

North of Tyne Combined Authority, Cabinet

30 November 2021

(2.00 - 3.22 pm)

Meeting held: Committee Room, Civic Centre, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8QH

Minutes

Present:

Chair: Mayor J Driscoll

Councillors P Earley, N Forbes, K Kilgour, J Riddle and R Wearmouth and Ms L Winskell

Also: Mr R Fry (Observer)

43 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Johnson and G Sanderson and North Tyneside Council's Elected Mayor Redfearn.

44 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor J Riddle declared an interest in agenda item 13 (North East Local Enterprise Partnership – Funding Decisions Update) due to being a Director of Advance Northumberland. He remained at the meeting during the consideration of the agenda item and took part in the decision-making.

45 ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR AND/OR THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

The Mayor, on behalf of Cabinet, thanked all teams for their efforts to eliminate damage after the recent storm.

46 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 September 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

47 **ADULT EDUCATION BUDGET – FIRST YEAR UPDATE AND LOOK AHEAD TO YEAR TWO**

Submitted: A report of the Head of Inclusive Growth (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

The Cabinet considered the report which provided an update on the first academic year 2020-21 of the North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) devolved Adult Education Budget (AEB). The report set out the adult education opportunities that had been created for the NTCA residents during the first academic year and outlines next steps in terms of AEB delivery. The report was introduced by Councillor K Kilgour. She thanked L Mills and the team for their work.

L Mills delivered a Power Point presentation (copy of the slides are attached to Official Minutes) to support the report.

The Cabinet welcomed the report. Amongst the matters discussed at the meeting were:

- the success of the work to date;
- the value of the AEB devolution to the Combined Authority of enabling these outcomes;
- the successful outcomes of the programme of achieving improved skills and enabling employment;
- the scale of the work being carried out and the wide coverage area;
- the data set out in the report and the opportunity to analyse it further to explore trends and extract proportions;
- the continuing learning as the programme developed;
- the welcome outcome of the programme of enabling all providers within the coverage area to have access to funding;
- the welcome involvement of the hard-to-reach groups;
- the success of the collaborative approach to working, including a joined-up approach to enable quicker access to learning provision;
- the success in reducing waiting times for access of the provision of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), through an additional dedicated funding provided by central government for this work;
- the welcome engagement with various sectors, including the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE);
- the importance of appropriate leading time when engaging with the VCSE sector to allow capacity for an effective engagement;
- the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (North East LEP) offering to support this work;
- the value and opportunities for fine-tuning of this work for even closer matching employers' needs; and
- the importance of continuing this important work.

All teams involved in this programme were congratulated for their achievements.

RESOLVED – That:

- i. the progress which had been made in terms of Adult Education Budget (AEB) delivery for the first academic year (1 August 2020 to 31 July 2021) of devolution be noted; and

the approach to managing AEB delivery for the second academic year (1 August 2021 to 31 July 2022), as proposed in the report, be endorsed.

48 **FUTURE HIGH STREETS CHALLENGE**

Submitted: A joint report of the Director of Regeneration North Tyneside Council and Chief Economist (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

The Cabinet considered the report which invited it to support the work to transform historic town centres and high streets and allocate a ring-fenced “Future High Streets Challenge” technical capacity fund. The report was introduced by H Kippin, the Managing Director of the Combined Authority.

The Cabinet welcomed the report. Amongst the matters discussed by the Cabinet were the good progress achieved; the scale of work being carried out; the collaborative approach used and the involvement of a range of partners; the importance of readiness for the forthcoming funding opportunities; the importance of involvement of universities in the context of their student business start-ups; the welcomed maximised use of the devolved powers by the Combined Authority; and the endorsement of the proposed approach.

The Mayor, on behalf of Cabinet, thanked everyone involved in this work.

RESOLVED – That:

- i. The development and launch of the North of Tyne Future High Street Challenge, which would work with partners and local communities to develop new ways of working and unlock investment to transform our historic town centres and high streets, be supported.
- ii. An allocation of up to £500,000 from the North of Tyne Investment Fund to establish a Technical Capacity Fund, subject to the development of a business case, to support this work be agreed.
- iii. The Managing Director be authorised, in consultation with the Investment Panel, the Mayor and the Cabinet Member for Housing, Land and Development, to consider and approve the business case for the technical capacity fund; and authorised the Managing Director to agree how the Fund would be deployed and how the next steps of this project would be brought forward.

