrumental in helping new and existing businesses survive and thrive. The Growth Hub is funded by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and is a free service that combines national and local business support, offering programmes that respond directly to what businesses say are critical for recovery and renewal.

Growth Hub	Forecast 19/20	Actual 19/20	Total to March 2020	Forecast 20/21	Forecast 21/22	Total planned by 21/22
Businesses supported	450	1,044	6,678	1,200	1,500	9,378
Grant funding	£328k	£350k	£1.65m	£700k	£700k	£3.05m
Total Funding	£1.6m	£350k	£1.65m	£2.3m	£2.3m	£6.25m

Response to COVID19 in 20/21:

The Growth hub team offer phone & face to face/virtual support and has quickly adapted to respond to the needs of business to overcome Covid 19 challenges by working closely with the local authorities & national grants schemes to ensure regional business benefit from the government support. There has been a significant increase in number of SMEs supported through the Growth Hub with figures in 20/21 more than double in 19/20.

Workforce for the Future

Workforce for the Future will improve skills to benefit residents and businesses across the region. It is a £4.1m fund supported by a further award of £4m from the European Social Fund for activities to link small and medium-sized businesses with the right talent, creating new employment opportunities for residents.

Workforce for the Future	Forecast 19/20	Actual 19/20	Total to March 2020	Forecast 20/21	Forecast 21/22	Total planned by 2024/25
Businesses supported	40	29	29	120	350	471
Grant Funding	£230k	£212k	£212k	£993k	£1.31m	£4m
Public Sector Match Funding	£230k	£212k	£212k	£974k	£1.31m	£4m
Total Funding	£460k	£424k	£424k	£1.97m	£2.62m	£8m

Response to COVID19 in 20/21:

No adaptations were made but Workforce for the Future ensured that the projects it took forward within the programme would support businesses and residents where most needed and that the support to be provided complemented other initiatives within the region.

Creative Scale Up

Creative Scale Up is a two-year pilot programme funded by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport. It aims to help creative businesses in the West of England access finance through an intensive sustainable growth support programme. Creative Scale Up mobilises regional and national investors and educates and encourages them to invest in the West of England hot-bed of creative businesses.

Creative Scale Up	Total to March 2020	Forecast 20/21	Total planned by 2024/25
Businesses Supported	57	N/A	N/A
Grant Funding	£92k	£408k	£543k
DCMS Grant Funding	£1.3m	£1.3m	£1.3m
Total	£92k	£408k	£543k

Response to COVID19 in 20/21:

We understand the creative sector needs support now more than ever, so we have changed our focus and delivery of the programme to ensure our offer remains meaningful and relevant during crisis times and it is still easily accessible. Programme delivery has moved online, and mentoring sessions and participation in the Peer Support Network is taking place virtually.

The themes for peer support discussion and the training have been developed with scaling businesses in mind and include leadership, business strategy, access to finance, innovation, and communication. Whilst these themes are still relevant to businesses on the programme, we appreciate the need to now frame these topics around survival and resilience.

South West Energy Hub

The West of England Combined Authority is the host and accountable body for the South West Energy Hub which supports organisations across the wider South West of England to identify, develop and implement projects that reduce energy use and increase clean energy capacity. This could include:

- Energy efficient retrofit for homes, business and the public sector
- Energy infrastructure for new development or improvements in construction standards
- Renewable or low carbon heat and electricity generation
- Distribution network improvements above standard investment processes including smart grids and storage
- Heat networks and heat recovery
- Energy supply or refuelling for low carbon vehicles

The South West Energy Hub receives £3.395m funding from government over an initial 3-year period.

South West Energy Hub	Forecast 19/20	Actual 19/20	Total to March 2020	Forecast 20/21	Forecast 21/22	Total planned by 21/22
Funding	£569k	£308k	£401k	£1.8m	£1.6m	£3.4m

Response to COVID19 in 20/21:

Delivery has continued with more remote working to engage and support local stakeholders. Groups who receive funding from the Rural Community Energy Fund have adapted well and embraced new digital methods to engage their communities.

Invest Bristol & Bath

Invest Bristol & Bath is the investment promotion agency for the Bristol and Bath region, part of the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership. It supports foreign direct investment, UK national companies and those companies already in the region as they grow and expand, with hands on advice and intelligence.

