

**Minutes of the Marches LEP Board Meeting  
29 January 2019 at The Clive, Bromfield, Ludlow, SY8 2JR**

**Present:**

<b>Graham Wynn OBE</b>	GW	Chair, Marches LEP Board
<b>Paul Hinkins</b>	PH	Telford Business Board Chair; Deputy Chair, Marches LEP
<b>Frank Myers MBE</b>	FM	Herefordshire Business Board Chair
<b>Paul Bennett</b>	PB	Shropshire Business Board Chair
<b>Dr David Llewellyn</b>	DL	Agri-Tech Food Champion; Vice-Chancellor, Harper Adams University
<b>Paul Kalinauckas</b>	PK	Access to Finance Champion, Chief Executive of BCBS Business Loans
<b>James Staniforth</b>	JS	Skills Board Chair; Principal and CEO of the Shrewsbury Colleges Group
<b>Cllr David Harlow</b>	DH	Cabinet Member Economy and Communications, Herefordshire Council
<b>Cllr Lee Chapman</b>	LC	Portfolio Holder Adult Services, Health and Social Housing, Shropshire Council
<b>Cllr Hilda Rhodes</b>	HR	Cabinet Member Transport, Roads and Broadband, Telford & Wrekin Council

**In Attendance:**

<b>Gill Hamer</b>	GH	Director, Marches LEP
<b>Kathryn Jones</b>	KJ	Partnership Manager, Marches LEP
<b>Ennis Vingoe</b>	EV	LEP Team Support Officer
<b>Gareth Wilson</b>	GWil	Area Lead Cities and Local Growth, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
<b>James Walton</b>	JW	Section 151 Officer, Shropshire Council (part only)
<b>Mark Barrow</b>	MB	Director of Place, Shropshire Council (part only)
<b>Andrew Lovegrove</b>	AL	Chief Finance Officer, Herefordshire Council
<b>Richard Ball</b>	RB	Acting Director for Economy and Place, Herefordshire Council
<b>Mark Pearce</b>	MP	Managing Director, Skylon Park (part only)
<b>Nick Webster</b>	NW	Economic Development Manager, Herefordshire Council
<b>Katherine Kynaston</b>	KK	Assistant Director Business Development & Employment, Telford & Wrekin Council
<b>Peter Collins</b>	PC	Sharpe Pritchard (part only)
<b>Patrick White</b>	PW	Metro Dynamics (part only)

<b>ITEM</b>		<b>ACTION</b>
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Welcome, Apologies &amp; Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>The Chair thanked everyone for attending the extended meeting and welcomed GWil and PB to their first meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were received from S Roberts, A Manning-Cox and Prof I Oakes. Apologies were also received from Cllr J Lester, Cllr S Davies and Cllr P Nutting who were represented at the meeting by Cllr Harlow, Cllr Rhodes and Cllr Chapman respectively.</p> <p>The Chair 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 – as an employee of a higher education institution;</p> <p>PB – working relationship with LEP’s legal firm</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Minutes of last meeting held on 27 November 2018</b></p> <p>The minutes from the last Marches LEP Board meeting on 27 November 2018 were reviewed. A grammatical error was noted.</p> <p>FM said that he did not think DH’s comments on NMITE had been accurately recorded.</p>	

	<p>FM said that there was no mention in the minutes of the discussion on risk and the Board's strong recommendation that Government should be asked to mitigate the risk, and no mention of AMC's strong point that whilst the Board concentrates on the risk to the LEP's reputation by spending the money, that it hadn't considered the risks to the LEP's reputation by standing in the way of the project.</p> <p>GW commented that verbatim notes of the meeting were taken but that issuing 15 pages of minutes would not provide a fair reflection of the meeting. AMC had sent an email today and referred to the fact that it was a robust discussion.</p> <p>DH stated that he agreed with FM in that he didn't think he had said what was recorded in the minutes and he felt that only the negative aspects had been minuted about what he had said about the cost freeze.</p> <p>GH said that the hand-written notes would be revisited, and that today's meeting was also being recorded. A more detailed version of Section 4 would be sent to all to review. GH reported that Cllr J Lester (JL) had added in a number of comments in December when the minutes were issued which were now in red in the minutes. DH said that he doesn't get the papers or minutes circulated to him. GH noted that this was due to his role as an observer that day and not as a Board Member.</p> <p>GW confirmed that the minutes were accepted as amended tonight and an amended Section 4 would be circulated for Board Members to comment on.</p>	<b>EV</b>
3.	<p><b>New Model in Technology &amp; Engineering (NMiTE) Project</b></p> <p>GW confirmed that everyone had received the email issued at 10:34am on 29 January 2019 containing an amendment to the NMiTE paper (the first 4 bullet points in Section 6, point 2), tabled by Herefordshire Council for consideration by the Board.</p> <p>GH reported that since the last Board meeting on 27 November 2018, a letter had been received from the Department for Education on 7 January 2019 seeking to agree the lease for the former Robert Owen Academy (ROA) building shortly. It stated that any change of use from educational purposes would need the consent of the Local Authority.</p> <p>A letter had also been received from JL on 21 December 2018 which stated that, at that stage, Herefordshire Council was considering the merits of alternative use for the ROA in the event of the NMiTE project foreclosing and the Council commitment to the delivery of outputs assigned by the LEP.</p> <p>The paragraph received from Herefordshire Council on 28 January 2019 had confirmed the Council's commitment to the ROA continuing to be used for regeneration purposes, or in the event of the failure of the NMiTE project, the potential use of the building if required for suitable alternative projects that would enable the delivery of an equivalent range of outputs, agreed with the LEP at that time.</p> <p>GH also reported that during the LEP Annual Review meeting on 10 January 2019, GW had asked T Bray for a letter of comfort in relation to the LEP being penalised for the NMiTE underspend. GH referred Board Members to a letter dated 17 January 2019 from the Secretary of State, Greg Clark MP which acknowledged that the LEP Board was taking steps to mitigate risks and it was his wish that the LEP move forward to enter into a funding agreement for the NMiTE project.</p> <p>GH turned to the recommendations to the Board in Section 6 of the NMiTE Report:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approve the phasing of the LEP Funding Agreement into 2 parts.</li> <li>2. Replace the first 4 bullet points with the new paragraph presented by Herefordshire Council as discussed.</li> </ol> <p>PH queried whether the utilisation of the NMiTE capital assets would be lost. GH responded that of the £2.3m in the first phase, £600k would be spent on building refurbishment and renovation, and the balance on equipment for fitting out the building. A value on the building as at March 2020 had been presented to the last PRMC meeting. Discussions</p>	

<p>would take place with Herefordshire Council in the event of the project closing regarding the use of the equipment and the use of building, or potentially selling it off in other ways. RB commented that the revised paragraph referred to retaining the building and its investment to deliver alternative outputs. There was the assumption that the equipment would be available for future projects and outputs too. GW commented that equipment assets would be required to deliver the outputs under a new entity, whatever that might be, which gave more comfort about getting commitment in delivering those outputs. FM commented that it was a big and risky project, recognised by the Government who were putting other money in and might decide that they had a call on the assets and if the Board wasn't careful, in trying to cover every conceivable option, it made it harder to deliver the project.</p> <p>GW said that he was trying to ensure that every Board member around the table had a chance to make their views known. The Board was not trying to block the project or make it impossible for the project to be delivered but must take responsibility for taxpayers' money to be awarded to this project if the Board agrees. FM commented that what he said was intended to do that.</p> <p>DH commented that Phase 1 required a spend of £1.9m in the next 2 months which was clearly not achievable.</p> <p>GH responded that at the NMiTE Board Meeting that morning, the view was that £200k could be spent and the funding agreement would need to reflect that. The funding agreement would be amended to state that it should defray £2.3m by March 2020.</p> <p>PB commented that NMiTE was an exciting project but did place a lot of risk on the LEP and the accountable body and that he was uncomfortable with changes being made now to a project of this scale, when the original paper was presented 8 weeks ago.</p> <p>GH responded that there had been numerous discussions and meetings between the LEP, Shropshire Council, Herefordshire Council and NMiTE since the last Board meeting to move this forward, which had been very positive following the impasse at the last Board meeting, and the commitment made yesterday by Herefordshire Council had been hugely positive. It was a novel and innovative project, but good progress was being made and Greg Clark's letter accepted that.</p> <p>GW said that at the LEP Review his concern was getting assurance in writing from the Government as verbal assurances weren't sufficient for the accountable body to be able to sign off the funding agreement. The Board still had to be responsible and exercise due diligence, but the Secretary of State's letter did identify the risks. GW's concerns had been in the event of a project foreclosure, that this would not reflect on the LEP from a reputational perspective or impact the LEP or the local authority partners in terms of future funding opportunities. GW believed that those concerns had been understood and he would be giving the Secretary of State an update on 31 January 2019. GW believed that the Board now had as much assurance as it could have.</p> <p>FM reported that he was receiving reports of reputational risk in the other direction in that the LEP was much too cautious and putting the project at risk.</p> <p>GW said that FM had a valid point in that having escalated it to the Secretary of State there was an increased reputational risk if the Board was not able to agree how to move forward tonight.</p> <p>DH said that this project shouldn't be viewed in the terms of a private investor who wouldn't invest due to the level of risk. This was 'pump priming' and a project which was about long-term regeneration and not short-term returns.</p> <p>DL commented that the risks had been identified at the last meeting and actions had been taken to address them and the Board should move the debate on to how they were being addressed, and the assurances Herefordshire Council could provide about the next steps. Could the building be utilised for alternative use and who would take on the responsibility</p>	<p><b>GH</b></p>
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for delivering the outputs? If the Board could get clarity over these 2 points it could move forward. The suggested paragraph from Herefordshire Council didn't quite say that the Council would be prepared not just to use the building to deliver the outputs but would find the means for an organisation to deliver those outputs. Who would be responsible for delivering them?

LC asked for clarification on the 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet point in the recommendations. GH explained that the overall project, if funded to the full £8m, was offering £10.9m in Private Sector Match. The requirement was that NMiTE find the match even though there was a value in the building which could be deemed as Public Sector Match.

DL said that the project was receiving £15m from Department for Education for which Herefordshire Council was the accountable body, plus the £8m from LEP. Match was required for both funding streams. Herefordshire Council, by agreeing to the ROA being used, acknowledged that part of this would be utilised as match. GH commented that for LEP match NMiTE had £2.3m in capital match and needed £3.3m in Private Sector Match by March 2020 for Phase 1 of the project.

LC commented that Shropshire Council understood the excitement around this project, but the issue from their perspective was who was going to take responsibility for delivery of the outputs.

PB asked how much money was at risk and not supported by the assets that would be acquired in the event of the project foreclosing.

GH responded that in Phase 1, investment in refurbishing the building was £600k and the balance was for capital equipment. The value of these as at March 2020 if needed to be sold on had been calculated.

RB explained that in the event of project foreclosure Herefordshire Council was committed to retaining the assets for use by different projects. The overall set of outputs would be delivered but may be at different levels due to being different projects and the Council would work with the LEP to ensure that the outputs were delivered at a similar level. RB noted that the value of the building was worth a lot more than the £2.3m being spent.

PB asked about the Financial Implications section of the paper.

GH explained that it referred to the potential for 'clawback'.

DL commented that there was a large set of targets to be achieved by 2025. If the NMiTE progress was slower than expected and the targets weren't met by 2025, was there a similar risk, a diminished risk, or no risk at all? These projects could take a long time to hit the necessary level and NMiTE may or may not be there by 2025. It was acknowledged that University Centre Shrewsbury had taken some time to get off the ground.

