



North East Combined Authority

DURHAM • GATESHEAD • SOUTH TYNESIDE • SUNDERLAND

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday 25 March 2021 at 2.00pm

Meeting to be held virtually via Microsoft Teams

www.northeastca.gov.uk

AGENDA

	Page No
1. Apologies for Absence	
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 Democratic Services Officer). Please also remember to leave the meeting where any personal interest requires this.	
3. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2020	1-6
4. Covid-19 Regional Economic Recovery	7-20
5. Digital Connectivity (Thematic Update)	21-34
6. Update from the North East Local Enterprise Partnership	35-66
7. Forward Plan and Scrutiny Work Programme Update	67-73
8. Date and Time of Next Meeting	

To be confirmed.

Contact Officer: Jonathan Lunness
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North East Combined Authority

DURHAM • GATESHEAD • SOUTH TYNESIDE • SUNDERLAND

Agenda Item 3

North East Combined Authority, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday 17 December 2020
(2.00pm – 3.00pm)

Meeting held virtually via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Independent Members: Mr D Taylor-Gooby (Chair) and Mr S Hart (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: J Welsh (South Tyneside), M Clarke (Durham), A Mullen (Sunderland), D MacKnight (Sunderland), J Eagle (Gateshead), J Wallace (Gateshead – present during Items 6-8)

Officers: N Robason (Monitoring Officer, NECA), G Armstrong (Policy and Scrutiny Officer, NECA), J Lunness (Strategy and Democratic Services Assistant, NECA), Eleanor Goodman (NECA Finance Manager), Rory Sherwood-Parkin (Senior Economic Policy Manager, South Tyneside Council), B Handson (Strategy and Democracy Support Officer, South Tyneside Council), S Gwillym (Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer, Durham County Council), Angela Frisby (Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinator, Gateshead Council)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absences were received from Cllrs G Kilgour, W Flynn, R Crute, A Batey and Catherine Auld (Assistant Director of Economic Development – Sunderland Council).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr J Eagle declared an interest as an employee of NEXUS although has dispensation to discuss and vote on matters relating to this.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1 OCTOBER 2020

The minutes were approved as a correct record.

4. NECA BUDGET PROPOSALS 2021/22

Submitted: Report of the Chief Finance Officer, NECA (previously circulated and copy attached to the official minutes).

Eleanor Goodman, NECA Finance Manager, presented the report which updated the Committee on the budget proposals for 2021/22 and future years in line with the budget consultation process.

It was noted that a small increase to the corporate budget is anticipated, with costs per constituent authority rising from £22,857 to £25,000, although it was highlighted this is the first time for such an increase. Contributions for the Joint Transport Committee Accountable Body Role are to be maintained at £10,000 per constituent authority.

The Committee noted that SLAs had been reviewed, documented and formalised to ensure the accurately reflect support to NECA and the JTC.

AGREED – That:

- i. the report be noted.

5. IMPACT OF EU EXIT ON THE NORTH EAST (INCLUDING REGIONAL FUNDING)

Submitted: Report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration & Environment and Acting Head of Paid Service, South Tyneside Council (previously circulated and copy attached to the official minutes).

Rory Sherwood-Parkin, Senior Economic Policy Manager at South Tyneside Council, presented the report and delivered a presentation on the potential impact of the end of the EU transition period on 31st December 2020 on the NECA area, particularly in relation to the economy and funding.

The presentation covered the following issues:

- Economic Impact
- Labour Market Impact
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund
- Impact on NECA
- Next Steps

Main points of the presentation included:

- Any trade disruption will impact exporters, importers and complex supply chains;
- There will be an impact regardless of a deal or no deal, but would be more severe in a ‘no-deal’ scenario;
- Larger firms more prepared than SMEs;
- End of free movement on 1 January 2021 regardless of any deal, with changes impacting on businesses ability to fill skills gap;
- 23% of North East employers are concerned about a skills gap;
- European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) ends on 31 December 2020, with the current programme spend continuing to June 2023;

- UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) not available until 2022, with Government a transition fund of £220m for 2021/22;
- UKSPF will be split between ‘people’ and ‘place’ projects;
- Both short term and long term impacts, including likely depressed growth and an impact on the NECA Economic Plan and investment ambitions;
- Local Authorities are ramping up communications to businesses with signposting to North East Growth Hub and Government Advice to help prepare.

During discussion of the presentation, a Member noted that after leaving the EU, residual funding from the previous cycle of ESIF will continue until June 2023 and so although the UK has left it may feel like we are still benefitting from that, however longer term the future is not clear. Concerns were raised by a Member that after the referendum was held in 2016, there is still no clarity on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund being provided by the Government and noted that £220m to prepare in 2021/22 does not compare the previous amounts received from ESIF. The importance of continuing to lobby Government on these issues was stressed.

Concerns were raised by a Member regarding the points-based system which makes it difficult for workers from abroad to gain access to the labour market. It was noted by the Member that the impact on Brexit on industries which currently thrive in the North East, such as offshore energy, remains unclear. Rory Sherwood-Parkin also noted that the impact on Foreign Direct Investment remains unknown.

The Vice-Chair raised the issue of the skills gap in the North East and the continued pressure on adult social care, both of which were noted in the presentation. The Vice-Chair made the point that these were two problems for the region before the UK’s exit from the EU and so it may be useful for the Committee to have update reports on their current position to allow the impact of Brexit on these issues to be monitored.

The Chair questioned whether the UK Shared Prosperity Fund would be able to match the previous European Union funding in the North East. Rory Sherwood-Parkin explained that whilst the Government has committed to match the annual level of EU funding, it is not known by when that commitment will be fulfilled and whether it will match the regional breakdown of that funding.

AGREED – That:

- i. the report and presentation be noted.

6. COVID-19 REGIONAL ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Submitted: Report of the Chief Executive, Sunderland City Council (previously circulated and copy attached to the official minutes).

Rory Sherwood-Parkin, Senior Economic Policy Manager at South Tyneside Council, presented the report which provided Members with an update on the economic recovery work taking place across NECA and the NELEP areas.

Rory Sherwood-Parkin delivered a presentation which covered the following topics:

- Economic Impact
- Labour Market Impact
- NECA and LA Response
- Government Announcements
- Next Steps

Main points of the presentation included:

- Ernest & Young estimates a 12% fall on GVA in the North East, with the region being hit hard due to the high proportion of jobs in effected sectors, e.g. hospitality, visitor economy, retail;
- There has been a significant decrease in footfall in town and city centres across the NECA area;
- Rises in unemployment higher in the region compared to the UK nationally, with a rise in the claimant count in the NECA area, particularly amongst 18-24s;
- Vacancy levels are recovering in the region;
- Grants and support continue to be rolled out across the region.

During discussion, the Chair noted that additional work such as signposting businesses and residents to the support available is being expected of local authorities currently and queried if funding would be increased.

A Member sought clarification over the grants available to wet-led pubs. This was confirmed by Rory Sherwood-Parkin as £1000 for the month of December.

AGREED – That:

- i. the report and presentation be noted.

7. FORWARD PLAN AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

Submitted: Report of the Policy and Scrutiny Officer (previously circulated and copy attached to the official minutes).

Gavin Armstrong, the Policy and Scrutiny Officer, presented the report which provided Members with the opportunity to consider items on the Forward Plan and the Work Programme of the Committee for 2020/21.

The Committee noted that a joint informal briefing was held with the North of Tyne Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13 November 2020, as well as an informal meeting of the Committee with the North East Local Enterprise Partnership in November to discuss the impact of Covid-19 on the region.

It was questioned if the Thematic Reports from Thematic Leads to the Committee would be resuming. The Policy and Scrutiny Officer noted that some changes to Thematic Leads had been approved at the Leadership Board held 15 December 2020 and that this could be requested for the Municipal Year 2021/22.

AGREED – That:

- i. the report be noted.

8. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

25 March 2021 at 2.00pm.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Agenda Item 4

Date: 25 March 2021

Subject: CV19 Regional Economic Recovery

Report of: George Mansbridge, Head of Paid Service, South Tyneside Council

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide a presentation on the current economic and labour market impact of the pandemic upon the NECA economy, the response from national and local government and the latest developments from the March 2021 Budget.

Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note the contents of the presentation.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1. Background Information

- 1.1 This presentation on CV19 regional economic recovery will outline the economic and labour market impact upon the NECA area of the CV19 pandemic. It will describe the response from NECA and the four constituent authorities to this unprecedented economic shock, the wider regional response and how this fits with Government announcements (particularly the recent Budget).

2. Proposals

- 2.1 There are no proposals being put forward as the presentation is for information and discussion.

3. Reasons for the Proposals

- 3.1 Not applicable.

4. Alternative Options Available

- 4.1 Not applicable

5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6. Potential Impact on Objectives

- 6.1 None.

7. Financial and Other Resources Implications

- 7.1 None

8.

- 8.1 None

9. Key Risks

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

9.1 None

10. Equality and Diversity

10.1 None

11. Crime and Disorder

11.1 None

12. Consultation/Engagement

12.1 None

13. Other Impact of the Proposals

13.1 None

14. Appendices

14.1 None

15. Background Papers

15.1 Economic data from North East Data Hub [here](#)

16. Contact Officers

16.1 Rory Sherwood-Parkin, Senior Economic Policy Manager, South Tyneside Council,
rory.sherwood-parkin@southtyneside.gov.uk, 07812 514 191.

17. Sign off

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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

18. **Glossary**

- 18.1 OBR (Office for Budget Responsibility)
NELEP (North East Local Enterprise Partnership)



CV19 Regional Economic Recovery

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

25th March 2021

Contents

1. Economic impact
2. Labour market impact
3. NECA LA response
4. March 2021 Budget
5. Recovery & Renewal Deal
6. Other Government announcements
7. Next steps

1. Economic impact

- **Profound economic shock** with NECA hit hard given high proportion of jobs in at-risk sectors (hospitality, retail, visitor economy, travel)
- Town and city centres **hit by low footfall** and national retailer closures
- Manufacturers experiencing **supply chain issues** (particularly automotive)
- Many firms **exhausted reserves** and cash flow, real concerns about surviving until they are able to reopen (and about loan repayments)
- City and town centre firms concerned about **consumer confidence** (but expectation of staycation boost to hospitality and tourism sector)
- But business **confidence picking up** (highest level since July)
- Plus digital, professional services, low-carbon and construction sectors continuing to do well

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North East business activity bounces back but job numbers continue to fall

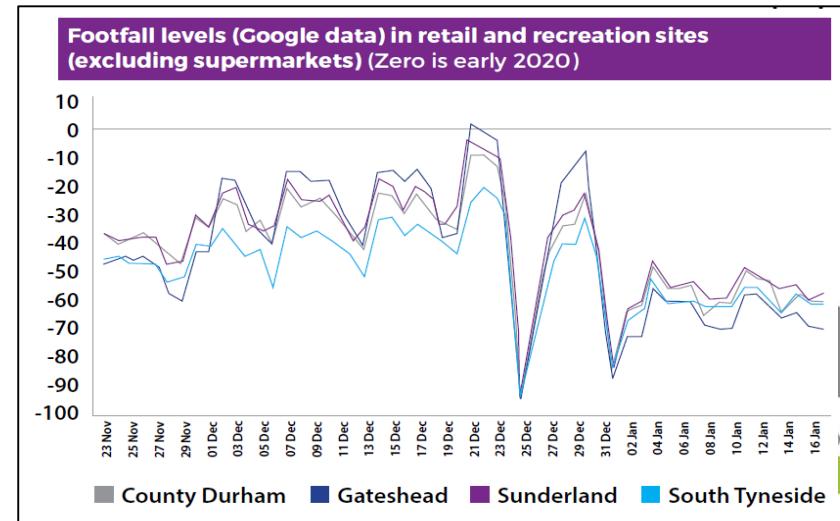
The NatWest North East Business Activity Index tracks month-on-month changes in the region's manufacturing and service sectors

SHARE    COMMENTS By Graeme Whitfield Regional business editor 00:00, 8 MAR 2021

PARTNER CONTENT

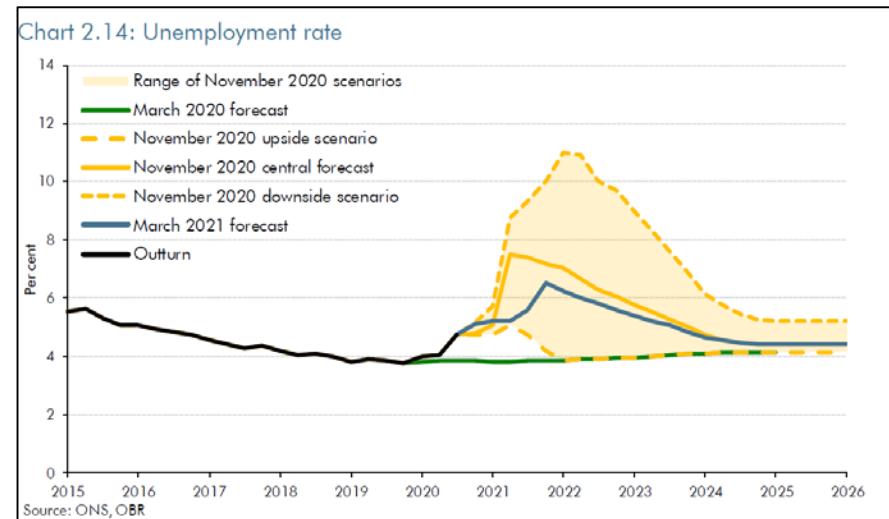
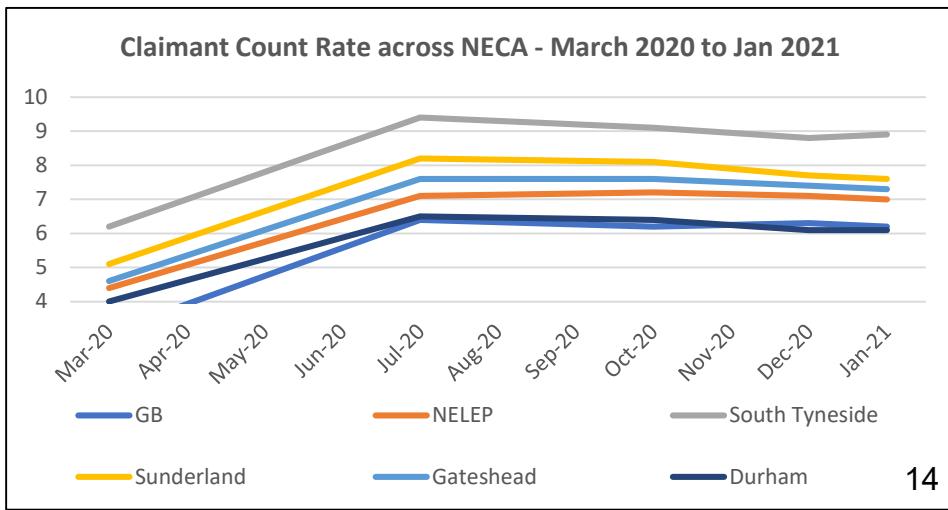
MOST READ

