

Thursday, 12 January 2023

LEP Governance: Update

Is the paper exempt from the press and public?	No
Reason why exempt:	Not applicable
Purpose of this report:	Governance
Strategic Priority	Cross Cutting

Director Approving Submission of the Report:

Martin Swales, Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

Report Author(s):

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Recommendations:

This paper recommends that the LEP Board approves the proposed change in Chair and expresses sincere thanks to Lucy Nickson for her dedication and commitment to the role of LEP Chair since January 2022, and her prior service as a LEP Board member.

Consideration by any other Board, Committee or Advisory Panel

N/A

1. Introduction

As part of the Government's March 2021 Budget, a review of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) in England was announced. The Government committed to consult and work in collaboration with LEPs and local businesses on the evolution of LEPs. The details of this were discussed at the MCA meeting in June.

Since January 2022, Lucy Nickson has been the Interim Chair of the LEP. Lucy has notified the LEP and MCA of her intention to stand down as Chair, and this paper seeks the LEP Boards approval to appoint Richard Stubbs as the new Chair. As a current LEP member, Richard has a full understanding of the LEPs responsibilities and functions, which will support a smooth transition in arrangements.

2. The issue and connection to delivering on our economic objectives:

At the March 2021 Budget, the Government launched a review on the **form, function and geographies** of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) in England. The Government committed to consult and work in collaboration with LEPs and local businesses on the evolution of LEPs.

The principle aim of the review was to ensure that local businesses would continue to be represented in decision-making processes that impact on businesses and economic growth, albeit under a new operating model from 2022/23. The Government's intention of better aligning LEP governance arrangements and geographical boundaries with new and existing Combined and Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) was a key consideration for the review.

3. What are we doing in South Yorkshire already – and what could we do?

The Combined Authority has been through significant change since its inception in 2014 and continues to do so. Significantly, as it has evolved into the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority, it has taken on a much broader set of statutory responsibilities and powers. The election of the new Mayor in May 2022, with an ambitious Manifesto for South Yorkshire, came with a recognition of the need to review the current arrangements to ensure the MCA is ready for the next stage of the journey. As such, the MCA is currently undergoing an Organisational Review which may recommend changes in governance to the MCA Board that would impact on the LEP.

Government have indicated they have confidence in the way that the private and public sectors work together in South Yorkshire, and they expect this principle to be continued in any new arrangements. The Government expect that future arrangements must embed strong, independent, and diverse local business voice into local democratic institutions with a meaningful role in decision making.

4. Discussion points

Previous independent conversations with LEP members have indicated that the Board is supportive of the recommendation in Chair.

5. Next Steps

If agreed, Richard Stubbs will become Chair with immediate effect.

At its meeting on 14th November 2022, the MCA Board agreed to an MCA Review led by the Chief Executive which is currently ongoing. The LEP Board are aware that this review may impact future MCA governance arrangements including the LEP. The LEP and its new Chair will be fully involved in this process.

List of Appendices Included:

None.

Background Papers

None.