

Public Minutes of a Meeting of the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership

24th February 2020 at 3.00 pm
Walsall College, Littleton Street West, Walsall

Present:

Stewart Towe	Chair;
Chris Handy	Accord Group;
Cllr. Adrian Andrew	Walsall MBC;
Cllr. Ian Brookfield	City of Wolverhampton;
Paul Brown	EY;
Kevin Davis	The Vine Trust;
Rachel Eade	Red Limited;
Simon Eastwood	Eastwood Consulting;
Lindsey Flynn	Well Associates;
Chris Handy	Accord Group;
Ninder Johal	Nachural Communications;
Cllr. Ian Kettle	Dudley MBC;
Prof Geoff Layer	University of Wolverhampton;
Cllr. Danny Millard	Sandwell MBC
Jatinder Sharma	Walsall College;
Amanda Tomlinson	Black Country Housing Group;
Tom Westley	Westley Group; and
Deborah Williams	Active Black Country Chair.

In Attendance:

Neil Rami	WM Growth Company;
Roger Mendonca	WM Growth Company;
Sarah Middleton	Black Country Consortium Ltd;
Aaron Toussaint	BEIS;
Richard Lawrence	City of Wolverhampton;
Katherine Birch	Black Country Consortium Ltd;
Lara Cragg	Black Country Consortium Ltd;
Prof Delma Dwight	Black Country Consortium Ltd;
Jaspal Sohal	Black Country Consortium Ltd;
Mark Lavender	Walsall MBC;
Kelly Valente	Walsall MBC; and
Hywel Ruddick	Black Country Consortium Ltd.

Apologies: Councillors Mike Bird Yvonne Davies and Patrick Harley and Prof Jackie Dunne, Cherry Elliott, Ninder Johal and Prof Nazira Karodia.

Governance

20/20 **Declarations of Interest**

Minute No. 41/20 - Project Change Request: Woods Lane Phase 2

Simon Eastwood and Chris Handy declared their respective pecuniary interests, in the item, as Members of the Accord Group's Board of Directors and took no part in the consideration or voting thereon, vacating the room during the consideration thereon.

21/20 **Minutes**

Introducing the minutes, the Chair made the following announcements: -

Deaths

Unfortunately, there had been two recent deaths of elected Members who have worked with the LEP over the years.

Councillor Bob Lloyd, Sandwell MBC - Cabinet Member for Inclusive Growth and sat on the Place Making & Land Theme Advisory Board.

Councillor Peter Bilson, City of Wolverhampton, Deputy Leader and was an alternate member for the LEP Board and had worked with the LEP over a number of years.

He advised that the LEP was sending out formal condolences.

Leaving

Prof Jackie Dunne would have been attending her last BC LEP Board meeting today but was representing the LEP at the Regional Skills Panel. She has a final BC Employment & Skills Theme Advisory Board (ESB) tomorrow morning, as will be taking up the Vice Chancellor role at Newman University.

He advised that Jackie initially sat on the ESB and then took on the Chair's role in 2017. The role was incorporated into the LEP Board as a full member in January 2018.

During her tenure, the ESB had undertaken a number of in-depth Task & Finish exercises resulting in actions linked to the Health & Care Sector to include the creation of a hub at the University and work was ongoing on the Apprenticeship and Schools reviews.

Her replacement was nominated by the University - Prof Nazira Karodia and she will be attending her first meeting of the ESB Board tomorrow and then her first Board meeting in March.

The Chair also advised that this was his last meeting, as he would be standing down on 29th February 2020, arrangements having been agreed with all Board Members for the appointment of a replacement Chair. He thanked public sector, private sector and LEP employees for their support over the years, highlighted the transition of the economic environment from the formation of the LEP in 2012 to date through partnership and wider working with the region to include the WMCA and Midlands Engine. He acknowledged that there were challenges ahead and wished the partnership well going forward.

Agreed

- 1) that the announcements and action advised be noted and undertaken; and
- 2) that the minutes of the meeting held on 20th January 2020 be received and confirmed as a correct record.

