

Subject:	Greater Brighton Five Year Strategic Priorities Action Plan		
Date of Meeting:	16 July 2019		
Report of:	Chair, Greater Brighton Officer Programme Board		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 At the Greater Brighton Economic Board on 29 January 2019 the Board's Five Year Strategic Priorities paper was approved.
- 1.2 In the paper, five strategic themes are identified; International, Creative, Connected, Talented and Resilient, and there are two key priorities attached to each theme. The next step was to develop a list of projects and initiatives that would support delivery of the priorities over the next five years. To this end, the Greater Brighton Officer Programme Board (GBOPB) meeting on 5 February 2019 took the form of a workshop to explore potential projects.
- 1.3 A long-list of projects and initiatives were presented back to the Officer Group at the GBOPB meeting on 25 February, and over several subsequent meetings the list of projects were refined to those contained within the Action plan at Appendix 1.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Board agree to support delivery of the projects outlined in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 That the Board approves the allocation of £25,000 from the Greater Brighton budget to establish a resource dedicated to inward investment as detailed in paragraphs 3.9 – 3.18.
- 2.3 That the Board approves the allocation of £15,000 of Board funds to develop the inward investment proposition and Greater Brighton narrative for the City Region via a Pitch for Place, as detailed in paragraphs 3.19-3.22.
- 2.4 That the Board approves the allocation of £10,000 from the existing budget to support delivery of a research-based piece of work around capturing the economic impact of creative industries in the Greater Brighton region and its constituent LAs.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Board has been successful in securing funding and raising the profile of the City region since its inception, but at a regional and national level the economic

and political context has changed since 2014. A new Government Industrial Strategy, a new Strategic Economic Plan from Coast-to-Capital and the upcoming UK departure from the European Union, are all significant developments that will have an impact on the Greater Brighton region.

- 3.2 These changes, coupled with the consensus from Board members that the Board should be more ambitious, more strategic and more proactive, mean that now is a good time to reflect on the last four years and look ahead to the future.
- 3.3 The Greater Brighton Strategic Priorities paper, approved by the Board on 29 January, sets out the Board’s aspiration over the next five years and a clear set of priorities on which to focus its energy and resources. There are five themes, each containing two priorities.
- 3.4 To deliver on the priorities agreed by the Board a number of projects have been identified in consultation with partners. A full list of projects, outcomes and key progress markers can be found in the Action Plan at Appendix 1. A summary of the projects is provided in the table below;

Theme	Priority	Project
International	Build an international profile with strong and relevant supporting messaging	Developing a Greater Brighton investment proposition and campaign
International	Establishment of an inward investment proposition	Directing Greater Brighton resources to promote the city region as a location for inward investment
Creative	Support innovative businesses to scale and grow	Deliver a Greater Brighton City Region business support programme
Creative	Sharing and commercialising knowledge	Develop City Region Innovation Network bringing universities, business and investors together for knowledge sharing and commercialisation of knowledge
Connected	Roll-out of full fibre and become the most 5G-enabled city region	Activation of full-fibre infrastructure across the City Region
Connected	An efficient travel network with effective regional, national and international connections	Lobby for a sustainable, healthy, accessible, safe and integrated transport offer for the City Region
Talented	Attracting and retaining talent in the City Region	Promote the city region’s heritage, cultural and environmental assets to demonstrate that the area is an exceptional place to live work and learn

Talented	Develop an integrated approach to talent	Encourage greater levels of collaboration between skills providers and learning institutions as a means of addressing gaps in provision and the skills needs of employers
Resilience	Build economic resilience	Deliver key infrastructure projects and unlock key development sites across the City Region
Resilience	Build environmental resilience	Deliver key environmental efficiency projects to minimize the impact of economic growth on the environment
Resilience	Build social resilience	Development of resilience plans to ensure that the benefits of regeneration are accessible to all

3.5 Not all projects within the Action Plan can be delivered at once. The reach of the agreed priorities extends over the next five years, so not all projects will be commencing straight away. The Board has limited resources so will need to prioritise some over others. There are three main projects that could begin immediately, subject to the Board agreeing to use funding from the Greater Brighton workplan budget. Two of these projects are outlined in the remainder of section 3 below, and the other is the focus of a separate paper on the Creative Economy being presented to the Board at this meeting.

