

Draft Minutes of the LEP Place Leadership Group 10 November 2020

VIA TEAMS

Attendees

Mel Squires (MS)- NFU (Chair and Board Member)

Andy Wood – East Devon Council

Caroline Ayre - Confor

Chloe Thomas – Environment Agency

Chris Balch – Plymouth University – Guest Speaker

Chrissie Ingle – HotSW LEP Rural Productivity Lead

David Ralph – HotSW LEP

David Northey – Network Rail

Derek Phillips (DP) - Exeter Chamber of Commerce & Industry

Doug Bamsey – Somerset Councils (part)

Ian Harrison – HotSW Transport Board

Mike Deaton (MD) - Devon County Council

Mike O’Dowd Jones (MODJ) - Somerset County Council

Paul Hickson (PH) - Somerset County Council/HotSW LEP

Ruth Lambert – Federation of Small Businesses

Richard Gibson - Cross Country

Sarah Jennings (SJ)- Devon Local Nature Partnership

Tim Jones (TS) - Devon and Cornwall Business Council (Part)

Supporting Officers

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

Apologies

Andrew Ardley – South Western Railway

Carl Wyard – Torbay Development Agency

David Lewis (DL) - SW Energy Hub Project Manager

David Northey (DN)- Network Rail

Eifion Jones – HotSW LEP

Helen Dobby (HD)– Environmental Agency

Helena Davidson - HotSW LEP

John Dixon (JD) - Plymouth City Council

Julian Gray – South West Coast Path

Judith Gannon – Abbey Manor Developments

Mark Worsfold - South West Water

Mel Sealey - HotSW LEP

Richard Grant – Plymouth City Council

| | Agenda item | Lead |
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| 1. | <p>Welcome, introductions and apologies MS welcomed everyone to the meeting and went through protocols. Apologies are noted above.</p> | MS |
| 2. | <p>Declarations of Interest None</p> | MS |
| 3. | <p>Minutes of the Last Meeting Two amendments – David Ralph and Julian Gray had attended the meeting Minutes of the last Place Leadership Group meeting (9 September 2020) were approved as an accurate record.</p> <p>Question was raised around the current situation on funding. DR responded – 500 enquiries for Kickstart grants with 1600 applications – currently working with Government to try to get more money. CSR will be on 25 November but this will be just for one year. GBF £354m was allocated to HotSW – there was £1.5m outstanding headroom after the first round – three additional projects are now moving forward. Projects are current going through contracting stage and starting on site.</p> | <p>MS AMS – To <i>forward minutes to publish</i></p> <p>AMS action</p> |
| 4. | <p>Western Power – Future Energy Scenarios 2023-2028 Lead was not on the call and emailed during the meeting to send apologies as something had come up which meant he was unable to attend. To be invited to next meeting which will be a single theme meeting with a deep dive into Energy.</p> | WPD |
| 5. | <p>Natural Capital Update on the paper going to the Board re Natural Capital at end of November. There is a need to identify potential funding to take forward a demonstrator project.</p> <p>Notes from Natural Capital meeting to be circulated Paper to Board to be circulated to group Agriculture Bill – notes to be circulated</p> <p>It was highlighted that Natural Capital should be mentioned in the newsletter and on the website – this will be done once a decision on how we move forward with this has been made.</p> <p>From the Chat A thought on natural capital and decarbonisation and how we develop future freight movements throughout the south west. Currently majority of freight moves via road fleet with rail playing a very small amount in our region. Therefore, there is an opportunity for the railways to have a larger role in improve our natural capital and working towards decarbonisation. A discussion yesterday with rail freight leaders came up with a number of areas that need to be considered for two types of traffic, intermodal (containers) and Fast parcel traffic as a result of the growing online market. These trains need a number of things , such as a capacity on the route, gauging and access to key locations , such as sidings ,</p> | MS |

