

Independent Evaluation of Local Growth Interventions: Greater Cambridge Partnership

Capacity Development and Partnership
Working Evidence Paper

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SQW

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Contact: Dr Jo Hutchinson Tel: 0161 475 2116 email: jhutchinson@sqw.co.uk

Approved by: Jonathan Cook Date: 12/11/2019
Director

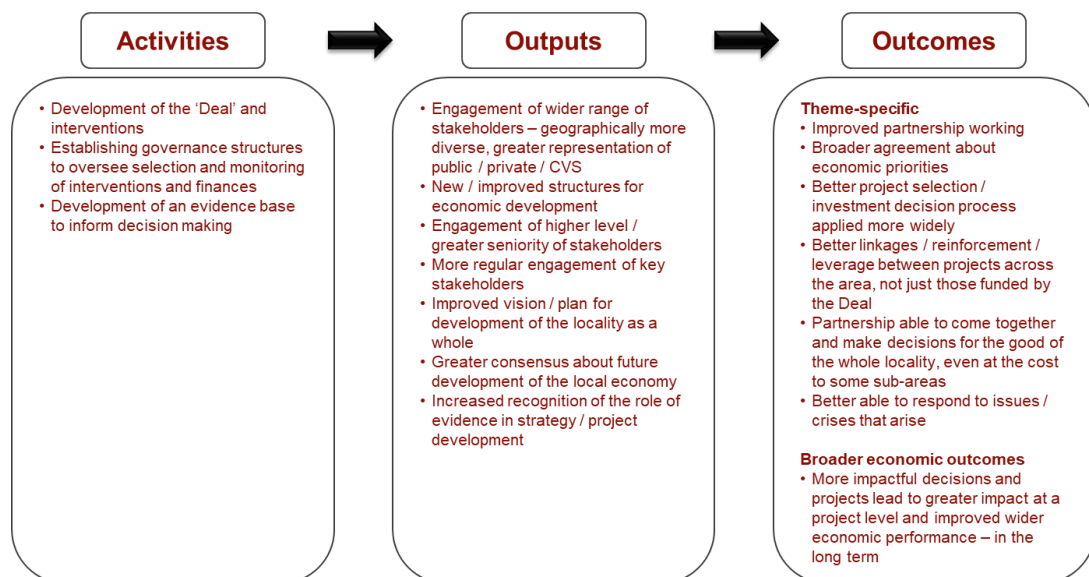
1. Introduction

- 1.1 This evidence paper sets out the method and findings of the assessment of the effects on capacity development and partnership working of the Investment Fund, delivered as part of the evaluation of the Fund to inform the first Gateway Review.

Purpose

- 1.2 The National Evaluation Framework recommended evaluations to inform the first Gateway Review including an assessment of the effects of each fund on local capacity development and partnership working. This was expected to be particularly important for the first Gateway Review, where quantitative benefits may not yet have been fully realised. Nevertheless activity was ongoing, and it was important for the evaluation to assess where the design, development and delivery of the Fund may have strengthened local partnership arrangements and boosted local capacity, leading to increased confidence about future delivery.
- 1.3 The type of activities, and the nature of the expected benefits – outputs and outcomes – related to capacity development and partnership working are set out in Figure 1-1.

Figure 1-1: Local capacity development and partnership working logic model



Source: SQW

- 1.4 Effects were examined at two levels:
- at a **strategic level**, considering the contribution that the Investment Fund as a whole has made to changes in the behaviours, perspectives, and decisions of actors across the economic development landscape
 - at a specific **project level**, considering how the development and delivery of individual project activities (or groups of linked projects) have led to changes in the

behaviours, perspectives and decisions of actors across the economic development landscape.

Sources of evidence

1.5 The evaluation has involved the following research at a strategic level:

- Two waves of an online survey were undertaken with those involved in economic development across the Locality in mid-2018 and mid-2019 respectively. In 2018, 24 responses were received, and in 2019, 32 usable responses were received (including 16 that had responded previously in 2018)¹.
- Two waves of in-depth consultations with senior economic development stakeholders across Greater Cambridge were undertaken in October 2018 and August 2019. In total, consultations were completed with 11 stakeholders of whom ten were the same people interviewed twice; we also interviewed two different people, one succeeding the other in a senior local authority post between 2018 and 2019 (see Annex A for consultees).

1.6 The evaluation also involved the following research at a strategic level:

- Consultations were held with GCP officers responsible for programme delivery from the Greater Cambridge Partnership and Cambridgeshire County Council covering the 12 interventions.
- Two in-depth case studies were undertaken on evidence-focussed project activities that the GCP had funded and supported. These were related to skills work with 'Form the Future', and public engagement activities through Choices for Better Journeys. The case studies included consultations with representatives from eight organisations across the two case studies.

Approach to analysis

1.7 Reflecting the data collection set out above, the assessment of the effects on capacity development and partnership working was based principally on qualitative analysis, drawing on the feedback from stakeholders, case studies and responses to the online survey, which included a mix of open-ended and closed-ended questions.

1.8 The closed-ended questions from the survey provided an opportunity to gather quantitative data on stakeholder perspectives on capacity development and partnership working and contribution of the Investment Fund to changes. However, it should be recognised that the sample sizes were modest, and they may not reflect the views of the wider economic development community across Greater Cambridge. Quantitative data from the online survey are presented to contextualise, complement and triangulate the detailed qualitative evidence from the stakeholder consultations.

¹ There were five further respondents to the survey, though the data could not be used due to inconsistencies.

1.9 No specific research questions were established for the assessment of the effects on capacity development and partnership working; the effects were expected to vary across the Localities covered by the Independent Evaluation Panel. This said, the analysis has been framed around:

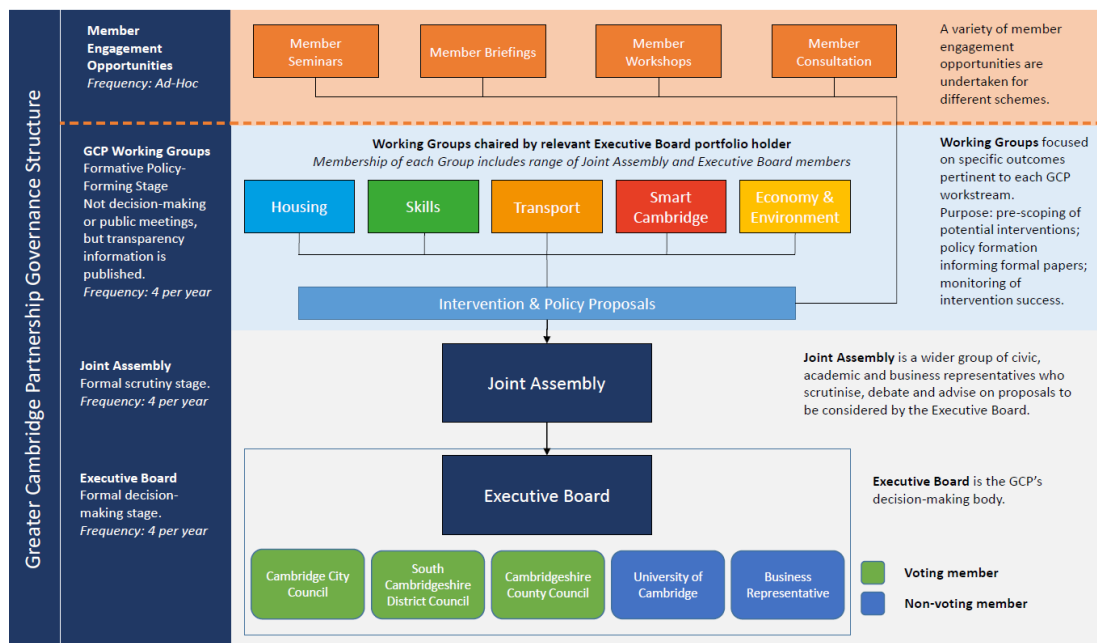
- the extent to which the evaluation provides evidence that there have been changes in capacity development and partnership working within the Locality over the period covered by the first Gateway Review
- how far the Investment Fund has contributed to these changes, and its relative role and contribution alongside other factors.

Capacity and partnership working – structural context

1.10 The effects of capacity building and partnership working generated by the Investment Fund should be seen in the context of the prevailing partnership infrastructure across the area.

1.11 The Greater Cambridge Partnership is a new organisation set up to deliver the City Deal by the latter’s three constituent partners, South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridge City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council. Its permanent Chief Executive was appointed in 2017, part way through the first five years covered by this evaluation, and consolidated a governance structure as indicated in Figure 1-2.

Figure 1-2: GCP Governance Structure



Source: GCP, 2019

1.12 In 2017, after the Greater Cambridge Partnership began delivering the City Deal, the Combined Authority was created across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and assumed some key responsibilities across its area (including Greater Cambridge) with statutory powers and a budget for transport, affordable housing, skills and economic development. The mayor was elected in May 2017 and this preceded a period of review and introspection as relationships, priorities and responsibilities were re-considered.

- 1.13 Business representation in GCP's governance is from the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), as agreed in the City Deal, with its Chair sitting on the Executive Board until November 2017, when the Combined Authority began reconstituting the LEP. It was then agreed that the existing LEP representative on the Joint Assembly (Chief Executive of Cambridge Network, one of a number of active business groups in Greater Cambridge) would be the most appropriate replacement on the Executive Board. That arrangement has remained in place, with further representation from across the business community found in the Joint Assembly.
- 1.14 Residents across Greater Cambridge are actively involved in civic activities and provide a very high degree of scrutiny to aspects of public policy and economic development. Discussions about capacity and partnership in Cambridge must recognise the contribution and challenge that its active citizenry represent.

Structure

- 1.15 The remainder of this evidence paper is structured as follows:
- Section 2 presents evidence from the stakeholder survey including an assessment of responses from both iterations of the survey to assess change
 - Section 3 provides an analysis of the stakeholder interviews to show development of partnership working and capacity building since the agreement of the Investment Fund.
- 1.16 The following annexes are provided:
- Annex A: Consultees.
 - Annex B: Detailed online survey data tables.
 - Annex C: Case study write-ups for Choices for Better Journeys, and the Apprenticeship Service.

2. Stakeholder survey

Summary of key findings

Two stakeholder e-surveys were carried out in 2018 and 2019 to assess the effects of the Investment Fund on local capacity development and partnership working in the Greater Cambridge area.

A group of 16 stakeholders participated in both surveys (wave 1) and a further 16 stakeholders responded in 2019 only (wave 2). Wave 1 were slightly closer to the management and delivery of Investment Fund supported projects.

All respondents reported some awareness of the projects supported by the Investment Fund. Respondents came from a range of sectors with the most common being a local authority perspective.

Overall, both survey samples show that stakeholders believe that all elements of capacity and partnership working in the Greater Cambridge area are now stronger than they were back in 2014 when the Investment Fund was agreed.

Strengths of partnership working cover a broad set of issues. Wave 1 respondents scored the Greater Cambridge area highest on 'effectiveness of governance and management structures' and 'quality of the evidence base'. Wave 2 respondents scored the Greater Cambridge area highest on 'level of engagement of the private sector' in 2019.

In the case of the wave 1, who took part in both surveys, it was apparent that there was also improvement specifically between 2018 and 2019 (i.e. between the times of both surveys).

Wave 1 and 2 respondents were similarly positive about the scale of change in local economic capacity over the last five years.

The data show that respondents who answered both surveys considered the City Deal overall and Investment Fund to be the most influential factors in the change in local economic development capacity between 2014 and 2019.

Wave 2 reported that the City Deal overall and changes in local strategic priorities were the most important factors influencing change between 2014 and 2019.

Introduction

- 2.1 The online survey exercise was completed by 24 stakeholders in 2018 and 32² stakeholders in 2019 across the Greater Cambridge area. The exact number of stakeholders contacted is unknown but was thought to be approximately 70 for each survey, meaning the surveys have

² After initial data cleaning there were 37 respondents in 2019. However, after more detailed analysis on the survey profile, five respondents were found to have given an incorrect response as to whether they had completed the baseline survey (they answered that they had but in fact they had not). In line with analysis in other LGI areas, their responses have been excluded due to the unreliability and incompleteness of the data.

achieved a good response rate. This section summarises the main findings from the two e-surveys with more detailed tables of data provided in Annex B.

Respondent characteristics

2.2 The key characteristics of the two online surveys are set out below.

- The 2018 sample comprised 24 respondents, of these 14 had been involved with economic development in Greater Cambridge area since the time of the signing of the City Deal (2014). The 2019 sample comprised 16 respondents who had completed the previous survey in 2018 and 16 'new' respondents of which four had been involved with economic development in Greater Cambridge area since the time of the signing of the City Deal (2014).
- **Respondents to the 2018 survey were slightly closer to the Investment Fund than the 'new' respondents to the 2019 survey.** Over half of the 2018 sample (14 out of 24) had some direct involvement in either the governance and/or implementation of the Investment Fund, whilst this was true for just over half (nine out of 16) of the 'new' respondents in 2019. Of the respondents who completed the 2018 and 2019 surveys only one had seen a change in their involvement with the Investment Fund.
- **All respondents reported some awareness of the projects supported by the Investment Fund.** In both surveys, most respondents had either a full awareness, i.e. aware of all of the interventions supported and details about them, or a breadth awareness, i.e. aware of all interventions but limited view of the details of each.
- In all cases, survey respondents were aware of how 'all' (full awareness) or 'some' (some awareness) of the projects supported by the Investment Fund were progressing.
- **Respondents came from a broad range of organisations including local authorities, universities, industry and business/academic networks.** Across both 2018 and 2019 surveys it was most common for respondents to report that they were from a local authority, but *more* common in 2019, with seven out of 24 in 2018 and 14 out of 32 in 2019. In both cases the second most common affiliation was with business/industry at six out of 24 in 2018 and seven out of 32 in 2019.

