

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE THAMES VALLEY LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP (BTVLEP) BOARD MEETING

Held Friday 20 July 2012 from 9.30am at Instron Europe, Coronation Road, High Wycombe, Bucks HP12 3SY

Present:	CLlr Adrian Busby, South Buckinghamshire District Council	(AB)
	CLlr Michael Edmonds, Aylesbury Vale District Council	(ME)
	CLlr Arif Hussain, Wycombe District Council	(AH)
	CLlr Nick Rose, Chiltern District Council	(NR)
	Ruth Farwell, Buckinghamshire Business First (Bucks New University)	(RF)
	Michael Garvey, Buckinghamshire Business First (Stupples Chandler Garvey)	(MG)
	Alex Pratt, Buckinghamshire Business First (Serious Brands)	(AP)
	Andrew Smith, Buckinghamshire Business First (Pinewood) (Part meeting)	(AS)
Apologies:	CLlr Martin Tett, Buckinghamshire County Council	(MT)
	Rob Spurrett, Buckinghamshire Business First (ComDev)	
In attendance:	Malcolm Buchanan, Instron (Part meeting)	(MB)
	Philippa Batting, Buckinghamshire Business First	(PB)
	Jim Sims, Buckinghamshire Business First	(JS)
	Marcus Rogers, Buckinghamshire County Council	(MR)
	Warren Ralls, Wycombe District Council	(WR)
	Sarah Fraser, Buckinghamshire Business First	(SF)

SUMMARY MINUTES

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A number of members of the Board declared an interest in the discussions around selection of projects to benefit from GPF2 funding:-

- Ruth Farwell – Hughenden Quarter Spine Road and Aylesbury Town Centre Regeneration.
- Adrian Busby/Nick Rose – Big Green Deal.
- Michael Edmonds – Aylesbury Town Centre Regeneration and Aylesbury East Development.
- Arif Hussain – Hughenden Quarter Spine Road and Westbourne Street Link Road.
- Michael Garvey – Hughenden Quarter Spine Road.

With due regard for these declarations the Board agreed unanimously to continue discussions with all members present.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING – 15 June 2012

2.1 Matters Arising

- A list of opportunity sites available across the county to be provided at the next meeting.
- The possible expansion plans at Heathrow and air capacity as a whole to be included on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting.
- It was confirmed there would be no infringement of FSA regulations should GPF grants be returned to the BTVLEP with interest in order to maintain the integrity of the 'pot'. Work was underway to establish a mechanism for publicising support of projects through a "Backed by the BTVLEP" logo.

2.2 Outstanding Actions from previous meetings

- **Strategic Transport Priorities** – The Infrastructure Sub Group would be considering housing growth in connection with identified strategic transport priorities and reviewing the entirety via a visualisation tool assessing how infrastructure development will unlock growth and the benefits this may bring. This work will lead in part to the development of what might constitute the Majors programme for Bucks.

3 **WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AIMS**

3.1 Key Focus for WDC

- The creation of 2,000 new jobs by 2016 reducing unemployment (particularly in deprived wards).
- Working with skills providers to assist Business.
- Bringing forward the development of key sites.
- Attracting new inward investment opportunities.

3.2 BTVLEP Role

- Help to promote the area to attract new businesses and investors.
- Continue to support the development of key sites/regeneration of business parks.
- Continue to focus on skills issues.
- Support WDC in its work to reduce unemployment in identified deprived wards. A clear picture of the quantum of deprived wards across Bucks would be useful to enable lobbying for funding to support these areas which are largely overlooked by the centre.

