

**West of England
West of England LEP Board**

Friday, 17 May 2019, 10:30am
WECA Offices, 3 Rivergate, Bristol BS1 6ER
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Present:

Prof Steve West, West of England LEP
David Brown, The Bristol Port Company
Prof Hugh Brady, University of Bristol
Martino Burgess, Gregg Latchams
Neil Douglas, Viper Innovations
James Durie, Business West
Christopher Grier, Airbus
Dick Penny, Watershed

David Pester, TLT Solicitors
Jon Reynolds, GDS Digital
Mohammed Saddiq, Wessex Water
Mayor Marvin Rees, Bristol City Council
Cllr Toby Savage, South Gloucestershire
Mayor Tim Bowles, West of England Combined Authority
Cllr Dine Romero, Bath and North East Somerset
Cllr Donald Davies, North Somerset Council

Officers In Attendance:

Patricia Greer, Chief Executive
Dave Perry, Chief Executive, SGC
Mike Jackson, Chief Executive, BCC

Jo Walker, Chief Executive, North Somerset Council
Ashley Ayre, Chief Executive, B&NES

Apologies:

Katharine Finn, PwC

Andrew Hodgson, KPMG

Minutes

		Action
1	<p>Welcome and apologies</p> <p>Professor Steve West, Chair, welcomed everybody to the meeting and offered a specific welcome to the new Leaders of Bath & North East Somerset Council (Cllr Dine Romero) and North Somerset Council (Cllr Don Davies)</p>	
2	<p>Minutes of the meeting of 2 April 2019</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 2 April 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Regarding Item 4, there was a specific action for the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) Team to develop a Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) programme of deliverables. This would be covered under Item 6.</p>	
3	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>All Board members were reminded that they had a responsibility to treat all proposals/projects equally and impartially and therefore must declare whether they or their organisation had a direct or indirect interest in any of the projects to be considered by the Board.</p> <p>James Durie declared an interest regarding the Skills West contract and the Talent Institutes.</p> <p>Professor Steve West, Professor Hugh Brady, Dick Penny and Chris Grier also</p>	

	<p>declared an interest regarding the Talent Institute proposals.</p> <p>Dick Penny and Steve West declared an interest in Bristol Virtual Reality Lab.</p>	
4	<p>New Business Members</p> <p>The Chair reported that following a request from Government the Board should be more gender balanced, a number of potential new Board members had been recruited following an interview process. The interviews had been conducted by Steve West, Katharine Finn and Martino Burgess, although Steve West had sat out one of the interviews because he knew the candidate.</p> <p>The Chair therefore recommended that five new members join the Board, with their appointments being phased in as existing Members terms ended, subject to the approval of the Board.</p> <p>The five new members recommended were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Margot Day, Arcadis [BuroHappold] ▪ Joanne Rumley, Foot Anstey ▪ Heather Cooper, Hargreaves Lansdown ▪ Natasha Swinscoe, WEAHSN ▪ Zoe Metcalfe, Arup <p>The Board unanimously agreed the appointments.</p>	
5	<p>Employment and Skills Plan</p> <p>Stephen Bashford, Head of Business and Skills, and Rachel Pykett, Policy Manager, gave an update on the Employment and Skills plan which sat underneath the Local Industrial Strategy. Board members were requested to provide comment on the progress highlighted in the report in relation to direction of travel, strategic fit and delivery approach. The item had an accompanying presentation which was circulated following the meeting.</p> <p>The report stated that the Business and Skills Directorate was responsible for developing and managing a wide-reaching portfolio of projects and programmes against the Combined Authority's operating framework and associated objectives. The work was designed to address market failure and add value to economic development activity already in place across the public and private sectors.</p> <p>A brief update on projects currently being developed and delivered was set out, grouped into the following thematic headings, mirroring the strategic priorities of the Emerging Local Industrial Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People, Skills and Inclusive Growth; • Enterprise, Inward Investment and Trade; • Innovation and Sector Development. <p>Each of these themes had a number of objectives and projects and more details of these were set out in the report, in the accompanying presentation and verbally at the meeting. These could be categorised into five key visions and objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating our employment, skills and education system to ensure it is aligned with demand and responsive to changing patterns of employment; • Encouraging all young people to achieve their potential; 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting everyone who is able to work, to do so, by helping to address their barriers to employment; • Empowering people to progress within employment, including to better, higher paid opportunities if they wish to do so; • Ensuring employers are able to recruit and retain the diverse skills and talent they need to thrive from within and beyond the region <p>In respect of the Future Bright programme it was reported that there had been a sharp rise in the number of referrals to the programme. Whilst it was due to close in 2020, partners were keen to see the scheme extended and potentially cover a broader cohort of people. It was noted that the pilot scheme was currently going through an evaluation process.</p> <p>In respect of the Talent Institutes, a feasibility study had been undertaken to see whether WECA could invest in this large-scale activity. Eight outline submissions for possible TIs had been proposed from a range of sectors. Five of these were deemed to largely fit the expected vision of TIs. A summary of these proposals had been set out in Appendix 2 of the report. These proposals had helped to identify initial demand and need within the WECA region.</p> <p>The final Employment and Skills Plan, following a period of public consultation, would be brought to the Joint Committee for approval in July 2019.</p> <p>The following comments were made by the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LEP Board could try to influence the government in providing more apprenticeships, etc. Patricia Greer replied that there would be a spending review paper submitted with a list of things WECA would like to be provided; • It was asked whether the LEP could feedback to government regarding the engagement level in schools due to the Academy system, although it was noted that this may not be something the LEP were able to influence; • It was suggested that the issue of engagement could be raised with the Regional Schools Commissioner although it was pointed out they were more concerned with mechanisms. It was however, a real opportunity to engage with youngsters below secondary level, 10/11 year olds about what they would like to do and this is something that could make a massive difference; • It was asked what was meant by “clean” in the drive for Clean Growth. It was noted that there were certain groups that could not necessarily afford to attend interviews and trainings and there may be ways that new technologies and industries could drive modal shifts in the way people worked and travelled in the future. 	
6	<p>Local Industrial Strategy</p> <p>Jess Lee, Head of Policy & Strategy, gave an update on the Local Industrial Strategy. Since the last LEP Board meeting in April 2019 the Authority had been working to develop policy proposals which reflected the four key priority areas as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving inclusive growth; • Creating an environment for Business Growth; • Fostering Innovation; 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investing in infrastructure. <p>Policy proposals would be submitted to Government in June 2019. We will work with the Strategy Steering Group (a sub group of the LEP Board) to finalise the proposals and would report on progress to the next LEP Board.</p> <p>Jess Lee stated that the West Midlands Combined Authority had become the first Combined Authority to publish their Local Industrial Strategy, with Greater Manchester shortly to follow. WECA was aiming to publish their Local Industrial Strategy prior to the summer 2019.</p> <p>It was confirmed that a meeting of the Strategy Steering Group would be arranged before the next LEP Board meeting.</p> <p>In response to a question raised about benchmarking the Chair stated that this was a mechanism to track and monitor progress for the areas LEP had responsibility for. Once it was signed off the LEP could work through the management of the projects.</p>	
7	<p>Infrastructure Update (Mass Transit)</p> <p>David Carter, Director of Infrastructure, submitted a report with an accompanying presentation informing the Board of the progress to date and proposed next steps for the development of proposals for Mass Transit in the West of England to deliver the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating a step change in the mass movement of residents and visitors across the region to address existing congestion issues and provide new capacity to sustainably facilitate growth in Housing and Employment across the West of England; Driving inclusive growth: enabling as many people as possible to contribute and benefit from growth; Environment for business growth: supporting businesses to grow and for residents to progress their careers; Investing in infrastructure and housing for future growth, delivering on regional plans; <p>David Carter explained that the Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP) contained a proposal to study the following options for a Mass Transit scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential technology options for each route and/or the entire network; Potential alignment options and station/stop locations; Patronage forecasts; Benefits assessment; Funding options; Environmental impacts. <p>A Mass Transit scheme had the potential for making positive changes to air quality and congestion in the region as well as better opportunities to move people around, thus stimulating regeneration. Four main transit routes had been identified for further investigation: Airport corridor, North corridor, East corridor and A4 corridor.</p> <p>Comparisons of other systems had shown that Crossrail had the potential of handling 50,000 passengers per hour depending on frequency of service but it was important any particular solution covered its costs or made a small operating</p>	

	<p>profit. London Underground for example made around £1bn surplus per year but this was used to subsidise the bus network meaning the whole of London's transport network was revenue neutral. Financing of networks could include some sort of private-public partnership.</p> <p>Some parts of the network already existed such as Metrobus 1, 2 & 3 and extensions to park and ride sites, but some parts of the network still needed to be connected together more coherently.</p> <p>In order to inform the work it was vital that demand for services was clearly identified in advance and digital data would be used provided by, amongst others, mobile phone operators and Highways England.</p> <p>The Chair acknowledged that this was a strategically big project with information needed about how people were going to be travelling in 10-15 years' time. David Carter acknowledged that this would be an incremental process and it was important not to spend time getting data which was out of date.</p> <p>In response to a question asking whether the passenger numbers would make the services viable, David Carter stated that a joint objective with the DfT and Highways England was to not increase motorway traffic with the key helping passengers 'jump' the motorway network.</p> <p>Mayor Bowles said that the project was moving to the next stage with more announcements to follow. This was an opportunity to the Combined Authority and business to look at the future transport ambitions and what the nature of that work would look like.</p> <p>It was reported that there was some scepticism in the wider community as to whether any of the proposals would come to fruition. There was a concern that the schemes may be Bristol-centric rather than Bath and the fringe areas, although it was acknowledged that it was important to prioritise.</p>	
8	<p>Local Growth Fund</p> <p>Pete Davis, Head of Grant Management and Assurance, submitted a report seeking approval for the Local Growth Fund quarterly monitoring report for submission to Government. The LEP Board were requested to approve the Quarter 4 2018/19 LGF quarterly dashboard.</p> <p>The report stated that at the LEP Board meeting in January 2019 it had been agreed that the dashboard would be provided to the LEP Board for approval when possible prior to submission to the Cities and Local Growth Unit.</p> <p>The completed dashboard was tabled at the meeting. The Chair stated that if there were any concerns the Chief Executive would take another look to ensure that the projects were not slipping.</p>	
9	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The Chair reported that the Annual Report and the LEP Delivery Plan were due for sign-off by the Joint Committee on 14 June 2019. It was proposed that the document be circulated to the LEP Board members prior to that meeting for any comments. Comments received by the despatch can be considered for inclusion</p>	

	in the report, otherwise the Chair can report any comments to the Committee at its meeting on 14 June 2019.	
10	Date of Next Meeting	
	Thursday, 11 July 2019, 9.30 am, WECA Offices, 3 Rivergate, Bristol BS1 6ER	

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