

**BOARD MEETING**

**Minutes of the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership Board Meeting**

**held on 14th November 2018, Wyvern House, The Drumber, Winsford CW7 IAH**

**Present:**

Christine Gaskell Cllr Samantha Dixon Prof Tim Wheeler

Chris Hindley Clare Hayward Stephen Kinsey

Pete Waterman Graeme Bristow Ged Barlow

Robert Mee

**Apologies:**

Cllr Rachel Bailey Cllr Terry O’Neill Cllr Samantha Dixon

John Downes Meredydd David

**Attending / Observing:**

Philip Cox (LEP Chief Executive) Mark Livesey Frank Jordan

Andy Farrall Charlie Seward Roy Newton

Matthew

**Agenda Item 1: Apologies and Introductions**

1.1 Christine Gaskell welcomed Board Members and explained that Gary Steen had tendered his resignation earlier in the week. A letter thanking Gary for his help and support had been sent and a recruitment exercise would be launched early in the New Year to identify potential successors. Apologies were received from Cllr Terry O’Neil, Cllr Rachel Bailey, Cllr Samantha Dixon, John Downes and Meredydd David.

**Agenda Item 2: Conflicts of Interest**

2.1 No conflicts of interest were declared.

**Agenda Item 3: Public Presentation**

3.1 Members of the public were in attendance and Matthew Waterhouse used the opportunity to ask Board members to prioritise a connectivity study into the A51. Mr Waterhouse highlighted the key link provided by the A51 to north Wales and the fact that it was increasingly the route of choice for large numbers of Heavy Goods Vehicles. Significant pinch points were evident across the route and congestion was a significant issue. The Board was urged to find resource to fund an early study.

**Agenda Item 4: Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 July 2018**

4.1 The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record, with all action points having been actioned.

**Agenda Item 5: Chief Executive's report**

5.1 The Board noted the report and additional comments from the Chief Executive and:

* Welcomed the appointment of Roy Newton (Transport Director) and Catherine Walker (Marketing and Communications Director) to the LEP. Both appointments would significantly strengthen the LEP team.
* Noted that an advert had been issued seeking candidates for the role of Finance Director. Again, this would be a key role within the LEP, taking responsibility for finance and governance.
* Noted that financial support had been given the NP11 to help establish a work programme, which was likely to see an initial focus on clean growth and a study around the supply chains of key manufacturers.
* Welcomed the establishment of the Convention of the North and particularly the role it would play in advancing the voice of the north with Government.
* Welcomed the appointment of Christine Gaskell to the Industrial Strategy Council. This body would play a key role in critically assessing the delivery of the Industrial Strategy.
* Welcomed the LEP’s attendance at the Regional Leaders Summit in China and looked forward to further engagement to explore common interests. Going forward it was hoped regional leaders might also be able to attend.

**Agenda Item 6: Transport Plan**

6.1 Pete Waterman introduced this agenda item and began by acknowledging that the A51 had already been identified as a priority and that the Local Transport Body were alive to the issues having received representations through the course of drafting the Transport Plan. Roy Newton went on to explain that the Local Transport Body had overseen the development of the draft Transport Strategy to support the delivery of the Strategic Economic Plan. The Strategy sets out how transport provision within Cheshire and Warrington should be developed over the next 20 years and identifies short term (5 year) priorities.

* 1. The draft strategy:
  + summarises the economic and spatial context;
  + analyses existing accessibility and travel patterns;
  + identifies transport challenges which need to be tackled to support achievement of the SEP objectives;
  + describes potential key design principles;
  + sets out how the sub-region could address the challenges; and
  + proposes transport infrastructure priorities
  1. Roy Newton explained that engagement with stakeholders had been a key component of the development of the strategy, providing an opportunity for stakeholders to input and sense check the various elements of the strategy. In general, stakeholders were supportive of the draft strategy.
  2. Roy concluded by stressing that the strategy identified a number of studies which were required to identify solutions, as well as schemes which required business case development. There would not be the resources available to undertake all of this work simultaneously, though there would need to be an appropriate balance of studies and business case development in order to maintain a pipeline of schemes, which might take advantage of government funding as it became available. The Transport Advisory Group would be establishing a robust process to do this.
  3. The Board welcomed the draft Transport Strategy commenting that it was a through and comprehensive piece of work. Having been assured that it complemented the strategies already published by local authority partners, the Board approved the draft for publication.

**Agenda Item 7: Sub-Committee Delegations**

7.1 The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the paper sought to respond to concerns that had been expressed at the recent Board Awayday. Board Members were keen to ensure enough time was available in Board meetings to discuss strategic issues affecting the sub-region and where possible to avoid repeating discussions which had already taken place in sub-committees.

7.2 In recognition of the likely increase in demands being placed on the Board, which were only likely to increase further as the LEP looked to negotiate its Local Industrial Strategy, the paper proposed delegating authority to LEP sub-committees enabling them to take decisions. In doing so, governance and transparency would need to mirror that already in place for the full LEP Board, which would mean appointments to sub-committees would need to be carried out in an open and transparent process.

7.3 To ensure a clear line of accountability to the LEP Board it was proposed that serving LEP Board members would be appointed to role of Chair and Deputy Chair for each sub-committee. It was further proposed that a Business Growth Hub Board was established to oversee the operation and direction of the Growth Hub. The level of financial delegation proposed, would look to allow sub-committees to progress around 80% of current business with the remainder coming to the full Board for decision. In addition, any novel or contentious issues would come to the full Board irrespective of financial value.

7.4 The Board approved the recommendations and the proposed level of financial delegation. In giving approval, the Board stressed the importance of having clear and transparent accountability.

**Agenda Item 8: Board Sub-Committee Reports**

8.2 In reporting sub-committee updates:

* The Board welcomed the investment in the Glasshouse which had now been made
* Agreed with the proposed use of the £5m LGF skills money to deliver STEM and digital priorities across the sub-region

**Agenda Item 9: Commercial Engagement with Marketing Cheshire**

9.1 The Board met in private.

**Item 10: Any other business**

10.1 The Chair suggested that in future matters to be discussed in public should be recorded.

10.2 Andy Farrall informed the Board that Terry O’Neill had announced that he would be stepping down as the Leader of Warrington Borough Council, and therefore from the Board, at the end of the calendar year. Andy also reported that in preparation for his own retirement next summer, he would stop attending Board meetings. Steve Broomhead would be taking Andy’s place.

10.3 Christine Gaskell suggested that the Board should receive a presentation on the Growth and Skills Hub given that some members missed the presentation given at the Awayday. She also suggested that the Board have a discussion at a future meeting about establishing a Junior Board.

**Date and Time of Next Meeting:**

Wednesday December 5th 4:30pm.

**Action points:**

**Action**: LEP Executive to set in hand arrangements to record future discussions.