

South East Local Enterprise Partnership

Delivery Plan April 2019 to March 2020

Smarter, Faster, Together

1. Summary and Strategic Objectives

The area covered by the South East LEP (SELEP) makes a vital contribution to the national economy. Our annual economic output is around £87 billion – around 5% of the UK total. We have one of Britain’s most important concentrations of vital infrastructure assets, including its largest ports, its only international rail link and two of London’s airports; in addition to nine universities, some 166,000 businesses and a significant share of the country’s energy generating capacity. Our population is growing much faster than the UK average, with rapid population growth in both existing towns, cities and rural communities and in emerging garden settlements. We are an integral part of the Greater South East economy, with the capacity and appetite for growth and strong business leadership.

The South East’s recent record of economic growth gives us reason to look to the future with optimism. However, there are challenges ahead. In the short term, the immediate economic outlook is one of some uncertainty, particularly associated with Brexit. But we face longer term challenges as well: productivity is lower than it should be; rapid population and housing growth means greater pressure on our infrastructure – and the costs associated with this are substantial; and while new technology presents major opportunities for innovation and business growth, it is also ‘disruptive’ and presents challenges in building a workforce and business base that is fully equipped to respond.

Smarter, Faster, Together is our Economic Strategy Statement and is a long term view, looking forward to the next decade with a focus on what action will be taken in the next five years. Work is beginning on the construction of the South East Local Industrial Strategy, but this will take some time to bring forward. The Strategy Statement is therefore a ‘bridge’ between the former SEP and a future LIS, highlighting some of the issues that the LIS should consider, and some areas for future exploration. This delivery plan is effectively the action plan for the Statement for the year 2019/20.

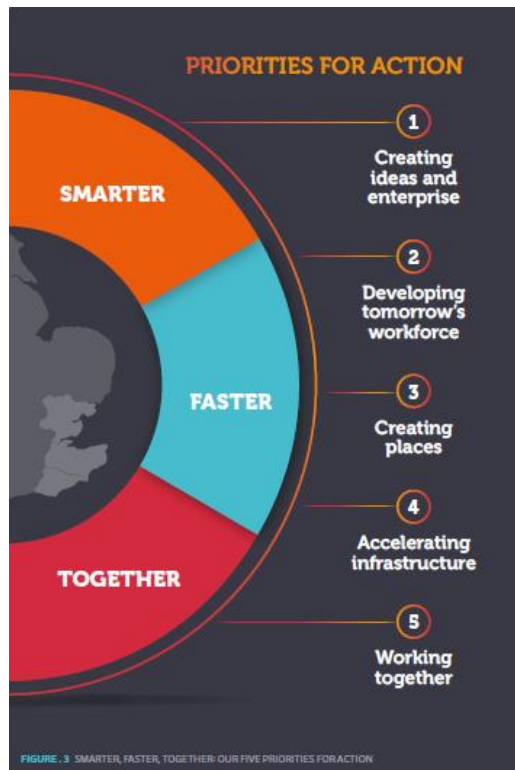
SELEP will be as focussed as ever on the delivery of our highly successful, multi-million pound capital programme over the forth-coming year, whilst also developing our Local Industrial Strategy and ensuring that all recommendations from the LEP Review are properly implemented before March 2020. This work will take place against a background of the greatest economic change for the country since the second world war, which has the potential to have the greatest effect on the communities and businesses of the South East of any area of the UK. The SELEP Secretariat has been making plans for managing the large workload ahead of us and the SELEP Strategic Board has indicated its strong support for the production of truly robust and impactful LIS.

In addition, SELEP is ready to work with partners to expand the capital programme for other funding streams, such as the Stronger Towns Fund, to ensure that all the communities in the South East share in prosperity and growth.

Our Strategy is formed around the following principles:

- work **'smarter'** – translating our impressive jobs and business growth into a long-term increase in productivity and prosperity
- deliver **'faster'** – developing solutions to unlock the housing and infrastructure that we need, and to ensure the efficient connectivity that will underpin productivity gain
- work **'together'** – both across SELEP, and with our neighbours in London and or neighbouring LEPs, across the Greater South East, with Government and with business.

