

INFRASTRUCTURE BOARD

2nd July 2020

GROWTH AREA INFRASTRUCTURE PLACE PACKAGES

Purpose of Report

To provide the Board with an overview of the Infrastructure Place Packages as set out in the draft Strategic Economic Plan, which have been developed with Local Authorities following a series of local workshops.

Thematic Priority

Secure investment in infrastructure where it will do most to support growth.

Freedom of Information

This paper will be available under the Combined Authority Publication Scheme.

Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- I. Note the Growth Area Infrastructure Place Packages summarised in Annex 1;
- II. Note the proposed process and next steps for progressing the further development of the Growth Area Infrastructure Place Packages, including agreeing the initial priority to develop high level Blueprints for each Growth Area.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** The Infrastructure Board on the 9th July 2019 resolved to support the development of Infrastructure Place Packages with local authorities through a series of workshops. The rationale was to develop an integrated 'place based approach' for accelerating the growth and regeneration of the SCR's key Growth Areas, and identify a robust pipeline of infrastructure schemes which can be ready for delivery once future SCR funding is confirmed
- 1.2** The Infrastructure Place Packages have been developed alongside and helped inform the preparation of the emerging new Strategic Economic Plan.

2. Proposal and justification

- 2.1 Two workshops were held with each of the four South Yorkshire local authorities. The first covered progress and discussion on the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) as well as beginning to identify the medium to long term infrastructure priorities for each area. The second workshop focussed more specifically on the places identified in workshop one, four of which are also Town Deal areas.
- 2.2 The outcome of the workshops has been the development of seven specific Growth Area (GA) Infrastructure Place Packages as follows; Annex 1 summarises the key elements of each of the Place Packages:
- Rotherham Town Centre
 - Barnsley Town Centre
 - Sheffield City Centre
 - Doncaster Town Centre, Waterfront & Station Gateway
 - Goldthorpe, Thurnscoe & Bolton upon Dearne
 - Sheffield AMID Attercliffe & OLP
 - Rotherham AMID Corridor and Extension
- 2.3 A separate piece of work has been ongoing with Doncaster Sheffield Airport to develop an Economic Blueprint for GatewayEast which will be presented to the LEP Board for consideration. Consideration is being given to the appropriate approach to Unity in Doncaster.
- 2.4 Each of the packages identify some early interventions to support the development of a Strategic Business Case and infrastructure pipeline of schemes for the Growth Areas. Some of this early work such as feasibility studies, option appraisals, land acquisition strategies and masterplanning are already progressing in some areas; for example, in those Growth Areas which have also been identified as Town Deal areas. However, discussions are ongoing with Local Authorities and other partners such as Homes England and the Environment Agency, to identify what work is required across all the Growth Areas to accelerate the development of the SBCs for each of them.
- 2.5 At its meeting on the 1st June 2020, the MCA agreed the revised SCR Assurance Framework which provided a more formal mandate for supporting the development of projects, with the report highlighting *'Early Release of Funding – to aid the development and timely progress of quality capital schemes Section 5: Robust and Transparent Decision-Making proposes that a proportion of the total project costs is released at either Strategic Outline Case (SOC) and/or Outline Business Case (OBC) approval stage.* This will be important in helping accelerate the development of schemes by assisting with early revenue costs to develop the SBCs and subsequently, the Outline Business Cases (OBC) and Full Business Cases (FBC), for the individual projects within the Growth Areas.
- 2.6 Accelerating the progression of capital schemes and wholesale regeneration and growth of our places will be particularly important as the SCR seeks to reset and recover from the economic implications of Covid 19. There is an even greater need for early public intervention in localities such as the North where the economic viability of schemes is more marginal and private sector investment may be less than elsewhere. The proposed approach to the Growth Areas therefore seeks to address this by focussing interventions immediately and in an integrated way in the key places within the SCR such as our urban centres which could contribute most to the SCR's economic recovery.

3.0 Next Steps

- 3.1** It is proposed that each Growth Area Infrastructure Place Package be developed further with local authorities to clearly understand and set out the high level ambitions, outputs and outcomes for each Growth Area and how these will contribute to supporting the delivery of the new SEP and the post Covid-19 recovery.

The intention would be to agree these 'Blueprints' with Leaders first before then working collectively with them to develop the Strategic Business Case (SBC) for these Growth Area programmes. The programmes will include confirming the individual schemes to deliver the Growth Areas' ambitions. Four of the Growth Areas are also Town Deal areas, so in these areas, the Town Deal Investment Plans will form a key part of the SBC.

SBC's once prepared would be brought back to this Board for consideration prior to recommending for approval by the MCA and Local Authorities, as well as seeking the commitment of other funding and delivery bodies where applicable.

- 3.2** This approach will provide the strategic case for the development of individual schemes identified within the SBCs, fast-tracking the subsequent project development stage by negating the need for SBC's for individual projects. If SCR investment is required, each scheme would be brought forward at the appropriate time and be subject to the SCR Assurance Framework, including consideration of potential SCR funding to support OBC and FBC development.

4. Consideration of alternative approaches

- 4.1** An alternative option would be to wait to develop the Infrastructure Place Packages and subsequent pipeline of schemes until there is greater clarity over funding opportunities and any criteria for use of the funds. However, further funding may take some time to be confirmed by Government and other funding partners, resulting in momentum being lost in developing schemes through to funding approval and delivery.
- 4.2** The availability of funding should not be the primary consideration when developing a pipeline of infrastructure investment. The development of the integrated Growth Area programmes and pipeline of schemes will help to ensure that schemes with a strong strategic fit can progress more quickly once new funding programmes are in place, and will avoid a situation where delivery is backloaded towards the end of a SCR future programme.
- 4.3** A further option would be to open a 'call for schemes' to develop the infrastructure pipeline rather than develop a single SBC for each Growth Area. Although this may be part of a wider approach to investment, this would lack a strategic approach to developing 'places' and may not align with the objectives of the SEP.

5. Implications

5.1 Financial

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any scheme that progresses in the future would be subject to the SCR Assurance Process.

5.2 Legal

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

5.3 Risk Management

If progress is not made in developing an up to date pipeline of infrastructure investments there is a risk that schemes will not be ready to take advantage of new funding programmes when they become available. This could lead to schemes being back loaded

towards the end of a programme lifetime and potentially negatively impact on growth, regeneration and job creation, and would slow down the post Covid-19 economic recovery.

Taking forward any of the infrastructure developments will require a separate risk analysis.

5.4 Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion

There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

6. Communications

6.1 It is not proposed to communicate the Growth Area Infrastructure Place Packages more widely at this stage, but as individual schemes come forward for delivery there will be positive communication opportunities.

7. Appendices/Annexes

7.1 Annex 1 – Summary of Growth Area Infrastructure Place Packages

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Background papers used in the preparation of this report are available for inspection at: 11 Broad Street West, Sheffield S1 2BQ

Other sources and references: