

COAST TO CAPITAL STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PLAN CONSULTATION

Our priorities

We will use our new Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) to set out a clear evidence base for the development of the regional economy. This will explore the best ways of exploiting the five unique opportunities that we have identified:

1. Be the partner of choice for London
2. Lead UK trade growth
3. Support economic growth which enhances our region
4. Pioneer digital innovation
5. Create an offer for all stages of life

The purpose of the SEP is then to identify ambitious regional priorities for growth and to develop specific ways of delivering these over the coming years. We have identified ten such priorities which have the potential for inclusion in our strategy for the region, which seem most relevant for economic growth in the Coast to Capital area. Articulating these clearly will increase understanding of the challenges that we face, and will put us in a strong position to develop a local industrial strategy with Government which will drive investment in our area.

We have worked closely with experts to develop these propositions and now seek feedback from our partners and stakeholders and ask that you do so via the consultation questionnaire document.

Against each priority we have set out what we want to achieve by 2030 (our goals), and how we aim to deliver these goals. These will help us to identify projects which might eventually form the basis of a local industrial strategy for the region.

As you read through the document we would ask you to think about the following questions:

- A. Do you agree with the ten priorities?
- B. Do you agree with the goals that we have set out against each priority?
- C. Do you have any other suggestions as to how we might achieve these goals?

Please return your completed consultation questionnaire to sep@coast2capital.org.uk by Friday 23 March 2018.

BE THE PARTNER OF CHOICE FOR LONDON

Our close links to London are a valuable and important part of the region's economy, and drive wealth and investment in our area. London is a global city, with a significant gravitational pull on business and economic activity in our region. London is looking outwards for solutions to its growth needs. We aim to demonstrate that investment in our regional infrastructure, business space, and housing is not only essential for the growth of our region, but also to maintain the growth and sustainability of the London economy – which makes such a significant contribution to the UK as a whole. It is our ambition to be the partner of choice to London so that the long term growth of our area is aligned with the capital.

Coast to Capital is uniquely placed to do this, given the significance of our regional assets. The primary one of these is Gatwick airport, which is a significant part of our national aviation infrastructure. The London Borough of Croydon is integral to our regional economy and the fastest growing borough in London. Other physical assets include our growing ports of Shoreham and Newhaven; Universities; major business parks in Crawley and elsewhere and significant business premises including a high number of international company headquarters. The Coast to Capital region is also a major supplier of skilled labour to the London labour market, with 120,000 people commuting daily to London and 13,000 people relocating in 2016 from Greater London to our region.

Investment in our region is essential in order to grow the Coast to Capital economy as a business destination in its own right, and in relation to London. Investment in transport, business and other infrastructure will deliver significant further capacity for the growth and relocation of business in our region. Without this, our area risks becoming simply a dormitory corridor for the capital, without our own sustainable economic base and without the possibility to generate our own wealth.

Priority 1:

Investment in regional transport infrastructure

Our goals

- i. The growth of Gatwick Airport, including within its existing footprint, as the single most important economic site within our region. The success of Gatwick will drive both our ambitions for international trade and the growth of the economy intrinsically linked to the airport
- ii. Investment in strategic rail and road provide high volume, reliable, fast and safe connectivity between London, international gateways and different centres of economic growth in our region
- iii. A significant shift towards infrastructure that harnesses innovation and smart technology and supports sustainability through green power, clean air and modal shift initiatives

How we aim to deliver these goals

- a. Offer explicit regional support to the growth of Gatwick Airport highlighting its importance as a driver of economic growth, jobs and wealth in the whole region as well as the opportunities to develop UK international trade
- b. Promote investment in the Brighton Mainline to deliver modern rail links to London, specifically through delivery of the Windmill Bridge Junction scheme at Croydon
- c. Support delivery of Crossrail 2 which will significantly improve connections between Epsom, East Surrey and London.
- d. Support Transport for the South East in its bid to become a Sub-national Transport Body and in the development of its Transport Strategy which will bring particular weight to the significance of our A27 and M23/A23 road corridors
- e. Deliver on our Newhaven Enterprise Zone Strategy
- f. Support early adoption of large scale electric vehicle technology across the region, including support for specific projects which aim to make parts of our region national pathfinders
- g. Support research and innovation in hydrogen fuel technologies
- h. Encourage modal shift away from the car to public and sustainable and public transport alternatives building on good practice at Manor Royal Business District

Priority 2:

Investment in business infrastructure in our region which offers significant opportunity for high value businesses to scale and grow, bringing high value jobs back to the region and reducing our reliance on commuter journeys

Our goals

- i. More high quality business space available that will attract new growth businesses to the region, provide opportunity for scale up of existing businesses and promote sector clustering and agglomeration
- ii. Business space is created that is connected to local communities and sustainable so that more people can live and work in their local area
- iii. Close working with the GLA to encourage businesses to relocate from London to our area, to reduce our dependence on the commuter economy
- iv. Active support for businesses which are ambitious and looking to engage in global markets
- v. Increased levels of inward investment into the region

How we aim to deliver these goals

- a. Introduce the right statutory and market-led planning frameworks and incentives so that business space/parks can be developed quickly
- b. Identify strategic sites best placed to deliver the business space we need
- c. Support and nurture scale-up businesses in the region
- d. Ensure the skills are available locally to attract new businesses into the region
- e. Support innovation and supply chain development
- f. Continue to work with the DIT Capital Investments team to promote the large scale commercial and infrastructure investment opportunities in the region

LEAD UK TRADE GROWTH

A very high level of international connectivity has driven economic growth in the region over recent years. We have benefitted from our proximity to London, the attractiveness of the region as a destination for HQ buildings, good access to the near continent for passengers and freight. Above all, the region has benefitted from the growth and success of Gatwick airport.

As a result of this, the region has performed well in terms of our FDI and export potential. The presence of a major international airport in the middle of the region is a unique asset in ensuring that the region is resilient to and able to take advantage of a changing international trading environment.

Changing international priorities present the region with significant opportunities to maximise our growth and to exploit our competitive advantages in relation to other regions of the UK and our competitor destinations in other parts of Europe. Our analysis shows that there are some significant opportunities which the region should exploit in order to increase our competitive advantage.

Priority 3

Utilising the region's strong international connectivity as a key driver of economic growth

Our goals

- i. Gatwick Airport strengthens its position as the most successful globally recognised gateway into the UK for international businesses, tourism and connectivity
- ii. Strategic connections developed with all key neighbouring international gateways including Dover, Portsmouth and Southampton to give greater access to global supply chains
- iii. Coast to Capital becomes a UK gateway for Asia Pacific markets
- iv. Businesses across the Coast to Capital area improve their capacity and ability to export to global markets
- v. Improved profile and success for the region in attracting trade visits and foreign direct investment to boost economic potential
- vi. Coast to Capital's universities and colleges further improve international reputation & visibility, giving the region access to new and emerging trade markets

How we aim to deliver these goals

- a. Develop strategic partnerships with Gatwick Airport, key ports and operators to stimulate business travel and support the growth of freight operations
- b. Develop a portfolio of investment opportunities, business networks and higher education connections with Asia Pacific markets
- c. Lead support for businesses seeking to internationalise in partnership with the Department of International Trade and key delivery bodies
- d. Develop a network of regional and private sector delivery partners in identifying potential opportunities to create international trade hubs to improve our success rates with potential foreign investors

- e. Work with Innovation South partners to expose international trade opportunities gained through innovation and productivity improvements
- f. Support our universities and colleges to build strategic international networks and to increase the intensity of international research collaborations

Priority 4:

Create a successful unifying identity for the region which supports the diversity and opportunity of business opportunities in the area. To use this to encourage inward investment, promote tourism and reflect the strength of the region. This is essential in order to allow us to compete effectively with English city regions, which are better able to present themselves to international partners.

