

### **Item 1.3: Key Decision/Action Points from Board**

#### **D2N2 LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING**

Wednesday 7 December, 2022

Derby College Engine Room, The Roundhouse, Roundhouse Road, Derby DE24 8JE  
(with hybrid Teams dial-in)

Chair	Elizabeth Fagan, CBE
Minutes	Sally Hallam

#### **Present and Apologies**

##### **D2N2 Board Members in attendance**

Katrina Crookdake	Area Lead Nottm/Notts, BEIS
Scott Knowles	CEO, East Midlands Chamber- Business Rep
Cllr Chris Poulter	Leader, Derby City Council
Becky Rix	Marketing Director Roadgas - Business Rep
Viv Russell	CEO, Minerals Products Qualifications Council- Business Rep
Mandie Stravino, OBE	CEO, Derby College Group – FE Rep
Tony Tinley	Union Official Unite - Business Rep
Liz Wigley	Area Lead Derby/Derbys, BEIS
David Williams	Chair, Geldards, Deputy Chair D2N2

##### **Accountable Body/Auditors in attendance**

Sarah Wainwright	Senior Finance Officer Accountable Body, Derbys County Council
Philip Handley	Director, Audit and Assurance, HSKS Greenhalgh

##### **Apologies from Board Members**

James Brand	CEO United Castbar – Business Rep
Cllr Kevin Buttery	Leader, Amber Valley BC
Graham Cartledge	Chair, Handley House – Business Rep
Cllr Keith Girling	Portfolio Holder, Nottinghamshire County Council
Natasha Johnson	CEO GlobalEntrepreneurs UK – Business Rep
Cllr Barry Lewis	Leader, Derbyshire County Council
Cllr David Mellen	Leader, Nottingham City Council
Prof Edward Peck	VC, Nottingham Trent University
Cllr Simon Robinson	Leader, Rushcliffe BC

## Also in attendance

Kath Marriott	CEO, Rushcliffe BC
Robert Dixon	Head of Business Growth, Nottm City Council
Cllr Carolyn Renwick	Derbyshire County Council
Karl Apps	Assistant Director for Sustainable Growth, Derbys
County Council	

## Officer Support

Will Morlidge	D2N2 CEO
Frank Horsley	D2N2 Head of Business and Innovation
Fiona Baker	D2N2 Head of People and Skills

## 1.1 Welcome and Introductions

Elizabeth Fagan welcomed all to the meeting and invited new Board member, Tony Tinley to introduce himself briefly to the meeting.

## 1.2 Declarations of interest

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

No declarations were made by members present.

## 1.3 Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 June 2022 were confirmed as a true record, subject to the following two amendments:

- Under 2.1 Chairs report discussion on LSIPs, Prof Peck clarified universities were not committing to be part of the local accountability framework but rather they were interested in a discussion about how HE and FE can work together once the new FE accountability framework is in place.
- Reference had mistakenly been recorded under 2.3 to Local Growth Funding. This should read Low Carbon Growth Funding.

## 2.1 D2N2 Chair's Report

Elizabeth Fagan introduced her Chair's report updating members on significant developments since the last meeting and drew Members' attention to the detailed notes under each item.

A discussion took place to consider the recommendation to approve a single business engagement event to be led by local authority leaders, to encourage

businesses to be fully involved in the consultation on devolution which would be running until January 2023.

Scott Knowles made 3 points from the business community side:

- (i) Following the local authority consultation event referred to by Cllr Poulter that had taken place in Nottingham on 5 December, businesses - together with FE, HE and the third sector - were keen to learn how they would be represented in the emerging governance structures.
- (ii) Given the pushback from SMEs noted by East Midlands Chamber in response to its promotion of the consultation exercise, there was a request to support businesses in understanding the benefits to the region to businesses themselves from devolution. There was a concern that it could be another level of bureaucracy.
- (iii) Electing the right Mayor would be just as critical as getting the devolution deal itself: it should not just be a political appointment.

Cllr Poulter confirmed that the Mayor would lead a Cabinet including eight representatives from the unitary authorities. Other members would also be drawn from districts, boroughs and potentially other stakeholders. He also confirmed that officers were pulling together a breakdown of where current responses to the consultation had originated.

The Chair summarised the discussion as an agreement by Board to the importance of ensuring that the business community felt they had been engaged appropriately, given the strategic benefit that devolution could bring to the region. Production of a “frequently asked questions” document would be useful.

Frank Horsley advised the meeting that the Business Growth and Innovation Board was meeting on 12 December, where it would receive a presentation from Chris Henning of Derbyshire County Council including the consultation process. Feedback from that would be garnered and D2N2 would continue to work closely with the Combined Authority team over messaging.

Board **APPROVED** the recommendation for a single business engagement event to be led by local authority leaders.

Under Advisory Boards updates, Fiona Baker drew attention to the role of the People and Skills Board going forward and whether it would merge with the devolution skills group. This activity had been paused whilst the consultation activity took place.

Progress was ongoing with LSIP, with a wider stakeholder event planned in Nottingham in the coming days. Natalie Gasson-McKinley (FSB) would feed back to the P&S board on this. FSB were reaching out to FE and Scott Knowles confirmed that EMC had a seat on the steering group.

