

Leadership Board

31 July 2018

(2.00 - 2.55 pm)

Meeting held: Committee Room, Town Hall and Civic Offices, Westoe Road, South Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE33 2RL

APPROVED MINUTES

Present:

Councillor : Mayor N Redfearn (Chair)

Councillors: M Gannon, P Jackson, I Malcolm, J McCarty and M Mordey

19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (MEMBERS)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors N Forbes, S Henig and G Miller, and Mr A Hodgson.

20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor M Mordey declared an interest in agenda item 11 (Project Approvals) as a Member of Port of Sunderland Board.

21 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 June 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

22 COMBINED AUTHORITY - GOVERNANCE CHANGES - UPDATE

Submitted: A report of the Monitoring Officer (previously circulated and attached to Official Minutes).

Members noted the report which provided an update on the proposed changes to the NECA governance as a result of the approaching creation of a mayoral combined authority for the areas of Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland, consequent amendment of the NECA boundaries and establishment of joint governance arrangements for transport functions. The report also provided an update on progress with the making of an order by the Secretary of State to effect those changes.

Updates

As an update on the information set out in paragraph 2.2 of the report, it was noted that the NECA had given its consent to the making of the order and the order had been laid before the Parliament. At this stage, the exact date of the order becoming effective was not known. Members would be kept informed about progress of this matter.

Regarding the joint governance arrangements for transport functions, it was noted that the arrangements included Audit function, whilst any Standards matters would be dealt under the Standards arrangements of the constituent combined authorities.

RESOLVED – That the report and updates be noted.

23 **UPDATES FROM THEMATIC LEADS**

(a) **Economic Development and Regeneration Update**

Submitted: An update report of the Thematic Lead for Economic Development and Regeneration (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Members considered the report which provided an update on activity and progress under the Economic Development and Regeneration theme of the Combined Authority.

The report was introduced by Councillor I Malcolm who highlighted key areas of progress and provided updates, including on the recent attendance at the NECA Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the work of the Economic Development and Regeneration Advisory Board.

Members noted the value of the work of the Invest North East England team (INEE) and the importance of ensuring that local authorities in the North East supported this work, promoted INEE function and offered links to INEE on their websites.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

(b) **Employability and Inclusion Update**

Submitted: An update report of the Thematic Lead for Employability and Inclusion (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Members considered the report which provided information on progress in delivering the Employability and Inclusion theme of the Combined Authority and the “Employability and Inclusion” and “Skills” themes of the Strategic Economic Plan.

Councillor P Jackson introduced the report and highlighted key achievements and challenges.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

(c) **Transport (and Digital Connectivity) Thematic Lead Update Report**

Submitted: An update report of the Thematic Lead for Transport and Digital Connectivity (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Members considered the report which provided an update on progress of activities under the Transport and Digital Connectivity theme of the Combined Authority.

Councillor J McCarty introduced the report and highlighted key areas of impact. As an update on the information set out in paragraph 1.1 of the report, it was noted that the government was set to invest up to £780m into overhaul works on the East Coast Main Line.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

24 **STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2017/18**

Submitted:

- i. A report of the Chief Finance Officer (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes);
- ii. A letter from MAZARS, with MAZARS' conclusion of outstanding matters, Audit Completion Report (with the Chair's permission, due to the timetables involved circulated at the meeting and copy attached to Official Minutes); and
- iii. An updated set of Annual Accounts was available for Members to collect after the meeting.

Members considered the report which set out the Draft Statement of Annual Accounts 2017/18, Chief Finance Officer's Narrative Report for the Year ended 31 March 2018, Annual Governance Statement 2017/18 and Draft Audit Completion Report. The documents had been considered by the NECA Audit and Standards Committee on 30 July 2018.

It was noted that MAZARS were anticipating the issuing of an unqualified opinion on the accounts and an unqualified value for money opinion today, 31 July 2018, subject to the completion of the outstanding work.

Members noted updates and adjustments from MAZARS, the External Auditor for NECA, and from the Chief Finance Officer, as presented at the meeting.

The Chief Finance Officer explained how NECA would implement the recommendations of the External Auditor. He also advised that the process for preparing the annual accounts would be reviewed and improved.

The Chief Finance Officer thanked staff of NECA and MAZARS for their work.

RESOLVED – That:

- i. The Annual Accounts 2017/2018 be approved;
- ii. The Annual Government Statement 2017/18 be approved;

- iii. Approval be given to the issuing of the Management Representation Letter; and
- iv. Mayor Norma Redfearn be authorised to sign the Annual Accounts and Annual Governance Statement on behalf of the North East Combined Authority.

25 **FINANCE UPDATE - 2017/18 OUTTURN AND 2018/19 UPDATE**

Submitted: A report of the Chief Finance Officer (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Members considered the finance update report. Members noted the process for preparing 2019/20 budget and that this process would need to incorporate the impact of the emerging mayoral combined authority.

Regarding the delays to the refurbishment works to the Tyne Pedestrian and Cyclist Tunnels, it was noted that the works were currently progressing as scheduled, and Members would be kept informed about progress. A briefing note would be prepared for Members setting out the latest information about progress and the opening timetable.

RESOLVED – That:

- i. The outturn position on the revenue budget and the capital programme for 2017/18 as set out in the report be noted;
- ii. The update about the revenue budget position and capital programme for 2018/19 be noted; and
- iii. The proposed budget timetable for the preparation of the 2019/20 Budget set out in section 2.6 of the report be noted.

26 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday, 18 September 2018 at 2pm.

27 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED – That by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting for the duration of consideration of agenda items 10 (Confidential Minutes of the Previous Meeting), 11 (Project Approvals) and 12 (Proposed Purchase of Land at Howdon) because exempt information was likely to be disclosed and the public interest test against the disclosure was satisfied.