

**STOKE-ON-TRENT AND STAFFORDSHIRE
LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP
PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING**

22nd March 2018

Strategic Economic Plan

1. Purpose

To secure approval to the revised Strategic Economic Plan document.

2. Background

In March last year SSLEP began work on reviewing the SEP and discussing whether its content was still current. This work has progressed through a series of workshops with yourselves and wider partners which in addition to influencing the document have led to a range of other discussions.

As part of this process we have attended meeting with businesses, Chambers of Commerce, Universities and held a series of meetings of a working group. Local Authority Economic Development Officers have also been privy to drafts and fed in comments. In addition the team have continually sought views during our engagement events and through feedback and enquiries to the Growth Hub.

In November of 2017 a consultation draft was published on the SSLEP website and widely circulated to partners and publicised through the newsletter and other channels. Learning from other areas SSLEP focussed its promotional activity through networks rather than holding events which experience indicated would be poorly attended. The consultation elicited formal responses from Universities, the VCSE sector, the Chambers of Commerce. The responses were supportive and the number was reflective of the engagement undertaken through the process. For instance a series of bespoke events on the Industrial Strategy were held which influenced thinking. In addition the Partnership represents a wide cross section of interests and networks.

3. Revised Document

The document appended to this paper is the revised SEP which is proposed for adoption. It will form a stepping stone to the development of a Local Industrial Strategy. The document will continue to form the basis for the assessment of funding proposals and in supporting policy and bidding activities.

The key changes will be illustrated in a short presentation at the meeting. These include the increasing recognition of digital technologies as an

enabler, updates to reflect policy changes including the development of the Midlands Engine, updated sectoral information, housing, and the development of HS2.

The development of this document has involved a significant amount of input from partners and consultants Regeneris.

Development of Industrial Strategy

The completion of the SEP review will provide a starting point for further development of a Local Industrial Strategy. In preparation it is proposed to earmark funding to develop more detailed evidence about the area's economy. To ensure SSLEP is making the most effective use of the work done to date it is planned to undertake this work in a staged way collating the sectoral research and action plans to a consistent standard. The brief for this work is in development and a budget has been identified.

4. Recommendations

It is recommended that;

- a) The group reviews and agrees the content of the updated Strategic Economic Plan
- b) The Partnership supports the advance work planning to develop a Local Industrial Strategy and looks forwards to being involved in discussions about its content.
- c) A summary version is produced for wide circulation and the provision of printed copies.