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2. Labour market impact

- **Rise in total unemployment** since March 2020 (6.4% in NE compared to 5% nationally) means we have highest levels outside London
- **Furlough keeping this down**; 64,000 workers (13% of workforce) on Furlough at end of Jan (up from 52,000 or 11% in Dec)
- **Claimant count flatlining**, but NECA rate up from 4.7% in March 20 to 7.5% in Jan 21, particularly amongst 18-24s (up 4,000).
- Encouragingly, NE vacancy levels close to pre-pandemic levels (growth in construction, logistics, manufacturing, health and social care)
- OBR forecast in Budget say national unemployment (five year high at 5.1%) to **keep rising** and peak at 6.5% at end of year (see below)



3. NECA LA response

- **Supporting businesses through:**
 - Closed Businesses Lockdown Payment
 - Open, Closed & Sector Local Restriction Support Grant schemes
 - Additional Restrictions Grants (taking LA7 approach and supporting supply chain and non-listed firms)
 - Christmas Support Payments for Wet-led Pubs
 - Helping businesses to access Government loans
 - Signposting to support (particularly on import/export re EU Exit)
- **Coordinating Kickstart six-month placements**
- **Accessing Getting Building Funds** to accelerate key projects
- **Monitoring impact upon key sectors and trends** (anecdotal rise in start-up activity and industrial unit demand)
- **Reporting feedback and concerns to BEIS & MHCLG (LA7)**, such as those excluded from support, Spring crunch point, lockdown-easing plan

4. March 2021 Budget

- Extensions to Furlough, hospitality VAT cut, business rate holidays, stamp duty cut and Universal Credit uplift (**potential Sept cliff edge**)
- **New grant support for businesses** (up to £6k for retailers, up to £18k for hospitality) and widening of self-employment grant (but still gaps)
- Incentives doubling to take on apprentices and further **funding for cultural organisations** (and funding for community ownership)
- **Freeports**, offshore wind funding and government relocation (but not for the NECA or NELEP areas with concerns about displacement)
- Focus on **green and digital growth** (Infrastructure Bank, SME support)
- Launch and more detail on **Levelling Up Fund and UK Community Renewal Fund** (pre UKSPF) with June deadlines (focus on quick delivery)
- Five year city-region transport settlements, but not for North East
- LA7 £2.7bn **Recovery and Renewal Deal** submitted to Government with ongoing negotiations underway....

5. Recovery & Renewal Deal

NE-Wide Recovery Proposals: Some headlines

- **£2.8bn of investment** in a range of areas important to recovery – including transport, digital, housing, place infrastructure and future economy
- **Clean Growth and Net Zero** – including investment in offshore wind & supply chain, advanced manufacturing and support for transition to net-zero infrastructure
- **Inclusive Economy and Good Jobs** – including expansion of skills funding and powers, education challenge, Good Work pledge and rapid investment to support retraining & employment
- **Future Connectivity** – including bold investments in transport and digital connectivity...reflecting a new life – work – travel balance and economic realities for transport.
- **Rural Innovation** – improving connectivity, SME innovation and rural-urban transport links, as well as extending ‘town deal’ investments
- **Place Based Funding** – so that we can make this work for our diverse towns, cities and places – building on Govt proposals around Levelling Up Fund and SPF.
- **Augmented Business Support** – reflecting the need for a range of support from digital adoption and LM insight, through to startup and bridging funding
- **Fiscal Incentives** – such that will support rapid recovery in our cities, connect our export offer through a Freeport, and support health & growth through Prevention Fund.
- Phased approach which could unlock 100k jobs, 26k training opportunities, 100k homes retrofitted.... Calling for **rapid co-investment from Govt**

The proposal

This is a bold proposal, reflecting the scale of challenge which COVID-19 has brought to our region and we have framed it around a five-point plan:



If ever there was a time for radical change and transformation It's now – and the North East Is ready.

6. Other Government announcements

Number of other initiatives underway on short and long term recovery:

- **Job Centre Plus Restart programme** to support 12-month unemployed (from Summer 2021) and Job Entry Targeted Support (underway)
- **Skills for Jobs White Paper** – Focus on Further Education; upgrading buildings, support for reskilling (Lifetime Skills Guarantee) and building links with industry and growth sectors (Local Skills Improvement Plans)
- **Energy White Paper & Ten Point Plan** – Real focus on green growth, particularly Electric Vehicles, offshore wind and housing
- **Consultations on new subsidy regime** to replace EU State Aid (designed to support key sectors) and procurement (to allow more local suppliers)
- **National Infrastructure Strategy** published (plus TfN agreed Northern Powerhouse Rail plan and LA7 agreed North East Transport Plan)
- **Awaiting Devolution White Paper** and announcement around Business Rates

7. Next Steps

- Continue to **roll out grant support to businesses** and help residents access new jobs
- Continue to **monitor impact** of CV19 Exit upon the NECA economy and resulting recovery measures
- Continue to **work across NELEP area** on Recovery and Renewal Deal submission to Government
- Continue to **lobby Government** for further support for economic recovery and clarity on funding streams and measures

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Agenda Item 5

Date: 25 March 2021

Subject: Digital Connectivity

Report of: George Mansbridge, Head of Paid Service, South Tyneside Council

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide a presentation on digital connectivity in the NECA area; particularly why such infrastructure is vital to future economic growth, progress made to date through Local Authority collaboration, along with future plans and challenges.

Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note the contents of the presentation.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1. **Background Information**

- 1.1 This presentation on digital connectivity will outline why digital infrastructure is vital to future economic growth in the NECA area, outline progress made to date through Local Authority collaboration (notably Digital Durham), set out the current situation in regard to broadband and mobile coverage and then describe future plans and challenges.

2. **Proposals**

- 2.1 There are no proposals being put forward as the presentation is for information and discussion.

3. **Reasons for the Proposals**

- 3.1 Not applicable.

4. **Alternative Options Available**

- 4.1 Not applicable

5. **Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation**

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6. **Potential Impact on Objectives**

- 6.1 None.

7. **Financial and Other Resources Implications**

- 7.1 None

8.

- 8.1 None

9. **Key Risks**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

9.1 None

10. Equality and Diversity

10.1 None

11. Crime and Disorder

11.1 None

12. Consultation/Engagement

12.1 None

13. Other Impact of the Proposals

13.1 None

14. Appendices

14.1 None

15. Background Papers

15.1 UK Broadband Impact Study 2013 [here](#)

DCMS Superfast Evaluation Findings 2021 [here](#)

OFCOM Connected Nations data 2020 [here](#)

ThinkBroadband maps 2021 [here](#)

OFCOM mobile coverage checker 2021 [here](#)

North East Recovery & Renewal Deal 2020 [here](#)

UK Gigabit Programme 2020 [here](#)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

McKinsey Skills Mismatch report [2019](#)

Good Things Foundation; Digital Nation 2020 [here](#)

16. Contact Officers

- 16.1 Rory Sherwood-Parkin, Senior Economic Policy Manager, South Tyneside Council,
rory.sherwood-parkin@southtyneside.gov.uk, 07812 514 191.

17. Sign off

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

18. Glossary

- 18.1 DCMS (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport)
NELEP (North East Local Enterprise Partnership)

Digital Connectivity

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

25th March 2021

Agenda

1. Why is digital connectivity important
2. Previous NECA and North East work
3. Current position
4. Recent investment and plans
5. Gaps (and Government plans)
6. Regional work
7. Digital inclusion and Skills
8. Next Steps

1. Why is digital connectivity important

- Fast, resilient and affordable broadband and mobile coverage is vital for our residents, businesses, visitors and investors.
- Digital connectivity vital to boosting productivity, helping businesses growth and export, residents to access training and public services and a key requirement of visitors and investors.
- Economic impact of better broadband is considerable (£20 in net economic impact for every £1 of spending according to DCMS; better broadband makes firms and workers more productive)
- Superfast speeds (30mpbs) are considered the minimum for good connectivity, with Government focussing upon future-proofed connectivity (1GB – gigabit capable or full fibre)

2. Previous NECA and North East work

- Excellent collaboration through the Digital Durham programme to boost superfast broadband (30mpbs) across the NECA area
- Digital Durham subsidised (through DCMS and LA funding) rollout to areas which would not have been commercially viable
- Over 87,000 premises in the NECA area can now access superfast broadband as a result:
 - Durham: Over 63,700 (with some delivery left to complete)
 - Gateshead: Over 14,100
 - South Tyneside: Over 4,600
 - Sunderland: Over 4,600



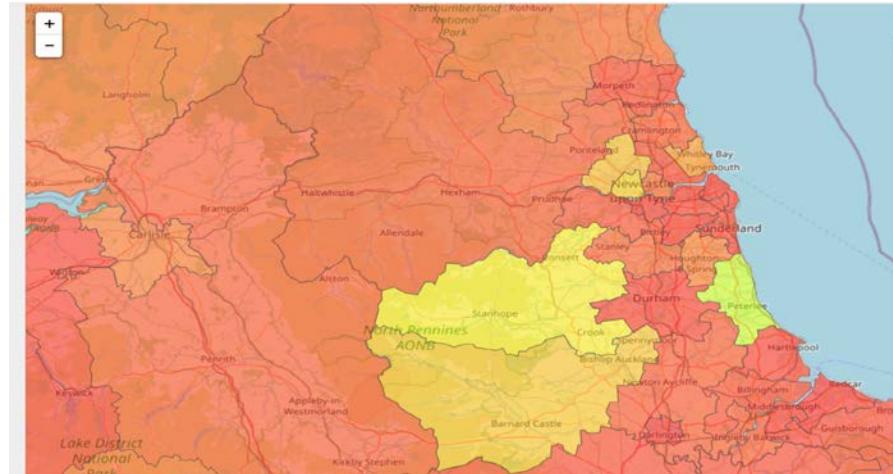
3. Current coverage across NECA

- Ahead of the national average for superfast and ultrafast (left box), but behind on gigabit-capable connectivity (right box)
- Risk that fall behind other areas impacting competitiveness
- Mobile coverage is good overall, but with significant gaps

	Superfast	Ultrafast	Gigabit-capable
NECA average	98.0%	61.6%	6.8%
UK average	96.0%	52.3%	27.0%
Durham	96.5%	27.5%	15.3%
Gateshead	97.9%	74.8%	4.1%
South Tyneside	99.1%	79.5%	1.0%
Sunderland	98.3%	64.5%	6.9%



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4. Recent investment and plans

- All 4 Local Authorities engaging with providers on commercial rollout (ie Openreach, Virgin Media, CityFibre, Hyperoptic)
- Joint working and discussion across LAs on approach to wayleaves (particularly for social housing)
- Close working through NE Highways and Utilities Committee (NEHAUC) on permits, defects and reinstatement

The collage consists of five different web pages and news articles related to broadband infrastructure:

- thinkbroadband®**: A homepage featuring a search bar for "Find a provider" and "test my broadband". It also has links for "Broadband Providers", "Guides", "Information & Data", and "Tools". A news item at the bottom left states: "67 more locations added to Openreach programme".
- CityFibre News**: A green-themed news article titled "CityFibre invests over £60m in Sunderland's Full Fibre future".
- Virgin Media**: A news article titled "2,000 premises in Shildon get ultrafast broadband boost".
- NE**: A news article titled "Fast broadband to come to rural County Durham". It includes a photo of a white van with "Openreach" branding parked in a field.
- News**: A news article titled "Ultrafast broadband now available to 4,500 homes in Houghton-le-Spring". It features two men in high-visibility vests looking at a map.

5. Gaps and Government plans

- Commercial rollout will not get everywhere
- DCMS Future Telecoms Infrastructure Strategy identified that 20% of the country unlikely to be commercially viable
- Government ambition of 85% gigabit-capable by 2025
- DCMS focussing on delivering to hard to reach areas through UK Gigabit Programme (£5bn funding over 5 years)
- Prioritising delivery to premises without superfast access
- Government consultation closed in February 2021; procurement lots and approach to be decided by Summer
- Digital Durham working with DCMS and undertaking Open Market Review to ask providers about their commercial plans (and to define where the hard to reach areas are).

6. Working with the wider region

- Working with NELEP on support for digital businesses, digital adaptation for non-digital firms and digital skills provision
- Engaged with NELEP on action plan to deliver NE Digital Strategy
- Digital a key part of Recovery & Renewal Deal (submitted to Gov) with call for £100m annual investment in digital connectivity

North East Digital Strategy

The North East LEP's Digital for Growth strategy focusses on developing a pipeline of activity that aligns to the national digital agenda by building on our existing digital assets and capabilities. The strategy identifies four priority themes:

Data



Harnessing the power of data and analytics, revolutionised by the onset of 5G, AI and machine learning. Reimagining the future of regions, cities and communities providing routes to data-led growth.



Digital collaboration and enterprise

Accelerating our thriving tech sector and driving innovation to grow technology-enabled businesses and create new products, services and solutions.

Workforce



Building an inclusive and resilient labour market by improving digital literacy and access to technology – increasing employability and making careers in digital attractive and possible for all.

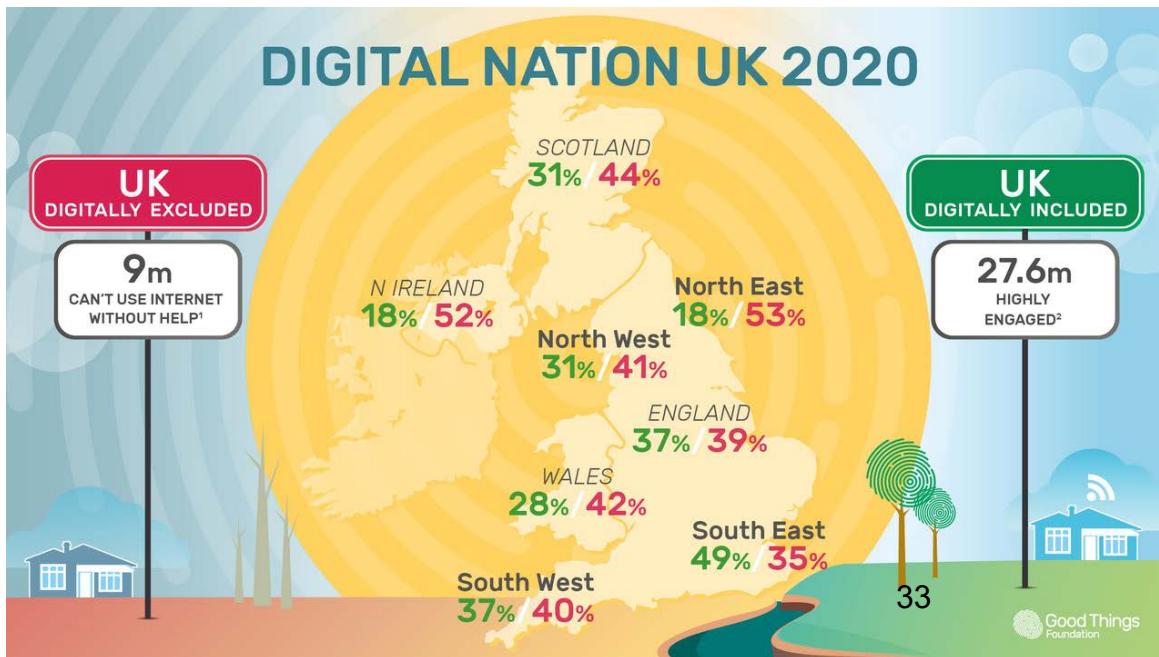
Infrastructure and connectivity



Deploying next generation digital infrastructure to connect people and places through fibre, ultra-fast Wi-Fi and 5G – providing ubiquitous connectivity to homes, businesses and open spaces leaving no one and nowhere behind.

