

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

At a meeting of the Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership held in the Conference Room, Invest Knowsley, Huyton Library, Civic Way, Huyton, L36 9GD on Thursday, 19th September, 2019 the following Members were

PRESENT:

Mr A Hamid MBE, Chairperson of the Board
Elaine Bowker
Paul Corcoran
Chris Fry
Amanda Lyne
Dr Liz Mear
Mark Whitworth
Metro Mayor S Rotheram

APOLOGIES

Mayor J Anderson OBE
Professor Dame J Beer
Councillor P Hackett
Dr Jonathan Hague
Mike Hulme
Laura Pye
John Syvret CBE
Angela White OBE

373. WELCOME FROM COUNCILLOR G MORGAN, LEADER, KNOWSLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Councillor G Morgan, Leader of Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council, welcomed Board Members to the Invest Knowsley Centre. He explained that the Centre was home to Knowsley's major development team, Growth Hub and the Knowsley Chamber of Commerce. Members then watched a short video which summarised Knowsley's regeneration progress.

374. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were declared by Board Members.

375. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Board considered the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2019 and were received as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

The Chair, Mr Asif Hamid MBE, reported that Ben Dalton, Agent Academy, was in attendance at the Board meeting, to observe the Board in operation and develop mechanisms to engage young people with the work of the LCR Local Enterprise Partnership.

The Chair drew Board Members attention to Minute 368 and invited Paul Corcoran to provide an update on the review of the LEP sub-boards.

Paul Corcoran reported that the review of the LEP sub-boards was progressing well and a report had been prepared which would seek to ensure greater diversity of Board membership and at a sector level, as well as looking to improve location representation. He explained that the Digital and Creative Sector Board would test the proposals and look to expand its membership. Consideration was also being given to improving the communications between Sector Boards and the LEP Board.

Elaine Bowker informed the Board that a Task Group had been established and thanked Amanda Lyne and Angela White for progressing this in her absence. In addition to Elaine, as Equality and Diversity Champion, the group includes Paul Corcoran, Angela White and Amanda Lyne. The Group had drafted terms of reference which would be circulated to Board Members. The Task Group was action focused and would be meeting again on 14 October, to which all Board Members were invited and an update would be provided at the next Board meeting.

Dr Aileen Jones, LCR Combined Authority, reported that in relation to Minute 369 – Local Industrial Strategy Position Statement policy discussions were being held with a number of stakeholders and Board Members would be invited to attend.

In relation Minute 372, subject to the Board's approval, it was proposed that Councillor Pat Hackett would represent the Board at the Mersey Dee Alliance. Councillor Hackett also represented LCR Combined Authority and Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council at the Alliance and would provide updates to the Board as required.

It was AGREED that:-

- (i) an update on the progress of the Diversity and Inclusion Task Group be provided at the next meeting of the Board; and
- (ii) Councillor Pat Hackett represent the LEP Board at the Mersey Dee Alliance.

376. UPDATE ON NP11 LEPS' ENERGY & CLEAN GROWTH REPORT (P/PR)

The Board received a presentation from James Johnson, which provided an update on the developments of the NP11 LEP's Energy and Clean Growth report.

The Board was advised that the findings of the NP11 LEP's Energy and Clean Growth report would be presented to the Northern Powerhouse Minister in November 2019 for consideration. The presentation highlighted the key energy challenges for the North, which recognised the importance of clean growth. To support the development of the Energy and Clean Growth at a City Region level, the Low Carbon Economy Board would become the Clean Growth Board and would monitor progress.

The initial findings of the Energy and Clean Growth report acknowledged the demand for energy by business and domestic use. The report currently contained 10 recommendations, two were of particular interest to the City Region as they related to off shore wind and the recent announcement by Central Government that they would release new areas to support further off shore wind development.

It was noted that hydrogen for public transport was well emphasised within the report, along with other aspects such as electric vehicles. The report also considered how innovation, through devolved budgets, would support green finance and the low

carbon sector. As the report reflected the North as a region, tidal energy did not feature strongly.

In terms of next steps, the Board was advised that the LCR Combined Authority Policy Team would consider the report in further detail but due to the timeframe for submission the report could not be brought back to this Board for consideration.

