

THIS IS NOT A PUBLIC MEETING

# North East Local Enterprise Partnership Board

Thursday 21 March 2024

16:30 - 17:15



In-person meeting in the  
Gold Room, Vermont Hotel, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1RQ

## AGENDA

1. **Welcome from the Chair and apologies (4:30pm)**
2. **Declarations of interest (4:30pm)**
3. **Minutes of the Board meeting on Thursday 25 January 2024 (4:35pm)**  
**Board will be asked to agree the Minutes.**
4. **Annual Review and End of Year Report 2023/24 - papers attached (4:40pm)**  
**Helen Golightly to present to the Board.**
5. **Fund management update - **confidential** paper attached (4:50pm)**  
**Ray Browning to present to the Board.**
6. **Devolution update – verbal update (5:00pm)**  
**Henry Kippin to update the Board.**
7. **Chair and Chief Executive update - paper attached (5:10pm)**  
**Lucy Winskell and Helen Golightly to update the Board.**
8. **Any other business and close**

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# Annual Review

April 2023 – March 2024

Creating 100,000 more and better jobs for the North East economy between 2014 and 2024.

North East  
Local Enterprise Partnership





# Introduction from Helen Golightly OBE

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Helen Golightly OBE, Chief Executive Officer

Last year, I began by expressing my delight at our local leaders reaching a devolution deal with the government. This historic agreement between the government and the local authorities of Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland grants new powers and a £1.4 billion investment fund over 30 years. This transfer of authority will enable our new Mayor and Cabinet to plan for the long term with certainty and unlock the benefits of devolution for the 2 million people living in our area. Additionally, in the March 2024 budget, the Chancellor announced a further £100m Trailblazer Deal for the North East, demonstrating the government's belief in the opportunities that we have as a region and our region's drive and ability to deliver.

Since the initial announcement in January 2023, we have been fully immersed in a year of transition, preparing for the launch of the new North East Combined Authority on 7 May 2024. The North East Local Enterprise Partnership is one of five organisations merging to form the new authority, alongside the current North East Combined Authority, North of Tyne Combined Authority, Invest North East England, and Transport North East.

Along with members of our executive team, I have been working closely with colleagues across the five organisations to ensure the region builds on the progress made by the North East Local Enterprise Partnership and is operationally ready from day one in May. Being prepared to deliver from day one and bringing those five organisations together has always been a critical part of the transition plan.

The timing of the new authority aligns perfectly with the end of the North East

strategic Economic Plan, a plan that has been our beacon for the past decade – clearly articulating our vision and ambition to create 100,000 more and better jobs for our region between 2014 and 2024. What a journey that has been, with some twists and turns along the way – the global pandemic, our departure from the European Union, and the war in Ukraine being three of the most significant.

I remain immensely proud of the achievements that the region has made collectively towards that ambition, despite the unprecedented challenges that we faced. The economy now has 66,600 more jobs than it did in 2014, with an additional 90,000 better quality jobs driving this growth.

This was never the LEP's economic plan, it is the region's economic plan and I am proud to have witnessed the collaboration of the most inspiring, passionate and committed people who have championed the ambitions of our Plan and created such a positive impact for our region and our people.

As always, the executive team at the LEP have spearheaded the charge and been part of that driving force as we have and continue to lead and transform the national careers agenda

and deliver our best in class Growth Hub. The LEP has secured and are investing over £1bn in the region, leveraging an additional £2bn investment, and fundamentally championing the importance of evidence and data-led decision making.

In January this year, I announced my intention to step down from my role as Chief Executive at the North East LEP in May 2024. Leading the North East Local Enterprise Partnership over the past decade has been the privilege of my career. I am proud of the work we have done to improve the lives of those who live, work, study, and visit our region and to grow and develop its economy.

I am immensely proud of the dedicated, passionate, and driven team I have had the privilege to work with at the LEP. As they transition into the new Mayoral Combined Authority, I am excited to see their continued passion to make a difference.

Our journey to devolution has been fascinating, and I am proud of the role I have played in reaching this monumental point where our region unites as one. As I write my final reflections as part of the LEP's last annual review, I feel nothing but immense pride and excitement for what has been and what is yet to come. Thank you to everyone who has been part of our journey!

**Helen Golightly OBE**  
North East LEP, Chief Executive Officer



# Our targets

## Progress on the Strategic Economic Plan targets

In 2014, when the North East LEP's Strategic Economic Plan was published, it contained six targets to monitor the region's economic progress.

At that time, it would have been impossible to predict the challenges of the following decade, including the seismic economic impact of the Covid-19 crisis, its long-term impact on health and global supply chain disruption.

Looking back now the data is a story of progress and resilience, and a story of how global trends have shaped the North East.

Since 2014 we've added 66,600 new jobs to the North East economy. This is two thirds of our more jobs target and a recovery from the losses caused by the Covid-19 employment shock.

Importantly we've also added 90,000 professional opportunities to the North East, meaning the quality of jobs available to our residents has improved.

Despite every headwind therefore, there are more and better jobs in the North East in 2024 than there were in 2014.

