

SCR - INFRASTRUCTURE BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:

THURSDAY, 29 AUGUST 2019 AT 10.00 AM

11 BROAD STREET WEST, SHEFFIELD S1 2BQ



Present:

Mayor Ros Jones (Chair)
Councillor Bob Johnson
Councillor Denise Lelliott
Richard Stubbs
Mark Lynam
John Mothersole

Doncaster MBC
Sheffield City Council
Rotherham MBC
Private Sector LEP Board Member
SCR Executive Team
Sheffield City Council

Officers in Attendance:

Colin Blackburn	Assistant Director - Housing, Infrastructure and Planning	SCR Executive Team
Jonathan Guest		Sheffield City Region
Paul Johnson	Senior Policy Manager	SCR Executive Team
Karl Sample		Sheffield City Region

Guests in Attendance

Craig Tyler (Minute Taker)

Apologies:

Councillor Tim Cheetham

Barnsley MBC

11 Welcome and Apologies

Members' apologies were noted as above.

12 Declarations of Interest by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the agenda

None.

13 Urgent items / Announcements

None.

14 **Public Questions of Key Decisions**

None received.

15 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 9th July were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting.

16 **Strategic Economic Plan and Local Industrial Strategy Review**

A paper and accompanying presentation were received to provide an overview of the current economic landscape in Sheffield City Region and the emerging evidence to structure future priorities/activities in the SCR in relation to infrastructure, to be encapsulated within the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)

Information was received to explain the process and timescales for development. It was noted the SEP and LIS are scheduled for publication in December 2019 but acknowledged there are a number of factors that may affect this intention.

Regarding sign-off it was noted the SCR effectively owns the SEP and can sign this off when considered appropriate. However, the LIS is co-owned with government and subject to other procedures and expectations (to be agreed with government).

Comparisons were drawn between the SCR and other city regions (nationally and internationally), noting the SCR lags behind almost every other region in terms of GVA and productivity.

It was acknowledged the drivers of productivity are numerous and suggested the SCR might be affected by having a significant number of jobs in low productivity sectors, lower skills levels and relatively less investment in research and development.

Further information was presented with specific relevance to the infrastructure related matters under the tutelage of the Infrastructure Board including housing, digital networks and energy production.

It was noted where the SCR might be particularly sensitive to wider economic drivers.

The Board considered the importance of growth being 'inclusive' to ensure this genuinely translates into improving the lives of the SCR's residents and breaks the cycle of the SCR being stuck in a low wage economy.

Members were presented with the proposed 'people-focussed' vision for the SCR's SEP and LIS and its proposed supporting policies and outcomes (metrics to be confirmed).

Members agreed it was entirely appropriate to base strategies around people.

It was suggested we need to recognise there are a number of initiatives in the SCR that are working well, such as apprenticeship rates and examples of inward investment that are based on the quality of the local workforce, and considered what more can be done to scale up what is working well.

It was noted the SCR has a unique and very diverse landscape which doesn't lend itself to some initiatives that might work in other city regions. Caution was therefore urged to ensure we don't just try to copy what might be working elsewhere.

It was proposed that some of the comparative economic figures might be misleading and suggested comparisons should be drawn against national averages rather than London.

Members asserted the importance of having an effective action plan in place to focus our efforts and initiatives and help the SCR manage its 'step-change' journey towards achieving its economic ambition, turning rhetoric into actual deliverables.

Consideration was given to additional specific local factors that need to be addressed to achieve our productivity ambition including the need to recognise the significant deprivation and lack of social mobility that exists in some locations.

It was suggested many of the ambitions of the SEP and LIS are cross-cutting and will only be achieved if silo-working is avoided.

The Board considered whether the SCR is as effectively 'noisy' as other city regions in respect of marketing its riches and potential.

RESOLVED - that the Board notes the summarised evidence base and the emerging areas for prioritisation.

17 **Draft SCR Energy Strategy**

A report was received to present the emerging Draft SCR Energy Strategy.

It was noted the Strategy is still a work in progress and views are being sought on the emerging goals and policies prior to the document being considered complete.

