

## 3. Survey results

### 3.1 LEP Survey Analysis

A request to complete this survey was distributed to Service leads in all Local Authorities across England, for the purposes of gaining their views on the Coalition Government's proposal to create Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) to replace Regional Development Agencies. The survey primarily intended to capture thinking around what LEPs could potentially look like, how they would be governed and the economic geographies they might cover.

The Government is currently developing its proposals on LEPs and intends to consult in late summer/early autumn. The results of this research will be published during July to help inform the development of proposals at national and local levels.

In total, the survey was viewed 296 times, of which 139 started and 69 completed the survey, representing a response rate of **49.64%**.

### 3.2 Authority profile

#### 3.2.1 In what region are you based?

The North West of England, with 20.6% of responses, was most represented in terms of where respondents were based, followed by the South East, South West and West Midlands (all with 13.7%), the East of England (9.2%), the North East and East Midlands (both with 8.5%), London (6.9%) and Yorkshire and Humber (5.75%).

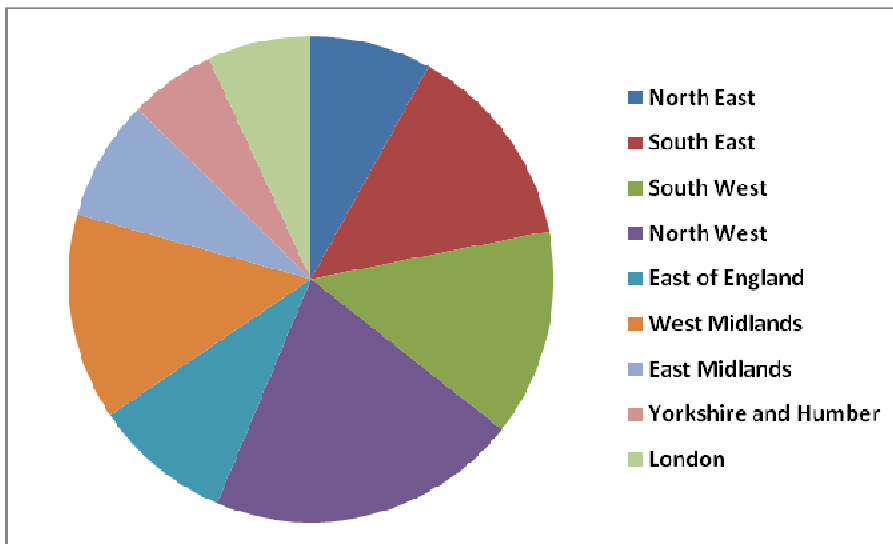


Figure 1: In what region are you based?

### 3.2.2 What kind of authority are you?

There was a roughly equitable division between Unitary (37.2%) and District (36%) authorities, followed by County authorities (11.6%), City authorities (8.1%) and Metropolitan authorities (6.9%), as illustrated in Figure 2 below.

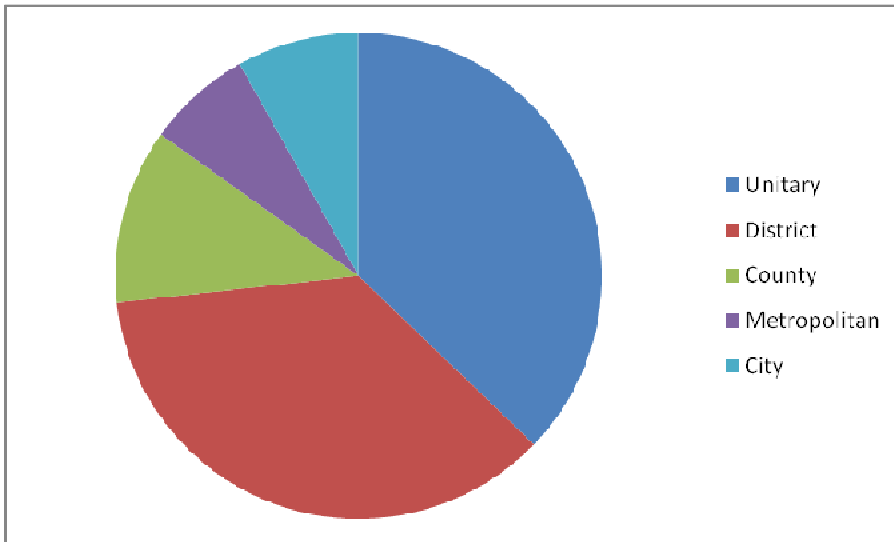


Figure 2: What kind of authority are you?

Figure 3 presents a cross-tabulation of respondents' answers about where they are based against the local authority type they represent.

Some areas have a proportionally higher percentage of one local authority type over another in terms of respondents to this survey. The North West, for example, has a significantly higher proportion of metropolitan and district authorities, whereas in the South West region, county authorities are nearly twice as common as district and unitary authorities. The North East has greatest representation through city authorities and the South East has more unitary authorities than any other type.

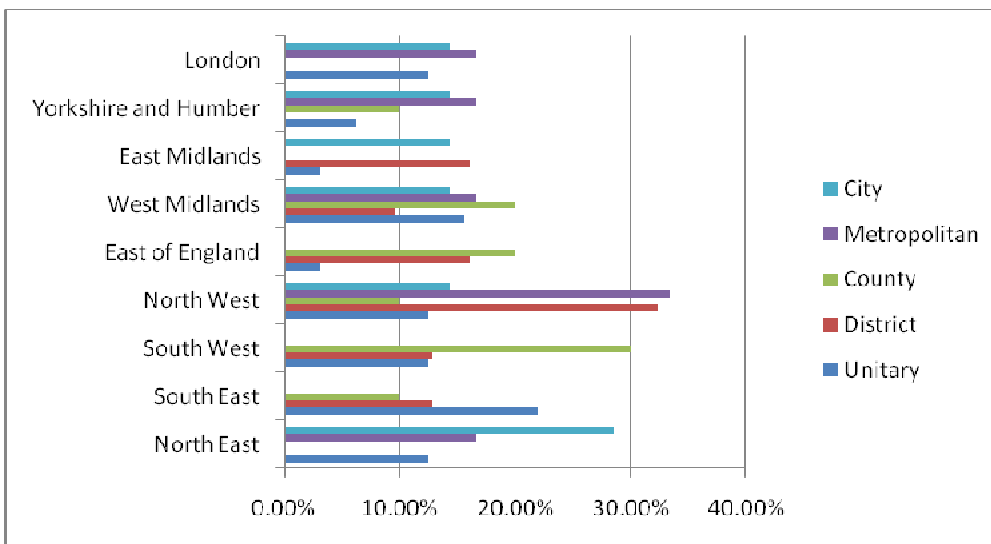


Figure 3: Region against Local Authority type.

### 3.2.3 Which of the following job titles best describes your current position?

Of the response categories available, 41.8% stated they were Head of Economic Development for their authority, 10.4% were their authority's Head of Regeneration and 1.1% were Head of Community and Services.

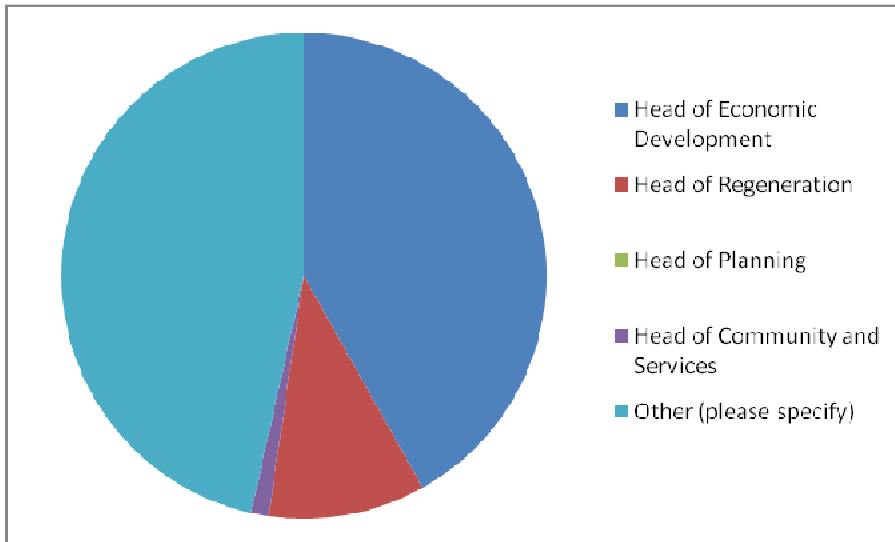


Figure 4: Which of the following job titles best describes your current position?

There were 46.5% who selected the 'Other' category. For a full list of responses given under 'Other' please refer to **Appendix 1**. Included within this were Chief Executives, Directors, Business Development Officers, Economic Development Officers and Economic Research Managers.