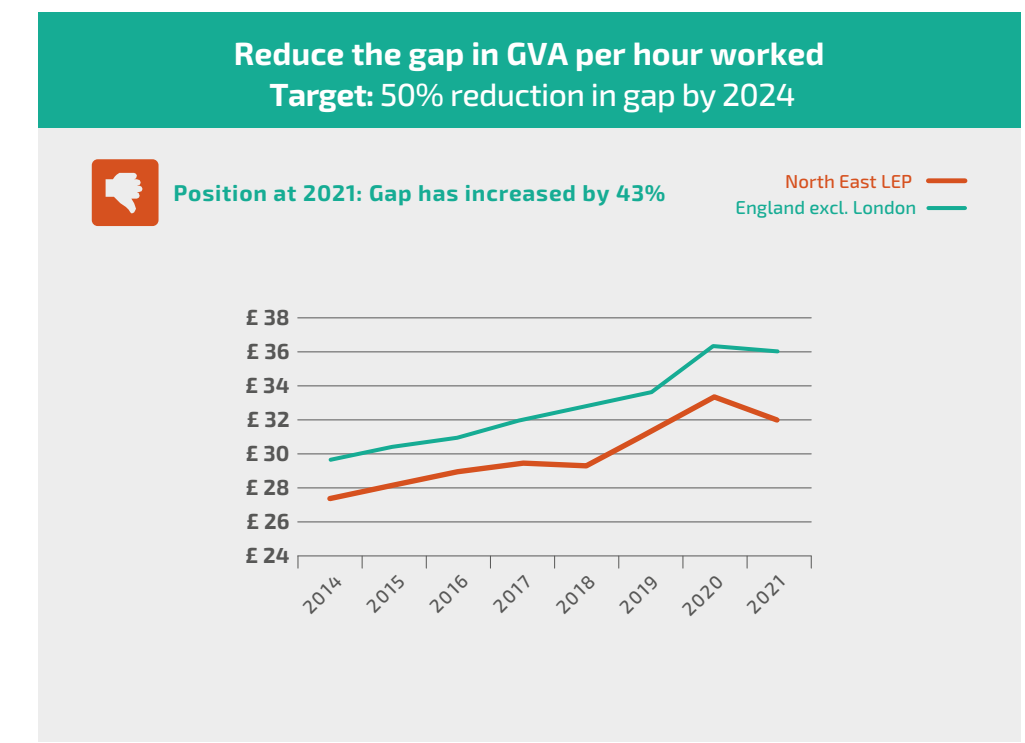
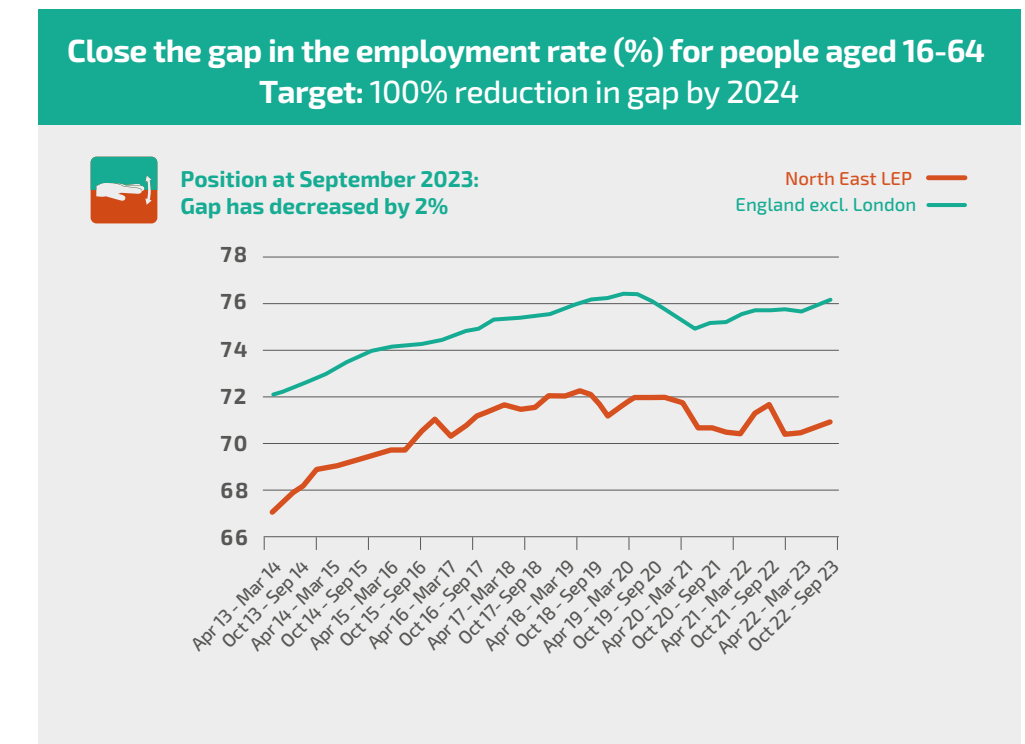
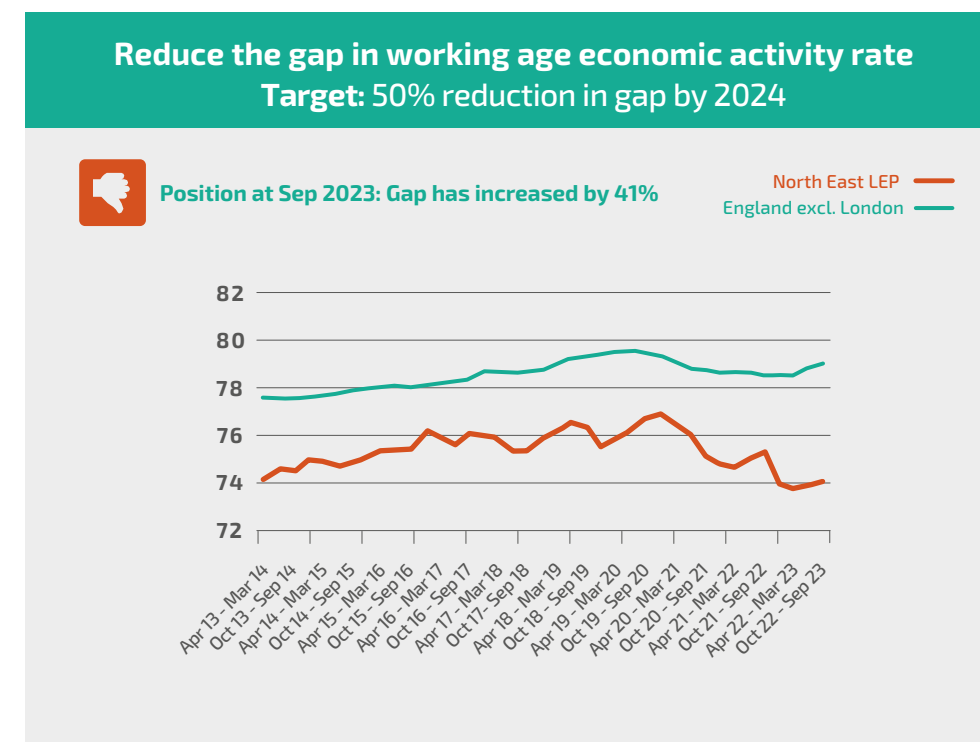
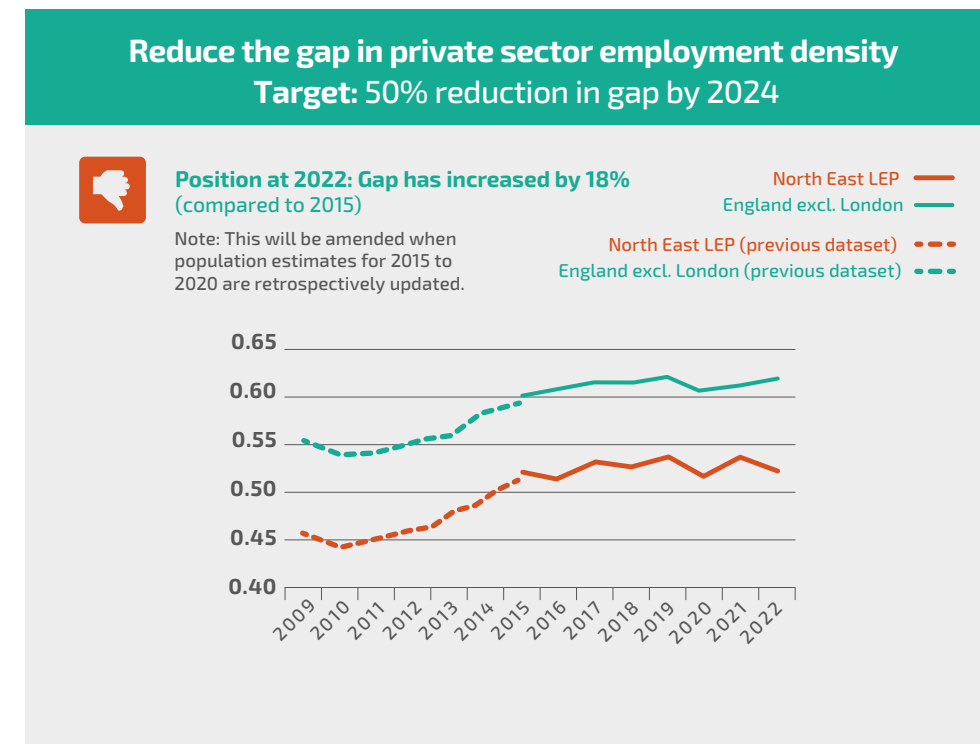
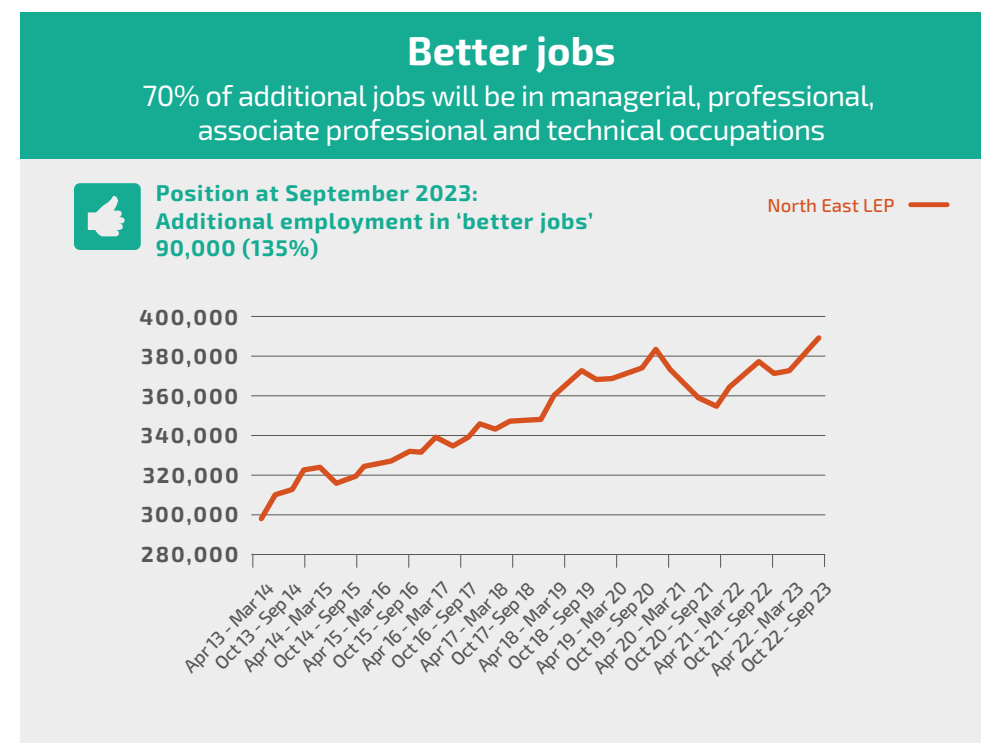
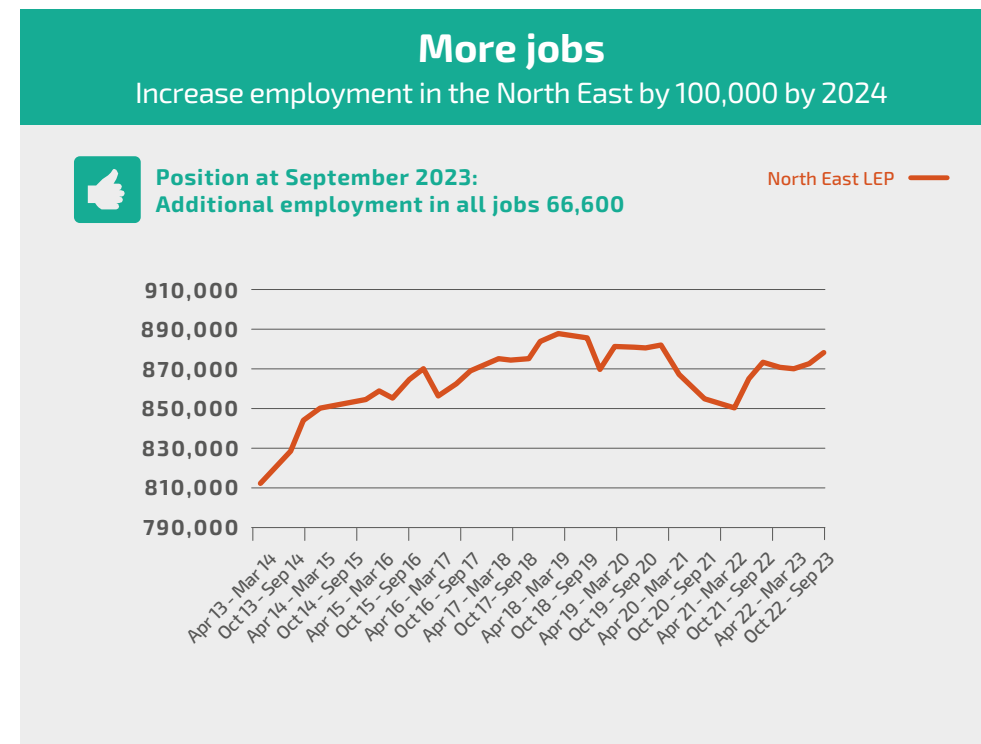
However, while overall employment has recovered from Covid-19, the North East has been disproportionately affected by the post-Covid-19 rise in economic inactivity associated with ill health.

