

Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire

Enterprise Partnership



Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire Enterprise Partnership

Annual Report 2019/20

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Chairman’s Forward

This has been a transformational year for the Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SSLEP). The publication of the National Local Growth Assurance Framework in January 2019 provided a welcome opportunity for us to reflect on what we needed to achieve, working together, for our area, our businesses & our communities.

During 2019/20, we have implemented our Improvement Plan, driving organisational change to operate structures and processes that provide best practice, strong governance and accountability; putting us in the strongest possible position for the next phase of investment in our economy.

Having moved to a company limited by guarantee, we have also welcomed five new private sector Board Directors. They have brought new impetus and enthusiasm, matched by a wealth of local knowledge and experience in: business support; raising workforce skills and business productivity through innovation; and housing & community enablement. We have further enhanced our local authority representation, at Board and in operational sub groups, ensuring decisions are made in light of strong technical input, sound local knowledge and alignment of resources to provide local solutions for business. We have also restructured and increased capacity in our LEP Secretariat Team, to work more effectively with partners in delivering our priorities.

This Annual Report provides you with an update on our existing and new projects & programmes, with further details available on our website on key areas of interest. Over the year, we also brought fresh eyes and a new focus to the Partnership work programme.

In developing our Local Industrial Strategy we have set out an ambitious vision for the future economy of our area, building on the strategic capabilities of our outstanding businesses, civic and learning institutions. I want to thank those of you in our business community who have worked with us in designing that strategy, from which we will create an investment framework with Government that will increase productivity and create higher value jobs across the city and county.

The Coronavirus crisis has occurred at a point where we are designing delivery activity for our strategy. We are working hard with partners and government to ensure that recovery planning is robustly embedded in this work, while keeping an eye on the shared business vision for our economy, putting us in the best possible position to achieve lasting business growth.

I am a Staffordshire businessman and have been proud to lead SSLEP’s transformation and strategy development on behalf of my business community, to raise the profile of our city and county, to showcase our business strengths and demonstrate why we are a strong competitor in a global economy. A personal highlight for our partners has been the valuable input of a very wide range of businesses & stakeholders in helping us to plan for the future. I look forward to building on those existing and new business relationships from across our whole area.

Alun Rogers
Chair, Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP



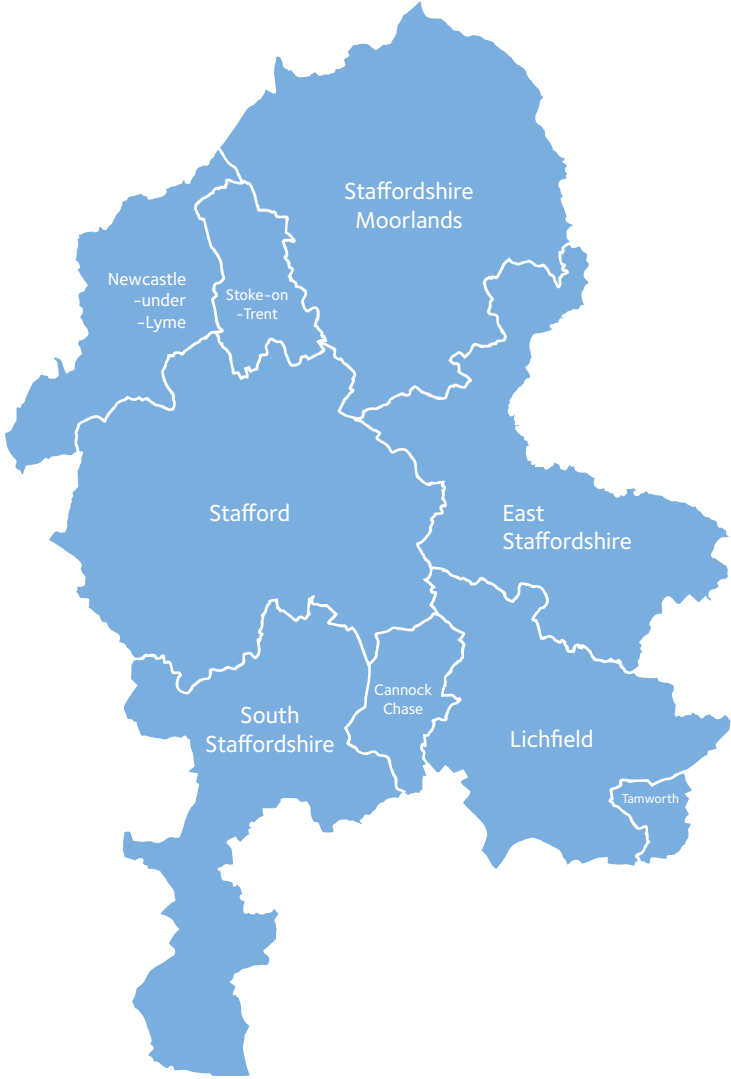
A View of our LEP

	 Working Age Population	 Homes	 Enterprises	 Jobs	 GVA Total	 GVA per hour	 Attainment 8	 Median Salary (Full Time)
England	35m	24m	2.4m	26m	1.6tn	£35.60	46.8%	£30.7k
West Midlands	3.7m	2.5m	214k	2.6m	133bn	£31.10	45.6%	£28.5k
SSLEP	695k	498km	39k	471k	23.6bn	£28.60	42.8%	£27.2k

The table below represents a snapshot of our region by breaking down the percentage spread of population, housing, business and jobs.

	Working Age Pop	Dwellings	Enterprises	Jobs	Attainment 8*
Cannock Chase	9%	9%	9%	9%	42.2
East Staffordshire	10%	10%	12%	13%	46.3
Lichfield	9%	9%	12%	10%	51
Newcastle-under-Lyme	12%	11%	9%	10%	42.6
South Staffordshire	10%	9%	12%	7%	45.1
Stafford	12%	12%	14%	13%	46.7
Staffordshire Moorlands	8%	9%	11%	6%	47.2
Stoke-on-Trent	23%	23%	16%	26%	42.8
Tamworth	7%	7%	6%	6%	40.9

* Attainment 8 has replaced 5 grade A* to C GCSEs including English and Maths and is based on average attainment in 8 subjects.



Our Pledge

Our original Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) set out our Pledge to create 50,000 more jobs and grow GVA by 50% between 2011 and 2021.

