

LEP – Sub Committee

LEP - Enterprise Zone Governance Committee

Private and Confidential: No

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Draft Enterprise Zone Marketing Strategy

Appendix A refers

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Executive Summary

The purpose of the report is to provide the Committee with a 12-month Marketing Strategy for Lancashire's Enterprise Zones. The report also seeks to provide further context and wider considerations when implementing the strategy, particularly in relation to key messaging and positioning.

Recommendation

The Enterprise Zone Governance Committee is asked to:

- i. Consider and approve the approach to messaging and positioning as outlined in the report
- ii. Approve the 12-month Marketing Strategy as detailed in Appendix A to this report

Background and Advice

The purpose of this report is for the Committee to consider the draft 12-month marketing strategy as detailed in Appendix A of this report, along with the considerations identified below.

Over the last 12-18 months, there have been a series of discussion papers and presentations generated by partners in connection with the proactive marketing of Lancashire's Enterprise Zones and associated actions and activities.

These include the need for a refreshed messaging and positioning proposition for the EZ portfolio; the identification of more defined and demand-led target sectors and target investor markets; the need to review both the individual and overarching EZ

brands; analysis of which marketing and communication channels to utilise to articulate the respective and collective EZ offer; the need to align with other local and regional investment strategies; and other considerations (including the county's appetite to pursue several new Investment Zone opportunities).

And while there has been an aspiration to develop these workstreams into a firm three-year marketing plan for the EZ estate (which would be initiated by the individual EZ 'owners', regional partners (e.g. the LEP), and commercial agents (such as Colliers), this has not yet been realised.

However, following the steer and priorities as set out by Sarah Kemp in her paper to the EZ board in March 2022 – and the latest updates from the Task & Finish Group - the LEP has reviewed the foundation work undertaken thus far, and looked to create an initial 12-month action plan for the EZ marketing piece.

In addition to collating and integrating some of the previous work undertaken, this paper also considers elements and proposed tactics in response to several new investment strategies which have been finalised and/or published more recently – most notably the Internationalisation Strategy, Innovation Strategy, and Digital Strategy. Some of the LEP's Sector Group strategies have also helped inform this report.

This is in line with the Task & Finish Group's 'Articulation of the demand/ supply side equation' activity.

And while there are parts of this 12-month strategy which still requires discussion, actions and costing, the objective of this document is to establish a practical roadmap to help us shape, promote and maximise the investment opportunities the EZs offer in a more strategic and demand-led way.

Articulation of the Demand/Supply Side Equation Activity

When the EZ Task & Finish activities were outlined in March, it was highlighted that the much of the 'demand-led' articulation would need to be informed by several forthcoming LEP and partner strategies including the *Internationalisation Strategy*, *Innovation Strategy* and *Digital Strategy*.

This is based on (both on a site-by-site basis, and collectively) that any future EZ marketing needs to be far more market-led and targeted to more specific customer needs as well as Lancashire's core economic strengths.

In addition, calibrating the EZ offer to align more closely to wider Lancashire offer, the county's specialisations and genuine USPs, will also greatly enhance the EZ proposition, demonstrating that they are part of a larger, integrated commercial ecosystem and collaborative business community.

Some of these strategies have now been completed and/or published, and from them we can derive a number of valuable insights and strategic reference points as they pertain to the EZ piece.

For example, the *Internationalisation Strategy* has used an aggregated analysis approach to identify seven target sectors where Lancashire has strong competitive advantages and growth potential.

Of these, five have direct connections to our EZ offer:

- Digital & Cybersecurity
- Aerospace
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Energy & Low Carbon
- Advanced Manufacturing

In addition, the *Internationalisation Strategy* also highlights how our EZ offer can dovetail with other strengths and opportunities in niche markets and subsectors. For example:

Aerospace & Aviation: The growing convergence between aerospace, aviation, telecoms and electech could create major FDI opportunities across the space and satellite sectors. Further, with two operational airstrips at Warton and Blackpool, and R&D assets such as UCLan's Civic Drone Centre, Lancashire has strong aviation and UAV assets to drive FDI interest in future flight opportunities.

Whilst the refreshed Lancashire *Innovation Strategy* (currently being finalised), doesn't directly reference an individual EZ and/or the Lancashire EZ cluster, it does talk about the potential of 'convergence zones' for example:

Technology is changing how traditional industries operate. Essential technologies including IoT, AR/VR, Blockchain, Drones/Robots, 3D printing and AI are being deployed across multiple sectors, leading to rapid change in how traditional sectors are operating at 'convergence zones'. This Plan includes actions designed to enable Lancashire's innovation ecosystem to flourish in areas of industry/technology convergence where it already has strong capabilities.

