

MCA - LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:

THURSDAY, 13 JANUARY 2022 AT 11.00 AM

ONLINE

SOUTH YORKSHIRE
BUSINESS



LOCAL
ENTERPRISE
PARTNERSHIP

Present:

Lucy Nickson (Chair)	Private Sector LEP Board Member
Neil MacDonald (Vice-Chair)	Private Sector LEP Board Member
Joe Chetcuti	Private Sector LEP Board Member
Michael Faulks	Private Sector LEP Board Member
Angela Foulkes	Private Sector LEP Board Member
Councillor Terry Fox	Sheffield City Council
Peter Kennan	Private Sector LEP Board Member
Mayor Dan Jarvis MBE	SCR Mayoral Combined Authority
Mayor Ros Jones CBE	Doncaster MBC
Richard Stubbs	Private Sector LEP Board Member
Professor Chris Husbands	University Representative LEP Board Member
Professor Dave Petley	University of Sheffield
Dan Fell	Doncaster Chamber

Officers in Attendance:

Dr Dave Smith	Chief Executive	MCA Executive Team
Dr Ruth Adams	Deputy Chief Executive	MCA Executive Team
Helen Kemp	Director of Business & Skills	MCA Executive Team
Kate Josephs	Chief Executive, Sheffield City Council	Sheffield CC
Jim Dillon	Interim Director of Business and Skills	MCA Executive Team
Andy Gates	Assistant Director - Strategic Corporate Affairs	MCA Executive Team
Felix Kumi-Ampofo	Assistant Director Policy and Assurance	MCA Executive Team
Dan Swaine		Doncaster MBC

Apologies:

Karen Beardsley	Private Sector LEP Board Member
Alexa Greaves	Private Sector LEP Board Member
Councillor Sir Steve Houghton CBE	Barnsley MBC
Gemma Smith	Private Sector LEP Board Member
Cathy Travers	Private Sector LEP Board Member
Bill Adams	TUC Representative
Sarah Want	Sheffield University

1 **Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Mayor Jarvis MBE welcomed L Nickson in her role as interim Chair of the LEP Board, during the period of transition moving towards an election and a new Mayor to be appointed in May 2022. On behalf of the Board, he wished her well in the role of interim Chair, and he looked forward to working with her over the upcoming months.

Apologies for absence were noted as above.

2 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest in relation to the agenda items for discussion at the meeting.

There were no declarations of interest in relation to any activity since the last formal Board meeting.

There were no declarations of interest in relation to any forthcoming activity.

3 **Notes of Last Meeting held on 4 November 2021**

A Foulkes requested that the minutes of the last meeting should be amended to reflect the establishment of the South Yorkshire Apprenticeship Hub, rather than a recommendation from the South Yorkshire Apprenticeship Hub.

RESOLVED – That subject to the above amendment, the notes of the previous meeting held on 4 November 2021 were agreed to be an accurate record.

4 **The Synergy Project (MIT REAP)**

A report was submitted which set out the findings and proposals from a report commissioned by the MCA and LEP to investigate the state of the South Yorkshire innovation ecosystem and to provide recommendations for improvement. All of the evidence had indicated that the South Yorkshire innovation ecosystem was operating at a sub-optimal level.

A study had been funded by the SYMCA, LEP, BMBC, Sheffield Hallam University and the University of Sheffield to explore the conditions required to promote Innovation-Driven Enterprises (IDEs) – start-ups, scale-ups and SMEs with high growth potential and global ambition. Over 50 interviews had been conducted to gather information from entrepreneurs, business leaders and other members of the South Yorkshire ecosystem.

F Kumi-Ampofo presented Members with a series of PowerPoint slides which reiterated the key points that were highlighted within the report.

R Stubbs agreed with the conditions for delivery as set out within the report. He considered that the report did not identify the huge interest and appetite for

the region; infrastructure and skills within the region continued to be a conversation of interest from outside of the region. He added that consideration should be given to a private sector delivery vehicle that could be independent whilst attaining public sector values.

In terms of the networking in how the private sector interacted within the region, D Fell highlighted the need for cross-fertilisation of the fields. He considered that the SYIB should be SME friendly in its delivery. He was very supportive of the recommendations highlighted within the report.

Professor Husbands considered that the move from diagnosis to prescription would always be the most difficult element. Given the pre wide-ranging diagnosis, he queried where the effort would be put into the SYIB.

M Faulks was also in support of the findings and recommendations highlighted within the report.

RESOLVED – That the Board:-

- i) Noted the progress in developing the detail to underpin the innovation-led inclusive growth focus and provide further steer on how to develop this work further.
- ii) That the findings from the research are discussed and noted, and Board Members propose what actions could be taken from this.
- iii) Set out how the findings from this study:-
 - Inform the work of the proposed South Yorkshire Innovation Board (separate paper).

Inform the new and emerging South Yorkshire innovation-led growth story and how the proposed Economic Summit (separate paper) could help develop this further.

5 Innovation Board for South Yorkshire

A report was presented which set out a proposal to establish a South Yorkshire Innovation Board (SYIB), which would be tasked with leading on operationalising the innovation and productivity enhancing activity set out in the region's Strategic Economic Plan.

Mayor Jarvis MBE considered that the establishment of an SYIB was a sensible proposal. He commented that from a national Government perspective, innovation was crucial to addressing the productivity challenges and a key element from the Levelling Up Agenda. He had raised the matter recently in Parliament with George Freeman, Minister for Science and Innovation, who was enthusiastic of the capabilities to be offered by South Yorkshire.