Beyond the headlines, we have five priorities for action to make our long-term ambitions a reality:



Our delivery plan is structured around these priorities and further detail on each of the priorities can be found below:

Priority 1 – Creating Ideas and Enterprise

Creating, adapting and adopting new ideas is at the heart of our ambition for a ‘smarter’ economy. This means supporting our innovative capacity in our ‘leading edge’ businesses – but it also means increasing the opportunities for creativity across the economy, enabling businesses with the potential for growth to expand.

- **Encourage those businesses with the capacity for innovation and high growth to scale up**
- **Increase the adoption of new technologies and processes**
- **Support the process of knowledge transfer**
- **Respond to the increasing need for workspace flexibility**
- **Ensure that the South East is Britain’s gateway for trade and investment**

Priority 2 – Developing Tomorrow’s Workforce

A skilled workforce will be vital in delivering the productivity gains that this strategy demands. But higher skills are also the route to better pay, better jobs, and better progression in work.

- **Increase industry-relevant qualifications for all ages**
- **Simplify the skills landscape for employers**
- **Raise awareness of the wide range of career and employment opportunities that exist in the SELEP area**

- **Support the capital investment in our further and higher education capacity that our growing population and business base needs to succeed**

Priority 3 – Accelerating Infrastructure

To deliver our ambitions for a ‘smarter’, ‘faster’ LEP, we must ensure that we secure the right infrastructure to support future growth. Since our first SEP was published in 2014, we have developed a strong track record, although infrastructure funding gaps remain significant.

- **Securing sustained improvements in our national transport infrastructure stock**
- **Securing, with Government support, investment in the local infrastructure that unlocks housing and employment growth**
- **Investing in digital and advanced technology**
- **Sustaining efforts to drive up levels of housing (and commercial development) delivery over time**
- **Developing new approaches to delivery**
- **Developing new approaches to ensuring energy provision**
- **Developing technology-led solutions to support the increased sustainability of new developments and infrastructure**

Priority 4 – Creating Places

The scale of growth that the South East will see over the coming decade is significant, and some of the changes facing businesses and people in work will be transformational. But greater productivity is only useful if it improves living standards and the communities within which we live: as well as delivering ‘growth’, we need to create places to which South East residents and businesses aspire.

- **Putting the South East’s towns, cities and rural communities on the ‘front foot’ in responding to new technology and changing work patterns.**
- **Supporting quality of life and quality of place**
- **Supporting businesses’ role within the community**

Priority 5 – Working Together

While the South East LEP covers a large and complex geography in its own right, it is by no means isolated. Our links to London and other parts of the Greater South East are vital, and we will need to build on our wider regional connections.

- **Work with partners to develop a new economic narrative for the Thames Estuary**
- **Build stronger relationships across the Greater South East**
- **Develop a strong dialogue with the key national and regional agencies in relation to future transport investment**
- **Work with complementary strategic partners to develop a shared understanding of the opportunities for economic growth**
- **Develop the South East LEP’s role in dialogue with Government**
- **Strengthen our wider relationships with the South East’s business community**

The investments and interventions we have planned for 2019/2020 are detailed throughout this document. Progress on the delivery of these plans will be reported to each Strategic Board throughout the year and a final summary of performance will be made at the Annual General Meeting that will be held in the spring/early

summer of 2020. We will also work with Government, in particular the Cities and Local Growth Unit but also other colleagues in other departments that are supporting on specific pieces of work, to continue to strengthen our culture of delivery and to share best practice.

We will also work with the LEP Network to develop this Delivery Plan.

Scope of the Plan

Priority 5 above details how SELEP sits within a much wider network of partners and organisations who are working to bring economic growth to our area. This Plan covers only those workstreams and projects where SELEP has direct control over the delivery. In Section 4 below details on the wider network of interventions where SELEP is working to influence delivery and outcomes but doesn't directly control them. Examples of this includes our network of Enterprise Zones, European Structural Funds and a City Deal made in our area.

Value of Investments

It is currently planned that SELEP will directly invest more **£115 million** across its programme of interventions this year. This is likely to increase as we provided further information on funding available for the Enterprise Advisor network in the year. At time of writing it is unknown if there will be funding available under the newly announced Stronger Towns Fund during 2019/20.