Strategy

22/20

West Midland Growth Company – Presentation and Question & Answer Session

Neil Rami and Roger Mendonca were in attendance to provide an overview of the work Growth Company and in particular activity across the Black Country, to include: -

- WMCA SLA
- Universities SLA
- CWC SLA
- MIPIM
- Commercial Partners
- National Centre for Sustainable Construction

- Discover England Fund: England's Waterways
- Cultural Destinations
- FDIAAE
- West Midlands Trains
- DIT Key Account Management

They also referenced the Trade, Tourism and Investment (TTI) bid to Government and the market lead approach to India.

The Chair welcomed the presentation and stated that it was good to see the specifics emerging to support and enhance the boroughs, from the creation of the WM Growth Company and stated that it was an organisation the region should take advantage of going forward.

Jatinder Sharma welcomed the opportunities that other funding streams would also bring to include the Towns Fund, with 7 in the LEP region, Heritage Towns Fund and the Future High Street's Funds. Councillor Adrian Andrews advised that there was potentially up to £25m for Bloxwich, Walsall.

With questions on how the WM Growth Company would link in, the meeting was advised that there were huge opportunities if delivered properly and some initial schemes were highlighted. In regard to sector working it was noted that there were bigger opportunities for the Black Country, given the diversity of sectors in the region.

Councillor Danny Millard stated that he would wish to see the maximum opportunity for local firms already in existence and asked how this could be achieved. Neil Rami advised for the HS2 development there was a requirement to use local suppliers.

Deborah Williams referenced the development of skills being key for technology, the visitor economy, Foreign Direct Investment etc and Roger Mendonca advised that every time skills was the key factor.

Neil Rami advised that work was being undertaken to package what offer the WM already and the data analysis indicated that a greater skill set was an ambition for the area.

Councillor Ian Kettle advised that part of the package should include quality housing and advised that there was a need for a broad spectrum of housing provision. Neil Rami added that large inward investment was

attracted by education, housing and what opportunities were available in areas after employment.

The Chair thanked the Chief Executive and Chief Operating officer for attending. Neil Rami thanked the Chair and thanked him for his support in helping to establish the Wm Growth Company.

Agreed that the LEP Board: -

- 1) Welcomed the presentation and thanked Neil Rami, Chief Executive, and Roger Mendonca, Chief Operations Director, for their attendance; and
- 2) Note the thanks of the West Midlands Growth Company officers to Stewart Towe for the support provided by himself, as Chair of the LEP, to the establishment of the Growth Company.

23/20

Policy Update

Sarah Middleton provided the Policy Update – highlighting key points on the update: -

- Black Country Members of Parliament – meetings with Chair – meetings had been held with James Morris MP and Mike Wood MP. All the elected or re-elected MPs had been invited to meet with the LEP.
 - LEP Progress on Recruitment of Chair – there was a report later in the meeting.
 - Annual Performance Review – the meeting was advised that the issue for the initial Delivery, given at the mid-year review, was in relation to unsigned contracts, outstanding contracts had been signed and the indications were from BEIS was that this rating would be increased upwards.
 - Peer Review – 2nd March 2020 – Tom Westley and Sarah Middleton would be attending the Peer Review with Cheshire & Warrington LEP on 10th March 2020.
 - Government Announcements
 - Budget 2020
 - HS2
 - ESIF extension letter
 - Coronavirus and West Midland business – WMCA briefing.
- In addition to the briefing the meeting was advised of the work through the Growth Hubs to provide business support both for businesses affected by the Coronavirus outbreak and Brexit.

EIU Statistics

- Actions Report from January 2020

The meeting was provided with an update from the requests submitted at the January meeting in relation to include the Sports dashboard detailing the sports sector and Apprenticeship Starts and achievements.

It was noted that whilst apprenticeship retention rates were currently not available, the update provided information on Apprenticeship Achievements and WMCA Black Country Transfer Levy. In regard to the levy, £3.8m had been allocated with £688,000 within the Black Country.

