

Minutes of a Meeting of the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership

**20th March 2017 at 3.00p.m. at NMC,
47 Birmingham Road, West Bromwich**

Present:

Stewart Towe	Chair;
Simon Eastwood	Carrillion plc;
Chris Handy	Accord Group;
Cllr. Lee Jeavons	Walsall MBC;
Ninder Johal	Nachural;
Cllr Roger Lawrence	City of Wolverhampton;
Cllr David Sparks	Dudley MBC; and
Tom Westley	Westley Holdings
Lowell Williams	Dudley College

In Attendance:

Sarah Middleton	Black Country Consortium Ltd;
Rachel Goodwin	Black Country Consortium Ltd;
Wayne Langford	Black Country Consortium Ltd;
Paul Mellon	Black Country Consortium Ltd;
Paul Mountford	Sandwell MBC;
Angie Took	Black Country Consortium Ltd;
Kim Rowlands	BEIS;
Hywel Ruddick	Black Country Consortium Ltd.

Apologies:

Paul Brown, Andy Cox, Prof Geoff Layer and Councillors Coughlan, Eling, Lowe and Moore.

18/17 **Declarations of Interest**

Ninder Johal and Tom Westley declared their respective interest in the Music Institute Bid – Minute 24/17.

19/17 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd January 2017 were circulated.

Agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd January 2017, be received and confirmed as a correct record.

20/17 **Policy Update**

The following updates were submitted: -

- a) DY5 Business and Innovation Enterprise Zone
- b) Midlands Engine and Midlands Connect Strategies
The meeting was advised that Midlands Engine had been allocated £4 million to develop their governance arrangements and operate their offices.
- c) HS2 Key Messages for the Black Country
- d) Industrial Strategy – Institutes of Technology
Lowell Williams provided an update on the work the Black Country Colleges were doing and advised that across the West Midlands the aim was to submit two strong bids for Institutes of Technology.
- e) Black Country LEP Annual Conference.
- f) LEP Annual Conference.
- g) Housing White Paper and Consultation.
The meeting was advised that the White paper had been received and the LEP would consult with relevant stakeholders in preparing a response.
- h) WMCA Board Land Remediation Fund.

The Chair added that: -

- Prof Geoff Layer would be attending an event that evening – Learning the Region Concept and would report back to the next meeting.
- Scale Up Task Force meeting – update to next meeting.
- DiT were pushing for export opportunities and the Chair had been appointed as a champion.

Agreed that the LEP Board note the Policy Update.

21/17 **West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Update**

Councillor Roger Lawrence advised that at the WMCA Board meeting some large projects had been approved, to include the Land Remediation Fund bid by the BC LEP.

Major transport schemes had been approved but still required final approval of the DoT.

He advised that the BC LEP was considered the strongest performing of the three West Midlands LEPs.

The Chair welcomed the update and highlighted the evolving world of the Midlands Engine (ME), WMCA and the LEP. He stated that it would be important for each level to know not only what they were going to do but also, importantly, what they were not going to do.

Agreed that the WMCA update be noted.

22/17

Industrial Strategy

Sarah Middleton advised that there were three approaches to respond to the Strategy green papers, through ME, WMCA and at LEP level. At LEP level she advised that energy supply and provision was key and that post-Brexit there would be a need for revenue/capital pots to long-term goals. She stated that the document contained what were thought to be the key messages and welcomed feedback.

It was noted that the issue of energy and reliability of supply needed to be tackled quickly.

With reference to Skills, Lowell Williams advised that the FE Colleges had a Skills and Productivity Group, who were co-responding with WMCA. He welcomed the opportunity for BC Colleges to provide a joint response with the LEP.

Reference was made to the Housing White Paper and the need for off-site manufacturing and the associated transport issues.

The issue of Public Sector Reform was highlighted.

Agreed: -

- 1) That the Board notes the report and the LEP's role in developing a coherent response in partnership with the Midlands Engine and the West Midlands Combined Authority;
- 2) The Board note the ambition to help government through a coherent, direct approach, and shows partnership working in order to generate a strong Black Country response; and

- 3) That the Industrial Strategy response be revised to incorporate the comments of the Board, detailed in the above preamble and note that the final response will be circulated to the Board for comment.

23/17

Strategic Economic Plan

a) Strategic Economic Plan – Latest Draft

Sarah Middleton outlined the latest draft of the SEP and asked that Board Members provide feedback.

Cllr. David Sparks referenced the visitor economy and cultural offering and suggested it would be strengthened if it look at attractions outside of the Black Country, to include the Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley and Worcestershire.

Agreed: -

- 1) That the Board notes the report and the LEP's role in developing a coherent response in partnership with the Midlands Engine and the West Midlands Combined Authority.
- 2) That the Board note the ambition to help government through a coherent, direct approach, and shows partnership working in order to generate a strong Black Country response.

b) Local Growth Fund Report

The Board received the regular dashboards on the progress of LGF

Agreed: -

That the LEP Board: -

- 1) Note the updated forecast on the spend of the 2016/17 LGF funding;
- 2) Note the additional funding secured of £53m Land Remediation Fund from the WMCA and the Growth Deal 3 allocation of £55.05m;
- 3) Note that the Music Institute Bid was approved under action between meetings to £7,159,551;
- 4) Note the forecast slippage in 2016/17;
- 5) Approve the Sandwell Engineering skills bid of £542,230 in 2017/18;
- 6) Approve the Willenhall, Walsall MBC, Severn Trent joint bid for £139,757 in 2017/18;

