

Subject:	Greater Brighton Pitch for Place & Inward Investment Desk		
Date of Meeting:	14 July 2020		
Report of:	Chair, Greater Brighton Officer Programme Board		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Clare Mulholland	Tel: 01273 291026
	Email:	clare.mulholland@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 In July 2019, the Board approved two projects aligned to its Five-Year Priorities and the 'International' theme. The first was the establishment of an inward investment resource as recommended by the Board's Inward Investment Strategy and the second was the development of a Greater Brighton 'Pitch for Place', a place making narrative, which is the result of the Futureproofing the City Region event in March 2019.
- 1.2 In November 2019, the Board commissioned Breeze Strategy to deliver both projects. This paper outlines the basis behind the city region's place narrative, how this is key to attracting investment and the preferred approach to securing inward investment through the utilising of existing resource and the establishment of a pro-active desk.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Board recognise and accept that post-Brexit and post-COVID, the role of place narrative and inward investment is key to Greater Brighton's recovery and future growth and approve the overall direction of the narrative and proposed approach towards inward investment.
- 2.2 That partners agree that a level of funding is required for an Inward Investment Desk service. The report suggests that the minimum level of funding for an efficient service is £250,000 per year, although there are options beneath this. The Board agrees that work should commence to identify the most appropriate potential sources for this funding, including Local Enterprise Partnership and national government funding, to resource the desk from 2021/22.
- 2.3 That the current team utilise existing resource to continue to develop and deliver elements of the plan, where possible, and report back on progress at the end of 2020 the work undertaken to date.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 In July 2019, the Board approved an allocation of funding to be used to develop a place narrative to promote the City Region as a destination for investment, learning and a centre for the UK's visitor and cultural economy. This work started with the Futureproofing the City Region event held in March 2019 and which helped to shape some early thinking.

3.2 From this, the Pitch for Place proposal was developed and included an allocation of £15,000 to compliment and support the inward investment activity described in the other key proposal in this paper. The Pitch for Place proposal included the following objectives:

- Understanding and articulating the ingredients of the region's 'story'.
- Collating the distinctive qualities of the region and developing a series of statements on what we are and where we have come from (history/heritage), where we are now and where we want to be in terms of investment, education, visitors.
- A set of statements specific to Greater Brighton which draw on the commonalities between the different local authority areas and neighbourhoods.
- A dissemination and promotion plan linked to the work of the inward investment desk if approved.

3.3 The second project was to procure specialist support with experience in the inward investment field, to get things moving. Key tasks would include;

- Acting on behalf of Greater Brighton in responding to enquiries from DiT and elsewhere,
- Working with Greater Brighton officers and partners on activities to profile the region,
- Responding to the outcomes of the business survey as regards trade
- Establishing links with the region's commercial estate agents and, in partnership with local authority leads, acting as a conduit between local opportunities and potential investors
- Establishing a framework for an inward investment service that is both pro-active and responsive
- Helping to build the business case for future funding of posts, including a bid for longer term funding in 2020/2021.

Pitch for Place

3.4 The suggested framework for the Pitch for Place proposition, messaging and narrative aims to provide the region with a highly usable, flexible and relevant way of communicating with target audiences. The place narrative has an overarching statement about the region as follows:

Greater Brighton is Europe's most exciting, agile and welcoming business region. Perfectly positioned between London and England's south coast, we are building something really special where innovators and entrepreneurs can thrive in places that combine connectivity and creativity.

From London to Brighton, through the stunning Sussex countryside and South Downs, we're harnessing the strengths of an area in ways that

respect our history and natural assets and where we are proud of our strong values of independence, diversity and inclusivity. Above all though, this is a welcoming place that embraces newcomers and encourages new thinking.

On the doorstep of Europe's biggest city, with our global connections from Gatwick Airport and fast rail connections right into the heart of London, this is a place where businesses can reach new markets with ease, without compromising on a unique quality of life which helps to attract and retain talented people with the skills and creativity that your business needs.

