

**From:** Mark Dance, Cabinet Member for Economic Development  
Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport

**To:** Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee  
– 9 May 2019

**Subject:** Kent and Medway Enterprise and Productivity strategy progress update

**Classification:** Unrestricted

### **Summary**

This paper provides Members with a further update on the development of a Kent and Medway 2050 Enterprise and Productivity Strategy. It summarises our programme of work, progress made by our consultants (Arup) with the evidence gathering, and the early outputs of our engagement with businesses, and key local / regional public service providers.

### **Recommendation**

The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to note the progress made to date.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 As we have set out previously, Kent County Council, Medway Council, and the 12 Kent districts and boroughs are working in partnership to develop a Kent and Medway Enterprise and Productivity Strategy. This strategy and the evidence we gather will form the basis of our contribution to the Local Industrial Strategy which South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) has been tasked by Government Ministers to prepare.

## **2. Gathering the Evidence**

- 2.1 At its November meeting, the Cabinet Committee received a briefing on a commission we tendered, inviting consultancies to demonstrate how they could support KCC to understand better the underlying causes of the county's comparatively low productivity.
- 2.2 Since that Committee meeting, we can now report that we have appointed Arup and have an agreed programme of work in place, which began in December and runs through to June. Key aspects of that programme of work include:
  - sectoral and spatial socio-economic analysis to identify Kent and Medway's comparative strengths and weaknesses, using a variety of statistical techniques to provide greater insight;

- analysis of 'what works', drawing on the evaluation material from the What Works Centre for Economic Development, to inform our response to the evidence;
- preparation of indicators/ metrics to monitor progress of the strategy over time;
- foresight drivers – identifying the potential impact of key drivers of change (i.e. ageing population, automation, climate change) on our economy in the future;
- engagement – series of 1:1 discussions with key stakeholders supported by KCC, and a workshop held on 7<sup>th</sup> May, with a cross section of business, civic and public leaders to ensure strong bottom up input into Arup findings.

2.3 Arup's programme of work is well underway and is due to conclude at the end of June. The workshop on the 7 May was an important stage in this work and was used to play back the evidence gathered to date, and build consensus around the following:

- reflections on the evidence analysis, the work on future scenarios, and the identification of opportunities for the Enterprise & Productivity Strategy and, in turn, the Local Industrial Strategy;
- economic issues and priorities that the strategy should focus on;
- potential areas for intervention, and views on existing project proposals.

### **3. Engagement and stakeholder input**

3.1 In parallel to the Arup programme of work, the KCC economic development team have brought together key local and regional organisations with delivery and financial responsibilities around four themes – skills and employability, innovation, business sectors and the support environment, and infrastructure. The purpose of these discussions has been to gather early views and build consensus around the principle issues and local context against which the strategy should respond, current interventions and their effectiveness, and ideas on the actions that the strategy could take in the short, medium and longer term.

3.2 The strategy also needs to set a clear direction on what we collectively want Kent and Medway to look like as a place to live, work, invest and learn in the medium/ longer term, with clear goals/ objectives that we work towards. Local authority members and leaders will want to shape that direction. To that end, we have started to engage Chief Executives and Leaders but are at the beginning of a conversation we need to iterate over the next few months.

### **4. Next Steps**

4.1 The 7 May workshop provided an opportunity to take stock of the evidence gathered to date, the issues and questions that raises, the direction that the

strategy should set, and how we start to respond to that. We intend to bring the outputs of that workshop to the next meeting of this Cabinet Committee for discussion.

## **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 We have identified a budget of £49,000 for this piece of work which was funded from the Economic Development budget in 2018-19.

## **6. Equalities Implications**

- 6.1 An equalities impact assessment is being developed in consultation with the equality and diversity team.

## **7. Recommendation**

- 7.1 The Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to note the progress made to date.

## **8. Contact details**

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