

Marches Enterprise Joint Committee	
Meeting date:	11 October 2017
Title of report:	The Marches and Mid Wales Draft Freight Strategy

Classification

Open

Notice has been served in accordance with Part 2, Section 5 (Procedures Prior to Private Meetings) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (Regulations) 2012.

Key Decision

This is a non key decision.

Purpose

To advise members on the production of the Marches and Mid Wales Freight Strategy and seek Marches Enterprise Joint Committee endorsement of the Strategy.

Recommendation(s)

THAT:

- (a)** Joint Committee members endorse the Marches and Mid Wales Freight Strategy.

Summary

1. The Marches LEP produced a report called “Investing in Strategic Transport Corridors in the Marches” in May 2016. The LEP Board then agreed that a key area of further work identified in the Corridors Report should be the development of a Freight Strategy for the Marches area.
2. Following a Shropshire Council procurement process, MDS Transmodal Ltd (MDST) was appointed to develop the Freight Strategy. Members of the LEP Board’s Transport Officers Group (TOG) formed the Steering Group for the work. The Strategy was funded by the Department for Transport Excellence funds and contributions from the three local authorities. Partners in Wales then expressed a desire to extend the scope of the Strategy to include the area covered by the Growing Mid Wales Partnership (Powys and Ceredigion Councils), given that many of the issues relating to freight and transport in general exist cross-border. The Welsh Government made funding available and the contract with MDS Transmodal Ltd was extended to enable the creation of the Marches and Mid Wales Freight Strategy.
3. The Strategy has been developed to take advantage of the opportunities and strengths that emerged from the evidence base, and has highlighted weaknesses and constraints to freight movement that should be addressed. A SWOT analysis is included in the Strategy which details this process. The policy review, review of best practice, consultation work, discussions with the Steering Group and SWOT analysis fed into the consideration of investment and other interventions to address the weaknesses and constraints to freight movement.
4. An action plan is now being developed by the Marches LEP Transport Officers Group and partners from the Growing Mid Wales Partnership. A Strategy launch event is being planned for November/ December 2017 with key stakeholders from both sides of the border which will provide an opportunity to raise the profile of the recommendations in the Freight Strategy.

Alternative options

5. The LEP could have continued to develop a Marches Freight Strategy just for the Marches. However, given the extent of the shared border between mid Wales and the Marches LEP area and the volumes of movement of freight across that border, it seemed sensible to work in partnership with colleagues in Wales to create a joint Strategy.

Financial implications

6. It is anticipated that the cost of a launch event will be met by partners but the costs will be kept to a minimum.
7. No commitments have been made with regard to delivering the interventions and actions set out in the Strategy. The purpose of the Strategy is to provide the evidence base and reasoning for interventions. Once approved, the Strategy will be used both as a lobbying document to gain funding for the development of the various interventions

and to assist the LEP overall in delivery of its transport objectives.

Legal implications

8. This strategy is a decision for the joint committee because in accordance with the functions of the committee it sets the priorities for the strategic economic investment across the Marches LEP.

Risks, opportunities and impacts

9. There is a clear opportunity to use this document to lobby for funding to take forward the interventions and actions with both the transport authorities in both Wales and England. Cross border working will continue, and opportunities for cross border improvements to the freight network/transport network generally will be explored for mutual benefit.
10. The impact of this Strategy will be dependent upon the availability of funding and the will to make the improvements and changes identified.

Consultation

11. A broad consultation was undertaken, including Town and Parish Councils, businesses, Midlands Connect, the LEP, Growing Mid Wales Partnership, and road hauliers. MDST Managing Director Chris Rowland met with the LEP Management Team, and consulted with relevant local authority officers.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - The Executive Summary of the Marches and Mid Wales Freight Strategy.

The full strategy and technical annex can be made available from the Project Development Officer in the LEP Team and will be available from the Marches LEP website.

Background papers

The 'Investing in Strategic Transport Corridors in the Marches' report, May 2016.