

## **BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**This matter is a Key Decision within the Council's definition and has been included in the relevant Forward Plan**

### **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PLACE**

#### **INCLUSIVE ECONOMY PEER REVIEW ACTION PLAN**

##### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report has been prepared in order to share key messages with cabinet from the recent external Inclusive Economy peer review.
- 1.2 The report will also outline key actions that will be taken forward in response to the recommendations arising from the review.

##### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **Cabinet noted the key findings arising from the peer review and the supporting action plan.**
- 2.2 **Cabinet note the proposed establishment of an Inclusive Economic 'task and finish group' led by the Council incorporating partner and stakeholder representation. The core objectives of the group are defined as:**
  - **Oversee the delivery of the peer review action plan contained within this report.**
  - **Provide strategic direction leading to the establishment of a wider Inclusive Economic Strategy for Barnsley.**

##### **3. INTRODUCTION**

- 3.1 An external Inclusive Economy peer review was commissioned by the Chief Executive with a view to understanding current achievements to date, future plans and capacity to deliver change as focus shifts from a traditional economic growth approach towards the adoption of an holistic inclusive economic strategy.
- 3.2 The review took place in October 2019 and was led by the West Midlands Combined Authority supported by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. The review focused on three key objectives:
  - Review the extent to which current policy, strategy and interventions in Barnsley are delivering towards an inclusive economy.
  - Identify what the Council and partners (including the city region) could do to deepen and strengthen approaches to inclusive economic growth.

- Provide a formal peer review report to help develop the local strategy and associated prioritised interventions.

3.3 This report summarises key messages arising from the review and provides an implementation plan facilitating the transition towards the delivery of a wider Inclusive Economic approach within Barnsley.

## 4. PROPOSAL AND JUSTIFICATION

### 4.1 Format of the review

4.1.1 The review took place over a two day period. The structure of the review was developed in order to provide the peer review team with as much exposure as possible within the available timescales. Specific sessions facilitated included:

- Strategic overview/context session led by the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive
- Policy/Performance/Financial Management/Governance and Decision Making
- Borough tour
- Inclusive Economy Stakeholder workshop, (partners from across the borough attended an interactive session).
- Economy workshop
- Sheffield City Region Growth Strategy
- People Achieving Their Potential
- Community and Public Health

4.1.2 The key output from the review was a formal peer review report shown in Appendix A of this report.

4.1.3 The peer review team also attended a follow up feedback session held in November. The feedback session enabled the peer review team to provide feedback on their findings and also incorporated a workshop which has helped to directly inform the action plan included with this report.

### 4.2 Key Messages Strengths

4.2.1 ***Strong ambition to succeed and be the best the authority can be*** – The peer review team felt that the Council had a clear ambition which is shared by the authority at political and managerial levels. The council aspires to play an effective role in addressing the challenges it faces by supporting the community to put them at the front of everything they do.

The team found an openness to external challenges and a willingness to learn and improve. The culture of the authority appears to be 'can do' with lots of examples of how funding challenges and the broader austerity position has driven innovation internally. The shift of the Public Health directorate into a devolved model puts the public health agenda at the heart of daily business, and can be a positive driver for inclusive growth.

4.2.2 ***Unique and best practice community and area working model*** - The devolved budget through place led area council and ward alliances puts the citizen and

councillors at the heart of decision making. There were good examples of stronger community service making a difference to local areas and using the thriving and vibrant economy or strong and resilient communities to support improved outcomes. Corporate performance reporting narrative report shone a light on a few key interventions with small pots of money generating a positive return and increase in public participation and volunteering. However, more could be done with the evidence and intelligence gathered in ward alliances to inform strategic decision making.

4.2.3 **Robust cultural and visitor economy** - The review team were exposed to several stakeholders with whom cultural regeneration was being used to broaden out the regional leisure and employment offer. A visit to the Elsecar Heritage Centre showed promise and innovation for connectivity to other local attractions and shared the Council's ambitions for development. Using this mixed approach to growth in this may start to see the Barnsley earned pound being spent locally which in turn will increase the spirit of pride in the region. There are further opportunities for using the history and heritage of Barnsley to develop belief and pride in citizens.

4.2.4 **Clear partnership working** - The review team attended a partnership event where it was clear that there is a strong ambition to work collaboratively. It was recognised that most partners had built their own plans but were seeking leadership from the authority to lead a change in approach. There was strong evidence of prolonged engagement with partners at political and officer level to positive effect.

A broader ambition to 'make Barnsley great' has given rise to strong partnership across thematic areas. There was evidence presented of good design principled being adapted to link housing, infrastructure and industrial growth, with the Dearne Valley redevelopment shown as a good example.

4.2.5 **School alliance and early years provision** - The school alliance shared good innovative practice of peer review between schools and this challenge had supported significant improvement. The link to the authority was evident in the push to improve early years and the broader best start in life approach and it should be recognised as good practice.

4.2.6 **More and better jobs** - The borough's efforts to develop an 'employer promise' to define what being 'work ready' looks like is to be commended. The progress made on this would be of interest to other authorities facing similar challenges.

