
Title:	Chief Executive's Report
Purpose:	To update members on programme activity since our last board meeting in September.
Recommendation:	That members note the content of the report and comment on any areas of specific interest or concern and:- Support the nomination of BTVLEP Chief Executive to be the BTVLEP representative of the Aylesbury Garden Town Board (Item 8).

1 Annual Review

The date for the BTVLEP Annual Review (formerly Annual Conversation) has been fixed for the afternoon of January 24th. As in previous years, this is an important milestone in our annual calendar as the results may impact on our standing and reporting obligations and it represents an opportunity to demonstrate the effectiveness, transparency and accountability of our LEP. We will shortly be provided with a review framework submission, that last year focused on strategy, delivery and governance and this will be shared with Board members at our January meeting. The Chairman and I will be seeking a number of board members to help support the Annual Review presentation in London.

2 Modernising Local Government

On November 1st The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, confirmed his decision to create a new single unitary authority for Buckinghamshire. All local parties were agreed that the worst decision would have been no decision and I am pleased that in the two weeks following this decision there has been a swift and positive response from all of our local authority partners in starting to establish the new authority. As mentioned previously in this board pack, as part of the LEP Review, there are a number of direct implications for this LEP, most notably through our relationship with our two accountable bodies (BCC and AVDC for the Enterprise Zone), our board representation and through the delivery of a number of our transport Local Growth Fund projects. We will look to work closely with the emerging transitional arrangements to ensure that the voice of the business community is clearly heard as the new organisation is established and to help provide support, stability and strategic economic direction at this time of change. A copy of the letter sent to Andrew Smith from Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP referencing the announcement is attached as **Appendix 1** to this report.

3 Skills Update

The undoubted highlight of the Skills Programme over the past month has been the Bucks Skills Show held at the Gateway in Aylesbury on October 12th & 13th. Sponsored by Bosch, the Bucks

Skills Show smashed all previous records with schools bringing over 1500 students to the Friday event and over 1500 additional visitors attending on the Saturday. The programme included a diverse range of employers and high profile speakers including Rt Hon David Lidington MP and Sir Anthony Seldon as well as representatives from organisations including Google, ITV, IHG and the Civil Service. The Skills Show also provided the opportunity for the Careers and Enterprise Company to help launch the new Careers Hub service in Buckinghamshire. A summary of the Skills Hub achievements produced as an aide-memoire for Skills Board members is attached as **Appendix 2** to this report.

4 Growth Hub Update

Buckinghamshire Business First is now planning the first Buckinghamshire Business Festival taking place in March 2019. The festival will be held over 10 days and is designed to boost knowledge, encourage collaborations, share opportunities, highlight innovation, help businesses make new connections and give them fresh ideas to grow their business.

With workshops, exhibitions, conferences, networking and fringe events it will incorporate key themes including Brexit, Digital, Funding & Leadership. As a result of the new festival programme it is proposed to extend the programme for the Buckinghamshire Business Awards with the presentation evening being held in October 2019.

An exciting new initiative “Be Your Own Boss” has been launched by BBF in association with L&Q Housing Association, Red Kite Housing Association, Thames Valley Housing Association, Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust, Chiltern District Council, South Bucks District Council and Wycombe District Council. The programme provides for a one off £25 fee in return for a comprehensive support package for prospective entrepreneurs, incorporating:-

- An Enterprise Day to answer questions and help you decide if running a business is right for you
- Bespoke business support face-to-face, over the phone or by email
- Training courses that cover all of the topics relevant to a person wanting to start their own business, including creating a brand, creating a business plan, product or service development, marketing, sales and customer relations
- Advice and guidance from people who have been in the same start –up position
- Networking events to help make new contacts
- Information 24/7 with online business support section
- Discounts on products and services offered by Buckinghamshire Business First members
- An online business directory full of Buckinghamshire Business First members with products, services and skills that may be of use to you
- A dynamic work environment with hot-desking and free Wi-Fi at two locations across the county
- Professional meeting rooms to impress prospective clients with
- Library resources, including free access to sector specific reports and ‘How to’ guides
- Business plan templates

5 Enterprise Zone Update

There continues to be exceptional progress on our 3 Enterprise Zone sites with the scale of development amongst the most impressive in the country. A full report is to be presented to the Enterprise Zone Board on Wednesday 21st November where a request for funding to extend the

Westcott Innovation Centre footprint to provide an additional focus on production engineering support for the rapidly emerging nano-satellite market.

