

LEP BOARD AWAY DAY, 2018

KEY MESSAGES

BACKGROUND

The LEP Board Away Day was held on 20 September 2018, with the aim of shaping thinking on development of a Local, Inclusive Industrial Strategy and priorities for Leeds City Region. The discussion was structured around three key themes:

1. What is distinctive about Leeds City Region vs what is a national challenge and priority?
2. What should our priorities be?
3. What further evidence do we need to develop our understanding?

A summary of the key messages are provided below:

DISTINCTIVENESS OF LEEDS CITY REGION

- Diversity of Leeds City Region (geography, SME base, cultural assets, universities, clusters, age profile) is a strength but also can be a challenge in terms of building a strategy and vision. Need to think of a strong 'hook' which celebrates this diversity and provides a compelling narrative around which to structure and build-on strengths.
- Diverse SME base with niche tech strengths including Medtech and in Advanced Manufacturing
- University expertise is a real strength for Leeds City Region, niche opportunities for engagement including advanced manufacturing and supply chains. Need to exploit this more effectively including a move towards higher level skills.
- Blurring of sectors and ability to use strengths in one sector e.g. digital capabilities of the universities to support other aspects the economy – 'be digital or get digitised'.

WHAT IS WORKING WELL / WHAT MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE?

- Harnessing the power of the business¹

¹ The Chancellor has announced **£31m for a business-led package of initiatives aimed at driving up firm-level productivity**, including:

- *Creating a 'Small Business Leadership Programme'*, providing management training to 2,000 small business leaders in its' first year with our ambition to train 10,000 people per year by 2025.
- *Strengthening local networks to focussed on business improvement*, so that the UK's hundreds of thousands of business leaders can learn from each other about management excellence and technology adoption. This will form a core element of our Local Industrial Strategies, which will be focused on strengthening business productivity at a local level.
- *A new mentoring programme for SMEs*. Ten of these leading companies, including GSK, Amazon, KPMG and Siemens UK, have already signed up to provide over 100 mentors to small business leaders.

- *Proposals for a private sector advisory group* providing peer-to-peer support for businesses whether online or face-to-face,
 - *Promoting a joined-up approach to business support* ensuring messages reach as many business as possible, using technology to maximise the impact of this. Harnessing the power of business and other leaders to tackle low productivity – link to discussions on ‘No Wrong Door’ agreement on business support across all public and private intermediaries.
 - Effective delivery of core business support services, ensuring that the fundamentals of business support programmes are sound. This includes robust evaluation of existing activities and private sector engagement on service design
- Ensure that the Industrial Strategy provides a compelling narrative for the City Region which gets buy-in from a range of partners, including the voluntary and community sector
 - More needs to be done to raise the profile of the LEP, more collaboration between business representative bodies and clearer demonstration of the value for businesses to engage.
 - Continued investment in digital tech, skills, etc. will be key to adapting to, and exploiting the opportunities associated with the ‘future economy’. We need to ensure that new digital technologies are used as enabling tools, bringing business, the public sector and people together with a shared vision.
 - Aligning the strengths of our universities with the needs of businesses and promoting the diffusion of innovation through strengthened networks. Diffusion of innovation to improve productivity is as important as the process itself.
 - Support and encourage peer-to-peer sharing of good practice and understanding
 - Engaging with the voluntary and community sector to build on strong foundations for inclusive growth. Supporting inclusive growth is vital in order to improve living standards and tackle stubborn deprivation in the City Region. The voluntary and community sector plays a key role working with communities to tackle complex issues and remove barriers to participation. These interventions provide the foundations to build on as development of the Local, Inclusive Industrial Strategy takes place.
 - Engage with stakeholders at a pan-northern level where collaboration at a bigger geography can enhance activity. This will build on ongoing work with the
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- *Creating a partnership between the government, professional services firms, large banks and technology firms*, to reach out to the 5.7 million UK companies and support them to adopt new management practices and modern business tools.

Northern Powerhouse (NP) 11² to drive economic growth in the prime capabilities of the North³.

EVIDENCE BASE

- Further evidence needed on *supply chains, innovation networks and tech based sector strengths and cluster opportunities*:
 - **Supply chains**: identifying areas where there are opportunities to improve processes and develop new opportunities for businesses
 - **Innovation**: exploration of innovation networks and how information is shared. Alignment and connectivity of assets is important to support this activity
 - **Tech strengths/cluster opportunities** (clean tech, med-tech, textiles, etc. deep dive)
- **Productivity**: including:
 - better understanding of the difference between growth and productivity and clear on which is the priority;
 - greater analysis of productivity performance across the City Region, including analysis of sectors that have significant levels of low productivity firms
- **Understanding impact of existing support products**: understanding of what works, key lessons, better use of evaluation (e.g. Randomized Control Trials) to understand impact.

² NP11 is a collaboration of 11 Northern LEPs, and is chaired by Roger Marsh.

³ The Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review identified Energy, Health Innovation, Advanced Manufacturing and Digital as the Prime Capabilities for the North