



# Greater Lincolnshire LEP Board

31<sup>st</sup> January 2020

Roythornes Solicitors, Enterprise Way,  
Pinchbeck, Spalding, Lincs, PE11 3YR

Minutes

**Present: Board Directors:** Pat Doody (Interim Chair & Nat West, Chair of ESC), Alric Blake (All Tech), Cllr Craig Leyland (ELDC), Cllr Rob Waltham (NLC), Chris Baron (Butlines, Skegness & Chair of VE Committee), Dean Fathers (Health & Diversity Champion), Gary Headland (Lincs Chamber & IoD), Nick Worboys (Longhurst), Sarah Louise Fairburn (L J Fairburn & Sons Ltd and Food Board Chair), Zoe King (Epix Media & Digital Lead & SME Champion).

**Observers:** Stephen Fidler (DfT & GLLEP Senior Sponsor), Pete Holmes (BEIS CLG), Helen Briggs (Rutland CC CX), Andy Gutherson (LCC), Anna Graves (SHDC CX), Lord Gary Porter (Leader SHDC), Cllr Nick Worth (SHDC), Michelle Sacks (BBC DCX).

**Apologies:** Cllr Colin Davie (LCC), Mary Stuart (UoL), Cllr Philip Jackson (NELC), Andrew Crookham (S151 Officer LCC), Cllr Ric Metcalfe (CoL), Debbie Barnes (LCC), Simon Green (NLC)

**LEP Executive:** Ruth Carver (CX), Kate Storey (PM), Sue Groves (Note Taker), James Baty (PRM).

**Apologies and Declarations of Interest -** Apologies were noted from Cllr Colin Davie, Cllr Ric Metcalfe Cllr Phillip Jackson, Mary Stuart, Andrew Crookham, Debbie Barnes (Andy Gutherson in attendance).

Full declarations of interest for each individual Board Director can be found at:

<https://www.greaterlincolnshirelep.co.uk/about/boards/>

The LEP Board were reminded that declarations of interest are required as part of LEP governance and must be updated at least annually, and if anything changes to the LEP office at the earliest convenience.

### **Minutes & Matters Arising (Paper 1)**

The minutes from the Board meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2019 were accepted as a true record.

#### **Outstanding Action:**

- Lead Flood Officer - Outstanding action from each Unitary to send Lead Flood Officer to Peter Holmes at BEIS. ACTION AG, RW and PJ.

#### **Matters Arising :**

- Freeports - An update on the current position on freeports was given interest from North and North East Lincolnshire and Boston. Consultation expected soon, and government understand the aspiration of Greater Lincolnshire in this area.
- DF informed the board of a planned meeting with Lord Patel, and asked for an update on our digital activity. RC updated the board that since the last meeting, where Zoe Easey presented to the board the activity she had taken forward, Mosaic (digital hub) in Lincoln had opened, and a Digital Hub Director started. The board discussed the importance of digital business and skills to uplift the economy across all sectors, especially in areas such as health and visitor economy.
- An verbal update on the Chair and NED recruitment was given by the Interim Chair and the Chairs Appointments Panel. Interviews are confirmed for 12<sup>th</sup> February.
- Decision Log was noted - Add "Completion of Diversity Forms" to the Actions log.
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#### **Actions**

- ❖ RC to send briefing to DF on Digital Skills and business support activity
- ❖ Board Directors were asked to complete the diversity questionnaire
- ❖ Amend the forward plan to include Health Sector, and Diversity/succession planning discussion.

## LEP Chair & Chief Executive's Report (Paper 2)

The Interim Chair updated the Board on meetings he had since the last meeting, and the CX highlighted a few areas in the CX quarter 3 report.

CX sought a board decision on the outstanding monies owed to the LEP as a result of a legal challenge. The Board agreed to the revised proposal being submitted for consideration.

