

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

At a meeting of the Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership held via Zoom on Thursday, 3 June 2021 the following Members were

PRESENT:

Mr A Hamid MBE (Chairperson of the Board)
Paul Corcoran
Melinda Acutt
Professor Dame Janet Beer
Lynn Collins
Dr Jonathan Hague
Mike Hulme
Laura Pye
Metro Mayor Steve Rotheram
Councillor Janette Williamson
Mark Whitworth

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Graham Morgan, Leader, Knowsley MBC
Councillor Mike Wharton, Leader, Halton BC
Murryam Anwar, BEIS
Mark Basnett, Managing Director LCR LEP
Mark Bousfield, Executive Director of Commercial Development and Investment, LCRCA
Kirsty McLean, Executive Director of Policy and Strategic Commissioning, LCRCA
Simon Reid, Growth Platform
Frank Rogers, Chief Executive, LCRCA
Ellie Stanborough, BEIS
Tony Wade, Finance Director, LCR LEP
Ste Lingard, The Good Business Festival
Robin Kemp, The Good Business Festival
Ben Heywood, Investment Manager, LCRCA
Eleanor Fielding, Development Manager, LCRCA

APOLOGIES:

Mayor Joanne Anderson
Elaine Bowker
Angela White OBE
Tony Reeves, CEX Liverpool CC
Jill Coule, Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer, LCRCA
John Fogarty, Executive Director of Corporate Services, LCRCA
Dr Aileen Jones, Interim Executive Director of Strategic Delivery
Mick Allen, BEIS

463. WELCOME AND DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS (V)

The Chair, Asif Hamid MBE opened the meeting and welcomed 2 new attendees to their first meeting of the Board.

Melinda Acutt and Councillor Mike Wharton were attending their first meeting of the LEP Board.

The Chair reported that Melinda Acutt was the new Chair of the Clean Growth Board.

The Chair also congratulated Councillor Mike Wharton on his appointment as Leader of Halton Borough Council.

No Declarations of interest were submitted by Board Members.

464. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING (P)

The minutes of the Board Meeting held on 25 March 2021 were agreed.

The Chair, Asif Hamid MBE, asked Mark Basnett to provide an update on any matters arising.

At this point, the Chair welcomed colleagues from BEIS to the meeting and in particular, Murryam Anwar.

Mark Basnett, Managing Director of the Local Enterprise Partnership firstly reported that apologies had been submitted by Mayor Joanne Anderson, Elaine Bowker and Angela White OBE.

Mark Basnett indicated that there wasn't a great deal of matters arising and the main item on Freeports would be considered as part of the agenda for the meeting. He had circulated a report with proposals for the recruitment of members which the LEP was leading on, working with colleagues from the Combined Authority and welcomed the views of the Board during discussion of the item, later in the meeting.

Mark Basnett highlighted two other items for the Board's information:-

LEP Annual Performance Review

Mark Basnett informed the Board that the outcome of the LEP Annual Performance review was received on 7 May 2021 and all requirements and expectations of Government had been met and it was a positive review.

Murryam Anwar from BEIS thanked the Chair for his welcome and stated that in respect of the Liverpool LEP, year on year had been one of the exemplar LEPs. She added that the criteria slightly changed this year, in terms of the ratings and Liverpool had continued to be one of the top performing LEPs. In relation to the LEP review, Murryam reported that she had been speaking with Mark Basnett about using Liverpool LEP as an example of operating in a Mayoral Combined Authority setting. She acknowledged the time taken by Members who contribute to the Board and expressed her appreciation.

Mark Basnett thanked Murryam for her kind comments and agreed that it was credit to the exceptional Board Members, who were the driving force of the LEP. Mark Basnett referred to the ongoing Government review into LEPs, in part due to mixed performance in some locations where there were geographical issues, amongst others. It was hoped that the review would progress well and does not cause any significant changes and asked the Chair, Asif Hamid MBE to mention it as part of the Chair's update item.

Racial Equality Review

Mark Basnett reported that following the commission of Innervision to undertake the review, a draft report had been received a few days ago and the Team were working

through it. He added that owing to the comprehensive nature of the report and the short timescale it had not been possible to share it with Board Members yet. Mark indicated that the final outcome and recommendations could be shared with Board Members for comment before the next meeting in July 2021 and final approval of this important piece of work.

