

## **Cumbria LEP chair meets with PM**

The chairman of Cumbria's strategic economic body has attended a round table meeting with the Prime Minister as part of ongoing discussions about economic opportunities for the county.

Chair of Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership, George Beveridge, attended the session with Theresa May in Birmingham, a one off event organised on behalf of the LEP Network.

Topics of discussion included transport, skills development, housing supply pressures, foreign investment and energy sector opportunities in offshore wind, nuclear, oil and gas, all of which are key issues for Cumbria's economy.

Mr Beveridge also held discussions on the developing industrial strategy and Cumbria's role in the Northern Powerhouse with Government ministers and key secretariat members, including Greg Clark, Andrew Percy, Lucy Neville-Rolfe and Lord Prior.

"We welcomed the chance to sit round the table with the Prime Minister and along with our talks with other ministers, this was a significant opportunity to press Cumbria's economic case," said George Beveridge, chair of Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership.

"The PM acknowledged the LEPs' role at the heart of our respective economies and local areas and was keen to hear about the challenges we face, particularly with regard to transport infrastructure and key sectors for growth, including the rural economy.

"In this context, Cumbria LEP has been strongly representing the county at Transport for the North (TfN) and has welcomed their emerging Strategic Road and Rail Plans which now fully recognise Cumbria's major transport infrastructure priorities, that is the coastal railway line, the A595, the A590 and the A66."

In terms of the new industrial strategy, the LEPs are pressing the case for the government to prioritise on skills and greater engagement with DfE at a strategic level and bringing businesses into schools, where the Cumbria LEP area is already top performing.

The LEP Network is an important conduit for engagement with central Government, providing Cumbria LEP with a shared platform from which to discuss key issues, share local knowledge and promote economic development opportunities. It is playing a central role in determining local economic priorities, driving economic growth and helping to create local jobs.

For further information about Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership, visit [www.cumbrialep.co.uk](http://www.cumbrialep.co.uk)

## **Ends**

For media information please contact Karen Gardner at Osprey Communications on 015394-42436.

## **Notes for editors**

- Cumbria LEP provides a strategic lead for all activities contributing to the growth and vibrancy of the county's economy and where appropriate takes positive action, using the skills, capability and networks of LEP partners.

- The LEP is keen to work with all partners and stakeholders (private and public) to undertake actions, secure funding and implement initiatives to support sustainability and growth of Cumbria's economy.
- A copy of the Cumbria Strategic Economic Plan is available at: [www.cumbrialep.co.uk/what-we-do/sep/](http://www.cumbrialep.co.uk/what-we-do/sep/)