

Marches Enterprise Joint Committee	
Meeting date:	24 July 2018
Title of report:	The Marches Local Enterprise Partnership Energy Strategy
Report by:	Marches Local Enterprise Partnership Project Development Officer

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not a key decision.

Purpose and summary

To approve the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership Energy Strategy.

In March 2017 the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) invited Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) and councils to submit bids for funding for the development of a LEP wide energy strategy. The Marches bid was prepared by Herefordshire Council with support from the Marches LEP, and was one of 13 which were successful.

The resulting Energy Strategy provides an evidence base and a set of Marches wide actions addressing the key issues identified in the strategy.

Recommendation(s)

THAT:

- (a) the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership Energy Strategy at Appendix 1 be approved.**

Alternative Options

1. None. If the Strategy is not approved, the LEP will not have met its obligation to produce an Energy Strategy with the funding provided by BEIS.

Key considerations

2. In March 2017 the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

invited Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) and councils to submit bids for funding for the development of a LEP wide energy strategy. The Marches bid was prepared by Herefordshire Council with support from the Marches LEP, and was one of 13 which were successful.

3. The work included the development of the evidence base, identification of gaps, stakeholder engagement and the development of the strategy. The evidence base provided the basis for the development of six key priorities which are listed below:
 - a. Smart control and mitigation of grid constraints; this could include the establishment of an Energy Innovation Zone (EIZ), which is based on the idea of creating commercial markets for new approaches to local energy systems and the local generation and consumption of energy.
 - b. Innovation in agricultural technologies; this could include flagship projects where farms generate their own power from renewables and storing it until it is required.
 - c. Sufficient reliable energy supply; this priority has two strands, the first is access to local gas and electricity networks, and the second is access to low cost energy.
 - d. Development of the supply chain in key areas of the low carbon economy. There are supply chain opportunities for electric vehicles, particularly in Telford, and as the Marches area is a leader in the deployment of Anaerobic Digestion, there is a business opportunity to build the local supply chain for this technology.
 - e. Local renewable energy supply; the Marches has significant renewable energy resources, and for example, large scale solar schemes are particularly viable though the use of power purchase agreements.
 - f. Addressing high levels of fuel poverty; the options for this key priority include improved energy efficiency, access to lower cost energy and economic growth.
4. The key priorities will be delivered through a number of actions which have been developed. For further details, section 6 of the Energy Strategy attached as Appendix 1, details how the strategy will be delivered. The steering group made up of council and LEP officers which managed the consultants producing the strategy will continue to work together to drive forward the delivery of the actions.
5. Plans to launch the Strategy are at an early stage, the audience for the launch will include key stakeholders.
6. MEJC members will wish to note that the evidence and actions contained within the Strategy will inform the forthcoming Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) update. The Energy Strategy Steering Group (LEP and council officers) will take this work forward and will work closely with the BEIS sponsored Midlands Energy Hub once it is established.

Community impact

7. Key priority 6 in the Strategy is to address high levels of fuel poverty which is a particular issue in the more rural parts of the Marches.

Equality duty

8. 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.
9. The public-sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying ‘due regard’ in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. As this is a decision on back office functions, we do not believe that it will have an impact on our equality duty.

Resource implications

10. There are limited resource implications arising from this report. The Marches LEP Director has agreed to fund the launch of the Strategy, and the actions within it will be taken forward by officers in the councils and the LEP. Support will be provided by the Marches LEP Project Officer funded by BEIS and employed by the the Midlands Energy Hub when established later in 2018.

Legal implications

11. The joint committee must set, monitor and review the energy strategy because it contains objectives and priorities for strategic economic investment across the Marches LEP area.
12. As required the strategy has been considered by the LEP board as detailed in the consultation section below.

Risk management

13. If the Strategy is not agreed the LEP will not have met the requirement by the funder, BEIS, to develop an Energy Strategy for the Marches area; and the actions required to address the issues raised in the Strategy may not be undertaken.

Consultation

14. The Marches LEP Board discussed the draft strategy and recommended its approval at its meeting of 19 March 2018.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Marches Local Enterprise Partnership Energy Strategy

Background papers

None identified