

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

Held Friday 26 July 2013 from 9.30am at  
GE Healthcare, Pollards Wood, Nightingales Lane, Chalfont St Giles, Bucks HP8 4SP

**Present:** Cllr Adrian Busby, South Bucks District Council  
Cllr Michael Edmonds, Aylesbury Vale District Council  
Cllr Nick Rose, Chiltern District Council  
Cllr Richard Scott, Wycombe District Council  
Cllr Martin Tett, Buckinghamshire County Council (Chairing)  
Ruth Farwell, Buckinghamshire Business First (Bucks New University)  
Michael Garvey, Buckinghamshire Business First (Stupples Chandler Garvey)  
Guy Lachlan, Buckinghamshire Business First (Jones & Cocks Limited) (Alternate)  
David Pritchard, Buckinghamshire Business First (Manches) (Alternate)  
Andrew Smith, Buckinghamshire Business First (Pinewood)

**Apologies:** Alex Pratt, Buckinghamshire Business First (Serious Brands)  
Rob Spurrett, Buckinghamshire Business First (ComDev)

**In attendance:** Richard Harrington, BTVLEP Chief Executive  
Warren Ralls, BTVLEP Partnerships Manager  
Jim Sims, BTVLEP Development Manager  
Sarah Fraser

## **SUMMARY MINUTES**

### **1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no new declarations of interest at this meeting.

### **2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING – 14 June 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 2.1.1 – Broadband** – A meeting is planned with DCLG on 27 August re Planning policy/ barriers to growth and the possible inclusion of FTTP on all new build applications.
- 2.1.2 • **Item 2.1.5 - Consultation Response Process** – Details will be brought back to the September Board meeting as part of a suite of documents being discussed with Bucks Planning Officers.
- 2.1.3 • **Item 4.5 - Vice Chairman Appointment** - Cllr Martin Tett proposed Cllr Richard Scott for the role of Vice Chairman; seconded by Cllr Adrian Busby, and agreed unanimously.

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

### **3 SPENDING ROUND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **3.1 Single Local Growth Fund (SLGF)**

- Details of announcements made on 26 June had been provided to the Board.
- £1bn of the £2bn announced for 2015/16 within the SLGF will be capital funded with the aspiration that local areas will match this.

- Government is clear that it wishes to see multi-year strategic plans (although funding passed 2015/16 is unconfirmed until post May 2015 elections).
- New Homes Bonus (NHB) allocations will continue to be directly related to the number of houses being delivered in the local area. Within the SLGF proposals it appears that £400m of NHB funding (around 35% of the total NHB pot) will be placed directly under the control of LEPs to support their priorities as the LEP deems fit (Skills funding within the SLGF, however, being tied to Skills projects).
- On the basis of past performance, Bucks' estimated allocation of the £400m NHB will be £1.5m; BTVLEP controlling £1m, and SEMLEP controlling £0.5m relating to Aylesbury Vale.
- Notification of SLGF allocations is expected by July 2014, related to Strategic Plans currently being produced. The competitive element of the SLGF being allocated against a number of criteria including: value for money; ability to deliver; and the overall benefit to the local area.
- With regards to Transport projects, significant work has been completed by the Local Transport Body identifying and collating a list of projects across Bucks that require funding. In addition to this, consideration may be given to smaller projects that can unlock disproportionate returns, and those larger schemes that are aspirational in nature but which will need greater investment than is currently available to enable delivery.
- Projects to be supported through Skills funding within the SLGF, will largely depend on eligibility criteria. Consideration may be given to the establishment of a second University Technical College.

### 3.2 EU Structural Investment Funds

- Bucks' notional allocation under the EU Structural Investment Funds is €13.9m.
- The Board agreed it wished to focus allocation of this funding on one or two key areas, eg skills and employability, where the LEP might be able to make a difference, and through these address the requirement to spend 20% of the allocation on low carbon and social inclusion programmes.

## 4 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

### 4.1 Growing Places Fund

- GPF monies have been transferred in respect of the Aylesbury Town Centre project; contract agreement is in place for the Broadband project (monies due to be transferred at the end of the project); and contract documentation is being finalised for Wycombe projects.

### 4.2 Growth Deals

- Whitehall is keen that each LEP has a single body through which funding can be received and which can speak as a single voice for all partners within the LEP.
- Bucks is pressing on allocation through competition, but many other LEPs favour allocation by formula.

### 4.3 Case Conference

- The Case Conference on 18 July in Whitehall had gone well and the feedback received had been positive.
- The 'asks of Government' in brief were:-
  - **Broadband** - support for the existing project via TV Licence payers funds available.
  - **Local Growth Hub** - extending the work already undertaken by Bucks Business First.
  - **Skills** - removal of the cap on 'off quota' numbers allowing an increase in the number of students supporting themselves or being supported via business sponsorship, particularly with regards to advanced level technical skills courses.
  - **Local UKTI capacity** - secondment of UKTI staff to the BTVLEP for one year.
  - **Real Estate Investment Trust** - establishment of a pilot REIT between the LEP and registered social landlords.
  - **Development projects** - increased Public Works Loan Board allocation.

## 5 LEP DELIVERY MECHANISM

- The Board supported (with a number of caveats) the recommendation to progress establishment of a new Bucks-wide organisation to support the BTVLEP Board in the delivery of its objectives. This would be an incorporated body able to borrow and receive funding.
- The proposed governance structure would see the Member organisation directors (ie BTVLEP Board members) being responsible for setting the delivery vehicle's business plan and having financial responsibility (signing off annual accounts and setting of budgets etc). This activity would be supplemented with a number of operational directors who would meet on a more regular basis.
- It was confirmed the delivery vehicle would have no independence away from the LEP main Board.

## 6 SINGLE POT/EU STRATEGIC PLANS - Timetable

### 6.1 EU

- The submission deadline for bids to the EU Structural Investment Funds is 7 October 2013.
- The draft bid will be brought to the Board at its meeting on 20 September 2013 for approval.

### 6.2 Single Local Growth Fund (SLGF)

- The deadline for submission of the first draft of the Strategic Plan to the SLGF is end December 2013 (originally this had been requested by 30 September).
- The initial draft of the Plan will be brought to the Board on 20 September, and will go through a period of consultation between September and the December submission date.

## 7 SKILLS SUB GROUP UPDATE

- The sub group's developing workstreams are very much around the priorities that the BTVLEP has identified and there is a strong focus on Information, Advice and Guidance in schools, colleges, universities and for those not in education, employment or training.
- EU funds cannot be used to provide Information, Advice and Guidance in schools.
- There is an opportunity for Bucks County Council to be innovative in the tender for Information, Advice and Guidance services (due to take place in the next 6 months) over and above statutory requirements; including perhaps the requirement to speak to employers investigating their requirements, and including items reflecting the BTVLEP's agenda.
- The Board reiterated its wish that the Skills Sub Group focus on economic prosperity in Bucks and how to provide a supply of people with the right skills so that businesses can be created and grow.
- It was reported that the recent industry-led bid to create a Next Gen Academy, looking at ways of improving skills and training for the Games, Animation, VFX and Creative Digital industries had been successful in gaining Government approval for the first stage of funding. Subject to planning approval it was hoped that the Academy would be based at Pinewood Studios.

## 8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Friday 20 September 2013, from 9.30am, venue Buckinghamshire University Technical College.