

Question text	Answer	User Name
How will the new North of Tyne Mayor organisation work with the LEP?	The LEP will work closely with the North of Tyne Mayoral Combined Authority to deliver the North East Strategic Economic Plan. The current proposal suggests the Chair of the LEP will be a member of the North of Tyne Cabinet and the Mayor may choose with the North of Tyne Leaders to take a place on the LEP Board. The LEP will continue to work in partnership with all key stakeholder organisations to grow the North East economy.	Anonymous
How does the LEP involve VCS/third sector in shaping future funding with government	The North East has a large and vibrant VCS base working within our communities on a local and regional level. Many of these organisations are involved in delivery of employability and inclusion programmes, funded through a variety of means including ESF, Big Lottery and direct funds from charities. The VCS are represented on the Employment and Skills board, ESIF committee and the NECA Employment Inclusion and Skills Group and a number of working groups including representing the North East on a national basis. Their input is hugely valuable and will absolutely form a part of discussions regarding future funding.	Anonymous
How does the loan interest rates compare with high street banks	The North East Investment Fund (NEIF) generally invests at a commercial rate, based upon a combination of a credit worthiness assessment of the applicant and assessment of the level of collateral brought to the deal. This rate can be comparable with the high street banks. Depending upon the status of the applicant our interest rates range from 3% to 11% pa. The NEIF is not in the market to compete with banks, but to help those proposals that may have stalled when the capital finance required has not been made available.	Anonymous
The business rate benefits are due to end in March for the round 1 EZ sites. Is the LEP doing any lobbying to extend this deadline?	Enterprise Zone policy and the deadlines for benefits are set as part of national policy and cannot be changed by local areas. We are aware that Business Rate Discount benefit will be ending for Round 1 sites in 2018 following an extension in 2014. The North East LEP alongside other LEPs through the National LEP Network is lobbying Government on this point to seek to extend this deadline and continues to work with government to understand challenges and opportunities to delivering the sites and in particular the impact of benefits to supporting growth; although public investment on the sites will continue to benefit businesses after the direct benefits finish.	Anonymous
Is there a cost to being part of the Innovation SuperNetwork?	The Innovation SuperNetwork is supported through the North East LEP and European Regional Development Fund and therefore there are no costs to interact with the SuperNetwork events or schemes. There are costs however associated with becoming a partner organisation.	Anonymous

<p>How does the LEP engage with the other regions, for example in regard to connecting likeminded businesses or collaborating on particular strands of activity?</p>	<p>There are several forums in which LEP's engage, nationally these are most prominently the national LEP Network and Growth Hub Network and several groups exist across the Northern Powerhouse such as the Northern Growth Hub network and Northern Innovation Network. Through such forums plans are being developed to drive collaboration across LEP boundaries. The 38 LEP Chairs and Chief Executives meet regularly to discuss issues and to lobby Government. There are also a number of smaller collaboration projects between LEPs.</p>	<p>Brian Dakers</p>
<p>Is there any funding available for North East SMEs to help them expand and take on new staff?</p>	<p>We keep an up to list of funding and finance available on our Growth Hub Website <a href="https://www.northeastgrowthhub.co.uk/finance-and-funding/">https://www.northeastgrowthhub.co.uk/finance-and-funding/</a> Funding and Finance is available to support growing companies and we encourage look on the Growth Hub and if people need any specific information they can contact us on <a href="mailto:info@northeastgrowthhub.co.uk">info@northeastgrowthhub.co.uk</a>.</p>	<p>Anonymous</p>
<p>What is the timescale for the new UK prosperity fund? Which Gov dept will lead on it?</p>	<p>There are no clear timescales currently available for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. We are hopeful there will be an announcement and the detail shared during 2018.</p>	<p>Anonymous</p>
<p>With Brexit on the horizon, how can the LEP help encourage more inward investment from &amp; exports to non-EU countries &amp; regions, especially the US &amp; China?</p>	<p>The North East Strategic Economic Plan clearly articulates the areas of opportunity where the North East can build international competitiveness, work is underway to develop collateral that clearly articulates our distinctive value proposition in each of these areas. To effectively spread our message during 2018/19 a North East International Trade Strategy will be developed, the strategy will be developed in collaboration with the DIT and regional partners.</p> <p>The USA and Japan are consistently the top two overseas countries from which the North East receives new inward investment. As such we have a solid base for further developing relationships with those countries as well as developing relationships with the vast potential markets, particularly in India and China. Please visit Invest North East England, <a href="https://investnortheastengland.co.uk/">https://investnortheastengland.co.uk/</a> for more details.</p> <p>In partnership with a range of business support providers, the North East Growth Hub are also developing a programme of activity to support businesses to mitigate the risks and to capitalise on the opportunities that may result from Brexit, and support is likely to focus on expansion in to new markets and supply chains.</p>	<p>Paul Lancaster</p>