In this context we need to ensure opportunities in our region are available to all, with an emphasis on the health inequalities and skills gaps that prevent some groups from participating fully in our economy.

Covid-19 also had a particular impact on some of our most productive sectors such as the automotive industry, while our export-oriented economy has been exposed to changes in the global trading environment such as the war in Ukraine and supply chain disruption.

As we highlighted at [Our Economy 2023](#) productivity is one of the most important determinants of broader living standards in the region. As the UK seeks to renew its productivity growth the innovative sectors in the North East need to be a key part of that resurgence.

Looking forward, global economic trends will continue to affect the North East economy over the next decade too. A continued focus on these key indicators, coupled with coordinated action across and beyond the region, can see the North East navigate future challenges too and build a better regional economy for all.



Note: The data for all of the targets was up to date at the time of writing. Due to changes to the population estimates the population weights for the annual population survey are due to be updated which may change the figures in future releases.

# Business, innovation and sector growth



**“2023/24 was a year that saw the impact generated through the delivery of the Strategic Economic Plan reflected in economic data. The North East business base has momentum moving from the bottom of the league tables for business startup and scaleup rates to one of the highest performing regions.”**

**Colin Bell, Business and Sector Growth Director**

## North East Business Advisory Board

2023/24 saw the successful transition to a newly formed Business Advisory Board to strengthen the business voice in regional policy and strategy development. Chaired by LEP Board member Ammar Mirza CBE and comprising regional leaders from businesses, business membership groups, education and the voluntary sector the BAB group provides guidance and support to the main LEP Board to inform regional priorities and delivery which will strengthen the economy, in particular on-going work on the new mayoral combined authority portfolio areas and corporate plan.

The levels of impact generated are a clear demonstration of how business support can significantly impact on the delivery of more and better jobs and regional productivity improvement.

The year saw the transition to the new UK Shared Prosperity Funded business support services. To support this transition and to enable businesses to find the business support available and relevant to them the North East Growth Hub was re-platformed. In addition to enhanced search functionality a range of new and improved toolkits were launched covering:

- Startup
- Leadership
- Markets
- Net zero
- Finance and funding
- Operations

## The North East Growth Hub

The North East Growth Hub supported approximately 9,900 businesses to access tailored business support services. An independent evaluation of the Growth Hub evidenced impressive impact with businesses accessing the Growth Hub and associated services generating:

- Average increase of two employees compared to nearer zero for non-users
- Average turnover increase £378k after one year compared to £81k for non-beneficiaries
- Average £8.8k turnover per employee compared to £5.4k nationally.

The Growth Hub also launched a series of tools designed to better understand and segment the regional business base. The Business Segmentation Tool introduced an innovative and powerful methodology allowing the current performance and future potential of a business to be accurately established in 2 mins by asking five top of mind questions exploring:

**North East Growth Hub:**

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**Over £9million investment** attracted to support business growth and innovation.

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**Average increase of 2 employees** compared to nearer 0 for non-users

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**Average turnover increase £378k after one year** compared to £81k for non-beneficiaries

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**Average £8.8k turnover per employee** compared to £5.4k nationally

## Productivity performance

- Growth ambition
- Growth dynamic
- Proactiveness
- Openness (to support)

The segmentation methodology was supported by a new half yearly business survey providing valuable intelligence to inform the development of the business support ecosystem and future policy.

As part of the Autumn Budget Government confirmed their commitment to the development of the Growth Hub network as a pillar of national business support services.



North East Growth Hub team

## Innovation Launch Pad

The North East LEP led a successful bid to Innovate UK to attract £7.5 million Regional Launchpad funding to support the development of the North East Artificial Intelligence and Immersive Technologies cluster. The initial competition launched November 2023 allocating £2million and attracting 120 applications, 8 of which were selected for funding.

**Innovation Launch Pad:  
£2million allocated**

## Made Smarter

Made Smarter went from strength to strength experiencing high demand. With an annual budget of £800k the North East Made Smarter adoption programme engaged 130 manufacturers (across the North East LEP and Tees Valley Combined Authority areas) to support the adoption of smart manufacturing technologies. The success of the programme was called out by the Chancellor in his Autumn Budget committing ongoing and increased levels of funding.

**Made Smarter:  
130 manufacturers engaged**  
(across the North East LEP and Tees Valley Combined Authority areas)



Deal Direct Blinds in Gateshead worked with Made Smarter Adoption North East to invest in a new, state-of-the-art roller blind table.

## Challenge North Tyne

The year saw the successful conclusion of Challenge North Tyne, funded by the North of Tyne Combined Authority and delivered by the North East LEP in partnership with the Innovation Super Network. The programme supported 130 businesses to collaborate with 25 Challenge Supporters to develop innovations focused on:

1. Supporting older people at Home, Work and Play, and
2. Delivering Energy Efficient, Net Zero Homes

Independent evaluation identified the following economic impact and value for money:

- An estimated of 50.5 FTE jobs (gross) will be created in the next 2-3 years.
- The evaluation estimates that the programme will deliver net GVA of £5.63 million.
- Cost per net job created is a maximum of £22,184
- Return on investment is at least 7.9:1 (i.e. every £1 of public investment delivers £7.90 of net additional GVA to the economy)

# Skills, employment, inclusion and progression



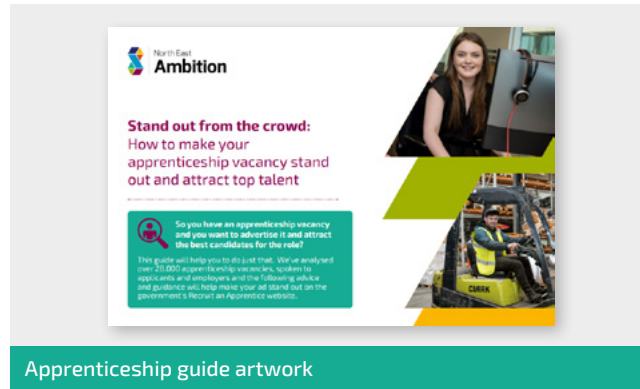
“It is an exciting time as we move towards the transition to regional devolution, and I am particularly proud of the team’s continued focus on high quality delivery of core programmes over the last year providing the evidence basis of ‘what works’ for future activities.”

**Michelle Rainbow, Skills Director**

## North East Ambition

We are driving excellence in careers education ensuring that our residents understand the opportunities available to them and that our businesses have a pipeline of talent to drive forward the North East’s economy. Our North East Ambition programme expanded to work with 177 mainstream schools, SEND schools, Alternative Provision and FE colleges. We launched our project with the Youth Justice Service in South Tyneside and are delivering a project providing intensive support to a cohort of young people with SEND.

The evidence shows us the enormous benefits of starting careers education young. The North East Ambition Primary Programme works with the region’s youngest members. This year we have expanded to work in 120 primary schools, who signed up to use the adapted set of Good Career Guidance Benchmarks. We have also successfully launched a Careers Champion role, with six experienced Careers Leaders from across the region supporting their own local networks. We launched Wave One of DfE’s national, Start Small, Dream Big programme aimed at developing careers related learning in 75 North East primary schools.



Apprenticeship guide artwork

We have over 220 individuals from businesses signed up to support our education sector through the Enterprise Adviser Network. We are delivering a range of projects putting employers at the heart of education and better preparing the region’s future workforce. We are directly supporting SMEs to access the skills landscape, our ESF-funded programme concluded in December 2023 having supported over 1100 SMEs to successfully engage and partner with educators, learners and wider communities.

“North East Ambition has really opened our eyes as a school to why career-related learning is important and the impact that it can have on the children’s futures.”

Teacher in a network school

## Supporting subject leaders and teachers

Our first Teacher Encounters programme took place this year. In partnership with Newcastle University, trainee secondary school teachers in science, geography and maths were introduced to their role in careers education, visited a range of employers and guided on how to embed learning into their classroom teaching.



Teacher encounters – Texo

Through our Linking Curriculum Learning to the World of Work, in partnership with North of Tyne Combined Authority, we are supporting STEM teachers to co-develop curriculum content using real life examples from North East industry. We are working with 10 schools, 19 employer partners and impacting over 1500 students. Students were more confident linking their curriculum work to the world of work and teachers were able to discuss STEM career opportunities with their students. This work featured as a Case Study of best practice for the Institute of Physics.

Between 2022 and 2024 there has been a **577% growth in the number of T level learners**

## Technical education

Our work to champion excellent technical education in the region has continued. We are supporting the roll out of T-Levels. T levels require employers to be front and centre of addressing the technical skills gap. To support this we have enhanced the North East Ambition website’s Provider Portal to reflect the local T level offer and co-developed with employers a guide to support businesses hosting an industry placement. We are working directly with the civil service to highlight the apprenticeship options available within the public sector. We hosted the first regional Civil Service event, with senior representation from eight local government departments.

“T levels provide 16 year olds with another option, not all are ready to move into work or even an apprenticeship so this two year period provides valuable preparation and skill acquisition”

Rob Dodds from Unipress

Through our ApprenticeReady programme, we have mobilised multi agency partnerships and secured funding to address recommendations from our evidence base to improve apprenticeship take up in the North East. We have secured funding to deliver additional projects aimed at promoting the value and accessibility of apprenticeships to business and education communities. We trained 12 young apprenticeship ambassadors to promote their apprenticeship journeys in schools. We produced an employer guide, which sits on the DfE’s Recruit an Apprenticeship site. We have been invited to be one of three areas piloting a new UCAS Apprenticeship Hub.



Skills Bootcamp

## Skills Bootcamps

Our Skills Bootcamps provide free and flexible courses that allow people to upskill or reskill, re-enter employment or open new careers opportunities. They are carefully tailored to provide training courses that meet employer demand. To date we have worked with over 150 employers to train 1458 people and 1242 of them have used their new skills to progress their careers through a new job or new contracts.

“The Greenskills Programme has been fantastic for our business. With a strong pipeline of global wind energy work stretching over at least the next three years, Boston Energy needs experienced people to deliver these projects.”

Neil Harvey, Head of Pre-Assembly, Construction, Commissioning and Onshore O&M / Service at Boston Energy

We continue to expand our Skills Bootcamps offering. We completed our first £2.7 million Skills Bootcamp programme in January 2024, delivering 26 bootcamps. This year we have expanded the programme and now have 36 training organisations delivering 106 Bootcamps worth £7.4 million. Delivery is ahead of target which has led to DfE confirming an additional £1.8m to meet demand from both employers and learners. Finally, we have worked in partnership with North of Tyne Combined Authority to invest an additional £17.5 million to deliver another wave of skills bootcamps under the North East Mayoral Combined authority from April 2024.

**Skills bootcamps:  
1,458 people trained to date**

**93% of learners surveyed would recommend a Skills Bootcamp**

ApprenticeReady has engaged **97%** of its contracted post 16 institutions

“Really grateful to get my Global Wind Organisation qualifications through the boot camp at no cost. It has allowed me to get a full-time job in wind.”

Learner on a bootcamp course.

# Investment and infrastructure



“Two of our biggest programmes, the Getting Building Funding and Local Growth Fund, have come to fruition this year; supporting a further two thousand-plus jobs across the region. Whilst it's pleasing to reflect on the positive impact of these programmes, it's equally satisfying to see how our new and ongoing partnership investment schemes with FW Capital are helping to unlock private sector developments across both urban and rural communities.”

**Helen Golightly, Chief Executive Officer OBE**



Tyne Dock Enterprise Park – Phase 1. The new quay is supporting Equinor’s Dogger Bank O&M base.



The North East Property Fund supported a housing scheme by Kelmec Ltd, at Murton, County Durham

## North East Property Fund

Since 2017, and with a budget of £16m, the North East Property Fund has supported the development of 227 houses across 51 developments in the region, as well as the creation of 7,600 sq. m of commercial space and 750 jobs.

Launched more recently in January 2023, the Commercial Property Investment Fund is also managed by FW Capital on behalf of the North East LEP. In its first year, three new investments totalling £9.1m have been agreed, with four projects in the pipeline that are expected to generate a further investment commitment in the coming year of over £17m.

“We are delighted with the success of the North East Property Fund, which has seen increased levels of funding each year since its introduction in 2017. And we are on course to exceed the fund targets c.9 months prior to its end in March 2025. We are also very proud to maintain a 0% default rate.”

**Chris Dixon,**  
Senior Investment Executive, FW Capital

## Government programmes reach completion

The final £5m of the £270m Local Growth Fund has been spent, with the programme on track to deliver 1,500 jobs and secure over £300m in follow on private sector investment by the year end. In Newcastle, work completed on the regeneration of the historic Pattern Shop, creating 3,328m<sup>2</sup> of commercial floorspace.

The £47m Getting Building Fund has also concluded, with several key schemes opening during the year including Northern Gas Network’s ‘Community Energy Village’ in Gateshead, which is offering regional businesses and universities access to clean energy innovation, product research, and testing facilities. In Sunderland, investment in an electricity substation is now supplying eight new units developed by L&G with an investment of £27m. Japanese robotics company Yaskawa is the first of several businesses expected to take occupancy in 2024.

Durham County Council commenced work on the next phase of development at NETPark with 11 new units on programme to complete in February 2025.



NETPark phase 3

NETPark phase 3 will create **232,150 sq. ft** of new laboratory, office and production space

## Enterprise Zones

This year has seen significant construction of new buildings on Enterprise Zone sites, helping to boost this year’s business rates income to an estimated £8.6m; an increase of £1.5m on the previous year and £0.5m higher than the original estimate.

New investment this year includes a further £6.5m contribution towards a £13m second phase of quay improvements at Tyne Dock Enterprise Park where Equinor have created 200 jobs at their O&M Base. Major manufacturing investments are under construction at IAMP (International Advanced Manufacturing Park) in Sunderland, including the new Envision AESC battery gigafactory factory. And at Northumberland Energy Park in Cambois, JDR Cables’ £130m manufacturing facility supplying cables for offshore wind farms is planned to open in 2025.



First Commercial Property Investment Fund (CIPF) supported scheme – new units at Thinford, County Durham

**Portland House:**  
5,950m<sup>2</sup> of refurbished office space has attracted **seven businesses** to date and **over 200 jobs**



Portland House, Newcastle upon Tyne. 5,950m<sup>2</sup> of refurbished office space has attracted seven businesses to date and over 200 jobs.

The North East LEP's support has been pivotal in Port of Tyne's success. Funding - specifically for Enterprise Zone developments like Tyne Dock - has led to transformative projects such as the Dogger Bank Wind Farm Operations and Maintenance Base, which is generating hundreds of well-paid jobs in support of the North East Strategic Economic Plan. The LEP's backing has truly accelerated our progress.”

