

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIPS GEOGRAPHIES

Purpose of the Report

1. This report sets out Government's plans to reform Local Enterprise Partnerships, including the potential for revised boundaries where there are overlaps.
2. Policy Committee is requested to delegate approval to the Corporate Director, Place in consultation with the Chair of Policy Committee, to respond to proposals on geographies within the required timeframe.

Information

3. Local Enterprise Partnership (LEPs) are the Government's model to promote economic development. They provide the strategic leadership required to set out local economic priorities, and better reflect the natural economic geography of the areas they serve.
4. On 24th July 2018, Government announced a series of proposals for reforming LEPs, including the potential for revised LEP Boundaries where there are overlaps.
5. The publication of the 'Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships' review builds on government's Industrial Strategy white paper to bring forward reforms to the leadership, governance and accountability of the 38 LEPs charged with kick-starting economic growth and creating jobs in their regions.
6. The review proposes a number of changes to boost the performance of LEPs, increase their diversity and ensure they are operating in an open and transparent way. These include:
 - up to £20 million of additional funding between 2018 to 2019 and 2019 to 2020 to support the implementation of these changes and embed evidence in Local Industrial Strategies
 - supporting LEPs to consult widely and transparently on appointing new Chairs and improve board diversity
 - an aim for women to make up at least one third of LEP boards by 2020 with the expectation of equal representation by 2023
 - a mandate for LEPs to submit proposals for revised geographies including removing situations in which 2 LEP geographies overlap
7. It is important for local areas to now consider the changes and respond with proposals to Government, particularly to develop ambitious strategies for growth and build an economy that is fit for the future.

Other Options Considered

8. Overlapping geographies emerged when LEPs were first formed on a voluntary basis. Since 2011, however, the context in which LEPs operate has altered significantly. As LEPs now oversee significant amounts of public funding, it is important that accountability for decisions and responsibility for investment is clear. On balance, Government considers that retaining overlaps dilutes accountability and responsibility for setting strategies for places. Only by responding to Government on this issue by their deadline, can the County Council play its part in ensuring the best outcome for Nottinghamshire. The 'do nothing option' was therefore discounted.
9. Government's focus on LEP geography relates to 'overlapping geographies' for those places that have two LEPs serving the same area.

Reason for Recommendation

10. As proposals offer an opportunity to resolve our overlap with the Sheffield City Region, there is a requirement to agree our position as soon as possible.

Statutory and Policy Implications

11. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

12. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Implications for Service Users

13. The Council's primary concern is to ensure it does the best from an economic point of view for residents and business of Nottinghamshire. The Council is fully committed to supporting the LEP develop a high-quality, evidence based Local Industrial Strategy and we are already making good progress on it.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Policy Committee:

- 1) Agrees that the County Council proposes to Government that the existing overlap between Sheffield City Region LEP and the D2N2 LEP be removed.

- 2) Delegates approval to the Corporate Director, Place in consultation with the Chair of Policy Committee, to consider and respond to Government on the 'Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships' review by their deadline of 28th September.

COUNCILLOR MRS KAY CUTTS MBE
Leader of the County Council

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (SLB – 4/9/2018)

14. Policy Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Financial Comments

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- *Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnership's* - published by Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on 24th July 2018, available online at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728058/Strengthened_Local_Enterprise_Partnerships.pdf
- *Industrial Strategy: building a Britain fit for the future* – published by Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy on 27th November 2017, available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/industrial-strategy-building-a-britain-fit-for-the-future>

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All