

Key Decision/Action Points from Board

D2N2 LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, 21 September, 2021

By Teams Dial-In

Chair Elizabeth Fagan CBE

Minutes Sally Hallam

1. Present and Apologies

D2N2 Board Members in Attendance

David Williams	Geldards, Deputy Chair
James Brand	United Cast Bar, Business Representative
Cllr Kevin Buttery	Leader, Amber Valley BC, D2 Representative
Andrew Cropley	FE Representative
Tim Freeman	Toyota Manufacturing UK, Business Representative
Cllr Keith Girling	Portfolio Holder, Notts County Council
Cllr David Mellen	Leader, Nottingham City Council
Cllr Chris Poulter	Leader, Derby City Council
Becky Rix	Roadgas, Business Representative
Viv Russell	Longcliffe Quarries, Business Representative
Cllr Simon Robinson	Leader, Rushcliffe Borough Council, N2 representative
Prof Shearer West, CBE	VC Nottingham University, HE Representative
Liz Wigley	Area Lead D2N2, BEIS

Also in attendance

Susan Caldwell	LEP Sponsor
Katherine Cousins	BEIS
Kate Wood	University of Derby (guest presenter)

Officers

Scott Knowles	CEO, East Midlands Chamber
Kath Marriott	CEO, Rushcliffe Borough Council
David Fletcher	Director, Derby City Council
Nicki Jenkins	Director, Nottingham City Council
Simon Gladwin	Asst. Director, Amber Valley BC
Joe Battye	Director, Derbyshire County Council

Officer Support

Will Morlidge	Interim Chief Executive, D2N2
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Tom Goshawk	Head of Capital Programmes, D2N2
Frank Horsley	Head of Business and Innovation, D2N2
Michelle Reynolds	Operations Manager, D2N2
Rob Harding	Head of Marketing and Communications, D2N2

Apologies

Apologies were received from Board Members, Clare James, Graham Cartledge and Cllr Barry Lewis and from officers Emma Alexander and Anthony May.

1.1 Welcome and Introductions

Elizabeth Fagan welcomed all to the meeting and passed briefly to Will Morlidge, who was attending for the first time in his new capacity as interim Chief Executive. Will introduced himself for the benefit of new Members in particular.

1.2 Declarations of interest

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

Cllr Poulter declared an interest in item 2.6 under the discussion on MRC Midlands in Derby and took no part in discussions under this item.

1.3 Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 July, 2021 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) The road to net zero – proposed hydrogen task force;
- ii) Reviewing the impact of D2N2 since 2011;
- iii) LEP review update;
- iv) Mental health in the workplace;
- v) Partner engagement

and drew Members' attention to the detailed notes within the report.

On the proposed hydrogen task force, the Chair referred to the vast amount of work

done towards decarbonisation in the region following the declared ambition to become the cleanest area in terms of carbon emissions. This included preparations towards greater use of hydrogen to reduce emissions and the setting up of a Low Carbon Growth Group co-chaired by Board Member, Becky Rix and Nottingham City Council's Wayne Bexton.

Approval was now sought for the setting up of a Hydrogen Task Force to further support delivery of this key strategy. It would work with other Boards, including D2N2 Advisory Boards in re-shaped format and existing external fora to avoid duplication of activity.

Cllr Poulter underlined Derby's commitment to further develop the use of future fuels, referencing a number of local initiatives under way in his area, including with Toyota.

Joe Battye referred to work under way on this via the D2 Recovery Board, noting the need to check potential overlaps.

Prof Shearer West suggested that research expertise at the University of Nottingham could be utilised in support of this work.

Board **AGREED** to the setting up of a Hydrogen Task Force.

ACTION: TG/WM to progress.

On the review of D2N2's impact over the past 10 years, the Chair reminded colleagues to be confident and acknowledge the many achievements realised in partnership with local authority and other stakeholders including examples as cited in the report.

On mental health in the workplace, the importance of recognising and supporting this in the workplace, particularly as furlough ended, was highlighted. Members noted that D2N2 had signed up for support from Midlands Engine's Mental Health in the Workplace Pilot scheme.

