



North East Combined Authority

DURHAM • GATESHEAD • SOUTH TYNESIDE • SUNDERLAND

Economic Development Digital Advisory Board

Tuesday 24 March 2020 at 2.00pm

Meeting to be held at: Durham County Hall, Durham, DH1 5UL

www.northeastca.gov.uk

AGENDA

Page No

1. **Apologies for Absence (Members)**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Please remember to declare any personal interest where appropriate both verbally and by recording it on the relevant form (to be handed to the Strategy & Democratic Services Assistant). Please also remember to leave the meeting where any personal interest requires this.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 28 January 2020** 1-8

For approval as a correct record

4. **Progress Update** 9-18

5. **NECA Economic Plan Update** 19-22

6. **Date and Time of Next Meeting:** TBC

Contact Officer: Jonathan Lunness
Tel: 0191 4247536
Email: jonathan.lunness@northeastca.gov.uk

To All Members

Economic Development and Digital Advisory Board

28 January 2020
(2:00pm – 3.30pm)

Agenda Item 3

Meeting held: CR1, Sunderland Civic Centre, Burdon Road, Sunderland, SR2 7DN

Present:

Chair	Cllr G Miller
Councillors	M Brain, K Shaw, J Anglin
Co-opted Members	G Hall, S Hanson, A Westwood (Substitute)
Officers	P Melia, D Pattison, B Poulter, S Cuthbertson, A Mason, N Robason, J Lunness

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr I Malcolm, Cllr C Marshall, G Currey and Co-opted Members S Glendinning and B Farhat.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 NOVEMBER 2019

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 November 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

5 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND DIGITAL PROGRESS UPDATE**

Submitted: A report of the Thematic Lead for Economic Development and Digital (previously circulated and attached to Official Minutes).

The Advisory Board considered the report which provided an update on activity and progress under the Economic Development and Digital theme of the Combined Authority. D Pattison of Invest North East England (INEE) presented the report in the absence of G Currey.

During the presentation it was noted that:

- provisional figures up to Q3 indicate that in the NECA area there has been 18 FDI projects creating 415 new jobs and 5 UK projects creating 305 jobs
- provisional figures up to Q3 indicate that in the NELEP area there has been 35 FDI projects creating 1342 jobs and 17 UK projects creating 437 jobs
- examples of key inward investment successes in the NECA area include MAN Truck and Bus in the Team Valley as part of a £20 million investment scheme, as well as Nuby in South Tyneside and Ocado in The BEAM in Sunderland;
- INEE is leading on a number of significant enquiries, predominantly in Advanced Manufacturing, one of which is due to land in the North of Tyne Combined Authority (NoTCA) imminently;
- INEE is looking at their Marketing and Communications strategy moving forward in to the financial year 2020/21;
- INEE continues to support and attend a variety of events representing the region, including MIPIM UK Summit held in October 2019 (details attached in Appendix 1) and is considering attending again this year;
- upcoming events include the Shared Services Leaders' Summit being held in March 2020 and MIPIM Cannes being held in March 2020 which will involve the private sector and businesses;
- work on lead generation continues with INEE entering its second lead generation contract with OCO Global and a graduate intern whose role is to identify further leads in key sectors;
- INEE continues to manage the DIT Key Account Management Contract, working with the DIT for the North East

Members noted the updates in the report regarding the Local Industrial Strategy, European Structural and Investment Funds, the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Strength in Places Fund and on Brexit updates.

During discussion, Members raised the following points:

- Members queried whether it was possible to receive further analysis on the kinds of new jobs in the region, for example if they are high-skilled or permanent;
- it was noted that the LEP Board receives updates on the target to create 100,000 new and better jobs which would suggest the data is available;
- it was raised whether companies themselves know the breakdown of jobs and if this could be shared with Local Authorities, keeping in mind potential sensitivities for this information being in the public domain;
- Goldman Sachs is reportedly looking for a new office outside London to create a technology hub and it was stressed NECA and INEE should be considering this opportunity

The Chair and Members thanked D Pattison for the update.

The Chair also provided Members with an update on the progress of the EDDAB Review. It was noted that;

- the Chair will ensure that tangible and concrete outcomes are to be fed back to the NECA Leadership Board;
- the NECA Leadership Board will be asked to amend EDDAB's Terms of Reference at the NECA Leadership Board meeting being held 3 March 2020 to allow co-opted Members to nominate a substitute;
- an Annual Forward Plan and work programme will be introduced for the 20/21 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED – That:

- i. the report be noted;
- ii. the Chair will continue to feed the views and work of EDDAB back to the NECA Leadership Board.
- iii. D Pattison will look into the possibility of providing breakdowns of the types of jobs in future reports.

