

HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE BOARD

7th January 2021

GROWTH AREA ECONOMIC BLUEPRINTS

Purpose of Report

To provide the Board with an update on progress on the SEP Growth Area Economic Blueprints being developed with Local Authorities.

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:

1. Note the Growth Area Economic Blueprint update summarised in Annex 1;
2. Note the proposed process and next steps for progressing the further development of the Growth Area Growth Area Economic Blueprints.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The former Infrastructure Board on the 3rd July 2020 resolved to support the development of Economic Blueprints in each of the Growth Areas identified by the Strategic Economic Plan. This work has evolved from a series of SEP workshops undertaken with Local Authorities from which Infrastructure Place Packages were initially developed earlier this year.
- 1.2 The Economic Blueprints will outline a shared commitment to an integrated 'place based approach' for accelerating the growth and regeneration of the SCR's key Growth Areas; including both setting out the 'vision' for the areas and identifying a robust pipeline of infrastructure schemes for each area, which can be ready for delivery as part of the future capital pipeline.

2. Proposal and justification

- 2.1 Accelerating the progression of capital schemes and wholesale regeneration and growth of our places will be particularly important as the MCA seeks to reset and recover from the economic implications of Covid 19. There is an even greater need for early public intervention in localities in the North where the economic viability of schemes is more

marginal and private sector investment may be more limited. 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 which offer the opportunity for the biggest economic and social benefits, such as our urban centres, which could contribute most to the SCR's economic recovery.

2.2 The nine SEP Growth Areas are:

- Doncaster Town Centre, Waterfront & Station Gateway
- Rotherham Town Centre
- Sheffield City Centre
- Goldthorpe, Thurnscoe & Bolton upon Dearne
- Sheffield AMID Attercliffe & OLP
- Stainforth Unity
- Barnsley Town Centre
- GatewayEast

2.3 The GatewayEast Economic Blueprint has already been developed and endorsed by the LEP. Work is ongoing with local authorities to prepare the other seven Blueprints, building on the momentum gained from the work on Town Deal Investment Plans in those relevant areas.

2.4 The presentation in Annex 1 provides an update of the work to date on the Economic Blueprints and the key emerging priorities for each area.

3.0 Next Steps

3.1 The intention is that once the Growth Area Economic Blueprints are agreed with local authorities and other partners, a programme level Strategic Business Case (SBC) will be prepared for each Growth Area and reported to this Board for consideration. The programme SBCs will include confirming the individual schemes to deliver the Growth Areas' ambitions to inform the MCAs capital scheme pipeline.

4. Consideration of alternative approaches

4.1 An alternative option would be to wait to develop the Economic Blueprints and subsequent pipeline of schemes until there is greater clarity over funding opportunities and any criteria for use of the funds. However, there is a risk that programme development momentum could be lost in waiting for the right funding to be available. The Economic Blueprints and subsequent SBC's provide an opportunity to outline the interventions needed whilst being funding agnostic.

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.

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 seeks MCA funding in the future would be subject to the MCAs 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; which could slow down the post Covid-19 economic recovery.

Specific risks include;

- Lack of a shared ownership to the Economic Blueprints purpose, vision and priorities.
- Lack of resources to develop the Blueprints.
- Lack of prioritisation of investments within the Blueprints which reduces their value.
- Future funding uncertainty.
- Sufficient collective resources to develop scheme business cases and deliver the resultant schemes

5.4 Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion

There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

6. Communications

6.1 The Growth Area Economic Blueprints provide an opportunity to market the growth and investment potential of the region, particularly in the context of COVID recovery. The Blueprints will be utilised collectively as part of the MCA's communications and marketing strategy, alongside promotion of individual schemes as they come forward for delivery; in consultation with the Board and relevant stakeholders in the region.

7. Appendices/Annexes

7.1 Annex 1 – Growth Area Economic Blueprints Update Presentation

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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: