

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>General scrutiny committee</b>
<b>Meeting date:</b>	<b>Monday 8 October 2018</b>
<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Economic Development Strategies review</b>
<b>Report by:</b>	<b>Economic Development Manager</b>

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

This is not an executive decision

## **Wards affected**

(All Wards);

## **Purpose and summary**

The Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) are in the process of reviewing and redrafting their Strategic Economic Plan. The Strategic Economic Plan is used by the LEP to set its strategic direction and priorities, further it has a role in communicating with government and partners, in particular in setting priorities for the accessing of government funding and support.

The LEP have consulted with a range of partners in the redrafting process and are now in a position to issue a first draft for review. The LEP have appointed consultants to lead the redrafting process. The appointed consultants will present to Scrutiny their findings to date and lead a discussion on the content of the document.

Scrutiny committee has an important role in sense checking the document and making recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Corporate Strategy and Budget for consideration in a corporate response to the draft Strategic Economic Plan.

## **Recommendation(s)**

**That:**

- (a) the committee identify any recommendations to be made to the cabinet member on the general ambition and vision of the draft strategic economic plan, including the sections on :**

- **Our assets;**
  - **Our economic sectors;**
  - **Ideas;**
  - **People;**
  - **Infrastructure;**
  - **Business environment;**
  - **Place and Housing;**
  - **Relationships and partners.**
- (b) **the committee consider what projects could be recommended to the cabinet member for inclusion within the final draft of the Strategic Economic Plan as priority schemes;**
- (c) **the committee consider building into their work programme consideration of a review of the effectiveness of the plan thereafter.**

## **Alternative options**

1. There are no alternative options to the recommended action as it is a function of the committee to make reports or recommendations to the executive on the discharge of executive functions.

## **Key considerations**

### **The Marches LEP Strategic Economic Plan**

2. The Marches LEP are currently in the process of updating their Strategic Economic Plan. This strategic document provides the broad direction for the LEP and forms the basis for determining the priorities the LEP sets and the support the LEP offers. The current Strategic Economic Plan was developed in 2014. Since then, the LEP and key partners have accessed more than £105m in Government funding to support economic growth.
3. Against the backdrop of the Government's Industrial Strategy LEPs have been tasked with developing Local Industrial Strategies (LIS) to drive economic growth, raise productivity and create more prosperous communities. To make sure the Marches are concentrating on the right things, they have updated their evidence base and are in the process of updating the Strategic Economic plan so that they have a clear view of issues affecting the Marches economy.
4. Refreshing the economic strategy is an opportunity for businesses and the public sector to agree the kind of economy which is wanted in the future and to agree the actions required to drive business growth in the Marches, including how to take advantage of the future economic trends and challenges set out in the Government's Industrial Strategy.
5. In broad terms the SEP provides the overall strategic direction of the Marches economy whilst the Local Industrial Strategy will focus on how the area's business and industrial

base will be supported to deliver against the vision and objectives set out in the Strategic Economic Plan.

6. In spring 2018 the LEP appointed consultancy firm Metro Dynamics to undertake the refresh of the SEP. Over the summer Metro Dynamics has reviewed the LEP's evidence base and carried out consultation activities, engaging with a range of local organisations with a stake in the future of business across the Marches.
7. These have included a series of workshops with businesses, local government, education providers and other local partners. Metro Dynamics have also held individual conversations with local stakeholders and an online survey was published on the Marches LEP website to gain feedback from a wider audience.
8. These workshop sessions and survey responses have been collated by Metro Dynamics into a draft version of the SEP which was presented to the LEP Board on the 25<sup>th</sup> September as a first iteration of the document. In addition to the LEP Board's views, Metro Dynamics wanted a wider examination of the draft document to sense check the content and direction. The draft Strategic Economic Plan document is attached at Appendix A.
9. Scrutiny members will be given a presentation by Metro Dynamic's on the emerging themes within the SEP. Members are encouraged to comment on the presentation, and draft document, with a view to advising whether the content reflects the economic situation in, and priorities for, Herefordshire.
10. Scrutiny's comments will be taken, into consideration by the Cabinet Member for Corporate Strategy and Budget when responding to the drafting of a final SEP document. The Cabinet Members comments, along with those from other partners within the LEP will similarly be taken into consideration by the LEP Board when drafting the final version of the Strategic Economic Plan.

## **Community impact**

11. The drafting, and approval, of the Strategic Economic Plan will set the LEP's vision and objectives, it may also identify what priority schemes the LEP intends to support across the Marches. The Strategic Economic Plan will be used by the LEP, and partners, as a mechanism to communicate with government over the Marches contribution to the national economy.
12. Government will refer to the Marches Strategic Economic Plan when considering what projects to support and potentially fund. As a consequence the Strategic Economic Plan has the ability to facilitate the delivery of economic development projects within Herefordshire, subsequently making a significant contribution to the corporate priority to support the growth of our economy.

## **Equality duty**

13. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
14. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires the council to consider how it can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that it is paying 'due regard' in its decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.
15. It is not considered that the drafting of the Marches Strategic Economic Plan will have an impact on the council's equality duty.
16. Any projects contained within the Strategic Economic Plan that are led by the council are subject to the council governance and accountability. As a consequence any decisions to implement projects by the council will have considered the public sector equality duty during the approval process.

## **Resource implications**

17. The cost and commissioning of the Strategic Economic Plan drafting is being led and incurred by the Marches LEP.
18. Council officers have been involved in the supply of information and evidence to Metro Dynamics to inform the drafting of the Strategic Economic Plan. This has been resourced within existing service budgets.

## **Legal implications**

19. There are no legal issues arising from the content of this report.

## **Risk management**

20. The risk around the delivery of the Strategic Economic Plan is primarily carried by the Marches LEP. There is however a risk that not drafting, or having a badly drafted, SEP will reduce the ability of the Marches, including Herefordshire, to secure government funding. This risk has been mitigated by employing suitably qualified consultants via an open procurement process with the selection of the consultants based on price and quality.
21. Should any council led projects be included within the final version of the Strategic Economic Plan the associated risks will be identified and mitigated within appropriate project management arrangements put in place for the delivery of successful project proposals, and will be considered through the decision approval process.

## **Consultees**

22. A number of consultation events have taken place with partners and businesses from across the Marches, including Herefordshire, to gain information and evidence to inform the draft Strategic Economic Plan. This has included an online survey for businesses or individuals to complete.

23. This information and evidence will be considered along with opinions taken from a number of other sources, including General Overview and Scrutiny Committee

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Draft Marches Strategic Economic Plan.

## **Background papers**

None Identified