

Draft Minutes of HotSW LEP CIC Board Meeting

22 October 2021

9.30 – 11.30 am

Via MS Teams

Board Attendees:

David Bird, Isca Ventures LLP (in situ at Exeter Jockey Club conference room)
Jane Dumeresque – Non-Exec Director
John Laramy CBE - Principal & CEO, Exeter College
Prof. Judith Petts CBE– Vice-Chancellor & Chief Executive, University of Plymouth
Karl Tucker – Chair HotSW LEP and Managing Director, Yeo Valley Properties Ltd (in situ at Exeter Jockey Club conference room)
Cllr Nick Kelly – Leader, Plymouth City Council
Paul Coles – CEO, SWBC
Paul Crawford – Chief Executive, LiveWest
Cllr Phil Bialyk – Leader, Exeter City Council
Richard Stevens – Managing Director, Plymouth City Bus Ltd
Cllr Rufus Gilbert -Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills, Devon County Council
Stuart Brocklehurst – Chief Executive, Applegate
Cllr Val Keitch – Leader, South Somerset Council
Vince Flower – Non-Exec Director

Officers in attendance:

Ben Bryant – Finance Officer for the LEP, Somerset County Council
Chris Evans - Assistant Director of Innovation, Impact & Business, University of Exeter
Claire Gibson – Head of Delivery, HotSW LEP (in situ at Exeter Jockey Club conference room)
David Ralph – Chief Executive, HotSW LEP (in situ at Exeter Jockey Club conference room)
Eifion Jones – COO, HotSW LEP (in situ at Exeter Jockey Club conference room)
Jane Portman – Chief Executive, South Somerset Council accompanying Cllr Val Keitch
Keri Denton - Head of Economy & Enterprise, Devon County Council, accompanying Cllr Rufus Gilbert
Kevin Mowat – Director of Place, Torbay Council
Paul Hickson - Strategic Commissioning Manager – Economy and Planning, Somerset County Council
Tracey Lee – Chief Executive, Plymouth City Council accompanying Cllr Nick Kelly

Others in attendance

Carl Benneyworth - Rural Officer & Strategic Tourism Officer, HotSW LEP based at Somerset County Council
Elizabeth Spence - Deputy Area Lead for HotSW & Dorset, Cities & Local Growth Unit – South West
Janet Powell – Executive Assistant, HotSW LEP (for minutes) (in situ at Exeter Jockey Club conference room)
Suzanne Bond - Area Lead HotSW, Cities and Local Growth Unit - South West

Apologies:

Anne Marie Morris MP – representing Devon MPs

Ben Bradshaw – representing Devon MPs

CLlr David Hall - Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development, Somerset County Council (proxy vote given to Karl Tucker)

David Warburton MP – representing Somerset MPs

Fiona McMillan OBE – Senior Advisor, EDF Energy

Prof Lisa Roberts – Vice-Chancellor, University of Exeter (proxy vote given to Karl Tucker)

Melanie Squires MBE – SW Regional Director, NFU (proxy vote given to Karl Tucker)

Sarah Cook - Vice President UK Operations, Leonardo (proxy vote given to Karl Tucker)

CLlr Steve Darling – Leader, Torbay Council (proxy vote given to Karl Tucker)

Paper	Decision	Decision agreed
6. Chief Executive's Report	F&R Committee, endorsed by the S151 Officer is recommending the updated Local Assurance Framework to the Board for approval.	The board agreed the updated Assurance Framework.
6. Chief Executive's Report annex A – Strategic Investment Panel (SIP) terms of reference	For the Board to approve the revised SIP terms of reference.	The Board agreed these.
7. Inclusive Growth	For the Board to consider and endorse the emerging approach to inclusive growth.	The Board endorsed the emerging approach to inclusive growth taking into account the feedback given.
8. Digital Investment Programme	For the Board to approve the Digital Investment Programme focussing on digital skills, digital business utilisation, digital infrastructure, and Build Back Better digital futures programmes.	The board approved the 5 recommendations in the paper.
9 iii) annex A & annex B North Devon Enterprise Centre Getting Building Fund Business case	For the Board to approve the SIP recommendation towards phase 2 of the North Devon Enterprise Centre under the Getting Building Fund programme.	The Board agreed the priorities and approved the recommendation from SIP for the investment with conditions as noted.