7. Digital inclusion and skills

- High rates of digital exclusion across NECA and NE (graph below shows North East has highest rate of digitally excluded)
- Issue around access to devices highlighted by pandemic (nearly 17,000 laptops and tablets distributed to vulnerable children since start of CV19)
- McKinsey 2020 report said digital skills will be those most needed over the next decade



8. Summary & Next Steps

- Excellent progress on broadband coverage following Digital Durham collaboration and attracting commercial rollout
- Need to collaborate with private sector to drive gigabit-capable coverage or risk being left behind
- Vital to work across NECA and NELEP on digital skills so residents and businesses can maximise opportunities
- Opportunities to look at projects and programmes through new UK Community Renewal Fund
- Focus within NECA Economic Development and Digital Advisory Board on Digital

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Agenda Item 6

Date: 25 March 2021

Subject: Update from the North East Local Enterprise Partnership

Report of: Chief Executive, North East Local Enterprise Partnership

Executive Summary

The purpose of the report is to update the Committee on the activities of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), and in particular, progress against delivery of the North East Strategic Economic Plan programmes and the implementation of the North East Renewal and Recovery Deal document.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note:

- i. the focus of the work being undertaken by the North East Local Enterprise Partnership;
- ii. the progress against delivery of the North East Strategic Economic Plan programmes; and
- iii. the development of the North East Renewal and Recovery Deal document.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1. Background Information

- 1.1 The North East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) leads the development and provides the leadership to facilitate the delivery of the regional economic plan covering the seven local authorities and two combined authorities in the North East area. The principal document is the North East Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), which covers the period from 2014 – 2024. The document can be found on the North East LEP's website at:

[The Strategic Economic Plan | North East LEP](#)

The North East Strategic Economic Plan is the region's overarching strategy for how we are going to grow and develop the North East economy and create 100,000 more and better jobs during the ten-year period to 2024.

- 1.2 In addition, to the SEP and in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the LEP led also the formation of the regional North East Covid-19 Economic Response Group, made up of the LEP and the North of Tyne and North East Combined Authorities, with partners representing business, the regional universities, the voluntary sector and the trade unions. The Group gathered evidence, data and intelligence to inform a five-point plan to support the economy, build resilience and prepare for recovery. The North East Recovery and Renewal Deal document can be found on the LEP's website at:

[COVID-19 Response Group - North East Local Enterprise Partnership \(northeastlep.co.uk\)](#)

2. Proposals

- 2.1 The regional Strategic Economic Plan has five programmes of delivery:

- Business Growth;
- Innovation;
- Infrastructure and investment;
- Transport Connectivity; and
- Skills, employment, inclusion and progression.

Progress against activities in each programme along with an update on our communications and policy development is reported to each LEP Board. The latest progress report can be found in appendix one which sets out all of the projects being delivered.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 2.2 The North East Recovery and Renewal Deal document has five elements. These are:
- Job recovery – focusing on rapid interventions to help people and jobs and training, including a job recovery programme;
 - Building the economy of the future – focussing on maximising the use of our existing assets and exploring opportunities to enter new markets and supply chains through innovation;
 - Supporting businesses – focussing on the rapid recovery of businesses and sectors;
 - Communities and place – focussing on creating resilient places and strong communities as they adapt to living with Covid -19, as well as addressing other challenges and supporting cultural recovery.
 - Digital and connectivity infrastructure investment – focussing on building infrastructure to lead transformation and encourage recovery.

The Deal document was submitted to Government in autumn 2020.

The region is working collaboratively to develop and deliver the activities set out in the plan. The 2021 implementation plan is set out in appendix two.

3. Reasons for the Proposals

- 3.1 The North East LEP wants to appraise the Committee of progress against delivery of the SEP, as well as update on the implementation and development work attached to the Renewal and Recovery Deal document.

4. Alternative Options Available

- 4.1 The report is presented for information.

5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

- 5.1 The SEP is the approved economic growth regional plan up to 2024. The five programmes set out in the document will be reviewed and updated during 2021/22 to focus on recovering from the impact of the pandemic and the exit from the European Union.

6 Potential Impact on Objectives

- 6.1 The LEP works closely with both combined authorities and the regional transport team at North East Transport, ensuring alignment of priorities and activities.

7. Financial and Other Resources Implications

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

7.1 There is no budget attached directly to the delivery of the SEP or the Recovery and Renewal Deal. The programmes and projects within each must source and secure funding for delivery on a project by project basis.

8. Legal Implications

8.1 None

9. Key Risks

9.1 The key risk is the lack of clarity around national funding to delivery initiatives in the plans.

10. Equality and Diversity

10.1 All projects and initiatives set out in the delivery plans have an inclusive approach.

11. Crime and Disorder

11.1 There are no crime and disorder issues to raise.

12. Consultation/Engagement

12.1 Extensive consultation exercises have been undertaken each time the SEP has been updated.

13. Other Impact of the Proposals

13.1 None

14. Appendices

14.1 Appendix one- The LEP Board SEP delivery update paper dated 19 March 2021
Appendix two – The Renewal and Recovery Deal Implementation Plan for 2021

15. Background Papers

15.1 The North East Strategic Economic Plan
The North East Renewal and Recovery Deal document

16. Contact Officers

16.1 Helen Golightly – Chief Executive, North East LEP

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Helen.golightly@nelep.co.uk

Telephone - 07900226078

17. Sign off

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

18. Glossary

- 18.1 LEP – Local enterprise partnership
SEP – Strategic Economic plan

North East Local Enterprise Partnership Board



28 January 2021

ITEM 5: SEP Programme Delivery Update

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the details given in the SEP Programme Delivery report, which is attached as *Appendix 1*.

2.0 Highlights and points to note since the last meeting

Business Growth

- Kickstarting Tourism and Restart and Recovery Grants (£2.4m fund): 570 businesses contracted to a value of £1.56m with another 34 at contracting stage and 25 at eligibility stage. The average grant size stands at £2,730. Since the second national lockdown was announced there has been a huge increase in the number of businesses requesting extensions as delivery is delayed.
- North East Growth Hub continues to deliver ahead of target in most areas. Performance to 31st December 2020; high intensity interventions delivered = 636 (145% of target), medium intensity interventions delivered = 1,264 (119% of target), light touch interventions delivered = 36.3k (203% of target), customer satisfaction 98%.

Innovation

- The Covid-19 Innovation Challenge pilot is in delivery phase, and engagement from the North East business community has been very good. The pilot was launched in December 2020 with two challenges: the delivery of home-based services and safe in-person events. The call for expressions of interest for the two pilot challenges closed on 15 January 2021 with a total of 63 applications received. The applications will be evaluated by a panel on 19 January 2021.
- 11 Innovation Delivery Partnerships (IDPs) were endorsed by the Innovation Board at its meeting in December 2020 for consideration at LEP Board 28 January 2021. The IDP pilot programme's inaugural workshop to develop the IDP framework and the benchmark approach takes place on 22 January 2021.

Skills, employment, inclusion and progression

- In response to feedback from careers leaders and employers a Work Experience framework is being developed to support schools, colleges and employers to support meaningful encounters both virtually and in a blended approach once Covid related restrictions allow. The framework will include employability skill activity as well as 360°workplace tours and employer talking head videos.
- Through our College Hub, the LEP supported the Gatsby Foundation to produce a video resource for World Skills that highlighted the benefits of Higher Technical Qualifications. In addition, we have led on other initiatives that have linked curriculum staff from the region's FE colleges to employers in sectors where there are currently skills shortages. The most recent of these was an Industry Insight event, which involved Ryan Maughan from Avid Technology, discussing and answering questions on the electrification agenda. A second session, which will focus on life sciences, is planned.

Transport

- The initial design phase of the Metro Fleet replacement project has been successfully completed ahead of the programme and it is anticipated that Covid-19 will not impact on the new trains entering service in 2023. The final cab mock-up is being manufactured and will be delivered to Gosforth Depot in February 2021 for driver consultation. The new Howdon satellite depot is now in operational use.
- Progress on the development of the EV chargers for the Taxi trade has been steady, with orders placed and the first chargers are being installed; four of the ten are now online.

Investment and Infrastructure

- Package of measures agreed at previous LEP Board for £5m of Covid-19 related support are progressing; Patent Protection Scheme has provided grants to 12 Health and Life Science focused businesses; Health and Life Science Development Fund has led to seven projects being take forward; Cluster Development Fund has made 12 awards; VCS Capital Fund has made grant awards totalling £1.2m.
- More than £31m of grant awards from the Getting Building Fund programme have been approved by the Investment Board since the £47m was allocated to the North East LEP in July 2020.

Strategy and Policy

- Substantial work undertaken to support the development of a regional bid to respond to the Free Port opportunity. Bid is to be submitted by 5 February 2021, separate paper detailing the bid contents will be presented to the LEP Board for sign-off.
- The North East has been successful in securing a Round 2 'Healthy Ageing' High Potential Opportunity which will result in specific commercial opportunities in the North East being promoted and actively marketed by the Department for International Trade to encourage inward investment.

Communications

- There continues to be growth in the number of followers across LEP's social media (0.4% on Twitter and 2.6% on LinkedIn since March). The North East LEP remains the most followed LEP in the country on Twitter.
- The stories with the most views on the LEP website related to the £1.2m of LGF grant support awarded to Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise projects.

3.0 Recommendations

- 3.1 The Board is recommended to note the contents of the report and *Appendix 1*.

Appendix – North East Strategic Economic Plan Programme Delivery update, January 2021

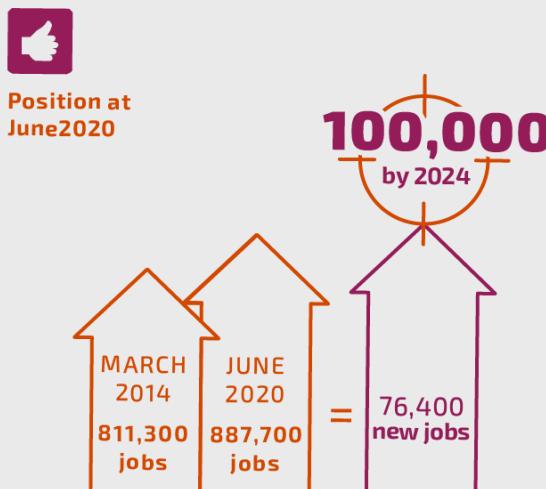
North East Strategic Economic Plan

Programme Delivery update

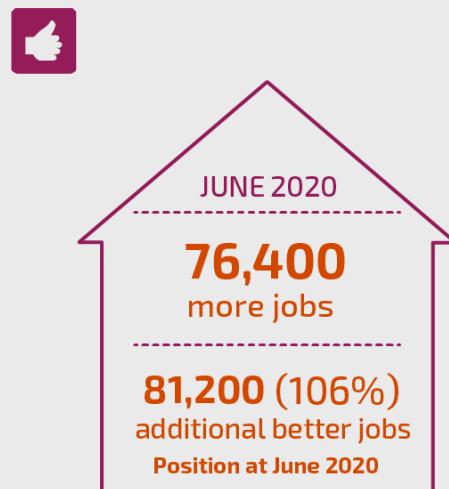
January 2021



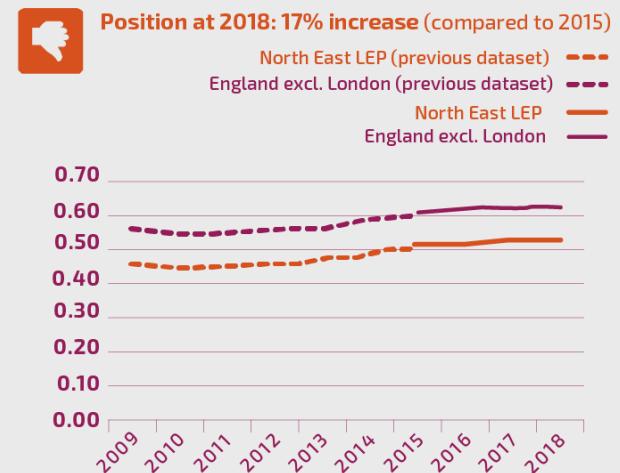
Target Increase the number of jobs in the North East economy by 100,000 by 2024



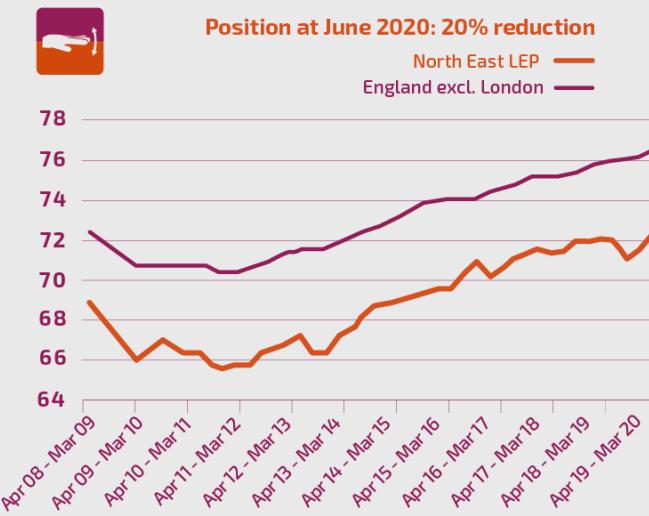
Target 70% of all jobs created from 2014 will be better jobs



Reduce the gap in private sector employment density
Target 50% reduction in gap by 2024



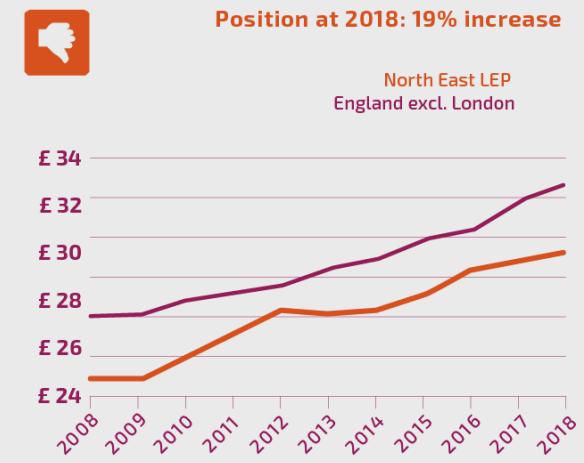
Close the gap in the employment rate for people aged 16-64
Target 100% reduction in gap by 2024



Reduce the gap in economic activity for people aged 16-64
Target 50% reduction in gap by 2024



Reduce the gap in GVA per hour worked
Target 50% reduction in gap by 2024



Business Growth | Lead: Colin Bell

Ambition by 2024

To be a growth orientated, dynamic and productive environment where businesses invest, grow and thrive. At a time of change, we want business leaders to be inspired and supported to achieve their goals through strengthened leadership, innovation and trade, resulting in:

- An increase to the density of scaleup businesses in the North East by 50% from 2014 to 2024. These businesses will deliver 6,000 new jobs into the North East economy
- The attraction of new businesses who invest in the North East and create 4,000 new job per year between 2014 and 2024

We want more businesses to actively seek, and find with ease, the support and finance they need to grow and to strengthen the visibility of opportunities for investment in our economy.

