

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

BUSINESS & FINANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9 DECEMBER 2020

MARCHES LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

REPORT OF THE MARCHES LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To enable the Business & Finance Scrutiny Committee to consider the current priorities of the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and Telford's strong track record of delivery of investment and economic growth, channelled via the LEP.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Committee consider the report and agree any recommendations or further actions.

3 INTRODUCTION

3.1 This report provides an update on the Marches LEP, including governance and current board membership.

3.2 It also outlines current priorities, including Covid 19 response and projects directly benefiting the Borough including a significant number being delivered by Telford & Wrekin Council.

4 KEY INFORMATION

Governance

4.1 The Marches LEP, one of 38 LEPs and established in 2011, supports economic growth across Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. It is a business led organisation and its vision is found at **Appendix 1**.

4.2 The LEP Board, chaired by Mandy Thorn MBE DL, includes the leaders of the three local authorities of Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin as well as the chairs of Herefordshire Business Board, Shropshire Business Board and Telford Business Board. The LEP Board is the LEP's ultimate decision-making authority and it comprises both public and private sector partners - a full breakdown of current LEP Board Members may be found at **Appendix 2**.

4.3 In response to government instructions, the Marches LEP became a company limited by guarantee in February 2019 and Board members have become directors of Marches Local Enterprise Partnership Limited (company **11822614**).

4.4 The Marches LEP has a detailed Accountability and Assurance Framework (AAF) which may be found at <https://www.marcheslep.org.uk/download/transparency/Accountability-and-Assurance-Framework-2019-final.pdf>.

4.5 This has been formally approved by the LEP's Government sponsors (the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG)) and it sets out the LEP's key practices and standards in decision making, financial management and accountability. It is an iterative document and is reviewed annually as a minimum by the Marches LEP and its Accountable Body. The s151 Officer at the Accountable Body (Shropshire Council fulfils this role) has a responsibility to formally confirm each year that the local AAF meets all standards set out in national guidance.

4.6 To further support the LEP's governance, a new Director of Corporate Services, Ilia Bowes, joined the LEP team in October 2020. She is working with the Chief Executive, Gill Hamer, and the Board to review and update all aspects of the Marches LEP's AAF, including its articles of association.

4.7 Within the AAF, the LEP agreed with each local authority that it will attend its relevant scrutiny panels to provide an overview of key activities undertaken and progress made. The Marches LEP last attended this General Scrutiny Committee on 11 February 2020.

4.8 In line with Government requirements, the Marches LEP has developed an Annual Delivery Plan which sets out its workplan for financial year 2020/2021 and outlines its priority actions. A copy may be found here https://www.marcheslep.org.uk/download/transparency/Item-3-Appendix-1-MLEP-Delivery-Plan-2020-21_2.pdf.

4.9 Progress against the deliverables is reviewed regularly by the LEP team, Deputy Chair and Chair. Formal mid-year and end of year performance reviews are held with Government (Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG)) to review achievements, to consider examples of good practice and identify areas for improvement. To this end, a formal mid-year review was held on 28 September 2020.

4.10 To support the sharing of best practice and effective cross-local authority working, the Marches LEP holds monthly operational meetings with the Heads of Economic Development, discussing common challenges and considering joint working approaches. These include commissioning joint research, e.g. the Visitor Economy Strategy, Digital Strategy and Innovative Health Strategy to achieve economies of scale and responding collectively to national initiatives and consultations. In addition, through the Marches Growth Hub, the Marches LEP supports all three local authorities with the promotion of their business support services, enquiry handling and the maintenance of the website's support finder as a shared resource.

Current Priorities

4.11 The Marches LEP's current priorities include the delivery of strategically important capital infrastructure projects funded by **Growth Deal** (Local Growth Fund) and, more recently, the **Getting Building Fund**. These deliver a range of outputs, including job creation and apprenticeship opportunities. Telford & Wrekin has a strong track record for delivery having successfully invested £34.2m from Local Growth Fund into 6 projects including the delivery of Ni Park, Newport. There is also a recently agreed package of commercial/residential investments – Stronger Communities Programme – including a focus on the former New College Site in Wellington and Station Quarter. See **Appendix 3** for details of these.

4.12 The **Marches Growth Hub** www.marchesgrowthhub.co.uk/ provides advice and guidance to new and existing businesses is also an important Marches LEP initiative. It acts as a gateway to business support services delivered in Telford by the Council's Business Support Team and has a comprehensive events calendar www.marchesgrowthhub.co.uk/calendar/. Additional government funding to provide business adviser support related to the end of the EU transition period has just been announced and the LEP is working through delivery options with growth hub local authority partners.

