

Chair's Report

Report to the LEP Board, 18th September 2020
Report from Stephen Parnaby OBE – LEP Chair

1. Summary

- 1.1. This paper provides information on the activities that I have undertaken since the last Board meeting in July. We held an informal Board meeting on 20th August, at which the Board debated and discussed the decision reached by the four Unitary Authority leaders at their meeting on 12th August. At this Informal Board meeting, with three local authority present, I was asked by private sector members to return to the LA's to seek further discussions on the way forward. Discussions would particularly focus, in offering the option of providing support, through the current mechanism, during the transitional year of 2021/22. The Board believes that this approach would enable the smooth transition to a Hull and East Riding LEP, allow for programme completions, provide support to the developing construct on the Humber issues, and support the LA's as they develop their plans for combined authorities.
- 1.2. As per the Board's directive, I requested a meeting with LA Leaders to discuss this further and set it out in my letter, circulated to members. Unfortunately my request was not accepted and I now have access to the notes from the Unitary leaders meeting of 12th August which indicates support for a further discussion with the LEP Chair. My latest communication with the LA Leaders (circulated to the Board) emphasis that view.
- 1.3. Following the statement made in Hull Daily Mail on 20th August, stating the demise of the Humber LEP, I have received a number of concerns from stakeholders in particular the private sector which I will articulate at the meeting.
- 1.4. You will also recall that Simon Clarke made it clear that he expected a joint response agreed by all partners, on the way forward to him by 23rd Sept. Unfortunately, at the time of writing the report we do not have an agreed position, and this is regretful given the real opportunities that the region can deliver whilst focussing on economic recovery. I fear, unless there is further development we may need, as the LEP, to write back to the minister stating our position, and no doubt this will be supported by other stakeholders. With Simon Clarke stepping down, we will have to communicate with the new minister in charge of the portfolio, Luke Hall MP.

2. Activities undertaken

2.1. LEP

- Attended meeting Business Development Board
- Attended meeting Employment and Skills Board
- Attended Investment and Regulation Board
- Private Sector Meetings

- Informal LEP Board Meeting
- Several Freeports Meetings
- Regular meetings with Vice Chairs
- Contact with Board members as required

2.2 Support to the Chief Executive and LEP team

- Weekly meeting and other meetings required with Chief Executive
- Fortnightly meetings with Exec Directors
- Team meeting - LEP team.
- Regular meetings with PA to plan and organise future commitments

2.3 Local Authorities

- Meeting with LA leaders
- Attended a meeting of the JSU

2.4 National meetings

- Meeting with Secretary of State

2.5 Regional Meetings

- Attended meetings of NP11
- Attended meeting of Transport for the North Board
- Chair, GLEP

2.6 MPs

- Several conversations as required

2.7 Local Stakeholders

- Business Organisations
- Potential Major Investors
- CE Welcome to Yorkshire
- Individual Business Leaders

2.8 Business Organisations and Businesses

- CBI
- British Steel
- Anglian Water
- Meetings with Professional Services

Stephen Parnaby
11th September 2020