

16<sup>th</sup> July 2020

## SCR RENEWAL ACTION PLAN

### **Purpose of Report**

This report presents the draft SCR Renewal Action Plan.

### **Thematic Priority**

This report relates to all of the existing and future Strategic Economic Plan priorities.

### **Freedom of Information**

The paper will be available under the Combined Authority Publication Scheme.

### **Recommendations**

The Board is asked to

1. consider and endorse the draft SCR Renewal Action Plan
2. to agree to take forward the delivery planning through the appropriate Thematic Boards.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1** The development of the Sheffield City Region (SCR) Renewal Action Plan (RAP) is important move to mitigate the worst effects of the Covid-19 crisis and ensure a strong and timely recovery towards a more resilient economy and society. The RAP is aligned with the Economic Plan (SEP) and will act as a bridge to the SEP, setting out the more immediate term actions we need to take and should allow us to reset and confirm our priorities and the sequence of interventions needed in the medium to longer term.
- 1.2** The RAP has been designed with three linked horizons in mind – Relief (immediate term) Recovery (medium term) and Resilience (long term). The interventions in the draft RAP developed so far are designed to be delivered within the next 12 to 18 months to bring immediate **Relief** to local people, employers and businesses.
- 1.3** The draft RAP is attached at Appendix 1 for consideration by the Board and will be presented to the MCA at its next meeting for final approval.

## **2. Proposal and Justification**

### **2.1** Economic impact of Covid-19

The RAP focuses upon three main areas of action:

- People
- Employers
- Place

The evidence clearly showed that the areas above will face the greatest challenges and thus should be the focus of all our activity. These challenges laid bare by the evidence are briefly summarised below.

## 2.2 People

The global and national economic outlook is widely predicted to be bleak, albeit it is difficult to quantify just how bad the economic impact will be.

The potential impact on the City Region could be devastating for our communities, particularly the predicted rise of unemployment. There is also expected to be a significant loss of training opportunities, at least in the immediate term. This includes those made unemployed, forced into unemployment by personal circumstances, those currently on the job retention scheme though at risk of unemployment, and those to be made unemployed in the next 6 – 12 months.

### 2.12 Employers

There are immediate concerns of the liquidity of many businesses in SCR. It is expected that as supportive measures reduce or are discontinued, the business base will face pressing cashflow, invoicing and investment challenges. There is a risk of widespread insolvencies, due to a lack of demand and/or inability to operate in the wake of COVID-19 impacts. This includes those businesses over leveraged through loans and Central Government support, who will no longer be viable once Central Government support ends.

### 2.15 Place

Our places are feeling the effects of social distancing measures and reductions in disposable income due to furlough measures or loss of income due to increased unemployment. This is most stark in our urban centres which are facing current challenges with their space configuration and mobility and could see longer term issues, particularly with property values.

With the potential closure, or failure, of high street retailers our urban centres face an uncertain future. This includes the knock-on impacts on wider determinants of health and wellbeing, community, inclusion, transport, housing and employment / engagement opportunities

### Responding to the challenges

Appendix 1 provides more detail on the interventions proposed but the high-level objectives are presented below:

- **People** - *we will invest to ensure local people have the opportunity to develop their skills, and to find, stay and progress in work*
- **Employers** - *We will invest to ensure employers can survive, adapt and thrive*
- **Places** - *We will invest to create jobs and thriving places, in a way that reduces inequality and enhances our environment*

### 2.16 Next steps and timescales

This paper proposes that the Board considers and endorses the RAP. This will put the City Region will be in a stronger position as we engage with central Government and other partners.

The AP will be presented to the MCA at its July 2020 meeting. Once approved, implementation plans will be developed via the appropriate Thematic Boards. These will be presented to the LEP and MCA Boards at the September meetings and delivery will begin as soon as funds are available and allocated.

### 3. Consideration of alternative approaches

- 3.1 The document aligns many views on recovery, renewal and resilience and the preparation of the RAP involved input from stakeholders to shape evidence, options, approaches, objectives and the ambition. At every stage of the process, we have been guided by LEP and MCA members.

### 4. Implications

#### 4.1 Financial

The RAP will help to secure additional funding from Government for SCR. Delaying its completion may hamper our ability to secure the investment, people, employers and place need.

The costs associated with the completion of the RAP, have been accounted for within the existing approved budget.

#### 4.2 Legal

There are no legal issues for this paper.

#### 4.3 Risk Management

If endorsement is delayed, the LEP, MCA and partners' ability to secure additional funding from the new Government and deliver on our ambitions could be weakened.

#### 4.4 Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion

The emerging RAP will help to address poverty and the health and wellbeing of the local populations and therefore will contribute to improving social inclusion. Covid-19 is disproportionately affecting vulnerable groups – from a health and economic perspective and the RAP seeks to target these groups.

### 5. Communication

- 5.1 Proactive communications will be delivered across a range of channels, including digital, social and traditional media, following approval of the strategy.

The LEP and MCA will work with partners and stakeholders (e.g. MPs) to deliver this communication. A communication plan is available.

### 6. Appendices/Annexes

Appendix 1 – Draft Renewal Action Plan

<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	<b>Jonathan Guest</b>
<b>POST</b>	<b>Senior Economic Policy Manager</b>
Director responsible	Felix Kumi-Ampofo
Email	Felix.kumi-ampofo@sheffieldcityregion.org.uk
Telephone	Microsoft Teams (or 0114 220 3445)

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: N/A.