

**Notes of the LEP Executive Group Meeting
Oak Room, County Buildings
11th May 2017**

Present

Group Members

David Frost (Chairman)	
Kerry Diamond	Continental Engineering
Jonathan Dale	Denoviant
Cllr Philip Atkins	Leader, Staffordshire County Council
Prof Liz Barnes	Staffordshire University
Cllr Patrick Farrington	Stafford Borough Council
Ken Stepney	JCB
Cllr Brian Edwards	South Staffordshire Council
Jo Tyzzer	rep. David Sidaway - Stoke-on-Trent City Council
James Bailey	rep. John Henderson - Staffordshire County Council

Advisory/Secretariat

Peter Davenport	Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP
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In Attendance

Andrea Whitworth	Cities and Local Growth Unit
Simon Hooton	Regeneris
Stuart Wells	Regeneris

Apologies

John Henderson	Chief Executive, Staffordshire County Council
Kevin Oakes	Crown Derby
Cllr Abi Brown	Deputy Leader, Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Sarah Montgomery	National Memorial Arboretum
David Sidaway	City Director, Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Richard Cotterell	Perkins Engines

1. Apologies

These were noted.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations in addition to those noted in the register.

3. Notes of the previous meeting and any matters arising

The minutes were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting.

It was mentioned that the Enterprise Zone Implementation Plan had now been signed and would be formally submitted to BEIS shortly. (Drafts had been discussed previously)

A report on MIPIM would be tabled at the next Executive Group Meeting.

Information on the Ceramic Sector Deal had been circulated to members.

4. Chairman's Delegated Decisions and Actions

The Chairman gave an update on meetings and events he had attended in the last month. These included an event at Keele University where he had presented to business leaders who were supporting the MCIL Management Programme and were keen to learn more about the

LEP. The Chairman was keen for the LEP to be involved in similar initiatives to further encourage business engagement.

The Chairman had also attended the opening of Tile Mountain's new facility, which was a good visual representation of the Enterprise Zone and reported very positive feedback and enthusiasm for additional development plans.

Cllr Atkins was welcomed following the recent elections.

The Chairman and Members thanked Kerry Diamond for her unstinting contribution to the SSLEP since its formal formation in 2011. Members wished her well following the completion of her terms of office.

5. KPIs

The report was circulated for information.

6. Strategic Economic Plan Review - Regeneris

The review of the Strategic Economic Plan item took the form of a discussion based on a presentation and an early revised draft. In addition LA Leaders presented a document that had been compiled following discussions amongst them which identified a number of areas to be fed in. This had identified a series of priorities – Infrastructure and Place; Sites/Premises; Skills; Innovation; Business Intelligence/Support.

The following bullet points outline the areas raised by members which will be picked up in the next version.

- It was agreed the Strategic Economic Plan needed to be sufficiently flexible. The LA priorities provided a useful input and supported the priorities.
- The Midlands Engine and other links needed to be highlighted.
- We need to cover the ability to retain graduates and young people, and attract young people to the area. It was noted that the area doesn't currently provide the 'city living' that young professionals demand. It was agreed that competition from Manchester and Birmingham would always be there but this was the opportunity to highlight the areas own unique advantages and selling points.
- The importance of good schools and local education provision was highlighted. The Chairman said more engagement with schools was essential.
- The SEP is a key part of the LEP evidence and should also explain where the LEP has added value to date in addition to being a strategy document.

A wider consultation would be carried out in mid-June, with a working group set up to produce a consultation draft. The plan was that a final version would be brought to the Executive Group for approval on the 14th September.

7. City & Growth Deal Programme Board Report - Confidential

The Progress of projects within the City Deal and Growth Deal programmes had been considered by the Assurance and Strategic PMBs.

Programme Highlight report provided an update on progress in delivering the larger projects.

The CDGD Outcomes Dashboard was discussed. It was reported that there were no changes to the April report; currently forecasting GD target for Jobs to be above target: forecast 5635 jobs by end 20/21 (target 5000 jobs). Housing forecast below target 954 houses by end 20/21. The reduction in housing by 20/21 was due to a reforecast of the housing provision timeline for Branston Locks development. To date no jobs or housing have been claimed, although the Tamworth EQ scheme was reporting that two tenants had now signed up for the new Business Enterprise Centre.

