



**Minutes of the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership
Performance and Investment Committee Meeting
held on 28th April 2021 at 1.30 via Teams**

In attendance: Chris Hindley (Chairman), Loren Jones, Paul Jackson, Ian Traynor, Alex Thompson, Joe Toward, Nichola Newton, Peter Skates, Ian Brooks, Rachel Laver.

Apologies: Stewart Brown, Catherine Walker

Presentations on: Recovery Plan – Ian Brooks
Jobs Portal and Careers Fair – Pat Jackson

Item No.	Item	To be Actioned by	By When
1.	<p>Welcome, Introductions and Apologies</p> <p>Apologies from SB and CW Due to the Corona Virus meeting held via Teams</p>		
2	<p>Conflicts of Interest</p> <p>CH asked for any conflicts to be declared.</p> <p>Declarations of interest: IB discussed potential conflict with the Jobs portal and careers fair proposal, as it was being proposed by the LEP.</p>		
3	<p>Minutes and actions from the last meeting:</p> <p>Actions from the last meeting: Marketing Cheshire will look at completing a map showing LEP interventions.</p> <p>RL spoke to Will Johnson at MHCLG about whether there was any additional funding available for the Development Fund (Evergreen). No funding currently available.</p> <p>Minutes approved.</p>		
4	<p>Recovery Plan Presentation</p> <p>IB gave a presentation on the recovery plan. He explained that this would also serve as the LEP's 21/22 delivery plan.</p>		

	<p>The recovery plan details the roadmap to restarting the Cheshire and Warrington Economy and is broken down between the key strategic themes of; Healthy, Sustainable, Inclusive and Fast Growing.</p> <p>Difficult balance between strategy and recovery. PS stated that the Councils were progressing their own recovery plans. PS will feedback on how the CEC and LEP one can work together.</p> <p>Copy of the Recovery Plan available on the LEP website.</p>	PS	May 21
5	<p>Jobs Portal and Careers Fair</p> <p>PJ detailed progress with the current Cheshire and Warrington Jobs portal. The portal pulls jobs details from Adzuna, and also details training and apprentice opportunities. 14k jobs currently on the website. Job centre Plus has been using the link to the site to refer job seekers. Only data available so far is from March following a social media campaign to drive jobs seekers to the site which resulted in a high number of visits.</p> <p>The portal was originally created as a pilot by the Northern LEPs. The proposal is to run the site for another 11 months, until the end of March 22 but just for Cheshire and Warrington. Not all LEPs are continuing with the site with LEPs making their own local arrangements.</p> <p>PDMS, the company that run the portal plan to collect analytical data and hopefully the LEP might be able gain support at a national level if a sustainable model can be developed.</p> <p>PDMS originally delivered the site at a deeply discounted cost as it was running it across a number of LEP areas. If the portal is to be continued the opportunity to run the site will be openly procured. If PDMS bid it is likely to be on a more commercial basis.</p> <p>Discussion about the added value of the website and whether a landing page would be more beneficial or a website which just focussed on the Apprentice and training opportunities as there are national job sites which invest heavily in the user experience and are the more likely sites job seekers will go to.</p> <p>The funding would have to come from LEP reserves as there is no funding programme to pay for the portal.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the value for money and sustainability of the website, the benefits, how the benefits could be measured and the strategic fit of the proposal. The committee felt that there wasn't sufficient evidence in the paper to support the project at this time. The majority of the committee voted against supporting the proposal including the s151 officer. It was suggested that the portal is supported for a further three-month period to gather more evidence to help establish the value of the site.</p>		

	<p>PJ to speak to PDMS about the cost to extend the contract for 3 months and how to best capture the user data and experience.</p> <p>Careers Fair</p> <p>The committee discussed whether to endorse the support for the Careers fairs. The numbers that had attended past events were very impressive and therefore the committee could see the clear value for money and strategic fit for this proposal and unanimously supported the proposal.</p>	PJ	May 21
5	<p>LGF Presentation</p> <p>It as agreed to postpone this until the next meeting</p> <p>RL to present at the May meeting</p>	RL	May
6	<p>Programmes Update</p> <p>RL ran through the LGF year end position. Many of the claims had come in late and many with errors, but it appeared almost all projects had fully spent their grants. Only two projects had a significant underspend which were Macclesfield College and the Business Energy Efficiency Programme (BEEP).</p> <p>Macclesfield college bought everything they planned to, but it cost £12k less than expected which they only informed the LEP of at the end of the month. They were encouraged to spend the remaining kit on any other kit they might need such as laptops which could have been invoiced before the end of the year but declined.</p> <p>The BEEP project suffered from a couple of companies pulling out at the last minute, the impact was mitigated by the over commitment of the fund that the committee had previously agreed.</p> <p>The total of underspend of £32k on a £127.7m programme can be managed by transferring the amount to mgt fees as agreed previously with BEIS. The total management fees for the whole programme amount to 0.41% well within the eligible amount.</p> <p>Ran through RAG report by exception. RL mentioned the positive progress that the Warrington Smart Grid project had made, including securing additional funding and plans to install some batteries in Warrington Town Hall. Ellesmere Port One Public Estate was also making huge progress with a significant amount of the building frame now completed.</p> <p>Congleton Link Road has now opened and has unlocked land for development as well as easing congestion.</p>		

	<p>As the fund has been successfully spent on time, a press release will be drafted to celebrate and highlight some of the achievements over the last five years of the programme.</p> <p>RL to provide outputs update at the next meeting when all the finalised claims are in.</p> <p>Getting Building Fund – the Chester Drainage tunnel project underspent due to the tunnelling equipment arriving on site over three weeks later than expected, however in anticipation of potential issues the agreement to allow a £4m claim on Centre Park Link, meant that the LEP was still able to spend the full £7.5m of GBF by the end of March as required.</p> <p>MDC continuing with the procurement of contractors but have highlighted that there may be long lead times with some of the kit. They were reminded that the funding has to be spent this year. RL will continue to work closely with them to review progress.</p> <p>RL explained the RAG ratings and that the quarterly report has a more detailed RAG rating and this will be sent over the next month for review.</p> <p>Reviewed risk register. Board to review risk register. Separate meeting to be held to discuss the register in more detail. CH, RL and IB to attend.</p>	<p>RL</p> <p>RL</p> <p>CH/IB/RL</p>	<p>May 21</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>May 21</p>
7	<p>AOB</p> <p>Next meeting 26th May 2021</p> <p>JT gave his apologies for the next meeting</p>		