

## BUCKINGHAMSHIRE THAMES VALLEY LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP (BTVLEP) BOARD MEETING

Held Friday 24 February 2012 from 9.30am at John Lewis Home & Leisure,  
Holmers Farm Way, Cressex Centre, High Wycombe, Bucks HP12 4NW

**Present:** Cllr Adrian Busby, South Buckinghamshire District Council  
Cllr Michael Edmonds, Aylesbury Vale District Council  
Cllr Arif Hussain, Wycombe District Council  
Cllr Nick Rose, Chiltern District Council  
Cllr Martin Tett, Buckinghamshire County Council  
Michael Garvey, Buckinghamshire Business First (Stupples Chandler Garvey)  
Alex Pratt, Buckinghamshire Business First (Serious Brands)  
David Pritchard, Buckinghamshire Business First (Manches LLP) (Alternate)  
Andrew Smith, Buckinghamshire Business First (Pinewood)  
Lisa Williams, Buckinghamshire Business First (John Lewis) (Alternate)

**Apologies:** Ruth Farwell, Buckinghamshire Business First (Bucks New University)  
Rob Spurrett, Buckinghamshire Business First (ComDev)

**In attendance:** Rodney Mallinson, Federation of Small Businesses (Part meeting)  
Linda Walton, Federation of Small Businesses (Part meeting)  
Jim Sims, Ngage Solutions Limited (Part meeting)  
Marcus Rogers, Buckinghamshire County Council  
Stuart Jones, Buckinghamshire Business First  
Chris Rawson, Buckinghamshire Business First (Part meeting)  
Sarah Fraser, Buckinghamshire Business First

## SUMMARY MINUTES

### 1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- There were no new declarations of interest.

### 2 VICE CHAIR

- The Board agreed the appointment of Cllr Arif Hussain as Vice Chair of the BTVLEP.

### 3 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING – BTVLEP AND SEMLEP

- The Board approved the signing of the MoU with the South East Midlands LEP.

### 4 FUNDING UPDATES

#### 4.1 Broadband – BDUK

- Confirmation had been received of the success of the joint bid with Hertfordshire LEP to BDUK.

#### 4.2 GPF – Decision Process/Project Recommendations

- It was acknowledged that the Growing Places Fund represents a very small proportion of the investment needed for key infrastructure projects across the county (and over its borders).
- Confirmation had been received from SEMLEP that they would be supporting the East/West

Rail project through their GPF allocation. Support had also been pledged for development at Silverstone.

- The establishment of a Bucks Infrastructure Fund stimulated by GPF but with matched investment from the County and District Councils was discussed.
- Those projects identified as being crucial to the county and where the most benefit could be gained by all businesses/residents across Bucks were: Broadband; East/West Rail; and Handy Cross.
- The Board approved (with some minor amendments) the 'gated' flowchart for accessing project suitability.
- The Board agreed the current Growing Places Fund allocation would be utilised to: provide the match needed to support the BDUK Broadband project (£3.7m); support the continuance of the East/West Rail project (£0.5m) in collaboration with SEMLEP and the Oxfordshire LEP; and to unlock the development at Handy Cross (£2m).
- It was agreed the District Councils would look into the feasibility of providing a fund to support smaller projects across the county.

4.3

### **External Funding Development Strategy**

- Initial thoughts on a process for identifying and bidding to relevant and appropriate funding streams; as well as helping to identify the level of executive capacity and skill sets required was discussed. An update on this item would be brought back to the next Board meeting.

## **5 FSB PRESENTATION RE ED PRIORITIES FOR BUCKS**

- The Board welcomed Rodney Mallinson (Chair, South Bucks & Aylesbury Branch, FSB) and Linda Walton (Secretary, South Bucks & Aylesbury Branch, FSB).
- Recognising that small businesses were at the heart of the Buckinghamshire economy, the priorities for the BTVLEP, as identified by local FSB members, were seen as :-
  - Championing the small business cause with banks and other lenders locally.
  - Supporting apprenticeship initiatives and small business friendly training programmes.
  - Championing 'Buy Local'.
  - Naming and shaming local late payers.
  - Promoting small business friendly behaviour in local government.
  - Lobbying for fair and prompt compensation for those local enterprises adversely affected by the HS2; and looking at how to ensure local businesses benefitted within the supply chain in constructing HS2.
  - Access to adequate and affordable Broadband provision.
- It was agreed that different aspects of the LEP agenda may benefit from different partners leading activity and this was something that could be discussed further with the FSB. The BTVLEP Board recognised the need for the small business voice to be heard in equal measure to that of larger enterprises.

## **6 BUSINESS PLANS COMPARISON/GAP ANALYSIS**

- A desk exercise had been undertaken to pull together information from a number of sources (and provide a gap analysis thereafter) including:-
  - The Buckinghamshire Business Group.
  - The economic development strategies for the 5 Local Authorities.
  - The Sustainable Communities Strategies.
  - The priorities for neighbouring LEPs.
  - The Buckinghamshire Business First Business Plan
- It was felt that the strength of the BTVLEP lay in retaining a strict business lead, keeping a simple focus on job creation/retention and economic prosperity.
- It was agreed a draft Economic Development Strategy for the BTVLEP would be drafted in

consultation with Board members and brought to the Board for approval on 11 May.

## 7 TRANSPORT UPDATE

- It was agreed that a draft response to the DfT consultation re Local Transport Bodies would be provided for the Board to consider in advance of its meeting on 30 March 2012.
- It was agreed that developments across the South of Bucks inc Heathrow Hub capacity, HS2 etc would be added to the agenda for the next meeting.
- It was agreed that consideration needed to be given as to how to ensure local businesses benefitted from opportunities to deliver the HS2 project in the event that the legal challenge was unsuccessful. It was thought that this would likely come through the procurement process and discussions with prime providers.

## 8 SKILLS STRATEGY

- It was noted that there were several pieces of research due to report imminently (Skills survey, Warwick University research, recruitment agency survey) and once this information was available a meeting would be arranged with key skills stakeholders to review the results and agree next steps.
- The Board would consider the establishment of a Skills sub-committee.

## 9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- Friday 30 March 2012, 9.30am, BT Head Office, Newgate Street, London EC1A 7AJ.