

**Draft Notes of the LEP Executive Board Meeting
Drawing Room, County Buildings
Thursday 17th May 2018**

Present

Group Members

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| David Frost (Chairman) | |
| Cllr Philip Atkins | Leader, Staffordshire County Council |
| Wendy Dean | Strategi Solutions |
| Cllr Abi Brown | Deputy Leader, Stoke-on-Trent City Council |
| Mohammed Ahmed | National Grid |
| John Henderson | Chief Executive, Staffordshire County Council |
| Alun Rogers (Vice Chair) | risual |
| Paul Farmer | Wade Ceramics |
| David Sidaway | City Director, Stoke-on-Trent City Council |
| Dr Mark Bacon | representing Prof Trevor McMillan, Keele University |

Advisory/Secretariat

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

In Attendance

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|------------------------|------------|
| Andrea Whitworth | BEIS |
| Lt Col Stuart Hitchman | 11 Signals |
| Major Sam Brettell | 11 Signals |

Apologies

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|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Prof Trevor McMillan | Keele University |
| Richard Cotterell | Perkins |
| Cllr Brian Edwards | South Staffordshire Council |
| James Leavesley | Leavesley Group |
| Sarah Montgomery | National Memorial Arboretum |
| Kevin Oakes | Royal Crown Derby |
| Cllr Patrick Farrington | Stafford Borough Council |

1. Introductions

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Lt Col Hitchman and Major Brettell.

2. Apologies

These were noted.

3. Declarations of Interest

No additional declarations were made beyond those set out in the registers of interests.

4. Presentation on the Army's Skills and Opportunities

Lt Col Hitchman gave a presentation which outlined the role of the army, its offer to employers and the benefits or supporting reservists. The areas he particularly highlighted were the development of soft skills, hard skills and value of the training provided. He

highlighted a number of events and advised that an event at Donnington was being arranged. The presentation was circulated with the papers.

5. **Notes of the previous meeting and any matters arising**

The minutes were agreed to be a true record of the meeting and the following points raised:

- A final copy of the Enterprise Zone Implementation Plan would be submitted on Friday the 18th May
- Ceramic Sector Deal – the brief for the research work had been developed and was being progressed. David Sidaway highlighted that further funding would be needed subsequently to progress the project. It was also noted that a bid of £30k had been submitted to the Midlands Engine Strategic Programme Development Fund

6. **Chairman's Delegated Decisions and Actions**

There were no delegated decisions to report. The Chairman advised members of the following:

- The LEP Annual Conference would take place at Uttoxeter Racecourse on Friday 26th October. It was hoped Andrew Griffiths, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy would be the keynote speaker
- Discussions were underway to arrange for Stephen Jones, Director, Cities & Local Growth Unit, to visit the region in June
- Nathan Phillips, Director of Planning and Analysis at DExEU had been announced as the LEP Senior Sponsor. A visit would be arranged following some introductory discussions with Andrea Whitworth

7. **KPI**

The dashboard was noted. Members were advised that Sam Hicks, the LEP's newly appointed researcher, had been tasked to undertake a review of the dashboards and produce consistent templates. Members asked for categorisations of jobs to be included and information on graduate progression.

Action: Mark Bacon to forward graduate outcome and employment data to Peter Davenport

8. **Confidential**

9. **Development of the Local Industrial Strategy**

A report was circulated which reviewed the current evidence base and suggested commissioning three thematic pieces of work on manufacturing, office based activity and Infrastructure. Members discussed whether the suggested approach was too generic and the advantages of having a diverse economy compared with a sectoral focus. It was agreed that a working group needed to be established involving business. To kick this off, the Board welcomed the suggestion of Mark Bacon that a conference with discussions would be a good way of exploring the issues raised. In addition, Members also agreed to add this item as a standing agenda item for future meetings.

Action: Peter Davenport and Mark Bacon to develop conference proposal

10. City & Growth Deal Programme Report

An update was given and reports were circulated for information and discussion. A meeting of the Strategic Programme Management Group would be held to review a deep dive of the projects categorised as Amber. The outcome would be fed back to the Executive Board in July.

Members approved the recommendation for a capital investment of £0.5m for the delivery of the Churnet Works, Leek, small business unit scheme in accordance with the Business Case Assessment.

A Governance and Assurance Internal Audit Report had been received. This found that controls were inadequate. A number of areas had been highlighted and these were being addressed.

11. Midlands Connect – Sub-National Transport Body Proposal

The consultation document which had been circulated by Midlands Connect to partners had been circulated. This sought views on the principles of a Sub-National Transport Body, membership of the body, its functions, its funding and voting mechanisms. The materials had not been published. It was agreed that the Chairman should write a response to the letter from Sir John Peace.

12. 2017-18 Final Outturn LEP Finances Dashboard

Members considered the final outturn dashboard and noted that 66% of Local Growth Deal funding had been spent. To date 83% of ERDF and 77% of ESF funding had been committed. £1.3M of Growing Places Funding was available for further loans. The revenue budget breakdown was noted.

13 Policy and Task Group Reports

A report was circulated for information including:

- Inward Investment – this was noted
- Growth Hub Activity Report – members were asked to review and raise any queries
- Careers Hub Pilot - the board considered a proposed bid to the Careers & Enterprise Company for funding to develop a careers hub. It was agreed to bid for a hub.

14 Any Other Business

The following items were raised:

- The Chairman's proposal to devote June's meeting to Smart Staffordshire, the Investment Services Review and the Environment & Economy and to use July's meeting to discuss key investment discussions was agreed
- The City extended thanks to the Chairman for his support in their bid to become a Channel 4 Creative Hub
- Branston Locks had now been completed
- A date had yet to be set for the GVA Discussion Meeting and members were asked to prioritise this in their diaries when a new date was circulated
- The process had begun to recruit two new Board members and all were asked to encourage suitable applicants to apply
- The LEP Review was ongoing and an update for LEP chairs would be taking place on the 29th May with an outline of the review expected during June/July

Date and time of next meeting:

Thursday 14th June

4.30pm-6.30pm

Executive Suite, Staffordshire University, Leek Road, Stoke-on-Trent