

THE MARCHES LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP LIMITED BOARD MEETING					
Tuesday 25 May 2021			4.00 pm – 6.15 pm		
Remote access via Zoom					
AGENDA					
Item	Time		Lead	Discussion/ Decision	Paper
1.	4.00 pm	Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest	MT		
2.	4.05 pm	Midlands Connect briefing - including Union Connect report and high-level lobbying group; rail business case (Birmingham – Shrewsbury)	S Spink	Discussion	
3.	4.35 pm	Hereford Enterprise Zone Update	AMC/ M Pearce	Discussion	
4.	5.05 pm	Minutes of Marches LEP Ltd Board meeting on 23 March 2021 and Matters Arising	MT/GH		X
5.	5.10 pm	Review of LEPs – progress report	GH	Discussion	X
6.	5.20 pm	Draft LEP Recovery Strategy	KJ	Discussion/ Decision	X
7.	5.30 pm	Appointment of a LEP Board Champion for Energy and NET Zero	IB/T Yair	Decision	X
8.	5.35 pm	Governance updates - including the LEP Assurance Framework and procurement of the PR & Marketing contract	IB	Decision	X
9.	5.45 pm	Local Growth Fund & Getting Building Fund - progress report for 2020/21 FY	NA	Information	To Follow
10.	5.55 pm	Report from Performance Risk & Monitoring Committee (PRMC) meeting on 29 April 2021	SR/IB	Information	X
11.	6.05 pm	LEP Chair and CEO Report	GH	Information/ Discussion	X
12.	6.15 pm	Any Other Business			
Date of next meeting – Tuesday 20 July 2021 at Ludlow Racecourse from 4 pm - 6.30 pm, if COVID rules allow. LEP Board photo to be taken at start of meeting, refreshments to be provided.					

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**Draft Minutes of the Marches LEP Ltd Board Meeting
23 March 2021 at 4.00pm
Meeting held via Zoom
(Company Number: 11822614)**

Present:

Mandy Thorn MBE DL	MT	Chair, Marches LEP Board
Sonia Roberts	SR	Deputy Chair Marches LEP Board; Equality & Diversity Champion; CEO Landau Limited
Frank Myers MBE	FM	Herefordshire Business Board Chair
Beth Heath	BH	Shropshire Business Board Chair
Paul Hinkins	PH	Telford Business Board Chair
Andrew Manning Cox	AMC	Hereford Enterprise Zone Chair
Cllr David Hitchiner	DH	Leader, Herefordshire Council (part of meeting)
Cllr Peter Nutting	PN	Leader, Shropshire Council (part of meeting)
Cllr David Wright	DW	Cabinet Member for Economy, Housing, Transport and Infrastructure, Telford & Wrekin Council
Paul Kalinauckas	PK	Access to Finance Champion
James Staniforth	JS	Skills Advisory Panel Chair; Principal and CEO of the Shrewsbury Colleges Group
Dr Catherine Baxter	CB	Higher Education Champion; University Secretary, Harper Adams University
Christine Snell	CS	Business Partner, AJ & CI Snell
Ruth Shepherd	RS	Director, Results Communications (part of meeting)

In Attendance:

James Walton	JW	Section 151 Officer, Shropshire Council
Roger Allonby	RA	Head of Economic Development, Herefordshire Council (part of meeting)
Mark Barrow	MB	Executive Director for Place, Shropshire Council (part of meeting)
Katherine Kynaston	KK	Director Housing Economy & Infrastructure, Telford & Wrekin Council (part of meeting)
Ollie Hindle	OH	Assistant Director, West Midlands & South West, Cities & Local Growth Unit, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (part of meeting)
Nick Francis	NF	Deputy Head, West Midlands & South West, Cities & Local Growth Unit, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (part of meeting)
Cynyr Rhys	CR	Senior Associate, Bevan Brittan LLP (part of meeting)
Gill Hamer	GH	Chief Executive, Marches LEP
Ilia Bowles	IB	Director of Corporate Services, Marches LEP
Kathryn Jones	KJ	Partnership Manager, Marches LEP (part of meeting)
Nick Alamanos	NA	Programme Manager, Marches LEP (part of meeting)
Ennis Vingoe	EV	Marches LEP Executive Assistant (part of meeting)
Wayne Redge	WR	Marches LEP Office Administrator (part of meeting)

ITEM		ACTION
1.	1. Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest MT welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the meeting. MT said that 2 members had submitted declarations of interest for Item 7, and due to the sensitive nature of this item it would be discussed in a separate session that would	

	<p>commence at 6pm. Apologies were received from Sara Williams. MT noted that the meeting was being recorded to aid the production of the minutes.</p> <p>2. Declarations of Interest</p> <p>The Chair reminded members to complete the form that had been distributed for any specific Declarations of Interest for this meeting. Declarations had been received from:</p> <p>DH – declared an interest in Item 7 as the Leader of Herefordshire Council. PN - declared an interest in Item 7 as the Leader of Shropshire Council.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of the Marches LEP Ltd Board meeting held on 26 January 2021</p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2021 were approved by those members present at the meeting and would be signed (electronically) by the Chair as a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>Minutes of the Marches LEP Ltd Emergency Board meeting held on 24 February 2021</p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2021 were approved by those present at the meeting and would be signed (electronically) by the Chair as a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p>	EV
3.	<p>Update on the Kickstart programme – Richard Smith, Department for Work and pensions (DWP) Group Partnership Manager for the West Midlands</p> <p>RS provided an update and said that since the start of 2021, a significant focus had been on providing the Kickstart Scheme - a £3bn national programme providing 6 months' work experience for young people (aged 16-24 years) in receipt of universal credit. Employers applied to be Kickstart employers or to be part of a Gateway organisation. The Marches had a number of Gateway organisations and the majority of the placement opportunities would come from these. So far in the Marches area just under 700 young people had been moved into work. The final placements were due to commence on 31 December 2021, but DWP was hopeful that there would be an extension and was looking to see where there were gaps in terms of sectors and geography. Members had a number of queries. It was agreed that C Snell would speak to RS about how DWP could work with the agricultural sector on placements.</p> <p>MT thanked RS for the update. She also thanked members whose businesses were Gateway organisations, supporting young people in the Marches area to find work placements.</p>	CS
4.	<p>Outcomes of 3 March 2021 Budget and implications for LEPs</p> <p>GH told members that it was likely that there would be a change in emphasis in the role of LEPs with the focus being more on business engagement, business support, skills and innovation. The capital infrastructure funding (Levelling Up fund) would be bid for individually by local authorities. This was a policy decision within MHCLG and was not a reflection on the performance of LEPs. A review of the future role of LEPs would be undertaken before the end of July 2021 and Terms of Reference for this review, which should be available within the next week, would be circulated to members.</p> <p>PN said that he could see advantages to the Levelling Up funding coming directly through local authorities via a competitive process but was confident of a future role for LEPs particularly in business engagement. He said that local authorities should continue to extend their role around local business engagement.</p> <p>DW said that a number of overlapping agendas had led to the Government decision but that the advantage of the LEP was that it provided a forum for local authorities</p>	GH