GH said that it would be a process of monitoring, negotiation and discussions with CLG.

JW commented that there had been a lot of discussion about risk. At the start of these discussions 6-12 months ago, the likelihood of financial risk in terms of 'clawback' was always fairly low but the impact of that potential risk was considerable. The implications of such an event happening were unclear to the Board therefore the LEP was not in a position to financially underwrite the project and local authorities separately were not willing to do that, therefore that risk was unmanaged. However, now there were the various 'letters of comfort', these helped to manage the impact of the risk going forward. JW said the question for the Board was had it managed the risk to a point that was now acceptable or was there further work to be done. If it had reached a point that was acceptable, then the Board could move on. The points raised by DL regarding understanding the mitigations provided to the Board by the Local Authority; and understanding the use of the building and the underwriting of risk, these really needed to be understood by the Board who could then decide whether they had reached a point where the appetite was that it could be accepted and could move forward.

DL commented that it was clear that the project may well hit the private sector capital match by March 2020. The 'jobs created' number was not known; new students enrolled was 220 down on its target so the Board needed to continue to keep the pressure on that target to understand how the student flow was going to work. Presumably the undergraduate target would then be down, and GVA. The Board needed to be very clear about this as the risk was not just about getting it working, it had to work to get the next phase of the money released as that was a much bigger sum.

GH commented that NMiTE were working on a new business plan and that she had indicated to E Rodriguez-Falcon at the NMiTE Board meeting that she would need to come to speak to the LEP Board at the March or May meeting. The Board would need to come back to consider future investment in the project based on progress by September 2019, as the LEP would only have one year to invest another £5.7m of Growth Deal funds. The Board would have to take hard decisions on data/numbers etc and the project may find it tough to hit the targets. There was a lot to be achieved in the next 6 months.

GW commented that following the robust discussion had by the Board at its meeting on 27 November 2018, the project and undertakings achieved had moved the discussion on some way. Herefordshire Council's commitment about the building and outputs to mitigate any issues from the project failing were a big step forward. Having escalated the concerns as a Board to the Secretary of State, if the Board was not able to support the project there was a risk there to the project, as FM had alluded to.

DL commented that the email note from Herefordshire Council stated that it was committed to the delivery of outputs for the first phase of the project. The Board really needed to come back in good time for the second phase and should be prepared to say whether it was convinced that this was going to work.

GH commented that she and GW were meeting with E Rodriguez-Falcon on 8 February 2019 to further this discussion. This was going to be a big ask for the project. GH had already started the discussion about developing a project pipeline to potentially spend the other £5.7m by 2021 because the LEP would be penalised if it did not allocate the funds. GH proposed the projects in Growth Deal 3 that did not get full allocations would receive funds to bring the projects up to original values. It would then be necessary to look at other projects that could come forward to use up the balance of the £5.7m.

DL said the LEP should keep some funds back from the Phase 1 funding agreement to appoint a project officer to make sure the Board were closely monitoring this and dealing with the risk associated with it.

GH said that she had had a conversation about this with RB in the past and with D Nolan this morning about the LEP appointing a project officer to work across the project on behalf of the LEP.

GW informed the Board that he had received an email about the project from AMC in New Zealand.

GH gave out copies and explained that AMC's view was that the project should be supported, taking into account the risks and provisos.

GW said that he would be meeting the NMiTE team on 8 February 2019 and suggested that the Board invite them to make a presentation when the new business plan had been signed off by their Board.

GW proposed the following:

1. The Board supports the release of £2.3m for Phase 1
2. A LEP Project Officer is put in place to work closely with NMiTE and Herefordshire Council on behalf of the Board
3. Continue to monitor the outputs and report back on a regular basis to the Board.