Often smaller, micro business offer the most innovative / new technology solutions, how can LEP help bridge gaps caused by red tape and size related standards	We recognise the opportunities for small and micro businesses to drive innovation, but also the challenges faced in achieving this. As the many standards and regulations are set nationally or internationally we cannot change these. In response we continue to promote the North East innovation business support provision which aims to support micro and SMEs to understand and respond to these challenges. At a local level we are also investigating opportunities to support more challenge-driven funding opportunities alongside traditional procurement routes.	Anonymous
Could Colin say a few words on the success and impact of the recent (very popular) start-up and scale-up events held in Newcastle.	The LEP's approach is focused on the creation of an ecosystem that will enable more businesses to start and scale. Events such as Paul Lancaster's, Newcastle Start-up Week and the Scaleup Summit are a clear illustration of how the ecosystem is developing to fulfil this ambition, both of these events brought a range of people together and through an inspirational and provoking experience created a real buzz that spread across wider community. Building on such momentum is key to tipping the scales and engendering real and lasting change. We are delighted that the momentum continues to rise with 400 people joining us at the launch of Scaleup North East this Friday (26th Jan). Although room is tight you can still register via <a href="https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/scaleup-north-east-launch-tickets-39730349545">https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/scaleup-north-east-launch-tickets-39730349545</a>	Alan Lowdon
Will there be any further European funding available? If so what will it be for?	It is anticipated that future calls will be issued in relation to the European Funds, however at this point the focus of these calls has not been set by Government. Our website provides up to date information on open European Funding calls, <a href="https://www.nelep.co.uk/funding/funding-applications/">https://www.nelep.co.uk/funding/funding-applications/</a>	Anonymous
How does the NE compare with other regions? Have you noticed a positive change in perception of our region from external businesses, politicians & media?	We are a strong, focussed and well evidenced Strategic Economic Plan to create more and better jobs in the North East by 2024. The plan is becoming increasingly owned by key partners regionally and nationally who align their organisations, messaging and funding behind it. The economic data shows the North East economy is growing and as some key performance indicators show that the gap is closing, but challenges remain. People and businesses in the North East are very proud of our quality of life, lower cost of living and fantastic places to live. We must continue this messaging to attract businesses, skills and investment.	Paul Lancaster
As a business consultant, how do I list on the Growth Hub website?	Unfortunately we don't have the functionality to list individual business consultants on the Growth Hub however if you are running a business support programme that you feel is suitable to be listed please contact us on <a href="mailto:info@northeastgrowthhub.co.uk">info@northeastgrowthhub.co.uk</a> .	Sandra Innes

<p>Students are leaving our Universities with strong degrees. How can we retain talent when most 'grad jobs' only offer £16-18k? Should there be a subsidy scheme?</p>	<p>Graduate starting salaries are sometimes lower in the North East, than those in the South. However this isn't always the case especially in high demand sectors and when graduates compare the cost of living in the south of the UK to that of the North East they may find that their salary goes a lot further. Additionally, as many graduates told us in our Liveworkstay campaign there are opportunities to progress more quickly and a great work life balance seems to be a strong factor in deciding stay in the North East. Some universities offer opportunities for business and new graduates to work together - I would suggest speaking to the Careers department within the universities to see if they offer this type of scheme.</p>	<p>Jamie Hardesty</p>
<p>Will the career strategy support in schools be extended to NEET young people who could fall behind those who are leaving education over the coming years?</p>	<p>This is a really good point and one we think we should explore further. As we described we are already working with over 100 secondary schools, all 9 FE colleges and the 4 universities but your point is well made. The starting point will be to speak to those organisations who are working with these young people to see what guidance is already being provided and if applicable how we can support them and shape future funding to address the deep rooted social issues that offer result in NEETs.</p>	<p>Stephen Telford</p>
<p>ERDF funding has been mentioned - is there more information on this funding stream after March 2019. How is the NE positioned to attract future funding?</p>	<p>We are awaiting for Government to confirm what the shape and structure of successor funding to European Funding looks like. We hope there will be more detail soon. We are working with Government officials to influence the focus of this funding, but are awaiting the final formal details.</p>	<p>Dave Brignall</p>
<p>how do you include non graduates in the future, and include the wider populations of newcastle and the north east, such as the unemployed etc</p>	<p>In the employment and inclusion element of the Strategic Ecomic Plan, we outline some key activities and programmes to support those furthest away from the labour market, especially those affected by health issues or other barriers. Additionally the drive for excellence in technical education, promotes training and support for non-graduate roles including apprenticeships. The Good Career Guidance benchmarks (in the Careers Strategy) requires schools to provide IAG to all students, including pathways to non-graduate routes and direct employment.</p>	<p>Warren Hardy</p>
<p>Govt's 25 Year plan for the Environment now published - NE high quality of Environment - initial thoughts on incorporating into the objectives of the LEP?</p>	<p>We have started to have early discussions with the Environment Agency and DEFRA on how the key themes highlighted in the plan link to the LEP's programmes of delivery.</p>	<p>Dave Brignall</p>