

**Draft Minutes – Minutes of LEP Board meeting held on 24 January
2020 enclosed**

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 9

West of England West of England LEP Board

Friday, 24 January 2020, 9:00am
Not Open to the Public
Held at 3 Rivergate, Bristol BS1 6ER

Present:

Joanne Rumley, Foot Anstey
Margot Day, Buro Happold
Richard Bonner, Arcadis
Natasha Swinscoe, Academic Health Science
Network
Heather Cooper, Hargreaves Lansdown
Prof Steve West, West of England LEP
Katharine Finn, PwC
David Brown, The Bristol Port Company
Neil Douglas, Viper Innovations

Christopher Grier, Airbus
Dick Penny, Watershed
Jon Reynolds, GDS Digital
Mayor Marvin Rees, Bristol City Council
Cllr Toby Savage, South Gloucestershire Council
Mayor Tim Bowles, West of England Combined
Authority
Cllr Dine Romero, Bath and North East Somerset
Council
Cllr Donald Davies, North Somerset Council

Officers In Attendance:

Patricia Greer, LEP Board CEO
Dave Perry, Chief Executive, South
Gloucestershire Council
Jo Walker, Chief Executive, North Somerset
Council

Will Godfrey, Chief Executive, Bath & North East
Somerset Council
Mike Jackson, Chief Executive, Bristol City
Council

Also In Attendance:

Katherine Bennett, Chair, Western Gateway
Louise Sutherland, Be The Business
Emma Cooper, Be The Business
Matt Bright, Be The Business

Oliver Rooke, BEIS

Apologies:

Zoe Metcalfe, Arup
Prof Hugh Brady, University of Bristol

Mohammed Saddiq, Wessex Water

Minutes

		Action
1	Welcome and apologies The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting and those present introduced themselves. Apologies for absence were received from Mohammed Saddiq, Hugh Brady and Zoe Metcalfe.	
2	Minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2019 The minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2019 were agreed as a correct record.	
3	Declaration Of Interest	

	<p>The following declarations of interest were declared:</p> <p>Steve West declared an interest as the University of the West of England was in receipt of some funds through LEP.</p>	
4	<p>Western Gateway</p> <p>Katherine Bennett, Senior Vice-President at Airbus, and Independent Chair of the ‘Western Gateway’ attended the meeting to update on progress in developing the proposition and to discuss with the Board their views on its shaping.</p> <p>The following points were raised during discussion of this item:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LEP’s focus was on delivering the Local Industrial Strategy priorities of clean and inclusive growth in the West of England; • The principle of pan regional collaboration was welcomed where it adds value to the work of the constituent regions but there was need for clarity about the role and purpose of the Western Gateway; • The exact geography of the Western Gateway was not fixed and synergies with neighbouring places should be considered. Attention was drawn to the publication of the prospectus of the ‘Great South West’ area; • The suggestion was made that the Western Gateway focused on a single overarching proposition around the climate emergency. Within that, two or three pan-regional propositions, perhaps including renewable energy generation (including tidal power) and a new energy vehicle demonstrator on the M4 could form the focus of the Gateway; <p>ACTION: That LEP Board continue to support Katherine Bennett in developing the scope of the Western Gateway;</p>	
5	<p>Be The Business (video link attached)</p> <p>Louise Sutherland, Emma Cooper and Matt Bright attended the meeting on behalf of Be The Business and gave an introduction to the campaign to drive productivity in SMEs. This followed a review of the LIS Productivity Challenge Delivery Programme business case at the last Board meeting, with a focus on how LEP Board members could get involved to help lead a new regional productivity movement.</p> <p>The following points were raised during the discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The type of bespoke regional approach outlined by BtB would be a first nationally; • It was important that business thought equally about organisational ‘culture’ and how that could be linked to a contribution to society at a higher level as well as alignment with the environment in which they operate. It was noted that such alignments could help SMEs boost productivity; • There was a wider concern about the link between productivity and poverty as low wages often persisted where workforce productivity was high. There was also a risk that productivity improvements via capital investment (e.g. technology or machinery replacing labour) could have adverse impacts on the labour market. • The link between technological innovation and productivity was relevant to 	