- **Regional Labour Productivity**

Delma Dwight highlighted the key points: -

- Output per hour worked for all industries was £31.4 for the West Midlands in 2018, an increase of 3.6% (+£1.08) since 2017. While for the UK output per hour was £35.3 with a slower growth rate of 2.5%.
- The West Midlands output per hour was 88.9% of the UK average.
- Since 2017, the West Midlands had the highest percentage increase in arts, entertainment and recreation at 18.5% (+£4.72) compared to a UK increase of 0.1%.
- However, notably the real estate activities industry had the highest output per hour at £236 for the West Midlands, compared to 2017 this increased by 2.6% (+£5.88). The next highest industry was finance and insurance at an output per hour of £56.80.
- Output per job for all industries was £50,219 for the West Midlands in 2018, an increase of 2.5% (+£1,247) since 2017. While for the UK output per hour was £56,891 with a slower growth rate of 2.2%.
- The West Midlands output per job was 88.3% of the UK average.
- Since 2017, the West Midlands had the highest increase was in the arts, entertainment and recreation industry at 13.8% (+£4,865) compared to a UK decrease of -1.0%.

- Real estate activities were the highest industry for output per job at £337,436 in the West Midlands in 2018, with the next highest at £98,167 for finance and insurance.

Councillor Ian Kettle referenced the Care Sector and asked how it was shown in the figures and how it affected the figures. Delma Dwight and Professor Geoff Layer advised that the description of the methodology behind productivity would be shared with the Board.

Professor Geoff Layer queried the figures in relation to jobs created, as opposed to the filling of vacancies and posed the question if a job vacancy was filled did it count as a job created. He asked that the figures be broken down into jobs created and vacancies filled.

Councillor Danny Millard referenced companies' achievements in the statistics and how they were measured. He also asked where they were located. Delma Dwight advised that the achievement measure was if the apprentice was retained or obtained a job within the sector, they trained in. She highlighted that the figures for 2018/19 were low.

Jatinder Sharma highlighted the problems with the levy. He stated that the take up had been poor and that the qualifications were getting tougher, however as a region the averages were above the sector average. He highlighted that these two factors had represented big changes.

Councillor Danny Millard commented that the level 2 qualification had been omitted from the apprenticeship scheme entirely.

- **Black Country School Performance – Key Stage 4**

Delma Dwight highlighted the key points in relation to the Black Country Summary KS4 School Performance: -

- Average Attainment 8 score per pupil is 0.7 percentage points higher than 2018 but still 2.9 percentage points below the national average (46.7).
- The average Progress 8 score has increased from -0.18 to -0.12.

- The percentage of pupils at the end of Key Stage 4 who achieved grade 5 or above in English and mathematics remained at 35%, 8 percentage points below the national average.
- Ebacc (English Baccalaureate) entry rate has increased by 3 percentage points to 33%, but is 7 percentage points below the national average.
- The Ebacc average point score increased by 0.09 from 2018 to reach 3.66 in 2019.

Amanda Tomlinson referenced the improvement in some school's performance and queried if there were some links.

It was referenced that deep dive pilot be undertaken to understand the reasons behind the improvements in some BC schools.

Agreed that the LEP Board receive and note the policy updates, to include Board comments, on: -

- Black Country Members of Parliament – meetings with Chair
- LEP Progress on Recruitment of Chair
- Annual Performance Review
- Peer Review – 2nd March 2020
- Government Announcements
 - Budget 2020
 - HS2
 - ESIF extension letter
- Coronavirus and West Midland business – WMCA briefing

EIU Statistics

- Actions Report from January 2020
- Regional Labour Productivity
- Black Country School Performance – Key Stage 4

24/20

Black Country Growth Hub: Brexit Preparation Report

The LEP Board noted the data presented and noted that the data gathering work continues to inform Growth Hub activity.

In addition, whilst the Trade Deal would be not signed until the end of December – work was being done with WTO Rules of Origin and this was a key activity for BEIS.

The Department for International Trade had also launched two new digital tools to give businesses the information they need to trade goods in and out of the UK market: -

- a) The “Trade with the UK” tool provided businesses exporting goods into the UK with detailed and up to date information such as tariffs, taxes and rule; and
- b) The “Check How to Export Goods” tool provides exporters of goods from the UK with information such as duties and customs procedures for over 160 countries.

