

North East Local Enterprise Partnership Investment Board

14 January 2021

Meeting held via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Members:

Andrew Moffat
Gillian Hall
Cllr Bruce Pickard
Cllr Tracey Dixon
Mark Thompson

Advisors:

Ian Richards
David Furness
Jason Hobbs

NTCA Officers:

Craig Winter
Katy Laing

LEP Officers:

Helen Golightly
Paul Woods
Ray Browning
Matt Ebbatson
Ben McLaughlin
Claire Prospert

Minutes:

Brenda Joyce

1 WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair, Andrew Moffat, welcomed everyone to the meeting. He went on to formally welcome Councillor Dixon as a member of the Investment Board and congratulated her on her appointment as Leader of South Tyneside Council.

There were no apologies for absence.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Gillian Hall declared an interest as a Port of Blyth Commissioner in the GBF application for the Robotics and Autonomous Systems Test Facility (item 5b). She also declared that she had been a board member of ARCH (now Advance Northumberland) several years ago (item 5d).

Bruce Pickard declared an interest in the GBF application for North Shields Town Centre as a North Tyneside councillor and ward member (item 5c).

David Furniss declared an interest in the GBF application for Bedlington Town Centre (item 5d). He also declared an interest in the GBF application for North Shields Town Centre as he had advised the vendors on Unicorn House (item 5c).

Mark Thompson declared interests with the GBF Programme as Ryder Architecture was engaged with the following projects - The Glassworks South Shields (item 5a) and Bedlington Town Centre (item 5d).

3 **MINUTES OF THE INVESTMENT BOARD 7 DECEMBER 2020**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 7 December 2020 were approved as a correct record subject to the following amendment to Matters Arising.

With regard to State Aid Gillian Hall enquired as to an update to the meeting on discussions with officers and whether it would have any impact on processing capabilities. She had wanted to make sure that the question around State Aid would **not** change what the LEP had to do. Matthew Ebbatson had been advised by DWF that the LEP should keep within existing rules and exemptions in line with the six principles of new Subsidy Control Regime. Gillian Hall suggested keeping a watching brief on this as it could impact on projects getting through quickly.

4 **MATTERS ARISING AND ACTIONS LOG**

The Action Log was noted.

Referring to 'Progress against past approvals' the Chair advised that this had been expanded to display the current stage in terms of the split between Pre-condition, Draft legal agreement and Contracts exchanged.

All projects had been rated as green other than two – North Bank of Tyne EZ and The Pattern Shop.

Ben McLaughlin advised that the North Bank of Tyne was rated as amber and although the decision had been taken a year ago the project had not been able to progress to the 'contacts exchanged' stage. There was further work to be done by Newcastle City Council before getting to that stage.

On the Pattern Shop Ray Browning advised that the City Council had asked for it to be deferred and would come back with a bigger scheme to refurbish three floors. The revised business case was expected in February and was likely to come back to the Investment Board in March for reconsideration.

5 **PROJECTS FOR APPROVAL BY INVESTMENT BOARD**

(a) **The Glassworks; GBF**

This report was strictly confidential as it contained commercial information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person or organisation and was not for wider circulation.

The Investment Board received a report summarising the business case received and appraisal undertaken for the Glassworks office development in South Shields, South Tyneside, seeking to utilise £3m of Getting Building Fund monies. The report outlined the project and recommendations for approval as a result of appraisal.

RESOLVED – That the Investment Board approve a grant award from the Getting Building Fund with conditions

(b) Robotics and Autonomous Systems Test Facility; GBF

This report was strictly confidential as it contained commercial information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person or organisation and was not for wider circulation.

The Investment Board received a report presenting the key findings and investment recommendations following the independent appraisal of the final business case submitted by ORE Catapult for the R-Core Test, Validation and Demonstration facility in Blyth.

RESOLVED – That the Investment Board approve a grant award from the Getting Building Fund with conditions

(c) North Shields Town Centre; GBF

This report was strictly confidential as it contained commercial information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person or organisation and was not for wider circulation.

The Investment Board received a report presenting the key findings and investment recommendations following the independent appraisal of a business case submitted by North Tyneside Council to deliver the first phase of a new North Shields Town Centre regeneration strategy.

RESOLVED – That the Investment Board approve a grant award from the Getting Building Fund with conditions

(d) Bedlington Town Centre; GBF

This report was strictly confidential as it contained commercial information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person or organisation and was not for wider circulation.

The Investment Board received a report presenting the key findings and investment recommendations following the independent appraisal of a project business case submitted by Advance Northumberland (Commercial) Ltd for a first phase, partial re-development, of a prominent town centre development site in Bedlington, south east Northumberland.

RESOLVED – That the Investment Board approve a grant award from the Getting Building Fund with conditions

(e) North East Property Fund extension proposal

This report was strictly confidential as it contained commercial information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person or organisation and was not for wider circulation.

This report built on the proposal received from FW Capital in relation to the operation of the North East Property Fund presented to Investment Board on 15 October 2020. The proposal addressed their request to extend and increase the size of the pilot fund as demand continued to increase. Further to consideration of the proposal in Autumn 2020, an assessment of the proposal had been undertaken and Investment Board was asked to review this report prior to the final recommendations for an approval.

RESOLVED – To approve the extension of the North East Property Fund by three years of investment, following by two years realization, subject to conditions

6 UPDATE ON STATE AID POLICY CONTEXT (VERBAL)

This verbal update was strictly confidential as it contained commercial information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person or organisation and was not for wider circulation.

Craig Winter provided a verbal update on State Aid and confirmed that as of 1 January 2021 EU regulations no longer applied to subsidies granted in the UK with the proviso that they were still relevant in specific limited circumstances. The UK government had, by statutory instrument, set aside the direct application of the EU regulations following the exit from the EU.

7 FORWARD PLAN

This report was strictly confidential as it contained commercial information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person or organisation and was not for wider circulation.

Noted.

Gillian Hall commented that the InTEGReL projects were also part of the Innovation programme. Ray Browning confirmed that he worked closely with the Energy Team.

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The annual performance review was scheduled to be held on 25 January 2021 with the Ministry. This would consider governance, delivery of the LGF and strategy.

9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11 February 2021