

**Notes of the LEP Executive Group Meeting
Drawing Room, County Buildings
Thursday 14th September 2017**

Present

Group Members

David Frost (Chairman)	
John Henderson	Chief Executive, Staffordshire County Council
Kevin Oakes	Royal Crown Derby
David Sidaway	City Director, Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Cllr Abi Brown	Deputy Leader, Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Prof Liz Barnes	Staffordshire University
Cllr Brian Edwards	South Staffordshire Council
Mohammed Ahmed	National Grid
Paul Farmer	Wade's Ceramics
Alun Rogers	Risual

Advisory/Secretariat

Peter Davenport	Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP
Julie Frost	Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP
Alison Thomas	Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP
John Devlin	Programme Consultant

In Attendance

Apologies

Sarah Montgomery	National Memorial Arboretum
Richard Cotterell	Perkins
Cllr Philip Atkins	Leader, Staffordshire County Council
Cllr Patrick Farrington	Stafford Borough Council
James Leavesley	Leavesley Group
Wendy Dean	Strategi Solutions

1. Introductions

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He was pleased to welcome the new members to the board.

2. Apologies

These were noted.

3. Declarations of Interest

No additions were made to those already recorded.

4. Notes of the previous meeting and any matters arising

The minutes were agreed to be a true record of the meeting.

5. Chairman's Delegated Decisions and Actions

There were no delegated decisions to report.

6. Where the LEP Sits in the Changing Landscape

The Chairman outlined his thoughts on where LEPs and the SSLEP were in the national average. He referred to projects, and wider initiatives the LEP was involved with including the Constellation Partnership and West Midlands Combined Authority, and outlined their objectives.

The Make It team's joint stand with Midlands Engine at MIPIM Cannes had worked well and demonstrated where Midlands Engine could add value. The Chairman had received very positive comments on the Ceramics Deal from a representative in the nuclear sector who wanted to replicate it for their industry. This illustrated the contribution the LEP was making to the areas economy.

Jake Berry and Margot James MPs had begun work on a review of LEP national, which should inform the role looking forwards. In the eyes of Government and the media, the importance of the Assurance Framework, and being transparent, was paramount. The review would impact on the LEP and the board would need to give thought on what changes would be required.

7. KPIs

The report was circulated for information.

A Vacancy Data Analysis report was also circulated. This data suggested that there are two trends at play - businesses are seeking more professional and managerial capability, so high demand for roles like financial directors, analysts, and compliance and HR professionals. Meanwhile, there is a significant shortage of people to fill blue collar roles such as drivers, electricians, and construction workers, which is being exacerbated by the uncertainty of Brexit.

Actions:

A quarterly report on date to be provided would be circulated separately.

Peter Davenport to circulate the dashboard from the Growth Hub

8 & 9 Confidential items

10. Rail

10a A presentation was given and reports circulated for information. Over the last 10 years, rail patronages had grown by 84%, which was well in excess of 53% nationally. West Midlands Rail would be replacing the London Midland franchise, with new branding being launched in 2018.

10b Crewe Hub – Members agreed the principles set out in the discussion with the addition of parking. It was noted that parking played a big role in where people chose to travel from. The members of the Executive agreed the recommendations of the report to:

- a) Consider the consultation and the points raised above.
- b) For the SSLEP to respond to the consultation and work with partners to press for improved services to Stafford and Stoke
- c) That the Chairman is delegated to agree the consultation response following the circulation of a draft to Executive Group members.

11 West Midlands Interchange

The responses of the Local Authorities were circulated, together with a weblink to the consultation. Following a discussion, the group agreed that a further response from the SSLEP on the planning application was not appropriate and that it should draw attention to the SEP and LA responses.

13. *City & Growth Deal Programme Report – Confidential*

14. Policy and Task Group Updates

A report was circulated giving an update on Inward Investment. The commercial property event had been very successful. The first draft of the Annual Report would be circulated towards the end of September. Members were asked to submit any comments to Alison Thomas, LEP Communications Manager.

16. Any other Business

None

Date of Next Meeting:

Thursday 12th October, Drawing Room, County Buildings, Martin Street, Stafford, ST16 2HE