#### 4.3 **Key Messages Opportunities**

4.3.1 **Developing the Inclusive Economy Narrative** - It was evident through the peer review that the concept of Inclusive Growth is present in the authority and within its practice, but the narrative, strategic overview and relationship to delivery was not clear. It is recommended that a consistent narrative underpinned with a clearly defined outcomes framework work is key moving forward.

4.3.2 **Developing a collaborative approach** - Stakeholders articulated a desire for a broad strategy to develop an Inclusive Growth agenda that informs an overarching ambition for generating shared priorities. There is an opportunity to turn this into a single, shared vision for inclusive growth in Barnsley to maximise the potential of

partnerships. In order to achieve maximum impact from the an Inclusive Economy it is critical that a strategy is developed in collaboration with key partners.

- 4.3.3 **Influencing regional strategy** – The peer review recognised that it is critical that regional strategy is shaped from a district level ensuring that local inclusive economic aspirations are incorporated into the Sheffield City Region Strategic Economic Plan, (SEP). It is therefore critical that the Council works to shape the refreshed SEP.
- 4.3.4 **Fragile employment** – linked to the prevalence of distribution hubs located within the area. The type of employment within the Borough does not align with the sense of ambition for the town felt within the council. Significant work will need to be undertaken to address this. It is critical that a human capital strategy is developed that provides a skills pathway to proactively address emerging employment challenges such as automation enabling residents to upskill for new opportunities. Similarly, in respect of future inward investment, the Council may be required to take bold decision to avoid further saturation of the distribution sector whilst ensuring that a balanced business base is established providing a step change in the quality of employment available.
- 4.3.5 **Sector specific skills pathways** – There is a significant opportunity to develop skills and career pathways into sector where recruitment challenges exist. One example sector relates digital where local businesses are articulating a challenge in terms of recruiting individuals with the technical skills required. The proposal to develop a skills pathway through the Digital Campus in partnership with Barnsley College and Sheffield Hallam University. A second sector with different challenges relates to health and social care. Development of entry level employment pathway into this sector will help to address current skills shortages. Expanding this with a progression pathway has the potential to enable individuals to develop a lifelong career providing a positive societal contribution.
- 4.3.6 **Carbon Agenda** – Barnsley like many areas has declared a climate emergency and has clear outcomes defined in terms of zero 40 and zero 45. It is critical that this agenda is aligned to an Inclusive Economic approach. Environmental impacts must be considered in decision making processes and future strategy if the identified targets are to be achieved.
- 4.3.7 **Social value and expansion of community area model** - There was evidence of a social value framework being used across the authority, but it was felt that it was not quite in the place the authority wanted it to be. Whilst engagement with communities was developing social capital, it was felt that the social value construct with key stakeholders could be developed further. Similarly, it was also felt that greater integration of the community area working model with the emerging Inclusive Economic agenda is critical in terms of co-production and ownership at a local level. More can be done with the evidence and intelligence gathered in ward alliances to inform strategic decision making. This was felt to be a key vehicle to address disengagement within communities.

- 4.3.8 **Transportation** - The transport network was described as not being fit for purpose with evidence that it was preventing access to employment for residents within the borough with poor connectivity to employment sites. The infrastructure does not support cross borough connectivity which is supporting a sense of community isolation. The plan to improve rail links between the borough and Leeds and Sheffield may help to address some of these issues. However, opportunities should be explored at Sheffield City Region level to explore how citizens could be better connected by the regions through public transport, bus networks and active travel.
- 4.3.9 **Strengthen Citizen Engagement** – The peer review team recognised that citizen engagement is critical in respect of developing a truly representative Inclusive Economic strategy. It was recognised that the ongoing 2030 consultation will help to inform the evolving strategy but there is also a requirement to integrate this with other sources of intelligence such as community and stakeholder data.
- 4.3.10 **Hardwiring Into Decision Making** – There was a recognition that Inclusive Economic outcomes will need to be embedded within the Councils decision making and resource allocation process if a significant transformation is to be achieved. It was appreciated by the peer review team that this may be more of a longer term aspiration as a result of the need to have a clearly defined Inclusive Economic Outcome framework but this was felt to be a key recommendation arising from the report.
- 4.3.11 **Delivering Place Based Growth** - A key aspect of the successful delivery of an Inclusive Economic strategy is to deliver true holistic place based growth. The peer review recognised that this approach is already being progressed within Barnsley through key priorities such as Barnsley Town Centre and the wider Principal Towns Programme. It is further acknowledged that additional funding opportunities such as Stronger Towns at Goldthorpe provide a unique opportunity to truly deliver innovative place based transformation.

#### 4.4 **Implementation of Recommendations**

- 4.4.1 Appendix B of this document contains a high level action plan consisting of key activities to be taken forward in response to the findings of the peer review.
- 4.4.2 It is envisaged that this action plan will be delivered in parallel to the development of a wider Inclusive Economic Strategy. This approach will help to ensure that momentum is maintained on key opportunities identified through the review whilst ensuring that a robust and evidence based wider Inclusive Economic strategy is developed in collaboration with partners and key stakeholders.
- 4.4.3 It is further proposed that a Inclusive Economic ‘task and finish group’ led by the Council incorporating partner and stakeholder representation. The core objectives of the group are defined as:
- Oversee the delivery of the peer review action plan contained within this report.

