

# The Marches Local Enterprise Partnership

## Delivery Plan 2021/22 Progress Report



This document highlights any progress made against the priorities set out in the Marches LEP Delivery Plan for financial year 2021/22, which can be found at <https://www.marcheslep.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Delivery-Plan-2021-22.pdf>.

### 3.0 Strategic Activity

PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET DATE	PROGRESS TO DATE	RAG RATING
<b>Strategies and Partnership</b>			
To await outcome of the LEPs' review and confirmation of how we can continue fulfilling a strategic role in support of our local business and skills.	Q3	Awaiting outcome of the LEPs' Review	Red
To seek Government funds to implement actions identified in the Local Economic Recovery Plan.	Q4	Depending on the outcome of the LEPs' Review	Red
To await the Levelling Up White Paper and confirmation of how can consolidate and enhance our role in driving local sustainable growth.	Q4	Awaiting publication of the Levelling Up White Paper	Red
To continue articulating the needs of The Marches through work with local, regional and national partners. This will include engagement with:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the West Midlands (WM) and East Midlands (ME9) LEP Chairs and CEOs;</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Ongoing	Green
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), as an observer on their Board;</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Ongoing	Green
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the wider membership of Midlands Engine, particularly to support our data and intelligence capabilities, and Midlands Connect to promote investment in our transport infrastructure;</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Ongoing	Green
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welsh partners through the Growing Mid Wales Partnership, to deliver our joint transport, digital and energy priorities and to outline ideas for cross border projects ahead of the next Comprehensive Spending Review;</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Ongoing – meeting to be arranged for partners to understand current UK government appetite for Marches Growth Deal.	Yellow
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the LEP Network, to support their work with Government on LEPs' Review, share best practice and amplify local messages into national Government and across Government departments.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Ongoing	Green
<b>Business and Community</b>			
To showcase the work of the LEP and the launch the LEP Annual Report 2021, through public engagement and thought leadership.	Q3	Depending on the outcome of the LEPs' Review, a public meeting is being planned for Jan 2022	Yellow
To continue working with the three Business Boards, Federation of Small Businesses, Chambers of Commerce, National Farmers' Union and other membership organisations to share business intelligence and drive economic recovery.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Yellow
To continue liaising with the area's MPs, seeking their support to highlight how the LEP can add value to national initiatives, raise awareness of particular local economic issues and opportunities and increase the profile of the Marches across government departments.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Yellow
With the exemption of confidential Board meetings, to continue holding public LEP Board meetings, enabling members of the public to attend by registering in advance of the meetings.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Green
To attend Scrutiny sessions with each of the three Local Authorities as requested in order to highlight the work of the LEP and demonstrate how it is adding value to local placemaking priorities.	Q4	Dates being arranged with Local Authorities	Green
<b>PR, Marketing and Communications</b>			
To carry out a tender for the procurement of PR and Marketing services for the LEP, Marches Growth Hub (MGH) and Hereford Enterprise Zone (HEZ).	Q1	Completed. Be Bold (incumbent supplier) won the contract wef 1 <sup>st</sup> Sep 2021	Grey

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To produce an updated communication plan for 2021/22, outlining a co-ordinated approach across the LEP, MGH and HEZ.	Q2	Completed. This is an interim plan given the ongoing LEPs' Review	
LEP, MGH and HEZ to continue maintaining and developing their presence across a range of social media platforms to support business engagement and raise awareness of key initiatives.	Ongoing	Ongoing	
To produce and distribute an electronic six-weekly newsletter (joint LEP/MGH where appropriate).	Ongoing	Ongoing	

### 4.0 Governance

PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET DATE	PROGRESS TO DATE	RAG RATING
To appoint a new CEO.	Q2	Completed. Rachel Laver started part time on 14 <sup>th</sup> Sep and full time on 4 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2021	
To induct the new CEO.	Q2	Ongoing	
To execute the LEP's Diversity Implementation plan to ensure diversity and equality measures are embedded in the LEP's business planning and day-to-day operations and have a positive impact on the communities, workforce and businesses across The Marches.	Q4	Ongoing. A slower than expected start due to the ongoing LEPs Review	
To review and update Articles of Association and LEP Board's Terms of Reference (TORs).	Q4	These were last reviewed between Jan and Mar 2021. Next review Q4 2022	
To review and update Accountability and Assurance Framework, including policies.	Q4	Ongoing. The document has been reviewed throughout the year as changes occur	
To sign off audited LEP's accounts 2020/21 at Board AGM and submit audited accounts to Companies House.	Q3	Annual Accounts 2020/21 are being finalised. AGM is scheduled to take place on 30 November 2021	
To attend quarterly service review meetings with Shropshire Council to ensure services provided by the Council under the Service Level Agreement, i.e. HR, legal, accountable body, procurement, finance and IT, meet agreed terms and LEP's business needs.	Ongoing	Meetings have taken place at the end of Q1 and Q2	
To conduct an annual review of LEP Board Membership, gender representation and composition.	Q4	On hold, due to the ongoing LEPs Review and the uncertainties that this brings	
To arrange training for Board Members, including diversity and inclusion.	Q3	On hold, due to the ongoing LEPs Review and the uncertainties that this brings	

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### 5.0 Delivery

#### 5.3 Infrastructure and Place

PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET DATE	PROGRESS TO DATE	RAG RATING
To manage the £105m Local Growth Fund programme. This includes monitoring the achievement of contracted deliverables (outputs and match funding) and reporting to Government.	Ongoing	Ongoing	
To manage the £14m Getting Building Fund programme. This includes ensuring the expenditure profiles are met, monitoring the achievement of contracted deliverables (outputs & match funding) and reporting to Government on a quarterly basis through the Delta portal.	Ongoing	Ongoing	
To develop a Project Call and associated processes/procedures.	Q2	Completed	
To deliver the Telford Land Deal work programme, including the flagship NI Park development.	Q4	Ongoing	
LEP to continue being represented on both Telford and Hereford Stronger Towns Fund Boards.	Ongoing	Ongoing	
To continue collaboration with The Marches Nature Partnership to respond to national policy development, to shape future rural support programmes and to consider economic opportunities related to the transition to net zero.	Q4	The Marches Nature Partnership's work is going really slow and a strategy is yet to be agreed	
To understand the findings of the review into the "Green Book: Central Government Guidance on Appraisal and Evaluation" and how this will help the LEP advocate for the Marches and its specific social and economic features, ensuring that our rural areas receive an equitable and proportionate share of future funding.	Q3	Ongoing	
To continue working with partners to understand Building Digital UK (BDUK) procurement, outcomes of 5G pilot and associated opportunities for The Marches area.	Q4	Ongoing. At the beginning of August, Government announced that almost half a million premises in parts of England, including Shropshire, would benefit from the continued rollout of project Gigabit	
To work with Transport Officers Group (TOG) members to support Midlands Connect's response to the Union Connectivity Review and the development of Building Back Better (Midlands Connect Budget Submission).	Q4	Ongoing	
<b>Energy</b>			
To prioritise the delivery and implementation of key energy projects in The Marches, including the promotion of new national and regional schemes and identification of potential future funding opportunities.	Q4	Work ongoing with the Marches LEP Energy Steering working toward the implementation of the Marches Energy Strategy	
To nominate an Energy Champion to sit on the LEP Board to help progress the delivery of The Marches LEP Energy Strategy.	Q1	Completed. Gordon Coppock was nominated LEP Energy Champion and co-opted Board Member at the Board meeting on 25 <sup>th</sup> May 2021	
To continue working with the Midlands Energy Hub to address the capacity gap within local authorities, improve the regional and national communication channels, deliver energy infrastructure projects across the Midlands and support local authorities' commitment to zero-carbon and a green recovery.	Q4	Work ongoing via the Marches LEP Energy Steering Group and the work of the Regional Senior Energy Project Officer. Funding in place until March 2023.	
<b>Marches Investment Fund (MIF)</b>			
To continue monitoring of existing contracts, Dicentra and Harper Adams University.	Q4	Ongoing	
With partners, to bring forward new projects funded under MIF.	Ongoing	Ongoing	
To undertake a review of remaining funds, assessing how they can be utilised.	Q3	Work due to begin	
<b>Hereford Enterprise Zone (HEZ)</b>			
To progress infrastructure works to make plots of land development ready (12 acres minimum)	Q4	Good progress to date. 5.3 acres made development ready. Plot	

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		creation works continue on the North Magazine.	
Progress and complete sales of plots of land (12 acres minimum)	Q4	One sale of 2.7 acres completed. Another sale of 2 acres imminent. Ten more sales in varying stages of negotiation.	
Manage the opening of the Shell Store and secure the first set of tenants (minimum of 10 by year end)	Q4	Shell Store is open for business. 5 tenants in place; events and activities being held in the conference and meeting rooms	
Support the Cyber Quarter partners in opening up and securing the first group of tenants (minimum of 6 by year end)	Q4	Preparatory works well advanced to open up the building later in the year. Partners and prospective tenants are being shown around the facilities.	