Councillor Fox welcomed the report. He sought clarification as to how the SYIB would link together the four local authorities to enable collaborative working.

He queried whether matters could be explored further to ascertain whether there would be a financial cost to establishing an SYIB.

In response, A Gates commented that discussions would be undertaken to ensure that the SYIB had the correct membership. The feedback received from the recent Business Advisory Group had highlighted the importance to consider the business spatial level i.e. clustering, which would have an impact across the four local authorities.

A Foulkes wished to observe that the SYIB had a clear synergy with the emerging skills strategy. She suggested that the major skills providers should be included within the SYIB as both a vehicle and place, and for the skills to be merged earlier across people and places within the region.

P Kennan was fully supportive of the establishment of a SYIB. He referred to a number of the statistics within the budget, which stated that the national research and development had totalled approximately £26bn per year. However, the tax credit claims made for R&D based on innovation had last year totalled £47.5bn. He considered that membership of the SYIB should include accountancy firms, lawyers and specialist advisors to ensure that all of the innovative information was addressed.

Professor Husbands was supportive of the establishment of a SYIB, however he expressed concern that there was no funding available. He queried how the terms of reference were likely to cover the gap as identified within the report.

N MacDonald referred to the Business Advisory Group which met on a regular basis and consisted of a wide range of business representative bodies, which was Co-Chaired by D Fell and himself. At a recent meeting of the group, the establishment of a SYIB was unanimously approved, however the issue of resourcing was raised. The Business Advisory Group considered that it was essential for the SYIB to be private sector led, and for it to engage with the private sector moving forwards. He added that the SYIB should address the SME issues, and to ensure that the spatial dynamics were correct.

Professor Petley endorsed the suggestion that the SYIB must be private sector led and dominated, whilst avoiding the creation of a large and complex board. He made a plea to the LEP Board and the wider community to quickly create a SYIB, which would be effective, reasonably sized and private sector led.

R Stubbs referred to the need for a better narrative, which he suggested should become a task of the SYIB. He highlighted the importance to ensure that the SYIB did not become another LEP Board, and to ensure that its purpose was to focus on innovation and to ensure that it linked into the other aspects. He considered that the SYIB would become the strategic alignment setter for the work to be undertaken.

K Josephs highlighted the need for a credible private sector led voice for innovation in the region. She endorsed the comments made regarding the SYIB being private sector led.

Dr Smith also agreed with the comments made, and he added that the delivery

of the SYIB was in relation to a whole range of activities. He considered that the SYIB would address the issue for the region to attract and retain the correct range of quantum of private finance available to support business growth.

The Chair expressed her thanks to Members for the discussion, which had identified very broad support for the establishment of a SYIB, whilst noting the pace and the work to be undertaken in terms of the practical steps.

In terms of the next steps, A Gates commented that matters would be progressed further.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Approved the recommendation at 3.1 of the report to establish a South Yorkshire Innovation Board.

Considered and informed the proposed objectives, membership and the headline terms of reference set out in sections 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5 of the report.

6 **Economic Summit for South Yorkshire**

A report was presented which set out a proposal for the region to host a high-profile Economic Summit in the first quarter of 2022. The summit would seek to position South Yorkshire as an innovative, forward thinking, and attractive location to invest, scale-up and commercialise ideas and to stimulate partners to work with on the development of transformational projects that unlock growth. The summit would provide an important stakeholder opportunity to showcase the investment pipeline work that had been developed by the region and to profile the growing number of innovation assets.

R Stubbs emphasised the need for investment to be made with outside communication agencies, to enable both noisy and visible conversations to be held during the summit. He queried whether the summit would be held in the former John Lewis building which was located in Sheffield.

In response, A Gates agreed that external support would be sought. The location to hold the summit would be ascertained in due course.

Dr Smith referred to the engagement that had been made for external support. It was important to undertake smaller events leading up to the summit, in order to create momentum and to enable individuals to understand the meaning of the summit.

J Chetcuti highlighted the importance to notify attendees of the date of the summit as soon as possible.

RESOLVED – That Members agreed with the plan to hold an Economic Summit in March 2022.

7 **Governance Report on Membership**

A report was submitted which provided an update on LEP Board governance, membership and some amendments to the roles following recent changes to the Private Sector Board membership.

Members noted that the appointment process for a substantive LEP Chair would commence after a new Mayor had taken up office following the election in May 2022.

The report sought to appoint N McDonald as the LEP Board interim Vice Chair, and D Fell to be appointed as the interim LEP Private Sector Co-Chair for the Education, Skills and Employment Thematic Board. Following the resignation of K Beardsley, the Chair would agree a recommendation of a second Private Sector Member for the Transport and Environment Board, to be reported to a future LEP Board meeting.

The Chair expressed her thanks to N McDonald and D Fell for their interim positions.

RESOLVED – That the LEP Board Members approved the changes to representation outlined within the report.

8 **Mayoral Update**

A report was presented which provided Members with an update on key Mayoral activity relating to the economic agenda.

Updates were provided on:-

- Covid-19.
- The publication of the Integrated Rail Plan and the forthcoming Levelling Up White Paper.
- Fighting for South Yorkshire's fair share of the Shared Prosperity Fund.
- Strengthening relationships with India.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the update.

9 **Chief Executive's Update**

A report was submitted which provided Members with a general update on activity being undertaken by the LEP outside of the agenda items under discussion.

Updates were provided on:-

- Submission of research England bid.
- Levelling Up White Paper delay.
- Hydrogen twinning city link.
- Institute of Technology Bid.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the update.

I, the undersigned, confirm that this is a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signed

Name

Position

Date