	<p>PH asked as a point of clarification that if Herefordshire Council own the building was there a potential conflict re voting.</p> <p>GW responded that the money wasn't going to the Council as the building remained for third party use and for the purposes of these proposals, believed that the Council was entitled to vote.</p> <p>PH said that he felt it was correct to raise it as a point of clarification.</p> <p>PB agreed that the point should be recorded as having been considered, and that it would be wholly inappropriate for Herefordshire Council not to vote.</p> <p>GH reiterated the proposals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Releasing £2.3m by March 2020, minus the cost of the Project Officer</li> <li>2. Accept the amended paragraph for the NMiTE Report, submitted by Herefordshire Council</li> </ol> <p>JS commented that the point of appointing a project officer was about the assurance that the Board wanted around this process and would concur that the best way of getting that assurance was having someone reporting to Marches LEP, and the cost should come from the £2.3m.</p> <p>GW asked members if they agreed with the proposals. The Board agreed to the proposals.</p> <p>FM commented that it would be interesting to compare the NMiTE project to the Shrewsbury project at a future meeting. LC said that the Shrewsbury project had struggled with student numbers and that if Shrewsbury had been looking at the sort of targets NMiTE were looking at by 2020, they would have been concerned which was why Shropshire Council's support was contingent upon the agreement to appoint a project officer.</p> <p>GW thanked everyone for the robust discussion of the issues.</p> <p>JW and MP left the meeting. MB, PW and PC joined the meeting.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p><b>Matters Arising from minutes of last meeting on 27 November 2018</b></p> <p><b>Project Development Funding Pot</b></p> <p>GH reported that the deadline for bids was 31 January 2018 and that there was £300k available. The applications would be assessed by GH, NA and G Spence.</p> <p><b>LEP Annual Performance Review Meeting - 10 January 2019</b></p> <p>GW reported that the review had been robust and had included a moderator. The NMiTE project had taken up a significant part of the discussion. GW felt that there was nothing raised of concern and was awaiting the outcome following a moderation meeting for all LEP reviews on 29 January 2019.</p> <p>GH commented that last year the LEP had been rated excellent for Governance; good for Delivery; and good for Strategic Approach. A positive review would enable the LEP to draw down funding for 2019/20 for Growth Deal, Growth Hub etc. GH would circulate the outcome letter when it was received.</p> <p><b>LEP Geography</b></p> <p>GW reported that the challenges in some LEPs over boundary changes had still to be resolved. Government had re-iterated that it didn't want overlaps. GH reported that Marches LEP had received the full amount of funding linked to the LEP Review work; some LEPs had received partial funding and those where there were still issues over overlaps, appeared to not have received any of the funding they bid for. GH said MHCLG wanted to start consulting on the UK Shared Prosperity Funding but were unable to do this until the issues over boundaries were resolved.</p>	<p>GH</p>