- 3.5 This can then be accompanied by several different compelling aspects, highlighting specific strengths which can be used with target audiences.

Global Connectivity
Creative Talent
Proven Business Region
Highest Qualities of Life
Growing Places

- 3.6 It is also recognised that University of Sussex has emerging research specialisms in quantum technologies with seven research groups covering Quantum Computing, Quantum Clocks, Quantum Imaging, Quantum Enhanced Measurements, and Quantum Simulations. There may be opportunities for specific R&D innovations in quantum technology to provide disruptive capabilities and new products and services for numerous industry sectors.

- 3.7 The place narrative will be used within various digital assets and on several platforms such as the Greater Brighton website, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube and communications such as Zoom/Teams.

- Words - using these where appropriate and tailoring to different audiences
- Images - must identify and use strongest possible imagery
- Videos - snappy sector case studies, endorsements, fly-overs
- Stats - collate and share latest statistics that back-up the narrative
- Accolades - track and use third-party accolades that support the pitch
- News - monitor and share positive news that builds on the pitch
- AR/VR - investigate latest tools that facilitate virtual place marketing

Most importantly, it will become a resource for the inward investment activity.

Inward Investment Desk

- 3.7 Greater Brighton is under-performing for inward investment. Given the strength of its business advantages, high-quality connectivity, talent and lifestyle, Greater Brighton should have been attracting a far larger share of the more than 1,000 annual foreign investment projects. In the last figures pre-COVID-19, the UK recorded increased foreign investment in 2019 and the South East was the second-best region outside of London. Yet Greater Brighton was not represented in the top 20 UK destinations and the latest DIT figures show only a small handful of project successes.

- 3.8 In the post-Brexit, post-COVID world, Greater Brighton's economic recovery companies, jobs, investment and talent pose significant challenges. Every competitor location will be keener than ever to win new projects and Greater Brighton simply cannot continue to be a by-stander in this battle.
- 3.9 A Greater Brighton Inward Investment Desk (GBIID) needs to be created and resourced if the area is to compete successfully. There is an opportunity to create an agile, smart and lean investment team that reflects the changing realities around the 'new normal' both in terms of what businesses are looking for and how they can be engaged. Building a different type of inward investment service can be a real competitive advantage for Greater Brighton.
- 3.10 The GBIID should have a remit across five key areas:
- Product Development - provide feedback to partners on the competitiveness of Greater Brighton's offer to inward investors and highlight gaps or weaknesses in the proposition
 - Business Retention & Expansion - have deep knowledge of existing inward investors in Greater Brighton and monitor opportunities to grow and identify threats to survival
 - Partnership Leverage - guide and leverage local, regional and national partners that are able to help engage potential and current investors, avoiding duplication and maximising value
 - Place Promotion - using the Pitch for Place messaging to deliver greater consistency and clarity in novel ways that support the primary aim of successful engagement with investors
 - Smarter Investor Targeting - creating new research and intelligence tools that provide a pipeline of opportunities and engaging with prospects in a professional manner.
- 3.11 Following extensive consultations and analysis of recent and current inward investment flows, demand and likely growth areas, a targeting plan has been developed that considers the biggest opportunities for Greater Brighton to be:
- New Tech FDI - typically high-growth technology companies fuelled by venture capital looking for their first UK/European base.
 - Recent FDIs - companies who have made the decision to come to the UK in the last 1-2 years, but who are in serviced offices (especially in London) and have not yet become rooted to a particular location.
 - UK High-Growths - any company showing significant growth prospects where the owners are looking for an expansion (or relocation).
 - Existing FDIs - the foreign-owned companies already in Greater Brighton represent a vital opportunity that is currently not being approached in any systematic way.
- 3.12 The GBIID will target these audiences by using a research and intelligence approach which will track opportunities and engage decision-makers using a combination of direct approaches and channels. Unlike traditional inward investment teams, the GBIID will eschew expensive mass market tools like international trade shows and advertising and become a pioneer for virtual lead generation and leveraging new tools and processes.
- 3.13 The delivery structure required for this plan involves two business managers; one focussed on engaging with existing investors and one focussed on new

prospects, supported by a research officer. This lean structure requires highly competent people armed with a range of research tools, but crucially depends on the support from existing resources from the Greater Brighton Communications Team. Within the optimum funding model there would be a range of communications activities from the website, blogs, hosted webinars and virtual site tours that will support the desk's work.