465. METRO MAYOR'S UPDATE

The Chair, Asif Hamid MBE, on behalf of the Board, took the opportunity to congratulate Metro Mayor Steve Rotheram on his recent re-election. He added that continuity and working in partnership had been key to the success of the LEP and invited the Metro Mayor to provide the Board with an update on his manifesto.

The Metro Mayor, Steve Rotheram was pleased to report that the election result was the biggest political mandate of any politician in either Merseyside or Liverpool City Region's history. He felt that the election result dispelled some of the myths around the roles of the Metro Mayor and the Combined Authority and what they do. He added that there was still a lot of work to do to communicate the work of the Metro Mayor and the Combined Authority and work to get a clear message out on the manifesto and the Corporate Plan had been accelerated. The Metro Mayor referred to the appointment of Portfolio Holders, including new members from Liverpool and Halton and he looked forward to working together. He had also had a meeting with the 6 Local Authority Chief Executives to discuss acceleration of programme delivery building on work undertaken over the past 3 years. The Metro Mayor stated the need to prove to the Government that the best way to deliver quickly and provide better value for money was through devolution, and the Combined Authority had more funding opportunities to bid into that Local Authorities individually were not able to access. He affirmed that his priorities had remained the same from day one, stimulating the economy, post Brexit and post-covid and putting more emphasis on the skills agenda, especially apprenticeships. The Metro Mayor also referred to discussions with M10 colleagues on increased local devolution and the work in the City Region on business growth programmes. He concluded by stating that with the blessing of the 6 Local Authority Leaders, development work was being undertaken by Sir Paul Grant to look at issues in the education system by earlier intervention to address the skills gap to supply the demand from employers and ensure that young people reach their full potential in the further and higher education sector. It was hoped that some initial findings would emerge over the coming months.

The Chair, Asif Hamid, MBE thanked the Metro Mayor for his leadership over the past 3 years. He welcomed his reappointment as Mayoral Advisor and stated that work to recruit a Deputy from the business community was taking place. He added that exciting times were ahead.

The Metro Mayor Steve Rotheram referred to the creation of a Deputy Metro Mayor position and that Councillor Janette Williamson had been appointed.

466. MEMBERS UPDATE (V)

The Chair, Asif Hamid MBE invited Board Members to provide an update on the current position within their sector.

Councillor Janette Williamson firstly thanked the Metro Mayor and stated that it was a real honour to be appointed as the first Deputy Metro Mayor. She added that she was also very pleased to continue being the member responsible for the inclusive economy and third sector portfolio. Councillor Williamson referred to the discussions with the

Metro Mayor and other Leaders about delivering at pace and how she would be looking closely at how regeneration could work in tandem, complimented with community led growth. She thanked everyone, including the Wirral Chamber and Wirral Council and stated that the regeneration of Woodside was taking shape. She concluded by stating that in relation to large scale regeneration, it was important to embed social value, good employment practices, running alongside the community wealth building strategy, supporting local businesses. It was important that businesses supported the community they were trading in, helping it to grow and thrive and Councillor Williamson was looking forward to working with partners and the third sector to take forward the agenda.

Mark Whitworth informed the Board that it was good news. There had been no covid issues and the business continued to recover well. Recruitment was taking place and the port was continuing to attract new investment. He added that the company had rebased in a number of areas, such as the environment. Mark stated that they were a close neighbour to many businesses in the Region and a lot of good work was taking place in relation to the environmental agenda which hadn't been communicated or publicised enough. There were lots of initiatives which he would welcome the opportunity to be able to talk about at a future meeting. Mark referred to the national 'Net Zero' event which he found interesting. As a business, they had started to address the challenges set and had signed up to the 'race to net zero' initiative. He added that a lot of work was ongoing with the Sefton taskforce around education. There are a lot of highly skilled jobs in the sector for which they recruit from around the world, so work was ongoing to look at attracting those skills locally and develop skills for the future. He concluded by stating that they were in a strong position coming out of covid, they were changing their outlook as a business and were determined to be seen and recognised as a good neighbour and business for the future.

The Chair, Asif Hamid MBE, welcomed the news of continuation of growth and acceleration of jobs.