4.13 The **Marches LEP's Skills Advisory Panel** (SAP) has developed a detailed evidence base to understand the skills needs of its local economy and labour market. The SAP, which includes representation from Telford & Wrekin Council, Telford Business Board and local training providers, is currently gathering evidence of where this has been used to develop and support new skills programmes.

4.14 A further key activity stream is the implementation of the **Marches LEP's Energy Strategy**. Telford & Wrekin Council and Telford Business Board are represented at Steering Group level and are supporting work to encourage the take up of grant funding available to businesses across the borough, including the Marches Renewable Energy (MarRE) grant schemes, the Rural Community Energy Fund (RCEF), Business Energy Efficiency Scheme (BEEP) and Sustainable Energy in Public Buildings (SePuBu). The Energy Strategy Steering Group is also striving to attract more funding to the area under the £3 billion green investment announced as part of a Covid-19 recovery package. This includes Green Homes Grants, decarbonisation initiatives, the Green Jobs Challenge Fund and automotive transformation fund.

4.15 The Marches LEP submitted its draft **Local Industrial Strategy** https://www.marcheslep.org.uk/download/marches_local_industrial_strategy/Marches-Local-Industrial-Strategy-Final-draft-20.12.19.pdf to government in December 2019. This was developed following extensive business consultation across Telford & Wrekin and sets out the area's unique strengths in response to the national industrial strategy. Further guidance is awaited from government on how local industrial strategies will be taken forward and their role in economic recovery but the LEP is continuing to champion the major local growth opportunities connected with:

- high-tech, energy-efficient manufacturing and engineering
- modern and environmentally sustainable food production, packaging and distribution through agri-tech innovation

- excellence in cyber security and resilience.

A breakdown of Marches LEP projects that have directly benefited Telford & Wrekin, including support for skills, broadband and infrastructure programmes, is found at **Appendix 3**.

Covid-19 Response

4.16 The Marches LEP has played a leadership role, co-ordinating key stakeholders across the Marches, during the initial Covid-19 lockdown and subsequent economic downturn. The Marches Growth Hub enhanced its online offer, enabling access to a wide range of virtual events, business information (updated daily in line with Government announcements) specialist advice and grant funding.

4.17 The Marches LEP convened an Economic Impact Group comprising sector representatives, business representation organisations including the Chambers of Commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses and the National Farmers Union, to gather information on business conditions to share with senior civil servants, Ministers and local MPs. This enabled a very clear articulation of the issues being faced by Marches businesses and ensured that the rural economy was clearly represented in understanding the economic impact of the Covid-19 outbreak. This was supported through a LEP survey which gathered information directly from businesses to inform feedback on the impact of government interventions. The LEP has also ensured that local representatives have participated in a series of Ministerial roundtables with BEIS ministers.

4.18 This Economic Impact Group last met (virtually) at the Marches Economic Recovery Summit on 15 October 2020 as part of the LEP's Business Recovery Week. Discussions here reflected on current economic conditions and highlighted actions required to support economic recovery. These will be incorporated into a Marches-wide economic recovery plan which will enable cross-local authority area working on common areas of interest including skills, business support, digital infrastructure and support to market towns.

4.19 In addition, the Marches LEP approved a business case submitted by Telford & Wrekin Council, in partnership with Telford Business Board, in May 2020 to award an allocation of £404k to support strategically important and tourism sector businesses. This was in recognition that the sector has been significantly impacted this year, firstly by flooding and then by Covid-19. This project comprises **£230k** to support the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust deal with the loss of visitor income caused by the flooding to museum buildings in the Gorge in February 2020 and the impact of the closure of the whole museum owing to COVID-19. In addition, **£174k** has been targeted towards re-energising local and regional consumer demand across Telford's retail, hospitality and leisure sectors, with a particular focus on five key Borough Towns/Centres, through a programme of digital innovation, marketing and innovative events to generate footfall. This funding has been drawn from the Marches Investment Fund which, each year, benefits from a contribution of Telford Land Deal profits for investment across the Marches area.

4.20 The impact of Covid-19 has seen an increase in unemployment across the Marches. Members of the SAP are working with partners to promote the Kickstart programme and to signpost to Telford's all-age employment support programme, Job Box, as well as promoting apprenticeship opportunities with local employers, including those being created under LEP funded projects.

5 FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT

5.1 Work set out in this Report is being undertaken within Marches LEP resources. This includes an annual cash contribution from each of the Local Authorities (£21,165 from Telford & Wrekin in 2020/21) to enable the drawdown of BEIS/MHCLG core funding for the LEP.

5.2 **Appendix 3** sets out examples of how Telford & Wrekin has benefitted from project funding drawn down by the Marches LEP. Our 2019 SEP and LIS is being used to prioritise opportunities for funding and shape government investment into the area. The Marches LEP is continuing to make the case to government for funding to support economic recovery and to increase understanding of the area's economic priorities.

5.3 Financial risk to Telford & Wrekin Council and other local authority partners is limited through the use of Shropshire Council as the LEP's accountable body and the LEP maintaining adequate reserves to meet all anticipated financial liabilities.

5.4 The LEP has its own Performance, Risk and Monitoring Committee that meets every two months to review the Risk Register, identify any new risks and ensure mitigation is reflective of operational/quality assurance framework practice. This is a strategic group with delegated responsibility from the LEP Board and its reports form part of the governance reporting for the Board of Directors.

6 LEGAL ISSUES

6.1 The Marches LEP is a company limited by guarantee (since February 2019) and its articles of association (<https://www.marcheslep.org.uk/download/transparency/Appendix-1-Articles-of-Association.pdf>) set out its membership, obligations and decision-making processes. Specialist legal advice was commissioned to identify any issues arising as the result of the LEP having become a company limited by guarantee.

7 ACTIONS TO ADDRESS

7.1 Performance against the Annual Delivery Plan is formally reviewed by government. A performance rating is awarded to each LEP and the process provides an opportunity to highlight examples of good practice to share across the LEP network. The process also enables the identification of areas for improvement. The Marches LEP has achieved positive feedback on all aspects of its delivery; strategy, governance and delivery, and, in response to government feedback is developing a plan to improve diversity through Board and sub-group membership.

7.2 In addition, the LEP has been asked to align the terms of reference of the Business Boards (tenure, etc.) to the main LEP Board in a way they can retain their independence but demonstrate clear governance. This is currently being undertaken.

7.3 The Marches LEP, through the LEP Network, is lobbying for a longer-term financial settlement. The current public funding round (Growth Deal and funding from EU schemes) is coming to an end and there is currently no sight of future programmes. This potential gap in funding, coupled with the impact of Covid on the local economy, poses a significant risk to economic recovery. The LEP team is seeking to understand local opportunities associated with the recent Comprehensive Spending Review and the government's Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Marches LEP Vision

Appendix 2 - Marches LEP Board Membership

Appendix 3 - Marches LEP Investment in Telford & Wrekin- Infrastructure, Skills and Innovation

Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

AAF - Accountability and Assurance Framework

BEEP - Business Energy Efficiency Scheme

BEIS - Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

CEC - Careers & Enterprise Company

DEFRA - Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

DfT - Department for Transport

DWP - Department for Work & Pensions

ERDF - European Regional Development Fund

ESF - European Social Fund

ESFA - Education and Skills Funding Agency

ESIF - European Structural and Investment Fund

EU - European Union

FEI - Further Education Institution

GBF - Getting Building Fund

GVA - Gross value added (productivity measure)

HEI - Higher Education Institution
HETAS - Heating Equipment Testing & Approval Scheme
LAG - Local Action Group
LEP - Local Enterprise Partnership
LGF - Local Growth Fund
LIS - Local Industrial Strategy
MarRE - Marches Renewable Energy Efficiency Scheme
MHCLG - Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government
MIF - Marches Investment Fund
NiPark – Newport Innovation & Enterprise Park
OFTEC – Oil Firing Technical Association
RDPE - Rural Development Programme England
SAP - Skills Advisory Panel
SEP - Strategic Economic Plan
SePuBu - Sustainable Energy in Public Buildings
SME - Small or Medium sized Enterprise
VAR – Virtual & Augmented Reality
WHG - Wrekin Housing Group

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Appendix 1 - Marches LEP Vision

- A place which is open for business, up for business and pro-growth.
- At the forefront of changes in how people live and work using new technology and improved physical and digital connectivity to enable businesses and people to develop and succeed.
- A growing place, attracting more people to come, stay and build their careers and businesses.
- A destination not a boundary - gateway to markets in the Midlands, Wales, South West, North and Europe. A visitor destination with significant natural and cultural resources that is well known and attracts people looking for a high-quality experience.
- A pioneer in the provision and testing of digitally driven health and social care for dispersed populations supporting healthy ageing and economic participation in later life.
- A global centre of excellence in advanced manufacturing specifically automotive, cyber security, and the next phase of technology development in agriculture, environment and food production.
- An inclusive place that enables residents from all communities to thrive and develop with quality jobs offering good wages, training and progression.
- A collaborative and proactive place with businesses, further education institutions (FEIs), higher education institutions (HEIs) and public organisations working together to agree what needs to happen and getting things done. Known as a good place to start and grow a business.

Appendix 2 – Marches LEP Board Membership

Marches LEP Board Members		
Sector	Name	Job Title and Organisation
Private Sector Chair	Mandy Thorn MBE DL	Chair, Marches Care Ltd
Community & Voluntary Sector	Sonia Roberts ¹	Chief Executive, Landau and Deputy Chair of LEP Board
Area Business Board Chairs	Frank Myers MBE	Chair of Herefordshire Business Board
	Paul Bennett	Chair of Shropshire Business Board
	Paul Hinkins ²	Chair of Telford Business Board
Enterprise Zone	Andrew Manning Cox	Chair of Hereford Enterprise Zone
Higher Education	Dr Catherine Baxter	University Secretary, Harper Adams University
Food & Drink/Agri Tech	Christine Snell	Business Partner, AJ & CI Snell
Financial/Professional Services	Paul Kalinauckas	Retired Chief Executive, BCRS Business Loans Ltd
Skills & Workforce Development	James Staniforth	Principal and CEO, Shrewsbury Colleges Group & Chair of Skills Advisory Panel
Construction	Ruth Shepherd	Founding Director, Results Communications Ltd
Manufacturing	Sara Williams	Marketing Manager, Protolabs
Local Authority Leaders	Cllr David Hitchiner (Alternate - Cllr Ellie Chowns)	Leader of Herefordshire Council
	Cllr Peter Nutting (Alternate - Cllr Steve Charmley)	Leader of Shropshire Council
	Cllr Shaun Davies (Alternate - Cllr David Wright)	Leader of Telford & Wrekin Council

¹ Sonia Roberts acts as the Marches LEP Diversity Champion

² Paul Hinkins acts as the Marches LEP SME Champion

Appendix 3 - Marches LEP Investment in Telford & Wrekin - Infrastructure, Skills and Innovation

Funding awarded to projects in Telford & Wrekin since April 2015

Local Growth Deal (LGF) 1, 2 and 3, Getting Building Funds (GBF) and Marches Investment Funds

Telford Eastern Gateway	£3.6m
Telford Growth Point Package	£13.9m
Telford Bus Station	£1.3m
Superfast Telford	£1.004m
Newport Innovation and Enterprise Package	£7.4m
Stronger Communities Regeneration Sites	£7m
Marches Centre of Excellence in Health Allied Health and Social Care	£3.5m
Stronger Communities – New College, Wellington & Surrounding site with Wrekin Housing Group (WHG)	£2.38m
Tackling Fuel Poverty Through Zero Carbon Innovation – Wrekin Housing Group (WHG)	£1m
Telford College	£520k
Marches Investment Fund support for Strategic Tourism & Business Initiatives	£1.804m
Total funding awarded to Telford & Wrekin	£43,408,000

Growth Deal 1, 2 and 3 – Capital Infrastructure Projects Overview (including Getting Building Fund 2020)

Growth Deal 1:

Telford Eastern Gateway

A £5.2m project, including £3.6m from Local Growth Fund, which aimed to maximise opportunities to attract advanced manufacturing investors linked to the i54 site, just 12 miles to the east of Telford. The project comprised utility infrastructure works at the Telford 54 (T54) site and network capacity improvements to M54 J4. It opened up the potential of the 31-hectare T54 development site immediately next to J4 of the M54 and has brought wider economic benefits to the automotive supply chain.

This project is now financially complete with all Growth Deal funds having been claimed. To date, the project has delivered 712 new jobs and 379 new homes.

Telford Growth Point Package

This £17.37m project, including £13.9m from Local Growth Fund, concentrated on improving road capacity in Telford adjacent to major employment sites, including Hortonwood and Hortonwood West, maintaining and enhancing their potential for inward investment, and also on-site infrastructure to open up development sites. The package also included sustainable travel measures to encourage cycling.

This project is now financially complete with all Growth Deal funds having been claimed. To date, the project has delivered 1,146 new jobs and 1,163 new homes.

