

Cumbria LEP board plans next steps following GSK Ulverston announcement

Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership, the county's strategic economic body, will continue its investments along the A590 corridor, whilst working with GSK to help safeguard the jobs of its Ulverston workforce.

Following the announcement about the future of the GSK Ulverston site and a meeting of the board of Cumbria LEP, the organisation has been looking at its spending commitments, as well as any practical measures it can take to support the existing site in terms of both current and future potential owners.

Cumbria LEP is investing £4.5m in South Ulverston for infrastructure improvements, and a further £5m in flood resilience measures in and round the town. Road improvements include the new £1.7m Cross-a-Moor junction to accelerate delivery of 900 new homes. Cumbria LEP has also committed £4.5m to implement junction improvements in the town.

George Beveridge, Chair of Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership, says: "Last week's announcement was hugely disappointing news for the town and the Cumbrian economy.

"We will continue to work with GSK and any subsequent owners to support the existing site and do whatever we can to safeguard the jobs of local people. That will also entail engaging with local authorities, our MPs and other stakeholders and playing an active role in trying to secure a viable long-term future for the site."

Cumbria LEP's investments in the A590 corridor are key contributors to one of the priorities of the county's strategic economic plan: improving strategic connectivity to the M6, especially from the South Lakes area and Barrow.

"There will be two major strands to our ongoing work regarding the GSK Ulverston site," adds Mr Beveridge. "Firstly, we need to meet with the site owners and explore where we might be able to support them so that, if possible, the site can continue under its present use and the current workforce is protected.

"If GSK decides to sell the site, the investments we are making in and around Ulverston will all help to make it more attractive to prospective new owners, in terms of infrastructure, housing and transport connectivity."

For further details about Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership, go to www.cumbrialep.co.uk

Ends

For media information please contact Karen Gardner at Osprey Communications on 015394 42436 or email karen@ospreycommunications.co.uk

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/