Our goals

- i. The region benefits from a strong brand which is recognisable regionally, nationally and internationally; reflects the unique culture and attractions found in Coast to Capital; and increases awareness of the region attracting international investment and tourism
- ii. The unique characteristics that draw international tourism are widely marketed to positively influence tourism spend and duration of stay
- iii. Promotion of regional sub-sector strengths that differentiate Coast to Capital from other UK regions

How we aim to deliver these goals

- a. Develop a regional brand and marketing strategy inspired by best practice from other regions
- b. Create a visitor economy website and promotional tools geared towards increasing visitor spend within the region
- c. Improve sector propositions to compliment the brand and the opportunities in the region to attract foreign direct investment
- d. Work with local partners to develop experience based opportunities for tourists

SUPPORT ECONOMIC GROWTH WHICH ENHANCES OUR REGION

The economic output per head in the Coast to Capital area is higher than any English city region apart from London and Bristol-Bath, however our growth is slowing and the city regions are catching up. However, conventional models of city-based growth, which rely on intensive urban development, are not appropriate for a region made up of a constellation of large towns embedded in a diverse landscape.

Our region enjoys a reputation of high quality natural assets which include the South Downs National Park, two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and a UNESCO World Biosphere Region. Our natural capital is key to the identity and future success of our region and protecting the unique natural capital is our over-riding goal.

However, the region cannot expect to continue to compete nationally and internationally through incremental small-scale growth. We believe that the central challenge for the region to remain competitive is the need to articulate a simple model of growth which unlocks land for public and private sector investment and helps grow the rural economy through investment in natural capital and increases the productivity of our towns by sustaining and enhancing the local attractiveness of that location utilising the existing asset base of retail, leisure, education, transport and healthcare facilities.

Priority 5:

Ensuring that all investment in our economic capacity is accompanied by similar investment in our natural capital and clean growth, so that the unique nature of our region is enhanced by a growing economy

Our goals

- i. To be the partner of choice to Government as it develops a new policy approach to investing in rural areas
- ii. Increased opportunities for development while conserving and enhancing the environment and growing the economy in the spaces between our towns
- iii. Housing and business space comes forward more quickly through a proactive approach to identifying land in rural areas that is better suited to development
- iv. The rural economy grows as businesses (those making a living from the land/landscape and those that are simply located in a rural area) benefit from investment in natural capital
- v. Local supply chains emerge developing innovative and natural development methods and low carbon solutions
- vi. The region establishes new benchmarks for the production and use of renewable energy
- vii. Enhanced accessibility to high quality natural green spaces and clean air increasing attractiveness of the region to businesses, employees and visitors to the area

How we aim to deliver these goals

- a. Develop Green Infrastructure policies to help pilot Government priorities, including around low carbon design, and consider how to apply them to proposed major developments in the region

- b. Influence the development of the new Environmental Land Management scheme for England (which will replace CAP payments), to maximise the benefit to our region and the delivery of economic and public benefits
- c. Identify the areas in our region which will benefit most from environmental investment in order to support economic growth (particularly housing, business space and connectivity) and quality of life
- d. Champion and implement the concept of net environmental gain from planning and 21st century low carbon design principles in the region
- e. Prepare a prospectus for the region in order to engage developers in all the above at the master planning stage
- f. Adopt the recommendations from the tri-LEP (Coast to Capital, EM3 and SELEP) energy strategy and support the development of the South East Local Energy Hub

Priority 6:

Prioritising the intensification of towns where development is focused on sustainable locations and there is a base level existing infrastructure for transport, employment, health and well-being which can be enhanced and augmented.

Our goals

- i. The delivery of high quality, locally distinctive mixed-use schemes based on good urban design
- ii. Places for people which engender social interactions and mixed communities
- iii. Well connected-places with high sustainable travel usage and a low carbon footprint
- iv. Rejuvenated local economies that add vitality and commerce to existing locations
- v. Enhanced accessibility to high quality landscape, recreation, heritage and culture
- vi. A highly skilled construction pipeline and workforce

How we aim to deliver these goals

- a. Develop a business case for dedicated Government funding for the intensification of towns, building on the Housing Infrastructure Fund to support the regeneration and economic growth of towns which have an appetite to do so
- b. Promote the transformative effect of high quality and density in order to increase the economic sustainability of our towns
- c. Deliver development expertise and leadership across complex projects such as One Public Estate, brownfield regeneration and regeneration vehicles with opportunities for direct and indirect funding in support of local authority statutory responsibilities
- d. Understand the market considerations of developers and act as a critical friend to authorities and developers for complex project delivery negotiations
- e. Champion the use of design panels and design competence across region, augmenting design policies
- f. Encourage knowledge sharing around urban design and density guidelines, including taller buildings
- g. Explore modern innovative housing options that fit the lifestyle and earning potential of the region's population

PIONEER DIGITAL INNOVATION

Coast to Capital is in a unique position to be at the forefront of an industry that drives economic growth for the region and the rest of the UK. Digital disruption is already upon us in the way we use screens in all shapes and sizes to lead our lives. The next wave of disruption goes beyond the screen and comes in the form of artificial intelligence, machine learning, the internet of things, automation, virtual and augmented reality and the availability of big data.

