

LGA and LEP network joint-working commitment

Following the first meeting of the Local Enterprise Partnership Review Advisory Panel, Cllr Martin Tett, Chairman of the Local Government Association's Economy, Environment, Housing and Transport and Christine Gaskell MBE DL, Chair of Cheshire and Warrington LEP and on behalf of the LEP Network, signalled a joint commitment to work together to ensure the Review provides the basis for stronger and enduring partnerships between councils and business across the country.

Economic growth

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They also call on the Government to expect ambitious proposals in Local Industrial Strategies for inclusive growth that will need to be supported by local devolution and backed across Whitehall if the country is to prosper post-Brexit.

Cllr Tett said

“The review of Local Enterprise Partnerships and the development of new Local Industrial Strategies are important opportunities to secure an even stronger partnership between business and public sector leaders. The LEP Review must seek the most robust local governance arrangements which are supported by new local powers and funding and underpinned by local democracy and a strong business voice.

“The Government’s industrial strategy provides a critical opportunity to drive the creation of a successful, world-leading economy.

“If the Government is able to match the scale of our ambitions then local industrial strategies have the potential to underpin national prosperity for decades to come, bringing together Government, business

leaders, universities and local councils to forge new, powerful relationships with each other, for the benefit of local residents and businesses.

“Driving inclusive growth and the push towards productivity requires a combination of factors: funding at a local level to support targeted investment, the buy-in of Whitehall departments so interventions at the national level share a common goal; and, crucially, devolution to local councils to ensure policy interventions in areas such as skills and employment support are focused on meeting local needs.

“LEPs are local partnerships and growth strategies will rely on the strength and quality of local leadership. They will continue to succeed with the close involvement of councils, as we work together to meet local ambitions.”

Christine Gaskell, said:

“The LEP Network and LGA joint commitment will ensure that the LEP Review builds on the successful partnership LEPs have built with local government, and seeks to continue increasing local investment, local skills and local jobs for residents and businesses in all our communities as we prepare for the economic challenges and opportunities that a post Brexit Britain will bring.

“Councils’ planning, education, infrastructure and housing responsibilities combined with their community leadership role successfully complement our focus on productivity and business expertise. The unique role of LEPs enables business and political leaders to work in unison to deliver the local economic growth our communities so desperately need.

“Our engagement with local councils and the role of local political leaders on our LEP boards is crucial to delivering effective Local Industrial Strategies, just as the high calibre of business leaders on our boards is critically important to brokering and driving forward Local Industrial Strategies. Improvements to productivity nationally and locally will be achieved only if all government departments are open to respond to the ambitious Local Industrial Strategies that we will bring forward in partnership with our local government leaders. That bond of leadership is the key to delivering a successful economy and helping to realise the government’s post Brexit vision.”