



CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY
BUSINESS BOARD: MINUTES

Date: Monday, 23rd July 2018

Time: 2.30pm – 3.30pm

Location: Fenland Hall, March

Present: Councillor Charles Roberts (Chairman), James Palmer (Mayor) and Councillor Wayne Fitzgerald

25. APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Apologies received from Professor Andy Neely and Councillor Lance Stanbury.

Due to the low number of Members present, the Chairman advised that he would be dealing with the Growth Deal item in a slightly different way. The other agenda items were either for noting or for referring to the Combined Authority for endorsement.

It was noted that Councillor Roberts and James Palmer were members of the Combined Authority Board, but that there were no conflicts of interest in relation to the items to be considered.

26. MINUTES OF THE MEETING – 25TH JUNE 2018

The minutes of the Business Board meeting held on 25th June 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

27. APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The Board considered an update on proposals for substitute membership.

The following nominations for named substitutes were noted:

- Councillor Lance Stanbury had nominated Councillor James Waters;
- Mayor James Palmer had nominated Councillor Steve Count.

It was resolved unanimously to:

1. agree the appointments of substitute members as reported orally.

28. BUSINESS BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The Interim Director of Business and Skills presented a report detailing the current recruitment exercise to attract permanent members to the Business Board. Members were reminded of the intention to create a formal Business Board with effect from September.

The key point raised at the last Business Board meeting was that Members felt there were insufficient expressions of interest. As a result, the Interim Director had contacted the top thousand businesses (in terms of turnover) in the area, advising them of the vacancies and encouraging them to apply.

Fifteen formal applications had been received as at the closing date of 20/07/18. The shortlisting process, composition of the panel and timescales were noted. The shortlisted candidates would be invited to interview on 17/08/18. In response to a Member question, it was confirmed that the pool of fifteen applicants had a wide geographic spread, and each of the four key sectors were represented, plus Education, and individuals with experience of SMEs.

It was confirmed that the intention was to recruit the Chair from this pool of applicants. A Member commented that the Chair required specific skills, and moreover, a greater time commitment. He also suggested that it may have been more appropriate to appoint the Chair first, so that the Chair could be involved in the appointment of the Board Members. Officers advised that the skills matrix included specific skills relevant to a Chair. Although not explicit in the advertisement, it was implicit that the Chair would be appointed from the Board members. Informal discussions between the Interim Director and some candidates had touched upon the point that the Chair would be selected as part of the process, and one applicant had expressed a particular interest in that role. It was further noted that despite a strong field of applicants, the panel may decide not to recommend appointment to all posts in the August round of interviews, and there was scope for a further round of interviews.

On a technical issue, it was noted that the Panel's recommendations on appointments needed to be agreed by the Business Board, who were not meeting until the end of September. However, one option was for a formal meeting of the Business Board to take place on 17th August to approve the appointments, given that at least 3 of the current Board Members would be present.

It was noted that one of the recommendations of the LEP Review was that the public/private split on the Business Board should be 50/50, but that, positively, the Board's aspiration was much higher. Even if appointments were not made to all of the Board Member vacancies in the August round, the Business Board composition should still be compliant with the government recommendation.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a. note the continued approach being undertaken to market-test interest in membership of the Business Board;

- b. agree the next steps of the recruitment process, leading to the appointment of an industry Business Board Chair and members by September 2018.

29. FORWARD PLAN

Members noted the updated Forward Plan.

The Chief Executive drew Members' attention to the substantive agenda for the September meeting, which would be the first meeting of the fully constituted board.

30. CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH INDEPENDENT ECONOMIC REVIEW (CPIER) PROGRESS UPDATE

The Interim Director for Business and Skills presented a report on the interim Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Report (CPIER).

It was noted that the Combined Authority and Business Board had submitted a response regarding the Interim CPIER to the Commission on 17th July. It was agreed that that letter would be circulated. **Action required.** The headline messages contained within those responses were noted.

Members commented that the general reception to the CPIER across the county had been very good, as it clearly reflected the current position, and gave the evidence base and strength to support the Combined Authority going forward with its growth agenda. Whilst acknowledging the three economy approach, Members commented that this should be seen as a strength of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough economy, rather than something that caused divisions.

Noting the further round of "questions for consideration" being posed by the CPIER, a Member asked if the September deadline was realistic. Officers advised that the Commission, technical board and management board had been working towards the September deadline for some time, although it was acknowledged that there was still a lot of work to be done. In discussion, Business Board Members suggested that the deadline could be extended by a few more weeks, if required. The Chief Executive advised that the September deadline had originally been chosen partly to provide the Combined Authority with the necessary evidence for Budget discussions later in the year. The deadline was also significant because of the relationship between the CPIER and the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS).

It was resolved unanimously to

- a. note recent progress towards the completion of the Review;
- b. note the response made by the Combined Authority to inform the final Review, alongside those responses made directly by constituent partners;
- c. provide any further headline responses to the Interim CPIER report, to be reported verbally to the Combined Authority Board;

- d. note the final tranche of funding provided to complete the Review, in preparation for the development of the Local Industrial Strategy.

31. SKILLS STRATEGY – WORK READINESS AND CAREERS PROMOTION PILOT

The Chief Executive introduced a report updating the Board on progress on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Skills Strategy. This innovative programme was designed to prepare school pupils for the workplace, promoting vocational and STEM (science, technology, engineering and/or mathematics) related career paths.