Chris Handy asked if work had been taken on immigration and the new points measurements and was advised that currently BEIS was focussing on “country of origin”.

Paul Brown referenced the questionnaire and asked if companies had been approached to ask why they did not trade with the EU or others and Rachel Eade added if they did not then the follow up question should be why not. Delma Dwight advised that work was ongoing to follow up the feedback received from the questionnaire.

In relation to the Brexit Advisers, Rachel Eade queried what had been the demands on them. Jaspal Sohal advised that pre-election there had not been many calls but since the election the Brexit enquiries had increased.

Agreed

- 1) that the LEP Board note and receive the update; and
- 2) that the actions identified in following the feedback from the Brexit questionnaire be undertaken and reported back to a future meeting.

25/20

WMCA #2041 – Black Country Response

The #2041 paper launched by the WMCA in January 2020 set out the need for change: if the WMCA continued to emit carbon at the current rate, in 6 years’ time the WMCA would have used up its allocated carbon budget for the period 2017-2050 and the likelihood of keeping temperature increases within a 1.5oC rise would diminish completely, according to the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change.

The report set out a wide range of actions which would need to be carried out on a multi-level geography, involving many stakeholders in the West Midlands. It was noted that urgent action was required, and so there was

need to move quickly, led by robust intelligence, on the best ways forward.

The proposed Black Country response to the WMCA consultation #2041 on climate change was presented with the main responses contained in the Table, which set out five principles and 74 actions to include the measurement of the tree canopy , the Black Country Geo-Park, Managing short trips and utilising the canal network, low carbon transport and the Innovate UK funding regarding a de-carbonisation pilot for the Black Country.

LEP Board Members: -

- discussed the developing implementation process of #WM2041 (appendix 1 in the report) and its potential impacts on the Black Country.
- discussed the next steps for the Black Country LEP to lead on and agree timescales at which actions would take place.
- reviewed the Sector Action Plans that the BC LEP led on for the West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) through a 'zero carbon' lens to ensure the sector was resilient in a changing climate, as well as a changing economy.
- discussed the potential of including carbon accounting in a project lifecycle to understand its impact on carbon emissions on LEP funded projects.

26/20

LEP Core and Strategic Funding Report

The Board were advised that: -

LEP core funding awarded to date by the Government totaled £1,878,000 (see appendix table A in the report), which supported activities such as providing capacity for LEPs to drive forward their growth priorities, to allow them to do long term resource planning and to strengthen support and autonomy of the business led boards.

The Government awarded each LEP £1,750,000 (see appendix table B in the report) to cover the costs associated with the development of their key strategic documents and funding plans, including the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and the EU Strategic Investment Framework (EUSIF) known as the Heseltine Fund (Strategic Fund).

Core Funding

Core funding for 2019-20 consisted of the £250,000 grant and, in addition, £112,640 of unallocated funding carried forward from previous years.

For the six-month period to 31st December 2019 the current year grant expenditure showed an underspend of £3,727 against budget, and an underspend of £23,832 on the unallocated funding from previous years. These have arisen due to vacant capacity posts and underspends on other budget lines (see appendix table C in the report).

Strategic Funding

Core funding for 2019-20 consisted of the £250,000 grant and in addition, £94,609 of unallocated funding carried forward from previous years.

For the six-month period to 31st December 2019 the current year grant expenditure showed an underspend of £2,023 against budget and a nil overspend against unallocated funding from previous years. Variances are considered immaterial. (see appendix table D in the report).

LEP Review Implementation and LIS Development Funding

For the year of 2018-19 the MHCLG made available £200,000 to fund the implementation of the LEP Review and the Development of the BC Local Industrial Strategy. Expenditure was procured and committed by the end of the 2018-19 financial year and has continued into the current financial year.

For the period to 31st December 2019 expenditure against budget is considered satisfactory and it is anticipated that the grant funding will be defrayed by 31st March 2020. (see appendix table E in the report).

Agreed that the LEP Board approve the LEP funding and expenditure position as at 31st December 2019.