Up to March 2020 we continued to exceed our job target but GVA still sits below our original projections. Our new Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) responded to the Government's 2018 Local Industrial Strategies Policy Prospectus and provides a more focused means for us to drive forward our economy. Our LIS Implementation Plan including COVID-19 Recovery Plan, to be published later this year, will refresh our strategy and ambition.

Growth since 2011*

12% employment growth
18% GVA growth
54,000 jobs created
17% increase in new business creation
31% increase in population educated to NVQ4+ level

* Figures provided are up to March 2020.



Our Local Industrial Strategy

In 2017, the Government's White Paper 'Industrial Strategy – Building a Britain fit for the future' set out a policy framework against which major private and public sector investment decisions would be made.

The Industrial Strategy stated that Government would work to strengthen Local Enterprise Partnerships and committed to supporting the development and delivery of their Local Industrial Strategies (LIS) to build on local strengths and deliver on economic opportunities.

In October 2018, the Government published its 'Local Industrial Strategies Policy Prospectus' which made clear that LISs will be long-term, based on clear evidence and aligned to the national Industrial Strategy. They should set out clearly defined priorities for how cities, towns and rural areas will maximise their contribution to UK productivity and allow places to make the most of their distinctive strengths. SSLEP progressed the development of our LIS over the course of 2019-20, in three phases:

Phase 1 April – June 2019

We built a robust economic and sectoral evidence base for our LIS, in partnership with a nationally renowned consultancy, and undertook initial engagement with businesses and stakeholders to increase our understanding of the evidence in the context of local challenges.

Phase 2 July – August 2019

Here we engaged with over 250 businesses across Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire through a series of workshops and interviews to feedback the findings of our evidence base and understand opportunities to boost growth and productivity.

Phase 3 September 2019 – March 2020.

We co-produced iterative drafts of the strategy with our partners in local authorities, higher education and business building on the evidence base and qualitative research with stakeholders. Our draft LIS was published on our website for consultation in December 2019 and further refined in early 2020, based on the extensive and comprehensive feedback we received.

Towards the end of the financial year, we began to develop the partnership working arrangements to enable us to produce a LIS Implementation Plan. This work will be rolled out in 2020-21 through LIS Advisory Sub-Groups, focusing on four areas emerging from our strategy. These are:



Place



Future Workforce



Innovation



Growing Business

The role of these sub-groups has been expanded to include our plans for economic recovery and renewal in the wake of the Covid-19 virus.





How our funding is resourced and allocated

Total City Deal and Growth Deal Investment Package **£123.04m**

City Deal	£24.75m	Local Growth Deals	£98.29m
Private sector investment forecast		Comprising:	
Divided over the two City Deal projects:		LGD1	£60.89m
District Heat Network	£28.25m	LGD2	£14.10m
Keele Smart Energy Network Distributor	£5.1m	LGD3	£23.30m
Match funding investment			
Government, Growing Places and EU			£72.3m
Local Authorities and colleges			£75.4m
Private sector investment forecast			£136.85m
Growth Deal schemes – private sector investment forecast			£103.5m

Working in Partnership

SSLEP is made up of organisations who work with us to achieve our goals.

As well as a core group of partners – who are often delivery agents for LEP commissioned projects and services that are detailed over the coming pages – our success is secured through the flexibility to manage and cultivate partnerships and investment with a host of other organisations. The development of our Local Industrial Strategy this year has increased and strengthened engagement with a range of valuable partners. The list below contains our core partners but does not represent the full extent of the SSLEP’s partnership working.

















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Local Growth Deal Investment Programme

LGD 1 Investment Breakdown	
Etruria Valley Link Road	£26.700m
Stafford Western Access Route	£24.300m
Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering Skills Hubs - Completed	£6.900m
Branston Interchange - Completed	£5.087m
Local Sustainable Transport - Completed	£5.000m
Meaford Employment Site - Completed	£4.200m
Liberty Park, Lichfield - Completed	£4.000m
Bericote Four Ashes - Completed	£1.909m
LGD 2 Investment Breakdown	
Stoke-on-Trent City Centre Access	£7.710m
Tamworth Enterprise Quarter- Completed	£2.975m
Blythe Park Extension	£1.250m
Stoke Flood Alleviation Scheme	£1.200m
Rugeley Flood Scheme – Completed	£0.754m
Stafford Station Gateway Land Purchase	£0.150m
Cannock & Silverdale Enterprise Centres	£0.380m
Friarsgate, Lichfield - Completed	£0.071m
LGD 3 Investment Breakdown	
City East Link Road	£8.580m
Doxey Road and Stafford Western Access Route	£8.500m
Skills Capital Equipment Fund- Completed	£2.370m
Local Sustainable Transport	£1.460m
Victoria Ground (Phase 2)	£1.400m
Keele Science and Innovation Park Smart Innovation Hub (the Denise Coates Foundation building) - Completed	£1.000m
Spode Church Street (Phase 2)	£0.500m
Stoke Station Power Upgrade	£0.100m
Funding to be allocated	£0.384m

European Structural & Investment Funds

European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) continue to play a key role in supporting to our priorities to stimulate business growth, contribute to key infrastructure projects and raise skills levels.

EU funding is available over the next 2-3 years and remains on track to be fully committed to support important projects and programmes.

The total amount of EU funding available to the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire LEP area now stands at £161m. 88% is largely committed, supporting a range of capital investment, business support and skills & Employment projects and programmes.

ESIF Fund	Current allocation (£m)	Committed (£m) *	Balance remaining (£m)
ERDF	91	84	7
ESF	65	54	11
EAFRD & LEADER	5	5	0
TOTAL	161	143	18

What our ESIF Funds Support



European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

- Growth Hub services delivery to our businesses
- Mentoring for Growth
- Business grant and finance programmes, including a £10m contribution to the Midlands Engine Investment Fund
- Key infrastructure projects supporting business innovation and low carbon initiatives: Smart Energy Demonstrator and the Denise Coates Foundation Building (formerly Smart Innovation Hub) at Keele University

Key outputs from ERDF contracted projects to date include:

- 1,274 businesses developing innovative products/ processes
- 3,871 businesses receiving support to start, establish and grow
- 5,827 tonnes in carbon reduction delivered.