	<p>and others key stakeholders to get around the table to discuss local priorities. The LEP had a continuing role to play in bringing together a range of local partners. DH said that the LEP had particular expertise that was not currently available in his local authority. There were some issues such as the environment, agriculture, culture and tourism where the local authority would wish to work with the LEP. It may be more of a challenge to fund these elements in the future. DH felt that Government was unrealistic in the current funding and delivery deadlines. PH welcomed the changing role of the LEP and commented on the increased role for business engagement and the competitive nature of the future funding. MT said that as directors, the Board need to be mindful of the impact of any proposed changes on the LEP staff team.</p> <p>The Board noted the content of the report.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Local Skills Report</p> <p>JS introduced Ellie Wright and Simon Hooton from Hatch and thanked members of the Skills Advisory Panel, the LEP team particularly Aggie Caesar-Homden, and business and education partners for their contribution to the research over the past 2 years. There had been a significant amount of work and consultation undertaken resulting in the Local Skills Report - Strategy and Action Plan. The presentation covered the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cross cutting priorities ○ Sector priorities ○ COVID-19 recovery priorities • Extensive list of actions to address the issues identified <p>Members asked a number of questions on the report. CB said that the Marches LEP HE Group (which included the FE sector), were grateful to have had the opportunity to be involved in the research for the Report. MT said that the production of the Report was the start of a process and that the Board would need to own the actions required. MT thanked JS, E Wright and S Hooton for their work on the Report.</p> <p>The Board noted the purpose of the Marches Local Skills Report.</p> <p>The Board endorsed the priorities of the Local Skills Report to enable formal submission to the Department for Education in line with local governance requirements and publication on the Marches LEP website (unanimous).</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Inclusive Economy and Diversity Policy and Implementation Plan</p> <p>SR said that it was important to have a policy in place for good governance and the action plan would ensure that the policy was implemented. Reviews against the plan would be undertaken on a regularly and a progress report would be brought to the Board for the November meeting. MT said that it was an excellent document.</p> <p>The Board approved the Marches LEP’s Inclusive Economy and Diversity Policy and relating Implementation Plan (unanimous).</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Governance</p> <p>a. Board Member Appointments Panel Report</p> <p>IB said that the Panel had met to review Board appointments due to come to an end in 2021 and discussions were in progress with relevant members regarding</p>	

	<p>succession planning. The Panel also reviewed gender representation and the Board would be looking to at least maintain the current gender representation of its membership which was just under 50% female. The Panel had looked at the composition of the Board to ensure it was representative of the Marches geography and also the diversity in skills, experience and background of the population in the Marches</p> <p>The Board noted the recommendations reached by the Board Member Appointments Panel at their February meeting as highlighted in the report.</p> <p>b. Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Marches LEP and Shropshire Council IB confirmed that the SLA had been signed and the provision of services by Shropshire Council had been formalised. This agreement would come into effect on 1 April 2021. There would be several reviews throughout the year to ensure the requirements were met.</p> <p>The Board noted the steps that had been taken to finalise and sign the SLA with Shropshire Council.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Update on 2020/21 spend for Local Growth Fund (LGF) and Getting Building Fund (GBF) NA updated the Board on the Local Growth Fund and Getting Building Fund projects.</p> <p>GBF LEP Board members were informed that, based on the information provided by projects a potential over commitment of circa. £1.7million was anticipated for 2020/21. It was reported that this situation continued to be fluid as all the activity in this financial year had yet to be concluded. As agreed at the Emergency Board Meeting on 24 February 2021, the Marches Investment Fund would be utilised as a cashflow facility.</p> <p>The Board noted the current position relating to the Getting Building Fund Programme, as set out in section 1 of the Report.</p> <p>LGF It was reported that due to the Tannery project not proceeding with the St Austin Street Carpark, an underspend position of £194,568 was established within the LGF Programme. As agreed at the 24 March 2020 LEP Board Meeting, any available LGF funds would be awarded to projects within the approved LGF Project Reserve List. The Bishop's Castle project, ranked 1st on the reserve list, was awarded funds on 18 March 2021 through Delegated Authority approval.</p> <p>The Board noted the Delegated Authority decision taken in awarding the Bishops Castle project £194,568 of Local Growth Funds, as set out in section 2.4 of the Report.</p> <p>Based on the outturn information position provided by projects the LGF Programme remained on course to spend its full allocation, it was reported there was significant work being undertaken with project promoters and a considerable amount of money still to be invoiced. GH thanked project promoters, Shropshire Council finance team and NA and the LEP team for their contribution to the work required to process all the invoices for the projects.</p> <p>The Board noted the current position relating to the Local Growth Fund Programme, as set out in section 2.5 of the Report.</p>	

