Report to:	Business Innovation and Growth Panel
Date:	7 March 2018
Subject:	**Digital**
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1 Purpose of this report

1.1 To update the BIG Panel on work to develop the digital agenda and seek feedback on the Digital Framework.

2 Information

Leeds City Region Digital Framework

2.1 BIG Panel will be aware from previous panel meetings that the LEP has a long standing ambition to develop a digital strategy for the whole of the City Region.

2.2 The Digital Framework is now being progressed alongside work to develop the new Local Inclusive Industrial Strategy. Although these are separate strands of work with different timescales, the Digital Framework - once established - will contribute significantly to the narrative and objectives of the digital and tech focused Local Inclusive Industrial Strategy.

2.3 The output of the work to develop a Digital Framework will be a short, concise document (PowerPoint slides) which clearly articulates the overall vision for the digital economy in the Leeds City Region whilst setting out clear ambition statements and proposed interventions. The Digital Framework will also make clear how it will contribute towards (and help to solve) the City Region's four key challenges.

2.4 This overarching Digital Framework will provide a framework for investment and a collective narrative/ ambition for 'digital' across the whole City Region.

2.5 The Framework will set out to articulate an approach to the digital economy and to the development of digital capability across the City Region's population and institutions that sets the direction of travel and encourages all

the other actors in the region to align with both the LEP and the Combined Authority and each other.

2.6 In this way, the very process of bringing together key stakeholders from across the City Region will help to build relationships and identify opportunities to work collaboratively going forwards.

2.7 There are five strands (or outcomes) to the emerging Leeds City Region Digital Framework (which are all very much interconnected):

- Every business a digital business – helping the City Region businesses to embrace and grow through improved use of new technologies
- Digital skills for all – giving everyone access to the skills they need to thrive in a the digital economy
- A digital sector that services the world – making the Leeds City Region the best place to start and grow a digital business
- World class digital infrastructure – ensure everyone can access a fast, reliable and resilient network
- A smarter, more intelligent City Region – using technology and data to solve the City Region's biggest challenges.

2.8 A number of these strands are taken from the Government's Digital Strategy and mirror the Government's ambitions to grow the economy through the opportunities that digital brings. The Leeds City Region framework will position digital as an enabler – and not the driver – in an attempt to solve some of the City Region's biggest challenges.

2.9 For each of the five strands/outcomes, a facilitated pre-consultation workshop will take place during March. These will bring in a small group of key stakeholders to test some of the emerging thinking to date. Following this, a much wider online consultation process will take place in an attempt to capture the views and opinions of stakeholders across the City Region and across the five strands.

2.10 BIG Panel will receive a presentation at the meeting on 7 March setting out this emerging thinking.

Digital Inward Investment Fund

2.11 The Digital Inward Investment Fund is a £1 million funding pot that has been allocated from an overall £13.45 million programme secured under Growth Deal 3. The £1 million has been set aside specifically to support growth in the Leeds City Region digital economy, providing grants to inward investor businesses to help de-risk and bring forward new investments in the region.

2.12 The programme will support around 35 new inward investment projects and create over 175 new jobs in the City Region. An evaluation of the economic impact of the scheme has been undertaken, which found that the 170 direct jobs created through the scheme are likely to result in around 200 additional FTE jobs, generating £56m in net additional GVA (up to 2027).

2.13   Local design agency, The Engine Room, is in the process of designing a marketing campaign which includes creating a name and identity for the fund. The campaign is targeted towards growing digital businesses looking to expand or make a move into the UK who are currently based in London or international locations particularly USA, Canada, India and China. The campaign also aims to engage intermediary organisations, sector stakeholders and national and trade media focused upon the technology and investment sectors.

2.14   On Tuesday 16 January 2018, the Engine Room facilitated a workshop with key stakeholders to support the development of creative concepts and messaging for the fund. The design of the campaign will be completed in March in preparation to formally launch the fund in June to coincide with 'London Tech Week' (11 - 17 June 2018).

Digital skills campaign

2.15   The Digital Skills Campaign is being developed to address the digital skills gap in the Leeds City Region and is due to be launched in spring this year. The aim of the campaign is to promote digital careers across the region to individuals, to highlight the range of roles in digital across all sectors and to support individuals to upskill/retrain/train in digital skills.

2.16   The campaign is seeking to develop collaboration across the region with businesses, educational institutions and providers to develop a model of bringing information together to enable individuals to engage with opportunities in training, business engagement/visits to the workplace and employment opportunities, to develop or start their career in a digital role.

2.17   Focus groups have taken place with individuals across the region to gain insights to inform the messaging of the campaign and early findings have shown that people support the idea that existing personal attributes could be attributed to a digital role, for example somebody who excels at problem solving could have the aptitude for a software development position. There is also demand for digital roles to be de-mystified. Work is underway on further collaboration with businesses and providers across the region, to develop the campaign model.

2.18   Interested businesses or partners are asked to contact Becky Collier becky.collier@westyorks-ca.gov.uk

3   Financial Implications

3.1   There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

4   Legal Implications

4.1   There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

5   Staffing Implications

5.1   There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

6   External Consultees

6.1   See text in main body of report.

7   Recommendations

7.1   That the Panel note the contents of the report and provide feedback at the meeting.

8   Background Documents

        None.

9   Appendices

        None.