Professor Dame Janet Beer firstly congratulated the Metro Mayor, Steve Rotheram on his re-election and thanked him for his recent letter. She stated that it had been a pleasure to work with him as a Mayoral Advisor and she looked forward to continuing that work in other ways, especially in relation to skills and retainment of graduates in the City Region, climate futures and research and development programmes.

Professor Dame Janet Beer stated that she was aware that some Board Members had received correspondence regarding the postponement of graduation ceremonies. She informed the Board that a decision was taken to postpone the events due to the ongoing uncertainty and the impact on planning the events with the increased restrictions and the news had not been well received. There were plans in place to hold the events weekly through the Autumn period. In relation to learning provision, there would continue to be a blended approach, although again, there was opposition to this approach, especially from Parents. She added that lectures were online which students preferred and a lot of tutorials and seminars etc, were face to face. The Sector was working hard supporting pandemic recovery and resilience, in particular some good work around the pilot events. There was also a lot of activity around race equality, including an audit and engaging staff in initiatives around the anniversary of the death of George Floyd. Professor Dame Janet Beer also stated that they were working hard trying not to lose the spirit of collaboration during the pandemic and the effective working around the City Region. Work was ongoing around the Good Business Festival. They were constantly finding ways to improve health outcomes and improve access to higher education. Professor Dame Janet Beer concluded by stating

that the sector would continue to work with the LEP in the lead up to the spending review on all of these areas to ensure a joined-up approach in the City Region.

Laura Pye provided an update in relation to the Visitor Economy. She stated that it was good news that the sector was open again. Caution was needed as most venues were operating at a third of full capacity which had financial implications for viability in the longer term. Employment and skills were a big concern for the sector. There were a number of issues, including the pressure on staff returning to full-time work after being at home on furlough for 15 months and recruitment and skills shortages, particularly in the hospitality sector, as a result of covid and Brexit. She expressed concern around the 21 June 2021 and the need for clarity and enough notice in order to respond. Any delay to the full re-opening would continue to impact on the sector. Laura Pye concluded by stating that it was still tough for the sector and it would be even tougher in the next 3-4 months.

The Chair, Asif Hamid MBE stated that he would raise the matter regarding staff availability later in the meeting for discussion with Board Members.

Dr Jon Hague informed the Board that growth had been good in the first quarter and good cash delivery last year which had been a concern, so overall very positive. The food and refreshment sector had been the star with 10% growth in quarter 1. Research and Development had increased with recruitment to vacancies ongoing. E-commerce in quarter 1 was 66% of business growth, which was quite a statement, although there were still challenges on availability of key raw materials which was a concern.

Dr Hague added that in relation to the return to office working in UK, there would be a hybrid approach with around 40-50% occupancy. This didn't apply in research and development laboratories currently, but work was being undertaken with the University around carrying out experiments from home. He also informed the Board that Unilever were hoping to spin out a £600m business called 'Elida Faberge' which was public knowledge and he was hoping that the business headquarters would be situated in the heart of the 'Knowledge Quarter' in the City Region. They were also looking to get the National Packaging Centre located in the same area and it was good to see economic development projects moving forward.

The Chair, Asif Hamid MBE asked how the international markets compared to the UK.

Dr Jon Hague responded and stated that Europe was the worst performer in quarter 1. Latin America and Asia had grown strongly, so most of the growth was in emerging markets.

Paul Corcoran, Deputy Chair extended his congratulations to the Metro Mayor, Steve Rotheram and Councillor Janette Williamson. He informed the Board that there was relatively positive news. There were lots of new jobs in the sector, a lot of which were being funded by the 'Kickstart' programme, but it was unclear how many of those jobs were going to be permanent in the long term. The programme continued to be an operational nightmare, for both the young people coming through and the businesses trying to administer the programme. Rob Tabb and colleagues at the Combined Authority are providing feedback to Government on the issues being experienced. On a positive note there had been great collaboration between lots of different providers, including Code Nation and Form, adding lots of value in the space between the business and education arena and more of that was welcomed. There had been an increase in freelancers and micro businesses starting up, following businesses reviewing their communications, digital and technology teams, so there was a need to find support for start-ups within the sector. The sector was keen to return to work but there was uncertainty around what the workspace would look like and it would be

beneficial if the Liverpool City Region could lead on a pilot around workspaces. There could be different themes around flexibility, the use of innovation and technology, environment and health. There was still a massive piece of work to do around the business eco-system. He added that there should be a Chief Digital Officer or technological expert who was the expert for all things digital. Work had been undertaken in the Sub-Board with a wish list of what that role would entail.