What we will deliver	Progress update and current position	Lead	Progress Status	
Raise levels of business growth ambition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research, develop and implement a strategy designed to increase businesses' ambition to start up, grow, scaleup and improve Develop relationships with intermediaries to reach a larger proportion of the region's businesses, with a particular focus on improving awareness amongst under-represented groups, such as women, ethnic minorities, rural areas and social enterprises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No significant updates since the last board meeting. Progress on areas of research, such as exploring the causes of enterprise cold and hot spots, is not possible during lockdown. The team continues to engage in the MIT REAP programme. The project focus has narrowed to focus on attracting Graduates back to the North East to start a business. Covid19 Response Plan Growth Hub 2.0 proposition is prioritising increased start up support capacity as a priority. 	Colin Bell	A
Increase demand for external business support and finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide access to business start-up support, finance and information through the North East Growth Hub online portal and the national Business Support Helpline Provide one-to-one impartial brokerage to established businesses and high potential start-ups through our Growth Hub Connectors Provide intensive account management and managed brokerage to businesses that are scaling up or have the potential to do so Work with high quality private and public partners to ensure business support and finance are accessible to rural businesses, social enterprises and business leaders from different gender and ethnic groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North East Growth Hub continues to deliver ahead of target in most areas. Performance to 31st December 2020; high intensity interventions delivered = 636 (145% of target), medium intensity interventions delivered = 1,264 (119% of target), light touch interventions delivered = 36.3k (203% of target), customer satisfaction 98%. The BEIS Peer Networks completes recruitment 31st January and delivery by 31st March. We are forecasting recruitment of 32 cohorts by end of January. Demand for EU Transition support is low, many businesses do not think that they will be effected and/or perceive that as a deal had been reached that they do not have to make any changes. The North East LEP has been awarded £181k to raise awareness and to support businesses. In addition, we have been awarded £40k for collaborative activity across the North East Growth Hub Cluster (North East LEP and Tees Valley CA). We expect further funding from BEIS to increase Growth Hub capacity to support businesses through EU Transition – we are awaiting confirmation of funding. 	Colin Bell	G
Ensure the support of external business support and finance matches the needs of businesses and the economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review business support and finance provision to ensure that the region's ecosystem provides a ladder for business growth from start-up to scaleup and continuous improvement Introduce a quality assurance system through the North East Growth Hub that assess the quality of support offered to businesses by external business support and finance providers Work with private and public partners to design and develop a range of interventions to drive productivity improvement and the adoption of digital technology Ensure peer mentoring and peer-to-peer leadership development is available to support businesses to scale and improve productivity Work with partners to increase the density of high potential start-ups in the North East Continue to develop the North East Growth Hub Business Support Provider Network to encourage collaboration and the sharing of good practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £2.4 million Kickstarting Tourism and Restart and Recovery Grants: 570 businesses contracted to a value of £1.56m with another 34 at contracting stage and 25 at eligibility stage. The average grant size stands at £2,730. Since the second national lockdown was announced there has been a huge increase in the number of businesses requesting extensions to their Contract End Dates as project delivery is delayed due to the lockdown Scaleup North East: work has commenced with RTC on the new £4million Scaleup North East 2 programme which will use an integrated delivery model with the North East Growth Hub will increase the intensity of delivery. Start-up support capacity: no significant options have been identified to boost start up support capacity. Concerns remain that demand will continue to increase through lockdown and as Government support measures (such as the Job Retention Scheme) are removed. Partners are adapting their delivery models to deal with higher volumes although fears are that in doing so the impact of support will reduce and suppress survival rates. It should be noted that supporting a proportion of the self-employed to move on to develop and grow a business could help to address the regions enterprise deficit – this is a time limited opportunity (as many will choose to return to employment once demand returns) so work continues to lobby for increased levels of business start up support. 	Colin Bell	A

What we will deliver	Progress update and current position	Lead	Progress Status
Improve the region's economic resilience			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the North East Growth Hub to distribute up-to-date information on business support and finance options available to support Brexit preparations Work with partners to develop programmes and solution designed to help businesses to diversify into new markets, supply chains and geographies, including through Supply Chain North East Work with partners to inform the business support and finance funding mechanisms that will replace the European Structural Investment Funds Work with partners to set up task forces, when appropriate, to prepare for, to mitigate the effects of and to deal with the fallout of economic shocks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cluster Development Fund: 12 projects have been awarded a total of £283k LGF funding to support cluster developments aimed at supporting Covid19 recovery: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Manufacturing Forum – Advanced Manufacturing Northern Film and Media – Creative Industries Durham Culture Partnership – Creative and Cultural Sector Entrepreneurs Forum – Enhancing Digital Delivery to members Food & Drink North East – Food & Drink North East Automotive Alliance – Electric Vehicle Supply Chain North East Process Industries Cluster – Pharmaceutical Manufacture Newcastle Gateshead Initiative – Tourism Industry Dynamo – Cyber Security Cluster REHTECH Ltd – Resilient Communications Collinwood Solutions – Semiconductor Cluster Sunderland Software Centre – Digital Sector 	Colin Bell	A
Grow inward investment in the region			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combined and local authorities, the LEP, the Department for International Trade and private sector will work together with a shared ambition of securing maximum inward investment into the North East Establish and follow a clear target driven, lead generation model that is focused on the SEPs areas of strategic importance and support service sectors Have a robust account management system, led by local authorities, to share knowledge and investment opportunities with key partners Develop and deliver an integrated marketing plan to raise the profile of the North East as a place to invest and locate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To date in 2020/21, due to Covid-19, there has been a significant decrease in active inward investment project numbers and a very difficult environment in which to attract new investment. The Q1&2 success totals show that in the NE LEP area there have been 23 inward investment project successes resulting in 1,230 new jobs. The Q 3 figures are being collected in January 2021. INEE continues to deliver the DIT Key Account Management Programme (KAM) in partnership with local authorities. An addendum to the original contract has just been signed which reflects the challenges that operating during Covid-19 – reducing some hard project success targets and introducing some additional softer activities. The Team continues to develop its pipeline through proactive lead generation and other activities including: servicing existing clients on the INEE project pipeline (one very significant investment expected shortly); reviewing and updating its marketing and communications strategy; developing its strategic approach to inward investment attraction in a post-COVID-19 world including developing the North East North Shoring Plan and a strategy to attract new electrification projects; working with partners on some very significant new projects in a variety of sectors which involve billions of pounds of investment and many thousands of new jobs; integrating the emerging Freeport proposals into INEE's propositions once these become clear. The Freeport will be a significant lever for inward investment activity. 	Guy Currey	A

Programme Risks						
Risk Description	Cause description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall	Actions to avoid/reduce impact	
Programmes do not match the needs of businesses	Lack of control over current funding landscape	M	H	MH	Liaison with BEIS, LEP taking a thought leadership role.	
Future ecosystem deployment is delayed	SPF or EU funding successor is delayed	M	H	MH	Financial input/output model being tested and embedded within recovery planning	
Business downturn and/or closure	Brexit process/outcome causes economic shock National resources are not secured or directed to deal with significant shocks Regional partners are uncoordinated and unable to draw down Government resources	M	H	MH	Engage with business and gather intelligence about business impacts of Brexit.	
Covid-19 impacts coupled with EU Exit processes and timescales significantly impede ability to attract new FDI with resultant economic impacts to North East LEP area's economy.	Covid-19 and EU Exit processes and timescales cause uncertainty and deter or defer investment decisions.	H	H	HH	Continued liaison and dialogue with partners to develop contingency plans.	

Innovation | Lead: Alan Welby

Ambition by 2024

Innovation is central to our long-term aim to build a more productive North East, fostering a competitive and embedded business base and solving social and economic challenges in the region and beyond. It is a tool for internationalising our economy, particularly in areas of specialisation, by attracting partners and investors to engage in our science, research and business base and for strengthening the competitiveness of businesses and creativity of communities.

We have an ambition of a collaborative and open innovation eco-system that enables the matching of what is needed to what is possible to drive economic or social value, or both.

We aim to increase the number of innovation active businesses by 550 and increase investment in business research, development and innovation by 50% between 2014 and 2024.

What we will deliver	Progress update and current position	Lead	Progress Status
Stimulate new business opportunities through the North East Open Innovation Challenge			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Stimulate new business opportunities through the North East Open Innovation Challenge · Support the alignment and communication of open innovation and challenge events and programmes to create critical mass and deepen engagement with regional businesses in events · Support best practice for open innovation events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The Covid-19 Innovation Challenge pilot is in delivery phase, and engagement from the North East business community has been very good. The pilot was launched in December 2020 with two challenges: the delivery of home-based services and safe in-person events. The call for expressions of interest for the two pilot challenges closed on 15 January with a total of 63 applications. The Eols will be evaluated by a panel on 19 January, and due to the high numbers a planned third call may be halted in favour of focussing on the existing Eols. · Work continues to develop a North East Open Innovation Challenge with communications focusing on stimulating interest amongst regional businesses through the Covid-19 challenge. Work is continuing to develop a set of materials to support region-wide engagement and appetite for OI challenge activities. https://challenge.northeastgrowthhub.co.uk · The INVITE project was successfully completed and the lessons learned were communicated in a blog. The development of the Covid-19 Challenge and the future North East Open Innovation Challenge are both utilising the good practice and lessons learned from INVITE. 	Alan Welby	G
Prioritise a regional pipeline of projects to form a Strategic Investment Programme			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Develop a prioritised list of regional, large scale pipeline projects · Align with activities undertaken by our Combined Authorities · Focus on large-scale collaborative projects that have the capacity to have significant impact for the regional economy and create jobs · The North East LEP's Innovation Board will play a challenge and support role, holding regional partners to account for progress in developing the evidence base and business plans, securing funding and delivering pipeline projects · Develop a programme to address identified place-based gaps to supporting business growth · Coordinate an approach to securing funds for pipeline projects, including from the National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) and Grand Challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The number of projects on the innovation pipeline has reduced following the transfer of several projects into the Innovation Delivery Partnership (IDP) pilot in December. Activity to identify new projects of regional significance will be undertaken in Spring 2021. · A review of Innovation Board membership and terms of reference is planned which will ensure continuing alignment of innovation activity through appropriate representation from both the North East Combined Authority and North of Tyne Combined Authority. Both Combined Authorities are involved in MIT-REAP Team North East and in both the development of the IDP process and the assessment of Expressions of Interest. Relationships with local planning authorities are emerging regarding the Economic Markets Foresight Analysis. · Alignment will be retained between the Innovation pipeline and the LEP regional priority project pipeline during future calls to ensure focus remains on projects of strategic importance. · Durham University have secured funding to take forward the Place Based research piece on behalf of the LEP with work underway to define research parameters. This will be the first phase of this work. 	Alan Welby	G
Support our businesses to capitalise on local research and innovation capability			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Strengthen collaboration between businesses and innovation assets such as universities, catapults and national centres of excellence · Enhance the co-ordination between businesses, sectors and innovation assets · Support our innovation assets to successfully secure national funding to run regional programmes · Work with service delivery partners such as the NHS and local authorities to take up and roll-out new delivery approaches · 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Ongoing activity continues with focus on the NE Covid 19 Challenge programme. The LEP contacted to 12 businesses participate in the Intrapreneurship programme plan as part of High Potential Startups. · Coordination between sectors continues to take place through the IDP process and through the Economic Markets Foresight Analysis that is being procured. · The 12 projects supported through the Innovation Project Development Fund are progressing with business case development. IC3 (the International Centre for Connected Construction) is awaiting the outcome of a Strength in Places Fund bid. · The Covid 19 challenge programme will engage with service delivery partners to apply new models of collaboration to address issues thrown up by Covid - Local authorities, NHS, Transport organisations and utilities have engaged in the process as challenge sponsors. We have also been very successful in engaging private sector organisations to sponsor challenges. 	Alan Welby	G

What we will deliver	Progress update and current position	Lead	Progress Status		
Increase private sector investment into growing innovation businesses					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support VentureFest and FinanceCamp Develop new approaches to lever private funding from outside the region Develop an open innovation challenge to drive increased collaborative investment Work with universities to continue to grow spin-out success, including through Northern Accelerator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The team continues to engage with the Innovation SuperNetwork and is looking towards the new date agreed for VentureFest (17 March 2021). The Finance Task and Finish Group's recommendations are now built in to a corporate action plan for further consideration. The Group met on 14 January to take forward demand-side actions. A finance and funding toolkit is proposed for the North East Growth Hub as the first deliverable of the roadmap. Discussions continue regarding the successor to North East Fund and with Venture North, and the team is engaged with the Corporation of London regarding finance for sustainable growth. The MIT Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Programme (MIT-REAP) is focused on retaining graduate talent and will be mobilised in the new financial year through the stakeholder group. Activity proposed to support the retention of graduates compliments other graduate enterprise activities underway and supports the aims of the Recovery and Renewal Deal. To date, 29 survey responses have been received. 	Alan Welby	A		
Engage partners to identify and drive business growth through an Innovation Sectors and Competencies Programme					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and prioritise regional innovation sectors and competencies, including assessing where these align with the Industrial Strategy and North East Local Industrial Strategy Put robust governance in place to identify priority areas Ensure buy-in and engagement with private sector Develop a portfolio of projects and programmes Identify leads and capacity to drive activity Improve alignment of innovation activities to skills and business growth programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11 IDPs were endorsed by the Innovation Board at its meeting in December 2020 for consideration at LEP Board 28 January. The IDP pilot programme's inaugural workshop to develop the IDP framework and the benchmark approach takes place on 22 January 2021 with lead and core partners. The IDPs are divided into Pathfinder (Wave 1) and Development (Wave 2) partnerships, the main distinctions being market identification and strategic intent. The pilot IDPs are in the following emergent markets: Pathfinder (x7): aging, battery materials, electric drives, immersives technologies, integrated construction, offshore robotics, space; Development (x4): cybersecurity, fintech, surfaces and interfaces, water resource management. The tender deadline for the Economic Markets Foresight Analysis was extended to 15 January 2021. Tenders will be evaluated on the 20/21 January, with the contract due to commence w/c 15 February, running through to mid-September 2021. The Government's Open Innovation Team has been procured to provide validation capacity to the project and will bring international and national market and sector experts together to test, challenge and peer review findings at two critical stages in the contract. The framework for evaluating and reporting on IDPs will be developed through engagement during the pilot process. A co-creation approach is being taken to developing a benchmarking framework with agreed measurable standards for the components of an innovation ecosystem. The benchmarks align with the innovation KPI framework and support key elements of the IDP concept. Good practice is integral to the design of the framework. 	Alan Welby	G		
Coordinate regional partners to provide enhanced innovation support activity					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the delivery of a programme of innovation support for regional businesses Ensure activity is aligned through successful partnership brokered by the Innovation SuperNetwork Support businesses to increase their investment in RDI Strengthen our links with national and international hubs and networks to generate commercial returns for local businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Business Growth and Innovation teams continue to build the ecosystem model by exploring the data requirements to fully populate the financial input-output model that will inform potential investment decisions along with several partners. LEP team continues to work closely with the SuperNetwork through the Open Innovation Challenge and participation in the SuperNetwork Partner Group. Alan Welby is chairing the Northern Powerhouse innovation leads and has lead a review of activity. The LEP has also facilitated the recruitment of a NP11 Innovation Director who will report to Alan Welby with 5 applications at the deadline close of 14th Jan with interviews later in January. 	Alan Welby	G		
Programme Risks					
Risk Description	Cause description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall	Actions to avoid/reduce impact
Innovation budget insufficient to cover all activities - namely Places and Communities study	Broader budget pressures	H	M	HM	Investigating other approaches to delivery with reduced cost and reprofiling activity
Uncertainty over funding direction of key national competitions	Pre-budget period lack of clarity	M	H	MH	Keeping up to date with development and developing strong project irrespective of details of investment stream
Capacity to address key activities particularly IDP	Required resourcing for IDP development	H	M	HM	Considering options for additional focused resource to provide capacity

Skills, employment, inclusion and progression | Lead: Michelle Rainbow

Ambition by 2024

Our long-term ambition in the North East is that demand for skills and the quality of jobs continue to improve, leading to higher productivity. To delivery this, the North East must be a place where:

- Individuals, regardless of age or employment status, have a good understanding of the employment opportunities available in the North East and the pathways to access them
- Employers have strong links with education and training providers leading to responsive provision that meets local needs
- All partners understand the importance of skills in improving productivity and living standards, with commitment to delivering good working environments for residents

This is an ambition vision that will require substantial changes to deliver. By 2024, our ambition is that these principles are understood across the region and that there has been significant progress made towards their achievement, providing a strong base to build on in future years.

