

ANGUS COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 16 APRIL 2024

TAY CITIES REGION DEAL – TAY CITIES ENGINEERING PARTNERSHIP (TCEP)
UPDATE AND MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

REPORT BY ALISON SMITH, DIRECTOR OF VIBRANT COMMUNITIES & SUSTAINABLE
GROWTH

1. ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report updates the committee on the progress of the Tay Cities Engineering Partnership project led by Dundee & Angus College and agrees to Angus Council entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the project partners to formalise governance arrangements.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICIES

This report contributes to the following priorities contained within the Angus Council Plan 2023 – 2028:

Caring for the Economy:

- We will continue to support and deliver elements of the Tay Cities Deal
- We will encourage and invest in fair work opportunities for those that live, work and study in Angus.

Caring for People:

- We will support children, young people and adults to access appropriate opportunities which allow them to progress in their learning.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) Notes the update on progress of the Tay Cities Engineering Partnership (TCEP) since the approval of the Full Business Case (FBC); and
- (ii) Approve that Angus Council enters into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Dundee & Angus College (Project lead), Perth & Kinross Council, Angus Training Group, Fife College and University of Highlands & Islands to formalise the TCEP governance arrangements and authorises the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth, following consultation with the Director of Legal, Governance and Change, to execute, deliver and perform the MoU.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Tay Cities Region Deal was signed by UK and Scottish Government ministers and Tay Cities Region partners on 17 December 2020. The two governments have pledged £300 million over a 10- year period, which will help to lever a further £400 million of investment to create a smarter and fairer city region with over 6000 new job opportunities.
- 4.2 The Tay Cities Engineering Partnership (TCEP) was developed to drive the transformation of manufacturing processes needed to ensure the sector remains competitive, such as the implementation of robotics and artificial intelligence; increased internationalisation; increased productivity; research and development and skills development. It brings together the resources of key private and public engineering facilities in a new collaboration to support the skills and

technology base required to meet these ambitions and accelerate the pace of research and development.

4.3 Skills development to complement the Deal projects is a key component and strength of the overall Deal and one of the elements of TCEP is to increase the profile of engineering as a career opportunity, develop training places and provide business support.

4.4 TCEP was awarded £2million at Deal Signing in December 2019 and the Full Business Case was approved by the Tay Cities Region Deal (TCRD) Joint Committee on 11 March 2022. Specific outcomes identified within the Full Business Case include the following:

- Creation of a Mobile Engineering Technology Unit to showcase Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing (EAM) and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects. This will raise the profile of these subjects, increase careers awareness and address possible negative perceptions. The Unit will be fitted out with robotics and virtual reality technology to create opportunities in EAM and STEM from early years through both primary and secondary schools, into further and higher education and on to the workplace.
- Develop new foundation and graduate level apprentice training places to meet skills demand and enhance employability, career development and staff up-skilling.
- Develop enhanced up-skilling programmes to meet the emerging requirements of new sectors.
- Create an EAM Centre of Excellence equipped with leading industry tools to trial, test and demonstrate new processes and equipment.
- Create a Product Innovation Lab, located within the Aviation Academy for Scotland, to support businesses bringing new products to market. The Lab will offer cost-effective product prototyping and testing, as well as mass production (but at low volumes to suit new products) and specialist incubator and product development support.

