



LEP STRATEGY COMMITTEE – AGENDA ITEM 7

Subject: Strategy Work Programme Progress report

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Meeting date: Friday 7th August 2020

Purpose

To update the Strategy Committee on progress with the Strategy Work Programme including an update to the Strategy Programme Delivery Plan.

Recommendations

The Strategy Committee is asked to

- a) Note the content of the report
- b) Discuss progress against the Delivery Plan.
- c) Note the LEP's participation as a partner in the Industrial Decarbonisation Challenge Fund Industrial Cluster Plan competition (Stage 2)

Discussion

Delivery Plan

1. The updated Delivery Plan is attached for discussion as **Appendix A**. The Strategy Committee is asked to note progress against target and consider potential corrective action against those areas highlighted Amber. A number of items have now been marked as completed. No actions are currently rated as high risk (red) although the ongoing uncertainty around UK Shared Prosperity Fund remains problematic with no clarity as yet on when details will be released.

Quarter 2 Activity

Decarbonisation Roadmap

2. As previously reported the LEP committed up to £10k plus a limited amount of staff time to support the development an Industrial Decarbonisation Roadmap focussed on the Mersey Basin area. The activity, led by Peel Land and Property and supported by the five north west LEPs, North West Business Leadership Team, the Cheshire Energy Hub and the North West Local Energy Hub reached a conclusion on 22nd July with the submission of an application for funding to stage 2 of the programme.
3. The LEP took responsibility for the Business Case scoping work, and commissioned Hatch Regeneris to develop an outline framework for the Stage 2 business case.
4. Stage 2 is, in effect, delivery of the work programme outlined in the scoping work undertake at Stage 1. The consortium, which now includes additional industry partners Engie and Scottish



Power, has submitted a bid for c.£330,000 of Innovate UK funding. Total costs for the project are approximately £620,000.

5. The LEP is again an active partner in the consortium and has agreed to take responsibility for production of the final report and business case. This work will be undertaken by consultants, to be appointed in 2021 following a competitive tendering exercise, with a budget of up to £100k. This activity will be cash flowed by the LEP but reclaimed from Innovate at 100% grant rate.
6. Decisions on Stage 2 allocations will be announced in the autumn with work starting in January 2021.

Digital Infrastructure Plan

7. A presentation on the Digital Infrastructure Plan was provided to the June meeting of the Strategy Committee and the slides circulated for information after the meeting. It was reported shortly after the meeting that the levels of gigabit coverage in Warrington had increased significantly due to the switch on of Virgin Media's gigabit service in the area.
8. A copy of the interim report provided by the consultant team is attached as **Appendix B**.

Natural Capital Audit / Natural Capital Plan

9. As reported previously the LEP has appointed a consortium led by Natural Capital Solutions to develop a Natural Capital Audit and Investment Plan for the sub-region. This work is a key deliverable of the Quality of Place Strategy.
10. A presentation on progress with the Audit will be given at the August meeting of the Committee.