## 3.3 Current thinking on LEPs

### 3.3.1 Which of the following best describes your current thinking/activity on LEPs?

Figure 5 below suggests that there is currently little national consensus around Local Authorities activities in relation to LEPS. Encouragingly, a significant percentage (32.5%) have already begun working with partners to develop proposals for their LEP. However, this is tempered by similar percentages that are only in preliminary discussions with partners (30.2%), and those who are waiting for activity from the Government before committing to any action of their own (31.4%).

When current thinking / activity on LEPs is compared against local authority type, as in Figure 6 below, it is evident that county authorities are more advanced in terms of working with partners than other types of authority. In addition, many districts appear to be erring on the side of caution and are waiting for activity from the Government this summer before they commit to any activity of their own.

It is interesting to note that no district or county authorities anticipate LEPs will evolve from the Regional Development Agencies, and although small numbers of other authority types do anticipate this happening, these are a minority.

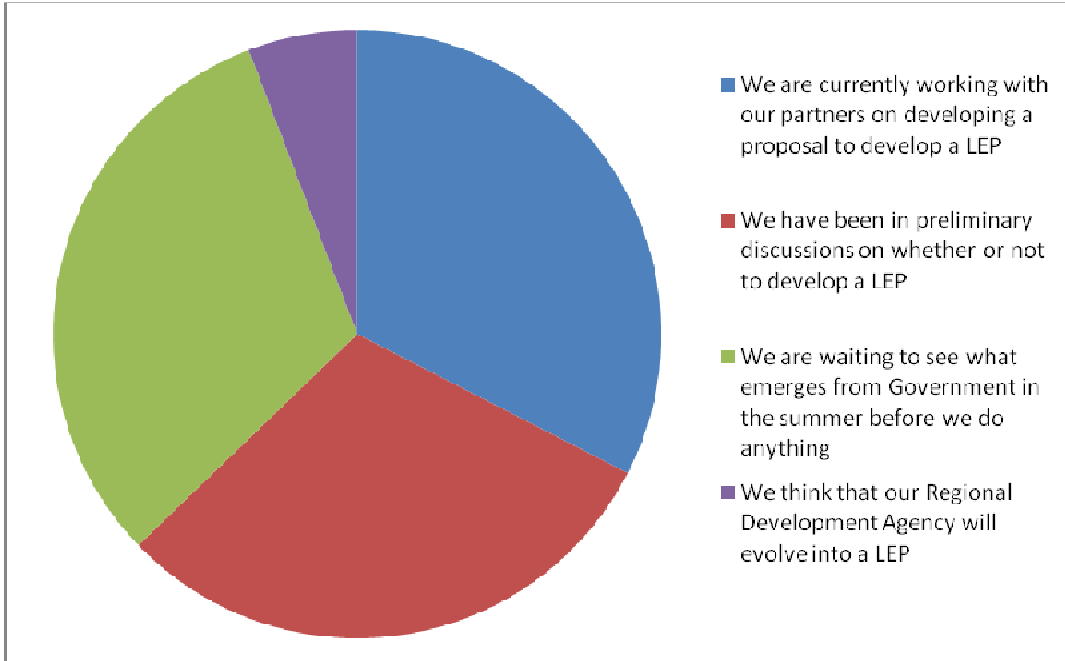


Figure 5: Which of the following best describes your current thinking/activity on LEPs?

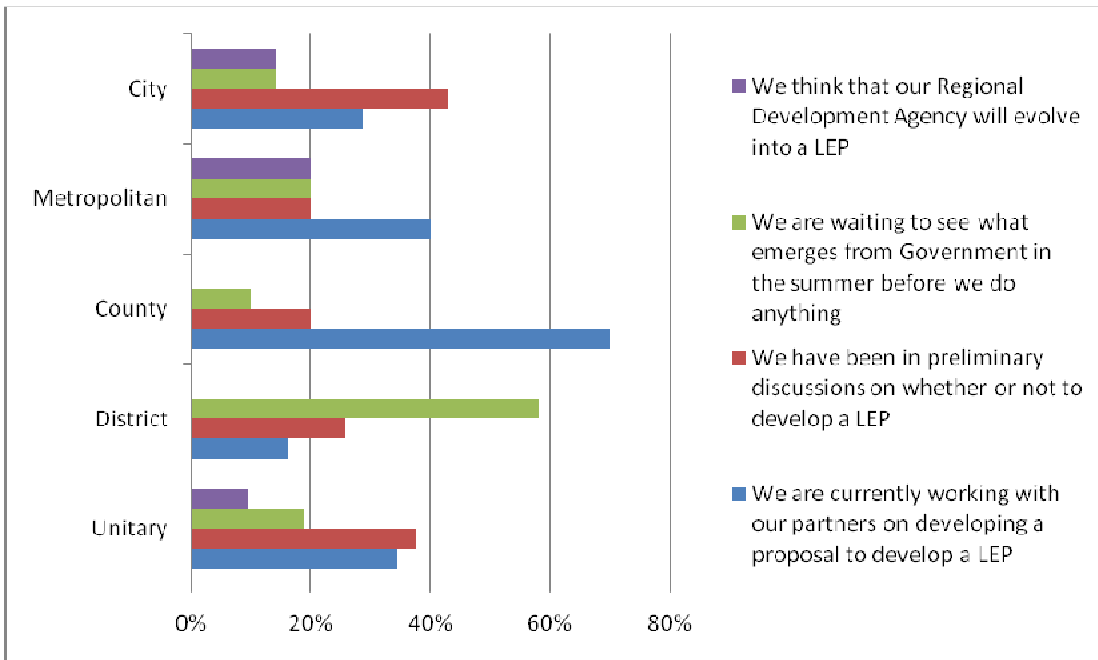


Figure 6: Current thinking / activity on LEPs against Local Authority type.

### 3.3.2 Core functions of the LEP

We asked respondents to indicate the extent to which they agreed with a series of statements regarding the potential core functions of LEPs.

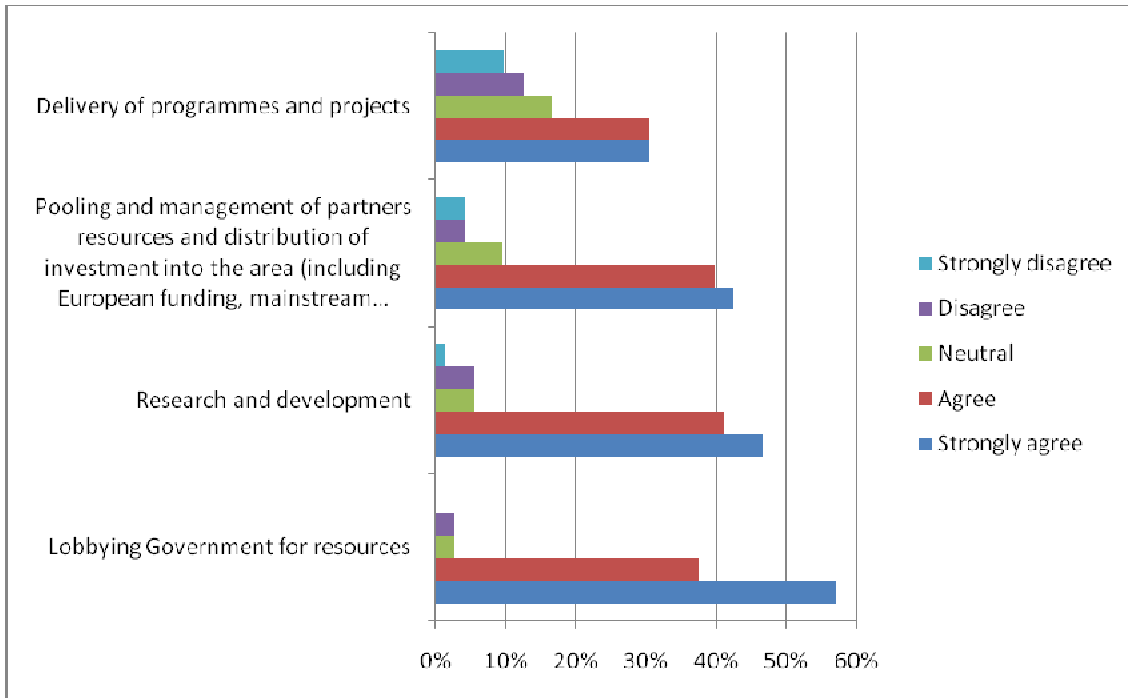


Figure 7: Core functions of the LEP.

There was a strong consensus from respondents that LEPs should be fulfilling higher level strategic functions, such as lobbying government, research and development, and the management and distribution of resources. The proportion of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing with these statements was between 82% and 94% across all typologies.

However, there appeared to be less agreement regarding LEPs undertaking operational activity, in terms of the actual delivery of programmes and projects on the ground, with only 61% either agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement. Authorities who disagreed or strongly disagreed tended to be from the northern regions, either the North East or the North West, whilst the majority of respondents from Yorkshire and Humber (60%) preferred to remain largely neutral on this issue.

