



D2N2 LEP BOARD – AGENDA
Tuesday, 23 March, 2021 (10.00am – 12 noon)

By dial in via MS Teams (calendar invitation supplied)

1.1	Welcome and Introductions		Verbal	10.00
1.2	Declarations of Interest		Verbal	10.03
1.3	Minutes of meeting 27/1/21 and matters arising		Paper	10.05
2.	Strategic discussion			
2.1	Chair's Report, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EM Freeport (Appendix 1) Budget 2021 Implications on LEPs Advisory Boards update Partner engagement 	Elizabeth Fagan, Chair	Paper	10.10- 10.25
2.2	People and Skills Report	Prof Shearer West/Rachel Quinn	Paper	10.25 - 10.40
2.3	D2N2 Chief Executives Report, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business and Innovation update Place activities update Budget announcements Marketing and Comms update (Appendix A) ESF update 	Sajeeda Rose	Paper	10.40- 11.00
2.4	Midlands Connect Update	Maria Machancoses	Presentation	11.00- 11.20
2.5	Exempt item under Local Government (Access to Information) Act Capital Programme Performance Update including	Sajeeda Rose/Tom Goshawk	Paper	11.20 - 11.35

2.6	Exempt item under Local Government (Access to Information) Act Growing Places Fund Update	Sajeeda Rose/Tom Goshawk	Paper	11.35- 11.45.
2.7	Development Corporation Update	Anthony May	Verbal	11.45– 11.55
3.	Any other business:			11.55 - 12.00
4.	Date of next meeting: Wednesday, 19 May, 2021 (10am – 12 noon)			

Item 1.3: DRAFT Key Decision/Action Points from Board

D2N2 LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, 27 January, 2021

By Teams Dial-In

Chair Elizabeth Fagan CBE

Minutes Sally Hallam

1. Present and Apologies

D2N2 Board Members in Attendance

James Brand	Business Representative
Graham Cartledge CBE	Business Representative
Andrew Cropley	F E Representative
Cllr Kay Cutts, MBE	Leader, Notts County Council
Cllr Alex Dale	Leader, NEDDC, D2 representative
Michele Farmer	Inclusion and Diversity Representative
Tim Freeman	Business Representative
Clare James, MBE	Business Representative
Cllr Barry Lewis	Leader, Derbyshire County Council
Jayne Mayled	Business Representative
Cllr David Mellen	Leader, Nottingham City Council
Cllr Chris Poulter	Leader, Derby City Council
Emma Rigler	Business Representative
Viv Russell	Business Representative
Cllr Simon Robinson	Rushcliffe Borough Council, N2 representative
Prof Shearer West, CBE	HE Representative
David Wright	Area Lead D2N2, BEIS
Susan Caldwell	LEP Sponsor, DIT

Also in attendance

Gill Callingham	rep for N E Derbyshire DC
Anthony May	CEO, Nottinghamshire County Council
Kath Marriott	CEO, Rushcliffe Borough Council
David Fletcher	rep for Derby City Council
Scott Knowles	CEO, East Midlands Chamber
Nicki Jenkins	rep for Nottingham City Council

Officer Support

Sajeeda Rose	Chief Executive, D2N2
Tom Goshawk	Head of Capital Programmes, D2N2
Frank Horsley	Head of Business and Innovation, D2N2
Michelle Reynolds	Operations Manager, D2N2
Rachel Quinn	Head of People and Skills, D2N2
Rob Harding	Head of Marketing and Communications, D2N2

Apologies

Apologies were received from David Williams.

1.1 Welcome and Introductions

Elizabeth Fagan welcomed all to the meeting, extending a particular welcome to Clare James who was attending her first Board. Observer Becky Rix who would be joining the Board from March was also introduced briefly to the group.

1.2 Declarations of interest

The Chair reminded all Members that Declarations of Interest should be stated to be recorded where an interest arose.

Tim Freeman and Clare James both declared interests in the Freeport bid and took no part in any discussion during that section of the meeting.

LEP Sponsor, Susan Caldwell also declared an interest in Freeport due to DIT's involvement in the evaluation of bids.

1.3 Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 November, 2020 were confirmed as a true record and actions were confirmed as having been completed.

2.1 Chair's Report

Elizabeth Fagan introduced this report updating members on significant developments since the last meeting, including:

- i) Board Recruitment;
- ii) Recovery and Growth Plan including focus on low carbon;
- iii) East Midlands Freeport update;
- iv) Advisory Boards update;
- v) Partner engagement.

i) Board Recruitment

The Chair confirmed that new Board member, Clare James, MBE from East Midlands Airport had now replaced Karen Smart and offered her the opportunity to introduce herself briefly to the group. EF also thanked outgoing Board member, Emma Rigler who was attending her final meeting today, putting on record particular thanks for her work in supporting D2N2 to strengthen engagement in North Nottinghamshire.

ii) Recovery and Growth Plan – including low carbon

EF referred Board to the work under way to develop action plans for each Advisory Body based on the Economic Growth and Recovery Strategy (ERGS), paying particular attention to green growth and progressing delivery of the low-carbon ambitions within ERGS.

Emma Rigler and Will Morlidge gave a joint slide presentation reviewing the approach to delivering on low carbon within ERGS. WM introduced to the Board 6 key actions that D2N2 intended to progress, namely:

1. **Low-carbon Freeport bid:** ensuring that low carbon was embedded across the bid, from having on-site green energy production and encouraging businesses in low carbon sectors to locate within the freeport through to building on existing best practice from Toyota and others to use the sites to promote biodiversity.
2. **Support for Institute of Technology bid:** to increase the range of low carbon and digital skills being delivered to support key sites such as Ratcliffe and key programmes such as Derby's proposal to become the UK's centre for future fuels.
3. **Support for Midlands Energy Hub retrofit programme:** the Energy Hub had been awarded funding from Government for both the skills and capital elements of a retrofit programme, so D2N2 was looking for opportunities to increase scale and/or pace of delivery.
4. **Work on modern methods of construction with Homes England:** to bring together knowledge of the various small scale investment sites across D2N2 into a larger investment portfolio with greater certainty of supply, in conjunction with investigating potential new models of funding for MMC sites, to help de-risk commercial investments and to develop a complementary skills programme.
5. **Decarbonising the footprint of quarrying throughout the area:** working with Midlands Engine to scope an approach to the decarbonisation of vehicle fleets in quarries across the Midlands both to benefit the sector directly and to bring additional demand to incentive low carbon fuel supply.
6. **Developing a low-carbon Gigafactory proposition:** for a large scale plant to support the supply chain for low carbon manufacturing, construction and/or electricity generation.

A short discussion followed on the role D2N2 would play working alongside local authority partners to bring all threads of the low carbon strategy together across D2N2. There was general agreement that the region already had a number of excellent low carbon initiatives.

The Board agreed that the D2N2 role remained to identify and tackle gaps in supply, demand or skills and to enable delivery by local partners. What was needed specifically was clear branding and consistent messaging across the area. Inclusion lead, Michele Farmer offered to share her insights into this from experience of work outside this region.

iii) East Midlands Freeport Update

EF referred to the notes in her report and to the presentation that would follow later in the meeting.

iv) Advisory Boards Update

EF drew attention to notes within her report detailing current activity within each of the Advisory Boards and invited any additional comments.

Viv Russell for Innovation and Business Growth noted that AB and its focus groups were working well and that meetings had been enriched by informative presentations. He thanked Growth Hub staff for their work in supporting businesses throughout the pandemic.

Prof West for People and Skills highlighted work on the Institute of Technology bid and reported that a meeting was due to take place between colleges and university partners to map skills to low carbon.

Andrew Cropley commented on the Skills for Jobs White Paper now out and confirmed that the FE sector had broadly welcomed the Paper's initiative to put employers at the heart of setting educational standards for life. He voiced some concern that the focus on inclusion of young people had not been matched with an equal focus on addressing engagement of adults with FE.

Rachel Quinn confirmed that the White Paper aligned with D2N2's ambition to bring employers and skills providers together. She also drew attention to the support for CEC within it, noting that D2N2 now had a strong strategy for moving to 4 careers hubs.

Scott Knowles agreed with AC's concerns on adult inclusion and noted that due to current restrictions, employers were unsure whether placements would be required.

ACTION: RQ/SK/AC to pick up discussion outside of the meeting.

EF invited David Wright from BEIS to provide any updates on the UKSPF or levelling up.

DW confirmed that prospectuses for both were due soon, but no specific date information was currently available. Based on the speed of turnaround with the Getting Building Fund, he recommended a call to action to get a pipeline of potential projects as ready as possible to capitalise on funding opportunities that would appear quickly.

v) Partner Engagement

Board noted that partner dialogues were ongoing including with local authority Leaders, University VCs, Midlands Engine, EM LEP Chairs and D2N2 MPs, the latter having meetings that week and the following week.

Board **NOTED** the Chair's report.

2.2 Chief Executive's Report

Sajeeda Rose presented her report updating Board on items including:

- a) Skills Update;
- b) Business and Innovation Update;
- c) Marketing and Communications Update;
- d) ESIF Update;
- e) D2N2 Future High Street and Towns Fund Update

and referred members to the notes under each item.

On Digital Skills, SR drew Board's attention to the successful bid for funding and reported that the LEP had now been invited to bid for a further extension of funding with a bid deadline of 12 February, 2021.

On the continuing work of the Growth Hub, SR highlighted both support given to businesses due to the pandemic and more positively, to those businesses looking to grow in the future by means of application to the Business Investment Fund. Government continued to invest in the Growth Hub model enabling it to proactively support our SMEs eg with transition support around EU exit.

Work was ongoing with EMC, CBI, FSB and other networks to address persistent issues identified by the British Business Bank in local SME investment readiness and to ensure that they received the support they required to access appropriate equity funding for longer-term sustainability and growth.

On Marketing and Comms, SR recorded thanks to all for work on the AGM, positive feedback on which could be accessed via the website link.

On final ESIF monies, the CEO confirmed that £8m of final contracting was under way, with support going to a range of projects that would address many of the challenges faced by individuals from the impact of Covid-19.

On Future High Street funding, SR reported that 7 of the 8 bids from the D2N2 area had successfully secured two-thirds of funding bid for and work was now under way towards the submission of finalised reports.

Separately, Government had allocated a number of towns who were invited to bid for Towns Funding. Board was advised that the LEP had shared information across towns to assist with planning and bid development. Coalville in Leicestershire, as the only town in the county with allocated towns fund status, had also been invited to work with the group of towns collectively and to share best practice.

Board **NOTED** the report.

2.3 Capital Programme Performance Update

The Chief Executive introduced a report providing an update on the performance of the D2N2 Capital Programme and detailing the latest updates of all programmes as presented to the Investment Board (IB) on 9 December and 13 January, 2021.

She reminded Board that the IB oversees and approves projects which then come before main Board for final endorsement. Papers from the Investment Board are now sent to all Members for information.

On LGF, Board was informed that spending was on track in the final year of this 5-year programme, with £32m of allocated £40m now spent and a contingency overprogramming of £1.8m to allow for slippages.

The Annual Conversation with BEIS was due on 2 February, 2021 key areas of focus for discussion being Strategy, Governance and Delivery. Notable outcomes would be reported back to the next Board meeting in March.

SR invited Tom Goshawk to talk the Board through summary slides relating to two projects, namely the Worksop Access to Skills Hub (WASH) project and the Becketwell project. Board was also invited to consider and approve written procedures for projects presented for approval to the February and March IBs, to enable projects to progress spend before the end of the 2020/21 Financial Year.