- Provide strategic direction leading to the establishment of a wider Inclusive Economic Strategy for Barnsley.

Longer term it is envisaged that the Inclusive Economic Strategy will be owned by a reinvigorated Barnsley Economic Partnership.

## **5. CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES**

### **5.1. Do Nothing**

- 5.1.1 Doing nothing is not a viable option as this would fail to capitalise on the recommendations identified through the peer review.

### **5.2. Integrate Peer Review Findings Into An Inclusive Economic Strategy**

- 5.2.1 This approach would see the rapid development of an Inclusive Economic Strategy incorporating the recommendations from the peer review. Although this approach is feasible, it is felt that it would fail to address key recommendations from the review of developing the strategy in collaboration with partners, being informed through citizen engagement and local evidence base.
- 5.2.2 The longer term aspiration is to develop a full comprehensive Inclusive Economic Strategy for Barnsley but in the interim period, delivering the action plan contained within this report will ensure that momentum is maintained.

## **6. IMPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE/SERVICE USERS**

- 6.1. The recommendations contained within this report will have an impact on local residents. An Inclusive Economic approach puts residents at the heart of strategy development and delivery and consequently the action plan contained within this report is intended to deliver positive outcomes for the borough.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

## **8. EMPLOYEE IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. There are no employee implications associated with this proposals contained within this report.

## **9. PROCUREMENT AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no direct procurement or legal implications associated with this report. However, it is recognised that there will be dependencies in respect of wider procurement activity undertaken by the Council and the further alignment and embedding of social value supported by this action plan.

## **10. CUSTOMER AND DIGITAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 There are no immediate customer or digital implications associated with this report.

## **11. COMMUNICATIONS IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1. The peer review process has been a positive exercise intended to help crystallise the transition to an Inclusive Economic approach within Barnsley. It is therefore important that the positives and future opportunities identified from the review are effectively communicated both internally and externally within the Council.

## **12. CONSULTATIONS**

- 12.1. Internal consultations have been undertaken during the compilation of this report with Communities, Public Health, Economic Development, Procurement, Finance, Employment and Skills and Housing and Energy.

## **13. THE CORPORATE PLAN AND THE COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**

- 13.1. There is no immediate implications for the Corporate Plan or existing Council Performance framework. However, longer term, it is appreciated that an Inclusive Economic Outcomes framework will underpin the future 2030 plan and also help to inform a revised outcomes framework associated with that plan.

## **14. LIST OF APPENDICES**

- Appendix A - Peer Review Report  
Appendix B - Peer Review Action Plan

## **15. GLOSSARY**

- SEP - Strategic Economic Plan  
WMCA - West Midlands Combined Authority

**Report author:** Paul Clifford

## **Appendix A - Peer Review Report**

### Inclusive Growth Peer Review for Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> October 2019

#### **Background**

2. The visit to Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council was a bespoke peer review arranged by the newly appointed Chief Executive and Leader of the Council. A peer review is designed to assist an authority assess its current achievements, its future plans, and its capacity to deliver or change within the context of the peer review objectives.
3. The review was focused on three key objectives:
  - Review the extent to which current policy, strategy and interventions in Barnsley are delivering towards an inclusive economy.
  - Identify what the Council and partners (including the city region) could do to deepen and strengthen approaches to inclusive economic growth.
  - Provide a formal peer review report to help develop the local strategy and associated prioritised interventions.
4. It was agreed that feedback would focus on the following key strands: leadership and governance; customer focus and engagement; and partnership. The peer review is a tool to challenge the approach the authority is undertaking in a reflective and constructive manner. It is not an inspection, and not an LGA-accredited peer challenge. It is a supportive approach undertaken by 'critical friends' to help the authority identify its current strengths and opportunities to develop. All observations and recommendations are offered in that spirit.
5. The members of the peer review team were:
  - Sean Russell – Implementation Director, West Midlands Combined Authority
  - Mike Hawking – Policy and Strategy Manager, Joseph Rowntree Foundation
  - Dr Henry Kippin, Executive Director Public Service Reform, West Midlands Combined Authority (who has acted as a consultant to the review team)
6. A two day programme was organised by BMBC and included several sessions which presented the current activity and interventions in the authority, as well as a number of site visits and a broader partnership engagement event. This gave the review team an opportunity to meet a variety of internal and external stakeholders.
7. The team were grateful of the welcome and hospitality provided by the authority, and would like to thank everyone for giving up their valuable time and contributions during the review. A special thanks you should go to Paul Clifford who oriented and support the whole visit giving the team the best opportunity to understand the authority.



8. On the last day of the review a few highlights were fed back to the authority. This report seeks to give a more detailed written account of the findings.

