

## Orning, Suffolk Business Board: Meeting on 24 September 2024

### Minutes & Actions

#### Attendees

##### Business Board Members

Name	Role & Organisation
Mark Pendlington	Chair
Doug Field	CEO, East of England Co-op
Oliver Paul	Director, Suffolk Food Hall
Lisa Perkins	Chair, Tech East
Kelly Boosey	Commercial Manager, Oxford Innovation
Leanne Gittins	Managing Director, LME Recruitment
Tom Ball	CFO, Ipswich Town FC ( <b>Arriving 14:30</b> )
Nikos Savvas	CEO, Eastern Education Group
Cllr Matthew Hicks	Leader, Suffolk County Council
Cllr Richard Smith MVO	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Economic Development and Skills, Suffolk County Council
Cllr Andrew Mellen	Leader, Mid Suffolk District Council
Cllr Neil MacDonald	Leader, Ipswich Borough Council
John Dugmore	CEO, Suffolk Chamber of Commerce
Paul Ager	Divisional Port Manager, ABP
Graeme Derby (R)	UoS Head of Business Engagement

##### Apologies

Name	Role & Organisation
Hannah Reid	CEO, Community Action Suffolk
Peter Brady	CEO, Orbital Group

##### Guests

Name	Role & Organisation
Mike Todman	Interim Head of Oxford to Cambridge Arc and East Anglia Team
Naomi Smith	Deputy Area Lead for Suffolk Cities and Local Growth Unit

##### Officer team

Name	Role & Organisation
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Rob Hancock	Assistant Director, Suffolk County Council
Lisa Roberts	Head of Economic Strategy, Suffolk County Council
Ian Gallin (R)	Chief Executive, West Suffolk Council
Hannah Brown	Executive Assistant & Project Support, Suffolk County Council
Michael Gray	Head of Skills, Suffolk County Council
Andrew Cook	Executive Director Growth, Highways and Infrastructure, Suffolk County Council
Julian Munson	Head of Innovation & Sectors, Suffolk County Council
Jai Raithatha	Head of Economic Development, Suffolk County Council
Julie West	Programmes Coordinator

<b>Actions</b>
<b>ACTION 2.1</b> Board Members to submit any further feedback on the Economic Strategy document to SCC Officers by 7 October. <b>Business Board Members.</b>
<b>ACTION 2.2</b> Board Members to submit to SCC Officers any further images that can be included within the strategy document. <b>Business Board Members.</b>
<b>ACTION 2.3</b> SCC Officers to action feedback from Business Board members in next iteration of strategy, including executive summary, greater clarity on skills proposals, greater reference to existing business investment in Suffolk, revisions to targets/aspirations, clarity over document audience, review language around solar development etc. <b>SCC Officers.</b>
<b>ACTION 3.1</b> SCC Officers to share the full Energy Deep Dive session details with PA as the new Board Member representative. <b>SCC Officers.</b>
<b>ACTION 3.2</b> SCC Officers to ensure Greater Anglia are invited to the Ports and Logistics deep dive session. <b>SCC Officers.</b>
<b>ACTION 6.1</b> MP to discuss with SCC Officers the Charing arrangements for the January Business Board. <b>SCC Officers.</b>

