

## **Establishment of the Somerset Growth Board**

*Portfolio Holder:* Jo Roundell Greene, Environment & Economic Development  
*Strategic Director:* Rina Singh, Strategic Director (Place and Performance)  
*Assistant Director:* Martin Woods, Assistant Director (Economy)  
*Service Manager:* David Julian, Economic Development Manager

### **1. Purpose of the Report**

The report seeks the approval of the District Executive Committee to endorse the Somerset Chief Executive and Leaders' Group proposal to establish a Somerset Growth Board.

### **2. Public Interest**

The Somerset Growth Plan was endorsed by all Somerset Local Authorities in February 2014. This plan sets out Somerset's priorities for the promotion of economic growth to 2020 and it aims to maximise sustainable employment and housing growth through local opportunities.

The role of the Somerset Growth Board will be to ensure that the momentum of the Somerset Growth Plan is sustained and that the plan is well integrated with the economic agendas of the Local Enterprise Partnership and other key partners.

The key purpose of the Somerset Growth Board will be to take ownership of the Somerset Growth Plan and maximise the opportunities to help deliver our key economic priorities.

### **3. Recommendation**

The District Executive committee are recommended to agree that:

- 1) South Somerset District Council endorses the Somerset Chief Executive and Leaders proposal to establish a Somerset Growth Board;
- 2) An annual financial contribution of £4,570 to be found from Unallocated Balances is made towards the Growth Board's core costs for a period of three years;
- 3) That South Somerset District Council's representative on the Board will be the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Economic Development.

### **4. Forward Plan**

This report is presented to the District Executive Committee at this time to endorse the Somerset Chief Executive and Leaders proposal to establish a Somerset Growth Board. It is not included in the SSDC Forward Plan.

### **5. Background**

The Somerset Growth Plan was developed by the six Somerset local authorities, business representative organisation and other key stakeholders including the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and Somerset's Further Education sector. The Growth Plan sets out Somerset's plans to promote growth between now and 2020 and for laying the foundations for long term sustainable economic growth for years after this. It was developed to attract and guide investment into Somerset, to overcome barriers and maximise sustainable employment and housing growth from local opportunities,

benefitting Somerset's communities, businesses and residents. The Growth Plan was endorsed by all six local authorities in February 2014.

## 6. Report

The key purpose of the Growth Board will be to take strategic ownership of the Growth Plan, ensuring that Somerset's priorities are communicated with key partners, such as the LEP, and to provide local accountability for its delivery. The Growth Board will act in an advisory capacity to the six Somerset Councils and the LEP and will present recommendations from the board to individual councils for approval. Leaders and CEO's of all Somerset councils have endorsed the creation of the board.

There follows an extract from the County Councils paper recommending establishing the board:

A key function of the Board will be to ensure that Somerset is in a position to respond, at short notice, to ongoing calls for projects should additional funding be made available. Somerset should have a pipeline, for the LEP and other external agencies, of prioritised projects supported by evidenced business cases. If we are not in a position to provide these details then the LEP will have to make decisions on the information it can obtain; it is therefore in our best interests to ensure we work towards developing and agreeing Somerset's priorities.

To ensure the Growth Board can effectively attract and guide investment it will need sufficient executive support. Regeneration Directors can provide an overarching senior executive support role for the Board through their support to the thematic sub-groups and attendance at the Board meetings. However, additional support will be needed for management and ongoing review of the Growth Plan; primarily the development and management of a project pipeline based on evidenced business cases. A monitoring evaluation framework will be developed which will provide appropriate performance reporting allowing the Board to identify where further effort needs to be made to achieve the strategic targets. In order to support the Growth Plan's wider purpose, of overcoming barriers and maximising sustainable growth from local opportunities, appropriate communications and engagement with stakeholders is needed. There are currently no identified resources to provide this executive support to the Growth Board. To ensure its effectiveness it is suggested that each of the six Somerset councils co-fund this support and each commit to a three year financial contribution as set out in the table below:

<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Annual Contribution</b>
Somerset County Council (cash)	5,000
Somerset County Council (in-kind)	4,500
Mendip District Council	3,071
Sedgemoor District Council	3,277
<b>South Somerset District Council</b>	<b>4,570</b>
Taunton Deane Borough Council	3,125
West Somerset District Council	957
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24,500</b>

In summary, the Board is intended to:

- provide strategic ‘ownership’ of the Somerset Growth Plan and manage the ongoing cycle of reviewing, updating and promoting the Plan;
- act in an advisory capacity to the six Somerset Councils and the Heart of the South West (HotSW) Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) in respect of the Somerset Growth Plan. All recommendations from the Board will be presented to the six councils for approval. The Board therefore has no delegated decision making authority;
- accelerate delivery of the Somerset Growth Plan and maximise local accountability.

## 7. Terms of Reference

The draft terms of reference are attached at the end of this report.

## 8. Financial Implications

South Somerset District Council’s contribution to the Somerset Growth Board will be £4,570 per annum for a period of three years (a total of £13,710) to be taken from the Council’s Unallocated Balances.

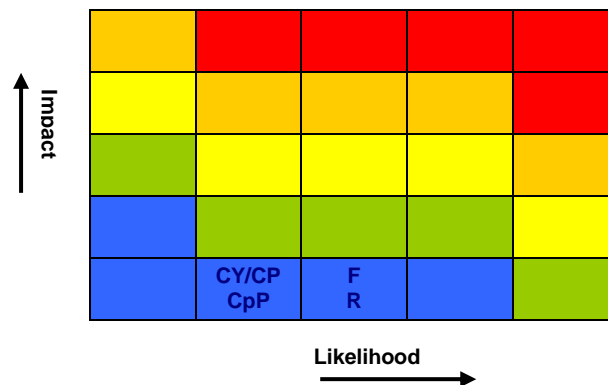
Somerset County Council has confirmed that there is no implication of shared liability for SSDC in terms of redundancy costs.

