

**STOKE-ON-TRENT AND STAFFORDSHIRE
LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP
Note of a Board Meeting held on the
20 October at the North Staffordshire Chamber of
Commerce and Industry**

Present

Maitland Hyslop	(Internet Central) - Chair
Catherine Raines	(representing Chief Executive, Staffordshire County Council)
Stephen Dixon	(Johnson Tiles)
Ron Dougan	(Trent and Dove Housing)
David Billson	(representing Leader, South Staffs Council)
Mark Kerrigan	(Alton Towers)
John Van de Laarschot	(Chief Executive, Stoke-on-Trent City Council)
Paul Richards	(Staffs. University – representing the University Sector)
Ken Stepney	(JCB)
Stephen Sweeney	(Leader, Newcastle Borough Council)
Philip Atkins	(Leader, Staffordshire County council)

Observers / In attendance

Jenny Tucker	(Keele University)
Kevin Postones	(BIS - Local)
Cllr. Ben Adams	(Staffordshire County Council)
John Sellgren	(Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council)
Jeff Marlow	(Southern Staffordshire Partnership)
Cllr. Colin Greatorex	(Lichfield District Council)
Dai Larner	(Staffs Moorlands District Council)
Cllr. Sybil Ralphs	(Staffs Moorlands District Council)
Bob Phillips	(Cannock Chase Council)
Cllr. Gordon Alcott	(Cannock Chase Council)

Advisory/Secretariat

Alison Knight	(Stoke on Trent City Council)
John Willis	(Stoke on Trent City Council)
Bryan Carnes	(North Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce)
Peter Davenport	(Staffordshire County Council)

1. **Introductions**

The chair welcomed all guests and visitors and thanked the team for organising the JCB event. The event had been extremely constructive.

2. **Apologies**

Mohammed Pervez	(Leader, Stoke-on-Trent City Council)
Brian Edwards	(Leader, South Staffordshire Council)
Nick Bell	(Chief Executive, Staffordshire County Council)
Kerry Diamond	(Zytek Group Ltd.)
Sue Prince	(Beechenhill Farm)
Steve Willis	(Stafford College)
Mark Meredith	(Stoke City Council)
Hardial Bhogal	(Stoke City Council)
Steve Burrows	(Staffordshire County Council)
Jeremy Herbert	(Staffordshire County Council)

3. **Declarations of Interest**

There were none declared. The Chair asked all members who hadn't yet done so to complete the requisite form.

Action

Forms to be forwarded to the Chair and PD.

4. **Notes of the meeting held on 21 September and Matters Arising**
These were agreed.

Matters Arising

John Willis nominated as Supply Chain representative for JLR.

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5. **For Decision**

- 5(a) **Developing the Red Carpet**

John Willis welcomed as the new lead of the joint team. CR advised that John had been appointed lead of joint team. He then made a presentation which set out the approach to Red Carpet Investment support. This explained how investment interest should be generated, the investment decision supported, and the decision de-risked.

The Board were pleased to learn that the teams in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire had been brought together to provide a single point of contact for investment enquiries.

The December Board meeting will consider the performance indicators for the team and a business plan will be developed by the team and sub-group.

The Board was keen to support a pro-active approach to marketing the area including following up overseas leads directly.

Mark Kerrigan reported that he had been involved in a piece of work on visitor perception which provided an interesting insight and that he would like to report on at the next meeting.

Action

1. JW to circulate presentation
2. Further report to be brought to the December meeting – JW
3. MK to make a short presentation on the visitor perception work at the next meeting.

- 5(b) **Sub Group Reports**

Business Development

The Board supported the LEP's participation in the Business Link syndication project. Following a discussion about the emerging opportunities including ICAEW, the Sub Group was asked to consider in more detail the business support landscape with recommendations to be brought to a future Board meeting.

The Lead highlighted the importance of mentors, and asked members to promote and encourage participation. He suggested that 5 per member should be a target. He reported that the NSCCI already ran a scheme which could help deliver a quick impact.

Action

Sub group to consider the need for business advice and report to a future meeting.

Board members to encourage businesses to act as Mentors

Inward Investment

The presentation had outlined the process. A further report will be presented to the Board in December setting out priorities and resources.

The opportunities presented by future European Funding programmes were highlighted by Philip Atkins.

Action

Future European Funding opportunities to be investigated by the Funding Group

Branding and Communication

The Board agreed in principle to the use of Start Up funding to secure assistance to prepare a communications and marketing strategy and delivery plan as well as developing the brand. This work would support inward investment and business development. The documentation should be amended to delete point 6 and ensure that the work is on a task and finish basis focused on the areas agreed at the group meeting.

It was agreed that the tourism perception work be brought to a future meeting by MK.

Action

Sub Group to review the approach and specification

Enterprise and Skills

The group was continuing to focus its work on three broad priorities.

- Developing a more enterprising culture both at school and beyond.
- Ensuring that young people are equipped with basic employability skills required by local businesses.
- Ensuring that we are delivering the education and skills needed to fill jobs now and in the future.

The group reported that it would be hosting a session highlighting STEM on 13 December to which headteachers, universities, colleges and local employers will be invited.

The group would also be examining the idea of an "Educational Trust" in more detail

Land and Housing

The Board asked the group to work with partners to identify priority sites where the LEP could assist and support bids for funding. The Board were pleased to learn about the work Local Authorities were undertaking to merge property assets. Ron advised that the Group would be meeting with the HCA and reviewing land use data to understand trends. In addition Ron has been working with colleagues across the West Midlands on construction.

Low Carbon

The Chair reported that the LEP has expressed an interest in being the location for the Headquarters at the Green Investment Bank. A new Board lead for this area was requested.

Planning

A seminar was to be held on the 25th October to share good practice and develop a "LEP Planning Charter Mark". The seminar was to be attended by businesses, members and officers and be lead by an experienced facilitator.

Broadband

The draft Local Broadband Plan had been submitted to BDUK. The team were liaising with neighbours and seeking support for the inclusion of broadband within the West Midlands ERDF programme priorities. All residents and businesses had been asked to register their interest in improved services with their network providers.

The Chair highlighted the importance of securing the maximum benefit from the funding available.

Funding

The group was investigating a Growth and Risk Fund to stimulate economic growth and job creation. The scope and operation of the fund is to be developed for discussion at the December Board meeting and would need to link to the Business Development Group.

The group is developing proposals for an Access to Finance Forum event.

Chair's Summary

The Chair thanked colleagues for their reports and expressed a desire to see the sub groups taking a lead in debating issues before reporting to the board.

He advised Cllr Edwards that he would be pleased to receive nominations from the south of the County for participants in the sub groups.

Action

Cllr Edwards to seek nominations.

6. Any Other Non Confidential Business

- Forthcoming Events:
 - Lets do Business
 - 2012 Olympics Event
 - Procurement and Accessing Contracts
 - Mentoring and Networking Event
- The Chair had met representatives of the Peak District and had agreed to arrange a meeting between all the interested LEP
- The Chair advised that DEFRA were seeking pilots to develop the concept of a "Rural Growth Zone" and he had expressed an interest in exploring the idea further
- The Chair had met an inward investor and promoted the benefits of the LEP area.
- The development of the "Business Plan" needs to be progressed.

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NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Date of Next Meeting

17 November 2011 at 6.00 p.m. at Staffordshire University.