	<p>Following the Emergency Board Meeting in February 2021 a draft Deed of Variation had been sent to the Marches Centre for Manufacturing and Technology. The Board noted the latest position in relation to the MCMT Deed of Variation, as set out in section 2.6 of the Report.</p> <p>GH commented that based on the potential status of LGF and GBF at the end of the financial year the LEP was keen that MHCLG review the indicative outcomes of the Annual Performance Review 2021 and amend the rating for 'Delivery' from 'action needed' to 'meeting expectations'.</p>	
9.	<p>Report from the Performance Risk and Monitoring Committee (PRMC) meeting on 25 February 2021</p> <p>SR thanked Sara Williams for volunteering to be the PRMC Deputy Chair. Board members would be invited to comment on the PRMC via a 360-degree review, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the committee. Board members were asked to forward any suggestions they may have on future agenda items for the PRMC to SR. MT thanked SR and IB for the report.</p> <p>The Board noted the outcomes of the last PRMC meeting on 25 February 2021 and the latest changes to the Strategic and Programme risk registers.</p>	All
10.	<p>LEP Chair/CEO report</p> <p>MT and GH described the Peer Review process which the Marches LEP had recently undertaken with Dorset LEP. GH said that the Marches LEP PR and marketing tender would be issued in the next couple of days. BH asked for it to be noted that she wished to review with others how business intelligence is gathered from the business boards effectively to support the work of the LEP and the need for business boards to ensure their membership represent the business sectors in their areas. It was suggested that the 3 business board chairs discuss the issue separately.</p>	
11.	<p>Any Other Business Nil</p>	
12.	<p><i>The meeting was suspended at 5.45pm and except for GH, JW, IB and CR all non-Board Members left the meeting at this point. PN and DH who had declared an interest in this item, also left the meeting.</i> <i>The meeting re-convened at 6.00pm in closed session.</i> South Wye Transport project legal dispute – authority to negotiate A separate confidential note of this meeting will be produced.</p>	
	<p>Next Meeting of the Board of The Marches LEP Limited: Tuesday 25 May 2021</p>	

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Meeting date:	25 May 2021				
Agenda Item:	5				
Item Subject:	Review of LEPs – progress report				
For:	Discussion	X	Decision		Information

Purpose of the Paper:

To provide an update on the review of the role of LEPs being undertaken by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) which was announced on 3 March 2021.

Summary of Recommendations:

To note the content of this report.

Background

The government set out a commitment at the March 2021 Budget to work with local businesses and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) on the evolution of LEPs: *“We will also be working with local businesses on the future role of Local Enterprise Partnerships. We want to ensure local businesses have clear representation and support in their area, in order to drive the recovery. We will work with Local Enterprise Partnerships over the coming months, with a view to announcing more detailed plans ahead of summer recess. This will also include consideration of Local Enterprise Partnerships’ geographies.”*

Ministers agreed the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the review of the role of LEPs on 15/04/21– See Appendix 1. These TOR were circulated to all Board members on 16/04/21 by email.

Since then, the LEP Network has set up four working Groups to discuss the following topics.

- a) Objectives and Functions
- b) Geographies and Functions
- c) Representation and Interaction with Local Government
- d) Implementation and Funding

The process agreed with civil servants is that the civil servants produce proposal papers for each of the above topics; the LEP Network Groups consider the papers and propose changes; the LEP Network Board and civil servants then agree any changes.

N.B. Civil servants have asked that the papers being considered by the LEP Network working groups can only be shared with LEP Chairs and LEP CEOs at this stage as they have not been signed off by Ministers as agreed government policy.

Gill Hamer, the LEP CEO has taken part in the Objectives and Functions Group. This group has considered the following future three key functions for LEPs: -

1. To fulfil a strategic role, providing place-based economic expertise and insight to central and local government and helping secure long term inclusive growth at the local level as part of the Plan for Growth.
2. To identify key local sectors and industries, and to design and deliver interventions to make them more competitive, making the most of local opportunities.

3. To deliver a programme of joined-up, expert and tailored business advice and support for local businesses, ensuring they can play their full part in the Plan for Growth.

Civil servants are also holding regional roundtables with business representation organisations i.e., Chambers, CBI, FSB etc to get their views on the future role of LEPs. The West Midlands event was held on 11 May 2021.

The aim is still that the Government will announce more detailed plans on the future role of LEPs ahead of summer recess i.e., July 2021.

Financial implications: None

Legal implications: None

Risks, opportunities and impacts: Any slippage in the timetable of the review of the role of LEPs will cause considerable levels of uncertainty for the LEP Executive.

Equality implications: None

Background papers/documents:

[Appendix 1 – Review of LEPs Terms of Reference](#)

Report Author: Gill Hamer, LEP CEO

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Meeting date:	25 May 2021					
Agenda Item:	6					
Item Subject:	Draft LEP Recovery Strategy					
For:	Discussion	X	Decision	X	Information	

<p>Purpose of the Paper:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide an overview of the work undertaken to produce the attached draft Marches LEP recovery strategy which is very much a working document and will be added to/amended as more data emerges To seek Board Members' views on its content
<p>Summary of Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To agree the attached draft recovery strategy as a working document To note that this document will evolve/be added to as further data emerges
<p>Background</p> <p>The report has been compiled following consultation with local authority partners, the 3 Business Boards and with reference to relevant government documents and associated LEP research, data, strategic papers and supporting evidence bases; these are referenced within the report as appropriate.</p>
<p>Financial implications: The report has been produced by the LEP Executive in consultation with partners. Further government funds will be required to implement many of the actions identified.</p>
<p>Legal implications: None</p>
<p>Risks, opportunities and impacts: This document can be used by partners to underpin/endorse their business cases for funding bids.</p>
<p>Equality implications: None</p>
<p>Additional information/ attachments: Appendix 1 – Draft LEP Economic Recovery Plan</p>
<p>Background papers/documents: None</p>
<p>Report Author: Kathryn Jones, Partnership Manager</p>

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Meeting date:	25 May 2021				
Agenda Item:	7				
Item Subject:	Appointment of an Energy Champion to The Marches LEP Board (the LEP Board)				
For:	Discussion		Decision	X	Information

Purpose of the Paper:

To seek the LEP Board’s approval for:

- a) appointing Gordon Coppock as a Co-opted LEP Board Member and Energy Champion, for the purpose of progressing the delivery of The Marches LEP Energy Strategy; and
- b) agreeing voting rights of Co-opted Members.