Programme	
Local Growth Fund	£107.3m
Growth Hubs	£0.7m
Growing Places Fund	£6.6m
Sector Support Fund	£0.5m
Total	£115.1m

Risks

This Delivery Plan has been constructed in March 2019 and will be kept updated during 2019/20. Should there be a disruptive exit from the EU it is likely that plans will need to be reworked in a significant way. The impact of a disruptive exit would impact on our project delivery plans as we may choose to delay or change projects to ensure that any transportation or travel delays aren't further exacerbated, and we may wish to provide additional or supplementary support to our businesses. We are already being used as a conduit of information to and from the Government on the impact of Brexit regardless of the model of withdrawal and we may be required to deliver or enable national programmes of support. The recently announced Stronger Towns Fund is an example of this. The value of the Fund has been announced at time of writing, but it is unclear what role the LEP will play and what action SELEP needs to take in the forthcoming year. The SELEP Risk Register is annexed to this document. The Risk Register is a dynamic document and an update is provided to the SELEP Accountability Board on a quarterly basis.

Key Performance Indicators

The many interventions that we taking to deliver those priorities are detailed in this plan and we have a large selection of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will be used to track performance. These indicators will be provided to SELEP Strategic Board at their meetings throughout the year. Some of the KPIs have locally agreed targets but there has been no combined reporting and assessment of KPIs at a Strategic level until now. In the first year of collection it is suggested that KPI outputs are collected to establish a baseline which can be compared to benchmarks and targets set for future years.

Key Performance Indicator	Priority(ies) linked to
All LEP Review Recommendations with deadline of 31 March 2020 implemented by 31 March 2020	All
S151 Officer Letter of Assurance issued with all no concerns highlighted	All
Rating of at least 'Good' achieved in our Annual Performance Review	All
Value (£m) invested across all projects	All
Number of businesses supported via the South East Business Hub	Creating Ideas and Enterprise
Number of projects completed LGF and GPF	All

Key Performance Indicator	Priority(ies) linked to
Proportion of capital investment slipped to future years from original budget	All
Number of businesses rating their experience of the Growth Hub as 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'	Creating Ideas and Enterprise
Number of Scale Up (businesses with a high potential to grow) businesses supported	Creating Ideas and Enterprise
Number of homes completions enabled	Creating Places
Number of jobs created	All
Digital Skills Partnership established and launched (pending Board's approval in March	Developing Tomorrow's Workforce
Skills Advisory Panel established and functioning in line with DfE requirements	Developing Tomorrow's Workforce
Number of people supported into work	Creating Ideas and Enterprise/Developing Tomorrow's Workforce
Number of additional apprenticeships	Developing Tomorrow's Workforce
Number of adults upskilled	Developing Tomorrow's Workforce
Number of people in work supported to upskill	Creating Ideas and Enterprise/Developing Tomorrow's Workforce
Number of new tutors/teachers recruited to aligned to key sectors	Developing Tomorrow's Workforce
Value of new skills related training facilities in meters squared completed	Developing Tomorrow's Workforce
Number of employers (Enterprise Advisors) working with schools	Developing Tomorrow's Workforce

2. Local Growth Deal

Our Local Growth Fund capital programme that is in place to deliver our Local Growth Deal totals £570 million and 102 projects. Of those 102 projects, 90 have been awarded funding and we've spent £285 million to date (end of quarter 3, 2018/19). We have recently been through a process to prioritise projects for the reallocation of funds that either have yet to be allocated or to move allocated funds from projects that can no longer come forward or are unable to deliver. 11 projects are due to come forward to Accountability Board for final approval for investment during 2019/20. The final project will be under the DfT Retained Scheme and will require approval from the Department before presentation to Accountability Board. It's currently forecast that DfT will be considering the project during 2020/21.

There will be a large amount of activity on projects throughout the year. There are some projects that are 'completed' insofar as the intervention is complete but will continue to deliver both outputs and outcomes in the year and a further 24 projects are planned to complete during the year. A map detailing projects can be found on the SELEP website <https://www.southeastlep.com/projects-map/>

It is currently forecast that SELEP will invest £107.3 million of Local Growth Funding during 2019/20. This includes £27.8m of retained funding from the Department for Transport.

Milestones

In the coming year there are 3 projects due to start and 24 projects due to complete. The LGF Programme cuts across the priorities of the LEP and many projects will actually contribute to more than one priority. However, we have grouped each of the projects in train this year by their main priority as below:

LGF Projects by ESS Priority

Priority	Projects Commencing	Projects Completing
Creating Ideas and Enterprise	4	2
Developing Tomorrow's Workforce	4	1
Creating Places	1	5
Accelerating Infrastructure	3	16
Total	12	24

Projects due to Complete

Newhaven Flood Defences	Middle Deal
Hailsham, Polegate and Eastbourne Movement and Access scheme	Ashford Spurs
Queensway Gateway Road	Dover Western Dock Revival
Coastal Communities Intervention – Hastings	A226 London Road/B255 St Clements way
Devonshire Park	Strood Town Centre Enhancements
A131 Chelmsford to Braintree	Chatham Town Centre Placemaking and Public Realm
A133 Colchester to Clacton	Medway City Estate Connectivity Improvement Measures
Coastal Communities Intervention – Jaywick	Rochester Airport – phase 1
STEM Innovation Centre, Colchester Institute	Strood Civic Centre – flood mitigation
Mercury Rising Theatre	A127 Kent Elms Corner
Sittingbourne Town Centre	London Southend Airport Business Park Phase 1 and 2
Tunbridge Wells Junction Improvement Package	TGSE LSTF - Thurrock

Projects due to Commence

Chelmsford Flood Alleviation	Thanet Parkway
Grays South	Bexhill Enterprise Park North
Flightpath Phase 2	Sidney Little Road Business Incubator Hub
Innovation Park Medway	Digital Technologies Campus
Colchester Institute	Skills for Rural Business Post-Brexit
USP College CEDTIL	A2 Offslip at Wincheap

Outcomes to Date and Forecast for This and Future Years

Priority	Homes Completed				Jobs Created			
	To Date	19/20	Future Yrs	Total	To Date	19/20	Future Yrs	Total
Creating Ideas and Enterprise	0	0	0	0	816	328	2,687	3,821
Developing Tomorrow's Workforce	0	0	0	0	155	262	661	1,078
Creating Places	1,501	1,244	10,533	13,278	1,102	2,796	11,239	15,110
Accelerating Infrastructure	10,400	3,979	50,839	65,218	6,669	9,383	78,512	94,564
Total	11,901	5,223	61,372	78,496	8,742	12,742	93,099	114,583

Outcome information has been provided by the organisations directly responsible for delivery. The assessment of outcomes and the impact of projects is a developing area for both us and our partners and figures are likely to change through the year as we further refine our processes for data collection and assessment.

Plans for Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of ALL capital projects is in place and the principles of this evaluation are:

- A proportionate approach to monitoring and evaluation will be implemented, ensuring that evaluation objectives relate back to the business case and builds on assumptions used in the appraisal process
- Outcomes monitored will be those that are most relevant to the impact of the project's objectives as set out in the business case, and evaluation will be made on those Local Growth Deal outcomes that are appropriate for each project
- Organisations delivering or leading projects using SELEP funding are required to report to the SELEP Secretariat on a quarterly basis and the Secretariat reports to both the Accountability Board and Strategic Board on project progress, also on a quarterly basis
- All LGF Projects that have been awarded £2m or more are required to complete a one-year post completion scheme evaluation and three/five year post scheme evaluation
- The one-year post scheme evaluation focuses on the delivery of the outputs stated within the original Business Case. This provides a review of the lessons learnt through the development and delivery of the project, as well as considering any project outcomes achieved to date. This one-year post scheme completion must be completed by the end of the subsequent financial year following project completion.
- The three/ five-year post scheme evaluation focuses to a greater extent on the delivery of the outcomes of the project. For projects with a total project cost of less than £8m, the three/five-year post scheme evaluation must be completed within three years of post-scheme evaluation. For projects with a scheme cost of over £8 the three/five-year post scheme evaluation must be completed by within five years of project completion.

