

Minutes of the LEP Place Leadership Group 12 February 2020

NFU OFFICES, PYNES HILL, EXETER

Attendees

Andrew England (AE) - Torbay Council
David Lewis (DL) - SW Energy Hub Project Manager
David Ralph (DR) - HotSW LEP
Derek Phillips (DP) - Exeter Chamber of Commerce & Industry
Doug Bamsey – Somerset District Councils
Helen Dobby – Environmental Agency
John Dixon (JD) - Plymouth City Council
John Lovett – Network Rail (Replacing David Northey)
John Mayer – Federation of Small Businesses (Standing in for Ruth Lambert)
Mel Squires (MS)- NFU
Mike Deaton (MD) - Devon County Council
Paul Hickson (PH) - Somerset County Council/HotSW LEP
Richard Grant – Plymouth City Council
Steve Mewes - Somerset Wildlife Trust/Somerset LNP
Tim Jones (TS) - Devon and Cornwall Business Council

Supporting Officers

Anne-Marie Spalding - HotSW LEP Place Secretariat/Somerset County Council

Apologies

Andrew Ardley - South Western Railway
Barbara Shaw - Westward Housing (Chair)
Barry Smith (BS) - Environment Agency
Christopher Garnsworthy – Western Power
Dan Newman (DNe) - Torbay Development Agency
David Northey (DN)- Network Rail
Eifion Jones (EJ) - HotSW LEP
Heidi Coombe - HotSW LEP
Helena Davidson - HotSW LEP
Ian Harrison (IH) - HotSW LEP Transport Board
Judith Gannon – Abbey Manor Developments
Mark Worsfold - South West Water
Mel Sealey - HotSW LEP
Mike O’Dowd Jones (MODJ) - Somerset County Council
Richard Gibson - Cross Country
Ruth Lambert (RL) - Federation of Small Businesses
Sarah Jennings (SJ)- Devon Local Nature Partnership

	Agenda item	Lead
1.	<p>Welcome, introductions and apologies MS welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited attendees to introduce themselves. Apologies are noted above.</p>	MS
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest None</p>	MS
3.	<p>Minutes of the Last Meeting Minutes of the last Place Leadership Group meeting (5 December 2019) were approved as an accurate record. No actions</p>	MS AMS – To forward minutes to publish
4.	<p>LEP Update New Chair – Steve stood down after 6 years, Karl Tucker of Yeo Valley has taken over as the new chair. KT has talked about changing things – more time thinking and doing, rather than discussing. Need to address challenges and address them. He considers there is a need to strengthen the Board, particularly around private sector voice. He also wants to look at the effectiveness of the Leadership groups – are they doing what they should be? It is unclear where we are with Government currently. There has been no update on the LIS – document has been round three times. The document has made a clear direction for the LEP and though Government aims may change it has been a useful piece of work. It is about defining the importance of driving productivity. Growth – different set of investment decisions – however there is currently no money. Queens Speech – white paper – outlined that there is to be more consultation about devolution – another round with existing mayors. Discussions on what the offer is on devolution. The future role and purpose of LEPS sits in the middle of these discussions. UKSPF funding – we have a budget next month and comprehensive spending review in the summer. The LEP network has recently submitted a proposal which asked for new money for a two year period – perhaps as interim money. Therefore, whilst the money isn't guaranteed at the moment, it would be worth looking at pipeline of projects. Challenge on regional voice – working with Cornwall and Dorset on Great SW status. A proposal has been submitted to Government – lobbying is going on to get agreement on this https://heartofswlep.co.uk/news/chancellor-urged-to-back-the-great-south-west/ No date for Great SW response – this would add value to existing Low Carbon plans across Environment Agency would like to be involved and can provide evidence. Government brands – do we have to deliver Government agenda? No answer at the moment. Optimistic £15m over 3 years – working together on net carbon zero - renewed momentum if funding achieved. Rural productivity one of key lines, Energy. This however all needs resource moving forward. Conversations are taking place with Western Gateway. KT is keen to see impact – where has impact been, what has worked.</p>	DR