2.3 These characteristics influence how findings from the survey have been reported and analysed. There are caveats and considerations to take into account when interpreting and reporting on the findings from this survey.

- The absolute number of respondents is relatively low and there is substantial variation in the number of respondents from the 2018 survey compared with the 2019 survey. Any findings drawn from the analysis must consider this. For this reason, a decision was taken to report on the findings of the survey using the number of respondents rather than percentages.
- Respondents self-selected to take part in the survey upon invitation and, as such, the data collected from the surveys may be subject to response bias.

- Both surveys asked stakeholders to reflect on the performance of the Greater Cambridge area in 2014. It is important to note that in both cases the surveys took place several years later and the views of stakeholders may have changed over time or may have been different had they been asked in 2014.
- In analysing the 2018 survey data it is important to consider that those respondents, given their slightly greater proximity to the delivery and management of the Investment Fund, will have more detail on the Investment Fund, but equally may have a particularly positive view of the Investment Fund's effect.

Evidence on local economic development capacity

2.4 Respondents were asked to provide their perspective on the performance of the Greater Cambridge area across a range of factors associated with local economic development capacity. Respondents to both surveys provided a score against the different factors in 2014, when the City Deal and Investment Fund were approved³, and then in 2018 and in 2019. New survey respondents have provided a perspective from 2014 and 2019. Only respondents who completed both surveys offered perspectives for all three points in time. The data are split into two waves:

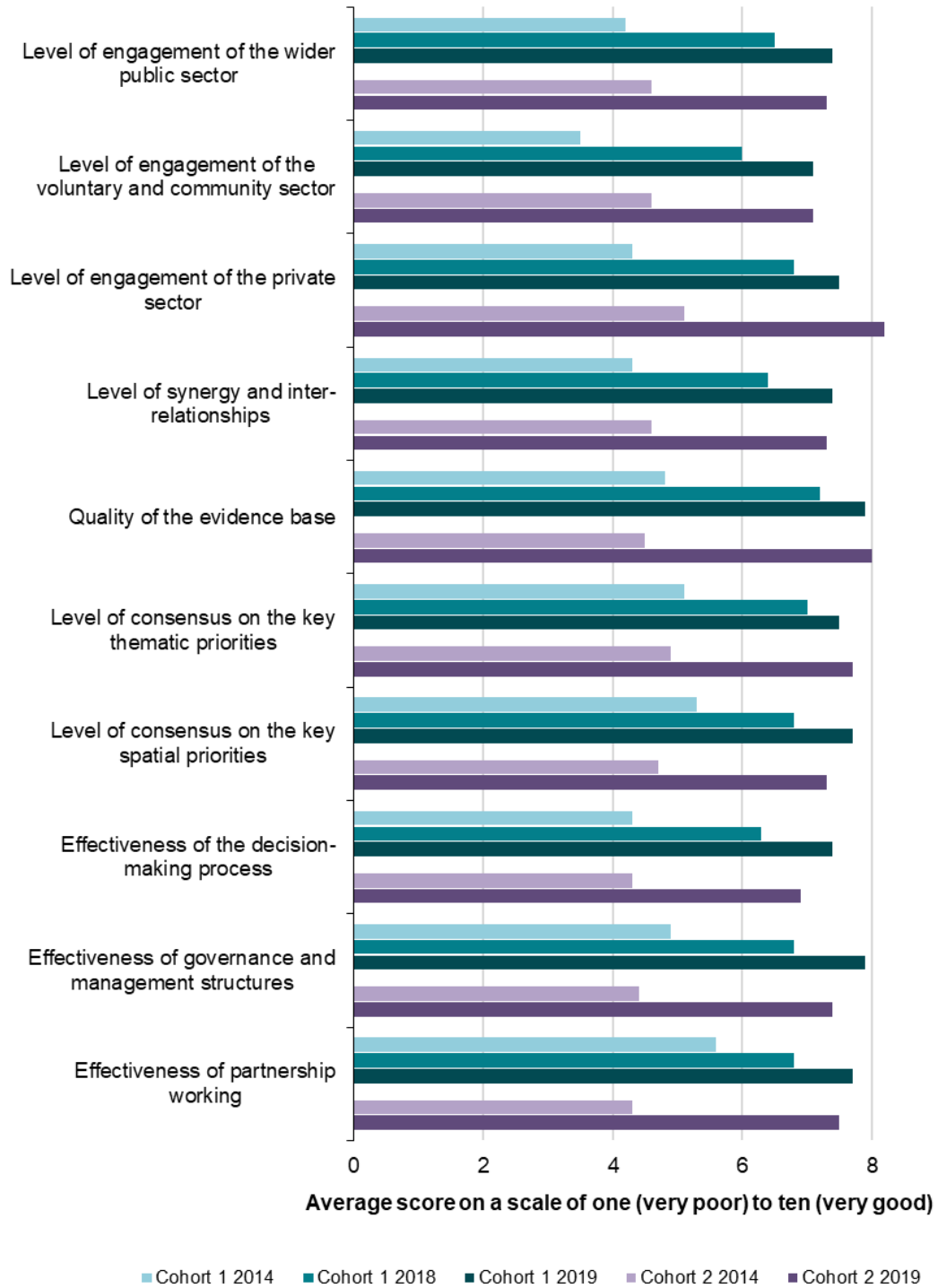
- Wave 1 – respondents who answered the 2018 and 2019 surveys (n=16)
- Wave 2 – respondents who only completed the 2019 survey (n=16).⁴

2.5 **The survey responses suggest that the Greater Cambridge area's local economic development capacity has improved in recent years: all indicators have improved since the City Deal and Investment Fund were approved in 2014** (Figure 2-1). In 2019, wave 1 respondents scored the Greater Cambridge area higher than the wave 2 respondents across six out of 10 local economic development capacity indicators, however in most cases scores were relatively similar.

³ If the respondent was not around at that point, they were asked to consider the time they first became involved in economic development in the area. This was the case for 10 respondents who reported their first involvement in economic development in the Greater Cambridge area in 2015 or later.

⁴ The analysis in this report does not include data from eight respondents who answered the survey in 2018 but not in 2019. Although these data were presented in the baseline report, they are not included in this report because they do not cover changes since the baseline report and perspectives at this point in 2019.

Figure 2-1: Average scores for different aspects of local economic development capacity in the Greater Cambridge area reported by wave 1 and wave 2 e-survey respondents



Source: SQW analysis of LGI Greater Cambridge Partnership Survey

2.6 The main observations in relation to wave 1 are as follows:

- Respondents in wave 1 reported **improvements on all indicators** from 2014 to 2018 and from 2018 to 2019.
- **Wave 1 respondents scored the Greater Cambridge area highest on 'effectiveness of governance and management structures' and 'quality of the**

evidence base' (both 7.9 out of 10) and lowest on the 'level of engagement of the voluntary and community sector' (7.1 out of 10) in 2019.

- The **greatest improvement in scores between 2014 and 2019 reported by wave 1 was in 'level of engagement of the voluntary and community sector'**, which went from 3.5 in 2014 to 7.1 out of 10 in 2019. The smallest improvement was in 'effectiveness of partnership working' which went from 5.6 to 7.7 out of 10 between 2014 to 2019 (it is important to note that it had the highest score in 2014).
- The greatest improvements in scores between 2018 and 2019 reported by wave 1 were in 'level of engagement of the voluntary and community sector', 'effectiveness of the decision-making process', and 'effectiveness of governance and management structures' which all saw an increase of 1.1 points in the period. The smallest improvement in scores between 2018 and 2019 was in 'level of consensus on the key thematic priorities' from 7 to 7.5 out of 10.

2.7 The main observations in relation to wave 2 are as follows:

- **Respondents in wave 2 reported improvements on all indicators from 2014 to 2019.**
- **Wave 2 respondents scored the Greater Cambridge area highest on 'level of engagement of the private sector'** (8.2 out of 10) and lowest on the 'effectiveness of the decision-making process' (6.9 out of 10) in 2019.
- **The greatest improvement in scores between 2014 and 2019 reported by wave 2 was in 'quality of the evidence base'**, which went from 4.5 in 2014 to 8 out of 10 in 2019. The smallest improvement was in the 'level of engagement of the voluntary and community sector' which went from 5.1 to 8.2 out of 10 between 2014 to 2019 (it is important to note that it had the highest score in 2014).

2.8 **In both waves there was a minimum of two points improvement out of 10 for every indicator** from 2014 to 2019. The data reported above and illustrated in Figure 2-1, emphasises that there has been an overall improvement across all areas of local economic development capacity reported by both wave 1 and wave 2.

Influences on local economic development capacity

2.9 Respondents were asked to report on the extent to which a range of external factors had influenced the changes in local economic development capacity reported in Figure 2-1. They rated these factors on a scale of one ("not at all influential") to five ("very influential"). Table 2-1 presents the average score out of five for respondents across three time periods: 2014-2018 (wave 1); 2018-2019 (wave 1); and 2014-2019 (wave 2).

2.10 **The data show that respondents who answered both surveys (wave 1) considered the City Deal and Investment Fund to be the most influential factors** in the change in local economic development capacity between 2014 and 2018 (4.5 & 4.3 out of five respectively). The same was true of wave 1 between 2018 and 2019 (4.5 & 4.1 out of five respectively).

2.11 Both waves offered broadly similar thoughts regarding factors influencing changes in local economic development capacity. Wave 2 reported that the City Deal was the most important

factor influencing change between 2014 and 2019 (4.4 out of five) and compared with wave 1 emphasised more the developments in local strategic priorities and objectives in explaining changes in local economic development capacity (4.4 out of five). Wave 1 attributed slightly more influence to the Investment Fund specifically but the difference between the two waves was minor.

- 2.12 Overall both waves, at all time periods, scored the City Deal and the Investment Fund similarly. There was a difference of 0.1 between the two waves on the average scores for the City Deal; and a difference of 0.4 for the influence of the Investment Fund specifically.

Table 2-1: Factors influencing changes in local economic development capacity (average scores 1-5 with top two average scores highlighted)

	Wave 1 (n=16)		Wave 2 (n=16)
	2014-18	2018-19	2014-19
Greater Cambridge City Deal	4.5	4.5	4.4
The GCP Investment Fund and Gain Share specifically	4.3	4.1	3.9
Changes in the overall level or nature of funding received (other funding/delivery mechanisms)	3.7	3.4	3.6
Changes in political leadership / new local leaders have emerged	4.1	3.6	4.3
Changes in economic development structures / organisations	4.1	3.4	4.0
Changes in local strategic priorities and objectives	4.0	3.4	4.4
National government expectations and policy agenda	3.6	3.3	3.7

Source: SQW analysis of LGI Greater Cambridge Partnership Survey

- 2.13 A number of examples were provided by respondents to the 2018 and 2019 surveys in terms of how the City Deal and Investment Fund has had a positive influence on local economic development capacity. These are summarised below:

- *“The availability of the Fund has forced prioritisation and synergy with spatial planning goals. Early projects adopted have provided confidence to businesses moving into and expanding within the area.”*
- *“The work of GCP over the past four years has been the significant driver for economic planning and growth as it has given clear, evidence-based direction and leadership. It has created a functional entity of 'Greater' 'Cambridge' which did not exist before and which has enhanced the areas reputation with both the public and private sectors.”*
- *“The advancement of the infrastructure has and will have a positive impact much needed to attract further economic development into the region, allowing further growth.”*
- *“It has focused partners on the delivery of infrastructure in a timely and co-ordinated way.”*

- *“The continued economic success of Cambridge is vitally linked to the investments being made through the GCP Investment Fund and Gain Share. That is why AstraZeneca, Marshalls, the Bio Medical Campus play strongly into the work of GCP as the congestion issues, if not solved, will directly constrain their success and future growth.”*
- *“It has provided raw cash, without which we wouldn't have even been able to dream of implementing the previously-developed and well-evidence, well-consulted Transport Strategy for Cambridge & South Cambridgeshire.”*
- *“Overarching view is that the Investment Fund has facilitated joined up strategic thinking and a cohesive approach for the area, bringing all the key streams together to remove barriers to economic growth.”*

2.14 The more critical comments tended focus on ‘teething problems’, with respondents highlighting how partnership working and capacity had improved, or on challenges associated with bureaucratic aspects:

- *“We were not successful in bringing people with us at the start, taking those we serve along on the journey. But putting that right over the past couple of years has brought with it a significant strengthening of the team. My impression is that “Greater Cambridge Partnership” now has high aided brand awareness and is indeed a well-trusted brand.”*
- *“The primary negative effect that leaps to mind is the conditions the Government put on the Fund. In particular, by putting a very short-term Gateway in place (and only confirming the first £100m of the potential £500m total), the Government created a climate in which the partnership has felt compelled to progress and prioritise schemes that could demonstrate delivery/progress in a very short space of time. If the funding had come with greater certainty over a longer time frame, it might have been possible to progress projects in a slightly different scale or sequence.”*
- *“The very complex decision-making processes and the glacial speed of change has been negative for the region.”*
- *“The challenge now is to ensure the additional tiers of local government do not thwart the progress or inhibit the ability of the Greater Cambridge Partnership to independently plan and deliver the interventions crucial to the continuing success of the local economy.”*

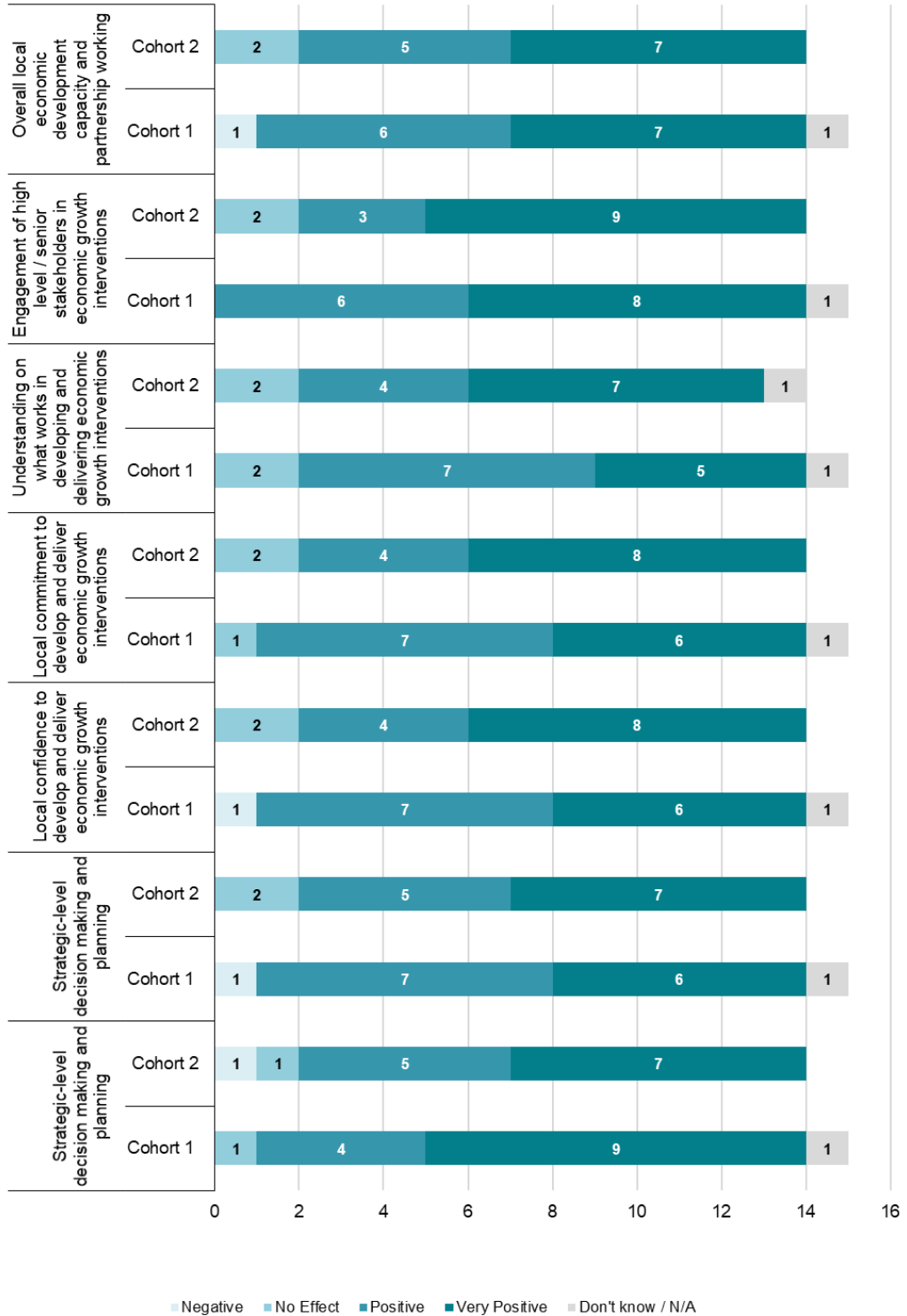
Overall effects of the Investment Fund

2.15 Finally, respondents were asked specifically about the effect of the Investment Fund on various elements of local economic development capacity in 2019 (Figure 2-2). **In all elements, the majority of respondents stated that they thought the Fund had delivered a positive or very positive effect on capacity development.**

- In 2019, for each of the seven elements at least 12 out of 15 wave 1 respondents who answered the question reported that the effect of the Investment Fund was positive or very positive.

- In 2019, for each of the seven elements at least 11 out of 14 wave 2 respondents who answered the question reported that the effect of the Investment Fund was positive or very positive.
- 2.16 For wave 1, who answered this question in both 2018 and 2019, there were more (or the same) number of respondents who answered 'very positive' regarding the effect of the Investment Fund for every element in 2019 compared to 2018 indicating a perceived improvement year on year.
- In 2018, one respondent reported a 'very negative' effect of the Investment Fund in terms of 'local confidence to develop and deliver economic growth interventions'. In 2019 there were no respondents who reported very negative effects.
 - In 2018, two respondents reported a 'negative' effect of the Investment Fund in terms of 'strategic-level decision making and planning'. In 2019, there were no respondents who reported negative effects in regard to this element.
- 2.17 A number of examples were provided by respondents to the 2018 and 2019 surveys in terms of the overall effects of the City Deal and Investment Fund. These are summarised below:
- *"I believe GCP now has high "aided brand awareness", and is regarded as one of the brighter lights in the political firmament. We continue to fulfil one of the most important roles previously played by Cambridgeshire Horizons, namely bringing people together on a regular basis to work through common concerns. In a sense we are the public sector manifestation of ideas sparking off each other through agglomeration and cluster effects. Not the least important ingredient of this strength is bringing together three councils under different political leaderships to work together successfully (despite recent strains with Cambridgeshire County Council and intelligent charging)."*
 - *"I think that the existence of the Fund has had a galvanising effect on local leaders and stakeholders to take their role in economic development seriously; and to create an incentive/imperative to continually review the evidence, and to challenge ourselves around what the barriers to sustainable economic growth really are, and how they might be addressed."*
 - *"The GCP has really moved up a gear with a clearer strategy and much better engagement with local stakeholders. This is a hugely positive change which needs our continued support to deliver the maximum benefit."*
 - *"A major positive for business is that people can see that Cambridge is trying hard to be a smart city and promotes use of technology to nudge behaviours as well as segregated routes etc."*
 - *"I think they are beginning to engage more effectively with the local community and this is more evident than before, as I think they struggled to take the community forward with them. The Citizens' Assembly the City Access survey are two initiatives which help with community engagement and allows the community to review considerations and offer advice as appropriate."*

Figure 2-2: Effect of the Investment Fund on elements of local economic development capacity (wave 1 n=15, wave 2 n=14)



Source: SQW analysis of LGI Greater Cambridge Partnership Survey

2.18 The more critical comments tended to be; concerns about relationships with the local community, how priorities should be re-shaped around sharing prosperity, and the benefits of delivery to date:

- *“I do worry about the reach of enthusiasm, support, or even acceptance, of the high rate of growth to which leading players are committed. [...] I feel the emphasis, certainly in these politically troubled times, needs to be on the sharing of prosperity, and genuinely engaging those who may feel left out.”*
- *“The false start with the City Deal and some earlier questionable proposals about road closures had the unfortunate effect of tarring what is now a much better run project with some negative reactions. The more recent consultation and engagement events have gone some way to neutralising these early views.”*
- *“I am surprised at how little effect it has had. Road projects for example have cost a great deal of money (Hills Road, Ditton Road, cycling changes), but they appear to have been done without meaningful consultation, and to little apparent benefit.”*

3. Stakeholder interviews

Summary of key findings

The Investment Fund's priority, namely to deliver those aspects of established transport plans relevant to the Greater Cambridge, has remained consistent. Stakeholders agree that this is the right priority, and, despite external challenge they are even more convinced that the strategy to encourage modal shift and enhance connectivity is correct.

The local citizenry are highly engaged and motivated - they are a major stakeholder and the GCP is developing more effective and constructive ways to harness the passion and expertise of their communities.

Formal governance structures are working well with an alignment of forward thinking Working Groups, open Assembly, and effective information sharing between officer groups.

Stakeholders noted that the quality of evidence that was available to them, supported by Investment Fund resource, was improving. They also noted increasingly mature decision making that used evidence and put the longer term needs of Greater Cambridge above short termism and in some cases, political allegiance. However, several noted that the more contentious big decisions are yet to be taken and that this would be the true test of the Partnership.

The pace of change is accelerating after early delays and interruptions. There is great confidence in the GCP team which maintains a focus on delivery and ensuring that all actions align with the strategic objectives of the City Deal and Investment Fund. Effective links are maintained between the three core local authority partners which contribute strategic expertise and officer capacity for specific activities.

The positive partnership and capacity building effects have been attributed to the enabling effect of the Investment Fund, and City Deal more widely. The availability of the Fund (and the significant scale of it) has enabled improved and broader engagement, and focussed energies on operationalising changes to transport infrastructure in a way which has connected and engaged Cambridge's different communities. There is now confidence that there is a plan to address Cambridge's infrastructure deficit, the funds available to deliver this plan, and the partners on board that share in the vision.

Introduction

- 3.1 Two rounds of in-depth qualitative consultations were completed in autumn 2018 and August 2019 with key strategic stakeholders involved in economic development across the Greater Cambridge area. The consultees included chief executives and / or senior officers of each of the three councils, business representatives drawn from Cambridge Ahead or major local employers, and education representatives.

- 3.2 The consultations were framed around the key drivers for the Fund; how it has been deployed over the first five years, the contribution of the Fund to economic capacity development and partnership working, and the relative influence of the Fund and other factors in delivering against these outputs and outcomes. The consultations also sought to gather qualitative evidence on any expected 'cumulative' effects of the activity delivered across the Infrastructure Fund, and alignment with other key economic development interventions and agendas in the area.
- 3.3 It is important to note that **many of the findings set out below are intrinsically linked to the GCP City Deal more generally**; in many cases it is difficult to separate the outputs/outcomes relating to the Investment Fund specifically. For example, the GCP has been established to deliver the whole City Deal but within that, the Investment Fund is being used to drive forward actions. As well as delivering interventions, the Fund has provided resources for the consultation and business engagement activity, which are key features of local capacity building, and it has been used to operationalise key transport elements. The demonstration of ability to deliver change through access to funding is helping to build confidence in the credibility of the Partnership, and is helping to focus on priorities and sustain engagement in the Investment Fund projects. Its **transport elements are fundamental to the City Deal strategy which is to sustainably connect housing sites and employment sites across the city**. Partnership building and capacity development for the Investment Fund and the City Deal should be mutually reinforcing.
- 3.4 The Greater Cambridge City Deal is focused on addressing challenges around housing, skills and transport, with the Investment Fund specifically focused on addressing transport challenges. The Investment Fund has been deployed primarily to target investment at the transport challenges, or infrastructure deficit, which will **support and accommodate Cambridge's continued growth**. These investments include the early interventions that are the focus of the impact evaluation such as the cross-city cycling schemes that encourage modal shift, 'quick wins' projects. These improve existing facilities and further the development of strategic route improvements for bus, rail, cycling and walking within, around and through the city. These also include Park and Ride facilities, and further development of schemes to improve connections with surrounding towns such as Cambourne.
- 3.5 In addition to the focus on transport schemes, further schemes that have been approved by the GCP include other **complementary activities**. For instance, there is a Smart Cambridge technology programme as well as activities relating to planning, evidence and economic assessment which support GCP's focus on other issues that are relevant to enabling the growth of the economy. This includes, for example, looking at the extent to which constraints on the National Grid are impeding growth across Greater Cambridge and producing a set of potential interventions to tackle such issues.