Delivery

27/20

Black Country Local Programme Dashboards

The new indexed suite of Dashboards was presented: -

- Growth Deal In Flight Current Financial Year
- Growth Deal Future Years
- Black Country Pipeline
- Land and Property Investment Fund
- Growing Places
- Enterprise Zones

It was noted that the priority pipeline was currently being considered and would be reported through to the March LEP Board.

Currently there were £17m worth of claims that had come through but the PMO and Accountable Body were confident they would meet the spend targets for the year.

Lara Cragg provided an update on some of the projects to include: -

- The School of Architecture and the Built Environment – which would be opening later in the year;
- Woods Lane was providing an additional 30 housing units; and
- Outputs, to include business assists would be monitored until 2025.

Deborah Williams referenced climate change and asked how the projects had been measured for impact. She was advised that at the time these projects were approved, climate change had not been a consideration. However, some of the larger projects would have had an Environmental Impact Assessment undertaken. It was noted that this would be a piece of work to reflect upon and going forward there would be a need to consider the climate change impact of future programmes.

Members advised that the Garden City and Energy work being undertaken could have the climate change lens.

With reference to the Land and Property Investment Fund it was noted that some projects had been moved around to ensure delivery of key projects. The reassurance exercise on outputs achieved being undertaken with the CA would be reported through the LEP Board over the next few meetings. Sarah Middleton added that the LEP had been advised that indirect outputs linked to a project could now be counted as outputs.

With reference to the Enterprise Zone work being undertaken by the Accountable Body, it was noted that this should ensure that all funds could be maximised in an integrated way across the 3 local authorities

with enterprise zones. Identified available funding would be able to be used by the 4 Black Country local authorities.

It was noted that the Growing Places Fund was being used to support projects from Growth Deal over programming.

Agreed that the new format be welcomed and the update be noted.

28/20

Black Country Strategic Economic Plan – Land and Property Investment Fund Project Withdrawal Recommendation: Portersfield Phase 1 - Cavendish House (SEPPL55)

Simon Eastwood presented the report and highlighted that the request was that the LEP Board approves the withdrawal of the Portersfield Phase 1 - Cavendish House project, from within the Land and Property Investment Fund Programme (LPIF).

Agreed that the LEP Board:

- 1) approve the removal of the Portersfield Phase 1 - Cavendish House project, from within Land and Property Investment Fund programme; and
- 2) noted the removal of the scheme created capacity of £664,725 within the Land and Property Investment Fund. No financial claims had been made from Avenbury (Dudley) Ltd to the accountable body against this project.

29/20

Draft Minutes of the Place Making & Land Theme Advisory Board – 11th February 2020

The draft minutes of the Place Making and Land Theme Advisory Board held on 11th February 2020 were submitted.

Agreed that the LEP Board receive and note the minutes of the Place Making and Land Theme Advisory Board held on 11th February 2020.

30/20

Black Country Executive Joint Committee – Decisions 4th December 2019 and 12th February 2020

The decisions of the Black Country Executive Joint Committee held on 4th December 2019 and 12th February 2020 were submitted for information.

Agreed that the decisions be noted.

31/20 **PR and Communications**

The LEP Board received the update on PR and Communications in January noting that the Growth Hub Mobile Business Surgeries had been a success and would continue to move around the Black Country; and that the Black Country Primary School Games, the largest such event in the Country was the focus around the ABC Partnership at present.

Agreed that the update be received and noted.

32/20 **Date of Next meeting**

Agreed that the date of the next meeting be held on 23rd March 2020 at a Wolverhampton venue.

33/20 **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.

Paragraph 3 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

34/20 **Private Minutes of the LEP Board held on 20th January 2020**

The private minutes of the LEP Board held on 20th January 2020 were submitted.

Agreed that the private minutes of the LEP Board held on 20th January 2020 be received and confirmed as a correct record.

