

**Minutes of HotSW LEP CIC Board Meeting**  
**14 March 2017**  
**at**  
**Exeter Racecourse Conference Centre**

**Board Attendees:**

Adam Chambers  
Andrew Leadbetter  
Barbara Shaw  
David Hall  
Harvey Siggs  
Ian Bowyer  
Judith Petts  
Kevin Mowat (alternate for Gordon Oliver)  
Martha Wilkinson  
Martin Brown  
Nick Ames  
Nick Engert  
Paul Diviani  
Steve Smith  
Simon Barker  
Stephen Bird  
Stephen Criddle  
Steve Hindley (Chair)  
Tim Jones

**Officers in attendance:**

Chris Garcia – HotSW Chief Executive  
Keri Denton - officer accompanying Andrew Leadbetter  
Mark Williams – officer accompanying Paul Diviani  
Pat Flaherty – officer accompanying David Hall  
Stuart Brown – officer accompanying Harvey Siggs  
Tracey Lee – officer accompanying Ian Bowyer

**Others in attendance:**

Eifion Jones - LEP Head of Strategy & Operations  
Helena Davison – LEP Comms Manager  
Janet Powell - LEP Executive Assistant (for mins)  
Sally Edgington – BEIS  
Jonathan Eddy – BEIS

**Apologies:**

Frances Brennan  
Anne Marie Morris MP – representing Devon MPs  
James Heapey MP – representing Somerset MPs  
Gordon Oliver

## Table of Decisions

Board Paper	Decision	Decision agreed
<b>4.1 Area Based Review</b>	This report sets out the review recommendations from the Gov't series of 'Area based reviews' for Devon & Somerset Colleges, accompanied by a verbal commentary from Stephen Criddle as Chair of our People Leadership Group. The LEP Board notes the recommendations.	The Board notes the recommendations within the paper.
<b>4.2 Next steps following Board Away Day</b>	The LEP Board agrees that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The LEP should adopt the vision, mission and strategic priorities set out, noting the flexibility required in the areas identified.</li> <li>2. Under the vision, mission and strategic priorities, a Board working group should be established to establish the detailed operational arrangements for the LEP in adopting these.</li> </ol> <p>The Prospectus set out in the Annex is adopted.</p>	In principle, the Board agrees the next steps, on the condition that more emphasis is placed on understanding the data to measure prosperity and inclusivity.  The Board agrees to a working group.
<b>4.3 SW LEPs and Cross LEP working</b>	This paper summarises several recent developments. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cross sector responses to Industrial Strategy - with Marine (from Cornwall to Southampton), Nuclear (from Plymouth to Gloucestershire) and Aerospace (from Cornwall &amp; Isles of Scilly to Gloucestershire).</li> <li>2. SW Partnerships.</li> <li>3. Rural productivity.</li> <li>4. Energy Strategy</li> </ol> <p>To seek Directors support for our work to join these up.</p>	The LEP Board agrees that it supports the development of a common narrative for the SW.
<b>4.4 Productivity Plan/Industrial Strategy</b>	The LEP Board: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Notes the status of the productivity plan work and the more active role anticipated from SIP</li> <li>2. Considered the issues highlighted from Building Our Industrial Strategy which need including in the LEP's response (17<sup>th</sup> April deadline) and supports the establishment of a small Board working group to agree our submission.</li> </ol>	The Board notes and agrees with the recommendations.
<b>4.5 ESIF update</b>	That the Board notes the comments in the paper.  Although Stephen Bird is due to retire as a LEP Director, the Dept. for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) who oversee ESIF funding have requested for Stephen to continue to Chair the HotSW ESIF subcommittee subject to board agreement.	The Board notes the comments.  Board agreement was given.

