

**Freeport Board**

**TVCA Offices – Teesside Airport Business Suite, Teesside International Airport, Darlington, DL2 1NJ**

**Friday, 1 December 2023 at 2.30pm**

<b><u>Attendees</u></b>		<b><u>Apologies</u></b>	
<b>Members</b>		<b>Members</b>	
Ben Houchen (BH) (Chair)	Tees Valley Mayor	Gary Dawson (GD)	AV Dawson
Julie Gilhespie (JG)	Operator Representative of Custom Zones and Tax Sites	Jerry Hopkinson (JH)	PD Ports
Bill Scott (BS)	Port Clarence		
Councillor Alec Brown (AB)	Leader of Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council		
John Coxon (JC)	DLUHC		
David Smith (DS)	STDC Board Member		
Andrew Koss (AK)	Sembcorp		
Neil Etherington (NE)	Able Seaton Port		
Shaun Casey (SC)	Redcar Bulk Terminal		
Siobhan McArdle (SM)	Chair of Tees Valley Business Board		
<b>Non-Members</b>		<b>Non-Members</b>	
Brian Archer (BA)	Executive Director for Growth, Enterprise and Environment, Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council	Emma Simson (ES)	Acting Monitoring Officer, TVCA
Gary Macdonald (GM)	Group Director of Finance and Resources		
Helen Kemp (HK)	Group Director of Business and Skills, TVCA		
Craig Walton (CW)	Chief Digital Officer, TVCA		
Natalie Robinson (NR)	Head of Performance and Risk, TVCA		

Elizabeth Hutchinson (EH)	Project Development Manager, TVCA		
Guy Close (GC)	Governance and Scrutiny Manager, TVCA		

No.	Agenda Item	Summary of Discussion	Actions Required	Responsibility
	Welcome and Introductions	BH welcomed all in attendance.  It was reported that agenda item 9 'Compliance report including Risk Register and Finance report' was not available. The report was to be submitted to the next meeting in March 2024. The Board noted the importance of updating the Risk Register as soon as practicable and requested that it be reported into the next available Risk and Assurance workstream meeting for review and feedback to the next Board.		GM/NR
1.	Apologies for Absence	Apologies for absence were submitted by Gary Dawson (GW), Jerry Hopkinson (JH) and Emma Simson (ES).		
2.	Declarations of Interest	AK declared an interest in agenda item 8, 'Freeport Seed Funding Business Case' in relation to Sembcorp's involvement in the development of 5g Digital Test Beds.		
3.	Minutes of Previous Meeting	The minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2023 were approved as a correct record.		
4.	Freeport Update - Senior Responsible Officer Update	The Board noted the following key updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HM Government announced on 21 November 2023 that tax incentives for Freeports had been extended for a further 5 years until September 2031;</li> <li>• MP Jacob Young had been appointed as a minister in the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities</li> </ul>		

		<p>and as a result had stepped down from his role on the Teesside Freeport Board; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The independent review panel's report in relation to Teesworks was due in the coming weeks.</li> </ul> <p><b>Resolved:</b> That the Board noted the update report.</p>		
5.	Delivery Plan Update	<p>The Board was provided an update on key activity since the last meeting.</p> <p>The update included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tax Site Development;</li> <li>• Teesworks East;</li> <li>• Teesworks West;</li> <li>• Wilton International;</li> <li>• Custom Zone development; and</li> <li>• Key milestones.</li> </ul> <p><b>Resolved:</b> That the Board noted the update report.</p>		
6.	Governance / Workstream Review	<p>Board members were provided with an update on a refresh to the governance structure to reflect the move from business case development into pragmatic delivery.</p> <p><b>Resolved –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the Board approves the two workstream structure proposed in the report; and</li> <li>• Appoints the workstream Chairs and TVCA secretariat leads for the workstream.</li> </ul>		

7.	Investing Business Rates from Freeport – Decision Making Progress	<p>A report was presented which advised the Board about its local decision-making role in reviewing and approving investments funded by additional Freeport generated business rates income.</p> <p>Retained business rates from Teesside Freeport was a key financial lever provided by Freeport status and funded by HM Treasury, where rates relief were granted to occupying business.</p> <p>JG presented the report and responded to questions and comments.</p> <p><b>Resolved</b> – That the Board notes the content of the report.</p>		
8.	Freeport Seed Funding Business Case	<p><b>It was resolved</b> to exclude the press and public during the consideration of the appendix to the report as it contained confidential information under the terms of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12a of The Local Government Act 1972.</p> <p>The Board was provided with a report which summarised the business case and recommended the investment of £3.5m of Freeport Seed Funding in the provision of a Digital Test Centre.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the Board approves the business case to allocate £3.5m to the Freeport Digital Test Bed;</li> <li>• That the Board approves a request to reprofile expenditure, subject to confirmation with treasury colleagues and following further investigation by TVCA officers in relation to spend acceleration.</li> <li>• Delegates authority to the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) Chief Executive, Section 73 Officer and Monitoring Officer to approve the full business case on</li> </ul>		

		<p>final cost confirmation and to enter into contracts to deliver the project as proposed; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approves the change request to DLUHC to re-profile the drawdown of funding for the Digital Test bed project.</li> </ul>		
9.	Compliance report including Risk Register and Finance report	Item deferred to the next meeting.		
10.	Date and Time of Next Meeting	Friday, 1 March, 2024		