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

2.2 Interim Chief Executive's Report

Will Morlidge presented his report updating Board on items including:

- a) Advisory Boards update;
- b) Inclusion update;
- c) Marketing and Communications update;
- d) ESF update

and referred Members to the detailed notes under each item.

Under Advisory Boards, WM drew attention to the consultation on the National Skills Fund, the response to which was under consideration via the People and Skills AB.

He asked for Board approval to delegate signing off the consultation response to PSAB on behalf of the LEP.

Board **AGREED** to delegate the National Skills Fund consultation response to the People and Skills Advisory Board.

Andrew Cropley reported his delight that West Notts College had been one of two successful applicants for the Strategic Development Fund pilot, with a quarter share of £3m funding to follow. The Chair offered congratulations on behalf of Board.

Board was advised that D2N2 was the only LEP to have succeeded in both first and second rounds of funding applications for the Digital Boot Camps. The first round achieved an 80% success rate in learners achieving their target qualification aims. The second round was being delivered in conjunction with Leicestershire and Lincolnshire and represented a further £2m investment into the region.

In response to a question from Cllr Buttery as to value for money at £2,283 per person and on post-course monitoring of likely career progression as a result of taking part, Andrew Cropley confirmed that a full year course cost was £4,188.

ACTION: WM to confirm how and when post-course evaluation of results will be undertaken.

On Business and Innovation, WM highlighted the key work under way on the International Trade Strategy, ensuring that business got the right support to export.

LEP Sponsor, Susan Caldwell confirmed to Board that the National Export Strategy led by DIT had been commissioned, with a launch date yet to be confirmed. An executive summary of the Global Trade Outlook to 2050 would be available in due course. This would summarise global trade patterns and how they could be translated into trade opportunities, such as the purchasing of goods and services from an emerging middle class across Asia.

Viv Russell, Chair of the Business and Innovation Advisory Board, advised Members that they would be holding a planning meeting at Laing O'Rourke, Worksop on 8 December, which would be combined with a site visit for interested parties.

Board **NOTED** the report.

2.3 Brexit: is the impact becoming clear in economic data?

WM thanked the team's analytical staff in conjunction with support from local authorities, the universities and trade unions for work undertaken to date on this. In short, evidence of the impact was emerging but there was currently insufficient data to conclude trends accurately.

For example, whilst there had been a demonstrable decline in business investment in skills/innovation and recruitment activity, to date there was an incomplete picture of the balancing positives of Brexit such as may be expected from new trade deals. Monitoring work would continue.

Scott Knowles confirmed a mixed picture from Chamber members' quarterly trading and export data. For UK-only markets, their statistics showed 50% reporting growth and only 13% reporting decline in sales, whilst for exporters, 30% saw an increase in actual sales and 23% only reported a decline.

Board **RECEIVED** this update with thanks.

2.4 Presentation on Mental Health and Productivity Pilot (MHPP)

The Chair welcomed Kate Wood, regional lead for MHPP at the University of Derby, who took Board through a presentation on this scheme.

The pilot had been developed following pre-pandemic research with 2,000 businesses across the Midlands Engine region. This had revealed willingness in principle by employers to support, but a lack of confidence by line managers in starting a conversation about mental health. Employees had perceived stigma in revealing any mental health issues.

Two routes were now available for businesses to support mental health in the workplace:

1. Thrive at work – a structured approach around 6 standards leading to formal accreditation;
2. Mental health at work commitment – a public commitment to declare standards of support by an employer, also based around the 6 core standards, with access to tools and resources for the employer to put this in place at their own pace.

KW drew attention to various pilot interventions that were now available, such as sleep support or support for returners to work. All were fully funded by Midlands Engine and so free to employers. More details and access to resources could be found on websites for MHFA England, Every Mind Matters and This is Me.

KW asked Board to support by mentioning the pilot to businesses and promoting the “Bridge the gap, start a chat” campaign.

Tim Freeman thanked KW for her interesting presentation, indicating that he would actively support involvement for Toyota with the scheme. He would follow up with KW after the meeting.

Viv Russell suggested some alignment with established programmes already running in other industry sectors, citing the “Mates Matter” initiative within his own minerals and construction sector as an example.

