



County Durham
Economic Partnership

MINUTES

Meeting	County Durham Economic Partnership Board
Date of Meeting	Tuesday 3 rd November 2015
Time	13.00 – 15.00
Venue	Netpark Incubator Boardroom

Attendees:

Brian Tanner	Chair
Cllr Eddie Tomlinson	Chair of Rural Working Group
Cllr Neil Foster	Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Regeneration, DCC
Jon Gluyas	Durham University
Tarryn Lloyd Payne	Strategy & Partnerships, DCC
Ian Thompson	Director of Regeneration and Economic Development, Strategy, Programmes & Performance, DCC
Andy Palmer	Job Centre Plus
Carol Daniell	Chair of the BES Group
Sue Parkinson	Strategy & Partnerships, DCC
Angela Brown	Business Durham
Simon Goon	CPI
Arun Harish	DCC
Stephen Tracey	Derwentside Homes
Geraldine Kay	Chair of Durham City Board
Neil Graham	

1. Welcome

BT welcomed everyone to the meeting. He thanked Stephen Tracey for attending. Stephen's presentation was the main focus of the meeting. He also welcomed Arun Harish from CPI who is now a member of the CDEP Board.

2. Apologies

Edward Twiddy	Atom Bank
Simon Hanson	FSB
Stephen Howell	Head of Sport & Leisure, DCC
Michelle Gorman	Visit County Durham
John Ainsley	Durham Business Club
Sue Soroczan	Job Centre Plus
Sarah Robson	Chair of the Housing Forum
Barbara Gubbins	County Durham Community Foundation

3. Minutes of the last meeting

These were agreed as a true record

4. Matters Arising

Action from Item 9 CDEP Chair appointment – This was approved and BT has been re-appointed as Chair.

5. Progress against Economic Measures; Stephen Tracey

ST gave a presentation to the Board on progress against economic measures. In economic terms the purpose of the report is to explain where we are, where we are going and how we get there. ST informed the board that this work had been developed with the CDEP Data Management Group and would be giving an overview on measures of success and explaining each one with a focus being on the employment rate.

ST explained that not all performance targets are used as reflection of the overall economic climate. Key highlights from the report included;

- Big changes have happened as a result of the recession in County Durham where there have been large job losses.
- There was a steady growth nationally in employment rates after the recession. 2006/2007 saw positive impact on rates.
- GVA has grown over 50% higher than the average national value, the 3rd highest in England. This aside, GVA is still very low.
- More results for GVA are expected in January which will tell more about the success of economy over the past year.
- Business Growth since 2007 has seen virtually no growth. We have a low number of businesses.
- Gross House Disposable Income – The latest data show we are not far off the national rate.
- Deprivation – The latest data were released 30th September and indicated that use is whether it's local area (SOA) is in the top 20% deprived in employment domain

The board discussed areas of positive growth in the economy. Clear patterns of local regeneration (Seaham) were highlighted as areas of success. However, the wider connection to employment and market demand were highlighted as areas where development in place would not necessarily lead to local regeneration by itself and further supported the need for wider business and people-led economic development and regeneration.

The board further discussed the wider implications of understanding the presented statistics. Clearly further work would be needed to understand the implications and similarities between pre-recession "peaks" and current areas of need and opportunity.

Further discussion focused on the implications and understanding behind the changing patterns in deprivation. Population change between two census periods show pockets of growth across the County. Changes of deprivation are difficult to measure as people moved more into some areas. The Working age of population is 16-64 in some areas and there are 60% of people in these areas not in employment.

In summary the following messages were relayed in terms of the CDEP Measures of success;

Employment Rate

- Rates recovered but still some way to go to reach pre-recession peak (or 73% target)
- The recession (and recovery) affected different groups in different ways.
- More to understand about employment and links with disability

GVA

- Low GVA compared to regional/national levels
- Latest annual growth very strong.

Business Growth

- Low number of business compared to national/regional rate and very little growth

GDHI

- Disposable income not far from regional target but long term trends indicate a widening trend

Deprivation

- 150 LSOAs employment deprived as of 2015 ID
- Concentration of employment deprivation remain in many major population centres

BT thanked ST for his very detailed presentation and report. It was further agreed that the key messages from this work would inform the next stage of the Regeneration Statement Review.

Action: The Board agreed to note and agree the key measures subject to further interpretation through the Data Management Group and Working Group Chairs.

6. County Durham Regeneration Statement Review – Andy Palmer

AP discussed the County Durham Regeneration Statement Review Progress Report. He mentioned that the Regeneration Statement was first written in 2009/10. The key narrative explains what we are doing and why we are doing it. At the meeting in July the Board it was agreed that there would be a review of the current document which was produced in 2012.

AP discussed the key areas highlighted by partners during the review;

- Need a positive, succinct and shorter statement
- Established and recognised at the local level – has a variety of uses and purposes, but need to strengthen its influence and outward looking messages
- Should continue to provide a vision and ambitions for the County – setting the direction for the partnership, but need to strengthen its economic narrative, expected measures of success and objectives
- Existing five measures of success will need reviewing and should continue to be embedded within the Statement and form objectives that drive priorities and activity
- It needs to continue to set the direction for the CDEP and provide the narrative for the County Durham Plan and other partnership strategies and plans

- Recognise the value of the existing five ambitions of Thriving Durham City, Vibrant and Successful Towns, Competitive and Successful People, Sustainable Neighbourhoods and Rural Communities and Top Location for Business. However, we need to ensure their fit is reviewed and place more emphasis upon measurable objectives
- Stronger role for transport and infrastructure
- Need to be clear about priority actions, investment and expected performance of the partnership

AP informed the Board that there would be a draft outline statement presented at the next Board meeting in February

