

**Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Wednesday 6th July 2022  
Virtual Meeting via Teams**

**Present:** Chair Cllr Laura Crane

Cllr Paul Donovan, Cllr Steve Parish, Tracey Walsh, Phil McCabe and Helen Nellist

**Also In Attendance:**

- Philip Cox - Cheshire and Warrington LEP
- Ian Brooks – Cheshire and Warrington LEP
- Rebecca Luck - Cheshire and Warrington LEP
- Sharon Parker – Warrington Borough Council (secretariat)

**89. Apologies**

Apologies were received Catherine Barber-Brown .

**90. Declarations of Interest**

Nil.

**91. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on the 26 th of January 2022 were received as a correct record.

**92. Membership**

It was noted that Phil McKay had resigned and that there were a number of vacancies on a couple of the committee across the LEP. Further discussions would take place with PC and IB on the most effective method to fill this particular vacancy. **ACTION**

**93. Briefing from Philip Cox – LEP Review – following the letter received from Ministers on 31 March 2022**

PC outlined the letter which had been sent to all LEPs following the Levelling up White Paper. The letter set some context and background to how LEPs had been set up, the numbers of them – 38 and they total spend to date of £20 billion pounds. It had rankled with some that given the high spend officers had been appointed rather than elected. The letter also stressed the importance of the value of the voice of business but also thought that more should be done to connect democratically elected bodies and that for those appointing mayoral combined authorities Government wants LEPs to be merged. Funding would be devolved and the decisions about spend would be via politicians not LEP Board.

PC also raised the issue of what would happen around the structure of the LEP, the role of Board Members – their role in the future would be different. How would they continue to be influential?

The Committee were also provided with details of changes to financial arrangements and the cuts that had been made. Conversations were taking place with the three Local Authorities about how this could be managed and financially modelling was taking place.

The Committee asked about timescales. PC thought the earliest would be May 2024.

There was also discussion around the continued importance of an external scrutiny function.

**94. LEP Delivery Plan for 2022 -23**

Rebecca Luck provided an overview of the above Plan. The following points were made.

Last six months spent drafting the Plan. Vision at the heart of all that the LEP was doing. Printed now on the website.

The LEP's vision was to be the UK's healthiest, most sustainable, inclusive and growing economy heart.

The delivery plan was drafted utilising the purpose pyramids for each of the delivery boards, and unlike last year had been subsequently drafted to help identify direct accountability of deliverables for each of the sub-boards.

Despite the LEP and Growth Hub's core funding receiving a sizeable reduction from Government, the drafting of the delivery plan had taken into account the Board's decision to retain staff and capacity throughout the financial year, with the LEP choosing to utilise the financial reserves.

- The Strategy Team are working to develop the economic intelligence base, and subsequently develop the strategy.
- Following the submission of the LEP's proposal to the Department of Education on a Skills Bootcamp programme, the LEP had now been awarded over £1m to deliver 15 Skills Bootcamps (across digital, technical and green skills) to over 260 learners. The first 3 Skills Bootcamps are now actively recruiting for eligible learners.
- On the 30<sup>th</sup> June the Pledge held, at Alderley Park, a Celebration and Next Steps event, which was an opportunity for the Pledge to communicate to all its stakeholders its future "offer."

### **Key Risks/Issues**

- The confirmation from Government regarding the reduction in funding
- The evolving role of the LEP, as defined within the Government letter in March

The Committee were complimentary about the KPIs, smart targets and deadlines. HN did though ask that some of the targets were a little looser than others and what were they going to focus on?

Any other comments could be sent through to Rebecca by the Committee.

### **95. Training Working Group**

The Chair updated the Committee on work that had been undertaken to date on training. The questionnaire had been issued and members were encouraged to complete. Some had been returned. It was also thought that to further support the work ex members of the Committee be asked to complete. **ACTION**

### **96. Work Programme and Items raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The work programme was noted and the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee was invited to attend a Board Meeting of the LEP. **ACTION**

Constitution to be reviewed at December Meeting.

**97. Public Participation**

To receive questions from members of the public 15 minutes will be allocated for members of the public to speak at Overview and Scrutiny meetings. Each member of the public shall be limited to a period of up to 5 minutes speaking.

Nil

**98. Future Meeting Dates**

Decision – The following dates were noted, due to commence at 2.00pm, via Teams.

5 October

7 December ?