6 **DIGITAL UPDATE**

Submitted: A report of the Thematic Lead for Economic Development and Digital (previously circulated and attached to Official Minutes).

The Advisory Board received a presentation on the NECA Digital Agenda, exploring the practical implementation of digital initiatives in the area. Members were also invited to take part in a discussion.

The presentation was delivered by P Melia. The presentation focused on how Sunderland Council is delivering on the digital agenda and digital initiatives in the area. The presentation covered the followed areas:

- Digital Ambition of the City
- Dynamic, Healthy and Vibrant City
- Digital Initiatives and the planned Fibre Ring
- How to use new technology

It was noted during the presentation that:

- connectivity inside the North East region remains a real problem, for example getting from Southwick to the Nissan plant;
- digital connectivity drives the city and how we digitally connect will be important for the future, for example in digital and advanced manufacturing jobs;
- it is important children have good internet access, as this can affect their grades at school;
- there is a digital divide in the North East which needs broken down;
- to achieve ambitions and attract talent we need to embrace new technology and it is important to work with partners, businesses and universities in the region;
- Sunderland is taking a proactive approach, intervening in the market where necessary;
- Sunderland is planning to install a 26km fibre ring which would enable schools, health services and others to take advantage of the benefits;
- it is hoped by the Council taking the lead on the fibre ring it would encourage major businesses to build on the project, taking it into other residential or business areas;
- 6 business cases showcasing how to take advantage of the infrastructure including:
 - Sporting/Big Events: improving connectivity between the emergency services at The Airshow or providing a new user experience at football matches
 - Businesses: growing businesses to be digitally enabled and supporting new digitally enabled start ups
 - Smart Homes: if all homes were smart landlords, tenants and families would benefit
 - City Centre: digitally enabled city creates opportunities for creative and cultural businesses
 - Industry 4.0: digital manufacturing and more efficient supply chains
 - Learning: improving learning at both home and school and enabling learning at all ages
- Sunderland is the first city to build 5G in their city centre;

- areas benefitting from the 5G WiFi include the high streets, Hudson Road Primary School, communal rooms in tower blocks and there is demand for expanding, for example to the Bridges Shopping Centre.

During discussion after the presentation, the following points were raised:

- it may be useful to receive similar updates from other NECA Local Authorities to find out what they are doing regarding the digital agenda;
- the digital agenda is incredibly important as it impacts everyone including schools, residents, businesses and feeds in to the Local Industrial Strategy;
- it was noted that the NELEP's plan for 5G in the area appears to have been dropped from the agenda;
- it was noted that Sunderland achieved the progress so far on the digital agenda and 5G without support from central government;
- the Department for Culture, Media and Sport is now engaging more, although they remain committed to the 5G Urban Connected Communities Project;
- on a business level, a range of companies are engaging directly with Sunderland;
- it is important to keep in mind that that the NECA Economic Strategy is being developed which could contain parts of the digital agenda;
- it has been demonstrated that digital initiatives such as the fibre ring and 5G in Sunderland is practically workable and engages with schools and businesses

The Chair thanked P Melia for the update and presentation.

RESOLVED – That:

- i. the report and presentation be noted;
- ii. the Chair would will feed the information in the presentation regarding the Digital Update and initiatives in the area to the NECA Leadership Board.

7 **SKILLS UPDATE**

Submitted: A report of the Thematic Lead for Economic Development and Digital (previously circulated and attached to Official Minutes).

The Advisory Board considered the report and presentation delivered by B Poulter. The presentation provided an update and recap on the Skills

Agenda since the previous discussion by the Board at the Committee Meeting in September 2019 provided by G Wood.

The presentation provided information on the following:

- Current landscape of the skills agenda
- Different sectors
- Industry 4.0
- Strategic Economic Plan
- 2024 Vision
- Future Jobs
- Digital and Technology
- Skills for Jobs

During the presentation, it was noted that:

- the current landscape includes a decrease in Adult Education funding, the loss of ESF funding and a high level of the population in the region with low skill levels;
- the region is good at connecting with employers but there remains a lag between the skills required and the skills the workforce has;
- every workplace is relying on digital skills, not just the digital sector;
- the health and social sector still has difficulty retaining staff;
- there is ambition in the NECA strategy making it well placed to lead on Industry 4.0;
- from 2013-2019, 64,000 of jobs created in the area have fit in the 'Better Job' definition as laid out in the SEP;
- digital waits for nobody and the landscape is constantly changed;
- 2024 vision is to be an innovation hotspot;
- potential for 10,000 jobs in the automotive and advanced manufacturing sector for 2020-24;
- pharmaceutical sector has been strong in the North East, with over £1 billion GVA and most products exported;
- North East often described as a 'world leader' in the energy sector for offshore wind, predicated on the strong R&D and university base in the region;
- important to understand and address barriers to tackle the skills gap;
- need to build pathways from an earlier age to help young people get enthused about jobs in different sectors;
- current jobs will evolve and may not be available in the future, so it is necessary to reskill adults;
- Sunderland is having conversations with the Centre for Cities about the Skills Compact which focuses on bridging the skills divide;

- points emerging through the NECA Economic Strategy to be launched later this year, which will guide EDDAB's focus and work.

In discussion, the following points were raised by Members:

- it is important to recognise that there are a range of economic strategies in the area coming from NECA, NoTCA, and the LEP;
- whilst each party have different requirements, they must all complement the SEPs and LIS, on certain issues such as education, skills and transport it is important that there should be alignment which requires collaboration;
- the CBI is working on a platform for businesses which helps them engage with students and schools launching in April;
- the level by which skills impacts on attracting businesses to the region;
- the region has good skills in some sectors which attracts businesses, but struggles in other sectors such as digital, but this is an opportunity for the North East;
- businesses are attracted to the North East because the workforce is recognised as hardworking and sociable;
- issues such as transport connectivity, housing, infrastructure and wages are factors which discourage businesses from investing in the region;
- the success of schools is judged purely on grade outcomes, not about how well students leave prepared for work, which can cause a disconnect and the business community needs to be involved in tackling this;
- the first 1000 days of life can impact a child's prospects and opportunities, so this needs more investment;
- there is a lack of moderate to high-skilled amongst the North East workforce and there are still too many under-skilled people who need reskilled;
- if the region waits for the next wave of graduates to come into the workforce, rather than acting now to reskill and upskill workers then it will be damaging;
- the business community needs to invest more into their workforce;
- it is important to remember the national context, including a drop in business confidence due to Brexit;
- start-ups and entrepreneurs do not seem to be focussed on in regional strategies as a way to fill the skills gap;
- it is intended for businesses to feed in to the NECA EDs;
- the LEP had intended for a series of consultations on the LIS, however due to the Government deadlines this was not possible;

- NECA has written to the Government to outline its ambitions and how it wants to grow the NECA economy;
- NECA needs to remain a strong voice for the region, working collaboratively with partners to influence the government on issues such as the Adult Education Budget and the Government Budget

The Chair and Members thanked B Poulter for the presentation.

RESOLVED – That:

- i. the report and presentation be noted.

8 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 24 March 2020 at 2.00pm

Economic Development and Digital Advisory Board

Date: 24 March 2020

Agenda Item 4

Subject: Economic Development and Digital Progress Update

Report of: Thematic Lead for Economic Development and Digital

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on activity and progress under the Economic Development and Digital theme of the Combined Authority.

The report provides an update of activity of Invest North East England; an update on the development of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership Local Industrial Strategy; and an overview of the current activity within the European Structural and Investment Fund programme – including European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund grant allocations, commitments and ongoing bids and calls.

The report also provides an update on the latest position with regards to EU Exit and the withdrawal agreement.

Recommendations

The Advisory Board is recommended to note and provide any comments on the update report.

Economic Development and Digital Advisory Board

1.0 Background Information

1.1 This report provides an update on activity and progress under the Economic Development and Digital theme of the Combined Authority, including:

- Invest North East England and Trade activities
- Local Industrial Strategy
- European Structural and Investment Funds Programme
- Brexit.

1.2 Invest North East England (INEE)

1.3 *Inward Investment Successes 2019/20*

1.4 Preliminary successes/new job numbers for Q3 2019/20, for the NECA area are:

- 17 FDI projects resulting in 494 new jobs
- 7 UK inward investments projects resulting in 307 new jobs.

Across the wider region to date this year, there have been a combined total of 53 inward investment projects resulting in over 1,860 new jobs.

Key Inward Investment successes for 2019/20 in the NECA area include:

- Ocado announced as first tenants at The BEAM, Sunderland
- Nuby announced its expansion in South Tyneside
- Sumitomo announce a new manufacturing facility at Jade Business Park
- MAN Truck & Bus invests £20m at new facility in Gateshead.

