

Business Leadership Group – Minutes

Tuesday 15 March 2016

Present

Nick Ames (NA) (Chair)	-	Supacat
Ben Rhodes (BR)	-	Business Forum
Carl Wyard (CW)	-	Torbay Development Agency
Simon Barker (SB)	-	Agusta Westland
Noel Stevens (NS)	-	Alder King
Amanda Ratsey (AR)	-	Plymouth City Council
Ben Neild (BN)	-	University of Exeter
Sue Wilkinson (SW)	-	FSB
Paul Taylor (PT)	-	HotSW LEP
George Cowcher (GC)	-	Chief Executive, Plymouth and Devon Chamber (representing all HotSW LEP Chambers)

Supporting Officers

Julia Blaschke (JB)	-	Plymouth City Council
Helena Davison (HD)	-	HotSW LEP Communications Manager

Presenters

Julia Stuckey (JS)	-	HotSW LEP Inward Investment Manager
Emma Buckman (EB)	-	HotSW LEP Interim Strategy Manager
Anna Peachey (AP)	-	Plymouth City Council

Apologies

Brendon Noble (BN)	-	University of St Mark and St John
Paul Hickson (PH)	-	Somerset County Council
Adrian Dawson (AD)	-	University of Plymouth
Heather Ancient (HA)	-	PwC
Martha Wilkinson (MW)	-	Devon Community Foundation
Steve Turner (DCC)	-	Devon County Council

	Agenda item	Lead
1	<p>Welcome, introductions and apologies</p> <p>NA introduced the meeting and gave apologies as listed above.</p>	
2	<p>Conflicts of Interest</p>	
3	<p>Minutes of last meeting and matters arising</p> <p><u>Minutes</u> – accepted.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising</u></p>	

	<p>ACTION – Provide a spatial mapping update to Business Leadership Group, following the Place meeting tomorrow.</p> <p>ACTION - Mapping and Simplification Study – share consultation papers with Business Leadership Group.</p> <p>ACTION - BLG meetings to either be at the beginning (9.30am or 10.00 start) or end (3pm start) of the day (ongoing).</p>	<p><i>Julia Blaschke</i></p> <p><i>Julia Blaschke</i></p>
4	<p>Growth Deal 3 – Paul Taylor</p> <p>PT gave an overview of Growth Deal progress so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News expected very soon; deadline for GD 3 submission expected to be end of June • Funding will be available from 2017 to 2020 – projects will need to spend within this time frame • Areas that have devolution deals will have more flexibility on how to spend money • It is assumed that the overall amount available in GD 3 is £3-4b; a good outcome for HotSW LEP would be to secure between £50-70m; bid will be for double that amount to demonstrate ambition • BLG has a strong pipeline of projects ready for funding; however, pipeline refresh will be necessary as projects have been on pipeline since last year • Greater emphasis on skills would be beneficial • The group discussed the SIP recommendations around encouraging loan requests rather than grants ('loans first'); members commented that loans might cause problem for smaller applicants • Timing: Reprioritised list needs to go to SIP and Board before June – 12 May meeting will be too late for this. Alternative way for prioritisation needs to be found. <p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - circulate list of projects and Board paper regarding GD 3 - Identify way forward regarding prioritising projects on the list (e.g. sub-group meeting) 	<p><i>Paul Taylor</i></p> <p><i>Amanda Ratsey/Julia Blaschke</i></p>
5	<p>Devolution update – Paul Taylor</p> <p>PT gave update about devolution process so far. NS, GC reported from devolution meeting at Exeter. Discussion followed around how businesses interact with devolution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business impact and benefits of devolution to businesses are unclear to businesses – businesses do not understand whether/how they can influence devolution asks and spending decisions. Businesses need to be more engaged and businesses' views need to be incorporated into devolution prospectus. BLG should show leadership on devolution & business engagement • GC: distinctive and inspiring projects are currently missing in devolution proposal – 	

