



LEP STRATEGY COMMITTEE – AGENDA ITEM 5

Subject: Strategy Delivery Plan Update and Proposed Work Programme for 2020/21

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Meeting date: Friday 20th December 2019

Purpose

To update the Strategy Committee on progress with the Strategy Delivery Plan associated with the refresh of the SEP and development of its supporting strategies and delivery plans, including proposals for wider consultation and stakeholder engagement on emerging drafts. The paper also sets out initial thinking on priorities for the work programme through to March 2021.

Recommendations

The Strategy Committee is asked to

- a) Note the content of the report
- b) Discuss progress against the Delivery Plan.
- c) Discuss the proposed Strategy work programme for the next 15 months (January 2020 – March 2021)

Discussion

Delivery Plan

1. The updated Delivery Plan is attached for discussion as **Appendix A**. The Strategy Committee is asked to note progress against target and consider potential corrective action against those areas highlighted Amber.

Future Work Programme

2. There is a lot of work to do to maintain the initial momentum on delivering the SEP priorities, and to start implementing our Local Industrial Strategy. In order to manage this a draft work programme for the 15 months to March 2021 is set out below, and the Strategy Committee is asked to consider the work packages set out below and the proposed timetable for delivery.

LIS DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY

LIS Delivery Plan

3. Once agreed and published the Local Industrial Strategy will require a Delivery Plan setting out how the various interventions identified within the LIS will be delivered and by when. There will be a degree of overlap with the wider Strategy work programme, but it is proposed that work on this activity commences at the start of the new Financial Year for completion by the end of September 2020. In parallel, a number of work packages will be progressed in order to start to implement some of the key priorities identified within the LIS.



Inclusive Growth – (up to £50k)

4. One of three key outcomes from the Local Industrial Strategy is delivering more inclusive growth for Cheshire and Warrington. Economically and politically this issue is becoming more prominent and the LEP needs to ensure it is properly positioned to respond. This workstream would involve additional policy work on how, in delivering our Local Industrial Strategy and Strategic Economic Plan, the sub-region might deliver more inclusive growth.
5. This initial work would undertake more detailed analysis of the current situation across the sub-region, look at the potential policy levers available to the LEP and others in addressing economic and social inequality and deprivation and identify good practice from elsewhere in the UK and (if appropriate) further afield. It will develop a brief for consultants to support the LEP to lead in commissioning the production of an Inclusive Growth Strategy, which will also inform the LEP's approach to developing priorities and interventions through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Digitisation / Smart Places Roadmap – pre-work (up to £50k)

6. One of the key deliverables outlined in the LEP Digital Strategy is the development of a Digital Infrastructure Plan for Cheshire and Warrington. This allocation will support development of a detailed, costed Digital Infrastructure Plan to provide a framework for long term investment into digital infrastructure and linked to the wider digital skills agenda, to sit as part of the wider LIS Investment Programme, by the end of Q2/2020-21.
7. The LEP needs to better understand the longer-term changes in infrastructure provision that will be needed to facilitate a shift to connected, smart places (e.g. connected and autonomous vehicles, smart energy systems, etc). The balance of the allocation will allow work to be commissioned to understand the challenges and opportunities the Digitisation and Smart Places agendas present for Cheshire and Warrington.

Sector Development Plans (up to £30k - provisional)

8. The LIS has identified a number of key sectors that underpin the Cheshire and Warrington economy and which have the potential to grow and cluster, attracting investment and high quality, well paid jobs. Some work has already started to develop a roadmap for the development of the Life Sciences sector and it is proposed that this work be progressed during 2020, along with similar roadmap development for the manufacturing and energy sectors subject to sufficient budget remaining towards the end of the financial year,.

Brexit Implications analysis (£25k – provisional)

9. As things stand there is still considerable uncertainty over the impact that leaving the European Union might have on our wider economy and in particular the key sectors identified in the Local Industrial Strategy. It is proposed to allocate a provisional sum to support any specific analysis that might be required as the landscape becomes clearer at key points throughout 2020.

SUSTAINABILITY AND CLEAN GROWTH

Decarbonisation Roadmap (£10k in phase 1)



10. The LEP has committed up to £10k plus a limited amount of staff time to support the development of an initial bid to the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund for funding to develop an Industrial Decarbonisation Roadmap focussed on the Mersey Basin area. The bid is lead by Peel Land and Property and supported by the five north west LEPs, North West Business Leadership Team, the Cheshire Energy Hub and the North West Local Energy Hub.
11. If successful, the initial phase of roadmap development, which is principally to scope and define work to be undertaken in a more intensive second phase, would start in January 2020 and be completed by late June 2020 in time for a bid for round 2 funding.