Agenda	Action
Originally the Board meeting was to be held face to face in a conference room at the Exeter Jockey Club Club, however, the Chair decided on 20 October to revert to a On-line Teams meeting instead, due to the rising numbers of covid both in the counties and nationally. Therefore a small amount of Board members and officers were in situ due to the filming for the AGM webinar straight after the Board meeting noted above.	

1. Welcome & Apologies Apologies as above.	
2. Declarations of interest All Board Directors submit yearly annual submission declarations of interest forms. Only those conflicts of interests over and above those already declared are required to be raised. Nothing further raised.	
3. A little bit of Culture An extract from a poem entitled 'Warning' (when I am old) by Jenny Joseph was read out by PCrawford.	
4. Draft minutes of 16 July Board meeting and actions arising Amendment - under the agenda item 12 action to rephrase to- DWP shortcomings will be taken up with the relevant Gov't partners. Action: To ensure the LEP links into groups already up and running in the sustainable aviation and clean growth energy sectors plus within digital transformation to avoid duplication. Action: To ensure the affordability costs of electricity versus gas is considered and forms part of the terms of reference for the energy programme board. The above two actions points will be covered in the updates provided by CG. All other actions completed and minutes taken as accurate.	JP CG CG
5. Questions from the public None.	
6. Chief Executive's Report <u>To summarise:-</u> Post pandemic there remain challenges and the LEP needs to be adaptable to the changes in the way the economy recovers. The report includes a couple of recommendations about the Local Assurance Framework and JD becoming a voting member of the Strategic Investment Panel (SIP). Bridgwater Bay was unsuccessful in its STEP nomination for Nuclear Fusion in Somerset and also for supporting further work on Space and Satellites). Picking up recommendations from the Board Effectiveness Review:- Under the 1 st review led by SB this recommended improving the quality of performance management information to the Board and under agenda item 9 i) a new model is set out with feedback appreciated from the Board. Diversity – after the AGM today, the LEP will no longer be compliant against gender balance as two female board members will be stepping down. Gov't have confirmed they are happy with the current position whilst waiting for the LEP review to be completed. The LEP has been working with the Business Representative Organisations (BROs) to try to address this,	

developing a Future Leaders Programme currently with ten people just about to start. If Board members have any further nominations these would be welcomed.

Tech Talent Charter – The LEP is sponsoring some workshops around diversity (not just in the tech business but across the patch). The LEP has been asked to sign up and this is being considered.

GSW -there is a steering group meeting scheduled for 11 November and an APPG on 23 November with the focus on rural issues based on the draft paper MS prepared which is being circulated.

LEP review – nothing to add just waiting to see what announcements are forthcoming from the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) next week. The key points LEPs are looking for answers for are; what the future function of LEPs is, what funding will be provided for this and the future funding model for Growth Hubs (GH)?

The CEO handed over to CG to update the Board on Clean Growth.

The long awaited Net-zero strategy from Gov't was published this week just in time for COP 26.

- It sets out a pathway to try to reduce emissions across a variety of sectors and to ultimately meet the sixth carbon budget with plans and investments targeted toward 2037 which is the end of that budget period.
- Treasury has announced £36 billion of capital investment to support the delivery of this to create 190, 000 jobs by 2025 and 400, 00 by 2030 and leverage in £90 billion of private investment by 2030.

Headlines for HotSW include:-

- The restated commitment for 1g watt floating offshore wind by 2030 utilising the Celtic Seas backed up by £380 million of funding to support the offshore wind sector as a whole.
- The commitment of 5 g watt of hydrogen capacity by 2030 with a revenue mechanism to enable this to happen. The LEP is already looking at some hydrogen projects in the area.
- The Heat and Building Strategy was also published this week, setting out that all new heating appliances in homes and workplaces need to be low carbon by 2035, with an ambition for no new gas boilers to be sold by 2035.
- There is a heat pump ready programme with £60 million to help pioneer heat pump technology. The LEP is looking to do some supply chain work to understand the opportunities for the area in conjunction with the SW Energy Hub who have been asked to fast track this for the area seen as critical to benefit from this investment.
- For Natural Capital, there is the Farming Investment Fund and the Farming Innovation Programme to support low carbon farming and agricultural innovation. Also, additional funding for the Nature for Climate Fund to ensure more heat restoration, woodland creation, and management, with more investment in net-zero related research and development (R & D) across natural resources.