	<p>If money from Growth Deal is not defrayed by March 2021 it will be taken back. Trying to get everything contractually committed. Projects are behind on outputs – jobs and housing in particular – mainly on transport projects as outputs come later. There is a need to demonstrate outputs.</p> <p>Funding Business investment could be a piece of work to look at – SWMAS rail sector deal (HS2? Work). If money becomes available there is a pipeline of projects – productivity strategy and LIS. There is a need to be clever around funding models.</p> <p>Identify some best practice – work done in Exeter as to what an investment fund might look like.</p> <p>Positioning paper and sub group from Place – needs to be explored. Need to be ready around short timescales. Challenge – two years of funding – needs to be funding ready.</p> <p>9 Key things being asked by HotSW in their Rebalancing the UK’s economy – remind MPs and keep them engaged to support ambition</p>									
<p>5.</p>	<p>Transport Rail – £500m fund available for reversal of Beeching closures – potential two projects Okehampton and Tavistock. Further round of New Stations Fund announced – likely to be promoted are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Edginswell (Torbay) – Cullompton (Mid Devon) – Wellington (Somerset West & Taunton) <p>DfT announced they were to seek bids for three expressions of interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £50 million for an all-electric bus town; • £20 million for demand responsive transport schemes in rural and suburban areas; and • £70 million for new Superbus networks to deliver low fare, high frequency services, alongside the four-year pilot of such a network in Cornwall. <p>All electric buses - there is likely to be interest within the LEP area to bid for this – couple of places looking at this. Cornwall already has this and Plymouth bus company are servicing so could come into South Devon.</p> <p>The DfT announcement also included details of how local authorities can access an additional £30 million revenue funding for improving current bus services, or restoring lost services. Allocations of this funding have already been determined by DfT, with a bias towards rural areas:-</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Devon County Council</td> <td>£985,778</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Plymouth City Council</td> <td>£137,345</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Somerset County Council</td> <td>£443,070</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Torbay Council</td> <td>£29,326</td> </tr> </table>	Devon County Council	£985,778	Plymouth City Council	£137,345	Somerset County Council	£443,070	Torbay Council	£29,326	<p>DR on behalf of Ian Harrison</p> <p>Full notes to be circulated</p>
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	<p>Rail Dawlish consultation ongoing and challenging. GWR changes to timetables did not create any significant problems.</p> <p>GWR up, Cross Country and South Western Rail (issues) franchises coming forward – see notes for full detail.</p> <p>Meeting coming up in two weeks with local councils on Wellington and Cullompton – update to group to be provided. A question was raised around franchises, new stations, fast service – co-ordination seems to be a challenge who is doing this? DR responded that this is incremental work – would be best to have a long term franchise.</p> <p>Network rail – starting a strategic study – will address ambitions for stations and journey times. Drafting questions for consultation. Cross Country stops needs to be addressed. Self funding study. Rail Freight – long distance passenger will also pick up freight</p> <p>General discussion - TJ suggestion could Hinkley Chain work be replicated for HS2? Small business groupings together to collaborate and help them with procurement.</p> <p>Heathrow hub - Bristol decision has demonstrated how difficult it is to do Long haul for next 30 years will be jet fuel – no alternative. Opportunity for land based project to offset HS2</p> <p>Q Hinkley legacy meeting – what could transport bring to that. A - Hinkley stakeholders are thinking through legacy important to do it now – skills, workforce, communities – sensible workstream. Business – supply chain, innovation – Hinkley deal money is running out . Place – are there legacy things around housing, transport etc – hardest – what do you have to do to encourage development. Legacy always been the ambition locally and regionally. EDF never interested in rail. Increased workforce being looked at – rail could have a role but is perhaps too long term. Hinkley and Gravity could work together on rail.</p> <p>Exeter Skypark - any awareness of a rail ambition? No detail but will be followed up.</p> <p>Agenda planning – involve Ian on corridor work - move from update to moving forward.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>NFU Position on Rural Policy</p> <p>Covers everything including environment. Wider development and agri-environment (referred to CAP receipts). NFU – shift from cap receipts to farm payments and rural development.</p> <p>The contribution of the rural economy is much wider than only agriculture. The contribution of the rural economy is equal to the output of England’s top 10 most productive cities outside London.</p>	<p>MS Presentati on and response to be circulated</p>

Specific position post Brexit – secure funding for rural communities and farming continue as much as possible. Infrastructure – land management, natural capital, services and digital access.

