

Meeting: County Durham Economic Partnership Board

Date & Time: 14th June 2023 at 10am

Venue: Conference Room 4B County Hall, Durham/hybrid via Teams



Better for everyone

Present:	Name	Organisation/Pillar Rep
	Glyn Llewellyn (GL)	Chair
	Ailsa Anderson (AA)	Engineering & Manufacturing Network
	Alan Smith (AS)	Believe Housing (lead for Inclusive Growth)
	Andy Kerr (AK)	Durham County Council
	Duncan Peake (DP)	Raby Estates
	Alison Clarke (AC)	Culture Sport & Tourism
	Sue Parkinson (SP)	CDEP Vice Chair
	Claire Williams (CW)	Funding & Programmes DCC
	Richard Baker (RB)	Durham University (lead for Innovation)
	Glenn Martin (GM)	DCC
	Dinah Jackson (DJ)	Rural Design Centre
	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)
	Kate Burrows (KB)	Durham Community Action (VCS Voice)
	Sarah Slaven (SS)	Business Durham (lead for Business Competitiveness)
	Alison Gittins (AG)	Durham Business Group
Apologies:		

	Amy Harhoff	Durham County Council
	Andy Bailey	Durham County Council
	Reshma Begum	Federation of Small Business
	Cllr Elizabeth Scott	Durham County Council
	Paul Marsden	Head of the Association of Secondary Schools

Item No.	Subject	Discussion and Decision	Lead Officer(s)	Timescale
1.	Welcome to new members - Chair	<p>GL welcomed everyone to the meeting, and initiated round table/screen introductions</p> <p>He gave a special welcome to new members of the Board and mentioned that the next two years will be quite a challenging time in relation to growth in the economy. He referenced that this would require looking at new ways of doing things; that is the purpose of the Inclusive Economic Strategy (IES) and we have plans in development in the shape of the IES Delivery Plan. However, there is a lot to do so good communication will be essential; in particular businesses need to understand what we are aiming to achieve. He finished by saying that he expect that all board members will take on responsibility to achieve the required results.</p> <p>GL thanked Bill Fullen who had retired and Tim Hammond who had stepped down from the Board.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GL to write to Bill Fullen and Tim Hammond to thank them for work over years as Board members <p>ABro listed the apologies.</p>	GL	
2.	Minutes of the meetings: 8th February 2023	The Minutes from the meetings of 8th February 2023 were agreed as a true record of the meeting		
3.	Matters Arising	There were no matters arising.		

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4.	Inclusive Economic Strategy - presentation	<p>AK gave a brief introduction and discussed the presentation.</p> <p>The Council approved the IES in December, once it had been approved by the CDEP Board. The CDEP has been integral in shaping the Strategy and will be held to account when going into the delivery phase, which will be used to define the economy of County Durham.</p> <p>He discussed the Delivery Framework – The 5 “P’s”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People • Productivity • Places • Promotion • Planet <p>AK advised that he had brought this to the Board today to present the emerging actions of the delivery plan and gain their endorsement or otherwise on the direction it was taking. He reminded the Board that, since February we have started to form working groups, with each working group looking at what will be in the delivery plan. He then handed over to each lead to give a brief overview of progress to date.</p> <p><i>SS updated on Productivity</i></p> <p>There have been two full meetings of the productivity workstream, with members having taken actions away to work on outside those meetings. Further meetings are planned - certainly until end August and possibly beyond as we develop that work. Whilst the delivery plan will capture existing activity, it is more important that it focusses on new partnership activity specifically designed to deliver the strategy in its early days. One of such key things in relation to the productivity strand is that we are just embarking on the new programmes of delivery using the UKSPF that reacts to the vision of the IES, providing excellent support for businesses and a growth package which has just been approved and that will be providing support to businesses to help them grow. Crucially, this programme draws on a number of partners working together.</p>		

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		<p>A similar approach is being taken to supporting business start up using UKSPF funding. We have been given piece of work to bring all enterprise and business support providers in the County together; this is working well, and we are establishing a new partnership delivery model to meet this ambition of the IES. The productivity workstream is also looking at how to encourage good working practices amongst Durham businesses, and we intend to establish a subgroup to explore further the opportunities and issues and how we take that forward.</p> <p>Finally, the workstream had good discussion to identify the opportunity economic sectors for the County and are looking at a new approach to targeting inward investment promotion.</p> <p>Questions/Comments RB mentioned one of the projects of the Productivity Group that Durham University is leading on is the In-Tune Programme which is involves all the Universities in the north east working together to on spin out and support, and will sit under this framework.</p> <p>GL felt he would like to explore whether the University could support the partnership in measuring the impact of the IES and RB mentioned that the University are refreshing their strategy so could look a logic model for doing this. DJ asked if she could work with RB on this</p> <p>KB asked if we could make sure that Start Up is included as we are looking at social enterprise as part of delivery. SS advised that NEEAL and Business Durham, who are leading on this work, will speak to KB to explore this further.</p> <p>DP endorsed the importance of partners being accountable for the delivery and success of the IES.</p> <p><i>AB – People</i> The Group have met twice in April and May. He referenced the change in Government guidance on the use of UKSPF, meaning that it is now available to</p>		