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| | <p>good road access and loading and unloading facilities or ongoing journeys by electric road fleet. It is felt that the South West like Scotland is ideal for growth in rail freight and suggest we need to discuss this matter and how we can build this in to future plans.</p> <p>Point raised to also look at the Timber Transport Forum and rail freight of timber including best practice</p> <p>In light of the large distribution points it was suggested that a separate discussion takes place around a strategy on what business requires and how rail can help to meet our decarbonisation targets.</p> <p>Request made for membership of all working groups to be circulated.</p> | AMS action |
| 5. | <p>Planning White Paper</p> <p>Presentation to look at the implications of the Planning White Paper</p> <p>A package of proposals for reform of the planning system in England to streamline and modernise the planning process, improve outcomes on design and sustainability, reform developer contributions and ensure more land is available for development where it is needed. Set against a context of Brexit, Covid-19 and Climate Emergency.</p> <p>Last 10 years has seen prioritisation of housing growth and measures to aid that process. Three Pillars – Pillar 1 Planning for Development – Shift from discretionary to rules based system of planning – Growth Area, Renewal Areas, Protected areas (National Parks, AONBs etc). Streamlined Local Plans – map based with more environmental assessment. Once set there will be little chance for engagement.</p> <p>Pillar 2 – Planning for beautiful and sustainable places – A framework for quality – National Design Guide, National model design code, revised Manual for Streets – Central guidance as to what ‘good’ looks like. Local Authorities will be required to appoint Chief Officers for Design and Place Making.</p> <p>Pillar 3 – Planning for infrastructure and connected places – Abolition of s106 and CIL to be replaced with Infrastructure Levy based on nationally set rate or rates as fixed proportion of completed development value, subject to minimum values. Payment on occupation of schemes. Councils could borrow against future receipts.</p> <p>Key drivers for change – Digitalisation, open data and PropTech tools to enable engagement. Significant investment in skills will be required, eg public engagement and design.</p> <p>Rule based system will be a real challenge – little chance of discussion and change.</p> <p>Jobs and wealth does not come through strongly mostly focused on housing.</p> <p>Biggest challenge – the political economy – some concessions expected.</p> | Chris Balch |

Mike Deaton – County deals with Waste and Minerals applications which are a concern in this new system. Many minerals in the countryside and not sure how that will work. New quarries and waste sites usually have a lot of opposition. Duty to cooperate has been a concern. Community Infrastructure levy has not been good for the County Council as money for schools, etc was taken out of their hands and they had to rely on Districts to allocate which has not always happened. Concerns around how the new levy will be accessed in two tier authorities. Also members had concerns around the lack of detail in the paper. Chairs of Planning in Devon met to prepare a robust response to MPs.

CB responded that this paper seems to be similar to a Green Paper, not a White Paper as it is so high level and leaves so many questions unanswered.

Andy Wood - Quotes from Conservative Secretaries of State – 10 years apart
6th July 2010 “Communities will no longer have to endure the previous government’s failed Soviet tractor style top-down planning targets - they were a terrible, expensive, time-consuming way to impose house building...They were a national disaster that robbed local people of their democratic voice, alienating them and entrenching opposition against new development.”

6th August 2020 “A new nationally-determined, binding housing requirement that local planning authorities would have to deliver through their Local Plans.”

From a District perspective everyone agrees with the challenges and everyone agrees on simplification. Concerns around community engagement, how climate changes features in that as well. Major concern around the planning deficit. Tried to do a wider plan but it did not work and they are back to local plans. There is a major problem with strategic planning. Also to highlight the housing methodology – the reward for delivering more housing is more housing, without necessarily having the infrastructure to support it.

Concerns about the quality of developments was raised. Nansledan being held up as a good example of high quality place making. About a mile from there is a Persimmon development which is not a good example. The Duchy put additional rules around the development. The two developments have been delivered under the same planning authority but with completely different qualitative outcomes suggests that something more is needed. The paper is so housing dominated that it causes concerns around the ‘jobs and wealth’.

CB it is interesting to note that planning can influence this – Prince Charles has taken a different longer term view than profit. The tools that planners have to negotiate design is low. The paper seems to be based on a design ideal that doesn’t exist in most places.

IH – the Government seems focused on the quantum of housing being delivered and this paper seems to have come out as a means of tackling that – will it work? The housing developers are unlikely to deliver more houses than they are doing at the moment as that is the amount they can sell. Also what does the paper do for affordable housing? What we are lacking is sufficient delivery of affordable housing.

CB – private developers will not provide the amount of affordable housing needed – affordability is a real issue.

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| | <p>PH – the LEP chose not to respond to the White Paper, more appropriate to let the discussion run – this presentation is about helping us to understand the issues. The presentation should be shared with Board members to help their understanding and we should produce a summary of the key issues that could be useful in informing MPs. Not to agree or disagree but as an ongoing discussion around policy, what we feel are the key issues in the Heart of the South West.</p> <p>TJ – judiciary review will be interesting as will the statutory consultation issues. It will be interesting to see how this group can take this forward in terms of jobs and economic growth. The production of a local plan in 30 months is very challenging if there are no zonal changes. Need to look at how to layer into this what our spatial needs are going to be, needing to be extremely nimble in the changing market. We do not want decisions made remotely from the South West. Cranbrook and Sherford came out of an assumption of population growth.</p> <p>IH – Cranbrook and Sherford came from the strategic planning system in the early 1990s.</p> <p>From the Chat –</p> <p>SJ - From a natural cap perspective the PWP is totally lacking in detail - but the current system does need to be streamlined . Concerns regs capacity to frontload the system/ the focus on using existing data /clarity reg env req for full permission/ need for more resource for LPAs etc etc. PWP states that there is an intention to design a quicker simpler framework for assessing env impacts..... Devon LNP has done a headline response - If anyone want to see it let me know.</p> | |
| <p>6.</p> | <p>Energy</p> <p>There have been two meetings of the Energy Working group which is made up mainly of local authority officers, plus there is a member of Regen SW.</p> <p>Currently plotting potential sites across the Heart of the South West that are in local authority ownership. Somerset has been completed and the offer is available to all local authorities. Presentation to be circulated</p> <p>Under the recent Getting Building Fund two retrofit projects were approved – one in Plymouth and one in Exeter – plus an SME carbon reduction advice service. These are currently going through the contracting phase.</p> <p>DR commented that he sees quite a lot of the energy projects going through and wonders if the HotSW is getting its fair share. Are projects coming forward – third of the geography of the South West. Update from David Lewis at next meeting to clarify situation.</p> <p>SJ is happy to promote through Climate Emergency team in Devon.</p> <p>David Northey commented that there are opportunities on the land around the railway through the Heart of the South West. Should be working in partnership to see what the rail could offer on the brownfield sites, which may have been earmarked for other development but would be better used for energy.</p> | <p>AMS</p> |

