

South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership

# Annual Delivery Plan 2022/23

## Introduction

As advocates for our economy, leaders of business and communities, SEMLEP recognises that the journey from recovery to stability and economic growth is going to be tough. Inflation and the cost of living today is pushing many families further into financial crisis, with some 3 in 4 adults feeling worried about costs of living<sup>1</sup>. Businesses increasingly report chronic skills and labour shortages, there are persistent supply chain issues and we have dramatic increases in energy costs. As we move through 2022/23 our economy will continue to face significant challenges.

In 2020, we published the South East Midlands Economic [Recovery Strategy](#). This drew from our robust understanding of our local and regional economic strengths and fragilities, economic analysis and scenario planning and, insight from direct engagement with businesses. The impact of the last two years is significant. Whilst some areas have fared better than others, real GVA decreased by 11.2% in 2020, a bigger fall than 9.7% seen nationally. Whilst overall, the area's unemployment rates were lower than national average in 2022 and 2021, there were sharp increases in unemployment within some communities. The recovery in local job postings has remained high throughout 2022 to date, but understandably some sectors find themselves returning from a real GVA shrinkage of over 30%.

Longer term OECD growth forecasts<sup>2</sup> put the UK at zero for 2023. But alongside these stark warnings, we know that the South East Midlands area has a diverse, capable and resilient economy. By supporting businesses to capitalise on their strengths, enabling innovation and harnessing collaboration, we can build back stronger. We can be more productive, greener and more inclusive.

This year's SEMLEP annual delivery plan builds on the actions of the Economic Recovery Strategy and prioritises activities to help our businesses, people and our places navigate towards inclusive recovery, increased productivity, and sustainable growth. Our 2022/23 delivery plan remains rooted in economic evidence and informed by what our business community tells us is crucial to them, to secure their long-term future. Our delivery plan sets out our core activities and key performance indicators (KPIs) where applicable in four sections: strategy, delivery, governance and transition. It is framed in the context of the latest Government policy positions on Levelling Up and achieving Net Zero.

Whilst we support our partners on their journey, this year also brings changes to us an organisation. Following the conclusion of the Government's review of Local Enterprise Partnerships and the publication of the Levelling Up White Paper, we enter a period of transition.

The Levelling Up White Paper published in February 2022 confirmed that in areas where there is no Mayoral Combined Authority or devolution deal in prospect, LEPs will continue to play a vital role in supporting local businesses and the local economy. This includes embedding strong, independent and diverse business voices into local decision-making and a key role in developing local economic strategies and providing economic intelligence

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<sup>1</sup> [Worries about the rising costs of living, Great Britain: April to May 2022, ONS](#)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/62d0ca31-en/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/62d0ca31-en>

and analysis. We will also continue to deliver programmes and projects on behalf of central government departments and other agencies, such as business support, delivering an employer-led skills strategy and a programme that supports getting people back into work. As with many publicly funded organisations, we are faced with budgetary constraints; our budget has been cut by 40% from 2021/22. Over the longer term, our economic partnership will be on a trajectory aligned to the Government's devolution agenda.

As we progress plans for our own future, we recognise that our partnership must remain agile, effective, collaborative, and inclusive. In doing so, we will be best placed to adapt and respond accordingly to help secure the best possible future for our area.

## Strategy

The long-term strategy for delivering productivity led economic growth for the region, aligned to government policy agenda, is set out in the [South East Midlands Local industrial Strategy](#), published in 2019. This is supplemented by the [South East Midlands Economic Recovery Strategy \(ERS\)](#), setting out short term forecasts and priorities for the area to bounce back from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Both strategies are underpinned by extensive evidence bases, updated as new pertinent economic and business intelligence becomes available. SEMLEP produced Business Intelligence reports – initiated during the pandemic and EU Exit to monitor local economic shocks – will continue to be available to our stakeholders monthly to inform future plans. SEMLEP also conducts a biennial business survey in collaboration with its partners, and other economic reports, to support our stakeholders' plans.

These economic strategies are accompanied by [the South East Midlands Skills Strategy](#), published in 2021, developed through consultation with the Skills Advisory Panel and the Local Skills Report published in January 2022. These too are accompanied by an extensive review of Labour Market Information resources. These plans and resources will play a critical role in assisting the creation of new Local Skills Improvement Plans, to be developed by our Local Authority partners.

To respond to findings and actions set out in the South East Midlands' economic and skills plans, SEMLEP's biennial business survey and intelligence, SEMLEP has identified the following priority actions for our strategy work:

## Milestones

- Support the Skills Advisory Panel transition to new structures – **March 2023**
- Refresh the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion evidence base and analysis– **December 2022**
- Produce an annual update of the South East Midlands' commercial property market to the SEMLEP Board – **September 2022**
- Publish a South East Midlands Logistics Study final report, supporting our partners to understand the opportunities and challenges for this transforming sector – **September 2022**

## Delivery

This section provides a summary of SEMLEP's objectives for delivery. These are presented across 4 main areas: SEMLEP's Growth Hub, Skills, Community Grants, Legacy Capital Programmes.