35/20 **Black Country LEP Chair – Update**

Chris Handy, as Deputy Chair, expressed the Board's thanks to Stewart Towe for his strong leadership of the Board, his political awareness in setting the tone of the partnership between the public and private sectors and the collaboration he had had with the local authority leaders. Delivery had been key and the LEP had "got the job done". Going forward the Pipeline work would stand the LEP in good stead. As a major

industrialist, Stewart Towe had given of his time freely and all had gained from his contribution especially the Black Country as a region. Achievements included the Enterprise Zones, with their business rates to be used to fund future programmes, over £1 billion on funding had been secured for the region, Broadband had been rolled out and the Growth Hubs had been established. On the ground there was also a high level of employment.

Cllr. Adrian Andrew echoed these sentiments and stated that in bringing the business community and the local authorities together, had enabled the region to “punch above its weight” and he thanked Stewart Towe for his contribution to the region and stated that he would be missed.

Cllr. Ian Brookfield advised that from his perspective Stewart had provided clear leadership, helped him to understand the work being undertaken across the Black Country and expressed his view that he was sorry Stewart was stepping down.

The Chair thanked Members for their comments. In regard to the wider report he stated that there had been a number of discussions regarding a successor and he felt that the report captured the agreed view across the public and private sectors, in that an existing, experienced Board Member would be offered the role to Chair the LEP for approximately a year, until his Board membership tenure ceased, and during the period of office a Deputy Chair would be appointed with a view to them being mentored to take on the role of Chair of the Board in 2022.

Following these comments, it was

Agreed that the LEP Board:

- a) approved the appointment of Tom Westley DL, as Chair of the Black Country LEP Board, commencing on 1st March 2020.
- b) noted that the Chair of the Black Country LEP Board is also the Chair of Black Country Consortium Limited.
- c) noted that the Audit Committee will need to have a new Chair from amongst the private sector Board members, commencing 1st March 2020.
- d) noted that the BC LEP Board will seek to appoint a new Deputy Chair as part of its ongoing recruitment campaign.

(NB During the consideration of this item Tom Westley had left the meeting room and took no part in the consideration or voting thereon)

36/20 **Black Country Local Industrial Strategy Implementation**

The meeting was advised that this item was in the private session as the “asks” for Government and the CA were still “work in progress”. It was noted that in some part they built on the comments from the presentation by the WM Growth Company.

Agreed that the LEP Board:

- a) noted and supported the “Asks” submitted to Government for pre-budget consideration; and
- b) request that the WMCA to provide equitable resources to each LEP area in the CA, to deliver their respective lead elements of the WMCA Local Industrial Strategy.

37/20 **Private Minutes of the Funding Sub-Group meeting held on 18th February 2020**

The draft private minutes of the Funding Sub-Group meeting held on 18th February 2020 were submitted.

Agreed that the LEP Board received and noted the minutes of the Funding Sub-Group meeting held on 18th February 2020

38/20 **Project Change Request: i54 Western Extension (SEPPL95)**

Simon Eastwood presented the report and advised that the request was that the LEP Board approves of the proposed funding split, between more than one LEP programme, for the i54 Western Extension project.

Agreed that the LEP Board:

- 1) approved the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to a Grant Agreement with Wolverhampton City Council to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF), funded elements of the i54 Western Extension project – with delivery to commence in the 2020/21 financial year.
- 2) noted that all project outputs would be claimed and split across more than one LEP funding programme, with the proportion of the output split still to be confirmed.

- 3) Confirmed that the grant amount to be awarded from the Local Growth Deal was a sum detailed in the private report; and
- 4) Noted that the appropriate Grant Agreements were in place and would be utilised by the Accountable Body (Walsall Council), and include all conditions passed onto the LEP by Government, together with all terms, conditions, performance measures and sanctions as required by the approvals/conditions received from Government or approved by the LEP Board or the Joint Committee

39/20

Project Approval Recommendation: YMCA Cleveland Road (SEPPL142)

Simon Eastwood presented the report and advised that the request was that the LEP Board approved the YMCA Cleveland Road project, within the Local Growth Deal Programme.