European Social Fund (ESF)

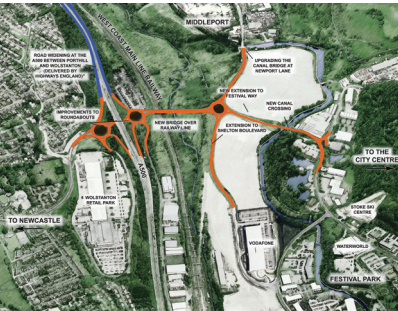
- Key programmes delivered through a range of partners support residents who hold multiple barriers, are furthest from the job market or are at risk of redundancy to progress to education and employment. Also support of unemployed who may need to develop higher skills to progress. In addition programmes support young people to develop their capability to progress back into learning and remain in either education, apprenticeship, traineeship or employment.
To date the ESF programmes have supported over 25,000 learners with 11,000 progressing to positive destinations.

European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) & LEADER

- Programmes that support businesses and projects in rural areas across manufacturing, tourism and food and drink sectors

Developing and Enhancing Our Place

Our ambitions is to realise the true future potential of our cities, towns and rural areas, providing the highest quality environment for those who live, work, study and visit here. This includes strengthening of transport links, enhancing the quality and quantity of our housing supply and supporting digital connectivity.



Etruria Valley Link Road (EVL)

Location
Stoke-on-Trent.

Work supported
The construction of new roads and a viaduct spanning the West Coast Main Line railway and Fowlea Brook. Also site-based access roads linking previous phases of development, two new canal bridges and naturalisation of the Fowlea Brook with the construction of internal highway infrastructure from Shelton Boulevard to the new link road. The project received full government approval in February 2020. The Etruria Valley area includes five sites that have government designated Enterprise Zone status, as part of the Wider Ceramic Valley Enterprise Zone.

Investment
£26.7 million Local Growth funding (including £18.5m Department for Transport retained funding) towards the scheme.

Targeted output
Improved accessibility and connectivity to sites supporting inward investment and creating jobs that are accessible to the local community.

City East Link Road (CELR)

Location
Stoke-on-Trent.

Work supported
The wider CELR plan involves a programme of investment, including the construction of a new highway and junction / corridor improvements. This Local Growth Fund project focuses on two elements of the programme: junction improvements at Joiners Square and improvements to the Bucknall Road Corridor.

Investment
£8.5 million Local Growth Fund. Total investment of £86.18 million supporting the delivery of the Midlands Connect Strategy. Subject to £64.6m DfT funding (via Midlands Connect) through the Large Local Major Schemes funding programme.

Targeted output
Up to 2,350 houses and the creation of 100 jobs.



Liberty Park

Location
Adjacent to Lichfield Trent Valley Railway Station on both the West Coast Main and Cross City railway lines.

Work supported
Construction of a new access bridge over the West Coast main railway line, two new traffic roundabouts, a pedestrian crossing and junction improvements. Two new units were completed in February this year, providing 117,000 sq ft and 49,000 sq ft of Grade A industrial/logistics accommodation.

Investment
£4 million Growth Fund. £38million total investment.

Targeted output
The creation of more than 700 jobs.



The Branston Locks Development

Location
400 acres of land immediately west of the A38 near Burton creating housing, leisure, recreation, community facilities and an employment site. The project scooped the Best Large Project award at an annual regional Institute of Highway Engineers event.

Work supported
Realignment of Branston Road to make it suitable for the volume of traffic created by the new development and construction of a new, award-winning bridge over the Trent and Mersey Canal. Pedestrian and cycle access to the future development and canal tow path have also been created.

Investment
£5 million Growth Fund. Total investment estimated at over £800 million.

Targeted output
2,500 new homes and a 50-acre employment site with the potential for 3,800 new jobs.



Stafford Western Access project

Location
The new road will link the A34 Foregate Street at Madford Retail Park to the A518 Newport Road Castlefields junction.

Work supported
The new road will enable millions of pounds worth of new housing and business development to take place and improve traffic flow in the town centre, particularly by the railway station. The scheme will include improved conditions for bus services, pedestrians and cyclists. It will also redevelop areas of derelict land.

Investment
£15.5 million Local Growth funding alongside developer funding.

Targeted output
Up to 2,350 houses and the creation of 100 jobs.

A heritage asset for the future



Tamworth Assembly Rooms

Location

Tamworth Assembly Rooms was first proposed in 1887 to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria and it was opened in 1889. Since then the theatre has continuously entertained the people of Tamworth and beyond, but significant refurbishment was needed to ensure it could survive for another 130 years.

The new look Tamworth Assembly Rooms opened earlier this year following a £5million project to extend, refurbish and modernise. The project has brought the venue into the 21st century, while enhancing and restoring the historic features which make it such a special building. Redesigned layout and extensions creates impressive, versatile space with more space that can be used for a variety of purposes, including bar and cafe.

The building has also been modernised throughout with upgraded acoustics, heating and lighting, and improved access and facilities.

The refurbishment of Tamworth Assembly Rooms is part of the wider £6.2million Enterprise Quarter project, including the creation of Tamworth Enterprise Centre and plans for a restaurant in the Carnegie Centre.

Investment

£2.95million from the Growth Fund. In addition, the National Lottery Heritage Fund contributed £903,400, Arts Council England gave £365,000 and the remainder has been invested by Tamworth Borough Council and Staffordshire County Council.



St Modwen Homes – Victoria Ground Phase 2

Location

Stoke-on-Trent

Work supported

St Modwen Homes has worked closely with Stoke-on-Trent City Council on the redevelopment of the Victoria Ground site. In parallel the City Council has, in leading the SUNRISE project, worked with the Environment Agency in naturalising the River Trent running across the site, to improve biodiversity and accessibility to the City's major watercourse. However, contaminated land within the site remained a significant barrier to the redevelopment of the Victoria Ground site for housing purposes.

With support from the LEP's Local Growth Deal, this contamination issue will be addressed and the site redeveloped for much needed family housing. The housing scheme also brings significant benefits to the adjacent Minster Primary School through the provision of outdoor sports and play facilities.

Investment

£1.4m Local Growth Fund grant, £900,000 Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, private sector leverage (St Modwen Homes) £13.97m

Targeted output

44 jobs; 70 homes



Stoke-on-Trent Rail Station Power Upgrade

Stoke-on-Trent Railway Station has a significant amount of under-utilised floorspace but is constrained by its current power supply. This project is targeted at enabling investment within the station facilities by supporting improvements through the installation of a new power supply. The project will enhance one of the key transport interchanges within Stoke-on-Trent and see significant new investment within the station facility. This will ensure that Stoke-on-Trent keeps pace in terms of business and customer expectations of modern-day transport facilities.