The Board recognised the significant importance of tidal energy and the benefits it could bring to the City Region and the North. The Board therefore requested that the NP11 report reflect the importance of tidal energy.

It was AGREED that:-

- (i) the recent and upcoming changes to governance and administrative arrangements relating to Low Carbon Economy in the Liverpool City Region with the creation of a Clean Growth Board be noted;
- (ii) the valuable contribution made by Amanda Lyne, the outgoing Chair and other members of the Low Carbon Economy Board be recognised;
- (iii) the Clean Growth Board be convened by January 2020 and be a key partner in the production of an LCR Energy Strategy which is aligned with the Local Industrial Strategy and input and endorsement sought from the LEP Board prior to its adoption;
- (iv) delegation be granted to the LEP Chair and Managing Director to work on the Board's behalf with the Combined Authority Energy and Environment Policy Lead to ensure that Liverpool City Regions interests are fully represented in the final NP11 Energy and Clean Growth Report; and
- (v) feedback be provided to the NP11 of the Liverpool City Region's request that Tidal Energy feature prominently within the Energy and Clean Growth report.

377. EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS ADVISORY BOARD (V)

The Board received a verbal update from Tony Reeves, Chief Executive, Liverpool City Council who explained that Mayor J Anderson OBE, the LCR Combined Authority Portfolio Holder for Education, Employment and Skills and his Deputy Portfolio Holder, Councillor P Sinnott, were developing a briefing note which would set out the proposed focus for employment and skills in the City Region.

It was advised that Mayor J Anderson OBE envisaged that the Portfolio would focus on improving educational attainment across the City Region by working with the constituent Local Authorities. Furthermore, there was also a determination to have more vocational opportunities available in schools, as it was recognised, that for a small cohort of learners the school environment did not provide them with the stimulus they required. There was also recognition that employers needed to be empowered to set the skills agenda for the City Region and the Employment and Skills Advisory Board would undertake the commissioning function of skills.

Elaine Bowker welcomed the proposals and referred to examples which were already available for young learners to access vocational training and stressed the importance of providing high technical and professional vocational training.

Metro Mayor S Rotheram emphasised the importance of changing employers' views of vocational training and encouraging them to view it as a credible alternative to academia.

The Board welcomed the ambition and the collaboration proposed by Mayor J Anderson OBE as portfolio holder.

Mark Basnett, noted that in order for the proposals to be successful across the City Region, then it had to work for SMEs who were already experiencing difficulty with the Apprenticeship Levy. He highlighted that the work undertaken by the Skills Brokers was vital in understanding and supporting the needs of SMEs.

It was AGREED that the update be noted.

378. BREXIT PREPARATION (V)

Board Members were informed that Brexit preparations continued across the City Region. In particular, the Growth Hub Brokers had been trained to look for key issues when speaking with local businesses, such as trade and certification issues. The LCR Combined Authority and LEP had commissioned the Growth Platform to lead an intensive piece of work to identify the number of foreign owned companies in the City Region and understand their future decision-making strategies. Through this work, the LCR Combined Authority was working with constituent Local Authorities to advise them of the support available.

The Board noted that a number of businesses were expressing concern regarding the ongoing uncertainty surrounding Brexit and were holding back investment as a consequence of this.

Tony Reeves, Chief Executive, Liverpool City Council, reported that the blue light services had developed responses to emergencies which may arise out of the implications of Brexit. He also explained how the public sector infrastructure would be under an increasing in burden, if the country were to leave the European Union without a deal.

Mark Bousfield, Director of Commercial Development and Investment, LCR Combined Authority, reported that the LCR Combined Authority would be looking to establish a Brexit Resilience Fund at their meeting on 4 October 2019.

The Board recognised the importance of sharing information with businesses to support them in the coming months. It was suggested that a number of case studies be prepared explaining where to seek support in particular circumstances.

It was AGREED that:-

- (i) the updated be noted; and
- (ii) a number of case studies be prepared explaining where businesses can seek support and be shared with the business community.

379. LOCAL GROWTH FUND (V)

Tony Wade, Finance Director, LCR Local Enterprise Partnership, reported that the performance dashboard had been circulated to all Board Members. Overall the Local Growth Fund performance had been rated green, however, despite this rating locally there were three areas of concern which related to level of uncommitted funds, the pace of spend and the impacts and outputs of the Fund.

