

Finance and Resource meeting –
Minutes
Thursday 4th January 2018, Teleconference

Present

David Bird (DB) – Santander (Chair)
Chris Garcia (CG) – Chief Executive of HotSW
Eifion Jones (EJ) – Theme Lead / HotSW
Mel Squires (MS) - NFU
Paul Griffin (PG) – Somerset County Council
Kerri Denton (KD) – Devon County Council
Julia Blaschke (JB) – Plymouth City Council
Mel Roberts (MR) – HotSW LEP

Supporting Officers

Ester Curry (EC) – Plymouth City Council

Apologies

Amanda Ratsey (AR) – Plymouth City Council
Paul Hickson (PH) – Somerset County Council

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	Agenda item	Lead
1	<p>Welcome, introduction and apologies DB introduced the meeting and gave apologies as listed above.</p>	
2	<p>Conflicts of Interest No additional conflicts flagged</p>	
3	<p>Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising None</p>	
4	<p>Innovate UK MOU Two papers for reference – Innovate MOUs The papers were introduced to the group as an opportunity for the group to consult on them. The joint MOUs set out an ambition for more Innovate UK activity in the Great South West. When HotSW sign will become only the second area in the country (after Leeds) with a specific agreement with Innovate UK. Current advice from Ashfords recommends the introduction of a side letter that sets out understanding in order to avoid renegotiation. The revised MOU that addresses the key points raised by Ashfords was presented to the group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction of a general 3 month termination notice 2. Each party is accountable for their own compliance with data protection. 3. Each party is accountable for their costs of complying with the MOU. <p>If the group approved the revised MOU, the signing ceremony would take place on the 25th January, Exeter. It was agreed there are no financial implications - from signing, however activities that take place under the MOU may incur financial costs, these would not however bypass any standard funding approval mechanisms. It was also confirmed that this was a Great South West activity, including the 3 LEPS, however Wiltshire is not part of this agreement. EJ clarified he would lead from the LEP and collaborate with the appropriate persons from Innovate UK and local partners. Agreed happy to proceed with this revised MOU and EJ could arrange signature</p>	EJ
5	<p>CEX recruitment: The paper was presented by the CG with two specific questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Should personality questionnaires be added to the interview process? 2. Welcomed ideas on who the employer should be. Somerset have expressed that they would be happy to, however a conversation with Plymouth University can be opened up which would include a 10% cost saving. <p>Comments –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potential sensitivity surrounding who the employer might be was discussed and also agreed parity of treatment to all LEP employees, as far as possible. Agreed CG to contact UoP. Felt that there were too many required competencies on the paper, recommended that 3-5 key requirements be outlined. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support also expressed for using personality questionnaires within the recruitment process; felt that it was a useful tool for aiding questioning at the second round of interviews. 	CG
6	<p>ESIF Technical Assistance Bid One paper presented to the group.</p> <p>2015 technical assistance bid that set out how the LEP would put forward £75,000 over the course of 4 years out of the Growing Places Fund. This mechanism meant that the contribution did not go into the LEP core budget; this issue emerged in the pre-Christmas budget. As it stands the LEP needs to pay £67,000 to match the technical assistance funding.</p> <p>The group was asked for permission to reopen the conversation with DCC regarding GPF (if not granted the funds would need to be withdrawn from the committee reserves). Permission was granted.</p>	CG
7	<p>ERDF Inward Investment support:</p> <p>The ERDF funding application for Inward Investment support needs more work, which cannot be resourced from existing resources. A proposal was put to the group to use the unspent Inward Investment budget in this year's budget to appoint Emma Buckman to work on the bid. £7,500 from this budget line would be required; the deadline for the bid is 4th February 2018. Emma has already started work, but if F&R do not grant permission work will be halted.</p> <p>All agreed to proceed.</p>	EJ
8	<p>Confidential discussion on Revenue requirements</p>	
9	<p>AOB.</p> <p>The group was briefed on the new LEP best practice and due diligence and transparency guidelines that will affect how minutes, agendas and confidential reporting are published. Bringing the LEP's processes in</p>	

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	<p>line with local authority practices, the stricter timelines will require a more timely resource in place to ensure timely delivery.</p> <p>There will also be an enhanced whistleblowing process.</p> <p>The new guidelines will include a new Codes of Conduct document that all members will sign up to and further tweaks to the declaration of interest.</p> <p>There was no further mention of holding meetings in public, DCLG are content as long as the AGM is public, and as such there is no requirement to alter current processes. These changes concern board meetings, SIP and F&R.</p> <p>The group asked for clarification on best practice for gifts and event invitations. Action: Chris to follow up and get a final response to the group.</p>	<p>CG</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p>	<p>CG</p>

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