



LEP Strategy Committee MINUTES

Meeting Held: Thursday 23rd March 2017,
Committee Room 2, Warrington Town Hall

Present:

Robert Davis (Chair)
Frank Jordan
Nigel Schofield

Philip Cox
Andy Farrall
Georgina Patel

Pete Waterman
Robert Mee
Andy Hulme

Apologies:

Louise Morrissey

Charlie Seward

Agenda Item 1: Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

Robert Davis welcomed members to the meeting. An Apology had been received from Louise Morrissey and Charlie Seward (represented at the meeting by Georgina Patel).

Agenda Item 2: Declarations of Interest

None.

Agenda Item 3: Minutes, Actions and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 19th January 2017 were approved.

Matters Arising

- The link to the GM and Cheshire East Science and Innovation Audit was still to be shared (AH to action)
- Andy Farrall noted that the strategy for Warrington New City has been refreshed and will be circulated to Strategy Committee Members
- It was agreed that presentations should be arranged to enable updates on progress with Constellation Partnership (formerly NGDZ), Mersey Dee Economic Axis and Warrington New City

Agenda Item 4: Strategy Work Programme Update

The contents of the report were noted.

The Committee reviewed the latest draft of the refreshed **Strategic Economic Plan**. It was noted that the work is still required on the narrative to ensure that it tells the strongest possible story about the Cheshire and Warrington economy and its growth potential.

An Executive Summary will be included. This will be in a format that will allow it to be tailored to meet the needs of specific target audiences.

It was confirmed that once adopted, the SEP would be supported by a series of more detailed strategies and delivery plans covering: -

- Skills
- Transport
- Science and Innovation
- Housing
- Digital
- Place Marketing (including the Visitor Economy)
- Energy

It was suggested that the document should also refer to existing place-based strategies (e.g. those produced by the Cheshire West and Chester Development Boards).

Andy Hulme confirmed that the next iteration of the Strategy (subject to sign off by the Strategy Committee) would be considered by the main LEP Board in April. The question of wider consultation prior to adoption of the SEP towards the end of May, will be considered by the LEP Executive.

The Committee considered a draft response to the government's consultation on the **Industrial Strategy Green Paper**. Closing date for responses to the consultation is Monday 17th April 2017 although it was noted that this is Easter Monday.

The response is being drafted by the LEP on behalf of the Economic Prosperity Board and is an opportunity to highlight how the sub-region can work with government to deliver the Industrial Strategy at a local level. This includes opportunities for the LEP to work with key sectors (such as energy and automotive) to develop 'sector deals'.

The Committee noted that the Northern Powerhouse team within BEIS is running a consultation on the **Northern Powerhouse Strategy**. This also has a closing date for responses of Monday 17th April 2017. It was agreed that a response should be submitted and that this should draw heavily on the narrative being developed for the Industrial Strategy Consultation response.

It was noted that efforts are underway to highlight the important role that LEPs can play within the Northern Powerhouse, including in the Northern Powerhouse Partnership(NPP). This includes a proposed meeting of LEP Chairs with George Osborne in his role as NPP Chair.

Agenda Item 5: Local Growth Fund Round 3 Update

A verbal update was provided. Confirmation of the Round 3 award had now been received but the final profile of the £43.28 million award is still being finalised.

Agenda Item 6: Growing Places Fund Strategy

The contents of the report, which had been held over from the January meeting, were noted.

The Committee discussed the proposal for adopting a more pro-active approach in deploying Growing Places Fund. It acknowledged the case for utilising the fund in a more directed way to support activity aligned to the LEP's policy objectives. This was considered necessary as there are still areas where market products are proving difficult to access for some more innovative projects.

It was noted that this would potentially need changes to the current governance arrangements for GPF and the procurement of specific expertise to support a more flexible and innovative approach from the LEP, and provide the Strategy Committee with the necessary assurance and due diligence.

The Committee approved the principle of adopting a more pro-active approach to deployment of GPF and the recommendation that the LEP Executive: -

- Draft a more detailed set of eligibility criteria to enable initial gateway checks to be taken out on projects being considered for GPF
- Finalise a simple Growing Places Funds Strategy which will also set out proposals for governance of the Fund
- Develop proposals to review and refresh the current arrangements for legal and technical support to the LEP for GPF applications.

Agenda Item 7: Any other business

Nigel Schofield noted that in light of the proposed Industrial Strategy, there may be a greater need to consider the benefits of industrial mapping to help better understand local supply chains.

Date, Time and Venue of next meeting.

Thursday 20th April 2017, 2.00pm*.

Venue to be confirmed.

Note that this date may be subject to change to enable tie for the Committee to consider the draft Strategic Economic Plan prior to the LEP Board on 26th April.