

LEP BOARD: Minutes of Business Executive Summary

11 September 2012

Attendees:- Alan Denby, Chris Grace, David Allen, Gordon Oliver, Janet Powell (mins), Keri Denton, Liz Waugh, Paul Hickson, Nick Engert, Rachel Davies, Sally Edgington, Simon Barker, Stephen Bird, Tim Jones (chair), Will Mumford

Apologies: - Adam Chambers, Frances Brennan, Nick Ames, Tudor Evans

Telecom: - Wendy Purcell, Vaughan Lindsay – unable to participate due to equipment failure

Declarations of interest

Growing Places Fund bid - Exeter Science Park – Stephen Bird, Will Mumford and Keri Denton

2. Foreign Direct Investment Report

An overview of the FDI report was given and summarised the priorities as:

- the need to create clear and defined messages to both national and international markets to attract inward investment
- to turn engagement strategy from being responsive to pro-active
- to ensure the group had the encouragement and support required from the board

3. Finance and Budget Board Paper

The Finance and Resource group met recently and were looking to the future on the basis that short-term finance is now in place. The Growing Places Fund had transferred to Devon County Council who will manage this on a pro-bono basis for the LEP.

The group will proceed with finalising a paper for the board on the suggested legal status for the partnership. This is turn, will allow for the recruitment of a full-time CEO and full-time administrator. Having considered the option of a secondment it was agreed not to follow this route.

The Chair indicated that Francis Clarke has provided some pro-bono support

Working Links has offered to undertake recruitment of the administrator, on a pro-bono basis, for the LEP.

4. Dashboard reviews, bids, consultations, register of workgroups

Dashboards were circulated as per the Board's request. These will be updated for each Board meeting to show a state of play on each of the key areas of work.

Discussions continued about the working groups within the partnership, particularly the Devon Local Districts LEP Forum. This would feed the views and priorities of local districts and business sectors into Devon County Council's own economic strategy. A similar set up will be required in Somerset.

It was noted that some projects will require a strategic approach that can be informed by both district and county before the LEP provides an over arching perspective and / or influence. The need for local authority partners to articulate the areas where the LEP can provide support and assistance in meeting their economic targets was re-iterated.

LEP is increasingly seen by Government as the vehicle to carry forward a raft of government initiatives. However the LEP needs to be mindful about how best to utilise its resource.

5. Growing Places Fund recommendations

Thanks expressed to the GPF panel for their contributions. Four projects had been put forward to and returned from due diligence.

6. Enterprise Areas update

The Chair and a small working group had been involved in shaping and preparing a report. There was sufficient budget within the 'capacity funds' to request SLIM define the scope of work, validate the work carried out so far and prepare recommendations back to the board for future endorsement.

7. EU Funding Prospectus post 2013

The EU Funding Prospectus before the Board had been drawn up by the Local Authorities EU Issues Group on behalf of the LEP. Its purpose is to help the Board/LEP and consider how it can best utilise future EU Structural Funding.

There were five themes in the document that the board were asked to look at and respond to the EU Issues Group with recommendations for next steps. A revised document would then be worked up in time for the November Board meeting.

Some key areas missing in the prospectus of: - Coastal defences, climate adaption risks and resilience (e.g. Plymouth Breakwater) and flood defences. These missed opportunities could easily be aligned to infrastructure deficiencies, linked to flood defences and growth of jobs. The setting up of a water and environmental group in which he was involved with, would engage with all three LEPs across the area debating in such issues as flood defences for the region.