The Coast to Capital region is already taking advantage of this disruption and leading the way in digital innovation through the Brighton Digital Catapult Centre. This Catapult enables our highly creative and effective SMEs to work even more closely with our universities and those big businesses which specialise in R&D and have greater access to resources and markets. The region is home to existing world renowned digital clusters in Brighton and Croydon and cutting edge innovation in the field of quantum computing at the University of Sussex. We also have access to the latest technology to help our SMEs push the boundaries of what is possible with the only 5G test bed in the country outside of a university based at the Fusebox in Brighton.

Our starting point in considering how to meet this objective is that Coast to Capital is not a city region and derives its success from a network of economic hubs which is greater than the sum of its parts. For this network of hubs to bring about an increase in productivity and economic growth across the region it is important that there is excellent connectivity, not only through transport networks but also digital ones.

Priority 7:

Leading the way in digital innovation to drive productivity and growth across all sectors

Our goals

- i. Our highly innovative and productive digital and technology SMEs scale up and commercialise their products through support leveraged from big businesses and universities
- ii. The SME tech clusters of Brighton and Croydon extend their reach beyond Coast to Capital, for example to the wealth of big businesses with a focus on R&D along the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford corridor
- iii. To be the region known for leading the commercial application of digital enabling technologies, such as quantum computing, which will lead to the development of new technologies and clustering of high value businesses requiring a highly skilled workforce
- iv. A highly skilled talent pipeline and workforce to support the growth of our growing SMEs and our high value big businesses

How we aim to deliver these goals

- a. Build on the existing good practice in the region that is working to bring together SMEs, big business and universities such as the Digital Catapult, Sussex Innovation Centre, Croydon Tech City
- b. Create a Coast to Capital Innovation Board that brings innovating businesses large and small around the table with the higher education and public sectors to explore

- the potential for greater collaboration both within the region and across a wider geography
- c. Explore options for creating a university presence to bring a focus on research and innovation which serves the Gatwick and Croydon areas
 - d. Support the delivery of the Innovation South Science and Innovation Audit report recommendations on digital enabling technologies
 - e. Build the presence and capacity of a supply chain for the development of products using quantum technology in readiness of demand
 - f. Grow the Coast to Capital Enterprise Adviser Network to champion and promote career opportunities linked with digital technologies across the Coast to Capital region
 - g. Support the development of an Institute of Technology (IoT) with a focus on Level 4 and 5 digital skills which will grow the talent pipeline and develop the skills of the existing workforce
 - h. Establish a Local Digital Skills Partnership, with the support of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, to bring local communities and regional stakeholders together to consider digital skills needs and draw up action plans

Priority 8

Ensuring the region has the best digital network capability essential to deliver high productivity gains across all sectors

Our goals

- i. Successful roll out of full fibre across the region
- ii. Brighton Mainline becomes a digital superhighway connecting the towns and cities along its network, so that our digital infrastructure supports the potential of our digital sector
- iii. A region wide Smart Urban Landscape (built on the principle of a Smart City) which takes advantage of advanced Internet of Things and communication technologies, sophisticated data science and analytics and innovative thinking to improve regional productivity, sustainability and quality of life
- iv. A new generation of high growth digital businesses unlocked across Coast to Capital, the wider South and other UK regions as a result of 5G driven innovation

How we aim to deliver these goals

- a. Take a region-wide partnership approach to laying full fibre networks with a dig once policy for all new developments
- b. Work with Network Rail and Department for Transport to bring forward investment in full fast fibre on Brighton Mainline
- c. Explore the use of big data and communication technology to develop a region wide smart urban landscape which links coastal and rural areas in a network of interconnected initiatives
- d. Build on the 5G test bed activity in Brighton and extend the 5G capability initially by linking in the universities, colleges and local authority. Explore how this might be extended to other economic hubs in Coast to Capital

CREATE AN OFFER FOR ALL STAGES OF LIFE

Coast to Capital's population is expected to grow by 22% by 2039 and 57% of this growth is expected in the 65+ age group; much like the rest of the nation we have an ageing population. With options for city, coastal, rural and urban living in our region, it has an appeal to people at all stages of life. However, we need to be aware of the competition from other parts of the UK in terms of housing, employment and lifestyle choices for different age groups and ensure that our region remains competitive and affordable.

