

North East Local Enterprise Partnership Board

24 November 2022

Meeting held virtually via Microsoft Teams

In attendance:

Lucy Winskell	Chair, North East LEP
Ammar Mirza	AmmarM (UK) Limited
Gillian Hall	Gillian Hall Consulting Limited
Heidi Mottram	CEO, Northumbrian Water Group
Carol Botten	CEO, VONNE
Ellen Thinnesen	CEO, Education Partnership North East
Mark Thompson	Ryder Architecture
Chris Day	Vice Chancellor, Newcastle University
Colin Hewitt	Ward Hadaway
Phil Redman	Mott MacDonald
Cllr Richard Wearmouth	Deputy Leader, Northumberland County Council
Cllr Martin Gannon	Leader, Gateshead Council
Cllr Amanda Hopgood	Leader, Durham County Council

Apologies

Mayor Norma Redfearn	North Tyneside Council
Mayor Jamie Driscoll	North of Tyne Combined Authority
Cllr Tracey Dixon	Leader, South Tyneside Council
Cllr Graeme Miller	Leader, Sunderland City Council
Cllr Kemp	Leader, Newcastle City Council
Erika Leadbeater	TSG Marine
Kate Medcalf	

Officers

Helen Golightly	Chief Executive, North East LEP
Michelle Rainbow	Skills Director, North East LEP
Richard Baker	Strategy and Policy Director, North East LEP
Paul Woods	Finance Officer, North East LEP
Janice Gillespie	Chief Finance Officer, NTCA
Katy Laing	Finance Officer, NTCA
Brenda Joyce	Democratic Services, Newcastle City Council

1 WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. A particular welcome went to Colin Hewitt and Phil Redman, new members of the North East LEP Board.

Apologies were received from Mayor Redfern, Mayor Driscoll, Councillor Kemp, Councillor Dixon, Councillor Miller, Kate Medcalf and Erika Leadbetter.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mark Thompson declared interest in the following projects - Gateshead Quays MSCP, Bedlington Town Centre, Gilbridge Police Station, Biosphere 2, East Pilgrim Street, NetPark and Giants on the Quayside.

Gillian Hall declared an interest as a Port of Blyth Commissioner.

3 **MINUTES OF THE LAST BOARD MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2022**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 29 September were agreed as a correct record.

Matters arising

The Net Zero launch event had been held on 14 November, which went very well and was well attended.

In terms of devolution, the Autumn Statement referenced the North East devolution deal as 'in due course'. It was hoped that there would be an announcement before Christmas and conversations were ongoing.

The recruitment for a further new Board member had gone live today. New Board members would be allocated to sub-boards in January.

The Chair offered congratulations to everybody involved in the Net Zero Summit which had been a very powerful event and a testament to resilience and the tenacity by Board members and the Team.

She went on to thank Richard Baker, Jen Robson and the team for the work putting on the Our Economy event which had also been very successful. It was a huge feat to put on two large events two days running

4 **ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN - PROGRESS UPDATE**

Helen Golightly advised that this was a standing agenda item formatted in terms of the LEP Review and the key themes that LEPs were asked to take forward – representing the business voice, strategic economic planning, improving skills, growing businesses and managing funds.

There were a few initiatives with a red rag status such as growth hub funding and the Enterprise Zone (EZ) piece relating to interest rates.

5 **FUND MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

This report was confidential as it contained commercial information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person or organisation and was not for wider circulation.

~~This report sought Board approval to a new capital investment project on NETPark, Sedgefield, County Durham and reported on progress with two new funding programmes; Skills Bootcamps Wave 4 and the Innovate UK Launchpad initiative.~~

~~Regular funding programme updates were provided with data from quarter 2 in 2022/23.~~

~~Paul Woods introduced the report which was presented in four parts:~~

~~**Part A**—provided a summary of funding decisions taken under delegation since the last Board meeting.~~

~~**Part B**—recommended that Board approved to a grant award of £2.965m from the North East Investment Fund (NEIF) programme to Durham County Council to deliver the NETPark Phase 3 infrastructure project.~~

~~Councillor Hopgood's interest in this grant was noted.~~

~~**Part C**—provided funding programme 2022/23 Qtr.2 performance updates and latest forecasts for the Local Growth Fund (LGF), Getting Building Fund (GBF), Project Development Accelerator Fund (PDAF) and Enterprise Zone (EZ) programmes.~~

~~It was noted that the red flag in terms of Enterprise Zones' initiative had come down since the last meeting as interest rates had stabilised.~~

~~The Autumn Statement and the Office of Budget Responsibility paper announced a revision of business rates and it was likely that the income from business rates was likely to rise significantly. Additional grant was expected in relation to the inflation increase.~~

