

MARCHES LEP BOARD MEETING PAPER

Meeting date:	24 March 2020				
Agenda Item:	4 c				
Item Subject:	Governance – LEP Board Policies for a) LEP Board meetings being open to the public b) Expenses for Board Members				
For:	Discussion	X	Decision	X	Information
Purpose:					
To outline the findings of research undertaken with other LEPs on whether: -					
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The press and members of the public can attend LEP Board meetings; 2. Board members can claim expenses when attending meetings on behalf of the LEP. 					
Recommendations:					
To consider the below findings and discuss whether the Board: -					
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wish to allow members of the public and press to attend future Board meetings for the non-confidential element of Board meetings; 2. Wish the secretariat to develop an expenses policy in line with the findings below which can be implemented from 1 April 2020. 					
Summary:					
1. LEP Board Meetings being open to the public and press to attend					
At the January 2020 LEP Board meeting the merits of holding LEP Board meetings in public was discussed. The Board asked for the LEP Secretariat to research whether and how other LEPs opened their meetings to the general public and press.					
Of the 38 LEPs in the country, six of them state on their websites that Board meetings are open to the public. These are Cheshire and Warrington; Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly; Greater Manchester; Oxfordshire; Swindon and Wiltshire; and Cumbria. The majority of these six LEPs hold their Board meetings in two parts. The press and public are able to attend for the first part and then are asked to leave for the second part in which the Board discuss confidential items.					
Three out of the six LEPs make it clear on their website that the Board meetings are open to the public and press and the agendas are published in advance of the meetings with the location. The other three LEPs ask the public and press to register their attendance in advance and members of the public are allowed to submit questions to be addressed at the Board meeting. Please note South East Midlands LEP said it had sought advice from its Accountable Body on the matter of holding meetings in public and was advised that it would not be an efficient use of time as quite often the LEP Board would need to hold two separate meetings to accommodate confidential items.					
2. Board Member Expenses Policy					
Seven LEPs were contacted to provide a benchmark on their Board Member expenses policy: Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly; Greater Manchester; Oxfordshire; Swindon and Wiltshire; Greater Birmingham; South East Midlands and Cumbria.					
All of these LEPs allow their Board members to claim 'reasonable' expenses incurred on official LEP duties. In some instances, it is up to the LEP Chair to authorise the travel in advance. The overwhelming majority align their expenses policy with their local authority accountable body expenses policy. In most cases these policies require Board members to complete an					

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expenses form and return it to the LEP CEO with a copy of the original receipts e.g. mileage allowances range from 40p per mile to 45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles and 25p thereafter, standard class train travel and meal allowances are capped.

Financial implications:

The LEP Team has set aside a budget of £1,500 for 2020/21 FY for Board members' expenses.