Telford Bus Station

A £1.9m project, including £1.3m from Local Growth Fund, centered on the replacement of the existing bus station including re-modelling of entrances and footpaths, supporting the regeneration of Telford Town Centre as well as providing an enhanced public transport interchange. The project was a key element of the overall development strategy for Telford Town Centre and supported the Telford Shopping Centre masterplan. It aims to unlock 8,800m² of retail development land and create 300 jobs at the site (from a total of 14,358 across the borough).

This project is now complete with all Growth Deal funds having been claimed. Ongoing monitoring of the project is taking place to record and report outputs to Government.

Growth Deal 2:

Superfast Telford – Marches Broadband Scheme

A £3.9m project, including £1.004m from Local Growth Fund. The aim of the project was for Telford to be one of the first areas in the UK to exceed the UK target for fibre broadband coverage by 2020, to support the town's growth, economic prosperity and digital inclusion. More than 9,323 premises (including 1,398 businesses) that cannot currently access faster fibre broadband have been supported to gain open access to a network of providers. Ongoing monitoring of the project is taking place to record and report outputs to Government.

Growth Deal 3:

Newport Innovation and Enterprise Package

A £9.2m project, including £6.3m from Local Growth Fund, the Newport Innovation and Enterprise package (Ni Park), which started on site in December 2019, will create serviced employment land including an Agritech Enterprise and Science Park with direct links to the Harper Adams University's innovation facilities. It will attract investment from high tech businesses, stimulating complementary research and development activities. It will encourage supply chain growth across a wide range of companies engaged in new agricultural technologies and links to Telford's strong advanced manufacturing sector. The Park has been recognised and promoted by the Department of International Trade as a 'High Potential Opportunity' area to international agritech and agrifood businesses looking to invest in the UK.

At the 24 March 2020 LEP Board Meeting, it was agreed to award this project an additional £1.036m in 2020/2021 taking the total Local Growth Fund contribution to £7.4m, reflecting the project's original allocation. This additional funding is supporting stabilisation works to a retaining wall.

To date the project has delivered 80 jobs and 525 new homes.

Stronger Communities Regeneration Sites

The Stronger Communities Regeneration Sites project is a £16.9m initiative which includes £7m of Local Growth Fund and comprises three sub-projects which will deliver the regeneration of brownfield sites and new, mixed tenure housing in key locations across Telford. This includes sites adjacent to one of the most deprived wards, Donnington, as well as a key site within the boundary of the transformational Town Centre Growth Programme area and the 'opportunity' market town of Wellington.

In total the project will create 60 new jobs, 495 homes and will unlock 3 acres of employment land.

Marches Centre of Excellence in Health Allied Health and Social Care

A £5m project, including £3.5m of Local Growth Funds, upgrading and refurbishing space on the University's Telford campus, including the installation of state-of-the-art equipment, creating a technologically advanced learning facility to support the Health, Allied Health, Social Work and Care sectors within the Marches.

The use of equipment will create new and more flexible learning pathways based on employer and market needs, enabling learners to engage with real life situations (e.g. road traffic incidents and major emergencies) in a controlled environment. This investment will result in the creation of 72 new jobs, the development of 2 new apprenticeship programmes, attracting over 1,313 new learners, and recruiting 174 new apprentices into the field of Health and Social Care and Allied Health by 2025.

Getting Building Fund

The Government has made £900m available through the new Getting Building Fund (GBF) for investment in local, shovel-ready infrastructure projects to stimulate jobs and support economic recovery across the country. The Marches LEP has secured £14m from the GBF for a wide range of projects that will deliver a boost to the local economy.

Stronger Communities - New College, Wellington and surrounding site with Wrekin Housing Group (WHG)

This is a £21m project which includes £2.38m from the Getting Building Fund. The New College site and WHG housing sites are located within, or adjacent to, one of the most deprived wards in the borough and are gateways into Wellington. The project will unlock this stalled site, delivering new residential units and incorporating sustainability in design, whilst also improving walking and cycling routes into Wellington. The project will deliver 110 residential units across both sites by 2023/24 and will unlock 3 acres of brownfield development land. Additional place shaping outputs will also be delivered in the form of footpaths and a mini football playing pitch.

Tackling Fuel Poverty through Zero Carbon Innovation – Wrekin Housing Group (WHG)

£1m was awarded to this project from the Getting Building Fund as part of a £1.4m project. Wrekin Housing Group, through this investment, will produce zero carbon homes across Telford & Wrekin using a combination of energy technologies to be retrofitted to existing homes, or fitted into brand new homes. Impacts include low energy bills easing fuel poverty in Social Housing, reducing the load on the local grid and eliminating carbon through energy consumption. The project will concentrate on the retrofit of 68 homes (PV and Battery Storage) and 11 non-Piassavas new builds where planning permissions have already been granted.