What we will deliver	Progress update and current position	Lead	Progress Status
1. Deliver North East Ambition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Develop a primary school benchmark pilot that could influence the national careers strategy · Adoption of the Gatsby Good Careers Benchmarks by all secondary schools and colleges · Secure and deliver a £3.4million North East Ambition programme that ensures our education system provides young people with the skills to meet the long-term needs of the North East economy <p>· As part of the Career Benchmarks: Primary Pilot, we recently commissioned an external organisation, Learn by Design, to develop some resources for our primary schools – to support them with aspects of the benchmarks that, collectively, they find the most challenging. The resources that we are developing will be focussed on LMI that can be delivered through the curriculum, for teachers as well as parents/carers. These resources will also make reference to the SEP. In addition, we're developing a further piece of work linked to transition, which will add value to the school's current processes and better connect primary and secondary schools in terms of Careers Related Learning, with each other.</p> <p>· Working with partners from across the region, we delivered two live My North East Choices broadcasts through the Learn Live platform. These broadcasts were designed to highlight the full range of options for young people who are completing Year 11 this year, as well as 17-19 year olds who also have decisions to make in terms of their next steps in education, employment or training.</p> <p>· Through our College Hub, including by engaging a number of Vice Principals from FE partners across the region, we supported the Gatsby Foundation to produce a video resource for World Skills that highlighted the benefits of Higher Technical Qualifications. In addition, we have led on a number of other initiatives that have linked curriculum staff from the region's FE colleges to employers in sectors where there are currently skills shortages. The most recent of these was an Industry Insight event, which involved Ryan Maughan from Avid Technology, discussing and answering questions on the electrification agenda. A second session, which will focus on life sciences, is planned.</p>	Michelle Rainbow	G
2. Deliver Education Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Partner with the Department for Education and others to consider the allocation of the £24 million Opportunity North East funding to improve prospects for young people in the North East. Boost social mobility and raise aspirations for children · Expand delivery of the Next Generation learning pilot focussing on school leadership, high quality CPD, rich employer engagement, early preparation for next stage, a focus on wider skills, a focus on student well-being and teaching and learning through applied learning, project based learning and oracy skills <p>· Opportunity North East continues to delivery in line with the project delivery plan. Significant challenges have been faced during the last academic term, 74% of students were able to access virtual Cycle 2 advice and guidance and career related activity and interventions. The data evidences positive direction of travel against a number of assessment criteria following interventions and interviews between Cycle 1 and Cycle 2.</p> <p>· Partnership work with Ford Next Generation Learning has commenced with an additional Further Education College with a focus on Health pathways. Stakeholder and community groups are being convened in preparation for initial engagement workshops.</p> <p>· In response to feedback from careers Leaders and employers a Work Experience framework is being developed to support schools, colleges and employers to support meaningful encounters both virtually and in a blended approach once restrictions allow. The framework will include employability skill activity as well as 360°workplace tours and employer talking head videos. The framework will be tested with pilot schools and employers.</p>	Michelle Rainbow	G
3. Improve skills progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Develop a list of the region's assets within FE, HE and other providers to inform future investment provision · Promote the North East as a potential location to pilot a system to help individuals recognise and record their transferable skills · Work with the Apprenticeship Growth Partnership and other partners to increase the number of apprenticeships available at all levels within growth and labour-intensive sectors · Support partners to implement good quality T-levels and specialist technical education to widen choices for young people · Secure funding to deliver a university pilot project focussing on careers and opportunities <p>· No significant updates since the last board meeting.</p> <p>· The LEP and other partners are scoping the pilot programme for transferable or fusion skills. The pilot will be influenced by the findings in the Taylor Review. A proposition for a pilot was included in the draft local industrial strategy.</p> <p>· The Skills Advisory Panel has identified the impact on Covid-19 on apprenticeship delivery as a priority. This is now part of an overall ask around Jobs Recovery in the regional Economic Response to C-19</p> <p>· A LEP proposal to hold a series of targeted events to promote T-levels placements was approved by ESFA, an a series of events is underway with employers and with educational organisations to promote</p>	Michelle Rainbow	G

What we will deliver	Progress update and current position	Lead	Progress Status		
4. Increase youth employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to deliver Generation North East and the model to prevent youth unemployment Provide specialist intensive support for those most distant from the labour market because of disadvantage, poverty, poor physical and mental health Grow the number of apprenticeships by developing access courses Ensure young people are able to develop their digital skills. This required digital skills to be built into school, FE and HE courses, exploring new models of delivery including working to secure an Institute of Technology in the region and ensuring that support for young people not in education, employment or training includes digital skills training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generation North East has adapted extremely well under Covid-19 restrictions by delivering digitally to young people. Currently they have on register 1,185 young people and support 414 into work since April 2014. The contract is now preparing to end in March 2021 and partners are reviewing the legacy and lessons learnt to inform any future funding opportunities or programmes. DurhamWorks has now supported 8,231 young people since its commencement in January 2016. 4,838 have completed the programme and of those 4169 (86%) have progressed into employment, education or training or gained a qualification. The National Careers Service (NCS) is currently being provided by telephone or other digital platforms which provides the customer still with a full Information, Advice and Guidance session; and demand is rapidly increasing - total customers seen in this period in the NE LEP area are 9,688 this equates to 1,076 customers per month; 	Michelle Rainbow G		
5. Improve labour market activation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop holistic package of support for people facing health barriers to employment, building on successful projects such as Mental Health Trailblazer and Working Links, showcasing the benefits of collaboration Ensure support is in place for those that have moved from unemployment or inactivity into work to help them progress and acquire further skills Increase take up of Better Health at Work Awards and similar schemes to employers, to share employment and human resource best practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No significant updates since the last board meeting. The National Careers Service has been working with local authorities to roll out the Jobs Fuse programme. This is a new programme that supports workers impacted by the Covid-19 crisis to return to work and help employers fill vacancies. The programme has been launched in Durham and South Tyneside (at the time of writing) and planning was underway in the rest of the North East LEP region. The programme is flexible and will be integrated into existing services where appropriate. The programme also provides direct support for furloughed workers, it also provides information and support to employers to plan for their furloughed employees. The North East LEP is developing a partnership project with Durham University to develop a series of case studies looking at good work. The proposal has been approved for funding and first inception meeting are underway. 	Michelle Rainbow A		
6. Ensure connected communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide targeted support for communities and individuals, focusing on those with multiple barriers or protected characteristics, and ensure this is a strategic funding priority Work to secure funding and other resources to ensure that all North East residents are able to develop their digital skills regardless of their age, location or economic status Consideration of digital skills provision and local digital infrastructure must be prioritised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No significant updates since the last board meeting. Over £70m of ESF projects are currently live, with 21 projects currently in the appraisal process. The ESF regional coordinator has collected information on the impact of covid-19 on delivery across the North East programming and is in touch with the managing authority to mitigate the impact. Digital Skills is part of the overall ESIF strategy and will be a priority in the development of future provision. The SAP will provide the start of the detailed analysis of the requirement. 	Michelle Rainbow G		
7. Help deliver Fuller Working Lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop and implement the North East's Fuller Working Lives strategy with a supporting communications plan that targets employers and addresses the challenges and opportunities around this agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No significant updates since the last board meeting. Work has commenced the development of a series of activities focussed on the 3 R, re-train, retrain and regain. Development of the FWL strategy is being developed as a key part of local industrial strategy. The LEP is working with regional universities to explore innovation in healthy aging, aligned with the Aging Society set out in industrial strategy. 	Michelle Rainbow G		
Programme Risks					
Risk Description	Cause description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall	Actions to avoid/reduce impact
Fusion Skills Pilot: Lack of funding	No confirmed funding source for the employability framework	M	H	MH	Sources of funding is being sought
T Levels: Emerging government policy on T-Levels placements	Emerging government policy on T-Levels placements may result in reluctance from employers to provide apprenticeships.	M	H	MH	Regular communication with ESFA/partners to ensure clear messages to employers on reforms.
Apprenticeships: regional delivery impacted by covid-19	Early indications are that covid-19 is having an impact on apprenticeship delivery country-wide	M	H	MH	Working with regional partners to draw up an action plan to support delivery.
Youth Employment: programmes face uncertainty around delivery	The sector is reporting financial uncertainty with many grant funding streams uncertain and delivery halted.	H	H	HH	Working closely with partners to assess the impact of covid-19 on the sector and draw up a response.

Transport connectivity | Lead: Philip Meikle

Vision Statement

Our ambition is once of improved, greener and more sustainable transport options, including public transport, cycling and walking.

New mobility solutions will make travel simpler and affordable across our distinctive local economy. Quality infrastructure will make for reliable, fast journeys with connectivity into national and international freight and passenger networks. This network will be the enabler to sustainable growth and opportunity, and to the North East being an outward looking economy attracting trade, investment and visitors from across Europe and the world.

Through the Strategic Economic Plan we have established a strong investment pipeline. Our aim is to continue to deliver continuous improvement in a modern, integrated transport system that underpins our economic ambitions.

What we will deliver	Progress update and current position	Lead	Progress Status
Ongoing transport project delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued infrastructure renewals on the Metro system to promote system reliability Further roll out of electric vehicle charging points through the Go Ultra Low North East programme to encourage the uptake of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles in the region Delivery of the Local Growth Fund transport programme and the Local Sustainable Transport Fund capital programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project and Programme Management of circa 300 individual projects within the Metro Asset Renewal Programme and development of 30 new projects for delivery under the subsequent Essential Renewals Programme. £341m of the £350m ARP funding has now been invested. A further £20m 'Essential Renewals Funding' is confirmed for 2021/22. 231 Projects have been completed and closed out with 62 live projects in progress at 8th January 2021. Programme delivery is continuing to be impacted by Covid working restrictions with some managed budget pressures, delays and disruption to site works. Transport North East Strategy Unit has procured Swarco UK Ltd to progress the development of the EV chargers for the Taxi trade. Orders have been placed and the chargers are being installed. Four of the ten are now online with a further five to be delivered by early February 2022. Delays have been encountered due to unexpected wayleaves but are now being progressed. 	Philip Meikle	G
Secure funding from Transforming Cities Bid and commence delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A high-quality bid, that secures significant funding for the sustainable transport network Begin a programme of sustainable infrastructure interventions in public transport, walking and cycling Develop the foundations of an innovative new mobility ecosystem with digitally based ticketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An excellent funding settlement has been achieved, with both rail schemes funded and a £104m Devolved Pot established for local schemes. A delivery team has now been recruited and the programme will start in 2021. A plan for new mobility has been prepared (this formed the basis of our FMZ bid). Exploration continues to find potential sources of funding for new mobility interventions. 	Philip Meikle	G
Deliver better connectivity through improved infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interventions on the local Strategic Highways Network, including major junction projects and commencement of A1 improvements Roll out of the first trains in the Metro fleet replacement programmes Commissioning of electric vehicle filling stations and charging clusters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highways England (HE) current work programmes for strategic highways improvements is on schedule: A19: Construction on Testos/ Downhill Lane continues through the period, which will create a free flowing A19 between North Yorkshire and Northumberland. A69: Work has continued on the two junction schemes in the Hexham area to improve flow - Due for completion in March 2021. A66: Planning for the dualling scheme is progressing and HE with the commitment in the Spring Budget that the scheme will commence within the RIS2 period (2020-2025). An exercise is currently live showing the latest designs, before a formal engagement exercise next year. A1: Western Bypass improvements at Scotswood-North Brunton commenced in March 2020, Birtley to Coalhouse: due to start in 2020-2021. A1 in Northumberland, schemes at Morpeth to Felton and Alnwick to Ellingham merged to now be called Morpeth to Ellingham. DCO consultation has closed and the application is being considered by the Planning Inspectorate with a decision expected in July 2021. The initial design phase of the Metro Fleet replacement project has been successfully completed ahead of the programme deadline of 6th January 2021. Stadler have advised that any impact COVID 19 will have on the Fleet Replacement Programme will be clearer by summer 2021 but advise at present it has not impacted on the new trains entering service in 2023. A decision was taken to cancel the manufacturing of a full size saloon mock up on the basis that it is unlikely that Covid restrictions will be sufficiently lifted to allow for a public exhibition to take place during April 2021. The final cab mock up is being manufactured and will be delivered to Gosforth Depot in February 2021 for driver consultation. Howdon satellite depot is now in operational use. The Go Ultra Low North East programme has made significant progress during the project period, notably the opening of the UK's first EV filling station. There has been some delay to the delivery of the hubs due to COVID 19 therefore a further extension until April 2021 has been granted. The project will then close. 	Philip Meikle	G

