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

**D2N2 LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING**

Thursday 12 September, 2024

Nottingham University RAD building, Jubilee Campus, Wollaton Road Nottingham (and via Teams)

Chair Elizabeth Fagan, CBE

Minutes Sally Hallam

**Present and Apologies**

**D2N2 Board Members in Attendance**

Dr Glenn Crocker MBE Executive Director, The Pioneer Group

Cllr Chris Emmas-Williams Leader, Amber Valley Borough Council

Katrina Crookdake Area Lead, Nottingham/Notts, DBT

Tim Freeman Deputy MD, Toyota Manufacturing UK

Cllr Keith Girling Portfolio holder, Nottinghamshire County Council

Natasha Johnson Director of Partnerships, Global Entrepreneurs UK

Scott Knowles DL Chief Executive, East Midlands Chamber

Prof Edward Peck CBE VC and President, Nottingham Trent University

Cllr Matt Relf Portfolio Holder, Ashfield District Council

Cllr Carolyn Renwick Portfolio Holder, Derbyshire County Council

Becky Rix Marketing Director, Roadgas

Viv Russell Chair, Minerals Products Qualifications Council

Mandie Stravino OBE Principal and CEO, Derby College Group

David Williams MBE DL D2N2 Deputy Chair and Chair, Geldards

Liz Wigley Area Lead Derby/Derbyshire. DBT

**Apologies from Board Members**

Cllr Neghat Khan Leader, Nottingham City Council

Cllr Nadine Peatfield Leader, Derby City Council

Tony Tinley Regional Officer, Unite the Union

**Also in attendance**

Sarah Wainwright Senior Finance Officer, Derbyshire County Council

Matthew Wheatley Head of Economic Development, Nottingham City Council

**D2N2 (EMCCA) Officer Support**

Fiona Baker

Tom Goshawk

Lana Jay-Galyer

Nicola Swaney

* 1. **Welcome and Introductions**

Elizabeth Fagan welcomed all 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 recorded.

**1.3 Minutes of last meeting and matters arising**

The Minutes of the meeting on 12 June, 2024 were confirmed as a true record.

Any matters arising were covered elsewhere on the agenda.

**2. Strategic Discussion Items**

**2.1 Chair’s Report**

Elizabeth Fagan introduced the Chair’s report and referred Members to the detailed notes therein.

She summarised matters relating to the transition of LEP staff into the new Combined County Authority (EMCCA). Staff were settling in, although there had been a number of initial challenges, in part due to EMCCA being run currently by a senior interim team unfamiliar with the area and who may not have had detailed knowledge of the work of the LEP ahead of transfer.

The Chair opened the floor to staff to add any comments.

Inconsistency with interim finance staffing was noted as a challenge, with interim posts having been filled and then vacated, leading to difficulties over identifying an appropriate point of contact for Derbyshire County Council as LEP Accountable Body.

Staff reiterated the general point about initial challenges, acknowledging that some transitional challenges were to be expected with a start-up. The absence was mentioned of some fundamental basics to do the work smoothly such as mobile phones, the shared filing system that remained on the former LEP site and only having temporary email addresses. The opportunity of working in a new model of organisation was welcomed.

From the staff side, it was reported that the TUPE process itself had not been as smooth as staff would have wished and had not been perceived as being as collaborative as it could have been. Staff reflected back the wish that TUPE lessons be learned for future exercises from the feedback given.

Natasha Johnson requested a list of staff’s new job titles, noting that there had been some changes.

Cllr Emmas-Williams wished for a note of thanks to be minuted from Board to the former LEP team for the effort that they had put in to maintain service delivery through transition and beyond.

The Chair asked David Williams to give a short update on the creation of the new EMCCA Business Advisory Board, for which he would be Chair. DW expressed the view that it should be further on in development than it currently was. From 40 initial expressions of interest, 10 applications had been received. The Board would not therefore be fully up and running in time for the first EMCCA Board at the beginning of October. He reiterated an appeal for interested parties to apply.

On Skills, Fiona Baker reported that the skills arena was expanding rapidly with a raft of new policies at an early stage. She informed Members that Skills England was keen to talk to MCAs and for them to be involved in shaping policy.

With reference to the Strategic Skills Plan for the Adult Skills Fund only, Fiona reported in response to a query from Mandie Stravino that this was in draft form at present, with a review of data being undertaken and the intention of reviewing the amended draft at the retained People and Skills Board. Mandie queried the comment as appeared under the Chief Executive’s Report para 3.2 and referring to ‘shaking up’ ASF provision, which she felt contradicted the SSP. Fiona Baker responded to confirm that the intention was not to make immediate sweeping changes, but to maintain stability of delivery and to make changes over time.

A discussion took place on work that needed to be progressed in support of this and the possibility of using existing LEP resources including the retained LEP People and Skills Board and providers to develop that strategy.

Lana Jay-Galyer updated Members on the activities of the Careers Hub, working with districts and upper tiers to ensure consistency of delivery across the region. She was pleased to report that the Careers Hub had improved from 38th out of 44 to one of the most highly-performing Hubs in the country, now ranked 8th.

The Chair congratulated Lana on this achievement.

On business and innovation, the uncertainty over UKSPF and the future of business support funding post-2025 was raised. Tom Goshawk confirmed that work was ongoing with ESAIF to resolve ongoing resource issues and a further update would be provided to the December meeting.