**Victoria Beattie,**  
Head of Estates, Port of Tyne



# Transport connectivity



"It's been an immensely busy year further progressing the key priorities from the North East Transport Plan, particularly as we continue to move through the transition process to the new Mayoral Combined Authority. I'm proud to say we've achieved new and enhanced bus services and initiatives, the completion of several major schemes, and progression with implementing better electric vehicle charging infrastructure across the region. Not only that, but a viral campaign to reopen the Leamside Line and an influx of new funding sets us up nicely for what's to come. Watch this space!"

**Philip Meikle, Transport Strategy Director, Transport North East**

## Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)

The region's Enhanced Partnership (EP) is a great example of how working in partnership creates a better offer to the travelling public. We welcome the fact that the region was awarded a further £11.2m in funding through the Network North funds.

Over the last year a number of excellent initiatives have been launched, including a new multi-modal 21 and under day ticket (£3) to accompany the £1 single ticket. These tickets have been very popular across the region with more than 10 million sold to date, and have helped make access to education, training and employment cheaper for young people. The BSIP and EP has also funded zonal adult multi-modal day tickets which can be used on bus, Metro and Ferry.

New and enhanced bus services have been launched including new links to Newcastle Airport from places not served by the Metro, while existing routes have seen frequency increases to make choosing the bus a more appealing option.

## Active Travel Fund

Delivery of our Tranche 2 programme (£9.049m) is well underway, with five schemes complete and the remaining three schemes to be completed later in 2024. Through Tranche 3

**£46.5m**  
of Active Travel Fund  
secured since March 2020

of the Active Travel Fund, the region secured £17.9m for the delivery of eight schemes. Then at the end of March 2023, the region was also successful in securing an additional £17.4m through our Tranche 4 bid for four capital and two development schemes. This takes the total to £46.5m of ATF secured since March 2020.

We continue to work collaboratively with Active Travel England and partners to drive up the pace and quality of investment.

## Capability Fund (Active Travel)

The region was awarded £1.4m of Active Travel Capability Fund for 2022-23, which allowed for the continuation of activities delivered through the previous round of Capability funding including scheme design and development, cycle training, and promotional events. Funding has also been utilised to continue the promotion of activities through Go Smarter, Go Active.

## Transforming Cities Fund

The Transforming Cities Fund Tranche 2 programme is well underway. In 2023, three major schemes were completed – Sunderland Central Station, Durham Bus Station, and North Shields Transport Interchange. In total, £152.6m has been expended on our Transforming Cities Programme inclusive of the Metro Flow project. Work continues on the remaining schemes, which will deliver improvements to sustainable transport across the region.



New Sunderland Train Station – funded through the Transforming Cities Fund

Transforming Cities Programme:  
**3 major schemes completed in 2023**



New Durham Bus Station – funded through the Transforming Cities Fund



Councillor Martin Gannon at the 21 and Under #GetRound for £1 fare launch in Gateshead



Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure at the Angel of the North in Gateshead

## Levelling Up Fund

Delivery has now commenced on the region's Levelling Up Fund Round 2 programme. The region has been awarded £19.5m, which will be used to deliver up to 52 new high-quality zero emission buses and supporting infrastructure. The buses will operate on eight of the highest frequency bus routes across the North East which currently experience some of the highest levels of air pollution. The funding will also provide up to 92 new Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers across 36 regional sites. These include Park & Ride locations and other key destinations to encourage multi-modal journeys which use public transport for at least part of the journey. It is currently forecast that delivery will be complete by the end of the 2024/25 financial year.

Levelling Up Fund to deliver up to  
**52 new high-quality zero emission buses**

## Leamside Line

Transport North East continues to pursue the complete restoration of the Leamside Line. We're pleased to have cross-party political support and strong backing from local business community representatives.

Significant progress is being made on the Outline Business Case for the Washington Metro Loop. This project aims to extend the Tyne and Wear Metro from Pelaw to South Hylton via Washington, thereby linking major population areas with no current access to the network.

## Northumberland Line

The most advanced rail expansion project is the reopening of the Northumberland Line between Newcastle and Ashington, scheduled for this summer.

This reopening marks a significant step in enhancing connectivity to employment, education, healthcare, and leisure opportunities. Initially, services will connect Newcastle with new stations at Seaton Delaval, Newsham, and Ashington opening in summer 2024, and additional stations at Bedlington, Blyth Bedside, and Northumberland Park set to open in 2025, with the latter becoming a Metro interchange.

Investment in Metro Infrastructure and Trains Metro Flow, the largest single project within the Government's national Transforming Cities Programme, was completed on time and within budget by Nexus. The £104m infrastructure investment improves reliability and speeds up recovery time from disruptions; it paves the way for a more frequent service across the network as Metro's new train fleet is phased into service.

The introduction of the first new trains will be a landmark moment for the £362m fleet programme. Work is complete on an award-winning £70m new depot in Gosforth, Newcastle, and the first trains are going through a rigorous programme of 19,000 tests prior to carrying their first passengers later this year.

The new fleet, built by Swiss manufacturer Stadler with a number of North East manufacturing firms providing key components, will offer an accessible open plan layout and sleekly modelled interior, transforming the customer experience and setting new standards for performance and energy efficiency.

## Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEVs)

The Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund aims to deliver a step-change in the deployment of local, primarily low power, on-street charging infrastructure across England and accelerate the commercialisation of, and investment in, the local charging infrastructure sector.

The fund, delivered by the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV), is available in two parts: capability funding to be spent on resource to support infrastructure rollout, and capital funding to be spent on charging infrastructure. The region has been successful in bidding for £1.1m capability funding, which is being delivered across two tranches and will help support infrastructure delivery across the region by increasing staffing resources within each local authority. Following an Expression of Interest, the region was invited to apply for an indicative allocation of £15.8 million of capital funding.

Plans for additional EV infrastructure deployment through the City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) are also underway. This includes both new charging sites and the replacement of some legacy chargepoints across the region. The project has a total cost of £5.2 million and will aim to achieve the following objectives:

- Drive up productivity through improved connectivity.
- Levelling-up services towards the standards of the best.
- Tackling air pollution and reducing carbon emissions.

Work has also continued on the delivery of the £500,000 LGF-funded programme to install new EV chargers at strategic sites across our seven local authority areas, with new chargers already operating at St Mary's car park, Sunderland and Church Street, Gateshead.

# Evidence and Analysis



"Not only do we believe that evidence and data-driven decision-making and having more accessible data so that it can be understood is a critical part of any organisation, we champion it in the most passionate way. At the North East LEP, we believe evidence and analysis is the compass guiding our choices, offering clarity in complexity, and ensuring our actions are grounded in reality. I'm incredibly proud of the passion and dedication of our wonderful team, how they nurture and champion evidence and analysis implicitly in what they do, and can't wait to see what's next as we move forward to the new combined authority."

**Jen Robson, Director of Communications and Corporate Services**

## Our Economy

Each year, Our Economy brings together a mix of policy makers, business representatives and education providers. This year, we provided a state of the region's economy key note address and the wider theme of the event focused on inclusive productivity.

We wanted to explore how we can tackle two of the key challenges facing the North East and how the two concepts do not have to be mutually exclusive. The challenges we looked at were closing the productivity gap with the national average, and creating an inclusive economy where the benefits of economic growth

are felt by everyone who lives, works, studies and visits our region.

In support of our ambitions, we partnered with Ortus Economic Research and Kada Research to look for lessons on inclusive productivity from similar regions around the world. We also published the results of a research project into the number of exporters in the region, where we partnered with Glass AI to identify businesses in the region with exporting signals.

On the day we hosted experts from the productivity institute, the Centre for Progressive Policy, and the Centre for Process Industries

to share their insights on what inclusive productivity means, as well as hosting Nisha Katona CEO of Mowgli Street Food to hear about what inclusive productivity means for businesses in practise.

**Our Economy 2023:  
Over 200 attendees  
from across the region.**



Our Economy 2023 speakers (left to right): Lucy Winskell OBE, Chair of the North East LEP. Dr Marianne Sensier, Investment in Places Productivity Project Manager, Research Fellow, The Productivity Institute. Annabel Smith, Head of Place and Practice, Centre for Progressive Policy. Frank Millar, Chief Executive, CPI. Rob Hamilton Chief Economist, North of Tyne Combined Authority. Nisha Katona MBE, CEO, Mowgli Street Food.



**The North East Evidence Hub now has over 100 regional economic and social datasets available and welcomed 19,000 users in 2023.**

## North East Evidence Hub

This year we have continued to expand the data and research available on the North East evidence hub, which has over 100 regional economic and social datasets. This has included expanding the data available on the Net Zero transition, publishing new spotlight pages on the defence and security cluster in the North East and the census, and providing commentary on datasets of regional interest from our team.

