

**Working** with businesses to  
build a **stronger** economy.



## AGENDA

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Friday 19 January 2018, Centre for Life, Newcastle, NE1 4EP

08:30 – 09:00	Registration and networking
09:00 – 09:15	Welcome from Andrew Hodgson, Chair, North East LEP
09:15 – 09:30	Helen Golightly, Executive Director, North East LEP
09:30 – 09:40	Simon Green, North East Innovation SuperNetwork
09:40 – 09:50	Colin Bell, Business Growth Director, North East LEP
09:50 – 10:00	Michelle Rainbow, Skills Director, North East LEP
10:00 – 10:30	Question and answer session, hosted by Andrew Hodgson

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# KEY NOTE SPEAKERS

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## **Andrew Hodgson, Chair, North East LEP**

As former Chief Executive Officer of Soil Machine Dynamics (SMD), Andrew is a leader in subsea engineering and in recent years has been awarded three Queen's Awards for Industry. He's currently Chair of SubseaNorth East, a board member of Subsea UK and Trust Board member for the International Centre for Life.

He has also been awarded as North East Business Exec of the year, EY Entrepreneur of the Year and EEF's UK manufacturing champion.

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## **Helen Golightly, Executive Director, North East LEP**

Helen has been with the North East LEP since 2012, and the Executive Director since 2015. Helen leads the delivery of the North East Strategic Economic Plan, working with partners to grow the local economy. Her previous experience includes over twenty years in a number of local government roles in planning, regeneration, economic development and corporate governance.

She has extensive programme and fund management experience with responsibility for delivering a wide range of programmes and commercial negotiations. Helen is also the interim Chief Executive of the North East Combined Authority, focussed on economic growth, job creation and investment into the region.

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## **Colin Bell, Business Growth Director**

Colin Bell is Business Growth Director at the North East LEP and holds an MSc in Small Business Development from Teesside University. Following an MBO in 2009 Colin was a director and owner of business growth and business improvement software business Winning Moves Ltd where he was instrumental in scaling the business from a turnover of £400k to £2.7 million. This included the development and delivery of business growth programmes such as Growth Accelerator, Great200Leaders, the Masters level and accredited Winning Leaders Academy and Optimising Business Technology. In addition Colin designed and delivered several sector development tools which have been used under license in more than 20 countries.

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## **Simon Green, Executive Director, Innovation SuperNetwork North East England**

Simon's background is within innovation management and access to finance, working across businesses ranging from start-ups to major corporates and spanning a range of different sectors. Having started his career in Dowty Rotol and then P&G, working in Europe, Asia and North Africa, he later founded and ran three start-up businesses over a ten year period. More recently, he headed up Newcastle Science City's innovation support activity, leading a team of seven innovation and business growth experts. Now Executive Director of the Innovation SuperNetwork, Simon works closely with local and national partners such as the North East LEP and Innovate UK to enhance the innovation eco-system of the region. The SuperNetwork team connects businesses to the market opportunities, finance and expertise they need to grow. This is delivered through specialist support, collaborative activities and events like VentureFest and FinanceCamp.

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## **Michelle Rainbow**

Michelle manages the North East LEP's skills agenda and has held senior posts in a number of private sector SME businesses and the NHS, as well as running her own business. This diverse experience and a focus on funding and business development gives Michelle a broad perspective on the challenges and opportunities for businesses in the North East.

Her current role involves leading, animating and developing a business-led approach to bring the North East LEP's skills programme to reality, and securing funding for the region to achieve this, and help businesses grow.

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