"The project leads at Avanti West Coast are delighted to receive funding from the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire LEP to support the completion of a full power upgrade to Stoke on Trent station. It is anticipated that completing this very much needed project, will enable Avanti West Coast to renovate the existing ground floor accommodation, creating more retail and consequently additional jobs within the Stoke area".

A representative of Avanti West Coast

Investment

£100,000 Local Growth Fund grant.

Targeted output

12 jobs

Growing Business

Our ambition is to be a place of choice for people wanting to start, grow or locate their business here. We want to support the development of new and scale-up businesses and increase productivity and use of resources across all our sectors.

During the financial year 2019/20 Make It Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire have

Assisted **28**
companies to relocate
or expand within the
LEP area.

Created/safeguarded
841 jobs
(736 created and 105
safeguarded)
as a result.



Make it Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire

Make it Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire provides the investment service for our area to attract new business investment as well as to support our existing companies to expand. The emphasis of the Make It Investment Strategy is on promoting our sector strengths to investors and to distinguish ours from other locations in the UK and overseas, utilising multipliers and promoting our key sites and assets.

Midlands Engine Key Account Management (KAM) Programme Funding

Funding of £35K was secured from Midlands Engine to develop and deliver a business engagement strategy to engage specifically with foreign-owned companies, local partners and colleagues from the Department for International Trade.

The Make It team has been successful in running a targeted programme working with foreign owned companies throughout Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire. This year's programme has included local network building events such as the Chamber of Commerce Patron's Lunch and a business engagement event on 26 February hosted by Michelin in Stoke. The latter targeted around 150 foreign-owned companies from across Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire from a range of sectors. Speakers highlighted their experience and achievements in growing their business in the area.

In April 2019 Make it Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire procured a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. Through the Midlands Engine funding, additional licences were purchased to enable the Evolutive system to be shared with local delivery partners. This means that partners will benefit from shared company intelligence, improved account management and enhanced joint working capability.

Commercial Property Events

Commercial Property Events hosted by the Make It team provide opportunities to engage with property professionals and potential inward investors.

Events included:

- Aspect Building at the National Memorial Arboretum on 2 May 2019 sponsored by St Modwen showcasing St Modwen Park Burton.
- Brown Hills Trade Park in Tunstall on 9 July 2019 sponsored by Clowes Developments (CWC). Delegates learned about 'Transformational Growth & Investment Plans' across the city and within the Ceramic Valley Enterprise Zone.
- MOOG Aircraft Group at i54 South Staffordshire on 5 November 2019, highlighted the business park's success and its 60-acre western extension.

The annual international MIPIM event in Cannes is the most high-profile event in the Make It Team's Annual Events Programme, providing a unique opportunity to showcase Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire's latest place-making plans and major projects and attract new investment interest. This year's event has been rescheduled due to the Coronavirus outbreak.

Critical to enabling businesses to locate and grow in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire is the development of new commercial property. There has been in excess of 3.6 million sq ft of speculative developments in Staffordshire in the past 3 years, demonstrating confidence in the area. New occupiers and investors include Super Smart, Screwfix, Arc Trend and Hellmann Logistics.

The Growing Places Fund



The SSLEP Growing Places Fund (GPF) is a government allocated fund of £10.72 million designed to unlock growth by addressing immediate development constraints whilst creating jobs, housing and expansion.

Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP has used its government allocation to establish a revolving interest-free business loans fund based on the principle of investment, repayment and then reinvestment. This means that the funds can be put to maximum use, as they are reinvested into business growth as they are repaid.

Current GPF loan projects in delivery:

The London House student accommodation (Phase 3) in Stoke-on-Trent; the expansion of Dunston Business Village (Phase 2), near Penkridge, Stafford and both Scott FM Ltd and Canalside Farm near Stafford. GPF grants have also been invested in the Ceramic Valley EZ, Smithfield redevelopment site in Hanley, and the Four Ashes Business Park in South Staffordshire. During 2019-20, three loans totalling £0.502m have been paid out and two loans, totalling £0.647m, have been repaid back to the GPF loans fund.

* The Growing Places Fund Panel has been able to commit more than the total fund sum because loan investments will be staggered over the coming years. This will allow time for the repayment of the GPF loans currently in circulation and allows the LEP to then recycle and reinvest these loans fund into local SMEs.



John Scott Works, Hilton Cross

Staffordshire-based John Scott Works is part of the PRN Group, an international group of companies with a proven record in steel manufacturing and process automation. In 2017 on opening in the UK, then in Tipton, the company started to design, manufacture, and install mezzanine floors, something the group have been doing across mainland Europe for nearly 25 years.

2019 saw the purchase of John Scott Works 12,000 square foot factory at Hilton Cross in South Staffordshire. With this new space the company completed 218 projects (compared to 50 in 2018) and the workforce increased to 37 employees, up from 16. Whilst many competitors choose to out-source the manufacturing of different elements to different companies, according to Managing Director Matt Schot: "John Scott Works believes higher quality standards can be maintained when the entire manufacturing process is done in-house from start to finish."

The Make it Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire Investment service provided support in advising on potential funding and facilitated an introduction to the planning team at South Staffordshire Council for advice on future expansion.

John Scott Works choice to locate in the Midlands, with its roots embedded in steel manufacturing, was only natural. Within its sphere of work, the company is making changes to an industry still used to heavy duty hot rolled section beams, by producing cold rolled beams which are aesthetically pleasing and feature trays for electric wires and piping.

The new facility in South Staffordshire is ideally positioned centrally in the UK and near the Midlands motorway network meaning that John Scott Works is able to respond quickly and efficiently to any enquiry.



Canalside Farm, Great Haywood

Geoff Barton of Canalside Farm Great Haywood, located on the outskirts of Great Haywood, applied to the SSLEP Growing Places Fund to secure a 0% interest loan to fund the expansion of the existing farm shop, along with the addition of a new car park.

Canalside Farm produce some products in-house and wished to expand on this by building a production kitchen within the existing farm shop. They successfully secured a £300K loan against development costs of £780K, with the expansion ultimately creating 9 additional jobs.

Canalside Farm is frequented by 'out of area' visitors drawn to their 'Pick-Your-Own' attraction. As part of their expansion, the applicant planned to increase productivity of this attraction with improved infrastructure, layout, crop variety and marketing.

The intervention proved highly successful for Canalside Farm. Turnover for the shop has increased by 27%, with the number of transactions increasing by 13% across the whole business. The increased productive area for retail is 40% and the number of new products sold has increased by 55 in the new bakery plus deli.



The Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire Growth Hub

Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire Growth Hub helps to unlock private sector growth by supporting the development of sustainable new businesses, helping companies to grow and assisting new product/market development.

The Growth Hub extends the reach and impact of national and local initiatives and funds and by providing targeted support to enable local businesses to engage with support opportunities.

Staffordshire County Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council and the Greater Birmingham and Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce work together on the Growth Hub, concentrating on the priority areas identified by BEIS, MHCLG and SSLEP. A wider collaboration of partners assist with ensuring there are as few duplications and gaps in service as possible.

As COVID-19 lockdown measures were implemented across the region, the Growth Hub team became integral to providing advice and guidance to businesses on how to access loans, grants and other support. From 23rd of March when the support programme opened though to 31st March the Growth Hub team handled almost 1,000 contacts – by phone, email or webchat.

Growth Hub ERDF Business Grants and Support

Total ERDF Claimed to date*	£543,370
ERDF Committed	£3,331,316
Private Investment to Leverage	£506,317
Grants Awarded	72
Value of grants awarded	£506,317

* Funding committed for 3 years commencing April 2019.

Since its launch the Growth Hub has:

Assisted
3210
start-ups

More than
400 people
signposted to the
National Business
Helpline or a
Start-Up scheme

Business
Helpline – an
average of
440 contacts
a month,
including **60**
new businesses

More than **3500**
business diagnostic
reviews. More than
450 diagnostics
carried out in the
last year alone.

11,000
business on
the helpline
database

Over **12,000**
referrals to
national and
local business
support
organisations

Jobs boost follows Growth Hub grant

Two grants from Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Growth Hub have enabled Langley Alloys in Wolstanton to invest in new machinery, creating four new high skilled jobs in Newcastle-under-Lyme. The machinery expands its range of services as well as reducing timescales and costs by bringing more of their operations together under one roof.

Langley Alloys distributes high-performance metals, including stainless steels, together with nickel and copper alloys. They are used in a variety of applications to tackle corrosion, including the oil and gas industry, chemical processing, and water and mining sectors.

Business Development Director at Langley Alloys, Rodney Rice, said: "Dealing with the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Growth Hub was straight-forward, and the grant support has helped us to take the risk out of some of our investments. Our sales are definitely up, The number of people in the team has increased from 23 to 40 in the last three years. We are active in more markets and it's been a really exciting few years for us.

Ultimately, the support we have received from the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Growth Hub has helped us to succeed in Staffordshire and also take our metal around the world."



Penkridge marketing agency puts expansion on the fast track with Growth Hub support

Dynamic Penkridge-based design and marketing agency Brand Jam is plotting a path of clear growth with support from the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Growth Hub. Led by directors Sarah Hackett and Chris Robinson, Brand Jam specialises in the use of strategic branding and brand storytelling for not-for-profit organisations, social enterprises and SMEs.

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Growth Hub signposted Brand Jam to two grants totalling £5,000, enabling the firm to invest in new equipment and create a new role for a design professional. The company has also accessed a wealth of advice and guidance through schemes and workshops including the 'Let's Do Mentoring' initiative and HR support.

Brand Jam's Creative Director, Chris said: "Instead of facing situations for the first time, not knowing quite which way to turn, at the Growth Hub there's someone there that we can actually talk to, get advice from and help steer us in the right direction. We've really found it a benefit. It's helped us to rely on people and gain from their expertise."



i54 South Staffordshire

The i54 South Staffordshire development is a key part of the Black Country Enterprise Zone and at 97 hectares is one of the most successful employment sites in the Midlands.

Through a collaboration agreement between Staffordshire County Council, City of Wolverhampton Council and South Staffordshire Council, the uplift in business rates received from the site are used to repay the borrowing incurred by partners in the funding and delivery of the access to the site and the servicing and development of the site which enabled it to be occupied by end users.

The site is already home to 2,600 employees, 50% of whom live within a 5-mile radius of the site. When fully built out, employment is expected to increase to around 3,400 and the site is anticipated to have levered in private sector investment in excess of £1 billion.

Alongside the key auto-aero manufacturers Jaguar Land Rover and Moog Aerospace and other high value-added companies, the latest company to occupy the site is Morris Site Machinery who expect their new facility to be operational towards the end of 2020.



i54 Western Extension

Building on the success of the original i54 employment site, the collaboration partners group are now bringing forward the i54 Western Extension, with works on the first 60 acres phase of the extension well advanced.

The access road to the Western Extension was completed in March 2020 and work is now underway to prepare the serviced development platforms. Completion of the development platforms is programmed for summer 2020 and will be able to accommodate end user requirements of up to 1 million square feet, and dependent on the nature of the end users, potentially create around 1,700 jobs.

The wider economic benefits of the first phase include anticipated Gross Value Added of around £110 million per annum and private sector investment leverage of £300 million.

A funding package for the £38.5 million scheme has been agreed by the collaboration partners working with £10 million of funding from each of the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership.

Ceramic Valley Enterprise Zone (CVEZ)

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire is thriving with a diverse business base, moving into more high-value added sectors. Stoke-on-Trent is now ranked 1st above major cities including London, Birmingham, Manchester and Edinburgh for employment growth by the UK Powerhouse 2020 Report.

Ceramic Valley Enterprise Zone comprises six key sites along the strategic A500 corridor totalling 140 hectares. Since its 2015 launch, the zone has grown into one of the UK's most successful enterprise zones, enabling redundant and neglected brownfield sites to be developed out, and achieving 73% occupancy of current development build.

"We are extremely proud of what we and our partners have achieved in a short space of time on CVEZ; buoyant levels of investment, speculative development on a scale the City hasn't seen for many years, 89 hectares of derelict land brought back into economic use and creating over 2000 new jobs, employing local people and raising aspirations amongst our young people."

Stoke-on-Trent City Council Leader Cllr Abi Brown

Tunstall Arrow

Progress

Phase 1, all 5 units pre-let on completion to international businesses. Detailed planning application for Phase 2 underway for proposed speculative scheme comprising a further 5 industrial units ranging from 13k to 30k sq ft. Construction expected in Autumn 2020.

Tunstall Arrow, an 8.8ha site won the Regeneration Project of the Year in the Business Insider Property Awards West Midlands 2019.