4 **FUNDING UPDATES**

4.1 Growing Places Fund 2 – Project Recommendations

- Seven projects were brought forward for consideration which, due to the timescales involved, were all projects known to the Local Authorities. Work was being progressed to develop a pipeline of private sector applications should future rounds of funding be made available.
- The BTVLEP Board agreed, in principle, to support the Aylesbury Town Centre Regeneration and the development of the Hughenden Quarter Spine Road based on the advanced state of these projects, projected job numbers to be created, and the speed of payback on initial investment.
- Due diligence discussions would progress with these two projects and as the quantum of funding requested by applicants for these two projects exceeded the amount available through GPF2, the secretariat was asked to bring forward recommended allocations to the next Board meeting.
- The Aylesbury East project could offer considerable benefits if adopted in the AVDC Plan. However, as the project had not yet been adopted and there were still land discussions/issues to be resolved this was felt to be a longer term project.
- Work would continue with those projects not selected in this round of funding in order to: develop a pipeline for the future; bring projects to a more advanced stage to substitute if needed; and to investigate whether these projects could be brought to fruition through alternative sources of funding.
- The various projects making up the Bucks Growth Fund application would be reviewed to establish whether there were any individual projects in the application that could be supported by either GPF2 or an alternative source of funding.

4.2 Growing Places Fund 1 - Update

- **Handy Cross** – Heads of Terms for this project would be agreed shortly. This development was reported as being the subject of a live planning application but no problems had been raised to date.
- **East/West rail** – Funding for this project is due to be pulled down shortly. This funding had helped to secure the announcement from Central government confirming that this project is in the spending round for 2014-2019 (together with the Western Rail access to Heathrow).
- **Broadband** – Issues with state aid and procurement appeared to have been resolved. The framework has now been signed by providers and this project is moving forward.

5 **BTVLEP SUB GROUPS - UPDATE**

5.1 Infrastructure Sub Group

- The Infrastructure Sub Group included representation from all Local Authority Planning Departments.
- The group will be considering infrastructure requirements at a strategic level, looking at how to unlock stalled developments that can bring forward growth; how to take best advantage of 'change of use' opportunities; and the implications of CIL and how best to achieve a joined up approach.

5.2 Skills Sub Group

- The Skills Sub Group has met for the first time; its primary purpose being to provide coherence within the Skills arena, bringing greater effectiveness to the work being carried out by other groups and organisations by aligning activities to meet the needs of the emerging Bucks Skills Strategy.
- Key common themes to be tackled were around: work preparedness/work ethic of young people; the need for clear communication around what employers expect; and the need for a consistent message through the Information, Advice and Guidance service.

6 **FUNDING THE SECRETARIAT**

- DCLG/BIS had offered the view that the use of part of GPF2 funding to support the work of a LEP secretariat was for the individual LEP to decide. Indications were that central government would be providing financial resources to help support the work of the LEPs, which would enable any top sliced GPF2 allocation to be recycled in short order.
- A proposal had been prepared re Local Authorities providing appropriate support to help resource the secretariat to the BTVLEP. It was agreed that LA Board members would take this to their respective cabinets for approval.

7 **BTVLEP BOARD GOVERNANCE**

- The BTVLEP is not constituted as an entity but given that it will increasingly have influence over significant agendas, a proposal had been prepared for how the BTVLEP might operate. This would be a Board policy paper and could be amended at any point if the Board wished to do so.
- The Board offered a number of amendments to the paper, and with these made it was agreed that this would be adopted as a Board policy and uploaded to the BTVLEP website.

8 **BTVLEP GROWTH MANIFESTO**

- The broad 'flavours'/priorities outlined in draft manifesto were agreed but the Board cautioned the need to distil the key priorities and the key differentiators for Bucks.
- The Board reiterated the desire for a plan based on jobs led growth rather than housing led growth with specific measures and timescales.
- It was agreed that it would be useful to articulate what the BTVLEP can achieve collectively above what its constituent members can achieve individually.
- The Manifesto would be amended in light of the comments made and Board members would then meet individually with the secretariat to provide feedback prior to the final document being brought back to the October Board meeting.

9 **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

- The Board thanked the secretariat team, including members of BBF, AVDC, BCC, WDC etc for the work they are doing in support of the BTVLEP. It was confirmed that work was now actively underway to bring visitors from Whitehall etc to the area.

10 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

BTVLEP Conference

- The secretariat to progress plans for a BTVLEP conference towards the end of the first quarter 2013 for LA Cabinet Members and other interested parties demonstrating what the BTVLEP has achieved in its first year of operation and what it is hoped to achieve going forward.

11 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Friday 12 October 2012, 9.30am, The Clare Foundation, Wycombe Road, Saunderton, Bucks HP14 4BF.