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		<p>support skills activity this year. The Progression and Learning Team at DCC have been proposed to be responsible for leading the development, management and delivery of the activity working with partners and sub-contractors. The activities and workstreams have been informed by stakeholder events. There has been an outline proposal received from the Progression and Learning team, and a further level of detail will be presented on activity, timescales and expected deliverables, which will be considered by CDEP's Technical Funding Group, after which delivery can commence.</p> <p>The Workstream is also considering a comprehensive digital inclusion programme, consideration is being given to how to unlock the funding available for apprenticeships, how SME's can take on apprentices and help deliver a new employment support offer which provides key workers to support vulnerable groups, those excluded from the Labour Market and those in insecure and low paid employment</p> <p><i>Questions/Comments</i> AK mentioned that one of the key things in the IES is being really clear about where the County's emerging sectors are and where good quality jobs will be so we can align skills and education of young people. In response to a direct question, it was confirmed that this would include skills for the visitor economy.</p> <p>AS advised that Housing Providers all have active employment teams and appropriate links need to be made with them.</p> <p>SS mentioned she had received information from Jim Cokill, Chair of Environment and Climate Change Partnership, relating to the requirement for talent/skills for biodiversity which had been fed into the people group</p> <p>The importance of having a comprehensive Vision for Volunteering clearly embedded in this work was emphasised.</p> <p>.</p>		

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		<p>AK – Place</p> <p>Reference was made to the fact that this is an area where there are already a significant number of programmes available to invest in places in County Durham, such as the £35m Towns and Villages Programme to support our businesses, develop community resilience and enhance the environment. He referenced the roll out of Place Labs and that plans were underway to develop Phase 3 of NETPark which will create jobs, including in supply chain. Finally, it was advised that an Investment Plan was in process of being developed for the County.</p> <p><i>Questions/Comments</i></p> <p>MC pointed to the increase in remote working which meant that people with appropriate skills may move from London and surrounding areas to places with a different quality of life, although they would not necessarily be the people filling the vacancies referenced.</p> <p>AK felt that it was obviously appropriate to acknowledge this, and that consideration would be needed to work out how best to harness this to the County's advantage. MC made it plain that actions needed to benefit everyone.</p> <p>SP concluded that this strategy was called Inclusive Economy Strategy for a reason, and reminded the Board that that is a point we need to bear in mind. Whilst inclusivity is sometimes taken as a proxy for supporting those furthest from the labour market, we should keep in mind that inclusivity means different groups of people in different situations.</p> <p>AC – Promotion</p> <p>AC discussed the Placelabs concept which had been piloted in the County and involved working through for people who wanted a creative hub, but doing so in such a way as local people self-define what they wanted for their area and what local people want to do. In terms of promotion, the 4 priorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand and Place Marketing • Inward Investment • Year-round visitor economy • Cultural and Creative infrastructure 		

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		<p>She advised that there had been two sessions with the group. The need for place brand and marketing came out strongly in the E-Conversation, and it was suggested that one of the things that held back progress was our ability to being able to talk confidently about place. She advised that there is a piece of work with Combined Authority to think about how the north east is portrayed and AC is working on that group to add expertise from County Durham to maximise the regional and county work, which has included both county and regional events and how best to promote regional attractiveness to an international market. This includes the need for a skills programme to develop the cultural and creative-sector workforce.</p> <p>RB – Innovation RB advised that Tim Hammond is leading the group which is looking at how innovation cross cuts the strategy and stressed the importance of innovation in achieving all of its aims.</p> <p><i>Questions/Comments</i></p> <p>DP felt that connections and cross cutting themes were important particularly around the green sector. He referenced what the University for example is doing around soil and the obvious links with the rural economy. He reminded the Board that those links could be missed if we don't have the right forum for making those connections, and pointed to the need to promote or enhance opportunities for making and reinforcing those connections, which is an important part of the Inclusive Economic Strategy.</p> <p>AA commented on apparent lack of activity to support STEM subjects, and reminded the Board that there is a widespread view that young people aren't aware of the future jobs market. She suggested that progress could be made by informing parents as they are one of the the biggest influencers of young people, and by encouraging more engagement between employers and the education system.</p>		

