

# Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership

Greater Manchester  
Local Enterprise Partnership  
Draft Communications  
Plan

DRAFT

## Background

The Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership was founded nine years ago.

The board brings together the private and public sectors to support business growth, develop local skills and innovation, direct investment and reform public services. The Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership comprises of distinguished, pioneering business and political leaders from across the city-region.

We work with partners across the public and private sectors, with the goal of stimulating growth to unlock all of Greater Manchester's vast economic potential.

Greater Manchester has a unique partnership model of the GM LEP and Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) providing collective leadership through a shared vision and set of priorities for the city-region, as set out in the Greater Manchester Strategy.

In June 2019, The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), the Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership and the UK Government agreed and jointly published one of the country's first modern local industrial strategies.

The Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy was co-designed with businesses, the voluntary and social enterprise sector and citizens. A comprehensive consultation exercise was undertaken, including a six-week formal consultation.

The Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy outlines a set of long-term policy priorities to help guide industrial development and provides a plan for good jobs, growth and prosperity in Greater Manchester.

This communications plan sets out how we aim to communicate the LEP's implementation of the Greater Manchester Strategy, Internationalisation Strategy and Local Industrial Strategy to local and national stakeholders with a comprehensive media, communications and engagement approach. This will complement the work of Marketing Manchester in promoting Greater Manchester on the national and international stage as the region's destination marketing organisation and tourist board.

The aim of the LEP is for Greater Manchester to be recognised globally, with the Greater Manchester Internationalisation Strategy setting the goal of becoming a top global city by 2035 - a strong, successful economy where everyone can build great businesses, careers and lives.

## Insight

This communications plan has been developed following a process which identified the need to improve both internal and external GM LEP communications. This plan sets out how the new LEP communications capacity will be utilised in line with feedback received at the LEP Board away day along with input from the GM LEP Chair to better understand the LEP's key priorities.

- In May 2019, GM LEP published its Annual Delivery Plan which sets out the key activities planned for April 2019 to March 2020 including a clear commitment to develop a GM LEP Communications Plan.
- The Annual Delivery Plan sits alongside a number of other Greater Manchester documents that collectively provide a comprehensive framework for strategy development, project delivery and performance management including the Greater Manchester Strategy, Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy and the Greater Manchester Internationalisation Strategy.
- Improving communications was highlighted as a critical requirement for 2019/20, both to ensure that Board members are fully up to date and engaged with the work of all members of the GM LEP and to ensure that the work of the GM LEP is being effectively communicated to external audiences.
- Following the discussion at the LEP Board away day, it was agreed at the July LEP Board meeting to recruit additional communications capacity to better keep LEP Board members up-to-date with key developments and increase the profile of the work of the LEP with external stakeholders.

## Aim

The aim of the LEP's communications plan is to 'raise the volume of the LEP' and enhance the LEP's approach to communications, building the profile of the board through a variety of communications and engagement activity.

## Objectives

- **Inform the public and key stakeholders on the LEP's work** – effectively communicate the work of the LEP over 12 months through new and innovate content, which will achieve a 20% increase in social media followers and engagement on the new LEP website. This plan also seeks to ensure that each month 80% of LEP news releases are picked up by media and 80% of media coverage that references the LEP is positive.
- **To increase the profile of LEP board members** - as a collective and as individuals through members appearing at least one SME / educational visit over the next 12 months. This will highlight the work of Greater Manchester LEP Board members, as LEP ambassadors within their businesses and in communities.
- **Strengthen ways of sharing information regarding LEP and GM activity with board members** – a new monthly internal newsletter with summary of LEP current projects and relevant news will be issued and seek to achieve a 70% open rate.
- **Consistency of message** – an audit of all external communications will be taken six months in to the plan to ensure that all messaging from all parts of the LEP is consistent and clear.

## Target audiences

**The Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership communications plan has a number of target audiences:**

### **Business**

Greater Manchester priority and growth sectors, Greater Manchester SME's, different LEP's, The LEP Network.

### **Government**

Greater Manchester Members of Parliament with an economic and business remit. Treasury, BEIS and Northern Powerhouse Ministers

### **Investors**

Potential investors from national and international target markets – Europe, USA, China, India and UAE.

### **Greater Manchester residents**

Introduce and inform the people who live in the city-region about their Greater Manchester LEP.

