

## **LIVERPOOL CITY REGION LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP**

At a meeting of the Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership held in the Totally Wicked Stadium (St Helens RLFC), McManus Drive, Peasey Cross, St Helens, WA9 3AL on Thursday, 21st November, 2019 the following Members were

### **PRESENT:**

Mr A Hamid MBE, Chairperson of the Board  
Prof Dame Janet Beer  
Elaine Bowker  
Paul Corcoran  
Cllr Pat Hackett  
Dr Jon Hague  
Mike Hulme  
Dr Liz Mear  
Laura Pye  
Metro Mayor S Rotheram

### **APOLOGIES**

Mayor J Anderson OBE  
Chris Fry  
Angela White OBE  
Mark Whitworth

### **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE**

Jenny Sibden, Co-Director of Cities and Local Growth Unit  
Stephen Speed, LCR LEP Senior Government Sponsor  
Mark Basnett, Managing Director LCR LEP  
Tony Wade, Finance Director LCR LEP  
Mick Allen Cities and Local Growth Unit  
Frank Rogers, LCR CA CEO  
John Fogarty, LCR CA Director of Corporate Resources and Section 73 Officer  
Mark Bousfield, LCR CA Director of Commercial Development and Investment  
Aileen Jones, Assistant Director of Policy & Strategic Commissioning, LCR CA  
Tony Reeves, CEO Liverpool City Council  
Colin Money Penny, Democratic Services Officer, LCR CA

### **WELCOME FROM COUNCILLOR R MCCAULEY, PORTFOLIO HOLDER: ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND HOUSING, ST HELEN'S METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Dave Hutchinson, the General Manager of St Helens RLFC, welcomed the Board to the Totally Wicked Stadium and provided an overview of the history of the Club and its very proud and key role within the local community.

Councillor R McCauley, Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration and Housing at St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council, welcomed Board Members to St Helens, remarking that St Helens RLFC was making a significant contribution to St Helens. Councillor McCauley then provided a presentation on the ongoing economic development and regeneration schemes taking place within the Borough explaining the new economic approach being taken by the Council, the sources of funding and

the main areas which were the focus for investment and new Housing. The intention was to create over 5,000 new jobs. There would be a chance to see a “Glass Futures” presentation after the meeting.

The Chair, Mr Asif Hamid MBE, thanked Councillor McCauley for a very informative presentation and also the ambitions the investments represented offering the support of the LEP Board where necessary. He then moved to open the meeting and introduced Jenny Dibden and Stephen Speed who were in attendance. Jenny is the Co-Director of the Cities and Local Growth Unit as well as Director of Science, Research and Innovation at BEIS and Stephen is the LEP’s Senior Government Sponsor and is Director at BEIS dealing with Nuclear, previously Director of Energy Development at DECC, they were both welcomed to the meeting.

### **382. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Declarations of Interest were stated by Paul Corcoran in respect of an Agent Marketing contract and by Elaine Bowker in respect of a Skills Capital Application but Mark Bousfield advised that neither conflicted with the agenda items for this meeting.

### **383. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Board considered the minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2019 and they were received as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Elaine Bowker provided an update on the progress of the Diversity and Inclusion Task Group and this included reference to the updated Statement, an audit of where the gaps were to feed into the recruitment process and her meeting with Lynn Collins. Outcomes of the survey were being progressed.

Mark Basnett provided an update to the effect that feedback had been provided to the NP11 about the request of the Liverpool City Region that tidal energy feature prominently within the Energy and Clean Growth report. This had been a valuable intervention by the LEP.

### **384. SIF AND LGF UPDATE**

The Board received a presentation firstly from Tony Wade, LEP Finance Director, who referred to the previously circulated Dashboard for the LGF Q2 Data Return and an attending briefing on that return. He reported that the return was at Green RAG rating, as had been all previous returns, and that the LGF award value for 2019-20 had now been exceeded. He further reported that 83% of the total award had now been committed up from 77% at the end of 2018/19. Not only was overall LGF performance at Quarter 2 rated Green but the number of individual project red or amber/red ratings had reduced from 12 to 8 which was very welcome. The Board were commended to approve the return for submission to BEIS subject to any comments of which there were none from the Board nor from John Fogarty (LCR CA Director of Corporate Resources) who is the Section 73 Officer for the LEP and who was present at the meeting.

Tony Wade reminded the Board that the return presented the position at 30 September but that a more contemporaneous view would be provided by Mark Bousfield, Director of Commercial Development and Investment at the LCR Combined Authority who then provided a detailed update on the Strategic Investment Fund (SIF). First of all he referred to the LGF and that only £37M was still available

for commitment as the rest had been approved, committed or disbursed. The three objectives were Transport and Highways, Skills Capital and Business Growth.

