**Employer Skills & Employment Board**

**MINUTES**

Wednesday 28th September 2016, LEP, Gadbrook Park

**Present:**

Lynne Williams (Chair) Jo Tipa Pat Bacon Paul Colman

James Richards Derek Lindsay Paul Taylor Karen McKean

Mark Roach Roz Atherton Christine Lowry Meredydd David (Observer)

Mark Livesey (Observer)

**Apologies:**

Clare Hayward Neil Warren Jenny Clucas Eilis Rattigan

Jim Carroll Jane Ingram

**Presenting:**

Jasbir Dhesi and Hellen Nellist, The Cheshire College

**Agenda Item 1: Welcome, Introductions and Apologies**

LW welcomed members and Jasbir Dhesi and Hellen Nellist to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Neil Warren, Clare Hayward, Jenny Clucas, Eilis Rattigan and Jim Carroll.

LW welcomed Mark Livesey, Deputy Chief Executive of the LEP, to the meeting.

**Action: Agenda discussion item at next meeting on Skills Strategy (RA/ML)**

RA informed the Board that Jim Carroll, CTO, Mobica had now joined the Board following attendance as an observer at the July meeting. JC will represent the creative/ digital sector. Jane Ingram, HR, Lloyds Banking Group has also joined the Board and will represent the finance sector.

**Agenda Item 2: Minutes and Actions from the July meeting**

The minutes of the meeting on 1ST July were agreed as a true record.

The action list was reviewed and all actions were either complete, covered by this meeting or ongoing.

**Agenda Item 3: Conflicts of Interest**

PB declared her position as a Governor at South Cheshire College and that her husband is a Governor at MMU (re AI 9)

PC declared his position as a Governor at South Cheshire College.

MD declared his position as Principal of Reaseheath College.

It was agreed that for the discussion and decision making under AI5 Local Growth Fund, PC, PB and MD would leave the room.

**Agenda Item 4: Local Growth Fund Update**

RA talked through the LGF update paper produced by the LEP Programme Manager. This included:

* Confirmation that the LEP was yet to receive feedback on the LGF3 submission to Government, including the FE Capital projects. Feedback is expected to be announced in the Autumn Statement (Nov).
* The Board approved the 300 bed accommodation project for Reaseheath College via electronic correspondence between meetings. The LEP is now working with the college to meet value for money/ due diligence criteria.
* The CITB, CECA, University of Chester and Reaseheath College project for a Civil Engineering Centre of Excellence which was approved at the last meeting has been withdrawn from LGF1 due to timings to access the match from CITB (outside the college’s control). Therefore this project will seek full funding from LGF3.
* There is currently £1.69m headroom in LGF1.

ML confirmed that moving forward all skills funds – capital and revenue, would have a clearer line to the SEP once refreshed.

**Agenda Item 5: West Cheshire College LGF Presentation**

The Board received a presentation from Jasbir Dhesi, Principal of South Cheshire College and Hellen Nellist, Principal of West Cheshire College setting out the rationale for investment, stakeholder views, employer support for the project, exceptional case rationale and leadership and financial management track record.

LW thanked JD and HN for their time and they left the meeting.

PC, MD and PB left the room.

The Board discussed the project and additional information received.

**Action: ML to seek reassurance from the Treasury regarding the investment.**

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| **The Board agreed** unanimously that the project was an ‘exceptional case’.**The Board agreed** unanimously to recommend that the project receives the full £4m funding at 100% intervention across LGF 1 and 3, subject to sign off by the LEP Performance and Investment Committee to ensure value for money and deliverability. |

MD, PB and PC rejoined the meeting.

**Agenda Item 6: Apprenticeship Levy Update**

Due to available time it was agreed this item would be carried over to the next meeting.

**Agenda Item 7: Brexit Update**

RA walked the Board through the Brexit paper produced by the LEP EU Programme Manager.

* Treasury has assured that all structural and investment fund projects signed before the Autumn Statement will be fully funded.
* Of the c£120m of EU funds allocated to C&W, the LEP is seeking to deploy £35m of ERDF projects and £20m of ESF projects over the next few months to secure these funds for the local economy.
* Re Future Funding further details are expected in the Autumn Statement, and LEPs are being asked to confirm the types of projects they want to be supported.

ML confirmed that the LEP is already engaging in a discussion with DCLG and Treasury on future funds and is one of the few LEPs having this early conversation.

**Agenda Item 8: ‘Shaping our Future – Skills in Partnership’ event**

The Board agreed to progress this event through a task group at the previous meeting. Due to summer leave unfortunately progress has been limited.

Given the lack of clarity on key skills policy and funding e.g. the apprenticeship levy, post 16 skills plan, Brexit and Devolution, it was suggested that the event be rescheduled to January 2017.

The Board agreed to hold this event in January, ideally on a Friday, to secure MP presence.

**Action: RA to reconvene the task group to progress this and report back at the next meeting.**

**Agenda Item 9: MMU Update**

RA updated the Board on the MMU Cheshire Campus in Crewe. MMU is carrying out a formal review of the campus in Crewe. The review is being undertaken by Deloittes and three options are to be considered:

* Overhaul of existing provision with reduced footprint on the site
* Overhaul of existing provision and relocation to town centre site
* Closure of the campus and centralize provision in Manchester.

The LEP and Cheshire East Council are fully engaging with the review process. MMU are due to make a decision at the end of November. The existing Provost has stood down from her post and will be replaced by Professor Christine Horrocks.

Regardless of the outcome there will be a radical overhaul of HE provision in Crewe. The LEP and Cheshire East Council have commissioned Arup to undertake a study to identify what HE provision should look like in Crewe / Cheshire East – both curriculum and model.

**Action: RA to share the Arup study with the Board once available.**

**Agenda Item 10: AOB**

Inside Government Conference

CH was due to speak at the conference on 11th October in London. The focus is the role of employers/ LEP in skills policy e.g. ABR. RA asked if anyone was able to attend and deliver the presentation.

**Action: PB to speak at the conference and RA to provide slides/ narrative.**

**Agenda Item 11: Date, Time, Venue of next meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting should be held following the Autumn Statement in early December.

**Action: RA to share rescheduled date with the Board.**

Topics for the next full meeting:

* UTC presentation – and host of the meeting
* Skills Strategy Discussion
* Careers & Enterprise Company Update
* Apprenticeship Levy Update and discussion
* Shaping our Future – Skills in Partnership event