3. Other Funding and Growth Programmes

In addition to Local Growth Deal activities, there are many other workstreams in place that are working to support economic growth in the South East These include:

- our South East Business Growth Hub helping our businesses grow and achieve their potential and working with the National Business Helpline to assist those in our communities who aspire to run their own business
- the Growing Places Fund, a revolving infrastructure fund that offers subsidised loans to bring forward more complex and risky developments that deliver housing and jobs but can't attract commercial funding
- the Sector Support Fund, a revenue support programme to fund discrete projects that will support larger interventions in the future or contribute towards larger revenue projects with funding from other organisations
- the network of Enterprise Advisors in schools, making links between schools and businesses to support young people to achieve their ambitions

South East Business Hub

The South East Business Hub is the Growth Hub in the South East. The Hub provides business support, both directly and by sign-posting to other support provision in both the private and public sector. The support offered by the South East Business Hub is greatly augmented the business support projects in place that are funded via the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Whilst SELEP was key in the shaping the offer that these projects provide, the responsibility for the delivery of the projects sits with the managing authority which is MHCLG and therefore delivery targets are not included in our plan.

The South East Business Hub is funded by a grant from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and indicative levels of funding for 2019/20 are £656,000. The funding is used to support both the central Hub, which consists of a website and some central support and consolidation and the three sub-hubs. The three sub-hubs are the Business Essex, Southend and Thurrock (BEST) hub, the Kent and Medway Growth Hub and the Business East Sussex (BES) hub. These sub-hubs provide support in their geography in line with BEIS requirements as set out in the grant offer.

The Growth Hub is the 'front door' to SELEP for many of the businesses in our communities and a network of SME businesses who are often hard to reach with standard messaging has been established. The value of the Growth Hub network has been recognised by Government and they are currently using that network to gather intelligence on the impact of Brexit on businesses. The Growth Hubs are a key enabler for us delivering priority 1 Creating Ideas and Enterprise.

The summary KPIs for the Growth Hub Programme are:

- Number of businesses support
- Number of businesses rating their experience of the Growth Hub as ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’
- Number of Scale Up (businesses with a high potential to grow) businesses supported

Growing Place Fund

The Growing Places Fund (GPF) is SELEP’s longest running programme of support. An original grant of £49.2 million was used to set up a £45m capital revolving fund whilst the revenue elements of the grant have been used to support the Sector Support Fund which is detailed below.

The GPF offers interest-free or minimal interest loans to projects that will be bring forward developments that enable the creation of housing and jobs. The projects often open up sites for development that will be funded commercially but need public sector support in making sites suitable, providing access or reducing risk. The Fund has been full allocated and investments being made now are being funded from repayments from earlier projects. To date there have been no defaults on the Fund and a further round of investment is planned for 2019/20.

As with the LGF programme, the GPF programme also cuts across the priorities of the LEP and many projects will actually contribute to more than one priority. However, we have grouped each of the projects in train this year by their main priority as overleaf:

GPF Projects by ESS Priority

Priority	Projects Completing
Creating Ideas and Enterprise	1
Developing Tomorrow’s Workforce	0
Creating Places	1
Accelerating Infrastructure	1
Total	3

One project is currently programmed to begin in 2019/20 and a further round of investment is planned so there may be some project starts identified during the year.

Currently £6.6m spend is programmed for the year, this will increase if projects are approved for spending in 2019/20 in the next round of investment.

The reporting of GPF outputs is currently being worked on and when robust forecasts of outputs expected in the year have been provided by delivery partners and sponsors, the plan will be updated.

Sector Support Fund

As indicated above, part of the £49.2m was allocated to revenue spending. This funding has been used of some specific, bespoke funding to our Enterprise Zones in the past and now is used to support the Sector Support Fund (SSF). It was recognised through conversations with the SELEP sector based working groups that a lack of access to revenue funding was restricting potential projects coming forward. Whilst there are a number of pots for capital investment, revenue funding is much harder to find and even tighter budgets in local authority partner organisations meant that avenues of support that previously had been available were no longer.

The Sector Support Fund is a £500,000 annual pot of funding that projects can bid into on a competitive basis for support for one-off, discrete pieces of work of a pan-LEP nature with a sector focus.

To date 9 projects have been endorsed for funding. The nature of these projects mean that they won't always have directly attributable outcomes, but they will enable other interventions to come forward in the future that will impact on the outcomes of the SELEP. These projects are cross cutting and contribute to all the priorities of the LEP. The projects are often drawn together by the working groups of SELEP and are an example of working together.

