

Paper Number EB09.19.1

<b>Security Level:</b>	Confidential	Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unclassified	Commercially Sensitive
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<b>Meeting &amp; Date:</b>	Extraordinary Meeting 11 September 2019		
<b>Subject:</b>	Midlands Engine Strategy Refresh		
<b>Attachments:</b>	Appendix 1: ME Strategy Presentation		
<b>Report of:</b>	ME Executive	<b>Total no of sheets:</b> (inc cover sheet)	5

<b>Papers are provided for:</b>	Approval <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Discussion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Information
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<b>Summary &amp; Recommendation:</b>
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>The purpose of this report is to provide the Executive Board with an update on progress to work jointly with Government in the process to develop a refreshed Midlands Engine Strategy</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>The Executive Board is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note progress since the last meeting, acknowledging the significant work undertaken by many partners from right across the partnership to help shape emerging strategy planning</li> <li>• Receive, discuss and provide feedback on a presentation on progress towards the Midlands Engine strategy refresh</li> <li>• Note the timeline for next steps, recognising the rapidly evolving political context</li> </ul>

## Background Information

### Strategy Refresh Approach

In 2017 we published the Midlands Engine Vision for Growth. This was a pivotal milestone in our development as a partnership and responded directly to the government's strategy for the Midlands Engine. In Vision for Growth, we set out our five priorities for investment, priorities to enable economic growth and bring prosperity for our region.

Invited by government in 2019 to jointly author the Midlands Engine Strategy refresh, a paper was presented to the Executive Board at its last meeting (June 2019) on a planned approach, including highlighting possible focus areas for the new strategy. A comprehensive sequence of engagements across the partnership began in June 2019 to identify strategic priorities for Midlands Engine – areas where measurable additionality will result through partnership collaboration and where there are opportunities to act together at a regional level.

A storyboard approach was adopted through which to capture views and identify Midlands Engine “opportunity spaces” - areas where partners agree it makes sense to enable regional level action. These areas have now been described as **Midlands Engine ambitions**.

In taking forward our work, we are building overtly on the core principles for Midlands Engine which were established within Vision for Growth and which have been contemporised through this strategy planning process:

#### Midlands Engine Principles

- We bring **additionality**, complementing the work of Local and Combined Authorities, LEPs, universities, businesses and others to generate added value at the spatial scale of the Midlands
- We lever the capacity of the Midlands to help Britain succeed. We are **apolitical**, focusing on increasing productive economic growth and improving quality of life for our communities
- Our delivery is framed by **long-term strategic** priorities, focusing on high impact, regionally significant initiatives, delivered through partnership
- We work on projects that benefit **the whole region** within a resilient partnership model
- We **work collaboratively** and speak with a unified voice, implementing a distributed leadership model to drive delivery

### Engagement Overview

Central to this process to develop the Midlands Engine ambitions, has been the input of partners from across the region. Commencing in June, a programme of partner engagement, conversations and meetings has been delivered, including (not exhaustively):

- ≡ Executive Board presentation (commencing the process) and Operating Board presentations
- ≡ LEP Chairs discussion dinner
- ≡ Energy workshop (public and private sector members)
- ≡ Universities round table session
- ≡ LEP Chief Executives round table
- ≡ Private sector stakeholder interviews and engagement
- ≡ Midlands Engine strategic theme group workshops (led by government colleagues)

- = 1-2-1 and small group meetings addressing specific topics
- = Operating Board workshop-style session
- = Internationalisation discussion meeting

Executive Board Members have received updates and been invited to give feedback on the emerging storyboard as the process evolved. Executive Board and Operating Board members have also been directly involved and invited to engage in a range of meetings in addition. Feedback has been provided from sessions which Executive and Operating Board Members have led independently, responding to the invitations made from the Board Chairs to do so. Further, in depth commentaries and input from both Midlands Innovation Universities and Midlands Enterprise Universities has been most beneficial.

Input from partners to directly shape the ambitions for the Midlands Engine Partnership has been extensive, representing a significant shared effort across the partnership to inform strategy preparations and define next steps. This development work together is a measurable success in its own right and the Executive Board may wish to acknowledge this.

**Evidence Led**

In addition to comprehensive input from partners, information and intelligence from the Midlands Engine Economic Observatory has been formative in helping to shape and inform the process. The identification of Midlands Engine ambitions has been materially underpinned by data, analysis and contemporary insight provided by our Observatory. For each of the emerging ambitions, there is a clear and compelling economic rationale for collaborative action, as well as a desire from partners across the Midlands Engine to act as one in these areas.

**Identifying Midlands Engine Ambitions**

The Midlands Engine Ambitions which have been identified by partners are:

The graphic features the 'MIDLANDS ENGINE' logo in a blue box on the left. To its right, a blue banner contains the text 'With one voice, we have defined the ambitions of our region as:'. Below this are four horizontal bars, each with a specific ambition and a brief description:

<b>The Smart Region</b>	Advancing a data-led, ultra connected, ultra integrated region
<b>Strategic transport connectivity</b>	Influencing strategic transport, underpinning our economic growth
<b>Internationalisation, trade &amp; investment</b>	Leading and growing in the global marketplace
<b>Innovation &amp; business</b>	Optimising conditions for R&D and accelerating business growth

Once identified, these ambitions have been developed through a further series of meetings, discussions and round table workshops. Through this process we have worked together to both reaffirm and focus our future strategic priorities across our partnership.

## **Current Position**

In order to build on the iterative development work described above, notwithstanding a concurrent change in government over the summer period, it was considered essential to maintain momentum in the evolution of this strategy planning work within the partnership. As such, after 3 iterations, the storyboard has been advanced and work has begun on the development of more detailed narratives which could inform the joint Midlands Engine Strategy with government. This approach has been adopted recognising a rapidly emerging series of opportunities which Midlands Engine will wish to capitalise on and which will materially inform the Midlands Engine partnership evolution. These include:

- Spending Review statement – week comm 2 September
- Party conference season – September and October
- Budget / fiscal event later in October/November
- Midlands Engine forward plan 2020/2021 and beyond

A presentation will be given at the Board Meeting sharing the current development point with Executive Board Members, inviting input and discussion which will help inform next steps. This is attached as Appendix 1 .

## **Political Engagement**

With the mid-summer appointment of Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP as Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, subsequently also appointed as the Ministerial Champion for Midlands Engine, opportunities for dialogue with the Minister by the Midlands Engine Executive Chairman have been secured to enable continued alignment in the current fast paced political environment.

## **Strategy Production**

Work will now progress, working jointly and directly with Government colleagues, to enable the translation of Midlands Engine ambitions into a final Midlands Engine refreshed strategy. The valuable work of the partnership to date is formative in guiding this next stage.

## **Timeline – Next Steps**

Board Members will be familiar with the initially proposed timeline which was presented at the last meeting and which has evolved throughout the summer period, responding to political changes and opportunities.

The current timeline for next steps, which is subject to change, is:

- ≡ Executive Board presentation and discussion session – 11 September 2019
- ≡ Follow up strategy workshop – September 2019
- ≡ Advancing strategy development jointly with Government – September/October
- ≡ Strategy launch by Government – yet to be confirmed but may be coincident with currently planned autumn budget statement

## **Recommendation**

Following receipt of the presentation and the opportunity for discussion, the Executive Board is asked to:

- ≡ Note progress since the last meeting, acknowledging the significant work undertaken by many partners from right across the partnership to help shape emerging strategy planning
- ≡ Receive, discuss and provide feedback on a presentation on progress towards the Midlands Engine strategy refresh
- ≡ Note the timeline for next steps, recognising the rapidly evolving political context