

Coast to Capital

Board Meeting

Wednesday 29 January 2020

North East Surrey College of Technology (NESCOT) Reigate Rd, Epsom

Meeting Minutes

Board Members: Tim Wates (TW) – Chair; Julie Kapsalis (JK) - Vice Chair; Jamie Arnell (JA); Mark Brunt (MB); Martin Harris (MH); Richard Hopkins (RH); Daniel Humphreys (DH); Amanda Jones (AJ); Colin Kemp (CK); Mike La Rooy (MLR); Paul Marshall (PM); Claire Mason (CM); Manju Shahul-Hameed (MS) – representing Tony Newman; Frances Rutter (FR); Jonathan Sharrock (JS); Adam Tickell (AT).

Attendees: Cavendish Elithorn (CE) – Department for Transport; Cath Goodall (CG) - Cities & Local Growth Unit, BEIS; Lisa Taylor (LT), Accountable Body, Croydon Council.

Coast to Capital attendees: Malcolm Brabon (MB); Kate Edwards (KE); Anthony Middleton (ALRM); Hazel Nicholmann (HN); Katie Nurcombe (KN); Kirsten Trussell (KT).

Part A items will be published. Part B items will also be published unless specified otherwise.

1. Introduction (Part A) – This item will be published

a) Welcome and apologies

TW welcomed Board members to the meeting and introduced Frances Rutter (Further Education Sector Director/Chief Executive and Principal of NESCOT) who gave an overview of the College. TW thanked Frances and her team for hosting the meeting.

Apologies were noted from Karen Dukes; David Joy; Rosaleen Liard; Tony Newman and Nancy Platts.

Paul Marshall was introduced as new Leader of West Sussex County Council, having replaced Louise Goldsmith, and gave a short introduction.

TW recognised Mike La Rooy's last meeting as Board member and would refer further to this at the end of the meeting.

b) Public Comments

None.

c) Minutes from last Meeting

Minutes of the October 2019 meeting were approved and the Matters Arising document was noted.

d) Declarations, Disclosures & Conflicts of Interest

TW read out the Conflicts of Interest statement (see Annex B). The following conflict was declared:

- DH in relation to the Decoy Farm project as part of Agenda item 5 (Local Growth Fund Consent Paper).

TW indicated that any other conflicts arising would be handled appropriately during the meeting.

e) Chairman's Committee Minutes (Part B)

The December 2019 Minutes were noted.

2. Chief Executive Report

JS summarised key LEP developments as outlined in the Report. The importance of furthering engagement with MPs was discussed post-Election. This included the recommendation for Local Authority leaders to have a single voice through the LEP and for the area to stay on radar. This had been similarly echoed by attendees of the Joint Committee at its meeting on 23 January who embraced a collective effort.

JK updated members on the progress being made on Diversity. This included initial outcomes of a Working Group, and a paper for the Board to consider at a future meeting. JK felt that the various initiatives had gone some way to raise awareness, but additional work was required.

JS emphasised the importance of the upcoming Annual Performance Review with Government, during which the LEP would be targeting an Exceptional rating in at least one area. The progress of two live complaints was noted. Members acknowledged the LEP's willingness to participate in any Local Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee as necessary.

JS summarised organisational developments as set out in the paper. Staff Handbook and Wellbeing initiatives were also welcomed.

JS updated members on project monitoring of the Local Growth Fund under the auspices of the Investment Committee, and felt confident that monies would be spent as planned.

JS explained that the Growing Places Fund Committee (GPFC) had been equally active. TW recognised the work of its Chair Karen Dukes, by way of her supreme effort to deliver the repayment of the Dearman loan in full against a backdrop of real uncertainty. Through Karen and Jamie Arnell's unique expertise they had protected the LEP's position which was a sizeable achievement. Special thanks would be passed on to Karen in person.

JS gave an overview of the Services team including the Coast to Capital Growth Hub, whereby BEIS had confirmed core funding for 2020/2021 at the previous level of £369,000. Members also noted the success of Growth Grant and Scale-Up Activities as defined in the report.

