

BUSINESS RECOVERY & GROWTH THEMATIC BOARD

25th March 2021

Establishing the South Yorkshire India Forum

Purpose of Report

This paper is intended to provide the board with a proposal to establish the South Yorkshire India Forum. Following the discussion at the last board meeting, the Board will be presented with the proposed approach and timing to establish a South Yorkshire India Advisory Board and a South Yorkshire India Business Network.

Thematic Priority

1. Facilitate and proactively support growth amongst existing firms
2. Increase sales of SCR's goods and services to other parts of the UK and abroad.

Freedom of Information and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

The paper will be available under the Combined Authority Publication Scheme

Recommendations

The Business Growth Board:

- Members are requested to consider and approve the proposed approach and timelines for establishing the South Yorkshire India Forum.
- Members are requested to approve that once established the South Yorkshire India Advisory Board is given authority to develop and deliver the forward South Yorkshire India strategy, the Advisory Board being accountable to the Business Recovery & Growth Board and providing periodic updates.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** Following the paper presented at the January meeting which set out the activity remaining to March 21', this paper sets out the proposed formation of the South Yorkshire India Forum comprising the South Yorkshire India Advisory Board and The South Yorkshire India Business Network.
- 1.2** The paper highlights progress made to date on the core programme, which warrants a commitment to move to the next phase of development, establishing the SYIF, giving strategic direction towards our 2025 ambition, stakeholder and partner engagement and increasing visibility of the South Yorkshire region in an area that is seeing significant progress being made across the Midlands Engine and Northern Powerhouse.

2. Proposal and justification

2.1 Background

2.1.1 In 2017, the Sheffield City Region (SCR) commissioned the UK India Business Council (UKIBC) to develop an India engagement strategy for the City Region to grow trade and investment. The task set by the SCR was to produce a strategy for 2025 and beyond that:

- Increase FDI inflows by 10% into SCR from India;
- Increase exports by 10% from SCR to India;
- Increase in number of Indian students by 10% studying at both Sheffield Universities; and
- Increase in Indian tourism to Sheffield by 10%.

2.1.2 With these objectives in mind, the UKIBC strategy report included an outline activity plan and made five clear recommendations:

- I. Focus on the Western Cluster, with Pune as the top target city, along with Mumbai, in Maharashtra
- II. Establish a brand that resonates in India – ‘Make in India: Design and Develop with the Sheffield City Region’
- III. Create a Team SCR, bringing together the City Region’s top assets, including: The Chair of LEP; elected politicians (local and national); the Vice Chancellors of both universities; the CEOs of all the Chambers and other business organisations, e.g., the Company of Cutlers; the Heads of the AMRC and AWRC; the CEOs/Chairs of SCR businesses in India; SCR-based heads of Indian businesses in the city region; and leading figures from sport;
- IV. A strategic India Forum should be set-up to support implementation
- V. Roll out an export growth programme to help firms to overcome barriers to entering the Indian market, which can often be perceived as challenging.

2.2 Key activities to date

2.2.1 Good progress has been made in implementing recommendations i, ii and v.

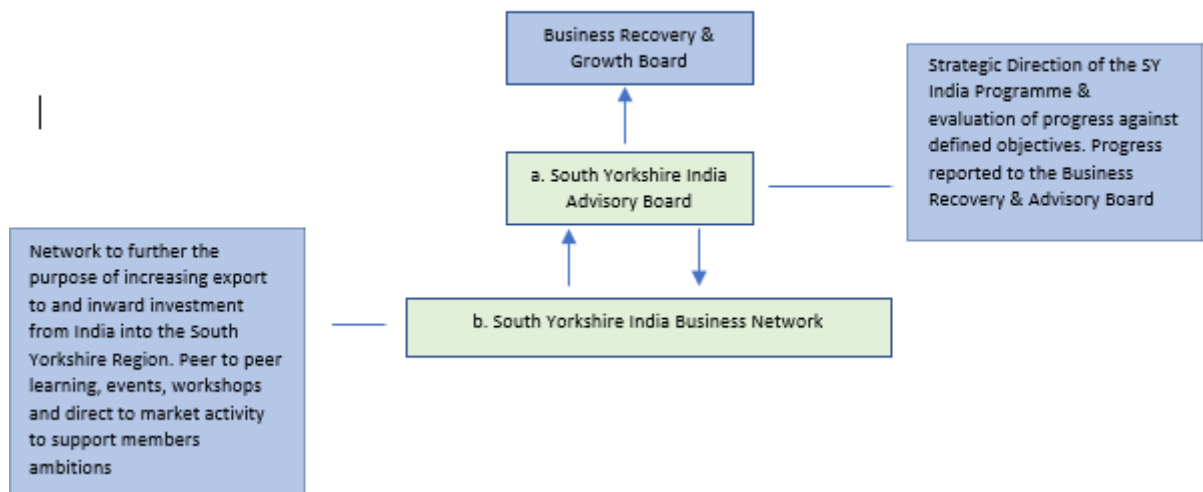
2.2.2 Important activities were the two SCR delegations to Pune and Mumbai in October 2018 and October 2019. These visits followed the “Make in India, Design and Develop with the SCR” theme, and generated productive connections with civic, corporate, academic and trade bodies in both cities.

2.2.3 These visits corroborated the sectoral and thematic focus suggested in the 2017 strategy document, giving SCR officials first-hand intelligence on how the SCR can benefit, economically and socially, by partnering with Indian businesses, state government departments, universities and trade associations. The visits also helped raise the profile of the Sheffield City Region in front of priority audiences.

