

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

Held Friday 17 March 2017 from 9.30am at National Film And Television, Station Road, Beaconsfield HP9 1LG

- Present:** Cllr Ralph Bagge, South Bucks District Council  
Cllr Neil Blake, Aylesbury Vale District Council (Alternate)  
Cllr Isobel Darby, Chiltern District Council  
Cllr Mike Appleyard, Buckinghamshire County Council (Alternate)  
Cllr Roger Wilson, Wycombe District Council (Alternate)  
Philippa Batting, BBF Managing Director (Alternate)  
Michael Garvey, Buckinghamshire Business First (Chandler Garvey)  
Martin Reed, Buckinghamshire Business First (Thomas International) (Alternate)  
Andrew Smith, Buckinghamshire Business First (Pinewood)
- Apologies:** Cllr Steve Bowles, Aylesbury Vale District Council  
Cllr Martin Tett, Buckinghamshire County Council  
Cllr Katrina Wood, Wycombe District Council  
Rebecca Bunting, Buckinghamshire Business First (Buckinghamshire New University)  
Guy Lachlan, Buckinghamshire Business First (Classic Oils Ltd)  
Eman Martin-Vignerte, Buckinghamshire Business First (Bosch)
- In attendance:** Alistair Lomax, University of Buckingham  
John Rippon, Buckinghamshire County Council  
Aaron Rosser, Buckinghamshire County Council  
Thomas Fitzpatrick, Buckinghamshire County Council  
Keith Mason, Satellite Applications Catapult  
Richard Ambrose, Buckinghamshire County Council  
Richard Turl, BIS South Central & West  
Richard Harrington, BTVLEP Chief Executive  
Ian Barham, BTVLEP Partnerships Manager  
Jackie Campbell, BTVLEP Skills Development Manager  
Rupert Waters, BBF Head of Economic Research  
Sarah Fraser

## **SUMMARY MINUTES**

- 1 **WELCOME FROM THE NATIONAL FILM AND TELEVISION SCHOOL**
  - Jon Wardle welcomed the Board. The school now has the most advanced training studio in Europe thanks in part to BTVLEP's investment, and has seen significant growth with more planned.
  - The school is 45 years old, has less than 1,800 graduates; and receives more applications per place than either Cambridge or Oxford Universities.
  - 85% of UK students receive some form of bursary support and courses are built to meet identified gaps in film makers' needs.
  - The NFTS benefits from DCMS and industry funding; the latter demonstrating how integral the school is to the film making industry.
- 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
  - Cllr Mike Appleyard declared an interest as a Governor of the University of Buckingham.
- 3 **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING - 27 January 2017**
  - The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

- Following discussion at the last Board meeting, it was reiterated that arrangements around members of BCC's Transport, Economy and Environment team working under the direction of the BTVLEP's Chief Executive replicated arrangements in other LEP areas. This better aligns resources to deliver the best outcome for Bucks as a whole. The BTVLEP Board will be responsible for monitoring progress on infrastructure projects and ensuring momentum is maintained. The Board requested:
  - Legal advice be taken re any liabilities accruing to the BTVLEP.
  - A breakdown of the split of the BTVLEP's Chief Executive's time on BTVLEP vs BCC work.
  - Confirmation that "Team Bucks" time can be used as match to core funding.

#### 4 **LGF 3 PROJECTS - BUSINESS CASES**

- Roz Bird, MEPC, will provide an update on the Silverstone Innovation Centre at the next meeting.
- Of the £20.5m LGF3 allocation recently announced, £2m is unallocated. Discussion on how best to utilise this funding will be brought back to the Board later in the year.
- The Board agreed to move to full business case for both projects below.

##### 4.1 University of Buckingham Centre for Liberal Economics, Innovation & Entrepreneurship

- Alistair Lomax provided an update on plans for new facilities at the University. The Board commented timescales proposed appeared ambitious and costs per square metre appear high.
- Dominic Williams of Hewdon Consulting, as an independent opinion, will review the final costings and will be instrumental in drafting the final contract.

##### 4.2 Stoke Mandeville Relief Road (Aylesbury South East Link Road)

- An update on progress was presented. DfT has made a specific allocation against this project, which it was confirmed will 'join up' with plans at neighbouring developments at Hampden Fields etc.
- BTVLEP's contribution to the project (£13.5m) will be in the form of a loan to be repaid through Section 106 agreements etc.
- The Board asked that costs to build a dual, rather than a single, carriageway be confirmed, in addition to costs for converting from a single to a dual carriageway in the future.
- This scheme could be considered under the Garden Towns discussion, if required.
- Recognising that all cases will have site specific issues, the Board requested an estimated figure be provided for building 1km of carriageway.
- A full business case will be brought to the Board for approval in November.