1.5 *Current Enquiries*

1.6 The INEE team is very busy at present leading on a number of significant enquiries predominantly in the advanced manufacturing, digital tech, energy and business services sectors.

A particularly significant investment by Verisure (sourced and managed by INEE), is creating 1,000 jobs in North Tyneside. This was landed in March (to be included in Q4 figures).

Economic Development and Digital Advisory Board

1.7 *Marketing and Communications*

1.8 Promoting the INEE brand and services continue to be a focus for the team. INEE, with support from the North East LEP, have produced an integrated marketing plan for 2020/21 which includes various marketing tactics to promote the region. The team have booked editorial space and adverts in key publications for the 2020/21 calendar (sector focussed) and are having ongoing discussions with media outlets to scope additional promotional options.

A key action for 2020/21 is to refresh the INEE and Energy Gateway North East England Websites. This will update some of the key data, images and content whilst maximising search engine optimisation (SEO).

The team continues to use social media (Twitter / LinkedIn) to promote the region to a wider audience.

1.9 *Events*

1.10 The INEE team have already attended / exhibited at / sponsored a number of events in 2019/20 representing the region. Key events planned for 2020/21 in key sectors are:

- Shared Services Leaders' Summit (March 2020)
- North East Digital Festival (May 2020)
- MIPIM Cannes (June 2020- postponed from March)
- Offshore Wind North East (November 2020)
- North East Contact Centre Awards (as sponsor, November 2020).

The INEE team will be working on a fuller programme of events with partners to ensure all priority sectors are covered.

1.11 *Lead Generation Contract*

1.12 The sourcing of completely new leads for the North East is a vital part of INEE's activity, adding value to NECA local authorities' own activities. In 2019 INEE entered into its second lead generation contract with OCO Global. The Team is currently negotiating the contract extension with OCO to take us into 2020/21.

In addition to this external lead generation activity, in September 2019 INEE appointed a graduate intern to identify further leads in the key sectors, utilising a range of tools and databases. The intern has made good progress and several conversations are ongoing with potential leads. The Intern's contract is being extended for a further year to build upon the solid start.

Economic Development and Digital Advisory Board

The Team is also exploring with partners a project to target a number of Indian tech companies with aspirations to invest in the UK. This would involve a visit to India to assess the fit with NE strengths. A visit to the NE for selected companies would then be arranged later in the year. This project has been put back due to the continuing uncertainty of the effect of the Coronavirus.

1.13 ***High Potential Opportunities (HPO)***

1.14 DIT has launched a new round of HPO projects. The Team is currently working with North East partners to consider bids to cover:

- Heat Networks
- Plant-based Products
- Ageing.

1.15 ***Northern Powerhouse Key Account Management Programme***

1.16 INEE continue to manage the DIT Key Account Management Contract. The contract in the North East is performing very well (the best in the Northern Powerhouse Area). Account Managers across the local authorities are identifying new projects on a monthly basis with a number of key successes already this year.

DIT has confirmed that the NE will continue to be funded for 2020/21.

2.0 **Local Industrial Strategies (LIS)**

2.1 The Government has requested that LISs are developed by LEPs – and in some cases Mayoral Combined Authorities – and submitted for refinement and eventual approval. Guidance published by Government in October 2018 highlighted that “Local Industrial Strategies will be long-term, based on clear evidence and aligned to the National Industrial Strategy”.

2.2 ***The NELEP Local Industrial Strategy***

2.3 Much work has been done to develop a NELEP LIS which is being developed in partnership and facilitated by the NELEP team. NECA has representation on both the Steering Group and the Working Group. A draft has been approved by the NELEP Board and submitted to Government. This work was paused while further word from Government was awaited.

2.4 Government has recently indicated to the North East LEP that it wishes to complete an agreed Local Industrial Strategy for the area within a short number of weeks.

Economic Development and Digital Advisory Board

Discussions with officials of the draft submitted by NELEP Board to Government have therefore begun.

3.0 European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)

3.1 The European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) programme continues to be delivered in the North East. The region is split into two areas: (1) More Developed (Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland); and (2) Transition (County Durham). An update on European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund is provided below.

3.2 *European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)*

3.3 The notional allocation for the More Developed area is £176.9m, and in the Transition Area is £86.3m; a total for the NELEP area of £263.2m. Following the latest calls for projects which closed on 30 September 2019, the North East LEP Area ESIF Committee has now provisionally allocated all ERDF grant. It should be noted that while c.£180m of grant is legally committed, the remaining grant allocation to projects is subject to full appraisal and due diligence, and therefore may result in the attrition of some projects.