Key findings

Strategic approach to the Fund

- 3.6 The City Deal started as an instrument for accelerating the Local Plan and the deployment of the Investment Fund has, particularly for the initial interventions, brought about the realisation and acceleration of the Local Plan and Transport Strategy. Many consultees agreed

that the Fund was the catalyst for delivering the schemes and that Greater Cambridge would not have had the resources to deliver them without the Fund. Throughout the implementation period the priorities of the Investment Fund have remained the same and there was **full and unanimous support amongst all stakeholders that the focus on transport and easing congestion was the correct priority.**

- 3.7 While the focus has been consistent some stakeholders expressed frustration at **early delays** in the process. This was associated either with the time taken for consultation or the introduction of the Combined Authority. The Investment Fund approach was tested in the early phases with the creation of a Combined Authority and the election of a mayor whose remit included transport. The mayor's election led to a pause with some of the development schemes, which have subsequently been re-started. The schemes have also been subject to extensive and often, intensive public consultation and scrutiny which also, particularly in the earlier period, led to delays and prolonged set-up phases.
- 3.8 Several stakeholders noted that whilst initially the driver to focus on transport was to ease congestion and ensure economic growth could continue, the more recent public consultations have added the additional concern regarding **air quality, public health and environmental enhancements**. The local population are concerned about this, and one consultee mentioned a recent widely supported 'Extinction Rebellion' demonstration in the city. This aligns well with the Transport Strategy where the aim is to encourage modal shift away from the private motor vehicle to more sustainable options. Indeed, it has helped to provide greater weight behind the arguments for proposed interventions where there have been some objections.
- 3.9 **The strategic focus of the Investment Fund 'has been challenged, but it has not changed'**. If anything, the challenges, which have come from the changing governance context and from extensive public scrutiny, have reinforced the vision and improved its clarity of purpose and ambition.

Delivery of 'outputs' associated with local economic development capacity

Engagement

- 3.10 Every stakeholder talked in some depth about the importance of engaging with the public, and many said that **the nature of public engagement in Greater Cambridge is more active, informed and extensive than in any other community** that they were aware of. For example, one interviewee said that they had received 5,000 different points of feedback through their consultation activities, another that they realised that Cambridge had 50 times the number of the consultation responses compared with a similar local planning process in Birmingham – notwithstanding the difference in the size of their communities. One consultee noted that they were amazed at the level and quality of response they got from people in their public meetings. An articulate, engaged and expert local community is clearly an asset, but one that requires harnessing and effective management if the 'tricky issues' associated with transport are to be addressed.
- 3.11 It was observed that communication activities earlier in the delivery of the programme were problematic. For example, earlier consultations about city centre congestion charging were reported to have been interpreted by the public as an agreed policy, rather than as an option, and it was also reported that local communities objected to the solutions presented for the

A1307. Feedback suggested that communities and interest groups wanted to be engaged in decisions, rather than just the technical details of implementation. This created poor press coverage and a lack of positive engagement. Since then, however, the nature of consultations and dialogue has changed. One stakeholder described how they had observed **a change in the nature of the dialogue with local people over the past three years**; *'whereas three years ago the conversation would be about changing nothing, now it is about which options are most relevant and impactful - about three-quarters realise something has to be done'*.

- 3.12 This change has arisen due to a series of initiatives and different approaches. First, the GCP has initiated two engagement campaigns – **Our Big Conversation**, and **Choices for Better Journeys** – which have offered residents the chance to input into the overall GCP Transport Strategy, building upon local consultation activities and a series of public engagement initiatives. Several consultees referred to the positive impact this has had upon the level and type of engagement across the city area.
- 3.13 Second, there has been a series of local consultative mechanisms around the form and location of each of the Investment Fund initiatives. The A1307 project witnessed significant hostility initially and it has taken time for the GCP to redevelop their proposals in line with the issues raised by the community and represent them to ensure community buy in. The GCP has learned from this experience and are **now adopting different consultation approaches**. These involve meeting with resident groups and special interest groups much earlier in the process than would normally be the case to present to them the problems that need to be addressed, and working with them to find an overall approach with agreed design principles that will inform the subsequent detailed designs and plans. It was said that although this extends the initial planning process, it pays dividends in two ways. First, it reduces the number of consultations that are required later in the implementation phase, and second, it builds trust through dialogue and principled delivery with special interest groups who are active across the Greater Cambridge area. Their expertise and energies are harnessed to generate better solutions from the outset.
- 3.14 A high profile example of how this approach is being taken further for the city centre was reported for the **Citizens' Assembly**. GCP successfully secured funding from the government's Innovation in Democracy Programme to hold a Citizens' Assembly looking at how to reduce congestion, improve air quality and deliver better public transport. The 60 members of the Assembly were recruited from across the travel to work area to ensure it was reflective of Greater Cambridge and the wider travel to work area. Over two weekends, the Assembly members heard from a range of experts, discussed the issues and challenges, and came up with recommendations at the end of the second weekend.
- 3.15 In addition to citizen engagement a second theme that was discussed by stakeholders was business and employer engagement. Previously this was reported to be too ad hoc and reactive, but this appears to have changed. It was now reported that GCP have been active in discussing the Investment Theme priorities with a wide range of stakeholders including with major employers. For example, the GCP was reported to have engaged with a range of groups across the University of Cambridge, including estates team, colleges, senior tutors' committees. This was said to be really helpful in contributing to university's masterplans and investments.

- 3.16 Business engagement was reported **to be a 'genuine strength' of GCP**, especially in terms of engagement with major businesses, but also to the other parts of the business community through business networks and business/science parks, e.g. to the life sciences sector through links to the Babraham Research Campus, OneNucleus and other sectors through the Cambridge Network and Cambridge Ahead. One stakeholder commented that proper dialogue with the wider business community did not exist before the City Deal/Investment Fund. They drew a comparison with business engagement with the former LEP which they characterised as being limited to only businesses seeking self-interest compared with the current situation which they thought was more genuine and able to bring a constructive business perspective. The Fund itself was viewed to play a role in this business engagement, because it provides a seriousness to the engagement which is not possible without such resource.

Structures

- 3.17 Formal engagement structures associated with the Investment Fund include the Assembly, Executive Board, five Working Groups, and a Leadership group comprising senior officers. Stakeholders reported that these structures are effective and that they have right people involved at the right levels.
- 3.18 The Working Groups comprise 5 or 6 members of the Assembly who can call upon the resources of any of the Assembly's members (including officers from Local Authorities to business experts or experts from the universities) to engage in forward thinking and **bring innovative thinking and practical proposals to the Assembly**. One example of how this has worked has been the consideration of capacity issues with the National Grid which will impact upon development in one part of the city and a proposal to put up-front financing of a sub-station to allow development to occur more rapidly than it could otherwise. The **Skills Working Group** up until now has been focused on the design and commissioning of the Apprenticeship Brokerage Service – this is now done and the group can focus on overseeing the apprenticeship project alongside horizon scanning and investigating skills.
- 3.19 These structures have encouraged innovative projects to come forward. For example, leading scientists have engaged in projects, such as those around autonomous vehicles and bus information technology to a degree that would not have been possible if it had been a local authority initiative because the structures of engagement did not exist, and, under austerity, there would have been little prospect of the councils delivering any schemes in relation to these ideas.
- 3.20 A **Leadership Group**, which is not part of the formal governance structures also works well as it provides a regular forum for senior officers from across the Partnership to meet with the GCP Chief Executive and share discussions with an oversight across all themes. While it is not a direct consequence of the Investment Fund, the structuring of planning services with a shared Director is further evidence of the strength of partnership working between the local authorities. Both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire have developed their separate local plans side by side and had a joint inspection. There is a commitment to developing a shared Local Plan which commenced summer 2019, and there is also now a Director of Planning for both local authorities.

The role of evidence

- 3.21 Stakeholders reported that while their priorities have not changed, they have tested those priorities frequently through their assessment against a **stronger evidence base**. One example of this was the Cambridge and Peterborough Independent Economic Assessment (CPIER) process which corralled a wide range of research and consultation evidence, and has provided an economic statement of fact which has guided the Combined Authority and GCP. In particular, its development of the case for three economic geographies, one of which being coterminous with the GCP footprint has reinforced the argument for a dedicated Investment Fund to serve the needs of the area.
- 3.22 There has continued to be **improvements in the recognition of the role of evidence to help shape investments and priorities**, including in GCP's own evidence gathering, such as including business views, commissioning research and reports from experts. One consultee noted that the practices of requiring business cases, and a focus on evidence that links activity with impact was a consistent feature of their engagement with the GCP team.
- 3.23 Another issue which was mentioned several times was that **a strong and continually evolving evidence base was necessary for future decisions**. Difficult decisions regarding traffic in the city centre and major schemes such as the A428 to link Cambourne to Cambridge through green belt still need to be made and partners stressed the need for these to be evidence based and open.

Delivery of 'outcomes' associated with local economic development capacity

Partnership working

- 3.24 Consultees felt that there was **continued consensus on the future development of the economy** within the membership of the GCP, particularly on its objectives and vision. One aspect that was frequently mentioned was **how notable this was given the political make-up of the three local authority partners**. The three currently are led by the three different political parties and representation has changed quite a lot over the past three years. Several mentioned that they thought that the political members were adopting 'statesmanlike' approaches to Assembly discussions and that Board members had risen above party politics and were increasingly thinking strategically and collectively. Members from the **education and business sectors** recognised that this was a challenge and they recognised the personal and political courage that this required. They also noted that the attendance of the education and business partners was very valuable as they provided **continuity and stability** and could seek to ensure that the discussions continued with the same tone as pace throughout the process.
- 3.25 Partnership working has been enhanced through the engagement of stakeholders at the right levels of **seniority and spread of stakeholders**. Large businesses and the universities were seen as well-integrated and well-represented in the GCP. The reasons for this strong senior engagement were attributed to the GCP having a clear mission that is seeking to solve problems that everyone has a stake in.
- 3.26 The City Deal, and the funding available specifically through the Investment Fund, has provided the basis for developing a strong executive team, led by GCP's Chief Executive.

Having this **dedicated resource has been critical in facilitating the improved engagement and partnership working** that has been reported. It was noted that the money has removed barriers to partnership, and enabled them to get people to the table (and help keep them there). Fundamentally, partnerships are about people. GCP has brought in people from outside local government, both at the Board level and on the executive team, to good effect. The mindsets of the people involved at the top level have also been collaborative, which has helped to ensure a cooperative discussion. Whilst these have been developed for the wider City Deal, the activities associated with the Investment Fund have been significant. Consequently, the Partnership and capacity development work linked to the GCP is not wholly attributable to the Investment Fund, but a major part of its activities have been associated with the delivery of Investment Fund interventions.

Priorities and decision-making

- 3.27 Wide-ranging engagement and **evidence gathering has reinforced the prioritisation of projects and informed and improved decisions** about the design of projects. For example, as reported in the One Year Out report the evidence collected on travel behaviours and needs has informed Park and Ride designs and the development of the centre access improvements. Earlier proposals of a set of options for addressing city congestion were re-evaluated after considering the varied needs of different workers. Another example cited was how discussions on bus improvements prompted business proposals for a more integrated approach to transport, which itself led to work on the potential for the Metro.
- 3.28 The Partnership is making progress towards being **able to make decisions for the good of the whole Locality**, even at a cost to some sub-areas or other groups. One example of this is how the County Council receive revenue from the Park and Ride facilities as part of taking cars off the road, but at the expense of others that lose revenue from less use of city centre parking sites. Despite this, there are some key tensions to overcome. For example, there is a tension about how to solve access and congestion issues as residents of the city are more likely to walk, cycle or use the bus than residents of South Cambridgeshire, who are more likely to drive. However, they are now having more open discussions and are considering evidence on these issues.

Wider influence

- 3.29 The partnership working has had **some wider influences**. One example is with regards to changes in how the University has made its own plans for transport to align with those of the GCP in ways that it hadn't done previously. For example, it is looking at longer-term planning in relation to its main sites, such as West Cambridge, the Biomedical Campus, and its wider estates – and how these can be delivered in ways that make sense in the local economy. This has been partly informed by the GCP's engagement, which has been widespread in the university (e.g. college groups, senior tutors, college bursars, the central university etc.).

Effects on performance and prospects

- 3.30 There was initially a slow start in terms of engagement and partnership working. However, by the time of this final evaluation report, **progress in achieving project delivery has been accelerating**. Monitoring systems are now established meaning that the executive

understand each month how projects are progressing and can actively manage risks accordingly.

