

MCA - BUSINESS RECOVERY AND GROWTH BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:

THURSDAY, 24 JUNE 2021 AT 3.00 PM



Present:

Mayor Ros Jones CBE (Co-Chair)
Neil MacDonald (Co-Chair)
Sharon Kemp
Councillor Jim Andrews BEM
Councillor Denise Lelliott
Richard Stubbs
Helen Kemp

Doncaster MBC
Private Sector LEP Board Member
Rotherham MBC
Barnsley MBC
Rotherham MBC
Private Sector LEP Board Member
MCA Executive Team

In Attendance:

Rachel Clark	Assistant Director Trade & Investment	MCA Executive Team
Sue Sykes	Assistant Director - Programme and Performance Unit	MCA Executive Team

Nici Pickering	Strategic Marketing Manager	MCA Executive Team
Gareth Morgan	Senior Business Development Manager	MCA Executive Team
Stephen Burrows	Senior Business Development Manager	MCA Executive Team
Richard Stubbs		MCA Executive Team
Chris Dungworth		
Tim O'Connell		
Gill Richards (minute taker)		

Apologies:

Councillor Paul Turpin	Sheffield CC
Councillor Saghir Alam	Rotherham MBC

1 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted as above.

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

None.

With regard to the Non-Disclosure Agreements, it was reported that the

amendments had been agreed and the revised NDAs would be sent out for members' signatures. It was noted that NDAs had also been sent to officers that morning; the co-Chairs would be kept up to date via email.

3 Urgent items / Announcements

None.

4 Public Questions of Key Decisions

None.

5 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 25th March 2021 be agreed as a true record.

6 Verbal update on Made Smarter following MCA acceptance on 7 June 2021

H Kemp gave an update on the Made Smarter grant following MCA acceptance on 7th June 2021.

The Memorandum of Understanding with BEIS could now be signed off which would enable the procurement of a delivery partner.

The Board had previously been advised of the ambitious targets, considering the small pot available for Yorkshire and Humber, aiming to reach 500 SMEs across the whole region.

There were a number of base requirements which had to be delivered including:

- Digital road mapping
- Fully funded projects
- Funded projects through the Cap Ex Grant
- Digital internships which had been broadened to include graduates as well as students
- Leadership and management training which would be delivered to a number of cohorts based across the region.

The Chair thanked H Kemp for the update.

7 Paper on proposal for key account management

A report was considered which sought agreement for the way forward on the Key Account Management Programme 2021/22.

Members were reminded that at its March meeting the Board had agreed to accept a grant from DIT to the value of £80k for continuation of the Key Account Management programme; this payment was in relation to recommended changes in how the programme was delivered. These were

detailed within the report along with options to consider.

In response to questions from R Stubbs, R Clark informed the Board that there was 25-30 in the region, it was also unknown the number that DIT would decide they did not want to look after any more.

The funding, which had been reduced, was based upon how the KAM had been delivered in the area. In the past the work had been outsourced to self-employed providers but it was now recommended to bring the work in-house and employ someone on a fixed term contract.

RESOLVED – That the Board agree to option 2 as detailed in the report to recruit a Key Account Manager into the innovation hub.

8

Outline of proposal for management of the China programme and next steps

A report was considered which gave an update on work undertaken in developing a Trade and Investment Strategy between Sheffield City Region and made recommendations as to the next phase of activity.

S Burrows reminded members that in 2018 research had been commissioned in terms of the most appropriate regions to consider to develop a partnership-type of agreement with.

A scoping visit in 2019 had concluded that Zhengzhou in the Henan province would be the most suitable. However, the pandemic had hindered in developing relationships further.

As things start to open up and some sense of normality returns, it was thought timely to re-visit the strategy and to start and build momentum.

The priorities for the remainder of 2021/22 and to underpin planning for 2022/23 were proposed as:

- To establish a South Yorkshire China Forum (name to be confirmed).
- To develop a phased Marketing and Communications plan.
- To establish baseline indicators and metrics to allow measurement of impact of the forward approach.
- To use the Forum to support the market development strategy with a focus on four areas of activity which were detailed within the report.

It was expected that the first meeting of the Forum would be in the autumn and a report would be brought back to the Board in due course.

RESOLVED – That the Board agree that:

- i) Due to the heightened political position between Beijing and London, it was prudent to consider a short-term limitation in SCR China interaction which would be:
 - a) secure for private South Yorkshire commercial interests, and

b) removed SCR from political criticism.