### **Context**

9. Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council was formed in 1974. It has 63 Councillors with a large majority consisting of labour councillors (49). The Leader of the council is Cllr Stephen Houghton CBE who has led the council since 1996. It has a population of 245,199 with many residents (97.9%) being white British. The borough is dissected by the M1 Motorway, with 90% of the population living in the urban East.
10. The Borough is included within the Sheffield City Region Combined Authority which covers South Yorkshire and includes Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield with Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire as non-constituent authorities. The CA has devolved powers over transport (public transport and major trunk roads only), economic development and regeneration. The Local Enterprise Partnership is responsible for economic policy (including business support) and is the author of the Strategic Economic Plan. These two bodies offer devolution opportunities for funding from Government in support of economic growth as well as developing the Local Industrial Strategy.
11. Barnsley is a former industrial town with a strong history of coal mining, textiles and glass making. Coal Mining remained the main industry for the work force in the region post war, with 70 Collieries operating within 15 miles of Barnsley Town Centre. Following nationalisation in the 1940s the industry saw a gradual decline. The impact of the closures in the 1980's and 1990's, with Goldthorpe colliery being the last one closed in 1994, has had a significant impact on the borough. Industry is now made up of distribution centres with brands such as ASOS making use of the connectivity of the M1 motorway along junction 35 to 37. There is a growing digital market, but most of the employment appears to be in either the service industry or blue collar low skilled work. The borough and growth company have worked hard to develop the SME market in support of the SEP.
12. Barnsley's main town centre has undergone a recent redevelopment with the creation of a new transport interchange. It is currently redeveloping the market areas and developing the existing 1960's shopping centre.

### **Leadership and governance**

#### **Ambition**

- Strong ambition to succeed and be the best the authority can be
- Enthusiastic executive team that flows through the team into place
- Strong public service and community offer with Area Councils and Ward Alliances

#### **However**

- Relationship with Sheffield City Region appears challenging with a forward view yet to be established
- Vision for Inclusive Growth needs to be reinforced as the narrative appears unclear
- Focus has been on developing the internal framework

13. There is a clear ambition described by leader and the newly appointed Chief Executive which appears to be shared by the authority and political and managerial levels and a desire to succeed. The council wants to play an effective role in addressing the challenges it faces by supporting the community to put them at the front of everything they do. This is distinct and notable.
14. We found an openness to external challenges and a willingness to learn and improve. It was evident from the internal session that learning is a key component of the work in the authority and there has been a culture over time of trying to develop models that maximises leadership at all levels. A recent internal leadership programme appears to have been well received by staff.
15. The culture of the authority appears to be 'can do' with lots of examples of how funding challenges and the broader austerity position has driven innovation internally. The shift of the Public Health directorate into a devolved model puts the public health agenda at the heart of daily business, and can be a positive driver for inclusive growth.
16. The devolved budget through place led area council and ward alliances puts the citizen and councillors at the heart of decision making. There were good examples of stronger community service making a difference to local areas and using the thriving and vibrant economy or strong and resilient communities to support improved outcomes. The Quarter 1, 2019/20 narrative report shone a light on a few key interventions with small pots of money generating a positive return and increase in public participation and volunteering. More could be done with the evidence and intelligence gathered in ward alliances to inform strategic decision making.
17. Decision making was only briefly tested in the peer review. There appears to be clear lines of accountability and clarity of roles and responsibilities at place level. The devolvment of decision making at area and ward level with aligned budget was innovative and was generating good results. However, at a board level for major investment there was no evidence of an inclusive growth review which may seek to support the narrative and consistency of application.
18. Throughout the peer review we experienced a perception that Barnsley felt like a poor relation in respect of funding from Sheffield City Region. It was not established during the review the extent to which this was factually correct, but it is important that this is unpicked, and a clear narrative set for the town, authority for staff. This is picked up later in this review.
19. It was also recognised that the location of the Borough creates a tension between allegiance to Sheffield and Leeds. Whilst administratively the authority is now aligned to Sheffield City Region, it has also been part of the Leeds City Region LEP, and the population are as likely to look to Leeds for employment and spending their time outside of work. It was also recognised that Sheffield has undergone significant development over recent years with development of the Arena, Meadowhall and a tram network making it more attractive than Barnsley. Understanding and describing Barnsley's contribution to both Sheffield and Leeds's

functional economic geographies will be particularly important for the future of any Inclusive Growth Strategy with clarity needed for funding opportunities and broader economic or infrastructure development.

20. The overall view was that the authority had good grasp of what inclusive growth could be, but the language and narrative were not consistent. Some staff talked about inclusive economy, inclusive growth or tangential links to the Strategic Economic Plan. Some also discussed related concepts such as Community Wealth Building. It was evident that lots of work had been done within the authority to develop the thinking, but a defined narrative and strategy was not yet completed. There were lots of discussions about a 2030 strategy, but the inclusive growth agenda appeared to be thought of as a separate. It's important that the two things are brought together, and a single shared narrative is developed across the authority and partners.
21. There was evidence of the Inclusive Growth building blocks being present within the governance framework of the Council. This could be amplified to support and drive activity moving forward.
22. The review team met several officers from the internal directorates. It was clear that the development of this agenda within the council has been internal and service based focus. Everyone who was spoken too recognised the importance of shifting towards an outward facing approach and a desire to engage stakeholders at an early stage.

