



MINUTES

Meeting	County Durham Economic Partnership Board
Date of Meeting	Monday 19 th May 2014
Time	13.00 – 15.00
Venue	NetPark Incubator Board Room

Attendees:

Brian Tanner	Chair
Sue Parkinson	Vice Chair & Chair of the Business, Enterprise & Skills Group
Cllr Eddie Tomlinson	Chair of Rural Working Group
Sarah Robson	Chair of the Housing Forum
Cllr Neil Foster	Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Regeneration, DCC
Simon Goon	Business Durham
Ian Thompson	Director of Regeneration and Economic Development, Strategy, Programmes & Performance, DCC
Andy Palmer	Federation of Small Businesses
Simon Hanson	County Durham Community Foundation
Barbara Gubbins	Chair of Durham City Board
Neil Graham	CPI
Arun Harish	Durham Business Group
Alison Gittins	Strategy & Partnerships, DCC
Tarryn Lloyd Payne	Strategy & Partnerships, DCC
Angela Brown	

1. Welcome

Brian Tanner welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies

Brian Manning	Esh Group
Ray Hudson	Durham University
Christine Yule	Durham Business Group
Paul Robson	Job Centre Plus
Geraldine Kay	Derwentside Homes
Melanie Sensicle	Visit County Durham
Roger Kelly	Chair of Cultural Partnership

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The actions were agreed as a true record

4. Matters Arising

There were no issues to raise

5. Supporting Investment in Co Durham; Business Durham – Simon Goon

Simon Goon gave a presentation to the Board in relation to supporting Investment in County Durham he reported that here in NETPark it is the only science park in the North East of England that has reached full capacity. Business Durham is the economic development company for County Durham, delivering the right environment for business and economic growth.

The 5 principles of Business Durham are:-

- Financial self-sustainability
- Develop effective and influential networks (Partnerships)
- Greater proactivity in business engagement, business support and inward investment
- Baseline economy and demonstrate progression towards positively impacting economy
- Implement improved internal systems

In summary Business Durham's aim is to help businesses locate, stay, grow and diversify in Durham.

Businesses need maximum opportunity to grow and thrive whether that is through supporting business competencies, sector development, investment, tackling premises and sites needs or supply chain development. Business Durham also helps support enterprise, business creation and stimulates entrepreneurship.

Simon highlighted key successes of Business Durham including; the involvement in Hitachi and its supply chain and developing opportunities at NETPark.

Questions

ET asked in relation to the NELEP how do you communicate with Teesside – SG mentioned they meet regularly with Neil Kendley and share information on the Hitachi chain and how they can develop relationships further to engage Darlington for the High Speed 2 rail. ET also mentioned that he was the Rural link for communication via the Rural Advisory Board.

BT – How can the CDEP support getting the message across to businesses and are businesses aware of what the offer is?

SG – We need to continue to build greater networks, create opportunities for businesses in Durham. It was felt that the partnership has a key role in raising this profile and promoting County Durham as a place to invest and to do business.

Action: Secretariat to circulate presentation

6. Shaping Capital Investment for County Durham – Andy Palmer

Andy presented to the Board in relation to capital investment. Building on the presentation from Ed Twiddy at the last Board meeting about the Strategy Economic Plan (SEP), there are key areas for investment in the County that needs to be optimised. These include A19/A1 growth corridors/ JEREMIE programme/Durham City and key business locations like Hitachi at Aycliffe Business Park & NETPark.

As part of the Local Growth Fund development process, County Durham has developed a number of proposals (public & private sector led). These investment proposals are for combination of loan and grant requests. Some of the main proposals include:

- Opening up site at Newton Park on Aycliffe Business Park– The plan is to open up and grow the supply chain for Hitachi.
- NETPark infrastructure development
- Beamish Museum
- Rural Programme
- Horden Railway Station & wider Transport schemes
- CPI Schemes

The Draft SEP was submitted to Government in March and following that further detailed project proposals have been submitted for LGF 2015/16.

NELEP are reviewing and prioritising proposals for project shortlists. Partners are working with NELEP to maximise opportunities for County Durham. All our proposals must support economic growth and job creation.

Action: AP to share draft SEP and once possible further details on LGF projects for 2015/16

NF said there had been difficulties with communication from Europe which is a disadvantage and does not help with planning our priority investments AP mentioned that timescales were optimistic on European side.

7. Building a ‘Thriving Durham City’ – Sarah Robson

Sarah gave a presentation to the Board, covering:-

- Planned work to promote Durham City
- Priorities over the next 3 years
- Alignment of strategies

SR highlighted the need to protect heritage we have, whilst promoting private sector development to help to stimulate further demand.

There is an emphasis on vitality of the City. We have already seen a lot of work going on and projects being developed in the city. We need to build on this. The public sector role is to act as the facilitator for all developments.

