

## **Overlaps: Lewes District Council area**

One of the principal elements of the Government's review of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) is the need for each LEP to respond to the review with proposals to remove any overlaps. For SELEP, this is pertinent for two areas, namely Uttlesford District in Essex, and Lewes District in East Sussex, and we are clear that both should remain in its administrative area.

### **Lewes District**

Lewes District is one of five districts in East Sussex, and currently resides in two LEPs, Coast 2 Capital and SELEP. We note that the review recognised the importance of traditional county borders.

This arrangement has, in particular, served Newhaven well, with both SELEP and Coast 2 Capital having invested funding into the area, with the resulting benefits starting to be realised. Newhaven is a key target for improving life outcomes, employment opportunities and wider regeneration which supports not only the town but surrounding communities. This was recognised by the Enterprise Zone designation for Newhaven – which has acted as a further catalyst for wider regeneration projects and additional investment.

While we recognise the benefit of being in both LEPs has brought to Lewes District we consider that in moving forward with the aspirations outlined in the LEP review, Lewes district should remain wholly in SELEP.

The district covers a number of settlements, and the county town of Lewes is located in the South Downs National Park, although much of the focus for growth and regeneration is centred on Newhaven, where a strong alignment and partnership between the Local Transport Authority, Local Education Authority and the recently merged East Sussex College Group is delivering real dividends to the area. The County Council, for example, has recently secured Local Growth Funding to complete the funding package to enable the delivery of the

Newhaven Port Access Road which is a crucial element of the achievement of the area's regeneration, and is the catalyst for unlocking wider economic potential, including the Enterprise Zone.

The Enterprise Zone will create around 55,000m<sup>2</sup> of new commercial floor space for employment use over the course of the next 25 years. It will refurbish a further 15,000m<sup>2</sup> of existing commercial floor space and will create and sustain around 2,000 jobs.

Building on recent developments including the construction of the Operations & Maintenance base for the Rampion offshore wind farm, the nearly complete flood defence work, as well as the £2.5 million Newhaven Growth Quarter which provides new supported space for start-ups and emerging businesses, the Enterprise Zone provides new opportunities for rapidly expanding businesses across a number of sectors including, research and development, manufacturing and creative industries.

SELEP has operated with a federated model for some time now, and this has enabled effective delivery of growth programmes across what is a large area. This means that Team East Sussex (the Economic Partnership for East Sussex) has worked hard to forge relationships to enable the delivery of the growth programmes. The Team East Sussex Board has the leaders of each of the five District and Borough Councils, alongside business leaders, skills providers and the voluntary and community sector. It is widely recognised that effective economic growth and regeneration relies on strong relationships, and partnerships between the public and private sector, which is something that Team East Sussex enjoys. For Lewes District to not be a part of that would have an adverse impact on the area's growth, and the opportunity costs are such that it presents a significant risk to the continued growth of East Sussex.