### **Communications plan outline**

The LEP communications plan will focus on four areas. These are communications and media engagement, events & visits, digital engagement and evaluation. The plan will be implemented from October 2019 until August 2020. All activity will be implemented over this period.

### **Communications and media engagement**

The communications plan will improve and increase the profile of the LEP through specific communications and media engagement.

We will do this through

- Seeking out external communications opportunities, proactive media opportunities and responding quickly, accurately and appropriately to reactive media inquiries.
- Maintain relationships with existing media contacts and identify new media contacts to engage with.
- Ensuring effective internal communication so LEP board members and Greater Manchester partners are across and aware of important economic and business developments within Greater Manchester.

### **Events & Visits**

The LEP communications plan recommends a series of ongoing events, led by LEP members. This will help to increase the profile of the LEP's work and LEP members to key target audiences.

### **Digital Engagement**

The LEP communications plan will increase engagement and the digital profile of the LEP through specific activity as set out in the plan. The plan also sets out current and target digital metrics.

### **Evaluation**

There will be a six monthly review to monitor the success of the LEP's Communications Strategy across all communications and media coverage. Metrics such as media coverage, website / social media engagement and qualitative analysis of LEP events and other visits by members.

## Communications and media engagement

The communications plan will improve and increase the profile of the LEP through specific communications and media engagement as set out below.

- **LEP members deployed as experts within media**  
Develop relationships with key media and make journalists aware that LEP members will be available for relevant print/online/radio/TV interview opportunities within their areas of expertise.
- **Think Pieces / Op-Ed's**  
Providing expert insight to important business/economic issues in line with GMCA strategy. These would be placed with target media and shared with the LEP Network and on the Greater Manchester LEP website. Opportunities around major economic events such as Government Budgets / Spending Reviews and major Brexit events
- **GMCA News Releases**  
Include quotes from LEP board members in GMCA/LEP releases around Greater Manchester economy/business/enterprise/digital  
For example:  
<https://www.localgov.co.uk/Council-leaders-calls-for-green-light-on-HS2-and-Northern-Powerhouse-Rail/48066>
- **Monthly LEP board Member's Blog**  
Greater Manchester Voices of Business. Regular contributions from board members or senior associates of their respective businesses.  
Juergen Maier's blog : <http://juergenmaier.co.uk/blog/>
- **Monthly External LEP newsletter** sent as part of the main external GMCA newsletter (established audience).
- **Internal communications will also be improved** with a monthly internal newsletter with summary of LEP current projects and relevant news.

## Events/Visits

The LEP communications plan recommends a series of ongoing events, led by LEP members. This will help to increase the profile of the LEP's work and LEP members to key target audiences.

### **LEP Member visits**

Ongoing

- Inspirational talks by LEP members to either SME's or students studying in their own profession/field of work. Deploying LEP members to meet those working within the sector or young people seeking careers in their appropriate professions in secondary schools, colleges, universities will be effective ways of raising their own profile and the purpose of the LEP.

### **Review of funding agreements/Growth Funds**

Ongoing

- Publicity and marketing on projects – Firmer and more effective guidelines for projects to allow for media opportunities with LEP members via appropriate Local Growth Fund Projects. Revise and rewrite Growth Fund publicity guidance for grant receiver's emphasising LEP involvement wherever possible. Opportunities will be sought to ensure LEP members and attend site media and ministerial visits to growth fund projects around the city-region – to exploit the credibility of the LEP and reaffirm their involvement in these projects. LEP Communications officer to have regular ongoing contact with Growth Fund projects

### **Local Industrial Strategy Events – The Story So Far**

First event: End of Feb 2020 – then ongoing at key milestones

- Local Enterprise Partnership Business Community Event.
- Update and inform Greater Manchester business community about the Local Industrial Strategy, success stories so far. Informing businesses about innovation partnerships on healthy ageing, Greater Manchester advance materials and manufacturing alliance, review of public data. Make the LEP more accessible to business community.
- To give businesses a better understanding of the LEP and what they do. The facilities they can tap into & networking opportunities
- An opportunity for the LEP to engage Greater Manchester businesses to ensure their voices are heard; to place the LEP at the centre of a 'network of networks'.
- Speeches by Andy Burnham, Sir Richard Leese and minimum two other Greater Manchester LEP members.
- Event hosted in partnership with GMCA to engage local businesses & shape economic and culture policy (subject to budget) e.g. by sector, size of business, location

## Digital Engagement

The LEP communications plan will increase engagement and the digital profile of the LEP through specific activity, as set out below.