The Transport De-Carbonisation Plan was published a few weeks ago with more money for

zero-emission vehicle grants and EV infrastructure and a focus on local on-street residential charging, plus:-

- £2 billion investment to enable half of the journeys in towns and cities to be cycled or walked by 2030.
- £3 billion to create integrated bus networks.
- significant investment in rail electrification, although no sums are attached to this.
- an extension to clean maritime demonstration competition (the LEP was recently successful in 3 awards)
- the aim is to be the world leader in zero-emission flight which aligns with the LEP's priorities.
- also some cross-cutting investment around innovation, skills, supply chain development which the LEP will start to work through and see these align.

LEPs were referenced - mentioning the significant role the network plays in providing advice and incentives for businesses to reach net-zero; the strategy is keen to explore how local networks i.e Growth Hubs and LEPs can be used to drive energy-efficient behaviours within businesses; and how the local net zero programme, the SW Energy Hub (rebranded the SW Net Zero Hub) can support LEPs in playing a leading role in decarbonisation and clean growth. There was some mention of projects and activities in the HotSW area – name-checked was the new community forest in Plymouth and South Devon, Hinkley, and agreement for the Recovery Challenge Fund for the Wildlife and Wetland Trust but similarly to other LEPs few references. Surprisingly there was hardly any reference to Universities given their focus on innovation.

Action: The LEP is keen to work with partners on the strategies above to respond collaboratively on some of these priorities.

All/CG

The following points were raised:-

- There was a query over whether there was sufficient electricity to make hydrogen but with 1 gigawatt of flow and 40 gigawatts of offshore wind planned there is sufficient renewables to support hydrogen. Other types of hydrogen are also being looked at including green which is not reliant on renewables.
- A separate Research and Innovation Framework was published on the same day, driven by the Gov'ts Chief Scientist. This focuses on the technology but does not include any new modes of funding or how behaviours, economics, and financing would need to change to deliver a systems-based approach and leaves a massive list of unanswered research and innovation questions. There is a strong emphasis on the private sector as investors, not just the public sector, and on collaborative working.
- The HotSW's floating offshore, number one for its major decarbonisation technology is in the frameworks' list of questions and highlights these are the right questions for this work in the South West, particularly at the demonstration point of technology readiness level (TRL) 3 or 4 into actual mainstream production with significant opportunities. In response, JD has written a paper published next week in effect saying it's a giant list of questions but where are the new modes of funding? The framework will direct the funding via a delivery plan but does not show the flow of funding, relying on UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and Innovate, with no account taken of other types of

<p>funding from e.g the Advanced Research & Invention Agency (ARIA) and local funding and how this can sit alongside research funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The LEP needs to unpick the positioning of ‘offshore floating wind’ from ‘Oceans Futures’ and take up the references made about the Celtic Sea, the North Sea, and clean maritime (where HotSW has been successful) to maximise the available opportunities. ➤ Natural capital also has a chance to feed into the production of clean hydrogen. ➤ It is disappointing that the detail on hydrogen and FLOW was not available earlier and before the LEPs review as this is an area where LEPs can add value on clean growth and will no doubt form much of the HotSW LEPs work next year. <p>Action: The short paper written by JP in response to the Research and Innovation Framework can be circulated to those Board members who have an interest.</p> <p>Action: There is a significant manufacturer of domestic heating appliances in the HotSW area that has been looking into hydrogen but is looking for Gov’t funding to pump prime this work, further discussion is to be taken offline.</p> <p>Action: For the Innovation piece to be brought forward as an agenda topic for the next Board meeting in January.</p> <p>Action: Within the CEO Report item 7 Progress on Diversity there was a query concerning the lack of female shortlisted candidates who took up the opportunity of mentoring through the Future Leaders Programme. This could be due to a variety of reasons which will be reviewed with the Nominations Committee who oversaw the recruitment exercise.</p> <p>The board agreed to:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To approve the Strategic Investment Panel (SAP) revised Terms of Reference 2) To approve the update to the Local Assurance Framework as recommended by the Finance and Resource Committee. <p>6a) Annex – Productivity Strategy Delivery update was noted.</p>	<p>JP</p> <p>PColes/CG</p> <p>SB/DR</p> <p>DR/Noms Committee</p>
<p>7. Inclusive Growth – Paul Crawford</p> <p>The contents of the paper were discussed at length at a recent HotSW Joint Committee chaired by VKeitch with unanimous support for the proposals with comments fed back in. The recent changes within the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the addition of ‘levelling up’ to their portfolio presents a great opportunity for the LEP to think about inclusive growth and what it means in the context of levelling up for the HotSW area, ensuring these principles are embedded into all the activities and decisions of the sub-committees that underpin the LEP and Joint Committee. It is proposed that in recruiting an expert panel this will advise and shape these into all work programmes. Post pandemic there are several issues:- net zero, new skills, productivity, a shifting labour force, and an affordability housing crisis which are the most significant for the HotSW area and translate into 4 key objectives:- good business, skills, housing, and health. The expert panel will work within the framework to ensure there are tangible actions, objectives, and measure to aid decision-making.</p>	

