
Title: Local Industrial Strategy

Purpose: To update members on the progress being undertaken in the production of the Local Industrial Strategy for Buckinghamshire and in the alignment of the Industrial Strategy for the wider Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor.

Recommendation: That members note the content of this report and of the verbal update giving the latest position in relation to the selection of the consulting partners for the Buckinghamshire Local Industrial Strategy ahead of the Interviews on May 25th. That members ensure that the delivery timetable allows for the appropriate engagement with partner organisations ahead of the final strategy adoption by this board at the end of 2018.

1 Introduction

As previously reported BTVLEP, as part of the Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor, have been selected as a pilot area for the development of the Local Industrial Strategy. The theme of the Oxford to Cambridge Corridor regional strategy is the development of the business ecosystem and the opportunities for developing the international capacity and export potential of businesses from across the Corridor.

Unlike Strategic Economic Plans, Government have a strong desire to be actively engaged in the co-creation of Industrial Strategies. A number of meetings have already been held with Government analysts to enable BTVLEP and our partners to gain access to data sources and a meeting has been scheduled with Joe Manning (The National Local Industrial Strategy Lead) and his team to update on the current delivery schedule on the afternoon of May 24th.

It is intended that the Local Industrial Strategies will take a longer timeframe perspective than Strategic Economic Plans concentrating on how well our regional innovation system is functioning, who/what are the key contributors to growth and how can we better organise collaborative working between businesses, research organisations and the public sector. As with the Strategic Economic Plan it is anticipated that the Strategy will form part of a deal based conversation with Government once aligned with place making and connectivity strategies and once positioned within the overarching vision for the Corridor.

We are currently working closely with regional colleagues and with government officials to ensure alignment of the emerging Buckinghamshire Local Industrial Strategy across the Corridor, to ensure that there is no duplication of research evidence and that those areas that require a greater than local input are pinpointed and developed as the platform for future collaboration to drive productivity growth further.

2 Cross Corridor Vision

The tender specification for producing a high level cross corridor economic vision has been agreed and will be published on LEP websites from May 18th. A copy of this brief is attached as **Appendix 1** to this report.

The high level vision will articulate the potential of the corridor building upon the key areas of strength, competitive advantage and the thematic areas which offer the most opportunity to drive economic growth and increased productivity across the Corridor.

At the Cross Corridor leaders meeting on May 11th it was reported and agreed that a steering group be established to guide this commission with representation from all Corridor LEPs and their local authority representatives. It was further agreed that BTVLEP would invite BCC and AVDC to represent the Buckinghamshire Corridor area.

In addition to the Cross Corridor alignment, we are also working closely with individual LEP partners to ensure that resources are managed effectively, paying special attention to any areas of overlap to align planned engagement events.

3 Buckinghamshire Local Industrial Strategy Co-creation

At a local level the tender for the Buckinghamshire Local Industrial Strategy commission has also been published, closing on May 18th. The assessment for potential applicants will be undertaken on May 23rd with interviews being undertaken on May 25th. The full tender specification is attached as **Appendix 2** to this report.

We have structured the commission in three distinct phases:-

Phase 1: Evidence Base Production (June –July 2018)

To develop a clear understanding of the current ‘industrial’ capability of Buckinghamshire & establish priorities for future investment;

- Inception Meeting & Contract commencement: Tue 29th May
- Draft Evidence Base circulated to Steering Group & BTVLEP Board: 16th July
- Evidence Base Presentation to the BTVLEP Board & Steering Group: 24th July

Phase 2: Stakeholder Engagement, Organisation of Workshops & Technical Facilitation (August – September 2018)

Bringing together businesses, the public sector & the knowledge base to test a number of potential investment hypothesis;

- Draft LIS Vision circulated to Steering Group & BTVLEP Board: w/c 24th September
- LIS Vision Presentation to the BTVLEP Board & Steering Group: 5th October

Phase 3: Outline Business Case Development & Strategy Writing (October – January 2019)

To write up the potential investment cases and draw these together into a final, local industrial strategy.

- Draft Final LIS circulated to the BTVLEP Board & Steering Group: w/c 23rd November
- Draft Final LIS presentation to BTVLEP Board & Steering Group: 11th January 2019.

Although the timetable for the three phases is challenging, we believe that it is deliverable if we focus, prioritise and collaborate and this trajectory is critical to ensure that Buckinghamshire's aspirations and industrial capabilities are fully incorporated into the wider corridor strategy referenced above.

A recently established Buckinghamshire Industrial Strategy task and finish group will support and review the development of the Strategy but it is important that members ensure that there is the capacity to consider, consult and agree the draft Strategy between October 5th and November 23rd .

4 Initial Evidence Gathering

A number of engagement events have already been held to provide insight into potential opportunities emerging for inclusion within the Local Industrial Strategy. A round table discussion was held at the University of Buckingham on April 30th together with senior Civil Servants supporting the Industrial Strategy and Growth Corridor development process.

A number of opportunities have arisen from this initial discussion with the potential for the University to operate as a centre for Artificial Intelligence research at the heart of the growth corridor beginning to crystallise. Together with Clean growth, Mobility and the Ageing society Artificial Intelligence are the 4 themes of the Industrial Strategy Grand Challenges and the activity proposed at the University of Buckingham could form the basis of a compelling regional proposal. An outline business case is under development and may be presented to our next board meeting subject to Board agreement of the principle of developing and supporting this capability within Buckinghamshire.

Members of the team have also met with Andrew Tierney and Rosa Fernandez from the BEIS/DCLG research team who have agreed to support the contract Buckinghamshire LIS tender interviews, as indeed they did for Oxfordshire, who are currently running two weeks ahead of us in commissioning terms. This meeting also reinforced the view that industrial strategies should be developed from a detailed assessment of local evidence, they should focus on areas with the greatest long term potential for growth and that an assessment of smart specialisations looking at the potential linkages between growth sectors should be investigated in detail.

5 Science & Innovation Audit Updates

The ongoing work of the science and innovation audits and academic research collaborations within the area should be supported as a priority for LEPs to inform this evidence base. The Science and Innovation Audits covering Upstream Space being led by the UK Space Agency and Sustainable Airports being led by Brunel University are now nearing completion, BTVLEP are actively involved as part of the steering group for both projects.

Following the presentation at the last Board Meeting BTVLEP have also written in support of the Royal Holloway "Story Futures" project and will be part of the steering group for this important research and development programme within the creative industries sector.

We will continue to mine other key sector collaborations such as high performance engineering flowing from our jointly funded Silverstone technology cluster work and life sciences as may both feature as key growth drivers in future strategy.

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