We also asked respondents to provide their own suggestions for what core functions LEPs should undertake (**Appendix 2**). These suggestions included providing a co-ordinating function between local authorities to ensure that activities were complimentary, providing an interface between local communities and local businesses, and adopting the role of a commissioner of services to which individual delivery partners would be accountable.

### 3.3.3 Core areas of interest

We also asked respondents to indicate the extent to which they agreed with a series of statements regarding the potential areas that LEPs should impact upon (Figure 8 below).

There was a consensus that LEPs should be involved in inward investment, employment support and the provision of enterprise support, with at least 61% of all respondents strongly agreeing with these statements. The only respondents who strongly disagreed with LEPs impacting upon planning and transport issues were exclusively unitary authorities based in the North East. Similarly, only North East unitary authorities strongly disagreed with LEPs being involved in enterprise activity.

Although positive, there was less strong agreement in terms of LEPs impacting upon skills, planning and transport and tourism activities. The areas of London, the East Midlands and the North East were particularly unconvinced of the value of LEPs in this area.

Unitary and district authorities across all regions were the only respondents that either disagreed or strongly disagreed with LEPs informing upon planning and transport issues.

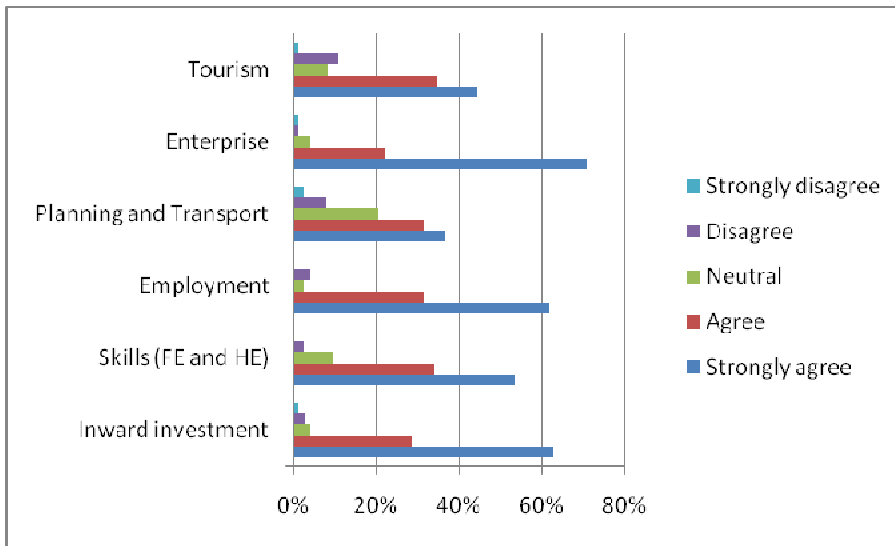


Figure 8: Core areas of interest

When asked what ‘Other’ areas of interest LEPs should be involved with a number of different responses were received (**Appendix 3**). These comments included suggestions concerning regeneration in the local community, sector developmental issues, promoting new drivers of economic growth such as low carbon agendas, and facilitating cross-boundary collaborations and implementation of projects.

### 3.3.4 In your opinion, what should be the key priority of the LEP?

Whilst there were a wide range of responses received against what respondents believed the key priority of the LEP should be, there were clear and recurring themes that could be identified. The most common of these was that LEPs should provide some form of strategic co-ordination and management of the various resources and activities of different partners involved in the Economic Development agenda locally:

*‘Galvanise economic partners to have a strategic economic view of their area’*

*‘Co-ordination and promotion’*

*‘Co-ordination and delivery of interventions to achieve a shared long-term development strategy’*

*'Working with local partners to ensure the best use and development of local resources'*

*'Joining up depleted funding sources to maximise impact'*

*'The LEP should assist partners to work together to deliver increased outcomes, supporting the pooling of resources but not necessarily managing that funding directly'*

*'Strategy formulation, drawing partners together, working with private sector partners and securing funding for local priorities'*

Related to providing a co-ordinating function, there were also repeated calls that LEPs should be providing leadership and direction for the sector:

*'Strategic leadership for the creation and retention of jobs and skills'*

*'Taking a very proactive role in developing projects that positively affect the local economy'*

*'The key priority of the LEP should be to provide the leadership, informed particularly by businesses, to consider the needs of the economic geography'*

Many of the respondents view LEPs as the most appropriate body to manage resources across new functional geographies and economic areas, in recognition of the increasing realisation that economic development, enterprise and regeneration activities do not adhere to traditional administrative boundaries:

*'Co-ordination across sub-regional areas and aligning policy/funding based on best functional urban region'*

*'Promoting and supporting all aspects of economic growth within a functional economic area – that is not restricted by local authority boundaries'*

*'The key priority of a LEP should be to bring together the public and private sectors to develop and deliver a shared vision for the economic prosperity of the functional economic area in which the Partnership operates'*

Other recurring, but less prominent themes, to emerge included encouraging inward investment, providing adequate support for businesses, promoting sustainable growth, and influencing policy development.

### **3.3.5 Based upon your experience, what should the LEP avoid doing?**

We asked respondents to draw upon their previous knowledge and experiences of cross boundary partnership working in order to identify what LEPs should *not* be doing.

The most commonly cited concern were numerous comments specifically warning against LEPs becoming another 'talking shop', reflecting previous experiences where initiatives had been proposed and discussed but little affirmative action had been taken.

There were also strong and repeated suggestions that LEPs should focus upon higher level strategic decision making and co-ordination of resources as opposed to the direct delivery of interventions themselves, with suggestions that, at the most, LEPs should be a commissioner of services:

*'If the LEP is set up at a strategic level such as the existing RDA level then it should not get involved in direct delivery of projects'*

*'[LEPs should avoid] Direct delivery – services/interventions should be commissioned'*

*'[LEPs should avoid] Trying to act in the place of other agencies – let them do what they are good at, be that project delivery or engaging with the private sector'*

*'[LEPs should avoid] Tampering with local delivery arrangements and any other non-strategic or non-sub-regional issues'*

Regarding the activities of other agencies, there were also numerous suggestions that LEPs need to avoid duplicating existing provision in their local area:

*'[LEPs should avoid] Duplicating what other agencies are better placed to handle'*

In terms of duplicating provision, there were repeated comments that warned against LEPs trying to be 'all things to all men' and attempting to achieve too much unrealistically at the expense of focussing on specific issues or remits:

*'[LEPs should avoid] Trying to please everyone, delivering in areas best served locally or nationally, being too strategic and not considering practical delivery issues. Avoid becoming a TEC!'*

Less common suggestions regarding what LEPs should avoid included, distribution of grant funding, focussing too much on urban areas at the expense of rural ones, and duplicating the structures and functions of the soon to be defunct Regional Development Agencies.

### **3.3.6 Out of the following options, which best describes your views on how LEPs should be developed?**

Over half of the respondents to this survey stated that they were using the development of LEPs as an opportunity to consolidate and build upon relationships with existing partners, whereas a third of respondents saw the LEPs as an opportunity to review the effectiveness and capability of existing partnership arrangements (Figure 9 below).

Similar proportions of respondents (between 7% and 9%) stated that they were currently unsure of how LEPs would develop, and that they were examining the creation of new structures as it was unlikely a LEP would evolve from existing partnership arrangements.

If we compare respondents' answers against local authority type (Figure 10 below), we see that only local authorities of the district or unitary type are considering creating a new organisational structure, whereas city and county authorities favour a clear preference for moving forward and consolidating existing partnership relationships over any other course of action.

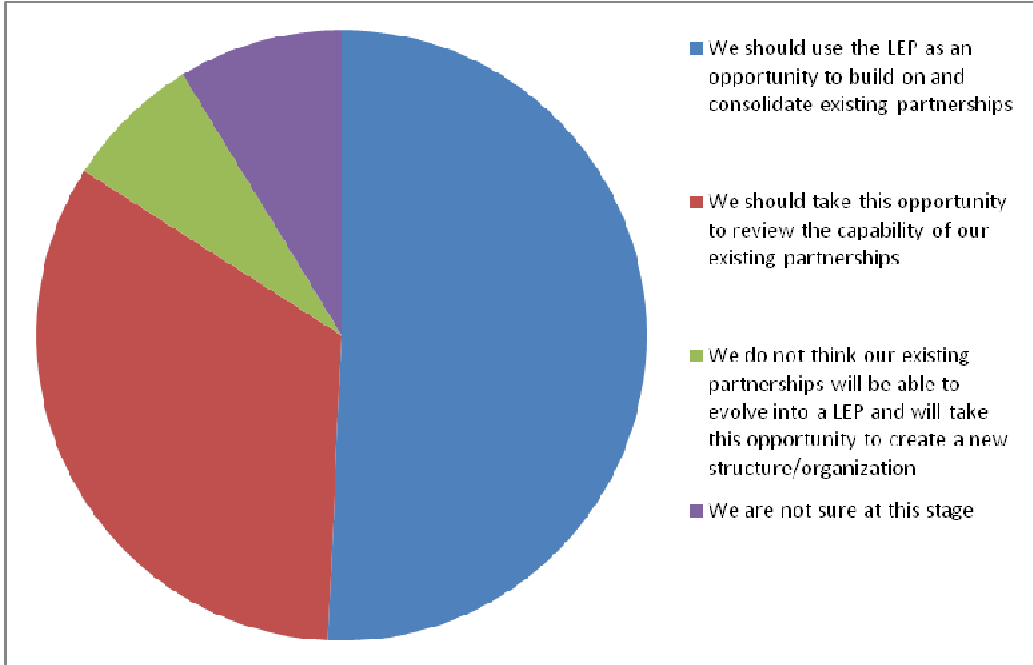


Figure 9: Out of the following options, which best describes your views on how LEPs should be developed?

