

Analysis of culture, tourism and sport elements of Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) strategies, including local industrial strategies (LIS)

Purpose of report

For discussion and direction

Summary

This report highlights some key culture, tourism and sport related themes and issues emerging from LEP strategies and LIS to date.

The Board identified a need to grow and more effectively articulate the evidence base for the economic impact of the culture, tourism and sport sectors. Board members are therefore invited to offer a steer on the key economic arguments to be developed for CTS-related areas, and provide thoughts on actions to embed CTS activity in future economic strategies.

Recommendations

For discussion and direction, with a steer provided on which of the proposals in paragraph 26 should be taken forward. Other actions may also be suggested.

Action

Officers to progress as directed.

Researcher:	Anna Jennings, Adviser
Contact officer:	Lauren Lucas
Position:	Adviser
Phone no:	0207 664 3143
Email:	lauren.lucas@local.gov.uk

Analysis of culture, tourism and sport elements of Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) strategies, including local industrial strategies (LIS)

Background

1. The CTS team undertook a review of all Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)'s plans, beginning with Strategic Economic Plans (SEPs) and moving on to Local Industrial Strategies (LISs) to analyse their content relating to culture, tourism and sport.
2. LIS, led by Mayoral Combined Authorities or Local Enterprise Partnerships, are intended to promote the coordination of local economic policy and national funding streams and establish new ways of working between national and local government, and the public and private sectors.
3. This analysis is not intended to be a static document, as many LIS are yet to be published. The first LIS were announced in November 2017 and published by March 2019. The second wave was announced in July 2018 and the strategies are due to be published by March 2020. In December 2018 the government announced the remaining LEPs would form the third and final wave.
4. There is a variety of CTS presence in the plans, from sophisticated, comprehensive and creative CTS strategies to others which only mention some of the CTS sectors briefly. Most plans include a component of CTS as a priority, although it is often not well-developed or featured across the plan.
5. In general, the scope of the LIS appears to be slightly narrower than the SEPs (their content was more closely specified by BEIS). As a result there is typically less detail in relation to culture, tourism and sport in these later plans.
6. However, the Greater Manchester, West of England, South East Midlands and West Midlands LIS feature culture and tourism creatively and well, with Greater Manchester strongly aligning this with digital development and 5G connectivity. Both Greater Manchester and West Midlands intend to use sport to drive tourism and growth, as well as in attractive place making.

Culture

7. Culture is included in most LEP plans, often grouped with tourism. There is a broad view of culture, including but not limited to museums, live music venues, theatre and heritage/historical sites.
8. Areas are good at identifying cultural assets and often speak with pride about their distinctive offer. However, this is often not followed by any specific plans for investment or forward strategy. Libraries are rarely mentioned.

Tourism

9. Tourism is generally included in LEP plans as a distinct sector of the economy. The plans often feature detailed analysis about the tourism sector and its statistics.
10. Strategies for boosting tourism usually focus on destination branding. Plans often aim to spread tourism more widely across the region and to boost the profile of lesser-known destinations, creating a more holistic offer.
11. Some areas taking a more comprehensive approach, providing support and networks to smaller tourism business, as well as investing in skills. The more sophisticated plans also understand the importance of partnership working and investment, aiming to improve the quality as well as scale of the visitor economy.
12. Some areas target specific demographics to generate tourism, e.g. domestic/business/international/specific continents.
13. Tourism is often linked to other sectors which can support/impede its growth, for example transport infrastructure and digital connectivity.

Sport

14. Sport and leisure are rarely included in the LEP plans.
15. Some areas consider 'green infrastructure'/natural assets in the context of attracting tourists or place making.
16. Developing cycle routes feature in a minority of LEP plans, drawing together health with transport infrastructure and the environment.
17. Parks and urban green spaces are rarely mentioned, although national parks feature quite strongly.

Other sectors

18. The creative and digital sector features heavily in most LEP plans as a key area for growth.
19. Culture and leisure are often linked to retail and town centres, considering the broader context of regeneration. This anticipates, and enhances, recent investment in high streets and town centres.

Narrative around culture, tourism and sport

20. The predominant narrative is that local areas need a good cultural offer (and in some cases, natural assets/leisure offer) to attract tourists and therefore boost the visitor economy.

21. Some areas take a more holistic view of place making, understanding that the culture and leisure offer contribute to quality of life in a place, consequently encouraging people and business to move to and stay in the area. Most plans do not reference the way culture and sport can boost the economy by contributing to health and wellbeing, productivity, skills, or inclusive growth.

Target-setting

22. A minority of LEP plans set concrete targets for CTS areas, with most plans instead focusing on overall economic indicators. Where targets are set they are almost always for tourism.
23. Most areas have good data on tourism and know the number of visitors as well as its contribution to the economy, so it would be feasible to set targets for improvement.

Implications for Wales

24. The analysis relates to LEPs in England. Improvement work in Wales is the responsibility of the WLGA.

Financial Implications

25. The proposals in paragraph 26 can be carried out with existing resources.

Next steps

26. The following actions could be undertaken to develop the economic case for including CTS-related targets and actions in economic strategies:
- 26.1. Develop LGA web resources to showcase the evidence base for the economic value of culture, tourism and sport. This would include a section in the [Local industrial Strategies Online Hub](#).
- 26.2. Promote the economic, productivity and place making value of sport and leisure in the LGA's work on inclusive growth, ensuring that one roundtable focuses on the contribution of culture, tourism and sport.
- 26.3. Develop an understanding of the role of councils in growing the creative and digital sector through their work on connectivity, planning and other local design levers. This would culminate in a guide for how councils can support local growth of their creative sector, funded from the LGA improvement budget (not CTS policy budget).
- 26.4. Publish indicative targets and benchmarking for CTS sectors to assist councils and economic partners in thinking about the local actions needed to realise the value of CTS work.
- 26.5. Share good practice from LEP plans of innovative strategies for growing CTS sectors, through CTS conferences, publications, and case studies in the Culture Hub.



Culture Tourism and Sport Board

21 January 2020