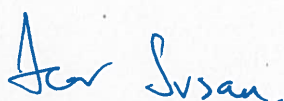


Susan Hall AM

Chairman of the Economy Committee
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
More London
London SE1 2AA

Our ref: MGLA161018-5350**Date:** 21 NOV 2018**London Economic Action Partnership (LEAP)**

Thank you for your letter of 16 October raising a number of recommendations and requests regarding the London Economic Action Partnership. Set out below are my responses to the issues raised in your letter.

Infrastructure spending

LEAP's priority is to support economic growth through job creation in the capital. Transport infrastructure investments under the Growing Places Fund programme were agreed under the previous administration and are not a priority for LEAP investment under this Mayoralty. The LEAP Board has inherited oversight of these projects and therefore would be responsible for signing off any changes. Greater London Authority officers working on behalf of LEAP manage the overall delivery of this work, and together with the LEAP Board ensure the robust delivery of large infrastructure projects that are transforming local communities.

LEAP's provision of an £8.5m capital loan to aid the successful delivery of the £25m redevelopment of Hackney Wick Overground station is an example of a transport project. Working with the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) as part of Round 2 of the Growing Places Fund, the completed project has radically transformed the accessibility and quality of Hackney Wick station, and it has significantly reduced journey times. The investment being a capital loan, £4.2m was invested and £4m was repaid in 2017/18.

LEAP's investment at Barking Riverside is a further example where £10m LEAP funding was used to build a road providing for bus priority routes, cycle paths and footpaths to enable commercial, retail and leisure development; new homes; and jobs – with the additionality of creating safer and healthier modes of transportation. £5.9m was spent in 2017/18.

I would very much welcome the opportunity to provide a breakdown of funding allocated by LEAP in this Mayoralty, and my team will share this with you in due course.

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Stakeholder engagement

While suggestions as to how we can raise awareness of LEAP's work are gratefully received, it is fair to say that LEAP already has a significant programme of engagement with stakeholders. This includes sub-regional events; workshops with individuals; regular engagement with individual boroughs, workspace providers and businesses; and hosting an annual summit of London's Business Improvement Districts.

LEAP's Crowdfund London initiative champions inclusive growth, by giving Londoners the opportunity to contribute to the process of change and development in their local area by bringing forward creative and innovative regeneration projects, with the best community-led crowdfunding campaigns receiving LEAP funding. Over the past year we have held Crowdfund London workshops across nine London boroughs, engaging with local communities by providing detailed programme insight; sharing success stories; and advising on how to run a campaign, think creatively and involve local communities. On 25 October LEAP pledged £590.5k to 26 community-led crowdfunding campaigns across 19 boroughs; more than 3,000 people had already pledged their support to these projects and LEAP's funding will further boost the campaigns.

We actively promote funding opportunities widely to encourage applicants from a range of backgrounds and continuously seek to improve to ensure we are following best practice in this area. In June we hosted three workshops in North West, North East and South London in order to introduce Round 2 of the Good Growth Fund (GGF). With stakeholders from local authorities, Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), the built environment sector, cultural organisations and charities, the workshops enabled potential future applicants to reflect and understand priorities from GGF Round 1. We also provided key guidance on the Round 2 application process and generated ideas about potential projects.

LEAP's London Growth Hub has engaged with over 13,000 businesses to date and regularly continues to engage local businesses and entrepreneurs through business shows, local business networking events, and partnering with business support providers to host events. For example, the London Growth Hub recently co-hosted GetFunded! with business support provider GetSet for Growth. The event provided an opportunity for 100 small businesses to hear from and engage with successful entrepreneurs, who in turn provided advice and guidance on how to successfully launch and grow a business. LEAP Member Simon Pitkeathley presented at the event to promote the London Growth Hub and LEAP's business support offer.

Alongside delivery partner Enterprise Nation, the Growth Hub recently hosted the official launch of the Meet the Buyer project at City Hall, with over 100 micro and small businesses and buyers in attendance. More than 200 applications have since been received to participate in the project, of which 75 have been shortlisted to participate.

In September LEAP launched a series of Roundtable events to improve its engagement with BAME, women, LGBT+ and disabled entrepreneurs – and increase their participation in our programmes. The first Roundtable, chaired by LEAP Member Natalie Campbell on 5 September, invited black women entrepreneurs to share ideas and improvements to ensure our business support programmes are fully inclusive and effective.

We will soon be publishing LEAP's first Annual Report, further increasing clarity, transparency and awareness of our work. From 2019 we will be holding an Annual General Meeting in public and using this as further opportunity to showcase our work and engage with stakeholders.

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The LEAP delivery team is recruiting a dedicated engagement and communications officer who will manage our stakeholder engagement strategy going forward.

LEAP website

LEAP is committed to making significant improvements to the Growth Hub website. Phase one of this work is focussing on improving navigation and adding project and programme-level content on the current site and will be completed before the end of 2018. This will include key outputs and outcomes from programmes, which will address your request regarding the London Co-Investment Fund.

Phase two involves a complete redesign of the website, for which we are undertaking user research to inform our understanding of how the website is currently used, barriers to use and key areas for improvement. We would very much welcome involvement from the London Assembly during this process, which will provide an opportunity to feed in ideas such as the proposed postcode search functionality.

The London Growth Hub already has a site-wide search function, and search results for events, schemes and resources can be filtered by a full range of categories and parameters. This functionality enables users to navigate the website with ease. The Growth Hub team would be happy to provide guidance on the search function for the Assembly.

Performance and spend

LEAP is extremely committed and motivated to performing in line with its targets. The LEAP Board closely monitors and scrutinises performance data and risk at each quarterly meeting. LEAP's Investment Committee and Programme Board focus on detail relating to individual projects at their delegation levels. In addition, the LEAP Board has established an informal process for Members to review granular data and provide specific advice as required outside of the formal meeting cycle.

LEAP is focussed on ensuring that its spend forecasting is accurate and spend pace is sufficient to increase economic growth across the capital. We are working closely with delivery partners to deliver this and will add a statement in the governance webpages of our new website to explain how we manage project performance.

Any slippage to spend profiles is taken very seriously and highlighted in the published quarterly performance report, that we will signpost to more clearly on the new website. Senior officers supporting the LEAP and individual delivery teams meet with Government monthly to, amongst other things, discuss performance and spend, which further increases accountability.

Support for London's microbusinesses

Reaching out to businesses

We are already undertaking an active strategy of engagement that has seen us meet with over 13,000 businesses, generate 15 million online engagements and build networks with 500+ business support providers, including London Boroughs. The Assembly's survey suggests that LEAP awareness amongst London's SMEs is about 30%, which we submit demonstrates that LEAP has

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already built a strong awareness base and reflects work already being undertaken to raise awareness of the London Growth Hub at events across the capital. We have held events and workshops in Brent, Hounslow, Islington, Lewisham, Ilford, Harrow, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Kensington & Chelsea, Hammersmith & Fulham, Camden and Lambeth. We are now progressing plans for our next round of engagement opportunities and would be happy to share details with Assembly Members.

On 16 October I launched my new Brexit Business Resource Hub, part of the London Growth Hub, at my reception with over 100 businesses and entrepreneurs, helping businesses of all sizes prepare for the potential challenges Brexit will bring. In addition, the London Growth Hub is planning to deliver a Brexit support programme and has set up a survey asking businesses for feedback to help create a programme that meets their needs.

We are continually exploring ways to maximise engagement with LEAP programmes and have exciting plans for raising the profile of the London Growth Hub, which include working more closely with grass roots business bodies across London's sub-regions. We would be happy to discuss these plans with the Assembly in the new year.

Supporting established businesses

LEAP is committed to economic growth in London and to supporting both new and existing SMEs to thrive. LEAP's London Growth Hub is a programme of free business support, with the aim of simplifying the business support landscape in London and making it easier for the capital's entrepreneurs, social enterprises, microbusinesses and SMEs to start, sustain and grow.

The Growth Hub's Start, Scale, Grow pilot launched in May 2017 to help business owners from start-ups, SMEs and growth businesses acquire the knowledge, confidence and skills to grow and develop their businesses. By the end of 2017 the project had supported 1,061 businesses and start-ups through masterclasses and helped 298 businesses and start-ups access one-to-one mentoring. Participants were reflective of London's population, with a 43/57% male/female split balance and 41.5% of respondents identifying as being from BAME communities.

In summer 2018 the London Growth Hub launched its new Mentoring for Growth programme in partnership with Be the Business. The programme matches high growth SMEs with a business leader from some of the best names in UK business, including Siemens, GSK and John Lewis Partnership, to enable SMEs to receive free mentoring over the course of 12 months and help them reach their growth potential.

LEAP is continually looking at better ways to reach the harder to reach businesses through a wider face-to-face business support offer that will be delivered across London, focussing on areas of higher deprivation and businesses that lack the social capital possessed by others. Thank you for your helpful suggestions about support that we should focus on providing; we shall certainly build this into our future programme of support, which will be led by the needs of businesses.

New technologies

I agree that upskilling to equip entrepreneurs and small business owners to adapt and take advantage of new technologies is essential to success. The London Growth Hub is already in the process of developing proposals for a 'Technology Adoption Service' that will help every-day

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businesses adopt existing and emerging technologies. The programme has been considered by the LEAP Programme Board and will be launched in 2019; again we would be happy to share details with the Assembly.

Affordable workspace

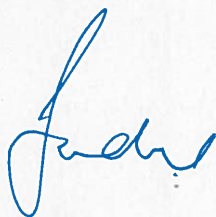
LEAP's Growth Hub already includes a directory of borough-level support across the capital, including private and public sector support, and we are looking at how we can better promote this on the new website. By way of example, the following link shows results for business support in the London Borough of Croydon: www.growthhub.london/support/?location%5B%5D=croydon.

In addition, we have developed the London Workspace Map a part of the Growth Hub, which provides a unique London-wide search tool for co-working space, artist studios, incubators/accelerators, maker spaces and shared kitchens.

Finally, we continue to deliver a pan-London property Advice Service, which provides start-ups and existing SMEs looking to take on or renegotiate an existing lease with free property advice from property experts. This support is easily accessible at: www.growthhub.london.

Thank you again for writing to me.

Yours sincerely,



Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

Cc: Rajesh Agrawal, Co-Deputy Chair, London Economic Action Partnership
Angus Knowles-Cutler, Co-Deputy Chair, London Economic Action Partnership
Clare Bryant, Clerk to Economy Committee
Dr Celia Caulcott, Board Member, London Economic Action Partnership
Amy Gelsthorpe-Hill, LEAP Board Secretary
Jamie Izzard, Senior Manager - SMEs, Food and LEAP
Debbie Jackson, Assistant Director - Regeneration and Economic Development,
Senior Responsible Owner for LEAP
Ben Johnson, Senior Advisor to the Mayor - Business and Digital Policy