Listed below are a summary of the main achievements for all of the sites:

Silverstone:

- Completion of the purchase of Unit 1129 by TotalSim for creation of the Silverstone Sports Innovation Centre (August 2018). TotalSim are now fitting out the Innovation Centre which should be operational by January 2019;
- Uniti: Development of c 7,000m2 production facility for Swedish Inward Investment for ground-breaking electronic car production facility at the gateway to the Enterprise Zone site announced (October 18);
- Sports Entrepreneurship Campus: proposal submitted to SEMLEP including a consortia led by Total Sim and supported by the University of Buckingham for c£15m LGF support for £45m project (September 2018)

Westcott:

- Completion of the Reaction Engines production building (September) – fit out and equipping of adjacent rocket testing area to complete by 2020.
- Opening of the 5G Step Out Centre (adjacent to the Enterprise Zone site) – July
- Opening of the Business Incubation Centre (October)
- Westcott Space Cluster launch event (October) attended by over 400 guests and hosted by the Satellite Application Catapult and the European Space Agency.
- At the launch event Rockspring announced its intent to develop c1,900m2 of new speculative floorspace to support the further growth of the Space Cluster (October 18).

Arla / Woodlands:

- Commencement of development by Db Symmetry of 23,100m2 employment floorspace (August 2018), due for completion by Q2 2019/20.

6 England's Economic Heartland

Work is progressing to develop the regional Transport Strategy by May 2019. The strategy will be an important part of the Oxford to Cambridge growth programme and will be supported by a number of work strands including a connectivity study for the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway and a new Freight Strategy.

The new strategy will plan for the short term, to ensure people are able to travel and move around the Heartland area as easily as possible before the major investments are in place. It will consider how residents and businesses will operate and move during periods of major transformation, where disruption could be significant. It will need to ensure disruption is sequenced and well managed, with national agencies talking to each other and with local and

regional partners to minimise any detrimental impact and will be challenging, innovative and ambitious for the long term – ensuring the investments being made are future-proofed and designed with innovations in transport in mind.

7 Local Growth Fund Project Progress

On November 28th an opening event for the University of Buckingham Vinson Centre for Economics and Entrepreneurship is being held. Excellent progress has been made on the development of this landmark new facility for the University which will be offering a business hub location managed through the BBF booking process.

Works on the University College Aylesbury Vale ground-floor business incubation space have been tendered within budget and are due to commence later this month. It is anticipated that the fit out work is expected to take around 3 months with the first businesses likely to use the Aylesbury town centre site from February 2019.

The Bucks Health and Social Care Ventures scheme which has been supported by both Local Growth Funding and ERDF investment was launched at Bucks New University in September. The aim of the programme is to make Buckinghamshire the go-to destination for health and social care innovation in the UK supporting SMEs, with the first cohort of 20 businesses currently benefitting from the support programme.

8 Aylesbury Garden Town

Good progress is being made on the master plan programme prepared by Alan Baxter Ltd and the proposed AGT Implementation Framework under the stewardship of Mark Thompson, the Interim Programme lead. At the last Board meeting it was agreed to start work for a Governance and Stewardship review (in accord with the ABA scope of work) to explore delivery options and the Board Terms of Reference (as required by the current Terms of Reference).

