

HotSW Joint Committee

Meeting date – 12 July 2019

Brexit Resilience and Opportunities Group Submission to the Treasury Committee Regional Imbalances in the UK Economy

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1. Summary

- 1.1. This report sets out a proposal to submit a response to the Treasury Committee Inquiry: Regional Imbalances in the UK Economy Inquiry, as part of the Joint Committee's lobbying activity.

2. Recommendations

2.1. The Joint Committee is recommended to:

- (a) Approve the development of a Heart of the South West Joint Committee response to Treasury Inquiry subject to engagement through the Chief Executives of Constituent Authorities;**
- (b) Authorise the Brexit and Resilience and Opportunities Group to draft the response;**
- (c) Authorise the Chair of the Joint Committee to sign off and send the response subject to the draft being shared with all Leaders for final comment;**

3. Reasons for recommendations

- 3.1 Since its inception in 2015, the Joint Committee has been lobbying Government on the economic opportunities that exist in our area and which could be realised with the right level of local powers and funding. This Treasury Committee Inquiry affords the Committee another opportunity to set out to Parliament how regional imbalances affect the Heart of the South West and makes the case to address those imbalances.

4. Background

- 4.1 The Treasury [Inquiry](#) is looking for evidence across its two strands of work as follows:

- Examining the nature of regional imbalances in economic growth in the UK – receiving evidence of regional imbalances; how they manifest; effectiveness of current approach and; how can devolution of funding on a regional basis help promote growth and reduce regional disparities.
- Establish what regional data is available, how it can be used more effectively in policy development and whether official regional economic forecasts produced

4.2 In its letter to the Secretary of State MHCLG, James Brokenshire MP, 19 April 2019, the Joint Committee set forward an offer to support the transition to a post EU-Exit economy subject to a set of ‘asks’ around funding and powers. The Joint Committee has been clear that the Government should look to ways to transfer the powers that will return from the EU to Whitehall, to a more local level and also, to restructure the way in which Government funds local areas to achieve its ambitions for the economy.

4.3 The Treasury Inquiry provides the Joint Committee with another opportunity to highlight the impact of a highly centralised approach to policy and questions its sustainability in a post EU-Exit economy. In producing a response to the Inquiry, the Joint Committee would also have a narrative that could be the basis of a response to other post EU Exit policy and interventions such as UKSPF consultation.

5. Next Steps

5.1 The suggested timetable is as follows:

12th July – HoSW Joint Committee recommends/does not recommend joint submission

12th July – subject to approval first draft shared with Chief Executives and Joint Committee’s Policy and Technical Group members for comment by 22nd July 2019

18th July – Brexit Resilience and Opportunities Group consider the draft at its meeting

24th July – Final draft shared with Leaders for comment.

31st July – Submitted with cover letter signed by Chair of Joint Committee (ahead of final submission date of 2 August 2019)

6. Equalities Implications

6.1 Any policy resulting from this submission would be subject to an Equalities Impact Needs Assessment. The submission will review regional economic imbalances and how this impacts across all protected characteristics

7. Financial Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications. The resource to undertake this piece of work is contained within the 'in kind' time of officers supporting the Joint Committee and their Constituent Authorities. The aim of this piece of work is to lobby for additional funding and powers for the area.

8. **Legal Implications**

8.1 There are no legal implications to producing this submission.

9. **Business Risk**

9.1 There is no risk to business from this proposal

10. **Other Implications: Health and Well-being; Health and Safety; Sustainability; Community Safety; Privacy**

10.1 There are no other implications

11. **Background papers**

10.1 <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/treasury-committee/inquiries1/parliament-2017/inquiry7>