1. WASH project:

£3.5m GBF towards overall project cost of £3.9m for a state of the art skills and education hub in Worksop town centre, providing for 300 new learners pa and creating/safeguarding 50 jobs;

2. Becketwell project:

£8.1m of total £13.371m Local Growth Funding to redevelop the Duckworth Square site in Derby, providing 259 new homes and creating 250 jobs. Phase 1 would commence in April, 2021.

Cllr Poulter confirmed the enthusiasm of Derby City Council for Becketwell as a catalyst for Derby City's regeneration and potential to attract inward investment to a site that had lain derelict for 25 years.

Board **NOTED** the progress of the D2N2 Capital Programme and in particular the upcoming Annual Performance Review.

Board **NOTED** the approval of the A46 Corridor – Chapel Lane Bingham project by written procedures in December, 2020.

Board **RATIFIED AND CONFIRMED** the decision of the Investment Board to invest £3,500,000 of Getting Building Fund to the Worksop Access to Skills Hub Project.

Board **RATIFIED AND CONFIRMED** the decision of the Investment Board to invest £8,100,000 of Local Growth Fund to the Becketwell Project and finalise the completion of the conversion from a pre-compliance agreement to the final contract.

Board **AGREED** to allow written procedures for projects to be approved at the February and March, 2021 Investment Boards to enable projects to progress spend before the end of the 2020/21 Financial Year.

2.4 Midlands Engine Development Corporation Strategic Business Case Update

Anthony May introduced his update report to Board, noting that the Business Case would be presented to the Oversight Board on 29 January, 2021. Subject to their approval, the Business Case would then be submitted to Government by March, 2021.

Meanwhile, agreement had been reached with the 5 affected local authorities to establish a company limited by guarantee to maintain momentum on projects. Ongoing work in support of the proposed Freeport would continue alongside the introduction of the Interim Vehicle. He stressed that as the same Ministerial teams would consider both the Interim Vehicle and Freeport, much work had been undertaken to ensure that the two aligned.

In response to a question from Graham Cartledge on the impact of the current HS2 situation on one or both, AM responded to confirm that lobbying, backed up with good quality evidence seemed to be having impact. Cllr Cutts reiterated the need to keep up momentum on this.

Board **RECEIVED** the report.

3. Any other business

None

4. Freeport Update Presentation (Exempt item)

Board heard a confidential presentation by Dan Aylward-Mills of Vivid Economics covering an overview of development of the East Midlands Freeport bid and had the opportunity to discuss and ask questions.

5. Date of next meeting

Tue 23 March, 2021.

D2N2 LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD REPORT

DATE:	23 March 2021
REPORT LEAD:	Professor Shearer West and Rachel Quinn
AGENDA ITEM:	2.2

TITLE:	People and Skills Report
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 2020/21 has seen significant progress in the People and Skills theme in D2N2. This report summarises plans and priorities of the People and Skills Advisory Board in its role as the Skills Advisory Panel for D2N2, key policy changes affecting the future of this work and recent progress against skills and productivity objectives.

An accompanying presentation will be provided at the board meeting.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The board agree the contents of the Local Skills Report and give final approval for publication

3. PEOPLE & SKILLS ADVISORY BOARD UPDATE

- Meeting date: 10 March 2021
- Chair: Shearer West
- Next meeting date: 10 June 2021

3.1 Headlines

The Board received progress updates from each of the sub-groups (summarised in Annexe A) and agreed a dashboard to track both core indicators impacting on the employment and skills landscapes and progress against priorities.

Scott Knowles, EM Chamber CEO framed a discussion on the recently published Skills for Jobs white paper that recommends Chambers of Commerce lead the work to plan and prioritise skills for business. The Board agreed to support a joint bid by both EM Chamber and D2N2 for delivery of a Local Skills Improvement Plan once the prospectus for delivery is published (expected w/c 15th March). This approach recognises the progress already made under the Board's role as Skills Advisory Panel as well as the added value Chambers and other business representative organisations can bring in extending reach into business and sectors

The Board agreed the final draft of the Local Skills Report subject to minor amends and correction. (see 4 below)

4. LOCAL SKILLS REPORT

- 4.1 The Local Skills Report (LSR) for D2N2 is formally presented to the Board by the People & Skills Advisory Board and can be read in full via this [LINK](#). Rachel Quinn will present a summary of the purpose and contents of the report at the Board meeting.
- 4.2 The LSR is a requirement of the D2N2 contract with Department for Education (DfE) for delivery of Skills Advisory Panel functions. It includes:
- analysis undertaken to date on the skills and labour market in D2N2,
 - summary interpretation of the area's skills strengths and challenges and how they inform the local strategic response,
 - identification of gaps to inform future activity and
 - key asks of partners
- 4.3 Section 8 of the report articulates the 'asks' of partners which have been agreed by the partners on the People and Skills Board. These can be summarised as:
- **Government:** Provide funding continuity; increase access to reskilling; increase SAPs' role in skills provision and funding.
 - **Post-16 Skills Providers:** Coordinate with our priorities for the region; build collaborative skills pathways; embed digital and low carbon skills in all learning pathways.
 - **Schools:** Provide senior support of Careers activity; promote higher technical skills pathways; embed careers inspiration and core digital skills in the curriculum.
 - **Local Authorities:** Support the strategic regional priorities for skills in your areas; continue collaborating with us and each other; facilitate relationships between local employers and schools.
 - **Employers:** Make skills core to recovery and growth planning; engage with the skills system to develop the future workforce; support your workers in retraining, reskilling and upskilling.
- 4.4 The report must be submitted to Department for Education by 31st March 2021 and made publicly available to stakeholders. Following approval by the PSAB the report is now being professionally designed and summary documents will also be made available.
- 4.5 Board are asked to note the contents of the report, confirm support for the asks of partners contained within (section 8) and give final sign off for publication.

5. DEVELOPING CONNECTED SKILLS PATHWAYS IN D2N2

- 5.1 The *Future Skills* theme of the D2N2 People and Skills Strategy identifies the need for closer connections between further and higher education providers to meet the rapidly changing skills demand in D2N2. The strategy is also underpinned by evidence of the need to stimulate transition from a low skilled economy and

population towards higher skills to meet anticipate growth and productivity objectives.

5.2 A meeting took place on 2 March, between college Principals, university Vice Chancellors and D2N2, and agreed to work together towards the following:

Outcome: A bold and ambitious skills system that can flex to meet the current and future low carbon skills needs to maximise growth and social mobility across D2N2

Objectives:

- Explore opportunities for improved collaboration between FE and HE to deliver joined up pathways for skills;
- Improve the connectivity between careers information, further and higher skills delivery in D2N2 to support needs of growth sectors and fill priority skills gaps
- Develop an approach that addresses both place and sectoral dimensions to growth and skills needs
- Maximise the local value of innovation assets – business growth, skills and place promotion
- Focus on digital and technical skills which support transition to a low carbon economy.

5.3 Next steps are being driven by the Skills for Growth sub-group and in summary include:

- Identification of top 5 key skills
- Mapping of existing provision, connectivity and gaps
- Convening a pilot group lead design of an optimal delivery model
- Early discussion with DfE to test a new model for skills in D2N2 as a pilot

6. STAFF CHANGES

Lastly, I wish to inform Board Members that I will be leaving my role as Head of People & Skills at D2N2 over the coming months. Whilst the final date of leaving is not yet confirmed, it is unlikely that I will be at the next board meeting. Advertising of the role is underway. I want to thank everyone for their support as I have grown into this role.

RECOMMENDATION: Board agree the contents of the Local Skills Report and give final approval for publication

Rachel Quinn
Head of People and Skills
March 2021

Annexe A

Sub-group	Priorities	Strategic Outcome
<p>Careers & Young People Chair: James Brand (United Cast Bar and D2N2 Board)</p> <p>Purpose: To implement careers programmes across D2N2 and co-ordinate and strengthen interaction between business and education</p>	Expand to 4 Careers Hubs across D2N2, reflecting local economic geographies.	Strengthened interaction between business and the education system
	Create a single online gateway to support all careers activity in D2N2.	Young people and adult re-trainers have access to high quality and dynamic labour market intelligence
	Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) and virtual careers fairs aligned to hub geographies.	
<p>Skills for Growth Chair: Nick Booth, (Uniper Academy)</p> <p>Purpose: To increase knowledge of current and future skills needs in D2N2 and ensure effective pathways exist for the D2N2 labour market to meet those needs.</p>	<p>Embed LMI, content and activity relating to digital skills and careers throughout.</p> <p>Develop and implement sector skills plans – commence with focus on Digital & Technical Skills in manufacturing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a coherent skills plan to meet future digital/low carbon skills. • Mapping of skills infrastructure to deliver • Engaging relevant innovation assets 	<p>Ensure all young people understand the 6 core digital skills and can demonstrate them</p> <p>Skills and education providers have the information and data they need and feel supported enough to flex their offer to adjust to the changed economy</p>
	Core messaging to business that ‘skills is key to recovery’ - with no ‘wrong door’ into skills support	Skills brokerage and guidance for businesses is aligned to and coordinated with business support mechanisms in D2N2.
<p>Employment Chair: Penny Halewood (Groundwork Greater Nottingham)</p> <p>Purpose: To develop, implement and oversee the delivery and coordination of employment and training programmes across D2N2</p>	Enable a ‘no wrong door’ entry to employment support in D2N2;	A well coordinated employment support landscape providing timely and targeted support to meet individual needs.
	Address the employment needs of graduates and higher skilled individuals.	
	Maximise the impact Kickstart placements into apprenticeships or sustained jobs.	Funding is used effectively across D2N2 to achieve skills for growth
	Deliver a single platform for employers to assist with inclusive employment.	Our strongly performing sectors continue to prosper, but are more open to supporting traditionally excluded populations
	Embed digital skills advice and upskilling in all employment support.	Increase the number of working age adults with essential digital skills for life and work
<i>Launch Covid-19 focused employment ESF calls</i>	<i>in conjunction with ESIF Committee</i>	

DATE:	23 March 2021
REPORT LEAD:	Elizabeth Fagan CBE
AGENDA ITEM:	2.1

TITLE:	Chair's Report
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report updates members on significant developments since the last Board meeting, specifically:

- a. East Midlands Freeport
- b. Budget 2021 Implications on LEPs
- c. Advisory Boards Update
- d. Partner engagement

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Board is asked to **NOTE** the report.

3. EAST MIDLANDS FREEPORT

On the 3rd of March as part of the Budget the Chancellor announced the outcome of the Freeport bids, and I was delighted that the East Midlands Freeport was confirmed as being one of the 8 winning bids and the only inland freeport in England.

The other 7 bids which were all seaport based are listed below, with further details included within **Appendix 1**:

- Humber
- Felixstowe and Harwich
- Liverpool City Region
- Plymouth
- Solent
- Thames
- Teeside

As board members will know we started the work on making the case for an East Midlands inland freeport back in 2019, working closely with the airport and LLEP. Since then, we have worked collaboratively with partners to put forward a compelling case for an East Midlands Freeport, which will play a significant part in transforming the region's social and economic future. I would like to once again formally express my sincere thanks to the board for your continued positivity, encouragement and support to deliver the successful expression of interest.

Now that our bid is over the first stage of approval, the next stage will require further work with Government to progress towards a detailed business case for formal approval to

establish the Freeport and to unlock the investment that will deliver jobs and prosperity for the region.

We know Government are keen to get Freeports up and running by the end of 2021 so that the benefits can start having an immediate impact therefore there is a sense of urgency on delivery – both on the process for establishing the freeport and to get it up and running across all sites.

The first task set by government for all 8 freeports by the week commencing the 22nd of March is to confirm the Freeport Governance arrangements set out within our bids, so that there is a formal partnership in place for government to have a dialogue with on delivery of the vision set out within the Freeport bid.