The Board is asked to provide feedback, to approve the principles and definitions, together with the governance arrangements to move forward to recruit the expert panel. Thanks were given to EJ and Debbie Stafford for their contribution and support in getting to this stage.

Comments that arose:-

- Would the expert panel need to comment on every project? The aim would be to identify employers and individuals within the region to gain their perspective of where the economic challenges are, who wish to actively contribute to shaping a series of high-level activities which translate into better skills, better-paid jobs, greater housing accessibility, and to prevent a shifting labour force. This will determine what businesses need to drive economic prosperity and which subcommittee is best placed to provide oversight to shape the priorities and opportunities. If these interrelated issues are not tackled within the next decade there will be a workforce that cannot afford to live and be housed in the region which will directly affect employer's ability to attract and retain people to work in the region thus helping productivity.
- How sector-specific will the review be? The LEP will need to identify those industries in the area with real opportunities to provide traction moving forward, those that align to the LEP priorities and with the emerging LEPs role (with or without grant allocation powers) where opportunities exist for businesses that have benefitted from the LEP to contribute to the agenda of clean and inclusive growth. The panel will provide high-level strong advisory guidance to the business groups who will come up with programmes of work that deliver on the inclusive growth agenda.

The other social mobility considerations that also need to be considered are:-

- How does the LEP enable those in rural and deprived communities to become more socially agile and into work, to secure roles in different parts of the geography, and to play their part in contributing?
- The shifting labour force, a post-pandemic result, has caused rising house prices due to the migration of people who can now move and live in the area but retain urban salaries. Conversely, people staying in the region can secure more highly paid opportunities out of the area - but how does this impact the economic prosperity of HotSW and the knock-on effects on housing? Consideration will need to be paid to the real challenges businesses face in recruiting and retaining high-calibre individuals and whether they have the investment appetite to create these jobs and to provide solutions to support them.
- How also do you counter the low aspirations of some of the young people in the area replicated through generations to provide motivation, support, and guidance to understand the opportunities that exist for them and to fulfill their potential and contribute to the economy?

The Board endorsed the emerging approach to inclusive growth taking into account the points raised above.

8. Digital Investment Programme – Claire Gibson

Following a deep dive session with the Board in September a clear steer was provided on

the digital investment priorities for spending the ring-fenced £8 million Local Growth Deal funding over the next three years which was taken back to SAP and the Digital Skills Partnership (DSP) to inform the skills element. Confirmation has been received from Somerset County Council (our accountable body) that £2 million of capital can be exchanged for revenue and this has shaped the proposals under the four priorities of Digital Skills, Digital Utilisation, Digital Infrastructure, and Digital Futures.

There is £1.5 million proposed for 3 priority areas on skills and Devon County Council as the skills lead has been asked to work with the DSP to come back to the LEP with a business case on how to take this strand forward.