We are continuing to expand the content available on the evidence as we transition to the North East Mayoral Combined Authority whilst also seeking to add additional evidence from partners around the region.

## Evaluation

The team has continued to support our Programmes of Delivery with their research and evaluation activities. Over the course of the past year the team supported the Business Growth team to evaluate Challenge North Tyne. The independent evaluation, conducted by Ortus, explored the impact of the programme on its participants and the wider innovation ecosystem and how to better evaluate mission-orientated innovation programmes.

In 2023, we commissioned an independent study to assess how the North East LEP implemented the Strategic Economic Plan. It focused on four areas—the LEP's role, capacity, evidence usage, and partnership. The research combined desk studies, meta-evaluation, and primary research. Key findings highlighted a consistent strategic vision, agile approach, evidence-based decision-making, and effective partnerships, all rooted in the LEP's organisational culture and values.


The study yielded four recommendations for the new combined authority: maintain the Evidence Hub, prioritise data-led decision-making, foster co-created development, and nurture partnerships. We have worked tirelessly ensure these recommendations are positioned well within the new combined authority and confident they will be.

## Partnership working

We have continued to coordinate and contribute to several regional evidence groups such as the economic prospects group and the Northern Evidence Network. The aim of these groups is to bring together experts in research and policy to share best practice and knowledge.

We have also maintained and developed our relationships with the local universities, such as supporting Durham University with a research project on the options for regional energy planning.

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[northeastgrowthhub.co.uk](http://northeastgrowthhub.co.uk)



[evidencehub.northeastlep.co.uk](http://evidencehub.northeastlep.co.uk)



[northeastambition.co.uk](http://northeastambition.co.uk)

# End of Year Review 2023/24

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2023/24 has been a year of transition. Our delivery plan for 2023/24 reflected this as we work towards the formation of a new Mayoral Combined Authority for the North East, in which the LEP's functions will be integrated.

The roles of the LEP set out by government were to:

- Embed a strong, independent and diverse local business voice into the North East Mayoral Combined Authority
- Carry out strategic economic planning in partnership with local leaders that clearly articulates the North East's economic priorities and sectoral strengths
- Continue to deliver a number of functions on behalf of government departments, shaped by the local business voice
- Monitor and assure existing local growth programmes and funds for which the LEP is responsible for.

This document reports our twelve months progress against the delivery of these roles and the future trajectory of the LEP's functions as we move to the new Combined Authority.



## Embed a strong, independent and diverse local business voice into the North East Mayoral Combined Authority

Action	Update	Position post May in our new Combined Authority	RAG
Lead the transition of the North East LEP board into the governance structure of the new Mayoral Combined Authority, where it will become the Business Board. Ensure that sub boards and business-led groups are also reflected in the wider evolving governance where appropriate.	<p><b>North East LEP Board</b></p> <p>The Board has agreed a two-stage process. The current LEP Board will transition in its current form and become the NEMCA Business Board. In late 2024, the membership will be reviewed in consultation with the NEMCA Cabinet. A draft Terms of Reference was discussed at the Board in January 2024.</p> <p><b>Advisory Boards</b></p> <p>The sub boards will transition as follows:</p> <p>Skills Advisory Panel's responsibilities will be part of the NEMCA Skills Portfolio Board.</p> <p>The LEP Investment Board's responsibilities will be subsumed within the NEMCA's Investment and Finance Portfolio Board.</p> <p>The next stage for the Business Growth Advisory Board is being discussed to inform a proposition to be considered by NEMCA post-May.</p>	<p>A final draft of the NEMCA Business Board Terms of Reference to be considered by the NEMCA Cabinet post-May 2024.</p> <p>Communications drafted to send to all sub board members with message of thanks and details of the transition arrangements.</p>	Green
Map and champion business priorities in line with the structure of the Devolution Deal, ensuring that critical projects identified in the Strategic Economic Plan are not lost.	<p>The LEP executive team has worked with the LA7 EDs to input into the NEMCA portfolios, as well as evaluating the SEP to feed into the NEMCA planning process and priorities.</p> <p>A transition position on the future of LEP projects and programmes is included throughout this document.</p>	The LEP executive team will transition into NEMCA to deliver the devolution deal and LEP programmes on transition.	Green
Convene a business-led group as the route for the new governance structures to be informed, challenged and engaged with the business community at scale with representation from business cluster and membership organisations and the education and VCSE sectors to share knowledge as the devolution detail is developed and provide a two-way forum to feed into the emerging MCA's priorities.	The Business Growth Advisory Board was reformed during 2023/24. It has senior representatives from business and sector membership organisations. The group met three times during the year and worked directly with the transition team to inform the development of the devolution deal portfolios, and the future regional Business Support Framework design.	The next stage for the Business Growth Advisory Board is being discussed to inform a proposition to be considered by NEMCA post-May.	Green

## Embed a strong, independent and diverse local business voice into the North East Mayoral Combined Authority

<p><b>Conclude, report on, evaluate and share learning on processes and practices against the delivery of the North East Strategic Plan to inform and transfer knowledge to future economic planning.</b></p>	<p><a href="#">The SEP learnings project</a> has been completed and published on the Evidence Hub.</p> <p>A communications and influencing plan has been delivered and all key recommendations have been fed directly to the NEMCA interim chief executive.</p>	<p>The LEP chief executive will share the findings with the NEMCA shadow senior executive team to discuss lessons learned and integration.</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Update and adhere to the Assurance Framework which includes holding an Annual General Meeting.</b></p>	<p>The final LEP Board will be considered as the AGM, where the transition of LEP activated will be notified, as well as the 'handover' position for all LEP funds. The LEP Assurance Framework has been used to inform the new NEMCA Assurance Framework.</p>	<p>A LEP Assurance framework has informed, and will be superseded by, the new NEMCA Assurance Framework.</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>

## Carry out strategic economic planning in partnership with local leaders that clearly articulates the North East's economic priorities and sectoral strengths.

Action	Update	Position post May in our new Combined Authority	RAG
<p><b>Prepare and disseminate a comprehensive evidence base that reflects the North East's economic performance and informs economic planning, investment, and prioritisation. Position the North East Evidence Hub as the go to platform to access and use this information.</b></p>	<p>The evidence and analysis team remain fully embed within the delivery teams, driving evidence led decision making and ensuring our work is evaluated effectively and used to inform future planning, policy and strategy.</p> <p>This year we have published three spotlight pages on the Evidence Hub on the Strategic Economic Plan, inclusive productivity (Our Economy 2023) and the defence and security sector in the North East, taking a deep dive into the data and providing context on the specific economic conditions in the region. We have also published over 10 different short insight pieces on a range of topics from AI to graduate migration. The publication of new content has continued to support the growth in the user base of the Evidence Hub which has grown by 25% compared to last year.</p> <p>To support the dissemination of our research we also publish a monthly newsletter highlighting new insight pieces and updated datasets. The number of subscribers to this newsletter has grown month on month, while the open rate is considerably above the Mailchimp non-profit benchmark, showing the content is appropriate for the audience. Our insight pieces on graduate migration and business births have seen particularly large numbers of views from the newsletter.</p>	<p>It is proposed that NEMCA will have a centralised data and insights team in which the LEP evidence and analysis team will transition into. The team will be bigger and positioned strategically in the organisation to ensure that informed decision making is central to its operations. The Evidence Hub will remain the repository for the evidence and evaluation for the region.</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Work with partners, including our universities, local authorities and national data bodies to analyse, develop research and share intelligence about the economy. This should complement current work programmes and ensure alignment into future priorities.</b></p>	<p>Our partnership working across the North East and beyond has led to the production of new evidence bases in support of regional initiatives. In December we published a regional evidence base on the <a href="#">defence and security sector</a> in the North East region in support of the launch of a regional cluster. Our joint work with analysts from across the region has resulted in the production of an <a href="#">indicators dashboard</a> for Net Zero North East England, supported by a broader <a href="#">evidence base</a> on the North East Evidence Hub.</p> <p>We have also maintained and developed our relationships with the local universities, for instance working with Northumbria University on our evidence base for Our Economy and supporting Durham University with a research project on regional energy planning. We continue to engage with networks across the North East and pan-regionally, including co-hosting the regional economic prospects group with the Bank of England and feeding into the Northern Evidence Network.</p>		

**Continue to deliver a number of functions on behalf of government departments, shaped by the local business voice. The functions are summarised below:**

