

LEP - Enterprise Zone Governance Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 15th December, 2020 at 2.00 pm via Zoom

Present

David Holmes OBE (Chair)

County Councillor Michael Green
Mark Rawstron

Councillor Mark Smith
David Taylor

In Attendance

Nicole Billington – Marketing Officer, Growth and Prosperity Team, Blackpool Council
Chris Dyson – Programme Manager, Strategic Development, Lancashire County Council
Dave Gorman – Senior Democratic Services Officer, Lancashire County Council
Phil Green – Director of Growth, Environment and Planning, Lancashire County Council
Rob Green – Head of Enterprise Zones, Blackpool Council
Sarah Kemp – Chief Executive, Lancashire Enterprise Partnership
Rachel McQueen – Chief Executive, Marketing Lancashire
Anne-Marie Parkinson – Programme Manager, Lancashire Enterprise Partnership
Hannah Race – Business Support Officer, Lancashire County Council
Holly Tween – Democratic Services Officer, Lancashire County Council

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair, David Holmes, welcomed everyone to the virtual Zoom meeting and thanked everyone for their time.

Apologies for absence were received from Marianne Hesketh, Katherine O'Connor and Steve Burns.

2. Committee Membership

The committee noted the resignation of County Councillor Geoff Driver as a member of the committee and the appointment of County Councillor Michael Green in his place.

3. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2020

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 15 September 2020 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Reporting to Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Board

The Chair noted that at the recent Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Board meeting, Chris Dyson updated the Board on the Samlesbury Aerospace Enterprise Zone.

Resolved: That a report on the Samlesbury Aerospace Enterprise Zone would be included in the agenda for the next committee meeting, due to be held 18 March 2021.

7. Any Other Business

There was no other business to be considered.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The committee noted that the next meeting was scheduled to be held at 2.00pm on Tuesday, 18 March 2021 in Exchange Room 5, County Hall, Preston.

It was suggested that a virtual alternative is planned for the next meeting, in case the committee is unable to meet in person in March.

The Chair agreed to consider an alternative start time for future meetings while committee members are working from home and managing competing commitments.

9. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved: That the meeting move into Part II, Private and Confidential, to consider the remaining reports as they contained information defined as confidential or exempt in accordance with the relevant paragraph of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as set out in the reports.

10. Lancashire Advanced Manufacturing and Energy Cluster Collaborative Marketing // Proposals for FY21/22

The Chair noted first that at the recent Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Board meeting, the Board recognised the importance of Enterprise Zones to the LEP and to Lancashire, and that the Enterprise Zone Governance Committee is ideally suited to allocate opportunities to the different Enterprise Zone locations in a way that best serves Lancashire.

It was noted that the Lancashire Advanced Manufacturing and Energy Cluster (LAMEC) may not be the strongest brand to serve the Enterprise Zones, as it excludes Enterprise Zones from certain sectors and restricts opportunities in jobs and academia. The committee considered the prospects of the current LAMEC marketing strategy, which is heavily based on the original idea for the Enterprise Zones forged in 2011.

The committee noted:

- i) That the LEP Board discussion had been driven by a view that the Enterprise Zones should not be restricted, because it was unknown what the future economic recovery might look like, and that opportunities could be missed as a result of the current LAMEC branding.
- ii) The need to find a balance between not limiting the Enterprise Zones whilst remaining focussed on their selling points and promoting the sites as unique.
- iii) That this was an opportune time to re-consider the LAMEC marketing strategy in order to maximise opportunities available to the Enterprise Zones, and that it was the committee's role working with the EZ lead authorities to provide clarity to achieve this.
- iv) That reports and updates to date had not emphasised the purpose and selling points of the Enterprise Zones. To move forward it would be helpful to establish why Enterprise Zones exist and what they aim to achieve.

Rachel McQueen, Chief Executive of Marketing Lancashire, presented a private and confidential report which provided the committee with proposals to consider for the LAMEC marketing strategy of 2021-22.

The report highlighted: the need to question whether the brand's language was still effective, or whether it had become restrictive and long-winded; the need to maximise LAMEC's role in future economic growth; promoting inward investment; the potential for collaboration and cross-promotion with Lancashire businesses; and strengthening the LAMEC narrative.

It was noted that the report did not clarify the target audience of the Enterprise Zones, nor whether the overall brand required a refresh.

The committee proposed a workshop to clarify the 'big picture' of the marketing strategy and to build collaborative proposals for the purpose of the Enterprise Zones. It was noted that the strategy's key messages needed to be determined so that the committee could move towards 2021 with more activity planned.

The committee recognised that the ambition and momentum expressed at the start of 2020 still existed, despite an unexpected year, and that this should be carried forward.

Sarah Kemp, Chief Executive of the LEP, highlighted: that the committee needed to provide support to any rebranding of the Enterprise Zones; that the primary driver of businesses' decision-making is the availability of skills and talent, rather than location; and that it is necessary to step away from the Enterprise Zones to understand the ecosystem (including universities, for example) in which they operate.

The committee noted the need to bring a wider group of people into the discussion in order to understand the target audience of the Enterprise Zones and to determine the new marketing strategy.

The committee heard that the current LAMEC branding was not an inhibitor to interest in the Blackpool Airport and Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zones, but it was noted that most enquiries at the sites continue to be from local companies. It was noted that the LAMEC branding was not key to attracting investment, rather that people and companies in particular sectors are already aware of the sites and their uses.

The committee heard that the current branding was not an inhibitor to interest in the Samlesbury Aerospace Enterprise Zone with several active enquiries being pursued proactively by the county council. It was also noted that the marketing of this site is due to be increased over the coming months.