This will require confirmation of Freeport Board membership, roles and responsibilities and how it will work with wider partners across the region.

The expectation is that the Freeport Board is led by an independent private sector chair and be a partnership of relevant organisations across the public and private sectors but with a private sector majority.

Once this is approved by government, additional funding will be provided to support each freeport area to resource the capacity and expertise required to complete the formal freeport business case alongside the necessary authorisations for establishing the customs and tax sites.

The region wide Freeport Working Group led by D2N2 and LLEP working collaboratively with partners is leading on the early stages of setting up the freeport.

A further update on progress will be provided at the board meeting.

4. BUDGET 2021 IMPLICATIONS ON LEPS

In addition to the announcements made by the Chancellor on Freeports, he also formally announced the launch of several programmes to support economic recovery and growth including the Levelling up and Community Renewal Funds.

Details of the funds are covered in the CEOs report, but I wanted to focus on the reference to LEPS and implication of those announcements on the role of LEPS going forward and how that is being taken forward at a national level.

Historically LEPS have been responsible for leading bids and co-ordinating delivery of economic growth funding within their respective areas such as the Local Growth Fund, Getting Building Fund and the European Structural Funds. The new funds will instead be competitively managed at national level, with local authorities bidding into the new funds on behalf of local areas.

It is also worth noting that prior to the Budget the Skills for Growth White Paper also had little reference to the role of LEPS on skills and instead put forward an alternative to the work of the Skills Advisory Panels delivered through LEPS in the Local Skills Improvement Plans.

Government is also moving away from the national industrial strategy and by implication the local industrial strategies all LEPS were commissioned to put in place. Although there are still references to the relevance of the Local Industrial Strategies in both funds.

Given the impact of these policy announcements and previous statements made by the secretary of state, the Budget set out a commitment to review the future role of LEPS which

will also include LEP geographies. Robert Jenrick at a recent roundtable event on the launch of the fund confirmed the role of LEPs was under review and likely to evolve.

At a recent meeting of LEP Network Chairs and senior civil servants it was confirmed that a detailed review is under way to look at the future function and form of the LEPs. This review will be published by the summer, beginning with jointly agreeing the Terms of Reference and the appointment of a lead Minister to oversee the review.

As the representative Chair for the East Midlands LEPs, I am part of the national LEP Network group taking this work forward and will provide further details at the board meeting.

By way of context below is the extract from the Budget announcements:

As we look towards the UK Shared Prosperity Fund next year, we are conscious of the need for an evolution of the way we support local economic growth so it can best support levelling up for the long term. The UK government will work with local partners throughout 2021 to develop an approach that delivers the infrastructure and regeneration priorities local leaders want to see in their area.

We will also be working with local businesses on the future role of Local Enterprise Partnerships. We want to ensure local businesses have clear representation and support in their area, in order to drive the recovery. We will work with Local Enterprise Partnerships over the coming months, with a view to announcing more detailed plans ahead of summer recess. This will also include consideration of Local Enterprise Partnership geographies.

5. ADVISORY BOARDS

Since we last met as a Board all the Advisory boards have met and below are highlights from each board. In addition, I will invite each Advisory Board Chair to provide an update at the meeting. We have a separate report and formal update from the People and Skills board which will be covered later in the agenda.

Further details of activity relating to each area are included within the Chief Executives Report

BUSINESS GROWTH AND INNOVATION

- Meeting date: 3 March 2012
- Chair: Viv Russell
- Next meeting date: 2 June 2021

The Advisory Board received a presentation on our **Low Carbon** priorities which focused specifically on how businesses can effect change and the role businesses can play in driving productivity through green growth. It was agreed that the Advisory Board would take the lead on carbon literacy in business and supporting the development of D2N2 as a global hub for low carbon technologies.

An update on our successful **Growth Hub Peer Network** pilot was presented. Delivered through East Midlands Chamber, the programme has supported 26 facilitated groups of businesses across a range of sectors and target groups focused on peer support and action learning to improve leadership and management, digital skills, e-commerce, and a range of other topics to boost productivity. BEIS has announced further funding for Peer Networks in 2021/22 that will enable D2N2 to deliver a further 17 more cohorts.

Following discussions at the East Midlands Growth Hub Cluster, the Advisory Board received a proposal for a new framework for manufacturing support to promote the adoption of industrial digital technologies (IDTs). The framework will bring together and better co-ordinate existing support and identify new activity to support our manufacturing base across key areas of innovation, adoption, investment, and leadership & skills. The programme will be developed for implementation across D2N2 and co-ordinated with neighbouring East Midlands LEPs were agreed. As a first step, Advisory Board endorsed the establishment of a **D2N2 Manufacturing Advisory Group** to steer development and co-ordinate partner efforts. The new group will work closely with the Energy Strategy Group and Innovation Theme Group to ensure efforts to support IDT complements the low carbon agenda.

Advisory Board received a regular report on **D2N2 Growth Hub** activity and noted that tender for the Growth Hub review has now closed. The consultant, when appointed, is expected to complete the review by 31 August 2021 reporting back to Growth Hub Executive Board and the Advisory Board. The review is an important stage in determining the future shape of the Growth Hub and business support beyond ERDF funding.

PLACE

- Meeting date: 9th of February 2021
- Chair: David Williams
- Next meeting date:

Low Carbon

While low carbon is embedded in everything we do, the Place Board will ensure overall co-ordination across the advisory boards and has agreed on six key low carbon priorities. Our role is to build on and amplify the excellent work already underway across the region, drive by the public, private and voluntary sectors. Our priorities will be:

- Making our energy generation greener and becoming more sustainable users of electricity
- Decarbonising existing and new housing stock
- Building on the Freeport and our other energy assets to really establish D2N2 as a hub for low carbon innovation, transport, and manufacturing.
- Improving carbon literacy in businesses, especially SMEs
- Making the most of our natural assets to support carbon sequestration.
- Strengthening the capability of our schools, colleges and other training providers to develop a workforce with the relevant skills.

David has asked the Energy Strategy and Innovation groups to lead on implementation, with support from across the partnership.

Update on Inclusion Agenda

Michele has convened the first meeting of the Advisory Boards to discuss how we can bring a similar LEP-wide focus on the inclusion agenda. I understand that the meeting was highly successful and has resulted in agreement that Will Morlidge run a session with each Advisory Board to review their approach to inclusion and identify how they can contribute to the levelling up agenda. I'll be inviting Michele to make a regular report to this Board on progress.

Rural Reference Group

Similarly, Bev Parker from Rural Action Derbyshire, who chairs our Rural Reference Group is reviewing how we ensure we consider all parts of the D2N2 geography into our thinking, be that cities, towns, and rural areas. Until now the RRG has focused only on European funding bids for rural areas, so this is a welcome broadening of their ambitions. I know one early success has been to strengthen engagement with the NFU and the Country Landowners' Association, giving us greater reach into the rural business community than we have had previously.

An early result is a joint event being planned between D2N2, the NFU and the Environment Agency, with support from the two county councils, to promote the value of going green to rural businesses and communities. This will be a good example of weaving together our interests in place, innovation, business support and low carbon.

6. PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

Since the last board meeting, I have continued to liaise with regional MPs and partners to reinforce the case and need for the East Midlands Freeport.

I'd like to thank all our MPs across the region and political spectrum, in particular Mark Fletcher MP and Ruth Edwards MP for their encouragement and support with the Freeport bid, including the cross-party Freeport video. The regular group-wide MP meetings remain our main conduit for discussions with parliamentarians, and we continue to engage in one-on-one dialogue where appropriate.

In addition to the Freeport, we have continued our regional cross LEP collaboration across the East and West Midlands exploring opportunities to collaborate on shared areas of focus and to influence and inform regional partnerships such as the Midlands Engine.

Finally, as you will hear later in the meeting from Shearer, I have been working with our Universities and Colleges across D2N2 to explore how we strengthen the regional skills system through stronger collaboration to improve skills outcomes as a key component of the regions recovery and growth.

Elizabeth Fagan

Chair

23 March 2021

Location	Jobs	GVA	Sectors	Port Managed by	Sites	Additional notes
East Midlands	60,000	£2billion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Manufacturing Logistics Low carbon 	MAG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EMAIG EMAP Ratcliffe on Soar 	More info
Felixstowe and Harwich	13,500 (over 10 years)	£650m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manufacturing Green energy Innovation 	Hutchinson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Port of Felixstowe Harwich International Port Gateway 14 site outside Stowmarket. 	More info
Humber region	35,000 supported	£7.6 billion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agri-food Manufacturing Visitor economy Low carbon 	AB Ports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> East of the Port of Hull Development land in Goole Able Marine Development Park Immingham South Humber Industrial Investment site in North East Lincolnshire. 	More info
Liverpool City Region	12,000	£739m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automotive, Biomanufacturing Chemicals 	Peel Ports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Port of Liverpool Wirral Waters Liverpool John Lennon Airport Logistics sites in Knowsley, Sefton, St Helens and West Lancs Stobart rail freight terminal in Halton. 	More info Liverpool was one of the freeports which expired in 2012

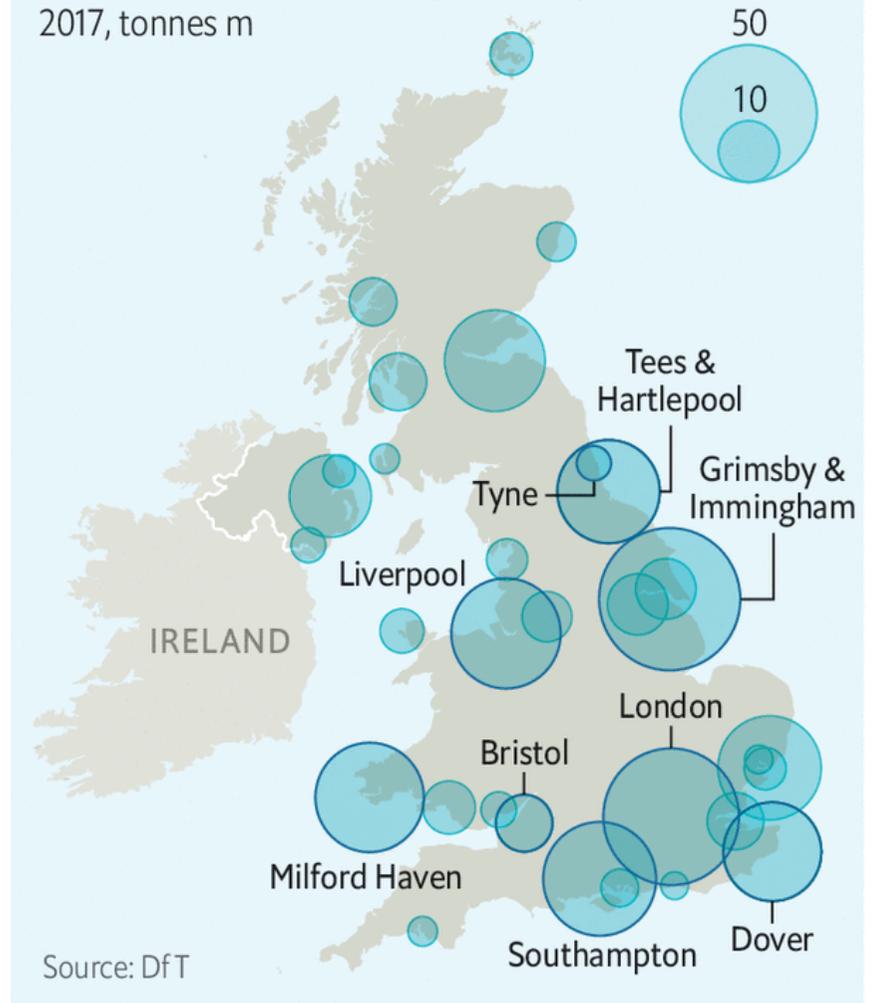
Plymouth	9,000 (over next 10 years)	£100m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-tech marine innovation • Low carbon 	Oceans gate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devonport South Yard • Langage Energy Zone • Sherford Business Park. 	More info councils estimate more than 70 local businesses would benefit from the scheme
Solent	52,000	£2 billion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autonomy • Green Growth • Decarbonisation 	AB Ports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eastleigh Riverside/Southampton International Airport North East Business Park • Portsmouth International Port • Dunsbury Park 	More info
Thames	25,000	£5.1 billion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aerospace • Automotive • Manufacturing • Green Growth 	Forth Ports and Dubai Ports World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ports of Tilbury • London Gateway • Ford's Dagenham plant 	More info Tilbury was a freeport until 2012.
Teesside	18,000	£3.2 billion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacturing • Engineering • Chemical processing 	PD Ports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teesworks • Wilton International • Teesside International Airport • The Port of Middlesbrough • Port of Hartlepool • Liberty Steel • LV Shipping. 	More info

FREEPORTS ANNOUNCED AT THE BUDGET



Pier review

British ports by total freight traffic
2017, tonnes m



The Economist

DATE:	23 March 2021
REPORT LEAD:	Sajeeda Rose
AGENDA ITEM:	2.3

TITLE:	Chief Executive Officer's Report
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report updates Board on the following.