	Item Description, Notes of Discussion and Actions Agreed	Action Lead
1	<p><b>Agenda, apologies and minutes</b></p> <p>MP welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the above apologies. MP congratulated PB, in his absence, as his company received a recent National AI award this week.</p> <p>MP noted the upcoming and Suffolk Public Sector Leaders (SPSL) meeting on 27 September and the Suffolk Chief Officers Leadership Team meeting (SCOLT) on 10 October.</p> <p>Other notable dates were confirmed as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>9 October Young Entrepreneur’s Dinner</b> - 12-15 young entrepreneurs have been invited.</li> <li>- <b>24 October Business Dinner</b> - 15-20 CEOs and Chairs of Suffolk’s largest businesses. Please note the change of date for this event, which was originally scheduled for 10 October.</li> </ul> <p>Both events are to gain further feedback on our economic strategy.</p> <p>5 November - First big deadline for the board when Suffolk County Council’s (SCC) Cabinet review and hopefully approve the strategy.</p> <p>MP touched on the updates with the Deep Dives around the table and shared reassurance received from Government to ensure all Counties are covered with Growth plans with or without a County Deal.</p> <p>The actions from the previous meeting in July were reviewed, MP noted the deep dive meeting schedule produced by JW that has been circulated which includes the attendees and Business Board lead. MP noted if anyone isn’t involved and would like to be to please speak to the board lead on the subject as they all have open invites.</p> <p>The next deep dive session was confirmed as the Skills workshop happening on Friday 27 September, kindly hosted by Nikos in Bury.</p> <p>All actions were noted as completed or scheduled to happen, the minutes were also agreed by the board.</p>	

2	<p><b>Economic Strategy – Lisa Roberts</b></p> <p>LR shared the economic strategy paper and noted that further updates will happen during a wider consultation next week. The consultation will include speaking to all who attended July’s workshops and Businesses who have shown enthusiasm in involvement so looking to gather further feedback from these parties by end of October. Deadline for any final comments is 7 October, so if any Board members have further feedback please submit by this date.</p> <p><b>ACTION 2.1</b> Board Members to submit any further feedback on the Economic Strategy document to SCC Officers by 7 October. <b>Business Board Members.</b></p> <p>LR spoke through slide 3 on the presentation deck which focussed on Vision, Foreword and ‘EPIC’ Suffolk. The foreword has been updated since the last board so this will be shared shortly, outlining our approach. LR highlighted the key conversation starter questions on the slides. LR noted her thanks for those who have sent images in to date but further images are still required so that we can display our strengths in a wide range of images</p> <p><b>ACTION 2.2</b> Board Members to submit to SCC Officers any further images that can be included within the strategy document. <b>Business Board Members.</b></p> <p>Strategy on a page slide was displayed bringing together all of our strengths across the sectors and looking at how they can come together. High Growth noted as the sectors where we are already driving initiatives locally and nationally, Emerging Growth as sectors that aren’t necessarily large sectors but with opportunities to grow these. The Value Growth sectors were confirmed as where the majority of job opportunities and sectors are within Suffolk.</p> <p>LR noted some narrative was missing from the design, commenting on the ambitions aligning with the acronym EPIC so looking to design this in the next iteration. LR noted that she heard from the last board that ambitious targets were wanted, LR spoke of the need to be mindful of what is our ambition and what are our targets for measuring success. LR noted productivity is hard to measure, so need to draw a line to productivity in the strategy and manage expectations within the space. LR noted the need to review how we join our measures for delivery and ambitions going forward so asked for Board Members views on these ambitions.</p> <p>LR asked for thoughts on the growth opportunities slides and what support would be needed from these sectors going forward. LR noted the key thread as the pioneering tech convergence boosting growth across sectors.</p>	<p><b>Business Board Members.</b></p> <p><b>Business Board Members.</b></p>

Growth Plan, this sets out 6 areas of interventions, the document has been set out so the key themes where we are looking to deliver the interventions, which is what the deep dives are all about. Indicators for success, looking at whether we have achieved what we are looking for.

LR noted regarding the map slide that we have tried to capture the different growth opportunities, noting the map has been updated to show the ports and logistics sector. The map also helps to show the connections to the wider region and where the growth can be driven forward by working with our neighbouring counties.

Making it happen, setting out the next steps and what we need to do to deliver the plan. Final slide pulling out what we are looking to deliver over the next 5 years, LR noted the dates need updating on this slide.

