



County Durham  
Economic Partnership

## MINUTES

<b>Meeting</b>	County Durham Economic Partnership Board
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Monday 31 October
<b>Time of Meeting</b>	13.00 – 15:30
<b>Venue</b>	Committee Room 1B, County Hall

### Attendees:

Sue Parkinson	Vice Chair and Chair of the Business and Enterprise Working Group
Ken Jarrold	Chair
Tarryn Lloyd Payne	DCC, CDEP Secretariat
Joanne Willey	DCC, CDEP Secretariat
Ivor Stolliday	Chair of Visit County Durham
Cllr Neil Foster	Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Regeneration
Sarah Robson	Chair of Place Shaping Working Group
Ian Thompson	Director of Regeneration and Economic Development
Stuart Thompson	Federation of Small Businesses
Brian Manning	Chair of Employment and Skills Group
Melanie Sensicle	Visit County Durham
Paul Chapman	Jobcentre Plus
Jonathan Walker	North East Chamber of Commerce
Ray Hudson	Durham University
Adrian White	Durham County Council
Glyn Hall	Chair of Housing Forum
Cllr Eddie Tomlinson	Chair of Rural Working Group
Graham Wood	Economic Regeneration Manager
Barbara Gubbins	County Durham Foundation

### Guest Speaker

Bryan Tanner	Durham University
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### Apologies

Bryan Hoare	Durham Business Club
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## 1. Welcome

Sue Parkinson, Vice Chair of the Board welcomed partners to the meeting and explained that she would be standing in for Ken Jarrold until he arrived.

## **2. Minutes of the last meeting**

Barbara Gubbins informed the Vice Chair that she was present at the last meeting, however it was not recorded.

The rest of the minutes were **agreed** as a true record.

## **3. Matters Arising**

Ken Jarrold has now written to the 2 Durham LEP members.

## **Update Items**

### **4. Employment Report**

Paul Chapman introduced the report that has been produced jointly by Jobcentre Plus and Durham County Council.

The group **agreed** that the next steps should be for the report to go to the Employment and Skills Executive Group for further development.

In future this report will be provided to the Board as a quarterly update.

### **5. Business Engagement**

Sarah Robson introduced the paper and explained the background behind it.

After a general discussion, Board members broadly supported the paper and asked for the emphasis to be based on points 7 and 8, drawing on points 4 and 9. Partners as listed in point 6 (DCC, NECC, FSB, County Durham Enterprise Agencies, Durham Business Club, South Durham Business Network, Derwentside Business Network, County Durham Engineering Forums) to support the further development of the Memorandum of Understanding.

Members also agreed to discuss an alternative name to Business "Network" and that it was hoped all parties would use the forum as a platform for continued dialogue and communication.

**Action:** Stewart Watkins to arrange further joint discussions with partners to develop Memorandum.

### **6. LEP Update**

Ian Thompson presented the paper that was circulated for information.

### **7. Apprenticeships**

Graham Wood presented the paper that was circulated for information.

The programme was well received by partners and it was commented on that in a time of little resources this represented a significant achievement in securing delivery against a clear regeneration priority. Particular focus was welcomed on the connection with social enterprise.

Barbara Gubbins informed the group about an apprenticeship initiative with the Princes Trust and highlighted how there could be joint ways of working. Barbara Gubbins volunteered to link in this aspect further as representative with the Voluntary and Community organisations.

**ACTION:** Barbara Gubbins and Graham Wood to discuss separately

## **8. Growth Review: Rural Economy**

Eddie Tomlinson presented the paper that was circulated for information.

An additional update to the paper informed the Board that following a recent LEP meeting it was agreed that an expression of interest would be submitted for the pilot of the Rural Growth Fund for Durham and Northumberland.

The Board endorsed this approach and welcomed the proactive role of the Rural Working Group in developing close links through the LEP.

## **9. Tourism and Culture**

Melanie Sensicle gave a presentation based on the 2 papers which were circulated for information.

An additional update to the paper informed the Board that Visit England have been successful in securing £20m from the Regional Growth Fund and Durham will be 1 of 15 destinations to receive £600k. There is a further expectation to match fund this activity locally.

The money will be used on a three-year project entitled, 'Growing Tourism Locally'. A key part of the project will be a national campaign aimed at inspiring Britons to take more short breaks and holidays at home and in doing so grow jobs in the tourism sector.

Sue Parkinson updated the Board about the progress of the Performance Reward Grant as detailed on page 3 of the Progress report on investment and culture in creative industries.

A call out for businesses to partner up with schools for the Business Magnates Competition was put to the Board.

