

Glasgow City Region Innovation Accelerator – Position noted.

5 There was submitted a report by the Director of Regional Economic Growth updating the Cabinet on the progress made on the Glasgow City Region (GCR) Innovation Accelerator Programme and of the key sectoral areas that had been approved by the Regional Partnership, advising

- (1) of the background to the announcement by the UK Government (UKG) of an Innovation Accelerator for the GCR in the Levelling Up White Paper, published on 2nd February 2022;
- (2) that the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) was leading for the UKG on the Innovation Accelerator programme and had asked Glasgow, Manchester and West Midlands city regions to establish an Innovation Partnership that would assess local innovation strengths, ensure strong business representation, and develop proposals for a funding bid;
- (3) that the Innovation Partnership had gathered a strong and diverse representation from key private sector industries, alongside both Glasgow and Strathclyde Universities which were already engaged in developing innovation districts in the GCR, ensuring that linkages across the innovation eco-system of business, academic and public sectors could be drawn upon and enhanced as a key feature of the GCR offer to national government and for the delivery of legacy benefits from the Innovation Accelerator programme;
- (4) that, in addition to the main Partnership, a project team had been working on the specific detail of the initial submission to BEIS, informed by a set of objectives agreed by the partnership for approaching this opportunity, which themselves reflected the context established by the GCR Economic Strategy, all as detailed in the report;
- (5) that BEIS had emphasised that it did not wish to be prescriptive on which projects were selected for potential funding, which it saw as a matter for local decision-making, and BEIS had also made an offer to address any policy and regulatory barriers that partners identified in the course of their discussions on the programme, as detailed in the report; and
- (6) that the Innovation Partnership and the Regional Partnership had formally agreed a set of key sectors for growth, detailed below, and new opportunities and a basic assessment had been undertaken on each of the sector's particular strengths and the opportunities that investment could drive, as well as the corresponding threats arising from lack of investment;
 - (a) Advanced manufacturing;
 - (b) Fintech;
 - (c) Space;
 - (d) 6G;

- (e) Nano fabrication;
 - (f) Precision medicine;
 - (g) Photonics;
 - (h) Quantum tech;
 - (i) Optronics; and
 - (j) Sustainability;
- (7) that partners believed that the sectors represented strong areas for potential growth, where translational research from the university sector connected to leading industry players and new business spin-out opportunities;
- (8) that a long-list of specific projects within the sectoral areas identified was being developed by university and industry partners and these would form the basis of an initial, high-level submission to BEIS at the end of June 2022, and that further guidance from BEIS on the framing of project proposals and eligibility for funding was expected shortly; and
- (9) that, following submission of those initial proposals, Innovate UK would work with the 3 City Regions on behalf of national government to develop further iterations of them over the summer months, leading to a final business case being put forward by the end of the calendar year.

After consideration, the Cabinet noted

- (i) the progress that had been made in developing proposals for the GCR Innovation Accelerator programme;
- (ii) that an initial submission of programme proposals to BEIS was required by the end of June 2022; and
- (iii) the key sectors outlined at paragraph (6) above had been approved by the Regional Partnership on 9th June 2022 to form the basis of this submission.