



BOARD MEETING

**Minutes of the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership Board Meeting
held on 21st June 2017, The Council Chamber, Town Hall, Warrington BC, Sankey Street WA1 1UH**

Present:

Prof. Tim Wheeler (Chair)
Clare Hayward
John Downes

Ged Barlow
Meredydd David
Graeme Bristow

Pete Waterman
Stephen Kinsey

Apologies:

Cllr Samantha Dixon
Christine Gaskell

Cllr Terry O'Neill
Gary Steen

Cllr Rachel Bailey
Chris Hindley

Attending / Observing:

Philip Cox (LEP Chief Executive)
Frank Jordan

Mark Livesey
Chloe Taylor

Andy Hulme

Agenda Item 1: Apologies and Introductions

1.1 Prof. Tim Wheeler welcomed Board Members and explained that he would be taking the Chair as Christine Gaskell had received an invitation from the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to meet his new Ministerial team. Apologies were received from Cllr Terry O'Neill, Cllr Samantha Dixon, Cllr Rachel Bailey, Gary Steen and Chris Hindley.

Agenda Item 2: Conflicts of Interest

2.1 No conflicts of interest were declared in relation to Agenda Items on the open section of the meeting.

Agenda Item 3: Public Presentation

3.1 No request from a member of the public had been received seven days before the meeting.

Agenda Item 4: Minutes of the Meeting held on 26th April 2017

4.1 The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record. While attempts had been made to bring the Farmer Review to present at this meeting, it had been agreed that Skills would take priority given the rapid progress that was being made and the Farmer Review would be brought to a subsequent meeting. **Action: LEP Executive**

Agenda Item 5: Chief Executive's report

5.1 The Board noted the report and additional comments from the Chief Executive and:

- Recognised that there had been significant change in the local political landscape and looked forward to connecting with new MPs and explaining the work of the Board;
- Welcomed the fact that the Chair had already written to new and returning MPs and that the LEP Executive would be looking to arrange a briefing in Westminster;
- Welcomed recent Ministerial appointments and the return of the Secretary of State for BEIS and Secretary of State for DCLG. Good relations were well established and it was noted that the LEP Executive also had good relations with incoming junior Ministers and lines of communication had already been established. Given the work programme that lay ahead it was important that such channels existed and Ministers were clear on the role Cheshire and Warrington would play in delivering the Government's programme;
- Welcomed the inclusion of HS2 in the Queens speech and recognised other key pieces of legislation e.g. Local Government Finance Bill had fallen due to General Election Result;
- Welcomed ongoing work that DCLG were taking forward in terms of LEP governance and that Cheshire and Warrington were contributing heavily to that thinking;
- Welcomed the drafting of a regional prospectus to explain what we are doing to deliver the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP).

Agenda Item 6: Review of outcome of General Election

6.1 This item was taken with Agenda item 5.

Agenda Item 7: SEP Delivery

7.1 Andy Hulme took the Board through the latest draft of the SEP, which now contained an Executive Summary and a range of graphics. Further work was ongoing in terms of presentation of the material but the substantive text was largely settled. The Board was asked to consider the near final draft and agree to the proposed dissemination strategy. In discussion, it was agreed that:

- The draft SEP was a strong document which demonstrated a significant step change from the 2014 SEP
- It would be imperative to secure the support of local and national politicians to the work programme contained in the SEP and so early engagement was essential. In terms of engaging with local politicians, briefings should be offered through the Leaders and local officers. In terms of national, an early Westminster briefing session would be of significant value.
- It was agreed that a targeted approach in briefing specific interest groups was a good idea. This had been done recently with the Rural Strategy Board and that approach had been effective.
- In addition to those groups identified in the Board paper, it was important to reach to the Private Sector too. Briefings should be offered to the CBI, local Chambers of Commerce etc. Copies of the SEP should also be sent to Senior Civil Servants.
- It would also be important to target potential inward investors and so it was agreed that a short, sharp – strategy on a page, should be developed.
- Further consideration should be given to the timing of the supporting strategies, a number of which related to government priorities. We should look to align activity wherever possible.

7.2 The Board agreed the draft SEP and endorsed the proposed dissemination strategy.

Agenda Item 8: Skills Strategy

8.1 Clare Hayward updated the Board on the progress that had been made in relation to developing the skills strategy: In discussion it was agreed that:

- The focus should remain on inspiring and communicating and in rationalising the number of initiatives that were being put to employers and providers;
- Progress should continue to be made in putting employers at the heart of the skills strategy going forward. In doing that, it would be important to reach the SME community as well as the corporates;

- Work on progressing the Pledge model and enabling it to roll out across Cheshire and Warrington should continue. A business plan was being pulled together, which could lead to a bid for money to pump prime this work;
- Work around developing the Institute of Technology model should continue and it was recognised that this would be of value to the sub-region with or without the Government's endorsement;
- The skills agenda should establish strong links with future SEP refreshes to ensure resultant activity was aligned;
- The progress that had been made around diagnosing the problems around the targeting of European funding was welcome. Again, the Board welcomed the idea of bending existing and future funding towards the clear priorities that were being identified.
- It may be useful to discuss the SEP cross-cutting skills issues at a future awayday;
- A set of slides capturing the progress being made in relation to skills would be circulated to Board Members. **Action: LEP Executive**

Agenda Item 9: Board Sub-Committee Updates

9.1 The papers provided in support of Agenda Item 9 were noted. It was agreed that in respect of P&I committee it would be helpful to circulate a spreadsheet of projects with an accompanying RAG rating.

Action: Ged Barlow

Agenda Item 10: Automotive Update

10.1 The papers provided in support of Agenda Item 10 were noted.

Item 11: Any other business

11.1 The Deputy Chief Executive highlighted that there was an opportunity for a Board Member to put themselves forward to sit on the Strategic Oversight Board for the Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund (NPIF). Cheshire and Warrington LEP had contributed £13m to the NPIF and so we stood a good chance of securing a place if we showed an interest. The role of the Board would be to provide strategic input into NPIF's governance and decision making processes.

Date and Time of Next Meeting:

Wednesday 12th July 5.00pm.

Action points:

Action: LEP Executive to bring the Farmer Review presentation of the Construction Sector to a subsequent Board Meeting.

Action: LEP Executive to circulate the skills slides to Board Members.

Action: Ged Barlow to commission project spreadsheet with accompanying RAG rating