### 5.4 Business Support

PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET DATE	PROGRESS TO DATE	RAG RATING
To support businesses in achieving their recovery and growth ambitions, the LEP will continue the implementation of its <b>Access to Finance Strategy</b> and contribute to the strategic delivery of the Midlands Engine Investment Fund.	Q4	Ongoing. Briefing on MEIF at September LEP Board meeting, LEP representation on SOB and RAB.	
<b>Marches Growth Hub (MGH)</b>			
To deliver MGH services through effective partnership working to support the:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective implementation of the core contract (funded by £462k from BEIS plus local authority contributions);</li> </ul>	Q4	6 monthly report submitted to BEIS by end of October 2021 outlining performance to end Q2. Q1 delivery below profile due to late receipt of BEIS guidance which meant delivery at risk. Activity plans presented to Marches Business Support Steering Group gave comfort on levels of activity for the remainder of the year.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivery of additional support services associated with the West Midlands Cluster, including EU Transition support and the new WMCA Made Smarter West Midlands Adoption Programme.</li> </ul>	Q4	Promotion to encourage delivery is ongoing.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivery of the second year of the Peer Networks programme following procurement of a provider; and</li> </ul>	Q4	Neale Lewis Associates (the contracted delivery partner) are recruiting eligible companies to the programme. The number of competing initiatives is impacting recruitment to this programme nationally	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awareness raising of support offered through <a href="http://www.marchesgrowthhub.co.uk">www.marchesgrowthhub.co.uk</a>, the three physical hubs and through referrals to partners.</li> </ul>	Q4	Ongoing; work also supported via Be Bold, Marches LEP appointed PR contractors	
To work with The Marches <b>Business Support Steering Group</b> to consider the implications of the LEPs' Review, the BEIS Business Support Reform project, the National Growth Hub Evaluation project and replacement funds for the impending end of EU funded business support services.	Q4	Details of the planned Business Support Reform by BEIS are awaited alongside news of any future funding	

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		through LEPs for business support services	
<b>Department for International Trade (DIT) projects</b>			
Working with local authority partners, to deliver the <b>Key Account Management</b> programme to support the consolidation and expansion of locally based foreign-owned companies and attracting new inward investment.	Q4	Improvement in performance noted in some areas. Delivery plans for remainder of year provide reassurance of commitment to meet targets.	
To promote and encourage the take up for <b>export and international trade</b> services through locally based teams, regional and national support.	Q4	Ongoing – proposed Marches DIT Strategic Plan to be reviewed by Marches Business Support Steering Group.	

### 5.5 Skills and Employment

PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET DATE	PROGRESS TO DATE	RAG RATING
To promote partners' involvement in the Government's Kickstart Scheme to highlight local placement opportunities for young unemployed people.	Ongoing	Ongoing	
<b>The Skills Advisory Panel SAP</b> (supported by its sub-groups) to continue to drive the skills and employment agenda across The Marches:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SAP funding to be sought from Department for Education (DfE) to continue the production of high quality local-level skills analysis, maintain relationships to deliver the local skills agenda and provide oversight of the implementation of the Local Skills Report Action Plan.</li> </ul>	Q2	SAP funding in place and tender for data and intelligence support to meet DfE objectives is live	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New SAP Chair to be appointed and SAP membership reviewed in line with the SAP Terms of Reference (TORs).</li> </ul>	Q4	New SAP Chair, Graham Gust, appointed wef 1 <sup>st</sup> Oct 2021. SAP TORs and membership being reviewed	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the SAP to consider the implications of the LEPs' Review, Skills Bill and replacement funds for the impending end of EU-funded skills and labour market support services.</li> </ul>	Q4	Ongoing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding to be used to refresh Local Skills Reports by 28 January 2022 to meet DfE requirements.</li> </ul>	Q3	Final guidance awaited from DfE	
To oversee the promotion of national skills initiatives, including those in response to economic and employment challenges, through effective liaison with DfE, including the Education and Skills Funding Agency, Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport and Department of Work & Pensions.	Q4	Promotion of new national and local programmes is ongoing.	
To deliver the <b>Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC)</b> contract in line with contract extension to August 2022 including the delivery of the implementation plan overseen by the Careers Hub Steering Group.	Q4	Ongoing. CEC is looking for improvements to the Marches delivery model which have been agreed with the LAs and a new strategic planning group is being put in place to enable this	

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### 5.6 European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)

PRIORITY ACTIONS	TARGET DATE	PROGRESS TO DATE	RAG RATING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review the future for The Marches ESIF Committee as the ESIF programme comes to an end.</li> </ul>	Q2	Guidance awaited	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure Government recognises the LEP' achievements in delivering the ESIF programme in respect of the development of the proposed UK Shared Prosperity Fund.</li> </ul>	Q2	Ongoing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To understand the role and focus of successor funds and position The Marches to benefit from these.</li> </ul>	Q3	Guidance awaited on successor funds. Delays in MHCLG approval of pilot Community Renewal Funding allocated to Herefordshire	