

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

**Note of Executive Group Meeting held on
10th April 2013
Staffordshire University, Stafford**

Present

Board Members

David Frost CBE, DL	(Stoke-on-Trent & Staffs LEP) - Chairman
Ron Dougan	(Trent and Dove Housing) – Retiring Chair
Nick Bell	(Chief Executive Staffordshire County Council)
Mark Kerrigan	(Alton Towers)
John van de Laarschot	(Chief Executive – Stoke-on-Trent City Council)
Jonathan Dale	(Longton Avia UK)
Cllr Mohammed Pervez	(Leader - Stoke-on-Trent City Council)
Cllr Philip Atkins	(Leader – Staffordshire County Council)
Ken Stepney	(JCB)
Kerry Diamond	(Zytek Group)
John Betty	(Stoke-on-Trent City Council)

University Observer

Sandra Booth	(Staffordshire University)
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Advisory/Secretariat

Peter Davenport	(Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP)
Alexander Greatholder	(Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP)
Jeff Marlow	(Southern Staffordshire Partnership)
Kevin Postones	(BIS)

1. Introductions

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

2. Welcome to the new Chair

Ron Dougan welcomed David Frost as the new LEP chairman and announced that the meeting would be his own last meeting in the capacity of chair.

Group unanimously members thanked Ron for his invaluable contribution to the success of our LEP over the last 18 months as Chair.

3. Apologies

Cllr George Adamson	(Leader Cannock Chase Council)
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4. Declarations of Interest

None

5. Notes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

Following on from the action of the previous meeting about gathering MPs' support for our SEP, it was confirmed that we had managed to secure the support of a number of local MPs who had sent letters of support.

6. Key Performance Indicators

KPIs were tabled.

As had been previously mentioned, concern was expressed over the figures reported for jobs created. Particular note was made over the inclusion of 2,500 jobs to be generated from JCB activity. Since it is extremely unlikely that 2500 jobs will be created within 12 months, members questioned whether it should be reported in the KPIs. Other members highlighted however, that reporting jobs as being created as soon as the "promise of investment" is created is common practice for public bodies.

It was also stated that it might be sensible to report jobs created alongside unemployment figures in a more directly comparable format.

There was uncertainty over whether all local sources of news were being used for our media monitoring KPI.

Action:

1. Secretariat to clarify whether all media sources in the area are being checked for news stories pertaining to the LEP.
2. Make it team to be invited to present to the next Executive Group Meeting

7. SEP Update Dependent on Information from Government - Confidential

8. Future Governance and Groupings

Having, established the principals of the LEP's operation in September 2013, the emerging role of LEP's and the need for appropriate programme governance. Points emerging from the discussion were;

- The LEP bears a large responsibility for the increasing amount of public money which it ultimately has control and influence over. Since this is public money it is vital that our decision making processes are consistent and preserve accountability. This requires appropriate governance

- There is a need some simple and clear procedure in place to ensure that decisions are made in the right way.
- Any governance written has to be proportionate; over complicating the operation of the LEP will only serve to damage its effectiveness and disengage businesses.
- Some simple areas for clarification are: who is accountable for making final decisions, how and when is it appropriate for decisions to be delegated, how do we decide who is accountable when accountability is required, what is the overall structure of the LEP and does it allow for effective working within our strategic framework/funding mechanisms.

BIS Local advised that the LEP was right to be reflecting on its governance especially as it will need to decide on an accountable body for receipt of LGF.

Action: Working group to be established to work on writing a set of protocols to underpin the governance of the LEP. Group will include: Ron, Darryl Evers, John Betty, and Kerry.

9. GBSLEP and SSLEP Draft Joint Working Protocol

The Joint Working Protocol was discussed and the suggested amendments outline. The objective of the protocol was to respond to a request from Government to set out how decisions on programmes which affected both LEP in the overlapping area would be managed. The draft was intended to provide a framework for discussions before sign off by the respective LEP's governance arrangements.

The Group discussed the draft and were concerned that the purpose of the document needed to be clearer. There was a need for simplicity and clear decision making within each of the LEP informed by issues such as the cross LEP overlap area. Business interests needed to feature in the arrangements as well. The Group also wanted to see a more general protocol that could be used with other LEPs.

The Group agreed that the principal of the second bullet point in "protocol working mechanisms" should remain as drafted. Amended draft to be circulated incorporating other comments. Sign-off deferred to a later date.

Action:

- a. Amended draft to be circulated incorporating other comments. Sign-off deferred to a later date.
- b. General MOU to be developed for agreement with neighbours.

10. Sub Group Update

Sub group updates can be requested from the secretariat. The minutes here record matters that were additional to the content of the sub group update paper.

Business Growth & Innovation:

Regulatory Charter – John Sellgren has distributed a report detailing the mandate behind, the creation of and the wording of the regulatory charter to his colleagues through the Staffordshire chief executives group. Reports so far indicate that no local authorities have rejected the proposed charter and that the following local authorities are happy to support the charter: Cannock Chase District, Stafford Borough, Lichfield District, South Staffordshire District, Tamworth Borough, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough, Stoke-on-Trent City and Staffordshire County. Confirmation still needs to be sort from the Staffordshire Moorlands District.

Infrastructure and Sites:

Aviation Policy Amendment – Jonathan Dale tabled a draft amendment to the LEP's current position on aviation transport links. The principle behind supporting expansion at Heathrow is that the LEP recognises that Heathrow is an international transport hub unrivalled in our region and therefore presents opportunities for our LEP area. The expansion is Heathrow is supported keeping in mind that the LEP still wants to increase of the long haul capacity of our local regional airports and that connectivity from the LEP area to Heathrow needs to be optimised. Discussion continued about whether we should support simply a direct HS2 link from Heathrow to Stoke-on-Trent or whether we needed to consider the connectivity of the whole LEP area to Heathrow being ambiguous about the high speed nature of the link.

Action: With reference to the aviation amendment, there needs to be clarification on connectivity not just to Stoke-on-Trent but to the wider LEP as well. Amended words to be circulated.

Education Trust:

There have been a number of business engagement events since the previous Executive Board meeting; one in the Staffordshire Moorlands and one in South Staffordshire. At these events skills was highlighted as a particular item over which businesses wanted to engage with the LEP.

Apprenticeships – Ken Stepney confirmed that JCB are securing a capital funding grant for 500 apprentices per year.

11. Any Other Business

John van de Laarschott wanted to praise the effectiveness of the Staffordshire Police Cadet scheme supported by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner after having a positive experience of visiting some of the new cadet recruits and questioning them on how they have benefited from the initiative.

Date of next meeting

8th May