### **ACTION**

A copy of the presentation from Melanie Sensicle will be circulated with the minutes of the meeting.

## **10. Regeneration Statement and Business, Enterprise and Skills Strategy**

Sarah Robson presented the paper that was circulated giving information on the need to refresh the Regeneration Statement and to produce a Business, Enterprise and Skills Strategy.

The group **agreed** with the need to refresh the Regeneration Statement and to produce a Business, Enterprise and Skills Strategy. They also **agreed** with the proposal to do this through a new group consisting of selected members from the BEWG and ESG and ESEG along with any other partners interested in being involved.

The Board will continue to receive progress reports of both documents as outlined in the reports.

## **11. Durham University: Enterprise and Employability Strategy**

Professor Brian Tanner gave a presentation on the Enterprise and Employability Strategy for Durham University.

### **Action:**

A copy of the presentation will be circulated with the minutes.

## **12. County Durham Housing**

Glynn Hall gave a presentation on Housing in County Durham.

### **Action:**

A copy of the presentation will be circulated with the minutes.

## **13. Working Group Chairs Update**

### *Transport*

- A LEP draft transport paper has gone to the Chair of the LEP and also David Land
- Belmont Park and Ride will be available for use for the upcoming Lumiere event, however it will not be 100% complete
- Civil parking enforcements will be in place in the North of the County soon

### *Place Shaping*

- The last meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> October focussed on Durham City and also looked at housing issues, an overview of employability and housing and also received a presentation on the Business Space Strategy

### *Employment and Skills*

- The last meeting was held in September and members of the group were asked to consider joining together with Tyne and Wear to better inform the LEP
- Mixed responses were received from the group as the group are still committed to helping younger people, which may not be the same priorities as Tyne and Wear
- As chair of the group Brian is continuing discussions to see how Durham maybe best placed going forward.

### *Voluntary and Community Sector*

- A report was presented by Barbara Gubbins explaining the status of the voluntary and community sector

### *Rural*

- The last meeting of the rural working group considered the paper on the growth review
- It is encouraging to have a representative from Visit County Durham on the group
- The 3 AAP's in West Durham (Teesdale, Weardale and Crook 3 towns) have all contributed to continue with the rural employability project

### *Business and Enterprise*

- The last meeting was held at the CORE manufacturing centre at Newton Aycliffe – Sue recommended the centre to partners
- Agreement has been sought from all partners of the group to share information to ensure non-duplication of business and enterprise support
- The niche sectors work is progressing
- Work is ongoing to develop social enterprise

- Sue has been involved in the coaching for high growth bid ensuring that Durham is well represented
- Enterprise Activity is being encouraged with registered social landlords
- The next meeting will look at the innovation action plan, business support review and creative industries

#### **14. Chairs Remarks**

Ken Jarrold thanked Sue for chairing the meeting.

He commented on:

1. Progressing our understanding of what has led to the current financial situation partners were asked to consider the following:

- An original belief founded in free market economics that markets should operate without government regulations. Governments in turn assumed that markets would not need regulation. Finally this was compounded by an increased desire to increase profits and financial gain.
- In conclusion this could be best summarised as
  - Bad Economics
  - Bad Policy
  - Bad Behaviour

2. In response to the continued financial uncertainty, the chair suggested that while wishing to avoid politics it has been suggested that a “Plan B” will emerge in the Government’s Autumn Statement as clearly the promised private sector jobs have failed to materialise in sufficient numbers to compensate for the loss of public sector jobs. County Durham will need to ensure it is well placed to capitalise on any new initiatives.

3. Ken Jarrold further updated the Board on areas he has been progressing on their behalf. They include:

- A recent visit to the GT group who were very complimentary about the Durham environment for doing business
- Continue with an emphasis on Employment and Skills
- Continue with an emphasis on Tourism and Culture
- The Refresh of the Regeneration Statement and the production of the Business, Enterprise and Skills Strategy
- The County Durham Partnership has also reemphasised the Employment rate and the Economy as its top priority

#### **15. Any other business**

Stewart Watkins informed the group of the announcements on the BIZ website regarding the Regional Growth Fund. This information can be found at:

<http://www.biz.gov.uk/RGF>

#### **16. Date and Time of next meeting**

30<sup>th</sup> January, 1pm, Committee room 1b, County Hall

#### **Future meetings**

30<sup>th</sup> April, 1pm, Committee room 1b, County Hall

30<sup>th</sup> July, 1pm, Committee room 1b, County Hall

29<sup>th</sup> October, 1pm, Committee room 1b, County Hal