Board **RECEIVED** the presentation with thanks.

2.5 D2N2 International Strategy

Frank Horsley took Board through a slide presentation on the D2N2 International Strategy, which had been developed with funding from DIT and assistance from consultants, Dayton Bell. The strategy had been developed to support and drive the “Global Britain” agenda and build new opportunities post-Covid.

Three priorities were being focused on, namely:

1. Enhancing D2N2’s export environment
2. Supporting new companies to export, and
3. Supporting existing exporters to increase their level of international trade.

Two key issues included helping businesses to have the confidence to export and enabling them to evaluate accurately the risks of trading overseas. Emerging markets to target included Asia and South America.

The strategy would be monitored with a full review in 12 months.

The Chair thanked FH and opened the floor for comments.

Prof West highlighted the role of the universities in supporting international trade with their extensive network of overseas contacts and expressed the view that the strategy could be strengthened with the involvement of the universities.

ACTION: FH to discuss with the three D2N2 universities

David Fletcher suggested working with established intermediary organisations who had the appropriate resources in place to support, eg UK-India Business Council.

James Brand echoed the need to knock down barriers to risks of export and credit risk and felt that businesses would welcome a network of contacts with whom they could work.

FH indicated that he would reach out to local authorities and universities to make use of their links.

Board **NOTED** the presentation with thanks.

2.6 Capital Projects Update Report

Tom Goshawk introduced his report updating on the performance of the capital programme since the last Board meeting, referring Members to detailed notes therein. Final approval was sought for 2 projects that had been presented to the September

meeting of the Investment Board.

On the MRC Midlands project, Board noted that Derby City Council were seeking £9.075m funding (£6.875m Getting Building Fund [GBF] and £2.2m Growing Places Fund [GPF]) for a new research, innovation and supply chain centre for the area based at Infinity Park. Subject to final approval by Board at this meeting, work would start in November, 2021. The project would deliver 70 new jobs, 50 learners, engage with 100 supply chain businesses and assist with 35 collaborative research projects within its first 5 years.

Board **APPROVED** the release of £9.075m funding from the GBF and GPF as detailed to Derby City Council.

On the Drakelow Park project, Board considered the application by Countryside Properties for a total of £7.6m funding, comprising £2.6m GBF from D2N2 LEP and £5m GBF from Stoke and Staffordshire LEP. The project would deliver 783 new jobs and 1,975 new homes.

The Chair sought clarification on roads approval by Derbyshire County Council. TG confirmed that final sign off was expected in October, 2021. Major construction works following initial site enabling would commence in February, 2022.

Subject to roads approval, Board **APPROVED** the release of £2.6m GBF to Countryside Properties.

2.7 Midlands Engine Update/ 2.8 Development Corporation Update

These items were presented as papers for information within the Board paper pack available on the website.

2.9 Freeport Update

Cllr Simon Robinson gave a short verbal update on progress with the Freeport bid, now led by Leicestershire County Council.

The outline plan had been submitted to Government on 10 September, with feedback due on 24 September. Comments would be taken on Board with a window for replies up to 31 October. The final business case would be submitted by 10 December, with an anticipated delivery point if successful beginning in March, 2022.

There was still much work to do, but the uniqueness of the inland site continued to be stressed. Cllr Robinson also reiterated that jobs resulting from a successful bid would be new, additional jobs not displacements from local economic centres. A further update would be supplied in due course.

The Chair thanked Cllr Robinson on behalf of Board for the update, noting that local MPs were positively supporting the Freeport bid.

2.10 D2N2 Annual Report and AGM

Rob Harding confirmed the date for this year's AGM as Wednesday, 24 November, 2021 (12 – 2pm). The venue would be confirmed shortly. The agenda would include items on capital growth programmes and levelling up.

The Chair thanked RH and appealed for as many attendees as could attend, subject to covid-safe restrictions.

Board **NOTED** the update.

3. Any other business

Board **AGREED** that the November meeting be held face to face, subject to covid regulations in force at the time.

4. Date of next meeting

Tuesday, 23 November, 2021 (10am – 12 noon).