~~**Part D**—Outlined two new funding programme opportunities. Firstly, the Board was asked to support the procurement of suppliers to deliver courses from an indicative new £7.4m budget allocation for Skills Bootcamps (this included £3m to extend Wave 3 contracts into 2023/2024) and an additional £4.4 million for new bootcamps training courses). Secondly, a new national Innovation Launchpad programme managed by Innovate UK was aiming to support high growth potential SMEs in less mature business innovation clusters. A North East bid for Applied Digital Technologies had been submitted to become one of ten planned regional Launchpads.~~

RESOLVED – That the Board agreed to:

- i) Note the funding decision taken under delegation in Part A, set out in Table 1.**
- ii) Approve up to £2.965m from the NEIF programme to Durham County Council to deliver the NETPark Phase 3 infrastructure project as outlined in Part B and subject to the conditions set out in the full project report in Appendix One.**
- iii) Note the latest 2022/23 budget and KPI performance position on the LGF, GBF, EZ and PDAF funding programmes as set out under Part C.**

- iv) **Note the proposal summarised in Part D para.8.1 and detailed in in Appendix 2 to secure additional funding from the Department for Education (DfE) Bootcamp Wave 4 and to:**
- a. **Confirm delegated authority to the Chief Executive and NTCA's Interim Chief Finance Officer (section 73 officer) to enter into and approve a grant agreement with Department for Education for up to £7.4 million for the financial year 2023/24.**
 - b. **Confirm delegated authority to commence the procurement process that will determine the appointment of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (North East LEP) Green Skills Bootcamp delivery partners, via the North of Tyne Combined Authority procurement portal.**
 - c. **Confirm delegated authority to the Chief Executive and NTCA's Interim Chief Finance Officer (section 73 officer) to enter into and approve up to three delivery contracts with the successful bidders, who will deliver skills bootcamps up to the value of £4.4 million in 2023/24, with a possible one year extension of an additional £4.4 million.**
 - d. **Confirm delegated authority to the Chief Executive and NTCA's Interim Chief Finance Officer (section 73 officer) to enter into and approve up to three delivery contracts with the successful bidders, who will deliver skills bootcamps up to the value of £4.4 million in 2023/24, with a possible one year extension of an additional £4.4 million**
- v) **Note the application submitted by the North East LEP to Innovate UK to establish a North East Launch Pad programme to support SMEs in the applied digital technologies sector as set out in Part D Para.8.6.**

6 **LOCAL SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PLANS (LSIPS)**

Michelle Rainbow (Skills Director) presented the report Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) and gave a presentation which set DfE policy and context including policy, Employer Representative Bodies (ERBs), DfE Guidance and the timeline.

In terms of the statutory response to LSIPs the FE sector needed to be able to demonstrate a response to this which would impact their funding. This had created a lot of conversations between FE and ERBs and FE and DfE to understand the implications.

DfE were very clear that provision needed to respond to the LSIPs. The views of LEPs, local authorities and combined authorities also had to be taken into account.

The first LSIP reports were due by 1 May 2023.

It was confirmed that there were two LSIPs in the region that would be developed by the ERBs; the North of Tyne LSIP led by the North East England Chamber of Commerce, and the North East LSIP led by the North East Automotive Alliance.

Both ERBs had presented to the Skills Advisory Panel in early November 2022 and had committed to engaging with and presenting further information to the SAP as the respective plans were developed.

Further details on the respective proposals from each ERB would be presented to the LEP Board for their input and comment as appropriate.

RESOLVED – That the Board agreed to:

- (i) **Note the contents of the report**
- (ii) **Note and engage with the content of the board presentation and provide feedback as appropriate.**

7 ECONOMIC POLICY UPDATE

Richard Baker (Strategy and Policy Director) presented two reports on the Quarterly Economic Update and Autumn Statement Briefing

The Quarterly Economic Round Up included the latest data on the Economic Outlook, the Labour Market, Internationalisation and Business Activity.

Moving on to the next report, the Autumn Statement Briefing aimed to summarise the key economic data and spending commitments, identify specific announcements about the North East LEP area and provide detail on future regional policy and funding issues.

8 CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE UPDATE

Noted.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair informed attendees that this was the last Board meeting for Gillian Hall. Gillian had been a Board member for nine years and a huge thank you was owed for her commitment and constructive challenge to the North East LEP. Thanks also went to Gillian for chairing the Innovation Board and being an outstanding member on the Investment Board. On behalf of the members and the Executive Team, the Chair said everyone was really grateful for Gillian's dedication, commitment, wisdom, appropriate questioning, commerciality, support and friendship. Everyone at the meeting joined in with a round of applause for Gillian.

In response Gillian said it had been a complete joy. She had lived with every iteration of the LEP and the really positive thing looking back was how the region came together to work together for the benefit of the region. Gillian went on to wish the North East LEP good luck with the huge amount of work still to do. She had learned so much from everyone and that that had added to her own personal development.