

Decisions of West of England Joint Committee on 8 April 2022

NUMBER	AGENDA ITEM	DECISIONS
9.	Latest Local Enterprise Partnership revenue budget outturn report	<p>The Joint Committee RESOLVED to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Note the Revised Analysis of LEP External Grants as at the end of February 2022. 2) Note the LEP revenue outturn as set out in Appendix 1. 3) Approve the Full Business Case for the acquisition of property in Milsom Quarter, Bath for the Fashion Museum and the award of funding in line with the Red Book valuation and able to be accommodated within the headroom in the Revolving Infrastructure Fund programme. 4) Approve the change requests for schemes in the Local Growth and Getting Building Fund programme as set out in Appendix 2. 5) Approve the change requests for schemes in the Economic Development and Revolving Infrastructure Fund programmes as set out in Appendix 3.
10.	Joint Committee Governance Review	<p>The Joint Committee RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Joint Committee is to be re-established with new governance arrangements that make accountability clearer, and decision making more transparent. This includes the receipt of any relevant recommendations from the Local Enterprise Partnership Business Board, and any other relevant legacy matters that involve both the West of England Combined Authority area and the area of North Somerset Council. 2) Joint Committee will play its full role in the development of strategy for the West of England region as a whole, working with the LEP, Combined Authority and Western Gateway and other partners to advocate for the region with Government and other stakeholders. 3) That the four Unitary Authorities (Bristol City Council, South Gloucestershire Council, Bath and North East Somerset Council, North Somerset Council) agree to dissolve the existing Joint Committee arrangements subject to new Standing Orders being agreed by the Joint Committee, subject to Unitary Authority council governance processes.

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		<p>4) To note the comments made by the Scrutiny and LEP Chairs, which will be considered as part of the report produced by Monitoring Officers setting out new standing orders which be considered at the next meeting of the Joint Committee.</p> <p>5) Monitoring Officers will produce new standing orders which be considered at the next meeting of the Joint Committee. The new standing orders will include provisions which detail arrangements for the management of Joint Committee meetings and agenda setting; election of a chair; the co-production of reports; voting arrangements; the relationship with the Combined Authority; and the role of the Combined Authority Mayor.</p> <p>6) One Front Door funding administrative arrangements should continue with regards to relevant funds such as the Economic Development Fund and Resolving Infrastructure Fund.</p> <p>7) To ensure clearer accountability of the Joint Committee and in line with Quality Assurance Framework, approve the principle that for those funds that are the responsibility of the 4 Unitary Authorities, for example the Economic Development Fund reports, will be commissioned by the Committee and signed-off by Unitary Authority (UA) CEOs in partnership with the CEO of the LEP before publication.</p> <p>8) Note the Government White Paper "Levelling Up the United Kingdom", published on 2 February 2022, proposes changes to the current framework for the governance and funding of LEPs. To welcome the agreement of the LEP Board to establish a working group, comprising representatives from the Combined Authority, the LEP, North Somerset and a representative from the three other Unitaries to consider options and proposals regarding the future governance of the LEP to bring before the respective bodies in the early summer.</p> <p>9) Note the letter received from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities regarding 'Integrating Local Enterprise Partnerships into local democratic institutions' on 31st March 2022. Note that bespoke arrangements to maintain West of England LEP will need to be developed and welcome the opportunity to be engaged in the development of a preferred option.</p>

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		<p>10) To provide greater transparency and accountability the Joint Committee will produce an annual report which will detail its activities and set out its priorities for the year ahead. Regular updates are to be provided at Joint Committee meeting regarding the work of the Western Gateway including engagement with Government and other key stakeholders.</p> <p>11) Good governance and accountability require that the West of England Joint Committee should have a clear and distinguishable identity, distinct from the Combined Authority. The Joint Committee is to establish its own online presence whereby committee reports, and decisions can be clearly accessed by the public. This will provide public access to the Joint Committee's standing orders and terms of reference to support the public's understanding of its role and purpose.</p>