### Progress on Enterprise Co-ordinators Programme

- 40 schools have so far signed up
- 26 are actively working with Business Advisers
- 4 schools in Rutland are to join the programme
- Board members reminded that they "Can give an hour" by going to schools or organisations to give advice students
- AG SHDC asked how many schools had subscribed to this programme in the south of the county and where there are gaps - RC to supply details

### Local Industrial Strategy

- In December, received positive feedback from the LIS Team, but more work is needed on specific areas, ie, Defence, productivity. Work is ongoing which will include Government priorities.
- Next Steps - Minister are still enthusiastic regarding Local Industrial Strategies and publication of some are imminent.
- For Greater Lincolnshire, the LIS is in a positive advance state and will need Government to take forward, which means it could be published in the near future.
- SF stated that the LIS is well placed, with a focus on local plans and local places.
- Humber LEP will be publishing their LIS in the near future, so the GLLEP LIS needs to be accelerated as soon as possible.
- CL had recently met with local MPs who need a better understanding of the LIS and borders (geography). Response that LIS has been written on the current geography of GLLEP.
- RW had recently met with Humber MPs in London and suggested that all the local political leaders should meet up to discuss devolution and show the Government that Greater Lincolnshire works as it is currently, not wait for a white paper to be announced.

### Actions

- ❖ Agreed to accept a smaller amount from SUFC regarding legal costs.

## **Greater Lincolnshire LEP Finances 2019/20 (Paper 2.1)**

Further to the discussions earlier in the year, and the realignment of the budget in October 2019, the budget is on track, but is now not delivering all of the elements within the Delivery Plan.

## **Greater Lincolnshire LEP Growth Deal Update Report (Paper 2.2)**

Contents of paper noted, and progress in particular against the 100% commitment level were recognised.

## **Greater Lincolnshire Agri-Food Industry Agenda for Growth (Item 3) - Presentation by Martin Collison & Sarah Louise Fairburn**

- The Sector Plan was launched in 2014 with the ambition to double GVA of the GLLEP food chain. This was updated in 2017 for Brexit, National Living Wage, Technology.
- The LIS "Future Proofing the Agri-Food Industry" has five priority areas:
  - Skills
  - Innovation
  - Adoption of Technology
  - Trade

- Provision of Commercial Space
- The food industry tends to work in clusters where 24% of employment is in the food chain to the factory gate, compared to 4% nationally.
- Clusters have grown since 2014 with Grimsby & the Humber having 65+ companies in the fish sector, arable and poultry (producing 12% of England's wheat and 18.5% of poultry meat production), with South Lincolnshire's fresh produce and processing. In December 2019, 3,500 lorries left South Lincolnshire each day.
- All major themes in the LIS are aligned with agri-food.
- Agri-Food Tech Trends: areas where agri-food is concentrated have seen this sector grow the fastest.
- UK Food Consumption Trends - Trade outside the home is slowing the fastest.
- Global Food Sector Trends - Population growth, climate change creating major challenges on water supply and food - 5 times the car sector.
- What do consumers care about? - food miles, animal welfare, waste, salt, fat and sugar in food.
- GLLEP Agri-Food Tech:
  - Lincoln AgriRobotics £6.3m to transform Riseholme and new professional teams
  - World's first Doctoral Training Centre for Agri-Robotics £6.6m
  - Multiple digital agri-food projects with industry, UK and international funding.
  - Largest European centre for agri-robotics, expect to be the World's largest in 2020.
- Policy Environment for Agri-Food - there is a potential for more exports and to reduce the 46% of food imported.
- Conclusions on the Potential:
  - The food sector is growing in the UK and even faster globally
  - Our food clusters are 10 times as concentrated as nationally and growing faster
  - Labour, automation and digital transformation of the food chain
  - Consumer demand for sustainability, health and convenience
- Food Enterprise Zones:
  - Europarc is still growing with more units being required
  - Hemswell Cliff
  - Holbeach - Businesses want this area to continue to grow and to embrace all technology/skills to drive it forward
- Technology Clusters & Skills - further investment is needed to ensure we stay at the forefront of agri-food technology. The University is a national leader, but could do more with additional resources.
- Manage Post Brexit Transition - there will be major changes to agricultural payments by 2028 - need to make a case for future funding being invested in Greater Lincolnshire.
- Sector Leadership - the Food Committee is 20+ leaders of major food companies with an annual meeting in London with MPs and Lords. The Food Committee needs to be rationalised and meet more often.
  - Agreed it is difficult to get business leaders to get together and make then understand that they will make a difference, but their knowledge and input to make decisions is needed.
- Regional Leadership - Already in discussions with other LEPs (New Anglia and Humber) and Midlands Connect who want to work with Greater Lincolnshire.
- Game Changing Investments - need to be able to attract investment into Greater Lincolnshire rather than to other countries.
- Greenports - the Dutch have 1-3,000 acre glasshouse zones which are adjacent to food processing, supply chain, technology and skills. They have central logistics, ie, energy, utilities etc, and some close to ports. They typically support 5,000+ high paid jobs, some double this. The UK imports 80+ glasshouse crops and the largest glasshouse in the UK is in Spalding (75 acres). The Humber LEP is very interested in this and Anglian Water is investing venture capital in glasshouse sites in Norfolk and Suffolk.