The Chair, Asif Hamid MBE said he would mention digital and creative further in his update later in the meeting.

Mark Bousfield, Executive Director of Commercial Development and Investment indicated that the Deputy Chair would enjoy the business eco system update. He stated that as an accompaniment to what had already been said, he would provide an update on space in the City Region. Dale Milburn from Knowsley MBC had informed him that Knowsley was running short on industrial space. Although the Combined Authority funded an extra 800,000 sq feet, that was being taken up, demand for space was tight in the industrial market. This was beaten only by space in the 'Knowledge Quarter' and laboratories. Businesses were being turned away due to lack of available space, so the big challenge was to accompany the growing demand with more space.

Melinda Acutt informed the Board that her company, ICS Consulting was an SME with 20 staff. The pandemic had affected the company differently to others. They had moved to home working and experienced enormous growth. Melinda was now running her biggest project ever from home. She was keen to build on the inclusivity benefits that the changes to ways of working had provided. Previously she had worked part-time to fit in with the school-run but was now able to work full-time with flexibility as she was based at home. She informed the Board that the first formal meeting on the Clean Growth Sub Board was scheduled to take place on 11 June 2021 which would agree the terms of reference and identify the workplan for the next 12 months. The short-term focus was likely to be supporting the development of the Combined Authority's 'Net Zero Plan, working with Mark Knowles. She thanked Councillor Gill Wood and Nicola Christie and everyone at Growth Platform for making her welcome. She was hopeful that she could provide more information on the themes and priority areas at the next board meeting. Melinda stated that she had attended some focus groups, including a 'Bank of England' focus group on climate change. Some of the issues being picked up were an anxiety around the amount of work in a short space of time and the need to bring along consumers and the public on the journey. Some customers were driving it, but others were uncertain on what needed to be done. There was concern around the high up-front cost of delivering a green economy and achieving a just and inclusive transition. She concluded by stating that the message coming from business was a clear, stable long-term policy framework in which to make long term investment decisions. In order to achieve this by 2040, businesses needed to get into delivery mode.

Lynn Collins provided the Board with an update on the Trade Union Sector. She felt that a range of positives had emerged from people being allowed to work from home. She added that if we were going to move to a positive world of collaboration, choice and discussion about future ways of working, we need to be careful to incorporate everybody in that process. Not everyone has space at home to work or can afford heat and light during specific daytime hours, so there are issues to be considered via a collaborative approach with high level discussions including a worker voice. Lynn was also concerned that a future world of work shouldn't include gendered workspaces with women at home and men in the workplace. There was a need to think differently, but it was a really exciting time to develop the structure for the future world of work.

Lynn Collins also referred to reports due to be published regarding the impact of covid on shielded and disabled workers which she would circulate to Board Members. Another report based on surveys was on the employment impacts of long covid, something for employers going forward.

Finally, Lynn informed the Board that she was meeting with private sector Unions that afternoon to discuss freeports, amongst other things, to continue to extend the hand of partnership to work together on freeports to create jobs.

Councillor Mike Wharton informed the Board that he had been the new Leader of Halton BC for a few weeks and he found the meeting fascinating, listening to everyone's updates. He was appointed the portfolio holder for Culture, Tourism and the Visitor Economy and he agreed with Laura Pye's comments regarding the issues the sector was facing over the next few months. He felt the pandemic had presented real challenges and he was looking forward to his role as portfolio holder. Councillor Wharton stated that he didn't understand everybody's role and it would help if he knew their background. He added that he had discussed the possibility of arranging a meeting with Mark Basnett and other LEP Members to get a better understanding of how Halton can help the business community. He stressed the importance of working together, especially with regard to land and business space.

The Chair, Asif Hamid MBE stated that there would usually be an induction for new Board Members and Lead Members, but this had not been possible due to a number of issues. This would be picked up separately instead. The Chair invited the Metro Mayor, Steve Rotheram to speak further.