- Business and Innovation Update
- Place activities Update
- Budget announcements
- Marketing and Communications Update
- ESF update

2 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Board is asked to **NOTE** the report.

3 ADVISORY BOARDS

BUSINESS AND INNOVATION UPDATE

Access to Finance

We continue to work closely with key partners in identifying the interventions required to facilitate improved **access to finance** (A2F) for start-up enterprises and growth businesses looking to scale up. Following a meeting of the A2F theme group on 20th January, the focus of activity is on developing a potential Investor Readiness programme through the Growth Hub that builds upon best practice from both local and European initiatives with an emphasis on developing a pipeline of investable prospects based on quality not quantity. Discussions have been held with key partners delivering across this theme such as Innovate Edge (formerly known as EEN) and Minerva Business Angels Network with active promotion of the Innovate Edge Pitchfest Midlands programme taking place in April/May.

Innovation

Within the **innovation arena**, current work is focused on mapping existing assets and D2N2 investment to develop a broader picture of our innovation eco-system and the offer we have to further support key sectors and attract investment as part of the place-based approach to R&D. The D2N2 Green Growth Strategy provides a focus on supporting industrial digitalisation and the shift to a low carbon economy and this will form the focus for innovation activity alongside supporting key sectors to recover and adapt to meet new opportunities.

Inward Investment and International Trade

The **Inward Investment Partner Group** met on 4th February. Despite the ongoing pandemic, all partners have reported a buoyant level of enquiries across the region especially regarding start-ups and service sectors such as IT/Tech. However, concerns remained regarding impact

on high streets/retail and likely unemployment rates. The group is currently developing an inward investment activity plan for the next 12 months to raise profile of the D2N2 offer whilst developing a new proposition for the region. Exploratory work will also commence shortly on models for a potential incentive fund.

Working alongside the Department of International Trade and East Midlands Business Ltd, we have now commissioned Dayton Bell to deliver a **D2N2 Internationalisation Strategy** with the draft to be presented in April 2021. The strategy work coincides with the launch of the new ERDF Internationalisation Fund providing small grant support for SMEs and Export Academy delivering focused modules to support new exporters. A project steering group has been established to manage the delivery of the strategy. The group will then form a theme group to oversee partner delivery to complement the DIT regional growth strategy.

We note the recent announcement of the Government's independent review of **Destination Managements Organisations (DMOs)** and we will work with local partners to fully engage in support of our visitor economy sector.

D2N2 Growth Hub continues to be the focal point of our business support effort in response to COVID and EU transition. Average monthly enquiry numbers remain over 1,000, which, alongside the virtual webinar programme, continues to strengthen the level of engagement that the Growth Hub is having with local SMEs. In January, the flagship Business Investment Programme hit the milestone of having contracted over £1m worth of grant applications as business continue to look to invest in new capital equipment to recover and invest.

D2N2 Growth Hub was given an allocation of £983,986 to deliver the Covid Recovery Grant scheme delivering 100% grants to support companies who had been directly affected by the pandemic, with eligibility criteria defined by Growth Hub partners. At the end of February, 363 SMEs have been supported, committing £730,000 of the budget. This included 141 grants to Visitor Economy sector businesses worth over £290,000 and equating to 116% of the target for the sector, providing vital support to hospitality and tourism businesses through the off season.

PLACE ACTIVITIES UPDATE

Low Carbon

We have been working closely with partners such as the Midlands Energy Hub and Midlands Engine to have a better understanding of our Low Carbon sector.

One of the key research reports we have supported is the Energy Hub's report into the Low Carbon and Environmental Goods and Services sector. This work looks across the Midlands and highlights that D2N2 is second in the Midlands only to Greater Birmingham in the scale and value of its low carbon sectors. We have already used this evidence to support our Freeport bid and there are some interesting opportunities here for growth: for example, considering how we can help the sector to maximise its trade potential.

We are also working with Midlands Engine to develop a pilot scheme on decarbonising minerals extraction across the Midlands, with a view to piloting an agreement with BEIS for investment in rolling out a wider programme of investment.

5 BUDGET ANNOUNCEMENTS

Alongside the Freeport, two of the most significant announcements in the Budget were the Levelling Up Fund and the Community Renewal Fund. The Budget also approved several Town Deals across the region.

Levelling Up Fund

This is a capital programme with a focus on shovel-ready projects requiring up to £20m with larger transport schemes up to £50m by exception. Projects for the first round should be able to spend by the end of 2021/22.

- It will be a process of competitive bids open to all local authorities: it has been informally described to us as more like the Freeport process than the Local Growth Fund, so there is no guaranteed minimum award to our area.
- Funding is based on index of need, with a focus on category 1 places. There are 123 category 1 places in the country. In the D2N2 area these are Bassetlaw, Chesterfield, Derby City, Derbyshire Dales, Erewash, High Peak, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood and Nottingham City
- Areas in Categories 2 and 3 will need to demonstrate much stronger benefits and impacts to be successful.
- Every LA can submit at least one bid for every MP whose constituency lies within their boundary. MPs can back only one bid.
- Where boundaries do not align well, local areas are expected to devise local solutions:
- Bids will be scored on VFM, strategic fit, place characteristics and deliverability.
- Capacity funding will be available for future rounds, but not the first round.
- Submission deadline for the first rounds is 18th of June, with a focus on Transport, town centre regeneration and Cultural assets.
- Subsequent rounds will be announced.

Community Renewal Fund

The proposed precursor to the Shared Prosperity Fund and replacement for European Funding. This round is helping to shape how future rounds will be designed.

£220m will be distributed in this round and will focus on:

- Investment in skills
- Investment for local business
- Investment in communities and place
- Supporting people into employment

Assessment criteria will be:

- Level of contribution to well-evidenced local needs articulated in relevant local plans.
- Level of contribution to an articulated investment priority
- Contribution to net zero or wider environmental considerations
- Clear targeting on an evidenced market failure or delivery inefficiency.
- The extent to which the project can inform future UK Shared Prosperity Fund with transferable learning
- Innovation in service delivery
- Commitment to robust evaluation

Our priority LAs in D2N2 are Bassetlaw, Derbyshire Dales, High Peak, Mansfield, Newark, Sherwood, and Nottingham.

Lead bidders must be Unitary or Upper Tier LAs (or CAs and Mets elsewhere). 90% of funding available through the UK Community Renewal Fund is revenue funding, with a small amount of capital funding.

Like LUF, submission deadline is 18th of June and projects must be able to spend by 31 March 2022.

Towns Fund

The Budget also confirmed some successes from our Towns Fund bids:

- Clay Cross: £24.1m
- Mansfield: £12.3m
- Newark: £25m
- Staveley £25.2m

Our Towns Fund group will continue to work with the districts and counties as we move towards delivery, with last week's meeting focusing on issues around changes to State Aid rules and on project assurance.

It also worth noting a couple of things that were not in the Budget:

- There was no further detail on of the initial £375m from the National Skills Fund announced in November will be accessed.
- And the long-awaited Devolution White Paper has again been delayed with no clear date for publication.

6 MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Summary

There continues to be growth in the number of followers across the LEP's social media (0.4% on Twitter and 8% on LinkedIn since January). The D2N2 LEP is the 6th most followed LEP in the country on Twitter. The stories with the most media reach included East Midlands Freeport, The Manufacturing Growth Programme (MGP), Worksop Access to Skills Hub, and the MTIF facility's completion.

KEY UPDATES

Marketing and Communications Plan

The Marketing and Communications plan's (**Appendix A**) was developed with Board member Jane Mayled. Its purpose is to provide a strategic framework and action plan for the LEP to manage its reputation and deliver a clear voice to unlock its full potential on a local, national, and international level.

National and Regional arenas have changed considerably over the last 18 months and will continue to do so. As this new landscape evolves, the communication demands on us has increased and become more complex.

Informed by research, metrics, and mapping exercises, our plan outlines the foundations and context facing the LEP, prioritising our resources and tactics to support the aims of the Economic Recovery and Growth Strategy (ERGS) and to enhance our communications efforts to inform, engage, and inspire actions that deliver impact.

East Midlands Freeport Communications

Together with LLEP, we have undertaken a joint communications approach to support the East Midlands Freeport bid and its successful outcome. This was the LEPS most successful media campaign and included three press releases, two blog articles and over 50 posts across LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook.

We want to thank all our partners for their support and for allowing us to champion our Freeport bid to large and diverse audiences, including the highest government levels. I would particularly like to thank Ioan Aspley-Reed, Head of Media at EMA and Jackie Ledger at the LLEP for their help and support over the past few months.

To date our activities have delivered:

- Over 60 news items across regional and national press (print, social and broadcast)
- Over 15,000 impressions via Facebook
- Over 30,000 impressions via Twitter
- 200% increase in website visits (circa 2000). The largest ever recorded.

**Impressions = the number of individuals viewing D2N2 Content*

Events

We support several events through our funding allocations, keynote speaking, and conference presentations. In the future, we will highlight upcoming events, so the board is briefed and aware they are happening.

Date	Event	Description
17 March. 9.30am – 2.30pm	Recruiting Talent	<p>The event will bring together experts who support businesses to change the way they recruit and retain staff.</p> <p>Sajeeda Rose, D2N2 CEO and Andrew Cropley, Principal and Chief Executive, Vision West Nottinghamshire College/D2N2 Board will be keynote speakers.</p> <p>Book here</p>

Since the last board meeting, we hosted a session entitled young people and careers in low carbon at the BEIS: Your Business Journey to Net Zero event.

This included presentations by Daniel Heffernan (Senior D2N2 Careers Hub Lead), Will Morlidge (Head of Strategy and Policy), James Brand (Managing Director, United Cast Bar Ltd / D2N2 Board member) and Nicola Swaney (Education Outreach Manager, Rolls Royce / D2N2 Business Growth, and Innovation Board)

7 ESF SUMMARY UPDATE

D2N2 ESF open calls

As a region we have successfully secured an additional £8 million from the national ESF Reserve Fund for employment and skills issues emerging from the Covid 19 pandemic, which is one of the largest allocations in the country. As a result, the following calls are now live for applications and will close on 10 May 2021.