MP noted on the 'Our Ambitions' page, looking at whether we are being ambitious enough and to note momentum and pace. Our Vision for what this document may look like, wanted something short but detailed with clear key themes in aspirational language and who is going to be doing what to drive and deliver it. MP noted regarding the map, struck by the investments already going on within the economy, noting a lot of public and private investment going into the economy so would be good to share and credit these investments to reflect the dynamic economy.

MP opened it up for other comments.

NS commented that what he would like to see, as we don't currently have much funding, is what are the things we need to push in order to make things happen, noting the ambitions that we have over the living wage and increased proportion of population qualified to level 3 and 4 and the need to be more ambitious highlighting that we are becoming known for a national centre for excellence in NSIPs. NS noted a need to focus on this as the university are currently doing fantastic things. MP noted importance to highlight the level 3 and 4 discussions at Friday's skill workshop.

RS noted pleased to see horseracing is noted within the document, noting that West Suffolk have commented on the defence industries around Lakenheath, Mildenhall etc as an opportunity to provide a cluster of these industries. LR noted that defence industries are in the strategy but could pull it out more around tech convergence so definitely a topic worth pulling out more.

DF noted great work within a short period of time, building on what NS has said, noted doesn't say enough about what we want to get as an outcome at the end if you put in investments.

JD echoed Doug's thoughts over the positive views of the document. Delivery plans highlighted as an important element and a key piece of work, noting the language could be more ambitious to talk ourselves up more. JD noted the need to focus more on the 'how' around the numbers and focus on enablers of growth, noting that he feels the correct 6 have been highlighted but with more connections needed between the enablers and sectors.

KB queried what the numbers are tracked against, noting she doesn't like the current layout of the strategy page, commenting that she feels the 6 areas are definitely correct and exactly in the right areas but need more word play to sound exciting, steering away from the generic language.

LP noted a specific point around the technology narrative, confirming she is against calling out specific technologies as looking to embrace the full set of technologies so a danger in calling out specifics. More generally LP noted that she would like to read something that makes her feel that we are doing something different, which isn't currently leaping out at the moment. Noting a lot of the difference may come out in the 'how' and what needs to be true to make these things happen. LP noted would like people who read this outside of the group to really connect to it and feel the change.

MP noted feeds back into JD point around a Delivery Plan that sits alongside the Strategy, LR noted that this is planned in draft to come to November's meeting.

MH noted the question around buy in is important and who we are aiming the document at. Noting residents haven't bought into some of the sectors including clean growth, noting recent protests against Sunnica and others and whether caveats are needed to pass through the Councillor route. KB noted have had conversations with RH regarding the Pride of Place deep dive and something that needs to go out to businesses to be less wordy and be different as they are two completely different audiences, noting the strategy is a government pitch from her perspective. MH noted that the media will be all over the document when published before Cabinet so highlighted the need to be conscious over the comms for this.

LR noted the thoughts on having elevator pitches aimed at different audiences. KB queried if there is agreement that EPIC Suffolk is what we want to go with, noting that is growing on her, but whichever acronym is agreed needs to be a key thread throughout and important to question if the key themes have been highlighted.

RH noted that the strategy is currently a fixed document with key principles in it, manifesting itself as a single strategy document but overtime he is expecting that many different extracts and documents will come out of it dependant on who

the audience is, but at this point aiming to focus on the key principals and language within the document.

OP noted that he feels we are very close with a few refinements needed. Noting that this is a strategy and growth plan with views that some of the views being discussed are at another detail level down, with a need to ensure that the main strategy is clear and understandable. OP commented that the current ambitions are economic indicators and suggested the need to note physical or vertical items that are achieved.

OP queried whether Sustainability needs to be added as a workstream or whether it is a given that it is woven throughout all. LR noted because all sectors are within the EPIC test then it should be explicit within the sectors, noting we have to ask ourselves is it EPIC, setting out the starter of a test that we could measure against. LR queried what the test or framework is that we will be applying to this among others so that it becomes explicit, LR welcomed thoughts on this.

