

New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership Local Industrial Strategy: Endorsement

Report No:	CAB/WS/19/031	
Report to and date:	Portfolio Holder Decision	No later than 24 September 2019
Cabinet Member:	Councillor John Griffiths Leader of the Council Tel: 01284 757001 Email: john.griffiths@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Julie Baird Assistant Director (Growth) Tel: 01284 757 613 Email: julie.baird@westsuffolk.gov.uk Andrea Mayley Service Manager (Economic Development and Business Growth) Tel: 01284 757343 Email: andrea.mayley@westsuffolk.gov.uk	

Decisions Plan:

This item is included on the Decisions Plan. Publication of the decision is usually after 48 hours of the decision being taken. The decision will be subject to call-in.

Recommendation: It is **RECOMMENDED** that:

Subject to the content of the new draft Local Industrial Strategy (not yet received), the Leader of the Council is requested to either:

- (1) endorse the content of New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership's draft Local Industrial Strategy on behalf of West Suffolk Council: or**
- (2) send further representations to New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership as to why the document cannot be endorsed by West Suffolk Council.**



1. Background / Context

1.1 The Government produced its National Industrial Strategy on 14 December 2017. It looked at productivity through five Foundations, which are well established drivers of the national and local economy:

1. Ideas – innovation
2. People – Skills and earnings, the labour market
3. Infrastructure - including digital
4. Business Environment – business support and finance
5. Places

The National Industrial Strategy also set out four challenges which the UK and global economy faces, with a mission for the UK economy and firms to adapt and play a leading role in each:

AI and Data
Ageing Society
Clean Growth
Future of Mobility



- 1.2 Following the National Industrial Strategy, the Government asked each place, led by Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) or Combined Authorities, to prepare a Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) by March 2020. The primary purpose of the LIS is to set out how future growth and productivity gains can be achieved in ways that benefit the whole population and, crucially, to start to make the case for future growth funding, once the current round of UK and EU growth funding is complete. It should be noted that not all places are preparing a LIS and some others already have theirs adopted (for example Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority). New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP) has been working closely with Government and has agreed to produce its LIS, covering Norfolk and Suffolk, by October 2019.
- 1.3 Government requires these strategies to be co-designed and approved with Government. The documents should be specific about the distinctive contribution and strengths that each place can offer.
- 1.4 It is not yet clear what funding for growth and infrastructure is going to look like post March 2020. But NALEP consider this to be an important opportunity to show Government the future potential of the Norfolk and Suffolk economy and why it makes sense for private and public investment to come here.
- 1.5 NALEP produced a first draft of its LIS on 14 August 2019, the aim was to deliver a 'best in class' Local Industrial Strategy that meets the needs of Norfolk and Suffolk by:
- Contributing to the aims of the Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy through action to drive **productivity** and **business growth**;
 - Focusing on activity where there is competitive advantage and clear strategic opportunities. Not trying to cover everything or start again.
 - Achieving Government recognition of the distinctive strengths and contribution, based on robust evidence.
 - Being business-led and owned by all partners
 - Placing Norfolk and Suffolk in prime position to secure Government funding and influence policy
- 1.6 West Suffolk Council was invited to provide comments on the first draft by 27 August with the view that a second draft would be provided on 13 September 2019. The second draft of the LIS included a very high percentage of the points made by the Council. However two key points were missing – reference to the importance of the Horse Racing Industry to the local and national economy and reference to the huge opportunity the Western Way Development would bring. NALEP has accepted that these two points can be included in a third draft of the LIS that will be issued on 19 September 2019. This report is written to enable a response to go back to NALEP in time for sign off at their board meeting on 25 September. Depending upon the content of the new draft LIS, the response from the Council will be either to endorse the draft LIS or to give an explanation as to why it cannot be endorsed.



2. First draft of the LIS

- 2.1 The first draft of the LIS (received 14 August 2019) promoted Norfolk and Suffolk as the UK's clean growth region. It stated its aspiration to transform the Norfolk and Suffolk economy into one of the best places in the world to live, learn, work and succeed in business. The document explains three "opportunity areas" that it considers provide the Unique Selling Point (USP) of our area. These were:
1. Clean Energy: Powering the World
 2. Agri Food: Feeding the World
 3. ICT and Digital Creative: Connecting the World.
- 2.2 The draft document briefly explained that the Norfolk and Suffolk economy is made up of other underpinning sectors and that the LIS should be read in conjunction with the Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy which was adopted in 2018.
- 2.3 In addition, the document explained its five foundations of productivity (which chimed with the National Industrial Strategy). These were:
1. Ideas: Improving collaboration across businesses and sectors driving up levels of business innovation, whilst increasing the adoption and diffusion of new technologies;
 2. People: Growing an inclusive economy with a highly skilled workforce where skills and employment provision meets business need and the aspirations of individuals;
 3. Infrastructure: Enabling productivity gains and clean growth through the delivery of integrated infrastructure to create places that people want to live and work;
 4. Business Environment: Creating more productive jobs and smarter agile businesses;
 5. Places: Transforming the Norfolk and Suffolk economy into one of the best places in the world to live, learn, work and succeed in business.
- 2.4 On receipt of the draft LIS, an email was sent to all Members of West Suffolk Council requesting feedback on the draft LIS. A number of responses were received and used to provide a response to NALEP by their deadline of 27 August.