Enforce importance of Agri-food - net exporter into wider chain. Collectively the Agri-food sector is worth £111 billion – this is larger than car and aerospace manufacturing combined.

64% of farming businesses have diversification activities.

Farmers own or host 2/3 of Britain's solar power capacity.

Greenhouse gas emissions from British farming have been cut by 16% since 1990.

Existing funds –

Transition timeline – direct payments depleting from 2021 – 3 year gap – ELMS not coming on stream for the majority farmers. Direct correlation with CAP.

5- 7 years before ELMS – farmers cannot engage with this.

Diversification – most farmers will be looking at this further – most feel that farming will be their core income stream.

Anticipated funding

NFU talk about farmers engaging – running a number of businesses other than farming.

Future funding – Local Action groups valuable.

Emphasis need for full digital and broadband connectivity in rural communities.

Net zero – what is land going to be doing in the future? Potential to be creative and addressing productivity.

Net zero – agriculture is affected by climate change – it is an emitter but also addresses it. NFU committed to net zero. Chance for offsetting from other sectors.

Shared Prosperity Fund – understand that this will be delivered through the LEPS – how do we prepare and rural proof? Support localised delivery – LEADER local action groups.

Discussions

HD – is there a way of building thematic funding approach rather than working separately.

Environment Agency works around catchments – wanting to shift to Places.

Adaptation – NFU very involved in discussions in Devon and Somerset re climate emergency – adaptation piece is critical. Potential business to business. Pool Harbour – farmers and SW Water.

SW Water planning piece held with Environment Agency – water planning group.

Inappropriate use of crops – need to improve run off. Economics around feed for animals.

Discussions needed around nutrition, feed etc.

Industrialisation of food production – heavy demand to support, eg hydroponics. Is this understood at strategic level? Dependency between rural and urban. Natural Capital.

	<p>What would happen if a planning application came in for hectares of greenhouses? What reaction would it have?</p> <p>Fortunes of rural economy crucial to prosperity – 25 rural businesses link to a farm. Looking at fragility of local rural authorities – business rates not a great opportunity Rural agenda is a challenge as it is so interconnected.</p> <p>What next discussion? Conversation with Government is around like for like replacement Need to make offer to the Governmentt and how we are helping to deliver – rural needs to say what they can deliver. Work with LEP networks – what is happening - rural not mentioned. Hosted meeting to be arranged - Next meeting – normal business then session hosting stakeholders.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Innovation Zones</p> <p>Recap – definition of innovation zones as in the LIS – complementing with local definitions of innovation and also purpose of local enterprise hubs.</p> <p>Scope of innovation zones – F&R signed off funds for a study.</p> <p>Initial meeting was held to look at what the potential of innovation zones is - Discussion was around moving towards a solution rather than identifying the problems. Looking at ecosystem, looking at barriers, places (is the LEP area an innovation zone).</p> <p>Dotted line to innovation board if set up by LEP.</p> <p>Scope of discussions, follow up with other members of the LEP. Momentum to keep going.</p>	<p><i>PH</i></p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Energy Hub</p> <p>Community Energy Fund devolved to Energy hubs – approx. £1.8m working with Community energy groups. Good structure compared to other areas. Not available for local authorities.</p> <p>Last round closed in December. Board looked at 9 applications – 8 x Stage 1 – feasibility studies, business focused knowledge of costs etc. Stage 2 – up to £100k – planning, legal etc to set up.</p> <p>5 successful – 2 rejected in SW 1at Stage 2 at Totnes – working with them to work up feasibility</p> <p>£200/£300k committed – need more projects – Discussions taking place with parish and town councils.</p>	<p>David Lewis</p>

