

LEP - Business Support Management Board

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 25th May 2023 at 10.30am in Exchange Room 9 - County Hall, Preston

Present

Ann Dean MBE DL

Miranda Barker OBE
Claire Driver
Martyn Jones

Sue Smith
Liz Tapner
Stuart Thompson

Observers

Paul Evans, Assistant Director, Area Lead at BEIS, Cities and Local Growth Unit

In Attendance

Andrew Leeming, Boost Programme Manager, Lancashire County Council
Holly Tween, Democratic Services Officer, Lancashire County Council
Amin Vepari, Senior Project Officer Strategic Development, Lancashire County Council
Andy Walker, Head of Business Growth, Lancashire County Council and Interim LEP CEO
Delyth Edwards, Senior Manager, Northwest – British Business Bank
Philip Hargreaves, Head of Access to Finance
Kam Kothia OBE DL, LEP sector lead for Digital (Item 8)

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and introductions were made by all in attendance.

It was noted that Beth McKenna would now represent Downtown in Business, and Claire Driver would now represent the Federation of Small Businesses.

Apologies had been received from Justin Kyriakou, Beth McKenna and Geoff Mason.

2. Declaration of Interests

None

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2022

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting on 24 November 2022 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair

4. Matters Arising

Under item 4 it was noted that a message around Internationalisation Grants and export activities had not been circulated, as events had overtaken.

Under item 6 it was noted that the suggested "dos and don'ts for business finance" message had not been circulated. The Chair agreed to follow up on this.

5. British Business Bank - update

Delyth Edwards, Senior Manager, Northwest – British Business Bank (BBB), gave a presentation outlining strategic objectives, key findings from 2022 research, regional and Lancashire specific activity, and some case studies from NPIF programmes and start-up loans.

Questions and discussion followed.

Delyth was thanked for her presentation.

Resolved: it was agreed that:

- i. The summary of findings from the 2022 SME Intermediary Research would be circulated to committee members
- ii. The presentation would be circulated to committee members

6. Access to Finance - Evaluation

Philip Hargreaves, Head of Access to Finance, gave a presentation on the interim evaluation of Access to Finance, and outlined characteristics of clients by business size, geography and personal characteristics; feedback from clients on achievement and satisfaction; value for money; barriers to growth and opportunities and challenges.

Questions and discussion followed.

Philip was thanked for his presentation.

Resolved: that the presentation be circulated to committee members

7. Sector Update - Energy and Low Carbon

Andy Walker, LEP Interim Chief Executive, reported that the LEP had developed 6 sector groups, all of whom had made significant progress and were developing their own documents, plans and recommendations. It had been previously noted that it was helpful for the sector plans to be brought before the Business Support Management Board as some common issues across sectors may best be addressed by a business support solution.

Miranda Barker OBE, LEP sector lead for Energy and Low Carbon, presented an update on the Energy and Low Carbon Sector plan, and the associated action plan, including strategic objectives, actions and outcomes.

The committee noted the progress made, and noted that the action plan would shortly be updated with outputs. There was a time for questions.

Resolved: that the link to the Energy and Low Carbon plan on the LEP website, and the action table, be circulated to committee members

8. Sector Update - Digital

Kam Kothia OBE DL, LEP sector lead for Digital, presented an update on the Digital sector plan, including the vision for Lancashire's economy and skills base, the strategic enablers and the developing action plan. It was noted that conversations about resourcing the plan were underway.

The committee noted the progress made, and there was a time for questions.

Kam was thanked for his presentation.

Resolved: the information be noted, and the presentation circulated.

9. Wider LEP Update

Not discussed

10. Position of Lancashire Businesses

Not discussed

11. Any Other Business

None

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for 10.30am on 07 September 2023 in Exchange Room 9, County Hall, Preston