

Business Isle of Man Agency Board Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday 15th February 2024

Time: 14:00-16:00 - All Board

Venue: Motorsport Press Office, Grandstand, Nobles Park, Douglas

| INVITED ATTENDEES - VOTING MEMBERS | | | |
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| Steve Pickett, Chair, Business Isle of Man | SP | Dr Michelle Haywood MHK, Political Member | MH |
| Tim Cowsill, CEO Of Business Isle Of Man, DfE | TC | | |
| Alex Fray, Sector Champion, Biomed & Medicinal Cannabis (apologies) | AF | Dave Hester, Sector Champion, Engineering & Manufacturing | DH |
| Ollie Neale, Sector Champion, Drink Production | ON | Findlay Macleod, Sector Champion, Food Production (apologies) | FM |
| Ieda Yell, Sector Champion, CleanTech | IY | Brian Butler, Sector Champion, Construction | BB |
| Carol Glover, Sector Champion, Small Business & Entrepreneurship | CG | Scott Pearse, Sector Champion, Local Economy - Retail | SPe |
| Jamie Lewis, Sector Champion, Local Economy - Hospitality | JL | Andy Sanderson, Sector Champion, Local Economy - Retail | AS |

| INVITED ATTENDEES - NON-VOTING | |
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| Mark Lewin, Chief Officer, Department for Enterprise | ML |
| Hira Modan, Marketing Manager, DFE | HM |
| Katy Ashwell, Business Development Co-Ordinator, DFE | KA |
| Geoff Moorcroft, Director of Educational Research and Projects, DESC | GM |
| Peter Reid, Chair of Skills Group | PR |

Please note all available members of the Business Agency Team are able to join on Teams to support where required.

| Agenda item | Owner(s) |
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| <p>Chair's Welcome & Introduction</p> <p>Standing items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologies - FM, AF, ML • Code of Conduct - no issues to report • Declarations of new/potential conflicts of interest - Decision Paper BB20240215 Continuation of ACE funding, DH and CG declared a potential conflict and will step out of the meeting during the vote. CG also declared role as Governor at UCM as a potential conflict while discussing the Skills Strategy. • Additions to Gifts/Hospitality Register - none • Previous minutes to be signed off by board - January 2024 Board minutes - taken as read | SP |
| <p>Papers for Decision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BB20240215 Continuation of ACE (Awareness of Careers in Engineering) Funding 2024 <p>RH introduced herself to the new board members and provided an overview of the paper, noting that the request is for approval of a £16,700 spend from revenue. Referencing the paper and appendix document included in the board pack, RH spoke to the presentation stressing that the</p> | RH |

initiative is not just for the benefit of the Engineering and Manufacturing (E&M) sectors but also positively impacts construction, medicinal cannabis, and cleantech. The amount of funding required is unchanged from 2023, despite this there are plans to support additional sessions this year. This also included with visit from McLaren to the Island last week. RH concluded by sharing a testimonial from Jason Moorhouse, MHK in support of the scheme.

DH declared his interest in the paper, having run ACE for 10 years previously, and said that this feedback is consistent with that from numerous other sources including teachers. He is in support of the paper and continuing the funding.

The Board asked a number of questions on how the ACE Programme evaluated its success. Following further discussion, it was agreed that more could be done to promote the outputs from the programme. However, It is clear that the quality and quantity of school leavers attending UCM for Engineering courses is very positive.

In response to a board member asking whether ACE should form part of the skills strategy, TC expressed his concerns with this approach. Explaining that while ACE currently sits within BIOM's remit, as a sector led initiative, it is well co-ordinated. The Agency should inform the skills board of the work rather than any moving of initiatives.

Referring back to the successes from ACE in 2023, SP questioned whether this momentum would continue and could more be done in the future. Board Member for Engineering and Manufacturing replied that a further paper would need to be brought to the board for future initiatives, but we needed to be mindful that success is reliant on volunteers. TC confirmed that 50% of the funding is matched from Business IOMs and if funding was to be increased in the future, this could impact the ACE businesses contribution. The board member agreed to pose the question to the ACE committee, on the basis of what else could be achieved with more funding. The board will be updated at a future meeting with the response.

A board member suggested the potential use of free opportunities to bolster the programme, with one suggestion of a visit to Manx Radio's repair space.

CG & DH left the room ahead of the vote.

Vote -

Approved - unanimous by all present.

The board also supported the ACE Group bringing forward further initiatives forward.

CG & DH returned to the meeting

Papers for Noting

- BB20240216 Review of the Economic Potential of IoM Freeport

SP introduced the paper, with TC explaining that the same questions regarding the economic value of the Freeport kept being asked. This review provides a useful overview and will support futures enquiries.

