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Meeting & Date:	Joint Strategic Economic Committee – Thursday, 13 April 2017		
Subject:	Subgroup reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills and Talent • Transport Infrastructure • Digital Capability • Place-shaping • Business Development 		
Attachments:	None		
Author:	Subgroup Chairs and Lead Officers	Total no of sheets:	9

Papers are provided for:	Approval <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Discussion <input type="checkbox"/>	Information <input type="checkbox"/>
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Summary & Recommendation:

Summary

- This is a composite report providing an update on the progress of the Subgroups as they prepare their action plans. At the meeting on 22 March 2017, the Board agreed to a budget of £250,000 for Subgroup activity. The total estimated expenditure is £300,000 so negotiations are ongoing.
- The current estimated expenditure on Subgroup activity in 2017-18 is as follows:

Skills and Talent	Transport Infrastructure	Digital Capability	Place-shaping	Business Development
£65,000	£135,000	£25,000	£25,000	£50,000
Current total estimate £300,000				

- As part of the approval process in March, the Board had additional information to take into consideration including the proposed 2017-18 SWLEP core budget and details of the Industrial Strategy from Government, which, due to its national and local significance, the SWLEP needed to take into consideration as part of prioritising spending for 2017-18.

4. Skills and Talent

4.1 **Subgroup meetings:** An additional meeting took place on 10 January 2017 to complete the draft Skills & Talent Action Plan.

4.2 **Finalising the Skills & Talent Strategy and completing the Action Plan.**

The Skills and Talent Strategy was commissioned as part of the preparation for the Post-16 Review to provide the evidence base and SWOT Analysis to drive the recommendations in the review and to support delivery of the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) priorities.

The draft Action Plan identifies the specific actions that will take place through the LEP with a focus on activity that will add value to that which is already taking place.

The table below outlines the draft proposed key actions against each of the SEP priorities and highlights the approximate funding that would be required.

SEP Priority Action	Activity	Funding
Priority Action 1: Improve the skills system Ensure there is a robust and responsive post-16 education system	Oversee recommendations from the post-16 review (to be confirmed in February 2017). a) Research/evidence base to inform <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher Education (all Level 4+ provision) demand and future options to grow provision • Annual key evidence to inform how well local provision is aligning with the LEP Priorities and key outcomes for residents. Gap analysis. • Demand and supply of skills and Apprenticeships across key sectors • Approach to delivering national Skills Plan and 15 technical pathways. b) Resources to raise the profile of LEP priority sectors and local employment opportunities including focus on STEM.	£30, 000
Priority Action 2: Skills for Growth 2.1 Develop a skilled and competitive workforce meeting the needs of employers 2.3. Achieve a higher proportion of Individuals employed in higher skilled and higher value added roles.	Refer a) and b) above Develop and agree the LEP wide HE Strategy (Refer a) re evidence base). Deliver the Apprenticeship Growth	

SEP Priority Action	Activity	Funding
2.4 Embed Apprenticeships as an established route to employment	Strategy c) Communication and Marketing Plan and activity to promote Apprenticeships to residents, employers and support implementation of levy.	£25,000
Priority Action 3: Skills for Inclusion 3.1 Improve educational attainment, exceeding the national average at 16 and 19. 3.2 Realise the potential of residents with barriers to employment including young people and older workers	d) Develop pilot programme to work with primary schools to raise aspirations and link to STEM. e) Identify work in other LEPs to improve English and Maths, involving employers.	£10,000
		Total £65,000

5. Transport Infrastructure

- 5.1 The Transport Infrastructure Subgroup has met to date: on 13 October 2016, 7 December 2016 and 1 March 2017. Chaired by Adam Schallamach with the Lead Officer, Parvis Khansari, other attendees have been made up of SWLEP, Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council officers.
- 5.2 The agendas for the meetings have included the following items:
- the SWLEP Subgroups Terms of Reference;
 - membership of the Subgroup;
 - action plan; and
 - SWLEP Rail Strategy.
- 5.3 The SWLEP Subgroups Terms of Reference document was presented by the Lead Officer at the initial meeting. While generally agreed, two requirements of the Terms of Reference need to be addressed. Firstly, the post of Vice-Chair is currently vacant. The Chair is liaising with other Board members to address this requirement. Secondly, three businesses representatives need to be identified to sit on the Subgroup to assist the Chair and Vice-Chair. The Lead Officer is currently working to identify suitable representatives. At the same time, the potential role of a wider transport stakeholder group will be investigated.
- 5.4 A draft action plan was presented to and agreed by the Subgroup on 7 December with the following key actions, costs and timescales (summarised below) to March 2018:

SEP Priority Action	Activity	Funding
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Priority action 1: Deliver key road junction and infrastructure improvements to support economic and planned development growth	Commission a strategic transport study for the SWLEP area to identify the transport infrastructure improvements required to deliver planned economic and housing growth to 2036.	£50,000
Priority action 4: Deliver rail capacity and connectivity improvements to support economic growth and help realise improved travel opportunities	Commission a 'Swindon & Wiltshire Rail Strategy' that will support and inform rail requirements in the SWLEP area.	£50,000
	West of England Line Strategy Group timetable study.	£5,000
Priority action 5: Lobby Government to address the unreliability of north-south road connections in the sub-region to support development and business growth both across Swindon and Wiltshire, and in neighbouring LEP areas	With BANES Council and Dorset County Council, secure inclusion of a Wessex (A350 / A36) North - South Connectivity Study within Highways England's Roads Investment Strategy 2 programme.	£10,000
	Support Highway England to commission and develop a transport study as required to support Action 5.1.	£10,000
Priority action 6: Lobby Government and work with Highways England, Network Rail, train operating companies and other key bodies to improve key strategic routes to the Midlands and south coast ports, Cardiff, Bristol and the Thames Valley, London and South East, and South West	Working jointly with other SW LEPs and local authorities, lobby the National Infrastructure Commission to review strategic infrastructure requirements to deliver future growth across the West of England.	£10,000
		Total £135,000

5.5 Other required actions falling outside of the March 2018 timeframe, including the action below (which could commence in 2017/18 but would extend beyond March 2018), have also been included in the action plan to more clearly map out future work stream needs.

SEP Priority Action	Activity	Cost
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<p>Priority action 6: Lobby Government and work with Highways England, Network Rail, train operating companies and other key bodies to improve key strategic routes to the Midlands and south coast ports, Cardiff, Bristol and the Thames Valley, London and South East, and South West</p>	<p>In partnership with the NIC, commission strategic transport studies as required to provide an evidence base for the strategic transport infrastructure requirements.</p>	<p>£30,000</p>
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6. Digital Capability

6.1 Commissioned work

Commission the production of a digital technologies strategy to deliver the SWLEP's visions and direct the work of the Digital Technologies Subgroup. This work could be undertaken as five different pieces or work with some phasing or as a single commission to:

Phase 1:

Undertake gap analysis in the provision of superfast and ultrafast broadband and compare provision with similar LEPs working with Wiltshire Online and Swindon in order to influence plans for the rollout of ultrafast broadband delivery to support access business. Produce as a series of maps.

Identify key contacts within ultrafast providers and Government and lobby to maximise rollout for business

Phase 2:

Identify the strengths and constraints of the Swindon and Wiltshire in terms of:

- the application of digital technologies to transform the economy and drive productivity growth;
- the existing digital technologies business base; and
- set the framework for a digital technologies business networking group to maximise investment opportunities.

Identify those digital technologies skills which businesses lack which can support competitiveness and productivity improvements and propose how these can be effectively addressed in Swindon and Wiltshire drawing on national or international examples of best practice.

- Produce a workforce development plan

Work with the Business Development and Skills and Talent Subgroups

Phase 3

Develop a digital technologies inward investment proposition for use by partners to promote Swindon and Wiltshire as the best business location in the UK and internationally.

Phase 4

Identify examples of best practice in public sector transformation which could be realistically delivered across Swindon and Wiltshire through the use of digital technologies to improve efficiency; support productivity and data sharing.

6.2 Estimated cost

The estimated cost to commission the digital technology strategy is currently £25,000.

7. Place-shaping

SEP Priority Action	Activity	Cost
Priority action 1: Deliver the investment needed to accelerate the delivery of strategic housing and employment sites to ensure that growth is accommodated sustainably	Interactive list of sites setting out timing for delivery and deliverability status.	£0 In kind support
	Track and map private sector development which has taken place each year (UA databases published 1st April each year).	
	Map where and how much S106/CIL funding has been allocated for investment.	
Priority action 2: Deliver infrastructure improvements to support economic growth, support higher value skilled employment and attract inward investment	Engage with the Transport Subgroup to understand where there is cross over with their work and with the Local Plans to deliver this action.	£0
Priority action 3: Develop increased energy infrastructure resilience for businesses and residents	Subgroup briefing on the capacity of the national grid to support the economic growth. Recommendations to be taken to the SWLEP Board	£0 In kind support
	Link to National Infrastructure Commission call for ideas submitted by the six south west LEPs on smart power	
Priority action 4: Deliver the master plans for the regeneration of Chippenham, Salisbury, Swindon and Trowbridge to deliver a strong economic, cultural, leisure and visitor offer	Subgroup briefing on the masterplans for Chippenham, Salisbury, Trowbridge and Swindon. Recommendations to be taken to the SWLEP Board	£0 In kind support
Priority action 5: Support the sustainable development of market towns and rural communities to ensure the right economic, social and visitor infrastructure is in place to ensure their long term resilience and safeguard their attractiveness	Commission research into the economic contribution of the cultural sector (including Creative Industries) across Swindon and Wiltshire in order to identify options for driving economic growth in the future linked to the review of the Local Plans for Swindon and Wiltshire.	£25,000

SEP Priority Action	Activity	Cost
Priority action 6: Deliver the Army Basing Programme as an exemplar of successful military-civilian integration;	Briefing to the Subgroup on the Army Basing programme to understand its impact on the economy and SEP delivery. Recommendations to the Board	£0 In kind support
Priority action 7: Develop a strong Visitor Economy resulting in new investment as well as increased trade, visitor spend and national and international staying visitors	Subgroup briefing on the three pieces of work funded by the SWLEP on the Visitor Economy. Recommendations to the Board	£0 In kind support
		Total £25,000

8. Business Development

8.1 The Subgroup is proposing a structure to manage the work in this area. The Business Development Subgroup would oversee a sub-structure of working groups, each of which is addressing an area of work.

- Business support
 - Growth Hub
 - SME Growth Programme
 - Innovate to Succeed
 - Export for Growth
 - The Enterprise Network and other incubation centres
 - Link to Skills and Talent Subgroup – workforce development
- Sector Development
 - Rural Economy
 - High Value Manufacturing
 - Life Sciences
 - Visitor Economy/Culture and Arts
 - Low carbon
 - Others on “ones to watch list”
 - Link to Digital Capability Subgroup
- Inward Investment
 - Link to Depart of International Trade and Service Delivery in Local Authorities
 - Link to Place-shaping Subgroup – place marketing
- Strategic Funding
 - Development of open call mechanism
 - Growing Places Infrastructure Fund
 - Link to ESIF Advisory Committee

8.2 In addition, the Subgroup will facilitate a regular “keep in touch” meeting with business representative groups across the area including the Federation of Small Business, the Chambers of Commerce, The Business Improvement Districts and key business-to-business enterprises.

8.3 The draft action plan is as follows:

SEP Priority	Activity	Cost
Priority action 1: Business Support	Deliver the Swindon and Wiltshire Growth Hub to support the needs of SMEs	Covered by Growth Hub funding and the ESIF SME Growth Programme
	Address the low rates of business formation by improving access to specialist public and private business support providers	
	Support the Government’s aspiration that 25% of public sector contracts are fulfilled by SMEs	
Priority action 2: Inward Investment	Develop (or commission?) a Swindon and Wiltshire Inward Investment and Place Marketing Plan	£30,000
	Develop an inward investment service delivery plan for Swindon and Wiltshire based on securing £500,000 ESIF funding for service delivery.	
Priority action 2: Inward Investment	Establish a central SWLEP inward investment resource	£10,000
	Develop internationally recognised clusters of Digital Technologies and Life Sciences activity by building premises, capacity and linkages between research and development and manufacturing capabilities	
	Strengthen the Advanced Manufacturing sector supply chain.	
Priority action 3: Smart specialisation	Develop Swindon and Wiltshire as a nationally significant player in the UK’s energy sector, with particular strengths in the low carbon energy generation sector and the application of hydrogen	

SEP Priority	Activity	Cost
	technologies	
	Support smart specialisation and innovation in our priority sectors as the drivers of economic growth	
Priority action 4: Business sector development strategy	Develop overarching framework for all business sector development strategies	
	Implement a programme to deliver strategies for priority and watching brief business sectors	
	Extend the membership of the Business Development Subgroup to include the Sector Development Group lead, representatives from Influence Swindon and Enterprise Wiltshire.	
	Deliver an annual SWLEP business conference/event	£10,000
	Produce a regular SWLEP business newsletter, frequency TBC	
		Total £50,000

Recommendation

The Joint Strategic Economic Committee is recommended to endorse the decision of the SWLEP Board to approve the General Account budget including the £250,000 allocated to Subgroup expenditure.