

Private and Confidential

LEP - Business Support Management Board

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 30th August, 2016 at 12.00 pm
at the Cabinet Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall,
Preston**

Present

Michael Blackburn

Michael Damms
Gary Lovatt

Barbara Murphy

In Attendance

Andy Walker

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Chair welcomed members and apologies were noted from Timothy Webber and Councillor Frank Mckenna.

Chair also welcomed Susan Smith, Director for SME Development, UCLAN attending to present information under item 9.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest noted at this time.

3. Membership

The Board were presented with an update to the membership of the Business Support Management Board which clarified the position on nominating substitutes to attend meetings in place of members and the need to ensure that any new members are ratified with the LEP Board.

It was confirmed that there were three vacancies on the Board and a request made to the Board for Susan Smith, University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) and Kevin Duffy, RSM UK (ICAEW representative) to be nominated as representatives. This would leave one vacancy for the Board to recommend.

Members discussed possible suggestions for the vacant place on the Board. In addition it was suggested that it would be more practical to have named organisations rather than named representatives on the Terms of Reference

(TOR) as many only hold their posts for a year. It was also recommended that the membership is reviewed every three years.

Resolved:

- i. Susan Smith and Kevin Duffy to be added as BSMB members by the next LEP Board
- ii. Vacancy carried for further discussion by the Board
- iii. That as a standing item, future agenda will provide BSMB members with an update on the wider work of the LEP
- iv. Nominated representatives of the Board members to be confirmed with the clerk
- v. Recommendation to the LEP Board for named organisations to be agreed for the terms of reference
- vi. Recommendation to the LEP Board that the membership is reviewed every three years

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 25 May 2016

Resolved: Minutes from the meeting held on 25 May 2016 were agreed as an accurate record.

5. Matters Arising

Matters arising covered in the agenda.

6. Growth Hub Update

Andy Walker, Head of Business Growth, Lancashire County Council, presented a report to the Board on the progress of the next phase of Boost Business Lancashire which included information on:

- The redesigned service with four support strands.
- The Gateway service which is up and running although further appointments still required.
- First outputs have been completed with a good response from those taking part.
- There is an improvement plan in place to attract more businesses (with Growth Lancashire)
- Gateway staff are in the process of being trained to improve product knowledge and to ensure Gateway assessment is consistent.
- Propel have an agreed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Boost.

Members were invited to comment and raise questions on the information provided:

It was agreed there was a need to monitor the quality of the marketing and feedback of the service to identify outcomes achieved.

It was felt that there was a need for a more structured referral system.

It was confirmed that each of LEPs will have an operational growth hub providing six monthly reports on progress and activity. This would give comparative benchmarking on how these were working and could be shared with members.

Resolved:

- i. Board noted and commented on the report
- ii. Freshfields to be requested to attend the next meeting of the Board
- iii. MOU to be circulated with the minutes
- iv. Further detail on the referrals to be provided

7. International Trade - Strategy and Provision

Michael Damms, EL Chamber of Commerce discussed the paper circulated with the agenda on the International Trade Strategy for Lancashire.

In light of the Government objective to double exports to £1 trillion by 2020 and to increase the number of exporters by 100,000, the paper outlined the areas for consideration for a comprehensive strategy for Lancashire to support trade capabilities not only in the short term but for long term activity.

It was reported that there is a need to identify current trade against requirements to meet this objective through the bringing together of key partners.

The Board were advised that a verbal report would be presented to the next LEP Board with a draft strategy for a future meeting which could be circulated to the Board for comment.

It was suggested that the Growth Hub could take on the challenge to question the international element of development.

Looking forward, it was agreed there was a need for advice from Government around how 'Brexit' could impact.

The Board were advised that work identified to form a strategy for North West. It was agreed that this was a significant area of work and Lancashire needs to take lead.

Resolved: Board noted and commented on the report.

8. European Structural Investment Funds Update

Andy Walker presented the three structures circulated with the agenda on approved ESIF projects, those awaiting contract and those in full pipeline.

It was confirmed that the majority of the projects were for around a two year time

period and that the ESIF Partnership would monitor the outcomes.

It was discussed that there was a need to identify where projects could become undeliverable if funding was delayed and therefore reduce the time to produce identified outcomes.

In addition, the Board questioned the sustainability moving forward with 'Brexit' and linking in to other opportunities.

Resolved:

- i. The Board noted and commented on the information provided.
- ii. Executive summary/aggregated table to be presented to the Board.
- iii. Position statement and future needs to be presented to the Board.

9. Briefing on UCLAN Productivity Research for LEP

Susan Smith, Director for SME Development, UCLAN, was welcomed to the meeting to present to members the report circulated with the agenda on Exploring the Productivity Gap in Lancashire – Project Plan.

The report outlined the project which included research in the following areas:

- Secondary research on SME landscape in Lancashire
- Primary quantitative research surveying SME's in Lancashire
- Primary qualitative research through workshops and interviews to look at relationship between capital and productivity at individual level for SME managers/owners

It was reported that this project aimed to assess productivity, map the SME landscape in Lancashire, barriers to growth and future resources required.

It was confirmed that the secondary research was underway.

Board members agreed that a key part of this project was to agree the definition of productivity, if it is too broad, it could affect the conclusion.

Board members were advised that once the questions had been formulated they would be circulated for input.

Resolved: Board noted and commented on the report.

10. Wider LEP Update

Andy Walker provided a presentation which was tabled at the meeting (to be circulated with the minutes) that provided a broad update and information on the wider LEP.

Resolved: Board noted and commented on the presentation and asked for it to be circulated electronically with the minutes.

11. Reporting to Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Board

The Board discussed items to be reported to the next LEP Board meeting.

Resolved: The Board confirmed the following to be reported to the next LEP Board meeting:

- i. Membership – the Board would like to recommend that Dr Sue Smith Director of the Centre for SME Development at UCLAN be formally invited to become a member of the Business Support Management Board and that seats held on the BSMB by the Chairman of the Institute of Directors Lancashire and the ICEAW Lancashire, should pass to the respective annual office bearers without the need to formally ratify these changes as new appointments to the LEP Board. The new Chairs for 16/17 are, respectively, Lee Petts of Remsol and Kevin Duffy of RSM
- ii. Strategy Development – that the Board approve further work under the auspices of the BSMB to support the update to LEP's Strategic Economic Plan in respect of maximising productivity (UCLAN), supporting innovation and increasing internationalisation (East Lancs. Chamber of Commerce)
- iii. Growth Hub (Boost) – That the BSMB noted good progress in sustaining Boost through contributions from LCC and ERDF and recommended that LEP formally endorse the use of additional BIS funds for the financial year 2016/17
- iv. Lobbying – that they group would recommend to the LEP Board that it considers individual and collective action to lobby for a commitment to retain Lancashire's ESIF funding programme, in full, to 2020 over and above the commitment given by the new Chancellor and that the LEP should take any opportunities to clearly articulate Lancashire's aspirations for key sectors as the newly formed Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy begins to revisit this area of work

12. Any Other Business

None.

13. Dates of Future Meetings

Resolved: Dates of future meetings confirmed.

The next meeting is due to take place on the 25 October 2016 at 12pm, Cabinet Room C, County Hall, Preston.