TC

TC went on to explain the paper highlights that there is no real difference between Freeports on Island and in the UK. The custom warehouses that are available here do offer the same advantages, although they are administratively heavy for IOM Government. However, Customs have adopted a new digital system in the last couple of years and changes in processes are expected as a result.

The board inquired about the next steps regarding the Freeport. TC clarified that the Department owns the land and confirmed that there are currently two plots available for development. He also noted that there is interest from businesses seeking to establish a

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| <p>presence on the Island who are looking for suitable large buildings. Various options for proceeding with enquirers are under consideration and efforts to explore the available options and determine what would offer the best return are ongoing. These are not just for the Freeport but also Island-wide.</p> <p>TC concluded, advising that the Head of Business Development, will be attending the March BIOM board meeting to discuss the Business Development Plan, of which property availability will be a consideration and there will be an opportunity for the board to feed into this at the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BB20240217 Draft Skills Strategy <p><i>Referenced in Skills Presentation below.</i></p> | |
| <p>Initial Briefing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair; <p>SP provided an update, noting the launch of Manx Menu last week which was positively received. A board member for the Local Economy added that it has been handled well and had generated a lot of positive attention and instilled a sense of national pride. The launch event at Cycle 360 with the members of the Travel Writers Guild (TWG) was a great success.</p> <p>A board member noted that the only negative comment noted from businesses is the lack of seasonal ingredients in February. However, it was recognised that when those ingredients are available doesn't necessarily coincide with when businesses need the increase in footfall.</p> <p>A board member questioned whether more visitors could be encouraged to visit the Island for the Food & Drink Festival. Another board member suggested that the festival is in need of an overall, with TC advising that he and the Visit Agency CEO are meeting with DEFA to discuss this.</p> <p>SP continued that the next big event is IFE and the corresponding showcase. All board members were asked to share any relevant buyers contacts that could be invited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DfE Chief Executive; <p>No update - ML not in attendance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CEO of Business Agency; <p>TC updated the board on upcoming events with IFE in March along with two BDMs attending the Oxfordshire Climate Tech and the NWAA Conference. The Climate Tech will be a good precursor to the planned Innovation Challenge in June.</p> | <p>SP</p> <p>TC</p> |
| <p>Skills Presentation</p> <p><i>PR and GM arrived 3pm</i></p> <p>Introductions were provided around the room and PR thanked the board for the opportunity to present.</p> <p>PR provided an overview as to why he joined the skills board and what he and the board hope to achieve. Explaining that Skills are critical for a successful and diverse economy and their aim is to produce a clear and transparent action plan with measurable targets along the way. They are asking this board and other sources for feedback. The strategy being presented will be reviewed in light of feedback from here and other forums</p> <p>PR and GM then gave a presentation which is attached in the Appendix.</p> <p>An extensive discussion followed and a number of points were brought up by the board:</p> <p>The Board suggested the initial work the skills board had done regarding the VTAS scheme and Apprenticeship changes hadn't been widely circulated, noting that the Chamber of Commerce, where much of the information had been collated, was just one industry representative. GM explained that they had to bring it forward, as they had initially consulted with small</p> | <p>PR & GM</p> |



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| <p>stakeholder groups, and they were restricted by the funding envelope available to them from the Department of Education. The Board suggested that these sort of decisions should be reviewed at a high level in line with the skills strategy.</p> <p>The general concern was that the skills board required officer and policy support to be able to drive such an important agenda. The sentiment from the board was the skills board is an important part of the puzzle to bring forward the skills and education requirements of the Manx Economy, but some components were missing to ensure the strategy was delivered successfully.</p> <p>The board was supportive of the initiative and suggested the Agencies could fill some of existing gaps from stakeholders and delivery to help bring forward the strategy.</p> | |
| <p>Standing Item: AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2024/25 Budget. <p>TC advised that the budget details are yet to be made available but they are expected soon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brief for Local Economy - Business Operational Cost Analysis Quick Quote Brief <p>There was an action from the last meeting to share this with the board, who have now provided further feedback on where the best comparison jurisdictions are for use in the report. TC recommended that we allow the experts and resulting data collected to demonstrate where the best comparisons regions are, that the report needs to be high level and that cost is a factor, as a more detailed report would be considerably more expensive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Value of papers for the board <p>TC expressed his concern over the high quantity of papers presented to the Board, for relatively low value approval, asking whether this should be reviewed, as in most cases he has the authority to approve some of the initiatives directly.</p> | TC |
| <p>Meeting Close 16:20</p> | |