David Williams made the point that low carbon needed to be considered under the skills agenda: currently there was insufficient skilled labour to service eg hydrogen developments.

Mandie Stravino added that FE currently had its own skills crisis in being able to recruit appropriately qualified teachers to train specialist areas like low carbon for the next generation.

Tony Tinley made a plea for older workers not to be excluded from new training initiatives.

For Place/Low Carbon Group, Becky Rix expressed the view that, whilst low carbon growth was well represented, she had concerns about it not slipping down the agenda. Becky is involved in discussions about a potential hydrogen academy linked to the Freeport and will report back to a future meeting.

Will Morlidge informed Board that D2N2 was active in working to bring coherence to pan-Midlands initiatives on low carbon.

David Williams noted that at the 5 December devolution consultation event in Nottingham, the low carbon workshop had been the most well-attended, although the focus had been on retrofitting rather than future fuels.

Board **NOTED** the report.

## **2.2 Submission of 2021/22 Accounts**

Sarah Wainwright introduced her report presenting the draft financial accounts of the LEP from 29 March 2021 to 31 March 2022 before handing to Philip Handley of HSKS Greenhalgh.

She noted that the surplus for the year had gone into reserve and the general reserve had gone down, in part due to EZ funds.

Philip Handley confirmed that the draft accounts had been considered by audit. Minor changes that would be made to the final accounts for approval and submission were in the introductory narrative on Board membership:

- Mandie Stravino would be correctly listed as Mandie Stravino, OBE,
- David Mellen would be correctly listed as Cllr not Mr,
- new Board Member, Tony Tinley would be added to the list of current Directors.

Mr Handley informed Board that, overall, this had been a very clean year, with nothing to report and subject to approval by Board, the Chair would be asked to sign a letter of representation to the auditors.

Elizabeth Fagan invited any questions. None arose. She put on record her thanks to Philip Handley and his team and also to Sarah Wainwright for the immense effort put in to complete this exercise.

Board **APPROVED** the draft financial accounts subject to the identified narrative amendments. These would be taken forward to the AGM for a vote on adoption.

Philip Handley left the meeting.

David Williams noted concerns that had been witnessed in other LEPs with more uncertainty about their futures as a going concern, specifically about the liabilities of directors.

The Chair confirmed that D2N2 LEP was in good health for a limited company. No Director currently took anything out of the company, enabling it to operate in a lean way. No Director should do anything to put the company at harm. For local authority Directors, failure to match fund in the future years leading through to devolution would put D2N2 at risk.

A decision would need to be made in due course about what to do with company funds on transition.

### **2.3 EXEMPT ITEM Capital Programme update: Early-Stage Angel Investment Fund**

Sarah Wainwright introduced an exempt report on the Early-Stage Angel Investment Fund and handed to Frank Horsley who summarised for the group.

Board **NOTED** the report.

Board **APPROVED** the following:

1. the establishment of the Limited Partnership Fund (LP Fund) as proposed in Appendix 1;
2. the final preparation of tender documentation to commence procurement for the fund manager;
3. the nomination of a D2N2 Board representative to participate in the tender selection process following the procurement competition.

### **2.4 GDPR: training requirements for all Board members**

In Maureen Vieyra's absence, Will Morlidge flagged up that Board members would be contacted in due course to complete mandatory GDPR training, where members had not already received recent training.

Board **NOTED** the verbal update.

**ACTION:** D2N2 to identify Board members in need of GDPR refresher training, identify a training course and share details with the Board.

## 2.5 Chief Executive's Report

Will Morlidge introduced his report and drew Members' attention to the detailed notes therein.

Aside from the written update, WM also informed Board that some issues had arisen with the developers of the Drakelow project, which D2N2 has agreed to match-funding with Staffordshire. Both county councils and the Environment Agency have confirmed that they remain concerned with the detailed plans for the bridge design.

WM reported that he had a call booked with the developers on 8 December, at which it had been agreed by the parties that the developers would be given until early January to meet the required conditions or the funding offer would be withdrawn. In this eventuality, the £2.5m GPF allocation would be reallocated amongst the pipeline of projects that D2N2 held in readiness.

WM separately referred to notes in the report of the cost-of-living crisis data that was now available via the website. He drew attention to the statistics which showed stark results even in less deprived areas.

On a more positive note, the D2N2 Connected Futures project was now underway – an 18-month discovery partnership looking at why young people with autism and learning difficulties were not getting into and staying in employment. This Board would be chaired going forward by our new Board member, Natasha Johnson.

The risk to business support generally and to Growth Hub specifically by the change in allocation of funding from LEPs to local authorities was highlighted. A decision was awaited from Government on how UKSPF was to be allocated, but this was not likely to be ringfenced for business support in the way that previous European funds had been.

On staff changes, WM recorded thanks to Frank Horsley and Martin Venning, both of whom will leave D2N2 before the next Board meeting.

The Chair echoed these thanks.

Board **NOTED** the report.

## 3. AOB

None.

## 4. Date of next meeting



Thursday, 9 March, 2023 (venue tbc).