

## Minutes of Board Meeting

7 March 2013

at

Plymouth Argyle, Home Park

**Attendees:-** Tim Jones (chair), Adam Chambers, Alan Denby, Chris Grace, , Frances Brennan, Gordon Oliver, Ian Coates (BIS), Jane Gallagher (Coast), Janet Powell (mins), Keri Denton, Liz Waugh, Paul Hickson, Nick Ames, Nick Engert, Rachel Davies, Sean Fielding, Simon Barker, Stephen Bird, Theo Leijser (DCLG), Vaughan Lindsay

**1. Apologies:** Tudor Evans, David Hall, John Hart, Wendy Purcell, Sally Edgington (BIS),

**2. Declarations of interest:** - Simon Barker and Stephen Bird under agenda item 4

### **3. Financial position of Local Authorities**

Each local authority provided a general update on their financial position. Torbay, DCC and PCC stated that each have committed £20k in their budget to the LEP; SCC has also allocated additional support for the forthcoming year towards the LEP. All Local Authority representatives expressed caution in the LEP relying on future financial contributions.

### **4. Framework for Engagement with the Skills Agenda - Rachel Davies**

Background to the complexities of education and skills situation; need for strategic overview and priorities to be set to avoid being too generic. Additional issues of urban and rural requirements, existing and emerging technologies, local versus global priorities. Key issues for LEP – local leverage of employer engagement. The Skills Strategy (see paper 1) proposes the formation of a LEP Skills Group, with the help of the Business Forum and a focus on ensuring employer engagement throughout.

### **5. Special Interest Groups - update planning group - Nick Engert**

NE explored terms of reference for planning group including requirement / need for one, and role and function. Driver for creation is the National Planning Policy Framework. This requires Local Authorities to have a local plan in which they demonstrate engagement with the LEP but no defined mechanics for this.

### **6. Board Performance/ Review – Liz Waugh**

Explained the rationale for commissioning the South West Observatory Report: audit board performance, review achievements, maximise board involvement and provide a focus on what needs to be done going forward. A Board Away Day was proposed and agreed.

### **7. LEP Finances and Recruitment of CEO – Adam Chambers**

Finances - High-level budget plan for 2013 - 2014 was developed which has enabled request for the maximum amount of general funding from Government. The LEP governance issue and decision-making process still addressing; it will be part of the Board away day agenda. Governance is strong in our local authorities, but the advent of the single growth pot means a review of the constitution to ensure it is fit for purpose is appropriate. Foot Anstey have worked on Governance / possible legal entities.

Recruitment of CEO - Panel interviews and presentation day set, utilising a competency based scoring methodology. Shortlisted candidates will be required to meet with the Chair and Vice Chair before the final candidate is put forward for Board approval. The latter will probably be sought by email, to minimise the delay in notifying the successful applicant.

**8. EU Prospectus Update – Paul Hickson**

A February summit of EU nations has set the budget framework. Government likely to issue guidelines in two stages: the March Budget and then firming up on their proposals in late summer. Timetable for the development of EU funding prospectus: draft to be worked up between March – September / an iterative process between Government and the LEP, with the final sign off due Spring 2014.

The Funding Group met with work on-going to decide the priorities: innovation, business support to include access to finance, connectivity the roll out of broadband to rural areas, employability, skills - higher level and graduate retention. Mindful of the Government expressing favour on co-operation across boundaries, common themes and being in dialogue with neighbouring LEPs.

**9. GPF – Liz Waugh**

Eight applications for Round 2 of varying calibre. Three applications taken forward for interview with total value of £4.5m. There may be a GPF Round 3 in May dependent on other projects outstanding. A commissioning approach is being explored but this will be considered with Local Authorities beforehand for any of their schemes.

**10. Local Transport Group and Pinch points – Liz Waugh***Local Pinch points scheme*

Nine schemes put forward totalling £15m with an expectation that perhaps 60% will go forward. This is a separate scheme from the Highways Agency pinchpoints scheme

*Local Transport Board*

First shadow meeting has taken place. The next session will look at the actual schemes. The national funding is approximately £40m over 4 years but may be under or over in the region of £23M - £58M. DFT allocated funds and as time goes on there are more and more constraints. DFT has to sign off the Terms of Reference (TOR) for our Local Transport Board.

**11. Board minutes 8 January 2013 were approved.**