



Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Limited

Private and Confidential: NO

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Update on Recruitment of LEP Chair

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Executive Summary

This report summarises progress made regarding recruitment of the LEP Chair and is asked to consider the formation of an Appointments Panel and who would sit on such a Panel.

Recommendations

The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Board is asked to:

- (i) Confirm the latest version of the job description attached at Appendix A.
- (ii) Note progress made with regard to recruitment of the LEP Chair.
- (iii) Confirm that members of the Transition Group consider the proposed longlisted candidates put forward by Proventure (co-ordinated by Blackpool Council).
- (iv) Agree to form an Appointments Panel to undertake the shortlisting and final interviews, comprising 2 public and 3 private sector directors, and decide who should comprise that Panel (one of the public directors to be the LCC as the accountable body and in accordance with the AB Framework).

Background and Advice

1. Introduction

1.1 On 12th December 2018, following extensive consultation with the business community and other stakeholders, the LEP Board approved the job description for the Chair of the LEP for use in the ongoing recruitment process. The job description has also been updated since the formal agreement in December in line with ongoing feedback and the latest version is attached at Appendix 'A'. The LEP Board report in November outlined a recruitment programme that targeted the recruitment of a new LEP Chair by April 2019.



2. LEP Chair recruitment progress

2.1 Proventure, a specialist recruitment consultant organisation was appointed by the Board in December 2018 to assist in the recruitment and selection of a new LEP Chair and has been leading the search process since then.

2.2. An initial briefing meeting was held with the Transition Director and Head of LEP Co-ordination followed by 11 briefing discussions during January and February with MP's (Ben Wallace MP briefing due 20 March), the acting LEP Chair, ex-Chair and other key stakeholders to give the consultants a wider perception of the LEP and role of Chair, as well as seeking views on potential candidates from existing networks. That process is now complete and the search stage commenced on programme at the beginning of February following final tweaks to the recruitment pack and website, drawing in candidates by mid-March. All stakeholders recognised the challenge of identifying credible female candidates who meet the criteria during the extensive consultations.

2.3 Candidate search: Direct approaches have been made to around 60 sources and potential target candidates, to create interest in the role across diverse networks. The role has been advertised at no cost on NED online jobs boards, including the Cabinet Office's Public Appointments website and media that targets women's networks and circulars. The role has also been promoted across the County's business focussed membership organisations.

2.4 Feedback on the role and the LEP: People have identified the complexity of working across Lancashire, with a real diversity of needs and demands across stakeholders, geographies, communities and sectors within the County. The perceived level of "politics" associated with this role is discouraging to some. Those with active business careers or current NED portfolios cannot commit the time required to succeed in the role. There is acknowledgement that the executive support available, if boosted, could give more capacity to the incoming Chair. There has been feedback that the LEP could better communicate its successes and could more visibly engage partners across the County. Some potential candidates have said that they would seek to have an actively engaged Vice Chair to balance the workload across the Board, especially when combined with greater executive support.

2.5 Potential candidates have been targeted across manufacturing, professional services, retail, technology and SMEs. There has been a significant drive to increase the diversity of the Board in response to the LEP review and current structural and governance changes underway. The search is continuing to target potential candidates to ensure a range of experience, styles and perspectives in order to give a choice of candidates.

2.6. A long list of candidates is due to be finalised by mid-March with preliminary interviews to be carried out by the end of March, to enable a shortlisting in early



April. Final interviews are to be held by 19th April and the recruitment decision reported to the LEP Board meeting on 30th April. The Board is consider forming an Appointments Panel with a suggested composition of 2 public directors (one to be from the 'accountable body') and 3 private sector directors.

2.7 Proventure have recommended a 'rolling longlist' where candidates are assessed when they apply rather than at a formal longlisting meeting, with decisions on whether they are seen taken in conjunction with the Transition Group (co-ordinated by Blackpool Council). Initial interviews will then be conducted by Proventure. This will maintain momentum in the process and enables the search to end once there are a range of appointable candidates. This approach also keeps senior candidates engaged and should ensure the initial timetable can be met.

2.8 Following the initial interviews, Proventure will prepare written reports on all candidates interviewed and will recommend a shortlist for consideration. As described in the actions above, there is a requirement for a LEP board to agree the establishment of an Appointments Panel, to agree the shortlist of candidates to proceed to final interview. The final interviews to take place either weeks commencing 8th/ 15th April.

2.9 With regard to the advertised time commitment and potential remuneration, the advice of our consultants is to leave the commitment at 5 days per month and consider remuneration of the role should that be required if that will assist in attracting the best person.

List of Appendices

Paper

Appendix A

LEP Chair updated Job Description and Person Specification

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A