

LEP Executive Group Meeting
Broad Eye Building, Earl Street, Stafford, ST16 2QR
15th October 2015
Minutes

Present

Group Members

David Frost (Chair)	
John Henderson	Chief Executive, Staffordshire County Council
Cllr Philip Atkins	Leader, Staffordshire County Council
Cllr Abi Brown	Deputy Leader, Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Mark Kerrigan	Alton Towers Resort
Jonathan Dale	Denoviant
David Sidaway	Rep. CXO, Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Ken Stepney	JCB
Cllr Patrick Farrington	Stafford Borough Council

Advisory/Secretariat

Peter Davenport	Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP
Julie Frost	Office Manager, Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP
Joanne Tyzzer	Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Prof Mark Ormerod	Deputy Vice Chancellor Keele University
Kevin Postones	BIS West Midlands
Graham Morley	South Staffs College
Julie Obada	Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Apologies

Richard Cotterell	Perkins Engines
Pro Michael Gunn	Staffordshire University
John van de Laarschot	Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Cllr George Adamson	Leader, Cannock Chase Council
Kerry Diamond	Continental

1. Introductions

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. He reminded members that the attendance of observers is at the discretion of the Chair.

2. Apologies

Noted.

3. Declarations of Interest

A record of declarations of interests was present at the meeting and available for examination. No additional declarations were made.

4. Notes of the previous meeting and any matters arising

The Enterprise Zone bid had been submitted. It was understood the bids were currently being assessed with an announcement on the outcome due around 25th November (the time of the Autumn Statement).

European City of Sport was progressing and a meeting had been arranged with Stoke-on-Trent City Council. The item would be brought to the Executive Board for discussion at a later date.

The LEP AGM would be taking place next week, as would the National LEP Conference. A representative from the Royal Signals had been invited to present at the Full Partnership Board meeting in November.

5. Chairs Delegated Decisions and Actions

The Chair announced that all Local Authorities within Cheshire, Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire, plus the two LEPS, had been invited to a summit at Keele University on 23rd September to discuss the Northern Gateway Development Zone. A working group had been set up to establish a series of work streams to develop the plan.

MIPIM UK would be taking place in the following week, along with a major State Visit from China. The Northern Gateway Development Zone would be launched and it would be important to identify investment opportunities for Chinese delegates.

6. Key Performance Indicators

The KPI report was noted. The Jobs created and new businesses were below target but manufacturing was progressing.

The potential job losses at JCB were discussed and the LEP was keen to ensure the skills of the employees affected were not lost.

7. Education Trust – Presentations by Ken Stepney, Julie Obada & Prof Mark Ormerod

Ken Stepney gave an introduction on raising aspirations and ensuring that young people were fit for work. Julie Obada set out Skills Programme. The background to the Area Review of Further Education was discussed. Executive members were anxious to put in place the mechanisms to progress a review quickly and the secretariat were asked to make the necessary arrangements.

Graham Morley set out the work of Skills Staffordshire and the significant progress it had made.

Professor Ormerod gave a presentation on Higher Education which the group welcomed.

It was felt important that engagement between schools and local businesses should be encouraged, as this would have a positive effect on students' attitudes.

8. Growth Hub Business Plan

Jonathan Dale outlined the draft business plan and highlighted a number of areas where he thought improvements were needed. The group agreed that the hub should be LEP wide and that Jonathan should review the costings and staffing elements on behalf of the LEP. It was agreed that any subsequent approvals necessary would be dealt with using the written procedure.

Action: Jonathan Dale to review on behalf of the group prior to the submission of the EU bid in conjunction with the secretariat.

9. Growing Places Fund Round 7 – Review of Applications - Confidential

10. City and Growth Deal Programme Report

The Implementation Tracker was noted and no major issues were reported. The Executive Group asked for a programme of future years expenditure to be available at its next meeting. It was advised that a review was being carried out in preparation for the Annual Conversation with BIS in December.

The Group agreed R that a capital grant award of £2,002,400 (£2,498,008 including match) be awarded to Stafford College on condition that the college provides full assurance of the capital match of £495,608.

The Group supported the retention of an interim programme director, Chris Gill, following an interview by the Chair and sub group chair for 12 months, 3 days per week, from the 9th November.

11. Financial Dashboard Q2 2015/16

The dashboard was noted.

12. Policy and Task Group Updates

The Inward Investment Report was circulated.

The group considered a paper covering the European Strategic Investment Framework (ESIF) Priority 4 Skills, Employment and Social Inclusion Commissioning Plan and Prospectus. The recommendation to delegate the final approval of this to the ESIF Committee was agreed.

13. Any Other Business

Ken Stepney reported that he had met Wolverhampton University and would be reporting back on the outcomes at a future meeting.

Jonathan Dale reported on the development of a Digital Working Group and advised that Staffordshire Chambers had started a similar initiative. The groups would be combining to pursue the main objective.

Cllr Atkins felt that it would be important that Cheshire East and West should be involved in the discussions on Midlands connect as decisions on HS2 progressed.

The Secretariat would be liaising with Chair on the agenda for the Full Partnership Board meeting in November. Any presentations would be kept to a minimum. It was noted that Agri-Tech would be covered.

Following a discussion about transport issues there was a desire to see this as a focus of a future meeting, possibly December.

19:55 **Close of Meeting**

Date of Next Meeting:

Full Partnership Board Meeting, Thursday 12th November, Broad Eye Building, Earl Street, Stafford, ST16 2QR