REGIONAL TRANSPORT FORUM – 1st July 2011

Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) & Regional Growth Fund (RGF) update

Report by: Southend Borough Council

Purpose of report:

- To give Members an update on LEPs and the Regional Growth Fund (RGF).

Recommendation:

1. To note the report.
2. To give a round table update on LEPs.

1 LEP Meeting 7th June

1.1 Representatives of both Southend and Thurrock Unitary Authorities attended the “LEPs and the Growth Agenda” meeting at Great Minster House on 7th June. The meeting covered the RGF with views from the RGF Secretariat, DfT, DCLG, HMT and the HCA. The deadline for the second round for RGF is 1st July 2011. However, at the meeting it was said that if all the money was not allocated during the second round, there could be a third round. The following points were discussed.

a) Areas within bids which shall be favoured:
   - Are dependent on the public sector and can demonstrate this
   - Can demonstrate that the funding will deliver private sector jobs
   - Demonstrate how programme bids fit in with the LEP (if the LEP is on board with it, although bids outside of LEP agreement also considered)
   - Demonstrate why the bid needs support i.e. why it cannot be delivered without assistance/funding and what it will deliver including added value (wider benefits)

b) Public sector dependency:
   - Statistic related to number in the public sector
   - How many people receive out of work benefits
   - Show signs of growth in private sector (potential)
   - Active enterprises per 1000 population, for example, and other local intelligence to demonstrate both why the area needs assistance but also potential to deliver growth in private sector jobs

c) Assessment:
   - Displacement of jobs from another location would not be considered favourably
• How likely is it that the programme will be brought forward – is it planned for? Demonstrate the backing for it?
• Demonstrate that there is a good governance structure and ability of the partners to deliver other schemes and projects successfully (past achievements) – capability to handle government money, track record, monitoring arrangements.
• Evidence that it will be a success, as well as demonstrating wider benefits / added value – transport infrastructure to open up an employment area for private sector jobs but also achieving other aims like reducing journey times, reducing accidents, reducing congestion etc.
• Direct and indirect jobs – need to demonstrate more with indirect jobs how it will be delivered and the wider benefits as direct jobs are more visible - need evidence base to embed realism
• Good to show that there is private sector investment in a programme bid – will be looked at favourably
• Programmes will be looked at favourably in this round – demonstrate how programme works to achieve a whole (explain why they are grouped together rather than being a list of individual projects)
• A programme that will assist the creation and development of small and medium enterprises will be considered favourably, working with SME’s.
• Consider externalities – improve retail in a run down area – improves the appearance of the area and removes blight which may draw in further inward investment
• Show how the area is one that has market failure and needs intervention (things would not happen without the assistance) – not interested in scheme or programme which would go ahead without the funding anyway
• Demonstrate where the demand for private sector jobs and growth is coming from – what is unique about the area or location – what is it about a place that will attract clusters e.g. creative industries etc.
• Include an executive summary of the bid and programme and avoid jargon (plain English and grounded language which means something rather than ‘fluffy ideas’)
• Try to be as specific as possible about the numbers and timing of jobs delivered
• Very similar approach to evidence provided for a successful CIF bid
• Refer to the web blogs – guidance available on the DfT website
• With a transport programme use transport modelling to demonstrate spatial distribution of the impact (where it will happen)
• Demonstrate the social and environmental benefits of a programme as well as the economic jobs and growth
• Need to provide an appraisal of each element of a bid i.e. for each element of the programme
• Show how housing and employment is dependent on the infrastructure delivery such as bottlenecks relieved at junctions etc.
2 Conclusion

2.1 The following extract from Lee Sambrook’s (DfT) email summarises the meetings discussions on the Regional Growth Fund. The key message from the workshop was that for RGF bids to score well they need to clearly demonstrate the criteria:

- Sustainable private sector job creation
- Geography – i.e. areas of public sector dependency

2.2 The data used to assess this criteria can be found at the following link;  

2.3 The workshop emphasised that this is a competitive process with each bid in competition with the next. Bids with the strongest alignment with the criteria would be in the most favourable position. However, in addition, a strong demonstration of wider benefits could help tip the balance towards a bid. The presentation titled ‘Transport Appraisal’ which has been sent with the RTF papers offers advice on how the wider economic benefits of a transport scheme could be captured as part of an RGF bid.