JS additionally summarised progress which was being made by the Enterprise Adviser Network and noted that funding levels for the academic year 2020/21 was yet to be confirmed.

3. Strategy

JS presented on the LEP's ongoing work to develop the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) proposals for negotiation with Government following an extensive engagement with Board members and wider stakeholders.

It was noted that the LEP would need to present a programme which addressed Government priorities, and demonstrated the level of innovation and business leadership expected. The programme should highlight benefits which were not solely dependent on public funds.

An evidence base had been produced which defined Coast to Capital as a large, diverse and complex economy, but where productivity was in decline and business growth stalling.

The Chair facilitated an informative discussion with Board members to help further define the LIS proposition. The Board endorsed the analysis and proposed approach to engagement with Government. The Board supported work to prepare business cases which would support Government investment in the region. It was agreed that further work would be required to develop a compelling overall message and selling point for the region, in order to influence Ministers. The Executive team should take this work forward as a priority, specifically through material to support engagement with Government and regional MPs over the coming months.

4. Governance

The Board was appraised of the various Governance recommendations as outlined in the papers and approved the following:

- 2020/21 Budget. (It was agreed that the term 'designated fund' should be used as opposed to 'deficit budget' – as to deliver the LIS, which was more positive terminology).
- The appointment of Kreston Reeves as new external Auditors for the LEP for a period of three years for the year ending 31 March 2020.
- The new Risk Policy.
- The composition of the Nominations Committee as part of recruitment for a

- new Chair (see further below).
- Appointment of Amanda Jones as Audit Committee Chair following Mike La Rooy's end of tenure, and for Mike La Rooy to become an independent member for continuity reasons.
- Appointment of Julie Kapsalis as Investment Committee Chair and Colin Kemp as Vice Chair.
- The updated Local Assurance Framework document for 2020 and accompanying Annexes.
- Process for consultation sign-off and for informing Board Directors they have been referenced in correspondence.

Additionally JS explained that the GPFC was seeking nominations for an additional member from the Local Authority Director composition given that there is currently only one member.

MH updated members on Chair Recruitment developments, including outcomes of the Recruitment Working Group which had been established to lead the agency search and to undertake the initial preparatory work for the Nominations Committee.

MH explained that Green Park had been selected as the recruitment agency following a formal tender process and a project initiation meeting had recently been held with them. Initial tasks would be to further develop the Job/Person Specifications and to produce an accurate Project Timeline.

Green Park would manage the recruitment process, but utilising networks was also a key driver. The agency would therefore be engaging fully with Board members on a one-to-one basis to help identify candidates. Board members were requested to allow flexibility in their diaries to engage with this process.

The Nominations Committee would now succeed the Working Group and will lead on the Chair selection process together with the agency.

5. Delivery

a) Local Growth Fund Consent Paper (*Part B – this item will be published*)

DH was conflicted and left the room.

JK updated the Board on the Decoy Farm project as part of Worthing Borough Council. Given the issues raised it was agreed that the funding decision would be deferred until the next Investment Committee meeting in March. The Board would be updated again at its meeting on 31 March.

DH re-joined the meeting.

The Board noted the remainder of the consent paper which included the decisions taken at the Investment Committee on 19 December.

6. Close (Part A)

TW paid a sincere and fulsome tribute to Mike La Rooy given his long and diligent service as Board member, having also served on multiple Committees including as Chair. MLR had become renowned for good governance and had helped to inspire confidence on this across the LEP.

There was no further business.

The next Board Meeting would take place on Tuesday 31 March at the Wates Offices in Leatherhead.

Annex A: Declarations, Disclosures & Conflicts of Interest Statement

'Can I ask members now to declare any interest they may have and to say which item or part of an item on the agenda the interest relates to. If a member realises a need to make any declaration later on during the meeting they may do so. If any member requires any assistance on how their interest affects their contribution to the meeting we will deal with it as the item arises. Are there any declarations please?'

Footnotes:

Confirmed minutes – approved by correspondence in April 2020 in the absence of a formal Board meeting due to COVID-19.20.