

# Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire

Enterprise Partnership

## Information for Candidates

### LEP Chair



# Message from Our Board of Directors

Dear Candidate

It is an exciting time for the Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SSLEP).

This year, we have been developing our Local Industrial Strategy, setting out an ambitious vision for the future economy of our area and building on the strategic capabilities of our outstanding businesses, civic and learning institutions. Our business community and public sector are working with us to design that strategy and create an investment framework with Government that will increase productivity and create higher value jobs across the city and county.

Seven years on from our formation, 2019 is also a review year for LEPs. We have moved to a company limited by guarantee structure. We have also reflected on our operational arrangements, to strengthen governance and accountability to our business base and wider communities and to ensure that we are 'future fit' to deliver for Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire, maximising investment opportunities and our contribution to the UK economy.

Our partnership is charged with creating the best conditions possible for economic growth across Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire through our work programme: supporting businesses to create higher skilled jobs that will retain and develop the skills of our people; developing our existing and future workforce; and enabling business research and development to increase the value of our economy and raise productivity.

We are strengthening our transport links and opening up sites for new and expanding businesses, working locally and with Midlands Connect. We are also

working regionally through Midlands Engine and nationally with government to raise the profile of our city and county.

We showcase our business strengths and demonstrate why we are a strong competitor in a global economy, and celebrate our high quality of life, ensuring that Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire continues to be an attractive place to live, work and do business.

We are now looking for an exceptional Chair to build on our work to date. The role of Chair requires strong leadership, a strategic thinker with a collaborative approach in achieving our goals. You will have a dedicated Board of Directors who will support you in continuing the work of transforming our economy.

The Board is keen to hear from business leaders who share their ambition for our area, are dedicated to improving the opportunities of our business communities and have the commitment to achieve their goals. If this is you, the Board is waiting to hear from you.

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The Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire LEP (SSLEP) is a business-led collaboration of private sector, higher education institutions and public sector partners.

Our mission is to create the conditions for our economy to grow and create more, better paid jobs, improve the skills for our workforce and raise productivity across Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire.

We want to transform our area into a connected county with vibrant, competitive urban centres and an inspiring, economic powerhouse in the city of Stoke-on-Trent.

We will achieve this by building upon our globally successful business base and ambitious, highly-skilled workforce.

Over the past seven years, SSLEP has firmly established itself as the key business-led organisation working with Government and Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire businesses to drive investment in our economy for the benefit of those who live and work here. Since 2011 we have seen 35,000 new jobs created and a 6% growth in the Gross Value Added (GVA) of the city and county.

## Our Programme of Work

Through our Growth Deals, SSLEP is contributing more than £147m of investment up to 2021 in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire.

Partner contributions, including from local authorities, universities, colleges and the private sector, bring total investment through the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan to some £344m to date. This has included:

- › Opening up new employment and housing sites, such as:

- Ceramic Valley Enterprise Zone - six sites of 140Ha developable land, creating 790 jobs to date
- i54 South Staffordshire Enterprise Zone, home to Jaguar Land Rover amongst others, with over 2,700 jobs to date and plans for expansion;
- Branston Locks in Burton-on-Trent, site of 2,500 homes, community facilities and a 50 acre commercial site;
- Tamworth Enterprise Quarter, a new business and enterprise centre, and redevelopment of leisure and cultural facilities, revitalising the town centre.
- › Improving education and training facilities, including our outstanding Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Hub. Six facilities, each providing a specialist area of world-class training through a network of colleges, private training providers and sector bodies offer learning in robotics, 3D printing, mechanical engineering and agri-stem, among other sectors. Almost 7,500 learners have benefitted to date.
- › Creating innovative clean energy solutions through nationally significant investments in Stoke's District Heat Network and Keele University's Smart Energy Network Demonstrator
- › Supporting business expansion through our Growing Places Loan Fund (£13.5m investment to across 11 schemes, leveraging over £70m private investment) and Growth Hub, offering support and advice to around 400 businesses per month and boosting high value business start-ups and growth companies through Keele University's Smart Innovation Hub .



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The growth potential of our key sectors sits at the centre of our strategic plans.

Our priority advanced manufacturing sectors are: Energy; Auto-Aero; Medical technologies, Agri-Food/Agri-Tech and Applied Materials (metals and ceramics).

