

Minutes of a Meeting of the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership

22nd January 2018 at 3.00pm
Business Solutions Centre, Wolverhampton Science Park,
Glaisher Drive, Wolverhampton

- Present:**
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| Stewart Towe | Chair; |
| Paul Brown | Ernst & Young; |
| Andy Cox | Cox & Plant; |
| Simon Eastwood | Carillion Developments Ltd; |
| Chris Handy | Accord Group; |
| Cllr. Patrick Harley | Dudley MBC; |
| Ninder Johal | Nachural Communications; |
| Cllr. Roger Lawrence | City of Wolverhampton; |
| Cllr. Paul Moore | Sandwell MBC; |
| Cllr. Aftab Nawaz | Walsall MBC; |
| Tom Westley | Westley Holdings; |
| Lowell Williams | Dudley College. |
- In Attendance:**
- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| Cllr. Brian Edwards | South Staffordshire District Council (Observer); |
| Keith Ireland | City of Wolverhampton; |
| Sarah Middleton | Black Country Consortium Ltd; |
| Stuart Everton | City of Wolverhampton; |
| Rachel Goodwin | Black Country Consortium Ltd; |
| Paul Mellon | Black Country Consortium Ltd; |
| Colin Parker | Black Country Consortium Ltd; |
| Peter Smith | BEIS; and |
| Hywel Ruddick | Black Country Consortium Ltd. |
- Apologies:**
- Councillors Coughlan, Eling, and Jeavons, Prof. Geoff Layer and Deborah Williams.

1/18 **Declarations of Interest**

Minute 27/18– Carillion

The meeting was advised that this item would be considered in private session. Simon Eastwood as Managing Director of Carillion Developments plc declared his pecuniary interest in the item and advised that he would leave the meeting when the matter was being considered and take no part in the consideration or voting thereon.

Minute /18 - Bilston Urban Village East – Site Investigation

Chris Handy, as Chief Executive of Accord, and Simon Eastwood and Ninder Johal, as Non-Executive Directors of Accord, advised that they had interest in this matter, insofar as Accord may bid for any potential development opportunity. No bid having been submitted to date.

2/18 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th November 2017 were circulated.

Agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 20th November 2017, be received and confirmed as a correct record.

3/18 **Policy Update**

The following updates were submitted: -

- Policy Away Day Notes and outcome
- Margot James Letter – 28th November 2017
- Annual Conversation
- Mary Ney Review and LEP Network
- LEP Review
- Local Enterprise Partnership governance and transparency – Best Practise Guidance for LEPs
- Ministerial Re-shuffle and impact on BC LEP
- WM Local Enterprise Partnerships Chairs meeting
- Major Road Network – Consultation Launch
- The Future of Local Enterprise Partnerships – Shared Intelligence
- Institutes of Technology – Competition Launched
- LEP Network Additional Updates: -
DIT; DfE Skills Summit – next steps;
DCLG; and –FSB Skills report.

The Chair advised that he and Sarah had met with representatives of BEIS that morning to undertake the Chair's Annual Conversation. He stated that there was acknowledgement of the strength to the BC LEP partnership and the comment from BEIS that the BC LEP should increase its profile of the work undertaken and projects supported.

With regard to the Mary Ney Review the Board were advised that BC LEP was compliant with the recommendations made.

Agreed that the LEP Board note the Policy Update.

4/18 **Employment & Skills – Regional Schools Commissioner and Black Country Schools data**

The BC LEP Chair, together with representatives from the 4 Local LA's and Black Country Consortium Ltd, met with the West Midlands Regional School Commissioner (RSC) to discuss their action plan and explore how BCLEP could best support and collaborate to improve the performance of Black Country Schools.

It was noted that the equivalent of 13 new Senior Schools would be required in the Black Country by 2025 to meet the increasing demographic with a corresponding increase in primary schools - this would require approximately £500,000 capital expenditure on new schools.

Keith Ireland advised that any school expansion would be paid for by the local authorities. He stated that the RSC should report directly to the Mayor and advised that Andy Street agreed with this approach.

Reference was made to how academy schools were held accountable and the Chair advised that businesses needed to have a level of involvement to help schools. He stated that this was the first meeting the RSC had held with the metropolitan authorities.