3.6 The first two projects are aligned to the ‘International’ theme and are included in the recommendations. The first is the establishment of an inward investment resource as recommended by the Board’s Inward Investment Strategy and the second is the development of a Greater Brighton ‘Pitch for Place’, a place making narrative, which is the result of the Futureproofing the City Region event in March 2019.

3.7 Subject to approval funding for the three projects would come from within the existing Greater Brighton work plan budget and will not require additional funds at this stage. Funding for other elements of the Action Plan is being considered and a case may be made for future funding from the Greater Brighton workplan budget in future years.

3.8 As a key partner and supporter of C2C it is crucial for the objectives and ambitions of the Board to align with the objectives and ambitions outlined in Gatwick 360°. The Board looks forward to working with C2C to deliver a Local Industrial Strategy that will drive growth and prosperity across the region. Appendix 1 aligns the projects to the priorities outlined in Gatwick 360°.

Inward Investment Desk - Establishment of an inward investment proposition

3.9 The first project relates to establishing an inward investment and trade resource. In April 2018 the Greater Brighton Economic Board approved the Greater

Brighton Inward Investment & Export Strategy. The Executive Summary can be found at Appendix 2.

- 3.10 The Strategy made two key proposals, one of which, in line with comparable city regions, was to establish a dedicated Trade and Investment Team. Greater Brighton has low success rates in attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI); in 2016/17 Greater Brighton had 17 successes, which was a small proportion of the 217 success across the south east as a whole, and represents less than 1% of the UK total. In a post-Brexit economy, where competition for limited funds will only intensify, it is likely that Greater Brighton will start to lag further behind comparable regions, such as Bristol & Bath and Thames Valley/Reading, unless a dedicated resource is established.
- 3.11 The Strategy recommended 6 FTE posts. The annual cost of this would be circa £360,000, a significant investment, and it was agreed that officers would explore external funding opportunities in the first instance.
- 3.12 In the summer of 2018 a bid was submitted in response to a call from the Coastal Communities Fund, which looked to fund the team for a period of 3 years. The fund was oversubscribed and the bid was ultimately unsuccessful and no further appropriate opportunities have arisen.
- 3.13 In 2018/19 the Board allocated £50,000 to support Inward Investment activity. It was agreed that before establishing an inward investment resource there was a need to gain a better understanding of the City Region's business base, particularly around export and trade. BMG Research in partnership with the Institute of Employment Studies (IES) were commissioned to conduct a survey of 1,500 businesses from across Greater Brighton and the survey has now been completed. BMG Research are now analysing the data and a full report will be submitted at the Board Meeting on 15 October. The findings from the survey will provide a robust evidence base on which to make informed decisions around how best an Inward Investment and Trade resource can support businesses, and will become an invaluable tool for that resource when established.
- 3.14 Latest information from the Department of International Trade (DiT) shows a nationwide slow-down in the number of foreign direct investments being secured, and the south east of the country has seen a larger reduction than the national average. If the City Region is to compete against other regions for the limited opportunities available, a dedicated resource is required now more than ever.
- 3.15 The ask of the Board is that £25,000 be released from the 2019/20 working budget to establish a Greater Brighton Inward Investment Desk to support inward investment and trade activity. The proposal is that the allocation be used to procure specialist support with experience in this field, to get things moving. Key tasks would include;
- Acting on behalf of Greater Brighton in responding to enquiries from DiT and elsewhere,
 - Working with Greater Brighton officers and partners on activities to profile the region,
 - Responding to the outcomes of the business survey as regards trade

- Establishing links with the regions commercial estate agents and, in partnership with local authority leads, acting as a conduit between local opportunities and potential investors
 - Establishing a framework for an inward investment service that is both pro-active and responsive,
 - Helping to build the business case for future funding of posts, including a bid for longer term GBEB funding in 2020/2021.
- 3.16 The work undertaken would lay the ground-work for the permanent resource that would follow, and full details of this proposal will be brought to a future Board meeting. Expected key outcomes and outputs from the work would be;
- A measurable increase in the number and quality of inward investment successes (based on DiT baseline),
 - A framework to ensure that future FDI/inward investment opportunities are landed successfully,
 - A stronger investment pipeline (as a result of targeted brokerage between developers and Greater Brighton investment opportunities).
- 3.17 £25,000 will procure approximately 50 days of specialist support which could be spread through the second half of 2019/20, from October-March. Over 26 weeks that equates to 2 days per week of activity, however the actual distribution of time will be agreed with the appointed specialist.
- 3.18 If approved this project will ensure that GBEB is able to capitalise on its growing profile as a place for investment. It will also ensure that there is a dedicated resource to respond to the findings of the business survey regarding the impact of Brexit and; it will facilitate better outcomes through closer working with DiT.