It was noted the approach taken to develop the Energy Strategy has included strengthening of the evidence base, ensuring we have a clear approach to what is required, undertaking significant levels of stakeholder engagement and aligning the draft to the emerging SEP and LIS.

Regarding next steps, it was noted the output from Phase 1 of the Carbon Target & Future Scenarios commission would be received later this month, ahead of further stakeholder workshops and reports back to relevant SCR Boards. Further outputs will be received from the Carbon Target & Future

Scenarios commissions later in the year informing further stakeholder input and leading to the endorsement of the final strategy by March 2020.

Members expressed support for the proposal to market the SCR Energy Strategy by means of a 'Green Heart of Great Britain' concept.

Members challenged the extent to which the notion of an energy strategy based around the increased usage of renewable and clean energy resources is realistic.

The Board debated the potential new sources of energy and new approaches to saving energy that might be developed through the implementation of the Energy Strategy, noting intentions to closely investigate hydrogen from electrolysis, minewater energy and nuclear research.

Consideration was given to where local authority policy levers (i.e. planning regulations) might help achieve the ambitions of the Strategy.

It was also suggested there may be other initiatives that might help market the SCR to innovators and investors and proposed the SCR could become known for being proficient in working with those innovators to help turn their ideas into reality. It was agreed to convene a workshop to explore this concept in more detail.

Action: Karl to liaise with Owen to progress an 'energy ideas into reality' event.

RESOLVED – that the Board agrees the next steps as set out in the report are notes the intention to bring a report back to the next meeting to provide commentary on the consultation feedback and consequent responses.

18 **Digital Infrastructure**

A report was received to provide an update on the Superfast South Yorkshire programme and to introduce a discussion on the need to produce a digital infrastructure plan for the City Region.

It was noted the commercial rollout of fibre broadband across South Yorkshire, funded by BT and Virgin Media, is currently expected to reach around 80% of premises across South Yorkshire. The remaining coverage will be covered by the Superfast South Yorkshire (SFSY) project, which a partnership between the South Yorkshire authorities of Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield and BT Openreach, to specifically address intervention areas across South Yorkshire that are not commercially viable for providers to service without subsidy.

The report therefore provided an update on the SFSY programme, its performance, future delivery and take-up rates. The report also set the scene for the potential production of a digital infrastructure plan for the City Region, which will aim to build on SFSY and ensure the region is well positioned to take advantage of the next wave of digital technology, such as 5G.

It was questioned whether the refreshed SEP has appropriately captured the

importance of digital to achieving the SCR's wider economic ambition, and noted the LEP will be charged with ensuring such matters are given appropriate recognition as the SEP evolves. It was requested the Infrastructure Board's LEP members continue to champion the importance of this matter.

Members considered the need for all Boards to work collectively to deliver the digital ambition.

It was noted the report is due to be received at the forthcoming SCR Chief Executives meeting, at which the Chief Executives will be asked to:

1. Note the progress and success of the Superfast South Yorkshire broadband programme.
2. Note the standard condition that is applied to all BMBC planning decisions and agree that the adoption of these across the City Region should be considered by the Heads of Planning.
3. Agree the need to work to prepare a SCR Digital Infrastructure Plan.

The Board expressed support for these recommendations.

19 **Infrastructure Board Work Programme Dashboard**

Provided for information.

Members were asked to continue to contribute requests for additional items

20 **Forward Plan 2019/20**

Provided for information.

Members were asked to continue to contribute requests for additional items.

It was requested the Board continue to be kept informed of what financial headroom is available for investment and what future sources of funding might be available going forward.

21 **SCR Transport Board Draft Agenda 30th Sept.2019**

Provided for information.

22 **Any Other Business**

No further matters requested.

In accordance with Combined Authority's Constitution/Terms of Reference for the Board, Board decisions need to be ratified by the Head of Paid Services (or their nominee) in consultation with the Chair of the Board. Accordingly, the undersigned has consulted with the Chair and hereby ratifies the decisions set out in the above minutes.

Signed _____
Name _____
Position _____

Date