<p><b>4.6 NED recruitment recommendations from interview panel</b></p>	<p><b>The LEP Board agrees that</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. The individuals recommended by the interview panel should become directors of the CIC. The retiring directors last board meeting being the May board.</b></li> <li><b>2. These individuals should also be invited to the May meeting as part of their induction</b></li> <li><b>3. Induction activity should be planned for the new directors so that they can shadow existing directors between March and May and take over by the end of May 2017.</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>The Board agrees to the recommendations.</b></p>
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Agenda	Action
<p><b>A. Training for LEP Directors – Duncan Moore/Lisa Gibson from Ashfords</b> (presentation and cover note circulated to the board) Board members received training from Ashford’s about their roles and responsibilities as the LEP continues to improve its transparency, accountability and processes.</p> <p><b>Action: Ensure alternate directors are included within professional indemnity and officer’s liability insurances.</b></p> <p><b>Action: To explore and clarify in future board papers their confidentiality; when it is, when not and under what circumstances?</b></p>	<p>JP</p> <p>CG</p>
<p><b>B. Board meeting</b> <b>1. Apologies as above</b></p>	
<p><b>2. Declarations of interest</b> SH: Midas has an interest in Oceansgate, Nuclear College and Yeovil Innovation Centre. JP: Agenda item 4.1 Area Based reviews/Somerset Colleges. MW: Devon Community Foundation is involved in a number of partnership bids, future ESIF/ERDF funding and Building Better Opportunities.</p>	
<p><b>3. Draft minutes of last meeting 17 January and actions arising</b></p> <p><b>Action: to clarify in decision table 4.4, bullet point 4 to read ‘The LEP will approach SCC 151 officer to review how unutilised cash in bank can be used productively’.</b></p> <p><b>c/f Action: post 4 May County elections a meeting with the LEP, Local Authorities (LA’s) and local MPs to take forward several topics i.e. Brexit, Education/Skills etc. to present a united approach and direction of travel for the HotSW area to Gov’t.</b></p> <p><b>c/f Action: To seek clarity from Sajid Javid on policy for non-devolution areas.</b> <b>c/f Action: Import and export tools to be shared with the LEP.</b></p> <p>All other actions completed.</p>	<p>JP</p> <p>CG/AM/JH/LA’s</p> <p>AM AM</p>
<p><b>4. Chief Executive’s report</b> Since the last board meeting, a new assurance framework has been put in place, a requirement from Govt to be in by the end of February. This requires the LEP to operate some enhanced processes in respect of transparency to the public which will impact on future board meetings. The LEP is in conversation with Julian Gale, Monitoring Officer at Somerset County Council (SCC) to discuss how to improve governance with ongoing support and advice being provided to manage the LEPs public facing relationship. It is hoped Julian will be able to attend the next board meeting in May.</p> <p>To this effect, reports and papers within the CEX report will in future be annotated with those that can be consulted upon, those that can be made public and on the website and those that are confidential.</p>	

**Action: Directors views are sought on the changes to papers/reports before this is implemented.**

**ALL**

4.1 Area Based Review (see paper) – including a ‘Presentation on proposed University of Somerset’ Mike Robbins/Fiona McMillan

Presentation circulated.

Government has been progressing a series of ‘Area based reviews of post -16 Education and training institutions’. The review for HotSW area was undertaken in conjunction with Cornwall and the review recommendations have just been circulated. As part of the review the desire for broader HE provision in Somerset was highlighted, hence the presentation to the board made on behalf of the University Centre Somerset (currently part of Bridgwater and Taunton College) which outlined the FE and HE partnership’s aspirations to establish a university in Somerset to further improve the training and higher level skills provision in the HotSW area.

Stephen Criddle, Chair of the LEPs People Leadership Group, verbally summarised the area based review stating that the aim of the review was to ensure colleges were strong and financially resilient. All 10 colleges in the HotSW area were found to be fit for purpose, to be able to stand alone and met employer needs, however the recommendation was for increased collaboration between colleges in localities. SC noted a low response rate from employers to the ABR consultation process, despite highlighting the 10,000+ businesses working with colleges participating in the ABR area. Future capital funding was also flagged as a key concern of Colleges

The ABR also recommended ref Institutes of Technology that “the Colleges in Somerset, Devon, Cornwall & Isles of Scilly to explore proposals for Institutes of Technology either as stand-alone organisations or through hub and spoke models, aligned to the requirements of emerging national IoT policy and the productivity challenges of the review area.”

More information should be forthcoming at the end of the month on the Gov’ts vision for Institutes of Technology (10 – 15 nationally), including focussing on delivering high level technical apprenticeships within hubs in conjunction with universities.

The board is supportive of the initiative and emphasised that education establishments must work closely with employers to ensure that the needs of business is met to enable the local workforce to take up higher level jobs.

4.2 Next steps following Board Away Day – LEP Futures paper (see paper)

This reflects on the key themes emerging from the LEP Board away day and identifies some remaining questions and issues for Board consideration.

Discussions continued around: -

- To not lose the emphasis on infrastructure but recognize the LEP works in a supportive role
- The emerging themes and structure were used as the basis for the recruitment of the new non-executive directors at interview to consider what roles they would fit into
- How will the LEP demonstrate its effectiveness – targets will need developing (not necessarily those expressed in figures)
- There needs to be more emphasis on understanding data and how to measure prosperity and inclusivity so this can be looked at within the sub groups

**Action: The Governance Sub – group will look at and refine the structure and governance of the LEP going forward.**

CG/SH

#### 4.3 SW LEPs and cross LEP working (see paper)

Several initiatives are underway involving different mixes of partners from across the SW. There now seems to be a strong consensus about setting up a common narrative / brand to compete against the Northern Powerhouse and Midlands Engine. This paper summarises a number of the most recent developments and seeks directors support for our work to join these up.

