

Item No. 6

GM LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

SUBJECT: LEP Foresight Group

DATE: 17 July 2017

FROM: Simon Nokes, Executive Director Policy and Strategy

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The LEP, by its nature, tends to be focused on the 0-5 year strategy of the City Region. It has not been able to spend much time focusing on the 5-10 year global trends which will affect the city region over a longer time period.

It is therefore proposed to set up a 'foresight group' would look at potential 'disrupters' to business as normal, and opportunities, 5-10 years out and beyond. In this way it would complement the work of the LEP, and also the work of the Mayor's Business Advisory Panel which is more about the current state of business across the conurbation and a sounding board for the Mayor.

The group would provide advice to the LEP on issues which it might need to start factoring into its thinking. Some of these issues might become the focus of future LEP Task & Finish Groups. It is proposed that the group would meet 2-3 times per year and consist of people who have a wide experience nationally/internationally and are experts in their own particular field. It will be important for the group to be made up of members covering a wide range of issues/sectors/factors to ensure it is able to consider the future from a broad base. The group would also be a good way of capturing the advocacy and provocation of people with a keen interest in the GM economy who may not have time to be part of the LEP.

Each meeting of the group would focus on a particular topic (eg what will 'ageing well' look like in 2035, what impact will digital and robotics have on the economy by 2035, how do we prepare the city region's resilience for future generations) and consider the economic implications that the LEP might need to factor into future strategy. It is proposed that a 'core group' of 15 or so people would be created (accepting that not every member would be able to attend every meeting) with others invited to join for particular meetings depending on the topic. Mike Blackburn and Nancy Rothwell would be on the group, to make the linkage to the LEP with feedback from the group to the LEP via a short paper presented by Nancy Rothwell. Other LEP Board members would be invited to join individual meetings in their field of expertise.

Subject to views of the LEP it is proposed to identify and approach an inclusive range of people who could form the core of the foresight group, with the aim of having a first meeting in September 2017, with a report back to the LEP at its November meeting. Suggestions on potential members would be welcomed. Before the first meeting an initial scoping will be undertaken of the wide range of topics the group could consider (based on the strengths and potential challenges of the city region) and then a topic chosen for the first meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The LEP is asked to endorse the proposal to set up a 'foresight group' as above and ask Mike Blackburn and Nancy Rothwell to approach individuals to be part of this group.