**STOKE ON TRENT & STAFFORDSHIRE**

**LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP**

**COMPANY EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING**

**16 July 2020**

**Local Industrial Strategy Implementation Plan, pandemic Recovery and
post-Brexit International Trade**

**Background: National policy and local approach**

1. The SSLEP published its Strategic Economic Plan in April 2018 and the executive summary of the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) in April 2020. As part of the UK Government response to the Covid-19 pandemic, it is anticipated that government guidance will highlight the benefits of ensuring that our LIS Implementation Plan will benefit from being structured to incorporate short term focus on the partnerships recovery activities, and with the medium and long-term emphasis placed on renewal and reinvigoration to levelling the sub-regional economy up to productive levels and sustaining a long term growth trend.
2. The SSLEP is also acting to ensure that its strategic and delivery plans provide strategic alignment with the future implications of the UK leaving the European Union as it moves from the transition period to finalise new trading arrangements.
3. It is proposed that the short-term industrial strategy development work around the LIS, pandemic recovery and post-Brexit international trade will be brought together in a single Sub-Regional Recovery & Industrial Strategy Implementation Plan for the SSLEP (referred to as ‘the Implementation Plan’ as a working title).

**Broad approach to drawing up an embryonic Implementation Plan**

1. The SSLEP has set up several subgroups to inform the development of the Implementation Plan and the LEP Secretariat has mobilised the remaining technical support provisions established under contract with Metro-Dynamics in producing the LIS. Metro-Dynamics have been commissioned for a short piece of work to assist the SSLEP in drawing up an embryonic Implementation Plan to support the LEP Executive Board meeting 16th July 2020, to frame a discussion about next steps. The emerging Implementation Plan has been informed through documentation captured from the subgroups to date and soundings taken from LIS Sub-Group leads.

**Proposed Next Steps**

1. It is proposed that the embryonic Implementation Plan is refined over the next eight weeks to bring an advanced draft version back to the LEP Executive Board (scheduled for the 17th September 2020) for further consideration. It is proposed that this will be achieved through an iterative process with the LIS Sub-Groups and by approaching technical advisors from across our partnership networks (e.g. Chambers of Commerce, FSB, anchor institutions, local authorities (including their delivery bodies such the SCC Infrastructure+ contact, housing associations, etc), DWP/JCP.
2. It is also proposed that the LEP Secretariat put in place external technical support to support the LIS Sub-Groups in articulating their Implementation Plan work outputs through a ‘prospectus’ type document that can be shared with LEP Stakeholders in anticipation of a future fiscal event in the run up to the Autumn Budget. The appointment of external technical support will be procured in line with the Accountable Body requirements. It is proposed that a costed specification of work is agreed through the LIS Implementation - Sub-Group Chairs' Meeting. It is proposed that the LEP secretariat set up the framework contract arrangements for a value of up to £100K over the next 12-month period.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That LEP Executive Board Members endorse:**

1. **the approach to develop the embryonic Implementation Plan through the LIS Implementation - Sub-Group Chairs' Meeting(s) to produce a Draft Implementation Plan and prospectus for consideration at the next LEP Executive Board (scheduled for 17th September 2020); and**
2. **that a costed specification of work is obtained by the LEP Secretariat and agreed with the LIS Implementation - Sub-Group Chairs' Meeting(s). It is proposed that the LEP secretariat set up the framework contract arrangements for a value of up to £100K over the next 12-month period.**

Board Lead: Alun Rogers, SSLEP Chairman

Secretariat Lead: Sam Hicks, Strategy & Research Officer, SSLEP

Report Author: Mark Parkinson, Chief Executive, SSLEP