

CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY
BUSINESS BOARD: MINUTES



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

Date: Monday, 25th March 2019

Time: 2.30pm – 3.45pm

Location: The Welding Institute, Abington

Present: Aamir Khalid (Chairman), Austen Adams, Councillor Charles Roberts, James Palmer, Tina Barsby, Douglas Cuff, Mark Dorsett, William Haire and Andy Neely

33. APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no apologies for absence.

Douglas Cuff advised that he had an interest in relation to the Haverhill Business Park (item 37), which could be considered a competitor to Granta Park. It was confirmed that he did not need to declare an interest in relation to this item.

34. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28TH JANUARY 2019

The minutes of the Business Board meeting held on 28th January 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

35. FORWARD PLAN

Note the Forward Plan.

36. LOCAL INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

The Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) was presented to the Board. The document had been revised following comments from Business Board Members at their last meeting.

Presenting the LIS, Mike Emmerich of Metro Dynamics commented that the key purpose of the Strategy was to detail how the government's national ambitions, as set out in the national Industrial Strategy, would be delivered locally. Whilst it should be neither a statement of all of the CPCA's work, or a bidding document, it should explain the interventions required to deliver sustainable growth set out in the national Industrial Strategy, based on Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's specific local requirements, using the evidence base of the CPIER. The LIS had been revised following Board Members' comments at the January meeting, including greater focus and clarity around the key interventions that had been made and were required in future. Annex 1 provided a summary of the evidence and a clearer narrative.

The three principle ambitions set out in the LIS were:

1. Improving the long-term capacity for growth in Greater Cambridge;
2. Increasing the sustainability and broadening the base of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's economic growth;
3. Expanding and building on the clusters and networks that have promoted innovation and enabled Cambridge to become a global leader.

In terms of processes, the LIS would be approved locally by the Combined Authority Board on 27/03/19, and would then be submitted to government, ultimately being fed in to the Chancellor's Spending Review. Ensuring that the Strategy was implemented, i.e. putting in place the actions set out in the Strategy would be key. Informal discussions with government officials indicated that they were content that the LIS was going in the right direction, and the measured, evidence-based approach was the correct approach.

Board Members made the following comments:

- noted that there would be a deeper dive behind each of the four strategic growth sectors;
- noted that the approach to Agri-tech was slightly different, as there was already an existing Agri-tech scheme, but there would be wider engagement in developing a more detailed strategy. Board Members commented that this wider engagement was necessary, as those involved to date could be too focused, whilst others would be better placed to approach this issue from a national perspective;
- noted that the reference to Cambridge Agri-tech as a venture capital fund was incorrect as it was an Angel Fund;
- noted comments from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee that greater focus on Climate Change being should be at the core of the LIS, and also a greater focus on digital connectivity. Board Members commented that environmental and sustainability issues had been included from the early draft stages, and whilst these were to some extent beyond the scope of the LIS, sustainable growth was key to the LIS, with important linkages to Climate Change, especially with agriculture and health, Agri-tech, Agrifood, and Health and Wellbeing;
- a Board Member commented that whilst appreciating that the Business Board was working within the structure of national government, he found it difficult to support the comments about the Apprenticeship Levy, as from the perspective of an employer, he found it a poorly thought through scheme, with a lack of providers and standards. He felt that although it was well-intentioned, the Apprenticeship Levy was proving to be a clumsy tool. Officers advised that they were in dialogue with the West Midlands Combined Authority who have a pilot, and government, with a view to using the Apprenticeship Levy and frameworks to make the scheme work better for businesses. The Board Member suggested that the Apprenticeship Levy should be a choice, not an involuntary distribution. Mayor James Palmer agreed that there had been numerous discussions with

businesses on this, but there would be no compulsion – any arrangement would be on consensus basis;

- noting the targets for Peterborough University (2,000 students by 2022 and 12,500 by 2030), a Board Member asked if these were conservative or ambitious student number estimates. It was confirmed that these were realistic and conservative estimates.

The Board noted the proposal that officers would be making minor refinements to the LIS as part of their discussions with government, and proposed to bring the LIS back to the Business Board in May, with any significant changes requiring Business Board approval.