#### 5 **5G TESTBED, NATIONAL SPACE PROPULSION TEST CENTRE, INNOVATION & INCUBATION CENTRE UPDATE**

- Keith Mason provided an update on developments at Westcott. The importance of 5G lies in the ability to access capabilities through mobile, wifi and satellite connection and to migrate from one to the other in a seamless way wherever users are in the world.
- The vision for Westcott is as a verification and test centre for upstream and downstream space technologies in a controlled environment.
- Funding is being sought from Government and from the National Space Agency.
- The project will see semi-permanent buildings constructed/older buildings refurbished, and masts erected etc to allow testing. It is planned to be operating by the end of 2017.

#### 6 **INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY**

- Responses to the Government's Industrial Strategy green paper are required by 17 April. This will form the basis of the new strategy for economic development going forward.
- Bucks performs well on the top line measure for productivity of GVA per hour worked in the context of the UK but not so well on this front against international standards. GVA per capita and GVA growth results are not so successful for the county.
- Responses will make the case that Government's focus should be on those areas that are doing well but with support could do better.

- Geography raises issues for Bucks: the focus on cities rather than non-metropolitan areas; the unhelpful coupling of London and the South East - two different areas with very different investment profiles.
- The BTVLEP team are fully deployed compiling the information to respond to the Green Paper. Additional resource may be required to complete this work.
- The BTVLEP's response will be complementary to submissions from the Greater Thames Valley LEPS, and England's Economic Heartland, and will accurately reflect the differing economies in the county. The response will also reflect the challenges Bucks is facing eg retaining graduates in the county whether due to availability of appropriate employment opportunities or the cost of housing.
- One focus may be on identifying the jobs needed in the future, eg in the creative industries and focussing on technical skills. The need to look at investment in research, not just institutions and their location but also applied research and where this takes place, should also be considered. There is a need to build capacity for manufacturing and innovation in technology. The county needs more space for companies to grow in to and definitely needs more innovation and incubation space.
- Government is genuinely seeking to listen to new ideas, clustering being top of Whitehall's agenda. Focussing on a regional approach, rebalancing outside of London will be helpful. Lord Prior, the BTVLEP's Sponsor, is one of the Ministers responsible for progressing the Industrial Strategy and is particularly interested in what will deliver growth and enterprise.

## 7 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

### 7.1 Local Growth Fund

- The Board approved an open call for projects in excess of £100k to utilise remaining £1.5m Skills Capital Funding (and will consider previously submitted projects in this mix).
- Funding for Iver sustainable transport schemes has not been lost and will be included in looking at a solution for all future local infrastructure needs for the area. Iver will be identified as having specific issues in the response being submitted on the Heathrow expansion by the Greater Thames Valley LEPS.
- The Board were asked to consider the possibility of allocating additional funding to the Eastern Link Road project if required to ensure it is delivered.

### 7.2 Skills

- The skills strategy is evolving and will be the subject of an agenda item at the next meeting.
- Many businesses are struggling to understand the new Apprenticeship Levy and how to access/use this.
- The Board gave in principle approval to a new 2 year post assisting companies to understand and take full advantage of the Levy. A full business case and budget with KPIs will be brought to the next Board meeting for final approval.

### 7.3 Enterprise Zones

- Good progress is being made with Bucks' Enterprise Zones.
- The developer at Westcott is requesting a £900k contribution towards the cost of a roundabout to open up the site; Silverstone is requesting £5m as a contribution to utility costs; and a contribution to primary infrastructure is sought at Woodlands. The AVEZ Board will consider these requests and sign off an implementation plan when it next meets on 23 March 2017.

### 7.4 England's Economic Heartland

- The EEH conference was held on 9 March, attended by the Minister for Transport. It appeared there may be funding available to contribute to the development of a sub- regional transport body.
- The route of the A41 expressway was discussed.

### 7.5 Housing White Paper

- The BTVLEP's response to the housing white paper is being drafted and will be circulated for approval prior to submission.

7.6 Silverstone Heritage Experience

- The Board agreed Richard Harrington sign the loan agreement once reviewed by the Section 151 officer.

7.7 Digital Infrastructure Group

- The DIG will be restructuring in the coming weeks, reviewing governance procedures and the current role as an advisory body to the LEP. A paper will be brought to a future Board meeting.

7.8 Connected Counties

- Broadband take up through the Connected Counties project is running at 43%, this is very high. Advanced works have started on Contract 2 in Wycombe and Chiltern District areas.
- Information is due shortly on the gainshare arrangements, which will allow connections to more properties. Further information will be brought back to the Board in May.

7.9 Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment

- MG had spoken at the Bucks Planning Officers Group recently on the market in the county.
- There is a growing recognition that many assumptions are flawed eg the projected amount of commercial sq ft going forward is enormously high and officers will now be planning over a shorter period of time to arrive at a more accurate picture.
- The latest white paper has caused increased confusion around greenbelt; the county is now being consulted on greenbelt release; if this is rejected it will create issues for housing numbers in Local Plans.

8 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- Friday 26 May 2017, 1pm, venue tbc.