### SEMLEP's Growth Hub

#### Milestones

- Deliver two growth focussed showcase business events to support businesses with scale up potential - **July 2022**
- Deliver Green Recovery and Innovation support to up to 100 businesses - **Dec 2022**
- Support over 150 high growth businesses through the Growth Curve programme for scale up and pre-scale up businesses - **March 2023**

KPI	Forecast for 22/23
Number of enquiries received	1500
Number of clients 1-to-1s (including diagnostic reviews)	350
Number of workshops delivered in collaboration with Partners	25
Number of businesses supported with decarbonisation and innovation plans	Up to 100

### Skills

#### Ongoing activities for the SEMLEP Skills agenda include:

- Support and the promotion of the delivery of the Local Skills Report action plan to:
  - Increase the talent pipeline of people entering occupational groups with opportunities and needs:
    - Logistics and supply chain
    - Construction
    - Manufacturing
    - Engineering
    - Digital
    - Health and Care
  - Develop relevant, accessible pathways into occupational groups with need both now and in the future for:
    - Logistics
    - STEM and digital related
    - Green Economy
  - Ensure focus on the development of relevant basic skills such as numeracy, literacy and spoken English, core transferable skills, attitudes and behaviours within pre 16 education.

- Provide focal points across the SEM for employers to engage with providers, provision and pathways for recruitment, upskilling/reskilling and development of the talent pipeline.
- Increase and promote Higher Education pathways in Milton Keynes through new MK:U and existing universities.
- Employment and skills data Analysis and interpretation for local authorities, education and training stakeholders and any new employer representative body (ERB) and Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).
- Provision of 'live' labour market information to stakeholders at appropriate levels.
- Employer consultation and surveys.
- Support for Strategic Development Fund (SDF) application and SkillsHub:MK activity.
- Guidance and support for employers for recruitment, upskilling / reskilling and engagement with education.
- Creation and roll-out of Careers Hub South East Midlands as part of the national The Careers and Enterprise Company network.
- Support to head teachers and careers leaders in schools and colleges for the development of quality inspirational careers support and guidance to young people.
- Support for Skills Advisory Panel phase out and transition to new structures.

## Milestones

- Constructively engage in the development of Local Skills Improvement Plan – **March 2023**
- Provide understanding of local skills economies and communities as well as access to macro analysis and data on the local labour market as source of evidence for designated employer representative body - **March 2023**

KPI	Forecast for 22/23
Proportion of Schools/Colleges registered with CEC network with a completed Compass Tool	100%
Average Gatsby Benchmark scores	90%
Average number of perfect (100%) GBM scores per school	5.4
Number of Enterprise Advisers matched to schools/colleges	90%

## Community Grants

### Milestones

- Complete delivery on all 8 rounds, bringing to a total 93 projects supported over the lifetime of the programme – **March 2023**

## Legacy Capital Programmes

### Local Growth Fund

The LGF programme successfully spent over £17m of LGF to approved projects this year with a small balance of £1.68m carried forward to next year for final payments and completion of 2 projects. Other projects are fully committed finalising their delivery for completion into Q1 22/23.

KPI	Total achieved to date	Forecast for 22/23	Reported forecast to 2030
Homes enabled	9,399	2,083	39,676
Jobs	7,593	2,041	21,016
Additional learners	7,933	2,394	8,989

### Getting Building Fund

The Getting Building Fund programme in the SEMLEP region achieved strong progress in 2021/22, completing £27.2m spend of £27.3m awarded by government. Several projects will complete their delivery and match contributions during 2022/23, including Innovate Recycle Limited which will also claim their remaining £100k GBF allocation upon final completion.

KPI	Total achieved to date	Forecast for 22/23	Reported forecast to 2030
Construction jobs	62	152	214
Jobs	149	160	486
Additional learners	341	678	2,978

## Governance

For 2022/23 SEMLEP's decision making, processes and systems and engagement will remain aligned to the requirements within the [Assurance Framework](#).

### Milestones

- Hosting a Board away day to progress the long term vision, mission and functions for the LEP aligned to new government policy – **July 2022**
- Recruiting new private sector board members – by **February 2023**
- Refresh our equality, diversity and inclusion policy – **February 2023**
- Ensuring the Assurance Framework remains up to date and compliant - **as noted in 6 monthly Government reviews**
- Holding an AGM in Autumn 2022 – by December 2022

## Transition

As set out in the introduction, 2022/23 is very much a year of transition for our partnership. Our Delivery Plan for 2023/24 will be published by November 2022. Throughout the year, we will be working with many of our stakeholders from the public, private, education and voluntary sectors to plan for our longer-term future.

## Milestones

- Engage with our stakeholders on the economic vision and mission for the enterprise partnership, agreeing priority actions to support local economies and the strategic, independent business voice within local decision making. – **Ongoing in 2022/23**
- Publish a 2023/24 SEMLEP Business Plan by 30<sup>th</sup> November in line with Government requirements. **November 2022**