Summary of Recommendations:

With regards to the appointment of a Co-opted Member and Energy Champion, that the LEP Board endorses The Marches Energy Strategy Steering Group’s recommendations to:

- a) appoint Gordon Coppock as a Co-opted Member and Energy Champion on the LEP Board; and
- b) empower the Energy Champion with the responsibilities listed in section 1.3 of this paper.

With regards to Co-opted Members’ voting rights, that the LEP Board approves either Option 1 or Option 2 as explained in section 3 of this paper.

1. Marches LEP Energy Champion

1.1 At its meeting in January 2021, the LEP Board discussed how the LEP could strengthen its support of The Marches Energy Strategy, particularly with a view to ongoing changes to the energy policy landscape, and support for the delivery of projects to help meeting net-zero challenges and other energy-related issues raised in The Marches.

1.2 The Board proposed that a LEP Energy Champion be identified. Recognising that specialist skills and knowledge were required, it was suggested that the co-opting of a member of The Marches Energy Strategy Steering Group to the LEP Board may be a way forward.

1.3 The Marches Energy Strategy Steering Group discussed this proposal and has recommended that Gordon Coppock be co-opted to carry out this role. The Group has also recommended that the main functions of the Energy Champion would include:

- Driving a strategic approach to the delivery of the LEP’s Energy Action Plan and opportunities associated with climate change.
- Supporting the implementation of The Marches Energy Strategy by providing a direct link between the LEP Board and The Marches Energy Strategy Steering Group.
- Helping to ensure that LEP Board decisions have included a consideration of the energy and carbon impacts.
- Working with the LEP Board to ensure that The Marches Energy Strategy is integral to the development of other LEP strategies, including the Local Industrial Strategy.

- Liaising with other LEP Board Members and staff, including the Midlands Energy Hub's Regional Senior Energy Project Officer, on a range of energy issues.

2. Gordon Coppock

Gordon has been a member of The Marches Energy Strategy Steering Group since its inception in 2019 and is therefore very aware of the aims and objectives of The Marches Energy Strategy.

Following a career with Siemens, culminating as a Director for the Asia Pacific region with responsibilities for 32 countries, he decided to focus on climate change issues. Gordon has significant experience of working in the renewable energy sector both in the Marches and across the UK. He started using solar PV in the 1980s and has worked for one of the UK's pioneering renewable technology companies, Leominster-based Wind and Sun.

A physicist by background, Gordon is an elected member of the Institute of Physics (IOP). He has been a STEM ambassador to support the IOP Lab in a Lorry project in schools in the Marches and Wales. He has also developed educational energy bikes to demonstrate the concept of energy generation.

An enthusiastic proponent of electric vehicles for over 20 years. His own house is also en-route to becoming a net zero carbon home. Gordon has been involved in a number of community energy initiatives, including:

- Director of Pomona Solar Co-operative since 2016 – Herefordshire's largest supplying low-cost electricity to local businesses.
- Vice Chair of the Herefordshire Green Network where he created the Zero Carbon Herefordshire project which is now the core team Great Collaboration project.
- Former Chair and responsible for the energy (saving and generation) group with the award nominated group KLEEN (Kington Local Energy and Environment Network).
- Founding voluntary director of Kington Community Energy Co-operative Ltd.
- Trained volunteer adviser for the Home Energy Service (HES), supported by the Lightfoot group in Shropshire for retrofit energy saving actions in buildings.
- In partnership with CAT run public workshops across the Marches region to share the Zero Carbon Britain project research focussing on energy generation and saving.
- Member (via Pomona) of Community Energy UK.
- Herefordshire champion for Keep Herefordshire Warm for 2 years with MEA.

Recommendation 1 – That the LEP Board endorses The Marches Energy Strategy Steering Group's recommendation to appoint Gordon Coppock as a Co-opted Member and Energy Champion on the LEP Board.

Recommendation 2 – That the LEP Board approves The Marches Energy Strategy Steering Group's recommendation to empower the Energy Champion with the responsibilities listed in section 1.3 of this paper.

3. Co-opted Members' Rights

The National Local Growth Assurance Framework for LEPs, recommends that, once appointed, Co-opted Members should adhere to the standards that all other permanent Board Members are required to adopt; for example, they should act in line with The Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles) and declare any conflicts of interests.

The Marches LEP's Accountability and Assurance Framework (AAF) indicates that Co-opted Members' appointments are made by the Board, for 12 months, and that a maximum of five co-opted members are appointed at any one time.

No recommendation is given on voting rights of Co-opted Members. As such, LEP Board Members are invited to agree on these, based on the following two options:

Option 1 – Co-opted Members have the same rights as Board Members, including voting rights.

Option 2 – Co-opted Members are part of the Board, join in discussions and contribute to formulating recommendations. However, they do not have voting rights and do not count towards the quorum.

Once agreed, Co-opted Member's voting rights will be clearly indicated in the LEP Board's Terms of Reference, LEP's Articles of association and AAF, and they will be applied consistently at each Board meeting.

Recommendation 3 – That the LEP Board approves either Option 1 or Option 2 as explained in section 3 above, with regards to Co-opted Members' voting rights.

Financial implications:

There are no financial implications from these recommendations.

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications from these recommendations.

Risks, opportunities and impacts:

Opportunities – The Marches Energy Strategy Steering Group is keen to ensure there are opportunities to raise the importance of energy across The Marches region. Also, having an Energy Champion with a wealth of experience in the energy field will bring additional insight to the LEP Board on a highly technical area, which is only likely to become more important in the coming years with changes to national legislation.

Equality implications:

There are no equality implications from these recommendations.

Additional information:

At their meeting on 13th April 2021, The Marches Energy Strategy Steering Group unanimously agreed to Gordon Coppock being put forward for the role of Energy Champion and Co-opted Member to the LEP Board.

Report Authors:

Tim Yair, Regional Senior Energy Project Officer, Nottingham City Council (07874 792678)

Ilia Bowles, Marches LEP Director of Corporate Services (07458 073509)

Gordon Coppock, Member of The Marches Energy Strategy Steering Group

Background papers/documents:

Marches Energy [Strategy](#)

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Meeting date:	25 May 2021					
Agenda Item:	8a					
Item Subject:	Governance update					
For:	Discussion		Decision	X	Information	X

Purpose of the Paper: To inform Board Members of the outcome of the reviews carried out to the Marches LEP Scheme of Delegation and Accountability and Assurance Framework and to recommend that Board Members approve the revised documents.

