

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

Held Tuesday 24 July 2018 from 9.30am at Greatmoor Energy From Waste Plant, Woodham, Bucks HP18 0AF

- Present:** Cllr Isobel Darby, Chiltern District Council
Cllr Angela Macpherson, Aylesbury Vale District Council (Alternate)
Cllr Nick Naylor, South Bucks District Council
Cllr Martin Tett, Buckinghamshire County Council
Cllr David Watson, Wycombe District Council (Alternate)
Hiren Gandhi, Buckinghamshire Business First (Blaser Mills) (Alternate)
Michael Garvey, Buckinghamshire Business First (Chandler Garvey)
Eman Martin-Vignerte, Buckinghamshire Business First (Bosch)
Andrew Smith, Buckinghamshire Business First (Pinewood)
Adam Stronach, Buckinghamshire Business First (Harwood Hutton)
- Apologies:** Rebecca Bunting, Buckinghamshire Business First (Buckinghamshire New University)
Cllr Steve Bowles, Aylesbury Vale District Council
Cllr Katrina Wood, Wycombe District Council
- In attendance:** Iain Stewart MP, Chair APPG Growth Corridor (Part meeting)
Phil Swann, Shared Intelligence (Part meeting)
Lisa McCance, Shared Intelligence (Part meeting)
Zoe Green, PWC (Part meeting)
Richard Turl, BEIS South Central & West
Richard Ambrose, Buckinghamshire County Council
Philippa Batting, BBF Managing Director
Richard Harrington, BTVLEP Chief Executive
Ian Barham, BTVLEP Partnerships Manager
Jackie Campbell, BTVLEP Skills Development Manager
Sarah Fraser

SUMMARY MINUTES

1 LEP REVIEW

- Pending final publication of Government's LEP Review, indications were that this would be broadly supportive of LEPs, will consider governance, appointment of Chairs/Directors, reporting mechanisms, the proportion of business vs Local Authority Board representation, optimum size for LEPs, the issue of overlapping geography, and the need for transparency, likely advocating at least one meeting be open to the public each year, akin to an AGM.
- Key issues for the BTVLEP involved addressing overlapping geography in Aylesbury Vale, and the question of incorporation, Government being clear that LEPs must have a legal body. Recommendations on both these issues are to be with Government by 28 September 2018.
- LEP Chairs have raised issues with Government around the need for greater consistency of funding if LEPs are to meet the "going concern" requirements of incorporated bodies; noting the introduction of the new "single pot" Prosperity Fund which may help address this.
- LEP Chairs for BTVLEP, SEMLEP and OXLEP have started discussions around geography, recognising the outcome of these may require individual Board approval.
- Discussions on geography/incorporation are against the backdrop of an already ambitious programme to meet the requirements for the production of the Local Industrial Strategy.

- The Board suggested there are a number of areas where Central Government will need to provide a framework within which LEPs might work and that a far greater quantum or a revised bidding/allocation methodology will be required if Government is to invest in those areas, such as Buckinghamshire, able to deliver the greatest return on investment and properly support the aim to increase UK productivity.
- **It was agreed a small sub group of the Board will look at the questions of geography and incorporation bringing forward recommendations to an extraordinary Board meeting on 7 September.**

2 **CAMBRIDGE : MILTON KEYNES : OXFORD GROWTH CORRIDOR**

- The Board welcomed Iain Stewart MP, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group related to the Growth Corridor, one of Government's top priorities, who provided an update on work looking at the growth potential along the corridor (and wider) following publication of the NIC's report in 2017, and the risks to realising this potential.
- For its full potential to be reached, the corridor must be regarded as more than a series of housing projects with roads and rail to link them. The starting point is the economic vision (into which the Local Industrial Strategy will feed) and the skills and infrastructure required to deliver this vision.
- The aim is to create a corridor that allows ease of mobility, providing the jobs required across the geography to satisfy those living in the area.
- The Infrastructure Projects Authority is to respond to the report produced by Iain Stewart and his team, which has put forward a series of possible next steps, recognising the need to retain local accountability.
- The Board considered the awaited decision on the broad route of the expressway will impact all areas along the route. A decision "in the summer" on the corridor has been indicated with the advice to Government being that this should form part of a broader economic strategy.
- The Board noted the need to ensure connectivity not only east/west along the corridor and into the north, but also to the south, into the Thames Valley and linking to Heathrow.
- The Board were encouraged to be bold and ambitious in outlining the potential for economic growth in the area; to consider carefully the challenges and opportunities, and to look at those sectors that are a particular strength to the area and will encourage transferrable skills in the workforce to support the vision of job fluidity along the corridor.

