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

**Date:** 20 September 2018

**Subject:** Channel 4

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## 1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To update the LEP Board on this significant inward investment opportunity and seek support for the proposal to attract the National HQ to Leeds City Region.

## 2. Information

- 2.1 Earlier in 2018 Channel 4 launched its '4 All the UK' strategy which involves the establishment of a new National HQ and two new Creative Hubs in the nations and regions. Leeds City Region submitted a pitch for the Channel 4 National HQ to be in our City Region. This represents a significant opportunity to expand the creative and digital industries, especially the TV, film and screen industries and would generate significant opportunities for talented individuals and independent production companies to flourish in the North.
- 2.2 The LEP, local authorities and regional industry bodies have collaborated closely to develop a compelling offer to Channel 4, engaging with many creative artists, screenwriters, education institutions, film/TV sector professionals and the wider digital community who have lent support to the partnership approach. To support the Leeds City Region pitch the #4Sparks social media campaign was created. It has served as a tool for communicating the main themes of the Leeds City Region pitch, receiving much support from a variety of stakeholders and is now a fundamental component of our pitch.
- 2.3 Following a strong collaborative bid and site visit, Leeds has been shortlisted by Channel 4 for the location of their new National HQ, alongside Birmingham and Manchester.
- 2.4 During August, Channel 4 has been holding advanced negotiations with all of the shortlisted regions and has participated in visits to candidate cities to meet with members of the independent production sector, education providers and community groups from across the region.
- 2.5 Negotiations are now at an advanced stage to clarify and confirm the details within the proposals made by Leeds City Region partners, as set out in

Appendix 1 (Exempt), and a final decision by Channel 4 is expected this October.

### **3. Financial Implications**

- 3.1 Financial support for this project is anticipated from a number of sources including those set out in Appendix 1 (Exempt).

### **4. Legal Implications**

- 4.1 There is a strict non-disclosure agreement in place which covers the terms of the negotiation. If the bid is successful further legal support will be required to prepare the necessary documentation and assess the associated issues.
- 4.2 The information contained in Appendix 1 is exempt under paragraph 3, Part 1 Section B of the Access to Information Annex to the LEP Board Procedure Rules as it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the LEP, the Combined Authority or any other local authority). It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the content of the appendix as exempt outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information as publication at this time could prejudice current and future decision making.

### **5. Staffing Implications**

- 5.1 Staffing implications are being considered and will be determined by the nature of the overall investment.

### **6. External Consultees**

- 6.1 No external consultations have been undertaken, however there has been extensive engagement of partners and industry representatives throughout the bid process, as set out earlier in this report.

### **7. Recommendations**

- 7.1 That the LEP Board endorses the Leeds City Region bid to attract the Channel 4 National HQ including the proposed support set out in Appendix 1 (Exempt).

### **8. Background Documents**

None

### **9. Appendices**

Appendix 1 (Exempt) – Summary of Leeds City Region proposal