

Thursday, 13 July 2023

**Local Enterprise Partnership – Annual Report 22/23 and transition to new business engagement arrangements**

<b>Is the paper exempt from the press and public?</b>	No
<b>Reason why exempt:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Purpose of this report:</b>	Discussion
<b>Strategic Priority</b>	Cross Cutting

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**Director Approving Submission of the Report:**

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**Recommendations:**

The LEP Board are asked to:

1. Note the Annual Report of the Local Enterprise Partnership Board presented at Appendix A.
2. Note the new governance arrangements established by the MCA at its June 2023 Board meeting – in particular the establishment of a new Business Advisory Board.

**1. Introduction**

This paper introduces the Annual Report of the Local Enterprise Partnership for 2022/23.

The report sets out the key achievements of the LEP in the last 12 months across the full range of LEP related activity; from strategy, insight, and regional advocacy, to programmes the LEP has supported (through the MCA decision-making processes).

The Board will also be taken through a short informal 'look back on 13 years of the Local Enterprise Partnership' presentation during the meeting.

The report also updates the Board on the new MCA governance arrangements and how the private sector voice remains a key part of the region's economic policy development process.

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

### Annual Report

The Annual Report demonstrates the importance of the LEP in providing a mechanism for the private sector to engage directly with political leaders from across the region, to help shape economic policy and investment programmes, to advocate for the region collectively, and to build strong partnerships with a single voice for South Yorkshire.

### MCA governance changes and maintaining a strong private sector voice

A key facet of the governance arrangements in South Yorkshire has been the strong inter-relationship between the LEP and MCA and overlap of membership. Building on the best of the public and private sectors, it has brought accountability, transparency, and business insight together.

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

### Case for Change – governance review

Following the national review into the future of LEPs, the Government set out its intention to wind down Local Enterprise Partnerships and embed any remaining roles and remits into the local government system, specifically, where they exist, in Combined Authorities.

In South Yorkshire, the MCA has already integrated the roles and functions of the Local Enterprise Partnership into its governance model. At its heart, the model has ensured a strong effective private sector voice in the development of policy, influencing the strategic direction of the MCA and advocating and engaging with the wider business community.

Reflecting the new national environment and the imperative to review the existing governance structures in South Yorkshire, the MCA has now agreed a new governance model which shifts away from a thematic board approach to a new 'cabinet' style portfolio model approach.

The MCA also agreed that the way in which the MCA policy making process engaged with the private sector would change, with a shift to establishing two new private sector focused boards; a new Mayor's Economic Advisory Council and a Business Advisory Board. They will play a critical role in ensuring a strong, independent and diverse business voice is embedded in the work of the MCA.

### Role and remit of the new Business Advisory Board

The new Business Advisory Board (BAB) will provide regional business input into the work of SYMCA.

The proposed role and remit include:

- Shaping South Yorkshire's thinking on issues of importance to businesses and the region's economic future, and to ensure these are heard and considered by the MCA and inform its decisions,
- Helping develop thinking on MCA priorities where the business voice can add most value,
- Sharing intelligence to inform how the region supports new and existing business to grow and thrive,
- Serving as a forum to surface issues that the Mayor and Local Authority Leaders may need to address,

- Enabling advocacy, networking, and engagement regionally.

The Board will meet formally six times a year to engage in problem-solving and deep dive into the urgent and important issues facing our region.

It will provide insight to help shape and design innovative policies and programmes, and positively challenge SYMCA and partners to ensure local support really works for businesses and communities.

### **Membership and term length**

Membership of the BAB is expected to be broadly balanced between business representative groups, representation from the Regional Skills Advisory Board, and an open recruitment process that will actively and purposefully seek new business voices.

SYMCA will endeavour to ensure that the new Board reflects the communities across the region, including a commitment to achieve gender balance.

Diversity on the Board in relation to business sectors, geography, demographics, and ethnicity will be prioritised to ensure it represents a broad range of interests from across South Yorkshire.

The new BAB will have 12 members, with proposed two-year term appointments, with the ability to extend for two-years.

Business Representation Organisations (BROs) will be asked to either nominate a lead officer from the executive function of their organisation or a member business who meets the criteria. The BROs include the Federation of Small Businesses, a single Chambers of Commerce rep for the region (with this being refreshed on a regular cycle), Make UK and a South Yorkshire Manufacturers / SY International Trade Forum representative.

The Regional Skills Advisory Board which is currently co-chaired by LEP Board member Angela Foulkes will also be represented directly.

LEP Board members have been engaged throughout the development of the new model.

### **Business Advisory Board recruitment**

Recruitment to the new Business Advisory Board is now live.

## **4. Discussion points**

The LEP Board is asked to:

1. Approve the Annual Report as attached at Appendix A.
2. Note the new business engagement mechanisms in South Yorkshire.
3. Support the communications and engagement work of the MCA and partners to ensure we attract a wide range of new businesses to support the MCA develop policy and engage and advocate for the region.

## **5. Next Steps**

n/a