

LEP - Lancashire Innovation Board

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 5th September, 2022 at 12.45 pm in Committee Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room at County Hall, Preston.

Present:

Graham Baldwin - Chair

Jane Dalton Michael Gibson
Gaynor Dykes Mike Kenny
Dion Williams

In Attendance

Andy Walker, Head of Service - Business Growth, Lancashire County Council.
Maya Ellis, Innovation and Digital Lead, Business and Innovation, Economic Development, Lancashire County Council.
Matt Wright, Head of Partnerships & Engagement for Regional Innovation, Lancaster University.
Mike Neville, Senior Democratic Services Officer, Lancashire County Council.
Catherine Stott, Democratic Services Officer, Lancashire County Council.

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair opened the formal meeting and thanked the Board members and others who were present for their contributions during the preceding workshop on the development of the Innovation Strategy.

Apologies were then presented on behalf of Ms M Conlon, Mr R Holland, Ms N Jones, Ms L Roche, and Mr M Spinks.

2. Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were made by Board members regarding items on the agenda at this point in the meeting.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 7th June 2022 are confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. North-West Innovation Board Chairs

Matt Wright, Head of Partnerships & Engagement for Regional Innovation, from Lancaster University, updated the Board on the outcomes of a meeting between the Chairs of three NW Innovation Boards (Lancashire, Manchester, and Liverpool) held on 17th June 2022.

He reported that at the meeting the Chairs had identified several key issues (including Advanced Materials and Manufacturing, Health Innovation, Digital and Creative, and NetZero/Environmental Innovation) and tasked officers with creating the draft Collaboration Framework, as set out at Appendix 'A' to the report, together with work around structuring themes and principles of collaboration.

The Board discussed the resourcing that would be required and noted that initially this would be done “in-house” across the authorities concerned and local universities regarding the collection of data and evidence. The Northwest Business Leadership Team would then hold a series of workshops to develop the framework of themes and joint activities with outcomes being presented to the Board in November 2022.

Members of the Board noted that whilst Mr Wright had moved role from the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to Lancaster University he was willing to continue to play a role in the development of this pan North-West work and it was recognised that this would provide a degree of continuity/stability until such time as the Innovation Manager position in the LEP Team was filled. Mr D Williams confirmed that Lancaster University was happy to provide Mr Wright's time to resource the development of the pan North-West discussion for the time being.

Resolved:

1. That the feedback from the Board regarding the draft Collaborative Framework and in relation to the future resourcing and implementation of the project are noted.
2. That the Board welcome the continuing involvement of Mr Wright, the Head of Partnerships & Engagement for Regional Innovation from Lancaster University and ask that he work with the other area leads to develop a report on regional investable propositions to be presented to the Board in November 2022.

Lancashire Innovation Plan Refresh

The Board discussed the ongoing Innovation Plan Refresh and the importance of sufficient resources being allocated to develop, and more importantly implement, the refreshed Plan. Maya Ellis informed the Board that Action Plans were being developed around the 12 key actions identified by Steer consultants and that each action would be fully costed and linked to specific individuals. Key Performance Indicators for the next 3 to 5 years would also be developed.

Resolved:

1. That the presentation given to the Board by Steer Consultants at the pre meeting workshop be circulated to all Board members for information
2. That a workshop be held in early October 2022 as part of the Innovation Plan refresh development work which would also enable Board members to agree specific commitments for their organisations.

5. Update on ongoing work

Maya Ellis, Innovation and Digital Lead, presented a report which updated the Board on operational work delivered by the County Councils Innovation Team, including the outcome of the Innovation Challenge, arrangements for the Innovation Festival on 7th October 2022, the ongoing development of the Innovate Lancashire website, and progress with the recruitment of Lancashire Ambassadors.

6. Any Other Business

Further to the discussion at the previous meeting Matt Wright, the Head of Partnerships & Engagement for Regional Innovation at Lancaster University, updated the Board on the ongoing discussions with Lancashire City/District Councils on Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) planning. He reported that to date there were indications that six local authorities would have some element of innovation included in their SPF plans, though with varying degrees of detail.

It was reported that some authorities were looking to commit to projects with specified resources in years 2 and 3 whilst others were developing more thematic proposals with no specified partners or resources at this stage.

Board members acknowledged that whilst the SPF had replaced the European Structural and Innovation Fund it did not represent the same level of funding and would inevitably have an impact on innovation support provision within Lancashire. It was also suggested that Innovation Board in the Region should develop joint communications regarding concerns about the future resourcing of innovation.

Resolved: That the Chair and officers draft a joint communication from the Board to Government regarding innovation resourcing in Lancashire.

7. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Board would be held at 10.30am on 7th November 2022 in Committee Room 'D' – The Henry Bollingbroke Room at County Hall, Preston.