Occupiers

Q-railing, Pramac-Generac, SG Fleet, Boels Rental, DHL Express

Phase 1 Investment Value

£13.4m

Phase 2 Investment Value

£10m

Relocating to CVEZ has allowed the German-owned Q-Railing to build their UK branch and take it to the next level. Q-Railing specialises in modular railing and balustrade systems in stainless steel, glass and aluminium. The 30 strong employee organisation with a turnover of £12 million was previously spread across units and unable to grow any further.

Paul Capewell is technical manager of the company. He said "The site is a great location for us. Logistically with the road network being so close to the M6, as well as the rail network, it is a huge benefit to us. There are also some great logistics companies locally to the enterprise zone that we can use which is incredibly helpful.

"Sites and units of the size we have now (44,000 sq ft) are hard to come by in North Staffordshire. The support provided by the city council and the developer meant we were involved in the design and created a bespoke building exactly for our needs. It was important for us to stay local and not lose any of our employees. Since we've found this space, we've taken on new staff and also linked up with colleges to offer training and apprenticeships roles."



Future Workforce

Our ambition is to develop a modern and flexible skills offer which enables everyone to up-skill and re-skill to meet the needs of our developing economy. We want to ensure that local people are engaged, particularly in areas of poor educational performance and deprived communities.

SSLEP Careers Hub

Careers Hubs are a subset of the National Careers Network, and SSLEP successfully bid to operate a Hub in the first round of 20 hubs. Through the Careers & Enterprise Company Network, the Stoke on Trent & Staffordshire Careers Hub now work with almost 80 schools and over 60 local and national businesses as Enterprise Advisers across the LEP area.

Schools continue to show increased attainment and Business Enterprise Advisers have a growing database of micro businesses, SMEs and large businesses who have offered support. Some of the great initiatives that have taken place this year include:

- Monthly school business breakfasts in several regions across the county, where local businesses meet to discuss best practice and the wider careers agenda.
- Working with the construction company Seddon, to develop a series of lesson plans linking careers to curriculum learning.
- The Stoke-on-Trent Ceramic Challenge took place earlier in the year designed to showcase the pottery industry to the young people of Stoke-on-Trent.

Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering Hub

The Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Hub (AME) provides world-class vocational environments with state-of-the-art facilities in local communities linked to key employers, providers, schools and colleges. This has been developed with £13 million SSLEP and private investment in two phases and has supported over 10,500 learners to date.

The AME Hub's key aims are to:

- Provide growth in sector specific traineeship and apprenticeships
- Upskill the current workforce in the sector to improve productivity
- Upskill and retrain those looking for work

- Provide specialist facilities and training to meet employer needs
- Promote careers in the sector and use the facilities and training as a progression route

Phase 1 – specialist provision in automotive and hybrid technologies in Newcastle-under-Lyme delivered by Martec Training; renewable pneumatics and hydraulics in Stoke-on-Trent delivered by Stoke-on-Trent College and, in Tamworth, construction, electrical installation, motor vehicle and engineering provision delivered by South Staffordshire College.

Phase 2 includes an AgriSTEM Academy at South Staffordshire College's Rodbaston campus, Penkridge, specialising in advanced manufacturing & engineering and agricultural technology sectors, a Science and Technology Centre at Stafford College specialising in advanced manufacturing and design and an Advanced Apprenticeship Academy at the JCB Academy in Rocester specialising in advanced engineering.

A cost benefit analysis has been completed as per the New Economy Manchester Cost Benefit Tool, using the projects actual learner growth figures for the AME Hub phase 2 projects. It identified that over the next 15 years the projects could collectively provide an economic benefit of £44m and a fiscal benefit of £13m. The analysis reflects that the £6.9m SSLEP grant was practicably repaid after 2 years.



Skills Equipment Fund (SEF)

The Skills Equipment Fund (SEF) allows local employers and training institutions to submit bids to secure funding to purchase state of the art equipment and fund minor adaptations to accommodate the equipment, to enable the delivery of high quality and high-level training programmes to support the growth in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire's priority economic sectors. Two rounds of the SEF have been launched to date and 7 projects have been secured with a total project value of £5m.

Grants have been awarded to the following organisations:

- Newcastle & Stafford College's Group – Advanced Manufacturing, Mechanical Electrical Centres, Hybrid Construction Technology Project
- Staffordshire University – Apprenticeship Digital Skills Portal, Clinical Simulation Lab, Digital Shed

- Stoke-on Trent College – Technical Curriculum Development Project, Academy of Technology & digital skills
- Perkins Engines Stafford – Manufacturing Excellence Centre
- South Staffordshire College – Cannock Engineering Academy

The SEF round 1 projects have now reported on activity, delivering a growth of 1,067 Apprenticeships and 874 new learners. This is above original projections.

A cost benefit analysis has been completed as per the New Economy Manchester Cost Benefit Tool, using the target learner growth figures for the SEF round 1 & 2 projects. It identified that over the next 15 years the projects could collectively provide an economic benefit of £141m and a fiscal benefit of £33m. The analysis reflects that if the targets are achieved the £2.3m SSLEP grant would be practicably repaid after 1 year.

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Skills Hub Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Skills Hub

Our Skills Hub launched in October 2019 and has since supported over 200 businesses with a detailed Training Needs Analysis review going on to match to hundreds of suitable training courses.

Training Needs Analysis supports businesses to identify what staff training may be needed, finding areas of vulnerability, underused skills, and development opportunities. Through this independent service the team then signpost to over 50 different approved Skills Hub providers, with collectively nearly 2,000 courses listed.

Additionally, the Skills Hub can support businesses with a grant of up to 48% (up to the value of £5,000) towards the cost of non-statutory training that is not funded elsewhere. This covers an array of courses, particularly focusing on bespoke training for machinery/equipment, CRM or software training. There is also support for focused business management and marketing training.

Since the outbreak of Covid-19, the Skills Hub have adapted the way they engage businesses and have continued supporting with grants, where the training can take place online.

Apprenticeships

The Apprenticeship Ladder is a national initiative to encourage businesses to take on apprentices and invest in their future by giving them the skills they and employers need. The Ladder for Staffordshire has supported over 200 apprenticeship starts, helping employers recruit into vacancies and potential apprentices to commence a career.

The Employer Apprenticeship Ambassador Network was set up to promote Apprenticeships to other employers, share best practice and support, encourage and mentor other businesses in establishing their own apprenticeship training programmes.

