

Private and Confidential

Lancashire Enterprise Partnership

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 20th September 2023 at 4:30 pm as a Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Present

Debbie Francis OBE (Chair)

Graham Baldwin
Miranda Barker OBE
Ann Dean MBE DL
Alison Robinson

Kam Kothia OBE DL
Mark Rawstron
County Councillor Aidy Riggott

In Attendance

Andy Walker, Interim Chief Executive, Lancashire Enterprise Partnership
Martine Winder, Economic Policy and Communications Manager, Lancashire Enterprise Partnership
Dr Michele Lawty-Jones, Director, Lancashire Skills Hub
Sue Roberts, Commercial and Business Support Manager, Lancashire Enterprise Partnership
Hannah Lysons, Democratic Services Officer, Lancashire County Council
Andy Milroy, Democratic Services Manager (Companies), Lancashire County Council
Nick Gerrard, Growth and Prosperity Programme Director, Blackpool Council
Neil Kissock, Director of Finance, Lancashire County Council
Paul Evans, Assistant Director, Lancashire / North West, Cities and Local Growth Unit
David Smurthwaite, Director of Economic Development, Rossendale Borough Council
Professor St.Jean Crean, University of Central Lancashire

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Councillor Smith, Councillor Mahmood, Councillor Barnes, Mick Gornall, Neil Jack, Denise Park, Antony Lockley and Mark Wynn.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2023

Paul Evans, Assistant Director, Lancashire / North West, Cities and Local Growth Unit, requested that under AOB of the previous minutes, they be amended to indicate that government wanted to see LEPs continue until the end of the current financial year.

Resolved: Following this amendment, the minutes were approved as an accurate record.

3. Matters Arising

None

4. Declarations of Interest

None

5. 23/24 mid-year Business Plan Delivery Update

Andy Walker, Interim Chief Executive, Lancashire Enterprise Partnership, presented a report (circulated) which provided the Board with updates on the activity of the LEP so far in 2023/24.

The Board were highlighted staffing changes including the introduction of 5 interns working on business finance and internationalisation, as well as the priority projects which were being undertaken including work on the National Cyber Force and the Lancashire Data Observatory. Board members commented on the importance of the development of the Data Observatory and the potential for commercialisation.

It was further raised by the Board the importance of maintaining a PR strategy in relation to the ongoing work, and it was agreed that a half year summary of ongoing activity would be beneficial to summarise the successes of the LEP so far this year.

It was queried what more was being done to create a central area for Lancashire businesses to see clearly what funding was available to them. Andy Walker confirmed that now Marketing Lancashire had been brought in house to Lancashire County Council, they had the ability to monitor analytics across various websites including the Invest in Lancashire and Visit Lancashire websites. It was requested that an update be brought to a future meeting to provide the Board with an understanding of what is being done to improve engagement in this area.

Resolved: The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Board noted the report as presented.

6. LEP Governance and Committees Report - September 2023

Andy Milroy, Democratic Services Manager (Companies), presented a report (circulated) containing Governance and Committee meeting updates since the last Board meeting held on 21 June 2023.

It was reported that there had been 2 urgent decisions which had been taken outside of the usual cycle of meetings for the Board to note.

Resolved: The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Board noted the report as set out.

7. Establishment of a Business Board for Lancashire - Update

Andy Walker gave a presentation and verbal update to the Board which gave an overview of the plans for a successor Business Board to the LEP and outlined the proposed structure and timelines involved with implementing such a Board. It was indicated to the Board that this is not the final proposal, and comments made by the LEP Members had not yet been added.

The Board were concerned about the omission of the Food and Agriculture sector group and made it clear that they wished to see this sector group retained in the successor Business Board either through a cross cutting Board or via the demography of the individual Board members. Andy Walker advised the Board that these concerns had also been raised by the LEP Members, and that Officers were committed to including this sector within the structure of the Board, however some thought would be needed to fully understand where this would fit.

The Board also commented that the scope and purpose of the proposed Business Board was not clear enough, and indicated the difficulty of attracting Board members to participate if there was not a clear enough steer on how their contributions to the Board would influence decisions made in strategy and policy. As well as this, a concern was raised about the prescriptiveness of the members and highlighted that this may have to become more flexible in the future to allow for a greater input from all areas of the business community.

Paul Evans clarified that as there is an allocation of funding to the Local Enterprise Partnerships, and an associated assurance framework, there is an expectation that until closure of the LEP any the establishment of a future Business Board, it is expected that LEPs will continue to be compliant with the Framework and funding requirements until the end of the current financial year.

The Board extended thanks to Officers of the LEP for their continued hard work and dedication during this time of great change.

Resolved: The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Board noted the update as provided and gave the above comments for consideration.

8. Energy and Low Carbon Implementation Plan

Miranda Barker OBE, Chief Executive, East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, provided the Board with a verbal update on the Energy and Low Carbon implementation plan.

Miranda presented an action plan for the sector, which included targets and timelines which had been highlighted in a traffic light system to show how much

progress had been made against those objectives.

Resolved: The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Board noted the update.

9. Health Sector Plan Update

Professor StJean Crean, University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN), gave a presentation to the Board which provided an update on the Health Sector Plan.

Resolved: The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Board noted the update provided.

10. Any Other Business

None

11. Date of Next Meeting

Resolved: It was noted that the next meeting of the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Board was scheduled for 20th December 2023 at 4:30pm. Board members were reminded that this is an in person meeting to celebrate the closure of the Lancashire LEP after 13 years of operation, and were encouraged to attend.

12. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved: The Board considered that, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, that the public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that there would be a likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the appropriate paragraph of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as indicated against the heading to the item.

13. Grant Funds to the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub

Dr Michele Lawty-Jones, Director, Lancashire Skills Hub, presented a report (circulated) which outlined several opportunities to secure grant funding for the Skills Hub which were in line with the Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework.

Resolved: The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Board:

- (i) Considered the opportunities to secure grant funds and approved the acceptance of grant funds should grant offers be received, with a

delegation to the Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer to review and agree the grant funding offer and terms and conditions, give due consideration to any procurement considerations and agree and enter into any legal agreements required to protect the interests of the LEP and Lancashire County Council; and

- (ii) Supported the extension of the Lancashire DSP Coordinator until the end of March 2025, with delegation to the Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer for approval subject to advice from the county council's HR service.

14. Growing Paces Report - PEARL Together Ltd, Spring Mill Earby

Sue Roberts, Commercial and Business Support Manager, Lancashire Enterprise Partnership, presented a report (circulated) on a request for Growing Places Funds which had been received from PEARL Together Ltd.

Resolved: The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Board

- (i) Considered and approved in principle a revolving loan of £3,000,000 at an interest rate of 3.25% over base for 2 years PEARL Together Ltd.
- (ii) Agreed that the Interim LEP CEO in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Lancashire County Council's Director of Law and Governance, enter into discussions with the developer regarding the Heads of Terms.
- (iii) Agreed that the Heads of Terms be brought to the LEP Board for approval.

15. Growing Paces Report - ETC Urban Darwen Heads of Terms

Sue Roberts presented a report (circulated) which outlined a request for Growing Places Funds which had been received from ETC Urban (Guildhall) LTD.

Resolved: The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Board considered and approved the updated Heads of Terms and requested that the Interim LEP CEO in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Lancashire County Council's Director of Law and Governance, approve and enter into the legal documentation required to protect the LEP's interest in respect of this loan.