Transport and Highway projects which were complex and had slower lead in times, were proving particularly difficult to take forward and a small number were not progressing. There would be a challenge to replace them with other schemes if they did not proceed. In relation to Skills Capital funding, the LCRCA would be asked to call in a number of projects in December while the challenge for Business Growth items would be to discover which Project would deliver most quickly. Tony Wade defined what constituted Business Growth and how it was distinguished from infrastructure.

Mark Bousfield referred to the disbursement data and how Q1 data was better than Q2 but extrapolating from history it was expected that Q3 and Q4 would be better than Q1 and Q2. Highways would be the key to that. The LCRCA was on course to approve £180M of business this year and once projects were approved they would be tracked and their outputs measured. In summary performance was improving, there was an improvement in taking schemes from amber to green and the support of politicians and officers in this process was proving critical.

Elaine Bowker commented in respect of Skills Capital that the “push and pull” factor was crucial and Mark Bousfield said that only if projects went ahead could their outputs be checked. He suggested that ways of working needed to change with a move from the previously reactive system to the present structured intervention which was marked by looking for strategic and pro-active investment. The ambition was to in future invest in a way that responded to the Local Industrial Strategy as the key guiding document.

Jon Hague at this point argued that a key driver for change in the future must now be related to the climate change emergency. He outlined industry leading research by Unilever to develop smart sustainable packaging to replace plastic and so reduce the immense damage it caused. This was being carried out at the Port Sunlight National Packaging Innovation Centre. There was good support for this from Wirral Council and the LCRCA and Government support was being sought. Academic support would also be welcome.

Mark Bousfield then discussed uncertainty arising principally from Brexit but not solely. There was a huge demand for funding but no certainty of it so this needed to be treated cautiously and realistically. A third aspect to understand was ambition and vision and mayoral aspiration to proceed with the digital loop and the tidal project, despite the austerity measures which local authorities had been placed under. The intention was to make sure that the Local Industrial Strategy aligned with the key strategic projects.

Following a discussion on the development of the Knowledge Quarter, BRC funding, the two still outstanding “Strength in Places Fund” bids and the major opportunity for investment in the Bio-Tech Sector as well as the need to rectify the very poor health outcomes in the City Region, Mark Bousfield concluded his presentation with an examination of the SME Growth Programme and the future direction of the Strategic Investment Fund.

The SME programme included provision for grants and soft loans, Brexit resilience funding, tech enable start ups, inward investment and skills and apprenticeship brokerage. The Metro Mayor, Steve Rotheram, made clear that the Brexit funding although initially prompted by the possibility of a “no deal” Brexit was not just for that

possibility and Tony Reeves confirmed that Brexit uncertainty did feed into confidence and was an issue so LCRCA funding was vital.

With regard to tech enabled start ups, Paul Corcoran said that it was most helpful that the digital and creative sector could see that their concerns were being recognised by the LCRCA. The Chair, Asif Hamid, said that this had to start somewhere and that VC money was intended to kick start further investment. Frank Rogers believed that the certainty of future funding was critical to programmes such as Adult Education and Households into Work. Tony Reeves agreed and added it was also all about achieving successes and attracting evidence led investment in the City Region by creating the conditions that attracted venture capitalists and could produce accelerated growth.

Councillor Hackett indicated how vital the support of the LCRCA was proving for “Big Ticket” investment in Wirral and Asif Hamid asked that thought be given to the development of a simplified outline of funding opportunities and the criteria involved as he believed this could prove very helpful in attracting business. The present system could, he thought, be ambiguous and confusing. Paul Corcoran and Asif Hamid both praised the Scrutiny Panel learning session organised by Democratic Services at the LCRCA the previous day as this had proved to be an excellent opportunity to raise the level of understanding amongst LCRCA elected Members about how the LEP was constituted and what it did. The intention was to organise a similar event in 2020 to bring a range of stakeholders to raise understanding and assess how each could better work together for the further improvement of the economy of the City Region.

In terms of the future direction of the SIF, Mark Bousfield said that the important question to ask would be “what problems do we want to solve?” There was a need for a more pro-active and strategic approach, to show ambition for growth and to lever in money from a variety of sources as well as prepare for competitive bids. Jon Hague commented that the petro-chemical industry was a good example of a sector that could grow into an industry of the future in which this City Region could lead.

