

Minutes of the Marches LEP Ltd Board Meeting
24 September 2019 at 3.30pm at The Clive, Bromfield, Ludlow, SY8 2JR
(Company Number: 11822614)

Present:

Paul Hinkins	PH	Deputy Chair, Marches LEP & Meeting Chair; Telford Business Board Chair
Frank Myers MBE	FM	Herefordshire Business Board Chair
Dr David Llewellyn	DL	Agri-Tech Food Champion; Vice-Chancellor, Harper Adams University
Paul Kalinauckas	PK	Access to Finance Champion, Chief Executive of BCRS Business Loans
James Staniforth	JS	Skills Advisory Panel Chair; Principal and CEO of the Shrewsbury Colleges Group
Cllr David Hitchiner	DH	Leader, Herefordshire Council
Cllr Peter Nutting	PN	Leader, Shropshire Council
Cllr Lee Carter	LC	Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Telford & Wrekin Council
Ruth Shepherd	RS	Director, Results Communications
Sara Williams	SW	Marketing Manager, Protolabs

In Attendance:

Gareth Wilson	GWilson	Area Lead Cities and Local Growth, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Mark Barrow	MB	Director of Place, Shropshire Council
Richard Ball	RB	Acting Director for Economy and Place, Herefordshire Council
Katherine Kynaston	KK	Assistant Director Business, Development & Employment, Telford & Wrekin Council
Gill Hamer	GH	Director, Marches LEP
Nick Alamanos	NA	Programme Manager, Marches LEP
Kathryn Jones	KJ	Partnership Manager, Marches LEP
Ennis Vingoe	EV	LEP Team Support Officer

ITEM		ACTION
1.	<p>Welcome, Apologies & Declarations of Interest</p> <p>PH thanked everyone for attending the meeting at the earlier start time. He explained that Graham Wynn (GW) would not be attending the meeting because he had, as per the Articles of Association, completed his tenure as Chair at the 23 July 2019 meeting. PH proposed that as Deputy Chair, he chair the meeting. All members agreed.</p> <p>PH read out a letter from GW expressing his thanks for the support of the members during his tenure as Chair.</p> <p>PN suggested that the Board should respond to GW's letter to thank him for all his hard work during his tenure. GH said that an event was being planned to mark GW's contribution to the LEP. Details would be circulated in due course.</p> <p>Apologies were received from P Bennett, S Roberts, A Manning-Cox and S Davies. LC and JS sent apologies for the first part of the meeting.</p> <p>PH reminded all members to complete a declaration of interest form for the meeting if required.</p> <p>Declarations of Interest were made by:</p> <p>DL – for Agenda Item 3 as an employee of a HE institution in the Marches LEP area.</p> <p>DH – for Agenda Items 3 and 6 as the Leader of Herefordshire Council</p> <p>PH – for Agenda Items 5 and 6 as Chair of Telford College Corporation</p>	GH

