

Buckinghamshire LEP Mid-Year Review 2019-2020

Location: Enterprise Hub, Vinson Centre, University of Buckingham

Date: 23/09/19

Time: 10.00-12.00

Action from 2018-19 Annual Performance Review

Action #	Action Point	Date completed	Resolution
1	Bucks LEP will keep CLGU updated on its work to review its evaluation of the existing and forecast outputs of its LGF programme.	Ongoing	Bucks LEP has kept government up to date on delivery of LGF spend and will commission an evaluation by the end of the financial year.
2	With regard to external communication and branding Bucks LEP committed to increase its retweets of Minister Jake Berry and secure Ministerial quotes at key LGF milestones	Ongoing	Quote provided for Silverstone Sports Hub Opening, Sept 2019. Bucks LEP will provide BH with details of the milestones coming up this Autumn.
3	Bucks LEP will also continue to work closely with DfT and Buckinghamshire County Council to support the delivery of the Aylesbury South East Link Road retained scheme	Ongoing	The LEP is working with DfT, but there are ongoing issues with delivering the scheme. Network Rail asked for shared value, which meant the LEP had to go back to the Board for further funding and cost 12-18 months of delivery time. Aylesbury doesn't have a local plan, which has created uncertainty. HS2 are funding part of the project, so cashflow is also dependent on them. The County is looking to contract before March 2021. Bucks LEP asked if DfT expenditure by March 2021, or if contractual commitment was enough,

			and asked what DfT's views on funding after this time would be. CLGU will follow up with DfT. Bucks LEP and KH will stay in close touch over the project.
4	Building on the LEP's work to develop its draft Local Industrial Strategy the next two months will be a crucial period in working with CLGU and other Government Departments to agree the details of the LEP's proposed interventions, in order to ensure you can keep to the planned publication timetable.	July 2019	Published July 2019

Improvement Plan (where applicable)
N/A
Governance
<p>Bucks LEP is now incorporated will directly employ all staff by March 2020. However, RH emphasised that as an employer the LEP wants certainty around medium and long-term funding. Its first AGM was in March 2019.</p> <p>In terms of relations with Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC), RH confirmed that he no longer has a highways role with the Council and said that the cession of secondment arrangements would further consolidate the LEP's independence.</p> <p>The LEP is aiming to work in a more integrated way with the Growth Hub, which is a separate incorporated body. The LEP is recommending to its Board that they align business plans until year end with a joint business plan from next year.</p> <p>KH asked about Section 151 Officer attendance at board meetings. The S151 officer representative was present and confirmed active engagement with the LEP and attendance at Board meetings. RH said that as the Finance Lead for its accountable body, BCC, Fiorella Mugari had a good understanding of the LEP's work.</p>

In terms of board composition, the LEP is refreshing its board to increase the current female membership from its current four female members (out of thirteen) towards the required equal representation. Private sector representation is currently eight out of thirteen members but will also significantly increase when the number of local authority representatives falls from five to two or three members once the new unitary authority is in place. KH stated that whether compliance issues have been raised and whether these have been resolved within the five-day window is likely to form part of the Annual Performance Review scoring. He confirmed that recent assurance compliance issues raised had all been addressed.

Delivery

Bucks LEP confirmed that it has spent £45m of its £60m LGF allocation¹. It is forecasting that it will spend £10m in 19/20 and £5m in 20/21. The remaining £15m for these two financial years is all contractually committed, with the exception of £1.7m for the Marlow to Maidenhead Great Western Railway scheme, which has been delayed due to Network Rail GRIP 3 issues. For this project, approval in principle is expected from BCC in October. RH said that the LEP hoped to achieve over 100% expenditure as it has £4m of Growth Deal funding it can now recycle. JR highlighted the match funding the LEP had achieved with £119m raised from £74m LGF.

After overcoming some technical problems with the Dashboard and updating forecasts, the LEP is now forecasting higher outputs. JR explained that the LEP was undertaking ongoing work to keep the data accurate, for example, it will annually collect housing output data from relevant local authorities.

KH confirmed that the levels of expenditure and contractually committed spending is likely to form a key part of the Annual Performance Review scoring.

Strategic Impact

Bucks LEP thought its published LIS had placed Bucks LEP in a strong position and has been useful for linking local stakeholders into their programmes. The LEP is looking at creating new sub-boards around the economic assets in the LIS.

IB said that the new process for bringing business cases to MHCLG across the OxCam Arc had come fairly quickly, but that because of partnership working around the LIS the county was in a good position to progress at pace.

¹ There is an additional £13.7m for retained Aylesbury Link Road scheme, but this is not included in the dashboard

PN said CLGU would conduct a mapping exercise of Government LIS commitments, as there may be projects government has promised that need a kick start. RH asked about government commitment to LISs. PN said that officials had held initial meetings with new BEIS Ministers on the role of locally produced economic strategies and further discussions were planned on the future of the Industrial Strategy programme.

RH said that the LEP had a business case for a swimming pool facility at the Silverstone Innovation Campus that could be used to provide real-life conditions for innovative product testing. This had formed the basis of a previous bid to SEMLEP, who had thought there could be state aid concerns, whereas Bucks LEP thought these concerns could be overcome and were keen to try and progress this project.

On geography, Bucks LEP said that Aylesbury Vale District Council had told the shadow board for the new Bucks Unitary Authority that it wanted to remain part of SEMLEP. PN said that once the new unitary council was in place, it would not be possible for a single authority be split across different LEPs. As such, local government reform in Buckinghamshire would effectively supersede the question of removing a LEP overlap and replace it with the issue of whether a single authority LEP was compatible with Ministers' broader policy for LEPs per se. RH said that an early view on this issue would be important to provide clarity to partners within the county.

AOB

The meeting discussed Arc working. PN said that CLGU and the OxCam Portfolio team were looking at their ways of working and would be holding a joint away day on 4 October.

Action Points

Action #	Action Point	Owner	Date to be completed	Date completed	Resolution
1	CLGU to follow up with DfT on position on expenditure or commitment by March 2021 on LGF retained schemes	KH			
2	Bucks LEP and KH to stay in touch around the Aylesbury South East Link Road Project	RH/KH			

3	Bucks LEP to provide BH with details of upcoming milestones for LGF announcements	Bucks LEP			
4	CLGU to provide steer to Bucks LEP on Ministers' views on single authority LEPs when available	PN/KH			

Attendees:

Buckinghamshire LEP:

Richard Harrington, Chief Executive, Buckinghamshire LEP

Ian Barham, Partnership Manager, Buckinghamshire LEP

John Rippon, Programme Manager, Buckinghamshire LEP

David Harvey, Section 151 Officer Representative, Buckinghamshire County Council

Government:

Peter Northover, Head of Oxford to Cambridge Arc and East Anglia Team

Kevin Hctor, Area Lead, Buckinghamshire

Beth Hacche, Deputy Area Lead, Buckinghamshire and Norfolk and Suffolk