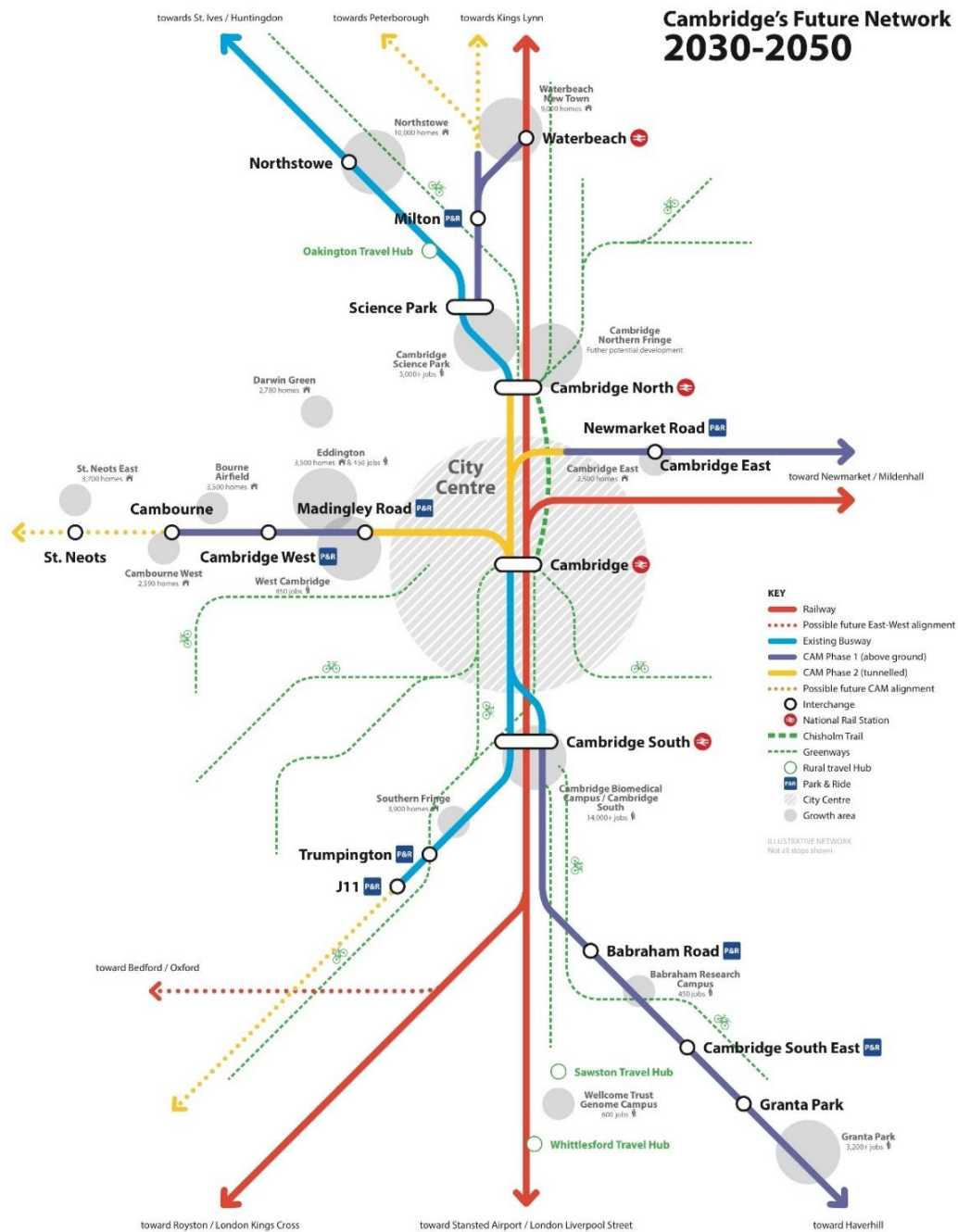
- 3.31 Stakeholders considered that **prospects for the next phases of development were good** and this was linked to the consensus between partners on priorities, the credibility in the plan, and the fact that the Investment Fund is there to help deliver on the plan. There was **confidence** in the GCP team and its ability to bring the right people together and make informed decisions. There was also confidence that political decisions were being taken in the interests of the functioning on the Greater Cambridge economic area rather than local or parochial interests. They therefore considered this to be a good foundation for the next stage. It was observed that fundamentally the improved partnership working across the public sector, business and the community had resulted in the deliverability of the proposed interventions. Without the engagement and development of the Partnership, schemes could well have stalled or have been delivered in a less effective way. The resulting effect on confidence in GCP's ability to deliver was seen as having a role in retaining and attracting businesses to Greater Cambridge (as opposed to elsewhere in the world).
- 3.32 There were however **two key concerns** about the next phase which stakeholders said would be interesting. The first was that the major spend was still to come on larger projects and they thought that this would test the Partnership in terms of their ability to continue to manage engagement alongside taking **difficult decisions**. The second reservation was with regard to certainty of future funding. Larger schemes need a longer time horizon with certain funding and some stakeholders were adamant that they could not sign contracts with builders or commit to purchasing land unless they knew that they would have funds to cover this. Local authority partners **questioned the value of a second Gateway Review** in a further 5 years because their councils could not afford it if Investment Funds were withdrawn mid-way through *'when I say it would bankrupt us – that's a statement of fact'*.

Cumulative effects and alignment

- 3.33 As recognised in the National Evaluation Framework, although there is no 'programme' approach in the implementation of the Investment Funds, the delivery of interventions when taken together may generate impacts greater than would be the case if they had been delivered individually. The evaluation is not seeking to quantify these effects, as a wide range of non-Investment Fund activity will also influence the impacts, and interventions have been delivered over different time-scales. However, consultations with strategic stakeholders sought to identify in qualitative terms if any 'cumulative effects' are anticipated and how they will be realised.
- 3.34 The first key message from the strategic consultations is that stakeholders recognise that the impact of a range of cycling schemes that have been delivered to date should be noticeable but are unlikely to be transformational. However, there will be **cumulative effects realised as key routes into, and around Cambridge create viable alternatives to car use that allow residents and commuters to undertake more journeys more sustainably and safely**. It was also anticipated that the Investment Fund would create routeways and networks whose **impacts will be greater than the sum of their parts** due to this integration. For example, collectively, the cycling schemes will mean there are improvements across the network which is hoped to have a greater effect on attitudes to cycling than would be achieved simply through

implementing one scheme. It was suggested that the same may be the case when all of the bus schemes have been implemented. Figure 3-2, produced by GCP, shows how the different schemes interconnect to open up routes across the city and into growth areas. This graphic also includes alignment with Combined Authority transport schemes (referenced below).

Figure 3-1: Map showing the strategic effect of transport investments



Source: Greater Cambridge Partnership (2018)

3.35 The strategic consultations also considered the alignment of the Investment Fund with other key economic development interventions and agendas in the area, and any benefits expected or realised from this alignment. The second key messages from the consultation is that these **investments are in close and symbiotic alignment with current and planned expansion at key employment and housing sites**. Stakeholders noted that the Greater Cambridge area

is pro-growth but recognise that growth will be impeded unless sustainable solutions to the areas transport systems are implemented. For example, a proposal for additional housing to the west of Cambridge is conditional upon the approval and delivery of the A428 scheme. The transport infrastructure projects are expected to support wider economic development, including development at settlements such as Bourne and Waterbeach, accelerating their pace and scale. Nevertheless, at this stage the confidence in the plans to deliver is resulting in initial planning permissions being granted for these large development sites.

- 3.36 Previously, for the One Year Out report consultees considered the alignment of transport improvements with plans to improve regional connectivity. In particular, several mentioned alignment with the wider Oxford-Cambridge Arc agenda and plan to connect **Cambridge, Oxford and Milton Keynes** through an expressway. More recently, stakeholders were focussed on the potential that would be created through continued integration of the GCP's Transport Strategy with that of the Combined Authority, and in particular the mayor's ambition for a **Metro** across the city. There was a sense that these schemes were in much closer alignment now than might have been thought a year ago.
- 3.37 Finally, the Local **Industrial Strategy** has recently been developed and published. Based on the CPIER, it identifies the three sub-economies of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area. One of these is the Greater Cambridge area, and the GCP has been identified as the best solution for effective representation of the Greater Cambridge economy. This shows how GCP structures are now recognised, and this is contributing to reducing chances of duplication, and enhancing opportunities for mutual symbiosis between districts and GCP and between GCP and CPCA.

Lessons

- 3.38 Stakeholders identified four key areas where they considered things to have worked particularly well:
- Having a **dedicated team** rather than seconded officers who can focus on delivery has been a particular strength, not least as they have been able to continue to engage and work with officers based in the local authorities.
 - Open and continuous conversations with the stakeholders that maintain **discipline and focus** on the plan. One stakeholder said that the Partnership had managed to capture *'interest and commitment of people with **collaborative mindsets**, and then getting people from business and universities that hold the politicians to account'* and keep them to the purpose has been a positive feature of the Investment Fund. Another stakeholder said that the GCP team have a *'reflective loop of checking that decisions and projects are still the right things against this clear purpose'*.
 - Similarly, several stakeholders talked about the importance of **engaging the wider community** in meaningful dialogue that takes their concerns and fears seriously and seeks to turn what could be a confrontation into a conversation. They cited the Big Conversation as a positive experience and one that will be embedded in future plans.
 - Having **funding** has helped to bring partners together in a positive dialogue. *'Giving places real money gives focus to delivering key ambitions for the place'*. This has created

a sense of agency for the decision makers as their dialogue and decisions can effect a real and positive change.

- 3.39 When asked about things that they thought did not work well, or that they would have done differently the most frequently mentioned aspect was **media and communication**. Several admitted that things had not been handled as well as they might earlier on, for example, with some premature announcements about schemes that had not been well thought through leading to anxiety and distrust. The amount of time and resource needed to manage communications had initially been underestimated but has subsequently been addressed.
- 3.40 The second element of learning was with regard to **sequencing activity and the degree of optimism rather than realism that might have shaped early plans**. One stakeholder said that, with the benefit of hindsight, it might have been better to get a stronger evidence base in place earlier on (recognising how useful the CPIER has been to decision making), and that it would have been better to bring forward work on the longer term transformational projects. This was in part linked to having a Gateway Review which one consultee said had not changed the plan but it does change the tone of the conversation and could lead to a sense of ‘medium-termism’.
- 3.41 Stakeholders were generally supportive of decisions to progress cycling infrastructure schemes in the early stages. In retrospect, it was recognised that to take forward early in the programme a selection of projects that were noticeable, deliverable and had the potential to make a difference to people’s lives on a day to day basis, was a positive strategy. Using these to build capacity and experience through different modes of civic engagement, and demonstrate the GCP’s delivery capacity, helped to establish the legitimacy of the Partnership. This will stand GCP in better stead when it comes to making more difficult decisions and implementing them. Implementation will inevitably bring disruption and inconvenience and if the public are, for the most part, bought in to the process then progress will continue, helping to create a positive environment for change in the future.

4. Case study evidence

Introduction

- 4.1 Case studies were used in the evaluation methodology at an intervention level to explore capacity development and partnership outcomes. The intervention level research is focused on how the development and delivery of individual interventions has led to changes in the behaviours, perspectives and decisions of actors across the economic development landscape. In the National Evaluation Framework, these are referred to as “intervention-up” benefits, as they arise from the intervention up to the strategic level, rather than the strategic driving the intervention.
- 4.2 Two case studies were chosen. Choices for Better Journeys was the first case study which was chosen because a) it reflected an important aspect of the operational activities that were not part of the main evaluation, and b) it provided an example of the narrative regarding the changing nature of dialogue and partnership with local communities. The second case study was the GCP Apprenticeship Service because a) it also reflected interventions that were not part of the main evaluation, and b) it provides a good example of the potential for local delivery to influence partnerships thus it was a good candidate for an ‘intervention up’ case study.

Choices for Better Journeys

- 4.3 Choices for Better Journeys was not a formal ‘consultation’, rather it was designed to generate insights and an evidence base to inform future decisions. To ensure that responses were informed and considered, a briefing document was prepared with infographics including visually appealing data that presented the problems facing the Greater Cambridge area, and then a range of different options. The survey received responses from more than 5,000 residents and commuters responding from 155 postcode districts within Greater Cambridge and beyond. This was therefore both a communication activity and a significant piece of research which provides an important evidence base to frame decision making.
- 4.4 This work-strand was jointly managed by GCP and Cambridge Ahead and each partner brought their own skills and networks to the project, notably by extending the reach of the work using Cambridge Ahead’s extensive business networks. This created a stronger professional partnership between GCP and Cambridge Ahead. These were not new, but they matured into stronger working relationships based on trust and this has provided a good foundation for future dialogue with the wider business community.
- 4.5 The exercise was designed to engage communities in exploring options, rather than agreeing or disagreeing with a set of proposals. It has built a rich evidence base regarding people’s transport priorities and preferred options at an important point in the delivery of the Investment Funds. There was some scepticism voiced at the outset about the necessity of the exercise, but as it has achieved extensive engagement it was reported that these voices have subsided.

- 4.6 Finally, in itself, it provided an example of a well-designed research process. Set alongside other engagements, including the earlier Big Conversation, the subsequent Citizens' Assembly and ongoing consultations regarding individual developments, it demonstrates a proactive and open approach to building a mature dialogue with Cambridge's communities. This is a new approach for the city which has developed through the implementation of the Investment Fund and marks a shift from public consultation regarding the design and detail of schemes that have already been drawn up, to an ongoing dialogue to establish priorities and principles first.

GCP Apprenticeship Service

- 4.7 The Skills Working Group developed a package of activity to focus on apprenticeships and the creation of an Apprenticeship Service to broker links between employers and potential apprentices that was tendered in 2018, and commenced delivery in March/April 2019. Before this time, the Investment Fund had funded Form the Future to deliver employer engagement and career information activities across all schools in Cambridgeshire, and had also funded Cambridge Regional College to investigate the apprenticeship needs of employers. The Apprenticeship Service then built upon evidence generated from these former activities to understand the latent supply of apprenticeship opportunities and demand for them. The project was therefore considered to be evidence based and its monitoring and reporting requirements focused on linking activity with outcomes to further enhance the evidence base for future activity.
- 4.8 The delivery partners (Form the Future and Cambridge Regional College) and their wider stakeholders are all well connected and networked having worked in the area for several years. The GCP Apprenticeship Service project was designed to build on each partners' strengths to prevent duplication of activity. Core partners reported that they had benefited from closer working and were enjoying an effective working relationship between themselves, and with the GCP and wider stakeholders.
- 4.9 Whilst it was early days at the time of the case study, the project has shown potential to enhance the capacity amongst the following groups:
- New employers have the potential to understand how apprenticeships can help their organisations, and for employers which already offer apprenticeships they can consider them for different parts of their workforce. The newly created post of business adviser was said to be very popular amongst businesses and was working well.
 - Schools and education providers are able to develop Career Plans that contribute to their attainment of the Gatsby Benchmarks for good career guidance provision. They can ensure students have encounters with employers and learn about apprenticeships as a pathway for learning after GCSEs or A-Level and equivalent study.
 - Young people have more opportunities to consider a wider range of pathways that include apprenticeships when they are making decisions about their futures. In the first reporting period over 3,000 students had been engaged and the service was

starting to offer one to one support to young people to help them secure new apprenticeship opportunities.

