



BOARD MEETING

Minutes of the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership Board Meeting held on 17th July 2019, Wyvern House, The Drumber, Winsford CW7 IAH

Present:

Christine Gaskell
Prof Tim Wheeler
Adrian Bull

Robert Mee
John Downes
Cllr Russ Bowden

Graeme Bristow
Chris Hindley
Cllr Craig Browne

Apologies:

Ged Barlow
Clare Hayward

Cllr Louise Gittins

Stephen Kinsey

Attending / Observing:

Philip Cox (LEP Chief Executive)
Charlie Seward
Andy Devaney

Mark Livesey
Ian Brooks
John Adlen

Frank Jordan
Steve Park
Graham Phillips

Agenda Item 1: Apologies and Introductions

1.1 Christine Gaskell welcomed Board Members and extended a warm welcome to Graham Phillips, Managing Director, Cheshire Young Carers, the LEP's supported charity for 2019/20. Apologies were received from Cllr Louise Gittins, Clare Hayward, Stephen Kinsey and Ged Barlow.

Agenda Item 2: Conflicts of Interest

2.1 Craig Browne acknowledged that he knew Graham Phillips.

Agenda Item 3: Cheshire Young Carers Presentation

3.1 Graham Phillips made an informative presentation of the work of Cheshire Young Carers and how they support across the county thousands of children aged between 6 and 18, who provide care to parents, siblings and relatives often in the most trying and difficult of circumstances. He explained their work with schools to bust the myth that children often seen as difficult, dis-engaged or troublesome are, in reality, stretched to the limit as the primary person running their household.

3.2 Often very bright and capable, these individuals are, without support, denied by their circumstances opportunities to achieve their potential or to form fulfilling social lives. Yet they are a cohort who are less likely to leave the area and who are well placed to effectively contribute to the provide a potentially untapped resource to support the delivery of economic growth in the area.

3.3 In response to Graham's request for support by the LEP, the Board resolved to

- provide opportunities for Cheshire Young Carers to attend LEP events during 2019/20, particularly those directed at businesses, where they could showcase their work and activities;
- offer staff one paid day of volunteering to support CYC's Fun Packed Summer of Activities.
- Those present from Marketing Cheshire agreed similar measures.

Agenda Item 4: Public Presentation

4.1 No members of the public were present.

Agenda Item 5: Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 May 2019

5.1 The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record.

Agenda Item 6: Chief Executive's report

6.1 The Board noted the report.

6.2 The Chief Executive then provided an update on the recruitment campaign for Boards of the LEP and Marketing Cheshire and sub-committee members of the LEP:

- The campaign started in March and resulted in 45 candidates being interviewed. The standard of applications was very high and, as a result, a full complement of 21 candidates would be offered appointments. Some have served a term on sub-committees for the LEP and are being re-appointed.
- The board accepted all the recommendations and resolved to appoint them to the positions.
- The names of individuals will be published following formal acceptances.
- The Chief Executive reminded the board that following the delegation of decision-making powers to sub-committees, attendance at meetings was of increased importance. Members of the public may attend meetings and it is important that sub-committees remain quorate and that meetings are not cancelled at the last minute.
- The board thanked Ged Barlow, Steve Parks, and Robert Davis and staff involved in managing the campaign, organising and attending interviews.
- Graham Bristow invited existing board members to ensure new members will be given the support they need to quickly understand the workings of the LEP and Marketing Cheshire in addition to the induction programme that the executive will prepare for them.
- It was agreed that the September board discussion forum would be a social event to welcome all new board and sub committee members.

6.3 The Chair and Chief Executive provided a brief update regarding the approach being taken to replace Warren Ralls at the LEP Network.

Agenda Item 7: Growth Hub Presentation

7.1 Andy Devaney, Director of Business Growth and Innovation, provided the Board with an update on progress made by the Growth and Skills Hub since December, and what has been done in a matter of a few months.

7.2 He reported that while we have not engaged with as many businesses as hoped for, the quality of the engagements we are making is high. The presentation highlighted some excellent case studies.

7.3 It is early days but the Board and Growth and Skills team are focussed on delivering real achievements and outcomes that support the wider economic strategy and aims of the LEP and the sub-region. The Chair emphasised the need to ensure emphasis on both Growth and Skills and to develop robust measures to demonstrate the efficacy of our activities.

7.4 Ian Brooks reminded the board that the Growth and Skills Hub were driving a “step-change” in the LEP’s volume of information and data sharing and that it will be important to invest in Information Technology to ensure continued compliance with data legislation.

Agenda Item 8: Enterprise Zone Presentation

8.1 John Adlen presented the latest update on the substantial investment in the Enterprise Zones and the exciting pipeline of projects. In particular, the regeneration of Newbridge Road in Ellesmere Port and projects at Hooten Park, were mentioned because prior to the Enterprise Zone status, these areas had been largely “un-investible” locations. Developments at Alderley Park were also highlighted.

8.2 The LEP is presently trying to establish an innovative “line of credit” to further invest in projects that, in time, will generate very significant amounts return, in the form of retained business rates for further investment.

8.3 The Chair proposed Board visits to some of the locations to better understand the projects and drivers of success, which will help our ability to engage with a variety of stakeholders.

8.4 When asked about the likelihood of future sites being designated Enterprise Zones or existing locations being expanded, the Chief Executive indicated this is not current policy. However, alternative models are being considered to support investment associated with e.g. HS2.

Agenda Item 9: Approval of Annual Report and Accounts 2018/19

9.1 Tim Wheeler informed the Board that the Finance and Audit Committee had received and reviewed a unqualified (“clean”) set of accounts at its meeting on the 16th July.

9.2 He explained that the LEP had achieved a small operating surplus, but that an accounting adjustment to pension provisions had resulted in a deficit being transferred to reserves. The F&A committee was nevertheless comfortable with the level of reserves held by the LEP. Guarantees from our Local Authority members ensure that the pension liabilities are of no material concern to the Board.

9.3 These factors considered, he was happy to recommend the report and accounts which were duly approved and signed on behalf of the board.

Agenda Item 10: Board Sub-Committee Reports

10.1 It was noted that:

- The Strategy Committee had approved work to begin on three business cases:
 - Crewe Hub Access
 - Winnington Swing Bridge
 - Warrington “Last Mile”
- Adrian Bull would chair a Marketing and Communications Board, initially to meet every 3 weeks.

Agenda Item 11: Any Other Business

11.1 The board was informed that both Winsford and Crewe had passed the first stage towards funding from the Future High Streets Fund. There are still several more stages to negotiate.

Date and Time of Next Meetings:

Discussion Forum (non-public event) Wednesday 18th September 4:30pm.

Board Meeting (public) Wednesday 16th October 4:30pm

Action points:

Action: None arising