To inform Board Members of the intended timetable for the preparation of the Accounts and relating external Audit for financial year ending 31 March 2021.

Summary of Recommendations:

That Board Members:

1. Approve the revised Marches LEP Scheme of Delegation;
2. Approve the revised Marches LEP Accountability and Assurance Framework; and
3. Note the intended timetable for the preparation of the Accounts and relating external Audit for financial year ending 31 March 2021.

1. Marches LEP Scheme of Delegation

The Marches LEP Scheme of Delegation has been reviewed to ensure the delegated financial authority allows the Chief Executive to fulfil the day-to-day management of the LEP Secretariat’s administrative and operational budgets.

As a result of the review, it is clear that the current delegated financial authority of the LEP Chief Executive of £30k has become inadequate mainly due to an increase in the overall monthly costs of the LEP Secretariat (i.e. salaries). It is therefore proposed that the Scheme of Delegation is amended as follows:

- The LEP Chief Executive is able to authorise expenditure up to the value of £45k (plus VAT).
- The LEP Chair’s and S151 Officer’s consent is to be sought for approval of expenditure between £45k (plus VAT) and £65k (plus VAT).
- The LEP Board’s consent is to be sought for approval of expenditure above £65k (plus VAT).

The proposed amendments are supported by the S151 Officer at Shropshire Council, the Marches LEP Accountable Body.

Recommendation 1 – That Board Members approve the revised Marches LEP Scheme of Delegation.

2. Marches LEP Accountability and Assurance Framework

Following on from the initial review of the Marches LEP Accountability and Assurance Framework in January (main body and Appendices 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 10 and 11), the remaining sections of the document were reviewed to ensure they were up-to-date and consistent with the National Local Growth Assurance Framework for LEPs. The document was also reviewed

for style and consistency to ensure it did not contain any discrepancies or unnecessary repetitions. Main amendments included the following:

- The inclusion of a description of the role and rights of Co-opted Members to paragraph 2.3.1, as required by the Assurance Team.
- The revision of the Marches LEP Scheme of Delegation at Appendix 12.
- The revision of the Terms of References of the Marches LEP Business Support Steering Group and Skills Advisory Panel.
- The revision of the Marches LEP Complaints and Whistleblowing policies, at appendices 14, 15 and 16.
- The inclusion of the new Marches LEP Inclusive Economy and Diversity Policy and Implementation Plan as Appendix 18.
- The inclusion of the revised Marches LEP Board Members' Register of Interests as Appendix 20.
- The inclusion of the Marches LEP Travel and Expenses Policy as Appendix 23.

Recommendation 2 – That Board Members approve the revised Marches LEP Accountability and Assurance Framework (co-opted members section, revised appendices 3, 5, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 24, and new appendix 23).

3. Accounts and Audit for financial year 2020/21

Draft end of year accounts for the Marches LEP Ltd for financial year 2020/21 are expected to be made available by Shropshire Council Finance team on 28 May 2021.

Thorne Widgery Chartered Accountants, thornewidgery.co.uk, who were contracted last year following a tender exercise, have been appointed again to prepare the statutory accounts and complete the Marches LEP corporation tax return for financial year 2020/21. Their proposed fees are very similar to last year's final charges and are as follows:

- Preparation of statutory accounts £2,100 (plus VAT) (2019/20: £2,000 plus VAT); and
- Corporation tax £255 (plus VAT) (2019/20: £250 plus VAT).

Thorne Widgery will be carrying out their work in June.

James Holyoak & Parker Ltd, jhpcaco.uk, who were contracted last year following a tender exercise, have been appointed again this year to conduct the external audit of the Marches LEP accounts and preparation of an audit report for financial year 2020/21. Their proposed fees are the same as last year (£4,500 plus VAT) and they will be completing their work in July.

Final draft accounts and initial results of the external audit are expected to be presented to the LEP Board at their next meeting in July.

Recommendation 3 – That Board Members note the intended timetable for the preparation of the Accounts and relating external Audit for financial year ending 31 March 2021.

Financial implications: None

Legal implications: None

Risks, opportunities and impacts: None

Equality implications: None

Additional information/ attachments:

1. [Marches LEP Scheme of Delegation](#)
2. [Marches LEP Accountability and Assurance Framework](#)

Background papers/documents: None

Report Author: Ilia Bowles, LEP Director of Corporate Services

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Meeting date:	25 May 2021				
Agenda Item:	8b				
Item Subject:	Procurement of a new PR & Marketing Contract				
For:	Discussion		Decision	X	Information

Purpose of the Paper: To inform Board members about the process being followed for the procurement of a new PR and Marketing contract and invite Board Members to authorise the relating expenditure of £86k + VAT per annum.

Summary of Recommendations: That Board members take note of the process being followed for the procurement of a new PR and Marketing contract and authorise the relating expenditure of £86k + VAT per annum, subject to funding being provided to the LEP by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government.

A tender for a new PR & Marketing contract went live on 12th April 2021 for 30 days, with the aim to source a suitably qualified and experienced contractor to develop and deliver PR and marketing services for The Marches LEP, including the Hereford Enterprise Zone (HEZ), and The Marches Growth Hub (MGH), including supporting the promotion of activities at the three Growth Hub sites in Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.

The tender was marketed on The Marches LEP website, Gov.uk Find a Contract and Delta E-Sourcing and closed at midday on 12th May 2021. Shortlisting and interviews are now taking place.

The tender was advertised at £86k + VAT per annum: £50k + VAT, for work related to The Marches LEP and HEZ, and £36k + VAT for work related to MGH, providing a minimum of 7 days per month for LEP and HEZ work and 5 days per month for MGH work. Over the expected three-year period, the estimated total value of the contract would be in the region of £258k + VAT.

As per The Marches LEP's Scheme of Delegation, being this expenditure beyond the level of authority of the Chief Executive, the Board is being asked to authorise it.

Subject to funding, once awarded, the contract would run from 1st July 2021 to 31st March 2023, with an option to extend for a third year subject to good performance and further funding becoming available.