	<p>AMC (in writing via email dated 24.09.19) – for Agenda Item 3 as Chair of Hereford Enterprise Zone</p> <p>GH distributed correspondence regarding NMiTE funding from Tony Bray, Area Director Cities & Local Growth Unit and James Walton, Section 151 Officer, Shropshire Council to members to be discussed under Matters Arising, following the break in proceedings.</p>	
2.	<p>Local Industrial Strategy Workshop</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Patrick White (PW) and Danielle Jackson (DJ) from Metro Dynamics to the meeting. PW presented the initial draft of the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) and invited Board members to discuss the aims, approach, opportunities and foundation sections in the document. Members suggested a number of amendments to the draft document and PW asked that any further comments following the meeting be sent to KJ. KJ said that she would be meeting with G Wilson and BEIS colleagues on 11 October 2019 to discuss progress, and that further input was expected from the LEP business engagement events on 17 and 18 October 2019. PW said that the final working draft would be circulated by 31 October 2019.</p> <p>PH thanked PW and DJ for updating the Board on progress with the LIS. PW and DJ left the meeting.</p> <p>Proceedings paused at 4.45pm.</p>	<p>All, KJ</p> <p>PW</p>
3.	<p>PH re-convened the meeting at 5.15pm.</p> <p>LC joined the meeting at 5.15pm. JS joined the meeting at 5.30pm.</p> <p>Presentation: New Model in Technology and Engineering (NMiTE) Phase 2</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Prof. Elena Rodriguez-Falcon (ERF), NMiTE CEO and Toby Kinnaird (TK), NMiTE Engineer in Residence to the meeting.</p> <p>ERF briefed the Board on the plans for Phase 2 of the NMiTE project explaining the progress so far in terms of securing funding from various sources; staff recruitment; getting employer partners on board; the core proposition of the 3 products and the test cohort of 25 students. ERF said that the initial predicted student numbers had been optimistic, and the numbers had been revised to 50, rising to 200 for 2020/21. ERF and TK responded to a number of questions from members and said that the final Business Case would be complete by the end of October 2019.</p> <p>GH asked that any further comments on the NMiTE Business Plan be sent to NA.</p> <p>PH proposed that an Emergency Board Meeting be held to consider decisions in relation to NMiTE Phase 2 (plus other Growth Deal projects - see Agenda Item 6) during October 2019. This was agreed by members.</p> <p>ERF and TK left the meeting.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>GH</p>
4.	<p>Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 23 July 2019 and Matters Arising</p> <p>GH noted the incorrect meeting date on the previous minutes. Following correction, the minutes from the previous Marches LEP Board meeting on 23 July 2019 were approved and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>Matters Arising</p> <p>Correspondence regarding NMiTE Funding</p> <p>GH confirmed that the additional documents distributed to members at the start of the meeting had also been given to LC and JS.</p> <p>Members discussed the documents. DH said that he wished to discuss the correspondence from James Walton, Section 151 Officer, Shropshire Council with Herefordshire Council colleagues in order to provide an appropriate response. FM said that he had asked GH for a copy of the letter from Tony Bray after the last Board meeting and had briefed Herefordshire Business Board on the contents. Members suggested that</p>	

	<p>as James Walton and Tony Bray had made the documents available to be shared at the meeting, they would not be considered confidential documents. Therefore, DH's request to share the document with colleagues was agreed.</p> <p>PN stated that the letter made no difference to Shropshire Council's perspective on the NMiTE funding.</p> <p>DH questioned the requirement for a separate body to underwrite the NMiTE project. GH explained that many projects did not require underwriting by bodies such as the local authorities, but because NMiTE was a new organisation with no financial track record, the project needed to be underwritten by another organisation.</p> <p>Members discussed potential conflicts of interest and how these were treated, including Business Board chairs' representation on the Board. GH said that there was guidance available to members on the website. It was agreed that further external professional legal advice would be sought on this.</p> <p>GH said that further advice was currently being sought on the operation of Marches LEP Ltd and would be brought to the next meeting.</p> <p>Appointment of Directors and Public Sector Alternate Directors</p> <p>PH proposed that the Board appoint Cllr Shaun Davies as a Director of Marches LEP Ltd. He also proposed that Cllr Lee Carter be appointed as Alternate for Cllr Davies; Cllr Trish Marsh be appointed as Alternate for Cllr Hitchiner; and Cllr Steve Charmley as Alternate for Cllr Nutting.</p> <p>The relevant paperwork would be forwarded to Sharpe Pritchard to register the Directors and Alternate Directors at Companies House.</p> <p>The Board confirmed the appointment of Cllr Davies as a Director and Cllr Carter, Cllr Marsh and Cllr Charmley as Alternates.</p>	<p>GH</p> <p>GH</p> <p>EV</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Governance</p> <p>LEP Chair Recruitment</p> <p>PH summarised the process that had been undertaken for the recruitment of the new Marches LEP Chair and informed the Board that the preferred candidate was Mandy Thorn (MT).</p> <p>PN proposed that the recommendation be accepted.</p> <p>The Board unanimously agreed the proposal.</p> <p>GH noted that MT would be confirmed as a Director of Marches LEP Ltd at the next meeting of the Board.</p> <p>FM suggested that the processes carried out by Penna be reviewed to ensure that the charge for their services was accurate.</p> <p>DL proposed that PH be appointed as Acting Chair until MT was confirmed as a Director of Marches LEP Ltd.</p> <p>The Board unanimously agreed the proposal.</p> <p>LEP Board Membership</p> <p>GH summarised the paper circulated to Board members. The following recommendations were made in the paper and accepted:</p> <p>1. Through openly advertised recruitment the LEP seek to recruit two new Board members in Autumn 2019 with backgrounds in Higher Education and the Food and Drink Sector with an advertising campaign targeted at women.</p>	<p>GH</p>