A similar convergence/clustering model was also highlighted in the new Lancashire *Digital Strategy* with regards to future Lancashire economic growth, however the strategy does make particular reference to the Samlesbury EZ and the development of an Innovation Hub.

Whilst all of the EZs clearly have strengths which play into these bigger picture and demand-led opportunities, it is the agglomeration benefits of clusters which are likely to be their 'USP' in terms of driving economic growth.

It is therefore recommended that any discrete (or collective) EZ marketing is always undertaken with reference to how they add-value to wider, overarching Lancashire investment propositions and both domestic and international growth markets.

The Impact of Investment Zones on Future EZ Positioning

In the same way that several new economic growth strategies for the county see some of the EZs as playing a complementary – rather than anchoring – role in the longer-term future of the local economy in terms of sector-specific, cross-cutting and converging opportunities, so the proposed Investment Zones could see them acting a part of a wider geographical piece, rather than being an autonomous investment destination.

Naturally there is no guarantee that the IZ proposals submitted by LCC, Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool Council will be realised (or even that the IZ concept will be progressed by government as initially intended), but either way it does demonstrate that any EZ future marketing and communications based on location should be considered in the context of any wider placemaking and destination marketing being developed in relation to inward investment.

Brand, Sector and Place Propositions Articulated

Lancashire's Overarching EZ Proposition & Brand

It has been strongly recommended the 'LAMEC' proposition is retired, but that the original branding (which was developed alongside the LAMEC descriptor) is retained. This includes the individual EZ 'badges' and the collective EZ logo.

Overarching EZ Brand Proposition(s)

Different Lancashire EZs are at different stages of maturity, and there are disparities (e.g. quality of infrastructure and ease of site access) which could make a collective benefits 'sell' challenging.

However, marketing messaging based on top-line commonalities/benefits/USPs/ future potential should clearly be developed and deployed to help engage with potential investors.

Some examples of such an approach based on commonalities and shared strengths include:

- ***Lancashire Enterprise Zones – the space you need now, and the capacity to grow in the future*** (qualify by highlighting footprint of collective and individual sites, volume of development-ready plots, high speed/high-capacity digital connectivity etc.)
- ***Lancashire Enterprise Zones – easily accessible locations in the heart of England's northwest*** (qualify by highlighting close proximity to major Lancashire conurbations, plus wider geographical benefits re proximity to Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds and beyond)
- ***Lancashire Enterprise Zones – four hubs offering unrivalled innovation, collaboration and commercialisation opportunities*** (qualify by highlighting relevant anchor businesses/assets/clusters in each EZ e.g. operational

airports at Warton & Blackpool, BAE/AMRC/NCF at Samlesbury, Victrex Technology Centre at Hillhouse. Also reference assets and clusters near to the EZs including university R&D strengths)

- **Lancashire Enterprise Zones – get access to experienced and highly-skilled workforce plus young dynamic talent** (qualify by highlighting key Lancashire workforce stats within EZ drivetimes, plus reiterate presence of universities through compelling graduate/post-graduate facts and figures)
- **Lancashire Enterprise Zones – immediately available high quality development land with government-back financial incentives, a thriving support ecosystem, and other outstanding business benefits** (qualify by highlighting both official EZ incentives blended with other national, regional and local benefits, e.g. Boost, R&D assets like AMRC NW etc.)
- **Lancashire Enterprise Zones – creating a dynamic R&D and multidisciplinary testbed environment at scale to drive cross-sector innovation** (use EZ assets, proximity of universities and other R&D expertise to support innovation testbed positioning as outlined in *Internationalisation Strategy* and the ‘technology convergence’ offer as outlined in the refreshed *Innovation Strategy* etc.)

Sector-led EZ Propositions

Whilst there are some overlaps between the EZs sector strengths, even a broad brushstroke proposition such as ‘Advanced Manufacturing’ cannot easily be applied to all the EZs (which was also been highlighted in Sarah Kemp’s March committee paper).

As a result, we need to look for overarching messaging and positioning which can work across several (or all) EZ settings which will resonate with potential target investors from a sector perspective such as the agglomeration benefits of clusters.

These themes should/could also align to themes and opportunities outlined in new/recently developed strategies as detailed above. They should also respond to emerging sector-led opportunities such as space and satellites, green energy and Electech.