It was resolved to:

- (a) recommend the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Industrial Strategy to the Combined Authority Board for approval;
- (b) recommend that the Combined Authority Board delegate to the Business Board and the Director of Business and Skills, in consultation with the Chair of the Housing and Communities Committee, to take the Industrial Strategy through the remaining stages of national sign-off, and refine;
- (c) note the first Digital Sector Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, independently produced to inform the Local Industrial Strategy, to be considered further by the Board at a future meeting.

37. GROWTH DEAL PROJECT PROPOSALS

The Business Board received a report on the new applications submitted for the Growth Fund, which included independent external assessment undertaken.

It was resolved to:

- (a) consider the confidential reports by external assessors of projects submitted for Growth Deal Funds;
- (b) recommend Applicants 2 and 3 as suitable for approval to the Combined Authority Board for approval, and ask for further detail from Applicants 1 and 4;
- (c) note the update on progress of projects that were approved at the January 2019 Business Board meeting and Small Grant Scheme.

38. GROWTH PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Business Board considered a report on the performance of the Growth Deals programme to deliver new homes, jobs and skills across the LEP area from April 2015

to December 2018, and the current in-year position to end February 2019 for both the Growth Deal and Growing Places Funds combined.

As at 28th February 2019, CPCA's Growth Deal programme had eight projects in delivery in the financial year, and the contracted forecast spend total was £81.58M. The cumulative programme spend to that date, including completed projects, was £67.51M. There had not been a great deal of movement over the past 12 months, but Growth Deal funding was now being allocated. The way projects were being monitored was being reviewed, and the impact of funding considered in greater detail i.e. jobs created and houses built.

A Board Member expressed concerns on the timescales, noting that the funding needed to be committed by Spring 2021. Officers acknowledged this point, and commented that it ruled out certain projects e.g. major infrastructure in favour of projects which could have a greater impact in the shorter term. Another Member observed that some of the requirements could be quite off-putting to be potential applicants e.g. the £5K per job, and suggested that flexibility was vital. It was also noted that whilst funding needed to be committed by Spring 2021, outcomes could be counted throughout the length of the project i.e. past that date.

It was resolved to:

(a) note the accumulative and in-year programme position to 28 February 2019 for Growth Deal and Growing Places Fund.

(b) note and recommend the Combined Authority Board agree the submission of the Growth Deal monitoring report to Government to end Q3 2018/19.

39. ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

The Business Board considered a report on the Assurance Framework. The key purpose of the Assurance Framework was to ensure that the necessary systems and processes were in place to effectively manage the delegated funding from government budgets.

Board Members were reminded that at their first meeting on 24th September 2018, the Board had approved an interim Assurance Framework based on the previous GCGP LEP's agreed framework, as at that stage, government was due to publish revised guidance for Mayoral Authorities with a local enterprise partnership. That guidance was published in January, and it required Combined Authority Boards and Business Boards to merge their Assurance Frameworks in to a single Assurance Framework.

Apologies were given for the late circulation of the Assurance Framework to Board Members, but this was due to a number of key staffing changes, and the need for a number of lead officers to input in to the document. Final checks were being made against the Government guidance which would result in further amendments. Because of this, it was proposed that the Assurance Framework would be considered again at the next meeting, to enable more in-depth consideration. The Interim Chief Executive commented that discussion on the preceding items around issues such as reputational

due diligence were particularly relevant to consideration of the Assurance Framework. However, timescales dictated that an Assurance Framework was signed off and presented to government by 29th March 2019.

It was resolved to:

agree the revised single Assurance Framework which is in line with the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government's revised National Local Growth Assurance Framework for Mayoral Combined Authorities with a Single Pot and Local Enterprise Partnerships.

40. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 28th May 2019. There was a proposal to move this date to the previous week, and it was agreed that this could be explored outside of the meeting, but there was some reluctance to change dates once they had been set, as Board Members had arranged their other engagements around the scheduled date. **Action required.**

There was a Member question as to whether virtual attendance e.g. Skype-ing into meetings was permissible and practicable. Officers agreed to follow this up. **Action required.**

A Member asked if any progress had been made with the recruitment of more Board Members. Officers advised that co-opting had been considered, but was considered sub-optimal compared to a full recruitment campaign.

A number of Members indicated that it would be helpful to have a standing agenda item providing an update on what was happening at the Combined Authority. **Action required.**

A Member asked if in future iterations of the Local Industrial Strategy and similar documents could be presented in a "track changes" format to highlight revisions, so that it was clear what changes had been made.

Chairman