AM noted within his paper, environmental, positive, innovative and circular (EPIC) with a need to be clear which EPIC acronym we are using throughout. LG noted if we need to appeal to different audiences, is it possible that we have a slide on 'what is in it for you' that explains why it benefits the audience. Keeping it short and snappy to the point but giving them the answers as an idea. Regarding the talent development page, LG noted her thoughts on the language being too soft and unclear.

LG noted it isn't clear to her how we are aiming on getting people into employment and needs to be more direct leading into inclusivity and diversity, noting it isn't mentioned enough within the slide.

KB in agreement with LGs points commenting on the current workforce and aging population with a need to keep people in careers for longer, considering the top and bottom end of the scale including upskilling people. LR noted importance on highlighting the younger generation as a key area to focus on. LG noted she feels we are underselling ourselves in this area with the language currently sounding too business-ey and not focusing on individuals.

AC highlighted the need to think about who we are aiming this document at and what they want to see capturing UKPLC and what is in it for our residents, young people and within employment to strengthen the strategy.

OP noted his assumption that the audience was Government stakeholders and business but thought that the public are to be included. LR noted this is to help direct business, academia, voluntary sector to really grow the economy so from a community level it hasn't been written for that purpose. NS noted a philosophical point around training the young people,

letting them go out to gain wider experiences and then come back so that we can reskill and upskill to continue working. Highlighted a need to encourage the younger generations as the new Government is coming in, talking about the different areas of growth.

JD noted the need for enablers to drive the economy and put Suffolk on the UK map.

OP noted the positives that no one has noted that they don't like the structure of the document and the layout, commenting that there may be additional pages to add in around what's in it for me and what pledges people can make to add value on a personal level.

LG noted regarding wage percentages whether they are above the current inflation as if its natural it isn't real. LR noted that the included percentages are above and beyond the inflation amounts.

PA noted a good piece of work with a lot of detail, noting conscious about audiences and the length of the document. PA noted if we are having a document for the public then highlighted the need for a much shorter and snappier pack, noting ABPs recent experience with creating similar documents, picking out only the key important items. Noted some top and tailing to be done around the look and images. LP added, the title of the strategy whether there is room for a really pithy sentence in the foreword around what it is going to do for the UK to really summarise.

Discussion around bringing out more examples of private investment in Strategy.

MP noted lobbied by Ipswich, Bury, Newmarket, Lowestoft and Felixstowe noting the power of place and look at how the strategy will facilitate growth in the particular areas in regard to the powerful lobbies and how we can detail this. KB noted agreement, saying that the map doesn't highlight these areas and an importance to stand partially more broadly as East of England rather than just Suffolk. DF noted have recently created a lot of personas as an exercise to look at the various areas and people and could feed into a really useful appendix.

MP queried to MT, as a member of the audience for this document, what his thoughts were. MT noted the fascinating thoughts on how we operationalise our strategy as being similar to a national level. High level sectors and strengths to be set out on what the government want to focus on which will form a wider package around budget with more to come on views around devolution and additional funding.

MT noted worth looking ahead on local growth plans shared with place and Government. Drafting ownership and approval for the plan will be an entirely local process with shared

priorities and shared framework maps directly onto the strategy we have so noted thoughts that Suffolks strategy fits in well within this. Noting the starts of an English devolution deal with clarity on the tools at our disposal, noting that the national planning policy framework consultation closes today. MT noted discussions with the treasury are still underway but conversations on identifying clusters is underway to make the case for the strengths within economies.

MH queried regarding the combined authority route, whether all of the Counties would do a strategy each or whether a combined one would be needed. MT noted regarding local growth plans, an intention for a focus on enablers within the key sectors rather than a list of geographic priorities. LG queried if that needs to be highlighted more within our document. MT commented that the policy is still emerging. MH queried what happens in the interim, MT noted the legacy LEP functions will be ongoing to achieve the ambitions.