Action	Update	Position post May in our new Combined Authority	RAG
<b>Deliver and develop contracted/funded business support programmes and services including but not exclusively:</b>			
<p><b>North East Growth Hub</b></p> <p>Fulfil our funding commitment to government to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connecting businesses to the best support available from the private and public sectors.</li> <li>• To target support on those businesses with the opportunity, ambition and greatest potential to grow.</li> <li>• To gather on the ground business and economic intelligence to feed into ongoing policy development.</li> </ul>	<p>The Growth Hub remains on target to meet contractual KPIs.</p> <p>Although future funding was confirmed by the Chancellor in the Autumn Statement the value of funding is subject to departmental business planning which has not yet concluded.</p>	<p>The North East Growth Hub, team and all functions will transition into NEMCA.</p>	<b>Amber</b>
<p><b>Made Smarter</b></p> <p>Deliver the £800k programme engaging with 75 manufacturers during 2023/24, in partnership with government and Tees Valley Combined Authority. The ambition of the programme is to increase digital adoption with advanced manufacturers.</p>	<p>Five cohorts totaling 50 companies are complete. The target is to engage 70 businesses during 2023/24, with a further two cohorts to deliver in Q4.</p> <p>Manufacturing businesses are engaged in developing their digital roadmaps and £223,000 of the £350,000 grant fund has been committed and £134,000 defrayed.</p> <p>The Department of Business and Trade have confirmed the budget for 2024-25 as £800,000 along with a commitment to expand the programme across the UK including an extension to 2030 with a budget of £130M.</p>	<p>Made Smarter, team and all functions will transition into NEMCA.</p>	<b>Green</b>
<p><b>Innovation Launchpad</b></p> <p>£7.5million Innovate UK grant fund allocated to develop the North East Tech Cluster. Includes 100% funded grants up to £100k for SME's and 70% funded grants for larger collaborative projects up to £1million.</p>	<p>The first round of the Launchpad allocated an initial £2million and attracted 120 applications, 8 of which have been selected for funding. A competition was also launched December to appoint a Cluster Development Manager, the successful applicant should be selected early March.</p>	<p>The Launchpad collaboration with InnovateUK will transition into NEMCA.</p>	<b>Green</b>



<p><b>Challenge North Tyne</b> Deliver the £880,000 Challenge North Tyne programme in partnership with the Innovation SuperNetwork to enable 50 innovation projects to tackle the economic, environmental and social challenges through open and collaborative innovation.</p>	<p>Challenge North of Tyne has been successfully completed. 130 Small Businesses and 25 Challenge Supporters have been engaged to support innovations to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support older people at home, work and play</li> <li>• Deliver energy efficient net zero homes</li> </ul> <p>Forecast outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50.5 FTE jobs (gross over the next two to three years)</li> <li>• Net GVA of £5.63m</li> <li>• Return of investment is anticipated to be 7.9:1</li> <li>• Cost per net job created maximum of £22,184</li> </ul>	<p>Programme concluded. No further action required.</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Internationalisation</b> Work with the Department for International Trade to mobilise international trade and investment activity, provision of local business intelligence, grant funding and levelling-up focused projects.</p>	<p>As devolution portfolios develop, consideration needs to be given to how best to incorporate internationalisation strategy as no LEP resource has been available to progress this meaningfully.</p>	<p>One of NEMCA's five Commitments is around internationalisation, therefore capacity within NEMCA could take this forward.</p>	<p><b>Red</b></p>

<p><b>Provide local skills analysis through the Skills Advisory Panel</b></p> <p>The Skills Advisory Panel (SAP) aims to bring together local employers and skills providers to pool knowledge on skills and labour market needs, and to work together to understand, address and inform the LEP board, partners, and government about local challenges.</p> <p>The SAP will provide oversight of the delivery of regional skills, inclusion and progression programmes and projects and commission research into key skills challenges.</p> <p>We will work closely with the region's employer representative bodies (ERBs) to produce Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) in the production of LSIP and continue to commission research on specific localised challenges and opportunities.</p>	<p>The SAP has focused on ensuring a smooth transition to NEMCA governance, building a strong evidence base and supporting information exchange between members. To achieve this, the SAP has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Received regular updates on the devolution timeline, including the role of political leadership and the shadow executive in ensuring a seamless transition for five organisations into NEMCA.</li> <li>• Received updates from our data and evidence base, including: regular data updates from the North East LEP's Skills Bootcamps on future skills needs. Drafts and final version for the Local Skills Improvement plans from our two regional Employer Representative Bodies. Data Analysis from DfE releases and evaluation reports on programmes, including North East Ambition and BEEP Gateshead.</li> <li>• Received updates from our partners, including briefings from representatives of the pharma industry, East Durham College, and NHS on skills requirements in pharma. Presentations from the NHS Integrated Care Board on the workforce planning and the NHS skills hub. Presentations from the North of Tyne Combined authority on the Adult Education Budget.</li> </ul>	<p>The LEPs regional Skills Advisory Panel will cease before May 2024. Its work and activities will feed into NEMCA's Skills Portfolio development and governance.</p>	<p><b>Amber</b></p>
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<p><b>North East Ambition (including Careers Hubs)</b></p> <p>We will continue to champion and improve provision in good career guidance for each and every young person in the North East, by working with education and business.</p> <p>Through the North East Careers Hub, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of schools and colleges engaged with us</li> <li>• Reduce the number of schools and colleges achieving fewer than three of the Good Career Guidance Benchmarks</li> <li>• Increase the average Benchmark score across the schools and colleges from within the North East Careers Hub</li> </ul> <p>We will continue to deliver the Primary schools' programme, including a new DfE initiative 'Start Small, Dream Big' which focuses on careers related learning in primary schools.</p>	<p><b>Good Career Guidance Benchmarks and Careers Hubs</b></p> <p>We have supported our schools and colleges throughout the year through a variety of different events, bulletins and resources, including our popular regional conferences and a conference for SEND coordinators. We continue to champion careers advice for everyone with the launch of our Youth Justice Project in South Tyneside and two projects supporting young people with SEND.</p> <p>Our Careers Hub membership has increased from 162 to 177 out of 193 schools and colleges in the North East. The region has seen improvement across the eight Good Career Guidance Benchmarks, with the regional average now standing at 5.2, with fewer schools and colleges achieving less than 3 Benchmarks and 14% of schools and colleges now achieving all 8 Benchmarks.</p> <p><b>Primary</b></p> <p>Our work in primary schools has expanded with over 120 primary schools now in our core network, working towards our adapted set of Good Career Guidance Benchmarks. We have appointed six Career Champions across the network, who are supporting clusters of schools.</p> <p>We have delivered wave 1 on DfE's Start Small, Dream Big project, that develops careers related learning in primary schools. 75 schools from the North East participated in Wave 1 of this project and its success led to the LEP being asked to participate in Wave 3.</p>	<p>The LEP's Skills team will transition into NEMCA to continue delivery of the North East Ambition programme.</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Enterprise Adviser Network</b></p> <p>We will champion the Enterprise Adviser Network and Education Support Partnerships by increasing the number of EAs working strategically with schools and colleges in the North East Careers Hub.</p>	<p><b>Enterprise Adviser Network</b></p> <p>The North East Enterprise Adviser Network (EAN) has increased and we now have over 220 individuals as members, with 180 of the EAs matched to over 140 schools and colleges.</p> <p>The ESF-funded North East Ambition SME support concluded in December. The programme achieved more than 100% of outputs. The LEP's North East Ambition programme (both NEA1 and NEA2) has supported 1155 SMEs to engage with education. This represents 116% of contracted targets.</p> <p>1729 individuals participated in the programme, which represents 119% of contracted targets.</p>	<p>The LEP's Skills team will transition into NEMCA to continue delivery of the North East Ambition programme.</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>

<p><b>Removing Barriers to Digital Inclusion</b></p> <p>Working with the Digital Alliance we will begin to find ways to deliver a regional strategy to remove barriers to digital inclusion and support progression towards a set of minimum standards.</p>	<p>The template business case, for use by external stakeholders, is being refreshed for circulation.</p>	<p>The evidence on digital inclusion will be made available and can be used to inform NEMCA portfolio development.</p>	<p><b>Amber</b></p>
<p><b>Positive outcomes</b></p> <p>We will continue to support education institutions with bespoke programmes to support careers leaders, teachers, school leaders, governors, employers and other stakeholders to work collaboratively to ensure positive destinations for all young people.</p>	<p>Following on from the positive evaluation of the 2023 Teacher Encounters Programme, we have agreed to deliver this again in 2024 in partnership with Newcastle University.</p> <p>14 schools are now being supported to develop partnerships with industry through the expansion of the Linking Curriculum Learning to the World of Work Project, involving subject teachers from biology, chemistry, physics, maths and English. The work featured in the Institute of Physics' "Solving Skills One Year On" report (Feb2024), as an example of best practice.</p> <p>Throughout the projects, we have supported all businesses to shape their engagement with education, these include businesses that have not previously engaged with schools but as a result have incorporated the opportunity for their staff as part of their volunteering schemes.</p>	<p>Delivery of this programme is externally funded and will continue to be delivered by NEMCA.</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>