A further £.5 million for increased business support through the Growth Hub is for dedicated digital expertise for SMEs to help them on their digital journey. However, it does not include the community triage support element for residents working from home for digital connectivity advice, as so far there is no mechanism to deliver this, but a small amount of money has been retained to continue to explore this.

£2.6 million has been allocated to help deliver against the digital futures element within the Build Back Better (BBB) plan to go out for a call with a specific commissioning brief to invite applications that will help deliver the plan, taking a more proactive role to talk to partners and encouraging them to apply i.e Tourism Data investment programme, 5g pilots, etc.

The one strand not fully progressed is Digital Infrastructure. With £3 million allocated the LEP is working with Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) to understand the outcomes of the Local Broadband Plan Review and the response from Gov't on the very 'hard to reach' areas to determine what this money should be spent and to bring proposals back to the Board.

The table in the paper sets out the proposed allocations, including a small top slice sum and a series of recommendations in section 5. The plan is to move quite quickly and at January's SIP meeting to present the details of the skills and business support cases, progressing these as matter of urgency, together with an outline proposal for the infrastructure investment. The BBB Digital Futures will take slightly longer to conclude.

The paper has progressed substantially since September and was well received by the Board.

Further comments:

- The evolution of successful digital skills boot camps is welcomed. However, infrastructure needs to include the barrier of not having IT kit which ties into the social mobility aspect i.e the need to be able to borrow kit and to ensure providers are up-to-date and teaching businesses on the latest technology.
- Technology is critical to levelling up, for inclusive growth and social mobility and needs to reach all parts of the region to provide skills to ensure no matter what home a person is born into so they can gain the skills they need.
- Technology must drive the ability to create clusters of business concentration, which in

<p>turn attracts venture capital and private equity. A centre for businesses creates a broader set of roles not only for directors and developers but for admin and back-office roles which often need to come into a physical centre thereby helping to achieve inclusive growth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It is important to ensure the funding for the community triage piece remains as this is seen as a key mechanism for advice on connectivity, how to get a laptop, or how to obtain the skills to advance both their personal and work lives. <p>The board approved the 5 recommendations in the paper.</p>	
<p>9. Performance Reports standing items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Annex A Delivery Activity Report ii) Annex B Objectives and Key Results Dashboard iii) Objectives and Key Results Amber Report <p>These were covered by Eifion Jones, Chief Operating Officer.</p> <p>Following recommendations from the Board Effectiveness Review, there is a new format designed to improve the reporting and performance management of the LEP.</p> <p>It uses a short piece of narrative that sits behind a series of dashboards and is based on the agreed work plan that was published on the website. The dashboards use an objective and key results format similar to other organisations. The narrative gives key highlights and rates the issues. Green is on track or to be achieved by milestone, amber is still happening, may have slipped, or future milestone at risk, red has not happened or the milestone will be missed by a long way. The summary shows the last quarter of which 89 topics are green, 37 amber, and 4 red with further narrative provided in the cover report. The work is reviewed by both the management team and F & R.</p> <p>F & R manage the work and go through the red items and asked for the amber annex. The Chairs of the Leadership groups are also given a run-through of any key issues within their work areas. The reports are for the Board's information to be able to scrutinise the work and there is no need to review in-depth. Specific queries can be raised if desired.</p> <p>The Chair noted the above was a great improvement and asked for comments from the Board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Whilst the 'strength in places' bid for floating offshore wind was not successful there is more funding available through 'FLOW', but there is a need to prove the concept can work at different sea depths, along with how to tether and float the turbines, etc. A gap exists between the lack of demonstration sites and funding to get companies into the South West to access the South Coast sites, which is recognised by the Science Group and some of the national companies and has been picked up in the Research and Development Strategy from Gov't. The LEP needs to capitalise on the innovation demonstration questions within this document. <p>Action: There is a meeting of the Offshore Wind Catapult in the next couple of weeks and the issue of demonstration sites and funding will be raised with feedback provided to the Board.</p>	<p>DR</p>

9ii) Build Back Better – Claire Gibson

This is the second update provided and concentrates on the 4 enabling funds driven by the Leadership groups and gives an update on activities and transformational progress particularly around aerospace, energy, health, and marine.