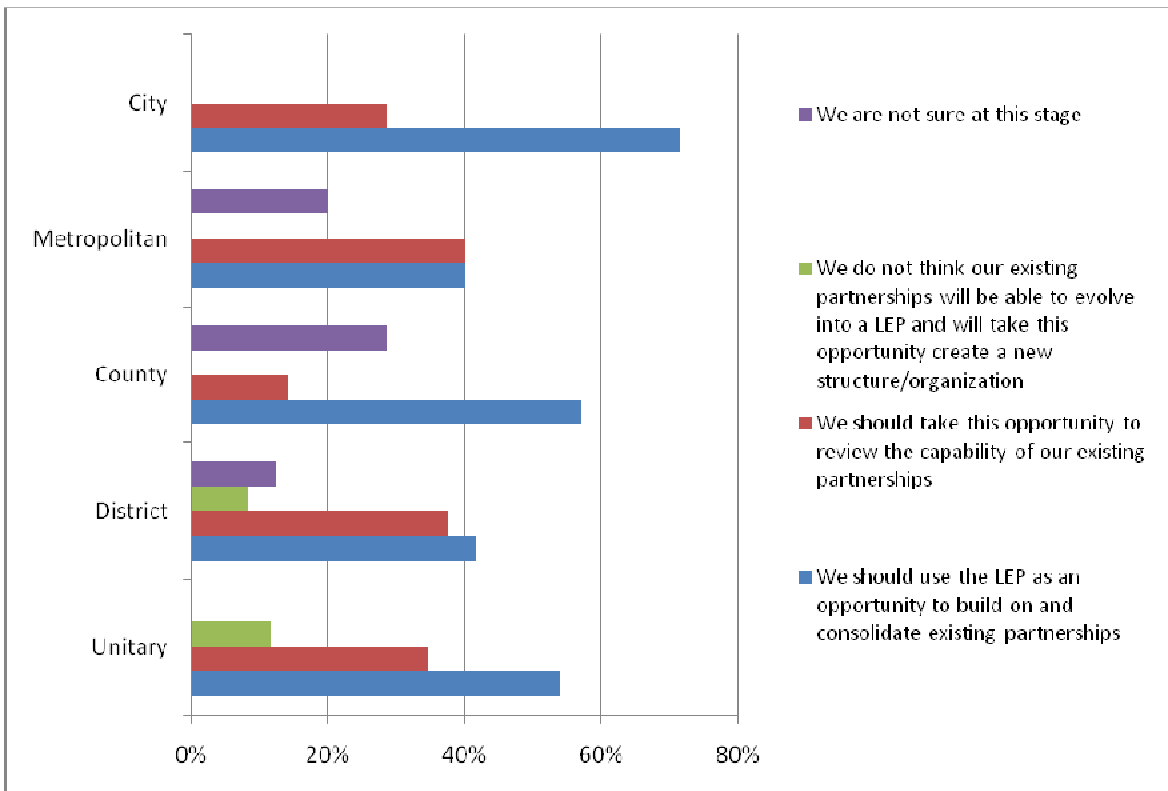


Figure 10: How should LEPs develop against local authority type?

### 3.4 Role and function of a LEP

#### 3.4.1 Which of the following do you think will be the biggest challenge in creating a LEP?

Securing financial and staff resources was identified by 30.4% of respondents as the biggest challenge, followed by getting the right level of private sector investment at the start (27.5%), committing partners to work sub-regionally (21.7%), attracting the right leadership/skills to manage the LEP (8.7%), with 4.3% stating it was too early to tell at this time (Figure 11 below).

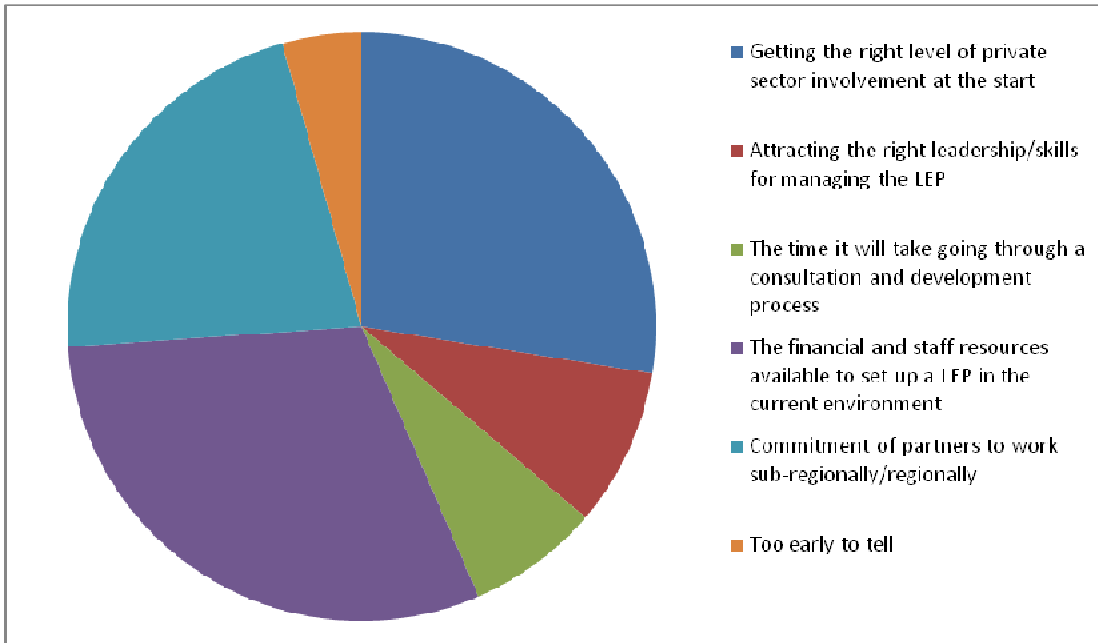


Figure 11: Which of the following do you think will be the biggest challenge in creating a LEP?

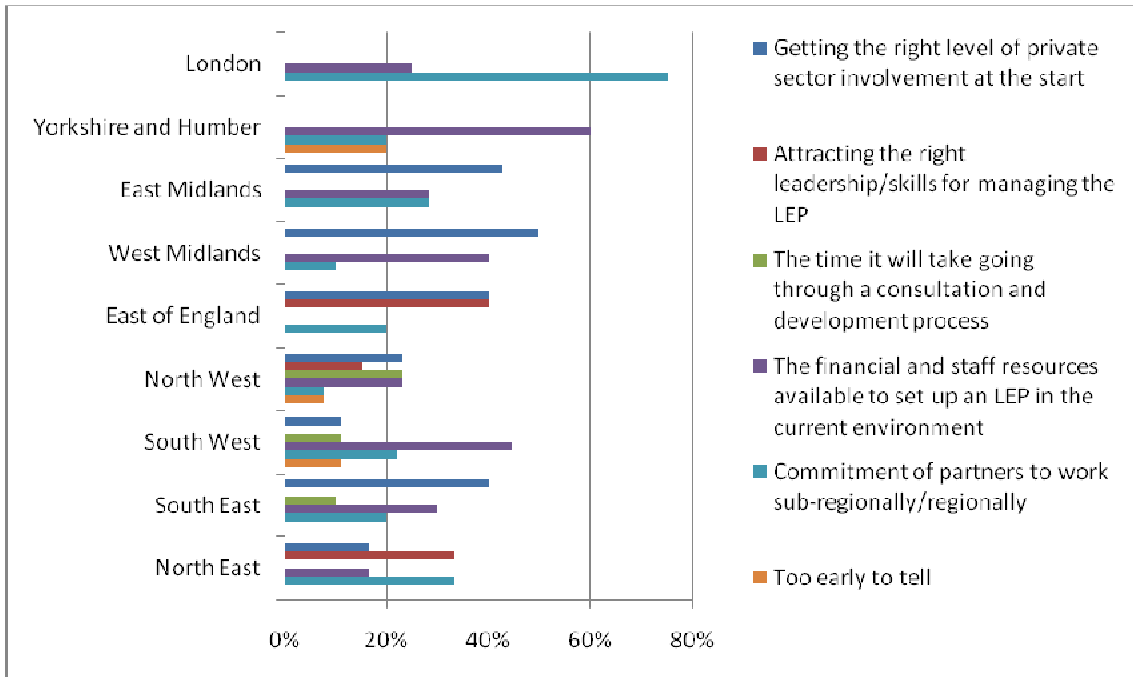


Figure 12: Biggest challenge to creating a LEP against region.