## 9. Risk

If Somerset does not develop and agree a collaborative set of local priorities it arguably will not be able to effectively influence the LEPs priorities and will therefore be at risk of not being able to attract its fair share of funding through the Growth Deal negotiations. This also poses a reputational risk to Somerset in that we will not be seen to be working collaboratively across the local area.

The greater risks are associated with not supporting the establishment of the Growth Board. Therefore a resolution to accept the recommendations of this report will result in generally low risks across the risk matrix.

## 10. Risk Matrix



### Key

Categories	Colours (for further detail please refer to Risk management strategy)
R = Reputation	Red = High impact and high probability
CpP = Corporate Plan Priorities	Orange = Major impact and major probability
CP = Community Priorities	Yellow = Moderate impact and moderate probability
CY = Capacity	Green = Minor impact and minor probability
F = Financial	Blue = Insignificant impact and insignificant probability,

## **11. Corporate Priority Implications**

Endorsing the creation of the Growth Board will assist SSDC in meeting its corporate aims for Jobs and Housing as set out in the Council Plan 2012-15. It will also assist the council in meeting a range of the objectives set out in the SSDC Economic Development Strategy 2012-15.

## **12. Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications**

There are no current implications associated with this report.

## **13. Equality and Diversity Implications**

There are none directly associated with this report.

## **14. Background Papers**

Draft Terms of Reference of the Somerset Growth Board (attached).

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**SOMERSET GROWTH BOARD  
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**1. Purpose of the Somerset Growth Board**

- 1.1 To provide strategic 'ownership' of the Somerset Growth Plan and manage the ongoing cycle of reviewing, updating and promoting the Plan;
- 1.2 To act in an advisory capacity to the six Somerset Councils and the Heart of the South West (HotSW) Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) in respect of the Somerset Growth Plan. All recommendations from the Board will be presented to the six councils for approval. The Board therefore has no delegated decision making authority;
- 1.3 To accelerate delivery of the Somerset Growth Plan and maximise local accountability;
- 1.4 To have strategic oversight of the thematic sub-groups (Place, Employment and Skills, Business and Hinkley Local Leads) and funding streams associated with the delivery of the Somerset Growth Plan.

**2. Core functions**

- 2.1 To review and update the objectives and priorities within the Growth Plan at least annually, and make recommendations for approval by the six councils and endorsement by local business representatives;
- 2.2 To facilitate and promote joined-up delivery amongst partners of key projects identified within the Growth Plan and any associated activities;
- 2.3 To coordinate the local government contribution to the delivery of key projects identified within the Growth Plan and any associated activities;
- 2.4 To oversee delivery of the accountable body function, adopted by member organisations if appropriate;
- 2.5 To engage with and obtain support from key partners and stakeholders at a strategic level to support delivery of the Growth Plan;
- 2.6 To provide the strategic link between local government in Somerset and the HotSW LEP Board;
- 2.7 To provide the strategic link between Somerset's key economic development stakeholders and the Hinkley Strategic Development Forum (HSDF), and other appropriate National / sub-National forums;
- 2.8 To provide a coordinated response to consultations and policy announcements that impact upon the delivery of the Growth Plan. This does not exclude the six councils from responding separately where necessary.

**3. Membership**

- 3.1 Membership of the Somerset Growth Board shall be limited to:
  - Cabinet Economic Development leads from the County Council and each of the five District Councils,

- Regeneration Directors,
- HotSW LEP representative,
- Business representatives (FSB, Chamber, IoD etc).

3.2 Membership of the Board shall be reviewed annually.

3.3 From time to time, the Chairman may invite 'guests' to present to the Board on specific topics of relevance to the focus of the meeting.

#### **4. Role and Responsibilities of Members**

Board Members should:

- 4.1 have the responsibility to represent their organisation or partnership and to feedback information to relevant individuals within the organisation or partnership they represent;
- 4.2 make recommendations to the council for the prioritisation of projects and resource commitments necessary to deliver them;
- 4.3 inform the Board of their councils commitment to deliver individual projects;
- 4.4 ensure that their council has a concise decision making process in place to agree issues of shared interest on growth and meet timetables set by government for national funding and other funding mechanisms;
- 4.5 make every effort to prioritise attendance at scheduled meetings but are asked to nominate a relevant substitute from the same organisation or partnership. In the case of Local Authority Cabinet Leads, the substitute should be a Cabinet member. The substitute will be copied into correspondence relating to meeting dates and papers, for information.

#### **5. Chairmanship**

5.1 A Chair shall be elected from the Board and hold office for a minimum of one year.

#### **6. Meetings**

6.1 A minimum of one meeting per quarter should be held throughout the year, with additional meetings scheduled as required.

#### **7. Reporting lines**

- 7.1 The Boards' recommendations will be referred to the six councils for decision;
- 7.2 The Somerset Councils Leaders Group will mediate where the Board is unable to achieve a consensus in support of recommendations to the councils or where the councils are unable to agree the Boards recommendations.

#### **8. Resourcing**

8.1 The administration of the Somerset Growth Board will be resourced by the member Local Authorities.

**9. Review date for the Terms of Reference**

9.1 The Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually from the point of acceptance and recommended for approval by the six councils.

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