

## **REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL 24<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2018**

### **Mid Devon and the Local Industrial Strategy**

**Cabinet Member(s):** Clive Eginton – Leader  
**Responsible Officer:** Stephen Walford – Chief Executive

**Reason for Report:** The Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (HotSW LEP) area has been designated by government as one of the ‘Wave 2’ areas for the development of the Local Industrial Strategies (LIS) that will shape future activity and plans supporting enhanced and accelerated productivity across the HotSW geography.

Ultimate approval for the LIS rests with the LEP, but to demonstrate alignment with partners across the area it is proposed that this is signed off by the statutory Joint Committee. The powers of this committee are extremely limited, so approval needs to be sought from Council to allow Mid Devon to vote on this item at the Joint Committee.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1. That Council agrees to delegate the partnership approval of the Local Industrial Strategy to the Heart of the South West Joint Committee (Council’s vote vesting through the Leader as the representative on that body).**
- 2. That the approval of any Mid Devon-specific input or content to the LIS is delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader.**
- 3. That the update report being prepared by the HotSW Joint Committee Programme Management Office is shared with the Cabinet and the Council as it becomes available.**

**Relationship to Corporate Plan:** The Local Industrial Strategy has the potential to influence across all Corporate Plan Priorities, however it is most clearly and closely aligned to the Economy priority and the objectives surrounding the attraction of businesses, the support and facilitated growth of existing businesses, and the overarching economic vitality of the district.

**Financial Implications:** None arising from this report.

**Legal Implications:** The HotSW Joint Committee is a Joint Committee of the local authorities across Devon and Somerset that comprise the HotSW area and established under Sections 101 to 103 of the Local Government Act 1972 and all other enabling legislation to undertake the following:

The key purpose of the Joint Committee is to be the vehicle through which the HotSW partners will ensure that the desired increase in productivity across the area is achieved.

The Committee is a single strategic public sector partnership providing cohesive, coherent leadership and governance to ensure delivery of the Productivity Strategy for the HotSW area. The specific objectives of the Joint Committee are to:

- Improve the economy and the prospects for the region by bringing together the public, private and education sectors;
- Increase our understanding of the economy and what needs to be done to make it stronger;
- Improve the efficiency and productivity of the public sector;
- Identify and remove barriers to progress and maximise the opportunities/benefits available to the area from current and future government policy.

**Risk Assessment:** Given the participation in the Joint Committee as one of the constituent Local Authorities, the main risks are around failing to participate actively in this or any other related process, thus manifesting a failure of sub-regional or regional awareness of Mid Devon's specific economic and productivity concerns. The risk from failing to participate is most likely to be a loss of regional influence and an inability to draw attention to Mid Devon's economic needs (across such areas as productivity, skills, infrastructure and related inward investment). It would also weaken the Greater Exeter proposition, recognising that strengthening Exeter and the surrounding area as a regional economic powerhouse will also confer significant advantages to Mid Devon's residents and businesses.

**Equality Impact Assessment:** No adverse impact on any protected groups.

## 1.0 Overview

- 1.1 The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has announced that the Heart of the South West (HotSW) covering Devon, Plymouth, Somerset and Torbay, is in the second wave of areas to benefit from working with the Government to develop their Local Industrial Strategies (LIS).
- 1.2 HotSW is one of six areas to get this vote of confidence which means the Government will be investing more to raise productivity and prosperity in these localities. The HotSW Local Enterprise Partnership and the HotSW Joint Committee will drive forward the Local Industrial Strategy and oversee its delivery.
- 1.3 The aim of Local Industrial Strategies is to put local people and businesses in the driving seat, allowing local leaders to harness the strengths of their own areas in a targeted approach.
- 1.4 On 5<sup>th</sup> October 2018, the HotSW Joint Committee approved a set of recommendations as part of a Governance Update report (agenda item 9 in the background papers).
- 1.5 One of the recommendations approved by the Joint Committee recommended that constituent authorities (of which Mid Devon is one) delegate approval of the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) to the Joint Committee.

## 2.0 Approvals Sought

- 2.1 The existing governance arrangements, and delegations given to the HotSW Joint Committee as it currently stands, are extremely limited. An additional

approval of Council is thus needed to empower the Leader to vote on such an item at the Joint Committee.

- 2.2 While the ultimate responsibility for approving the document rests with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), the validity and positioning of the document would be immeasurably strengthened by being agreed by all constituent authorities in addition to the LEP.
- 2.3 As work on drafting/finalising the document is undertaken, there may be scope, opportunity or requirement for Mid Devon to influence this and provide additional content as appropriate. It is therefore suggested that delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader to provide such content and seek such influence as may be possible.
- 2.4 The Joint Committee recommendations also created the obligation for the Programme Management Office to prepare a report detailing the work of the Joint Committee over the last 6 months. It is proposed that this is brought back to Cabinet and Council in due course to ensure that all members are kept informed of progress and activity at this sub-regional and regional level.

**Contact for more Information:** Stephen Walford, Chief Executive.

**Circulation of the Report: All Members**

**List of Background Papers:**

Heart of the South West Joint Committee Webpage:

<http://www.hotswjointcommittee.org.uk/>

Heart of the South West Joint Committee Papers - 5<sup>th</sup> October 2018:

<http://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=357&MId=767&Ver=4>