3.4 Following the latest call over 30 pipeline projects have been invited to develop full applications or project change requests (for extension projects), across the three priority axes listed below:

- Priority Axis 1 Promoting Research and Innovation
- Priority Axis 3 Enhancing the Competitiveness of SMEs
- Priority Axis 4 Supporting the shift towards a Low Carbon Economy in all sectors.

3.5 A final North East Sustainable Urban Development (SUD) call was launched in January 2020 and is due to close on 31 March 2020. The minimum project value is £1m (£500,000 ERDF grant), with up to £4m ERDF available under Priority 4 (Low Carbon).

3.6 The Government has confirmed that it will guarantee funding for ERDF projects that are contracted by the end of 2020. All contracted ERDF projects must be completed by the end of the programme period, 30 June 2023. Each application for ERDF will be required to demonstrate that it delivers good value for money and domestic strategic priorities.

3.7 It is intended that any ERDF grant not allocated through further North East LEP area calls will be recycled into the Reserve Fund which is being set up to ensure that the

Economic Development and Digital Advisory Board

UK makes best use of remaining programme funds up to 2023. MHCLG is expected to confirm the arrangements for an ERDF Reserve Fund shortly.

3.8 ***European Social Fund (ESF)***

3.9 Across the NELEP area there is a notional allocation of £224.7m (More Developed £161.3m, Transition £63.4m). As at February 2020, c.£97m has been legally committed in the More Developed area (60%) and c.£52m in the Transition area (82%). Subject to projects progressing to the contracting stage and the level of demand in response to the latest call (which closed on 3 March 2020), it should be noted that commitment levels, including pipeline applications, could increase to c.96% in the More Developed area and 117% in the Transition area.

3.10 The increase in commitment levels for ESF reflects the considerable technical assistance support reported previously, particularly in relation to the Skills for Growth Priority Axis call which closed in August 2019, and the two Inclusive labour market calls which closed in September 2019 and December 2019. In addition, the commitment figures also reflect recent extensions to the National Lottery Community Fund (previously Building Better Opportunities programme) co-financed projects.

3.11 The latest ESF Inclusive labour market call for projects issued in September 2019 generated considerable interest from applicants resulting in an overbid of c.£8m ESF. These projects are currently being appraised by DWP.

3.12 All ESF projects must be completed by December 2023 (projects must be completed no later than 3 years and 6 months after the proposed project start date).

3.13 The latest ESF call for projects closed on 3 March 2020. This was launched in December 2019 in order to deploy approximately £10m of the remaining ESF allocation under Priority Axis 2 Skills for Growth. A number of roundtable sessions have been held with local and regional partners to identify potential projects that meet key sector skills gaps in the following areas:

- Support for Management, Leadership and Enterprise skills - Support skills provision that delivers an increase in business starts targeted at the smart specialisation and growth sectors; pre-start support; entrepreneurial skills development; and training for innovators throughout their academic and business careers
- Support for employer led skills activities - Focused on SMEs in smart specialisation and growth sectors
- Support skills development for the workforce - Develop skills, including for those newly employed/ low skilled and those facing redundancy; enabling progress or

Economic Development and Digital Advisory Board

sustainment in work. Focus on low skilled, tackling barriers to employment. Skills refresh e.g. IT skills/specific qualifications to address gaps in emerging technologies

- Support for industry specific intermediate and high-level skills that respond to employer demand and offer flexible responses to emerging and projected skills needs - Focused on smart specialisation and growth sectors.

3.14 As with ERDF, any ESF grant not allocated through the latest North East LEP area calls will be recycled into the ESF Reserve Fund, overseen by DWP, set up to ensure that the UK makes best use of remaining programme funds up to 2023.

4.0 EU Exit

4.1 The UK left the EU on 31 January 2020 and the UK entered a transition period that will last until 31 December 2020 while a trade deal with the EU is negotiated. Government has indicated that if the trade deal negotiations do not go well then it is prepared to “walk away” and that this could be decided as early as June 2020. During the transition period, the UK is also permitted and intends to open up negotiations with other countries which could include the USA.

4.2 *NE EU Exit Implementation Group (formerly NE Brexit Group)*

4.3 The cross-partner North East EU Exit Implementation Group continues to meet and provides a forum for sharing intelligence across sectors. It is currently investigating the potential benefits of a Freeport/Free Trade Zone for the North East. In February, Government began a public consultation on its Freeport proposals. The consultation closes on 20 April 2020. It is then expected that an appointed panel will consider the results and advise Government on issuing a call for proposals.