	<p>The Board agreed.</p> <p>2. That the Leaders of the Local Authorities, the Business Boards, the Board of Hereford Enterprise Zone and Principals of Colleges consider opportunities to identify women Cabinet Members, Board Members and Senior Management of the FE Colleges who could join the LEP Board to represent their organisations.</p> <p>The Board agreed.</p> <p>3. That J Staniforth remain a LEP Board Member and Chair of the Skills Advisory Panel until September 2020.</p> <p>The Board agreed.</p> <p>GH said that the Articles of Association would be amended as necessary to reflect relevant changes and thanked JS for agreeing to continue as Chair of the Skills Advisory Panel.</p> <p>Government Mid-year Review of the LEP</p> <p>GWilson provided a verbal update from the recent mid-year review of the Marches LEP. He reported that there were ‘no significant concerns’ and that BEIS were comfortable with the organisation’s current performance. The annual review would take place in January 2020. A written report on the mid-year review would be available in due course.</p> <p>Confidential Item: Telford College</p> <p>PH left the meeting at 6.50pm (see Agenda Item 1 Declarations of Interest).</p> <p>DL took the Chair and checked that there were no further Declarations of Interest for this item.</p> <p>DL explained that a confidential report had been circulated to the Board on 23 August 2019, containing recommendations for comment and agreement. One member had asked that the item be brought to the Board for discussion.</p> <p>Members discussed the contents of the report and subsequent Board paper. NA explained the detailed processes that had been undertaken in order to arrive at the recommendations in the report. Following further discussion, the Board accepted the recommendations in the Board paper concerning the queries that had been raised about the report:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To Note the current position. <p>The Board noted this.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. To confirm the contents of Section 3.1 and 3.2 in the Board paper. <p>The Board agreed.</p> <p>In addition, the Board agreed the 2 recommendations set out in the original report of 29 August 2019.</p> <p>The Board agreed unanimously.</p> <p>It was noted that GH should arrange a meeting with a member of Telford College Corporation and the Principal in the first instance.</p> <p>PH re-joined the meeting at 7.10pm.</p>	<p>GH</p> <p>GWilson</p> <p>NA</p> <p>GH</p>
6.	<p>Growth Deal</p> <p>DL handed the Chair back to PH. PH thanked DL for chairing the previous item. Members were asked to comment on the Board report that had been circulated. DH referred to section 2.1.2 in the report and explained that the Southern Link Road element of the South Wye Package was currently under “pause and review”. He also referred to section 3.2, Growth Deal Infrastructure Call and suggested that for any potential underspend on the South Wye Package, priority should be given to projects within Herefordshire if the stated conditions could be met. RB said that the South Wye Package</p>	