### **Social Media**

- Build engagement and followers of LEP existing and new social media channels – by sourcing and sharing relevant daily Greater Manchester LEP board member news and centric business, economic and innovation news.
- Twitter Q&A's with LEP members - this could be around members' specific portfolios, news or current affairs to engage businesses, increase awareness and audience.

### **Check In With .....**

- Find out what happens in the typical day of a Greater Manchester LEP board member – video diary / video interview

### **Short video or audio podcasts**

- In conversation with....  
Two LEP members discussing topical Greater Manchester/U.K. business news stories around climate/enterprise/success/challenges etc.

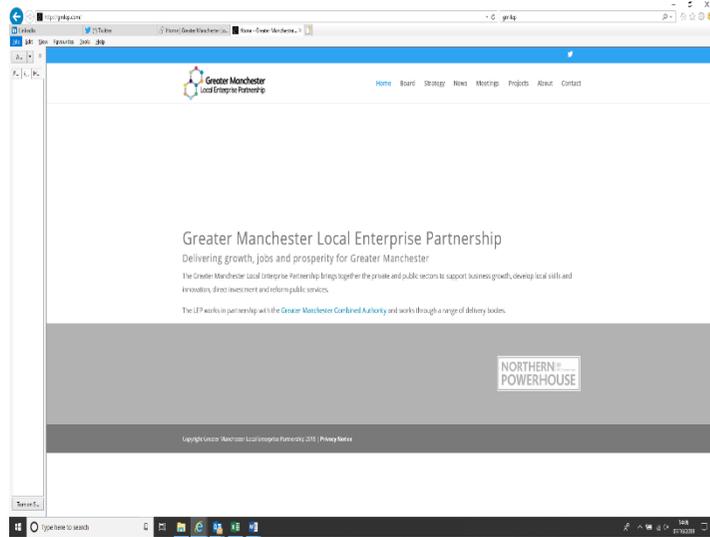
### **Meet the Board**

- Short punchy 5 min videos about board members for You Tube, social media content, LEP website, e.g. profile pieces about their careers, business, what drives them etc.

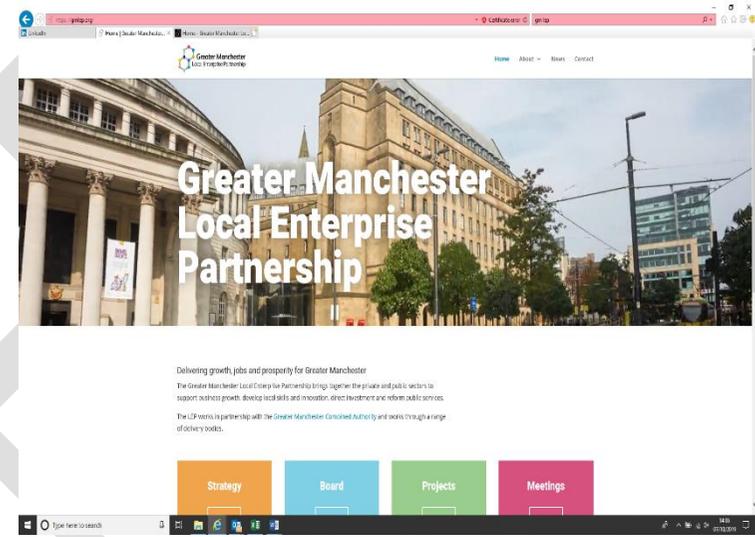
### **LEP Website improvements**

- The website is the shop window for the LEP – LEP website can be used to share news and re inforce strategic messages.
- Comparative research of other LEP Website was carried out and suggestions given to Marketing Manchester for website. Examples of the old and new website can be seen on the next page reflecting initial format improvements with content to be further developed following LEP Board feedback.