Both the Combined Authority and Business Board had expressed the need to create choice for young people who sought to prepare for STEM careers, but who did not want to follow a traditional academic route, as a key strand of the Skills Strategy. The Portfolio Holder for Skills, Councillor Holdich, had been key in taking this forward, working with an Academy to ensure there were a variety of interventions in place and that young people were aware of the choices available to them, e.g. apprenticeships. The proposed programme provided the framework for that detailed work.

Business Board Members were very supportive of the proposal but stressed the need for specific evaluation criteria to be established i.e. how outcomes were measured and mapped, such as success in getting a job or completing an apprenticeship. It was agreed that robust measurement was required, and this recommendation would be made to the Combined Authority Board. **Action required.**

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) note the proposal for the creation of a work readiness and careers promotion pilot;
- b) support the principle of the allocation of grant funding to a limit of £350,000 over three years to fund the pilot;
- c) note that the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, Director of Skills and the Portfolio Holder Fiscal will request the development of a full business case by the scheme promoters. The draw-down of funds to be dependent on passing appropriate value of money tests;
- d) recommend to the Combined Authority that the business case should include a specific mechanism for evaluation, so that improvements in young people's skills and outcomes could be measured. This should include appropriate measures to monitor the effectiveness of the scheme;
- e) agree there was no objection to the proposal to delegate to the Director of Skills to agree and approve a relevant funding agreement and programme reporting and delivery arrangements;

- f) agree to report the Business Board's recommendations to the Combined Authority Board on 25th July.

32. ADULT EDUCATION BUDGET DEVOLUTION READINESS CONDITIONS AND NEXT STEPS TO IMPLEMENTATION

The Board considered an update on the progress of the devolution of the Adult Education Budget (AEB), following the approval of the transfer of this function to the Combined Authority. The key components and principles of the AEB were noted, including the vital links between the AEB and industry, e.g. how to provide courses which benefitted both the individual and the economy, and the systems required to support this with the required capacity and resources.

The Mayor advised that he had had a very useful meeting with the Special Advisor to the Secretary of State for Education recently and had been greatly relieved that there was clearly a move to a pro-devolution stance nationally, which would be enormously beneficial to the people of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough going forward.

The Chief Executive reminded Members that Cambridgeshire & Peterborough had started this process later than the other Combined Authorities, but it was tribute to great work by the officers involved that the transfer process had reached this stage, especially given the legacy of previous arrangements, the large number of providers involved, and the complex systems that maintained those arrangements. It was also significant that there was considerable interest from government on how well the devolution of this budget was working, which underlined the importance of the strategy, and the systems supporting that strategy.

The Business Board recorded its thanks to the officer team for their hard work in addressing this situation.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) note the Readiness Conditions for the Adult Education Budget (AEB) submitted to the Department for Education on the 18th May 2018, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, and the next steps for the devolution process;
- b) note the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority AEB Skills Plan, including the policies and actions set out in the plan (Appendix 2 to the report);
- c) agree it had no objection to the Business Board taking on the role of the Skills Board, reporting into the Combined Authority's proposed Skills Committee, and the terms of reference set out in 4.2 of the plan be included in the Business Board's terms of reference;
- d) agree it had no objection to the principle of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's intention to fund ongoing system costs (including staffing) of EB devolution from 2019 by allocating up to 4.9% of programme money for this purpose;

- e) note the amount of funding allocation and the mechanisms are yet to be determined until a full costing business case is developed and agreed by the Board at a future meeting;
- f) agree to report the Business Board's recommendations to the Combined Authority Board on 25th July.

33. GROWTH PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Chief Executive presented an update on both the Growth Deal and Growing Places Fund, which had both been transferred across to the new Local Enterprise Partnership arrangements from 1st April 2018. Expenditure to date, planned payments over the current financial year and monitoring arrangements were noted. Members' attention was drawn to the formal schedule of payments appended to the report. It was noted that the Board's agreement to this schedule would be enormously helpful in the claims process, so that approval did not have to be sought for each individual claim.

Noting the problems with the LEP and lack of investment, Members felt strongly that the Combined Authority should not be penalised in future for failure to invest. Officers confirmed that they were working hard with the relevant government departments to ensure the Combined Authority was being treated in an equal and appropriate way.

Members noted a proposal for the Combined Authority to allocate £40,000 to commission an independent Interim Evaluation in 2018/19, which would cover establishing baseline information in the original business cases, revised outputs and outcomes, lessons learned and project highlights to inform case studies.

It was agreed that given the low number of Members present, recommendations (b) to (d) would be changed to 'note', and the report would be brought back to the September meeting of the Business Board for retrospective approval.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) note the submission of the Q4 2017-18 Growth Deal monitoring report to government on the basis of the programme summary in the report;
- b) note the programme position for Quarter 1 2018/19;
- c) note the forward schedule of payments to contracted Growth Deal projects and Growing Places Fund projects and authorize the Combined Authority Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer to make payments in line with the schedule;
- d) note the proposal for an independent interim programme evaluation of the Growth Deal and growing Places Fund and a budget of £40,000;
- e) request a further report on the Growth Programme to the next meeting.

34. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chairman noted that the meeting was the last meeting of the interim Business Board, and he felt it was an appropriate time to thank his fellow Board Members for their attendance and contributions, and also officers and all those who work behind the scenes, for all their tremendous work, especially in bringing the legacy left by the LEP to a manageable situation.

It was resolved unanimously to note the date of the next meeting – Monday, 24 September 2018 at 2.30pm, at Shire Hall, Cambridge.

Chairman