

**Notes of a meeting held on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014**

**At Staffordshire University, Octagon Building, Weston Road, Stafford**

**Present**

**Group Members**

David Frost (Chair)	
John Betty	Rep Chief Executive Stoke-on-Trent City Council
John Tradewell	Chief Executive Staffordshire County Council
Ron Dougan	Trent and Dove Housing
Mark Kerrigan	Alton Towers Resort
Ken Stepney	JCB
Cllr Mike Wilcox	Leader, Lichfield District Council
Cllr Mark Winnington	Cabinet Member, Staffordshire County Council rep. Cllr Atkins
Cllr Mohammed Pervez	Leader, Stoke-on-Trent City Council

**University Observer**

Sandra Booth	Staffordshire University
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**Advisory/Secretariat**

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

**Apologies**

Jonathan Dale	Longton Avia
Cllr Mike Heenan	Leader, Stafford Borough Council
Kerry Diamond	Zytek
Cllr George Adamson	Cannock Chase Council

**1. Introductions**

The Chair welcomed everyone and summarised some of the major events of the last month that he had attended, including:

- UK Corporate Games held at Keele University
- Meeting with Michael Heseltine MP
- The Growth Deal signing
- HS2 campaign in London
- MIPIM working dinner

## **2. Declarations of Interest**

No additional declarations of interest were made.

## **3. Notes of the previous meeting and matters arising**

The notes from the previous meeting were agreed.

In accordance with the notes a recommendation was made to use SEP allocated core funds money to develop some of the major projects from the first round of the growth deal. The recommendation was to allocate £90,000 to develop Etruria Valley, £50,000 to develop Stafford Western Access and £40,000 to develop the City Deal sites included in the Growth Deal. This was agreed.

## **4. Key Performance Indicators**

Key Performance Indicators were summarised with no items for concern raised. JSA counts had continued to fall and were below pre-recession levels.

At the MIPIM working dinner there were a number of recurring themes that surfaced. There are increasing numbers of organisations with considerable potential investment funds looking for long term income streams. On property development there was a sentiment that getting developments through the planning process after identification was continuing to be challenging. There were supply chain pressures on materials and labour which needed to be met in order to be able to push forward with developments.

The Phones4U employment fair had been a success. The volume of jobs being advertised at the event exceeded the number of people who had lost their jobs.

## **5. Annual Conference**

At the time of the meeting over 175 bookings had been made received. The agenda for the event was circulated including speaker biographies.

The Annual Report had been published prior to the meeting and had received positive feedback from partners. It would be published on the website.

The event would provide valuable experience in shaping the agenda of future events and the need for a particular focus.

## **6. Growth Deal 2**

Growth Deal 1 update:

- The Growth Deal had been signed on the 16<sup>th</sup> October.
- Development of a GD1 implementation plan was under way using a standard template.
- Metrics were being identified for reporting and were being selected from a portfolio.

- The LEP was making the case for it to have an annual allocation rather than quarterly payments.
- Government was supportive of our developing governance structure.
- It had been agreed that Staffordshire County Council would act as the accountable body. The timescale for the grant letter had yet to be received.
- The delivery partners are continuing to work with DfT to ensure timely delivery of the projects in the Deal.
- It was proposed that the Lichfield Park scheme be accelerated before receiving the grant to take advantage of rail possessions. This was agreed.

The Minister was seeking to secure additional funding for “Growth Deals” from the Autumn Statement. A programme of projects had been proposed based on the previous prioritisation work. The projects chosen were flexible in nature and so could be scaled back or up in response to the funds awarded.

## 7. City Deal Delivery Report

The report was reviewed. The outputs from the Keele University Smart Energy Demonstrator project were queried. It was clarified that energy and decarbonisation was a key theme of the City Deal.

The work on the skills elements had some areas at risk of slipping. It was agreed that a team needed to be urgently assembled to ensure that the milestones were achieved.

**Action:** Group to be assembled to review the progress of the adult skills pilot. **Secretariat**

It was also stressed that as projects were completed they would need to be evaluated.

## 8. Governance Review Implementation Plan

As an action from the previous meeting an implementation plan had been prepared. The working group recommendations were agreed as follows;

- the Implementation plan be adopted
- to make the following delegations to the LEP Chairman:
  - to appoint (or reappoint) business board members (drawn from the current membership of the Partnership Board) to the Education Trust, European Management Committee and Growth Deal and City Deal Programme Management Board, these appointees will also be members of the Executive Group;
  - to inform the Associate Board Members of the new arrangements;
  - to commence a LEP-led review of the role, function and membership of the Education Trust, given the changes in LEP structure and potential re-focussing of the Trust’s role within that structure;
  - to commence and manage the recruitment process for the LEP support team (– including finalising funding, structure and job roles (in liaison with the Strategic Funding Group) and hosting arrangements.)

These would need to be ratified by the Partnership Board on the 13<sup>th</sup> November.

In addition, item 10 sought the Executive Group's agreement to commence activity to appoint the new EU Local Management Committee in shadow form, in particular to seek nominations to the group from specific local organisations.

Additionally, it was noted that the colleges in the area were seeking two positions on the Education Trust to be created for a representative of the colleges in the north and south of the LEP area.

## **9. EU Area ESIF Committee**

The LEP Executive Group agreed to establish a Shadow LEP Area ESIF Committee as part of the new LEP governance arrangements.

## **10. Sub Group Updates**

The sub-group key updates paper had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Business Growth and Innovation sub-group was seeking resource in order to commission research on innovation support in the LEP area. Similarly, the County Council was requesting resource to support the work that they were leading for the LEP on the Agri-Tech sector. The requests would need to be submitted on the funding proforma.

## **11. Future meetings including Partnership Board on the 13<sup>th</sup> November**

A plan of future LEP agendas was tabled and executive board members were invited to make suggestions to the LEP secretariat on any amendments, if wanted.

## **12. Any Other Business**

Confidential - The executive group was reminded that contract of the Interim Chief Operating Officer for the Education Trust would end in October.

The group thanked Sandra Booth's and would be pleased to welcome Michael Gunn (Vice Chancellor, Staffordshire University) to future meetings of the group.

The LEP website was being revised and Alex Greatholder was in the process of making a number of changes.

## **20:00 Close of Meeting**

Date of next meeting: 13<sup>th</sup> November at the Skills Show, NEC, from 1:30 for 2:00pm start (Partnership Board)