- Covid 19 employment programme for adults - £2m of ESF
- Covid 19 programme for young people - £2m of ESF

Given the existing funding values of our current ESF employment and skills providers, they could potentially lever in an additional £25m of ESF investment if they meet the DWP performance criteria for extension. This will allow providers to deliver to December 2023 and support more employers, individuals, and communities to survive, recover and grow from the Covid 19 pandemic.

Details of two further calls going live shortly will be shared with the Board. MHCLG has confirmed that there will be no further local calls.

Finally our next ESF project will go live this month, which is the Healthy Work project for £4,149,878 of ESF – delivered Futures Advice Skills and Employment Limited. The project will support over 5,000 people with health and wellbeing issues to secure sustained employment in the D2N2 area.

Sajeeda Rose

Chief Executive

23 March 2021



D2N2 MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION

This is the marketing and communications strategy for the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). Its purpose is to provide a strategic framework and action plan for the LEP to manage its reputation and increase the effectiveness of its communications to drive economic growth.

Our communications approach needs to create a bold and consistent story and voice with a coherent narrative for the region.

The D2N2 LEP marketing and communications strategy will support the changing needs of our work, place new values at the heart of how we work, and ensure we focus on our priorities.

This strategy defines how we will position ourselves as a LEP, how we talk to all our audiences and how we will listen to what they are telling us.

The LEP will continue to have a digital first approach to communication; develop new channels that engage our communities at a time and in a place that suits them, supporting our future economic recovery and growth strategy and our inclusive approach.

Unprecedented private and public investment over the last ten years is transforming our region. But our region also remains one contrasts, with some of the most prosperous and deprived wards in the country.

With a developing strong cultural and visitor offer, a rich heritage, and huge swathes of beautiful green spaces, our communities have an impressive offer differentiated from other areas in UK and a keystone of the Midlands Engine.

Our strategy will ensure we make greater use of communications to share consistent messages to make sure they are heard louder and more often.

APPROACH

The marketing and communications team is developing a modern digital first model of working. Our objectives are to:

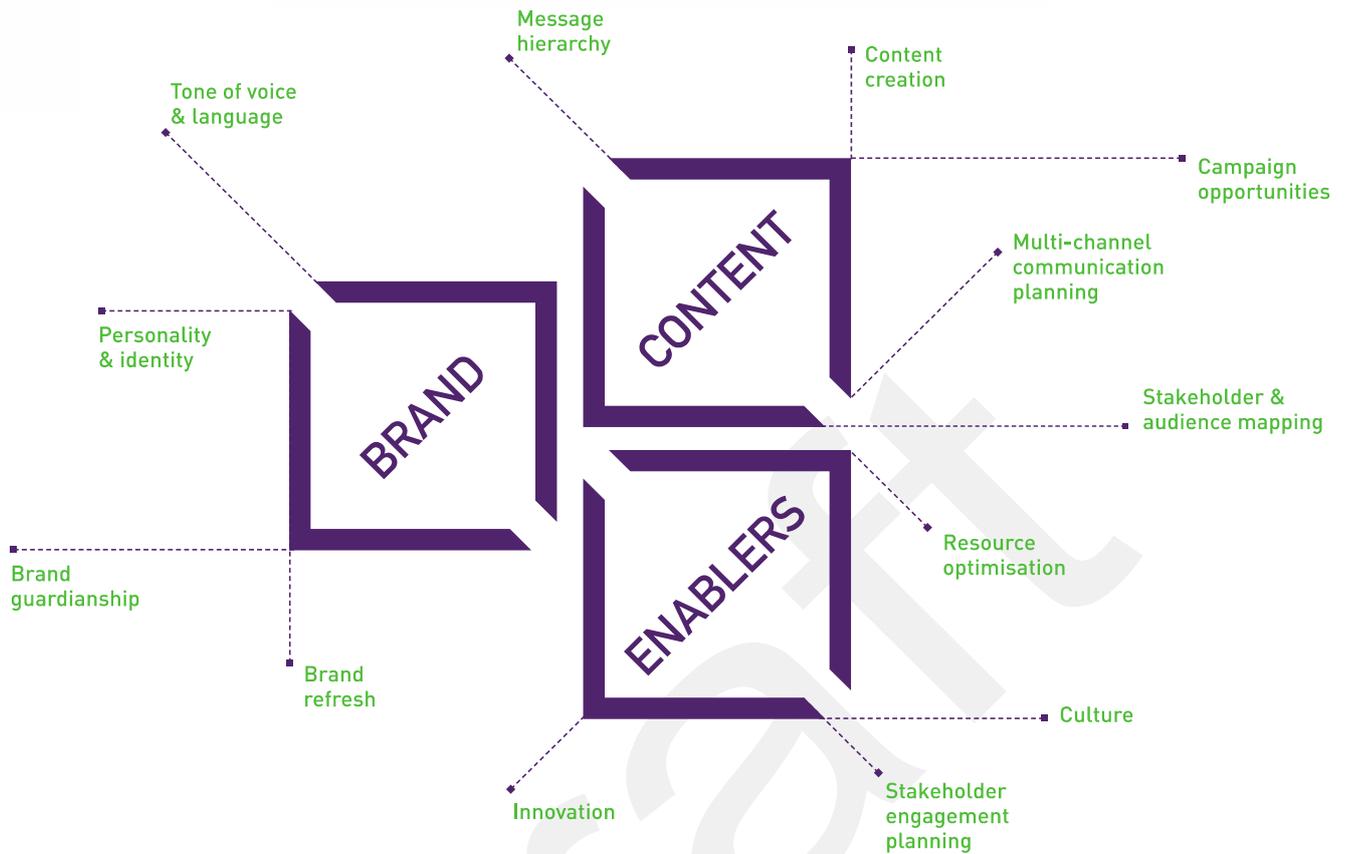
INCREASE AWARENESS	Ensure our priorities and ambitions are communicated effectively and are understood.
BUILD OUR IDENTITY	Build a reflective, approachable and clearly identifiable corporate brand
STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS	Manage and enhance our region's reputation and enable us build stronger relationships and fulfil our role as a leader, convenor and supporter.
PROACTIVELY DELIVER INFORMATION	Position communications as a vital strategic function which supports members, senior officers and the wider organisation.
PROVIDE ACCESSIBLE COMMUNICATIONS	Identify ways that communications and marketing activities can support the D2N2 priority areas.
DELIVER CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT	Ensure continual and measurable improvement in communications activities.

We have a clear understanding of the journey we want our stakeholders' and audience to take towards a desired outcome and the appropriate engagement tactics we will take to actions.

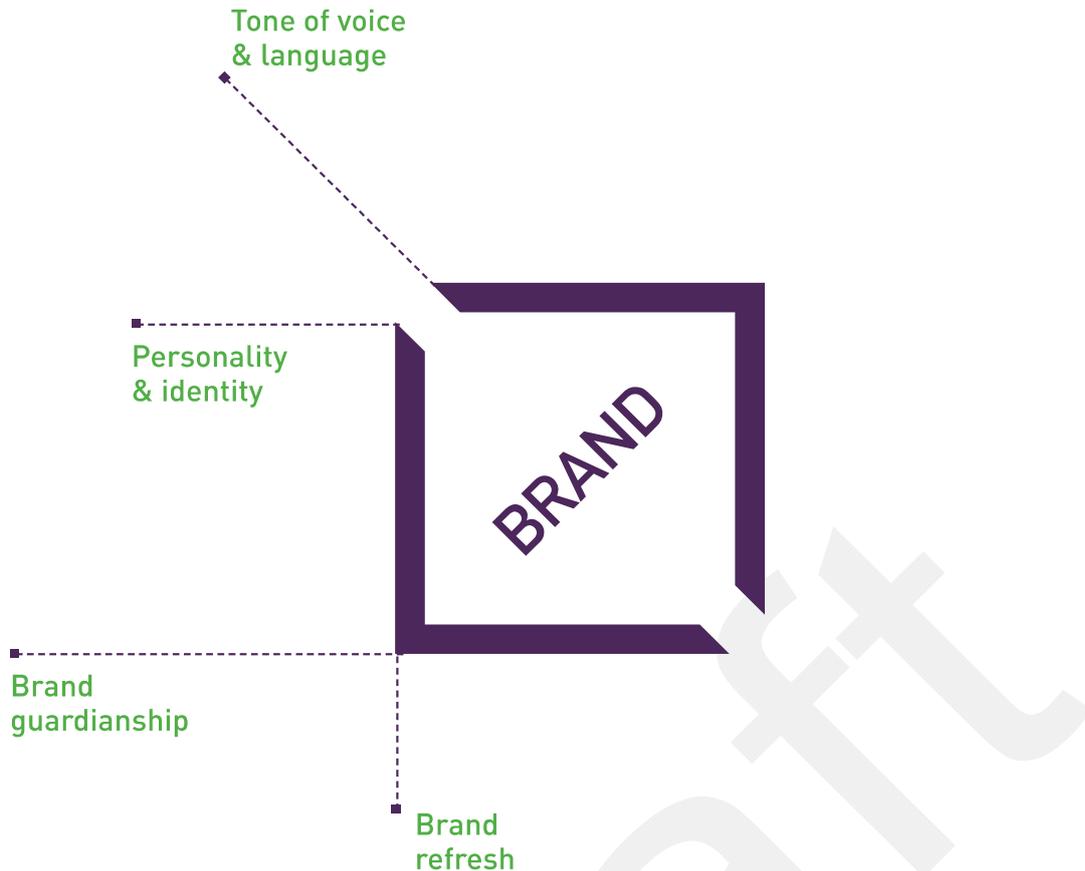
At different moments, different types of communications will help "move" our audience along our funnel and to support our needs and outcomes. Our approach has three simple steps:



We have developed three pillars that rely on each other, work together and combine to c



BRAND	CONTENT	ENABLING
Brand refresh 'Updating and refreshing our current brand structure.'	Message hierarchy 'The specific words and phrases we will use at the top-level of our communications.'	Resource optimisation 'Prioritising our activities and resources in the best way possible.'
Brand guardianship 'Ensuring our brand is consistently applied everywhere.'	Stakeholder & audience mapping 'Defining the stakeholders and audience that we want to connect with.'	Stakeholder engagement planning 'Planning the approach we take to strengthen our engagement with stakeholders.'
Personality and Identity 'The attitudes, emotions and characteristics we want to be associated with.'	Content creation 'Creation, publication, and governance of useful, usable and engaging content.'	Innovation 'Ensuring we keep pace with new, innovative ways of communicating and marketing.'
Tone of voice and language 'What we say and how we say it.'	Campaign opportunities 'Looking at opportunities to aggregate our content that align around a single goal or theme.'	Culture 'Creating a communications culture within D2N2 so that everyone acts as ambassadors for the region.'
	Multi-channel communication planning 'The strategies we use to maximize opportunities to connect to our audience.'	



BRAND

The D2N2 LEP brand is an essential tool that enables us to communicate our messages quickly, easily and effectively. In meeting our vision for D2N2 must extend our reach and profile with key partners and stakeholders across the region and beyond.

The D2N2 brand needs to work harder to position our vision and values. We want a brand that reflects our organisation and defines our position.

At D2N2, we work in collaboration with over 200 partners and engage with many different audiences on a daily basis, but in all of these conversations, we need to be able to present ourselves orally and visually that is simple, straight to the point and focuses on the end value that we want to create.

1. BRAND REFRESH

At the heart of every great brand is a clear sense of purpose. It brings people together behind a common cause and provides them with a sense of direction.

We believe our communications should be inclusive and used by all. This means designing for our audiences from the start.

Our refreshed brand structure will have three simple guiding principles. These will work in harmony and with our vision.