The Metro Mayor, Steve Rotheram felt there was a common thread in Member updates. The past 15 months had been a difficult period for everyone, how do we maximise the opportunities as we emerge from lockdown, how can we go from recovery and plan for growth. He referred to the differing opinions regarding economic growth during the election campaign and stressed that it was not just growth in the City Region that was needed, but exponential growth to catch up to areas who were ahead of us. It was important to be ready to access opportunities from National Government who were looking beyond recovery plans and industrial strategies and get as much funding as possible and a fairer share of UK PLC for the City Region. He stressed that the Liverpool City Region had the distinct advantage of being to work together in partnership which wasn't the case in some of the other LEP areas.

The Chair, Asif Hamid MBE provided an update on his own business which would be going out in the press shortly. The company had just posted results of 60% growth in business in the past 12 months. He also stated that there was information in the press about the business moving, which was not stated in the Director's report. The report stated that the business was continuing to grow and the working from home/hybrid solution would continue to grow. Online demand had grown, in fact the business was turning work away. Picking up on the comment of the joined-up approach in the City Region and with regard to the issues with vacancies and demand for skills, the Chair stressed the need to communicate and publicise the opportunities. He suggested that it was an opportunity to work together and demonstrate the opportunities available and show that the Liverpool City Region was open for business. The Chair suggested that a small sub-group be established to pull everything together, including media and communications Officers with the backing of the Metro Mayor.

It was agreed that Mark Basnett would contact Board Members, Lynn Collins, Paul Corcoran, Laura Pye and Dr Jon Hague.

Mark Basnett, Managing Director of the LEP indicated that there had been numerous conversations with the professional services sector who were experiencing similar challenges to fill vacancies, so it would be beneficial to include them in the piece of work. He added that the sector was very interested in promoting the City Region as a base to work.

Paul Corcoran, Deputy Chair, added that this issue tied into work that he was undertaking with Simon Reid and the sector Chairs around making sure the Board were fully informed about what was happening on the ground. He referred to the incredible Board Members and the various sectors and businesses they represent. There was often a gap between what was shared around sector board table and what was brought to the LEP Board. He informed the Board that Simon Reid had been working with the Sector Board Chairs on ways to ensure that the LEP Board, the Metro Mayor and decision makers remained fully informed of the valuable network that has been built over the years. It was proposed that 2 Sector Board Chairs will present top level findings to the LEP Board at each meeting for a maximum of 8 minutes each followed by a Q&A session. It also presented an opportunity for Sector Board Chairs to request actions of Board members from any of the sectors. Throughout the year, this would be on a rotation basis and they would also be given the opportunity to stay for the rest of the Board Meeting to gain more of an insight into the work of the LEP Board. He indicated that this would also feed into the request from the Chair around positive news stories and re-position the City Region as a great place to live, work, invest and study.

The Chair, Asif Hamid MBE concluded and thanked everyone for their updates. Bringing everything together under one roof would help businesses and help to drive forward growth and delivery.

467. THE GOOD BUSINESS FESTIVAL (PR)

Robin Kemp and Aimee Welsh from the Good Business Festival were in attendance at the meeting to provide the Board with an update on the forthcoming event in July 2021 and set out how the LEP and their networks could get involved.

Robin Kemp gave a presentation which highlighted:-

- The purpose of the Good Business Festival in positioning the City Region as a good place to do business;
- An opportunity, post-pandemic to galvanise businesses in and around the City Region;
- An opportunity for businesses to consider what building back better means for them; and
- The festival programme including key themes over the 3 days and the contingency plans in the event that that restrictions are not eased on 21 June 2021.

Aimee Welsh indicated that following on from the Events Research Pilot and as Liverpool infection rates were on the rise, it was likely that the festival would now be delivered as a hybrid event, with some sessions still at venues to retain the festival feel with smaller physical audiences. Also, by going digital, the festival would reach a larger audience. She added that the programme will largely remain the same. There will be some content online, both live on the day and also released via the website a week later, so all can be watched a week later. Discussions would be taking place in the

coming days to determine which sessions will be physical in content live and which would be streamed at the Everyman Cinema.

Mark Basnett thanked Aimee and Robin for their presentation and asked what the was the particular action required from Board Members?

Aimee Welsh asked Board Members to promote the festival via their networks as much as possible and provide feedback on the most important issues from Board Members' perspective.

Robin Kemp asked for direct feedback on the programme content. He added that this was an opportunity for open discussion and debate. The programme was being published on Monday, so there was still some time to provide feedback before the final programme went live on the website.

Mark Bousfield, Director of Commercial Development and Investment asked if he could make 2 high level comments regarding content and risk.

Mark stated that although the Board hadn't had time to review the content but the range and quality of the individuals and businesses that the Festival had been able to attract was brilliant. He added that McDonalds were going to make a major European announcement at the event. In terms of what the event had set out to do, he endorsed the content.

Mark indicated that a calculated risk was taken in terms of the format and timing of the event. The Team suggested that rather than fight for space in Autumn season, to go first and hold a physical as soon as it was possible. After much consideration, it was decided to take that risk. He stated that if the event format went back to a mixed approach, it was because of a calculated risk, not absence of forethought but credible content building and he recommended it to the Board on that basis.

Mark Basnett asked if the Board had any other comments. He added that the presentation would be circulated to members of the Board. He re-iterated that the information was available on the website from Monday and asked that members share the content as widely as possible to help make the festival a big success.

The Chair, Asif Hamid MBE encouraged everyone to share the information within their networks and support the event.

468. BUSINESS SUPPORT ECO-SYSTEM (PR)

Mark Basnett, Managing Director of the LEP introduced the item. He indicated that it was what the Growth Platform and the LEP was about, so it was important to understand the system and try to provide the glue to put it all together. He handed over to Ben Heywood and Ellie Fielding from the Combined Authority to address the Board.

Ben Heywood, Investment Manager and Ellie Fielding, Development Manager informed the Board that the purpose of the presentation was to update the Board on the Liverpool City Region Innovation and Business Eco-System projects. The presentation highlighted:-

- How more higher growth businesses generate opportunities in terms of job creation and higher value jobs;

- The importance of improving the health and wellbeing of the Liverpool City Region residents;
- The scope of activity which was focussing on non-capital projects and stimulating the activities of the eco-system rather than the physical structure it operated in;
- The vision and aims of the project;
- The 7 themes of an effective eco-system;
- How the scope of the programme was focussed on foundations 2 and 3;
- The method of assessment against each indicator;
- Specific challenges and weaknesses;
- Whilst innovation was a key strength, but translation into growth was a challenge;
- The investment runway in the City Region was fragmented and access to finance was poor;
- Businesses in key sectors like health and social care didn't contribute to research and development expenditure;
- There was cause for optimism and pockets of innovation in a number of sectors.
- There were emerging strengths and some of these were a direct response to challenges faced in the City Region;
- The holistic approach to ensure that the 4 elements are addressed;
- The breadth of stakeholders that were involved;
- The importance of Growth Platform and single access point for businesses; and
- The projects in delivery and development funded by the Strategic Investment Fund.

Ben Heywood concluded the presentation and asked the Board to provide feedback on the content and that he was happy to attend another session to provide more detail.

Mark Basnett thanked Ben and Ellie for the presentation. He highlighted that the purpose was also to demonstrate that there was a structured and strategic approach. Growth Platform had been established with the support of The Chair and the Metro Mayor to improve and simplify the business support eco system.

Lynn Collins commented that she was pleased to see the social value element highlighted. She referred to the Metro Mayor's Fair Employment Charter and stated that when it was being developed, they were keen to create an entry point for businesses who may not actually be employers at that stage but wanted to state their intention to be a fair employer. She asked if that would be helpful. In other city regions the Charter has been marketed through the Business Support professionals directly with the business to encourage take up and could we do that in LCR.

Ben Heywood responded and agreed that would be possible and undertook to speak to Lynn Collins separately.

Mark Basnett added that they had been working with the Good Business Festival Team on a good small business programme, which covered a whole range of issues that businesses could take forward including social value and it was looking to incorporate Fair Employment Charter.

