

**Notes of a Full Partnership Board Meeting  
White Room, County Buildings, Stafford  
Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2018**

**Present**  
**Board Members**

David Frost	Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP - Chair
Alun Rogers	risual
Patrick Farrington	Leader, Stafford Borough Council
John Henderson	Staffordshire County Council
James Leavesley	The Leavesley Group
Mohammed Ahmed	National Grid
Len Tildsley	Buxton & Leek College

**Observers / In Attendance**

Andrea Whitworth	BEIS
Dr Mark Bacon	Keele University
Cllr Mark Winnington	Staffordshire County Council

**Advisory/Secretariat**

Peter Davenport	Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP
Julie Frost	Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP
Alison Thomas	LEP Communications Officer
John Devlin	Consultant
Julie Obada	Stoke-on-Trent City Council

**Apologies**

Cllr Philip Atkins, Richard Cotterell, Cllr Abi Brown, Judith Kirkland, Kevin Oakes, Cllr Anthony Munday, Cllr Brian Edwards, Paul Farmer, Prof Trevor McMillan, Cllr Michael Wilcox, Adrian Maclaughlin, Phil Cresswell, Wendy Dean, Simon Tagg, Sara Williams, Paul Farmer, Sarah Montgomery

**1. Introductions**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. In view of the apologies the meeting was advised that it was inquorate and accordance with the constitution it would be necessary to ratify any decisions through the electronic procedure.

**2. Apologies**

The apologies noted above were received.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

None declared.

James Leavesley would be updating his Declarations of Interest for shortly due to an additional commitment he would be taking on.

**Action: Julie Frost to forward a new Declarations of Interest form to James Leavesley**

**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. The following points were made:

- The Industrial Strategy had been published
- The Make It Team had been successful in securing sponsorship
- Discussions re Channel 4 were continuing. A meeting between Gareth Snell MP, Ruth Smeeth MP, Sara Williams and David Frost had been arranged for Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> March
- LEP review was underway and completion was expected to be by the summer. The clear message coming through was there would be change

**5. Chairs Update & Delegated Decisions**

There were no delegated decisions to report. The Chairman had accepted the invitation from Lord Kerslake to sit on the Civic University Commission.

**6. Key Performance Indicators**

A report was circulated for information.

**7. Strategic Economic Plan**

The Board were asked to approve the revised document which had been amended following a series of events, discussions and a public consultation. The key elements were highlighted in the presentation together with the work in progress to prepare for the development of a local Industrial Strategy.

The members present discussed the document and highlighted a number of areas where some changes were needed to strengthen the document;

- Whilst the elements were explained the importance of productivity improvements needed to emerge more strongly to the reader.
- Logistics was a significant component of the local economy albeit not one of the target sectors.
- Raising skills aspirations significantly and imaginatively was essential.
- The digital connectivity continues to move on at pace and the document would benefit from an update in relation to 5G and wider digital connectivity.
- St George's Park in Burton-on-Trent mentioned for potential inclusion
- The areas location and geography is a key selling point.

The impact of educational standards on an areas prosperity was discussed. The appropriate measure varied but performance in schools has an effect on an area's attractiveness. Attainment in Stoke-on-Trent was a challenge but the quality of the schools was improving. This was an area that needs to be examined.

The delivery of the activities set out in the document would be set out in a delivery/work plan for the LEP.

**Action: Document to be amended in accordance with the changes requested above before publication.**

## **8. Governance**

The Board noted that the constitution had been amended to accord with recommendations from the Annual Conversation, Ney Review and Best Practice Guidance. The revised constitution and key changes were explained to the Partnership, particularly the change to the descriptions of the groups and the consolidation of the protocols.

The members of present agreed the changes and recommended their ratification through the electronic procedure in principle. It was noted that there would need to be some changes in detail in response to comments received from the S151 and CLoG.

**Actions: John Devlin to liaise further with Andrea Whitworth / Clarification to be included on sub-groups to clearly identify actions and responsibilities**

## **9. Growing Places Fund**

The members present recommended the approval of the following loans to avoid delay;

- Lichfield South – A loan of £895,582 payable in four instalments based on estimated expenditure and subject to an appropriate charge. This would unlock a 4 Ha. New development area with the potential to accommodate 1350 jobs.
- London House Phase III – A loan of £450,000 to deliver 91 self contained student studios.
- That Staffordshire County Council, as accountable body for the funds, authority to issue a funding agreement to release the loan applied for by both projects. Final contracts would be subject to the satisfactory completion of the final elements of the legal funding agreements which govern loan security.

## **10. 6 month Policy & Task Group Updates**

Covering:

- Inward Investment
- ESIF
- Skills
- City Deal Growth Deal
- Finance
- Finance
- Growth Hub

The report was circulation for information and the following feedback was given:

- At MIPIM Cannes, there had been significantly more interest from developers in investing in the region – they had been much more receptive and the groundwork in advance had made engagement much easier. The impact of HS2 was being positively felt. Technology and Education are a focus for developers. The County expressed thanks to the LEP for helping to reach this position.
- The Growth Hub had been running pop up shops on industrial estates which had been very successful way of engaging with businesses. The Business Helpline would be running from the Judge’s Chambers from next month
- Clarification was sought on the reasons for using a non-Staffordshire based company for the website redesign. It was felt the content management style system was very specialised but the point was noted and would be look into **Action: Peter Davenport**
- Stoke-on-Trent College was likely to be named as a national centre for skills the delivery of district heat networks
- An update on Skills and the Careers and Enterprise initiative was given – they would be holding an event on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> March with 200 attendees, including representatives from schools, providers and business
- The Careers Learning pilot had been submitted and an outcome was awaited

**Actions: Julie Obada to liaise with Alun Rogers re digital skills and with James Leavesley re agricultural reskilling. JO to send a plan to Julie Frost for circulation to be Board**

## 10. Any other Business

The role of the LEP in helping to raise educational attainment was raised and the role of the Opportunities Areas was discussed. The Chairman had concerns around how Opportunities Area funding would be used. Carol Shanahan and Prof Liz Barnes would be invited to present to the Board once a year on the progress of Opportunities Areas

The LEP had recruited a Strategic Researcher who would be taking up the post on the 1<sup>st</sup> May.

A GVA Away Day was to be arranged **Action: Peter Davenport**

Dates of next meetings:

Executive Group	19 <sup>th</sup> April 2018
<b>Full Partnership Board</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> November 2018</b>