

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

Held Friday 20 September 2013 from 9.30am at  
Buckinghamshire UTC, Oxford Road, Aylesbury, Bucks HP21 8PD

**Present:** Cllr Mike Appleyard, Buckinghamshire County Council (Alternate)  
Cllr Roger Reed, South Bucks District Council (Alternate)  
Cllr Nick Rose, Chiltern District Council  
Cllr Richard Scott, Wycombe District Council  
Ruth Farwell, Buckinghamshire Business First (Bucks New University)  
Guy Lachlan, Buckinghamshire Business First (Jones & Cocks Limited) (Alternate)  
Alex Pratt, Buckinghamshire Business First (Serious Brands)  
Andrew Smith, Buckinghamshire Business First (Pinewood) (Part meeting)  
Rob Spurrett, Buckinghamshire Business First (ComDev)

**Apologies:** Cllr Adrian Busby, South Bucks District Council  
Cllr Michael Edmonds, Aylesbury Vale District Council  
Cllr Martin Tett, Buckinghamshire County Council  
Michael Garvey, Buckinghamshire Business First (Stupples Chandler Garvey)

**In attendance:** Diane Savory, Chair, Gloucestershire LEP (Part meeting)  
David Owen, Chief Executive, Gloucestershire LEP (Part meeting)  
Jerry Unsworth, Wycombe District Council (Part meeting)  
Richard Harrington, BTVLEP Chief Executive  
Warren Ralls, BTVLEP Partnerships Manager  
Jim Sims, BTVLEP Development Manager  
Sarah Fraser

## **SUMMARY MINUTES**

### **1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

There were no new declarations of interest at this meeting. Cllr Michael Edmonds had tendered his resignation from the BTVLEP Board due to a change in responsibilities at AVDC. Cllr Neil Blake would be joining the Board as AVDC's nominated representative.

### **2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING – 26 July 2013**

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record and were signed accordingly.

#### **2.1 Matters Arising**

- 2.1.1
- **Item 3.1.1 – Single Local Growth Fund (SLGF)/New Homes Bonus** – It was confirmed that the 35% of New Homes Bonus to be utilised within the SLGF would not be retained centrally and subject to competitive bidding, but would be devolved directly to LEPs, un-ringfenced and allocated by formula.
  - Significant discussions had taken place around where priorities lie to ensure consistency between the SLGF Strategy and LPA Local Development Plans, and this continues under the auspices of the infrastructure sub group.

All other outstanding actions had been undertaken or were covered on the agenda.

### 3 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

(Andrew Smith joined the meeting)

- It was noted the BTVLEP Whitehall Sponsor would be visiting Bucks on 3 October and would be asked for an update on the requests made of Government through the Case Conference.
- Discussions had taken, and continue to take, place with LEPs and Local Authorities regarding how best to manage the issue of overlapping geographies, which Government had acknowledged added further complexity to negotiations.
- The BTVLEP's bid to the SLGF is being constructed on the basis of a strategy for the entirety of Bucks and the update to Whitehall to be sent by 25 October is being drafted in accordance with this.
- The task of the LEP was thought to be that of a catalyst for improved collaboration between various institutions; Local Authorities, Business, Business Representative Organisations etc, behind a clear compelling competitive strategy. The Board fully supported the desire to work collaboratively, recognising that elected members may face conflicting priorities and accountabilities from time to time; the mix of public/private sector Board members across a wide geography offering the strength to deal with these localised issues as they emerge.

### 4 GLOUCESTERSHIRE LEP - Aims and Priorities

The Board welcomed Diane Savory and David Owen of the Gloucestershire LEP (identified by BIS as being very similar in make up to the BTVLEP), who shared Gloucestershire's priorities and challenges.

- Challenges arise from: the need to bring about real integration of public and private sector; the need to keep everyone up to speed in a rapidly moving and changing environment; and the need to encourage central government to 'invest in success' as currently Gloucestershire is incorrectly perceived to be without need for support (similar to Buckinghamshire).
- Local Authorities are fully behind their LEP, clear on the need for deep collaboration, and cognisant of the competitive 'game' LEPs are entering with the Single Local Growth Fund.
- There are 10 members of the Gloucestershire LEP Board including 1 nominee from the County Council, 1 nominee for the 6 district councils, representatives from the University and FE colleges, and deep business representation.
- Gloucestershire have established the Retail Pathfinder for central government and funding has been provided by BIS to develop a retail toolkit, which is particularly useful when looking at town centre regeneration and is available on the Gloucestershire website. This work has offered a USP for Gloucestershire and a higher profile in Whitehall.