### **Customer focus and engagement**

#### **Ambition**

- Real sense of pride of being from Barnsley
- The cultural sector is becoming a focus to improve citizen and economic engagement
- Strong social value programme seeking to engage more volunteers

#### **However**

- Lack of good employment led to a perception of a lack of aspiration within the current population
  - Employment and schools are fragile
  - Transport connectivity makes the borough difficult to navigate
23. Throughout the review there was an overarching sense of pride in being from Barnsley. Lots of work has been done to seek engagement with citizens and reinforce this sense of pride. The narrative is such that Barnsley is broader than one area and the local towns work hard to ensure that local people benefit from local interventions. This was evidenced in the area council and ward alliance work.
  24. The communication team have a strong framework for delivery, and it was clear that the public health teams and broader council departments were committed to listening to the voice of citizens and communities and influencing service delivery on that basis. The new library complex and skills hub showed good evidence of engagement and tackling previous barriers to access.

25. The review team were exposed to several stakeholders with whom cultural regeneration was being used to broaden out the regional leisure and employment offer. A visit to the Elsecar Heritage Centre showed promise and innovation for connectivity to other local attractions and shared the Council's ambitions for development. Using this mixed approach to growth in this may start to see the Barnsley earned pound being spent locally which in turn will increase the spirit of pride in the region. There are further opportunities for using the history and heritage of Barnsley to develop belief and pride in citizens.
26. There was evidence of a social value framework being used across the authority, but it was felt that it was not quite in the place the authority wanted it to be. Whilst engagement with communities was developing social capital, it was felt that the social value construct with key stakeholders could be developed further.
27. Two significant challenges were raised consistently during the review; Transport connectivity and personal aspiration. Personal ambition is an area that needs greater understanding. We were often told that there was a lack of ambition in the population, but evidence from schools representatives challenged this – it is often a lack of belief that 'someone like me' can obtain a highly skilled job than a lack of desire or ambition to be successful. Whilst this might be linked to the availability of good jobs in the borough, just as important is how accessible citizens view good jobs as being within the wider city region. A young person who lives in a neighbourhood where there are several commuters to Leeds or Sheffield is likely to have a different view of this to a young person who's friends, family and neighbours tend to work within Barnsley. Responding to this challenge may require different interventions in different parts of the borough.
28. There has been significant development of the education sector over the last 10 years with the 14 senior schools being demolished and 10 academies being created. The levels of academic attainment are improving yet the ambition of students is still felt to be low. The leadership across the schools agenda showed strong evidence of collaboration and coherence. The willingness to collaborate between schools in different multi-academy trusts is particularly impressive – many other boroughs have ambitions to achieve this but have not been able to successfully deliver it.
29. Mobility of the population is also a challenge. A significant number of people leave Barnsley to seek different opportunities but do not return to the locality. The evidence presented showed a high level of low skilled, low value roles which would align to typical blue collar working. There is a lack of white-collar roles that offer people to meet their ambitions within the borough.
30. It was recognised that the digital sector was developing in the region and the college as described as outstanding which gives hope to the future working population. The inclusive growth agenda will need to focus on creating broader opportunities for employment and skills and it is essential that this is linked strongly to new opportunities being created in the borough and wider economic geographies.

31. Speaking with several employers it was felt that apprentices did not always have the skills required for the work environment and as such work could be undertaken in college to prepare the future work force. The borough's efforts to develop an 'employer promise' to define what being 'work ready' looks like is to be commended. The progress made on this would be of interest to other authorities facing similar challenges.
32. Employment in the borough was described as fragile, linked to the prevalence of distribution hubs moving into the area. The type of employment within the Borough does not align with the sense of ambition for the borough felt within the council. Significant work will need to be undertaken to address this. The review team identified that whilst the Sheffield City Region business growth work was developing in line with the SEP, there was a level of competition across boroughs which could lead to a lack of coherence felt by businesses. We were shown an example of a business moving from Sheffield to Barnsley, which had great benefits to the borough, but no true additionality to the city region. It should be noted that this is a challenge facing other regions too.
33. Transport for the Borough is a challenge. The network was described as not being fit for purpose with evidence that it was preventing access to employment for people wanting to work in the distribution field. The infrastructure does not support cross borough connectivity which is supporting a sense of community isolation.
34. The plan to improve rail links between the borough and Leeds and Sheffield may help to address some of these issues. However, opportunities should be explored at Sheffield City Region level to explore how citizens could be better connected by the regions bus networks.

## **Partnerships**

### **Ambition**

- Strong sense of place led to good historical working
- Strong evidence of ambition to make Barnsley great
- Enthusiasm and desire to use Inclusive Growth to create an overarching strategy

### **However**

- Austerity has generated a silo approach within partners
- Stronger connection required to the STP future health plan to reduce the wider determinants leading to health inequalities
- A single, united vision for inclusive growth in Barnsley is needed to ensure all partners are working to the same ambition
- More to be done to ensure partnerships truly benefit from membership of Sheffield City Region and vice versa

35. The review team attended a partnership event where it was clear that there is a strong ambition to work collaboratively. It was recognised that most partners had

built their own plans but were seeking leadership from the authority to lead a change in approach.