LOOK Our visual identity

SOUND Our tone of voice

FEEL Our brand personality

2. BRAND GUARDIANSHIP

We will develop the LEP's first brand guidelines to be an effective reference tool to help ensure consistency of design, messaging and tone of voice, across all our channels.

We will also expand our central bank of images, photos and messages, and other supporting assets for our platforms and specific campaigns.

These will be our building blocks for consistent and effective communications and ensure its proper use.

We will continue to formalise our internal processes for the creation, review, approval and use of marketing and communication assets.

3. PERSONALITY AND IDENTITY

Our content reflects our professionalism and integrity. This is essential, but in the process our content and communication can appear impersonal and stiff, driven by facts with no energy.

Emotion is the key to driving stronger engagement with our content. What does our audience really want from our content Inspiration? Education? Practical advice? Latest news?

We need to tell our audiences stories they relate to. We need to focus on the benefits of our work. Not the features. We must story tell our successes with people and facts.

These stories will inspire our audience to share more often and keep coming back for more.

71% of consumers are more likely to recommend brands with whom they have an emotional connection

4. TONE OF VOICE AND LANGUAGE

Tone of voice defines how the organisation sounds. It isn't just about the words we use – though this is part of it – but it's the way we write or talk. Is it formal? Is it chatty? Reassuring or firm?

We have researched our top performing (according to our content metrics) and best (in our opinion) content assets, and our brand voice needs to be bolder and more consistent.

We need to dial up and dial down on tone depending on the situation. Different tones will be used to build an emotional connection with our audiences.

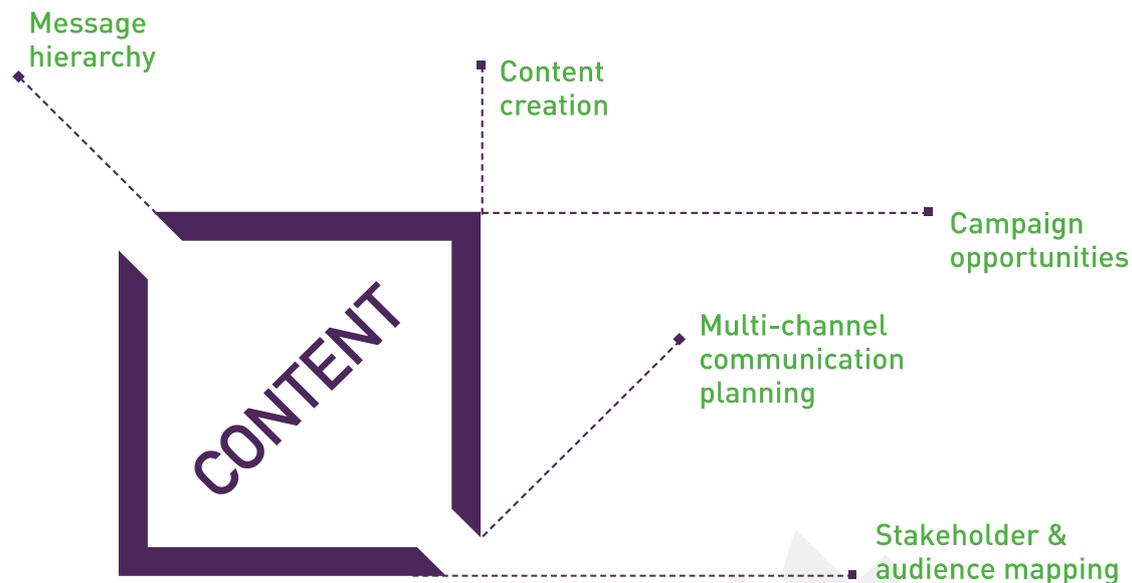
It's important that this tone of voice is applied consistently and that everyone who writes or talks about D2N2 is clear about how we sound. Our tone will be:

PROUD We are self-assured, incisive and direct. We proudly embrace who we are and what we've achieved and are always looking ahead for opportunities. Our writing has a dynamic edge, standing out for its energy and willingness to share a point of view.

INCLUSIVE We are proud of our reputation as a collaborative LEP. There is a natural warmth and inclusivity here that shines through our writing. We're considerate of our audience and have enough insight to provide them with information in a way that's both engaging, targeted and serves their needs.

INSPIRING We are passionate about inspiring success and enabling people to realise their ambitions. We challenge our audiences to think differently, get involved, and embrace ideas. There's a measured vitality in our writing that is both reassuring and motivating.

Our new brand guidelines will include further details of our brand personality and tone of voice.



CONTENT

We must be relentless in identifying, producing and distributing compelling content that drives positive perception and aligns with our goals, priorities and initiatives.

Our value and awareness grow when stakeholders and the public perceive both that D2N2 is an organisation of trust and our work benefits the larger society.

We will be focused on creating and delivering valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain our audience

We will commit to continuing the improvement of our website and keep content fresh and updated as we continue to move a greater share of our communications activity online, utilising our social media channels.

1. MESSAGE HIERARCHY

Building a messaging framework is more important than ever before. Our new framework will make sure we are telling a consistent story about our organisation, programmes, projects, and services.

It will be the backbone of our narrative, and structured well, it will help our teams and suppliers create any type of communication with complete consistency and brand cohesion.

D2N2 is identifying key messages to accompany the central themes of the organisation's activities (Appendix 1). We must be bold and compelling in what we say.

2. STAKEHOLDER AND AUDIENCE MAPPING

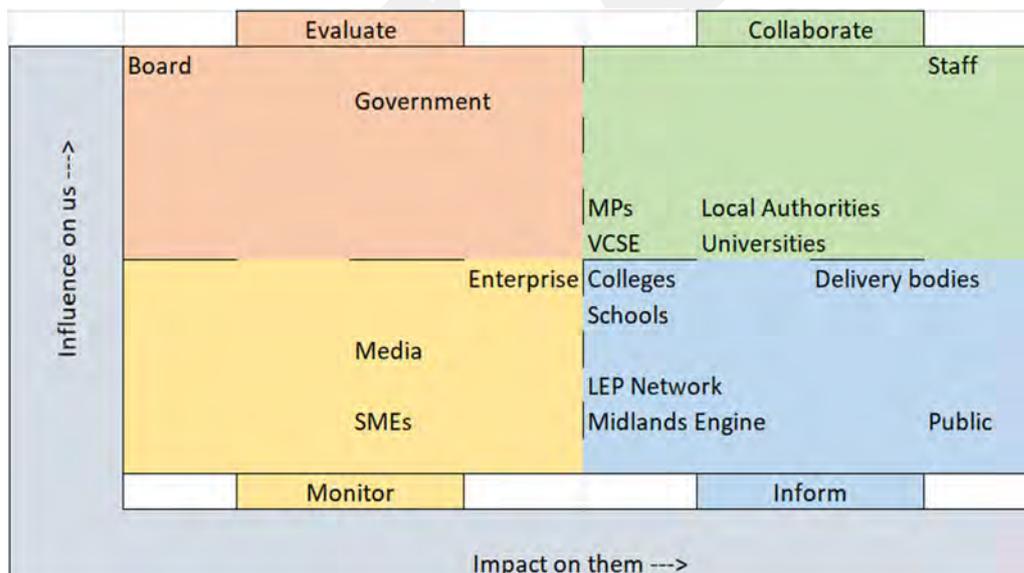
D2N2 has a diverse range of stakeholders, each of which is affected by our organisational actions, objectives, and policies. Our stakeholders have varying needs and our communications this.

Our stakeholders have been mapped as follows:

- Central Government
- Local Government
- Universities and Colleges
- Media
- MPs
- LEP Network
- Midlands Engine
- VCSE
- Delivery Bodies
- Board members, Advisory Board and staff,
- Local Strategic Businesses and Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs).
- General Public

We have mapped these stakeholders onto a modified Boston Matrix. The 'X' axis refers to the relative impact the activities of D2N2 has upon a stakeholder whilst the 'Y' axis refers to the influence that stakeholder has upon D2N2.

The stakeholders have then been grouped based on their positioning into four categories: Evaluate, Collaborate, Inform, and Monitor.



3. CONTENT CREATION

As a strategic, partner-based organisation most of our content (news stories, campaigns and assets etc) is produced in collaboration with other organisations.

Therefore, in addition to having capacity to create our own content, we need to ensure strong lines of communication and incentive to collaborate between

partners whilst providing strong and useable guidelines for partners to follow when creating partner content.

A. Asset Creation

In the past year D2N2 has donated some of its digital assets to partners including other LEPs, training providers, and Councils whilst also winning an award for one of its digital campaigns.

Distinctive assets help evoke emotion, even when the brand name isn't present. Every day we have opportunities to express the D2N2 brand. Our main assets are:

- Our website
- Our social media profiles and business pages on search engines and directories
- Our marketing collateral, promotional material, content, creative, ads and videos.

D2N2 has recently expanded its capacity for creating digital assets such as imagery and video. These are crucial to boosting the LEPs profile by leveraging our existing stakeholders.

By providing content accessible via our social media channels that is engaging and sharable, D2N2 takes advantages of our stakeholder's organic social media allowing us to reach beyond what is achievable by D2N2 alone.

B. Strengthening of Publicity Guidelines

As part of our review into best practice, we are strengthening our communications guidelines surrounding the publicity of our funded projects.

Future changes will provide additional clarity for partners on their responsibilities regarding content creation including media management, digital content, assets, and website representation.

The new guidelines also establish protocols for greater collaboration on reputation management between partners.

C. Operational Communications Network

The D2N2 Operational Communications Network is a group created and convened by D2N2 and includes communications professionals including representatives from unitary authorities, universities, place-making organisations, and the Cabinet Office.

Set up in August 2020, the Network's objectives include the collaboration, co-ordination, and amplification of region-wide messaging with D2N2's partners.

The group is designed to be a place where networking and sharing of best practice can take place. The group meets

virtually on a once a month basis and features a 'newswire' an instant-messaging service used to share stories from organisations.

D. Thought Leadership

Thought leadership pieces provide influence for issues and get them to all relevant stakeholders. They raise visibility, increase credibility, and build trust.

D2N2 pieces Include viewpoints about our programmes and strategies, and organisational based pieces on our values, purpose, and point-of-view.

A new Thought Leadership Plan will increase the creation, distribution, measurement, and optimisation of our thought leadership to ensure it's more consistent and effective.

4. CAMPAIGN OPPORTUNITIES

By taking a campaign led approach to some of our communications, the aim is to improve public perception and understanding of our programmes and in turn better manage our brand and reputation.

Each campaign will have a clear goal. Campaigns and plans will be driven by the intelligent use of data, with insight shaping objectives and segmentation so that communication can be effectively targeted

Our approach to campaign will be planned and focused. This will improve efficiency and the effectiveness of our marketing and communication activities.

A. Partner Campaigns

Supporting relevant partner campaigns is important. In some cases it will allow us to access a new network or the existing audience of the partner. This increases exposure, trust and our reputation.

This approach needs to be planned. Consistent understanding and alignment around forthcoming campaign themes and activities is critical. We propose that clear briefs are agreed for any national or regional campaigns to ensure that they support our themes and key messages; and that the campaign can be delivered effectively.

Case study: 2020 Apprenticeship Week

Objective: National Apprenticeship Week is an annual celebration of apprenticeships that brings the whole apprenticeship community together to celebrate the impact of apprenticeships on individuals, employers and the economy. D2N2 supported this national campaign to increase awareness of the week, and to deliver and support key apprenticeship messages for the region

Implementation: The communications team developed a campaign plan to support the week to drive awareness and interest. The campaign utilised national messaging together with more localised messaging relevant to the region. Using the National Apprenticeship Week toolkit and assets where possible, tactics included development of new D2N2 blogs and social media.