49 **INVESTMENT FUND UPDATE AND FUNDING APPROVALS**

Submitted: A report of the Chief Economist (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

The Cabinet considered the report which provided an update on progress with the North of Tyne Investment Fund, including the launch of the NTCA's flagship Green New Deal Fund, progress of the Access to Finance programme and an increase in the NTCA Events programme, to further support economic recovery. The report was introduced by Councillor P Earley.

The Cabinet welcomed the report. Amongst the matters discussed were:

- the amount of work being carried out;
- the scale of the progress achieved, and the impact made, despite the ongoing challenges;
- NTCA's work to create and safeguard jobs and opportunities;
- an unemployment rate for the NTCA area that was currently lower than its comparators, to which the NTCA work had made a contribution;
- the welcome launch of the Green New Deal Fund and the opportunities and innovation it represented for the NTCA area;
- the leading role of the Combined Authority within the Green Economy;
- the continuous work by NTCA to allocate funding it received to drive economic improvement for the area;
- the importance of continuing to work to create jobs and develop skills to match with the job opportunities;
- the importance of continuing to work collaboratively;
- the need to continue to support constituent councils and other partners' economic plans;
- the need to jointly support events to promote areas and bring visitors; and
- the importance of continuing to work to support the area's reputation of a great place to live and the "quality of life and quality of work" agenda.

Everyone involved in this work were thanked for their commitment and the progress achieved.

RESOLVED – That:

- i. The progress to date on the Investment Fund, achievement of key milestones and ongoing development work, particularly in respect of the creation of new jobs for residents as a direct result of the NTCA investments, be noted.
- ii. The launch of the Green New Deal Fund be noted.
- iii. The next steps for the £15m Access to Finance programme, including the objectives set out in the report and proposals to start formal engagement with potential delivery partners, be approved.
- iv. An additional funding of £1m for the North of Tyne Events Programme, to develop the pipeline for post 2023, establish an events' scale up programme and develop the existing pipeline to maintain pace. This would be implemented using the existing Events Programme arrangements, be approved.
- v. The Managing Director be authorised to finalise the conditions to be attached to the above funding award; and authorised the Interim Monitoring Officer to complete the necessary documentation.

50 **GOOD WORK PLEDGE – UPDATE AND NEXT STEPS**

Submitted: A report of the Head of Inclusive Growth (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

The Cabinet considered the report which outlined how NTCA had been working creatively to raise the profile of Good Work Pledge (GWP) amongst the region's businesses and their associated networks. The report also set out the next steps, including the creation of the "Good Work Community". The report was introduced by Councillor K Kilgour.

The Cabinet welcomed the report. Amongst the matters discussed were the value of the programme; the role of a positive and caring employment environment and good communication between the employer and employees; the impact of Coronavirus pandemic; the advantages and disadvantages of flexible working arrangements; plans to look closer at these impacts in due course; the changing labour market; and the encouragement of all employers to sign up to the Pledge.

Councillor K Kilgour and the Officer team were thanked for their commitment to this work and the achievements.

RESOLVED – That the progress made by the Good Work Pledge scheme in Year 1 be noted; and the plans for Year 2 be endorsed.

51 **2021/22 QUARTER 2 NTCA BUDGET MONITOR REPORT**

Submitted: A report of the Chief Finance Officer (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

The Cabinet considered the second quarter monitoring report on the 2021/22 financial position. The report brought together the forecasted financial position for the Corporate, Investment Fund, Brownfield Housing Fund and Adult Education budget and provided an indication of the potential position of the Combined Authority at 31 March 2022. It reflected a six-month detailed budget review undertaken for the Combined Authority and the potential position on reserves at the year end. The report also presented the Treasury Management Mid-Year Review up to and including 30 September 2021. The report was introduced by J Gillespie, Chief Finance Officer.

The Mayor, on behalf of Cabinet, thanked J Gillespie and the team for their work.

RESOLVED – That Cabinet noted the forecast budget monitoring position for the Combined Authority as set out in paragraphs 1.2 – 1.6 of the report and the reserves position as set out in paragraph 1.7 of the report.