36. There was strong evidence of prolonged engagement with partners at political and officer level to positive effect. The school alliance shared good innovative practice of peer review between schools and this challenge had supported significant improvement. The link to the authority was evident in the push to improve early years and the broader best start in life approach and it should be recognised as good practice.
37. A broader ambition to 'make Barnsley great' has given rise to strong partnership across thematic areas. There was evidence presented of good design principled being adapted to link housing, infrastructure and industrial growth, with the Dearne Valley redevelopment shown as a good example.
38. Some stakeholders articulated a desire for a broad strategy to develop an Inclusive Growth agenda that informs an overarching ambition for generating shared priorities. There is an opportunity to turn this into a single, shared vision for inclusive growth in Barnsley to maximise the potential of partnerships.
39. It was recognised that shrinking budgets had significantly impacted on the council and this was being felt across the broader partners where the perception was that they had collectively moved into silos. Good work was still ongoing, there was evidence that good practice wasn't being shared and the partnerships were not using austerity as enabler to refocus shared priorities. The community shop programme was a surprise to a lot of partners in the session; as was the improvement in the quality of social housing that had been undertaken recently. The authority recognised that the inclusive growth agenda does create a catalyst for engagement with partners. The opportunity for devolution through the Sheffield City Region and the wider Leeds LEP is recognised as an exciting opportunity for the Borough, but needs further definition and clarity.
40. The authority has developed many good partnerships with other organisations and agencies in the borough, however, ensuring partners are able to engage with and benefit from Barnsley's membership of Sheffield City Region should be a higher priority. Partners may not easily identify as being 'part of' the wider city region, therefore additional support and encouragement may be required.

## **Discussion**

41. It was evident through the peer review that the concept of Inclusive Growth is present in the authority and within its practice, but the narrative, strategic overview and relationship to delivery was not clear. The approach appeared to focus on participation, equity, growth, stability and sustainability a model like the Rockefeller 5 pillar approach. Developing the current thinking could support a broader partnership approach. Using a similar framework such as: Affordable, safe and connected places; power influence and participation; equality; education and learning; health and wellbeing; and economy could create the catalyst for collaborative action.

42. It was recognised that significant work has been undertaken in the Borough to raise ambition, equality, growth in employment and additional funding to support this had been obtained. The plan for regeneration was well thought through but will need to align to the industrial strategy and wider SEP.
43. The devolved model of accountability through area councils and ward alliances showed good decision making and evidence of local delivery. This was also echoed with the devolvement of public health to support a new narrative that health promotion was everybody's business, and this was evidenced through a number of sessions.
44. However, the overarching challenge of building ambition, belief and hope will require significant work. This could be supported by the development of the 2030 plan and a broad inclusive growth plan that is created with partners and formally accepted. At this point, a number of quick wins should be identified.
45. The issue of transport and connectivity is such a significant challenge for the region and requires substantial investment. To maximise the benefit of this opportunity growth corridors could be considered to focus key spend in key localities. There is existing evidence of place led redevelopment which could form the basis of this approach. This should be a priority area for work with Sheffield City Region.
46. The reviews saw a clear pride in Barnsley from officers, partners and citizens. However, it was clear that even within Barnsley there are multiple identities and communities that have different experiences of services and the labour market. It's important this is reflected in and forward plans, recognising the need to flex provision to meet need.
47. Although there is a clear sense of 'place' within Barnsley, there is a need to provide greater clarity to how Barnsley relates to Sheffield City Region and Yorkshire more generally. Much of the historical economic activity of the borough happened because of its natural assets and a desire to exploit them. A significant amount of current economic activity is being driven by location, and in particular the proximity to the M1. There is a question about how far the authority can work with or against this to achieve its inclusive growth ambitions.

## **Conclusion**

48. It was clear from the peer review that there is a real sense of ambition for Barnsley from both politicians and officers. It was recognised that significant work has been undertaken over the last 25 / 30 years across the Borough to stabilise the region post the decline of the major industries.
49. However, there needs to be formal inclusive economic growth programme to drive the ambition forward. The internal appetite and stakeholder engagement are in a strong place to formalise conversations that set the narrative towards a blossoming Barnsley.