Results and evaluation: We generated six new blogs covering different aspects of apprenticeships and posted 23 social media posts. The campaign generated 514% more website visits than our previous campaign. Twitter engagement (number of times users saw Tweets) was 14,333. It generated 1,336 impressions on LinkedIn

B. D2N2 Campaigns

Research of our website and social media traffic, shows that that 86% of our content is based on ongoing themes or goals.

Going forward we will look opportunities to aggregate that content into a campaign, to amplify impact and help our content stand out in a crowded market through a more creative approach.

Case study: Give an Hour

Objective: The Give an Hour campaign invites businesses to make a difference to the young people in their area by giving an hour of their time to help young people with careers advice. Delivered with the Careers and Enterprise Company, it is an excellent way for those that have established their career to support young people to get started.

Implementation: The communication team devised a four-month campaign using e-shots, newsletters and social media. We created a campaign landing page on our website with detailed information and a sign-up form. We also worked with partner networks to amplify our messages and our strong call to action

Results and evaluation: The landing page was accessed 651 times and just over 28,000 impressions were created through social media with 438 interactions (clicks, likes etc). The campaign generated 30 strong leads (what) directly to D2N2.

C. Paid for Campaigns

Paid digital advertising campaigns offer excellent engagement rates with key stakeholders. Targeted campaigns through Google AdWords and pay per click can boost reach to audiences quicker and more effectively than our organic, self-generated content.

Case study: D2N2 Growth Hub

Objective: In the wake of the Covid-19 crisis, businesses are needing support more than ever. This month-long campaign aimed to increase the Growth Hub's awareness and profile and also to create cut-through with businesses across the region. The key messaging for the campaign, focused on business support available through The Growth Hub, including grant support.

Implementation: The campaign was managed by a third-party digital agency, Anicca. Using LinkedIn, Anicca has raised awareness and engagement of the Growth Hub, while also looking to drive traffic and conversions on-site. The campaign targeted business decision-makers in the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire area.

Results and evaluation: The campaign generated 203 leads. Such was its success, the campaign had to be paused to allow the Growth Hub Enquiries Team to follow-up on all new enquiries being generated across the campaign. The campaign delivered 132,618 impressions (the number of times the post was shown to LinkedIn members) and generated 27,457 video views.

5. MULTI-CHANNEL COMMUNICATION PLANNING

D2N2 has access to several communication channels as part of its ongoing efforts of raising the profile of the LEP.

These range from traditional methods of communication such as public relations and events, to digital channels such as social media and email marketing.

A strong multi-channel communication plan will not only recognise the differences between audiences of each channel but will successfully amend the message to reflect the position the audience is within our stakeholder journey.

A. Website

The principle component of D2N2s communications offer our website, the latest iteration of which was launched in July 2020.

All D2N2s digital channels cascade from and feedback to the website in a hub/spoke model, allowing for an aggregating of content on a fully editable platform.

The most popular component of the website is our News service which covers the full breadth of LEP activities and those of our partner organisations.

Website traffic can be used as a strong proxy for effective communications delivery. Therefore, website traffic can be a reliable measure for both stakeholder engagement and profile for the LEP.

B. Newsletters and e-shots

The D2N2 Newsletter is now a fortnightly digest of news stories published on the website over the preceding fortnight.

The newsletter audience are those who frequently engage with D2N2 or its subsidiaries including the public sector, HE and FE sectors, and the private sector.

The intention is to grow the audience to more than 2000 members by the end of 2021 (currently 1600) whilst maintaining the high open (30%+) and click through (10%+) rates.

D2N2 deploys e-shots on an adhoc basis to our Newsletter audience with major news announcements such as those relating to the Coronavirus pandemic or new funding schemes.

C. Social Media

Increasingly social media is seen by industry experts as a better vehicle for communicating organisational messages to broad stakeholders. D2N2 makes use of three primary social media platforms: Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook.

- D2N2s Twitter account is by far our most valuable social media asset. Twitter accounts for 30% of website traffic via social media.
- The D2N2 LinkedIn company page was founded in May 2019 and accounts for 12% of website traffic.
- D2N2 has a presence on Facebook which generates 58% of traffic to the website

D2N2 uses two primary measures of social media efficacy: Impressions and Engagement.

D. Media Management

Our media management can include issuing press releases, arranging media appearances, responding to requests and proactively issuing response comms to negative stories to safeguard the reputation of the organisation.

In 2020, D2N2 acquired the services of a Media Monitoring service. This service allows D2N2 to connect with a wide range of journalists.

The system also allows us to monitor our news coverage, the sentiment of articles involving D2N2, and the Advertising Value Equivalent (AVE) of our media activities. We also use website traffic (organic traffic) to track the impact of our media activities.

It is important that we continue to develop, maintain and nurture an open and constructive relationship with our media regionally, nationally and internationally.

E. Printed Collateral

We produce a small range of print collateral and will continue to develop these as and when required, ensuring they are timely relevant and cost-effective. We will continue to take the lead on producing strategic reports, for example, the D2N2 Annual Delivery Plan and the D2N2 Annual Review.

All printed collateral is designed to direct readers to the D2N2 websites where they would be able to find out more about any specific consultations. It will also ensure consistency of messaging when partners and stakeholders engage with us.

F. Events

No other type of marketing gives you the opportunity to interact with your audience like live events.

Currently, D2N2 runs outreach events to partners on a range of topics, from strategy consultation to stakeholder engagement. This includes our Annual Conference held in the latter part of each year.

In this context, events can be hosting an event to build stronger relationships with prospects and stakeholders. It can also be attending an event as an exhibitor to educate potential customers on our programmes and projects.

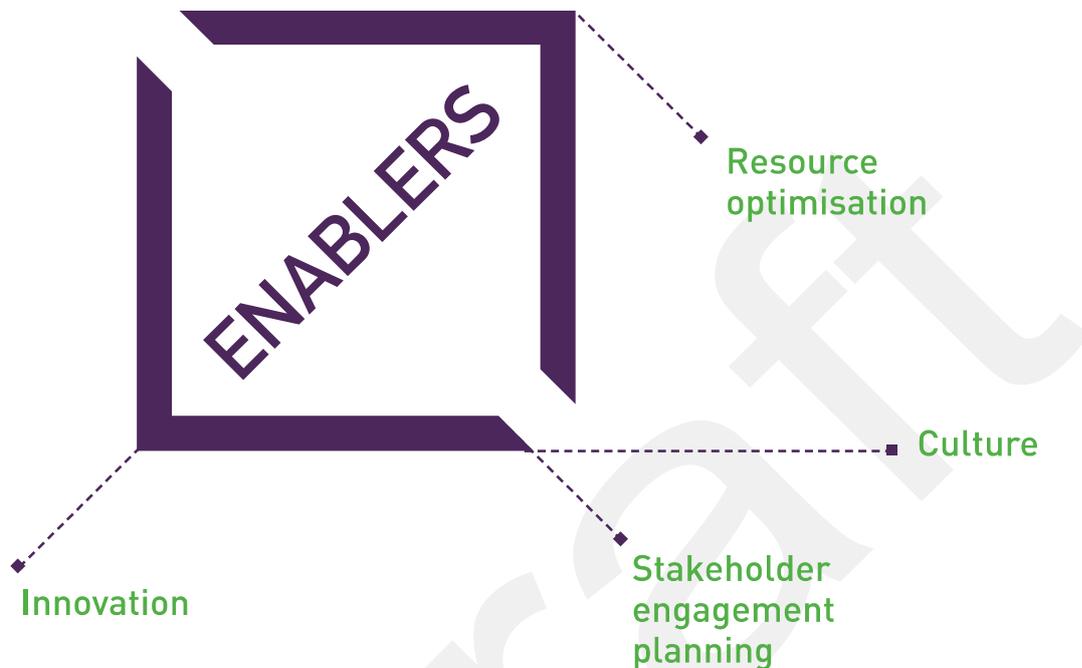
Going forwards, we will lead the development of annual events plan for to increase our engagement with our communities; educate them about what we do and gather feedback on what they want from us.

G. Advertising and sponsorship

The LEP does not have the budget to undertake advertising or sponsorship, but it can achieve sponsorship by providing assistance in-kind, such as profile raising to achieve a sponsorship association with events and campaigns. Any implementation will be tactical and linked to a specific project or outcome.

H. External Affairs

We will continue to develop good working relationships with BEIS and Government Ministers, civil servants and constituency MPs. Ensuring they understand the work of the LEP and the opportunities and challenges in our region



ENABLERS

Our building blocks, or enablers, is what we need to form, improve and maintain to create enduring relationships and something that makes it possible for another thing to happen or be done.

Some of our enablers are technical and some are organisational. These include the need to master new capabilities, encouraging flexible and rapid decision making. All are essential if we are to reach our aims and objectives.

These need to be embedded across the organisation to improve performance and out puts. We need to be agile and responsive to change and must be deeply tuned into insights about how technologies and opportunities are changing.

6. CULTURE

D2N2 will continue to focus on openness and transparency, ensuring staff are kept informed about news and developments before they are communicated externally.

All internal stakeholders are ambassadors for D2N2. This will continue to be the philosophy for all employee engagement and communication going forward.

Internal communication will be maintained through internal email, staff intranet, team meetings and key briefing sessions.

Two-way communication will also be encouraged to give internal stakeholders the opportunity to feedback on all areas of the business and make suggestions to influence change.

7. INNOVATION

The use of new channels has enabled us to connect to more people, improved access and enhanced the customer experience.

New marketing channels and opportunities continue to emerge as others decline. This cycle of growth tactic effectiveness is not only something we need to keep up with but try to stay ahead of.

Innovation spotlight: Voice Search

Voice search is dominating the search landscape. It has become a convenience to many, allowing everyday users to speak into their devices instead of typing keywords into a search query to get answers. In the UK, it is predicted that half of all online searches will be made through voice search by 2020.

As a result, many marketers are reevaluating their content to adapt to voice search to help their website rank higher on search engines and enable their services to be found easier.

8. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLANNING

Our important stakeholder groups are inherently known to us and we are interacting with these stakeholder groups in some form or another as a matter of course. This engagement happens in different formats and at various levels across D2N2, and the process has been embedded for some time.

However, this process can be ad-hoc without structure with no formal processes in place. Our new stakeholder plan will set out the type of relationship and related engagement that we need for each of our individual stakeholders. It will also encourage us to think about mutual areas of interest, as well as any areas where there is potential for disagreement or risk.

We have started to plan and set out the type of relationship and related engagement we need for each of our individual stakeholders and the communications activities that best reach those stakeholders.

Evaluation (High Influence on D2N2, Low impact on them)

Included: Board, Government

Methods of Communication: Meetings, Briefings, e-shots

Collaboration (High influence on D2N2, High impact on them)

Stakeholder Staff, MPs, VCSE, Local Authorities, Universities

Communication: Internal Comms (Staff), Briefings (MPs), e-shots, meetings, Operational Communications Group (LAs, Universities)

Inform (Low influence on D2N2, High impact on them)

Stakeholder Colleges, Schools, Delivery Bodies, LEP Network, Midlands Engine, Public

Communication: Meetings, e-shots, social media, press releases, social media,

Monitor (Low influence on D2N2, low impact on them)

Stakeholder Media, Enterprise, SMEs

Communication: Partners (Growth Hub), Press Releases, social media, e-shots, networks, meetings

A. Stakeholder management system

Robust relationship management is crucial to the success of our future stakeholder engagement plans, particularly as we are dealing with multiple stakeholder contacts at any one time.

We have started the process to create a solution that provides long term scalability and a uniform view of our stakeholders and our interactions with them.

Over the next few months, we will be looking at our collective requirements/needs to support the purchase of a third-party stakeholder management system.