RS regarding devolution noted his views that it is the worst possible time to try to get a strategic plan together as we don't know where we stand with previous plans being scuppered, noting it is important to still get on with the task. KB noted agreement and commenting that the 6 key areas won't be changing.

LR noted devolution is one way of delivery but our focus needs to be on how to deliver growth for Suffolk as there are other routes and funding sources. MT noted the important things as the shared priorities as this is what unlocks the funding.

DF noted the budget on 30 October, MH noted that the strategy will be published before the budget so if something major would come up then a last-minute paper can be tabled or it could be delayed.

LR noted that if the board decided time was needed, the board could decide to delay the paper to December's meeting to allow for more time which would allow another Business Board meeting to happen in November. It was confirmed that the investment deep dive is purposely being left to last to discuss all topics raised in other sessions.

MH noted his thoughts on delaying the paper until 3 December to allow for views following the budget. MP queried if we went for the December presentation to Cabinet all deep dive elements would be concluded, LR confirmed they would be. LG noted an importance to ensure what we are saying is current and relevant. RS noted thoughts around being able to predict largely what will be said within the budget and his views that the board should continue as planned with the November Cabinet.

JD noted views that our document is playing into what we need for Suffolk but not highlighting what will be needed by Government due to the change in Devolution.

	<p>MT noted context around an English Devolution Deal being pulled together expected around Spring 2025, RS noted always reasons for delay but noted his favour on going ahead in the November meeting.</p> <p>LR raised to the board that if the paper was tabled in November, not all the deep dives will have happened in order to influence the document, noting that the document is influencing the investment plan which will be ready for the November board. RH noted that we aren't seeking approval from Cabinet on the investment plan which will be influenced by the budget.</p> <p>MT confirmed budget is intending to work through funding available this year and next financial year, spending review next year with short-term roll overs.</p> <p>MP queried at what point we need to make a decision, MH noted papers can be pulled up to two weeks before. MP clarified that we aren't shooting ourselves in the foot in terms of timing. OP noted a comms and media advantage to going close to the budget. KB queried how many combined authorities are currently in play, MT confirmed around 12 at the moment making up 50% of the population.</p> <p>LR noted need to careful that the devolution doesn't overshadow the strategy as only takes up a small part of it.</p> <p>GD noted on developing pathways for younger people and a talent development growth plan as his key priorities. IG noted agreement to what MH said, shared prosperity funds in the budget with the strategy given some direction, noting that SPSL also may have some funding available so although uncertainty around direction that we do have some control.</p> <p><b>ACTION 2.3</b> SCC Officers to action feedback from Business Board members in next iteration of strategy, including executive summary, greater clarity on skills proposals, greater reference to existing business investment in Suffolk, revisions to targets/aspirations, clarity over document audience, review language around solar development etc. <b>SCC Officers.</b></p> <p>MP noted if any further feedback is thought of on the strategy document after the meeting to please still feedback to Lisa and the team.</p>	
3	<p><b>Business Board Deep Dives update</b></p> <p>RH noted the two purposes of the deep dives, the content of the strategy and areas to highlight on the implementation plan, as per the paper they are all in the calendar going forward. RH highlighted that the clean energy focus doesn't currently have a board sponsor and noted the discussion around coverage of the energy sector within the board.</p> <p><b>Business Support update – Kelly Boosey</b></p>	

KB noted the deep dive session at the end of August, lead a session with a mixture of representations from the Business Support sector. KB confirmed that they went in with a proposal to provide proactive support and to improve our data set. KB noted there was good feedback with a shared view around going digital and developing an app. KB noted still a lot to explore around how to engage and build business awareness, how an app platform would be managed and kept up to date, how it would be funded and how the data would be captured. In follow up to the session KB met with Andy Skinner regarding a start-up business called App Studio which they are supporting.

KB noted that it is an easy app to manage from an admin point of view. After an initial cost to build they are now supporting other organisations with a £100pm running costs so a cheap solution. The app has various functions around booking onto workshops and business support consultants. It can be signed up via just an email. KB noted a really interesting conversation but noted good to get PB involved and to get him to review this solution.

