

**Draft Notes of a LEP Partnership Meeting
Drawing Room, County Buildings, Stafford
Thursday 15th November 2018**

Present

Partnership Members

David Frost	Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP - Chair
Alun Rogers	risual & LEP Deputy Chair
Philip Atkins	Leader, Staffordshire County Council
John Henderson	Staffordshire County Council
James Leavesley	The Leavesley Group
Mohammed Ahmed	National Grid
Cllr Brian Edwards	South Staffordshire Council
Simon Tagg	Leader, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council
Sara Williams	Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce
Trevor McMillan	Keele University
Adrian McLaughlin	Dunston Business Village
Phil Cresswell (pp David Sidaway)	Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Observers / In Attendance

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 Abi Brown, David Sidaway, Cllr Patrick Farrington, Wendy Dean, Judith Kirkland, Cllr Anthony Munday, , Paul Farmer, Sarah Montgomery

1. Introductions

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies

The apologies noted above were received.

3. Declarations of Interest

None declared.

Members were reminded that they must provide an updated signed Declaration of Interest every 6 months. The current forms would be circulated shortly.

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 which were not covered by the agenda. The following points were made:

- The Strategic Economic Plan had been published
- The Local Industrial Strategy would be the next key priority for the LEP

5. **Chairs Update & Delegated Decisions**

There were no delegated decisions to report in relation to the Partnership. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and addressed current activity.

Key Performance Indicators

The dashboard was circulated for information. A draft Delivery Dashboard had also been circulated for comment. Issues around the time needed to secure planning permission were discussed. It was noted the MH CLG set timescales for the processing of applications.

The point of the LEP considering approving schemes based on GVA impact was raised. It was agreed that a Working Group would be set up to produce aims and objectives to report back to December's Executive Board. Alun Rogers agreed to lead the group, which would also include the LEP Chairman, Dr Mark Bacon and Sara Williams.

Action: Julie Frost to liaise with Alun Rogers on dates for the initial meeting

7. **Review of 2017-18 and Look Ahead to 2019-20**

Presentations on the following were given and copies circulated (these are available on the website):

- **City Deal**
Recommendations from the Open Call would be brought to December's Executive Board for consideration
- **Growth Deal**
The importance of ensuring statistics were reported to correctly reflect achievements was noted.
- **ESIF Programme**
A graph was circulated. It was noted that the number of people in the region with no skills had been reduced from being above the national and regional averages to being below. It was felt that this was due to ESF-funded programmes that had been implemented by the LEP.
Action: Alun Rogers and Julie Obada to liaise re ERDF funding bids for Skills

- **Skills & Employment**

Julie Obada advised the first national Heat academy had opened at Stoke-on-Trent College. The numbers of apprentices were down 40% national following the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy but numbers of Higher Apprentices remained steady. 43 schools were now engaged with the Careers Enterprise Company, with Chase Terrace in Burntwood the lead school in the Careers Hub for its best practice. The issue of apprentices who had been affected by the collapse of AAA Training was discussed. Up to 4,000 apprentices had been left unable to sign up for another scheme, find employment or finish their qualification due to issues around funding.

Action: Julie Obada to look at solutions to helping the students

- **Enterprise Support & Growth Hub**

The need for a simple report for the Board which outlined the value of the Growth Hub was raised. Members asked for Growth Hub business cards to be circulated so that they could have them readily available to hand out.

Action: Peter Davenport to liaise with Nicola Kent

- **Inward Investment**

The presentation was noted.

- **Strategy**

A series of meetings was being scheduled around the Local Industrial Strategy, including an Envisioning event at the end of November. Engaging with key businesses who were driving the economy was fundamental. Potential input from the Stoke Diaspora was discussed. The Local Industrial Strategy had to be in place by March 2020. However it was agreed that the ambition should be to achieve this earlier with September 2019 suggested.

- **Governance**

Contributors were asked to be clear when producing reports on which information was public and what was confidential. By April 2019, the LEP would have to be a legal company and have a Diversity Champion in place. It was noted that the LEP Strategic Partnership Manager would be retiring on the 31st December. Jacqui Casey had been appointed on a consultancy basis from the 3rd December on a 6 month contract.

8. Any other Business

If the future of the LEP was still unclear in January, the conference scheduled for the 18th January may need to be postponed again. However, this may have an impact on the booking costs.

Chambers members had complained about infrastructure issues, with congestion being a major problem. This was contributing to the blocking of development.

The Keele hydrogen project had received HSE approval for the first phase.

Peter Davenport invited members to his retirement event on the 21st December. A meeting arranger would be sent.

Dates of next meetings:

Executive Board	13 th December 2018, Drawing Room, County Buildings
Partnership	21st March, Executive Suite, Staffordshire University