

## **COLLABORATING FOR GROWTH: SECURING THE SOUTH WEST'S ECONOMIC FUTURE**

Today, the South West business community, Local Enterprise Partnerships, local leaders, Members of Parliament and academic institutions will come together at the University of Exeter for the South West Growth Summit hosted by Pennon.

Following over £30m Government funding through Enterprise Zones, the focus will be on how the South West can secure further investment, particularly in vital infrastructure connecting the region and increase skills to boost productivity and earnings.

The Summit will include two high profile panel discussions and a keynote speech from Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Sajid Javid. The panel discussions will be chaired by the Editor of the Western Morning News, Bill Martin, and feature local leaders, MPs, Local Enterprise Partnerships, academics and business leaders. One outcome of the summit will be the creation of a South West Growth Charter, a positive, forward-looking vision for the region's economic future. It will set out the region's ideas for making the most of the opportunities available as the UK leaves the European Union. This will be presented to Government ahead of the Autumn Statement.

Communities Secretary Sajid Javid said: "With its world-class universities, highly skilled workers and innovative industries, the South West has a lot to offer growing businesses.

"The Government has already invested over £30million into the region through Enterprise Zones and today's summit is about unlocking the future growth potential."

Chris Loughlin, Chief Executive of Pennon Group, said: "The South West is a place where innovative, successful industries are able to thrive in spectacular surroundings. As one of the largest businesses and employers in the region, we are committed to playing our part in delivering a sustainable economic future for the South West and we are delighted to be hosting the Summit.

"Our region has always had a strong sense of both individualism and community and in this spirit; the Summit will provide an opportunity for businesses, government and academics to come together around a shared vision for regional growth and economic progress."