## **Key recommendations**

- 1. Develop an Inclusive Growth narrative (including a dashboard) to drive towards 2030.**
- 2. Create a stakeholder network to embrace the ambition and generate a simple consensus for action.**

3. **Create a clear Inclusive Growth strategy ensure priorities are aligned to the Strategic Economic Plan, Local Industrial Strategy and NHS Long Term Plan.**
4. **Develop opportunities for infrastructure and economic growth in line with the Sheffield City Region and broader Leeds LEP.**
5. **Strengthen citizen engagement and collaboration to create the social movement needed to raise belief and aspiration of the population.**
6. **Inclusive Growth should be included in all governance strands and decision-making approaches within the region to maximise its full potential.**

**Strategic Issues that the strategy will need to address:**

1. **GROWTH AND PUBLIC SERVICE REFORM AS TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN?** – Barnsley has made great strides on improving and democratising public services within a period of austerity for the public sector. It has also done much to improve the growth prospects of the place as part of a long transition from its industrial past. But a meaningful strategy for inclusive economic growth will need to bring these strands together as two sides of the same coin.
2. **A COHERENT HUMAN CAPITAL STRATEGY?** – Barnsley is making strides on improving the education and skills offer for its young people within the context of a changing labour market and education provider landscape. But any strategy that has long term impact will need to be underpinned by a 'human capital strategy' that spans early years to working age – and which uses the City region and potential of devolution (and its skills offer and convening potential) as a lever for change.
3. **IS THE OFFER, ASK, AND INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO CLEAR ENOUGH?** - The relationship with core cities to the south and north is key to the future of the borough. But as a key member of the SCR, Barnsley will need to more clearly set out its offer, ask, and investment pipeline – and, critically, make the case for the critical investments that would create the step change in ambition that leaders in the borough want to see. Realising the true benefits of devolution for Barnsley will depend on the quality and focus of this work. It is perceived outside the borough that the over-arching conversation about one-Yorkshire devolution has delayed this work.
4. **WHAT MAKES A FUTURE PLACE?** – related to the above, we heard about some great initiatives to regenerate parts of the town centre and places like the Dearne Valley. There is clearly great ambition and a sense of pride that can help sustain a place through difficult times. An inclusive growth strategy will need to look to the future, and ask: what kind of place do we want to be? What will our economic opportunities look like? And in the context of big shifts like Brexit and climate change, what are the areas in which we could leapfrog other places? (for example, in sustainable transport, electric charging, clean growth and leveraging of the public sector?).
5. **CONNECTIVITY AS THE OVER-ARCHING THEME** – Barnsley's future story is about connectivity: the connection between its people and place; between its agendas for change (in the social and economic sectors); and about its connectivity to the centres of growth of Leeds and Sheffield. Some of this is physical and literal



– the quality of transport connections creating barriers to jobs and training for young people. It is also digital – as the shift to a modern economy and system of public services is accelerated. Exploring this should be at the core of an inclusive growth approach.

## **Appendix B – Peer Review Action Plan**

### **Introduction**

The table below provides:

- A summary of key messages from the Inclusive Economy Peer Review
- Suggested high level responses

<b>Key Message</b>	<b>Headline Activity</b>	<b>Key Actions</b>	<b>Senior Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Target Completion Date</b>
Create a clear <b><u>Inclusive Economic strategy</u></b> ensuring priorities are aligned to identified to the boroughs 2030 aspirations and that a consistent understanding and shared narrative exists.	Creation of new <b><u>Inclusive Economic strategy</u></b> for Barnsley which aligns existing strategic priorities, (More and Better Jobs, Jobs and Business etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish enabling governance structure</li><li>• Establish underpinning task &amp; finish group</li><li>• Development of Inclusive Economic narrative, wider strategy and delivery plan</li><li>• Formal adoption of Inclusive Economic Strategy</li></ul>	<b>SD Regeneration &amp; Culture</b>	31/03/21
<b><u>Developing a Collaborative approach</u></b> to the creation of a wider Barnsley Inclusive Economic strategy.	Integrate key partners into the Inclusive Economic Governance structure and seek to utilise 2030 consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Integrate partners into the enable governance structure and supporting task &amp; finish group.</li></ul>	<b>SD Regeneration &amp; Culture</b>	30/06/20
Proactively <b><u>shape regional strategy</u></b> to ensure fit with local Barnsley Inclusive Economic aspirations.	Ensure that the Sheffield City Region Strategic Economic Plan and Local Industrial Strategy reflect the Inclusive Economic aspirations of Barnsley. Current indications are that SEP will be adopted July 2020.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that developing SEP reflects Barnsley position as it develops</li></ul>	<b>ED Place</b>	31/07/20

Key Message	Headline Activity	Key Actions	Senior Responsible Officer	Target Completion Date
Developing the <b><u>Evidence Base and Outcomes Framework</u></b>	<p>Develop an Inclusive Economic baseline position.</p> <p>Create a clearly defined Inclusive Economy outcomes framework which can be incorporated within the wider 2030 plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish outcomes baseline position to define the current position within Barnsley</li> <li>Develop a Barnsley Inclusive Economic Outcomes framework giving consideration to innovative assessment models.</li> </ul>	HOS Economic Development	30/09/20
Strengthening the linkages with <b><u>health inequalities and growth activity</u></b>	The Inclusive Economic Strategy must contain a clear statement of intent in respect of reducing health inequalities and deprivation across the brough.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health inequalities to be incorporated as a key priority area of focus with the Inclusive Economic strategy.</li> <li>Seek out and maximise external opportunities to reduce inequalities, (i.e. Health Foundation Shaping Places)</li> </ul>	HOS Public Health	30/09/20
Elements of the existing business base could be considered to be <b><u>fragile</u></b> and subject to disruption moving forward.	Assessment of the business base within Barnsley identifying those sectors/areas that area considered to be fragile.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment of business base to understand potential challenges</li> <li>Identify a package of measures aimed at safeguarding identified sectors where feasible.</li> </ul>	HOS Economic Development	30/09/20
Alignment of the <b><u>Principal Towns Programme</u></b>	The Principal Towns programme seeks to deliver economic and community interventions aligned to the local priorities and need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilisation of learning from the development and establishment of the programme to inform the emerging Inclusive Economic Strategy.</li> <li>Identificaton and implementation of opportunities presented by the programme to deliver Inclusive Outcomes, (i.e. maximise local supply chains, creation of community capacity etc).</li> </ul>	HOS Economic Development	30/09/20