Sustainable Development (up to £50k)

12. The LEP Board has discussed the need for a greater commitment to sustainability and indicated a strong desire to develop priorities around sustainable development during 2020-21. Clean Growth already features strongly in the Local Industrial Strategy, but the focus has primarily been on industrial emissions and industrial decarbonisation. This workstream would start to gather the evidence to inform a wider sub-regional conversation about the wider transition to a low / net-zero economy by no later than 2050, how this might impact on the SEP objective of doubling the size of the economy by 2040, and links to the inclusive growth outcome in the LIS. This covers areas including housing and transport which could have significant implications for infrastructure and power across the sub-region and wider hinterland.
13. Initial scoping activity will take place during Q4/2019-21 with a view to commissioning specific activity from consultants in Q1/2020-21.

TAKING FORWARD PLACE MAKING / QUALITY OF PLACE

Development of a Cultural Strategy for Cheshire and Warrington (up to £30k)

14. The Quality of Place Strategy contains a commitment to “...*work with partners to develop proposals for creation of a programme to enhance our cultural and leisure offer, including sporting activities a promotion of active lifestyles, and examine potential sources of funding to deliver it*”.
15. This recognises the importance that culture and heritage can play in attracting and retaining talent within places, and the reality that whilst Cheshire and Warrington has a broad offer it is not always presented in a coordinated and strategic way. As a result, the sub-region runs the risk of missing out on national funding opportunities and also limits the scope for a more joined up conversation with Government, specifically the DCMS ‘family’.
16. Starting in Q4/2019-20 the LEP will commission Marketing Cheshire to lead on development of a strategic-level Cultural Strategy for the sub-region.

Natural Capital Audit / Natural Capital Plan (phase 1 up to £15k, phase 2 up to £20k with potential for partner contributions)

17. The Quality of Place Strategy also acknowledged the need to undertake further work to understand the potential economic value of the natural environment and the increasing focus



on the role of blue and green infrastructure in mitigating and adapting to climate change. There is also a need to prepare for a post-EU Funding regime which is likely to have a focus on maximising the value of 'public good' achieved through investment in agriculture, farming and forestry and the wider principle of "net gain" in sustainable development.

18. The starting point in this preparation is to understand the existing baseline in terms of the type of landscape and ecology present across the sub-region and its economic value (for example in terms of health and wellbeing). Much work on this has already been undertaken by both Cheshire East and The Mersey Forest, such that the initial audit would focus on filling current gaps in analysis in the south of Cheshire West and around Warrington.
19. In phase 1, the LEP will work with the Cheshire and Warrington Local Nature Partnership (which includes the three local authorities and other key public agencies), The Mersey Forest and key landowners to complete the baseline study for the sub-region, starting in January 2020.
20. Phase 2 will involve development of a Natural Capital Plan involving more detailed planning to identify potential priorities for public and private sector investment in blue and green infrastructure. For example, it may look to identify areas where investment in upstream river catchments might reduce the risks of downstream flooding, or where additional tree planting could be focussed to support carbon sequestration or improved shading in urban areas. This phase would be undertaken starting by the end of Q1/2020-21.



Appendix A: Indicative Programme

POLICY AREA / Activity	Lead	2019-20				2020-21											
		Dec	Jan	Q4 Feb	Mar	Apr	Q1 May	Jun	Jul	Q2 Aug	Sep	Oct	Q3 Nov	Dec			
Strategy Committee Meeting		20-Dec		07-Feb		03-Apr		12-Jun		07-Aug		09-Oct					
LIS DEVELOPMENT																	
LIS Publication / Delivery Plan	LEP																
Sector Development plans	LEP																
Digitisation / Smart Places	LEP																
Inclusive Growth Strategy prep	LEP																
BREXIT implications	LEP																
SUSTAINABILITY																	
Industrial Clusters Roadmap	NWBLT / NWLEH																
Sustainability Strategy prep	LEP																
QUALITY OF PLACE																	
Cultural Strategy	MC																
Natural Capital Audit	LNP																
Natural Capital Plan	LNP																