

**Notes of the LEP Executive Board Meeting  
Drawing Room, County Buildings  
Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2019  
DRAFT Minutes**

**Group Members**

David Frost (Chairman)  
Alun Rogers (Vice Chair)  
Wendy Dean  
Paul Farmer  
Sarah Montgomery  
Cllr Philip Atkins  
Cllr Patrick Farrington  
Cllr Abi Brown  
Cllr Brian Edwards  
Prof Liz Barnes  
David Sidaway

risual  
Strategi Solutions  
Wade Ceramics  
National Memorial Arboretum  
Staffordshire County Council  
Stafford Borough Council  
Deputy Leader, Stoke-on-Trent City Council  
South Staffordshire Council  
Staffordshire University  
Stoke-on-Trent City Council

**Advisory/Secretariat**

Jacqui Casey  
Alison Thomas  
John Devlin

Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP  
Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP  
Consultant

**In Attendance**

Andrea Whitworth  
Simon Ablewhite  
Sophie McFie-Hyland

BEIS  
Staffordshire County Council  
Staffordshire County Council

**Apologies**

Mohammed Ahmed  
James Leavesley  
John Henderson

Homeserve  
Leavesley Group  
Staffordshire County Council

**1. Introductions**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. Apologies**

These were noted.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

The minutes were agreed as a correct record. It was noted that the report on regulation would be presented at the March meeting. It was noted that planning permission had been given for the expansion of i54.

## **5. Chairman's Delegated Decisions and Actions**

There were no delegated decisions.

The chairman reported that there was no movement as yet from the Government's LEP Review on the LEP's future boundaries. He had raised the issue with James Brokenshire. It appeared a decision had been made, but more meetings with interested parties were planned before it was announced.

The chairman reported that the LEP's annual conference in January had been extremely successful and the best yet. He said the balance of attendance had shifted over the years from predominantly public sector to a 50/50 split between public and private sector attendees and looked forward to this trend of greater business engagement continuing. The chairman thanked the team for their hard work in ensuring its success.

The chairman had been a Commissioner of the Civic Universities Commission headed by Lord Kerslake, which launched its report on the concept of the Civic University at Westminster on February 13. The civic engagement work of Keele and Staffordshire universities was highlighted.

The chairman had attended the LEP Network's meeting at 10 Downing Street with the Prime Minister and the secretaries of State for BEIS and MHCLG on January 31. This had included presentations from five LEPs. It was felt that future meetings should involve more time for feedback from the PM and discussion.

## **6. LEP Review: Move to Company Structure**

The executive board agreed to move to an incorporated body model by March 31, 2019, as required by the Government's LEP review.

The executive board also agreed the following recommendations:

- i. Endorsed legal advice proposing that the SSLEP partnership is set up as a company limited by guarantee
- ii. Noted that the role of the LEP is essentially unchanged. The annual conference will include the annual general meeting of the new SSLEP company, and the annual report and annual delivery plan will be available at this point. A draft annual delivery plan will be produced by the end of April 2019.
- iii. The SSLEP company articles and governance arrangements are developed on the broad principles of
  - adopting a structure which enables the retention of the current range of partners on the Executive Board represented within the company membership, as members and directors of the company
  - adapting SSLEP's existing agreed governance arrangements in delivering partnership business through the SSLEP Board of Directors and its sub groups.
- iv. All current private sector board members will be company directors.
- v. All proposed Directors should confirm their willingness to become a Director of the company by 28 February 2019.
- vi. A clear Scheme of Delegation is agreed by the company directors and adopted in delivering partnership business.
- vii. The SSLEP Assurance Framework/Constitution is updated to reflect the new National Local Growth Assurance Framework requirements and the agreed new company structure for approval by the Board and placed on the SSLEP website by 31 March 2019.
- viii. The newly incorporated company will take out Directors' and Officers' Insurance.
- ix. Recommended that the Accountable Body should be approached to take on the role of company secretary.
- xi. Where possible, the SSLEP company uses partner hosting arrangements to minimise the costs of SSLEP staffing arrangements, with clear contracts of employment for all staff and secondment agreements which reflect the independent nature of the SSLEP company.
- xii. The LEP Executive Board Sub Group undertake a 'future fit' exercise on staff capacity & capabilities, bringing a proposal for future staffing arrangements to a subsequent Board of Directors meeting for approval.
- xiii. The SSLEP company continues to pursue cost-efficient arrangements for accommodation and associated services and formalises other service arrangements with partner organisations in the interests of transparency and good governance.