- **Recommendation – That Board members take note of the process being followed for the procurement of a new PR and Marketing contract and authorise the relating expenditure of £86k + VAT per annum, subject to funding being provided to the LEP by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government.**

Financial implications: The new PR & Marketing contract has been advertised at £86k + VAT per annum. Over the expected three-year period, the estimated total value of the contract would be in the region of £258k + VAT.

Legal implications: None

Risks, opportunities and impacts: PR & Marketing is a critical function for The Marches LEP and one that so far has brought great visibility and consistent messaging about our

achievements. As the future bring changes, it is fundamental that we continue investing in the right PR & Marketing and source a qualified and experienced contractor.

Equality implications: None

Additional information/ attachments: None

Background papers/documents: None

Report Author: Ilia Bowles, LEP Director of Corporate Services

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MARCHES LEP LTD BOARD MEETING PAPER

Meeting date:	25 May 2021				
Agenda Item:	9				
Item Subject:	Final outturn on 2020/21 for Local Growth Fund (LGF) and Getting Building Fund (GBF)				
For:	Discussion		Decision		Information X

Purpose of the Paper:

- 1) To update Board Members on progress delivering both Local Growth Fund and Getting Building Fund projects.

Summary of Recommendations:

The Marches LEP Board:

- 1) Notes the 2020/21 outturn position relating to the Getting Building Fund Programme, as set out in section 1.
- 2) Notes the 2020/21 outturn position relating to the Local Growth Fund Programme, as set out in section 2.1
- 3) Notes the Quarter 4 performance position relating to the Local Growth Fund Programme, as set out in section 2.2

Main points

1. Getting Building Fund - Update

In August 2020, the Government announced £900 million was available through the new Getting Building Fund (GBF) – investing in local, shovel-ready infrastructure projects to stimulate jobs and support economic recovery. On 18 September 2020, the LEP received confirmation from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) of the £14,000,000 Getting Building Funds award - split into £7,000,000 for Financial Year (FY) 2020/21 with an indicative profile of £7,000,000 in FY 2021/22.

Table 1 provides a final outturn position of GBF spend for the 2020/21 financial year.

Table 1 – Getting Building Fund 2020/21 Outturn Table.

Project Name	Original 2020/21 Profile	Final 2020/21 Outturn	Notes
Integrated Construction Wetlands	£ 500,000	-	Prior to 31 March 2021 the project had not purchased any sites relating to the two contracted elements - Wetlands & Rewilding. As a consequence, GBF grant could not be paid out in line with the agreed expenditure elements. The LEP are currently working with Herefordshire Council in relation to amending the Project Funding Agreement.
Pride Hill Remodelling	£ 2,917,000	£ 3,525,803	On 31 March 2021, the Project Funding Agreement was varied to include the purchasing of land with GBF grant. This land formed part of the original project proposal

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			but was attributed to Match Funding. This change resulted in an increase to the projects original 2020/21 GBF spend profile.
Tackling Fuel Poverty Through Zero Carbon Innovation	£ 600,000	£ 509,839	On 31 March 2021, the Project Funding Agreement was varied, enabling substitutions to be made to the list of agreed retrofit properties, enabling outputs to be delivered. The variation included a reprofile of outputs to ensure deliverability over the contract period.
Hereford City Centre Improvements	£ 1,505,744	£ 1,549,957	On 31 March 2021, the Project Funding Agreement was varied to include updated delivery milestones as well as the utilisation of £1,389,000 of Freedoms & Flexibilities* – ensuring the project met its contractual obligations around spend. A GBF Claim of £160,957 along with the Freedoms & Flexibilities value of £1,389,000 resulted in an outturn value of £1,549,957.
NMITE - Skylon Park Campus Development	£ 1,000,000	£ 800,000	On 5 th January 2021, a decision was taken by Herefordshire Council (HC) to accept responsibility for managing the £1.6m GBF project. On 29 March 2021, the 2020/21 allocation of £800,000 was paid to HC (Project Accountable Body). At the time of writing this report HC have not submitted their Quarter 4 LEP Certification Report confirming progress against GBF spend and deliverables on this project.
Stronger Communities - New College, Wellington and surrounding sites	£ 1,190,000	£ 1,190,000	On 31 March 2021, the Project Funding Agreement was varied to include the utilisation of £1,190,000 of Freedoms & Flexibilities – ensuring the project met its contractual obligations around spend.
Total	£ 7,712,744	£ 7,575,599	

**Freedoms & Flexibilities – a process enabling Local Authorities to manage spend between years in the scenario where a project cannot spend all of its annual allocation*

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The outturn figure of £7,575,599 ensured the LEP met its obligations with MHCLG in spending £7,000,000 of GBF grant within the 2020/21 FY. Whilst this figure represents an overspend of £575,599, at the 24 February 2021 Emergency LEP Board members approved the utilisation of the Marches Investment Fund as a cashflow facility.

On 10 May 2021, the LEP received a letter from Steven Greenwood (Deputy Director, Funding Delivery, Cities and Local Growth Unit) confirming arrangements for the payment of £7,000,000 of GBF grant for 2021/22 FY (see Appendix 1)

- **Recommendation – The LEP Board note the 2020/21 FY outturn position relating to the Getting Building Fund Programme.**

2. Local Growth Fund – Update

2.1 2020/21 Local Growth Fund Spend Outturn

The 2020/21 Financial Year (FY) represented the last period for project expenditure in respect to the LEP's Local Growth Fund (LGF) Programme. As set out in previous Board Reports MHCLG have been very clear that no expenditure would be able to slip into the 2021/22 FY. Table 2 provides a final outturn position of LGF spend for the 2020/21 FY as well as the overall Programme.