Paul Corcoran, Deputy Chair congratulated Ellie, Ben and the Team on pulling together a comprehensive package of support which was clear and concise. He

praised its development in a short period and how it would continue to position the City Region as a fantastic place to grow a business. He added that we should be seeing good and solid business as a hygiene factor and that we wouldn't invest, or support businesses unless they had good working practices, including the supply chain. He suggested that it should be considered at the Sector Boards to given them an opportunity to raise awareness.

Dr Jon Hague welcomed the presentation and wanted to recognise the contribution of Matt Reed from Liverpool University who had worked on a lot of the concepts. He echoed the Metro Mayor's comments on what a good Combined Authority could be doing. He praised the high expertise and focus on economic development and this was a prime example of how to invest in right people to get the job done. It was a brilliant piece of work and a testament to people involved. He commented that the only thing missing was the information on 'Project Boom' output metrics missing, so he would work with the Team on that to make sure it had the ambition and scale that was needed.

The Metro Mayor, Steve Rotheram commented that if it had been an easy task, everybody would have done it at the same time. The Liverpool City Region did it as we had brilliant officers and agreement at a political level to invest Combined Authority into something different. He drew attention to the Politicians who had the foresight and bravery to spend some of the limited funding on this and thanked colleagues on the call for their support.

Mark Bousfield, Executive Director of Commercial Development and Investment stated that the City Region couldn't be a successful economy without improving the growth rate of its businesses. He paid tribute to the Investment Team for pulling this together in such a logical and coherent way, especially Ellie and Ben who had been really good at listening. Listening was a core skill for the Investment Team and hearing the problems businesses were facing and approaching them in a logical way was what made him very proud of work that had come through. Referring to accelerated delivery, Mark indicated that at the July Combined Authority Meeting, reports were expected to be submitted on 'Liverpool Ventures' and the forerunner for the LCR Innovation Co-operative which came out of 'Project Boom'. He added that the LCR Innovation Co-operative was fully co-ordinated with Anthony Hollander and Liverpool University initiatives. The Co-operative was also talking to Mark Whitworth about digital innovation. He stated that it was all coming together and asked for continued support and feedback.

Councillor Janette Williamson pledged her support for the initiative and re-iterated the political will for it to succeed. She commented that a successful society was that grow look after their communities better. For her economic growth in isolation was not the mark of a successful society and felt that the City Region had the right balance.

The Chair, Asif Hamid MBE commented that this was a demonstration of great partnership working to come up with a great initiative and great ideas. It was all about the delivery and what could be achieved so we needed to keep the momentum going.

469. LIVERPOOL CITY REGION FREEPORT: CHAIR AND BOARD RECRUITMENT (P)

The Chair, Asif Hamid MBE indicated that the LEP had been asked by the Combined Authority to lead on the recruitment of the Chair and Management Board for the Liverpool City Region Freeport and handed over to Mark Basnett to talk to the report.

Mark Basnett, Managing Director of the LEP indicated that the report had been circulated to members with the agenda and it detailed the proposed methodology, for the recruitment and screening and the formal appointment of the Chair and private sector Board Members of the Freeport Management Board. He stated that the role of the Chair was very important and a significant public facing role. It would be key in liaising with Government and interacting with the Combined Authority and the private sector. He added that it was absolutely vital that the Management Board had the support of this Board and private and public sector partners. He stated that both the process and formal appointments would be considered by the LEP Board for approval. It would also be considered by the Metro Mayor, Leaders and Mayor and only with the agreement by both bodies would appointments be made.

Mark Basnett informed the Board that the recruitment process for the LEP Board was used as a basis for process and was adapted to ensure full consultation and approval of LCR Local Authority and Combined Authority partners.

Mark drew the Board's attention to section 4.3 of the report, which detailed the private sector roles to be recruited. It was proposed that the members from the Port of Liverpool and from the Universities are nominated directly by those organisations. Section 5 detailed the proposed recruitment process which with the agreement of the Board would commence the following week. Nominations would come to an Appointments Committee involving the LEP Board Chair, Elaine Bowker, the LEP Diversity Champion and Councillor David Baines on behalf of Local Authority Leaders. Mark added that the Committee would be supported by himself and Kirsty McLean, Executive Director of Policy and Strategic Commissioning. Candidates would be shortlisted and assessed via interview to determine suitability and recommendations would then be made to both the LEP Board and the Metro Mayor, Leaders and Mayor meeting for approval.