It was reported that many contracts that were funded by UKSPF would run out in March 2025 and stability was needed to ensure that services and staff across the region were protected. No announcement was expected until the October Budget. The LEP Board confirmed that LEP Reserves would cover the core £380,000 Growth Hub contribution required to maintain the service in the 2025/26 financial year. The LEP Board stated that it would help to convene an offer of what business support services could be commissioned if required.

Nicola Swaney reported that, following positive feedback from this year’s event, strong support had been indicated by Mayor Claire Ward and EMCCA senior team for the next UKREIFF, but more aligned to the wider region and with all partners to be engaged.

In response to a question about inclusion-related work under way, Natasha Johnson confirmed that the research group was focusing on collecting information on the challenges faced by ethnic businesses. She thanked the team for the work achieved in a short period of time.

NS drew attention to the Inclusion Steering Group Away Day that would be taking place on 19 September, with Mayor Claire Ward attending part of the session to feed into the Inclusive Growth Commission.

**ACTION: NS** to circulate report to Board members once available.

Board **NOTED** the report.

Board **AGREED** that the messages from staff feedback on the transfer to EMCCA be fed back formally via the Chair to the Mayor for the EMCCA interim team.

Board **AGREED** for Board members involved in Skills to support FB in collating evidence to support the work of the Inclusive Growth Commission.

**2.2 Proposed Transfer of LEP Assets to EMCCA**

In the absence of the CEO, Tom Goshawk and Sarah Wainwright spoke briefly to update Board on progress with securing the transfer of the LEP assets to EMCCA.

SW confirmed that Derbyshire County Council had been retained as a third party to the Agreement to transfer LEP assets to EMCCA in order to monitor and ensure that actions were followed up. She reported that the query over GDPR elements had now been settled but noted that the Agreement referred only in general terms to economic development. Clarification was sought as to whether further specific detail on the nature of the purposes for which funds were to be used should be requested in the document.

The Chair confirmed this and also requested that the solicitors provide a covering summary for circulation to all Directors.

Matthew Wheatley attending for Nottingham City Council sought clarification of wording in para 2.6 of the Agreement, which as written referred to transferring *all rights* to retain business rates from Enterprise Zones in the D2N2 area passing to EMCCA, rather than *all LEP rights*. This was noted.

Board **NOTED** the update.

Board **AGREED** to delegate sign-off of the final Agreement to transfer LEP assets to EMCCA, subject to discussion on matters of detail, to the Chair on behalf of D2N2 LEP.

**2.3 Finance Update**

Sarah Wainwright spoke briefly to her report summarising the income and expenditure for the expected final financial position of the D2N2 LEP, assuming a closure date of 30 September, 2024. She confirmed that this was on track provided that all contracts were novated.

The Chair noted that it was pleasing that work had been able to continue in transition and that the LEP would be handing over accounts in the black and a strong balance sheet.

Board noted with disappointment that the only bad debt was the invoice to Nottinghamshire County Council for core funding for the 22-23 period in the amount of £46,875.00, which remained unpaid despite chasing requests for the last two years.

Cllr Girling indicated that he would consider the request for payment.

Board **NOTED** the report.

Board **AGREED** to make a final request to Nottinghamshire County Council to pay its outstanding invoice, such request to be noted in the accounts, before otherwise writing off the debt.

**2.4 Update on D2N2 Capital Projects**

Tom Goshawk talked Members through an update on the LEP’s Capital Programmes and the closing position of the LEP’s funds as indicated in his report.

In response to a query from David Williams as to the fact that only 430 jobs had been recorded as created from SmartParc, TG confirmed that data was not yet available from Hello Fresh. An update could be provided for the AGM.

The Chair sought confirmation that systems would be in place to ensure ongoing governance by EMCCA. Sarah Wainwright confirmed that EMCCA’s PMO would take this on. DBT would be handling monitoring of overall activity.

Board **NOTED** the report and what funds would be novated to EMCCA as part of the transition process.

**2.5 Chief Executive’s Report**

In the absence of the Chief Executive, the Chair invited team members to add anything to the report as written, noting that much of the content had already been covered elsewhere.

TG referred to the opening two events for ESAIF and reiterated thanks to David Williams and Glenn Crocker for speaking at these well-attended events.

£3.5k had now been put to Funding Hero, an investment-readiness service, to work with firms on business plans to enable them to unlock access to funding.

A workshop would follow on 9 October, with 15 businesses the focus of the event, but the aim was to increase awareness more widely. In response to an appeal to publicise across additional networks, a number of Members kindly offered to do this.

On report para 7.3 referring to disposal of appropriately wiped LEP-owned laptops and mobile phones, Board agreed for the CEO to proceed as outlined.

Board **NOTED** the report.

Board AGREED that:

1. All appropriately-wiped hardware (laptops and peripherals and mobile phones) could be offered for sale to LEP staff at a reasonable discounted price
2. Any remaining kit could be donated to a charity (to be identified) for re-use. Cllr Matt Relf proposed local charity, “Three Musketeers” for this purpose.

**ACTION**: NS to supply flyer on High Growth Workshops, to be circulated to Board for disseminating across additional networks.

**3. Any Other Business**

DW reiterated the earlier call to action for Members to apply for,or recommend suitable candidates to apply for, EMCCA Business Advisory Board posts.

EF reported that Graham Cartledge had resigned his Directorship. Remaining Directors would formally resign on closure at the AGM in December.

**4. Date of Next Meeting**

Date of next meeting: Wednesday, 4 December 2024 (venue TBC).