

Meeting: County Durham Economic Partnership Board

Date & Time: Wednesday 8th February at 3pm

Venue: Salvus House, Durham/hybrid via Teams



Better for everyone

Present:	Name	Organisation/Pillar Rep
	Glyn Llewellyn (GL)	Chair
	Alison Gittins (AG)	Durham Business Group
	Andy Kerr (AK)	Durham County Council
	Cllr Elizabeth Scott (Cllr ES)	Durham County Council
	Andy Bailey (ABailey)	Partnership Team, DCC
	Kate Burrows (KB)	Durham Community Action (VCS Voice)
	Sue Parkinson (SP)	CDEP Vice Chair
	Claire Williams (CW)	Funding & Programmes DCC
	Tim Hammond (TH)	Durham University (lead for Innovation)
	Angela Brown (ABro) (Minutes)	Durham County Council
Also, in attendance via zoom:		
	Andy Broadbent (AB)	New College Durham (lead for People)
	Michelle Cooper (MC)	County Durham Community Foundation (VCS Voice)
	Reshma Begum (RB)	Federation of Small Business
Apologies:		
	Amy Harhoff	Durham County Council
	Sarah Slaven	Business Durham (lead for Business Competitiveness)
	Bill Fullen	Believe Housing (lead for Inclusive Growth)

Item No.	Subject	Discussion and Decision	Lead Officer(s)	Timescale
1.	Welcome and apologies	<p>GL welcomed everyone to the meeting</p> <p>ABro listed the apologies</p>		
2.	Minutes of the meetings: 23rd Nov 2022	<p>The Minutes from the meetings of 23rd November 2022 were agreed as a true record of the meeting</p>		
3.	Matters Arising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural England Prosperity Fund - The CDEP Board endorsed the areas of focus and the submission to Government on that basis – CW advised that they had yet to receive confirmation of the approval of the submission. • County Durham Pound – The Chair advised that he had written to Darren Knowd, who was leading this work, to thank him for his input. 		
4.	Retirement of Bill Fullen and appointment of replacement	<p>SP advised that she had been contacted by Bill Fullen from Believe Housing (lead on Inclusive Growth) who was due to retire shortly and who had suggested that Alan Smith, who will replace Bill as CEO at Believe Housing, would be prepared to take up Bill's role as a member of the CDEP Board.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GL will meet with Alan Smith to discuss joining the Board in advance of the next CDEP Board meeting 	GL	
5.	Devolution presentation by Andy Kerr	<p>AK gave a presentation to the Board on Devolution. The presentation slides were subsequently circulated to the Board.</p> <p>He advised that the next steps were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public consultation until 23rd March 2023 • Putting the resources in place to support delivery • Developing our investment pipeline to deliver our priorities 		

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		<p><i>Questions/Comments</i></p> <p>In response to a question about the likelihood of the devolution agreement not being finalised, AK advised that, although most devolution deals had been finalised, there is one example of where this did not happen. However, given that the consultation is not a referendum, the public consultation would need to be overwhelmingly negative for this to affect the finalisation of the agreement.</p> <p>.</p> <p>The Vice Chair asked colleagues if all were supportive of the Devolution proposal, and all were. She asked if there was anything the CDEP could do in support, and AK advised that the support of the Board in relation to the IES was extremely helpful, given that it was agreed almost immediately prior to the announcement of the deal, and thus provides clarity of direction and expectations.</p> <p>Action: CDEP to support with consultation and development of IES</p>	ALL	
6.	<p>Inclusive Economic Strategy – Presentation from AK/CW followed by substantive discussion</p>	<p>CW and AK gave a presentation on the Inclusive Economic Strategy, covering the approach and timescales for completing the IES Delivery Plans.</p> <p>CW referenced a forthcoming workshop to be held on 8th March to engage partners in the development of the IES Delivery Plan.</p> <p>SP thanked CW and AK on behalf of the Board for the huge amount of effort it has taken to complete this piece of work. She reminded the Board that CDEP is a wider partnership than just the Board, but that the Board itself has a role to lead the wider Partnership.</p> <p>GL agreed that we need to make sure we maximise the involvement of Partnership membership in areas of work where they can add most value. KB drew attention to the particular constraints of capacity on the Voluntary and Community sectors and SP agreed, adding that smaller businesses would no doubt have the same constraints. They are all, however, essential to engage and it was therefore</p>		