Here are some examples of more sector-led propositions which align to Lancashire’s ‘bigger picture’ economic themes and emerging sector opportunities:

- **Lancashire Enterprise Zones – thriving centres of green energy generation, low carbon solutions, decarbonised technology and net zero innovation** (qualify by highlighting Low Carbon Demonstrator at Samlesbury, green energy provision/sustainable waste handling at Hillhouse, Blackpool Airport proximity to Clean Energy Technology Park at Springfields + Energy HQ expertise)
- **Lancashire Enterprise Zones – the home of space, satellite and future flight investment opportunities** (qualify by highlighting airports/aviation

opportunities at Blackpool and Warton, the space applications related to Hillhouse's polymer and chemicals expertise, Samlesbury's strengths in aerospace and UAV technologies, the presence of a growing electech cluster on the Fylde Coast etc)

- **Lancashire Enterprise Zones – world-class expertise in critical infrastructure protection and cybersecurity** (qualify by highlighting critical infrastructure strengths thorough 2x EZ airstrips, energy/chemical facilities and expertise at Hillhouse and Blackpool Airport + BAE presence and imminent NCF HQ at Samlesbury. Also, more general messaging about physical and digital security linked to aerospace and digitalised advanced manufacturing)

EZ Marketing Collateral & Channels of Promotion

The Task & Finish activity plan outlined several marketing and communications channels which should be refreshed, researched and/or developed further.

These included:

- Website – including web architecture and functionality
- Events & Conferences – including tradeshow and exhibitions
- Publications – target trade press etc.
- Marketing Collateral – including Sectors, Quality of Life (QoL), and Property propositions

EZ Website

There has been a significant piece of work done on the functionality and content for a refreshed EZ website. However, before any such investment is made it is recommended that the messaging and positioning we want to articulate is appropriate and aligned to the 'bigger picture' themes as outlined earlier.

In terms of refreshed website copy and content, the foundation marketing collateral (as detailed below) could act as the basis for a new, more demand-led online presence.

Events & Conferences

Colliers have supplied the following list as part of their marketing proposal:

- UKREii
- UK Northern Powerhouse International Conference & Exhibition
- MIPIM Lunch (Place North West)
- MIPIM Cannes
- MIPIM UK: London
- MACH 2023
- Airline Purchasing & Maintenance Expo
- Insider "Made In Lancashire"
- "The Place for Growth"
- Advanced Manufacturing Show
- The Paris Airshow
- Advanced Engineering Show
- Smart Factory Expo



While this type of list is helpful, to fully assess the potential ROI of face to face and 'meet the investor' opportunities such as tradeshows and exhibitions, it is recommended that a more thorough audit of events (both domestic and international) is undertaken which are closely aligned to the strengths and key messages of both the EZs and Lancashire itself.

To help with this we would look to engage with partners such as the DIT, our universities, large employers – as well as the Task & Finish colleagues from Marketing Lancashire and Colliers – to help us identify where our message might reach the most appropriate and receptive audiences.

Publications

Colliers have also recommended a number of regional and national trade titles for potential advertising/ PR targeting (adding that additional research into media covering more niche and specialist subsectors could be undertaken). These include Insider Magazine, Place North West, The Engineer and Energy Global.

Media Advertising Considerations

If media advertising was a realistic option going forward, it is recommended that we call in the latest media packs (including reader profiles, advertising rates, and forward feature calendars) from the sector trade press and commercial property titles most relevant to our target markets (which would include the above titles, and several more).

Alternatively, if there was a set budget ringfenced for advertising we could engage with a media buying agency and task them with negotiating a media schedule across a range of sectors and markets.

Either way, we would strongly recommend not approaching media advertising/sponsorship as an 'ad-hoc' exercise; it needs to be targeted and aligned to core objectives and agreed target audiences and planned and budgeted for accordingly.

Public Relations Considerations

PR and media relations is another obvious route to consider to communicate our EZ offer, but for this to be effective we would need to identify and package up compelling tenant case studies and/or genuinely newsworthy angles (e.g. through trends data, on-site R&D breakthroughs, 'deal' announcements etc.). Budgets for journalist visits could also be ringfenced (or EZs could potentially contribute to a broader programme of Lancashire familiarisation visits). Target media research for the advertising audit as above could also help identify press opportunities including forward features and special reports.



Social Media Considerations

For 'owned' channels – such as the Lancashire EZ website, partner websites which also act as a 'front door', LinkedIn, Twitter, e-bulletins etc. – we can look to create content and digital assets which help to highlight the EZ offer. But these will need to be of a high quality, and regularly refreshed, to be effective. Again, any such content needs to be aligned to an agreed positioning/messaging strategy. In addition, social media should be considered as an ongoing process, not an event – and therefore needs to be properly managed and resourced to ensure messaging and content is both used consistently and strategically.