Lowell Williams advised that schools need interventions but from a few key people and agreed that they needed business involvement.

Cllr. Brian Edwards advised that in South Staffordshire some of the schools were in academy partnerships with Dudley schools.

Agreed: -

- 1) BCLEP notes the minutes of the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) meeting;
- 2) BCLEP to work with RSC and LA's to help understand and help to coordinate a bid to the Schools Improvement Fund to the value of £500K to £1m.
- 3) BCLEP to support the RSC with locations and volumes of future housing and industry sector information and relevant Labour Market Information
- 4) BCLEP to continue employer engagement in schools through their Careers & Enterprise Adviser Network (EAN) - BCLEP notes the latest progress of the establishment of the EAN.

5/18 **Employment & Skills – Careers and Enterprise – Black Country Strategy**

The meeting was advised that HER Majesties Government had launched National Careers Strategy underpinning and enhancing the importance of the “Gatsby Benchmarks” and the role of the Careers & Enterprise Adviser Network.

The BC LEP Employment and Skills Board had received the Black Country Ambitions - a set of Ambitions and targets for Employer Engagement with Careers advice in Black Country schools and would be making recommendations on them in due course.

Agreed

- 1) That the Board notes the targets and direction of the National Careers Strategy for young people
- 2) That the Board considers the Black Country ambitions and receives a report to the next meeting.

6/18 **Innovation Alliance for the West Midlands**

The meeting was advised that the WMCA SEP Board had recommended that the WMCA Board establish a formal Innovation Board and sought comments on the proposal.

The WMCA Innovation Board would report to the WMCA SEP Board, which reports through to the WMCA Board, reflecting the importance of innovation in the WMCA Strategic Economic Plan.

Its membership would be drawn from six university representatives, six LEP representatives (two per LEP), three senior business representatives and an independent chair.

Agreed

That the Board identify two business leads to represent the BC LEP on the WMCA Innovation Board.

7/18

West Midlands Combined Authority Update (WMCA)

The meeting was advised of the decisions taken at the WMCA Board meeting held on 8th December 2017 and 12th January 2018.

Cllr. Roger Lawrence advised that the Mayor's office had sought a precept to be added to each Constituent local authorities Council Tax Bill and advised that this had been rejected by the WMCA Board, as the Mayor should approach the Government for a greater allocation.

It was noted that the West Midlands Growth Company Business Plan was approved at 8th December 2017 WMCA Board meeting and Keith Ireland provided an update on the WM Growth Company.

Agreed that the LEP Board note WMCA decisions from 8th December 2017 and 12th January 2018.

8/17

Local Industrial Strategy

The Board were advised that the BC Local Industrial Strategy was being undertaken at the WMCA level through the WMCA SEP Board. There would be a need to consider how the BC could undertake interventions to complement the emerging strategy and advised that further developments would be reported through to the Board.

It was commented that for the BC there should be a focus on the manufacturing strength to include energy.

On a question on upskilling the workforce, it was noted that Colin Parker was undertaking this work stream through the Skills Factory with the aim of supporting a higher wage economy. It was noted that this was integral to the success of the Industrial Strategy.

Agreed: -

- 1) that the LEP note the progress on the Local Industrial Strategy; and
- 2) that the LEP receive regular updates on the Local Industrial Strategy and the evolving Strategy with the WMCA and neighbouring LEPs.

9/18 **Local Growth Fund Programme Dashboards**

Rachel Goodwin provided updates on the respective LGF Dashboards. It was noted that work had been undertaken where there had been limited or minimal progress on the delivery of a number of projects with predicted shortfall of approximately £6m on the current years spend, to mitigate that shortfall.

Option 1 was the deployment of contractual commitments from 31st March 2018 through to 30 June 2018, which would account for approximately £2m of the predicted shortfall.

Option 2 was to change transfer of the expenditure profiles of two Wolverhampton Schemes - City North Gateway Phase 1 and Wolverhampton Interchange. This would account for approximately £4m, if the Board agreed to the reports being submitted.

Stuart Everton provided an update on the transport dashboards.