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		<p>incumbent on the Partnership to so organise its efforts to ensure that this is made as achievable as possible</p> <p>KB felt in relation to time, space and resourcing engaging Voluntary Sector will find this difficult to respond. Sometimes we must be mindful that people work differently. SP agreed and mentioned that it is the same for micro businesses in the county.</p>		
7.	UKSPF Update – Vice Chair	<p>SP gave an update on UKSPF</p> <p>She advised that the current round of UKSPF allocation would remain with the County, but that any future rounds would be routed through a new Combined Authority.</p> <p>The UKSPF Delivery Plan has now been approved by HMG and work on delivery has commenced. In the first year (which was in reality only some three months long), there had been some emphasis on informing and preparing for Years 2 and 3 delivery. She referenced some areas:</p> <p>Business Productivity and Enterprise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Commission has been let to NICRE, in partnership with a local rural businesswoman, who runs the Durham-based voluntary Rural Business Network, to develop our understanding of the particular needs of rural businesses in the County • A Commission has been let to Ideas for Change to lead the development of a County Durham Enterprise Framework which will enable a cross-partnership response to the challenges around business start-up and early-stage sustainability and growth • A Call had been issued for expressions of interest in delivering activity to support business productivity. <p>Business Innovation Area</p>		

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This was an area best delivered with willing regional partners, and in particular the northeast Universities and Research Organisations and discussions were ongoing to develop this. <p>Skills</p> <p>No UKSPF can be expended in the early years of the programme, so time is being invested to inform delivery when resources can be released. To this end, a meeting of all those parties involved in skills delivery is scheduled for early December.</p> <p>Community & Place</p> <p>Work has now started to develop this area, and a scoping meeting with partners through the Community and Place Work Group has now been arranged.</p> <p><i>Questions/Comments</i></p> <p>In response to a question regarding on the ground delivery, CW advised that relatively small elements of activity were already taking place in the Community and Place area of work, but that the approved UKSPF implementation plan envisaged a significant rise in spending in 2023/24, given that approval had only been granted towards the end of 2022. AK reminded the Board that we need manage expectations and spend wisely, as the available funds are less than was available under the previous funding regime.</p>		
8.	Partner Updates – All	<p>SP advised that a letter would be issued to Board members to formally invite them to the IES workshop on 8th March</p> <p>ACB mentioned that the Safe Durham Partnership (SDP) are refreshing the SDP plan and are working with DCC office and Crime Commissioners Office and are looking to hold an event on 4th May. ACB agreed to circulate this information to Partners once agreed. AG mentioned that Andrew Woodward, who is the Policy and Commissioning Officer in the Police, and Crime Commissioner’s Office is a Board member of DBG, and would be happy to promote the event on 4th May</p>		

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		<p>TH confirmed that a group of universities, including Durham, are working together to develop a partnership approach to achieving net zero emissions, and that he would provide CDEP with further information in due course if appropriate. He also advised that, as part of internal staff changes within Durham University, Richard Baker (ex of the NELEP) would be joining the University staff and may attend future Board meetings in his place</p> <p>KB mentioned that the Rural Communities in Northumberland, Cumbria, and Durham have been awarded £1.5 million by The National Lottery Community Fund, the largest funder of community activity in the UK, to improve Village Halls and similar community spaces, making sure they are fit for a sustainable future. The funding has been awarded to the Community Spaces Partnership which is made up of Community Action Northumberland, Action with Communities in Cumbria, and Durham Community Action. The 3 charities had successfully piloted working directly with Village Halls and communities across the three counties and have been awarded £1,510,000 from The National Lottery Community Fund to now work together with rural communities and village halls across the region.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACB to circulate details of event on 4th May • TH my come back to CDEP Board for support on NetZero emissions 	<p>ACB TH</p>	
9.	Any Other Business	GL thanked everyone for attending today		
	Date and time of Next Meeting	14th June 2023 @ 10am Venue TBC		