Agreed that the LEP Board: -

- 1) Approve the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to a Grant Agreement with the YMCA to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) funded elements of the YMCA Cleveland Road Project with delivery to commence in the 2020/21 financial year using the Growing Places Fund to support for any Local Growth Deal over-programming required;
- 2) Approve the funding sum detailed in the private report; and
- 3) Noted that the appropriate Grant Agreements were in place and would be utilised by the Accountable Body (Walsall Council), and include all conditions passed onto the LEP by Government, together with all terms, conditions, performance measures and sanctions as required by the approvals/conditions received from Government or approved by the LEP Board or the Joint Committee.

40/20

Project Change Request: Birchley Island Development Phase (SEPPL121)

Simon Eastwood presented the report and advised that the request was that the LEP Board approves the change request for the Birchley Island Development Phase project from within the Growth Deal Programme.

Agreed that the LEP Board: -

- 1) approve the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to amending the Grant Agreement with Sandwell Council to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) funded

- elements of the Birchley Island Development Phase Project with delivery to commence in the 2019/20 financial year;
- 2) noted that this change request related to a revised financial spend profile;
 - 3) Noted that the appropriate Grant Agreements were in place and would be utilised by the Accountable Body (Walsall Council), and include all conditions passed onto the LEP by Government, together with all terms, conditions, performance measures and sanctions as required by the approvals/conditions received from Government or approved by the LEP Board or the Joint Committee.

41/20

Project Change Request: Woods Lane Phase 2 (SEPPL103)

Simon Eastwood advised that the request was that the LEP Board approves the change request for the Woods Lane Phase 2 project from within the Growth Deal Programme.

Agreed that the LEP Board:

- 1) approve the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to amending the Grant Agreement with Vistry Partnerships Limited to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF), funded elements of the Woods Lane Phase 2 Project with delivery to commence in the 2019/20 financial year;
- 2) noted that the change request related to a change of company name and registered office address; and
- 3) noted that the appropriate Grant Agreements were in place and would be utilised by the Accountable Body (Walsall Council), and include all conditions passed onto the LEP by Government, together with all terms, conditions, performance measures and sanctions as required by the approvals/conditions received from Government or approved by the LEP Board or the Joint Committee.

(NB: Simon Eastwood and Chris Handy declared their respective pecuniary interests, in the item, as Members of the Accord Group's Board of Directors, took no part in the voting or consideration thereon and left the room for this item.)

42/20

Project Change Request: Hub to Home Transport Innovation Centre and Test Track Project: Very Light Rail and Autonomous Technologies – Test Track (SEP B5)

Simon Eastwood presented the report and advised that the request was that the LEP Board approves the change request for the Hub to Home

Transport Innovation Centre And Test Track Project: Very Light Rail and Autonomous Technologies – Test Track project from within the Growth Deal Programme.

He advised that the total cost to complete Test Track 1 detailed in the private report. Whilst funding had been approved at the Black Country Joint Committee in September 2019 subject to due diligence, with the view to approve the associated fees, once they were confirmed by DMBC. The detailed breakdown of the fees contained in the report, would make up the balance of the funding required for the Dudley Test track element of the scheme.

Agreed that the LEP Board: -

- 1) approve the change request, to include the associated funds for Test Track 1, for the Hub to Home Transport Innovation Centre and Test Track Project: Very Light Rail and Autonomous Technologies – Test Track project from within the Growth Deal Programme.
- 2) Noted that the associated costs were detailed in the private report; and
- 3) Noted that the appropriate Grant Agreements were in place and would be utilised by the Accountable Body (Walsall Council), and include all conditions passed onto the LEP by Government, together with all terms, conditions, performance measures and sanctions as required by the approvals/conditions received from Government or approved by the LEP Board or the Joint Committee.

(NB Councillor Ian Kettle raised the issue of a potential conflict as Rachel Eade, was a member of the University of Birmingham. Rachel Eade whilst not aware of a conflict agreed to leave the room and took no part in the consideration or voting thereon.)

43/20

Risk Register

The revised Risk Register, which still represented work in progress, was submitted. It was noted that Members could feed their comments into the PMO.

Agreed that the update be noted and comments submitted direct to the PMO.

(The meeting closed at 4.55pm)