

ITEM 8

REPORT TO: WECA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 19TH SEPTEMBER 2018

REPORT TITLE: LOCAL INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

AUTHOR: JESSICA LEE, HEAD OF STRATEGY & POLICY

Purpose of Report

- 1 To provide an update on work to develop the Local Industrial Strategy for the West of England

Background

- 2 In July the Government announced that the West of England would participate in the second wave of regions to develop a Local Industrial Strategy. The strategy will be co-produced with Government and with partners across the region. It offers us the opportunity to further our ambition to be a driving force for clean and inclusive economic growth. We are working in partnership with the business community and Local Authorities and others to ensure that the strategy reflects the views and priorities of stakeholders across the region.

Issues for Consideration

Approach to developing the Strategy

- 3.1 The strategy will build on the unique strengths of the region: the combination of high skill levels, strong connectivity, attractiveness as a place to live and work and a diverse economic base offering a wide variety of job opportunities at all skill levels.
- 3.2 We intend to use this opportunity to develop our understanding of the region's economy. Examples of further detailed analysis we are undertaking include the sectors that are most important for jobs and growth, the likely skills needs of the future, the likely impact of automation on employment opportunities and the role of the region in relation to the economy of the broader geographical area.
- 3.3 The region's economy is driven by a wide range of industries from aerospace to advanced manufacturing, creative to robotics, finance to food. This diverse range of activity coupled with the geographical size of the region facilitates interaction between sectors. It is the interface between these industries that makes the region unique. The interface between traditional industries and our creative, digital and tech industries results in the region driving innovation across the UK and across the world.

- 3.4 Understanding, facilitating and maximising the value of this activity in terms of jobs and growth potential is central to the region's vision for our Local Industrial Strategy.

Grand Challenges

- 3.5 The national Local Industrial Strategy identifies four Grand Challenges, Future of Mobility, Ageing Society, Clean Growth, AI and Big Data. These are the areas where Government feel there is an opportunity for the UK to be at the forefront of the global response [need to check wording in the white paper. We will be holding a series of workshops in the Autumn to explore how the region might respond to these with business leaders, academics and other interested parties.

Evidence

- 3.6 We are developing an analysis of the strengths and challenges for the region as well as undertaking thorough investigations into a number of areas where there is nationally significant activity taking place. We are working with central Government colleagues as well as the universities to explore new approaches to understanding the economy of the region. We are also working with business leaders to develop a thorough understanding of the way those sectors of the economy operate and interact.
- 3.7 To support this work a Challenge Panel has been established, comprising academics, economists and subject matter experts, to provide rigour and challenge to the evidence gathering. The first meeting of the panel will be 9th October 2018.

Engagement

- 3.8 Our communications and engagement approach sets out our planned programme of activity. Key activities are as follows:
- Business briefing event – to involve around 150 representatives from businesses across the region. Representatives invited directly and indirectly via social media and business networks including Invest in Bristol and Bath and Growth Hub.
 - A series of workshops based on the region's grand challenges from September – November 2018.
 - Traditional media – news releases to regional media.
 - E-newsletters – Articles to be included in, Engine Shed, Business West, WECA, and Bristol/Bath Business newsletters (7,700 subscribers for Bristol/Bath Business alone)
 - Email core businesses (including representatives from Institute of Directors, Confederation of British Industry, Federation of Small Business, Business West, Further and Higher Education representatives and senior leaders from key sectors) to events by email
 - Social media campaign to target key sectors and encourage involvement – Twitter and Linked in (from WECA, LEP accounts and also Invest in Bristol and Bath and Growth Hub accounts 13,000+ followers). Includes sponsored content for LinkedIn and promoted tweets for Twitter (WECA accounts)
 - A video showcasing our region will be launched on the day and to generate interest on social media.
 - We also working with WECA's constituent councils asking for support in communicating to more businesses. North Somerset Council are publicising the Local Industrial Strategy on their Economic Development website.

Next Steps

- 3.10 The Local Industrial Strategy Steering Group will meet regularly to provide strategic direction and to act as a sounding board for the development of proposals. This group includes political representatives from each of the Local Authorities, business representatives from the LEP Board and Local Authority Chief Executives.
- 3.11 The business briefing event on 21st September will be the formal launch of our Local Industrial Strategy development.
- 3.11 Work has already commenced to develop the evidence base and this will continue over the Autumn.
- 3.12 We are discussing the final structure of the strategy and the timetable for publication with Government, but currently this is understood to be Spring 2019. We are expecting further guidance from Government during the Autumn.

Consultation:

- 4.1 The Local Industrial Strategy Steering Group met on 10th September and received an update on progress and engagement proposals.
- 4.2 The launch event on 21st September will provide the opportunity for interested parties across the region to hear about this work and the ways in which they can get involved as the work progresses.

Other Options Considered:

- 5 None

Risk Management/Assessment:

- 5 Our Local Industrial Strategy will be the key mechanism for engaging with Government to identify the funding and powers that are required to deliver this. Without an agreed Local Industrial Strategy the West of England will be significantly disadvantaged when bidding for national funding.

Public Sector Equality Duties:

- 6 The public sector equality duty created under the Equality Act 2010 means that public authorities must have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- 6.1 The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:
- Removing or minimizing disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
 - Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
 - Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
- 6.2 The general equality duty therefore requires organisations to consider how they could positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations. It requires equality considerations to be reflected in the design of policies and the delivery of services, including policies, and for these issues to be kept under review.
- 6.3 Work has commenced to develop an Equality and Diversity Framework for WECA that is focused on achieving inclusive economic growth across the Region. The Framework will identify the equality and diversity related themes that emerge from the objectives set out in the operating framework and define how these can be included in our Equality Analyses to provide a cumulative view of the overall equalities impact.
- 6.4 Equality Analysis will be carried out on the Local Industrial Strategy as it develops. Equality Analysis is carried out on all funded schemes as part of the assurance process and this will include any specific schemes or activities arising from the Local Industrial Strategy. An annual Equality and Diversity Report will be presented to the Annual General Meeting in Spring 2019

Economic Impact Assessment:

- 7 Current work to develop a strong evidence base will enable the Local Industrial Strategy to inform future regional policies and identify opportunities for economic growth.

Finance Implications:

8. At the meeting on 27 July 2018, the Joint Committee agreed to allocate up to £364k to support the costs of UA staff being seconded to provide capacity to support the development of the Local Industrial Strategy. The detailed costs to support the development of the LIS are being developed and will be contained within this overall allocation of funding

Advice given by: Tim Richens, Interim Director of Investment and Resources

Legal Implications:

- 9 The industrial strategy will form part of the policy framework that the region will work within and enable request for further devolved funding to be made in accordance with the evidence gathered

Advice given by: Shahzia Daya, Director of Legal and Democratic Services

Land/Property Implications;

- 10 None arising directly from this report

Human Resources Implications:

- 11 There are no HR implications arising as a direct result of this paper, HR is working with the Policy and Strategy team to ensure appropriate resourcing is in place to deliver the programme.

Advice given by: Alex Holly, Head of HR and Organisational Development

Recommendation:

- 13 Please state the full recommendation of this report here.

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