Next steps were confirmed as some hot house sessions with PB around technology and AI. A follow up also scheduled with MENTA. If it is likely to go ahead then a project plan will need to be scoped.

JD queried if the growth hub is the triage for business support programmes. LR noted this is more of a front-end process, to better improve the direction to the right business support which the Growth Hub would be apart of. RH noted timely regarding the Growth Hub arrangements running to June 2025.

### **Ports and Logistics, including hydrogen opportunities - Paul Ager and Julian Munson**

JM noted the paper picking up a comment from a previous board regarding the hydrogen opportunity but also highlights the ports and logistics being a key sector. Noted this paper is before the deep dive session so is happy to come back with updates. Noted currently getting invitations out and reflecting the importance of this sector to businesses so key to get a broad variety of people.

Regarding infrastructure, the hydrogen piece is really important and in relation to Freeport East and Sizewell which both need to be recognised and highlight the global importance of us in the hydrogen space.

JM noted that the deep dive session next month will hopefully unravel some of these future opportunities. PA noted keen to think about businesses along the A14 corridor, noting over the coming weeks will get some key names and details to build the session.

	<p>Going forward there is a recognition that there is a gap around the table from the Energy Sector which will be reviewed going forward.</p> <p>Key dates confirmed as 10 October Ports and Logistics deep dive session. 15 October Energy Deep Dive. PA noted happy to step into the space as a board member representative if no others are received to support the Energy deep dive. MP noted a grateful acceptance for PA to join 15 October. JM to share the details.</p> <p><b>ACTION 3.1</b> SCC Officers to share the full Energy Deep Dive session details with PA as the new Board Member representative. <b>SCC Officers.</b></p> <p>OP queried if Greater Anglia are involved in the Ports and Logistics deep dive, JW noted that they are not currently involved but is in agreement that they should be added to the group.</p> <p><b>ACTION 3.2</b> SCC Officers to ensure Greater Anglia are invited to the Ports and Logistics deep dive session. <b>SCC Officers.</b></p> <p><b>Net Zero / Clean growth opportunities update – Andy Mellen</b> AM shared a short presentation, acknowledging that Michelle Gordon aided with the preparation of the paper. AM noted that climate change provides a huge challenge to supporting economic development, AM noted within that there are huge opportunities within our response. Measures to reduce emissions to the business will almost always reduce the running costs. AM acknowledged that Suffolk have the existing infrastructure to achieve the carbon neutral plan. Noting the 5 key themes commented on in the slides.</p> <p>AM noted the strategic plan has two parts, firstly the sector on clean business, areas of the business that have low impact on the environment with huge opportunities for us. Sustainable resource management and the role of community and business involvement. AM noted the EPIC test elements for the clean growth.</p> <p>First pillar growing the clean growth sector detailed in the paper and second improving the performance across society in multiple different ways. AM noted a future deep dive session will be being arranged and is happy to come back once it has happened.</p>	<p><b>SCC Officers.</b></p> <p><b>SCC Officers.</b></p>
4	<p><b>Former LEP programmes update and funding position going forward</b></p> <p><b>Growth Hub / Business Support – Julian Munson</b> RH noted an update on some of the current delivery workstreams from historic LEP workstreams so important to</p>	

have sight of what is going on with a mind that a lot are due to draw to an end in mid-2025 so going forwards will be shaped by the Business Board.

JM shared the slides from the board pack, noting that Growth Hub is the first point of contact for Businesses seeking advice. Confirmed the growth hub brand has been going on for approx. 12 years providing a free diagnostics service. The New Anglia Growth Hub ran successfully for 10 years under Suffolk Chamber of Commerce, EU and Government funded with just over 3,500 businesses receiving support over this time. JM noted changed recently with the current contract being run through YTKO no confirmed funding past March 2024. Noting Norfolk has a different delivery model as it is run through the Council but have retained the same branding for communications and the website so receive the same front end. Some district level outputs across Norfolk and Suffolk with different targets potentially over complicating things.