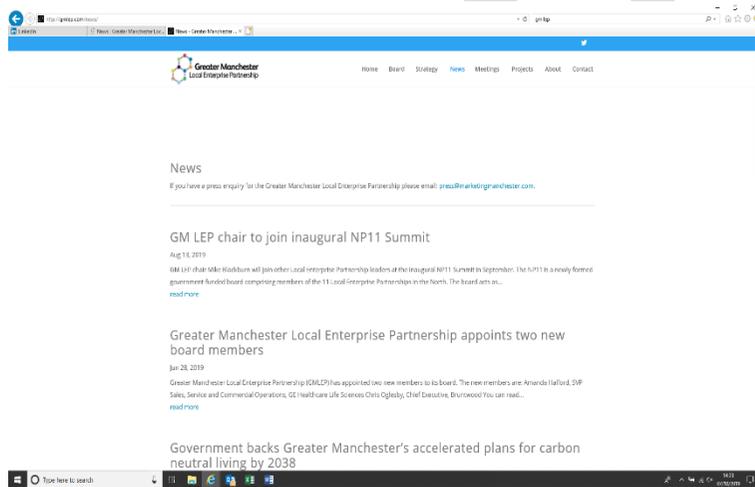
## Old Home Page



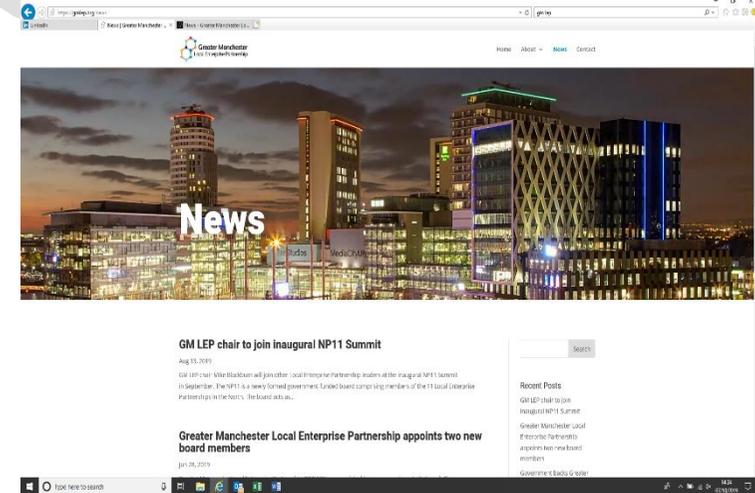
## New Home Page



## Old News Page



## New News Page



## Online engagement metrics

These projections are based on the communications team’s experience building social media audiences for businesses, and also based on comparisons with other LEP social media engagement.

### Website engagement targets

|                                | Sep 2018-Sep 2019 | TARGET Oct 2019-Oct 2020 (increase of 20%) |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Average time on site:          | 02:30             | 03.20                                      |
| Number of sessions (visitors): | 10,334            | 12,400                                     |
| New users:                     | 7,333             | 8,800                                      |
| Returning users:               | 1,244             | 1,493                                      |
| Bounce rate:                   | 46.1%             | 55.5%                                      |

*(Projected figures based on previous profile building projects for business clients)*

### Social Media Targets

|  | Sep 5 <sup>th</sup> 2019 | Sep 30 <sup>th</sup> | TARGET Jan 2020 | TARGET March | TARGET June | TARGET Sep |
|--|--------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------|------------|
| <b>Instagram</b><br>follower increase every 3 months | 0                        | 0                    | 100             | 115          | 133         | 153 15%    |
| <b>Twitter</b><br>follower increase every 3 months   | 2152                     | 2176                 | 2394            | 2633         | 2896        | 3185 10%   |
| <b>LinkedIn</b><br>follower increase every 3 months  | 1                        | 53                   | 68              | 89           | 116         | 151 30%    |

## Evaluation

There will be a six monthly review to monitor the success of the LEP's Communications Strategy across all communications and media coverage. Evaluation will be carried out to measure specific objectives and targets, including:

- Quantitative and qualitative analysis of social media engagement to measure effectiveness of content and assess whether the 20% increase in social media engagement has been achieved.
- Quantitative and qualitative analysis of the LEP website engagement to measure effectiveness of content and assess whether the 20% increase in website visits engagement has been achieved.
- Quantitative and qualitative analysis of media coverage to assess whether 80% of LEP news releases are picked up by media and 80% of LEP media coverage is positive.
- Qualitative analysis of LEP events and an assessment of the effectiveness of LEP member SME / educational visits.
- Internal and external newsletter analytics to assess whether the internal newsletter has achieved a 70% open rate.
- Summary report of website improvements.
- A summary setting out how consistent and clear the LEP messaging has been.