Our ambitions are benefiting from a strong digital economy, with new technologies supporting our economic diversification and further growth opportunities in evidence in our visitor economy, business/professional services and construction. Further details can be found on our website and in our strategy documents and project details.

We work with local, regional and national partners to champion our economic strengths and deliver our priorities. Locally we work with the Make It in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire inward investment team, public and private training providers; business networks such as the Staffordshire Chambers, FSB and CBI; and other civic, environmental and community-based organisations.

Nationally, we work with the wider LEP Network; Midlands Engine and Midlands Connect; the Constellation Partnership; a variety of national business and stakeholder organisations; and government departments.

## Our Executive Board

There are 18 Directors on the SSLEP Executive Board, 12 from the private sector and six public sector, representing our wide geography and key business sectors including universities and local authorities.

The initial term for a Director is three years and this can be extended a further term, to a maximum of six years. The role provides a unique, challenging and rewarding opportunity for experienced business leaders to help drive forward the economic prosperity of Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire.

A list of current Directors is on our website at [www.stokestaffslep.org.uk/ourpeople-partners](http://www.stokestaffslep.org.uk/ourpeople-partners) The Board operates in line with its assurance framework and company articles of association ([www.stokestaffslep.org.uk/governance](http://www.stokestaffslep.org.uk/governance)).

We have adopted the Nolan Principles, ethical standards expected of public office holders, as well as an agreed code of conduct and clear declarations of interest procedures to ensure full openness and integrity in the way Board Directors undertake their role. Sub groups of the board also operate in line with the assurance framework and terms of reference.

Our Board Directors play active roles in leading different areas of LEP Board work such as finance and audit, skills, risk management, SME champion or, where appropriate, for specific business themes or key growth business sectors.



The role and responsibilities of the Chair are as follows:

- › To provide high quality leadership of the Stoke on Trent & Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, building ambition, opportunity, cooperation and consensus, and setting the strategic direction for the economic growth of the SSLEP area
- › To build and manage national and local business and political relationships providing an ambassadorial business role on behalf of the SSLEP area and championing SSLEP strategic priorities on behalf of the LEP partners in regional, national and international fora
- › To communicate with a diverse stakeholder group, including private sector CEOs, Local Authority Leaders and CEOs, wider public bodies, local business and professional networks, Higher and Further Education organisations, local MPs, Government Ministers and Central Government Departments; ensuring that the views of major stakeholders are communicated to the Board, LEP Secretariat and LEP partners.
- › To provide leadership and direction of the Company Executive Board, ensuring that the Board is run in a transparent and equitable manner and all Board Directors are actively engaged in contributing to the work of the Board
- › To chair Company Executive Board and other LEP meetings effectively, ensuring that there is full participation during meetings, that all relevant matters are discussed, and that effective decisions are made, minuted and actioned
- › To ensure clear strategies and business plans exist for SSLEP which are publicly available.
- › To provide leadership, support and advice to Board Directors and the SSLEP Director and foster positive working relationships between partners
- › To ensure that SSLEP complies with Government requirements including holding an Annual General Meeting in public, regularly reviewing and updating its Assurance Framework, SSLEP policies and publishing delivery plans and reports.
- › To hold the SSLEP Chief Executive Officer to account for his/her performance and for the performance of the SSLEP Secretariat Team.
- › To oversee the process of appointing Board Directors (using a Nominations Committee) and the appointment of Sub Group Chairs and LEP Champions, subject to Company Executive Board approval; ensuring that processes are in place for the appointment, rotation, succession, and (if necessary) removal, of Board Directors
- › To ensure the induction of Board members and make sure that a full induction process is in place and establish a process for carrying out annual reviews of LEP Board Directors
- › To ensure the work of Sub Groups is aligned with the vision and strategy of the Strategic Economic Plan, Local Industrial Strategy and other LEP Strategies.
- › To ensure that the Board delegates appropriately to its key Sub Groups.