2.5 The response from West Suffolk Council was comprehensive and clear. It explained that the Council could not endorse the document in its current form and suggested a number of changes/additions that should be considered for inclusion in the next draft of the document. In summary, the points made were:

- West Suffolk Council (WS) would like to see a clear strategy in the document to improving productivity by place and by people.
- There is the opportunity to include the work WS has been doing with regard to "social prescribing".
- The WWD chimes very well with the themes in the LIS and should be mentioned (text provided).
- Request for more reference to our places and to emphasise the rurality of both counties. Need to mention our market towns.
- Request for more Suffolk examples (wording of case studies provided).
- More could be made of the other important sectors that underpin our economy including the Horseracing Industry (HRI); ports and logistics; public services; the health sector; and the innovation sector servicing the needs of Cambridge.
- Opportunity to reference the equine cluster around Newmarket and the advances in animal health.
- Request to include significant detail on the HRI (detailed text provided).
- Challenge to the references to "Infrastructure" which paint a rosy picture and would effectively undermine our campaigns for additional investment.
- Opportunity suggested for the document to showcase the growth of digital infrastructure across the region.
- Request for recognition of the importance of Cambridge.
- Highlighting the challenge of connectivity in a rural area.
- Opportunity highlighted to share techniques and learning and further grow supply chains & business start-ups.
- Request to promote our regional strengths in terms of food production and productivity.
- Suggestion that Energy strengths could be maximised by working with local authorities to exploit the potential for development and our communities to utilise sustainable energy sources.
- Request to be clearer on how we can exploit our strengths to benefit the UK economy as a whole.
- Support highlighted for WSC and its aim to have some form of institute of technology.
- Opportunity that Western Way Development (WWD) would bring.
- Suggestion to include reference to freight transportation and also the eastern section of the East West Rail project.
- Need to reference the other Enterprise Zones not just the Great Yarmouth ones.

2.6 In addition, a number of case studies were prepared for inclusion covering the following:



- British Sugar, Bury St Edmunds plant.
- Animal Health Trust, Kentford.
- Solar for Business.
- ACCESS Advancing Communities towards low-Carbon Energy Smart Systems, 2019-2023

- 2.7 Confirmation of the receipt of the response from West Suffolk Council was received on 27 August from NALEP, along with acknowledgement that the next draft of the document would need to be received by 13 September to meet our internal timetable.

3. Second draft of the LIS

- 3.1 The second draft of the LIS was received as promised on 13 September 2019. The document was twice the length of the first draft and contained a number of well written case studies – including British Sugar, The Animal Health Trust and West Suffolk Council’s Solar programme (including Toggam Farm and Solar for Business).
- 3.2 On the whole the document was an improvement upon the first draft. Most of the points made by West Suffolk Council had been accepted apart from reference to the Horse Racing Industry and Western Way Development. The omission of these two points has been raised with NALEP and there is now acceptance that both points need to be made in the LIS.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 Once the next draft of the LIS is received from NALEP, there will be only a few days to consider whether the new draft sufficiently addresses the points raised in the first consultation response from the Council.
- 4.2 This report proposes using the Portfolio Holder decision process to enable West Suffolk Council to respond in time for the 25 September NALEP Board meeting. The NALEP Board will be asked to endorse the final version of the LIS that will go back to Government for sign off (as a result, it may still be subject to amendment).
- 4.3 There will be two possible courses of action available to the Leader once the second draft of the LIS is received:- either to respond to NALEP to say that West Suffolk Council endorses the new version of the LIS; or to respond explaining why the Council is unable to support the new version.
- 4.4 The PH decision will not be taken until 19 September 2019 at the earliest, to enable enough consideration to be given to our response.

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 There are no alternative options to the LIS given the statutory nature of LEPs.

6. Consultation and engagement



- 6.1 All Members were emailed on 15 August with a copy of the draft LIS document and asked to send feedback by 23 August. Members were also invited to attend a “drop in” session with Officers on 22 August in the event they wished to discuss concerns/thoughts before responding.

7. Risks

- 7.1 There is a small risk that the LEP will not include appropriate reference to the Horseracing Industry or Western Way Development as requested by the Council. This will be mitigated through ongoing dialogue with NALEP.