Table 2 – Local Growth Fund 2020/21 FY Outturn Table

Project Name	2020 - 2021 Spend	Total Spend 2015 – 2021	Notes
Infrastructure			
South Wye Transport Package	-	£ 3,843,610	
Telford Growth Package	-	£ 13,900,000	Project has completed its LGF Spend.
Hereford City Centre Transport Package	-	£ 16,000,000	Project has completed its LGF Spend.
Telford Eastern Gateway	-	£ 3,600,000	Project has completed its LGF Spend.
Telford Bus Station	-	£ 1,300,000	Project has completed its LGF Spend.
Shrewsbury Integrated Transport Project	-£ 750,284	£ 6,000,000	The -£750,284 reflected an agreed virement between two LGF Projects (Shrewsbury Integrated Transport and Oxon Link Road' – this was agreed 24 March 2020 LEP Board meeting. The project has spent its LGF allocation.
Oxon Link Road	£ 1,158,868	£ 4,199,421	The final outturn figure represents a project underspend of £579.
Skills Capital			
Growth Deal 1 skills project	-	£ 3,245,498	Project has completed its LGF Spend.
Broadband			

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Connecting Shropshire	£ 1,020,727	£ 5,016,556	The final figure represents a project underspend of £5,444. The outturn figure includes a Freedoms & Flexibilities value of £319,011.06 - this will be reconciled in 2021/22 FY.
Superfast Telford	-	£ 1,004,000	Project has completed its LGF Spend.
Fastershire	-	£ 1,673,989	Project has completed its LGF Spend.
Skills - Investing in Our Future Workforce			
Shrewsbury Colleges Group	-	£ 209,079	Project has completed its LGF Spend.
North Shropshire College	-	£ 423,833	Project has completed its LGF Spend.
Telford College	-	£ 508,546	Project has completed its LGF Spend.
Derwen College	-	£ 313,501	Project has completed its LGF Spend.
Shrewsbury Colleges Group - Advanced Manufacturing Engineering and Automotive Expansion Project	£ 200,000	£ 200,000	The project has spent its LGF allocation.
Herefordshire, Ludlow & North Shropshire College: Energy Training Centre	£ 70,000	£ 70,000	The project has spent its LGF allocation.
Growth Deal 3			
NMiTE	£ 6,128,862	£ 8,399,992	<p>The final outturn figure represents a project underspend of £8.00.</p> <p>The NMiTE project is split into 2 elements – Phase 1 (£2,740,000) & Phase 2 (£5,660,000). On 25 March 2020 Herefordshire Council's (HC) agreed to be the Project Accountable Body for Phase 2 – enabling the LEP to transfer £5,660,000 of LGF Funds in Quarter 1 2020/21 FY.</p> <p>At the time of writing this report HC have not submitted their Quarter 4 Certification Report confirming progress against LGF spend and deliverables on this project.</p>
Flaxmill	£ 1,531,174	£ 2,000,000	Project has completed its LGF Spend.
Hereford Centre for Cyber Security	£ 2,095,316	£ 3,000,000	On 30 March 2021, the Funding Agreement was varied allowing the payment of outstanding claims.

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			Project has spent its full LGF allocation.
Newport Innovation & Enterprise Park	£ 2,633,433	£ 7,400,000	The project has spent its LGF allocation.
New Projects			
Primary Care Centre at the Tannery, Shrewsbury	£ 1,328,124	£ 1,328,124	The final outturn is an underspend position of £736,008.90. This includes a Freedoms & Flexibilities value £11,501.73 - this will be reconciled in 2021/22 FY.
Hereford Enterprise Zone	£ 5,432,000	£ 5,432,000	The LEP received a request to amend the Grant Funding Agreement to reflect changes in milestones and expenditure. On 26 March 2021, the Funding Agreement was varied allowing the project to spend its full LGF allocation.
Allied Health Care , University of Wolverhampton	£ 3,500,000	£ 3,500,000	The LEP received a request to amend the Grant Funding Agreement to reflect changes in milestones, assets, and expenditure profile. On 30 March 2021, the Funding Agreement was varied allowing for eligible spend to be processed. Project has spent its full LGF allocation.
Oswestry Innovation Park	£ 5,000,000	£ 5,000,000	The LEP received a request to amend the funding agreement to reflect changes in milestone dates and expenditure profile - this is within the scope of their agreement. On 31 March 2021, the Funding Agreement was varied allowing for eligible spend to be processed. Project has spent its full LGF allocation.
Stronger Regeneration Communities (Telford)	£ 7,000,000	£ 7,000,000	The project has spent its LGF allocation.
Bishops Castle	£ 194,568	£ 194,568	New LEP project, approved by under Delegated Authority 18 March 2021 to allocate de-committed funds.
Capitalisation (LEP Team Programme Management Costs)	£ 124,790	£ 124,790	
Total LGF Spend	£ 36,667,579	£ 104,887,505	
LGF Programme Allocation		£ 104,887,505	

**Freedoms & Flexibilities – a process enabling Local Authorities to manage spend between years in the scenario where a project cannot spend all of its annual allocation*

Table 2 confirms the LEP has been successful in ensuring the level of LGF Funds awarded to the Marches Region was spent by the 31 March 2021 deadline. This represents a significant achievement for the LEP partnership in spending £36,667,579 within the 2020/21 FY – acknowledging in January 2020 the LEP undertook an extensive Project Call exercise to reallocate in excess of £22million of LGF grant.

Following the LEP's Annual Performance Review with Government (9 February 2021) an indicative rating of 'Requires Improvement' was attributed to 'Performance' - reflecting the complexities involved in spending the LGF allocation by 31 March 2021. On 10 May 2021, the LEP received written confirmation from MHCLG the 'Performance' rating had been upgraded to 'Met' – due to the approach taken implementing risk mitigation processes enabling LGF grant to be spent.

Whilst successfully meeting our LGF Programme spend allocation signifies a major milestone, the LEP will continue to monitor projects in relation to their contractual obligations in achieving Outputs and Match Funding.

- ***Recommendation – The LEP Board note the final outturn spend position relating to the Local Growth Fund Programme.***

2.2 Local Growth Fund – Quarter 4 Performance Update

Quarter 4 2020/21 represented the LEP's busiest period in terms of expenditure, with £21,365,162 of LGF defrayed between 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021.

In terms of Match Funding no values have been verified and reported, reflecting the focus of the LEP and projects promoters in spending LGF grant by 31 March 2021.

