

**STOKE-ON-TRENT AND STAFFORDSHIRE
LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP**

**Note of Executive Group Meeting held on
16th December 2013
Room 12, First Floor, Staffordshire Place 1, Stafford**

Present

Board Members

Ron Dougan	(Trent and Dove Housing) – Chair
Ken Stepney	(JCB)
Kerry Diamond	(Zytek Group Ltd.)
Jonathan Dale	(Longton Avia (UK) Ltd.)
John van de Laarschot	(Chief Executive, Stoke on Trent City Council)
Cllr Paul Shotton	(Stoke-on-Trent City Council)
Cllr Mike Heenan	(Leader, Stafford Borough Council)
Cllr George Adamson	(Leader, Cannock Chase District Council)
Cllr Philip Atkins	(Leader, Staffordshire County Council)
Nick Bell	(Chief Executive, Staffordshire County Council)

University Observer

Sandra Booth	(Staffordshire University)
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Advisory/Secretariat

Peter Davenport	(Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP)
John Betty	(Stoke-on-Trent City Council)
Jeff Marlow	(Southern Staffordshire Partnership)
Alexander Greatholder	(Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP)
Simon Hooton	Regeneris

The meeting commenced at 1735.

1. Introductions and Welcome

The Chair welcomed Simon Hooton who was supporting the development of the Strategic Economic Plan from Regeneris to the meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from: Mark Kerrigan, Jenny Tucker, and George Adamson

3. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Mike Heenan declared an interest in Beacon Business Park

4. Notes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The notes of the previous meeting were agreed.

5. Key Performance Indicators

The dashboard was summarised and discussed. It was noted that there may be

confusion between the apparent downturn in month on month percentage change in business start-up rates and the stated climb in LEP rankings by the same measure.

Action: Clarify the statement and chart.

It was also noted that the LEP has seen a 6.7% reduction in JSA claimants this year, outperforming many other LEPs. However the recent job losses as a result of NPower activities may skew the statistics in the near future.

8. Sub Group Update

The circulated paper was noted. The following additional points were made.

Strategic Finance and Funding Overview

It was agreed that the LEP should promote the Green Bridge Supply Chain Program using local case studies.

Action: Secretariat to develop case studies

Skills and Education Trust

In the light of experience it had been agreed by the Education Trust that the Interim Chief Operating Officers appointment be extended to three days per week. The Board lead highlighted the importance of the post and the need for it to be extended to the end of September to deliver the work in progress.

It was agreed that the additional hours could be funded from the current Core Funding allocation and that the contract be extended to the 31st September 2010 to allow time for a review of the role.

Action:

- a. Secretariat to amend contract and make financial provision.**
- b. Keele University to be contacted regarding its offer of sponsorship.**
- c. Role to be reviewed in the new financial year**

Sectors and Inward Investment

It was noted that the sub group needed to consider sectors in addition to its inward investment focus.

Action: Lead and Facilitator to consider.

Transport

A verbal update was given by Jonathon Dale as follows

- Aviation – The report of the Airports Commission would be released tomorrow. The LEP had agreed that the development of regional airports should be supported with good access to all major airports being sought.
- Rail – Rail Devolution was progressing in the North and West Midlands. The LEP and partners were engaged in ensuring the best outcomes for the area building on current services.
- HS2 – A workshop had been arranged on the 14th January to discuss the potential LEP response to the consultation. There was a need to develop a policy to which the LEP will subscribe.
- Jonathon Dale also requested that transport updates be included in the Sub-Group executive summary.

Action: Include transport in future sub-group updates.

10. JCB Announcement

Board members had been pleased to attend briefings about the JCB proposals. These represented a major vote of confidence in the area and the LEP had offered its support in working with JCB and maximising the supply chain opportunities. This could be achieved by bringing forwards sites and developing skills in particular. Steve Burrows was leading the work with JCB and a suitable working party could be set up.

11. Any Other Business

John Van de Laarschot highlighted the following:

- Cllr Shotton chaired a task force to get jobs back in area following job losses from NPower.

- Stoke-on-Trent City Council have issues with the Strategic Economic Plan. They don't think that prioritisations are right for the city. The opinion is that the SEP represents the best possible attempt to please everyone but in doing so significant opportunities are being lost. For this reason the city will not support the current draft.
- If negotiations on the SEP are successful then the ESIFS will need to follow representing significant opportunities.

Date of next meeting

Full Partnership Board – 13th February 2014

Executive Group – 13th March 2014

The meeting closed at 1840.