- 4.10 The skills strand of work is important for GCP but the next stage of its development will be important strategically to ensure that skills is kept on the Board's agenda. This will help the Board to create routes to link prosperity to the city's young people and to address issues that are important to employers alongside those of congestion and infrastructure.

Annex A: Consultees

Table A-1: Consultees

A range of stakeholders incorporating a broad range of sectors and organisations across Greater Cambridge were engaged throughout SQW's work.

This Annex contains personal information and has been removed on the basis of confidentiality.

Annex B: Online survey data tables

Respondent characteristics

- B.1 Table B-1 shows the type and level of respondents' involvement in the GCP Investment Fund. In the tables the highest values in each column have been highlighted.

Table B-1: Involvement in the GCP Investment Fund

	2018 (n=24)	2019 repeat (n=16)	2019 new (n=16)
Involved in the governance and oversight of developing and delivering the GCP Investment Fund and Gain Share, and/or the interventions it supports	13	10	7
Involved in the implementation (i.e. the management, delivery) of the GCP Investment Fund and Gain Share and/or the interventions it supports	1	0	2
Involved in contributing match funding to interventions supported by the GCP Investment Fund and Gain Share	0	0	0
Stakeholder interested in and / or influenced by the activities/outcomes of the GCP Investment Fund, but not involved in its governance, funding or implementation	9	5	5
Other	0	0	2
Missing	1	1	0

Source: SQW analysis of LGI Greater Cambridge Partnership Survey

- B.2 Table B-2 details the categorises the respondents by their sector of work.

Table B-2: Profile of respondents

	2018 (n=24)	2019 repeat (n=16)	2019 new (n=16)
Local Authorities	7	6	8
Universities	4	2	1
Business/Industry	6	4	3
Business and/or academic network	4	3	2
Other	3	1	2

Source: SQW analysis of LGI Greater Cambridge Partnership Survey

- B.3 Table B-3 provides an overview of respondents' awareness of the interventions supported by the GCP Investment Fund and Table B-4 shows their awareness of the projects' progress. It shows that most respondents had a broad awareness of the range and overview of the Fund.

Table B-3: Awareness of GCP Investment Fund supported projects

	2018 (n=24)	2019 repeat (n=16)	2019 new (n=16)
Full awareness i.e. aware of all of the interventions supported and details about them	11	7	7
Breadth awareness i.e. aware of all interventions but limited view of the details of each	10	7	3
Depth awareness i.e. aware of some of the interventions supported in detail, but not all interventions	2	1	4
No awareness i.e. not aware of the interventions supported	1	1	2

Source: SQW analysis of LGI Greater Cambridge Partnership Survey

B.4 Table B-4 shows in addition that most respondents had either full or some awareness of the projects that have been supported through the Investment Fund.

Table B-4: Awareness of progress of Investment Fund supported projects

	2018 (n=24)	2019 repeat (n=16)	2019 new (n=16)
Full awareness i.e. aware of the progress of all interventions	10	8	7
Some awareness i.e. aware progress of some of the interventions, but not all	13	7	7
No awareness i.e. not aware of the progress of the interventions	0	0	0
Missing	1	1	2

Source: SQW analysis of LGI Greater Cambridge Partnership Survey

B.5 Table B-5 presents the time respondents have been involved in local economic development in the Cambridge City Region.

Table B-5: Time involved in local economic development

	2018 (n=24)	2019 repeat (n=16)	2019 new (n=16)
2010 or earlier	8	4	5
2011-2014	6	6	4
2015 onwards	10	6	7

Source: SQW analysis of LGI Greater Cambridge Partnership Survey

B.6 Table B-6 presents respondent's perspectives on changes to the performance of the Greater Cambridge area looking at a range of elements relating to local economic development capacity. Respondents were asked to rate these ten elements of the Greater Cambridge area's performance in terms of economic development capacity on a scale of one (very poor) to ten (excellent). Table B-6 also contains the average scores for each element from each wave and each point in time that the respondents were asked to reflect on.

Table B-6: Perspectives on changes in local economic development capacity

	wave 1 (n=16)			wave 2 (n=16)	
	2014	2018	2019	2014	2019
Effectiveness of partnership working	5.6	6.8	7.7	4.3	7.5
Effectiveness of governance and management structures	4.9	6.8	7.9	4.4	7.4
Effectiveness of the decision-making process	4.3	6.3	7.4	4.3	6.9
Level of consensus on the key spatial priorities	5.3	6.8	7.7	4.7	7.3
Level of consensus on the key thematic priorities	5.1	7.0	7.5	4.9	7.7
Quality of the evidence base	4.8	7.2	7.9	4.5	8.0
Level of synergy and inter-relationships	4.3	6.4	7.4	4.6	7.3
Level of engagement of the private sector	4.3	6.8	7.5	5.1	8.2
Level of engagement of the voluntary and community sector	3.5	6.0	7.1	4.6	7.1
Level of engagement of the wider public sector	4.2	6.5	7.4	4.6	7.3

Source: SQW analysis of LGI Greater Cambridge Partnership Survey

Factors influencing change

B.7 Table B-7 presents the relative importance of the Infrastructure Fund, alongside other factors, in the change in local economic development capacity. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of eight specific drivers of change to the Greater Cambridge area's economic development capacity on a scale of one (it was not at all influential) to five (it was extremely influential). Table B-8 contains the average scores for each element from each wave and each time period that the respondents were asked to reflect on.

Table B-7: Factors influencing changes in local economic development capacity

	Wave 1 (n=16)		Wave 2 (n=16)
	2014-18	2018-19	2014-19
Greater Cambridge City Deal	4.5	4.5	4.4
The £500m Investment Fund specifically	4.3	4.1	3.9

		Wave 1 (n=16)	Wave 2 (n=16)
	2014-18	2018-19	2014-19
Changes in the overall level or nature of funding received (other funding/delivery mechanisms)	3.7	3.4	3.6
Changes in political leadership / new local leaders have emerged	4.1	3.6	4.3
Changes in economic development structures / organisations	4.1	3.4	4.0
Changes in local strategic priorities and objectives	4.0	3.4	4.4
National government expectations and policy agenda	3.6	3.3	3.7
Other	3.5	4.2	4.7

Source: SQW analysis of LGI Greater Cambridge Partnership Survey

Table B-8: Overall effect of the of Infrastructure Fund Investment Fund to date (all waves n=16)

	Very Negative			Negative			No Effect			Positive			Very Positive			Don't Know / N/A		
	C1 2018	C1 2019	C2	C1 2018	C1 2019	C2	C1 2018	C1 2019	C2	C1 2018	C1 2019	C2	C1 2018	C1 2019	C2	C1 2018	C1 2019	C2
Strategic-level decision making and planning	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	1	1	7	4	5	6	9	7	0	1	0
Strategic-level decision making and planning	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	2	11	7	5	2	6	7	0	1	0
Local confidence to develop and deliver economic growth interventions	1	0	0	1	1	0	3	0	2	6	7	4	5	6	8	0	1	0
Local commitment to develop and deliver economic growth interventions	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	2	8	7	4	6	6	8	0	1	0
Understanding on what works in developing and delivering economic growth interventions	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	2	10	7	4	2	5	7	0	1	1
Engagement of high level / senior stakeholders in economic growth interventions	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	7	6	3	7	8	9	0	1	0
Overall local economic development capacity and partnership working	0	0	0	1	1	0	3	0	2	6	6	5	6	7	7	0	1	0

Source: SQW analysis of LGI Greater Cambridge Partnership Survey

Annex C: Case studies

C.1 Case study summaries are provided in this Annex covering the following two activities:

- Choices for Better Journeys
- GCP Apprenticeship Service.

Choices for Better Journeys

Key messages

Choices for Better Journeys was a research and engagement exercise run by GCP with Cambridge Ahead. It followed a major consultation exercise, the Big Conversation, and represented a further development in building relationships between GCP and communities across Greater Cambridge.

Choices for Better Journeys achieved engagement of a wide cross section of different communities who are often harder to engage, namely business communities and working age demographics. It secured participation by over 5,000 people across all demographics and including people who commute into the city to work as well as residents. The relationship with Cambridge Ahead helped facilitate this by using their networks to share information about the research to employers and businesses to encourage responses. It created a stronger professional partnership between Cambridge Ahead and its wide business networks and the GCP. These were not new, but they matured into stronger working relationships based on trust and this provides a good foundation for future dialogue with the wider business community.

The exercise was designed to engage communities in exploring options, rather than agreeing or disagreeing with a set of proposals. It has built a rich evidence base regarding people's transport priorities and preferred options at an important point in the delivery of the Investment Funds. There was some scepticism voiced at the outset about the necessity of the exercise, but following its achievement of extensive engagement it was reported that these voices have subsided.

In itself, it provided an example of a well-designed research process. Set alongside other engagement, including the Big Conversation, the Citizens' Assembly and ongoing consultations regarding individual developments, it demonstrates a proactive and open approach to building a mature dialogue with Cambridge's communities.

Source: SQW

- C.2 Case studies were used in the evaluation methodology at an intervention level to explore capacity development and partnership outcomes. The intervention level research is focused on how the development and delivery of individual interventions, in this case the Choices for Better Journeys consultation and research, have led to changes in the behaviours, perspectives and decisions of actors across the economic development landscape. In the National Evaluation Framework, these are referred to as "intervention-up" benefits, as they arise from the intervention up to the strategic level, rather than the strategic driving the intervention. This case study was chosen because a) it reflected an important aspect of the operational activities that were not part of the main evaluation, and b) it provided an example of the narrative regarding the changing nature of dialogue and partnership with local communities.
- C.3 This case study focused on capacity development and partnership working as a result of a consultation exercise called 'Choices for Better Journeys' (CfBJ) undertaken by the Greater

Cambridge Partnership (GCP) through its Investment Fund. It drew on interviews with the following organisations that have been involved: a senior member of the transport team at the Greater Cambridge Partnership; Cambridge Ahead⁵, an organisation representing the city's business and academic community; and a representative from the Marshall Group⁶, a large employer in Cambridge.

C.4 The intervention was designed to articulate and explain GCP's vision for the future public transport network and obtain detailed feedback from the public and stakeholders on options for funding public transport and methods of reallocating road space. The context for this was a combination of the following issues:

- There had been a substantial increase in traffic in Greater Cambridge in the last decade, with almost a quarter of people's commuting time spent in traffic jams. GCP felt that congestion was also affecting people's health, quality of life, the environment and productivity.⁷
- Between 2011 and 2031, Cambridge is forecast to see an additional 44,000 jobs, and based on travel habits in 2019, this could result in an additional 26,000 daily car journeys which would require a need to double public transport capacity. Therefore, the GCP was keen to encourage more people to walk, cycle or use public transport and to do this through improved services and better facilities for walking and cycling.⁸

"The scale of the issue in terms of Cambridge's congestion challenges and travel into and around Cambridge are so high that transformational solutions or schemes are needed to overcome those issues and those issues are...having a dampening effect on the Cambridge economy"

- A previous consultation exercise in autumn 2017 found that the biggest transport challenges people faced were traffic and congestion (65% of respondents), a lack of adequate public transport (42%) and a lack of reliable public transport (42%). However, people also said that a more affordable public transport network, with better availability and reliability, would be of great benefit to them.⁹
- It was felt that early consultations with members of the public were not as well managed as might have been hoped. For example, the A1307 consultation and premature announcements regarding options for the city centre were both reported as creating some poor publicity. This had created mistrust among some sections of the community that needed redressing.
- Residents in Cambridge are very engaged, knowledgeable, highly articulate and organised. In addition, there are resident groups and special interest groups that are similarly expert and engaged. This offers a great resource for the GCP, but one that

⁵ <https://www.cambridgeahead.co.uk/>

⁶ <https://www.marshallgroup.co.uk/>

⁷ Greater Cambridge Partnership, Choices for Better Journeys Brochure

⁸ Greater Cambridge Partnership, Choices for Better Journeys Brochure

⁹ Greater Cambridge Partnership, Choices for Better Journeys Brochure

needs to be strategically engaged and proactively managed to ensure that discussion informs, rather than delays, delivery of the programme.

