



Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Limited

Private and Confidential: No

Date: Tuesday, 13 September 2022

LEP Board Membership

**Report Author: Andy Walker, Tel: 01772 535629,
andy.walker@lancashire.gov.uk**

Executive Summary

Over the summer the LEP has seen the resignation of three directors with a further four coming towards the end of the existing terms of office (3+3 years) in the Autumn. Given the continued uncertainty around the role of LEPs moving forward, it might prove a difficult time to recruit new board members, but the LEP potentially has several options to "tidy-up" outstanding governance issues, retain a strong base and extend and refresh its reach.

The options open to the LEP include: -

- Accepting a reduction in the size of the Board, noting that this doesn't impinge on the decision-making ability or required gender balance of the Board.
- Revising its previous decision that board-members terms should be limited to six years and extending tenure for those who wish to stay
- The LEP could leave terms as is and run a significant recruitment campaign through the Autumn to refresh membership in a way which delivers the required gender balance and better reflects existing and emerging sectors within the Lancashire economy.

In reality, we feel that a partial refresh of the Board will work best at this time, but there is no need to push directors to leave or fill outstanding vacancies

Recommendation

The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Board is recommended to:

(i) Agree that the LEP seeks to sustain a strong and balanced board, retaining key skills, whilst using some vacancies to extend the breadth of sectoral representation to include representatives from the Visitor Economy and Food and Farming sectors and partially refresh membership. The detail of these changes will be confirmed once all involved members have been spoken to; and



(ii) That the LEP also takes this opportunity to formally appoint a Deputy Chair and that a new diversity champion needs to be appointed from amongst the existing and new members.

Background and Advice

As it presently stands, the LEP Board Membership is made up as follows.

Public Sector Representatives

There are five Local Government Director appointments which are exempt from a "term of office" as they are elected representatives that are appointed by virtue of their election by the public to their respective councils.

County Councillor Aidy Riggott (Lancashire County Council),
Councillor Ivan Taylor (Blackpool Council),
Councillor Quesir Mahmood (Blackburn Council)

2 District Council representatives – currently they are
Councillor Alyson Barnes and a vacancy following Councillor Stephen Atkinson's resignation.

The process for appointing the 2 District Council reps is that the District Leaders Group is invited to select the 2 nominations from amongst their number – a request has been sent to the District Leaders Group asking that they nominate a replacement for Councillor Atkinson.

Private Sector Representatives

The LEP Board is private sector led with private sector / education sector reps and the Chair and Deputy Chair who are subject to time limits.

The original Government Guidance for LEPs stated that Chairs / Deputy Chairs should serve a maximum of 3 years and in exceptional circumstances a further 3 years – total of 6 years. The LEP Board then approved a report to impose those same limits on all the rest of the private sector / education directors at a Board meeting held on 25th June 2019. There are currently 11 Private Sector / Education Sector Directors as follows, the date is when their term started:

1. Graham Baldwin – 18th May 2022
2. Miranda Barker – 7th February 2019
3. Ann Dean – 29th November 2016
4. Debbie Francis – 22 June 2021
5. Mick Gornall – 29th November 2016
6. Dave Holmes – 19th November 2015
7. Kam Kothia – 25th November 2020
8. Mark Rawstron – 10th November 2017
9. Alison Robinson – 15th June 2022



- 10. Annette Weekes – 8th December 2020
- 11. Claire Whelan – 29th November 2016

This means that:

- Dave Holmes' 6 year term expired on 19th November 2021
- Ann Dean's 6 year term is due to expire on 29th November 2022
- Mick Gornall's 6 year term is due to expire on 29th November 2022
- Claire Whelan's 6 year term is due to expire on 29th November 2022

- Mark Rawstron term expires on 10th November 2023
- Miranda Barker is next – 7th February 2025
- Kam Kothia is 25th November 2026
- Annette Weeks is 8th December 2026
- Debbie Francis is 22nd June 2027
- Graham Baldwin is 18th May 2028
- Alison Robinson is 15th June 2028

Requirement to fill vacancies

The Government Guidance for LEPs states that their make-up is for local determination and a maximum of 20 Directors in total. There will continue to be 5 council nominated directors, even if the 4 people whose terms are either up or expire later this year resign and are not replaced there will still be 6 private sector / education sector directors so the LEP will still be private sector led. That would be 11 Directors in total.

Directors would potentially only need to be replaced if there was a view that additional Directors were needed. The maximum of 20 is the upper limit, it doesn't mean the LEP must have 20 Directors, it's whatever is determined locally as the needs of the LEP.

Gender balance and wider representation

The Government guidance states within its diversity statement that that LEPs should include a commitment to ensure that by 2020 at least one third of members of LEP Boards are women with an expectation for equal representation by 2023.

Best Practice

It is best practice for a report to be made to the Board each year discussing progress in encouraging diversity and how improvements can be made.

In addition, it is best practice for each LEP to nominate a diversity champion from its Board. Their role will be to encourage diversity and ensure that the LEP is acting in line with its diversity statement.

As it stands now there are 16 Directors split as follows:

Private Sector 11 – they are exactly equal now – 5 male and 6 female

Public Sector 4 (will be 5) – there is no say over this and Government / BEIS have previously recognised this as they are elected representatives there are 3 male 1 female (with the 5th rep to be determined again by District Leaders Group).

In terms of Private Sector reps, as it stands, the 50/50 target for 2023 is being met. Even after the 5 directors reach the end of their term this year, if those Directors are not replaced, the split of the remaining 7 private sector directors will be: 4 female and 3 male.

The process for selecting directors

For any new private sector directors, the process has previously been:

- Advert put out there across private sector (usually through your Economic Development Groups) plus on the LEP website inviting applications via a short form.
- Shortlisting is undertaken, usually a panel is setup involving a small group of LEP Directors including the Chair and a mix of public and private sector reps.
- Interviews held – and "recommendations" made by the Panel to the LEP Board.
- The LEP Board in turn have to make recommendations to the 3 company members as ultimately appointing new Directors is a power reserved to the three company members collectively – LCC, Blackburn and Blackpool. It's advisable to make sure at least one company member Director is on the shortlisting / interview panel.