It was AGREED that the LGF Q2 Data Return be approved for submission and the updates be noted and TW and MB be thanked for their presentations.

### **385. LOCAL INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY UPDATE**

The Board considered a written update and a presentation by Dr Aileen Jones, the Acting Director of Policy and Strategic Commissioning at LCRCA concerning the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS).

Initially Aileen Jones focused on the engagement and consultation process that had been used to gather the evidence basis for the LIS, the opportunities that may be available in the economy and what types of intervention that could be needed. The process had been titled “LCR Listens” and featured various forms of engagement from on street interviews and focus groups to policy workshops with various stakeholders.

As a result of the process, the gathered views were being reflected upon and utilised in the drafting of the strategy and directing an understanding of the required policy interventions to help build a competitive and inclusive economy that would sustain long term growth and benefit all residents. It was a vision of thriving and strong places which were attractive for living, working and visiting.

The socio-economic challenges, such as a low current business density were understood but the intention was to build on the many assets of the region and connect to new opportunities and create a carbon neutral, inclusive economy with “Tech for Good” at the forefront.

Paul Corcoran applauded the vision and particularly the low carbon aspiration but he did think that the approach may be too broad in its focus. However Aileen Jones then suggested that she was moving on to explain that there were to be four competency led ambitions around a digitised, sustainable, creative and innovative economy and they related to:-

- (i) sustainable industrial technologies;
- (ii) Better Healthcare and Health Innovation;
- (iii) Applied Creativity; and
- (iv) Social Innovation.

The Metro Mayor, Steve Rotheram, emphasised that the approach being taken was very much in accordance with the national guidelines and it was strongly evidence based so that the feedback received was guiding the LIS. Paul Corcoran agreed but suggested that there needed to be more clarity on what “applied creativity” and the other categories actually meant. Tony Reeves commented that an example of applied creativity might be how culture provided distinctiveness to the Knowledge Quarter proposals.

Aileen Jones said that there was still much to do in the evaluation of what was needed and she approached the issue of policy development and explained key issue of people and business productivity in the City Region with 26% of the working age population inactive through a range of reasons including health and particularly mental health factors. There were large numbers of people without qualifications and low business density so there was a growing need for early intervention to tackle poor health outcomes. The improvement of careers advice and the skills and apprenticeship hub would help in this regard.

Other plans and policy ideas were then discussed including neighbourhood regeneration, the invigoration of town centres, the “One Front Door” investment platform, overcoming the financial barriers to innovation and the creation of the infrastructure for a fully integrated transport network. The next steps would be to continue to draft the strategy and consult stakeholders while continuing to push forward with the programme which was seeking to ensure the LIS was launched in March 2020.

A question was raised by the Chair regarding who the “audience” was for the Strategy and Steve Rotheram it was designed to show Government how taxpayer funding would be allocated in accordance with a strict evidence base of what was needed. Jon Hague added that it was likely that the LIS could generate interest from some stakeholders and the wider population and he asked that thought be given to developing a short presentation version which could be used in future to demonstrate the purpose and benefits of the LIS so that they could be more widely understood.

Elaine Bowker asked that consideration be given to the need for information on digital, numerical and literacy skills. More information on the changing nature of perceptions was requested as was the interaction of the Strategy with “Brand

Liverpool". Aileen Jones requested that any further comments on the draft LIS be fed through to her and the team as soon as possible.

It was AGREED that the ongoing process made in the development of the Local Industrial Strategy and the intention for the Combined Authority to submit the final Local Industrial Strategy to Government at the end of March 2020 be noted and any further comments on the presentation submitted to the meeting be forwarded to Aileen Jones as soon as possible. Thanks were expressed to Aileen Jones for her presentation.

### **386. SKILLS**

The Board considered a written submission and a verbal update from Mark Basnett concerning Skills. The report outlined the process to appoint employer members to the refreshed Employment and Skills Board and the proposed Employment and Skills Governance arrangements.

Mark Basnett explained to the Board how there had been a number of developments including Government guidance and the stepping down of the Chair, which had necessitated a need to re-assess the governance approach to employment and skills. As part of the re-focused and re-formed Board, six employers representatives were required to be appointed through the LEP.

Paul Corcoran reminded the Board of the youth engagement work of Ben Dalton from Agent Academy. Ben, who had attended the previous meeting, had been examining ideas to bring fresh younger voices into the LEP process through a new Sub Board across the City Region and he indicated that a report would be submitted hopefully to the next meeting. The intention would be for the Chair of the Sub Board to sit on the full LEP Board.

