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**Report to:** Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership Board (LEP Board)

**Date:** 18 July 2019

**Subject:** **Inclusive Growth – Update on activities**

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## 1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To summarise the Inclusive Growth and Public Policy Panel's emerging work programme; note the progress being made on establishing a strategic framework, developing the link to wider City Region priorities and identifying funding; and to agree the approach and to delegate final programme decisions to the Panel and LEP Chairs.

## 2. Information

- 2.1 Subject to further Panel consideration the following work programme is being progressed:

### *Understanding approaches to inclusive growth across the City Region*

- 2.2 With all partner districts developing their approach to inclusive growth – putting inclusion at the heart of their economic strategies and/or developing focussed strategies – the LEP is well-placed to understand how these approaches work together, highlight strengths and best practices that could be adopted more widely, and identify areas where additional focus is required. The following activities are progressing:

- Surveying, mapping and summarising the various approaches and initiatives relating to inclusive growth underway in partner districts across the City Region.
- Building on the Panel's visit to Huddersfield New College to learn about their exemplar approach to equality and diversity, further visits and presentations are being arranged across the City Region to enable learning from best practice, particularly with regards to good work, digital inclusion and health. This will lead to the publication of a series of best practice papers with the aim of prompting best practice to be adopted more widely.

- Opportunities for the Panel to learn from and disseminate best practice from beyond the City Region is also a focus. Recently, the LEP hosted the Deputy Mayor of London Rajesh Agarwal, which has created a valuable link with the Capital.

*Developing the City Region's Strategic Approach*

- 2.3 To provide a strategic and long-term framework for inclusive growth activities in the region, an Inclusive Growth Strategic Framework is being co-designed with partners. The Framework will aim to encourage a wide range of public sector, private and third sector partners to work together to reach agreed goals which will increase opportunities for those residents and communities currently not benefitting from economic growth.
- 2.4 At the Panel's request, a support group comprising senior officers from districts, private and third sector partners across the City Region has been established to ensure a partnership approach to embedding inclusive growth and developing the Framework. This group will provide in-depth and local understanding of the main barriers to inclusion and what practical approaches have proven to work in overcoming these. The first meeting of the Group took place in late May 2019.
- 2.5 Through collaboration and consultation with the support group and a wide range of internal and external stakeholders, we will ensure that the finalised framework fully aligns with all other partner and regional strategies, and reflects the LEP and Combined Authority's ambition for an inclusive approach to economic growth across the City Region.
- 2.6 Inclusive growth aspirations are also being embedded across wider LEP and Combined Authority activities, most notably to date within the criteria for business support grants. These aspirations will also be at the core of the City Region's Local Industrial Strategy, which will focus on bold steps to boost productivity whilst ensuring that the resulting economic growth is both inclusive and clean. This embedding of inclusive growth ensures a focus on grasping all opportunities to secure investments in the regional economy that can enable all our communities to contribute to and benefit from economic growth.
- 2.7 An example of such an opportunity is the Combined Authority's recent ambitious bids to the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF), which are focused on transforming transport connections for communities most in need of access to jobs, services and education. The bids include investments along a series of Inclusive Growth Corridors, and identifies the communities around these Corridors who could benefit from improved connectivity and mobility. The outcomes sought for these communities include:
  - Improved access to employment opportunities from deprived communities currently with poor public transport connections.
  - More students within easier reach of college places.

- Reduced cost of travel by supporting walking and cycling interventions, and through the innovative use of technology in relation to transport services and digital payments.
  - Improved public transport in areas with low levels of car ownership, enabling more residents to access opportunities further afield through sustainable travel
  - Improved health outcomes
- 2.8 We will seek to maximise the economic opportunities presented by these investments in connectivity and mobility through a series of targeted interventions and community initiatives to tackle inclusion and equality issues, including
- Identifying the specific support needs of communities around the Corridors (e.g. skills, employment support, etc.);
  - Piloting the respective approaches in a small number of areas;
  - Rolling out successful approaches across the City Region more widely.

#### *Developing a pipeline of projects and interventions*

- 2.9 Through working with the Panel and wider stakeholders, a pipeline of potential projects and interventions is being developed, aimed at both embedding inclusive growth across the City Region and to maximise the impact of investment in Inclusive Growth Corridors. Ideas under development include
- A Good Work Standard to promote a City Region-wide standard of best employment practices to help address issues around pay, progression, equality and diversity, health and wellbeing, professional development and employment opportunities. Employer commitment to the standard could become a key condition of receiving LEP grant support.
  - Research and mapping of digital inclusion needs and current provision across the City Region, informing targeted and practical interventions that complements existing delivery and, where relevant, focussed on Inclusive Growth Corridors.
  - Facilitating grant or other funding to support a range of community organisations to deliver employability programmes that help e.g. long term youth unemployed, BAME communities and people with disabilities. Support could be focussed on Inclusive Growth Corridors where relevant.
  - With advice from the Yorkshire Sports Foundation, exploring practical, low-cost options for employers to encourage staff members to become more physically active. This complements research currently being undertaken by Public Health England to identify the main health inequality challenges across the City Region.
  - Addressing fuel poverty, creating for example potential for training unemployed young people to advise families on basic measures to reduce energy bills, which would link strongly with both the City Region's skills and clean growth priorities.

- 2.10 It is proposed that, in order to progress the above work programme and take advantage of funding opportunities as they arise, any relevant approvals be delegated to the Panel and LEP Board Chairs in conjunction with the Managing Director of the Combined Authority.

### **3. Financial Implications**

- 3.1 There are no immediate financial implications from this paper. Budget previously identified can be used to support the pipeline of projects detailed at paragraph 2.9 under the principles agreed by the LEP Board (see paper on *Growing Places Fund Reinvestment* on 20 September 2018) alongside funds identified from the Business Rates Pool, subject to the delegated approvals proposed at paragraph 2.10.
- 3.2 Other external funding opportunities, such as the European Social Fund, will also be leveraged wherever possible. The LEP will continue to work with partners, both through the support group (see paragraph 2.4) and more widely, to ensure proposals and approaches are coordinated and complementary to maximise the funds available to the City Region.

### **4. Legal Implications**

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

### **5. Staffing Implications**

- 5.1 There are no immediate staffing implications arising from this report.

### **6. External Consultees**

- 6.1 There is currently no requirement for external consultations to be undertaken.

### **7. Recommendations**

- 7.1. To note the Inclusive Growth and Public Policy Panel's emerging work programme.
- 7.2. To note the progress being made on developing the LEP's strategic approach, including establishing a strategic framework and embedding inclusive growth in wider strategies.
- 7.3. To support the approach of prioritising interventions with the strongest links to wider City Region strategies, in particular Inclusive Growth Corridors.
- 7.4. To agree to delegate final programme decisions to the Panel and LEP Chairs in conjunction with WYCA Managing Director.

### **8. Background Documents**

- 8.1 None.

## **9. Appendices**

9.1 None