What we will deliver	Progress update and current position	Lead	Progress Status	
Develop a future transport investment pipeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of the North East Transport Plan continues The Transport North East Strategy Unit and Nexus are engaged with TfN on current projects covering the Major Roads Network, Strategic Development Corridors (road and rail) and the Long Term Rail Strategy line of route audits. TfN preparing a Covid response plan (TfN Economic Recovery Plan) and preparing for a potential stimulus budget. Project pipeline for inclusion in the Transport Plan is being developed, these will be projects which are regional priorities and meet the objectives and targets within the Transport Plan. The pipeline will be run as a live programme. The initial draft project pipeline is included in the consultation draft of the North East Transport Plan. Funding solutions have not been identified for most schemes in the pipeline. 	Philip Meikle	A	
Improve national and international connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of the programme of interventions outlined in the Newcastle Airport Masterplan to grow routes and foster wider business growth in associated sectors Agreement with Northern Powerhouse Rail and others on approach to East Coast Mainline improvements Ongoing augmentation or port capability to support trade and investment and to foster growth in key regional areas of opportunity including energy and advanced manufacturing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work is ongoing and we continue to liaise with local ports. A Free Port bid is being developed for submission to government, led by Port of Tyne with input from a range of relevant stakeholders including NELEP, Newcastle Airport and Transport North East Nexus are engaged in development work with Network Rail and TfN. TfN Board approved on 18th November the initial preferred network and phasing strategy following the intermediate sifting of options; for Leeds to Newcastle corridor the preferred option includes Full reopening of the Leamside Line for Freight traffic, enabling an uplift of passenger services on the ECML. 	Philip Meikle	A
Use transport to drive innovation and business growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint work across all transport modes to identify opportunities for innovation areas including energy, fuels, digital mobility and the development of the Centre for Connected Autonomous Vehicles Collaborative work with tourism agencies to strengthen the offer for business and visitor tourism Collaborative work to develop supply chain and skills development programmes linked to transport and logistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future Mobility Zone Project closed - DfT did not shortlist the North East FMZ proposition. The Airport is working with other members of the Northern Tourism Alliance, including DMO's and LA's on the Visit North East England project. NTA members are providing content for the new website and the Airport is driving traffic to the site via overseas digital campaigns The North East Freight Partnership's Skills Working Group engages with the logistics sector, training providers and other agencies to examine ways of addressing skills and labour shortages. The next meeting was to have been held in mid-2020, however meetings have been on hold due to COVID-19. An online NEFP meeting took place on 8th December and we are looking to hold an online Skills Group meeting in the early months of 2021. 	Philip Meikle	G

Programme Risks						
Risk Description	Cause description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall	Actions to avoid/reduce impact	
Affordability of Metro Asset Renewal Programme - Delivery of required outcomes within the £352m available funding.	Multiple project risks, contractor risk pricing and inflationary pressures. Covid-19 impact on working arrangements and supply chains. EU supply chain risks (inc' Brexit related).	H	M	HM	Re-prioritisation and allocation of risk contingency. Periodic (4weekly) programme reviews and quarterly 'affordability' reporting.	
Beyond 2020/21, funding for Metro Infrastructure renewals remains unconfirmed. Metro Infrastructure investment unfunded beyond 31 March 2021	Business Case submitted - still awaiting DfT / Treasury approval	M	H	MH	Continue to engage with DfT / Treasury. DfT Nexus Programme Board and direct communications.	
Funding not available for new mobility interventions	No funding can be identified from internal or external sources to develop new mobility trials	H	M	HM	Continue to explore funding opportunities.	
Pipeline of schemes for Transport Plan is not agreed and funding is not secured	Unable to reach consensus on which schemes are included in the pipeline and Funding is not available	M	H	MH	The interventions will be as a result of working in partnership with each local authority.	

Investment and infrastructure | Lead: Helen Golightly

Ambition by 2024

Through focussed and coordinated investments we will address market failures and competitive weaknesses. We will work with partners to quicken the pace and scale of investment across the North East, focusing on our business and infrastructure investment opportunities and needs. Opportunities for job and productivity growth on strategic employment sites, in town and city centres, along strategic transport corridors, in our culture and tourist hubs and in the rural economy will be prioritised.

What we will deliver	Progress update and current position	Lead	Progress Status
Manage the already secured North East LEP funding effectively			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest the £270m of Local Growth Fund (LGF) grant into transport, infrastructure for strategic science parks and employment sites, plus skills and business growth activities Maximise the loan investment opportunity for the £55m North East Investment Fund (NEIF) Progress delivery of the 21 Enterprise Zone sites' infrastructure programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Package of measures agreed at previous LEP Board for £5m of Covid-19 related support are progressing; Patent Protection Scheme has provided grants to 12 Health and Life Science focused businesses; Health and Life Science Development Fund has led to seven projects being take forward; Cluster Development Fund has made 12 awards; VCS Capital Fund has made grant awards totalling £1.2m. Grant Offer made for project on Team Valley, but applicant has declined. Options for alternative utilisation being considered. 31 projects have now received NEIF awards. An application to Getting Building Fund grant suport towards infrastructure works on Wallsend EZ site is expected to be considered during Q4 2020/21. 	Helen Golightly	G
Coordinate partners to develop a regional project pipeline based on spatial economic priorities			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce a regional project pipeline based on agreed spatial economic priorities through effective partnership working with the two combined and seven local authorities, business and education partners and government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work continues with Local Authorities to pull together a comprehensive pipeline list, including those forming part of the Covid-19 recovery plan. Expected that draft pipeline will be presented to Investment Board meeting in coming months. Further options around providing development/feasibility funding for pipeline projects being developed in order to ensure the region is in the best position for any funding opportunities. 	Helen Golightly	A
Secure additional investment into the North East			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure UK government funding linked to delivering the Industrial Strategy into the region Secure the notional allocation of European Structural Investment Funds into the region with partners Work with public and private sector partners to develop and secure funding for strategic projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £47m allocated to region through the Getting Building Fund (GBF) with programme of applications coming forward over the coming months to the LEP Investment Board. 14 projects with £31.2m of GBF grants already approved, and strategy has been considered by the North East LEP Investment Board to ensure spend target for 2020/21 (half of total allocation) is met. Details awaited from Government on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Significant work underway to support bid for Free Port status in the North East, including financial modelling that will underpin an investment programme if bid is successful Additional £19.6m ESF funding across 9 projects has now been approved through ESIF Committee. 	Helen Golightly	G
Increase access to finance for business to invest			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively deliver the North East Fund Identify gaps and market demand for new business finance models Develop business finance mechanisms to meet the need of North East businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There has been a steady increase in investments since the start of the pandemic, with £2.3m invested in Apr-Jun, £4.3m Jul-Sep, and over £6m invested in the quarter to December. The fund has recently achieved another significant milestone, having passed the £50m investment figure, which invested in almost 350 transactions. Demand (particularly sub £50k loans) continues to be affected to a degree by the availability of the government support schemes, which have now been extended to the end of March. Positively, the availability of the Future Fund has allowed several co-investment opportunities to be completed Review of the NEIF has resulted in development of Commercial Property Investment Fund, with market engagement activities having been completed with potential fund managers to refine the investment strategy. 	Helen Golightly	G

Programme Risks						
Risk Description	Cause description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall	Actions to avoid/reduce impact	
Delays to project completions and KPI achievement	Covid-19 related restrictions reduce ability of funded projects to complete in good time and delay achievement of KPIs	H	M	HM	Ongoing dialogue with project sponsors to understand impact	
Timely conclusion of Grant Funding agreements	Including assessment of new subsidy rules (relacing State Aid) and how these may impact on finalising the contracts required to spend grant budgets	M	M	MM	Work ongoing with NTCA and grant recipients to ensure progress is made	
Unable to fully defray GBF and LGF budget allocations during 2020/21 financial year	With half of the £47m allocation being provided in the current financial year, impact of due process in approving grants means that there will limited capital works undertaken in the eight months of the financial year between award and year end.	M	M	MM	Funding strategy developed and considered by Board in January and March 2021	

Strategy, Policy and Analysis | Lead: Richard Baker

Vision Statement

The North East LEP will be recognised locally and nationally as an exemplar for driving evidence based economic strategy, public policy and programme delivery.

What we will deliver	Progress update and current position	Lead	Progress Status
Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) development and delivery			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of external interim evaluation over period 2018-2021 Establish processes for embedding lessons from monitoring and evaluation into LEP decision making Development and delivery of comprehensive SEP communications plan Prepare for next scheduled review in 2021 Secure alignment with other regional plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The evaluation and monitoring arrangements are in place and active with a full interim evaluation report due in 2021. A forward plan for 2020-21 is in place and will include LGF content aligned with requirements of Investment Team. Discussion has begun about the forward progress for the SEP update, planned for 2021 informed by the evaluation and taking into account wider policy changes such as the Local Industrial Strategy and Transport Plan. Initial work to frame the post Covid evidence base has been begun by the Research and Analysis team The SEP has been used as a framing document for the Recovery Plan and the Transport Plan and project 1.4.2 will aim to consolidate that at that point of the 2021 update 	Richard Baker	A
Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) development			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree and develop a vision and objectives for LIS Develop a robust and open evidence base Identify and develop core propositions Pursue dialogue with Government regarding the LIS propositions Delivery of the engagement plan. Ensuring that it is co-produced with government and partners, and according to the government time table Approval of the LIS, taking through the required governance mechanisms Manage the various governance mechanisms including LIS Steering Group, Working Group and papers that are required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No significant updates since the last board meeting. Propositions that were developed as part of the LIS have informed the Covid-19 Response Plan 	Richard Baker	A
Economic analysis and commentary			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide timely, accurate and appropriate analysis of data Effectively communicate key messages from data using the most suitable mode of dissemination Develop new methods of accessing, collating, analysing and presenting data Identify opportunities to work with or provide guidance and training of other people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produced a comprehensive summary of the latest economic and labour market datasets relating to the impact of COVID-19, including identifying the most up to date information and potential new sources Provide monthly report of COVID-19 related data to feed into SAP meeting. Final report from consultants on new methods for understanding future employment and skills needs for specific sectors is currently being drafted. COVID-19 indicators have been added to the Data Hub, with more to follow. These have different timescales to other hub content, focussing on 2020, and include administrative data. Have developed the use of new COVID related data from Google and Government data about business support. 	Richard Baker	G
Delivery of research and evidence programme			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a centrally co-ordinated research programme Establish a collaborative research programme with NE universities Maintain the North East Economic Evidence Forum and continue to strengthen its role and remit Increase visibility of our analysis, research, and evaluation activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The team continue to support programmes with research activities including writing and reviewing tender specifications, supporting on procurement processes and providing critical friend support. The team is working across all delivery teams in developing a number of research projects including: emerging global market opportunities with Innovation; Heat decarbonisation and NE Air Freight Connectivity. We have also successfully commissioned a pilot study with the Skills Team to determine future skills needs within specific North East sectors. The Good Work project and one looking at spatial trade and investment are both progressing, with initial phases complete. The North East Evidence forum are engaged regularly regarding research and opportunities for collaboration. This will be built upon in the coming year. 	Emma Ward	G
Informing and influencing public policy in priority areas			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation of scope and activity of LEP public policy action Implementation of EU Exit work programme Strengthen and co-ordinate engagement with the northern powerhouse and its constituent activities Support and promote approaches which can deliver enhanced devolution to the region to support the economy Move forward a co-ordinated approach to public policy development related to infrastructure Develop and deliver a public affairs strategy focus on parliament and the senior civil service Co-ordinate and support the public policy response to Covid-19 through LEP teams and the Economic Response Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EU Exit Implementation Group continues to meet monthly. The Infrastructure Subgroup meets on an ad hoc basis to advise on the development of the Free Trade Zone proposal. A response to the Freezone consultation was submitted in July, following discussions with the Implementation Group, Infrastructure Subgroup, and LA Economic Directors. A Steering Group has been established to prepare for the bid and the framework agreed by the Board in October 2020. A full report on the proposal will go to Board in January 2021. Ongoing monitoring of policy developments with respect of planning and infrastructure. Prepared summary of proposals in the Planning White Paper. Arranging further discussions with a view to co-ordinating a regional response to the proposals 	Richard Baker	G
Energy for growth programme			

What we will deliver	Progress update and current position	Lead	Progress Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain active regional governance and profile for energy Support the growth of an active Offshore Energy Cluster to promote growth working with TVCA & other partners Develop the NE Energy Catalyst partnership and its programme of work Accelerate delivery of regional energy initiatives, linked to the BEIS Local Energy programme Engage actively with wider governance and political structures to embed Energy for Growth strategy Integrate Energy for Growth and its priorities with wider LEP strategies and delivery programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offshore and subsea technology working group providing guidance on regional sector support and development issues, including positioning in Subsea UK Global Underwater Hub proposition which is moving to implementation in 2021. NEYH Hub board has signed off on supporting development of an NE-led energy skills academy with £50k funding. North East led mine energy white paper project at final draft stage. Strong representation of North East projects in the NEYH hub project pipeline. NELEP supporting delivery of the LAD2 retrofit funding scheme via the Hub, with NE allocation of c£16m. Energy Lead part of the initial scoring panel for NTCA Offshore funding call. Ongoing support for regional offshore infrastructure priorities, including relating to portside hubs funding competition nationally. Phase 0' initiatives underway utilising existing assets, examples include: World's first 'Integrated Smart Energy Lab' (OREC, Durham and Newcastle University) press release and social media released. Project initiation document circulated to consortium, shortlisting priority areas of focus. Energy Partnerships Manager assisting with 3 GBF applications with Catalyst partners (1x OREC) and (2x InTEGReL). Energy Innovation Challenge Programme continues to link SMEs with Catalyst partner expertise and assets. The Energy Catalyst is providing a regional partnership to identify and support IDPs in the energy sectors. The Catalyst is being actively used as a network to help develop IDPs such as Battery Materials, and to explore linkages into the energy sector for other IDPs such as IC3. Energy Innovation Challenge Programme is driving engagement with SMEs. SMEs making contact directly with North East Energy Catalyst illustrates this engagement is working. An asset map showcasing innovation and demonstration assets has been created and is being digitalised. Mine energy white paper now at final draft stage, plans to publish, publicise and use in strategic influencing activities in Q4 are being developed. Draft HPO on heat networks now received from the DIT which will be used to inform regional strategy to develop this sector. Two stage1 North East projects were awarded funding in the latest round of RCEF to a value of £68,670. Six projects are currently receiving pre application support ahead of the 1st February deadline. The accelerator business case has been approved by the LEP investment board, and is now moving into implementation. Community energy study is ongoing, and the second steering group meeting has taken place. The consultant has been collecting evidence and data through a survey, focus groups and 1 to 1 interviews. Key Energy for Growth propositions identified within the draft LIS, and subsequently informing Covid recovery planning. Energy interventions forming a central part of emerging Freezones bid. Ongoing ERDF funding secured for the EIPM role. Getting building fund allocated funding for two Energy for Growth pipeline projects. Ongoing utilisation of LGF and alignment to Energy for Growth strategy. 	Andrew Clark	G
Digital programme			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a governance structure to oversee delivery of the work programme Develop an agreed communications plan to promote NE Digital development Develop and begin delivery of an active pipeline of projects under theme: data Develop and begin delivery of an active pipeline of projects under theme: workforce Develop and begin delivery of an active pipeline of projects under theme: digital collaboration and enterprise Develop and begin delivery of an active pipeline of projects under theme: infrastructure and connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital skills development embedded in Covid response and recovery planning across workstreams, focus on: training provision; upskilling of existing workforces; digital inclusion; hardware distribution; digital adoption; supporting remote working and remote learning. Specialist tech skills identified by steering group as a gap to be addressed in early 2021. Internal report on Tech Start Up authored by Digital Lead with input from task and finish group. Sets out suggested delivery mechanisms and activities against an evidence base. Workshop with LEP colleagues held to determine activity in the short term and inform longer term plans. Findings presented to steering group, draft blueprint for start-up support programme in production in collaboration with partners to identify short, medium and long term activities. Covid Future Fund/Innovate UK funding-initiated events series with webinar. Key tech stakeholders engaged to generate NE submissions to the call in the short term, identify priorities for digital strategy in the mid-term and inform UKSPF development in the long term. Alignment with Business Growth and Innovation programmes. Work ongoing with LA7 digital leads group to map regional infrastructure and connectivity demand and supply. Exploring pilot study with some LAs. Significant piece of work undertaken with the Transport team to create new Connectivity manifesto Three bids from across the region submitted to DCMS 5G Create call, Sunderland bid on Connected and Automated Logistics successful. "Connected North East" digital and transport submission to government for CSR in Covid Connectivity workstream. Digital-specific aspects of bid to be presented to steering group in November to identify priorities and governance plans for 2021. Refreshed Made Smarter outline bid submitted to BEIS in advance of CSR in partnership with TVCA, developed with input from CPI, Digital Catapult NETV and NEAA. 	Richard Baker	A
Health and life sciences programme			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and update health and life sciences evidence base to inform the Economic growth strategy for Health and Life Sciences Develop and launch an Economic growth Strategy for the Health and Life Sciences sector in the North East Working with the Steering Group refresh and develop the project pipeline (based on evidence, and aims and objectives of the Strategic Economic Plan and Local Industrial Strategy) Support the development of the North East Health and life sciences eco-system- and raise the profile With partners, develop and deliver a communications strategy to raise awareness, promote and develop the reputation of the NE Health and Life Sciences Sector Identify who we can work with/ other clusters with complementary assets and capabilities to the North East in order to maximise collaborative opportunities from which the region will benefit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A draft Health & Life Sciences ten year growth strategy was presented to the North East LEP Board in December 2020 and a final version will be presented in January 2021 following targeted amendments. Other sub-Boards were engaged in the process of finalisation. £300k of LGF funds was secured for a project development fund and 6 awards have been made. Work is being monitored and expected to be received by March 2021. The North East has been successful in securing a Round 2 'Healthy Ageing' HPO- which will result in specific commercial opportunities in the North East being promoted and actively marketed by DIT to encourage inward investment. The first stakeholder workshop will take place in February 2021- work is underway with partners to prepare for that. Work is underway to map out the potential campaigns and opportunities to support HLS as a sector and define a work programme over coming months. This will directly support the delivery of the Strategy. Priority opportunities have arisen around Medicines supply base/ Supply Chain security. Proposals to build this programme of activity are in place as part of the Covid Recovery Planning Process (which will focus on the Pharma sector primarily, but also benefit process industries and other advanced manufacturing sectors). This is ongoing with resourcing through LGF 	Richard Baker	G

Communications update

25 November 2020 – 14 January 2021

Highlights from the past two months

Below is a summary of the content we have issued to support projects and initiatives since November 2020

Strategic announcements and update

Statement from Lucy Winskill OBE, Chair of the North East LEP, on the EU trade agreement

The Government has announced a trade agreement between the UK and the EU. Lucy Winskill OBE, Chair of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership, commented: "We welcome the news of the deal between the UK and the EU and hope that it will provide clarity for businesses, and a continuation of trade between the North East and partners in the EU, and beyond. As details of our new trading relationship become clear we will continue to work with businesses and partners across the region, helping businesses to take advantage of opportunities and building a bright future for the North East."

North East Local Enterprise Annual General Meeting

This year's North East Local Enterprise Partnership Annual General Meeting was held online on Tuesday, 24 November 2020. During the meeting, our Chief Executive, Helen Golightly, gave an update on our work and our on-going priorities. The Chief Financial Officer, Paul Woods gave an update on the funding programmes managed by LEP. We were joined by an audience of over 250 people and questions were taken from Sli.do

Reaction to Spending Review – 25 November 2020

Lucy Winskill, Chair of the North East LEP gave her reaction to the Spending Review: "Today's Spending Review has set out the scale of the challenge we face to recover from the economic impact of COVID-19. The Chancellor is expecting to see a decline in economic activity and rise in unemployment with a long-lasting impact for many years. He is therefore right to focus on the recovery of the labour market with support for those who lose their jobs or need to retrain and to focus on the levelling up of the UK economy. We look forward to more details about the Levelling Up Fund and the early stages of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. We welcome the confirmation of the financial package to support the 10-point plan for a green industrial revolution. The North East has a strong role to play in delivering this plan. The proposed recovery and renewal plan set out by the North East COVID-19 Economic Response Group sets out our plan to address the challenges we face in our region and we will work closely with government to seek the best outcomes for our residents and economy."

Business growth

Funding awarded to help North East businesses recover from COVID-19 impact

More than £235,000 in funding has been awarded to help North East businesses in a range of sectors recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The funding will result in the creation of 12 different business support projects, for North East businesses operating in areas including the cultural sector, food and drink, digital and manufacturing. [Read more here](#)

Applications for High Potential Startups open

High Potential Startups accelerator programme, which helps entrepreneurs bring their idea to life, have reopened. The programme helps people to test their idea, understand customers, fill skills gaps, explore how to access finance and find co-founders. [Read more here](#)

Skills, employment, inclusion and progression

Newcastle College takes on a creative approach to careers education in 2020

The coronavirus pandemic has forced schools, colleges and universities to find new, creative ways to engage learners; particularly around areas such as careers education, where it's been very difficult for young people to experience meaningful encounters with employers because of COVID-19. The North East LEP's recent collaboration with Newcastle College to bring theatre to audiences in the North East, whilst at the same time giving students a valuable live work experience brief in a safe and secure way, is a great example of the creative approach that has characterised teaching this year. Students studying Performing Arts and a range of other courses in the creative industries at Newcastle College were invited to work alongside local media company The Social Co. to create and record 12 festive performances to screen to primary schools across the region during December. aspirations and broaden the horizons of North East primary school pupils. An independent audit commissioned by the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the EY Foundation has found in its first year of activity, the pilot has achieved its aims of translating and embedding the career benchmarks within primary school settings.

Innovation

North East businesses awarded funding to develop new energy products

£100,000 of funding has been awarded to help five North East energy businesses bring new products to market. The five SMEs all entered the Energy Innovation Challenge which was launched by the North East Energy Catalyst as a way of supporting businesses in the region to develop solutions to global energy challenges. The five businesses awarded funding are DLAW Contractors, The Energy Workshop, Otaski Energy Solutions, Power Roll, and Solar Capture Technologies.

North East leading on UK plan for a Green Industrial Revolution

Globally significant work being carried out within the North East's energy sector is leading the way on delivering the government's Green Industrial Revolution plan which was announced in November, reinforcing the region's position to lead delivery on the UK's Net Zero agenda. The plan announced by Prime Minister Boris Johnson includes 10 key areas of focus, which correspond with initiatives already being delivered in the North East and bring opportunities to create more and better jobs in the region. [Read more here](#)

Challenge North East launched to fund solutions to solve COVID-19-related issues

The North East LEP is calling on the regional business community to help it solve some of the biggest Coronavirus-related problems. Through Challenge North East, a new open innovation programme, the LEP is offering support to SMEs as it seeks to address critical issues facing the North East marketplace while it adapts to a COVID-19 world. SMEs will be given up to £5k grant funding between January and March 2021 to develop solutions to specific challenges, with the possibility of being in the running to win a grant of up to £40k to scale the most impactful solution in each area. 63 submissions were received and currently being reviewed.

Funding

More than £1.2 million awarded to North East voluntary, community and social enterprise projects

More than £1.2 million has been awarded to voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations in the North East to fund projects that support young people in the region and that contribute to a green economic recovery. The funding has been awarded by the North East LEP from its Local Growth Fund VCSE Capital Grant programme, which aims to help communities across the North East recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Projects awarded funding range from the regeneration of a community garden in Meadow Well, North Tyneside; the creation of a 'social kitchen' in Hendon, Sunderland; and the development of a new learning facility and 20 hectares of improved green space for public use in Newcastle.

[Read more here](#)

North East LEP website performance summary:

Audience		
Visitors	12,543	(+9.86%)
Total page views	28,502	(9.84%)
Average session duration	1m 18s	(+27.7%)
Traffic source		
		views
Organic	3,023	
Direct	3,478	
Email	28	
Social	580	
Referral	289	
Other	28	

Top five news pages		views
More than £1.2 million awarded to North East voluntary, community and social enterprise projects		473
Challenge North East launched to fund solutions to solve COVID-19-related issues		468
Could you help the North East LEP deliver careers-based best practice resources and videos for use in primary schools?		416
Reaction to today's Spending Review – 25 November 2020:		259
North East leading on UK plan for a green industrial revolution:		195
Top five pages		views
Home		5,864
About/executive-team		2,089
The-Plan		1,789
Projects		1,753
About		1,384

Social media

Total followers	Impressions	Top performing LEPs on Twitter:			
Twitter 12,176 (+0.4%)	156,732	1. North East LEP	2. Leeds LEP	3. Liverpool LEP	4. Black Country LEP
LinkedIn 7,675 (+2.6%)	25,145	12,176	11,304	10,035	9,243
Best performing organic posts: Twitter and LinkedIn					
					
Impressions 5,476	Engagement 121	Clicks 43	Retweets 12	Impressions 3,249	Engagement 67
					
Impressions 2,794	Engagement 51	Clicks 43	Retweets 13	Impressions 2,360	Engagement 72
					
Impressions 1,811	Engagement 85	Clicks 64		Impressions 2,207	Engagement 52
					
Impressions 1,599	Engagement 118	Clicks 103	Impressions 1,269	Engagement 96	Clicks 60

Priorities for the next two months

1. Support the development of the Health and Life Sciences strategy and develop a communications plan to announce its publication.
2. Continue with web development projects including:
 - New North East LEP website
 - Replatforming North East Growth Hub from October to Wordpress CMS
 - Introduce business focused area of North East Ambition
3. *Forward plan for the North East Datahub
4. Refresh our airport advertising, scheduled to go to print in February 2021.
5. Support the development and submission of the North East England Freeport bid.

Forward plan of content

Topic	Programme	Description	Type	Estimated date of issue
Health and Life Sciences Strategy launch	Corporate	Publish the approved Health and Life Sciences strategy	Press release and supporting blogs	WC 5 Feb (if approved)
North East England Freeport	Corporate with partners	Supportive PR as appropriate	Press releases, blogs, social media, pending sign off of bid details	TBC
Role of education in COVID-19 recovery	North East COVID Economic Response Group	<p>Highlight the role of Universities and colleges in supporting the North East's economic recovery from COVID-19 by working with the business community in the region.</p> <p>Pipeline includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newcastle University A case study exploring the START UP programme, and the impact the student and graduate businesses it supports are having within the region. Durham University A case study about Durham University's role in the international entrepreneur competition, just IMAGINE if... Northumbria University A case study about Northumbria University's new Restorative Just Culture programme - delivered in partnership with Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust – which aims to improve workplace wellbeing and cut business costs. Liz Bromley - NCG Thought leadership in role of colleges working with business as part of the recovery 	Case studies, News releases, Social media	Ongoing
MIT Reap	Business Growth	Profiling the LEP and partners involvement work of the stakeholders with a blog from Dr Phillip Budden from MIT REAP	Blog and social media	W/c 18 January 2021
Digital Adoption Toolkit	Business Growth	Campaign promoting the Digital Adoption to businesses via the North East Growth Hub	Social media, Partnership with Bdaily, Owned media channels	Ongoing to February
High Potential Startups	Business Growth	Campaign driving recruitment for the fifth round of High Potential Startups	Social media, Owned media channels, Digital marketing	Ongoing to February (or until cohort is complete)

COVID-19 Toolkit	Business Growth	Regular updates of COVID-19 Toolkit on the North East Growth Hub to ensure businesses have access to the most up to date guidance and support	Social media, Owned media channels	Ongoing
Growth Hub Connect	Business Growth	Campaign to promote the Growth Hub Connect service on the North East Growth Hub	Campaign currently in development	February
Business Growth Board Ambassadorial campaign	Business Growth	Highlight the role and contribution of the Business Growth Board members in supporting the delivery of the Business Growth programme and Strategic Economic Plan	Various	Ongoing
Brexit	Business Growth	Ongoing content based on government guidance for businesses	Insight articles and social media content (to be added to the North East Growth Hub Brexit toolkit)	Ongoing
Energy Catalyst	Business Growth	Blog post on North East Energy Catalyst plans for 2021	Blog post	Late Jan/early Feb
Restart and recovery grant case studies	Business Growth	Case studies on businesses receiving funding from the ERDF restart and recovery grant	Case studies published via the North East Growth Hub	Ongoing
Challenge North East	Innovation	Announce companies who have won funding to take their business continuity idea forward	Press release and supporting social media	March 2021
LEP's investment portfolio	Investment	A look at the investment portfolio of the North East LEP and its aims & achievements to date	Press release and supporting social media	Feb 2021
Enterprise Zones	Investment	What is the role of the Enterprise Zones and how do they fit into the Strategic Economic Plan?	Blog post and supporting social media	Feb 2021
Getting Building Fund	Investment	News releases and case studies about the 18 projects in the North East LEP region awarded funding from the Getting Building Fund	News releases, Case studies, Social media	January 2021 - onwards
Local Growth Fund	Investment	News releases, case studies and supporting social media about the progress of LGF projects in the North East LEP region	News releases, Case studies, Social media	January 2021 - onwards
Skills	Skills	Monthly thought leadership column from Michelle Rainbow in Northern Insight magazine	Article	Monthly
Careers in electrification	Skills	Video project aimed at inspiring secondary pupils to pursue a career in the electrification industry in the North East	Video	End of March

Please note, where content is owned as oppose to media relations, audience profiles are in place to ensure the content is targeted at the most relevant audiences as well as the LEP's general followers.

