



**LEP Strategy Committee
MINUTES (DRAFT)**

Meeting Held: Friday 8th December 2017,
Wyvern House, Winsford

Present:

Robert Mee (Chair)
Robert Davis
Andy Hulme

Philip Cox
Andy Farrall

Graeme Bristow
Lisa Harris

Apologies:

Frank Jordan
Stephen Kinsey

Clare Hayward
Gary Steen

Pete Waterman
Charlie Seward

Attending:

Katrina Michel (AI 3, only)

Agenda Item 1: Apologies

Robert Mee welcomed members to the meeting, in particular Lisa Harris, who has recently joined Cheshire West and Chester as Director of Places Strategy. Apologies were recorded from Clare Heyward, Frank Jordan, Charlie Seward (represented by Lisa Harris), Gary Steen, Pete Waterman and Stephen Kinsey.

Agenda Item 2: Declarations of Interest

None

Agenda Item 3: Presentation: Quality of Place Strategy

Andy Hulme and Katrina Michel (Chief Executive, Marketing Cheshire) provided an update on the progress in developing a Quality of Place Strategy and Delivery Plan, which is due for publication by March 2018.

A number of stakeholder events have been held since late summer and also an online survey was carried out, targeted at senior Business Leaders and Executives to better understand their views on the importance of Quality of Place from a business perspective. Together these were highlighting a number of key issues: -

- The sub-region has many significant benefits that make it attractive to inward investors, but it lacks a consistent and coherent narrative and 'brand' when trying to 'sell' those benefits to external audiences.
- With the possible exception of Warrington, we are struggling to create places that attract and retain younger people, especially those in the 20 – 35 age group
- There are challenges around the affordability of housing in many parts of the sub-region and we don't necessarily have enough of the right type and tenure of homes to meet what the market wants
- The quality of our high streets is mixed. Whilst many remain vibrant and able to offer a range of big brand names and more independent shops, others are struggling.
- Education provision, whilst better than many areas, remains variable.
- Current public transport provision is regarded by many as being poor. This can limit people's access to work opportunities and to key public services, and contributes to road congestion. The biggest single issue highlighted in the survey of Business Leaders was transport.
- That congestion in itself is viewed by many residents and businesses as one of the downsides of living or working in Cheshire and Warrington.

The outline narrative for the strategy is being developed and the Strategy Committee considered the initial list of suggested deliverables for inclusion in the Action Plan.

Agenda Item 4: Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 2017 were approved.

The matters arising were covered under the agenda.

Agenda Item 5: Strategy Work Programme Update

The contents of the report were noted.

Good progress is being made in the development of the first four supporting strategies to the SEP. The Transport Strategy will be published for consultation in the New Year; the Skills and Education Plan is now live on the LEP website and the draft report which will inform the Energy Strategy has been received from the consultants and will be considered at the January meeting of the Strategy Committee.

As reported earlier in the meeting the Quality of Place Strategy is on programme. Consultants have been appointed to support the development of a high level sub-regional housing strategy and a workshop is being arranged for the New Year to 'kick start' the development of the Science and Innovation Strategy.

Support in developing a scope for consultancy support to develop a Digital Strategy is being offered by the Skills and Growth Company.

The updated schedule for review of each emerging strategy by the Committee was reported.

It was noted that a presentation on the Industrial Strategy White Paper was given to the main LEP Board on 6th December. As further detail on the requirements to produce a Local Industrial Strategy are released, these will be brought to the Strategy Committee along with a workplan for consideration.

Agenda Item 6: Business Growth Hub

The LEP Chief Executive presented an update on the current review of the Business Growth Hub.

The Industrial Strategy White Paper confirmed a commitment from Government to continue funding Growth Hubs and have given us a steer that the 'worst case' outcome on funding will be a continuation at current levels.

The LEP has commissioned a review of current arrangements and asked for the development of a menu of options for the future shape and operating model of the Hub. Some initial thoughts have been presented which include separating the core coordination function from any service delivery role, and bringing this inhouse. This would enable a range of services to be commissioned from existing providers and partners to meet identified need, without any potential for a conflict of interest.

The Strategy Committee was supportive of the emerging model and believed that there was 'power' in the LEP being the vehicle for that initial contact with business.

Agenda Item 7: National Policy Announcements

Andy Hulme presented a set of points for inclusion in a response to the recent Consultation from the **National Infrastructure Commission**. The report focuses on the challenges of Carbon, Congestion and Capacity.

The Strategy Committee endorsed the proposed response although asked that more emphasis be put on ports and freight, and Northern Powerhouse Rail.

The Committee was also supportive of the suggestion that a dedicated sub-group is needed to bring together the various strands of the LEP's infrastructure activity.

It was noted that the Government had launched its Clean Growth Strategy in October and a briefing would be provided to the January meeting.

Action: Andy Hulme to circulate a briefing note on the Clean Growth Strategy for the January meeting.

Agenda Item 8: Any Other Business

There were no items raised under Any Other Business.

Agenda Item 9: Date and time of next meeting

Thursday 25th January 2018, Wyvern House, Winsford.

DRAFT