Pitch for Place - Priority 1 Build an international profile with strong and relevant supporting messaging

- 3.19 The second listed project is the Pitch for Place proposal to develop a narrative and subsequent brand to promote the City Region as a destination for investment, learning and the visitor and cultural economy. This work has already started, and the Futureproofing the City Region event held at the end March has helped to shape some early thinking. The event workshop identified four main themes or unique selling points for the region; quality of life, openness, innovation assets and environmental focus. These are likely to form the basis of the Greater Brighton narrative.
- 3.20 More work is required towards establishing the narrative that will make the Greater Brighton region stand out. The proposal at this stage is not to embark on a full branding exercise. There is a need first to develop the four themes identified into a series of statements about the City Region. These statements will then form the narrative of the Greater Brighton “story”.
- 3.21 The Greater Brighton Team has developed a “Pitch for Place” brief which will allow experts to take this work on to the next level. As outlined at 3.20, at this stage the favoured approach is for a fairly light-touch exercise rather than a detailed branding exercise. The proposal is to allocate £15,000 from the current

working budget, which will compliment and support the inward investment activity described in the other key proposal in this paper.

3.22 Expected outputs from the project would be;

- Understanding and articulating the ingredients of the regions 'story'.
- Collating the distinctive qualities of the region and developing a series of statements on what we are and where we have come from (history/heritage), where we are now and where we want to be in terms of investment, education, visitors.
- A set of statements specific to Greater Brighton which draw on the commonalities between the different local authority areas and neighbourhoods.
- A dissemination and promotion plan linked to the work of the inward investment desk if approved.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 The 'do nothing' approach was rejected at the Board meeting in January with approval for the Strategic Priorities. The Board is now expecting a set of projects to help the Board meet these priorities. Three projects (two within the paper) are recommended to be taken forward as these are considered the most pressing and will be the first steps towards the development of other projects that are listed. It is difficult to progress a number of the other projects without these being delivered first.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

5.1 There has been consultation and engagement with the Greater Brighton Officer Programme Board to prepare the project list and set targets and progress markers.

5.2 The Futureproofing our City Region event attracted over 80 businesses and city region stakeholders to look at the regions strengths and opportunity areas. The outcome of which was a recommendation to develop a compelling city region narrative and supporting statements that are authentic and owned by city region stakeholders. The Pitch for Place proposal is a response to that recommendation.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 It is recommended that the Board approves the list of projects summarised in this paper and provided in detailed in Appendix 1. These are how the Board and its partners will meet the vision, strategic themes and priorities laid out in the Strategic Priorities paper approved by the Board on January 29th.

6.2 The Board is asked to approve the use of existing work plan funding for 2019/20 to deliver three projects outlined in the paper; the Inward Investment resource, the 'Pitch for Place' activity and the research project around the Greater Brighton Cultural Economy.

- 6.3 Greater Brighton Officers will report back on progress of the projects at least annually so that achievement against milestones can be reviewed by the Board.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 The Greater Brighton fund annual report budget was presented to this Board in March 2019 and included proposed allocation of the budget to support a number of initiatives in this financial year. This includes the items detailed within the recommendations above. A total of £25,000 is required to support the inward investment and £15,000 toward the creative industries with the funding to be met from within the current year's operational budget.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Rob Allen, Principal Accountant
Date: 01/07/19*

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 The Board's Heads of Terms set out the functions to be discharged by the Board and these may only be exercised in respect of the region i.e. see paragraph 3. With regards to recommendation 2.2. to 2.4 of this report paragraph 3(vii) of the Heads of Terms permits the Board to incur such expenditure.

*Lawyer Consulted: Joanne Dougnaglo Senior Property Lawyer
Date: 24/06/19*

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 The social resilience priority in the Strategic Priorities Projects Paper will seek to ensure that the benefits of economic regeneration are shared across the City Region.

Sustainability Implications

- 7.4 The Strategic Priorities Projects Paper has a theme dedicated to resilience and three projects which address sustainability implications of continued economic growth. The sustainability implications of those projects will be considered in more detail as the projects are further developed.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. [Greater Brighton Five Year Strategic Priorities Projects Paper](#)
2. Greater Brighton Inward Investment and Trade Strategy – Executive Summary