## Comments

- Need to be clear with needs to Government.
- LIAT has been going for 4 years, but need to promote itself more, although major retailers in Lincolnshire are aware.
- Academia is supported by the LEP, but how do businesses get to know about what is happening.
- Suggested that the Health & Care Enterprise Committee have a joint meeting with the Food Committee.
- Company that has basic automation may move away from Greater Lincolnshire due to a skills shortage.
- Robotics - MC is discussing with banks to ensure that they understand the requirements of companies asking for assistance.
- SLF has seen presentations put forward by companies for funding and was disappointed, stating that it is an aggressive market and they need to improve. Asked if Growth Hub could assist companies on how to deal with major retailers.

## Actions

- ❖ Presentation to be circulated and an updated strategy and action plan developed to support the discussion.
- ❖ H and C and Food Boards holds a joint meeting to explore common areas

## **Lincolnshire Infrastructure Priorities (Papers 4 & 4.1) - James Baty**

Following the general election in December, Government has clearly stated that there will be a focus on development in the Midlands and the North going forward. Whilst the full extent and detail is not known until the Budget on the 11<sup>th</sup> March, the language and focus from Government presents an opportunity for Greater Lincolnshire to push forward with its near term infrastructure priorities, as well as presenting strong cases for longer term transformational infrastructure.

During 2019, two major strategies were in development relating to the overall direction and vision for Greater Lincolnshire. The Local Industrial Strategy seeks to set out commitments between Greater Lincolnshire and Government in order to boost productivity by focusing on particular drivers of the local economy; whilst the Planning for Growth (PfG) vision led by the Local Authorities served as a non-statutory spatial strategy developed by the local authorities within Greater Lincolnshire to maximise the spatial growth of the place through infrastructure led investment.

## Actions

- ❖ Submit a joint LEP/LA letter regarding infrastructure ask to Government before budget
- ❖ Ask all partners to seek MPs support to investment in major infrastructure.

## **LEP MP Engagement Plan Update (Paper 5) - James Baty**

This provided an update to the MP Engagement Plan which was taken the Board meeting in January 209 in light of the changes both to Board Members and MPs. The revised engagement plan was approved.

## **South Holland District Council (Item 6) - Presentation by Anna Graves and Cllr Nick Worth**

- There are more than 4,000 companies in SouthHolland, with 390 being established in 2017 and has the largest agri-food cluster in the UK.
- Key challenges are around workforce supply and remaining competitive economically with elsewhere in the UK. Some of the larger companies have been working on automation in order to keep competitive.
- South Holland District Council hold Business Breakfasts to which business are invited and encouraged to be proactive.
- South Holland District Council is an "Open for Business" Council and can approve planning to

delivery of projects in 12 months.

- South Holland District Council often work with authorities to the south and east on joint projects.
- They also have strong connections with the Netherlands (flower business), France and Italy. They are looking at the Netherlands at business/family levels.
- The key projects, economic priorities and opportunities are:
  - Food Enterprise Zone for technology, skills innovation and including business support for 50/60 small businesses.
  - Spalding Western Relief Road, which will prevent freight trains splitting the town in half and is also key to housing in Spalding and Holbeach.

**Close of meeting**

**Date of next meeting: 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 (venue to be confirmed)**