

**Present:**

James Pinchbeck (JP) Chair – Streets Chartered Accounts  
Angela Driver (AD) – LCC  
CllrT Dyer (CD)  
Noreen Read (NR) - EMB  
Phoebe Edwards (PE) - EMB  
Katrina Pearce (KP) – FSB  
Zoe King (ZK) – Epix Media  
Ian D Green (IG) – HSBC  
Jenny Couch (JC) – NELC  
Simon Beardsley (SB) – Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce  
Sean Gray – LCC  
James Baty (JB) – LEP  
Neil Darwin (ND) – Deyton Bell  
Simon Murphy (SM) – LCC Internationalisation Programmes lead  
Heather Martin (HM) – DIT  
Mike Stokes (MS) – Growth Hub Export adviser  
Andrea Collins (AC) – Export Department  
Eve Farley (EF) – Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce International Trade Coach

Apologies were received from:

Scott Fleming  
Richard Blackmore  
Helen Thompson  
Ian Harrison  
Mark Webb  
Samantha Harrison

James Pinchbeck declared an interest that he is also a board member of NBV and in relation to Help to Grow is the chair of the University Business School Advisory board and is assisting with their accreditation.

Phoebe Edwards declared that EMB have a contract with DIT for Internationalisation Support as well as commissioning Deyton Bell who are in attendance. EMB also delivery the Growth Hub advisory support for Lincolnshire County Council.

**Internationalisation Plan – Neil Darwin, Deyton Bell**

ND shared the findings of the Internationalisation Strategy plan. The draft plan was circulated before the meeting. Powerpoint presented during meeting circulated with minutes.

Actions are included within the Strategy plan.

**Update and  
Discussion**

JP highlights there was a steering group discussion regarding the Internationalisation plan that took place on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

SM updates that there was excellent engagement from the group of stakeholders. At the meeting there were three areas highlighted to explore:

- To create a strategy that is fit for purpose for Greater Lincolnshire and to ensure we've identified the gaps in provision and that the in the enhancements at the LEP and the Councils can address some of the themes are merging from the discussion at that meeting. It was made clear that this is an internationalisation strategy and not an exporting strategy.
- To encompass both physical and intellectual property in exports in.
- To focus on the exporting environment and to identify and access target markets.

Actions that have been identified to take further are to define the resource we have available and that we need.

- To confirm the principles of collaboration and competition.
- To agree a communication strategy for this strategy that is right for 2022 and an appropriate platform and timescales are allowed.
- Ensure plans are in place to engage businesses and visitors and the protocol that goes along with this.
- Too make sure that responsible exporting is undertaken and that all advisers support their business to engaging with their customers and to ensure they know what they are doing and what the key markets are.
- Action plan addition - prepare a Lincolnshire export prospectus that we promote to Embassy staff worldwide
- Define and agree targets for the strategy, for example increasing uptake of users of export support services, and an increase in export turnover in the county

SM also highlighted there is a discussion regarding the potential for an Exporting Peer to Peer network to allow for exporters to share their pitfalls as well as their expertise.

**Discussion and input to next steps where all can input and support delivery of the action plan – all**

JP opens up to the guests that have been invited along to the board meeting to raise any key points or any items they feel have been overlooked on the discussion so far around the internationalisation strategy plan and the discussions that have been ongoing thus far.

MS sought to clarify that in the Internationalisation Strategy Plan it states that in April 2019 an export adviser was contracted to provide support to business who were not receiving support from DIT. The adviser contacted was MS who states that 80% of businesses referred were already receiving support from DIT.

MS also states that he believes that as stated in the report trade missions are valued by businesses but that businesses should also be taught to be proactive and find valuable contacts before going on trade missions. To help with this MS feels the University's connections and DIT's OMIS service maybe helpful.

MS believes the idea of a Peer to Peer network group for Exporting would be useful as there is a wealth of expertise within the county.

HM raised the revised support that DIT has to offer. This involves road mapping the business journey with the relevant support available to the business. This mainly applies to accidental exporters or to business new to exporting.

The Export Academy offers a series of webinars where businesses can self-select which webinar is right for them.

HM states that although the Internationalisation Grant that is available, despite being a lucrative grant, is not being accessed at a high level due to low enquiry levels.

AC updated the board to say that she was at the steering group meeting and she reported to the group she felt that there were gaps around sustainability as well as the importing support. AC believes that companies seem to thrive when the support is more 'handholding' and close touch as opposed to signposting to training and webinars specifically in micro businesses.

JP confirms the need to focus on sustainability and net zero within international trade. JP also highlights the importance of making sure there is still a physical support available to businesses as although the resource input is more, the outputs are better than light touch digital support.

EF stated that there had been a soft launch of the Lincolnshire Chamber International Trade Consultancy Service, however this will receive a major launch within the next couple of months.. The work EF has discovered so far is that there is a huge need for handholding. From talking to businesses, EF has found it is the larger businesses that are interested in support which is surprising and that the interest from SMEs doesn't appear to be there, however they do need an in-depth level of support and mentoring.

EF believes there is a lack of stats based on Internationalisation within Lincolnshire and there is a need for baseline level of statistics. Also that a communication strategy needs to be put together to allow for a cohesive approach to business in the area.