Progress on the projects will be reported to Board on a quarterly basis. Projects with approval at time of writing are shown below. More details on the projects can be found at <https://www.southeastlep.com/opportunities/sector-support-fund/>

Project	Priority
Coastal Communities SSF Project	Accelerating Infrastructure
FutureProof: Accelerating Delivery of High Quality Development across SELEP	Accelerating Infrastructure
Future skills for Rural Businesses	Developing Tomorrow's Workforce/Creating Ideas and Enterprise
England's Creative Coast	Creating Ideas and Enterprise
Good Food Growth Campaign	Creating Ideas and Enterprise
Gourmet Garden Trails	Creating Ideas and Enterprise
Kent Medical Campus Enterprise Zone – Innovation Centre design work	Creating Ideas and Enterprise
North Kent Enterprise Zone: Enabling and Marketing	Creating Ideas and Enterprise
Delivering Skills for the Future	Developing Tomorrow's Workforce

Skills including Enterprise Advisors

Upskilling the population of the South East has been identified as absolutely key in ensuring that we all can share in tomorrow's prosperity. The launch of our highly-regarded Skills Strategy demonstrates our commitment to the Skills agenda and the strategy lays out how we are intending to work with partners to deliver better skills outcomes for all. This directly links with our wider ESS as is demonstrated through the priority of Developing Tomorrow's Workforce. The majority of work our work in this area to enable and facilitate delivery partners but we do directly work with the Careers Enterprise Company on their Enterprise Advisor network.

The Enterprise Advisor network is a programme that brings together businesses and schools to help young people achieve their ambitions and to ensure that employers have the skill sets they need in employees of the future. Currently SELEP holds the contract for Essex, Southend and Thurrock with 6 Enterprise Co-

ordinators reaching out to schools / colleges and facilitating joint working with employers (Enterprise Advisers). For this geography, there is a target of 89 institutions to be matched with employers by August 2019 and for all mainstream schools and colleges to be offered an opportunity to participate by August 2020. Confirmation of value of funding, including match, to support the programme up to August 2019 and beyond is currently being sought and will be added to the plan as it becomes known.

SELEP also has a role in supporting the network across the LEP area, with full coverage currently in East Sussex (and which is a Careers Hub and Opportunity Area bringing additional resource to the area) and growing coverage in Kent and Medway.

SELEP has been successful in securing a place on the pilot programme of the Digital Skills Partnerships policy that is being rolled out by DCMS. Pending approval by the SELEP Board, SELEP will enter into an agreement with DCMS to set up a Digital Skills Partnership. The establishment of this partnership will be a further tool in advancing the priorities detailed in our Skills Strategy and the Developing Tomorrow's Workforce in our ESS.

During the year will also be establishing a Skills Advisory Panel, in line with the Department of Education's requirements. The new panel will build on the already strong relationships that we have with both employers and providers.

4. Strategic Activity

Whilst SELEP has a large and important delivery function as detailed above, it has a wider reach with even more impact. Broadly this work can be separated into five areas:

- General partnership working with partners outside of the LEP borders, including neighbouring LEPs, other partnerships/bodies that have responsibilities or interests in economic growth, Government departments and agencies
- General partnership working within the LEP boundaries including our sectoral working groups, working with all levels of local government, local MPs, further and higher educational institutions
- Specific policy programmes/projects in our area that other organisations have responsibility for oversight of outcomes such as EU Structural Funds, Enterprise Zones, South East Energy Hub, City Deals, The Thames Estuary Commission and the Thames Estuary Production Corridor
- Specific policy programmes/projects run by national agencies/government departments such as the Lower Thames Crossing, Crossrail and Crossrail 2
- Our own strategy setting and direction, in 2019 this activity will mainly be concerned with the production of a Local Industrial Strategy

General Partnership Working

During 2019/20 we will continue to build on our relationships with our neighbouring LEPs, Coast to Capital, New Anglia LEP, Hertfordshire LEP, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and the London Economic Action Partnership. We already work together on a number of key developments such as: improving transport links across our regions through sub-national transport bodies; supporting garden communities that sit either just inside or just outside our borders but will have impact on both LEPs; working together to create scale, for example on the Tri-LEP Energy Strategy; co-operation and co-ordination on economic areas that cross borders, such as Brighton and Lewes, Cambridge and Stansted corridor and the Haven Gateway in the north of Essex. We also work with the LEP Network and the wider cohort of LEPs to ensure that we are aware of best practice and to join forces on issues and items where appropriate.

