

Summary of business: Board Meeting 14 January at Clarke Willmott, Taunton

Attendees: Adam Chambers, Alan Denby, Andrew Leadbetter, Chris Garcia, David Hall, Duncan McGinty, Doug Bamsey, Heather Barnes, Janet Powell (mins), Julian Beer, Paula Hewitt, Paul Diviani, Phillip Johnson, Nick Ames, Nick Engert, Rachel Davies, Richard Cohen, Sean Fielding, Simon Barker, Stephen Bird, Steve Hindley (Chair), Tim Jones, Tudor Evans, Vaughan Lindsay

Apologies: Frances Brennan, Gordon Oliver, Sally Edgington, Steve Smith, Wendy Purcell

Agenda item
<p>1. Welcome</p> <p>The Chair thanked Nick Engert and Clarke Willmott for hosting the board meeting and providing lunch and refreshments.</p> <p>Welcome and confirmation of Duncan McGinty as board member representing the Somerset District's.</p>
<p>2. Declarations of interest</p> <p>To confirm that these need to be raised at each board meeting and recorded.</p>
<p>3. Minutes of last Board meeting 21 November 2013 & actions arising</p> <p>Draft agreed as accurate.</p> <p>Outstanding actions</p> <p>PJ: action from JB with regard to the accountability issues for the EU programme, still to be resolved.</p> <p>AC: SLA's between the LEP and managing authorities are being progressed to aid understanding and ensure if things go adrift these can be rectified.</p>
<p>4. CEX report</p> <p>A run through of the key points:-</p> <p><u>Governance & back office</u></p> <p>There has been a considerable "ramp up" in dialogue with the Business Community.</p> <p><u>Financial Position</u></p> <p>Many thanks to Somerset County Council in providing an up-to-date operating budget.</p> <p>The LEP needs to submit the evidence base for core funding for 2015. A lot of work has already been undertaken with the Local Authorities to draw down "in kind" contributions. It was emphasised that private sector board members were there to lend private sector perspective and expertise as individuals and did not come to the table representing their companies.</p> <p><u>Growing Places Fund</u></p> <p>A query arose as to why there was a difference between allocated and drawn down figures. This was because some projects were in the latter stages of finalising funding agreements (one in particular wished to defer draw down) but there is confidence all existing projects will be invested in.</p>

SEP, Growth Deal & EU SIF

The first draft of the SEP was submitted on time. Early feedback shows it was quite well received. Further feedback is hoped for from the Greg Clark session, which has now been postponed from 14th to hopefully 17th January.

Discussions continued around which elements to emphasis in the SEP:-

- rail network and A303 must surely be a priority
- Hinkley Deal – the LEP acknowledges the huge effort and resources the Districts have dedicated to support this to ensure we get the most for our area, positioning this as success for UK PLC with the benefit felt through the Peninsula and City Deal.

FDI

The three propositions have been submitted to UKTI for their feedback and it is hoped to have the final ones ready for sign off by the Board at the next meeting.

It is hoped that the HotSW LEP's Inward Investment Manager role which is funded through City Deal with funding only through till March 2015 – will be seen by the LEP as an important role to retain even after the deadline.

RGN

The intention to set up an intranet in order to be able to download business cases.

There will be two opportunities to advertise the LEP's strategic messages at the forthcoming "Growing the Rural Economy" Event on 7 February.

Action: SBird requested support for the LEP's key strategic messages for this event.

Consultations – Assisted Areas Map

Jamie Evans from Devon County Council is responding on the LEP's behalf, with the strategy being to get more areas included into "assisted area status". Queries arose as to why some wards had been included and others taken out. There are strict technical rules for the inclusion of assisted areas e.g. primarily there has to be manufacturing opportunities within a certain populace, be an area of deprivation, also wards can be linking wards adjacent to i.e. Plymouth to Cornwall, Ivybridge to Torbay etc.

Action: - It was agreed to review the linking of areas.

5. CIC, Articles of Association & Insurance

The LEP has not quite yet been registered, still waiting for 4 sets of forms to come back from members.

AC: requested the permission of the board to go ahead and register the company with existing members, then to add further directors on, as and when the paperwork has been received. Agreed.

6. Update on SEP, EU SIF & Growth Deal

Timetable for the EU SIF, final Draft submission to be in at the end of January.

Action: - Board members to receive copy of final draft.

It was emphasised that we are one of the few LEPs that has chosen to align their SEP to the SIF and develop them both in parallel to each other. Work continues on the evidence base. The strategic plan is a framework under which individual deals can then be negotiated i.e. the Growth Deal.

Discussion continued around:-

- The argument for the SW to be on the British Transport Corridor due to Plymouth's seaport and its ferry connections to France and proximity to the Dorset ports.
- The South West having the largest area for Social Enterprise incubation.
- Governance and deliverance arrangements – the use of the SLA's and SMART
- Once funding has been allocated, how does the LEP handle its disbursements, which has resource implications.

7. LEP Governance & Leadership Groups

Whilst a lot of work has been undertaken around the strategic themes of PLACE, PEOPLE and BUSINESS, there is currently no lever for private business to engage with these. RD: is establishing a leadership group comprising all stakeholders for the Skills and there is a need to develop the same format for PLACE and BUSINESS.

A leadership group may then have sub groups which link into it and/ or form a task and finish group for a specific project/task.

There is the need for a group to focus on rural issues, but this will be built into the existing Rural Network group.

The Local Transport Board primarily focuses on major transport routes, but does not have sufficient breadth of perspective beyond majors in order to bring the strategic needs of road and rail together. However, it was pointed out that the LTB is not a LEP Sub Group, Transport Boards were set up to run as independents at the government's request as set out in their frameworks of reference. Perhaps a task and finish group would fit this role instead?

VL: commented that each of the Leadership groups should be chaired by a private sector board member.

It was agreed that provided each group had a private board member assigned to it, other people may chair the group.

8. Papers for noting

No comment

9. AOB

SF: Four enterprise zones have been established with funding of around £15m which will include money for incubation, building space, services, and science parks but still waiting for the Government's response to the Witty Review – the LEP's involvement is clearly important. JB: there is a list of post Witty mechanisms to help Witty agenda, but action is needed when the details are known.

Local Enterprise Partnership

Creating opportunities in Devon, Plymouth, Somerset and Torbay

SF: Super computer bid £100m into BIS for the Met Office, in competition with Edinburgh, the trick is how to build things around it and to use this as an anchor.

SH: Paid tribute to TJ's contribution as the previous Chair, both for input and the amount of travelling around the patch, especially prior to CG's arrival. He was heartened by the amount of high quality material achieved with such a small amount of people, helped no less by the pooling of resources and assistance from the LA's . He also looked forward to everyone's continued cooperation in helping to achieve a single economic unit.

Next meeting: 19 March 10am – 1pm at the Committee Room,
East Devon District Council, Sidmouth