

Title: Local Industrial Strategy, Buckinghamshire Growth Strategy & the Cambridge – Milton Keynes - Oxford Corridor

Purpose: To discuss Government Industrial Strategy engagement, the proposed process and timetable for development of a Local Industrial Strategy, within the context of the Cambridge – Milton Keynes- Oxford Corridor, and further development and implementation of the Buckinghamshire Growth Strategy.

Recommendation: That members note the content of this report and advise on how they would wish to support the development of local and cross corridor industrial strategies, building upon the Buckinghamshire Growth Strategy and BTVLEP Strategic Economic Plan.

1 Budget November 2017 Context and Progress

In the November Budget, the Government announced a broad package of measures to realise the economic potential of the Cambridge-Milton Keynes- Oxford Corridor as recommended by the National Infrastructure Commission in its Partnering for Prosperity report November 2017.

The four cross corridor LEPs were invited to join in conversation with Government on 12th January to review local industrial strategy work programme, evidence base and governance structures, receive an update on Industrial Strategy policy development and to update on programme development across the Corridor. Government has agreed to work jointly with LEPs and establish a joint programme of work to take this forward. This will entail joint working across MHCLG and DfT, reporting in close collaboration with other Government departments and agencies. The programme will be managed on a day-to-day basis by Rachel Fisher, Deputy Director for Infrastructure and Regeneration in the Cities and Local Growth Unit.

Director Generals Simon Ridley HMCLG and Tricia Hayes DfT wrote on 22nd January to set out the a series of measures on how Government would like to see this regional collaboration progress covering the areas of housing and new settlements, rail and road investment, local industrial strategies land capture reform and export growth and international investment. A copy of this letter is attached as **Appendix 1** to this report.

Governance arrangements for the corridor area are still in development, but there is emerging consensus that transport, infrastructure and digital strategy will be managed through the England's Economic Heartland transport board, housing and planning strategy through 'Growth Boards' and that LEPs will lead on Industrial Strategy. The three areas are not mutually exclusive and will require proactive integration management.

Iain Stewart the MP for Milton Keynes South has been appointed as Government champion for the Corridor and will be hosting a launch event in the House of Commons on January 31st. Both Andrew Smith and Richard Harrington have been invited to this event and will report directly with any updates verbally back at this meeting.

2 Industrial Strategy

Following a period of consultation after the Green Paper in spring 2017, the National Industrial Strategy White Paper was published in November 2017 looking to set out a path to greater national productivity and create an economy that boosts productivity and earning power throughout the UK. The strategy is based on 5 foundations of productivity:-

Ideas – the world's most innovative economy

People – good jobs and greater earning power for all

Infrastructure – a major upgrade to the UK's Infrastructure

Business environment – the best place to start and grow a business

Places – prosperous communities across the UK.

Government officials have described the Strategy as a live policy development area. Our area is expected to produce one of the first Local Industrial Strategies prior to a March 2019 deadline. Joint workshops, to determine how the Corridor will relate and respond to the National Productivity Challenge are to be scheduled commencing February 2018. The four LEPs in their initial response have all agree that this process will build on the foundations already established namely the Strategic Economic Plans and in our case the Buckinghamshire Growth Strategy.

Local Industrial Strategy

The four LEPs at the heart of the corridor, (BTVLEP, OXLEP, SEMLEP and the Greater Cambridge and Greater Peterborough Combined Authority) are committed to working in collaboration to develop a Cross Corridor Industrial Strategy which will identify long term priorities to improve skills, back the corridors world class science and innovation assets and identify and grow new sectors and businesses. The four LEP Chairmen will be meeting on Friday 26th January to advance development of a Cross Corridor Industrial Strategy Board. In addition to the four core LEPs both Hertfordshire LEP and Greater Swindon and Wiltshire LEP have expressed a desire to be part of this process as it develops.

The output will be a cross corridor industrial strategy produced by March 2019 and it is expected that a full commission for this work will be published in the spring of 2018 and series of consultation events and regional summits will be hosted in the summer and autumn of 2018 as part of the development process.

In advance of this work all four LEPs are supporting the development of a corridor wide Economic Vision. It is intended that this vision will provide an initial assessment of the core economic strengths of the region, highlight opportunities for further collaboration and closer alignment with the priorities of the Industrial Strategy. The latest draft of this vision is expected to be produced before the end of January and will be shared with Board Members for initial feedback. Running parallel to this work BTVLEP are also undertaking an audit of current underpinning evidence and strategies within the Corridor to support the full commission.

England's Economic Heartland

The England's Economic Heartland Leaders Board met on January 19th to formulate a regional response to the National Infrastructure Assessment, the major roads and strategic route network consultations and to learn about the timetable for decision making process for the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway in the summer of 2018 and to receive updates on East West Rail and the Regional Digital Investment.

Buckinghamshire Growth Strategy Programme Development

Following on from the agreement at the last board meeting to utilise the Buckinghamshire Advantage structure to support the further delivery of the Buckinghamshire Growth Strategy a number of briefing sessions have been held with partner organisations.

Buckinghamshire County Council endorsed the strategy at its cabinet meeting in October and further positive briefing sessions have been held with Cabinet representatives from Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe District Council prior to Christmas. One of the themes of these discussions was how the strategy could support the development of district level Economic Strategies and it is pleasing to see the strategy being clearly referenced in the new Wycombe District Economic Development Strategy which is currently out for consultation. Formal adoption by Councils of the jointly commissioned strategy would be a positive next step and establish a firm platform for future strategy development.

On January 9th Richard Harrington presented to Aylesbury Vale District Council, who although welcoming of the presentation, remain unmoved in their position on the growth strategy.

A meeting of the Buckinghamshire Advantage board has been called for February 5th and will be specifically addressing the operational delivery and development of the Growth Strategy asks and offers in the context of the Director Generals' correspondence referenced above. Members are invited to encourage their directors to assist development of a Local Industrial Strategy using the platform of the SEP and Buckinghamshire Growth Strategy and to aggregate a strategy up Cross Corridor level. A brief of works will be tabled at the BA Board meeting for discussion and approval.

Members are asked to :-

Note the content of this report and advise on how they would wish to support the development of local and cross corridor industrial strategy work, building upon the principles of the Buckinghamshire Growth Strategy and BTVLEP Strategic Economic Plan over the next 12 months.