**9iii) Strategic Investment Panel verbal update – David Bird (*all commercially confidential*)
Annex A – North Devon Enterprise Centre (NODE) Getting Building Fund (GBF) Cover paper**

Thanks were given to the Board in approving the updating TOR.

SIP continues to drive forward the various capital programmes, many of which are coming to an end to ensure the LEP delivers on the outputs for Gov't. There is a particular focus on maximising GBF by varying the delegation given by the Board. Is the Board happy to approve the three priorities as set out in part 1 of Paper 9iii) Annex A and for SIP to reallocate any surplus funding? (NB over £250,000 stills needs to come back to the Board for approval).

The Board agreed to the priorities.

Annex B – North Devon Enterprise Centre (NODE) Getting Building Fund (GBF) Business Case

This seeks approval of the SIP recommendation to award up to £538,000 (out of the £600,000 spare finding under the GBF programme) to phase 2 of the North Devon Enterprise Centre, evaluated by an external consultant Shane Vallance and is above the SIP delegated approval of £250,00) but delivers good outputs especially for jobs.

SB explained that he was speaking both as chair of the Innovation Board and as a director located in northern Devon, and thanked RG and KD for answering his questions in advance of the meeting. Maintaining gateway criteria is critical to the success of innovation centres, the information RG and KD shared showed that NODE is doing that. There are concerns locally at investment on a greenfield site rather than repurposing unused assets in the town centre, but clearly, the expansion of NODE automatically comes where NODE is located – this may, however, be an important point to bear in mind for future developments. SB endorsed the proposal and said it should make a significant contribution to levelling up northern Devon.

RG stated there has been a huge amount of work carried out by Devon County Council 's (DCC) economy team and this is a perfect example of DCC achieving with the LEP and urged the Board to approve the allocation.

JL whilst supportive made the point of possible tension between lots of little bits of activity across the patch or of creating hubs/ clusters of activity, but is interested to see how the NODE concept with outreach strands will generate this.

It is worth noting that work on the technopole is looking to address this dichotomy. Devon County Council has approved the match funding.

The board approved the recommendation from SIP for the investment with conditions as noted.

This project will probably require the use of some freedoms and flexibilities but it is SIPs intention to use this sparingly to deliver real projects and outputs by 31 March 2022 when the fund closes.

9iv) Finance Report Month 5 – David Bird (*all commercially confidential*)

Annex A - Financial Position as of 31 August 2021

Annex B- Financial Dashboard

Annex C- Going Concern

The LEP is a dormant community interest company and by law is not required to make a going concern statement but in the interests of transparency Somerset County Council (SCC) , the LEP's accountable body has produced the financial reports and annexes in the board pack. The Board was assured reserves have been built up for at least 6 months into the next financial year despite Gov't short term funding, so as not to prejudice staff and creditors by being unable to fulfill commitments. Assuming the 2nd tranche of this year's funding is forthcoming this will allow for 8 months and by then the LEP will have factored in the outcome of the LEP review, adapt the operating model in line with any funding from the Gov't next year. This is a standing agenda item on all F & R agendas to protect the LEP's stakeholders.

The LEP's government sponsor sought to manage the Board's expectations hinting the levelling up white paper may be delayed until December to give the new Secretary of State, Michael Gove (in the rebranded Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Dept or DLUHC) time to make his decisions with no clear direction forthcoming yet.

Thanks are noted to Mel Roberts, Ben Bryant, and the team at SCC for the support they provide to F & R and for reshaping the presentation of finances and the Board is commended to look at annex B Financial Dashboard which gives a really useful snapshot.

In addition to the above verbal updates were given by the following Chairs of the Leadership groups:-

Skills Advisory Panel (SAP – Vince Flower

Since the last board meeting there have been two meetings and the main message is that most of the workstreams are on track and green bar three which are still being worked upon. There is a full agenda for next weeks meeting where SB will be joining to give a presentation and the group still enjoys good engagement with a high number of participants, good momentum, and a clear direction of travel.