When responses are compared against the region where respondents were based (Figure 12 above), it can be seen for the North East, securing private sector involvement and attracting the right leadership and skills are seen as the biggest challenge. In the South West and Yorkshire and Humber, the biggest challenge has been identified as being the staff and financial resources which are required. The West Midlands is facing challenges in terms of financial and staff resources, in addition to securing private sector buy-in.

London is unique in that it is the only region where it is expected that securing the willingness of partners to work sub-regionally/regionally will be the biggest challenge. This is, perhaps, a reflection of the different levels of functional geographies which are present in the capital.

**3.4.2 Which other established partnerships would you “turn off”/incorporate within the LEP? Please select as many as are applicable.**

Respondents were asked which established partnerships they would like to see subsumed within the proposed LEPs (Figure 13 below). Business Support was the most commonly indicated with 22.3% of all responses, followed by Education and skills with 20.3%. Tourism, Research, Rural Affairs Forum and Local Strategic Partnerships all received between 10 to 15% of responses.

Partnerships to be incorporated under the ‘Other’ category, which represented 8.1% of all responses, included the Homes and Communities agency, Chamber of Commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses, and partnerships which were established to tackle worklessness.

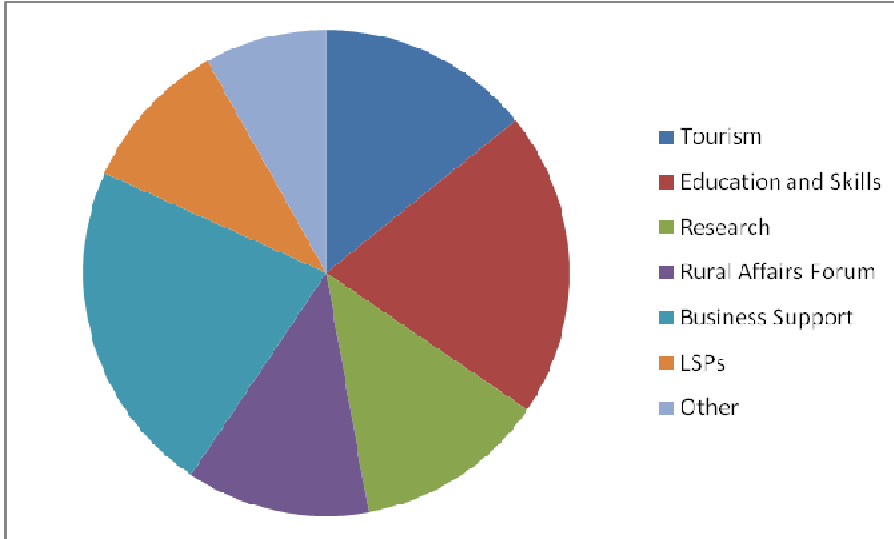


Figure 13: Which other established partnerships would you “turn off”/incorporate within the LEP?

In terms of local authority typologies, city, county and unitary authorities all displayed a marked preference for Business Support as the partnership to be incorporated into LEPs, whilst districts showed a preference for Education and Skills partnerships and metropolitan authorities were in favour of Tourism and Education partnerships jointly.

### 3.4.3 What scale of activity should the LEP encompass?

Figure 14 below highlights respondents views about the scale of activity LEPs should encompass, where there is a preference for LEPs to undertake Executive decision making roles.

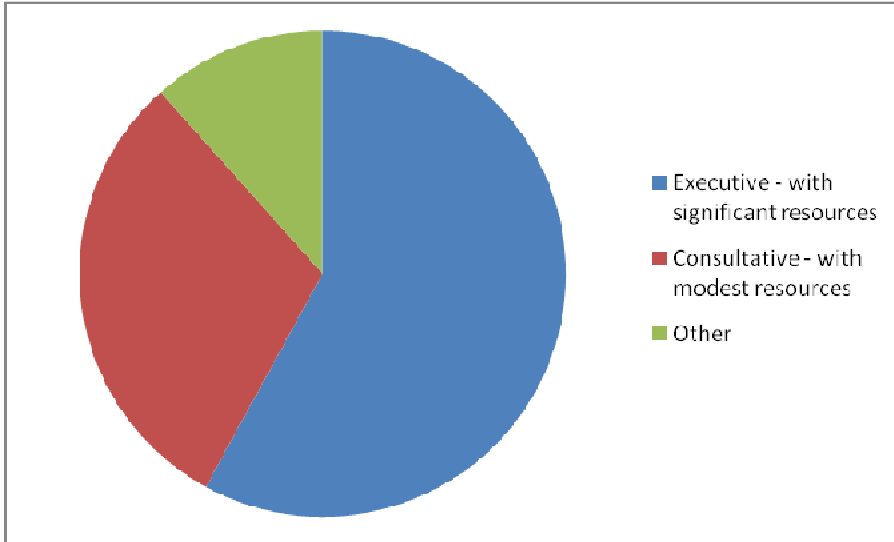


Figure 14: What scale of activity should the LEP encompass?

Figure 15 below highlights views about the scale of LEPs activity when respondent's local authority types are taken into account. All local authority types express a preference for Executive functions, with the exception of metropolitan authorities which expressed a preference for consultative activities with 'modest resources'.

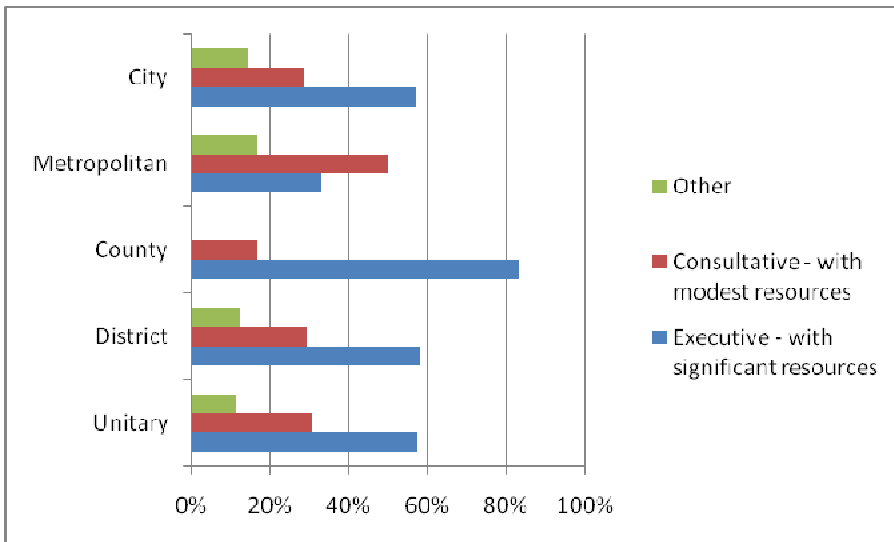


Figure 15: Scale of activity against local authority type.

### 3.4.4 What should be the geographic scope of a LEP?

Respondents were asked what the geographical scope of a LEP should be. The most common response from those available was that this should be left to the discretion of local partners to decide (45.5%), with similar proportions stating LEPs should be based upon existing functional market areas (22.7%), or existing MAA/sub-regional/City Region structures (24.2%), as highlighted in Figure 16 below.

