

<b>Meeting:</b>	Coast to Capital Board Meeting no. 39
<b>Date:</b>	19 April 2018
<b>Report Title:</b>	Draft Strategic Economic Plan
<b>Report by:</b>	Kirsten Trussell
<b>Item No:</b>	4
<b>Part:</b>	A

**Recommendation:**

The Board is asked to review the draft SEP document as attached, to confirm the strategic approach that we are taking and agreeing to target publication in July 2018.

We have made significant progress on the SEP and a full draft is attached (Annex 1) for discussion at the meeting.

**1. Our Approach**

In line with feedback from Government in the Industrial Strategy and the LEP review, this SEP sets out a shorter, more strategic and more focused vision for our region than the 2014 document. It meets the Board's objective of a leadership role for the LEP, rather than simply one of bringing investment into the region.

**2. The Consultation**

We have completed a consultation on the issues behind the SEP. It brought 55 responses from stakeholders across the region. We are pleased by the level of engagement from business and the general diversity of respondents.

In the main, the responses have been broadly supportive of the content of our approach. The best responses included some good evidence and strong arguments on specific points which have led to material changes in the strategic approach of the SEP as set out above. But there is some caution amongst smaller local authorities, Area Partnerships and some others about the LEP taking a more strategic role. Many consultees remain very focused on local issues rather than engaging comfortably with a broader analysis of the future of the regional economy.

We attach in Annex 2 a summary of the consultation respondents.

**3. The Document**

The draft SEP takes into account the responses from the consultation and further discussions with major local authorities.

We believe it is the right length, the right structure, describes our area well and sets out the evidence clearly. We have more work to do on getting the vision to the right level and ensuring that the priorities clearly address what we set out as our vision. Board feedback is particularly welcome on these points.

Since the last draft and based on consultation responses we have restructured the document to align closer with the Government's Industrial Strategy and given more focus to an analysis of evidence and to the priorities that have emerged.

The document contains an analysis of the growing industrial sub-sectors in the region which will form the basis of our future prosperity. We have also set out 8 priorities, to create the conditions within which these can grow. We can already identify specific areas for action against some of these priorities, but more work is needed on others to identify a clear work programme which will get regional buy-in.

We recommend aiming to publish the SEP in the summer, at our AGM scheduled for 19 July. This will allow us to spend more time working with partners to identify the right actions needed to deliver these priorities, as well as to build consent for the LEP taking a more strategic role. All of this will be essential if we are to start negotiations with Government on our Local Industrial Strategy in the right way – i.e. by producing comprehensive analysis and having full consent across business, local government and education for our approach.

#### **4. Timescale for Delivery**

July publication would mean that a final draft of the strategy would be presented to the Board for approval on 4 July with final sign off at a Joint Committee between then and the AGM on 19 July.

The Joint Committee will take careful handling – with 18 local authority leaders all needed to confirm agreement to the document. Several Councils in the area will have elections in May which may result in a change of political leadership. Officers advise that July will be a more realistic timescale to have socialised the ideas fully across the region.

#### **5. Further Stakeholder Engagement**

We would also like to deepen our engagement with stakeholders in finalizing the document, particularly from the Education sector and with the biggest businesses in the region. We plan to host a summit with the key large employers in the region to ensure the plan sits well with their ambitions to enable them to advocate on our behalf. Similar meetings with HE and FE leaders, as well as with MPs from across the region, will also help to ensure they are fully aligned with the approach of the SEP and become strong supporters of our future work on a Local Industrial Strategy.

We will confirm dates for all of these meetings as quickly as possible, involving Board members fully in them.

Annex 1 has been redacted