- 7) Not support the Countryside properties Doulton Road, Rowley Regis, Sandwell remediation grant support of £751,981;
- 8) Approve the change request from Chances Glass to transfer £660,000 to Sandwell MBC, who agreed to underwrite the grant awarded and commence delivery of the site works;
- 9) Approve the Access to Growth Scheme B4176 junction improvements for £90,000 in 2017/18;
- 10) Approve the Access to Growth Scheme A461 Salters Road for £1,380,000 in 2017/18;
- 11) Approve the Change Control Request in relation to the allocated funding of £80,000 development funding for the West Coast Main Line HS2 study now to be split between £40,000 awarded to and underwritten by Sandwell MBC and £40,000 awarded to and underwritten by Walsall MBC;
- 12) Approve the bringing forward of £200,000 of the LTB allocation for the M6 Junction requested by the project owners, Walsall MBC, from 2018/19 to 2017/18, to align with development timelines;
- 13) Approve, in relation to the Dudley Bus Station Project the change to the applicant and subsequent grantee from Dudley MBC to Transport of the West Midlands and a revised profile to the original grant of £200,000 in 2016/17, to now be £170,000 in 2016/17 and £30,000 in 2017/18;
- 14) Approve the revised Change Control process: -
 - i. That the delegated authority awarded to Simon Neilson as Chair of the Working Group on behalf of the Joint Committee will remain within 5-10% of total project value or up to £300,000 for mid-year changes
 - ii. That the delegated authority awarded to Simon Neilson as Chair of the Working Group on behalf of the Joint Committee will increase to 15% of total project value or up to £500,000 for year-end changes
 - iii. That changes less than 5% of total project value and less than £300,000 will be treated as reforecast and will not require formal approval until year end when the projected year-end claim value is confirmed
 - iv. That Simon Neilson must consult with Chief Executive BCC and the Sponsoring WG member for Delegates Authority decisions on changes
 - v. That Simon Neilson must consult with BCJC Chair, Chief Executive BCC, Section 151 Officer and the Sponsoring WG member. for Delegates Authority decisions for new projects

c) Local Growth Fund Programme Dashboards

Paul Mellon provided an update on the Dashboards.

Agreed that the note and receive the Local Programme Dashboards.

d) Minutes of the Funding Applications Sub-Board 8th February 2017

Simon Eastwood advised that because a decision had been required before this meeting on the recommendations of the Funding Sub-Board, these decisions were circulated for Board Member approval prior to this meeting.

Agreed: -

- 1) That the LEP Board approve and confirm the minutes of the Funding Sub-Board held on 8th February 2017; and
- 2) That the LEP Board note the recommendations contained therein received Board approval between meetings.

24/17 Actions Agreed Between Meetings

The meeting received a report on actions which had been required to be taken in between meetings in order for funding applications to be considered by the Black Country Joint Executive Committee; timescales to be met for the LEP Funding 2017/18; extending of the Black Country Strategic Housing Loan Fund to 31 March 2017; and submission of the revised Assurance Framework.

Agreed: -

That the LEP Board Note and confirm the action taken to: -

- 1) Approve the Funding Sub-Board recommendations of 8th February 2017;
- 2) Approve the Music Institute bid of £7,159,551;
- 3) Approve the £250,000 LEP Funding 2017/18;
- 4) Extend the deadline for applications to the Black Country Strategic Housing Loan Fund to 31 March 2017; and

5) Approve the Assurance Framework.

25/17 **Draft Minutes of the Competitiveness Theme Advisory Board**

The draft minutes of the Competitiveness Theme Advisory Board held on 1st February 2017 were submitted.

Agreed that the Board note the contents of the minutes of the Competitiveness Theme Advisory Board held on 1st February 2017.

26/17 **Draft Minutes of the Active Black Country Partnership Board**

The draft minutes of the Active Black Country Partnership Board held on 2nd February 2017 were submitted.

Agreed that the Board note the contents of the minutes of the Active Black Country Partnership Board held on 2nd February 2017.

27/17 **Black Country Joint Executive Committee Decisions**

The decisions of the meeting of the Black Country Joint Executive Committee were submitted.

Agreed that the decisions be noted.

28/17 **Black Country LEP Funding Report**

The Black Country LEP Funding report was submitted and, it was

Agreed: -

That the LEP Board: -

- 1) Approve the LEP funding and expenditure position as at 31st January 2017;
- 2) Approve the LEP core budget for the financial year 2017/18 and ratify the electronic approval by Board Members of the application;
- 3) Approve the use of brought forward core sums for 2017/18 capacity in excess of budget; and
- 4) Approve the budget for the 2017/18 LEP Strategic Funds.

29/17 **PR and Communications Update**

The Board received the regular update on PR activity since the last meeting and updates on work to improve response rates to e-communications from the LEP. It was noted that BC LEP Annual Conference had been trending at No. 4 on twitter on the day of the Conference.

Agreed that the report be noted.

29/17 **Dates of Next Meetings**

The dates of future meetings were noted, with the 24th April 2017 meeting being held on 24th April 2017 at 3.00 pm.

30/17 **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)**

To agree that the public be excluded from the private session during the consideration of Agenda items indicated: -

Black Country Consortium Ltd. – Business

- a) Audit Committee – Minutes of meeting held on 19th January 2017;
- b) Audit Committee – appointment

(The meeting closed at 4.10pm)