Background and context to Choices for Better Journeys

- C.5 CfBJ was an opportunity for the GCP to re-engage the public and obtain feedback from local citizens and stakeholders on the transformation and funding of public transport and to continue consulting with the public following a previous engagement exercise in autumn 2017 called ‘Our Big Conversation’. The Conversation asked people about the travel challenges they face and their ideas for where money should be invested in the future.¹⁰ It generated more than 10,000 individual responses and comments including at 38 public events from community pop-ups at supermarkets, workplaces and transport hubs, to business workshops and Councillor briefings.
- C.6 CfBJ was therefore part of an ongoing series of public consultations and communication events which have typified the approach taken by the Partnership to deliver its objectives. GCP led on the development of the CfBJ exercise and worked collaboratively with three key partners, all of which they had worked with previously:
- GCP and Cambridge Ahead worked with the Cambridgeshire County Council research team and RAND Corporation to design and finalise the questionnaire.
 - Cambridge Ahead helped to disseminate the survey to their business and academic members as well as engage the other business networks in Cambridge.
- C.7 Other organisations and stakeholders who were involved included Cambridge BID, Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce, Cambridge Network, CamCycle, and local residents and interest groups.
- C.8 The costs of engagement are accounted for within a range of different budgets and consequently the cost of CfBJ has been estimated. Table C-1 lists the major costs associated with market research, advertising and staff time to be approximately £49k excluding research costs.

Table C-1: Estimated spend on Choices for Better Journeys

Activity	Cost (£k)
Services from the County Council Research Unit	14
Advertising and event costs throughout the campaign	9.8
A market research piece to go alongside the engagement campaign	25
Approximate total (excluding research spend)	49

Source: GCP

Activities

- C.9 The CfBJ consultation took place between 25th February and 31st March 2019. The objectives of the engagement were to:

¹⁰ Greater Cambridge Partnership, Our Big Conversation – Key Findings

- set out the options for funding better public transport and methods of reallocating road space, how each option would affect different people and gain feedback on these
 - demonstrate the impact of congestion and increase public awareness and understanding of the relationship between improving public transport and reducing congestion
 - show how each option can support better public transport through Cambridge, and link with GCP schemes.
- C.10 The exercise was not a formal ‘consultation’, rather it was designed to generate insights and an evidence base to inform future decisions. To ensure that responses were informed and considered a briefing document was prepared with infographics including visually appealing data that presented the problems facing the Greater Cambridge area, and then a range of different options.
- C.11 The main tools for gathering comments were an online survey and a paper return survey, which was available on request. To supplement this, and capture views from those who could not easily access the internet, events were held to collect responses face-to-face and other forms of response, such as detailed written submissions and social media comments, were also received and incorporated into the analysis. The survey received responses from more than 5,000 residents and commuters responding from 155 postcode districts within Greater Cambridge and beyond. This was therefore both an important communication activity, but also a significant piece of research which provides a powerful evidence base to frame decision making.
- C.12 The results from the CfBJ exercise were analysed and published in May 2019. It reported on public perceptions of priorities, with two key findings. First, there was support for a public transport vision. Second, there was support for taking action to address congestion and deliver better public transport, with over 80% of people choosing one of the demand management options for doing this.

Examples of capacity building and partnership development

Partnership working

- C.13 CfBJ has enhanced the working relationship between GCP and Cambridge Ahead. They had a good working relationship before this project, but CfBJ served as a formal opportunity to strengthen the connections between the two organisations. In addition, working together has been useful for Cambridge Ahead and the business community to understand the decision-making processes that the GCP has in place and given them assurance that they work effectively. This project has enabled Cambridge Ahead and its wider business community to have a deeper understanding of the issues and engage, together with the GCP, on Cambridge’s future travel needs which helps build capacity within the system as it will lead to better shared awareness of those issues and closer working together to tackle them.
- C.14 CfBJ was GCP’s first experience of delivering a joint survey before the formal consultation period (i.e. the survey asked strategic questions and placed the respondent in the centre

rather than asking for respondent's thoughts about a given intervention). Collaboration at this stage led to:

- more compromises – GCP and Cambridge Ahead had to balance their respective agendas in the survey design to ensure both parties were getting the information they were interested in
- a higher quality survey – linked to the above, the two organisations provided a useful challenge to one another's ideas, which improved the survey design and meant they were confident of each question's purpose.

"[CfBJ] is an example of a pretty thorough, joint project [and] collaboration between GCP and Cambridge Ahead which has acted to strengthen the relationship between us and GCP"

- C.15 The main delivery partners suggested that CfBJ used a stronger survey design and achieved a much broader range of responses than would otherwise have been the case. GCP typically can engage high numbers of respondents from its consultations but these are often predominantly from elderly residents who live in the city centre. It has historically found it difficult to engage young people, those on low incomes and commuters who do not live in the city centre. Partnering with Cambridge Ahead meant the survey could be distributed via employers – 1/3 of respondents were from outside of Greater Cambridge and 50% were car drivers. The result of working with Cambridge Ahead was a high level of responses that came from different parts of the community, including business voices, which was really important.
- C.16 CfBJ has also led to further collaborations between the GCP and Cambridge Ahead. Subsequent to the survey being carried out and the results being made public, GCP worked with Cambridge Ahead to communicate what the results mean, and the process going forward to make decision on demand management and the City Access package, to Cambridge Ahead's members and the wider business community. Subsequently, two representatives from Cambridge Ahead spoke at sessions on the first weekend of the Citizens' Assembly to present reactions and thoughts from the business community.

Local economic development insight and understanding

- C.17 CfBJ has improved insights into the type of evidence GCP should collect and enhanced understanding of the factors that influence people's travel decisions. The CfBJ survey asked for respondents' views on the importance of different elements of a transformed public transport network, and also collected evidence on the drivers that influence and shape people's travel decisions. The survey indicated very clearly that people placed most importance on reliability and speed of transport options. As with the above, the survey reached more commuters and a high proportion of drivers. This provided more access than usual to factors influencing the decision to drive to work and one finding that was clear from CfBJ was that it should be cheaper to use public transport to get into the city than a car.

“The problem around transport in Cambridge is really severe and that has an obvious impact on the Cambridge economy. We see the Choices for Better Journeys survey as an important part in the process to get towards solutions to that problem and we see how it is connected to GCP’s City Access programme which will put forward solutions to that issue”

Generating consensus

- C.18 It was expected that CfBJ would help to generate consensus on the approach to tackling Cambridge’s congestion issue. The evidence base is stronger and more representative than historic research and CfBJ came after the Cambridge and Peterborough Independent Economic Review was published, which sets out a single set of priorities for what the needs of the Cambridge economy are in order to grow. Part of the conclusions of this was the need for all local partners and key players to work effectively together to deliver growth for the Cambridge economy. The CfBJ was seen as an example of the collective agreement to take a partnership approach to understanding the transport improvement measures needed and to build consensus around how to solve those.

“They’ve built a structure and architecture around decision making which works well for Cambridge and the Cambridge economy”

- C.19 The process has demonstrated GCP’s openness, eagerness and frankness in the engagement and involvement with the business community and residents. Partners anticipated that this will help accelerate decision making and smooth the implementation process of whatever choices are made.
- C.20 CfBJ has developed a broader evidence base and involved the public in key strategic decisions. This has begun to leverage buy-in from senior figures. In the absence of CfBJ, GCP would not have been able to access as broad a sample and the findings would have been less compelling/less impactful in generating what can be seen as a consensus on key issues.

“People are agreeing with the vision more”

Engagement with local communities

- C.21 CfBJ is one example of the GCP seeking to understand the community’s views and needs, both residential and business, and using this in their thinking and as part of their implementation process going forward. It was felt that GCP decision-making was informed by conversations with, and feedback from, the community. This has a beneficial impact on implementation as those communities feel like they have been a key part of the decision-making process.
- C.22 It was felt that the way in which CfBJ presented a package of potential interventions for people to consider, rather than asking for views on specific interventions, helped to engage businesses much more closely. This was because it helped them to realise that, whilst the

solution might include parts that they do not completely agree with, they can see that as a whole it is a workable solution built from evidence.

Overcoming initial scepticism from senior stakeholders

- C.23 Following previous experiences of consultations that focused on specific interventions, there was scepticism about whether CfBJ would generate more insightful results. However, it was felt that the approach to engaging the public at the strategic planning stage has generated meaningful engagement and that people have been able to express preferences and feedback on a range of options rather than accepting or rejecting a proposal from the GCP. It was also felt that CfBJ had generated robust evidence that has come from the community upon which the politicians and the GCP Board can make the right decisions about what the requirements are for congestion management in Cambridge.

GCP Apprenticeship Service

The Skills Working Group developed a package of activity to focus on apprenticeships and the creation of an Apprenticeship Service to broker links between employers and potential apprentices that was tendered in 2018, and commenced delivery in March/April 2019. It built upon evidence generated through prior Investment Fund activity that sought both to understand the latent supply of apprenticeships among Cambridge employers, and, to build demand for better impartial careers guidance across all Greater Cambridge education providers. The project was therefore considered to be evidence based and its monitoring and reporting requirements focus on linking activity with outcomes to further enhance the evidence base for future activity.

The delivery partners (Form the Future and Cambridge Regional College) and their wider stakeholders are all well connected and networked having worked in the area for several years. The GCP Apprenticeship Service project was designed to build on each partners' strengths to prevent duplication of activity. Core partners nevertheless reported that they had benefited from closer working and were enjoying an effective working relationship between themselves, and with the GCP and wider stakeholders.

Whilst it is early days, the project has shown potential to enhance the capacity of:

- Employers to understand apprenticeship and for new employers to be engaged or for employers who already offer apprenticeships to consider them for different parts of their workforce – the newly created post of business adviser was said to be very popular amongst businesses and was working well
- Schools and education providers to develop Career Plans that contribute to their achievement of the Gatsby Benchmarks for good career guidance provision by ensuring students have encounters with employers and learn about apprenticeships as a pathway for learning after GCSEs or A-Level and equivalent study
- Young people to consider a wider range of pathways that include apprenticeships when they are making decisions about their futures – in the first reporting period over 3,000 students and was starting to offer one to one support to young people to help them secure new apprenticeship opportunities.

The skills strand of work is important for GCP but the next stage of its development will be important strategically to ensure that skills is kept on the Board agenda. This will help the Board to create routes to link prosperity to the city's young people and to address issues that are important to employers alongside those of congestion and health.

Source: SQW

- C.24 Case studies were used in the evaluation methodology at an intervention level to explore capacity development and partnership outcomes. The intervention level research is focused on how the development and delivery of individual interventions, in this case the GCP Apprenticeship Service has led to changes in the behaviours, perspectives and decisions of

actors across the economic development landscape. In the National Evaluation Framework, these are referred to as “intervention-up” benefits, as they arise from the intervention up to the strategic level, rather than the strategic driving the intervention. This case study was chosen because a) it reflected interventions that were Investment Fund supported but were not part of the main evaluation, and b) given the changes in national policy, the case for apprenticeship development is best made by those who participate at the local level and thus it was a good candidate for an ‘intervention up’ case study.

- C.25 This skills case study focusses on an intervention that builds on foundational work undertaken by the core partners through the Investment Fund but which only started in March 2019. It is an apprenticeship brokerage scheme to connect employers with skills shortages who might not consider apprenticeships, with young people looking for a rewarding local career. The lead partner is Form the Future, who deliver the project in partnership with Cambridge Regional College.
- C.26 This case study drew on interviews with the following organisations that have been involved: Form the Future¹¹; Cambridge Regional College¹²; iMet,¹³ a specialist engineering and manufacturing training facility; Anglian Ruskin University,¹⁴ provider of degree-level apprentices; and Transversal¹⁵, a business representative on the Assembly. The findings were supplemented with financial data provided by Greater Cambridge Partnership, and the first monitoring report provided by Form the Future
- C.27 The intervention was designed to build capacity among partners and stakeholders to create new apprenticeship opportunities with Greater Cambridge employers whilst simultaneously building the attractiveness of such opportunities among young people. The context for this was a combination of the following issues:
- Skills needs and shortages among employers extend across different skills levels. Whilst Cambridge companies are renowned for graduate employment, there remain skills issues at all levels within the economy.
 - National policy promotes apprenticeships through revised Standards, the introduction of Degree Level Apprenticeships, and the application of the ‘employer levy’. However, implementation of national policy has been challenging and, at least in the short term, has had the adverse effect of reducing the number of apprenticeships as employers face challenges with implementing the new systems.
 - The intervention aligned with the national focus on careers guidance in schools through the implementation of Gatsby Benchmarks which aim to inform and inspire young people through better careers guidance. This includes improving information about different learning pathways and encouraging them to engage in a series of different employer encounters.