Professor Dame Janet Beer, commented that the recruitment of the Board was almost in advance of knowing what you want from the Freeport and we needed to be mindful that the Management Board had role of shaping what the Freeport would be. She added that the Appointment Committee looked fine but there wasn't a representation from anyone who knew about Freeports and wondered whether this should be re-considered.

Janet indicated that she was required to nominate a representative from the University but there were other Universities, so asked how the nomination process would work. She also thought it was important as far as possible to keep the conversation open about what was required and expected.

The Chair, Asif Hamid MBE, concurred with Janet's comment on the shaping of the Freeport and that was the reason for involving Kirsty McLean in supporting the process as she had been involved in the Freeport bid from day one. He indicated that he was happy to pick up some of the points offline. He added that it was difficult to work out what shape the Freeport would take and feedback from Central Government was optimistic that we would get it, but due to the timescale the positions needed to be filled before the final shape of the Freeport was developed.

Kirsty McLean also agreed with Janet but stressed that the recruitment process had to be done in parallel with the development of the Freeport. There was scope to revisit the shape of Management Board in the future. She explained that due to the restriction of Government timescales, unless initial arrangements are put together, funding won't be released, so it had been pinned to this part of the process. Funding was required to be able to develop the concept further, so whilst it was not an ideal situation, with continued close working it was manageable.

RESOLVED – That the draft Freeport Chair and Private Sector Board Member recruitment process be endorsed and approved, subject to final agreement by the LCR Metro Mayor, Leaders and Mayor.

470. CHAIR'S UPDATE (V)

The Chair, Asif Hamid MBE provided a brief update on his recent activities.

He indicated that he had been pushing to lead on the digital prospectus for the North and he was happy to state that we had been asked to do this by the NP11 with support from Paul Corcoran. Paul would be working with the LEP, Growth Platform, the Combined Authority and other leads throughout the NP11, and he thanked Paul for all his hard work to date.

He also referred to a global investment event taking place in October at Windsor Castle and he had been asked by Government to participate and represent the City Region as an exemplar for inward and international investment. He added that he would be making contact with Officers from the Combined Authority to pull together a compelling case to present at the event. He indicated that the event was international and supported by Royal family and the Prime Minister.

The Chair reported that on 17 June, the Metro Mayor would be talking to the business community on his plans for the next 3 years and asked Board Members to pencil it in their diaries. Further information would follow.

The Chair also referred to Murryam Anwar's comments on the LCR LEP being an exemplar. Not all LEP's were exactly the same which was why the Government were undertaking a review. He stressed the vital role that the LEP played and he would keep everyone updated on the review process.

The Chair also reported that he had been asked to Chair a national Committee BAME participation across the business sector. He added that he would keep Lynn Collins informed as he may require her participation. The first meeting was scheduled to take place in a few weeks. Mark Basnett would be involved in the co-ordination and the first meeting was about how to get the BAME community involved in organisations. There would also be an offshoot involving the participation of the voluntary and 3rd sector which was being set up by Government and the Chair also asked Lynn Collins if she would be involved.

471. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair, Asif Hamid MBE invited Ellie Stanborough from BEIS to address the meeting.

Ellie Stanborough referred to the Secretary of State joining the opening event for the Good Business Festival on 7 July 2021. This would be a great opportunity for him to

visit other places whilst he's in the City Region. Ellie provided a background of the Secretary of State's responsibilities and portfolio and asked the Board for ideas and suggestions of visits to tie in with the attendance at the festival. Those suggestions would then be put forward to his office for consideration.

The Chair indicated that there would be lots of businesses who would want to get involved and suggested that Mark Basnett co-ordinate suggestions from Board Members and liaise with Ellie Stanborough on the responses received.

Finally, the Chair, thanked everyone for their attendance, participation and hard work in helping the Liverpool City Region come out of this period of trading. He hoped that everyone would take some time to get out and enjoy themselves. He also asked for feedback on the format of the next meeting, whether it be via zoom, or a hybrid approach.

Minutes 463 to 471 received as a correct record the 22 day of July 2021.

Chairperson of the Board

(The meeting closed at 10:33am)