

LEP - Enterprise Zone Governance Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 22nd February 2024 at 12.00 noon virtually via Microsoft Teams

Present

David Holmes OBE (Chair)

Mark Rawstron

Councillor Mark Smith

County Councillor Aidy Riggott

In Attendance

Chris Dyson, Strategic Development Manager, Lancashire County Council

Mark Harrison, Project Manager – Enterprise Zone and Blackpool Airport

Holly Tween, Democratic Services Officer, Lancashire County Council

Andy Walker, Head of Business Growth, Lancashire County Council

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Officer apologies had been received from Steve Burns and Rob Green.

2. Declaration of Interests

None

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2023

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.

4. Matters Arising

None

5. Any Other Business

The Committee discussed the future governance of the Enterprise Zones.

Government had indicated that there must be a strong private sector voice

regarding economic development policy making, and discussions were continuing about where the governance for the various LEP functions would sit within the new Combined Authority.

It was noted that there are substantive activities for Enterprise Zones that will need to be undertaken, such as approving changes to the planning framework for Enterprise Zones, and responsibilities around additional business rates.

It was anticipated that the Combined Authority would be fully operational by October. It was proposed that interim arrangements were agreed while the structure was finalised.

Resolved: the Enterprise Zone Governance Committee agreed:

- i. CC Riggott would confirm that the Devolution Development Board was satisfied for the Enterprise Zone Governance Committee to report to them in the interim period before the Combined Authority is operational, and confirm what the reporting mechanism would be
- ii. That the responsibilities of the Committee be circulated to members
- iii. That opinions are sought from officer teams working on the Enterprise Zones on the ideal makeup and construct of a body to provide governance for the Enterprise Zones, and Andy Walker to bring a brief paper to the next meeting
- iv. Meetings of the current committee to be arranged for April, July and October
- v. CC Riggott to share any further significant developments in the governance structure with the Committee as they arose

6. Date of Next Meeting

Meeting date in April to be confirmed

7. 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 to schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as set out in the report. It was considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

8. Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone: Progress Report

Mark Harrison, Project Manager, Enterprise Zone and Blackpool Airport, 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 KPIs and milestones, risks, the Masterplan and Delivery Plan, project management, fiscal incentives, current activity, social value and environmental activity, Blackpool Town Deal, Squires Gate Industrial Estate, planning applications, communications infrastructure and marketing, Blackpool Airport and estate management.

The Committee considered the report and there was a time for questions.

It was requested that the table showing enquiries be amended in the update reports for each of the Enterprise Zones to include information on whether the prospective tenant was new to the county or already based in Lancashire, to make clearer the likelihood of converting the enquiry to tenancy and a notional target of occupancy or commitment to give a better picture of expected timescales. It was requested that the updated tables for each Enterprise Zone be circulated to the Board.

Resolved: that the Enterprise Zone Governance Committee

- i. note the report
- ii. request that the table showing enquiries be amended in the update reports for each of the Enterprise Zones to include information on whether the prospective tenant was new to the county or already based in Lancashire, to make clearer the likelihood of converting the enquiry to tenancy and a notional target of occupancy or commitment to give a better picture of expected timescales, and circulated to the Board

9. Hillhouse Enterprise Zone: Progress Report

Mark Harrison, Project Manager, Enterprise Zone and Blackpool Airport, 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 achievements to date, KPIs and milestones, risks and actions, the Delivery Plan, the Getting Building Fund, residential development, the Fleetwood/Poulton Rail Line, marketing, the Hydrogen Project and Steering Group, the Vinnolit site, new onsite companies, job creation, and estate management.

The Committee considered the report and there was a time for questions.

The hydrogen project and the ability for the site to export energy to the National Grid was discussed. It was suggested that producing some figures around the enablement of the project and the impact it could have as a net exporter of energy could assist engagement. This would be included in the report to the next meeting.

Resolved: that the Enterprise Zone Governance Committee

- i. note the report
- ii. figures around onsite green energy, hydrogen production and the impact of the ability to export energy would be included in the report to the next meeting

10. Samlesbury Innovation Hub - Progress Update

Andy Walker, Head of Business Growth, presented a private and confidential report on the plans for the Innovation Hub at Samlesbury.

It was commented that marketing of available space for SMEs was desirable from the beginning to encourage SMEs to engage with the project.

Resolved: that the Enterprise Zone Governance Committee note the report

11. Samlesbury Aerospace and Warton Aviation Enterprise Zones: 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 and Warton Aviation Enterprise Zones.

Regarding the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone site, the report included an update on the site delivery programme for phase 2b, KPIs, a financial update, an update on planning, commercial marketing agents, estate management, ancillary accommodation, marketing and communications, skills, and social value.

Regarding the Warton site, the report included an update on the Masterplan and strategic meetings between partners.

The Committee considered the report and there was time for questions.

Resolved: that the Enterprise Zone Governance Committee note the report