¹¹ <https://www.formthefuture.org.uk/>

¹² <https://www.camre.ac.uk/>

¹³ <https://www.imet.co.uk/>

¹⁴ <https://aru.ac.uk/>

¹⁵ <https://www.transversal.com/>

Background and context to GCP's wider skills agenda

- C.28 Cambridge is a world leader in science, research and bio-tech environments. It is estimated by the University of Cambridge that the city's cluster is home to 1,500 technology-based firms which employ 57,000 people and have a combined annual revenue more than £13 billion¹⁶. The city continues to attract and support innovative companies. There is consequently high demand for science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) skills to support the area's sector specialisms, which include bio-medical, clean-technology and advanced manufacturing.
- C.29 Despite the city's technology cluster, the benefits of this prosperity are not evenly shared across Cambridge and its surrounding areas and social and economic inequality can be observed within the city. A Form the Future report indicated that the suboptimal levels of careers education in schools¹⁷ had led to limited awareness of local STEM job opportunities amongst young people and an undersupply of work-ready labour for local employers. These local issues sat within a wider national context of national policy to promote apprenticeships via new standards, introduction of higher level apprenticeships and the apprenticeship levy.
- C.30 To support the supply of STEM skills required to meet the city's demand, the Greater Cambridge Partnership developed its Skills Agenda. The primary objective of the agenda was to:

bring together business and education providers to inspire and develop our future workforce, to help them secure the skills they need to succeed in the local economy and give businesses the opportunity to grow¹⁸

- C.31 It aimed to deliver this through close partnership working across the education, training and business bases to create additional apprentice roles, provide training to meet employer's needs to recruit and train apprentices. The skills work supported by the Investment Fund contributed directly to the Greater Cambridge Partnership's four skills agenda targets presented in Table C-1.

Table C-1: Greater Cambridge Partnership's Skills targets

Target
T1. Create an additional 420 Level 2 and Level 3 apprenticeships across Greater Cambridge by 2019
T2. Support employers to increase training and to bring business, training providers and the local community together to develop training that meets employers' needs and supports growth
T3. Work with the National Careers Service to ensure young people in Greater Cambridge have access to the very latest information about the local jobs market, helping them to make informed career choices
T4. Forge stronger links between businesses and the education sector to encourage a greater uptake of training and apprenticeships

Source: Form the Future progress report to Greater Cambridge Partnership 12/08/2019

¹⁶ <https://www.cam.ac.uk/research/innovation-at-cambridge/the-cambridge-cluster>

¹⁷ Form the Future (2018): *A Skills Service for the Greater Cambridge Partnership: Report on the programme delivered by Form the Future CIC for Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough LEP from September 2015- July 2017*

¹⁸ <https://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/skills/>

C.32 **The skills work delivered through the Investment Fund built on previous activity delivered through the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership (GCP LEP)** (now The Business Board of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority) through its Cambridge Area 14-19 Partnership. The LEP-managed partnership co-ordinated local provision by bringing together all state-funded education and training providers for 14-19-year olds in Cambridge, East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire¹⁹. In 2015, the GCP's infrastructure Investment Fund adopted a similar partnership approach but delivered a service **focussed on apprenticeships and creating a stronger evidence base**. It involved closer working with two providers from the 14-19 Partnership: Form the Future, who had existing links with every secondary school in Cambridgeshire; and Cambridge Regional College, the largest provider of apprenticeship training in the Cambridgeshire region.

Aims of the Apprenticeship Service

C.33 In March 2019, the Greater Cambridge Partnership partnered with Form the Future and Cambridge Regional College to launch a new service to **increase the number of apprenticeships across the Greater Cambridge region**²⁰. It aimed to do so by brokering relationships between prospective apprentices and local businesses to attract, develop and retain high-skilled staff. The intervention had four key performance indicators (KPIs) to be met by March 2021:

- 420 people starting apprenticeships
- 320 new employers to commit to support an apprenticeship scheme
- 18 schools to commit to support enhanced apprenticeship activity
- connect 7,500 students with employers.

Activities

C.34 The apprenticeships work delivered through the Investment Fund was progressed through two key organisations as the delivery partners: Form the Future and Cambridge Regional College. It is overseen by one of the Assembly's Working Groups, which includes representatives from a broad range of organisations, including iMet, Anglian Ruskin University and Transversal. The budget allocated to broader skills work is set out in Table C-1 and amounts to £2.9m. Of this budget, £1.8m was allocated to skills work during the Gateway 1 period (from 2015/16 to 2019/20). The apprenticeship activity described in this case study was expected to be delivered from March 2019 until March 2021 and the allocation for the current year is reflected in the highlighted column in Table C-1.

¹⁹ <https://www.cap14-19.org.uk/>

²⁰ <https://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/news/gcp-to-launch-a-new-apprenticeship-service/>

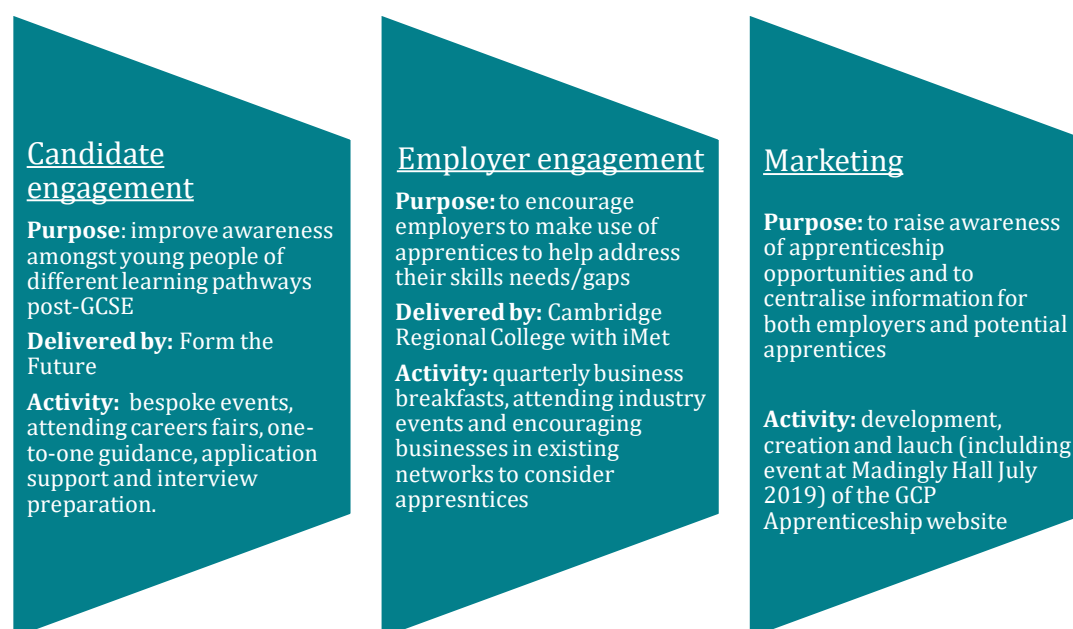
Table C-1: Skills budget allocation and spend during the Gateway period

	Allocated spend					Total Gateway 1 spend
	GCP LEP managed activity					
Total IF budget (£k)	2015/16 (£k)	2016/17 (£k)	2017/18 (£k)	2018/19 (£k)	2019/20 (£k)	
2,907	47	188	205	110	1,236	1,786

Source: Greater Cambridge Partnership

- C.35 The Apprenticeship Service comprises three key strands of activity: candidate engagement delivered by Form the Future, employer engagement delivered by Cambridge Regional College with iMet, and digital marketing and networking. An overview of each strand is presented in Figure C-1.

Figure C-1: Overview of skills work delivered through the Investment Fund



Source: SQW

Effects on capacity development and partnership working

- C.36 Capacity building associated with the project has been recounted in interviews across three main dimensions: strategic partnership working, capacity amongst employers, and capacity for career guidance for young people. The GCP project focussing on the Apprenticeship Service has only recently started delivery but it builds upon the previous Investment Fund work to inform and inspire young people.

Strategic Partnership Working

Working well...

- C.37 The delivery partners were well networked into prevailing city and county-wide networks at the outset and were not seeking partnership outcomes from the project. Nevertheless, **all partners reported the strengthening of existing relationships as a result of the**

Investment Fund supported activity. The two delivery partners' relationship was strengthened by the funding: Cambridge Regional College reported that the project allowed them to work more closely with Form the Future and exploit the synergies between their offers. For example, Form the Future is seen as an impartial advice provider by schools or sixth forms which can be less open to building relationships with the College as it might be perceived as a 'competitor'.

- C.38 Linked to this, **the Fund gave partners improved access to the knowledge and experience of members of the Skills Working Group and Assembly.** The Skills Working Group has been effective in creating the specification for the revised contract and overseeing its early implementation. An employer on the Working Group reported that the breadth of experience of group members helped to put the apprenticeship discussions in a broader context. For example, one member sits on the Housing Working Group and can share learning; another member represents Anglian Ruskin University and provides views on graduate-level apprenticeships. Linked to this, the relatively small number of group members was perceived to foster open discussions and quick decision making.
- C.39 The partnership working also improved the offer of Form the Future. The programme's focus on apprenticeships improved its overall offer to schools and colleges, students and employers because it supported personalised end-to-end support for young people wanting to secure an apprenticeship (e.g. from the expression of interest and CV clinic to apprentice recruitment). It was anticipated that this improved service would lead to better outcomes for all parties.

...being improved

- C.40 Consultation evidence also highlighted some areas for improvement to partnership working that could inform future delivery. These suggestions all linked to the need for more effective ways of harnessing the capacity of the Skills Working Group members. Looking forward, there is a dual challenge for harnessing this capacity in the medium term to: ensure that skills issues remain part of the conversation of the Assembly (as one consultee said '*to keep skills on the agenda*'); and shift the purpose of the group to deliver the forward looking, horizon scanning functions of some of the other Working Groups. Moving forward, consultees suggested two action points:
- **Well-defined aims and objectives** – members understand the project's KPIs, but one consultee explained that the Working Group lacked a clear objective to work towards. This would help to clarify its purpose and activity, and establish well-defined remits for each member.
 - **Site visits for all Skills Working Group members**²¹ - this would give members hands-on experience of the activity supported by the Investment Fund and, in the view of one consultee, make them more effective members. A different consultee commented that, although the group comprised experienced people, not all members have a skills background.
- C.41 The **evidence available to partners to assess progress was also reported as improving.** Whereas previously, reporting focussed on outputs being achieved (e.g. number of events hosted, employers or young people engaged), the revised contract seeks to track individuals

²¹ Note that one such site visit has been organised for October 2019

through the intervention process to capture outcomes that are directly linked with Investment Fund activity. Because this requires tracking of young people through transition points a new monitoring system with appropriate data protection safeguards is being implemented. This is in part facilitated by the recently launched portal which encourages interested individuals to digitally register with the Apprenticeship Service. Form the Future was confident that this would enhance partnership activity as it will be able to evidence effects in ways that have not previously been possible.

Capacity building among employers

- C.42 Employers may not employ and train apprentices for a range of reasons including information failures: employers often do not know the benefits of apprenticeships to their organisation, or how to manage the process. The project has sought to address these issues amongst employers that are contributing to economic growth. The current project was said to build upon an earlier GCP project delivered by Cambridge Regional College which held a series of conversations with employers across a range of different sectors to determine where there were skills gaps that could be filled in the short term by apprenticeships. This has informed its recent investment in a digital training suite to help meet the demand for coding skills which is reported across several sectors. **It is expected that this will improve capacity in the system to create new apprenticeship opportunities.** So far, the project has been actively promoting the scheme through hosting meetings, presentations and networking events and through individual meetings (with 53 planned for Q3 2019/20). Twelve apprenticeship starts have been reported (in August 2019) which is at a reasonable level given that CRC reported it generally takes at least three months to complete the apprentice-recruitment process and the project has only just started.
- C.43 The project had also employed a Business Advisor who has a ‘hand-holding’ role to work alongside businesses to help them with form-filling and recruitment associated with apprenticeships. The Business Advisor has been in post since early summer 2019. In the future there will also be specialist advice available to employers that wish to transfer their levy to SMEs in the region. It was too early in the process to identify cases where this had created capacity among employers to taken on apprentices, but early indications were promising. The Advisor was reported to be in great demand from employers to work with those that were new to apprenticeships as well as those more established employers that were struggling with new systems.

Career guidance capacity

- C.44 There are also information failures that hinder schools’ and students’ understanding of apprenticeships and therefore limit the supply of apprentices. The difficulty for schools sits within changes to the wider policy landscape - schools and colleges nationally are focussing on their careers provision as part of the national careers strategy and recent changes to Ofsted inspections that explicitly report on their career guidance provision. **Consultation evidence suggested that the GCP activity had helped to meet a gap in schools’ knowledge of apprenticeships and their capacity to provide up to date and locally relevant information to their students.** One example was given by Form the Future, which reported that its recent support for a school to develop its Careers Plan was very successful and that it had since built this offer into its suite of services to all schools. The GCP recently approved

funding for a RAND Europe study into careers advice and guidance capacity in the area, to support the development of interventions to tackle this issue.

- C.45 **The Investment Fund was seen to address three barriers faced by young people to accessing apprenticeships.** The capacity of individual young people to understand and access apprenticeships links to their knowledge of apprenticeships; their ability to consider this route alongside others; and the ability to apply and secure an opportunity. This is reflected in its first performance report²² which reported that 3,118 students had connected with employers and 12 of the target of 18 schools had been engaged in providing enhanced support and information to their students regarding apprenticeships. Both the main delivery partners and informed stakeholders were satisfied that the targets were both realistic and achievable.

²² Form the Future report to Greater Cambridge Partnership dated 12/08/19