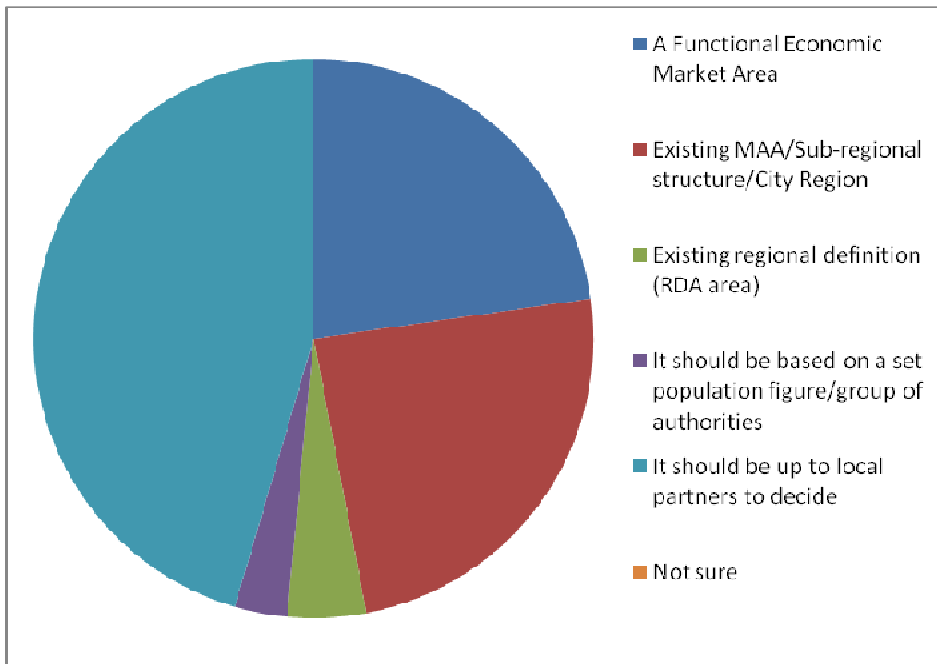


Figure 16: What should be the geographic scope of a LEP?

When responses are compared against local authority type, as in Figure 17 below, it can be seen that unitary, district and county authorities display a clear preference for allowing local partners to decide the geographic scope of the LEP, whilst city and metropolitan authorities would prefer to base this on existing MAA/sub-regional/City Region structures.

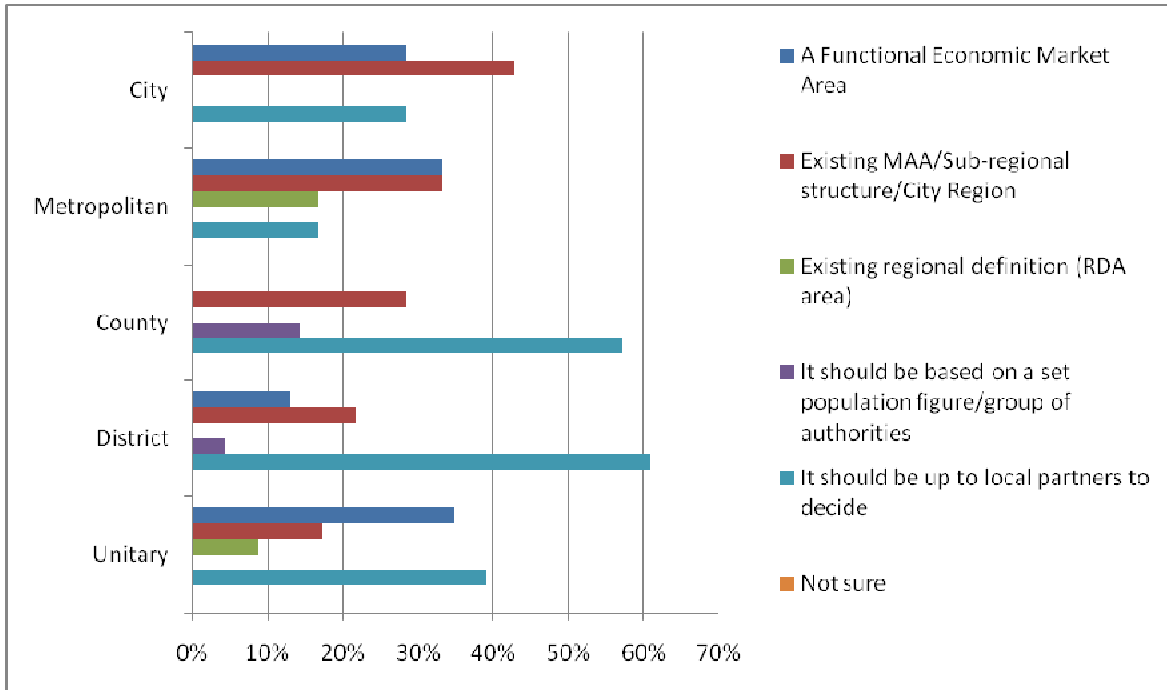


Figure 17: What should be the geographic scope of a LEP against local authority typology?

### 3.5 Future challenges

#### 3.5.1 Looking to future challenges, what would you say is your authority’s single biggest challenge?

There was a wide range of issues which were raised when respondents were asked to state what they perceived to be their authority’s single biggest challenge. By far the most commonly recurring theme was pressures associated with access to finance and resources, particularly in terms of anticipated cuts in levels of public spending:

*‘Budget cutbacks and maintaining the delivery of services’*

*‘Pressure on finance, and resulting uncertainty over prioritisation of economic development/regeneration activity’*

*‘Doing more for less – capacity’*

*‘Prioritising activity and interventions in the context of much reduced resources’*

*‘Budget cuts – delivering non statutory services with depleted resources’*

There were also comments highlighting potential difficulties associated with implementing new functional geographies:

*‘Biggest issue will be to get agreement as to the spatial scale of LEPs and linking that to LA levels of activity’*

*'Encouraging LA's to look beyond traditional admin boundaries'*

*'Seeking an autonomous LEP for a functional economic area that does not necessarily coincide with County Council boundaries'*

Other challenges cited including securing the buy-in of other partners, particularly BIS and the private sector, the current paucity of employment land supply, and achieving the right balance of investment between urban and rural areas.

For a full list of verbatim quotes, please refer to **Appendix 5**.

### **3.5.2 What one thing would you like to see built into the LEP proposals due for consultation in the summer?**

We asked respondents what they would like to see incorporated into the proposals for LEPs, to which a wide range of comments and suggestions were returned.

By far the most common suggestion was for mechanisms to be built into LEPs to make them accountable, be it to local authorities, businesses/private sector, and even elected politicians, as shown in the comments below:

*'Consideration on how the LEP will be accountable to local partners'*

*'A clear role for local politicians to ensure accountability to the area'*

*'Strong influence by, and accountability to, the private sector'*

Other respondents called for maintaining the influence and involvement of local authorities in the roll-out of LEPs:

*'Clear local authority leadership'*

*'Engagement with all LA's including districts'*

*'Commitment to work with LA's, to listen and take on their views – the LEPs need to respond to and effectively address local need'*

*'Ensure that local authority functions are strengthened to deliver on the ground'*

In addition to the above, other elements respondents would like to see incorporated into the LEP consultation included devolving RDA funding down to the LEPs, allowing local partners to determine the functional geography of LEPs, and clarity regarding where investment for the LEPs would actually come from.

For a full list of verbatim quotes, please refer to **Appendix 6**.

### 3.5.3 How long from today do you think it will take to establish a LEP?

Just over one-third of all respondents believe that LEPs could be established within 12 months, whilst just under one-quarter believe the timeframe to be closer to within 6 months, as highlighted in the figure below.

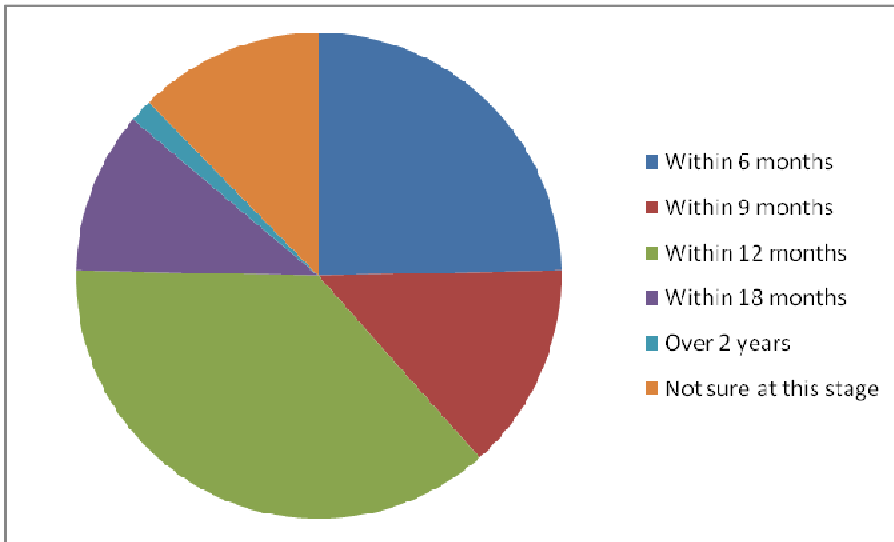


Figure 18: How long, from today, do you think it will take to establish a LEP?

Figure 19 below shows respondents expectations for the timeframe involved in establishing a LEP compared with local authority type. We can see that many county authorities and metropolitan authorities clearly believe LEPs can be established 6 months, whereas district and unitary are erring on the slightly more cautious side with 12 months.

In addition, it was only unitary authorities who estimated a timeframe of over 2 years to establish a LEP, although the proportions of these are very small (1.5%).