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	<p>could this group engage in the process?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local MPs need to be more engaged and briefed about devolution process – MP support will be critical Future business engagement meetings (bi-monthly) are being investigated. Group expressed strong support for this. Group is in unique position to influence devolution. How can this position be utilized? <p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify ways of engaging businesses and incorporating business views and viewpoint into devolution prospectus, e.g. through asking for feedback on website/distribution through group's channels 	Amanda Ratsey
6	<p>ESIF update – Amanda Ratsey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AR gave update on upcoming calls in April. AR expressed thanks to members of sounding board for helping developing calls and re-allocation Still no grant agreements have been signed in our area Interpretation of rules regarding use of ERDF of nuclear projects has been restricted: no more investment into any projects concerning nuclear new builds are eligible under ERDF – including supply chain work 	
8	<p>Mapping Study– Emma Buckman, Anna Peachey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AP talked through presentation (see attached). Please note that the report is only looking at publicly funded business support. It is important to communicate this distinction. AP will circulate report to group for comments AP will hand over the consultation for mapping study to EB. EB explained reason and plan for consultation. Findings of consultation will be presented to group at May meeting Important to define criteria of rationalisation-why/how are we doing this What are consequences for Growth Hub? <p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put on agenda for next meeting AP to circulate report to group 	Julia Blaschke Anna Peachey
9	<p>Supporting Growth Ambitions – Sue Wilkinson</p> <p>The group discussed the paper prepared by Sue Wilkinson.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NA emphasised importance to ensure growth ambitions of micro businesses are being catered for. SW stated that small businesses were hit by closure of Business Link. LEP's Growth Hub should address this Access to Finance is important to small businesses and needs to be part of devolution deal; 	

	<p>however, definition of Access to Finance is very wide and needs clear definition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SB: response from businesses indicates main problems for small businesses center around not being able to match funding from Government and (lack of) growth ambitions. There are no clear routes to support ambitious businesses to realise growth ambitions; currently foreign ownership seems to be easiest way to realise growth ambitions • Sector specific knowledge needs to be incorporated into any solution – different sectors have different requirements • NS emphasised that signposting needs to be clear and clear links need to be established to ensure businesses get all the information they need – this might also include information around things they have not yet asked for. <p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Put signposting on agenda for next meeting 	<i>Julia Blaschke</i>
10	<p>Inward Investment Report – Julia Stuckey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JS talked through her presentation (attached) • There is a danger of FDI companies disinvesting. Modelling of true costs can be done to show a business whether it would receive any gains from moving abroad. • All FDI projects should be included in UKTI’s FDI report, regardless of whether UKTI (or any Local Authority) has been involved in the landing, because otherwise our area might be seen as low performer on FDI and therefore receive less support and opportunities from UKTI • How can the identification of FDI landings in our area be maximised? Suggestions included scanning planning applications (to identify business expansions) and looking at grant funding decisions • SB: HotSW LEP is looking for ideas from existing businesses to contribute to soft landing packages – if members have creative ideas to support bringing in new businesses please contact Julia Stuckey • Consistency of offer to FDI businesses needs to be improved across HotSW LEP area – could this be part of our Devolution Deal offer to Government? • Enterprise Zones need to be included into consistency thoughts – how can we ensure we offer a consistent offer across our four EZs? <p>ACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore how identification of FDI businesses and landings in the area can be maximised and agree procedure • JS to share evidence reports on request • JB to circulate presentation • BLG members to contact Julia Stuckey with ideas for soft landing package 	<p><i>Julia Stuckey</i></p> <p><i>Julia Stuckey</i> <i>Julia Blaschke</i> <i>all</i></p>
10	<p>Future Agenda Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devolution update • GD 3 update 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda for joint meeting with People group • Productivity and relationship with skills (potentially to bring forward as a joint meeting agenda point for July meeting) • Mapping study update • Improve signposting of business advice 	
II	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Neild gave update on the recently published productivity output data for HotSW LEP. While HotSW LEP performs very poorly regarding outputs 'per job', our performance when looked at 'per hour' has improved. 	
	<p>Date of Next Meeting: <i>Tuesday 12 May, 3pm-5pm (NOTE NEW TIME), Exeter tbc</i></p>	<i>Julia Blaschke</i>