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| | <p>DB commented that land may be in public ownership but there needs to be consideration of other issues. There is no strategic overlay of where things happen and he was concerned that energy projects may take place at a cost to other things. Solar parks have sprung up, sometimes not in the best places. He also highlighted the potential for Nuclear Fusion and the discussions that are taking place around this. Two potential sites in the HotSW – Hinkley and Gravity. AMS confirmed that Nuclear Fusion is on the radar but on the ‘later’ list.</p> <p>PH suggested a deep dive into Energy at the next meeting. Potentially Energy White Paper may be available, looking at potential strategic energy projects. Invite WPD to next meeting. Single themed meeting on Energy</p> | |
| <p>7.</p> | <p>Rural Productivity</p> <p>First Rural Productivity Steering Group meeting was held on 4 November, guided by the Rural Commission report (2017) but reviewed in light of Covid-19 and Brexit. Recommendations drawn from that. The Group felt that the document was useful but not ambitious or innovative enough and didn’t cover issues such as food and fuel poverty, sustainability or net-zero.</p> <p>Issues identified at this early stage were: Support for the South West Food Hub in mapping suppliers but also looking at how this could be broadened to include other sectors, eg wood. To provide additional resources to help producers to sell online – issues around training.</p> <p>Strong support for a LEADER type programme to help Micros and SMEs through Covid and Brexit in rural areas.</p> <p>What was highlighted is that ‘rural’ is a big and diverse ‘industry’ and the group are keen to ensure that things are not duplicated – clear reporting paths needed between the LEP groups. Also to do a stock check of what has been done before and what worked effectively to see what may work now in the current climate.</p> <p>Looking at short, medium and long term actions – short term would be Covid response outputs to identify themes to provide a strategic approach.</p> <p>SJ useful to receive a list of the people on the Rural Productivity Group.</p> <p>CI highlighted that they will be looking to add people to fill the ‘gaps’.</p> | <p>CI</p> |
| <p>8.</p> | <p>Outputs and Key Results (OKRs)</p> <p>Progress and performance reporting for the Place arena. Original set agreed in the summer and will be updated for the end of the year.</p> <p>Draft document to be circulated to group for comment.</p> | <p>PH</p> |

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| 9. | <p>AOB</p> <p>Caroline Ayre – plea to be included in all groups where forestry is applicable.</p> <p>TJ – Issues on the Somerset Levels and River Axe as a result of phosphate levels and the spatial impact is profound. Best example of how we need to bring together land management, the environment and spatial development.</p> <p>MS pointed out that this needs reflection.</p> <p>PH – Somerset planning authorities are working together on this and it may be something that the LEP Board needs to be informed about.</p> <p>DB – goes back to Natural Capital and it needs a new/different response to the traditional approach. PH and DB to discuss how to keep colleagues in the loop. Some very substantial projects caught up in it. Also reflects on Recovery.</p> <p>DR – Need update on Employment Land review. Also reprocurement of the CDS package is taking place. CDS should provide an update on this and also gigabit at the next meeting.</p> | |
| | <p>Next meeting: TBC</p> | |

| Actions Log Summary | Meeting Date | Owner | Status Update | Next Steps |
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| To forward previous Place Leadership Group meeting minutes for publication on HotSW LEP website. | 10/11/2020 | Anne-Marie Spalding | | N/A |
| 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 | Ongoing | Anne-Marie Spalding | Next Steps to be developed | |
| OKRs for Q4 2020/21 | To be circulated for comment | Paul Hickson | Updated draft to be circulated | |

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| | | | feedback requested. | |
| Explore additional resource for Natural Capital task group | Ongoing | Paul Hickson | | |
| CDS to be invited to provide update on Delivery Contracts | Next Meeting | CDS | | |
| Membership of all groups to be circulated | | Anne-Marie Spalding | | |

ANNEX – Strategic intervention Ideas for Infrastructure and Place

| Foundation – Infrastructure | |
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| 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 | |
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| 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 |