Partnership working will become ever more important as we enter into what could be a period of great uncertainty for the UK economy. The challenges that present themselves with the SELEP area are likely to require solutions from outside our boundaries as well as inside.

Inside our borders we have well established sector based working groups, where key representatives of each sector come together, bringing the views of a much wider group through their own networks. Our current working groups are:

- Coastal Communities
- Enterprise Zones
- Housing
- Skills
- Rural
- Social Enterprise
- South East Creative Economy Network
- Tourism
- Transport Officers
- Universities (U9)
- Growth Hub steering group

The working groups play differing roles, in some cases they support direct delivery, such as the Growth Hub steering group. In other cases the groups support policies that other organisations have responsibility for but the LEP has a role in oversight such as Enterprise Zones and in yet other cases the groups are advisory subject matter experts on issues/sectors that are key for the SELEP area such as Skills, Housing and Rural. More detail on each working group can be found at <https://www.southeastlep.com/our-strategy/working-groups/>

The role that working groups play currently may shift over the coming year to recognise the challenges and opportunities that our exit for the EU trading block will bring. For example, we may need to focus on offering support to our small businesses to make changes needed to meet with new or changed regulatory environments and we may need to increase our support for the agri-tech sector as food security risks increase.

We will continue to work with our MPs and our wider stakeholder group. We have been increasing our reach through our newsletter and renewed and invigorated approach to digital channel management including our improved website. We acknowledge that further work is needed to build our brand and improve how we

communicate our successes. Additional resource is being sourced to support this work and a revised plan/strategy will be produced appropriate time in the year.

We are planning an Annual General Meeting (AGM) to be held in mid-July. This will be a much larger event than previous AGMs and will be looking to have a much wider engagement with businesses in the area.

Specific Policies

There are multiple projects, programmes and workstreams that SELEP influences whilst not be directly responsible for delivery. These include:

- European Structural Funds – responsibility for oversight of the delivery of outcomes for these funding streams sit with the relevant managing authorities but SELEP has a key role in influencing how the funds are allocated and providing support and assistance to projects where appropriate
- Enterprise Zones – there are four Enterprise Zones in the South East and we work closely with the organisations hosting and delivering those zones
- South East Energy Hub – we have a key role to play on the Energy Hub that covers the wider South East region
- City Deals – Southend-on-Sea is party to a City Deal and we support them in their delivery of the agreed output

EU Funding

Over £160 million of Structural Funding has been allocated to the SELEP area by the EU for the 2014 – 2020 programme. The LEP's role in the application of this funding was to create a strategy for this funding. SELEP does not hold this funding but does assess each application for funding to its fit with the strategy. The delivery and outcomes of the projects sit with relevant managing authority.

The majority of ERDF monies are now allocated. Final calls for projects to be considered for those funds remaining will be made during 2019/20. This includes the additional funding that has been allocated to SELEP as part of the windfall gain in currency exchange rates. Work is underway to provide a brief update of the ESIF strategy in preparation for an April/May call for applications under ERDF. The document will underpin the call and provide strategic justification for project applications and will bring in line the Industrial Strategy and the original ideas laid out in the ESIF to reflect current economic challenges and climate of change.

There is £80m European Social Funding (ESF), including currency exchange gains. Work in this year will include overseeing current contracts and working with DWP on issuing new calls for tender through 2019. Some contracts are due to commence in April 2019 with ESFA. These all align with the skills strategy which is informing remaining calls for tender. All ESF supports people into or closer to work as well as those in work to upskill. Projects will continue delivering to 2023.

The SELEP EAFRD allocation of £14.5m has been fully invested and no future calls for projects are expected in 2019/20.

Enterprise Zones

There are currently four Enterprise Zones in the SELEP area and they are at different points in their development and our relationship with them reflects that. Our plans for the coming year are:

Discovery Park

Discovery Park is well established and functioning well. We will be ensuring that we work closely with the operators of Discovery Park so their views are represented to plan a key role in the development of the LIS over the year. The Chair of SELEP met with the new Chair of Discovery Park in late 2018 and that meeting will be built on and the SELEP Board will provide support for the Enterprise Zone where appropriate.