4.4 The group is also examining the new immigration scheme and looking to opportunities post-EU exit in the light of potential trade deals with the EU and other nations/trading areas.

5.0 Reasons for the Proposals

5.1 This report provides an update on Economic Development and Digital theme activities and requests views and comments from the Board.

6.0 Alternative Options Available

6.1 There are no alternative options associated with this report.

Economic Development and Digital Advisory Board

7.0 Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

7.1 A further update will be provided to the Board at subsequent meetings.

8.0 Potential Impact on Objectives

8.1 The activities under the Economic Development and Digital theme will support NECA in its aims to promote economic growth and regeneration in the area.

9.0 Financial and Other Resources Implications

9.1 There are no financial or other resource implications directly associated with this report as it is for information only.

10.0 Legal Implications

10.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

11.0 Key Risks

11.1 There are no specific risk management issues arising from this report.

12.0 Equality and Diversity

12.1 There are no specific equality and diversity issues arising from this report.

13.0 Crime and Disorder

13.1 There are no specific crime and disorder issues arising from this report.

14.0 Consultation/Engagement

14.1 There are no specific consultation and engagement issues arising from this report.

15.0 Other Impact of the Proposals

15.1 There are no further impacts arising from the proposals.

16.0 Appendices

16.1 None

Economic Development and Digital Advisory Board

17.0 Background Papers

17.1 None.

18.0 Contact Officers

18.1 Vince Taylor, NECA Economic Lead Officer, 0191 561 1113,
vince.taylor@sunderland.gov.uk

19.0 Sign off

- 19.1
- Head of Paid Service: ✓
 - Monitoring Officer: ✓
 - Chief Finance Officer: ✓

20.0 Glossary

20.1 None.

Economic Development and Digital Advisory Board

Date: 24 March 2020

Agenda Item 5

Subject: NECA Economic Plan Update

Report of: Thematic Lead for Economic Development and Digital

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on work to produce an Economic Plan for the NECA area.

Recommendations

The Advisory Board is recommended to receive a presentation and take part in a discussion about the Economic Plan for the NECA area.

Economic Development and Digital Advisory Board

1. Background Information

- 1.1 The Leaders of the four constituent NECA local authorities have led work to develop an economic plan for the NECA area. This plan is being designed to be compatible with and supportive of both the North East Strategic Economic Plan and the emerging North East Local Industrial Strategy, as well as reflecting important local priorities and opportunities. The exercise has helped develop clarity over where fruitful collaboration between the four authorities within NECA will produce most benefit and a better understanding of the NECA economic geography, the challenges it faces and the opportunities it presents.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 A presentation will be made to the Economic Development and Digital Advisory Board setting out at a high level the results of the development work and the emerging priorities this has strongly indicated are worth pursuing.

3. Reasons for the Proposals

- 3.1 It is important that NECA understands the strengths it has, challenges it faces and opportunities it presents and how these can be harnessed within the context of plans and resources for the wider region.

4. Alternative Options Available

- 4.1 There are no alternative options associated with this report.

5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

- 5.1 A further update will be provided to the Board at subsequent meetings.

6. Potential Impact on Objectives

- 6.1 The activities under the Economic Development and Digital theme will support NECA in its aims to promote economic growth and regeneration in the area.

7. Financial and Other Resources Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial or other resource implications directly associated with this report as it is for information only.

8. Legal Implications

Economic Development and Digital Advisory Board

8.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

9. Key Risks

9.1 There are no specific risk management issues arising from this report.

10. Equality and Diversity

10.1 There are no specific equality and diversity issues arising from this report.

11. Crime and Disorder

11.1 There are no specific crime and disorder issues arising from this report.

12. Consultation/Engagement

12.1 There are no specific consultation and engagement issues arising from this report.

13. Other Impact of the Proposals

13.1 There are no further impacts arising from the proposals.

14. Appendices

14.1 None

15. Background Papers

15.1 North East Strategic Economic Plan - More and Better Jobs

<http://www.northeastlep.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/North-East-SEP-FINAL-March-2017.pdf>

16. Contact Officers

16.1 Vince Taylor, NECA Economic Lead Officer, 0191 561 1113

17. Sign off

- 17.1
- Head of Paid Service: ✓
 - Monitoring Officer: ✓

Economic Development and Digital Advisory Board

- Chief Finance Officer: ✓

18. Glossary

18.1 None.