

**EDUCATION, SKILLS & EMPLOYMENT BOARD**

**30<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

**Terms of Reference & Meeting Arrangements**

**Purpose of Report**

This report summarises the governance arrangements for the Education, Skills and Employment Board, approved by the Mayoral Combined Authority on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020 and the Local Enterprise Partnership on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020. The paper also confirms the schedule of meetings.

**Freedom of Information**

Thematic Board Papers and any appendices will be made available under the Combined Authority Publication Scheme. This scheme commits the Authority to make information about how decisions are made available to the public as part of its normal business activities.

**Recommendations**

Board members are asked to:

1. note the approved governance arrangements and identify any issues,
2. note the schedule of Education, Skills and Employment Board meetings

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1** Thematic Boards were first established by the MCA in early 2019 with the rationale of:
- achieving an efficient, effective and transparent model for decision making;
  - collaborating to build collective and combined decisions to deliver the outcomes identified in the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP);
  - providing strong and accountable leadership in setting the agenda, and delivering a defined programme of activity, to rigorously realise the outcomes of the SEP; and
  - scrutinising planned and ongoing activity to deliver the best outcomes for the region and value for money

A review of the Boards has been undertaken to ensure that they are well placed to fulfil the duties and responsibilities secured through the recent devolution agreement and are aligned to the priorities of the new Strategic Economic Plan (2020-2040). Proposed changes were considered by the LEP Board on the 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and approved by the MCA on the 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020.

- 1.2** This paper provides the Terms of Reference for the Education, Skills and Employment Board (appendix 1), summarises the key changes and clarifies arrangements.

## 2. Proposal and justification

**2.1** The Education, Skills and Employment Board is one of four new thematic boards established within the MCA. The role of each Board is to take a city region wide strategic perspective on issues relevant to the thematic area, to support the delivery of the Strategic Economic Plan and the Recovery Action Plan. The principle role of the Education, Skills and Employment Board is to:

- shape future policy development and priorities on issues related to education, skills and employment
- develop new education, skills and employment programmes
- monitor programme delivery and performance on skills and employment.
- act as the Programme Board for Adult Education Budget (AEB) delivery

**2.2** Other matters to note are:

### **Delegations** (section 3 of the Terms of Reference)

Each Board has a delegation to:

- agree investments up to £2m
- recommend investments over £2m to the MCA
- accept grants up to £2m
- award contracts for the supply of goods/services up to £200,000

These delegations remain unchanged from previous arrangements.

### **2.3 Transparency** (section 13 of the Terms of Reference)

To ensure an appropriate level of transparency it has been agreed that for each Board:

- papers will be made available to the public 5 clear working days before the meeting
- the public can submit questions and receive a written response
- meetings will be held in private and minutes made available to the public within 10 working days of the meeting taking place

These arrangements remain unchanged from those previously in place.

### **2.4 Advisory Boards** (section 12 of the terms of reference)

It has been agreed that the Skills Advisory Network (SAN) will be a formal advisory board to the Education, Skills and Employment Board.

### **2.5 Frequency of Meetings** (section 5 the Terms of Reference)

It has been agreed that the Board continues to meet on (at least) an 8-week cycle aligned to the 8-week MCA meeting schedule. This remains unchanged from the arrangements previously in place. Additional meetings, dependent on business need, can be agreed with co-Chairs and will observe publication requirements for papers, minutes and key decisions. The Board may also determine to have informal intermediate meetings where discussion is required mid-cycle

### **2.6 Meeting Schedule**

Meetings will be scheduled to ensure the Education, Skills and Employment Board meets around the 4<sup>th</sup> week of the MCA 8-week cycle. This allows any decisions requiring escalation to the MCA, for example, due to the value exceeding delegations, to progress through the decision-making process in a timely manner. The next meeting of the Board is

currently scheduled for the 5<sup>th</sup> January which precedes an MCA meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> January.

### 3. Consideration of alternative approaches

- 3.1 There is no discretion to change governance arrangements, as these have been approved by both the MCA and the LEP however, each Board is empowered to determine an appropriate work plan to ensure thematic priorities are met.

### 4. Implications

#### 4.1 Financial

Thematic Boards have the authority to approve projects and schemes with a value of less than £2m. The Thematic Boards are also able to accept tenders and quotations for the supply of goods, materials and services up to a limit of £200,000.

#### 4.2 Legal

The changes to the Terms of Reference have been captured in the MCAs Constitution.

#### 4.3 Risk Management

Strong governance arrangements are an important mechanism in managing a number of corporate risks. These arrangements reflect the commitment of both the MCA and LEP to transparency, and the clear delineation of responsibilities between different elements of the decision-making system.

#### 4.4 Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion

There are no equality, diversity and social inclusion issues arising from this report.

### 5. Communications

- 5.1 The roles and responsibilities of the new Thematic Boards are explained in the Assurance Framework and the MCA Constitution which is published on the website. All meeting papers, minutes and membership of the Thematic Boards are also published on the website. In addition, members of the public can submit questions to the Thematic Board and receive a written response.

### 6. Appendices/Annexes

- 6.1 Appendix 1- Terms of Reference

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Background papers used in the preparation of this report are available for inspection at: 11 Broad Street West, Sheffield S1 2BQ

Other sources and references:

- [MCA Meeting September 2020](#) & [LEP Board Meeting September 2020](#)