

**Draft Notes of a Full Partnership Board Meeting held at risual,
Unit 15 Parker Court, Stafford, ST18 0WP
Thursday 16th November 2017**

Present
Board Members

David Frost	Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP - Chair
Paul Farmer	Wade Ceramics
Alun Rogers	risual
Adrian Maclaughlin	Dunston Business Village
Patrick Farrington	Leader, Stafford Borough Council
Cllr Phillip Atkins	Leader, Staffordshire County Council
John Henderson	Staffordshire County Council
James Leavesley	The Leavesley Group
Cllr Brian Edwards	South Staffs Council
Cllr Abi Brown	Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Phil Cresswell (representing DS)	Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Robert Lawley (representing Sara Williams)	Department for International Trade

Observers / In Attendance

Alison Thomas	LEP Communications Officer
John Devlin	Consultant
Julie Obada	Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Andrea Whitworth	BEIS

Advisory/Secretariat

Peter Davenport	Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP
Julie Frost	Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP

Apologies

Mohammed Ahmed, Wendy Dean, Richard Cotterell, David Sidaway, Cllr Abi Brown, Judith Kirkland, Kevin Oakes, Cllr Anthony Munday, Cllr Elizabeth Shenton, Christian Marcucci, Richard King

1. Introductions

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Alun Rogers for hosting.

2. Apologies

The apologies were noted.

3. Declarations of Interest

None declared. The Board were asked to complete and return the Declarations of Interest form Julie Frost would shortly be sending out. All were reminded of the obligation to ensure declarations were updated and maintained for transparency.

Action: All

4. **Notes of Previous Meeting and matters arising**

The minutes were agreed to be a true and fair record of the meeting and there were no matters arising.

5. **Chairs Update & Delegates Decisions**

The Chairman announced that publication of the Industrial Skills Strategy was imminent. It was understood the 10 pillars would be reduced to 4-5, with Place being one. It was noted that the Ceramics Deal was expected to be referenced in the announcement of the Autumn Statement on 22nd November.

The Chairman gave feedback on a Make It event he had attended on the 9th November, week commencing 6th November, hosted at Knights solicitors. The event had been successful and the Make It team were keen to secure more sponsorship from the private sector.

The Chairman had been approached by Staffordshire MPs Gareth Snell and Ruth Smeeth to be involved in Stoke-on-Trent's bid to encourage Channel 4 to relocate part of its operations to the city. Stoke-on-Trent had been referenced in Channel 4 consultation documents. However, the City Council's key focus was currently on their bid to be the 2021 UK City of Culture.

The Chairman advised members he had accepted the City Council's request for him to be part of the group of 6 representatives travelling to Hull on 6th December to present the City's final bid to become UK City of Culture to the panel. The City Council representative felt the Chairman's involvement was key to the bid.

6. **Key Performance Indicators**

A report was circulated for information. The following items were noted:

- DCLG had produced a report on Transparency. It was imperative that SSLEP continued to ensure it continued to be compliant. It was reiterated to members that Declarations of Interest must be kept updated.
- Members of the City & Growth Deal Programme Board had agreed to make changes in the frequency of their meetings. The Assurance Programme Board would continue to meet monthly, whilst the Programme Board would be targeted to specific decisions. No change to governance was anticipated.
- Margot James MP and Jake Berry MP had contributed to a communications piece of work on the longer term role of LEPs. The Chairman had recently met with Jake Berry and had been given assurances that LEPs had a long term future under the current government.
- BEIS would shortly be producing scrutiny documents. A recommendation was made to check SSLEP's policies against the documents and arrange a follow up session with members.
- Sir John Peace, Chairman of the Midlands Engine, had been the guest speaker at the SSLEP Annual Conference on 21st October. He informed the Chairman it was the best LEP event he'd attended and expressed his wish to return.

- Amanda Milling MP had hosted a SSLEP event at Portcullis House. The event had been well attended. Members requiring LEP representation at meetings should contact Peter Davenport.
- Members were informed the SSLEP newsletter would shortly be circulated.
- There had been an underspend on Growth Deal 2, due to an increase in the financial allocation. An Open Call would take place on Monday 20th November with full bids in by 24th January. The Programme Board would be much more rigorous in their assessment of future bids, especially on Delivery and Outcomes.
- It was announced that Wendy Dean had taken the lead on Skills, replacing Ken Stepney after his time on the Board had come to an end.

9. Any Other Business

No further issues were raised.

- 10. Discussion:** In our Strategic Economic Plan, we set our ambition to see more jobs, higher paid jobs, and more productive jobs. How do we see this being achieved? Should we be equally focused on attracting prosperous residents as well as employees? What should we be doing to attract and retain skilled residents?

Alun Rogers presented Vacancy Data statistics. A discussion followed around the findings and the following points were raised and noted:

- In Zone Planning, a change of use application can be a planning issue- Quality places were usually successful places, quality over quantity. A change in attitude from planners was required
- Encouraging employers to understand the benefits of apprentices
- It was felt we should be capitalising on our geographical location – too many negative perceptions of Staffordshire, not enough being done to get on the map and on the radar of London-based journalists
- Transport issues – travelling around the county was difficult, lack of buses and taxis. Students had major issues with transport.
- Potential risk of gentrification and pricing locals out of the housing market
- Aspirations – aim to be nationally significant and set national standards
- Grit training in schools
- Pulling everyone along – career progression in all jobs
- Apprenticeships Levy creating uncertainty
- Where are commuters to Manchester, Birmingham and London going and to what jobs? How can we attract them to work in the area – quality of place with housing/health/jobs

- Innovation – Staffordshire is unique so comparisons with other areas and cities should stop. Be proud of where we are and exploit that.
- Build on area’s strengths, we can become a growth point in the UK – be ‘plus’
- Marketing was key
- Positive image set – use images clearly distinguishable as being in Staffordshire

Dates of next meetings:

Executive Group	15 th December 2017
Full Partnership Board	15th March 2018

DRAFT