	<p>was a Department for Transport (DfT) retained scheme and discussions would be required with the department prior to any proposed decisions on changes to the funding. Following detailed discussion by members PN proposed that the following recommendations made in the report were accepted:</p> <p>Report Overall Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To note the current performance of the Growth Deal Programme, as set out in section 1. The Board noted this. 2. To note the emerging risks to the Growth Deal Programme, as set out in section 2. The Board noted this. 3. To review the plans outlined for managing underspend within the Growth Deal Programme, as set out in sections 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3. The Board agreed. 4. To approve the procurement of a 'Mid Term' evaluation of the Growth Deal Programme, as set out in section 4. The Board agreed. 5. To approve the specific recommendations in managing the risk around potential underspend within the Growth Deal Programme, as set out in section 5. See below. <p>The Board discussed the specific recommendations made in section 5 of the report.</p> <p>Report Section 5 Recommendations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree the LEP team immediately undertake an Open Project Call to help mitigate any risks around underspend and underachievement of deliverables as set out in section 3.2. The Board agreed. 2. Agree the LEP team immediately undertake a Project Call in relation to the Skills Capital Underspend allocation, using the information as set out within section 3.3. The Board agreed. 3. A deadline of 31 October 2019 is set for Herefordshire Council to formally notify the LEP and DfT of their position relating to the 'pause and review' piece of work being undertaken on the South Wye Transport Package. This notification should confirm whether the project can adhere to the terms and conditions set within their Funding Agreement. Should Herefordshire Council be unable to provide assurances the LEP should seek to recoup the £3.8m claimed against the project, utilising this as well as the balance of grant against the approval of new projects. The Board discussed the recommendation and agreed to hold an Emergency Board Meeting before the end of October 2019 to review the outcome of discussions held with DfT. 4. A deadline of 31 October 2019 is given for the NMiTE Phase 2 project to be agreed, including requests made by the LEP Board for information as a consequence of Agenda Item 3. Should the project a) not be approved b) approved with a reduced Growth Deal allocation, any available funds be put towards the approval of new projects. The Board discussed the recommendation and agreed that NMiTE should be invited to provide additional information following their earlier presentation (Agenda Item 3), this would be reviewed at the Emergency Board Meeting in order for a decision to be made. 5. A deadline of 31 October 2019 is set for Shropshire Council to formally outline their plans to the LEP for Growth Deal Funding in relation to the Oxon Link Road project and any plans relating to the Shrewsbury North West Relief Road. 	<p>NA</p> <p>NA</p>
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	<p>Should assurances not be provided around the Growth Deal funding the LEP Board seek to redistribute the funds towards the approval of new projects.</p> <p>The Board discussed the recommendation and agreed an update would be provided at the Emergency Board Meeting.</p> <p>6. Should any funds become available (through recommendations 3, 4 & 5) priority allocation is given to those Growth Deal 3 projects who had a reduction in grant, ensuring they receive their original allocation, as set out in section 3.1.</p> <p>The Board agreed.</p> <p>GH proposed that an Emergency Board Meeting be held to review recommendations 3, 4, 5 & 6 in Section 5 of the report by the end of October 2019</p> <p>This was agreed by members.</p> <p>A meeting with DfT, Herefordshire Council and BEIS would be organised during October 2019 prior to the Emergency Board Meeting.</p>	<p>GH</p> <p>GH, RB</p>
7.	<p>Performance Risk and Monitoring Committee Six-Monthly Report and Risk Register Review</p> <p>NA introduced the paper and explained that the way the information from the PRMC meeting was presented to the Board had been refreshed.</p> <p>The Board noted the content of the Strategic Risk Register and the full LEP Programme Risk Register.</p> <p>It was suggested that additional words used to describe the levels of risk, such as “considerable” be removed from the documentation.</p>	<p>NA</p>
8.	<p>Access to Finance Strategy</p> <p>A paper on the Access to Finance Strategy, led by PK, had been circulated. There were no comments made and the Board agreed the draft strategy and Terms of Reference.</p>	
9.	<p>Developing the LEP Network</p> <p>GH introduced the 3 documents that had been circulated. No comments were made.</p>	
10.	<p>Growth Hub Six-Monthly Report</p> <p>PH introduced the Marches Growth Hub Report. GWilson said that the Marches Growth Hub remained one of the highest performing hubs within its funding band. GH thanked all partners for their contribution.</p>	
11.	<p>Any other Business</p> <p>Town Deal - Hereford and Telford had been successful in their bids for circa. £25m each. Heritage Action Zone Funding – Oswestry and Leominster had been successful in their bids. Tourism – a study and action plan had just been completed on tourism across the Marches and further work on baseline data would be undertaken.</p> <p>GWilson reported that MHCLG Senior Sponsor Hardip Begol was leaving the department. The Marches LEP would have a new sponsor in due course.</p> <p>FM proposed a vote of thanks to NA and KJ for all their hard work recently on the various projects and studies.</p>	
12.	<p>Close</p> <p>The meeting closed at 7.50pm.</p>	
13.	<p>Future Meetings:</p> <p>Items to be included on the Agenda for 26 November 2019 meeting</p>	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Transport2. Business Boards3. LIS update4. Telford Land Deal	
	<p style="text-align: center;">Next Meeting of the Board of The Marches LEP Limited: 26 November 2019, The Clive Arms, Bromfield, Ludlow</p>	