The committee noted:

- i) The differences and unique selling points of the four Enterprise Zones and recognised the danger of developing one, unified brand for all sites that does not best serve any of the sites.
- ii) That future branding had to serve multiple audiences and ensure the different Enterprise Zones are not competing for interest but work together.
- iii) That Lancashire's business offer is not considered to be as strong as that of Greater Manchester or Liverpool and that a proactive approach to rival other regions is required, rather than a reactive approach.
- iv) That the previous work of Marketing Lancashire on the Lancashire Narrative would be important to carry forward.

Resolved:

- i) That the Enterprise Zone Governance Committee continue to work with Marketing Lancashire and the leading authorities delivering the Enterprise Zones to develop collaborative proposals for 2021-22.
- ii) That Sarah Kemp, Chief Executive of the LEP, support the organisation of a set of workshops to discuss the future of the LAMEC branding and to identify:
 - a) The main selling points of Lancashire and the Enterprise Zones to prospective businesses; and
 - b) The best marketing strategy to adopt, knowing the discriminators of the Lancashire offer and the competition across the North West and the country.

11. Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone: Progress Report

Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones at Blackpool Council, presented a private and confidential report which provided the committee with an update on the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone.

The report included updates on activity since the last meeting, including:

- i) Increasing investment in the site's infrastructure;
- ii) The expected expenditure required to complete site assembly;
- iii) Progress achieved in line with the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of the site;
- iv) The progress of Phase One plans to complete the Common Edge sports pitches and facilities in line with Sport England's recommendations and the need for additional highway works, meaning work has been delayed by approximately three months;
- v) The opportunities provided by the new transatlantic fibre optic telecommunications cable;

- vi) The two-week delay to the main site development due to heavy rainfall at the start of the project; and
- vii) Enquiries into the remaining empty private sector sites.

The Chair suggested that a standard template be created for all Enterprise Zones to use as they deal with enquiries from different sectors, and a summary table to include in submissions for the March review. The committee noted that this would be useful to gain an understanding of future submissions, to understand whether the sites' marketing strategies are helpful or not, and to hear about the sites' newest and largest occupants.

The committee noted that the submission deadline to host a free port is 4 February 2021, that a working group is developing Lancashire's bid for a free port and suggested that a short update on the working group's decision should be provided around the time of the deadline.

Resolved:

- i) That the Enterprise Zone Governance Committee notes the contents of this progress report.
- ii) That the Enterprise Zone Governance Committee notes the refreshed Masterplan report.
- iii) That Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones to Blackpool Council, and Anne-Marie Parkinson, Programme Manager to the LEP, collaborate to create a standard template for the Enterprise Zone leads to use to characterise business enquiries.
- iv) That the Enterprise Zone Governance Committee be provided with a short update, for information only, on Lancashire's bid to host a free port, close to the time of the submission deadline.

12. Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone: Progress Report

Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones, Blackpool Council, presented a private and confidential report which provided the committee with an update on the Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone.

The report included updates on activity since the last meeting, including:

- i) The building fund for the new gatehouse, with planned works to begin from early 2022;
- ii) Funding from Wyre Borough Council to support the extension of fibre optic network to the site's gates;
- iii) The favoured investment type at the site continues to be Waste to Energy Generation, with three enquiries for such facilities ongoing;

- iv) The energy capability of the site is attracting a large, Swedish-based PPE manufacturer, who is interested in the site of the old power station at the centre of Hillhouse and would be a high employer;
- v) A number of job losses, which are expected to be temporary or from which staff were immediately re-employed across the site;
- vi) The future of the Fleetwood-Poulton railway line, which if dedicated to heavy rail would significantly impact the site's infrastructure costs and would require the site's single bridge access to be resolved; and
- vii) Transport, flood risk and environmental assessments are to be scoped and commissioned for the entire site, rather than plot by plot, subject to funding.

Resolved: That the Enterprise Zone Governance Committee notes the report.

13. Samlesbury Aerospace and Warton Aviation Enterprise Zone: Progress Report

Chris Dyson, Strategic Development Programme Manager, Lancashire County Council, presented a private and confidential report which provided the committee with an update on the Samlesbury Aerospace and Warton Aviation Enterprise Zones.

The report included updates on activity since the last meeting, including:

- i) The completion of a number of KPIs and Milestones across the sites during 2020, in line with targets;
- ii) The construction progress for the North West Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC) and the Centre's plans to employ more staff;
- iii) The updated Commercial Development Programme, which has been well-received by stakeholders;
- iv) Collaboration with Electricity North West (ENWL) to deliver the SAEZ electricity supply through significant investment and the investigation of renewable energy and low carbon projects for the site and other/s that will support the Government's net-zero targets;
- v) The BAE Asset Management Facility completion and Lancashire County Council's strong strategic and working relationship with BAE Systems; and
- vi) The marketing and promotion of both sites, through the LAMEC and with the commercial support of Colliers International.

The committee noted the ongoing enquiries for the site and that the county council was engaged with its Commercial Property Agent, Colliers International in respect of pursuing active enquiries. It was also noted that enquiries were being managed with efficiency in parallel to the site's delivery programme, many items of which are progressing well given COVID – 19 implications.

Anne-Marie Parkinson, Programme Manager of the LEP, thanked the Enterprise Zone leads for their inputs into the LEP Board reports and proposed that future updates on all Enterprise Zones be merged to form one update. It was suggested that the Enterprise Zones would benefit from uniformity in respect of recording

KPIs and that further liaison with Enterprise Zone leads and future report templates could facilitate this.

The committee thanked the Enterprise Zone team for their work and progress throughout the last year, despite the pandemic.

Resolved: That the Enterprise Zone Governance Committee notes the report.