It was AGREED that:-

- (i) the approach detailed in the submitted report to securing employer membership of the Employment and Skills Board be endorsed; and
- (ii) the proposal that appointments to the Employment and Skills Board are made jointly by the Chair of the LEP Board, the Metro Mayor and the Portfolio Lead for Education, Employment and Skills following an open nomination approach be approved.

### **387. GOOD BUSINESS FESTIVAL**

The Board were introduced to Ste Lingard from the LCRCA and Sue Finnigan from Culture Liverpool who were in attendance to make a presentation regarding the 2020 Good Business Festival.

There was an initial examination of the lessons learned from the original International Festival of Business and so how this Festival was very much being planned around what businesses in the City Region had suggested they would like to see contained in a Business Festival. The theme of the event was ethical business and appointments had been made for Culture Liverpool in association with Hemingway Design to produce the Festival. This was not going to be a Conference but rather a Festival of cultural importance and global relevance which would be both impactful

and thought provoking. It was considered that in 2020 business should be about doing good so a busy and lively event on this theme and the idea of culture meeting business was planned.

There were a range of high profile globally known speakers being targeted along with strategic and media partners integral to building a legacy. The events would be held at a number of venues right across the City Region and different types of spaces were being sought. The Festival would say that “Profit Comes from Purpose” and show that a good business would produce social benefits. The governance arrangements were explained with the LCRCA bearing the ultimate responsibility for the event which would be developed by an appointed Project Team. Around 50 events/activities were planned. The Project timeline was set out with a London launch event planned for January 2020. At its conclusion the Festival would be rigorously assessed and evaluated.

Mark Bousfield said that the intention was for high quality participatory events so it was not just about getting large numbers although significant attendance was anticipated. In a response to a question from the Chair, he indicated that work was underway through Arup to engage with local businesses on the concept and demonstrate the benefits that the Festival would bring to the LCR. The Metro Mayor understood that there was a need from the devolution agreement to undertake the Conference but he was sure that this format would produce beneficial results and he emphasised the importance of the ethical theme and said that there would be co-terminosity on what was being said and what would be done.

As Unilever was ambitious to be a global leader in sustainable business, Jon Hague suggested that it was a possibility that his CEO may wish to have some involvement and Liz Mear also said she would look to engage businesses in her area as the NHS has a major TED licence. The Chair said that it was good to see this change in direction and he praised the chosen theme and he asked that the timetable be re-distributed to all colleagues involved with the LEP. Mark Basnett suggested that the Chair of the new Youth Sub Board be engaged in some way in the development of the Festival.

It was AGREED that the contents of the update be noted and that the Board be further updated on progress at future meetings. Thanks were expressed to Ste Lingard and to Sue Finnigan for their presentation.

### **388. DIGITAL AND CREATIVE SUB BOARD UPDATE**

The Board considered a verbal update from Paul Corcoran, Co-Chair of the Digital and Creative Sub Board on the recent work and activity of the Sub Board.

Paul Corcoran said the Sub Board now had 14 members and it was guided by five pillars of business growth, skills and talent, place making, ensuring the right infrastructure and access to markets and investment. The membership as yet was not truly representative of the whole LCR and a piece of work was needed to attempt to rectify that and make the group representative of all ideas, all sizes of organisation and all geographic areas. Recruitment he thought needed to be looked at in a different way. Councillor Hackett suggested he may be able to provide some contacts in Wirral. More details would be provided about progress to future meetings.

The Chair said that he wished to encourage LEP members when and where they could to attend Sub Board meetings as he believed they would find them of interest.

It was AGREED that the contents of the update be noted.

### **389. CHAIR'S UPDATE**

The Chair Mr Asif Hamid MBE, reported on the anticipated membership of the LEP of Lynn Collins from the trade unions in February 2020 and he re-emphasised the point made earlier about the success of the Scrutiny Committee event on the work of the LEP held the previous day at No 1 Mann Island. The event had lasted over two hours and had been very beneficial in helping the 16 Councillors present to understand how the LEP worked and it was certainly similarly helpful to the LEP. He, Paul Corcoran, Mark Bousfield and Mark Basnett had all attended and there would be a wrap up session in December.

The Chair also reported to the Board on the review of the Growth Platform, the great success of Digital Marketing Week in Liverpool with the participation of over 6,000 business delegates and the similar success of the recent LEP Conference. The structure of the Conference had been excellent and there had been important contributions by the young people present. Jon Hague fully endorsed this last point and was impressed with the contribution from Apeejay Surrendra, owners of Typhoo.

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Chairperson of the Board

(The meeting closed at 11.15 am)