JM touched on a range of other programmes for Business Support with the app aiming to help them navigate the landscape. Barclays Eagle Labs and innovations labs in Suffolk delivering this, 10 early-stage businesses already identified and going through a programme so hoping to share successes of this soon.

Innovation Grant Mentoring Programme another success story noted. Agri-tech launch pad in the media this week, funding available for business this week, successfully securing funding through working with Innovate UK.

JM noted next steps following deep dive to map all of the support on offer to better inform the strategy going forward and importantly how we communicate this to businesses. JM noted important to recognise that within businesses they don't recognise or work to the same county boundaries that we do so important to keep consistent messaging.

JD noted key to track the outcomes from these initiatives for review by the board.

#### **Inward Investment – Jai Raithatha**

JR shared his slide deck on inward investment noting it comes from a whole range of means noting we get direct approaches from companies wishing to invest, referrals from Government as well as promotional work that we do ourselves.

In the approach to March 2025, two County Councils met with the LEP driven by UK trade and investment keen to have single point of investment. Responding to international enquiries that came through the pipeline, key partners such as Freeport and key landowners. The team have also been working on selling the assets from the UK in the international market. JR noted that since Covid there has been a significant reduction of

enquiries through the pipeline so highlights the importance of our own promotional work.

Vagina Beach in the US have been in discussion with us in terms of our expertise on offshore wind. 19 Successful investments in the County down to the teams work as well as 630 new jobs.

In terms of future delivery, this will end in March 2025 so need to review a few things, is a two-county approach the best one going forward considering that we have also been working closely with Essex, the financial resources that are going into the team, what future relationships are with Government bodies as well as linking into other sector-based activities.

MP noted the impressive stats that we need to feed into the strategy documents as they show a very vibrant picture. NS noted nothing for public bodies such as the NHS, investment from the university to make the County and town a better place, the investment from the colleges bringing in a huge number of jobs and skills so should we have these within the inward investment rather than just what is considered the straightforward businesses. OP noted also the US military defence and their investments.

OP queried what the status of Norfolk and Suffolk Ltd was as a brand, JR noted this is within what we need to consider going forward and ensure we are focussing on what our USP for Suffolk is and then fitting it into a wider concept.

#### **Skills initiatives – Michael Gray**

MG shared slides on the LEP skills programmes inherited into the County Council. MG noted interest in the level of feedback included for Board Members. MG encouraged the Business Board to not only focus on the inherited programmes but how they fit into our wider aims.

The skills bootcamp programme and Career Hub both fit in very nicely with our current aims. MG noted have a quality manager who accesses across the County and is now working with the Bootcamp team to work out where we can add value to this programme. MG noted the LEP skills programmes, managed across SCC and NCC with assumed leadership on each.

The bootcamp programme is the one SCC are directly responsible for and is very employment lead. To date MG noted we have been delivering bootcamps at a local level with growth noted across the programme. MG confirmed 18 different providers with up to 628 learners benefitting from the programmes across various different sectors. Start dates are throughout the year but all have now started. MG noted confidence that we are on track to hit all our targets and to date has been a very successful programme.

In regard to next year's bootcamp programme an invite has gone out to invite feedback into this proposal although funding isn't confirmed yet. MG noted an ambitious ask but we believe is a right balance with feasibility with a wide range of feedback received. MG noted if anyone is interested in the case studies for what the bootcamps can provide there is a whole host of them available online.

MG moved on to the Careers Hub and noted it does also have an unsure future but is committed until August 2025 as more academic focus. They provide support for schools and colleges to access them against Gatsby Benchmarks as well as a voluntary programme of individuals doing careers talks, offering advice, mentoring programmes and discussions with the senior leadership teams within the establishments.