This new way of working will improve strategic engagement and ensure that our staff have always have the correct information at their fingertips.

9. RESOURCE OPTIMISATION

We will maximise our resources by adopting standardised ways of working that embeds processes and project management techniques to ensure we provide the best value for money.

With new projects we will identify the key audience, select the communication tools that are most suitable, and use established evaluation methods to measure success. Where appropriate, we will also consider if the project warrants a more comprehensive campaign.

A. Content Calendar

To improve and help us with priorities we have created a new integrated content calendar that identifies core themes that are represented across the LEP.

The calendar will be continually improved to address our themes and assist us in the planning of content we will be sharing - across which platforms and when. The more advanced this can be, the easier it will be to react to tactical opportunities.

B. Clear Processes

The implementation of effective communications is at the heart of our work. We will follow the OASIS system as a framework for improved planning.

It will be applied to every kind of planned communication and campaign we produce, from news via press and digital to large scale campaigns. OASIS is a series of steps that can help bring order and clarity to planning campaigns.

The aim is to help make our planning process rigorous and consistent. The five steps we will adopt using OASIS are:



MONITORING AND EVALUATION

It is vital that the effectiveness of all our communications is properly measured and monitored to ensure that services continue to support and deliver our corporate objectives.

The key measure of effective communications is whether the information and messages an organisation wants to convey are picked up by the relevant audiences.

This can be evaluated through surveys and consultations. The results of which can then be used to benchmark performance over time and in comparison, with other organisations.

A range of indicators, targets and standards have been developed to provide performance information on all key aspects of our communications. The introduction of a new media and monitoring service in January 2020 has allowed robust data to be captured as to the production, distribution, coverage and media spend for all media activity.

Our new communication metric dashboard can be seen [here](#)

In addition to these ongoing performance indicators, individual targets will be set to evaluate the effectiveness of one-off communication projects and campaigns, including the use of pre- and post-event attitude surveys.

This will be achieved by using a mix of:

- Visual assessments
- Quantitative analysis by using analytics packages (our website), and within the dashboards of our advertising platforms and social media platforms
- Qualitative techniques, (such as surveys) often used to assess creative messages and ads
- The use of specialist or channel-specific tools (both free and paid)

REVIEW AND GOVERNANCE

The Head of External Affairs and Communications reports to the Chief Executive. Any risks to achieving the aims of this strategy will be recorded and escalated if required.

This strategy will be reviewed every three years to ensure it continues to reflect the principles and objectives of D2N2 and deliver on the communications needs of our region.

This strategy will be supported by an annual action plan. This plan sets out a range of actions and associated timeframes to deliver on the objectives identified in this strategy.

Draft

Appendix 1

We work to make Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham, and Nottinghamshire THE PLACE to invest, grow and prosper

Who we are:

Future focused, we drive sustainable economic growth through impactful partnerships and strategic investments.

Positioning statement:

We are the heart of England. Our place is Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham, and Nottinghamshire. We lead, convene and support to inspire action to shape our places and enhance individual, business and community prosperity.

Future Focused

We focus investments of time, knowledge and resource to anticipate opportunities that drive change and opportunity for all.

Impactful Partnerships

We inspire action through strong leadership and powerful collaborations to unlock solutions that deliver the greatest impact

Strategic Investments

We identify, consider and prioritise proposals for strategic investment to unleash our potential and drive sustainable economic prosperity

KEY THEMES: SKILLS, PLACE, BUSINESS, INNOVATION, LOW CARBON AND INCLUSION

SKILLS: We are improving skills in D2N2 working with partners to unlock our peoples potential.

BUSINESS: We support businesses of all shapes and sizes in D2N2 to access the help they need to grow.

PLACE: We work with partners in D2N2 to identify investments and projects that will regenerate our communities

INNOVATION: We work with innovators to help make businesses more effective, efficient and profitable.

LOW CARBON: We are leading and adopting strategies to deliver the fastest low-carbon turnaround in the country

INCLUSIVE: We are committed to creating an economy that works for everyone to ensure opportunities are distributed equally

Item 2.7
The Alchemy Project – Development Corporation
Briefing Note – March 2021

Introduction

1. This briefing note will take the form of an end of year report. It is the culmination of a series of regular progress updates provided to the D2N2 LEP Board in relation to the East Midlands Development Corporation (EMDC) Programme. The report provides a review of the deliverables over the financial years 2019/20 & 2020/21 and an explanation of the transitional arrangements for the formation of EM DevCo Ltd.
2. In February 2019 the Government signed off £2 million in funding, to be split equally across 2019/20 & 2020/21. The funding was for the purpose of undertaking work, including the development of a business case, for the establishment of a body to deliver regional ambitions for inclusive growth, with a particular focus on Toton and Chetwynd (around HS2 proposed Hub Station); East Midlands Airport Area; and Ratcliffe-on-Soar power station. Strong local stakeholder engagement was essential throughout the process. This was formalised through the establishment of an Oversight Board, now known as the Alchemy Board, chaired by the Chair of the Midlands Engine which includes key stakeholders; and a representative Executive Group.

Background & Progress to date

2019/20:

Introduction

3. During 2019/20 an Oversight Board and Executive Group was formed to oversee the work of the EMDC programme. Early analysis identified that all five cases of the Government compliant business case needed primary research and analysis. There was also an early recognition that there was no off-the-shelf model that meets the region's requirements and a new model of governance needed to be defined. It was not therefore a case of simply making the case for, and setting up, a familiar delivery structure, but defining an entirely new one.

Statements of Intent

4. A number of 'statements of intent' were agreed during 2019/20 to define a number of broad guiding principles for the EMDC programme. These included general high level principles; governance; planning; and freeport. The latter in recognition of a complementary opportunity for an Inland Freeport focussed on East Midlands Airport Area and Ratcliffe Power Station.

Working Groups

5. A number of working groups were formed to undertake more in depth work on specific components of the development corporation including Connectivity; Zero; Natural Capital – Net Gains; Freeport; and Communications. Close working also emerged with the NHS confederation to explore the potential for health considerations to be woven into the strategy.

Alchemy Project Summary Business Case

6. The year culminated in the endorsement of the 'Alchemy Project Summary Business Case' and its submission to Government in March 2020. This made the case for a new type of development corporation – a LLUDC and as a consequence the need for an Interim Vehicle. It included recognition in the Oversight Board for the need to focus on the three initial sites before considering a wider roll out. Concurrently, the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) undertook a consultation on development corporation reform at the turn of the Calendar year 2019/20 and the Midlands Engine submitted a technical response as part of on-going discussions with Government. Officials highlighted the need to be prepared and ready to engage in relevant legislative opportunities and the pending planning reforms were known at that point.

2020/21:

Introduction

7. In 2020/21 the programme has focussed on concluding the detailed business case and establishing an interim delivery vehicle, EM DevCo Ltd. The interim vehicle will be a company limited by guarantee that will drive forward the proposition whilst the Parliamentary processes to establish the proposed new model of Locally Led Urban Development Corporation (LLUDC) take place. The working groups established during 2019/20 to support the programme continued to advance a number of key themes.

Planning & Development Corporation Reform

8. During 2020/21 the Government undertook consultation on a Planning White Paper - 'Planning for the Future' <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future> . This included specific mention of Toton and the work on the East Midlands Development Corporation programme. The Midlands Engine responded positively to this consultation to highlight the range of possible powers envisaged for the new model LLUDC as part of the reform agenda.

Interim Vehicle

9. During 2020/21, the proposals for an interim vehicle focussed on the three initial sites continued to develop. The formation of the vehicle was agreed at the Alchemy Board in July 2020, with recognition and support for the five directly affected local authorities with statutory responsibilities covering the three sites to form the vehicle. The five authorities

included Broxtowe Borough Council; Leicestershire County Council; North West Leicestershire District Council; Nottinghamshire County Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council. Those authorities formally agreed to set up EM DevCo Ltd in December and to allocate £1.5m per annum between them for the set up and operation of the business.

10. The interim vehicle will mirror the governance model for the LLUDC. This includes the establishment of an 'Oversight Authority' of Members and a private sector led independent board of Directors. Work on the formal incorporation and establishment of EM DevCo Ltd is underway with a view to the company operating as soon as practicable in the financial year 2021/22.

Alchemy Board

11. The original 'Oversight Board' established to oversee the programme (Para 2 above), will form the foundation of the Alchemy Board.
12. During 2020/21, an Alchemy Prospectus was agreed as the basis for taking forward a strategic conversation at a regional scale. This highlighted five key themes to be developed further including Connectivity; Natural Capital – Net Gains; Zero; Health; and Skills. The governance for this is being reviewed as part of the transitional arrangements with East Midlands Councils and Midlands Engine supporting this workstream.

Freeport

13. The complementary opportunity for Freeports has continued to develop during 2020/21 including an Inland Freeport focussed on East Midlands Airport Area and Ratcliffe Power Station. Latterly, and in the build up to the formal submission of an Expression of Interest on the 5th February, these plans also include East Midlands Intermodal Park in South Derbyshire. The Government's support for the proposal was announced as part of the 2021 Budget announcements on the 3rd March.

Business Case for LLUDC

14. The detailed business case for the LLUDC model supports the establishment of the interim vehicle; complements the proposed Freeport status for part of the area; and is not dependent on HS2 with sensitivity analysis having been undertaken. The business case was endorsed by the Alchemy Board on 29th January 2021 and agreement given for the Chair to submit the final version to the Secretary of State follows discussions with MHCLG officials and final clarifications with key stakeholders.
15. The business case submission includes four key requests to Government; funding for the Interim vehicle (the five owning LA's are committed to providing £4.5 million); to progress legislation to establish the LLUDC; approval for 100% local retention of Business Rates in the EMDC area; and In-principle commitment to project funding for EMDC programmes.

16. This business case sets out, to Government, how a new LLUDC model for the East Midlands will meet the criteria for public-sector intervention. It includes a value for money assessment, commercial viability; financial affordability; and a route to delivery. It is intended that the business case will be formally submitted to Government on the 19th March 2021.

Conclusion & Transitional Arrangements

17. As we head into the financial year 2021/22, it is clear that the original objectives of the programme have been met. A clear and compelling proposition has been delivered for both a new model of LLUDC in the East Midlands and an Interim Vehicle in the meantime.
18. There are a number of key considerations for the programme moving forward. The five Local Authorities are progressing the establishment of EM DevCo Ltd as the interim vehicle. The company is due to be legally incorporated and registered with Companies House in March 2021.
19. A business plan for 2021/22 is under development, which will set out the activities and budget of EM DevCo Ltd for the year ahead and will be considered for approval by the EM DevCo Ltd Oversight Authority in April. The deliverables within the Business Plan will initially be based on the confirmed year one Local Authority funding of £1.5m, but EM DevCo Ltd will be capable of managing a larger budget, should anticipated Government funding be confirmed.
20. In line with the actions agreed at the January Alchemy Board meeting, a separate review is underway to establish a fit for purpose governance and support structure for the Alchemy Board moving forward. This review is being undertaken through East Midlands Councils working with the Midlands Engine.
21. It will be important to review the lessons learnt for the two levels that have emerged. These include the site specific considerations and the associated development and infrastructure investment opportunities and secondly at a regional, 'Alchemy', scale level of proposition. Both have been designed to influence each other and flexibility has been an important consideration throughout.

Future Project Governance Meetings

Alchemy Board Meetings

Thursday 29th April 2021, 13:30-15:30
Monday 12th July 2021, 14.30-16.30
Friday 8th October 2021, 11:00-13:00
Friday 21st January 2022, 11:00-13:00

Further Information

If you require any further information, please contact Ken Harrison, Programme Director.
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