Any feedback on input into our content plan, please email jen.robson@nelep.co.uk



Info@nelep.co.uk



www.northeastlep.co.uk



uk.linkedin.com/company/north-east-lep



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North East
Local Enterprise Partnership



North East Covid-19

Economic Response Group



Key asks pf the plan – a reminder

Jobs recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- £20m per year for our Education Challenge programme and NE Ambition programme funded beyond 2023- Flexibility to repurpose existing funds & schemes (e.g. ESF, AE budget/devolved funds & apprenticeships levy)- £140m NE Jobs Programme, based on government's schemes but shaped and tailored to local needs- Greater responsibility and more flexibility in the use of funding for apprenticeship- £25m devolved funding for responsive skills programme to support sectoral change- Invest in our FE estate and assets	Proposal for enhanced resourcing for intelligence gathering in support of all themes
Supporting businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Digital free zone- Business support framework (£90m) - starting with 1-year pilot- Tourism and Culture (£45m)- Innovation and HE	
Future Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">£650m Future Economy Fund and support for the new business innovation support framework- Green economy- Health and Life Sciences- Digital- Advanced Manufacturing	
Community and Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- £200m North East Future Places fund, £150m Housing retrofit and £200m strategic employment sites- ADZ and EZ schemes extension, future place making financial models- Further waves of housing market rejuvenation- £30m Public sector reform and Prevention fund	
Connected North East	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-£1b over the next 5 years:- £500m for Transport- £500m for digital infrastructure	

Timeline 2021– actions that we will take		Actions & support required from others (National Gov, Regional partners)	Risks & Dependencies	Indicative metrics
Jan-Mar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-going data and intelligence reporting (12-month/baseline) Project pipeline and key programmes identified and in place, identify and formulate a plan to accelerate development of key recovery projects (capital and revenue) Maximise NE uptake of JETS and Kickstart schemes, work with employers to promote apprenticeships and create traineeships, set up young people and NEETs support programme Secure continuation of Better Health at Work Award Submit a proposal for business support reform including 1-year pilot, set up enhanced start up support, secure resources for peer networks to revive hospitality, leisure and retail in city/town/visitor destinations, develop Game Changer fund, finalise tourism vision & uplift strategy Secure funding for NETV Made Smarter to support industrial digitalisation (1 year delivery, April start) Submit NE Free Port bid, complete NE internationalisation Strategy Launch town/city centre revitalisation and strategic Launch energy accelerator programme to drive local energy projects Ongoing delivery of the NTCA Brownfield Housing Fund, where delivery is starting on Scotswood and Newbiggin Hall and further funding approvals expected in the next 3 months Launch Innovation Delivery Partnerships pilot (IDP) Statement of Intent for Tourism in NE England signed, two summits planned in May and Dec 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget (3 March) – devolved/regional resources and process to be confirmed in support to key asks Clarity over size and nature of UKSPF Release of regional ESF reserve fund to deliver targeted recovery interventions DIT to provide additional resource to continue the Regional Export Manager role to support the NE internationalisation strategy Business support grant clarity & medium term commitment to Growth Hub/business support model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects dependent on funding clarity and announcements Delays to procurement or contract awards Lockdown ‘derails’ employer take up of incentives or delivery of schemes Government fail to clarify regional economic model 	NE based business turnover Start ups Take up of business grants at LA level Footfall and visits to retail & recreation locations Unemployment (regional, local, hyperlocal, age, gender) Economic inactivity (age and source) Redundancies %employment furloughed(+gender) SEISS take up Vacancy levels Digital exclusion Exports data by commodity and market Employment (jobs created) Jobs safeguarded Kickstart and JETS placements FE and HE enrolment Graduate retention NEETs Apprenticeship and T level starts Good Work Pledge uptake
Apr-Jun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Acceleration/development fund in place (June) – launch and first review point Full rollout of Job Recovery Plan including Kickstart schemes and other projects and programmes through localised use of the Skills Fund and ESF reserve funds Increase apprenticeships and traineeships, extension of incentive schemes for employers Launch Digital Bootcamps (if NE bids successful) and Mid-life MOT pilot underway Building on NTCA Good Work Pledge, support employers across the region to adopt good work practices; promote Better Health at Work Award and support employers to sign up for it Start delivery of 1-year business support reform pilot and launch other 1-year funded projects (business support, entrepreneurship/start up, and Northern Accelerator) Launch £1m phase 2 cluster development fund projects to enhance capacity in growth sectors Further roll out of the NTCA sectoral programmes of support in the next few (3-6) months, including around £5m of projects to support the Digital sector, the £10m Green New Deal Fund and the £3.25m Culture and Creative Recovery Fund Complete and public NE Trade and export strategy as contribution to regional internationalisation strategy Start delivery of the internationalisation strategy, set up Inward Investment fund Launch of NE climate change strategy and Net Zero North Project (Northern Powerhouse) Start delivery of LAD2 Housing retrofit programme in NE and YH energy hub area Bring forward further town/city centre revitalisation, strategic & innovation priority projects incl. CAVL, CESAM and IC3 (subject to funding) and further roll out of LAs and CAs recovery programmes Secure funding for NE Challenge programme building on success of Covid 19 challenge pilot Launch of the North East Cultural Partnership Recovery Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuation/phased reduction of gov support for businesses: grants, loans business rates relief, VAT reduction for hospitality businesses and JRS beyond April to avoid catastrophic increase in employment New forms of government support: e.g. event cancellation insurance Employers ability to take up incentivised offers to create jobs Gov support NE free Port bid Joint work with PWC and BEIS on pilot regional pathways programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free Port bid outcome Sudden cessation of JRS Planned actions dependent on gov funding Lack of flexibility for unused levy funds Potential delay of UK key policies (digital, export) 	65

Timeline – actions that we will take		Actions & support required from others (National Gov, Regional partners)	Risks & Dependencies	Indicative metrics
Jul-Sep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refresh NE Recovery and Renewal Plan / shape Local Growth Plan • Support young people & reduce NEETs by provision of high-quality transition support to maximise uptake of FE & HE places, provide support for Career Leaders, parents & young people online and with virtual career guidance, graduate retention schemes underway • Launch of digital Inclusion strategy and action plan commissioned by the SAP • Support Government roll out learning from the business support reform pilot nationally • Enhanced sectors and supply chains capacity support in place (offshore wind, onshoring of pharmaceuticals manufacture, electric vehicle and battery manufacture, digital) • Prepare for UKSPF submission and on-going delivery of capital projects • Launch the NTCA's Innovation Recovery Fund – promoting business innovation and supporting place adaption • Consultation on Tourism Statement of Intent closes and detailed strategy is further developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued dialogue with government – devolution, resources, Growth Plans etc • Clear messaging from DfE regarding results, grades and offers in advance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaccine roll-out programme on target • Large increase of NEETS as education leavers enter the labour market 	
Oct-Dec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going delivery of capital and revenue projects • Project Acceleration/development fund - second review point • Large scale job recovery intervention programmes and projects underway • Embed business support reform pilot work and NE innovation framework within UKSPF architecture • Learning from IDP and other innovation schemes to inform the Future Economy Fund's refresh • North East Tourism Partnership launches detaile strategy at the second NE Tourism Summit in December 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSR – Long term funding announcement from Gov supports key asks in NE Recovery and Renewal Deal • Further devolution enabling the region to plan and deploy resources and power effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaccine roll-out on target • Continued dialogue with Gov incl. through the SAP to provide feedback & challenge to Gov 	



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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Agenda Item 7

Date: 25 March 2021

Subject: Forward Plan and Scrutiny Work Programme Update

Report of: Policy and Scrutiny Officer

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an opportunity to consider the items on the Forward Plan for the current 28-day period and discuss items for the Work Programme for 2021 / 2022.

Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- i. Review the current Forward Plan and consider which items they may wish to examine in more detail;
- ii. Suggest any items for the Work Programme for 2021/2022 that Members would wish to explore in more detail, either at the Committee or via a 'deep dive' or working group;

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1. Background Information

- 1.1 The Forward Plan is a document which NECA is required to maintain under the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017. The Forward Plan is published on NECA's website and lists the decisions that the North East Combined Authority intends to take in the coming months and must include all decisions to be made in the next 28 days.
- 1.2 The Forward Plan template contains specific information relating to each decision, including the date the decision will be made, a brief explanation of the topic, the consultation to be undertaken, and contact details of the author. The Forward Plan template has recently been updated and includes further information including if the decision is a 'Key Decision' and if an item will be discussed in private.
- 1.3 Details of each decision are included on the Forward Plan 28 days before the report is considered and any decision is taken. This supports the transparency of decision making within the Combined Authority and allows members of the public to see the items that will be discussed. There are special procedures for circumstances where publication for the full 28 clear day period is impractical or where there is special urgency. Both of these procedures involve the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and would be reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its next meeting.

Role of Overview and Scrutiny

- 1.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee examine any decisions of the North East Combined Authority – be that by the principal decision-making body or a committee or officer holding delegated authority. This Scrutiny occurs in public and ensures democratic and public accountability.
- 1.5 One of the main functions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is the review and scrutiny of 'Key Decisions' made by the NECA Leadership Board and Officers of the Combined Authority. The relevant regulations set out a test for what should be considered a Key Decision – being those which are most significant in financial or other terms. This is explained in the Decision-Making Protocol adopted by the Committee on the 15 March 2018. At the inaugural meeting of the NECA Leadership Board on the 13 November, following the governance changes, it was agreed that the Decision Making Protocol would remain in place:

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

<https://northeastca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/NECA-Decision-Making-Protocol.pdf>

- 1.6 It is NECA's practice to include formal decisions on the Forward Plan to maximise the opportunity for review and scrutiny. In considering items in the Forward Plan, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should determine which areas scrutiny can add most value to in relation to the decisions being made.
- 1.7 The Forward Plan at the date this paper was issued is published at:
[https://www.northeastca.gov.uk/committee-meetings/forward-plan.](https://www.northeastca.gov.uk/committee-meetings/forward-plan)

Update on Requests for Special Urgency / General Exception

- 1.8 In accordance with the Decision Making Protocol, it was agreed by Members that the request of any Short Notice Procedure that involved the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be reported at the next Committee. The table below shows the number of requests made since the last meeting was held:

Type of Short Notice Procedure	Number of Requests since previous Committee
Requests for Special Urgency	0
Request for General Exception	0

- 1.9 The table above reflects that there have been no requests for general exception and no requests for special urgency since the last Committee.

Annual Work Programme – Update

- 1.10 The most recent version of the work programme has been compiled to allow the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to consider items that they have requested.
- 1.11 The work programme is also designed to give an overview of all performance, decision-taking and developments within the NECA, as well as being focused and flexible to allow for new issues and recognising the capacity of the scrutiny committee to respond in a timely way to emerging developments throughout the year. The Plan allows the Committee to take a longer-term view than the Forward Plan, adding a longer term perspective to the Committee's work.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Advantages of a longer-term perspective is the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of matters and to allow for more constructive engagement and scrutiny.

- 1.12 Members are also invited to comment and give consideration to any additional items they would wish to consider on their Work Programme or those decisions where they can add value.
- 1.13 A joint informal briefing with the North of Tyne Overview and Scrutiny committee was held on 13 November examining the region's economic response to recovery from the COVID 19 Pandemic and its associated governance.
- 1.14 The OSC meet informally with representatives from the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (NE LEP) to discuss the effects of COVID 19, and associated restrictions, on businesses across the region and in particular those in high streets. The committee agreed to continue to keep a watch on the issue.
- 1.15 The proposed work programme included in appendix 2. It should be noted that the work programme covers items that will be discussed at the meetings. It does not preclude 'deeper dives' providing more focused scrutiny of particular topics by a sub-group of the committee outside of these meeting dates. These topics can be raised with the Chair and Scrutiny Officer at any time.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 Committee Members are invited to review the Forward Plan for the current 28-day period – giving consideration to any items they may wish to examine in more detail – and to suggest any items for addition to the Annual Work Programme for 2021/22.

3. Reasons for the Proposals

- 3.1 To provide an opportunity for Committee members to input on any additional items as part of continued planning for the Work Programme for 2021/22.

4. Alternative Options Available

- 4.1 Option 1 – The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may review Forward Plan and suggest additional items for the Work Programme.

Option 2 – The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may choose not to review the Forward Plan or consider any additional items for the Work Programme.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

5. Next Steps and Timetable for Implementation

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 5.1 In considering the Forward Plan, Members are asked to consider those issues where the Scrutiny Committee could make a contribution and add value.
- 5.2 If the Overview and Scrutiny Committee determines to review or scrutinise a decision notified in the Forward Plan, a meeting of the Committee will be arranged to allow scrutiny members to carry out their role in a timely manner.
- 5.3 The work programme will be refreshed and updated at each meeting of the Committee throughout the year.

6. Potential Impact on Objectives

- 6.1 Development of a work programme and review and scrutiny of decisions in the Forward Plan will contribute towards the development and implementation of the policy framework of the NECA, the Joint Transport Committee and the North East LEP as well as providing appropriate challenge to decisions making.

7. Financial and Other Resources Implications

- 7.1 No financial or other resource implications are identified at this stage.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from these recommendations.

9. Key Risks

- 9.1 There are no key risks associated with the recommendations made in this report.

10. Equality and Diversity

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

11. Crime and Disorder

- 11.1 There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

12. Consultation/Engagement

- 12.1 On-going consultation takes place with Officers and Scrutiny Members across the NECA in regard to the items for the Annual Work Programme as Appendix One.



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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

13. Other Impact of the Proposals

- 13.1 The proposals consider the wider impact and take into account the Principles of Decision Making as set out in the NECA Constitution. They allow Members consideration of the items on the Forward Plan and allow them the opportunity to have an overview of all performance, decision making and developments across NECA.

14. Appendices

- 14.1 Appendix 1 – Annual Work Programme Update

15. Background Papers

- 15.1 None.

16. Contact Officers

- 16.1 Gavin Armstrong, Policy and Scrutiny Officer

Email: gavin.armstrong@northeastca.gov.uk

Telephone Number: Tel No: (0191) 4247537

- 16.2 Nicola Robason, Deputy Monitoring Officer

Email: nicola.robason@southtyneside.gov.uk

Telephone Number: 0191 424 7186

17. Sign off

- 17.1 Head of Paid Service: ✓

Monitoring Officer: ✓

Chief Finance Officer: ✓

18. Glossary

- 18.1 NECA - North East Combined Authority

North East LEP - North East Local Enterprise Partnership

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Item 7 - Appendix 1

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2021/2022

Standing Items for each Committee Meeting:

- Declaration of Interest
- Minutes of Previous Meeting
- NECA Forward Plan and Work Programme Report

Source of work programme and items of importance:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee obtains work programme items from the following sources:

- a) Items submitted by Members of the Committee (and including items referred by other members of the Combined Authority);
- b) Suggestions NECA Chief Officers; Patrick Melia – Head of Paid Service, Nicola Robason – Deputy Monitoring Officer and Paul Darby– Chief Finance Officer
- c) The Budget and Policy Framework; Transport Plan and Strategic Economic Plan
- d) The Forward Plan;
- e) The Thematic Leads;
- f) Evidence for any policy review work of relevance to NECA

Items for future consideration (2021-2022)

Meeting Date	Subject
June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• COVID 19 recovery update and focused area (eg Economic Performance of the NECA area)• Proposed Work Programme Framework 21/22• NECA Thematic Update - TBC
Date TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Barriers to employment -Mental health provision impacting employment and accessibility.• Environmental Plan and the impact on the region• Devolution – Potential Impacts on NECA

It should be noted that the work programme above covers items that will be discussed at the meetings. It does not preclude 'deeper dives' providing more focused scrutiny of particular topics by a sub-group of the committee outside of these meeting dates.