Key Message	Headline Activity	Key Actions	Senior Responsible Officer	Target Completion Date
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shaping future programme activity to directly deliver inclusive economic outcomes locally</li> </ul>		
Integration of the <b><u>Carbon Agenda</u></b> within the Inclusive Economic Strategy	Ensure that zero 40 and zero 45 is embedded into the Inclusive Economic Strategy both within the Council and with partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development low carbon section of the Inclusive Economic Strategy</li> </ul>	<b>HOS Housing and Energy</b>	30/09/20
Development of <b><u>Social Value</u></b> in conjunction with key stakeholders.	Embedding social value further within the Council and also adopting a shared approach with partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilisation of Inclusive Economic governance framework to ensure that social value is embedded consistently within the Council and within partner organisations.</li> </ul>	<b>HOS Procurement</b>	30/09/20
Utilisation of <b><u>community evidence and intelligence</u></b> to aid co-production of the Inclusive Economic Strategy.	Mapping out existing community data and intelligence that exists which can help to inform an Inclusive Economy strategy. Developing a framework to ensure intelligence is utilised consistently moving forward.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Map out existing community priorities, data and key intelligence.</li> <li>Develop a framework to ensure that intelligence is 'live' in the future delivery of the strategy.</li> </ul>	<b>Head of Business Improvement &amp; Intelligence</b>	30/09/20
Ensure that <b><u>communities are connected</u></b> to inclusive growth by developing an area-based focus to the strategy.	Working through the area governance arrangements, develop an area-level plan for community-led inclusive growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with colleagues in Place, identify existing inclusive growth initiatives as well as gaps and opportunities.</li> <li>Develop a practical plan for each locality building upon community assets and ensuring members are sighted and involved.</li> </ul>	<b>Head of Stronger Communities</b>	30/09/20
<b><u>Strengthen Citizen Engagement</u></b>	Ensure that ongoing citizen engagement activity is factored into the development of the Inclusive Economic strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek to utilise 2030 engagement messages and evidence to inform the development of the Inclusive Economic Strategy</li> </ul>	<b>2030 Project Manager</b>	30/09/20

Key Message	Headline Activity	Key Actions	Senior Responsible Officer	Target Completion Date
Development of <b><u>sector specific pathways</u></b> with an initial emphasis on Digital and Health & Social Care.	Work with lead partners to develop and implement skills pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development and implementation of skills pathways.</li> </ul>	<b>HOS Employment and Skills</b>	31/03/21
A Ensure the communities and residents are adequately <b><u>connected</u></b> to existing and future employment sites inclusive of road, public transport and active travel.	Key focus is to ensure that communities are able to access employment opportunities that currently exist and will be delivered in the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completion of the Barnsley Transport Strategy refresh.</li> <li>Map employment opportunities and transportation provision to communities identifying gaps in current and future provision.</li> <li>Embedding mapping of transport linkages into future site development.</li> </ul>	<b>HOS Transportation</b>	31/03/21
Inclusive Economy should be <b><u>hard wired</u></b> in all governance strands and decision-making.	Embedded Inclusive Economy into the organisational decision process aligned to the implementation of the 2030 plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IE outcomes to be incorporated in 2030 performance reporting framework.</li> <li>Establishment of Inclusive Economic board to oversee the delivery of the strategy.</li> <li>Alignment of Inclusive Economic objectives to the Councils financial, resource and business planning processes</li> <li>Integration of Inclusive Economic outcomes within internal economic business cases and cabinet decision process.</li> </ul>	<b>SMT</b>	31/03/21

Key Message	Headline Activity	Key Actions	Senior Responsible Officer	Target Completion Date
<b><u>Excellence in Care Programme</u></b>	Ensure alignment and support for the development and delivery of the programme and associated realisation of inclusive economy outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alignment of programme to the emerging Inclusive Economic Strategy providing a vehicle to support the delivery of the programme.</li> </ul>	<b>HOS Commissioning</b>	Ongoing
Adopt an <b><u>holistic Place Based</u></b> growth approach	Seek to adopt place based regeneration approach based around local need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town Centre place based urban centre regeneration.</li> <li>Stronger Towns Investment Programme in Goldthorpe and responding to future Towns Funding calls.</li> </ul>	<b>SD Regeneration &amp; Culture</b>	Ongoing