Mark Bousfield, Director of Commercial Development and Investment, LCR Combined Authority, shared with the Board proposals to improve the spend on projects which had committed funds and addressing the larger scale projects which weren't on site. The Board was advised that for LGF there was £313million awarded and £49million remained available following allocation through the original process and the two SIF rounds and calls for Skills Capital. For 2019/20, the forecast given to Central Government was that £83million of LGF would be spent this year, to date £10.5m of the £83m had been dispersed, which was a cause for concern.

Board Members were informed that when the highways schemes were on site then the spend would be aggressive and performance would improve. It was also noted that spend in the areas of secondary skills capital and land and property would help to improve performance.

Finally, the Board was advised that as a result of SIF Round 2, a gross pipeline of projects of the value of £437million had been generated and this far exceeded the funds available but over-programming was deliberate to anticipate the receipt of further funds in the future. Of the latest call, £14.6m had already been approved and a further £90million was expected to be approved before Christmas.

It was AGREED that the update be noted.

380. LEP DELIVERY PLAN & MID-YEAR REVIEW (P)

The Board considered a report from Mark Basnett, Managing Director, LCR Local Enterprise Partnership which provided an update on the Mid-Year Review process, which all LEPs were subject to.

The Mid-Year Review for the LCR Local Enterprise Partnership would be held on Wednesday 25 September 2019. The review would focus on the local arrangements for implementing independent scrutiny of the LEP, a review of the 2018-19 LGF delivery data returns and understanding the strategic importance of the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS). As part of the preparations for the Mid-Year Review, discussions had taken place with CLoG who were aware of the great work achieved by the LCR Combined Authority. Furthermore, the Growth Company had now been legally registered and would be formally launched by the end of September 2019. The Board were also presented with a proposed Dashboard to monitor performance against the LEP Delivery Plan which would be subject to review in the Annual Performance Review.

It was AGREED that:-

- (i) the date of the LEP Mid-Year Review be noted;
- (ii) the purpose and structure of the review as outlined in this paper be noted;

- (iii) the commitment to bring back the results to the LEP Board either through written correspondence or at a future meeting be noted; and
- (iv) the LEP Delivery Plan Dashboard be accepted as the means of reporting to the Board on performance against the LEP Delivery Plan.

381. CHAIR'S UPDATE (V)

Mr A. Hamid MBE, reported on the arrangements for the national LEP network at which all 38 LEPs from across the Country were represented. He explained that Chairs' attendance at network events was sporadic and as such a review of the network governance and representation was being undertaken. He advised that as part of this review a regional Board network was to be established which would provide Board Members from two of the constituent LEPs on to the National LEP Network Board. Furthermore, each of the LEP Chairs on the National Board would be allocated a portfolio of responsibility to be determined at a future date.

Mr A Hamid MBE, provided an update on the Government's recent announcement of the Towns Fund. He advised Board Members that further clarity was being sought on how the Fund would be devolved to the City Region.

The Chair went on to provide feedback from the recent Convention of the North held on 13 September 2019 in Rotherham and explained that he would be attending the forthcoming Party Conferences. The Chair also referred to the preparations for the International Business Festival 2020 and requested that LEP representation be included on the working group who were driving forward the arrangements for the Festival.

The Board were also advised that the LEP Annual Conference would be taking place on 19 November at the ACC, Liverpool. The focus of this conference would be on stimulating high growth, business resilience and young people.

The Chair invited the Board's consideration of Trade Union representation on the LEP Board. Mayor Rotherham strongly supported this and proposed that he invite a TUC representative to join the Board to effectively represent all Unions. This was agreed by the Board.

In conclusion, the Chair reported that John Syvret would be standing down from the Board with immediate effect. He also reported that after six years on the LEP Board, Amanda Lyne, was attending her last Board meeting. The Chair thanked Amanda for her devotion and challenge to the work of the LCR Local Enterprise Partnership in particular in Clean Growth and explained that with Amanda's valuable specialist experience she would continue to work closely with the LEP.

Minutes 366 to 381 be received as a correct record on the 19th day of November 2019.

Chairperson of the Board

(The meeting closed at 11.08 am)