The final spend for 2016/17 was £33.115m, against the annual allocation of £33.360m, which has resulted in slippage of £0.245m (0.7%)

The final level of slippage was significantly less than was previously reported to the Board as the final claims submitted at the end of March were higher than forecast by grant recipients / partners.

8. Final 2016/17 Outturn Dashboard

The dashboard had been circulated and the following points were noted;

- LGF - At Final Outturn, £0.245m of residual 2016/17 LGF Grant slippage remained which was utilised to finance the Kingswood Business Park (Phase 2) development
- Total 2016/17 capital spend on all LGD schemes including LGF Grant slippage schemes was £36.43m. Of which, £33.356m was met from this year's LGF Grant funding and the remaining spend met from developer contributions &/or Local Authority capital financing.
- City Deal - At Final Outturn, £934k or 88% of the profiled spend for City Deal schemes was spent with all budget profile underspends being carried forward & re-profiled in future years.
- RGF5 & Growth Hub - Growth Hub Grant was spent. £2.6m or 66% of the total RGF5 Funding was paid to 35 SMEs creating 455 new jobs & protecting 214 jobs. The Jobs & Growth Fund figures showed all allocations paid up to 30th April '17 the end of the scheme.
- Growing Places Fund - A revised total of £14.020m in loans & grants currently approved by Panel. The revised GPF cashflow currently indicates that there remains a balance of £1.56m available for future short term business loans. The 2016/17 GPF final spend of £2.091m has been financed from 2016/17 LGF Grant slippage with an agreement that this 'switched funding' from the GPF be utilised in future years to finance the remaining LEP Local Growth Deals 1 - 3 schemes/projects over the coming 5 years.
- ESIF - The ESIF Programme continues to exceed the UK average in terms of funding commitment with 67% of the £71.2m ERDF & 77% of the £58m ESF confirmed - NB £10m 'Fund of Funds' ERDF commitment is shown in PA3. ERDF bidding calls are planned throughout 2017 to commit residual ESIF allocations. Actual spend to date of ESIF funding claims is currently not available from Government, however a reporting framework is shortly to be put in place from 2017/18.
- Capacity & Core Fund Grants - The Core Fund has spent £261,332 & will c/fwd £49,515 whilst the Capacity Grant has spent £149,856 and will c/fwd £126,513 in to 17/18. Both carry forwards are to meet either existing or on going spend commitments.

9. Growth Hub 2016/17 Review

The review was noted particularly the following;

- 71% of contact was with existing businesses
- 17% of contact was from pre-starts
- 12% was from start-up businesses
- 40% of businesses are active customers who have contacted the Growth Hub on more than one occasion.
- 33% of referrals to the Growth Hub come from other organisations who work with businesses such as banks, business support organisations and accountants.
- 70% of businesses who contact the Growth Hub fall into the micro business category.
- The businesses sectors the Growth Hub receives the most contact from are manufacturing and retail.
- 510 Business Diagnostics were carried out by the Growth Hub Advisors.
- 1719 businesses contacted the Helpline and 2039 referrals were made for them.
- 25,380 copies of the Growth Hub newsletter were opened.
- 988 contacts were made with partner organisations by phone, email or face to face seeking information/advice to help them.

- 289 pre-starts and start-up businesses were referred on to a programme to help them get going.
- 460 referrals were made for businesses in the manufacturing sector
- Since the Growth Hub began more than 8100 referrals have been made for Staffordshire businesses.

The contact figures for Tamworth were queried.

10. Policy & Task Group Update

- Inward Investment – The report was noted and the following issues raised.
 - A list of the top 100 companies was requested
 - It was agreed that the SSLEP should commit £20k to secure the apartment and facilities at MIPIM 2017
- EU Funding
 - 71% of the allocation had been committed
 - Further ERDF and ESF calls were currently open
- Skills
 - The ESF call includes provision for the “Skills Hub”
 - Work on STEM, Careers Advice
 - Following the announcement of the closure of the Cannock College site the Chairman was re-assured that where the LEP invested a requirement to deliver the outputs over a period was included in the contract.
- Ceramics Sector Deal
 - The Group were pleased to receive an update on work on a sector deal. It was agreed to allocate a budget of £15,000 to support the work to submission stage.

11. Any other Business

None

Date of Next Meeting:

Wednesday 14th June in the Boardroom at Staffordshire University, University House, Leek Road, Stoke on Trent, Staffordshire ST4 2DF at 5pm-7pm.