Agreed that the Board note the updates in respect of the three dashboards.

10/18 **A34 Corridor Transport Development Funding (SEPPL13)**

The LEP Board gave consideration to the bid received for the A34 Corridor Transport Development Funding (SEPPL13).

Agreed: -

That the LEP Board: -

- 1) Approve the funding request for the A34 Corridor Transport Development Funding. Grant funding is to be awarded to the value of £70,000 with delivery to commence in the 18/19 financial year; and
- 2) Note that the project would be underwritten by Walsall Council.

11/18 **Accessing Growth – Springfield Phase 2 (SEPPL44) – Change Request**

The LEP Board gave consideration to the bid received for additional funding for the Accessing Growth – Springfield Phase 2 (SEPPL44) – Change Request.

Agreed: -

That the LEP Board approve the Change Request for the Accessing Growth – Springfield Phase 2 project from within the Growth Deal programme with grant funding of £550,000 to be transferred from 2017/18 to 2018/19.

12/18 **Accessing Growth: Walsall Economic Growth and Infrastructure Package (SEPPL44)**

The LEP Board gave consideration to the bid received Accessing Growth: Walsall Economic Growth and Infrastructure Package (SEPPL44)

Agreed: -

That the LEP Board approve the funding request for the Accessing Growth: Walsall Economic Growth and Infrastructure Package project from within the Growth Deal Programme, with grant funding to be awarded to the value of £918,000 and delivery to commence in the 2018/19 financial year.

13/18 **Accessing Growth: Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension Development Funding (SEPPL44) – Additional Funding Request**

The LEP Board gave consideration to the bid received Accessing Growth: Accessing Growth: Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension Development Funding (SEPPL44) – Additional Funding Request.

Agreed: -

That the LEP Board: -

- 1) Approve the Additional Funding request for the Accessing Growth: Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension Development Funding from within the Growth Deal programme. Additional grant funding is to be awarded to the value of £230,000 - with £130,000 in 2017/18 and £100,000 in 2018/19.
- 2) Note that this project will be underwritten by Dudley Council.

14/18 **Birchley Island Transport Development Funding (SEPPL39)**

The LEP Board gave consideration to the bid received Birchley Island Transport Development Funding (SEPPL39)

Agreed: -

That the LEP Board: -

- 1) Approve the funding request for the Birchley Island Transport Development Funding, with grant funding to be awarded to the value of £150,000 and delivery to commence in the 2018/19 financial year; and
- 2) Note that the project would be underwritten by Sandwell Council.

15/18 **Black Country Train Stations Development Funding (SEPPL13)**

The LEP Board gave consideration to the bid received Black Country Train Stations Development Funding (SEPPL13).

Agreed: -

That the LEP Board: -

- 1) Approve the funding request for Black Country Train Stations Development Funding, with grant funding to be awarded to the value of £75,000 and delivery to commence in the 2018/19 financial year; and
- 2) Note that £37,500 was to be underwritten by Dudley Council and note that £37,500 was to be underwritten by Walsall Council.

16/18 **City North Gateway Phase 1 (SEPPL84) – Amend Existing Grant Agreement**

The LEP Board gave consideration to the bid received City North Gateway Phase 1 (SEPPL84) – Amend Existing Grant Agreement.

Agreed: -

That the LEP Board: -

- 1) Approve a change in approach from project to programme management by the City of Wolverhampton Council and the BC LEP in relation to the City of Wolverhampton Council's Growth Deal Projects; Wolverhampton Interchange project and City North Gateway Phase 1 (M54 Junction 2 to Vine Island).

- 2) Approve for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to amend the existing Grant Agreement with City of Wolverhampton Council for the City North Gateway Phase 1 (M54 Junction 2 to Vine Island) project to reflect an amended Grant Award of £2,368,000 in 17/18. This is a reduction in the overall funding award of £4,003,000.
- 3) Note that the reduction in the overall funding award for City North Gateway Phase 1 will result in a transfer of funding to the Wolverhampton Interchange project in the current financial year. This is a provision to ensure achievement of year-end spend on the 17/18 Growth Deal programme
- 4) Note that the current grant intervention rate for the City North Gateway phase 1 project is 88%. A reduction in funding award of £4,003,000 will result in a revised grant intervention rate of 33%.

17/18 **Wolverhampton Interchange (SEPPL41) – Amend Existing Grant Agreement**

The LEP Board gave consideration to the bid received Wolverhampton Interchange (SEPPL41) – Amend Existing Grant Agreement.

Agreed: -

That the LEP Board

- 1) Approve a change in approach from project to programme management by the City of Wolverhampton Council and the BC LEP in relation to the City of Wolverhampton Council's Growth Deal Projects; Wolverhampton Interchange project and City North Gateway Phase 1 (M54 Junction 2 to Vine Island);
- 2) Approve an Additional Funding award for the Wolverhampton Interchange project from within the Growth Deal Programme. Additional grant funding is to be awarded up to the value of £4,003,000 in the 17/18 financial year;
- 3) Note that the value of the additional funding award was subject to the year-end expenditure position of the City North Gateway phase 1 project, is a provision to ensure achievement of year-end spend on the 17/18 Growth Deal programme.
- 4) Note that the original grant intervention rate for the Wolverhampton Interchange project was 27%. Following an increase to overall project costs, the current grant intervention rate for Wolverhampton Interchange project is 16%. If additional

funding of £4,003,000 is awarded, the revised grant intervention rate will be 21%.

18/18 **I54 Western Extension Transport Development Funding (SEPPL12)**

The LEP Board gave consideration to the bid received I54 Western Extension Transport Development Funding (SEPPL12).

Agreed: -

That the LEP Board: -

- 1) Approve the funding request for the i54 Western Extension Transport Development Funding, with grant funding to be awarded to the value of £75,000 and delivery to commence in the 2018/19 financial year; and
- 2) Note that the project would be underwritten by City of Wolverhampton Council.

19/18 **Securing Sandwell's Engineering Skills (SEPP29)**

The LEP Board gave consideration to the bid received Securing Sandwell's Engineering Skills (SEPP29).

Agreed: -

That the LEP Board: -

- 1) Note the withdrawal of the Securing Sandwell's Engineering Skills project from the Growth Deal programme; and
- 2) Note that removal of this scheme would create capacity of £542,230 for future Growth Deal scheme bids.

20/18 **Sustainable Transport Scheme Development Funding (SEPPL74)**

The LEP Board gave consideration to the bid received Sustainable Transport Scheme Development Funding (SEPPL74).

Agreed: -

That the LEP Board: -

- 1) Approve the funding request for Sustainable Transport Scheme Development Funding, with grant funding to be awarded to the value of £40,000 and delivery to commence in the 2018/19 financial year.
- 2) Note that the project would be underwritten by TfWM.

21/18 **Minutes of the Funding Sub-Group – 10th January 2018**

The Minutes of the Funding Sub-Group held on 10th January 2018 were submitted.

Simon Eastwood, Chairman of the Funding Sub-Group, advised that in addition to the items reported for LEP Board approval his Group also received updates on Black Country Enterprise Zones.

Agreed that the LEP Board confirm and approve the minutes of the Funding Sub-Board held on 10th January 2018 and the decisions contained therein.

22/18 **Draft Minutes of the Place Making and Land Theme Advisory Board – 27th November 2017**

The Draft Minutes of the Place Making and Land Theme Advisory Board held on 27th November 2017 were submitted.

Agreed that the LEP Board note the Draft Minutes of the Place Making and Land Theme Advisory Board held on 27th November 2017.

23/18 **Black Country Joint Committee (BCJC) – 22nd November 2017**

The Board received the decisions of the BCJC on 22nd November 2017.

Agreed that the decisions be noted.

24/18 **PR and Communications Update**

The Board received the regular update on PR activity since the last meeting.

Agreed that the report be noted.

25/18 **Dates of Future Meeting**

The dates of future meetings were noted: - 19th February 2018, Walsall College.

26/18 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

Agreed that the public and press be excluded from the rest of the meeting to avoid the possible disclosure of exempt information under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

27/18 **Carillion**

The meeting received an update on the Black Country Carillion Taskforce activity.

(The meeting closed at 4.45pm)