	<p>Core funding – 2 have gone direct to BEIS (larger projects) Retrofit Devon working in partnership with Bristol. £50/£60k to work up business model</p> <p>DevonEnergy Collective – potential up to 100mgw –Now looking at how can business buy this</p> <p>Biomass system – two for Plymouth.</p> <p>Dorset – GP project – there are 680 GP partnership in SW – each has multiple buildings and land – working with GPs to look at solar projects etc.</p> <p>Academy schools project in Cornwall – to roll out into Devon.</p> <p>Chard – small scale business park for the future – net zero</p> <p>Gravity (Puriton, Bridgwater) – working partnership with Eon</p> <p>Link to website-http://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/south-west-energy-hub-rcef/ – groups can be private sector and community groups</p> <p>Energy work group being formed to discuss how we move forward energy strategy.</p> <p>Private sector projects being mapped</p>	
9	<p>Natural Capital</p> <p>Thanks for Sarah Jennings for getting the update sorted out for the Board Meeting.</p> <p>Meeting to take place with DR to discuss how to move this agenda forward, potential actions, etc.</p> <p>Natural Capital on the agenda for the Somerset Wildlife Conference on 20 February 2020. AMS facilitating discussion group.</p> <p>Biodiversity net gain impact – future agenda under natural capital</p>	AMS
	<p>Next meeting: Scheduled for 4th March 2020 – will be moved to late April/early May PLEASE NOTE THIS A CHANGE FROM THE PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED DATE</p>	

Actions Log Summary	Meeting Date	Owner	Status Update	Next Steps
To forward previous Place Leadership Group meeting minutes for publication on HotSW LEP website.	12/02/2020	Anne-Marie Spalding		N/A
All presentations to be circulated	12/02/2020	Anne-Marie Spalding		
Artificial Intelligence and Data to be noted as an agenda item for a future meeting	08/05/19	Anne-Marie Spalding	Future meeting	
Information on funding opportunities to be shared with the LEP	08/05/19	All	Ongoing	Ongoing
A presentation on rail freight development to be brought to a future meeting	08/05/19	David Northey	Future Meeting	
Natural Capital Advocacy Document next Steps	Next meeting	Anne-Marie Spalding	Next Steps to be developed	
Workplan for future work	Next meeting	Paul Hickson		

ANNEX – Strategic intervention Ideas for Infrastructure and Place

Foundation – Infrastructure	
Clean Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabled distributed generation capacity/capability • Grid distribution capacity • EV infrastructure (roads) • Electrification of rail
Advanced Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution network and connectivity e.g. resilience of A303 • Access to ports and airports e.g. for international connectivity/exports • Supply chain efficiencies... (export region)
Artificial Intelligence and Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital connectivity and resilience • (Big) data management e.g. to facilitate/optimize smart transport and grid networks • Data management/ownership etc • Added value from data
General Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobility services e.g. to support zero carbon cities • Green infrastructure e.g. cycle routes, pedestrian walkways • Urban green spaces?

Foundation – Place	
Clean Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of regional renewable energy resources e.g. solar, wind, biomass and tidal • Innovative local energy solutions e.g. heat networks, ground source heating, efficient build etc • Grid distribution capacity
Advanced Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regionally developed renewable energy technologies/solutions? • Land management/agri-technologies to promote clean productivity gains e.g. monitoring and autonomous systems • Food processing opportunities
Artificial Intelligence and Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems and analyses to support land management to facilitate resource use and agri-tech productivity gains • Smart energy management • Food supply chain management • Data analysis opportunities/services – competitive advantages • Better equip businesses about data ownership, management, exploitation, marketing e.g. through cooperation/collaboration
General Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon capture/sequestration opportunities • Land management opportunities e.g. natural flood protection and payment for ecosystem services and for the “public good” • Digital connectivity • Feedback loop with infrastructure piece and natural capital • Carbon balance sheet • Circular economy • Health and well-being benefits