- 3.14 Based on an assessment of the tasks, challenges and opportunities for Greater Brighton, and cognisant of the difficult funding environment post-COVID, there needs to be a minimum level of funding for the service of £250,000 per year. Four options have been discussed to date based on different levels of staffing and associated activities. In broad terms these offer potential steps along the way to the preferred optimum structure outlined above. It is important to note that the proposed Inward Investment Desk is key to the recovery of the City region and the wider Coast to Capital region and so funding should be a priority.
- 3.15 Breeze Strategy and the GBEB will work to identify the most appropriate potential sources for the funding of the desk, including both from the LEP and other government sources as well as private sector funding.
- 3.16 Partnership working is key to the successful operation of the desk, with local economic development teams, the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), Department for International Trade (DIT), academic and business partnerships across Greater Brighton. This should always recognise gaps in existing provision rather than duplicate the work of others.
- 3.17 The GBIID should report to the Board on a regular basis (to be agreed) and inward investment should be a standing item on the officer board. A transparent approach to tracking and reporting the numbers of prospects, leads and activities is key to demonstrating and measuring the added value of the desk's work.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 The rationale for a Greater Brighton inward investment desk has been highlighted by a number of reports and strategies in recent years. This report suggests a work programme that seeks to build a deliverable plan of action and identify appropriate funding, governance and staffing of the service. The need for this service was clear before the current pandemic - the need to rebuild and recover the Greater Brighton economy now makes it an imperative.
- 4.2 A do-nothing approach would indicate that previous approval for the need of this work has now been de-prioritised due to the current situation. However, as pointed out in 3.8, in a post COVID 19 world, the Greater Brighton region needs investment. No support for inward investment would limit the potential recovery and economic growth of the region.
- 4.3 The recommended budget allocation is a best-case scenario and with the financial pressure faced by local authorities may not be a feasible option in the short term. There are options to phase up to this level of funding and these could be explored.

5 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

Adam Breeze from Breeze Strategy has consulted with all Greater Brighton Economic Board members and strategic partners for the development of both the Pitch for Place narrative and the Inward Investment Desk. A list of these consultees can be provided.

The Greater Brighton Officer Programme Board have been consulted on both pieces of work and will continue to be consulted and updated on progress as and when required.

6 CONCLUSION

The Greater Brighton city region is not performing economically as well as it should be. Given the strength of its business advantages, high-quality connectivity, talent and lifestyle, Greater Brighton should be attracting a far larger share of the more than 1,000 annual foreign investment projects. To do this, the Greater Brighton place narrative must be adopted by the Board in all communications activity and resource provided for an Inward Investment Desk as has been described within this paper.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 A minimum annual level of funding for the Inward Investment Desk service has been identified at circa £250,000 per year from 2021. Four options have been identified depending on the level of staffing and activities and these are detailed in the 'Greater Brighton Inward Investment Main Report' appendix. Further work will be required to identify options for potential sources of funding, including Local Enterprise Partnership, national government funding and potential private investor funding. Funding for the 'Pitch for Place' strategy has been met from the Greater Brighton Operational Arrangements Budget.

Finance Officer Consulted: Rob Allen, Principal Accountant

Date: 05/07/2020

Legal Implications:

- 6.2 None.

Lawyer Consulted: Joanne Dougnaglo, Senior Property Lawyer

Date: 03/0/20

- 6.3 Equalities Implications:

None.

- 6.4 Sustainability Implications:

None.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Greater Brighton Pitch for Place
2. Greater Brighton Inward Investment Desk Report

