

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

D2 JOINT COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

10 October 2022

Review of Partnership Arrangements: Derbyshire Economic Partnership and High Level Recovery Board

(1) Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the proposed review of economic partnership arrangements across the geography, specifically the Derbyshire Economic Partnership (DEP) and the high level COVID Economic Recovery Board.

(2) Discussion/ Decision Required by the Derby and Derbyshire Joint Economic Prosperity Committee (D2JC)

2.1 The D2JC is requested to:

- i) Note the planned review being undertaken by the Chair of DEP and consider the issues and proposals set out in this report and additional information provided at meeting.**
- ii) Decide whether or how far the work of this D2 Joint Committee should be included within the scope of the review and request that recommendations on the way forward be shared at the next appropriate Committee meeting.**

(3) Information and Assessment

3.1 The economic delivery arrangements within the D2 geography are one of strong and embedded partnership working, with good engagement from representative organisations such as the East Midlands Chamber of Commerce (EMCC), Marketing Peak District and Derbyshire (MPDD), Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and both further and higher education (FE and HE) establishments. Multi-disciplinary working groups set up to tackle key issues are commonplace and effective on the whole, for example, in tackling COVID recovery. However, the two-tier nature of the geography does add a layer of complexity that means oversight, resourcing and decision making is made more difficult than might be necessary – both for elected members and officers.

3.2 The Derbyshire Economic Partnership is a long-standing arrangement that has been in place for 10 years or more and covers the county area.

Work is funded jointly by the County Council and the eight district authorities and covers activity such as skills and employment, business support and inward investment. Relationships between DEP and similar partnerships based within Derby city are drawn in, primarily, through the Business and Economy Workstream (which is made up of senior officers from all ten authorities) but also this D2 Economic Prosperity Joint Committee.

- 3.3 From time to time, more bespoke economic partnerships emerge within the geography; for example, the D2 high level COVID Recovery Board which is made up of the ten local authority leaders, plus major businesses such as Toyota, Longcliffe, Henry Boots, the FE and HE sectors and representative organisations. (It is noted here that the D2 Joint Committee has received a separate report for consideration today regarding progress of the COVID recovery work). Toyota City Partnership, the Culture Heritage, Arts and Tourism (CHAT) Board are other examples
- 3.4 Other governance constructs have emerged more recently around the East Midlands Freeport, the East Midlands Development Corporation and the County Council's Regeneration Pipeline Programme. The proposed East Midlands Mayoral Combined County Authority also provides a changing context for partnership delivery going forward.
- 3.5 In light of the above, the result now is that there are a number of formal boards and informal partnerships within the geography all working to provide oversight, direction – and often, decision making – on matters relating to economic development, growth, regeneration, skills and employment and inward investment. Meetings often involve the same people and the timing of items for discussion often overlaps, leading to duplication.
- 3.6 Due to the progress being made on current work programmes, the DEP and COVID Recovery Board specifically, are at a point where review and consolidation of the work would be timely.
- 3.7 Therefore, working with the Chair of DEP (Richard Horseley) and the Chair and Vice Chair of the COVID Recovery Board, (Cllr Lewis and Tony Walker, respectively) it is proposed that a root and branch review of the work of these two partnerships be undertaken and recommendations made on how best to streamline activity and ensure decision making is timely and focused. The review will also ensure that 'business as usual' activity is evaluated and that appropriate action is taken to prevent duplication in the work of the boards and free up officer and member resources.

3.8 It is important to note at this stage that all relevant partners will be engaged in the review process to ensure outputs and recommendations are fit for purpose and reflect the specific needs and challenges being faced collectively. For that reason, the headline proposals set out in this report will be supported by more detailed discussion at the D2 Joint Committee meeting, including the proposed scope of the review and timescales for delivery.

4. Recommendations

4.1 It is recommended the D2 Joint Committee:

- 1. notes the planned review being undertaken by the Chair of DEP and provides any comments in relation to the proposed scope, objectives and timescales.**
- 2. Specifically consider and agree whether, or how far, the work of this D2 Joint Committee should be included within the scope of the review.**
- 3. Requests that the outputs and recommendations on the way forward be shared at the next appropriate Committee meeting.**