

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

Held Friday 26 May 2017 from 1pm at Officers' Mess, RAF Halton, Wendover, Bucks HP22 5PG

**Present:** Cllr Nick Naylor, South Bucks District Council (Alternate)  
Cllr Steve Bowles, Aylesbury Vale District Council  
Cllr Isobel Darby, Chiltern District Council  
Cllr Martin Tett, Buckinghamshire County Council  
Klaus Allion, Buckinghamshire Business First (ANT Telecommunications Ltd) (Alternate)  
Rebecca Bunting, Buckinghamshire Business First (Buckinghamshire New University)  
Michael Garvey, Buckinghamshire Business First (Chandler Garvey)  
Eman Martin-Vignerte, Buckinghamshire Business First (Bosch)  
Andrew Smith, Buckinghamshire Business First (Pinewood)

**Apologies:** Cllr Ralph Bagge, South Bucks District Council  
Cllr Katrina Wood, Wycombe District Council  
Guy Lachlan, Buckinghamshire Business First (Classic Oils Ltd)

**In attendance:** Nicola Thomas, Natural Environment Partnership (Part meeting)  
Roz Bird, MEPC (Part meeting)  
Rob Lewis, TotalSim (Part meeting)  
Richard Ambrose, Buckinghamshire County Council  
Richard Turl, BIS South Central & West  
Richard Harrington, BTVLEP Chief Executive  
Philippa Batting, BBF Managing Director  
Ian Barham, BTVLEP Partnerships Manager  
Jackie Campbell, BTVLEP Skills Development Manager  
Anthony Sowden, Enterprise Zone Director  
Rupert Waters, BBF Head of Economic Research  
Sarah Fraser

## **SUMMARY MINUTES**

### **1 WELCOME FROM RAF HALTON**

- The BTVLEP Board were welcomed to RAF Halton, a managed asset of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO).
- The future of the base is still to be finalised pending discussions between the DIO, Buckinghamshire County Council and Aylesbury Vale District Council.

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- No new declarations of interest were made at this meeting.

### **3 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING - 17 March 2017**

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

#### **3.1 Matters arising:**

- **LGF monies** - The remaining £2m unallocated is to be used specifically towards development of incubation space. The Board requested a close watch be kept on the Woodlands development to ensure this does not suffer from lack of funding.

## 4 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP (NEP)

- The work of the NEP was outlined together with the role the BTVLEP might play in assisting with this. Necessary growth is coming to Bucks, the NEP wish to see this happen in the most environmentally friendly and sustainable way possible.
- The NEP is encouraging developers to consider biodiversity and green infrastructure in all scales of development and is providing examples of best practice to draw upon.
- The need for NEP involvement in Garden Town discussions was highlighted.
- Assistance was requested in bringing the NEP and local developers together.
- BTVLEP/NEP to discuss undertaking a biodiversity audit of the Woodlands development.

## 5 SKILLS

### 5.1 Skills Strategy

- The Board recorded its thanks to Ruth Farwell (as she steps down from the Skills Board) for all the work she had undertaken in progressing the skills agenda, and noted its thanks to Rebecca Bunting who has picked up this mantle.
- The next phase of work will see the development of a countywide skills strategy to support partnership working, reduce duplication and ensure alignment/ co-ordination of resources.
- The skills team's ongoing work programme will be informed by a review of jobs at risk, skills that employers are likely to need in the future, the changing SME economy, the effect of Brexit etc. Significant work is being undertaken, in particular, to get schools/pupils to engage with the STEM agenda, employers continuing to cite issues in finding staff with these skills. Local colleges are fully engaged and the outcome of research undertaken by the skills team is shared regularly to help inform curriculum decisions.
- The Skills Board has recommended widening the current strategy to include lifelong learning and to look at higher level skills, and has recommended wider consultation on the strategy prior to bringing the final version back to the BTVLEP Board in September.
- The Board noted the framework and content of the Buckinghamshire Skills Strategy and supported the schedule for completion and adoption.

### 5.2 Apprenticeship Manager

- This new role will be key in assisting businesses to understand and make full use of the Apprenticeship Levy, including navigating the options around the ability of large employers to "gift" 15% of their levy to businesses within their supply chain.
- The Board noted the Job Description and outputs required of the proposed new Apprenticeship Manager role and confirmed approval to allocate £120k to support this 2 year fixed term contract. The Board asked that a candidate with the appropriate level of expertise/experience be recruited.

## 6 SILVERSTONE LGF SUBMISSION

- The Board received an update on development at Silverstone and an outline on plans to develop a cycle hub at the park.
- This facility will be custom built to meet the requirements of the cycling community and, as such, there is no other direct purpose built competition in the country and will support (directly and indirectly) 60 new jobs.
- The Board expressed its interest in this project which would offer interesting diversification to the proposals initially discussed, the project requiring £1.2m grant funding (of the £2m originally allocated) towards R&D equipment and Phase 1 fit out.
- It was agreed to bring a fully detailed business case to the next Board meeting having undertaken necessary due diligence and a review of any state aid issues.

## 7 INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

- Officials are in the process of reviewing responses received to the Industrial Strategy consultation (including that from the BTVLEP).
- The Board highlighted again its concern regarding the linking of London and the South East in the Industrial Strategy. It was noted similar concerns have been raised in a number of other responses received and it is clear LEPs do not want the South East to be disadvantaged through this connection with London.
- The Board indicated its approval to a piece of work looking at the responses submitted, creating a programme of work based on the outcome of this research.

## 8 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

### 8.1 LGF

- Further to reports provided, the Board approved release of £3m grant funding towards the University of Buckingham's Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship.
- BTVLEP will be meeting the AVDC Planning committee on 14 July following which it is hoped to be able to make progress with the Aylesbury Eastern Link Road land transaction.
- Discussions are still to be held with Government regarding the amount of funding available for 'SME Access to Finance' and, once agreed, consultants are to be appointed.

### 8.2 Digital Infrastructure Group (DIG)

- The DIG met recently and discussed gainshare and clawback arrangements. The decision was taken to recycle BTVLEP's investment in the Broadband programme to ensure no delays in extending the BT programme of work.
- In its Phase 2 proposition BTVLEP has discussed prioritising funds for business premises and there is now an opportunity to focus on the Enterprise Zones and to look at opportunities for achieving superfast speeds across the county.
- As part of the gainshare discussions the DIG have modelled business estates and looked at coverage gaps. BT is being pressed to employ newer technology wherever possible.
- An update will be provided at the next BTVLEP Board meeting and a fuller discussion held on where investment should be made in the future.

### 8.3 RAF Halton

- The Board were supportive of BTVLEP working with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation, AVDC and BCC, recognising the roles that each has to play, on development of the masterplan for the disposal of the RAF Halton site following its proposed closure.

## 9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Friday 7 July 2017, 9.30am, Pinewood Studios