	<p>SMEs. Input from professional services and the tech community could be vital here.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approach was aligned to the region’s university’s space, with incubators and R&SD/technology a fundamental part of the offer to SMEs. • There was a keenness to ensure the programme was delivered at pace to affect real change across the region’s SME community. • A question was raised about what methods would be used to engage a wide range of SMEs across the ‘long tail’. Many SMEs failed due to productivity but most needed to acknowledge the stress they were under. This was a live issue in the west and there was evidence and case studies. BtB were working with government’s Behavioural Insights Team which looked for the trigger points for helping SMEs in this way. In addition, there were a number of existing ‘diagnostic tools’ through the Growth Hub and business-led network organisations like Business West. <p>An accompanying presentation was given at the meeting but the embedded video had not worked. That video can be viewed here:</p> <p>https://vimeo.com/373115074</p> <p>ACTION: Reflecting on feedback and through follow-up discussions, a LEP Board proposition would be brought to the LEP meeting in two meeting’s time.</p>	
6	<p>Update on Climate Emergency Planning</p> <p>Helen Edelstyn, Senior Policy Manager and Jess Lee, Head of Policy and Strategy, submitted a report in advance of 31 January 2020 WECA Committee meeting on the Authority’s preparations in establishing an action plan following the Authority’s declaration of a climate emergency made at the WECA Committee meeting in July 2019. The Authority also stated that it would report back to the Committee every six months on progress. This is the first such six monthly report.</p> <p>The report requested the LEP Board consider the role they wished to play in providing focus and coordination of business activity recognising the vital role businesses have to play in addressing the climate change emergency.</p> <p>The following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The climate emergency should also be looked at in the context of an ecological emergency,; • It was recognised that many organisations are developing their approach to addressing the climate emergency and that these plans needed to be joined up to ensure collective action and pace, for example NHS Trusts and Universities all had action plans and there was a Climate Change Panel in Bristol University which can be asked to help with developing the evidence base ; • ; • There is the potential to link to the “Be The Business” work earlier on the agenda in considering the role business support initiatives can play in driving sustainability. ; • It was stated that the City Leap project had been launched to help transform Bristol into a zero carbon city. It was asked that an update be brought to the next meeting; 	

The Chair in summing up stated that there is an important role business can play in championing the Climate Emergency and welcomed input from members in developing plans.

ACTION: That an update on City Leap be brought to the next meeting.

AGREED:

- (1) That the comments made on the report be taken into consideration during the report's consideration at WECA Committee at its meeting on 31 January 2020;
- (2) That the LEP Board recognise that addressing the climate change emergency would require action from a wide range of partners across the region and the role that the LEP Board could play in focussing and coordinating that activity and in particular:
 - Actions that the Board members' organisations were able to take;
 - The Board's role in stimulating and providing a focus for activity both between Board members organisations and with the wider business community;
 - The Board's role in identifying and championing best practice examples and low carbon innovation;
 - The role the Board wanted to take in the development of the Climate Emergency Action Plan including whether the Board wished to establish a climate emergency sub-group to take forward work in this area.

7

Local Growth Fund Progress Update

Pete Davis introduced a report setting out progress with the delivery of the Local Growth Fund programme and the current position regarding spend within the required timeframe. The LEP Board were recommended to give any views on the LGF programme, the forecast spend position and risks as set out in the report.

The following comments were raised:

- The Board asked for clarity on projects that were likely to slip or that may not be able to be delivered so that any influence the LEP could have on the delivery of those projects could be used if necessary. Where appropriate, any plans for the reinvestment of funds should be flagged as soon as possible;
- It was noted in response that there was a certain amount of overprogramming with some commitments being shown in the next financial year. The Authority did not yet know what fund would be replacing the Local Growth Fund and government announcements were awaited;
- A slight typographical error in the report was noted in Appendix 1 where

	<p>the second column should read “20/21” not “19/20”;</p> <p>Agreed: That the LGF programme, the forecast spend position and risks, as set out in the report, be noted.</p>	
8	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freeport – David Brown, The Bristol Port Company raised the issue of creating a Free Port area at Bristol Docks. • The issue of the expansion of Bristol Airport was raised and the board agreed to consider a draft letter setting out an agreed position of the Board; 	
9	<p>Upcoming Meetings</p> <p>The LEP Board’s AGM meeting would be held on Wednesday, 4 March 2020.</p> <p>The LEP Board would also meet on Friday 13 March 2020.</p>	

DRAFT

This page is intentionally left blank