	<p>GW said that LEP Chairs would be meeting with the Prime Minister on 31 January 2019. He hoped that they would be presenting a united message. GW asked if members had any themes that they wished him to raise, to let him know by 5pm on 30 January 2019.</p>	<b>All</b>
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>LEP Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)</b>  KJ updated members on progress with drafting the new SEP and introduced Patrick White (PW) from Metro Dynamics, who delivered a presentation on the work they had been doing (presentation attached).  Key points covered were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Marches LEP had a good understanding of what was going on in its area due to its active partnerships with businesses, FE/HE providers, LAs and partners</li> <li>• There were some big commitments listed which we must ensure are delivered</li> <li>• Need to be clearer in the SEP about the major opportunities presented by business services in the area</li> <li>• Consider linking FE provision (skills) to particular sectors</li> <li>• Include specific infrastructure projects</li> <li>• Look at links to neighbouring areas</li> <li>• Consider how to engage SMEs in technological developments they will need to embrace to continue to be successful</li> </ul> <p>PH said that there was a need to ensure SMEs were engaged and that larger businesses were encouraged to say what they need.  PB commented that business and professional services was also a core sector for the Marches.  Members also made suggestions regarding the size of the text and about specific content such as statements about improving Broadband.  GW commented that the LEP team had met with 3 of the Shropshire MPs last week who had stated that Broadband, and connectivity in its broader sense was their main priority, linked to increased skills and productivity.  Members provided further comments on the content, photographs and graphics in the draft SEP.  The Board agreed that the document, following amendment as discussed in the meeting should be presented to the Marches Enterprise Joint Committee (MEJC) at its next meeting – date TBC.  GH thanked PW for his presentation and said that it was hoped that Metro Dynamics would also assist in the development of the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) to be submitted by February 2020. GH also said that she would be contacting partners again for nominations for Sector Champions and to help set up industry led groups to help deliver the LIS.  PW left the meeting.</p>	<p><b>KJ</b></p> <p><b>KJ</b></p> <p><b>GH</b></p>
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>Setting up of company limited by guarantee for the LEP</b>  GW welcomed Peter Collins (PC) from Sharpe Pritchard.  PC explained that he wished to explore with the Board, the governance model that would be required for the Marches LEP following incorporation. Sharpe Pritchard had been advising the LEP Network on LEPs becoming companies limited by guarantee, rather than companies limited by shares. The target was the end of March 2019 for the LEP to become an incorporated entity, and if the corporate governance could be in place by then, that would be helpful.  The main points covered in the discussion were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There would be a 2-tier governance structure. The Board was the decision-making element of the structure with current Board members being the Directors</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a Company Secretary function to fulfil – potentially by a commissioned law firm</li> <li>• Need to include democratic accountability and public scrutiny – what would be the role of the local authority elected members?</li> <li>• Some incorporated LEPs currently have a supervisory board</li> <li>• To meet the scrutiny requirement there could be a Scheme of Delegation incorporated into the Articles of Association - certain decisions could be referred to a ‘member/supervisory board’ for consultation. Some LEPs have a separate scrutiny group that aren’t Directors – 3 members x from business community and 3 x LA elected members. T Bray had advised that a separate scrutiny function was preferred</li> <li>• Incorporating the requirements of National Assurance Framework and other Conflicts of Interest policies into the Articles of Association may cause practical difficulties due to the requirement of statutory obligations and the actions Government was suggesting that LEPs take</li> <li>• Local Authority Leaders had powers to delegate their vote to their representative at the LEP Board meeting. This specific situation would need to be captured to ensure that it was included in the Articles of Association</li> <li>• LEP Team would continue to be employed through Shropshire Council and SLAs would be drawn up for services such as HR, legal, finance, IT and procurement. Any redundancy costs would be covered within reserves. Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government had confirmed it was comfortable with that arrangement</li> <li>• Not intended to ‘trade’ the company to start with due to potential issues around VAT and corporation tax</li> <li>• Personal liability of Directors – if they operate in a prudent manner then very little risk. Insurance would be provided for individuals but must still be able to evidence that Board Directors performed their duties in the correct manner</li> <li>• Membership – most LEPs were maintaining the status quo where the existing LEP Board were also the Members of the Company. The National Assurance Framework was not suggesting that a separate larger pool of members was required. Business Boards could remain as advisory capacity but could undertake potential consultation with them around the development of the structures</li> <li>• Could appoint up to 5 additional co-opted Directors on a short-term basis for particular projects</li> <li>• Directors would have terms of office as they do now, and accountability would be to the Chair if they did not fulfil their responsibilities properly</li> <li>• Composition of Board – representation from sectors was discussed. As part of the LEP Review actions there was a requirement for gender balance to be improved. There was also a requirement to have members from across the Marches area</li> </ul> <p>GH said she would continue to work with LA Monitoring Officers to consider how the need to ensure democratic accountability would be met under the new governance structure. GH said that GW and PH had agreed to complete the company registration papers to get the company registered. The draft Articles of Association would be produced for the Board to review before the next Board meeting.</p> <p>GW thanked PC for attending the meeting and leading the discussion. PC left the meeting.</p>	<p>GH</p> <p>PC</p>
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<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>LEP Chair and Board Member recruitment and call for nominations for Vice Chair</b></p> <p>A paper had been circulated.</p> <p>GH reiterated the requirement for an improved gender balance on the Board so would be proactively targeting the marketing and promotion for the current Board vacancies. Members were asked to forward any names of potential candidates to GH who would contact them to explain the roles.</p> <p>GH said that Board Members would be needed to form part of the interview panels. External consultants would be engaged to assist in improving HR policies, promotion and marketing etc around the recruitment campaign and for the future, specifically around protected characteristics.</p> <p>Members were asked to notify GH of any suggested amendments to the person specification and job description for the LEP Chair.</p> <p>LC suggested that P Nutting may need be the local authority representative on the interview panel for the Chair role, as the interviews were likely to be during a period of purdah for the other local authorities.</p> <p>GH asked that the other local authorities nominate an officer to sit on the LEP Chair recruitment panel.</p> <p>FM asked whether the Chair role should be a paid position because not being so may restrict the pool of candidates available. Following discussion between members it was agreed that the role should be advertised as a pro bono position. LC pointed out that there may also be an issue in the future of remunerating a director of a company limited by guarantee. GH reported that in discussion about recent campaigns in other LEPs, comments had been made that higher calibre candidates had been attracted for the non-paid roles. GW suggested that if the LEP failed to appoint a new Chair then this could perhaps be reviewed as an option.</p> <p>The Board agreed to the recommendations on the process to recruit the new Chair, new Board members and the call for nominations for Vice Chair.</p>	<p><b>All</b></p> <p><b>All</b></p> <p><b>GH</b></p> <p><b>KK, RB</b></p> <p><b>GH</b></p>
<p><b>8.</b></p>	<p><b>LEP Skills Board report on activities</b></p> <p>JS introduced the paper circulated to members and thanked A Caesar-Homden for drafting the paper. He asked members to note that the Skills Board had done an important job in advising the Board around the Growth Deals and ensuring that skills needs had been matched to the funds that had been made available. Also, the importance of the Skills Board's contribution to the SEP in framing the future vision and direction of the LEP from a skills perspective and in helping to ensure that information, data and ideas existed in advance of opportunities for funding being available, rather than being reactive.</p> <p>PH asked what involvement the Skills Board had with schools and their contribution to skills on a strategic level. GH commented that the Skills Board had taken a decision early on to focus on engagement with further and higher education due to the resources available. JS said that the Careers and Enterprise Company had a large amount of engagement with schools and a huge amount of work by further education and training providers took place with schools. JS said that he would raise the question with other networks of which he was a member.</p>	<p><b>JS</b></p>
<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b>Information Items</b></p> <p><b>Impact of Brexit on local businesses</b></p> <p>GH said that the Growth Hub was conducting a survey of SMEs on the impact of Brexit. If anyone had queries on Brexit, particularly from SMEs the LEP could feed these into a regular phone call with the LEP Network. The LEP would be supporting Chambers of Commerce with Brexit events as appropriate.</p>	<p><b>All</b></p>

	<p><b>Progress in developing Oswestry Innovation Park for LEP loan application</b> GH updated the meeting on current loans by the Marches Investment Fund. A loan application was expected from the Oswestry Innovation Park which had previously applied for Growth Deal 3 funding.</p> <p><b>LEP Strategic and Programme Risk Register</b> GH noted that the registers had been circulated for the Board's information and that one of the most significant risks had been discussed at length in the meeting today. A query was raised about the presentation of the spreadsheets in that some members may find it difficult to print on A3. GH said that the format would be reviewed.</p>	<b>NA</b>
	<p><b>Any other Business</b> Nil.</p>	
	<p><b>Next Meeting: 19 March 2019, The Clive Arms, Bromfield, Ludlow</b></p>	