Marketing Collateral

New marketing collateral to cover sectors, quality of life, and commercial property investment opportunities has yet to be finalised - but in light of the economic direction of travel for the county (as outlined above), there is an argument that a suite of overarching EZ marketing pieces – which are aligned to the wider 'bigger picture' inward investment narrative - be undertaken before anything else more EZ-specific is produced.

This piece, which could potentially be delivered in-house (if resourcing permits), or via an external consultant, would be informed by an audit of all existing EZ marketing work thus far, all available current research/insights regarding customer demand and new potential growth opportunities (e.g. from Colliers), and a review of other key Lancashire inward investment strategies, skills data and sector-led trends (both current and emerging)

This audit process would then be used to shape a suite of foundation collateral which could consist of elements such as:

- A new, high quality and compelling Lancashire EZ investment prospectus (with EZ cluster and site-specific content in addition to wider Lancashire messages)
- A Lancashire EZ investment sales deck (upbeat and punchy synopsis of offer captured in 8-12 slides, with option to incorporate more sector specific and/or site-specific add-on slides as required based on a flexible template)
- A Lancashire EZ investment 'elevator pitch' – 2-page fast facts/ succinct narrative piece which summarises the cluster and site-specific opportunity

This type of foundation content/messaging could also be edited/repurposed for the core EZ website (see below) and could also be used as the basis for new digital and visual assets (such as any new promotional films, paid-for LinkedIn content, trade press advertising etc).

This core collateral would/could also be shared with partners (e.g. the LEP, Marketing Lancashire etc) to be incorporated into their own channels and platforms, and further shared with third parties and intermediaries (e.g. commercial agents, DIT).

High quality, editorial style photography could also be sourced (or commissioned) to accompany this refreshed EZ messaging and written collateral – and both the



content and imagery could help inform any additional Quality of Life and/or property collateral which is later developed.

NB we are aware that Colliers have been contacted about the possible provision of new EZ marketing brochures, but as Blackpool Airport have highlighted in their own marketing plan there are key differences between an explicitly commercial property proposition and an inward investment proposition which is more holistic. We therefore anticipate that anything Colliers do produce will not be easy to repurpose to support a more integrated, sector-focused campaign, or the Quality of Life element.

Additional Marketing Collateral & Promotional Channels

There are many other elements to consider when devising a regional inward investment marketing strategy including audience research, branding, signage, case studies, partnerships, SEO and CRM.

Blackpool Airport EZ has recently done an audit of many of these options (in addition the collateral and channels already highlighted above) for its own EZ marketing strategy. And while Blackpool's refreshed marketing plan could act as very useful template for both the other EZ sites, and the overall EZ Cluster marketing piece, it is important to note Blackpool's own caveated conclusion:

All activities discussed in the above marketing strategy will be subject to further scrutiny depending on the relevance of each activity, perceived added value and the cost of each activity considered against budgetary restraints.

Marketing Lancashire have also recently collated lists other potential promotional material and marketing requirements, including collateral such as roller banners and pop-up exhibition stands.

However, to reiterate, the commissioning any such collateral should only be explored once it has been agreed that a) trade shows and exhibitions are a cost-effective route to market and b) what the actual marketing messages would be if attending any such events.

The EZ Marketing Strategy

The development and publication of major new economic strategies for Lancashire which cut right across many aspects of the EZ agenda in terms of both sectors and the Lancashire 'brand', and the potential impact of the Lancashire Investment Zone piece, does raise questions about how effective a standalone EZ marketing campaign might be going forward.

There is a risk that presenting the EZs as separate investment opportunities be seen to be competing with other elements of Lancashire's broader inward investment offer (including the IZ piece), and/or there could be the danger of confusing the market with mixed messages about the county's key investment locations.



To mitigate that, it is recommended that the suite of foundation marketing collateral, which takes into account the bigger picture Lancashire investment offer as detailed above is the first element to consider.

Once that narrative and messaging is agreed (along with the rationale) we can then look to use it to inform other marketing channels, including the EZ website, and also focus on identifying more specific opportunities, such as events, advertising and PR, which are directly related to the agreed EZ Cluster proposition. An indicative 12-month Marketing Strategy is detailed in Appendix A for consideration.

Financial Implications

There will be resource implications to the implementation of the marketing strategy, which will need to be fully costed and the funding options discussed with partners. If the approach and tactics are approved, a fully costed plan will be produced and presented to a future Committee meeting.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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none

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

n/a