3 **LOCAL INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY (LIS) UPDATE**

- Phil Swann/ Lisa McCance of Shared Intelligence outlined progress in the development of the Buckinghamshire LIS, designed to be "a chapter" within the National Industrial Strategy, and to feed into the vision for the Cambridge : Milton Keynes : Oxford Growth Corridor.
- The guidance from Government has been to focus on those features that are distinctive to the Buckinghamshire economy, that have the potential to be nationally significant and that support Government's drive to increase productivity. It was noted the LIS will sit alongside the Strategic Economic Plan when looking at where to place future investment.
- The first draft of the strategy will be produced by early Autumn following significant evidence gathering and engagement with businesses across the county; the final strategy due by the end of the year.
- The Board noted the early emerging propositions and, offered several suggestions for development of the LIS, recognising the need to answer tests on distinctiveness, national significance etc.
- Shared Intelligence will continue development of the LIS over the summer, returning to the BTVLEP Board on 5 October with a draft Strategy for amendment/approval.

4 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- There were no new declarations of interest at this meeting.
- Cllr Angela Macpherson was welcomed to her first BTVLEP Board meeting as Leader of Aylesbury Vale District Council. The Board offered thanks to the outgoing Leader, Cllr Neil Blake, for his contribution to the BTVLEP during his tenure.

5 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING - 24 May 2018

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

5.1 Matters arising:

- **Careers and Enterprise Company Funding** - Bucks has been successful in its bid for additional funding to support a full time post for 2 years delivering additional support to schools.
- **Ben Golding, BTVLEP Sponsor** - Visited Buckinghamshire recently and had been shown key development sites across the county in a very successful visit.

6 CAMBRIDGE : MILTON KEYNES : OXFORD GROWTH CORRIDOR ECONOMIC VISION

- Zoe Green of PWC outlined progress on the development of the economic vision for the Growth Corridor, the need to be bold and ambitious, and to demonstrate differentiation from other parts of the country.
- The vision will look at how to maximise and magnify already significant productivity along the corridor, and the investment required to achieve this. LEPs and all stakeholders will need to come together behind the combined vision to demonstrate that the corridor is a world leading place in a global context.
- The work to develop the Vision is running circa a month behind development of the Local Industrial Strategies, as these will provide key information on the distinctive and ambitious ideas to take forward.
- The final output in November will be a vision and investment plan demonstrating the potential and distinctiveness of the area. The aim will be to provide a very strong economic narrative on why the corridor is the place to invest and where scaling up of business can happen, supporting the Growth Corridor's APPG's desire to understand the economic drivers of the 'region'.
- The Board were advised that work on the Buckinghamshire Industrial Strategy is about looking at the county's strengths, what will drive productivity and the impact that Buckinghamshire can have on the national economy. The corridor vision will look at how to accelerate and enhance the local strategies to achieve greater impact through collaboration.
- In addition to the LEP commissioned PWC work, HMG will work with corridor Local Authorities/LEPs to produce a 'joint vision statement' at the Autumn budget, meeting a commitment from the last budget. This will be an holistic document looking wider than economic growth. Government will respond formally to the NIC report at the budget.

7 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

7.1 University of Buckingham Investment Proposition

- Further to the speculative proposition previously circulated, Alistair Lomax and Paul Jennings of the University of Buckingham joined the meeting to outline the background to the proposition, the investment required and the rationale behind the proposition.
- The Board were reminded that there remained approximately £2m unallocated Local Growth Fund monies, which had been held pending the outcome of the LEP Review.
- **The Board agreed:**
 - **There may be merit in the proposition from the University of Buckingham, recognising there was more work to do on the proposal to provide a clear and robust business case.**
 - **To put an open call out for projects within the LIS criteria, to be funded through unallocated Local Growth Fund monies, with the ability to complete prior to 2021, with a requirement to provide match funding, that demonstrate strong value for money, and that offer some form of reciprocity for the Buckinghamshire economy.**

7.2 Buckinghamshire Energy Strategy

- It was noted the biggest issue for the county within the draft Energy Strategy circulated will be ensuring the 3 Distribution Network Operators across the county are better aligned and that their plans map on to plans for development in the county.

- **The Board noted the consultation draft of the Buckinghamshire Energy Strategy, endorsed the principles and timetable therein, and approved the proposed co-creation of the final strategy with the Regional Energy Hub and BEIS teams.**

7.3 Halton Vision and Aylesbury Garden Town update

- The Board noted the outcome of the useful high level visioning work undertaken by the planning consultants, Urbed, on the economic potential at Halton, Green Park and Wendover Woodlands.
- The intention is to continue to work with the Local Authority, Forestry Commission and the MoD on the possibilities around the Forest Village ensuring alignment with local processes.
- The Board urged co-operation of all officers involved in this work to ensure continuity and consistency.

7.4 Comms

- The BTVLEP annual report is in the final stages of preparation and will be circulated once completed.

8 **BTVLEP STAFFING UPDATE**

- **Board members endorsed the recommendation previously circulated re Richard Harrington's salary.**

9 **DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

- Friday 7 September 2018, 9.30am, Aylesbury Waterside Theatre.
- Friday 5 October 2018, 9.30am, venue tbc.
- Friday 23 November 2018, 9.30am, venue tbc.