The percentage of the Norfolk and Suffolk settings hitting the benchmarks are below national average. NS noted that this doesn't include colleges as they have to hit the benchmarks, so the stats are from the schools.

MG noted the progress that is being made on the main outcomes detailed on slide 7 but noted it is fairly slow progress. MG noted that there are a lot more programmes ongoing as well as the two that have been inherited, examples of these are highlighted within the slide deck but noted a lot are at risk due to funding sources.

PA queried where the performance responsibility sits, MG noted mainly with the establishments and confirmed the stats are across Norfolk and Suffolk with support from the Careers Hub.

LR noted that within the benchmarks there are several elements at play as could be down to how establishments are scoring themselves so has to be taken with a pinch of salt.

LP queried what the themes are that can be influenced. NS noted really difficult as in order to receive the benchmarks they receive a 3 day visit and a lot of schools are incredibly busy. LP commented on encouraging business to encourage more work experience placements to assist. NS noted as a strategic board need to look at the big topics we can really influence noting his feeling of needing to go for something bigger and bolder. NS commented on the gaps in upskilling and a fully skilled workforce that is required.

LG in agreement with NS comments but noted the need for short term and long-term strategies and a need to be proactive not reactive and to be forward thinking. LG challenged NS views over not being able to influence the Gatsby Benchmarks and gaps noting that we could review what money is currently being spent.

	<p>NS noted that not many schools are under the influence of the County Council so NS suggestion is to focus our intention on what can be changed.</p> <p>MP thanked the board for the discussion and noted that a lot of conversion to come out of Friday's Skills Workshop.</p>	
5	<p><b>Comms proposals and next steps – Kelly Boosey &amp; Rob Hancock</b></p> <p>RH updated the board regarding comms, communicating the Suffolk offer in order to achieve it more sharply. RH noted KB has kindly agreed to lead in this space and a comms budget has been inherited from the LEP. Capsule marketing are on board to assist.</p> <p>RH noted how do we build in existing comms and brands with what we are currently using as Suffolk Economy so a need for professional help to get these into one coherent comms offer. Follow on will be to develop the comms themselves around press releases and websites so when we go to launch, we can do so in an impactful way.</p> <p>RH noted next step is to meet during the second week in October with the agency, noted Business Members are welcome to join.</p> <p>PA queried where Capsule Marketing are based, RH confirmed that they are based in Ipswich.</p> <p>RH confirmed that the SCC comms do the corporate comms so we will use the SCC press team to write press releases but in terms of websites and further comms we will be using the LEP funding.</p> <p>RH noted following several board member queries that the workshop will help identify what branding is best to use going forward and that this isn't set in stone that it will be Suffolk Economy.</p> <p>KB confirmed that the workshop is on 9 October from 1400-1600 and is an exploratory session to set the agency with the task at hand with thoughts whether Suffolk Economy is catchy enough.</p> <p>MH queried the timeframe on this due to releases needed for Cabinet, RH noted that the work is up and running and some assets may be after this date but initial materials will be there in time.</p> <p>The meeting was confirmed as currently taking place on MS Teams but with a request to change this to an in person meeting.</p>	

<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>November and January Business Board plans</b></p> <p>RH noted JW is working with MP on arrangements, today being the third one happening at EH so under discussion with other sites for the future two boards. In discussion with BT and Greene King as options with tours potentially being included.</p> <p>MP noted keen to go out to businesses for the meetings to allow to have the feel of the businesses.</p> <p>RS noted the need for a vice chair to this group to cover whilst MP is abroad. MP noted a topic to discuss offline.</p> <p><b>ACTION 6.1</b> MP to discuss with SCC Officers the requirement for a Vice Chair going forward. <b>SCC Officers.</b></p> <p>Future board dates confirmed as 28 November 1300-1500 which is in the diary, potential January dates being discussed are 16 or 30 with full proposed 2025 dates to be circulated shortly.</p>	<p><b>SCC Officers.</b></p>
<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>No AOB noted.</b></p>	