



Report to:	Business, Economy and Innovation Committee
Date:	9 November 2023
Subject:	Economic Strategy Update
Director:	Felix Kumi-Ampofo, Director Inclusive Economy, Skills & Culture
Author:	Jo Barham, Policy Manager

Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1. This report provides an update on the development of a new Economic Strategy for West Yorkshire. Committee members are asked to feedback on the approach in advance of a more detailed set of priorities being developed.

2. Information

Activity Update

- 2.1. Proposals for a new Economic Strategy to reflect the vision and missions of the [West Yorkshire Plan](#) were discussed at the July Committee meeting. Since then, the following actions have been undertaken:
 - Published a brief for research support on emerging opportunities for West Yorkshire clusters and areas of strength with a focus on net-zero.
 - Published a consultation questionnaire on regional strengths and opportunities: <https://www.yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/economicstrategy>
 - Published a call for evidence through the Yorkshire Policy and Engagement Network (Y-PERN) on childcare, the informal economy, and the future of work
 - Updated West Yorkshire Economic Assessment.

- 2.2. Alongside the evidence collection a programme of stakeholder engagement is being undertaken to ensure a wide range of voices contribute to the development of the Economic Strategy. Key consultation events since the last committee include:
- A session led by Asma Iqbal, BEIC member and LEP Board Diversity Champion. During an insightful and wide-ranging discussion, contributions were welcomed on ways of deepening engagement with communities across the region, reflecting and celebrating the full range of sector strengths in West Yorkshire, and maximising the use of the existing evidence base. Following-up events are being planned with BEIC members.
 - A session considering the needs and opportunities of rural communities and effective engagement channels considered the role of place in the Economic Strategy and the impact that rural communities can make.
 - Ongoing discussions with local authority colleagues to align regional and local priorities.
 - A session to explore the relationship between the Combined Authority and Business Representative bodies and good practice models.
- 2.3 Further engagement sessions are planned building on the emerging evidence and thematic discussions. This includes events with universities and voluntary and community groups.
- 2.4 The Mayor along with Professor John Wright (Bradford Institute for Health Research) recently launched the West Yorkshire Scientific Advisory Group (WYSAG). The WYSAG will support joint working between the Combined Authority and the West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) to highlight the best evidence on health inequalities and how this impacts upon the West Yorkshire Economy. Emerging lessons from this group will be used to inform the development and implementation of the Economic Strategy.

Next Steps

- 2.5 Once the evidence has been collected and initial consultation is complete a summary document of headline findings will be produced. A series of workshops will be undertaken utilising the evidence to shape priorities. This will form the basis of a draft document to be shared for further consultation. The use of external facilitators to support this approach is being explored. Input from members of the Committee would be welcome on prioritisation workshop approaches.
- 2.6 Building on previous good practice of the development of the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and Local Industrial Strategy (LIS), proposals for an expert panel are being considered to scrutinise evidence and peer review the application of evidence into policy priorities.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1. Economic opportunities for net-zero is a key driver of the Economic Strategy which will align closely with existing activity on climate and the environment.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1. The central focus of the Economic Strategy is for an inclusive economy with well paid jobs, this will be reflected in the prioritisation process and draft document.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion will be a driver of the Economic Strategy and this is being reflected in the approach taken to consultation with efforts to engage with a wide range of communities and individuals.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

7. Legal Implications

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

8. Staffing Implications

- 8.1. There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

- 9.1. Wide ranging consultation is taking place to develop this work. This includes an online questionnaire along with targeted follow-up activity and stakeholder events.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1. That members of the BEIC Committee note the updates and provide any comments / queries on the proposed approach.

11. Background Documents

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

None.