The Delivery Options paper for the future governance arrangements for AGT might include the following options:

- a) Continued advisory role
- b) Decision making role
- c) Delivery vehicles

Master planning programme review

The master plan programme as set out by Alan Baxter Ltd includes a number of strategic deadlines to be met:

- Strategic Visioning workshop with PDT, Board and key stakeholders held 7 November 2018
- Strategic narrative prospectus December 2018
- Master plan and delivery plan draft February 2019
- Strategic Infrastructure SPD draft March 2019

- Consultation on draft master plan and Infrastructure SPD April 2019
- Master plan and delivery plan final June 2019
- Final Strategic Infrastructure SPD June 2019.

Further consideration is being given to the methodology for the introduction of Area Based Frameworks (as part of the AGT master plan) and how we might identify 'zones of influence' such as existing residential suburbs, key transport corridors or employment areas where the Garden Town presents an opportunity to deliver transformative change.

Implementation Framework

The AVDC Planning Policy Team is currently working on the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) and Alan Baxter have been commissioned to produce the Aylesbury Garden Town Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The current AGT schedule plans for the formal consultation on these documents throughout February and March 2019. Discussions between the VALP and AGT teams are continuing with a view that the AGT specific design guidance should be included with the Aylesbury Vale district wide design guidance as one overarching Design SPD. Ultimately the fundamental aim should be to ensure the resulting document harmonises the VALP and AGT principles, where relevant.

Built Environment Forum 27 September

The forum was attended by 22 professionals with a good range of Developers, Agents, RPs and consultants. The key themes that emerged from the session were:

1. The need for unified local leadership.
2. The need for AGT to have a 'purpose' or a 'brand'.
3. The need to have a 'synchronised' and 'less adversarial' approach with DM in particular with the infrastructure overlay.

The AGT team will prepare a response to the issues and the Forum will meet again in March 2019 to consider these issues alongside the emerging Master plan. More thought will be given to a wider 'collaboration' platform with this forum as part of the Delivery Options review.

Cllr Nick Naylor has indicated that due to time commitments he is unable to continue to represent this board on the Aylesbury Garden Town Board. As an interim arrangement I am seeking Board approval for myself to be the nominated representative.

9 Digital Update

The Digital Infrastructure Group met on November 13th at the Westcott Innovation Centre and received a useful presentation from Bridge Fibre who specialise in providing fibre broadband solutions to rural business and science parks including Silverstone Park where an innovative revenue share initiative has been agreed with the site owners.

DCMS have recently announced new proposals where it will be compulsory for all new housing developments to be digitally enabled. Whilst this recommendation is very much welcomed, and prevents local authorities and other local partners having to invest retrospectively the group

agreed that a consultation response should be submitted to ensure that chosen full-fibre suppliers had the capacity to deliver in advance of any resident occupation and were from a nationally approved list.

The group learned that the current superfast broadband coverage in the county had risen to 95.19% and that the take up of the BDUK Contract 1 was the 3rd highest in the country but that Open Reach were lagging in their delivery programme nationally. As one of the largest contracts the impact in Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire was significant with the contract currently 4500 properties behind the initial schedule.

10 Communications Update

Recent communications activity has focused on the successful launch of the multi-million-pound Westcott Space Cluster, promoting the 2018 Bucks Skills Show attended by over 3,000 students, supporting the commencement of the new 2,500m² state-of-the-art sports engineering innovation centre at Silverstone, and the first phase of the development at Symmetry Park in our Woodlands Enterprise Zone.

In addition, the new BTVLEP website, which features a number of improved features, including search functionality, news navigation and improved links to partner websites - in addition to making it easier to comply with accountability requirements and GDPR - is about to go live. We have also produced a 'new look' BTVLEP annual report, which is available with this Board pack and attached as **Appendix 3** to this report.

The BTVLEP team were also represented at MIPIM UK in October as part of the Growth Corridor representation. The event provided a fantastic opportunity to showcase the cohesive approach that partners are taking to raise the profile of the region and has led to a very positive approach from the Department of International Trade into how we can support the promotion of the regions offer internationally.

Members are asked to :

- 1. Note the content of the report and comment on any areas of specific interest or concern; and**
- 2. Support the nomination for the BTVLEP Chief Executive to be the official BTVLEP representative of the Aylesbury Garden Town Board (item 8).**