

## Recruitment of new Chair of the Business Board – Constitution Amendment

To:	Business Board
Meeting Date:	15 May 2023
Public report:	Yes
Lead Member:	Alex Plant, Chair of the Business Board
From:	Domenico Cirillo, Business Programmes & Business Board Manager
Key decision:	No
Forward Plan ref:	n/a
Recommendations:	<p>The Business Board is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Approve the proposed amendment to Paragraph 9.4 of the Business Board Constitution under the 'Private Sector Representatives' section.</li><li>ii. Recommend the Combined Authority Board approve the proposed amendment.</li></ol>

# 1. Purpose

- 1.1 To seek approval of the proposed amendment to the Business Board Constitution under the 'Private Sector Representatives' section (paragraph 9.4).

# 2. Background

- 2.1. The current Chair, Alex Plant, has resigned and will formally step down following the Business Board AGM meeting on 15th May 2023. As required by the Business Board's Constitution, the Vice-Chair, Andy Neely, assumed the role of Acting Chair until a permanent Chair be appointed, which is expected to be made at the next Business Board meeting in July 2023.
- 2.2 Recruitment for the new Chair of the Business Board went live on 3rd April 2023 and was published on the Combined Authority's website. A recruitment pack was produced to showcase the role of the Business Board and to support the campaign and was made available online with the advert. We have taken the decision to extend the recruitment campaign and to postpone the interview process for the new Business Board Chair to June 2023 to allow for the proposed constitution amendment and expand the candidate pool.
- 2.3 In part, this is due to the restrictive nature of the Business Board constitution, particularly around the requirement for private sector members to be employed within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough which narrows the potential candidate pool. Secondly, and in view of the recent changes to reframe the role and function of its Business Board in a way that creates a stronger partnership between accountable local politicians and local businesses, we are recommending that the requirements for Board members (including the Chair) be amended to reflect the desire to achieve the greatest possible diversity of skills and experience to deliver the new advisory nature of the Board. This would be in line with other public private partnerships across the country where there is a need to attract business acumen and commercial experience.
- 2.4 We are therefore proposing that the former requirement for individuals to be employed in the area be dropped in favour of an association with the area and this could be through residency, having a business association or contributing to the economy through key sectors, including skills and education. The criteria that they have strong business credentials and the strategic, leadership and partnership capability will remain as core competencies. This move would also lessen the possibility of direct conflicts of interest in decisions being made by the Business Board that may favour certain sectors or businesses. This will broaden the pool of candidates we have available that can be appointed within the framework of the constitution.
- 2.5 The National Local Assurance Framework sets out the minimum requirements around the recruitment of a Chair and the proposed amendment is permissible in accordance with Paragraph 131) which states that '*The leadership that Chairs provide is central to the success of a LEP. As such, LEPs should recruit Chairs who are influential local leaders, who act as champions for their area's economic success. They should have sufficient standing to be able to convene the local business community and public sector stakeholders, whilst having the insight to oversee the development of an economic strategy and the relationship skills to work effectively with Government*'.

- 2.6 The Business Board Constitution (under Private Sector Representatives' section paragraph 9.4) currently states that '**Members should be employed by or have a substantial interest (by virtue of ownership / control) in businesses in the area served by the Business Board**'.
- 2.7 It is proposed that Paragraph 9.4 is amended to '**Members will be senior leaders able to influence and advise both within the region and beyond. They will have knowledge and expertise of key sectors and in representing the region's Economic Growth Strategy**'.

## Significant Implications

### 3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 None.

### 4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The legal requirements as to recruitment of the Business Board Chair and Members are set out in the Business Board Constitution.
- 4.2 The Combined Authority is under a general duty in Section 3 Local Government Act 1999 to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised. The proposals in this report are designed to comply with that duty.
- 4.3 Section 9P Local Government Act 2000 requires the Combined Authority to prepare and keep up to date a constitution which contains the Combined Authority's standing orders, code of conduct, information required by the Secretary of State and such other information as the Combined Authority considers appropriate. The provisions in the current and proposed amended constitution comply with this requirement.
- 4.4 Decisions relating to amendment to the Combined Authority's Constitution which contains the Business Board constitutions, are for Combined Authority Board to make. As a result, the adoption of a new Constitution must be agreed by Combined Authority Board.
- 4.5 Once agreed by the Combined Authority Board the Constitution must be publicly available.

### 5. Public Health implications

- 5.1 No public health implications.

### 6. Environmental and Climate Change Implications

- 6.1 No environmental or climate change implications.

## 7. Other Significant Implications

7.1 None.

## 8. Appendices

8.1 None.

## 9. Background Papers

9.1 [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Constitution](#)

9.2 [National local growth assurance framework \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)