The needs of different age groups vary. Young people are attracted to cities and often need smaller and more affordable accommodation; young families generally need larger homes and to live closer to work; and older people need to be able to down size and have access to affordable supported living or residential care facilities. Our region needs to make provision for all of these different needs. A region which caters for all stages of life will be critical to balancing the pressures of an ageing population with the need to drive growth.

The region needs to lead the way and act now in introducing modern innovative housing options that fit the lifestyle and earning potential of the region's population. We also need to ensure that we are maximising the huge diversity of attractions that the region has on offer, from amazing outdoor recreational activities on the South Downs or along the south coast, to world renowned heritage sites such as Chichester Cathedral and annual cultural events such as the Brighton Festival.

We need to ensure that the existing, untapped (unemployed and inactive) and future workforce has the skills needed to access or progress into well paid local employment at all levels, the adaptability to move through a variety of different careers as the employment market changes over time and the option to remain in employment for longer.

Priority 9:

Developing a highly productive workforce that meets the needs of business in a changing economy

Our goals

- i. A strong pipeline of employment-ready young people from our schools, further education and higher education providers moving into employment in the region
- ii. A regional skills ecosystem exists in which businesses, further education and higher education providers work together to map skills demand and supply and develop key policy areas such as Apprenticeship Frameworks and T Levels and also vocational and academic curricula
- iii. Businesses model a culture of continued investment in the skills of their workforce in order to retain staff in the region and increase labour productivity
- iv. Residents of Coast to Capital are enabled to make informed decisions about their future learning and employment options at key decision points of their lifelong learning journey

How we aim to deliver these goals

- a. Continue to develop the Enterprise Adviser Network in Coast to Capital to establish ever stronger links between education and business with priority given to our key sectors and sub-sectors
- b. Develop undergraduate and graduate internship and business sponsorship programmes to maximise the economic contribution of graduates in the region
- c. Ensure full use is made of the Adult Education Budget in the region (currently underutilised nationally) which might include a conversation with Government around greater freedom and flexibility locally on use of the budget e.g. to establish a Local Retraining Scheme to address skills gaps in key sectors; as match funding for ESF or UK Shared Prosperity funded programmes; or to fund digital skills in the workforce before they become a fundable basic skill in 2020
- d. Engage with businesses to ensure full advantage is taken of the apprenticeship levy and that, where appropriate, the 10% allowance is used to support the supply chain
- e. Establish a regional Employment and Skills Board / Skills Advisory Group (national requirement) which brings key businesses and the education and skills sector around a table to form strategic partnerships and to shape future education and skills provision based on robust evidence
- f. Embed careers and enterprise education within all teacher training courses developed for the region

Priority 10:

Maximising the productivity of the working age population

Our goals

- i. A business environment prevails within which entrepreneurship and flexible working options for older workers are supported and encouraged
- ii. A reduction in the number of people who are economically inactive but could be encouraged to work if more flexible options were available
- iii. An increase in the employment opportunities for unemployed people with learning difficulties, disabilities or mental health issues and are able to work with appropriate guidance and support

How we aim to deliver these goals

- a. Offer support to businesses to help them understand the importance and productivity benefits of flexible working options for older workers and people with caring responsibilities and embed new working practices
- b. Develop targeted programmes of support to help unemployed people with learning difficulties, physical disabilities or mental health issues to access appropriate work opportunities such as supported employment and job carving schemes
- c. Develop targeted programmes of support to help economically inactive groups engage fully in the labour market
- d. Work closely with the National Careers Service in their delivery of mid-life career reviews for businesses and their employees in the region leading to longer working lives either in employment or as an older entrepreneur