The annual Apprenticeship Graduation Ceremony is held in July each year. The ceremony has been held over

the past 6 years, giving apprentices the opportunity to experience a graduation ceremony in the same way that a University student would on completing a degree. Employers, training providers and apprentices can celebrate the achievement that completing an apprenticeship deserves, along with the apprentice's family and friends. Over 160 apprentices graduated at last year's ceremony.

The Apprenticeship Levy Transfer programme has been introduced to support SME employers in accessing apprenticeship funding. Large public sector employers such as Staffordshire County Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council and NHS Trusts are working together to transfer funding to those employers that are unable to access it in other ways, to meet their requirements for apprenticeship training.



Supporting Innovation

Our ambition is to grow our region's expertise in innovation. We want to increase demand and capacity for innovation and help businesses and communities to scale and grow through innovation.

Stoke-on-Trent District Heat Network

City Deal funding is continuing to help to deliver the infrastructure for a low carbon District Heat Network (DHN) in Stoke-on-Trent, a system of underground pipes that will deliver heat via hot water between an energy centre and the buildings connected to the network.

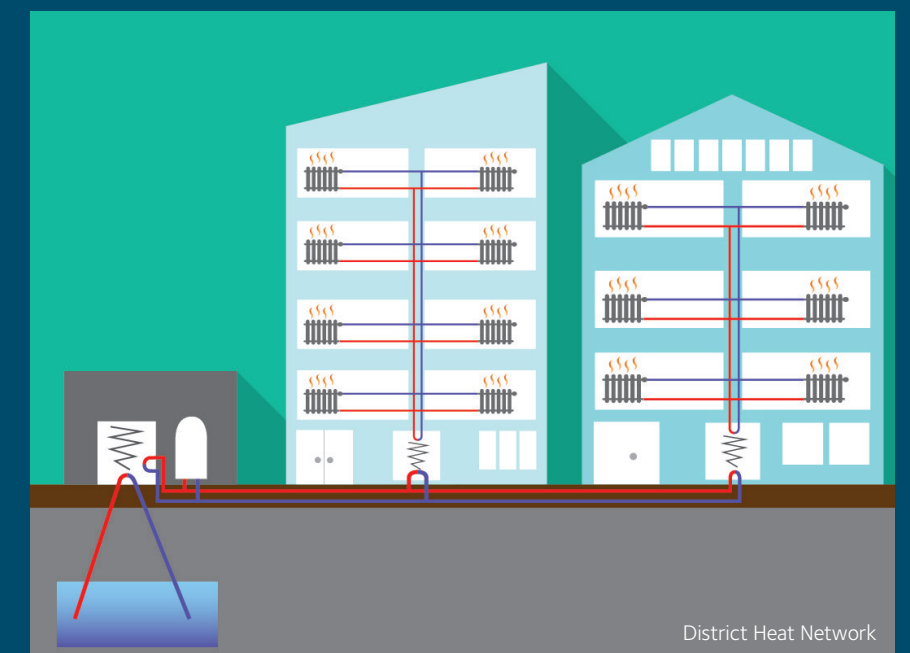
Detailed design work has continued to be developed for the University Quarter, City Centre, Stoke Town and Etruria Valley clusters where significant heat load focused on public sector buildings can be serviced by the network in its initial phases. The first phases of works have now been completed in the University Quarter area with around 4km of primary heat network pipes now installed.

Pumps and interim heat supply arrangements are now in place at the temporary energy centre location in the University Quarter area. Planned primary infrastructure works will subsequently see the installation of the next phases of works in the Stoke Town and City Centre locations.

Low carbon heat options have been secured and subject to final commercial negotiation, an agreement will be entered into which will guarantee a supply of fossil free/ ultra-low carbon energy for the city. A geothermal option has secured a site, planning permission and investment finance. Waste heat recovery is a priority for intermediate and longer-term heat supply for delivery of a city wide heat scheme.

The scheme is supporting jobs and creating wider opportunities in the city. The DHN is at the heart of the delivery of a city-wide SMART energy system helping to provide affordable, secure, low carbon energy across the city. The scheme has also enabled further private sector investment in other energy projects in the city which will over time be integrated into the wider SMART energy network.

The successful creation of the UK's first Heat Academy with Stoke-on-Trent FE College should help address a skills gap for the city and across the UK where some 200+ DHN schemes are now being looked at and will be in delivery over the coming years. A supply Framework is also now in place offering full design services and equipment supplies to all local authority and public bodies across the UK.



Leading Collaborative Innovation at Keele University

Keele University is a key partner in leading our area's innovation portfolio.

Activity includes:

- Engaging local SMEs in a series of innovation-led programmes and initiatives – sharing expertise with over 500 local businesses
- Working with the LEP to position Staffordshire at the forefront of the clean energy revolution, to capitalise on its competitive advantage both economically and in addressing social inclusion

Denise Coates Foundation Building

The Denise Coates Foundation building (formerly known as The Smart Innovation Hub) opened in 2019 and provides office space and business support for local businesses in the heart of Keele University's Science and Innovation Park. The project is funded by the University, Staffordshire County Council, the Denise Coates Foundation, the Government's Growth Deals and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) – the latter two secured via SSLEP.

Sharing the facility with Keele Business School, the building acts as a hub for local businesses and entrepreneurs to work collaboratively with students and staff, encouraging more innovation-led business growth and stimulating a collaborative approach to business and management research. By 2021, thanks to building facilities, the University will grow its established programme of business support, via its dedicated Business Gateway, by an additional 300 business collaborations, leading to the creation of at least 80 new higher value added jobs.



A Clean Energy Revolution through SEND

A second internationally-significant project being delivered by Keele University, partly funded by a City Deal and ERDF as part of the England 2014 to 2020 ESIF Growth Programme, is the Smart Energy Network Demonstrator (SEND).

This will be Europe's first facility for at-scale living laboratory research, development and demonstration of new smart energy technologies and services in partnership with businesses. The platform allows energy generation, distribution, storage, forecasting and energy balancing to be intelligently carried out across different energy sources. SEND will deliver better energy management, reduce reliance on fossil-fuel derived energy, significantly reducing energy waste and provide the opportunity to trial innovative ways of energy use and management.

Keele Horwood Energy Centre

The Horwood Energy Centre opened in 2019 and now hosts the control and support rooms for the SEND project as well as working spaces for researchers and business engagement. The demonstration facility and data generated by SEND will underpin new research and innovation partnerships with local, regional and international businesses. It will generate new products, services and knowledge to drive sustainable, high value economic growth and jobs locally as part of a UK-wide commitment to lead internationally as the home of 'clean growth.' By 2021, research suggests SEND will support the delivery of up to 440 new jobs, save over 4,000 tonnes CO₂ and will have supported 243 local SME's.