2.2.4 Strong progress has also been made on establishing the export growth programme, with the SCR India Growth Champions launched in 2020 with 10 participating businesses.

2.2.5 It is important to now build on this positive start by establishing the South Yorkshire India Advisory Board to guide delivery of activity to the end of f/y 22-23 and influence the strategy beyond this, expanding the trade and investment initiatives to grow exports from the SCR, attract more investment and students to the City Region and generate more SCR-India collaborations.

2.2.6 As outlined below, we recommend a) an Advisory Board for the Forum, and b) that there is a wider network of businesses and other stakeholders who are engaged in, and supportive of, the wider activities of the SYIF.



2.3 SYIF ADVISORY BOARD

- 2.3.1** The Forum would have an Advisory Board of 10-12 senior representatives from the public, private and academic sectors to guide and oversee the implementation and development of the SCR India engagement strategy.
- 2.3.2** Chaired by Richard Stubbs CEO of YHAHSN , LEP and Business Recovery & Growth Board member, it is proposed this Board should meet quarterly.
- 2.3.3** The Advisory Board will comprise key stakeholders drawn from across the Sheffield City Region and wider as well as individuals from SCR businesses succeeding in India,
- 2.3.4** The purpose of the Advisory Board is to:
- Provide strategic oversight of the South Yorkshire India programme and advise on the implementation of the strategy recommendations.
 - Monitor progress to the established 2025 ambitions and set further stretching targets.
 - Provide an activity and performance report to the Business Growth & Recovery Board every 6 months
 - Be representative of the SCR's assets and would support the SCR-India activities to improve the effectiveness and impact in the City Region and Maharashtra.
 - Allow stakeholders to share their respective plans and discuss how activities can be leveraged for wider benefit and build connections between the SCR and Maharashtra/India, bringing clearer visibility and better coordination.
- 2.3.5** For information Appendix 1 provides a list of the membership of similar Advisory Boards that support the Manchester India Partnership and the West Midlands India Partnership. Having held discussions with the other areas it is clear that membership needs to be a balance of individuals of senior standing and reach, but also to have members who can contribute to the core objective via experience, networks or aligned organisational objectives.
- 2.3.6** Maintaining engagement of the Advisory Board will be important, as such their oversight of the next phase of the India strategy is seen as key as they will be able to influence the direction over the next 2 years and beyond.

2.4 South Yorkshire Indian Business Network

2.4.1 Alongside establishing the Advisory Board, it is recommended that a SYI Business Network is set-up to engage a wider group of businesses and other stakeholders in India and across the South Yorkshire Region and when appropriate, the whole UK.

2.4.2 Members will have access to newsletters, networking opportunities and invitations to SYIF events in the UK and India. The benefits of this Business Network are:

A community of like-minded people keen to grow SCR-India trade, investments, and partnerships.

- To provide a group of South Yorkshire businesses engaging with India or aiming to engage with India, opportunity and access to resources that will maximise their investment.
- By engaging Indian businesses and wider stakeholders in the network we will generate credibility and accelerate positive results.
- The network gives the SCR a platform to provide intelligence and other support to many businesses in a light-touch way, encouraging exports to India, partnerships, and investments into the SCR.
- PR opportunities on launch and ongoing, which will help the City Region raise its profile among Indian stakeholders and the profile of India within the SCR.

2.5 South Yorkshire India Forum – recommended next steps

2.5.1 We propose a two-stage approach to developing the South Yorkshire India Forum over a 3 month period from April;

2.5.2 Stage one is to establish the Advisory Board:

- A longlist of around 20 potential members for Business Recovery and Growth Board to consider
- By the end of April, invitations and related information prepared to go to the short-listed individuals
- Discussions with the individuals to secure their participation on the Board through May.
- Terms of Reference for the Advisory Board are developed and approved by the BR&G Board
- The proposed first formal meeting of the Advisory Board is held in June.

2.5.3 Stage Two is establishing the SYIF Business Network:

- In April, the UKIBC and SCR team will design a provisional programme of activities for 2021-22 and 2022-23
- In May, the UKIBC and SCR team will road-test these activities with stakeholders in the SCR and Pune, e.g. Chambers of Commerce, DIT and the Universities.
- The agreed activity plan will be packaged into a draft proposition to go to a wide network of stakeholders.
- At its first meeting in June, the Advisory Board will consider this draft proposition. The Network will be announced in July and a launch event will take place in September 2021 when we hope a physical meeting can take place.

2.5.4 Further consideration will be given to the resource implications of providing Secretariat for the SYIF. As well as managing and supporting the Advisory Board, the Secretariat will produce a quarterly newsletter, run an active events programme, and engage with members/stakeholders on an ongoing basis.

3. Consideration of alternative approaches

- 3.1 Do Nothing – this option is recommended to be discounted as the UKIBC strategy report provided an outline activity plan and made clear recommendations to progress an India engagement strategy to enable the City Region to grow trade and investment.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial

The budgets for F/y 21/22 are currently under review

4.2 Legal

Terms of Reference to establish the South Yorkshire India Advisory Board will be developed with the Legal team

4.3 Risk Management

Any contracted delivery will have contractual milestones and performance review as standard clauses. These will form the basis of robust project management and are reviewed on an ongoing basis

4.4 Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion

None

5. Communications

- 5.1 Following this discussion a progress paper will be brought to a future Thematic Board

- 5.2 Discussions have been held with marketing to ensure appropriate levels of support are available and activity aligned to marketing and communications planning for 21/22

6. Appendices/Annexes

- 6.1 Appendix 1: Manchester India Partnership & West Midlands India Partnership Advisory Boards

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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: