Gate 1 Business Case (Idea Validation)

Revision No: **Date: 23rd October 2008**

Project Title: Economic Prosperity- sub-regional capacity		**Directorate:** -Select-
Project Manager: **Fiona Bodle**	**Business Owner:** **Policy, Planning & Regeneration**	**Budget Holder:** **Simon Neilson**

Resource Requirements

Revenue funding from **existing** budget	☐	**£**
Revenue funding required - **new**	☒	**£50,000**
Capital funding from **existing** budget	☐	**£**
Capital funding required - **new**	☐	**£**
Other resources required	☐ (please specify)	

Baseline/Context

Strategic Context
The Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership produced an Economic Development Strategy in November 2007. Since then the six local authorities and EEDA have been investigating the potential of a Multi-Area Agreement to support the delivery of the Economic Strategy and have commissioned the preparation of an Economic Development & Skills Delivery Business Plan. In addition an Integrated Development Plan is under-way which will provide the over-arching strategic document to link the Economic Development priorities of Thames Gateway South Essex to the capital programmes under-way and managed by the three Local Delivery Vehicles and the six local authorities.

EEDA has set out its priorities for Economic Development Delivery in the Economic Development Investment Plan published earlier this year.

Baseline for Capacity
At present capacity for delivery of economic development interventions resides largely within the six local authorities. EEDA have historically funded a small Thames Gateway delivery team, but with the establishment of the local delivery vehicles the requirement for additional site development resources from EEDA has reduced. TGSE has remained a priority for many of the regional bodies such as LSC and Business Link East and has attracted operational support, for example the competition for Further Education delivery in South Essex managed by the LSC. However, in order to be able to deliver the priorities contained within the Economic Development & Skills Delivery Business Plan the Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership is keen to assess its combined capacity for Economic Development delivery.

Idea Description & Strategic Fit

The TGSEP have signalled to IDeA that the Partnership would welcome being an 'Economic Prosperity Tool-kit' pilot area.

IDeA in conjunction with the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships and supported by Shared Intelligence, are preparing an Economic Prosperity Tool-Kit which will enable local authorities to evaluate there ability to under-take delivery of Economic Development within their area. With consideration for the out-come of the Sub-National Review, IDeA have sort to develop the tool-kit as a means of establishing those areas who might perform best if delegated powers and authority for Economic Development activities were to be passed on.

The TGSEP Aim
Having the various strategic documents close to completion the TGSEP members are keen to explore new models for delivery (hence consideration of an MAA) including; how the local authorities can work better together to improve their own performance in Economic Development Delivery and identify opportunities to under-take delivery collectively to achieve efficiency gains (for example, sub-regional sector support and sub-regional innovation programme). Further, there is a recognition that as significant economic drivers are developed (such as Dubai World Ports in Thurrock) that a more sophisticated Economic Development Capacity is needed to maximise the economic benefits that can accrue for the local community, (for example supply chain impacts, National Academy for learning and international trade opportunities.)

The TGSEP Business Plan
The Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership completed a review in 2008 which has strengthened the commitment of the six local authorities and EEDA to work together to improve the economic performance of the sub-region. A new business plan is currently being developed to support the new operating requirements for the partnership. The Economic Prosperity tool-kit pilot will enable the business plan to focus on areas of weakness in terms of delivery to support either individual partners or sub-regional delivery.

The Outcome
At the end of the IDeA Economic Prosperity Tool-kit pilot testing and TGSEP Business Plan preparation, TGSEP will have the relevant strategic context and operational delivery plans to ensure improved performance in delivery of economic development in the sub-region. The delivery capacity of the sub-region will have been 'independently' benchmarked by the IDeA tool-kit which will enable sound decisions around future resource allocations to be made within the sub-region.

Finance & Resources

The TGSEP Economic Development Delivery sub-group has prepared this proposal to attract £50,000 of Improvement East resources to support the Economic Prosperity Tool-Kit pilot to inform the development of the TGSE Business Plan. The resources are to be used to commission a consultant to work with IDeA's consultants to inform the tool-kits development, to facilitate the piloting of the tool-kit with TGSE partners and to support the development of the resultant TGSEP business plan.

The consultant will be supported by the TGSEP Economic Development Delivery sub-group comprising of the key partners within TGSEP.

Benefits
We would expect the project to deliver a practical evaluation of the tool-kits use in its current form, to continue to support and galvanise partners commitment to direct resources in the most effective and efficient manner for economic development and to provide a model of best practice for sub-regional organisation of services and activities for economic development.

Risks

There are no risks associated with the appointment of a consultant on a fixed term basis.

Idea Validation

Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership Chief Executives Board and Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership Finance and Policy Board wish to proceed with this project as soon as possible. (See minutes for 17th September and 16th October respectively.)

Stakeholder Engagement

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