Recent initiatives include: -

- The recent successful 3 LEPs (HotSW, Cornwall & Isles of Scilly, Dorset) joint application for Energy Strategy Support Funding.
- The cross LEP response being coordinated to the Industrial Strategy.
- A Marine strategy encompassing Falmouth across to Portsmouth.
- The development of a 'Great South West' brand and strategy to compete with the Northern Powerhouse and Midlands Engine.
- The recruitment of a consultant to help create a regional strategy, using the results of the recent Science and Innovation Audit to help make the linkages between businesses, LA's and universities where it will benefit the South West.
- Research commissioned jointly with Cornwall, Dorset and Wiltshire and HotSW LEPs into the impact on the rural economy and the formation of a Rural Growth Commission.

The aim is to set out the LEPs ambitions and asks in time for the Autumn Statement.

**Action: To continue to press West of England LEP to engage in initiatives.**

The Board is fully supportive of moves to create a wider south west identity along the lines of other UK regions and so attract investment and address cross-area strategic issues.

CG

#### 4.4 Productivity Plan/Industrial Strategy (see paper)

This paper updates the Board on progress on the productivity plan and invites contributions and discussion of key themes that need to be reflected in the LEP's response to Building Our Industrial Strategy.

At the Board, away-day last month, the directors re-addressed the role of the LEP in line with the new Productivity Plan which will eventually replace the Strategic Economic Plan. The Board agreed that key areas for focus are skills, helping develop the management capabilities in HotSW businesses and the underpinning infrastructure the area needs to compete. In delivering these the Board was clear that economic benefits need to be felt across the area. There is a need to maximise HotSW's natural capital; target key sectors for growth; develop wider regional partnerships on key issues and opportunities such as science and innovation, housing for keyworkers and energy grid capacity; and there is a clear need to create a distinctive economy.

Consultations on the productivity plan closed on Friday, producing over 30 responses in long format and over 40 responses from the shorter business survey, more than anticipated. Many of the key themes emerging mirror those from the Board Away Day of; focusing on key sectors, natural capital and distinctiveness to drive productivity, issues of physical connectivity, improvements in education/skills.

It was suggested that by utilising the results of the SIA, combining this with the strong offers in the aerospace, nuclear and marine sectors and demonstrating leadership and sound governance between the public, private and universities this could help drive transformation and provide investment results in the long term.

Other comments that arose;

- The board did not want to lose traction on transport and infrastructure
- The importance of large sectors such as tourism
- The fact that the area produces a vast amount of food, which is sent away to be processed so an initiative to focus on processing food locally especially around the M5 corridor
- SW potential for cyber security
- Defence procurement and why not a Gov't buy British culture?
- How to get Homes and Community (HCA) funding for the shortage in 7000 homes?

**Action: As the Gov't date for responses to the 'Building our Industrial Strategy' Green Paper is 17 April (Easter Bank Holiday) – it is agreed for a small board working group to sign off on the LEPs response prior to this for submission.**

SH/CG/EJ

#### 4.5 ESIF update (see paper)

This paper updates the Board on implementation of the HotSW European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) Strategy.

There is continuing concern over the quality of European Agricultural Fund for rural Development (EAFRD) submissions. It is hoped that the creation of a Rural Growth Commission (mentioned in agenda item 4.3) will help to develop better quality applications which in turn will result in better strategic outputs.

A meeting is also scheduled with Neil Parish MP (13 April) to flag on behalf of the HotSW LEP, the current issues over EAFRD, the slowness of being able to

utilise this funding to good effect within the HotSW area. Neil indicated he would be very happy to meet with representatives from the LEP to consider this issue and the impact it was having as he felt that this would support the work of the EFRA committee that Neil chairs.

The Board notes the comments.

4.6 NED recruitment recommendations from the interview panel (see paper)

This paper provides the board with an update on Non -Executive recruitment – which was supplemented at the board meeting with an update following the final interviews and recommendations from the interview panel for appointments.

A hard copy of the panel’s recommendations was circulated around the Board. 12 candidates were interviewed and the panel were encouraged by the quality and breadth of skill set which represent a good geographical and sectoral mix.

The board approved the recommendation to appoint eight new non-executive Directors with specific areas of expertise that will help the LEP achieve its organisational aims. The new directors will take up their positions after the end of May when the terms of office for a number of the LEP’s existing NEDs come to an end.

4.Chief Executive’s Report

Attention is drawn to Page 5 of the report which presents a financial statement for 2015/2016. The LEP is currently working with Somerset County to improve it’s accounting to demonstrate the breadth of work the LEP is undertaking – further population of figures will be forthcoming for the Board later this year.

**Action: Any further comments on CEX report/accounts gratefully received following the Board meeting to be incorporated into future reports.**

CG

**5. Papers for noting**

No comment.

**6. AOB**

CG: thanks, given to Plymouth City Council for their support in allowing a capital to revenue swap (this allows the conversion of 2% top slice of capital funds to revenue to allow the funding of Programme Management resources).

SH: thanked all for a very productive meeting.

**Next meeting:** 23 May 10am – 1pm at Exeter Racecourse Conference Centre.