
Title: Department for Business and Trade: Strategic Engagement and Investment Framework
Report of: Guy Currey, Head of Inward Investment
Portfolio: A Welcoming Home to Global Trade

Report Summary

The purpose of this report is to

1. Provide a background to the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) Strategic Engagement and Investment Framework (SEIF).
2. Request acceptance of the grant funding award of £200,000, to deliver the SEIF in the North East of England from 01 April 2025 – 31 March 2026.

Recommendations

The Director of Finance and Investment, is recommended to:

1. Accept the grant funding of £200,000 from the Department for Business and Trade for the Strategic Engagement and Investment Framework (for the period 01 April 2025 – 31 March 2026).

A. Summary of Proposal

1. Background

- 1.1 Prior to FY 2025/26 the North East CA had been in receipt of funding from DBT to fund a Key Account Management (KAM) programme. This had been running in the North East since 2018. The KAM programme funding ceased at the end of March 2025. After consultation with stakeholders, including the North East CA, from 1 April 2025 DBT has put in place a one-year transitional framework designed to support the evolution of investment delivery by partners.
- 1.2 The objective of the Framework is to bring national, regional and local partners in the foreign inward investment space together to provide a seamless end to end journey for investors. This is in the context of a major restructuring of DBT and the Office for Investment.
- 1.3 The Framework will distribute funds in the North East by way of Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003, through a Memorandum of Understanding with the North East CA. This will support the delivery of investment and economic growth through attracting and retaining inward investment.

2. The Investment Proposal

- 2.1 This delegated decision is to accept specifically the funding in the MOU covering £200,000 in the period 01 April 2025 – 31 March 2026.
- 2.2 The Grant will fund a programme of activity which is to be agreed between the NECA and DBT. The fundable activity is contained in Annex A of the attached MOU document.

3. Outputs and Outcomes

A full programme of activity is still to be agreed with DBT. However, they are clear that in this transition year the activity will support a range of anticipated outcomes which will be agreed throughout the year. DBT is keen to get the MOU signed so that more detailed discussions on the programme and the outcomes can be undertaken.

4. Timetable for Implementation

Milestone	Forecast Date
MOU signed	Anticipated end June/ early July 2025
Contract end	31 March 2026

B. Potential Impact on North East Combined Authority Objectives

The funding supports NECA's Corporate Plan and mission statement 'A welcoming Home to Global Trade'

C. Key risks

The main risk related to this commission is the performance of the SEIF in the North East does not satisfy DBT. This will be managed through regular meetings between DBT and North East CA to ensure that the programme of activity is acceptable and is delivering the agreed outcomes.

The North East CA is required to submit a quarterly monitoring report alongside the financial claim. The report must summarise Activities completed in the quarter and future activity planned and should reflect Annex A: The Funded Activities. The funded activities are wide-ranging in scope to allow a flexible approach to delivery so this is a low-risk contract with no clawback conditions.

Funding will be made by DBT on a quarterly basis in arrears based on actual spend incurred in that period

D. Financial and other resources implications

The financial profile for the project/programme is included below:

Funding source	2025/2026
<i>DBT SEIF Funding (£)</i>	£200,000
Total (£)	£200,000

There is no financial risk as this is external funding via DBT with no North East CA Investment Fund or Match Funding.

Grant funding will be paid to the North East CA quarterly in arrears.

E. Legal implications

The comments of the Monitoring Officer have been included in this report.

F. Equalities implications

The North East CA complies with the Public Sector Equality duty and this report has due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010.

G. Consultation and engagement

Consultation and engagement has taken place throughout the process between DBT and North East CA. The seven constituent local authorities will be consulted on the final agreed programme of activity once the MOU has been signed (via the Investment Gateway Meeting).

H. Appendices

None

I. Contact officers

Name: Guy Currey
Title: Head of Inward Investment
Email address: guy.currey@northeast-ca.gov.uk

K. Glossary

North East CA	North East Combined Authority
DBT	Department for Business and Trade
KAM	Key Account Management
SEIF	Strategic Engagement and Investment Framework

L. Consultee

Cabinet Member:	Director/Head of Service:	Director of Finance and Investment:	Monitoring Officer:
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes