

Minutes of a Meeting of the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership

19th February 2018 at 3.00pm

The Hub, Walsall College, Littleton Street West, Walsall, WS2 8ES

Present: Chris Handy in the Chair;
Paul Brown Ernst & Young;
Simon Eastwood Carillion Developments Ltd;
Cllr. David Hosell Sandwell MBC;
Ninder Johal Nachural Communications;
Cllr. Roger Lawrence City of Wolverhampton;
Cllr. Aftab Nawaz Walsall MBC;
Cllr. David Vickers Dudley MBC;
Tom Westley Westley Holdings; and
Lowell Williams Dudley College.

In Attendance: Helen Paterson Walsall MBC;
Sarah Middleton Black Country Consortium Ltd;
Simon Neilson Walsall MBC;
Robbie Chahal 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, Harley and Jeavons, Andy Cox, Prof. Geoff Layer and Stewart Towe.

28/18

Declarations of Interest

The Chair advised that for the alternate local authority Members their duty in respect of declaration in respect of the BC LEP Board extended beyond their Borough/City boundary and was Black Country region wide.

Tom Westley advised of his roles in relation to Dudley College and the Elite Centre for Manufacturing Services. Neither were on the Agenda.

Minute 46/18– Carillion

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.

29/18

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd January 2018 were circulated.

Sarah Middleton referenced Minute 3/18 – Policy Update in relation to Local Enterprise Partnership governance and transparency – Best Practise Guidance for LEPs and advised that the new Register of Interests form had been circulated to all Board Members and that the Government's requirement was that they were all on the LEP webpages by 28th February 2018. She advised that 5 had been received thus far and all Members were asked to complete and return them by Friday 23rd February 2018.

It was also noted that: -

- Code of Conduct – BC LEP was compliant as there was already a policy but some revision was required in respect of the internal use of LEP resources not being used improperly for political or personal purposes.
- Whistleblowing Policy – BC LEP was compliant in that Walsall MBC's policy was adhered to within the Assurance Framework. It was noted that the Government's best practise Whistleblowing Policy would be adopted.
- There was a revised Assurance Framework meeting scheduled for mid-March with the Accountable Beady and a formal report would be submitted to 16th April 2018 meeting.

Agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd January 2018, be received and confirmed as a correct record.

30/18

Policy Update

The following updates were submitted: -

- **West Midlands LEP Chairs' Letter** – The meeting was advised that a letter had been sent to Jake Berry MP seeking a meeting

regarding the LEP review across the Combined Authority and Midlands Engine area. The meeting was scheduled for 20th March 2018.

- **Jake Berry MP Letter – 23rd January 2018**

The meeting was advised that the Chair – Stewart Towe – had received confirmation of LEP Core and capacity funding of £500,000 for next two financial years, £250,000 per year.

- **Chris Grayling MP– ABCA letter**

The meeting was advised that a letter had been sent to Chris Grayling MP from ABCA Leaders and the BC LEP Chair supporting the proposed Metro Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Extension and the Works Act Order submitted by the WMCA on 12th December 2017.

- **Andy Street, WMCA Mayor – ABCA Letter**

The meeting was advised that a letter from ABCA Leaders and the BC LEP Chair had been submitted, seeking £5,000,000 funding for developing key Black Country highways schemes over the next 4 years.

- **LEP Network Letter to Meg Hillier MP – Chair of the Public Accounts Committee**

The meeting was advised that a letter had been sent to the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee, signed by all LEP Chairs, highlighted the commitment of all LEPs to transparency and governance with examples of good practice, to include the introduction of training and development reviews by the Black Country LEP for all Board Members.

- **Annual Stakeholder Conference – 21st March 2018 at 8.00am – 10.30am – West Bromwich Albion Football Ground**

The meeting was advised that this year's event would be BC LEP led with presentations on the work being undertaken on an Energy solution for the Black Country, the Black Country Garden City Initiative and the Black Country Growth Hub. It was noted, that as with previous years there would be no BC LEP Board meeting in March 2018.

- **Carillion**

The meeting noted that the update on the Carillion Taskforce would be held in private session to enable full reporting of the activity being undertaken.

Agreed that the LEP Board note the Policy Update.

31/18

Careers and Enterprise – Black Country Strategy

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

Black Country Ambitions is a strategy and vision for Careers Advice and employer involvement in schools that has been developed collaboratively by BCCDAP. BCCDAP is requesting LEP endorsement of the Black Country Ambitions as part of the LEP’s ‘people’ strategy.

The Black Country Ambitions key objectives and targets for Careers and Employer engagement in schools and academies was: -

- 100 hours experience of the world of work
- Personalised Digital Portfolio
- Relevant access to labour market information
- Extra support for vulnerable groups
- Equality of access
- Clear Policy commitment
- Strong governance and management
- Trained professionals
- Careers partnerships

Helen Paterson welcomed the report and summary but queried what was the definition of a “quality experience”. It was noted that the definition would be shared with the Board.

Agreed: -

- 1) that BCLEP notes the targets and direction of the National Careers Strategy for Young People; and
- 2) that BCLEP endorse the Black Country Ambitions, subject to final comments from the Employment & Skills Board.

3) That the Government definition of a “quality experience” be shared with the Board.

32/18 **West Midlands Combined Authority Update (WMCA)**

The meeting was advised of the decisions taken at the WMCA Board meeting held on 9th February 2018.

Cllr. Roger Lawrence advised that there had been interesting proposals on the Devo Deal 2, especially on future transport schemes.

Agreed that the LEP Board note WMCA decisions from 9th February 2018.

33/17 **Local Industrial Strategy**

The Board were advised of the work undertaken on the Local Industrial Strategy.

Agreed that the LEP note the progress on the Local Industrial Strategy.

34/18 **Local Growth Fund (LGF) Programme Dashboards**

Paul Mellon provided updates on the respective LGF Dashboards.

On a question where apprenticeships appeared in relation to funded projects, Sarah Middleton advised that the Employment & Skills (People) Theme Advisory Board received a Skills Dashboard which detailed the number of Apprenticeships across the Black Country.

Paul Mellon advised that a number of applications had been received for Land and Property Investment Fund (LPIF) and highlighted that the approved Music Institute Scheme had now secured the requisite private sector element of finance, required by the original Black Country Joint Committee approval.

Sarah Middleton advised that the LPIF pipeline was £150m but that the current allocated sum was £53m, with a further £97m allocated subject to performance. It was agreed to look at which existing projects could qualify for LPIF.

Agreed that the Board note the updates in respect of the four dashboards and the LPIF provided.

35/18 **M6 J10 Revised cost and additional capital funding**

Simon Eastwood provided a summary of the public report and advised that the decision would be fully informed by the private report.

Agreed: -

- 1) That the Board note the public version of report; and
- 2) That the LEP Board approve the funding request for the M6 J10 (Major Scheme) project from transport allocations within the Growth Deal Programme.

36/18 **Draft Minutes of the Competitiveness Theme Advisory Board – 13th December 2017**

The Draft Minutes of the Competitiveness Theme Advisory Board held on 13th December 2017 were submitted.

Agreed that the LEP Board note Competitiveness Theme Advisory Board held on 13th December 2018.

37/18 **Draft Minutes of the Employment and Skills (People) Board Theme Advisory Board – 18th January 2018**

The Draft Minutes of the Employment and Skills (People) Board Theme Advisory Board – 18th January 2018 were submitted. The meeting was advised of the Programmes on a Page and progress of the WMCA Productivity and Skills Commission.

Colin Parker shared the analysis of construction skills courses across the Black Country and highlighted a large number of gaps in provision. Lowell Williams advised, that at present, there was little demand for training for off-site construction. It was agreed to circulate this information to Board Members.

Agreed that the LEP Board note the Draft Minutes of the Employment and Skills (People) Board Theme Advisory Board – 18th January 2018.

38/18 **Institutes of Technology**

Lowell Williams provided a presentation on the Black Country Colleges and The Marches bid for an IoT in the Black Country and highlighted a

lack of technician level 4/5 qualifications. He highlighted the timeframe for the application.

With reference to The Marches he advised that a two LEP bid would be stronger and that the University of Wolverhampton was also linked into the bid. He stated that if successful it was intended to have a LEP representative on the board.

Agreed

- 1) that the presentation on the Black Country Institute of Technology bid be noted; and
- 2) That the LEP Board agree in principle to a LEP Board Member. The meeting was advised that Mr [redacted] being on the Black Country IoT Board.

39/18 **Active Black Country: Towards and Active Black Country Strategic Framework 2017-2033**

The Active Black Country: Towards and Active Black Country Strategic Framework 2017-2033 were submitted.

Agreed that the Board note the emerging strategy.

40/18 **Black Country Joint Committee (BCJC) – 24th January 2018**

The Board received the decisions of the BCJC on 24th January 2018.

Agreed that the decisions be noted.

41/18 **LEP Core and Strategic Funding Report**

The Board received the LEP Core and Strategic Funding Report and noted that Government had advised that the core and strategic funding would be £250,000 per year for the next two years. The letter also confirmed that Growth Hub funding would remain at the same level for the next two years. On a question regarding Growth Hub funding it was agreed to circulate the figure to Members.

Core Funding and associated actual expenditure was £163,041, which represented a variance against the Period Budget of £189,000, of £25,959 to December 2017

The Strategic funding and the associated actual expenditure was £104,137, which represented a variance against the Period Budget of £138,144, of £34,007 to December 2017.

The SEP Proposition Fund, which was funding of £25,000 from each of the four local authorities towards and expenditure necessitated by the Strategic Economic Plan.

The Board were advised of the table below which detailed the expenditure aligned to that fund.

<u>SEP Proposition Fund</u>	<u>Funding £</u>	<u>Expenditure £</u>	<u>Balance £</u>
<u>Brownfield Feasibility Study (15/16)</u>	-	<u>16,776</u>	-
<u>Garden Suburbs Project (16/17)</u>	-	<u>20,880</u>	-
<u>Garden Suburbs Project (17/18)</u>	-	<u>18,878</u>	-
<u>Local Authorities 4 x £25k</u>	<u>100,000</u>	<u>56,533</u>	<u>43,467</u>

The LGF Programme Office Expenditure, which was LGF funding allocated to Programme Office Expenditure and the Board were advised of the table below which highlights the 2017/18 grant allocation of £362,000 and how it was being utilised.

<u>2017/18 Programme Office Budget</u>	<u>Budget £</u>	<u>Period Budget £</u>	<u>Actual £</u>	<u>Variance</u>
<u>Programme Director (Interim)</u>	<u>214,713</u>	<u>161,035</u>	<u>107,485</u>	<u>53,550</u>
<u>Capacity</u>	<u>140,287</u>	<u>105,215</u>	<u>107,080</u>	<u>-1,865</u>
<u>Staff Other Expenses</u>	<u>2,000</u>	<u>1,500</u>	<u>521</u>	<u>979</u>
<u>Printing Stationery IT etc</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>3,750</u>	<u>1,520</u>	<u>2,230</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>362,000</u>	<u>271,500</u>	<u>216,606</u>	<u>54,894</u>

Agreed: -

That the LEP Board: -

- 1) Approve the LEP funding and expenditure funding as at the 31st December 2017; and
- 2) Approve the Programme Office and SEP Proposition Funding expenditure at 31st December 2017.

42/18 PR and Communications Update

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

Agreed that the report be noted.

43/18 **Dates of Future Meeting**

The dates of future meetings were noted: -

21st March 2018 – Annual Stakeholders Event, West Bromwich Football Club, commencing at 8.00am.

16th April 2018 – LEP Board, Dudley College.

44/18 **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.

45/18 **M6 Local Growth Fund report – M6 J10 Revised cost and additional capital funding**

Private Minutes

46/18 **Carillion**

Private Minutes

(The meeting closed at 4.45pm)