Growth Deal 1,2 and 3 Skills Capital Investment

Growth Deal funding has been allocated to local further education providers to allow capital investment in their training facilities and infrastructure. This investment is underpinning the development of new training programmes in line with local employer needs, e.g. advanced manufacturing and engineering courses and improving the providers' IT infrastructure to support digital skills development. Growth Deal funding will result in additional and improved apprenticeship provision and increased vocational training opportunities for post-16 students and the local workforce.

Telford College

A £684k project, including £520k Local Growth Fund, as part of the '**Investing in our Future Workforce**' project investing in new training facilities across the Marches to improve skills provision in line with local employer needs. The funding has been used by Telford College to develop a Virtual and Augmented Reality (VAR) training suite, enabling students across curriculum areas to engage with the latest VR platforms and learning programmes and enhance their education with bespoke technology packages. Outputs include additional 750 apprenticeships, 3,990 learners on full and part-time programmes and 185 learners in higher education. Ongoing monitoring of the project is taking place to record and report outputs to Government; to the end of Q4 2019/20, the project had delivered 152 apprenticeships and 956 additional qualifications at Levels 1/2/3 and higher education.

Other Marches LEP Projects

Marches Investment Fund (MIF) - MIF is a capital fund derived from an initial £8.1m through Government Growing Places Fund allocation, a proportion of any local profit share from the Telford Land Deal and annual repayments and interest from MIF private-led loan schemes. MIF loans have been awarded in Telford & Wrekin to:

- **£650k** to Mold-based developer, Dicentra, to bring the former Brintons carpet factory on Halesfield 15 back into economic use - this supported the redevelopment of 6,292m² of industrial floor space and a site totalling 4.04ha.
- **£750k** to Harper Adams to support the development of the Precision Agriculture and Engineering Innovation Centre, with the remaining funding coming from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and Harper Adams University.

MIF funding to support strategic tourism and business initiatives affected by the impact of the floods and COVID-19 virus

- **£230k** to support the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust deal with the loss of visitor income caused by the flooding to museum buildings in the Gorge in February and the impact of the closure of the whole museum owing to COVID-19.
- **£174k** targeted at the re-energising of local and regional consumer demand across Telford's retail, hospitality and leisure sector, with a particular focus on five key Borough Towns/Centres, through a programme of digital innovation, marketing and innovative events.

Telford Land Deal - This Deal, negotiated by Telford & Wrekin Council, was secured as part of the Marches LEP Growth Deal. Under the Deal, Telford & Wrekin Council are responsible for the marketing and disposal of all development land owned by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), with receipts generated invested locally into site preparation and any profit share earned benefitting both Telford & Wrekin and, via a MIF contribution, the wider Marches region. This new model of public land disposal has accelerated the sale of residential and commercial sites and is set to see up to £44.5m of land receipts reinvested in the local area over 10 years.

Marches Growth Hub Business Support - Since April 2015, £1.3m has been allocated to the delivery of business support services through the LEP team, the www.marchesgrowthhub.co.uk website and as a contribution to the operating costs of the Marches Growth Hub sites in Shrewsbury, Telford and Herefordshire.

The Marches Growth Hub provides access to advice and business support for pre-start, start up and growing businesses, including specialist support services funded through EU programmes. The Marches LEP funding, from BEIS, also contributes towards the cost of the Marches Growth Hub Telford & Wrekin team which co-ordinates, promotes and delivers a programme of events and provides business adviser support (currently virtually) across the borough.

Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) is a national network set up to inspire and prepare young people for work by connecting schools, colleges, employers and careers programme providers across England. CEC-supported Enterprise Coordinators are now in place for each of Marches LEP's three local authority areas and a programme of school and business engagement activities has been developed. Funding of £25k per year for each Enterprise Co-ordinator is matched by each of the three local authorities and Andriane Usherwood is employed in this role by Telford & Wrekin Council.

In 20/21, additional funding has been secured by the Marches LEP to strengthen support for schools and colleges and increase business engagement through the development of a Careers Hub.

Key Account Management

The LEP has secured funding to support engagement with, and account management of, foreign-owned companies across the Marches. Within Telford & Wrekin, this Department of International Trade (DIT) funded programme is managed by the Council's Inward Investment Team <http://www.enterprise-telford.co.uk/>.