Harlow Enterprise Zone

We will continue to take our place on the Board whilst it is still in place and will work with Harlow District Council and other partners to ensure that there is sufficient governance and oversight of developments at the zone. We will work with Harlow DC to ensure that information on outputs and outcomes of the zone is presented to the Board and that the Board has sufficient sight of how the investment of the retained business rate is being put to use and the impact of the investments on the Harlow area. The SELEP Board will continue to support the Enterprise Zone where appropriate.

North Kent Enterprise Zone

We will also continue to take our place on the NKEZ Strategic Board or any replacement oversight structure and work with the various partner organisations that involved in this multi-site zone. There is significant LGF investment planned for the Innovation Park Medway site and we will be working with Medway Council to ensure delivery of those plans over 2019/20.

Newhaven Enterprise Zone

We are currently working with Coast to Capital, Lewes Council and East Sussex Council to agree terms for the new special purpose delivery vehicle for the zone. Whilst details are yet to be confirmed, SELEP will play a key role in the company, working with partners to facilitate the success of the Enterprise Zone and the investment of the retained business rates into the Newhaven area.

South East Energy Hub

The Tri-LEP Energy Strategy, developed with Coast to Capital and Enterprise M3 will launch in March. We have been working with the wider South East grouping of LEPs on the developing the South East Energy Hub. We will continue to work with the Hub staff embedded in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and the wider grouping of greater South East LEPs to ensure that innovative and robust projects that offer good value for money and additionality are bought forward for further development.

National Schemes

Lower Thames Crossing

The nationally significant Lower Thames Crossing will continue to be high on our agenda. Whilst there is not unanimous agreement to the proposed positioning of the crossing amongst the partners of SELEP, we will continue to work with Highways England to ensure that those who are closest to the project are also those who will be benefitting from it. Highways England are currently working on a Skills, Education and Employment Strategy for the Lower Thames Crossing project and the team leading this piece of work are linking with the SELEP Skills Lead to ensure that their strategy fits with our Skills Strategy and our Economic Strategy Statement: *Smarter, Faster, Together.*

WE will also be working with their communications team to get messages out to our businesses on the potential benefits that the LTC could bring them, including a widened area of potential employees and greater/improved access to customers.

Crossrail and Crossrail 2 and Rail Improvements

The potential full opening of Crossrail, or the Elizabeth Line brings greater connectivity to the northern parts of our geography and we will continue to work with and support our partners, including in the inward investment organisations, to ensure that we can capture as much of that benefit in our communities as possible.

We will also continue to support partners lobbying for extensions to the Elizabeth Line, including out to Ebbsfleet in Kent and extensions to the proposed lines for the Crossrail 2 project.

Rail connectivity and improvements in our area are key to bring forward the housing that is already planned and future potential allocations. Additionally, better connectivity to our ports and airports will grow ever more important in future years as our trading relationship with the world changes. As such we will continue to work with partners to push national agencies to address failings and gaps. This includes but is not limited to, improvements on the Great Eastern Main Line, High Speed 1 expansion and improvements to the West Anglia Main Line.

Our Future Strategic Direction

Our current strategy of *Smarter, Faster, Together* has set us in good stead to move towards the first Local Industrial Strategy for the South East. The National Industrial Strategy has set out a clear direction for us as a country. Building on our strong evidence base already constructed for the ESS we need to identify the challenges that are restricting the productivity in the South East and develop innovative and effective interventions to address those challenges.

Work has begun on planning for how we can best approach this task on our wide geography. The discussion at the SELEP Strategic Board on 22nd March will be instructive as to how we move to produce a document which demonstrates an understanding of our economic baseline and the needs of our resident businesses and sectors. Importantly, we will be informed by Government's Industrial Strategy, by the themes of Smarter, Faster, Together, by our partners' emergent Productivity Strategies, and by the evidence base that we construct.

We will need to speak with some authority as to what constitutes the most appropriate strategy for our place. We might consider a focus on industrial sectors and their growth across our area; but we should also look to organise our strategy around important themes such as Garden Communities; the impact of the Lower Thames Crossing; clean Energy; Creative Sector and its estuarine growth; skills development; the impact of natural capital ; and our important relationship with London. We will require a strategy which identifies us easily. We will aim to have a draft of the strategy ready for early 2020.