<p><b>Technical Education</b></p> <p>Collaborate with employers and sector groups to enhance the talent pipeline, bridging the gap between education and employment. Implement the #apprenticesReady vision to increase demand for apprenticeships and T-level industry placements, while ensuring high-quality technical pathways to priority sectors.</p> <p>Support T-level expansion and alignment with higher technical qualifications</p>	<p>We have developed the ApprenticeReady framework and mobilised a multi-agency partnership to deliver the framework. Additionally, we secured DfE pilot status to test a new UCAS Apprenticeship Hub. We have engaged 97% of schools with sixth forms, 100% of GFE Colleges to deliver the framework. The number of young people registering for apprenticeships has increased by 59% compared with the same period in 2018/19.</p> <p>We have delivered nine projects promoting the value and accessibility of apprenticeships to business, including: producing the first employer apprenticeship vacancy guide, which is included in the DfE's Recruit An Apprenticeship system.</p> <p>We have continued to support the T level Delivery Group, which has a 577% growth in T level learners, and a 467% increase in T level Providers since 2022. Employer engagement was identified as a priority to support T-Levels. To meet this need we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hosted the first Civil Service event nationally. Enhanced the NEA Provider Portal to reflect the local T level offer.</li> <li>• Co-developed a guide to support businesses hosting industry placement.</li> <li>• Developed a school resource to support T level graduate progression into higher technical qualifications.</li> </ul>	<p>Delivery of this programme is contracted and funded by the Department of Education and will continue to be delivered by NEMCA.</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
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<p><b>Skills Bootcamps</b></p> <p>Deliver the £10m Skills Bootcamps project, funded by the Department for Education, to support 2,150 learners to train in jobs of the future.</p> <p>Delivery will include completion of wave 3, which is focused on green skills and wave 4, which extends to include green skills; technical skills; pathways to accelerated apprenticeships; supporting the education, training and learning workforce,; and people and management skills.</p>	<p><b>Wave 3 Skills Bootcamps (2022/2023) – grant award value £2.7m</b></p> <p>The Wave 3 Skills Bootcamp program completed in January 2024 with 94% of the grant allocation has been expended. We engaged with nine training organisations (incl colleges, independent learning providers, commercial training organisations and employer providers) to deliver across 26 Skills Bootcamp programmes in Green Skills, achieving the following KPIs;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 138 businesses engaged</li> <li>• 805 individuals participated (127% against contract target)</li> <li>• 743 individuals completed (92% - against 80% KPI))</li> <li>• 657 progressed to a successful outcome (82% against 75% KPI)</li> <li>• 100 self employed have accesses additional contracts</li> <li>• 170 learners offered a job</li> <li>• 387 employed learners accepted a new role</li> <li>• 93% of learners surveyed would recommend a Skills Bootcamp</li> </ul> <p><b>Wave 4 Skills Bootcamps (23/24) – Grant award value £7.4m (plus £1.8m in year growth)</b></p> <p>Wave 4 Skills Bootcamps delivery is ahead of target with 90% grant allocation projected to be expended by the end of March 2024. DfE has confirmed an additional grant award of £1.8m to fund pipeline employer job vacancies and learner demand. We have increased the provider base to 36 training organisations delivering 106 Skills Bootcamp programmes. Performance at the end of Jan 24:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1367 individuals enrolled and/or started (76%)</li> <li>• 715 individuals completed (52%)</li> <li>• 585 progressed – new job/role/increased contracts (43%)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Wave 5 Skills Bootcamps (24/25) – grant award £17.5 million</b></p> <p>DfE have confirmed a Wave 5 grant award of £17.5m to encompass the North East LEP and NTCA programmes. The Bootcamp programmes will be delivered by NEMCA.</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
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Action	Update	Position post May in our new Combined Authority	RAG
<b>Monitoring and assurance of existing local growth programmes and funds for which the LEP is responsible for. Funds include:</b>			
<p><b>The Local Growth Fund</b> To ensure full expenditure of the residual £5.5m 'swapped' funding in 2023/24 and continue to monitor and report on the performance of over 30 live projects to their conclusion</p>	<p>Quarter three budget spend was £0.92m, bringing the total to date to £3.23m with a balance of £2.62m planned to be spent in qtr.4. The number of jobs reported so far is 1,504, which exceeds the forecast for 2023/24.</p> <p>A further eight projects have achieved full completion in this quarter. Currently 15 projects are expected to be subject to ongoing monitoring by NEMCA in 2024/25, the final year for reporting performance to government.</p>	<p>All funding is planned to be spent in 2023/24. NEMCA will pick up the performance monitoring of 15 residual projects and report performance to DLUHC until May 2025.</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>The Getting Building Fund</b> To ensure full expenditure of the residual £1.4m 'swapped' funding in 2023/24 and continue to monitor and report on the performance of 19 live projects to their conclusion.</p>	<p>Budget fully spent. Grant reduction of £42,205 confirmed following budget underspend on the Tyne Tunnel Trading Estate project – this is being used to support programme management costs, displacing other LEP matched funds. 13 of 20 projects are forecast to be subject to ongoing monitoring by NEMCA into 24/25, the final year for reporting performance to government.</p>	<p>All funding is planned to be spent in 2023/24. NEMCA will pick up the performance monitoring of 13 residual projects and report performance to DLUHC until May 2025.</p>	<p><b>Amber</b></p>
<p><b>Enterprise Zone Programme</b> To oversee continued investment of £20m across 21 EZ sites, to increase generation of Business Rate Income to the region.</p>	<p>A new funding application for a second phase of infrastructure works at Ashwood Business Park, Northumberland, is being taken to the Investment Board in March. This will be the final LEP funding approval under the EZ programme that will be ongoing under NEMCA for several more years. BRGI will continue to be collected until 2042. The latest BRGI for 23/24 is £8.6m, 0.5m above the original forecast for the year.</p>	<p>The EZ programme is ongoing with Business Rates collected until 2042 on many sites. NEMCA will become responsible for investing in EZ site infrastructure and managing business rates income.</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>

<p><b>The North East Investment Fund</b></p> <p>Includes the Commercial Property Investment Fund and the North East Property Fund performance monitoring of external contracts and also ongoing monitoring of the repayment of existing loans from the NEIF made in previous years.</p>	<p>The Investment Board is planned to discuss actions and revised terms on an existing project that is facing serious financial challenges on March 7.</p> <p>The latest quarterly update on the performance of the NEPDF scheme was received on 31st January, showing significant demand and progress against housing development KPIs. Latest update on CPIF scheme will go to CPIF Advisory Group on 6th March.</p>	<p>The NEIF programme has 14 live projects that will continue into 2024/25. Performance monitoring and loan repayments will be collected by NEMCA.</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>
<p><b>Regional Access to Finance</b></p> <p>Lead the Regional Access to Finance development work</p>	<p>Work continues with developing the North East Fund successor Fund Ltd. A procurement is underway to study the market.</p>	<p>In 2024/25, the NEMCA FD will chair the Regional Access to Finance Group, and work closely with the North East Fund Limited team, both roles previously undertaken by the LEP Chief Executive.</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>



**21 March 2024**

**Item 7: Chair and Chief Executive Update**

**1.0 Background**

1.1 The Chair and Chief Executive would like to provide an update to Board Members on some of the discussions and meetings that they have been involved in since the last Board meeting in November.

**2.0 Chair's key meetings and discussions**

2.1 Since the last Board meeting on the 25 January 2024, the LEP Chair has been involved in a variety of meetings and discussions as outlined below:

- Final North East Combined Authority meeting
- North of Tyne Combined Authority Policy Cabinet
- Formal discussion with Chair of NP11
- Discussion with Transport for North
- Final North of Tyne Combined Authority Policy Cabinet
- Transport for North LEP Chairs briefing including discussions around business representation in the future
- Ongoing discussions with the LEP Network around transition to Business Boards as part of Mayoral Combined Authorities

**3.0 Chief Executive's key meetings and discussions**

3.1 Since the last Board meeting, outside of the internal and external 'business as usual' and project meetings, the Chief Executive has been involved in a number of meetings that continue to move the regional economic growth agenda forward. These include:

- Meetings with the LEP Network;
- Meetings with government officials;
- North East Devolution Operational Transition Board;
- Mobilising NEMCA Operations meetings;
- NEMCA shadow exec weekly meetings;
- Devolution Team Briefing sessions.

**4.0 Recommendation**

4.1 The Board is recommended to note the report.