

Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Commissioning Group Update

1. Introduction

The Commissioning Group met on 3 March 2016 and considered the following items:

- Detailed Project Review of Porton Science Park
- Health & Life Science Report
- Independent Technical Advisor (ITA) Project Prioritisation update
- High Value Manufacturing (HVM) update
- Local Growth Fund projects delivery update
- Marketing and Communications Strategy

2. Detailed Project Review of Porton Science Park

RW presented the in-depth project review for Porton Science Park. The key points from the presentation are as follows:

- Wiltshire Council is the developer and will procure for Phase 1
- Grant agreements are being worked on by Legal Teams and it is hoped they will be ready before the March 2016 Board Meeting
- Dstl retains ownership of the land and Wiltshire Council has 250 year lease at peppercorn rent
- ESIF usually seeks excellent for BREEAM standard, but this is difficult for Porton Science Park owing to the remote location and limited transport links. In this instance “very good” is acceptable.
- Surveys have been carried out to ascertain the make up of the ground
- Fencing will be erected as part of Dstl’s security requirements
- Aiming for a Minister to be on site mid-May, but if Purdah kicks in, the press opportunity may be “ceremonial”
- Infrastructure is on track, specialist support for incubator will need to be procured
- Porton Biopharma is a spin off from Public Health England (PHE), with PHE owning the Intellectual Property (IP) for Erwinase® cancer treatment and anthrax vaccine.
- The project delivery dates are challenging, but achievable
- Half the space is for incubator companies and half for grow-on space
- SWLEP, AHSNs and Medilink have been working together to produce an overarching strategy for the area

3. Health & Life Science Report

All parties (SWLEP, Wessex and West of England AHSNs and Medilink South West) have been involved in the development of the paper for an inward investment strategy across the whole of the SWLEP area. The Unique Selling Point (USP) for this cluster is the military aspect of the area. Salisbury and Porton are strong with pockets of strength and growth elsewhere in the region. The North of the SWLEP area falls within the Oxford Life Science Cluster. Oxford,

along with Swindon, is one of the Fast Growth Cities. This could also be used as a hook for the area. The Porton Task Group receives Government support.

The cost for providing an investment prospectus could be spec'd up to £10,000. More than that and the proposal would have to be taken back to the Board for approval.

4. ITA Project Prioritisation update

Ian Durston was thanked for the good piece of work. In conversations with Jonathan Eddy of BIS it seems optimistic to expect £80m at the next round of LGF, as some of the funds have already been allocated to Devolution. We have been told to “couch expectations”. Some suggested amendments to the papers were as follows :

- to quote within the paper that some of the schemes have moved from Category X to Category Y; and
- to show on Appendix B the DfT Retained Schemes within Transport

Discussion took place on keeping the Item within Part 2 of the Board Meeting. The process can be demonstrated as being transparent and robust, but confidentiality of individual schemes should be maintained at this stage of discussion. A paper on the process for “Lessons Learnt” is to be produced in the near future.

5. HVM Update

A first draft of the HVM Ecosystem was reviewed by the Group. It was at an early stage of development. A further version would then be available for a future Secretariat Meeting, which could then be submitted into the proposed Business Support Subgroup. This would also be linked into the Case Study of the lifecycle of a local business which had received assistance.

A proposal for the Advanced Materials and Waste Resource Hub has been received from Bath University, which is keen to locate within the M4 corridor. HVM Core Group Meetings and meetings with Bath University are ongoing.

The Commissioning Group decided that HVM should be taken forward to the Board Meeting in May to allow further development of the concepts.

With Graham Dean standing down from the Board in March 2016, the Members need to be mindful that a Board Sponsor for HVM needs to be appointed.

6. Local Growth Fund projects delivery update

Highlight reports were presented by both Unitary Authorities on projects due to commence in 2015/16 and 2016/17 and beyond. The Commissioning Group noted the schemes' progress and the summary reports are attached as Appendix 1.

7. Marketing and Communications Strategy

Results from the Marketing and Communications Strategy discussions by the Commissioning Group were as follows :

- Agreement for the publication of the Strategic Economic Plan to be awarded to RE-D
- Authorisation for the immediate expenditure of up to £10,000 for the provision of interim marketing and communications support
- Agreement for the provision of a Board paper to request the appointment of a Communications Officer at an annual cost of up to £40,000 to be managed by SWLEP Director