

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

Held Friday 17 July 2015 from 9.30am at Aylesbury College, Oxford Road, Aylesbury, Bucks HP21 8PD

**Present:** Cllr Ralph Bagge, South Bucks District Council  
Cllr Steve Bowles, Aylesbury Vale District Council  
Cllr Isobel Darby, Chiltern District Council  
Cllr Martin Tett, Buckinghamshire County Council  
Cllr Katrina Wood, Wycombe District Council  
Philippa Batting, Buckinghamshire Business First (Alternate)  
Michael Garvey, Buckinghamshire Business First (Stupples Chandler Garvey)  
Guy Lachlan, Buckinghamshire Business First (Jones & Cocks Ltd)  
Andrew Smith, Buckinghamshire Business First (Pinewood)  
Adam Stronach, Buckinghamshire Business First (Harwood Hutton) (Alternate)

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

**In attendance:** Karen Mitchell, Aylesbury College (Part meeting)  
Richard Ambrose, Buckinghamshire County Council  
Adrian Brown, Buckinghamshire Advantage  
Lee Shostak, Shared Intelligence (Part meeting)  
Lisa McCance, Shared Intelligence (Part meeting)  
Martin Tugwell, England's Economic Heartland Strategic Alliance (Part meeting)  
Richard Harrington, BTVLEP Chief Executive  
Jim Sims, BTVLEP Development Manager  
Ian Barham, BTVLEP Partnerships Manager  
Jackie Campbell, BTVLEP Skills Manager  
Steve Mayhead, BTVLEP Growth Deal Contract Manager  
Sarah Fraser

## **SUMMARY MINUTES**

### **1 WELCOME FROM AYLESBURY COLLEGE**

- Latest Ofsted results have graded the college as "Good"; with plans to move to "Outstanding".
- The curriculum is being "employer shaped" to reflect skills needed locally.
- The college generates significant, non-Government funded income.
- University Campus Aylesbury Vale, once open, will offer higher education courses, high level apprenticeships, technical skills etc.
- Key challenges for the college are: educational reform; devolution; future management of apprenticeships; and how to handle post 16 education.

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- Declarations of interest had been received separately from new Board members. There were no new declarations of interest at this meeting.

### **3 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING – 6 February 2015**

- The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

### 3.1 Matters arising

- **Funding for Creative Industries projects - Carried forward** - Andrew Smith/Jim Sims to discuss availability of additional monies available from HMT for Creative Industries projects.

## 4 **LOCAL GROWTH DEAL UPDATE**

### 4.1 Round 1 and 2 Projects

- Costs are being monitored and additional projects investigated should residual funding be available.
- A355 project - The landowner has asked the BTVLEP to assist in promoting land within the relief road for development. This was felt to conflict with the Local Planning Authority's responsibilities. It was felt the LEP should only be involved with development discussions of strategic economic importance.
- 5G Innovation Centre project - the University of Surrey will attend the September Board to provide an update on the project (developing next generation mobile telecoms and the applications associated with this). It was agreed no money will be spent on this project pending the September Board update.
- It was agreed to make a conditional offer of £2.2m to Bucks County Council re the Stocklake Link scheme, based on the recommendations in the Hewdon Consulting Due Diligence report.
- Detailed financial forecasts are still awaited for a number of projects. Scheme sponsors have been asked to provide this information as a matter of urgency.

### 4.2 LGF 3

- A call for projects to be submitted to Round 3 of the Local Growth Fund will be issued in August to be considered at 11 September Board meeting; final submission due in the Autumn.

## 5 **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN**

- Bucks Advantage had been charged to produce a long term Buckinghamshire infrastructure investment plan to be used as the basis for bidding to future rounds of the Local Growth Fund.
- This would be a 'live' document evolving as new priorities and opportunities emerged, and reflecting aspirations in Local Authorities' Local Plans as these were developed and finalised.
- Local Authority members of the BTVLEP voiced concerns around the focus on housing delivery (recognising the figures quoted were already in the public domain) and around a number of specific items in the Plan.
- Local Authority Board members were unable to support the Infrastructure Plan as it stood; this presented an issue for bidding to the next round of the Local Growth Fund.
- Business Board members recognised the difficulties facing Local Authority Members but in the absence of agreed Local Plans were keen to influence the development process to the benefit of Bucks' residents/businesses. This entailed finding a co-operative approach to infrastructure development.
- It was agreed to make clear the Infrastructure Plan is a "living" document, subject to normal political processes. Local Authority Board members will consult with their respective Councils to gain views/feedback/revisions prior to discussion on the Infrastructure Plan coming back to the September Board.

## 6 **ENGLAND'S ECONOMIC HEARTLAND STRATEGIC ALLIANCE**

- The opportunity to build a stronger voice into Whitehall, particularly around infrastructure and strategic transport issues, through a strategic alliance across Bucks, Oxon and Northants was discussed.
- Informal feedback from Whitehall has been positive and there have been discussions about the creation of a single strategic transport and infrastructure plan across the wider geography with a confirmed 5 year funding settlement.
- There are opportunities to improve existing business support provision and tackle skills issues.
- There is an opportunity to prepare a submission to Government by mid-September.

- HM Treasury has emphasised the need for tight governance and a clear point of contact accountable for progress.
- Board members were supportive of the approach being taken, welcoming more discussion, and asking that a clear picture is painted of the benefits for Bucks businesses and information on how Bucks' infrastructure plan fits with the infrastructure plan across the tri-county area.
- It was agreed to add updates on the Strategic Alliance as a regular BTVLEP Board item.

## **7 SKILLS EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME UPDATE**

- The new Skills Strategy Manager and Skills Development Manager are now in place.
- The new Skills and Employability Board has been established with significant employer involvement.
- The Skills team work closely with BBF to gain employer buy in/support for the Skills Hub. It was agreed BBF will formally take a place on the Skills and Employability Board rather than attend as an observer.
- The online element of the Skills Hub will be available from September.
- Board members suggested giving consideration to a structured programme of holiday work placements/work experience for students at University in particular, in an effort to retain more skilled young people in the county.
- It was suggested it would be helpful for employers to have a named contact to liaise with on vacancies.

## **8 LOCAL GROWTH HUB UPDATE**

- The Growth Hub has started the year well; a significant number of businesses have been assisted; 47 events have been hosted; and the Growth Hub is signposting businesses towards other agencies that can support them eg the Growth Accelerator.
- The Growth Hub is in the process of mapping all business support available in the county.
- BBF will shortly be announcing the appointment of several new directors to its Board, which will be relevant to the BTVLEP as BBF provides the business voice at the BTVLEP table.

## **9 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT**

- BTVLEP will be moving responsibility for its accounting function from BBF to Buckinghamshire County Council. This offers greater clarity on scrutiny to the accountable body for the BTVLEP.
- Partner contributions, important in securing match funding from Government and supporting the LEP's activities, will be rolled over for another 3 years as the original 3 year agreements have now expired.
- It was agreed to withdraw from the Financial Instruments arrangements operated by Finance South East and focus funds on Bucks activities.
- Information on the Superfast Extension Programme was requested to take to South Bucks District Council Cabinet to investigate options to make a contribution, to be matched by BDUK.

## **10 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

- Representatives from Heathrow are to be asked to attend a future board meeting to discuss the implications of proposed development at the airport and what mitigation is needed in Bucks.

## **11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- Friday 11 September 2015, from 9.30am, venue tbc.