IG states that HSBC are involved in a lot of international trade and that this has risen within Lincolnshire. IG confirms that customers do need educating but there is a lot of knowledge out there and that HSBC customers don't think twice about exporting. It is important for companies know where they need to go for help. In terms of sustainability a Green Loan has been launched to allow for cash back on sustainable items.

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| <p>KP states that exporting and importing are getting pushed down the list of a business's priorities and this needs to be looked at to make sure the support is highlighted to these businesses.</p> <p>SB highlights that it is worth clarifying that this focus also covers Rutland as well as Greater Lincolnshire.</p> <p>SB also queries who owns this strategy? Targets are about to be set but who is going to own, who is going to ensure the targets are met and what happens if they aren't?</p> <p>SB also states the importance of making sure that businesses are able to access the great support that the Growth Hub as a whole has to offer. How do we get to business and show them there is value in accessing overseas markets.</p> <p>AD responds to SB that it is her understanding that it is the steering group that has been set up to steer the plan and to agree the action plan and driving this forward.<br/>JP adds that it may be worth having a separate individual that could oversee the plan and targets set in the plan to ensure that the targets are delivered and value is added.</p> <p>HM backs up the idea to create a Peer to Peer / Export club to offer as a next step to businesses and also the need to get data about what businesses are out there and exporting.</p> <p>AD confirms the Growth Hub does have data but there isn't a joined up data set from all support providers across the patch and this needs to be addressed on the action plan.</p> <p>PE adds that due to the Trade Act, HMRC are beginning to open up which allows for more opportunity to gather data and this might be an easier route than at a local level. Brenden Byczkowski is a useful contact for this.</p> <p>PE also states that the support that is available that is at a good standard, but that the promotion could be increased to highlight the support that is available for businesses.</p> <p>AD responds by saying a start has been made on this with a one page document that highlights the support available and that this isn't too far away from being completed.</p> | <p><b>ACTION – Strategy Document to confirm ownership of actions and targets</b></p> <p><b>ACTION – consider sources of data and potential to create a data 'proxy'</b></p> <p><b>ACTION – 1 page Export support document to be reviewed by all partners</b></p> |
| <p><b>Economic Update – James Baty, LEP</b></p> <p>JB presents slides of the Economic Update to the board. Slides shared with minutes.</p> <p>ZK asks in chat “Do we have the data on our counties economically inactive and how they break down into those categories you mention?”</p> <p>JB responds by saying yes this is received, currently it is outputted through the skills and employment channel but it can be included in the economic breakdown for this group and wider groups.</p> <p>CllrT Dyer asks KP what businesses are saying on the ground level due to the increasing energy costs, particularly impacting the hospitality sector in relation to rising inflation levels.</p> <p>KP responds by confirming that businesses are being hit hard by rising cost levels, whether that is through traditional fuel price increases or increased labour costs due to the difficulties in this area. Businesses are getting hit by much more than the 5.4% inflation that is reported. In hospitality businesses feel they have absorbed the costs as much as they can without putting the</p>  |  |

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| <p>costs onto the customer but this is now begging to change and costs are needing to be put onto the consumer.</p> <p>JC comments on the struggle for getting the unemployed into jobs by saying that recently NELC held a jobs fair in Scunthorpe where hundreds jobs were available and 1200 people attended but very few jobs were taken which is a concern.</p> <p>SB states that due to the rising utility costs the difficulties are going to be increased when the fixed term rates expire and businesses move onto the newer rates that will increase their costs significantly. SB also states there is a pressure for companies to increase benefits to retain staff or to increase salary which is another cost pressure. Business rates are also increasing which will increase costs further on businesses.</p>  |   |
| <p><b>Any Questions re the Progress Information and Action Updates circulated</b></p> <p>Minutes from last Governance Board meeting – no comments received.</p> <p>AD highlights from the Growth Hub report (circulated) that the Growth Hub are working on some new pilot programmes that were included in the unsuccessful CRF bids, but that some BEIS funding has been able to be used to take some of the suggested programmes forward so more information on those programmes will be released soon.</p> <p>AD also highlights that Peer Networks will not be renewed for a further year and that the programme will end in March 2022, however, the new Help to Grow programme does have peer to peer delivery.</p> <p>There is currently a Made Smarter proposition for the East Midlands being developed. Government has made funds available for a Made Smarter pilot programmes such as the ones in other areas already such as Manchester, Yorkshire and the West Midlands. A copy of the proposition will be shared with the board once available.</p> <p>AD also states that the result of the Levelling Up White Paper and the LEP review is due to be released soon.</p> <p>SB queries what the responsibility of a board member is in when absorbing the targets. Should the board be challenging those figures? It was stated the Terms of Reference would be reviewed, has this been followed up?</p> <p>JP highlights the Midlands Engine Investment Fund report has been circulated for reference.</p> <p>The topic of the next board meeting is around Net Zero and the Green Agenda. JP asks if any board members to think of businesses they are aware of that know of any businesses that are struggling in this area and what the struggles are or any businesses that have tackled these issues well and how they have done this. Can these businesses feedback to AD with contact details and what their businesses concerns or solutions are to this topic.</p> | <p><b>ACTION:</b><br/> <b>Add Terms of Reference to agenda for next Board meeting</b></p> |
| <p><b>AOB: None</b></p>  |   |

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| <b>Date of next meeting: 24<sup>th</sup> March 2022, Area of focus: Net Zero and the Green Agenda</b> |  |
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