(Diane Savory and David Owen left the meeting)

### 5 STRATEGIC PLANS EVIDENCE BASE

- The draft evidence base had been circulated with the Board papers, and would sit across both the EU and SLGF Strategic Plans. The evidence base provides clarity on projects that can/cannot be supported via EU funding and the scope of the full vision for Buckinghamshire; some of which will be funded through the EU SIF, some through the SLGF, and some through other sources.
- Bucks has received its notional allocation under the EU SIF; this is not a competitive process and the strategy, as written, is not binding in terms of the EU commissioning (the SLGF Growth Plan will be).
- A greater proportion of ERDF vs ESF funding has been requested; partly as this will allow greater control over projects supported, the services bought/how we buy them, and the degree of flexibility offered.
- With minor amendments the Board approved the evidence base; the broad thrust of the strategy; the release of documents to wider consultation; and the submission of the EU strategy on 7 October outlining the framework of areas the BTVLEP are interested in, against which others might bid, recognising this would be an iterative process until final submission at the end of December.
- The Infrastructure Sub Group will be refining the list of priorities to be supported in the SLGF Strategic Plan in the coming weeks.

## 6 CHIEF EXECUTIVE UPDATE

(Jerry Unsworth joined the meeting)

### 6.1 LEP Delivery Mechanism

- The BTVLEP Board agreed the establishment of a shadow board of directors for the LEP delivery mechanism, drawn from the respective Member organisations (the five Local Authorities and Bucks Business First) to progress the production of the legal structure, the full memorandum and articles of association, and Members Agreement by the end of October.
- Once agreed by the BTVLEP Board, these documents would be taken to individual Local Authority cabinets and BBF in the period from end October to December, prior to submission of the SLGF bid at the end of December.

### 6.2 Consultation Response Process

- The co-operation between the LEP and the Planning function is considered to be vital going forward, and the Planning Protocol circulated with the Board papers was a first step in this process.
- It is anticipated that the Bucks Planning Group and the BTVLEP will collaborate and input into each other's activities going forward, as appropriate.
- The Board felt it important to allow the business voice to be heard in a planning context and the BTVLEP (via Buckinghamshire Business First) could bring this voice to discussions.
- It was agreed that it would be helpful if LEPs were made statutory consultees with regards to planning strategy/plan making.
- The Board supported the Planning Protocol with some minor amendments for clarity.

(Jerry Unsworth and Andrew Smith left the meeting)

## 7 SUB GROUP UPDATES

### 7.1 Skills Sub Group

- Skills providers in Bucks have been looking at current skills provision, reviewing the latest data available, and identifying where there are gaps to support the needs of businesses. It was agreed that it would be key to anticipate future needs and provide learning opportunities to address these.
- It was confirmed that the Skills Sub Group will be producing capital funds bids for 2015/16.
- It was agreed that it would be useful to engage the National Film & Television School with the work of the sub group and this would be progressed.
- Bucks County Council have been focussing on the 3% of students who do not achieve five A-C GCSEs and how to provide a wider educational basis for these students.
- A strong focus on the relationship between schools and business is essential.

### 7.2 Infrastructure Sub Group

- The Infrastructure Sub Group had met recently to appraise the projects to be put forward to the Public Works Loan Board.
- As part of the Case Conference, the BTVLEP have asked for an increase over the current £16m allocation but have been advised that this cannot be agreed until other areas have decided whether or not they wish to take up their PWLB allocations.
- The projects submitted to the PWLB were: Aylesbury Eastern Link Road; and High Wycombe town centre masterplan alternative route.
- In the event that additional PWLB funds become available, details have also been submitted regarding the development of the Aylesbury Waterside Academy.
- Submission results will be notified in November following assessment by the Treasury.

## 8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- Friday 1 November 2013, from 9.30am, Robert Bosch Limited, Denham.