- ii) As the second quarter of the business year approached and the positive implications of the vaccine roll out allowed a phased return to business as usual, it was timely to revisit the position at October 2019, phasing activity over the next six to nine months and laying the groundwork for a more structured programme of activity in 2022/23.

9

Verbal update on the India Programme and Forum

S Burrows commented that when the Board met in March it had been supportive of two key proposals. One was to continue the strategy through 2021/22, mainly supporting the Growth Champions, the second was the development of a South Yorkshire/India Advisory Board.

The plan had been that the group would meet for the first time in late June/early July but due to the growth of the pandemic in India, after taking advice, the decision had been taken to delay the first meeting until October 2021.

The business network would launch off the back of that meeting. A programme of action was being developed, a list of members needed to be agreed and once the Terms of Reference had been signed off the strategic part of the programme could be developed.

Operationally, news from the Growth Champions continued to be positive, they had held 47 meetings through the Virtual Trade Mission throughout April. Feedback from these meetings had been positive in terms of trade and business partnerships.

More work in this area would be done on a visit to India which was scheduled for late November with a contingency of February.

R Stubbs commented that he felt October was optimistic for the first meeting and that a visit in November seemed highly unlikely. Although this was an excellent opportunity to launch a group and have a good relationship with India, the timing had to be right and public opinion taken into account.

The Chair thanked S Burrows for the update.

10

Peer Networks Contract Award

A report was submitted which requested delegated approval to award contract(s) totalling £0.12m in relation to the peer Networks programme.

Members were reminded that at the March meeting of the Board they had approved acceptance of a grant of £0.12m to provide support, advice and training to assist businesses to face the challenges facing them in relation to Covid-19 by work through actions and solutions with peers.

The funding was allocated for the delivery of facilitation of 8 cohorts of peer network support to Sheffield City Region SMEs, one-to-one support for SMEs attending and programme management.

A tender exercise had been undertaken to appoint supplier(s) for delivery of the Peer Network programme. Contract award may consist of a single or multiple suppliers, totalling £0.12m.

RESOLVED – That the Board agree that delegated authority be given to the Head of Paid Service in consultation with the Section 73 and Monitoring Officer to enter into legal agreement/s for the Peer Network programme.

11 **Business Investment Pipeline**

G Morgan gave an update on the 26 projects that had been approved to enter the Business Investment Pipeline at the Board meetings in January and March 2021.

Since then, seven projects had become inactive, two of these had been lost to other regions and the others had decided not to proceed at the present time.

Two further projects were in active discussions with landlords and two other projects were going to full business cases. A challenge with both of these as the landlords of the sites were asking SCR MCA to guarantee the leases for a period of time which is not possible to do. Discussions are ongoing.

In terms of future projects, there were seven further projects which would be considered at the next LEP Board meeting.

S Kemp commented that there was a lot to take in and a brief paper with the details of the pipeline would be useful. It was also important to keep in mind the totality of the pipeline against the funding available and the management of expectations.

The Chair thanked G Morgan for the update and looked forward to receiving the update in written form.

12 **Project Approvals**

This item was exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

A report was submitted which requested that six projects were selected for development of full business cases. Members noted that if the projects were selected for further development then they would work towards submitting a Full Business Case application for funding which would go back to the relevant Board for a decision on the funding award.

The Board discussed at length the funding situation and the importance of managing expectations.

RESOLVED – That the Board approve the following projects for development of a full business case:

- i) Project D0001.

- ii) Project D00011.
- ii) Gene Therapy Innovation and Manufacturing Centre project.
- iv) Sustainable Aviation Fuel Innovation Centre project.
- v) Project D0003.
- vi) Project D0004.

13 **Any Other Business**

N MacDonald questioned how the RAP and Action Plan were progressing.

H Kemp replied that the RAP had experienced delays in terms of the digital agenda, however the soft landing workstream, was about to be launched.

There were 16 business advisors working in the local authorities. This was working well in moving the applications for additional business grants forward and helping to prepare applications for the Cap Ex scheme.

More broadly recruitment had been difficult with not a lot of interest in advertised roles and the calibre of applicants not meeting essential criteria.

The services of an Assistant Director had been secure who would join on the 1s September and was experienced in working with Combined and Local Authorities. A Business Development Manager who would lead on the RAP activity would be starting on the 1st July.

R Stubbs commented that he was happy to assist with publicising job opportunities.

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