

Minutes of the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership Performance and Investment Committee Meeting held on 27th October 2021 at 1.30 via Teams

In attendance: Nichola Newton (Chairman), Loren Jones, Ian Traynor, Joe Toward, Peter Skates (part), Ian

Brooks, Neil Taylor

Apologies: Chris Hindley, Catherine Walker, Stewart Brown, Alex Thompson, Paul Goodwin

Presentations on: Medicine Discovery Catapult – Dr Helen Bright, David Moore, Nicola Heron

Reaseheath Automated Milking - Ed Parrish

Transport Update – Roy Newton

Item No.	Item	To be Actioned by	By When
1.	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies		
	NN welcomed attendees and apologies were noted as above		
	Due to the Corona Virus meeting held via Teams		
2	Conflicts of Interest		
	Declarations of interest: NN declared an interest in the WVR AMET project		
	referred to in the programme manager report.		
3	Minutes and actions from the last meeting:		
	The minutes of the meeting of 22 nd September were approved. Actions from the		
	last meeting:		
	CW had suggested that the link on LEP website to the job opportunities portal	IB	Nov
	should be made more prominent. This has yet to be done. The website hosting		
	and maintenance is currently being transferred from one agency to another and a		
	list of improvements will be addressed once the transfer is complete.		
	In terms of strategy updates, John Adlen will be presenting in November (Growth	IB	Fwd Look
	Corridors) instead of Andy Devaney, whose update will be re-scheduled.		
4	Medicines Discovery Catapult		
	HB led a presentation on the progress of the project, explaining that the		
	laboratory design is finalised, and contractors are due on site in November.		
	The facility will provide a state of the art, secure resource for infectious diseases		
	research and medicines development.		
	HB explained that the timetable was tight to achieve full utilisation of the Getting		
	Building Fund allocation by 31 March 2022. Lead times for some of the specialist		
	equipment ranged from 12-24 weeks. Mitigations are being discussed with IB.		
	Questions from members focussed on management of risks e.g. cost inflation, the		
	level of contingency within the budget and responsibilities to make up any		

shortfalls. Members also probed the commercial model and the anticipated payback of the investment. HB explained that a new business development manager is being recruited to raise awareness, especially among SMEs, of the facility and its capabilities. 1B will continue to liaise closely with the project team and monitor over the next quarter whether the risks are crystallising. If the likelihood of slippage into 2022-23 becomes more likely, the committee would welcome a further update in January. 5 Reaseheath - Automated Milking Project EP gave an overview of the automated milking parlour which is now installed and fully operational on the Reaseheath farm. Unlike traditional parlours with milking at set times, cows come and go as they please and livestock seems less stressed by the procedure. Results show enhanced yield, improved fertility and improved life span. During the transition to the automated parlour, students were able to observe the "one-off" lessons associated with re-training the herd. Follow on cohorts of students now visit external farms which are installing equipment to experience that learning. Despite the covid restrictions 206 full time learners have gained experience of the process, there have been level 2 to level 5 placements, 48 external farmers visiting the site, 2 industry open events and 2 dissertations. Some primary schools have also attended the site. The challenges facing the dairy sector are growing demand (globally), very little scope to increase land use for dairy and carbon reduction. The technology supports meeting those challenges. 6/7 Programmes Update / MHCLG Returns IB ran through the programme update explaining he is temporarily covering the role until a replacement for Rachel has been recruited. He highlighted the good progress on projects such as EP OPE, Canalside EV charging and AMET. The committee noted the progress but is also keen to monitor closely projects at risk of not meeting their delivery targets. For example, for the skills programmes progress will ne	
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201 last year, with delivery of outputs anticipated from 2022 offwards.	
IB confirmed that RAG reports for the programme would normally continue to be	Nov
produced, but time constraints had prevented its production for this meeting.	
IB explained that Rachel's replacement is due to start on 8/11/21 and, by delaying IB	Nov
	INOV
completion of the bi-annual returns, due with MHCLG on 26/11/21, there was an	
opportunity to familiarise them with the programme and the reporting	
immediately on taking up the role. The returns will be circulated to members for	
approval in w/c 15/11 to give time for approval by both the members and s151.	
The committee noted the report.	
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	Besides the monitoring role for LGF and GPF, P&I members are keen to understand how their function will evolve. IB explained that there will be investment opportunities arising for Growing Places Fund and for EZ within the Growth Corridor.		
	Regarding the risk registers, the committee suggested reviewing upwards the likelihood of some risks to project delivery to reflect the challenges in the supply chain and inflationary pressures.	IB	Nov
8	Recovery Plan Update – Transport/Infrastructure		
	RN provided an update for transport initiatives and some additional activity		
	relating more generally to infrastructure and digital connectivity. Significant		
	progress has been made allocating £1.2M of LEP funding towards the		
	development of business cases and feasibility studies, all designed to raise the		
	level of "readiness" in the sub-region to anticipated calls for projects by		
	Government in the coming year or two. Many of the projects support transport		
	and sustainable transport (walking/ cycling) projects.		
	Coinciding as it did with the Chancellors Budget /SR speech, RN was able to report		
	announcements of £2Bn towards sustainable transport and £3Bn towards the		
	preparation of Bus Strategies. Consultants have already been appointed locally for		
	Bus Strategy work.		
	RN also gave a short update on HS2, the condition of Crewe station and the need		
	for investment, and the "bid" put forward by Crewe as a location for the Great		
	British Railways HQ (or part of it).		
	The presentation will be circulated to members (since done)		
9	AOB		
	IB said that a replacement for Rachel Laver had been identified with an anticipated	IB	Nov
	start date of 8/11/21. IB will seek to arrange introductions with members ahead		
	of the next meeting as part of induction.		