xiii. The SSLEP company continues to hold its Core Funding with the accountable body, while directing the accountable body in the use of all funding, in the interests of minimising tax liabilities and maximising available budget against delivery of the work programme.  
xv. The Accountable Body agreement is updated and a Service Level Agreement with the Chamber of Commerce be put in place in the interests of good governance.

It was also agreed that local authority and university members could nominate one named alternate to attend in the event of their absence and that the named alternate would be permitted to vote. Staffordshire and Keele universities rotate their Board position on an annual basis, so the alternative for Staffordshire would be a named Keele representative and vice-versa. It was agreed that local authority members could have an officer present in an advisory capacity. These details would be included in the articles.  
In view of the Government's March 31 deadline, it was agreed that the company would be set up with the necessary minimum number of directors and a first meeting would be scheduled in March with the remaining directors to be appointed in due course. This was required because Stoke-on-Trent City Council and some District Council elections will be held in May and democratically elected members could not be identified until after these elections.

The chairman agreed to write to the secretary of State James Brokenshire advising that, in order to adhere to the tight deadlines set out by his Department and the timetable in the National Local Growth Assurance Framework, the company would be set up by the deadline on the basis of the existing boundary arrangements.

## **7. City & Growth Programme Deal Programme**

The board noted progress on the schemes in the programme.  
It was noted that the Growth Deal target for jobs was slightly above target, 5008 jobs by the end of 2020/21 (target 5000 jobs). Total forecast jobs = 10731. Currently 376 jobs have been created.

It was noted that the housing forecast below target, 828 houses by end 20/21 (target 1000 houses). Total forecast housing units = 4850. Currently 97 houses have been completed (SWAR – Bellway development). Building of initial 5 units of 70 have now commenced at Branston Locks Cameron Homes site. A further 201 houses for Taylor Wimpey are planned to start March 2019 having received reserved matters planning approval.

City Deal jobs created to date 693 (IGISS / SSBSP / AME Hub Ph 1); the remainder of the jobs and energy outcomes will be achieved from delivery of DHN and SEND schemes.

The executive board approved a capital grant award of £1,000,000 to the Local Sustainable Transport Package, Stoke-on-Trent, for the delivery of a programme of walking and cycling improvement schemes.

The Programme Assurance Group report and Ceramic Valley quarterly report were noted.

## **8. Key Performance Indicators**

The KPIs were noted and suggestions for more detailed dashboards were discussed. It was agreed that it was helpful to see job creation broken down into sectors. The board agreed it would also be helpful to have more details on the skills levels of these jobs and proportion of high-level apprenticeships.

## **9. Policy & Task Group Updates**

### **Investment Update:**

To date for 2018/19 Make It Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire have assisted 8 companies in creating/safeguarding 1,214 jobs (899 created and 315 safeguarded) towards the annual target of 2,000 jobs. However, there are at least two strong enquiries in the pipeline and the team are confident are securing approximately another 600 jobs before the year end.

The team also records details of investments and jobs created/safeguarded by businesses where there has been no assistance provided. Although not comprehensive, when combined with those assisted this gives a total of 1,700 jobs and 19 companies.

It was noted that the Make It team had achieved significant private sector sponsorship for its presence at MIPIM. The new Make it website would be launched in March 2019.

### **Education Skills and Employment Group**

Skills Advisory Panels: The board received a report on the advice received from the Department for Education on the implementation of Skills Advisory Panels, and the plans being developed to strengthen the skills data available to the LEP and for the Education, Skills and Employment Group (ESEG) to be reviewed and developed as the Board of the SAP.

The board also received an update report on projects within the careers guidance priority of the SSLEP Skills Strategy.

## **12. Any other Business**

There was no other business

### **Date and time of next meeting:**

#### **Full Partnership:**

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March

6pm-8pm

Executive Suite, Staffordshire University, Stoke-on-Trent