5. PROGRESS TO DATE

5.1 Since approval of the Full Business Case the project has made good progress with achievements to date including:

- Development of workshops and classrooms at Dundee and Angus College Arbroath Campus branded as the Engineering Partnership Innovation Centre (EPIC), Arbroath.
- Launch of Seagreen Skills for the Future Lab to businesses hosted at Engineering Partnership Innovation Centre (EPIC) in November 2022.
- Appointment of a dedicated project manager in January 2023
- Official Opening of EPIC Centre in June 2023.
- The installation of equipment including; CNC machines, micro CNCs, 3D printers and cobots (collaborative robots). Staff have had the opportunity to trial the equipment during training sessions in preparation for delivery of courses in the coming academic year (2024/25).
- In August 2023 an information session was held for careers advisors from Skills Development Scotland to support the TCEP objective to raise awareness of career opportunities. This was well received and ensured that that advisors were able to share the knowledge gained from the event with those considering their future career prospects.
- Work has also continued with partners of TCEP to progress procurement of the new equipment planned to arrive with Angus Training Group, UHI Perth, Dundee and Angus College and Perth and Kinross Council facilities.
- TCEP is currently working closely with local schools and Developing Young Workforce to hold pilot events later this year for rollout out to wider audiences. The Partnership also continues to grow its network within the region and beyond with connections to Advancing Innovative Manufacturing in South of Scotland (AIMS) at Dumfries & Galloway College, TCRD Digital Skills Project, Scottish Manufacturing Advisory Service (SMAS) and National Manufacturing Institute Scotland (NMIS)

6. GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 The Full Business Case required that a dedicated Partnership Board be established to support the Partnership Manager in the progression of TCEP. Dundee & Angus College as the lead partner have engaged external legal services to prepare a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the project partners to agree and sign.

6.2 The Partnership Board will comprise of 2 separate roles. Benefitting parties and advisory parties.

Benefitting parties within the Board shall receive grant funding as part of the project to develop elements of TCEP within each of their own locations.

An advisory parties will support the development of TCEP and Advanced Manufacturing within the region but will not receive any monetary benefits.

6.3 The Benefitting parties are as follows - Dundee & Angus College, Perth & Kinross Council, University of Highlands & Islands (Perth Campus) and Angus Training Group. The advisory parties are Fife College and Angus Council.

PROPOSAL

6.4 It is proposed that Angus Council enters into the MoU in terms of which: The Partnership Board shall be responsible for: -

- (a) overseeing the implementation of this MOU and compliance by the Parties with the terms of this MoU;
- (b) providing recommendations on the manner in which TCEP is to be developed.
- (c) making recommendations on how best to achieve stakeholder involvement in and support for TCEP;
- (d) monitoring TCEP progress against key milestones and providing support for overcoming barriers to progress;
- (e) adopting a Communications Plan;
- (f) approving any New Parties appointed;
- (g) determining if a Party is in material breach of the MoU;
- (h) determining if a Party requires removal as a Party to the MoU and removal from involvement in TCEP;
- (i) approving any conditions to be satisfied by a Departing Party;
- (j) helping to resolve disputes between the Parties;
- (k) approve any changes suggested by a Party to the Budget prior to submission of the change request by the Partnership Manager to TCD;
- (l) considering and approving any acquisitions or disposals of tangible assets acquired by a Party using funds distributed in accordance with the terms of this MoU, the Offer of Grant and/or the Budget; and
- (m) considering and approving any leverage proposals submitted by a Party.

6.5 Meetings of the Partnership Board shall normally be held at least 3 times in every 12 months, or more frequently as decided by the Partnership Board Members from time to time.

- 6.6 It is proposed that the Manager of Economic Development represents Angus Council on the Partnership Board to provide operational oversight of Engineering and Manufacturing businesses within Angus and support as TCRD Project Management Office (PMO) Local Authority representative.
- 6.7 Progress of the TCEP project will be through Tay Cities Region Deal PMO Reporting requirements and officers will bring further updates to this committee on this project annually.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Financial implications may arise if Angus Council were to cause another party to the MOU to suffer loss, i.e., by breaching the terms of the MoU. However, this financial implication is deemed to be a low risk.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 There are no risks identified arising from the recommendations in this report.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

10. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS AND FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY

- 10.1 A screening assessment has been undertaken and a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required for the following reason: - it does not impact on people due to the technical nature of the Report.

11. CONSULTATION

- 11.1 The Director of Finance and Director of Legal, Governance and Change have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

NOTE: No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

REPORT AUTHOR: Mark Davidson, Economic Development Manager
EMAIL DETAILS: DavidsonMA@angus.gov.uk