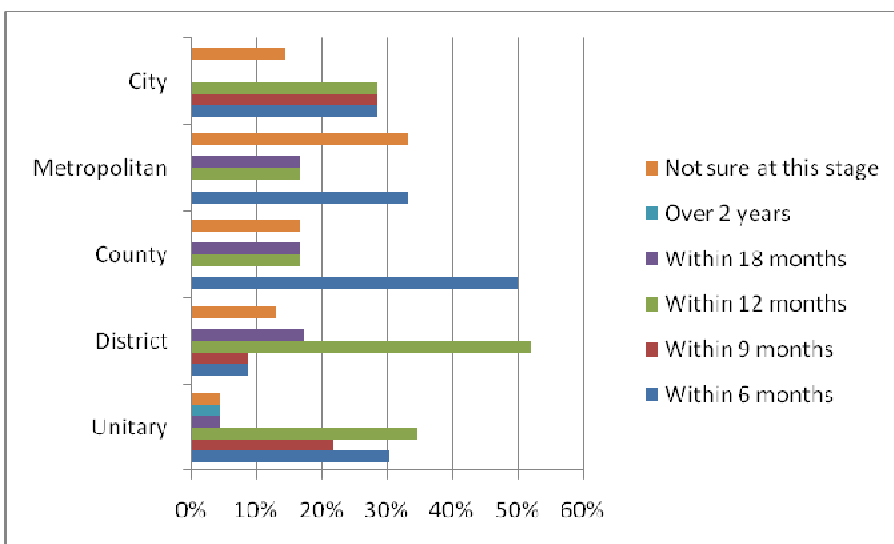


Figure 19: Time to establish a LEP and local authority type.

## Appendix 1 – Response profile

**‘Other – please specify’ responses in answer to the question ‘Which of the following job titles best describes your current position?’**

Area Regeneration Manager
Business Development Officer
Business Liaison Officer
Business Support & Development Manager
Chair of Strategic Economic Partnership
Chief Executive
Chief Executive
Chief Executive
Chief Executive
Chief Executive
City region manager
Director
Director of Partnership organisation supporting LA in economic development
Director of Schools, Skills and Enterprise
Economic Development and Community Partnerships Officer
Economic Development Officer
Economic Development Officer
Economic Development Officer
Economic Manager
Economic Policy Officer
Economic Regeneration Team Leader
Economic Research Manager
Economic Strategy Manager
Enterprise and Skills
Executive Manager for Economic Development and Regeneration
Group Manager (Regeneration and Funding)
Group Manager Economic Development
Head of Business Support
Head of Corporate Policy
Head of Enterprise & Employment
leader of the opposition
Partnerships
Principal Economic Research Officer
Principal of an FE College
Project Manager, Regional Policy
Strategic Manager covering regeneration, planning and housing

## Appendix 2 – Core functions free text comments

### **‘What should be the core functions of a LEP?’ – Open responses**

Developing inter and infra regional communities of interest on specific issues such as Economic Development, Transport Infrastructure etc.

Coordinating between local authorities to ensure crossover and fit with existing activities.

Enterprise Development Action Plan.

A full range of economic development (including attraction of investment, business support, innovation and sectoral support, etc), regeneration and related activity should also be within LEPs remit.

Reallocating resources to obtain equitable distribution of business and employment support funding.

Community and business interfacing.

We see the LEP as having an overarching commissioning role which to which individual delivery partners would be accountable.

The strategic commissioning of programmes and projects.

Linking to Planning, Housing and Transport.

## Appendix 3 – Core areas free text comments

### **‘What should be the core areas of interest of a LEP?’ – Open responses**

Cross Border collaborations and the implementation of projects.

Regeneration.

New industries.

Community regeneration.

Economic Analysis/Business services/Sector development/social enterprise/town centre development.

Strategic Housing issues.

Business Support/Business Link/Sector issues.

Apprenticeships, Workforce & Skills Development, housing and climate change.

European funding and reviving town centres.

Drivers of growth - e.g. low carbon economy.

Regeneration - note that this and areas above from a strategic commissioning perspective only.

Economic intelligence and sector development.

In relation to tourism this is felt to be a key area of concern for LEPs. Previously it has been considered that RDA's have underplayed the importance of tourism to the economy because of a perceived lower quality of job.

Planning and Housing.

## Appendix 4 – Priorities free text comments

### ‘In your opinion, what should be the key priority of the LEP?’ – Open responses

Developing a sub-regional delivery framework for economic development (including physical infrastructure, inward investment, enterprise and employment & skills).

Help to identify the areas which will benefit most from wealth creation in the economy. This is a key element in helping to reduce the budget deficit and maintaining sustainable communities.

Service co-ordination and commissioning.

Employment and Enterprise.

Cutting out bureaucracy of grant funding and truly addressing LOCAL priorities.

Inward investment.

Galvanising economic partners to have a strategic economic view of their area and direct limited resources to priority areas, whether for economic growth or mitigating against worst effects of economic cuts in vulnerable places.

Focussing agencies to single vision for delivering real economic growth but agree action plan and monitoring arrangements with key deliverables.

The proactive development of strategic economic development activities that are relevant to and for a local area, making the best use of its natural and manpower resources.

Forget about geographical and political boundaries. Adapt to new enterprising ways of working to enable local authorities, organisations that support business like Chambers, IODs and FSBs and local business groups to work together while pooling their resources to achieve their objectives. In the process do not create bureaucracies. Focus on specific activities that can make a big difference for their area.

Co-ordination and promotion.

Maximising the economic growth of the local area to the benefit of local residents.

Co-ordination and delivery of interventions to achieve a shared long-term development strategy.

Regeneration of the geographical area - jobs, skills, infrastructure, buildings, the economy, etc.

Developing PRACTICAL programmes for business support e.g. Business Start-up training and grants. Business expansion/ development programmes which continue and can be improved/refined over time. Export advice.

Economic Development in its widest sense.

Enterprise and innovation.

Acquiring resources for the region.

Delivering sustainable economic growth.

Raising productivity and reducing unemployment.

The key priority of a LEP should be to provide the leadership, informed particularly by Businesses to consider the needs of the agreed economic geography based on robust evidence. Agree strategies/action plans in partnership to deliver increased economic activity. The LEP should assist partners to work together to deliver increased outcomes supporting pooling of funding but not necessarily managing that funding directly-perhaps offering the scrutiny, challenge and support role.

Promoting and supporting all aspects of economic growth within a functional economic area, that is not restricted by LA boundaries.

Grow the local economy and narrowing the gap.

Economic Development.

Strategic direction and focus, prioritisation.

Delivery of funded actions to support the local economy.

Coordination across sub regional areas and aligning policy/funding based on best functional urban region and where appropriate, combining budgets and drawing down regional funding allocations to support sub-regional priorities. Imperative private sector is a key partner to determine future skills and business needs. Key role is to be played by the local authority to facilitate and enable local enterprise partnerships to respond to local economic drivers.

To develop local delivery of business support existing businesses and inward investment.

Development of indigenous sustainable business.

Sustainable economic development.

Striving for local prosperity.

Partnership working on local economic development.

Promoting sustainable and managed economic growth.

Ensuring that the public sector's economic interventions are in the best interests of our businesses. Enterprise and business support alongside raising the skill levels within the area.

To drive the enterprise development, employment & skills agenda; co-ordinate business start up support & aftercare; assist with business development, growth & sustainability; support inward investment and tourism.

Setting the strategy for all its functions.

Co-ordinating strategic priorities to promote economic prosperity.

The key priority of a LEP should be to bring together the public and private sectors to develop and deliver a shared vision for the economic prosperity of the functional economic area in which the Partnership operates, and to maximise value for investment.

Strategy and local delivery of projects carried out more locally i.e., through local economic development companies.

Management & Coordination of Resources and Programmes.

Job creation and investment; lobbying for infrastructure improvements.

Strategic leadership for the creation and retention of jobs and skills and to be proactive in advancing our global competitiveness.

Growing the Economy.

Deliver a cohesive economic strategy and action plan for the functional economic area it covers. Engage and work with existing economic development and business/community support organisations to deliver the strategy.

Enterprise, employment, regeneration (growth points, community specific etc).

Employment safeguarding and growth.

Creating jobs by improving the competitiveness/productivity of local companies, raising skill levels and ensuring the supply of sufficient quantity/quality employment land.

To establish an agreed shared vision and strategy.

Taking a very proactive role in developing projects that positively effect the local economy.

Economic health and development - for an appropriate sub regional unit - enhancing the day jobs of the contributors.

Contributing to economic growth.

The LEP should create the vision for the area, develop a strategy for that area and working in public/private and third sector organisations partnership, deliver that strategy. It is vitally important that the LEP is based around a robust evidence base.

Sustaining growth.

Inward Investment activity.

Understanding the region and its communities.

Working with local partners to ensure the best use and development of local resources.

