

**STOKE-ON-TRENT AND STAFFORDSHIRE
LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP
Note of a Board Meeting held on the
15 March 2012
Windsor Room, Stoke-on-Trent City Council**

Present

Maitland Hyslop	(Internet Central) - Chair
Ken Stepney	(JCB)
Mark Kerrigan	(Alton Towers)
Ron Dougan	(Trent and Dove)
Paul Richards	(Staffs. University – representing the University Sector)
Cllr Mohammed Pervez	(Leader, Stoke-on-Trent City Council)
John van de Laarschot	(Chief Executive, Stoke-on-Trent City Council)
Stephen Sweeney	(Leader, Newcastle Borough Council)
Cllr Colin Greatorex	(Lichfield District Council representing the Southern Staffordshire Leaders)
Cllr Ben Adams	(representing the Leader, Staffordshire County Council)
Nick Bell	(Chief Executive, Staffordshire County Council)

University/Further Education Observers

Caroline Mairs	(Keele University)
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Observers / In attendance

Cllr Mark Meredith	(Cabinet Member, Stoke-on-Trent City Council)
Cllr Gordon Alcott	(Cabinet Member, Cannock Chase Council)
Cllr Mike Heenan	(Leader, Stafford Borough Council)
Bob Philips	(Cannock Chase Council)
Jeff Marlow	(Southern Staffordshire Partnership)
Paul Masterman	(Staffordshire County Council)
Tony Bray	(BIS)
Neale Clifton	(Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council)

Advisory/Secretariat

Peter Davenport	(Staffordshire County Council)
Darryl Evers	(Staffordshire County Council)
Alison Knight	(Stoke-on-Trent City Council)
Sara Williams	(North Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce)

1. **Introductions**

The chair welcomed all guests and visitors to the meeting and thanked Stoke-on-Trent City Council for their hospitality.

2. **Apologies**

Kerry Diamond, Stephen Dixon, Cllr Brian Edwards, Cllr Philip Atkins, Steve Willis, Jenny Tucker, Catherine Raines, Steve Burrows, Kathryn Cooper

3. **Declaration of Interest**

Cllr Mike Heenan and Cllr Gordon Alcott declared interests in the Growing Places Fund.

4. **Notes of previous meeting and matters arising**

The notes were agreed.

Matters arising

- Headline figures on jobs and growth should feature on the agenda at the next meeting.
- The Chair outlined his desire for observers to attend for the whole of the meeting where they are partners in the LEP. Confidential items will be identified on the agenda.
- Ben Adams reported that SCC will underwrite £7.44m. of BDUK investment. This will enable Staffordshire to be involved in the early round of the procurement process.
- Chair advised that he had met the editor of the Sentinel and had covered the ambitions of the LEP.

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5. **For decision**

None.

6. **For discussion**

6(a) **Outline "Deal" with Government**

The Chair thanked Tony Bray for his efforts. He was keen to move forward on the 30th March or as close as possible thereafter. The proposal needs to be costed and set out what the LEP and its partners can deliver.

Tony Bray outlined that the approach required both Government and local partners to work together to identify what they can bring together to deliver ambitions. There will be an opportunity to look at Government areas that are susceptible to change. Bring collective reserves and intelligence to bear. He indicated that this was not a "City Deal". However Ministers were keen to see business cases to demonstrate what is needed. Delivery is a focus. He reported that he was looking at Etruria Valley in detail at the moment. There was a need to have a sense about barriers and what can be done at a detailed level. The engagement of DfT was important. As an example discussions with Core Cities have taken 8-9 months to date. The process involved developing a long term relationship and building of understanding.

The LEP was pleased to be able to have these discussions with Government. The meeting thanked the BIS and CLG team for their efforts. It was keen to be ambitious about what we can offer and deliver in the proposal that would be submitted.

6(b) **Delivering Local Major Transport Schemes Consultation**

The report was discussed. It was agreed that for clarity and consistency the arrangements should aggregate Local Transport Authority areas to form the Local Transport Board area (LTB). The LEP should be a member of the LTB.

The new arrangements should allow strategic investment decisions to be dealt with locally. The involvement of District and Borough Council colleagues in the LTB was supported. Cllr Alcott suggested – one North and one South. Cllr Adams supported this and suggested that the LA need to discuss this.

The recommendations were agreed.

Action

Response to be submitted in response to the consultation supporting the proposals and:

- That the LEP should be a full member of the LTB and participate in any decisions
- The LTBs should work together to agree strategic investment decisions with DfT support
- That allocations should be based on population
- That the LTB should seek to ensure value for money building on DfT guidance.

6(c) **HS2 – Update on discussions regarding an intermediate station**

The board welcomed the work being done with Cheshire, to develop an economic rationale for a stop. Steer Davis Gleave had been retained to investigate and review options. This work would be used to make a strong case to HS2 Ltd. This would need to be submitted by the end of the month.

Partners to the LEP have developed their individual positions which are acknowledged by the Chair. However, the Chair was keen to ensure that Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire didn't lose an opportunity should the route be constructed.

SCC will support officers engagement in the process and will assist the City and grateful for Stoke-on-Trent City Council's leadership on this.

Action

Further update to be provided

6(d) **Regional Growth Fund Round 3**

The report set out that the third round of RGF had opened with a closing date of the 15th June. The board noted that where it had supported RGF (2) bids many had been successful. Involvement of the LEP had greatly helped applicants and was to be encouraged. This approach was supported by BIS/CLG.

It was agreed that the LEP should work with bidders and that it would be helpful if bidders were encouraged to seek LEP input.

7. **For endorsement and information**

7(a) **Sub Group Reports**

(1) Business Development – Stephen Dixon

The helpline had proven successful with 150 enquiries to date. Typical requests to the helpline and referrals cover area such as Start Up support, Access to Finance, the Investor Development Service, International Trade/UKTI and enquiries about the LEP

(2) Inward Investment – Paul Richards

- Committed to align marketing continuity.
- Board keen to see trends reporting to the Board. This needs to include comparisons.

- Attendance at MIPIM has resulted in half a dozen leads. Next year's approach could build on this.
- Stoke-on-Trent has been recognised in by the Financial Times as one of Europe's top Micro Cities
- There remained a need to understand what are the barriers to sites coming forward. A map is needed to locate these. Map to be circulated.
- Need to get success messages out quickly.
- City has allocated funding for additional capacity in the team.

(3) Branding and Communications – Mark Kerrigan

- Need to circulate our successes and join up marketing opportunities.
- HCL have been re-engaged and work proceeding thanks to Paul Masterman.
- Strategy, outline what we can do and what capacity, priority areas identified by HCL.
- Chair pleased to see a step forward.

Action

MK note to be circulated

(4) Enterprise and Skills Group – Ken Stepney

- Ken reported that he was pleased with the momentum and discussion with Skills Funding Agency, Colleges and Princes Trust.
- Education Trust to be discussed at the next group meeting.
- Focus has to remain getting young people who have the necessary skills to the market place.
- However the engagement of schools needs to be improved.
- There was concern about the need to promote apprenticeship opportunities.
- Need to raise knowledge and share by word of mouth.
- A recent event had been held in Stafford which raised awareness about apprenticeships. There is now a willingness to employ apprentices.

(5) Land and Housing – Ron Dougan

- Helpful discussions had been held with HCA as part of the Stewardship Arrangements. Site availability data was being collated on a regular basis.
- HCA would be meeting Keele University on the 19th April.

(6) Funding – Kerry Diamond

- The Access to Finance Events were being promoted through the LEP contacts and networks. Whilst the event in Stafford had been successful the Hanley event had been poorly attended. Lessons had been learned in promoting the next event in Cannock on the 29th March.
- David Gage had been retained to progress the proposal for a Risk and Growth Fund to the next stage.
- Chair had met Ron Armstrong who would wish to be involved and invest in Equity Fund.

Action

Meeting with Ron Armstrong to be arranged

(7) Broadband

- The Local Broadband Plan should be published shortly.

- The group was working with partners to address the need for broadband access and super-fast coverage.
- The LEP continues to support the work and will be working with the Chamber to develop and promote a model which promotes improved broadband and seeks support. A meeting had recently been held with Eversheds to explore other models.

Action

Chamber to promote the emerging broadband model to business

(8) Planning

- The charter mark was being promoted and responses were awaited from Local Planning Authorities. It was suggested that the matter also needed to be discussed at the Staffordshire Planning Forum.

Action

Progress to be reported to a future meeting.

8. **Any Other Non-Confidential Business**

Housing Association Events – Ron reported that two events had been organised in Stoke and Stafford to discuss how the work of the associations could assist economic growth.

Portas Pilots – It was that bids should be supported where this was requested.

Strategy has been circulated. The Chair was keen to view the target of developing 40,000 jobs and increasing the economy by 40% as a means of promoting significant change – the elevator pitch.

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9. **NOT FOR PUBLICATION.**

Date of Next Meeting: 19 April 2012 at 6.00 p.m.
Octagon Boardroom, Staffordshire University, Weston Road,
Stafford