SSLEP Executive Board

The Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire LEP Board is responsible for our governance and decision-making.

The Board is tasked with establishing and driving the SSLEP's strategic objectives and ensuring delivery of our Local Industrial Strategy priorities. The Board also oversees the delivery of projects supported under our funding streams. Board members are drawn from the private and public sector are leaders and ambassadors for Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire's economic growth.

Business Representatives



Alun Rogers
Chair, SSLEP Board
Co-founder and owner
of risual



James Leavesley
Vice-Chair, SSLEP Board
and Chair SSLEP Strategic
Programme Management
Group
Chief Executive,
Leavesley Group



Mohammed Ahmed
Chair, Audit & Finance
Committee
Senior Finance Business
Partner, Homeserve



Hannah Ault
Chair, SSLEP Growth Hub
Steering Group, Chair,
SSLEP Growing Business
Sub-Group and SSLEP SME
Champion
Sales & Marketing Director,
Valentine Clays



Caroline Brown
Member, SSLEP
Strategic Programme
Management Group
Managing Director, Caja



Sinead Butters MBE
Vice-Chair, SSLEP
Strategic Programme
Management Group
Chief Executive, Aspire
Housing



Paul Farmer
Chair, SSLEP ESIF
Committee and SSLEP
SME Champion
Managing Director,
Wade Ceramics



Sara Williams
SSLEP Equality &
Diversity Champion and
SSLEP SME Champion
CEO, Staffordshire
Chamber of Commerce

Higher and Further Education Representatives



Prof Liz Barnes
Chair SSLEP Skills Advisory
Panel, Chair, SSLEP Future
Workforce Sub-Group
Vice-Chancellor and Chief
Executive, Staffordshire
University



Prof Trevor McMillan
Chair, SSLEP Innovation
Sub-Group
Deputy Vice-Chancellor
and Provost, Keele
University

Local Authority Representatives



Cllr George Allan
Deputy Leader of
Regeneration and
Planning Policy, East
Staffordshire Borough
Council



Cllr Philip Atkins OBE
Leader, Staffordshire
County Council



Cllr Abi Brown
Leader, Stoke-on-Trent
City Council. Chair, CVEZ
Project Board



Cllr Patrick Farrington
Leader, Stafford Borough
Council



Cllr Jeremy Oates
Portfolio holder for
Heritage & Growth,
Tamworth Borough
Council



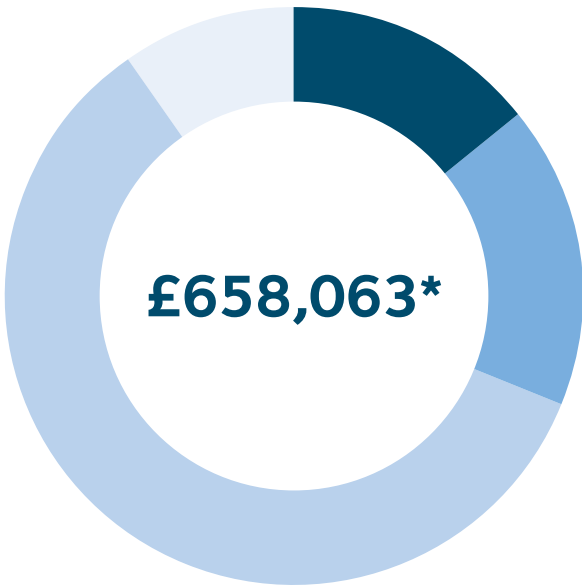
Cllr Simon Tagg
Leader, Newcastle-under-
Lyne Borough Council

Balancing the Books

Core Funds and Capacity Grant Funding

SSLEP is supported by £0.5m annual revenue funding, the Core and Capacity Grant, from the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy. This funding supports our operation and the delivery of our strategic priorities.

This funding has been matched by the contributions of staff and resources from Stoke-on-Trent City Council and Staffordshire County Council. In addition, other partners supply a considerable amount of time and contribute their invaluable expertise.



Strategic Planning	Projects & Programme Development	LEP Office & Delivery Team	Engaging Business & Support
£51,169	£60,684	£212,569	£34,630
This allocation is used to fund the review of the LEP's governance & strategic planning arrangements, plus the development and publication of the new Local Industrial Strategy (LIS).	This allocation supports a wide range of Local Growth Deal & Economic development 'cross-cutting' projects including the Constellation Partnership; the Careers Co; the Apprenticeship Ladder; the annual Apprenticeship Graduation and Platform (Phase 2).	This allocation funds the LEP Office and Delivery Team including insurance; the LEP Executive Board's activities; Branding & Communications; Bank Searches funding; Programme Management Consultancy and annual Audit Fees.	This allocation is used to support business and stakeholder engagement. Contributing to cross LEP & Partnership working including Midlands Engine; the LEP Network and promotes the LEP area at MIPIM.

All of SSLEP funding is received managed by our local authority partner Staffordshire County Council, in line with the governance arrangements set out in our Assurance Framework. This document can be found on our website.

SSLEP became a limited company in April 2019. A full set of audited accounts will be made available on our website: www.stokestaffslep.org.uk

* including £105,427 of 2018-19 carry forward & £52,636 of LEP Admin Reserve Funding.

Contacts Us

Our growth and development as a connected region depends on our continuing engagement with the business community. We are keen to hear your views on how we can drive jobs, growth and skills.


Chairman

Alun Rogers Chairman  chair@stokestaffslep.org.uk

Secretariat and General Enquiries

 01785 719000

Mark Parkinson Chief Executive Officer  mark.parkinson@enterprisestokestaffs.org.uk

Sharon Palphreyman LEP Programme Manager  sharon.palphreyman@staffordshire.gov.uk

Sam Hicks LEP Strategy and Research Officer  samantha.hicks@staffordshire.gov.uk

Joanne Kemp LEP Business Engagement Officer  joanne.kemp1@staffordshire.gov.uk

Emma Wilson LEP Project Officer  emma.wilson1@staffordshire.gov.uk

Media/Press Enquiries

Tom Hobbins Acting Communications Manager  tom.hobbins@staffordshire.gov.uk  07976 369109

**Stoke-on-Trent
& Staffordshire**
Enterprise Partnership



Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire
Local Enterprise Partnership



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Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP