

**Notes of the LEP Executive Board Meeting
Drawing Room, Judges House, Stafford
Thursday 13th September 2018
Minutes**

Group Members

David Frost (Chairman)	
Alun Rogers (Vice Chair)	risual
Paul Farmer	Wade Ceramics
Cllr Patrick Farrington	Stafford Borough Council
Mohammed Ahmed	National Grid
Sarah Montgomery	National Memorial Arboretum
Prof Trevor McMillan	Keele University
Cllr Brian Edwards	South Staffordshire Council
Cllr Alan White (representing Cllr Atkins)	Staffordshire County Council
Darryl Evers (representing John Henderson)	Staffordshire County Council

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	Consultant

In Attendance

Carol Shanahan	Opportunity Area Stoke-on-Trent
Chris Senior	Opportunity Area Stoke-on-Trent

Apologies

John Henderson	Chief Executive, Staffordshire County Council
Cllr Philip Atkins	Leader, Staffordshire County Council
Wendy Dean	Strategi Solutions
Cllr Abi Brown	Deputy Leader, Stoke-on-Trent City Council
David Sidaway	City Director, Stoke-on-Trent City Council
James Leavesley	Leavesley Group

1. Introductions

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and welcomed Carol Shanahan and Chris Senior.

2. Apologies

These were noted.

3. Declarations of Interest

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

4. Stoke-on-Trent Opportunity Area

A presentation was given which provided an overview of the initiative. The aims were to;

- Improving outcomes in the early years foundation Stage

- Improve outcomes in english, maths and science
- Improve pupil engagement in learning at all stages
- Improve the choices young people make from 16

The programme had a further 18 months to run. It was agreed that education was the key to economic growth in Stoke-on-Trent and Board members requested regular feedback from the OA team. The Board was asked to encourage business people to become involved in school governance.

Action: Chair to discuss the initiative in more details with the OA team

5. Notes of the previous meeting and any matters arising

The decisions made at the June Executive Board meeting had been ratified electronically and were formally approved.

6. Chairman's Delegated Decisions and Actions

There were no delegated decisions to report.

The Chairman advised members of the following:

- The Chairman had attended the Gestamp official opening, which had been high profile and very positive.
- After attending a number of meetings regarding the LEP Review the Chairman proposed that the Conference should be slipped from October to allow the event to discuss Shared Prosperity Fund consultation as well having more certainty on the outcome of the review.

7. KPI

The dashboard was noted. Members felt the data presentation was misleading and all agreed the KPI still requires work.

8. City & Growth Deal Programme Update

The Programme Assurance Group were advised that due to slippage on the Spode Works project the potential programme underspend in 2018/19 had increased to £3.16m. This would be managed by the Accountable Body.

It was proposed to invite project submissions for immediately deliverable projects up to a value of £3.5m with a further £10m for longer term opportunities

The Skills Capital Equipment Board had appraised the business cases for three projects which had been submitted by South Staffordshire College for a Cannock Engineering Academy, Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group, Stoke-on-Trent College – Academy of Technology and Digital Skills. The assessment of these projects was included in the report.

The Board agreed to release an additional £615k to the Skills Equipment Fund to allow a grant award to 3 projects as follows

- £500k for the Cannock Engineering Academy led by South Staffordshire College,
- £199k to the Academy of Technology & Digital Skills led by Stoke-on-Trent College and
- £499k for the Hybrid Construction Technology project led by Newcastle & Stafford Colleges Group.

The grant award to South Staffordshire College is subject to a condition that the £500,000 match from Cannock Chase District Council is secured and is not double counted against the £500,000 match from Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP which is also secured. Suitable evidence would need to be provided to demonstrate compliance with this condition.

The level of funding available for the open call would be amended accordingly.

9. Policy and Task Group Reports

A report was circulated for information including:

- EU Funding - £25m was available to be committed in bidding calls in October 2018 and March 2019. There had been over 14,900 beneficiaries of the skills and employment programmes. In addition 26 businesses had benefited from investment in farm productivity, and food and drink production.
- Inward Investment – A successful commercial property event had been held on the 11th September. Plans were being developed for the Midlands stand at MIPIIM 2019 and the new website had been launched.
- Skills – The Board were pleased to support a bid to the Construction Skills Fund to set up an on-site training hub with Taylor Wimpey. A potential skills dashboard was circulated for comments.

Action – All - Comments on the dashboard to the Secretariat

- Transport – The Midlands Connect studies in progress were discussed. The board were pleased to learn that the study work into the A50/A500 had commenced. It was noted that there had been lobbying for a new station at Alrewas/NMA and this features in long term aspirations. The board agreed that a transport strategy should be produced to support the development of the LIS.

Action – Draft Transport Strategy to be developed by the Secretariat and partners

- Ceramic Deal – The technical work on the Ceramic Park and the Midlands Engine had been commissioned utilising the SCAPE Framework in agreement with the Chairman. The expression of interest for the Cultural Development Fund had been successful and the board agreed to delegate to the Chairman the agreement of any additional development funding.
- Social Enterprise Place Recognition – The Board agreed to support the application to be accredited as a Social Enterprise Place.
- Local Industrial Strategy Update – an approach to developing the LEPs thinking was discussed. This envisioned a discovery phase in the autumn followed by a visioning discussion which would lead to a testing phase in the new year. Members agreed the principles of the proposed approach.

10 Any Other Business

The following items were raised:

- An update was given on how well development of the i54 Enterprise Zone was progressing and the potential expansion to the west
- The Board were reminded that there were vacancies for business members. It was agreed that these needed to be filled in accordance with the LEP Review and forthcoming Assurance Framework guidance.

Date and time of next meetings:

Partnership Board: Thursday 18th October
6pm-8pm
Drawing Room, County Buildings, Stafford

Full Partnership: **Thursday 15th November**
6pm-8pm
Drawing Room, County Buildings, Stafford