Developing investment strategies for the locality.

Strategic policy and direction.

Allocating funding and lobby for additional funds in key areas.

Managing EU Funding.

Keep Central Govt informed of ED activity in the regions.

Facilitate coordination of LA funding.

Agreeing settled growth priorities and the role of different places across the conurbation in driving that growth.

Joining up depleted funding sources to maximise impact.

Economic growth and regeneration strategy and strategic commissioning of delivery (including securing resources for this purpose).

Sector development.

Lobbying and also inward invest.

This should be focussed on employment generation and business formation, including within the tourism sector. Linked to this should be the dissemination of grants to enable delivery of job and business creation.

Strategy formulation, drawing partners together, working with private sector partners and securing funding for local priorities.

Given the economic climate at the current time and that predicted for the foreseeable future a key priority should be economic stability.

## Appendix 5 – Future challenges free text comments

### Looking to future challenges, what would you say is your authority's single biggest challenge? – Open responses

Encouraging inward investment.

With regards to LEP's, working within a regional boundary it is currently unsuited to.

Generally, creating "sustainable economic growth".

Access to resources.

Welfare state dependency.

Financing economic development function and priorities.

Public sector job cuts and rising unemployment.

Difficulty in driving up private sector investment and job creation.

Driving forward what has already been achieved in economic growth in a challenging environment.

Making the case for a functional economic area that is geographically small but able to make significant improvements to the community in the area.

Being deprived but in the south east of England.

Availability of resources and continuing to deal with two tier structure.

Rural area with pockets of dispersed deprivation. Doesn't figure highly on IMD, but are one of the top 4 for fuel poverty.

Bureaucracy.

Doing more for less – capacity.

Reduction in the public sector.

Managing budgets within a very tight fiscal environment.

Planning and delivery of sustainable population and economic growth.

Working with several authorities mean that there are varying challenges-biggest issue will be to get agreement as to the spatial scale of LEP's and linking that to LA level traction of activity.

Encouraging LA's to look beyond traditional admin boundaries.

Being a rural Council ensuring the agencies & other bodies effectively take on board & deliver fairly for these areas needs rather than focusing on urban areas.

Money - in order to support the work of a LEP in growing the economy - after that, attracting inward investment.

Addressing skills and worklessness issues.

Seeking an autonomous LEP for a functional economic area that does not necessarily coincide with County Council boundaries.

Excited by the possibilities but recognising the transitional arrangements moving out of existing local to sub-regional but optimistic this will provide local opportunities and support improved sub-regional working.

Working in true partnership with the private sector, although we are well placed to do this.

Resources and capacity.

Finance.

Finance and resources.

Managing substantial cuts while retaining economic intervention capacity.

To continue to offer confidence in a product that is in a fragile state.

Prioritising activity and interventions in the context of much reduced resources.

Avoiding being drawn into other potential LEP arrangements that may not be our best fit e.g. county wide or regional.

Addressing business needs to stimulate growth in local key sectors.

Achieving buy-in from BIS, which seems reluctant to explore real devolution to local authorities working at the level of the functional economy.

Budget cutbacks and maintaining the delivery of services.

Meeting a balanced budget and continuing to deliver front-line services.

Resolving Budget difficulties without compromising service quality.

Focusing and funding development of the authorities' specific key industry sectors within a wide LEP.

Pressure on finance, and resulting uncertainty over prioritisation of economic development/regeneration activity.

Employment land supply.

Finding future funding for regeneration.

Ensuring we have the skills and people to ensure our businesses can grow and develop.

Finding the right partners and being allowed to work at the same things for long enough to make enough happen.

Financial Resources.

If this question relates to challenges setting up a LEP - it would be around ensuring that the authority has sufficient resources to ensure a LEP could run successfully.

If the question relates to an economic 'issue' - it would be to raise the skills profile and aspiration of the local population.

25% budget cuts.

Having little influence over delivery of employment support and skills programmes.

Size - unitary authority.

Investment in the area to create economic opportunities.

With the withdrawal of RDAs and Business Link, LAs have a huge gap to fill in terms of enterprise and business support provision. Our staff team within ED has been reduced to a level that it will be difficult to respond effectively at a time when funding is also being cut.

Having the imagination and confidence to overcome the financial position in the public and private sector.

Budget cuts, delivering non statutory services with depleted resources.

Public spending cuts.

Developing the existing business base - getting the right balance between the needs of urban and rural areas.

Unlocking the financial resources and backing required by businesses and entrepreneurs to develop and create employment - bank lending is crucial, the lack of it is stifling current developments.

Given the existing and foreseeable economic climate, maintaining our services, private sector investment and employment levels will be particularly challenging, given the anticipated reduction in public sector employment and public expenditure.

## Appendix 6 – LEP proposals free text comments

### What one thing would you like to see built into the LEP proposals due for consultation in the summer? - Open responses

Devolution of funding from RDAs to LEPs.

Flexibility over how a LEP should be constructed with all public authorities given an equal say.

Appropriate representation applied to decision making.

Local accountability.

Consideration on how the LEP will be accountable to local partners.

That it considers both strategic and delivery issues - how will things be delivered with less resources?

A clear role for locally elected politicians to ensure accountability to the area.

Proposals for the tangible outcomes and outputs to be achieved by the LEP in its first year of operation.

Routes for influencing Government.

Freedom to deliver local solutions.

That it will NOT be decided by the County Council with little dialogue with BCs and DCs!

Strong influence by and accountability to the private sector. Local Authorities pay lip-service to Economic Development but the processes of the LEPs are too cumbersome and do not attract the right people. Most businesspeople despair of them.

Engagement with all LA's including Districts.

The development of the private sector in a public sector dominated area.

Clear local authority leadership.

The ability for local partners to determine the geographical coverage of the LEP.

Recognition of track record of business engagement and leadership.

Flexibility.

To require clear evidence of a functional economic area.

To show fair treatment of and a need to use resources proportionately for the rural areas surrounding our urban settlements.

Strong on low carbon economy.

A preferred option of single-county based LEPs.

Flexibility - avoid oversubscription to enable LEP's to reflect local conditions.

The freedom for local partners to establish an independent LEP which best meets the economic needs of the local area and is small enough to be able to target resources where they would have most impact.

Budget to make the LEP happen.

Facilitation.

Options and scenarios of how it might work/examples of where LEP activity has happened.

Local issues that impact economic outputs.

Incentives (resources) and mid-term certainty.

How budget would be allocated to a LEP and then how it could use these funds.

Budget.

Mechanisms for holding the ring and co-ordinating between LEPs at the regional level; and to co-ordinate collective national role.

A clear minimum level of business leader involvement (expressed as a percentage).

That the consultation is 'true' consultation and the LEP is developed around the responses/suggestions. It also needs to have input from those delivering services, not just setting policy.

Potential flexibility to allow overlapping geographies.

Adequate resources from government to replace those taken back to Treasury with the demise of RDAs etc.

No specific issue.

LEPs should be offered real devolution.

Holistic approach to economic development and not just predicated on existing RDA functions. It is also important to take into consideration the skills agenda and ensure that DWP / SFA roles and responsibilities are devolved to LEPs and not centralised.

Capacity within each LA area.

Opportunities for rural areas with potential for jobs growth to benefit from infrastructure investment.

As little restriction from Central Gov as possible but maximum devolution of funds and powers.

Consistent and appropriate funding with appropriate levels of budget authority.

Assurances that all deliverers of economic development/regeneration activity are involved in the development of LEP's - if some partners are omitted then it will be difficult to ensure engagement in the future.

Clarity over powers and resources available - essential to gain private sector buy-in.

It is NOT based on major cities but takes on board economic areas such as sub-regions.

Recognition of the needs of the SE - not the same as the North etc but there are economic and social challenges which we have been tackling and that needs to continue - the private sector is not so strong that it can do it all at this stage.

Local independence.

We would like to see that LEP proposals are built around sound economic evidence and ability to deliver. It needs to be 'local' in all senses of the word.

That they have a thorough understanding of the geographical area they cover.

A strategy to engage with private sector.

Promotion of enterprise through research and consultation; involvement of the private sector.

Where would investment come from? - would any of the RDA budgets be given to LEPs?

Commitment to work with LAs, listen and take on their views. The LEPs need to respond to and effectively address local need.

Speed!

Ensure that Local Authorities economic functions are strengthened to deliver on the ground.

Devolution of power and resources to LEPs.

Clarity for semi/rural areas that span more than one functional economic area.

The opportunity for local partners to decide on the area.

The ability to allow real and genuine local involvement in their development, and linked to this, clear government guidelines. Community and business involvement will be crucial to their acceptance and future success.

Clearer guidance on what constitutes 'local' and 'regional' is needed.

LEP's need to be suitably robust in terms of their governance structures, but equally they need to be flexible enough to enable them to respond to changing economic climates.