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		<p>GL replied to say that Paul Marsden who is the Chair of Association of Secondary School heads is on the Board although not here today, and he would have a vital role to play in this agenda.</p> <p>CW informed the Board that a sub group of the People working group has been formed to look at the development of an improved careers offer for County Durham.</p> <p>GM updated on Performance Management</p> <p>He set out the complexity of the picture relating to potential economic indicators and the need to be realistic about what could be measured which would relate to the ambitions of the IES. He pointed to the changing picture of data – citing new data from the Census, and the fact that some projections were rooted in lockdown which could skew the resulting picture.</p> <p>SP suggested that this is massive topic and the Board needed to dedicate more time to Performance Management</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABro will circulate the presentation • Productivity – DJ asked if she could work with RB on looking at model for measuring what University do • AC slide to be added into presentation – CW will send to AB 	<p>ABro DJ CW</p>	
5.	CDEP Communications - Chair	<p>GL referenced the paper he had circulated with the agenda entitled “CDEP Business Communications”. He advised that he had had some success in communicating information on the CDEP, and in particular on the IES, to individual businesses, and he proposed to maximise that by CDEP hosting a business conference. He sought</p>		

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		<p>the Board's view on the proposal and asked for representatives to support him with a working group to develop this. The Board endorsed this approach.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GL to develop a working group to look at setting up a business conference 	GL	
6.	UKSPF Technical Funding Group Update – Vice Chair	<p>SP informed the Board that the paper she circulated included government guidance for how UK Shared Prosperity Fund was to be delivered – it was allocated to accountable bodies (in this case DCC), but they were required to have a partnership to advise. To this end, a separate group (the CDEP Plus Board) had been set up which included all members of this Board as well as MPs for County Durham. CDEP+ had delegated responsibility for providing advice on strategic fit and value for money to the Technical Funding Group which is chaired by SP and an update on progress has been provided in the paper accompanying this agenda.</p>		
7.	Rural Issues (a) Community Research Network – Presentation	<p>DJ gave an update to the Board on Developing a Rural Durham Community Research Network, a report on which was circulated in advance of the meeting today</p> <p>There were questions as to how the CDEP Board might:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the collaboration by focusing in on specific <u>aspects of future network focus</u>, pointing the team to place-based aspects that the CRN could focus on within the topics of health and wellbeing, young people, and future services. • Guide the collaboration on the network's potential to inform rural county Durham's <u>inclusive economic interests</u>. 		

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise the collaboration on how we <u>position</u> the network so that knowledge produced by communities through new research activities can be used as a tool to inform future actions. • <u>Connect</u> the collaboration with organisations who could / should be part of the network. Who should we be talking to? • <u>Advocate</u> for the network and help the collaboration to <u>generate interest and support</u> through the sharing of information and key messaging. • <u>Guide</u> the collaboration, using the CDEP’s experience, on the range of actions and support that are necessary to “redress the research power imbalance”, including how we effectively support future community researchers. <p><i>Questions/Comments</i></p> <p>DP said he really enjoyed the presentation. He felt connectivity is one of the biggest challenges we face as a rural economy, and that the Board needs to be aware of the numerous hurdles and obstacles put in the way by BDUK. He advised that he has been trying to get broadband connections into Teesdale for 5 years, but has not been able to reach agreement with BDUK, so this is a real issue. He also pointed out that the planning system for small businesses in rural areas needed to be considered. He pointed to the substantial opportunities for the rural economy to contribute to the IES, not only contributing to decarbonisation but also creating sustainable ways for farming, and suggested that the Board needs to be aware of challenges around decarbonisation for many rural, off grid properties.</p> <p>AK felt there is real alignment with the Economic Strategy and place strand is right place to support this. As part of devolution, rural issues have their own strand which is being led by Northumberland Council, but Durham is of course represented on that, and he is feeding the emerging issues into the delivery. As part of the Devolution Deal there is a rural board to be formed, and it may be appropriate for that members of this Board to be represented, to ensure a strong voice for County Durham.</p> <p>KB advised that either she or DJ would be happy to speak individually to interested Board members.</p>		

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	<p data-bbox="253 683 483 783">(b) Understanding Rural Durham</p> <p data-bbox="253 906 539 1043">(c) Unlocking Rural Opportunities Defra Policy Paper</p>	<p data-bbox="577 236 1774 304">AS felt that it would be important to be prepared for the conclusions of this work, and DJ agreed to follow up this conversation with AS</p> <p data-bbox="577 347 689 376">Action:</p> <ul data-bbox="622 387 1675 496" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="622 387 1675 456">• If anyone would like to discuss community participating research, contact KB or DJ <li data-bbox="622 464 1648 496">• DJ to follow up conversation with AS on Research Development <p data-bbox="577 687 1301 716">A paper was circulated to the Board for information</p> <p data-bbox="577 906 1778 1161">GM mentioned that this was released in the last couple of days, and focuses on connectivity, homes, and energy in communities. It is a relatively short paper and contains a lot of information about current activity, but is relatively short on information about future plans. He referenced that the Government are pledging £7m for more rural solutions to broadband, but that there is very little dealing with deprivation in rural areas, including on transport, increasing affordable housing, and improving the electricity networks</p>	<p data-bbox="1832 384 1935 488">All DJ/AS</p>	
8.	Any Other Business	GL thanked everyone for contributing to a very informative meeting		
	Date and time of Next Meeting	To be confirmed		

