
Report to: Employment and Skills Panel

Date: 1 June 2018

Subject: **Leeds City Region Digital Framework**

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1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Panel on work to develop the Leeds City Region Digital Framework.

2 Information

Leeds City Region Digital Framework

- 2.1 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 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 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 There are five strands (or outcomes) to the emerging Leeds City Region Digital Framework (which are all very much interconnected):
- Digital opportunities for all 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
 - The 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.
- 2.7 A series of small facilitated pre-consultation workshops took place in March to test some of the emerging thinking to date. These followed on from the Local Authority Officers working group and a series of other discussions and presentations. Feedback was positive that the framework is heading in the right direction and the draft framework has been refined to reflect the comments received.
- Online consultation**
- 2.8 To ensure as much buy in and support to this Framework from the people who will be impacted by it, an online consultation for the Digital Framework will be launched using the new Engagement Hub, following CEXs meeting in late May.
- 2.9 The Engagement Hub is a new engagement tool for the Combined Authority and will allow the consultation to be framed in a number of different ways, depending on the audience (business, citizen, organisation etc.) and that audiences particular interests (infrastructure, skills etc.). Tools available to be used include surveys, discussion boards, ideas boards, questions and answer boards, stories etc. To do this effectively will require the support of partners to push the consultation out through their channels but the key to success is ensuring this is seen as relevant to people’s lives. Importantly, the hub is mobile optimised for ease of access/use.
- 2.10 As part of the online consultation, there is an opportunity to get involved in NESTA’s ‘Everyone Makes Innovation Policy’ programme as an associate member. The programme wants to see policy that aims to get more people involved in innovation; that directs innovation capacity and resources towards big social challenges and to the needs of marginalised or underserved people; and that tries to ensure that the benefits of innovation are spread more equitably. Their premise is that engaging the wider public in innovation policymaking could improve the way that policies are designed, help make

sure they focus on the most pressing challenges, and encourage decision makers to take ethical considerations into account.

- 2.11 As such, NESTA are very interested in how the Combined Authority is planning to try and make this consultation as inclusive as possible using our new engagement hub and get as much input as possible across the City Region to a Digital Framework which is people, not technology focused.
- 2.12 As the development of the Framework progresses, work will continue on the digital narrative, developing visions/personas to showcase how digital tech can transform the lives of ordinary people. Four personas have been developed to date which align with the LEP Board four inconvenient truths. Input into these personas is key, and will be potentially tested as part of the online consultation.
- 2.13 It is important to point out that the adoption of the framework (once agreed) is just the start of the journey. Action Plans and Working Groups will be required to ensure the aspirations in the framework are realised, building on existing activity taking place across the City Region.

Digital activity

- 2.14 Work under each of the five outcomes is already taking place across the City Region, for example the LEPs new Digital Inward Investment Fund, the Northern Max Accelerator in Bradford, and the Digital Manufacturing project taking place at the University of Huddersfield. The Framework will recognise this, building on good practice and identifying new future activity, particularly aligned with Inclusive Growth outcomes.

Communications and marketing

- 2.15 Over April and May the Combined Authority has been running a campaign (in advanced of the online consultation launch) which aligns with a number of existing digital events taking place. The campaign #LCRIsDigital has had the following themes:

Week 1 (16th April) – Transport, and general digital messages
Week 2 (23rd April) – Creative, inc #4sparks, and Fintech
Week 3 (30th April) – Innovation (across all areas)
Week 4 (7th May) – Digital skills launch, digital for all ages
Week 5 (14th May) – Inclusion
Week 6 (21st May) - Discover Digital

Some of the images and graphics from the campaign are shown in Appendix 1.

Skills and Inclusion

- 2.16 The West Yorkshire Combined Authority Discover Digital campaign will inspire people into digital roles, to promote digital skills across key industry sectors

and to demystify digital roles. The campaign is aimed at individuals across the region from graduates upwards, with the primary audience being graduates and career changers.

- 2.17 The campaign will direct individuals to the discoverdigital.org.uk website which will be an engaging platform to find out information from digital employers, across the region; the types of digital roles that exist within a company, the skills needed to gain employment and the personal attributes employers may look for. There will be lots of real life case studies on the website of individuals working in companies all across the region from SME's to large businesses, including inspirational stories in the style of 'talking heads' to camera.

The Digital Tech Sector

- 2.18 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.
- 2.19 The fund is now open for applications, and four application forms have been sent to perspective investment projects. Local design agency, The Engine Room, is in the process of designing a marketing campaign outside the City Region with the wordmark #welcome. 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. The fund will formally launch in June to coincide with 'London Tech Week' (11 - 17 June 2018).

Infrastructure

- 2.20 The West Yorkshire and York Superfast programme is currently in delivery. The Programme currently in phase 2 and seeks to provide superfast broadband (30MB/sec) to SMEs and households across the intervention area.
- 2.21 Work is currently ongoing to confirm the scale of a potential phase 3 of the programme. Bids are likely to be submitted in Summer 2018 with a full programme commenced by late 2018.
- 2.22 The Department for Media, Culture and Sport (DCMS) Local Full Fibre Networks Challenge Fund (LFFN) is likely to invite further bids in Summer 2018. The LFFN Programme aims to stimulate full fibre networks across the UK by encouraging private investment in follow on commercial deployments in full fibre infrastructure. The Department have also indicated that funding will be made available for other 5G pilots in the future. Part of the LFFN proposal is about providing the fibre infrastructure (backhaul) infrastructure to support future 5G rollout in the future.

- 2.23 North Yorkshire districts were successful in Wave 2 of the LFFN programme announced in Spring 2018. Work is currently ongoing with West Yorkshire districts to determine the scope for a joint bid(s) into Wave 3 of the programme.

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 A number of external discussions have taken place to inform the emerging Framework proposals. These include: DigiCat Yorks and DHEZ; KT Directors; Local Authorities; Leeds Digital Board; INCA; in addition to several LEP Board and BIG Panel members including Andrew Wright and Rashik Parmar. The pre consultation workshops included businesses, local authorities, skills training providers, and intermediaries.

7 Recommendations

- 7.1 That the Panel notes the contents of the report and provides feedback at the meeting.

8 Background Documents

None.

9 Appendices

Appendix 1 **Digital comms campaign images**