

Build Back Better

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1. Summary

- 1.1. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a greater economic impact on the Heart of the SW area than many other parts of the country; indeed, analysis by the Institute of Fiscal Studies¹ shows that Heart of the SW is one of the areas most severely economically affected by the Covid crisis, as shown on the map in the annex.
- 1.2. This results in particular from the structural challenges the area has long faced and include a business mix with a higher proportion of sectors more severely impacted by the numerous restrictions of the last 9 months.
- 1.3. In autumn 2020 the Joint Committee and LEP published the area's Local Industrial Strategy which highlighted the key opportunities, based on local strengths, to address these long-standing challenges and deliver clean and inclusive growth. In so doing this will help ensure the area is more prosperous and that businesses, communities and individuals have a higher degree of resilience for future crises.
- 1.4. Starting from the LIS and reflecting the immediate recovery challenge, the Build Back Better plan sets out the key programmes to deliver this ambition. Build Back Better effectively sets out a framework from which to make the case for investment in Heart of the SW, potentially as part of a 'recovery deal' for the area

2. Recommendations

2.1. It is recommended that:

The Joint Committee endorses the publication of the Build Back Better plan.

Noting that the plan is still draft, that the Joint Committee delegate final sign off to the Chair

3. Reasons for recommendations

¹ [CH7-IFS-Green-Budget-2020-Levelling-up.pdf](#)

3.1 A clear Build Back Better plan provides a framework for a) making the case with Government for investment in Heart of the SW and b) to help guide investment decisions made by members of the partnership as part of the area's recovery work.

4. Background

4.1 As previously noted by the Joint Committee, the Local Industrial Strategy is an evidence-based approach to develop a more prosperous economy based around clean and inclusive growth and the key opportunities in the Heart of the SW area. The LIS is in turn based on the Productivity Strategy which sets out the wider programme to tackle the area's long-standing productivity challenge. Build Back Better builds on the LIS to describe the key programmes needed to achieve the ambitions in the LIS over the short-medium term as part of the area's work to recover from the pandemic.

4.2 Build Back Better provides a framework to shape discussions with Government over investment in the area as we move to recovery. Build Back Better is agnostic in how funding is delivered and the funding streams that may be involved. For example little is known about the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Levelling Up Fund, what the priorities will be, which organisations money will flow through, how devolved decision making will be etc. Some of the programmes in Build Back Better may be funded directly from central Government, Innovate UK etc. At this stage the goal is to describe the priorities in the area; how these will be funded is a later piece of work depending on Government policy as it crystalises in the next few months.

4.3 A draft has been circulated to Joint Committee members with the opportunity to provide feedback and it has also been discussed with the LEP Board. With a Budget planned for March it would be prudent for the area to have a coherent proposition and set of asks for this and, with the key messages already drawn from the LIS, it is recommended that final Joint Committee sign-off of Build Back Better is delegated to the Chair.

5. Equalities Implications

5.1 There are no specific equalities implications associated with the recommendations.

6. Other Implications

6.1 Legal:
None

6.2 Financial:
There are no immediate financial implications. Programmes within Build Back Better require a mix of funding that would be determined as and when it becomes available.

6.3 HR
None

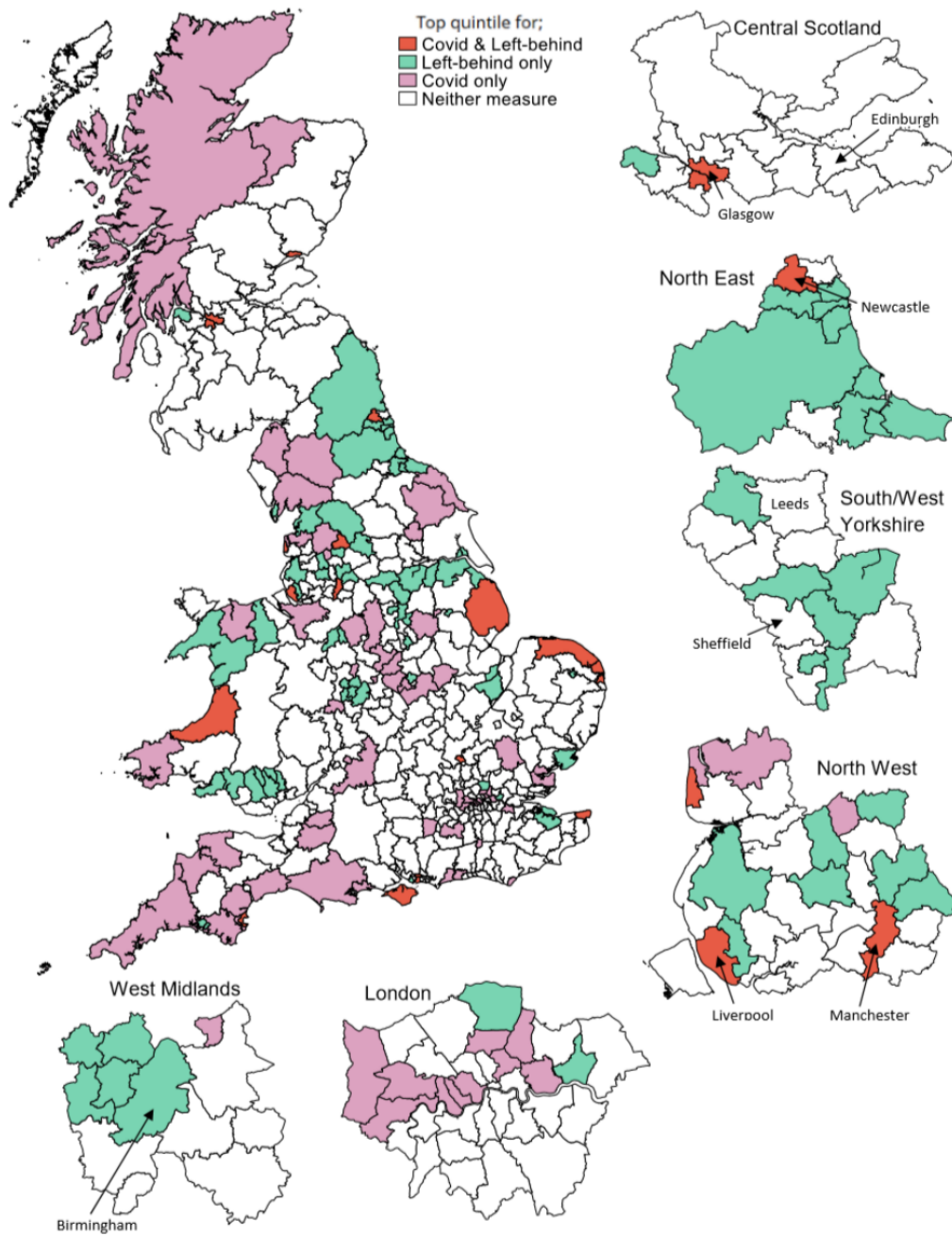
6.4 Risk
The key risk is that delivery fails to materialise as quickly as hoped due to a lack of Government support for the area's priorities.

6.5 Other Implications: Health and Well-being; Health and Safety; Sustainability; Community Safety; Privacy
No implications.

7. Background papers: none

Annex – extract from IFS Green Budget 2020

Figure 7.4. Areas economically impacted by the COVID-19 crisis and considered 'left behind'



Source: IFS Green Budget October 2020