Some of the key developments are:-

Timeline 2014/15

- The Co Durham Plan Examination in Public, this is hoped to be adopted by 2015
- North Road Planning application to be submitted
- Potential marketing of Elvet Waterside

2015

- The County Durham Plan will be adopted
- Prepare Aykley Heads – Masterplan
- Redevelopment of Old Shire Hall
- Millburngate House Planning Application to be submitted

2016

- Commencement of strategic housing sites
- Opening of Freemans Reach
- Completion of new bus station and junction improvements

2017

- Construction of Western relief Roads
- Completion of SCOOT project
- Lumiere Festival

2018

- Opening of Western relief roads
- Pace private development clearly visible

2020

- DCC vacated Aykley Heads (This may happen before this date)

Action: SR to circulate plans to the Board

Questions

BT asked if there were plans for Northern Relief Road. It was confirmed that this would be 10-15 years down the line.

SH asked in regards to past and future consultation plans SR mentioned that over the last 3 years of developing the Co Durham Plan they had over 100 public events which outlined key parts of the proposals. Opportunities for consultation and engagement on individual aspects of the strategic programme for Durham City where further discussed.

Action: Secretariat to facilitate a meeting with SH to discuss these issues

NG felt that we need to change people's mind-set. The City does need to move forward and we have been given an opportunity by government departments to make the most of the city centre that we must harness. This is all positive and we need to make people aware so things can work together to grow the city of Durham.

8. Investing in Innovation & Business; CPI Case Study – Arun Harish

Arun gave a presentation to the group in relation to CPI, its growth plans and LGF projects.

He mentioned that CPI had grown substantially moving from a regional level to national player and is very proud of its achievements. It has been operating for 10years this year and now employs 220 people. It has worked with over 500 companies and is continuing to work in partnership.

The Two LGF projects discussed in more detail were;-

- National Centre for Healthcare (bio)Photonics (£18m) – NETPark
- Centre for Innovation in Formulation (£14.4m) - NETPark

Questions

The board discussed the opportunities for working across the two LEPs and how best to overcome concerns.

LEP's are working together with CPI to ensure that we make the most of the advantages.

9. County Durham European Investment Group – Sue Parkinson

National level – A National Partnership Agreement has been drafted and agreed to give an understanding between UK and commission. Arrangements for the Operational programme are still outstanding however; proposed frameworks for ESF and ERDF have been consulted on.

The board was reminded of County Durham has transitional status which means any money can only be spent in County Durham. As most people will be aware we are currently working on pipeline projects, this is operating through our County Durham European Investment Group which covers leadership activity. These groups were agreed and set up with instruction from CDEP Board. The next meeting will be held 26th June where we will receive an update from each group. All European money comes with targets so it would be more efficient for us to start to look at further collaboration.

The second item on the agenda will be how European Investment at County level can work better with the NELEP to ensure our effective engagements and influencing.

AH asked who decides how money is spent? DCLG is the owner of the funds, however locally by the European Investment group we will determine our priority areas for investment and agree the types of activity we would like to see to achieve our outcomes. This will be done through collaboration with the NELEP. AP felt there may be a willingness to look at programme management for other transition regions (There are 11 in the country), SP stated we don't need to get too concerned on the business process until it all becomes clearer.

10. Partners and Working Group Chair updates

Sarah Robson – Housing Forum

The Housing Forum met in May and will meet again in July. Ivan Wood presented on the Police & Crime Bill. There was an update on Welfare Reform and HCA update. Providers are feeling the change in business model in relation to welfare reform. On the flip side providers have had best year which seemed encouraging.

Cllr Eddie Tomlinson – Rural Working Group

The Rural Working Group met on 24th April. There was an update on Defra from Claire Daly, Graham Black gave an update on rural proofing of the Co Durham Plan, Steve Robson from Enterprise Agency discussed REDO's and the work they had been doing, Tony Thompson gave an update on both rural and Durham broadband. The CLA are working with British Telecom and farmers are helping with digging in more remote areas.

Neil Graham – Durham City Board

There was a presentation at the last Durham City Board meeting on the review of the bus station. SR had covered other key projects in her presentation.

VCS – Barbara Gubbins

Voluntary Sector Strategy Group meets every few months. Jo Laverick DCA is launching Volunteer awards in June and the ceremony will take place in October at the Ramside. This will showcase the work of individual volunteers from across County Durham. Nominations for awards will open from 5th June – 25th July.

BG attended a presentation on Friday for national/regional funding for the voluntary sector. There is more opportunity for Durham to put in bids to lobby for national funding.

Garfield West Findings did a report on how North East is not getting their fair share. The feedback for this has been difficult to obtain. The office for civil society has launched a consultation on its forthcoming £40m Sustainability Fund on sustainability and Barbara will be attending a Big Lottery funding event with Joanna Laverick to continue support for Co Durham.

11. Any Other Business

SG mentioned that the Access to Finance guide is now online. If anyone would like a hard copy contact SG.

12. Date and Time of next meeting

28th July 2014 at 1pm