Invest Bristol & Bath	Forecast 19/20	Actual 19/20	Total to March 2020	Forecast 20/21	Forecast 21/22	Total planned by 21/22
Business investments supported	32	35	273	21	40	334
Jobs created	1,100	1,150	7,797	660	1,200	9657
Investment leads generated	175	180	851	175	160	1186
LEP funding	£1.3m	£1.1m	£4.8m	£1m	£1m	£6.8m

Response to COVID19 in 20/21:

The service had to adapt to the challenges presented by Covid 19, prioritising supporting local businesses and existing investors to avoid potential disinvestments and reducing proactive lead generation and international activities during the first few months of the crisis. However we have continued to receive a high number of inward investment enquiries, in particular from the more resilient sectors and emerging opportunities in Life Sciences and the Tech/Digital sectors.

Low Carbon Challenge Fund (LCCF)

The Low Carbon Challenge Fund (LCCF) will support the shift towards a low carbon economy. It is a £4.2m fund, with £2.1m European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) grant. LCCF is managed by the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), reporting to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. In addition to the total fund, breakdown is supplied for Green Business Grants, Local Energy Schemes & Innovation Housing.

Low Carbon Challenge Fund	Forecast 19/20	Actual 19/20	Total to March 2020	Forecast 20/21	Forecast 21/22	Total planned by 2024/25
Businesses Supported	40	20	25	43	87	130
Grant Funding	£320k	£671k	£710k	£985k	£696k	£1.68m
Private Sector Match Funding	£533k	£5.28m	£5.34m	£5.33m	£1.04m	£6.37m
Total Funding	£853k	£5.95m	£6.05m	£6.31m	£1.74m	£8.05m

Response to COVID19 in 20/21:

Further funds are being requested for LCCF from the West of England Recovery Fund. LCCF can play a key role in a green recovery from COVID-19 by helping businesses to reduce their energy bills and by stimulating the low carbon economy. If successful, Green Business Grants will re-launch in early 2021 and the Local Energy Scheme in Spring 2021. Virtual carbon surveys are already being delivered to help SMEs understand their energy use and greenhouse gas emissions.

Business Innovation Fund

External funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) has been matched with the WECA Investment Fund to operate the Business Innovation Fund (formerly called the Research and Innovation Challenge Fund). This is a grant and technical support scheme to help small and medium sized enterprises (SME's) to undertake research, development and innovation activities. The BIF provides SMEs with tailored support to bring new products, services and processes to market, which in turn will lead to business growth and high-value job creation.

Business Innovation Fund	Forecast 20/21	Forecast 21/22	Total planned by 21/22
Businesses Supported	0	66	66
LEP Funding	£63k	£62k	£125k
ERDF Funding	£52k	£500k	£552k
Private Sector Match Funding	£0	£550k	£550k
Total Funding	£115k	£1.11m	£1.23m

Response to COVID19 in 20/21:

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the scheme has been expanded to be cross-sector (within the ERDF eligibility requirements) rather than focussing only on the advanced engineering and digital innovation sectors.

SME's can obtain grants of £20,000 or £50,000 to invest in innovation projects, support to move their idea further towards commercialisation, protect their IP and develop a bespoke Technology Roadmap. The higher grants encourage collaborations with the national research base.

Women into Digital Jobs, Education and Training (WIDJET)

Women into Digital Jobs, Education and Training (WIDJET) worked with women across the region, providing digital skills and training from entry-level taster sessions through to high-level industry specified courses. Participants took part in a range of skills courses, training or seminars designed directly with business needs in mind, with the aim of them securing jobs in digital roles. The programme was supported by £238,000 from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). The programme has now concluded, but DCMS agreed that WECA would retain the small underspend to spend on activity related to helping under-represented groups to find work in digital roles.

Women into Digital Jobs, Education and Training (WIDJET)	Forecast 19/20	Actual 19/20	Total to March 2020	Forecast 20/21	Total planned by 2020/21
Grant Funding	£238K	£194k	£194k	£40k	£234k
Match Funding	£102K	£102k	£102k	£0	£102k