LEP Chair candidates will possess the following business experience, skills and attributes:

- › You will work at a senior level in / be an owner of a private sector business operating within the SSLEP area and have held senior leadership roles in one of our key sectors;
- › You will have demonstrable association with and interest in the Stoke and Staffordshire economy and possess extensive, credible business links and relationships within our area;
- › You will be a strategic thinker with a proven track record of organisational leadership or change management in a leadership role and will be able to inspire those around you through your energy and enthusiasm, creating the right atmosphere and changing culture and attitudes to suit business goals;
- › You will have an entrepreneurial spirit, demonstrating creative and innovative thinking to effectively contribute to Board discussions, identify alternative opportunities for the organisation and be capable of producing initiatives that maximise corporate opportunities, tackle issues and offer solutions;
- › You will be a strong communicator with experience of using varied media tools, proficient in MS Office, active in social media, possessing demonstrable tact, political sensitivity, diplomacy and levels of persuasion, able to act as our ambassador at a national/international level including with Government Ministers and Officials;
- › You will have the proven ability to chair meetings seeking balanced and informed decisions, taking an independent view on key economic issues able to interpret and comment on, through systematic study, information contained in business reports;
- › You will be a team builder with the proven ability to create a customer-focussed and empowering environment, applying the correct amount of accountability and support with any delegated responsibility, and to identify and initiate development initiatives that add value and cascade goals and objectives to be achieved;
- › You will have resilience and the tenacity to see things through;
- › You will have a wide experience of managing corporate governance and codes of conduct and experience of upholding the highest standards of integrity regarding perceived or actual conflict of interests in line with the Nolan Principles;
- › You will have the proven ability to identify organisational key performance indicators and their short and long-term financial implications, reasons for good and bad financial performance and be quick to effect remedial action;
- › You will be well informed on relevant legislation, imminent changes and be quick to ensure policy and initiatives are installed to address changes;
- › You will have sound knowledge of and an ability to talk with authority on the local area and its industry, with a clear understanding of and an ability to accurately predict the challenges, opportunities and infrastructure needed to make SSLEP prosper;
- › You will be a strong partnership worker, who places value on taking a collaborative approach to making things happen and have a successful track record of quickly building credibility with a wide range of stakeholders, demonstrating sound analytical skills and judgement and helping to resolve conflicts.

The Board meets once a month and the role is likely to require up to five days per month on average on SSLEP activities, plus attendance at eight Executive Board meetings and two Partnership meetings per year. The role will involve travel across the SSLEP area and occasionally outside of Staffordshire to attend meetings.

Board Directors give their time voluntarily, however extraordinary expenses for LEP commitments outside of our area can be claimed in line with our Expenses Policy.

For the Chair's role, a small honorarium can be offered at the discretion of the LEP Board. It is expected that each board member will do their best to support the Chair when assistance is required. For example, this might mean being available for a Ministerial meeting, which may be arranged at short notice.

The initial term of appointment is for 3 years and this can be extended a further term, so the maximum will be 6 years unless exceptional circumstances permit an additional year to be granted.

We are seeking to become a more diverse Board which is representative of the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire area and would particularly welcome applications from women, people with disabilities and people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds.

## Applications must include:

- › A short covering letter explaining why this appointment interests you, how you meet the criteria as detailed in role description(s), and your availability including any constraints such as notice periods or commitments. Please advise which position(s) you are applying for;
- › A CV detailing education and professional qualifications and full employment history, giving details where applicable of budgets and numbers of people managed, relevant achievements/outcomes in recent posts, and latest remuneration.
- › A completed Equal Opportunities Monitoring form. We are keen to ensure that all our roles are accessible to all members of the community and use this data to monitor our progress.

Applications must be sent electronically to: jacqui.casey@staffordshire.gov.uk. All applications will be acknowledged shortly after receipt. The closing date for applications is noon on Friday 3 January 2020.

Please note that the Chair will be selected through an open and transparent process administered by an appointments panel, members of which will be agreed by the Board. Interviews will be conducted on Friday 10 January 2020. A handover period will be agreed with the current Chair on acceptance of the appointment.

**Stoke-on-Trent  
& Staffordshire**  
Enterprise Partnership

## Email to

[jacqui.casey@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:jacqui.casey@staffordshire.gov.uk)

## Closing Date

Friday 3 January 2020

## Interview Date

Friday 10 January 2020

## Queries

If you have any queries about this appointment, or merely wish to hold an informal discussion please contact James Leavesley, Board Director and Chair of the Appointments Panel, on 07714 678502.



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