BT made note to the recommendations for the Board to support which were;

- a) Support the approach outlined for the review**
- b) Consider and nominate wider partner involvement through the Working Group Chairs**

The Board endorsed the recommendations

7. North East Devolution Agreement – Ian Thompson

IT gave a presentation to the Board on the Devolution Agreement for the North East. Key areas highlighted included;

- National Context; Devolution Journey
- National Picture
- Key asks for the North East
- The NECA ambition
- Developments to date
- Statement of Intent
- The Devolution Agreement

NECA have been meeting for two years now and all seven local authorities all share the vision for NELEP to create more and better jobs. He discussed the statement of intent which is 'what we've asked for' and informed the Board of the next steps:-

- Business and stakeholder engagement
 - Theme based discussions in November and December
- Public Consultation
 - Events across the NECA area in November
- Durham Event 9th November 6-8pm County Hall
- Spending Review announced 25th November
- Developing an implementation Plan - Including governance and resourcing arrangements

Questions

The board discussed wider plans for consultation. Of particular focus were plans for a "poll" in County Durham. The board discussed possible impacts and risks associated with both a Yes and No feedback from a Poll. Overall, the board felt that it did feel like the right thing to do and was a positive step in supporting local democracy. Current polling question are being developed by Durham County Council with support from Durham University.

The board further asked if there would be a plan for business consultation. IT informed the board that Business Durham is forming a business consultation plan.

IT further reminded the board that the process was still underway and subject to the Comprehensive Spending Review and other political and implementation considerations.

BT thanked IT for his presentation.

8. County Durham Plan update – Andy Palmer

AP gave an update on the County Durham Plan from the report which Mike Allum had written in relation to current position of the plan. He discussed the background, current position and next steps.

As part of the agreement reached with DCLG and endorsed by the Court the County Durham Plan was withdrawn to allow it to be refreshed and updated before being submitted again for examination by a new Inspector. The key areas of work to make these changes will include;

- Economic, population and household forecasting
- Housing Market Assessment
- Employment Land Review
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
- Sustainable Transport Strategy for Durham City
- Local Plan and CIL Viability
- Retail Needs Assessment

Planning are hoping to have the new draft approved by Cabinet and out to consultation early in the New Year, hopefully look to submit for examination in late spring/early summer.

Action: BT concluded that the recommendations of the report were for members of the Board to please note the latest position regarding progress of the County Durham Plan.

9. EU Funding – Sue Parkinson

Changes are made on daily basis so SP decided it would be more beneficial to give broad overview as opposed to a formal presentation.

- The current position is that we now have an operational programme but until we have the ERDF funding streams signed off then there is very little we can do. We are starting to see issues with output targets.
- Don't have all the definitions as yet which make calls for proposals of what people would like to spend money on very difficult without any definitions.
- The exchange rate – The UK allocation is in Euros but we are to spend it in pounds. The allocation will be revalued on a regular basis but we have currently lost already around 20% of the allocation across the board.
- Cuts are presently ongoing. ESIF Committee has asked for refresh of the strategy around how we spend money. This is taking place. The managing authority has been told indicative figures.
- Governance arrangements have vastly improved with NELEP which has had a change in Officers. The CDEP is part of the ESIF Committee and

continues to be represented by SP. The managing authority has set up the ESIF review sub group on which SP is representative for Durham. Durham is now engaged and listened to.

- It was agreed to revisit the Durham Investment Plan in the New Year to ensure alignment with the wider North East Investment Plan.

10. Partner and Working Group Updates

BT welcomed the Working Group Board Update report and invited the chairs to provide any further comments:

Neil Graham – Durham City Board

- There are issues at the moment as to where resources will come from to tackle the current issues. Continued innovative solutions will be needed to tackle very real challenges.

Sue Parkinson – Business, Enterprise & Skills

- SP has been approached from Gateshead Council to see if they can sit in on one of our Partnership meetings to see how we 'do partnership'. Therefore it was agreed that they can attend the next BES meeting in November.

Geraldine Kay – Housing

- Housing appears to be taking a 'battering' at the moment with regards to Government Policy. The new housing bill is controversial. There is a lot of uncertainty with regard to the future. An example of this is the announcement that Gentoo is to lose 300 jobs.
- Social Housing group is currently looking at ways to fill gaps with regards to affordable housing as this always requires help.

BT welcomed any updates from partners

Jon Gluyas – Durham University

- JG attended a meeting with N8 group in Leeds last Wednesday. The group has links with Northern Powerhouse/People at Westminster. JG will put a note together to circulate to the Board.

Carol Daniell – Job Centre Plus

- At the last meeting it was reported that Universal Credit had been rolled out. This went very smoothly. To date there have been 450 claims taken so far in Durham Local Authority Sites. All sites are coping very well with no reported issues.

Barbara Gubbins – VCS

Barbara was not in attendance at the meeting but sent update which BT read to the Board

Durham Community Action held a very successful event at Hardwick Hall to recognise volunteers after receiving a large number of nominations.

Phil Wilson held a very well attended Voluntary and Community Sector networking event recently in partnership with a number of voluntary sector support organisations. The feedback identified a number of areas where community groups need support including:

- Completing application forms
- Understanding how to treat Reserves and liabilities
- Trusteeship – expertise on governance etc.

Phil is going to share best practice with other MPs in the area and suggest similar events are carried out in their constituencies.

County Durham Community Foundation is currently delivering Learning Working Earning in East Durham for 16-25 year olds to support apprenticeships and work-based learning opportunities thanks to a national funder. An announcement is being made this week.

11. Any Other Business

Nothing was raised.

12. Date and Time of next meeting

Tuesday 2nd February 2015, Durham University