52 **2022-2026 NTCA BUDGET PROPOSALS**

Submitted: A report of the Chief Finance Officer (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

The Cabinet considered the report which invited it to consider the initial draft budget for the North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) for 2022/23, and the medium-term financial plan for the period 2023/24 to 2025/26. The report outlined the draft budget in respect of the Corporate Budget, Investment Fund, Adult Education Budget and the new Brownfield Housing Fund. It also outlined the context within which the budget proposals had been prepared in relation to the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). The report included proposals for the North East LEP accountable body budget. The report was introduced by J Gillespie, Chief Finance Officer.

RESOLVED – That:

- i. Agreed the draft Corporate Budget for 2022/23 as set out in paragraph 2.1 of the report, which would then be subject to consultation with Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- ii. Agreed the draft Investment Fund as set out in paragraph 2.2 of the report, which would then be subject to consultation with Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- iii. Agreed the draft Adult Education Budget as set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report, which would then be subject to consultation with Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- iv. Agreed the Brownfield Land Programme Budget as set out in paragraph 2.4 of the report, which would then be subject to consultation with Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- v. Noted that the Tyne and Wear levies would be issued on the 15 February 2022.
- vi. Agreed to hold the reserves set out in paragraph 2.5 of the report and noted that the Chief Finance Officer continued to keep the level of resources under review as the Authority developed and new information became available about the financial risks facing authority arrangements for managing risks.
- vii. Noted the North East LEP Accountable Body Budget, paragraph 2.6 of the report.

53 NTCA BORROWING POWERS AND DEBT CAP AGREEMENT 2021-2022

Submitted: A report of the Chief Finance Officer (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

The Cabinet considered the report which sought approval for the necessary steps to acquire statutory borrowing powers for non-transport related functions. The report was introduced by J Gillespie, Chief Finance Officer.

RESOLVED – That:

- i. the completion of an agreement with central government as to the maximum borrowing permitted (debt cap) for 2021/22 of nil be authorised;

- ii. consent be given to the making of the necessary regulations by central government; and
- iii. the Managing Director, Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer be authorised, in consultation with the Mayor, to take all necessary steps to give effect to the recommendations above.

54 **IN-YEAR APPOINTMENTS TO THE HOUSING AND LAND BOARD**

Submitted: A report of the Monitoring Officer (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

The Cabinet considered the report which set out proposed in-year changes to the membership of the Housing and Land Board and also proposed that the power to agree future in-year changes to this Board be delegated to the Managing Director. The report was introduced by J Softly, the Monitoring Officer.

RESOLVED – That:

- i. The in-year appointments to the Housing and Land Board as set out in paragraph 1.1.2 of the report be agreed; and
- ii. Authority be delegated to the Managing Director, in consultation with the Housing and Land Board Chair (i.e. the Cabinet Member for Housing, Land and Development), to agree future in-year changes to the membership of the Housing and Land Board.

55 **IN YEAR APPOINTMENTS – CHAIR OF INCLUSIVE ECONOMY BOARD**

Submitted: A report of the Monitoring Officer (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

The Cabinet considered the report which recommended that Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson be appointed as Chair of the Inclusive Economy Board. The report was introduced by J Softly, the Monitoring Officer.

Thanks were offered to the Right Reverend Bishop Christine Hardman who had previously chaired the Board.

RESOLVED – That Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson be appointed as Chair of the Inclusive Economy Board.

The Mayor, on behalf of Cabinet, welcomed Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson to the North of Tyne Combined Authority.

56 **NORTH EAST LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP – FUNDING DECISIONS UPDATE**

Submitted: A report of the Chief Executive Officer of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes).

The Cabinet considered the report which provided an update on the work and decisions of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (North East LEP). It was confirmed that the report was no longer exempt from publication.

Councillor J Riddle declared an interest in this agenda item due to being a Director of Advance Northumberland. He remained at the meeting during the consideration of this agenda item and took part in the decision-making.

L Winskell of the North East LEP thanked Janice Gillespie, the Chief Finance Officer of the Combined Authority and the team for their continued support of the North East LEP.

RESOLVED – That the report, which provided information on the work and funding decisions of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (North East LEP) over the last four months, be noted.

57 **DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday, 25 January 2022 at 2pm.

The Mayor, on behalf of Cabinet, wished everyone a happy Christmas.