

North East Combined Authority

North East Leadership Board

21 April 2015

Meeting held: Northumberland County Council, County Hall, Morpeth, NE61 2EF

Present:

Councillor: Henig (Chair)

Councillors Davey, N Forbes, Henry, Malcolm and Watson and Mayor Redfearn

86 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Mr P Woolston.

87 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

88 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 20 JANUARY 2015

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 January 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

89 MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 17 FEBRUARY 2015 (2015/16 REVENUE BUDGET - OUTSTANDING ISSUES)

The minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 17 February 2015 on the 2015/16 Revenue Budget were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

90 MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 17 FEBRUARY 2015 (GROWTH FUND UPDATE)

The minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 17 February 2015 on the Growth Fund Update were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

91 UPDATE REPORTS FROM THEMATIC LEADS

(a) Economic Development and Regeneration Update

Submitted: An update report of the Thematic Lead for Economic Development and Regeneration (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Members considered the update report.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

(b) Employability and Inclusion Update

Submitted: An update report of the Thematic Lead for Employability and Inclusion (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Members considered the update report.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

(c) Transport Update

Submitted: An update report of the Thematic Lead for Transport (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Members considered the update report.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

92 MENTAL HEALTH TRAILBLAZER

Submitted: A report of the Thematic Lead for Employability and Inclusion (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Members considered the report which provided an update on the progress of the development of the North East Mental Health Trailblazer project and sought agreement in relation to an element of the expenditure and the commencement of the project delivery.

RESOLVED – That:

- I. the expenditure of the initial £100,000 received from the Transformation Challenge Award (TCA) to cover essential set-up and development costs be approved; and
- II. the Trailblazer should commence delivery from 1 July 2015 on a phased basis and subject to the securing of the £1million match funding from the European Social Fund (ESF).
- III.

93 WORK PROGRAMME LOCALISM

Submitted: A report of the Thematic Lead for Employability and Inclusion (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Members considered the report which provided information about the development of a successor Work Programme, a mandatory support programme for the long-term unemployed, as invited by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the role of the Combined Authority in the development and implementation of the programme.

RESOLVED – That:

1. the independent findings of Rocket Science as to the effectiveness of the Work Programme, the scope for future alignment of successor arrangements with other welfare-to-work support in the North East Combined Authority (NECA) area and the practical issues and risks associated with alternative delivery arrangements of the successor to the Work Programme be welcomed and endorsed;

and based on this evidence:

2. the initial negotiation stance of the Combined Authority with regard to a Work Programme localism “ask” to DWP should be based on the following core strands:
 - to co-design a nationally commissioned programme for the Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) cohort
 - to co-design and co-commission a separate local programme for those on Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and those on JSA with many of the characteristics of ESA clients, which integrated DWP resources with those in social care, health and housing
 - to develop a locally commissioned and devolved post Work Programme pilot for those emerging from the Work Programme without a job
 - to develop an early intervention pilot which would aim to reduce the flow of clients into the Work Programme;

and subsequently:

3. further reports should outline:
 - the DWP response to the initial proposition and define in more detail the scope and operation of each of the core strands and their implications for the Combined Authority if they are to be effectively delivered; and
 - the options for managing the integration of public services that would be necessary to effectively deliver the localism of the Work Programme and other associated support.

94

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION ADVISORY BOARD

Submitted: A report of the Monitoring Officer (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Members considered the report which set out proposals for the establishment of the Economic Development and Regeneration Advisory Board (EDRAB), provision for Substitute Members for Members of the NECA committees and related amendments to the Constitution.

The ensuing discussion included matters such as:

- The importance of utilising Members' seminars for informal discussion on the co-ordination of the responsibilities falling within Thematic areas and related matters; and
- The decision-making role of the NELB.

RESOLVED – That:

- I. The establishment of the Economic Development and Regeneration Advisory Board and its Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix A subject to the inclusion of the Trade Union Congress (TUC) into the list of organisations that would be invited to nominate a representative to be a non-voting Co-opted Member of the Advisory Board, and the resulting changes to the Constitution be agreed; and
- II. The proposals for Substitute Members for Members of the NECA committees and sub-committees as set out in Appendix B and the associated amendments to the Constitution as set out in Appendix C be agreed;

95 **INWARD INVESTMENT FUNCTION PROPOSALS**

Submitted: A report of the Thematic Lead for Economic Development and Regeneration (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Members considered the report which provided an update on the progress to develop arrangements for an enhanced, regional inward investment function and sought approval of associated proposals.

RESOLVED – That an increased core budget of £140,000, funded by an equal contribution of £20,000 per local authority to support an enhanced level of the NECA-wide inward investment activity, be agreed.

96 **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Submitted: A report of the Chief Finance Officer (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

Members noted the report which provided a summary of the financial matters affecting the Authority, including information about grants receivable, accounting and audit arrangements and an update on relevant information contained in the national budget.

As an update, it was noted that information on the confirmation of funding for 2016/17 would be sought from the government as soon as possible after the election and before the next spending review. During the ensuing discussion Members commented on the risks associated with the lack of commitment to funding for the Local Growth Fund from 2016/17 onwards and the careful approach that should be taken by the Authority in these circumstances particularly when committing to projects. A comment was also made about risks associated with the

increased expectations from local authorities which were now operating with decreased budgets.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

97 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday, 16 June 2015 at 2pm at Sunderland Civic Centre (Annual Meeting).