Innovation Board – Stuart Brocklehurst

The region has world-leading strengths in marine autonomy and environmental science which are critical to the work in the future to achieve a global Britain with proposals for a maritime autonomy assurance testbed in Plymouth and an environmental intelligence innovation park in Exeter. It is vital through the technopole that the benefits are felt more broadly across the region and not just around the two centres. Research to date shows this has not been the case with only one-third of the proportionate amount of business R & D national spending and patents. As a package, it works well playing into key national and global priorities and also into levelling up and inclusive growth bringing

broader benefits i.e career paths for people and access to the housing ladder. There is a meeting with Sir Geoffrey Cox QC, MP next week who has offered to take this forward with Gov't. Some discussions have already taken place with officials and advisors in DLUCH, BEIS and hopefully this will bring more news in the future.

Business Group – Richard Stevens

The main activity has been around the Growth Hub (GH) and inward investment. All projects are a little delayed but the group is confident they will be delivered. The ERDF extension is now at a green rating and there is additional funding to the pot which needs consideration. BEIS's review of the GH was positive with no issues around the metrics for the 3 hours deeper support which the team is now catching up fast on and will be on track to achieve the outcomes for the year. The scale-up Inspires delivery project was highlighted by BEIS as an exemplar and bucks trends compared to others placing the GH at the top end showing continuous improvement, due to the good work carried out by the team.

The CEO reflected on the glowing report from BEIS in what had been a very challenging year for supporting businesses and gave thanks from the Board to the GH staff and also to the Local Authorities in recognition of the role in getting Gov't grants out to local businesses. The member of LEP staff that works directly on Inward Investment with the Dept. for International Trade (DIT), on the high-performance opportunities of photonics, marine, future flight, and Gravity has resulted in HotSW having 4 out of the overall 30 propositions put forward into the national investment atlas going to the Global Development summit this week. This demonstrates the LEP is doing well and indicates to BEIS the significant offer from the region which requires investment whilst also raising the LEP's profile around its core proposition in BBB.

The Chair added that a recent meeting with Catherine Bennet and the new Director of the Western Gateway, Sir Gary Streeter MP and the chairs of the Dorset and Cornwall and Isles of Scilly LEP, Sir Gary heard first hand that the leaders and stakeholders of the Western Gateway has no desire or intention to increase the geographical area of the Western Gateway but are happy to collaborate with GSW on mutual areas of interest and are supportive of GSW gaining recognition from the Gov't. Sir Gary is communicating this to his colleagues across the patch and there is a letter due to go to Michael Gove again on behalf of the region's MPs and APPG to ask for recognition and some funding commensurate with other areas to work with the Western Gateway on an equal basis.

The Chair apologised for not welcoming Jane Portman the new CEO for South Somerset District Council at the beginning of the meeting and thanked her for joining the meeting.

10. ESIF update plus annexes a) ESF, b) EAFRD, c) ERDF (commercially confidential)

Of the 7 ERDF projects awaiting additional extension funding collectively of £800,000, 3 have been successful although amounts are unknown. They are; Supporting Social Enterprises run by Devon County Council, Inward Investment run by the LEP, and Digital Utilisation for Growth which will complement the digital piece referred to earlier. The joint letter by the LEP and Plymouth City Council for ESF is being drawn up to send. ESF funding

runs till the end of 2023 and has £80 million in a national fund with £40 million allocated for extensions and the other £40 million put by to manage exchange rate risks by the Dept. of Work and Pensions. The Board was reminded that the LEP is not responsible for this, the managing authority is the Gov't to which the LEP provides advice. The challenge will be to demonstrate value for these projects and how they can merge with future funding streams i.e UK Shared Prosperity Fund etc and which one/s can continue in some form.	
11. Papers for noting. No comment.	
12. AOB CG: On behalf of Mel Squires, Chair of Place to give an update on the food mapping supply chain study which the LEP is funding along with Devon and Somerset County Councils and the NFU. The University of Exeter is carrying out the research and have produced a short 2-page briefing which will be circulated to the Board and the full report will be available at January's Board meeting. JL: It is 'Love our colleges' week and urged Comms to say the LEP loves all its colleges in the patch. KT: Thanked everyone for their time and hopefully, there will be some clarity moving forward for the LEP to have renewed purpose in 2022 when the LEP Review is completed.	Done

Next Board meeting – 28 January 2022 9.30 am – 12.30 pm with confirmation that this will be via MS Teams.