The number of outputs achieved has been lower than anticipated due to the focus of partners in achieving LGF spend. The outputs reported are:

- 282 Job Created/Safeguarded,
- 133 Homes Completed,
- 152 Apprentices,
- 420 Number of Learners,
- 22 Training Courses provided,
- 104 Area of New/improved learning/training floorspace (sqm),
- 261 homes with access to new or improved fibre optic provision,
- 15 Commercial Broadband Access,
- 2,715 Area of Commercial Floorspace built (sqm),
- 0.2 Length of newly built road (km),
- 0.308 Length of road resurfaced (km).

- ***Recommendation – The LEP Board note the Quarter 4 performance position relating to the Local Growth Fund Programme.***

Financial implications:

- The LEP needs to accurately monitor spend and outputs, ensuring these do not impact negatively on performance. Should this happen, it may result in the loss of grant to the Marches through future grant allocations.

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<p>Legal implications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
<p>Risks, opportunities, and impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timescales of project development and delivery need to be carefully managed, including ensuring that adequate resources are in place within the LEP and its accountable body to achieve these.
<p>Equality implications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
<p>Additional information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
<p>Report Author: Nick Alamanos, MLEP Programme Manager</p>
<p>Background papers/documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 1 - The Marches LEP Getting Building Fund 2021-22 payment

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MARCHES LEP LTD BOARD MEETING PAPER

Meeting date:	25 May 2021			
Agenda Item:	10			
Item Subject:	Report from the Performance Risk & Monitoring Committee meeting on 29 April 2021 v2			
For:	Discussion		Decision	Information X

Purpose of the Paper: To report on the Performance Risk & Monitoring Committee (PRMC) meeting on 29 April 2021 and highlight the latest changes to the Strategic and Programme Risk Registers.

Summary of Recommendations: That Board members take note of the outcomes of the last PRMC meeting on 29 April 2021 and the latest changes to the Strategic and Programme Risk Registers.

Summary of PRMC meeting on 29 April 2021

- Risks for equality, diversity and wellbeing had been added to the Strategic Risk Register. A Mental Health Champion had been appointed in the LEP Team.
- In the Programme Risk Register, 11 risks had their text updated and 9 received a change of rating. Amendments reflected the work undertaken over the past few months in managing the Local Growth Fund (LGF) and Getting Building Fund (GBF) programmes.
- It was proposed considering a new layout for the Registers, to make it easier for PRMC members to read their content.
- PRMC carried out its very first review of its effectiveness. A questionnaire was sent to PRMC members, Board members, sponsor team at the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) and S151 Officer. Findings and recommendations will be presented at the next PRMC meeting in June.
- A tender for a new PR & Marketing contract went live on 12th April 2021 and closed at 12.00pm on 12th May 2021. The opportunity was advertised on the Marches LEP website, Gov.uk Find a Contract and Delta E-Sourcing. The contract was advertised at £86k + VAT per annum: £50k, for work related to The Marches LEP and Herefordshire Enterprise Zone (HEZ), plus a further £36k for work related to Marches Growth Hub (MGH). Subject to funding, the contract will run from 1st July 2021 to 31st March 2023, with an option to extend for a third year.
- The new Marches LEP website was launched on 29th March 2021. The site had been restructured to ease navigation and showcase the LEP's achievements by focussing on project work. Accessibility of the site had been improved to mostly conform to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1, AA rating.
- The final APR outcome letter was expected towards the end of May. The LEP was expecting a positive change to the Delivery rating due to the success in delivering GBF and LGF funds.
- Just over £1m was projected to be carried forward to financial year 2021/22, due to interest earned on funds and underspend in the last financial year. Uncertainties on the receipt of the LEP core grant for financial year 2021/22 from MHCLG funding would be raised as a major risk at the Marches LEP Board meeting on 25th May 2021 if not clarified before then.
- The final outturn position of Local Growth Fund capitalisation had not been confirmed due to some project claims still being reviewed. However, it was expected that the LEP had fulfilled its obligations with Government in defraying £37.4m of Growth Deal Funding in

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financial year 2020/21. Should this position be realised, the LEP would be successful in achieving £104,887,505 spend across the programme, balancing to its allocation.

- The final outturn position of Getting Building Fund capitalisation had not been confirmed due to some project claims still being reviewed. However, it was expected that the LEP had exceeded its £7m spend profile, within a 10% threshold.
- The Marches Centre for Manufacturing Technology (MCMT) contract had been extended to March 2022. MCMT shareholders were in discussions to hand over shares in May 2021. The project decided not to relocate to the University of Wolverhampton; new sites in Telford were being considered.
- Due to unforeseen circumstances, the mediation meeting for South Wye had been rescheduled to 19th May 2021.
- The Shell Store funding agreement had been varied. Herefordshire Council had submitted their claims, these were being reviewed by the LEP.
- The LEP's 2020/21 profits from Telford Land Deal had been confirmed as £419,493.18.
- A £462k grant had been confirmed for the Marches Growth Hub. The application for funding was due by 6th May 2021. The delay in funding had meant that Local Authorities had to pause delivery or deliver at their own risk.
- A £45k grant funding for Peer Networks had been confirmed and the tender would be issued once the funding agreement was finalised.
- A funding agreement for £48k had been received from DIT for Key Account Management.
- The Careers and Enterprise Company had not yet confirmed the amount of funding through to August 2022; however, the same level of funding as previous year, was being assumed for planning purposes.
- The Marches Careers Hub was successfully launched on 28th April 2021.
- A £75k funding for the Skills Advisory Panel had been confirmed. A tender would now be issued to procure a data provider to develop an information database.

Risks table score key based on likelihood and impact

Low		Medium		High	
1	2	3	4	5	6

New Risks added to the Strategic (S) Risk Register:

Risk No	S1.14	Date Added	29 Apr 2021
Risk Description	Staff members affected by mental health issues do not receive adequate support and feel they cannot open up about their problems.		
Risk Rating	4	Target Score	2
Risk Mitigation	The LEP promotes awareness and discussion of mental health and wellbeing proactively. Advice to staff members is available through Shropshire Council's independent and confidential counselling services. Also, Shropshire Council's Mental Health & Wellbeing and No Bullying policies have been adopted by the LEP, to ensure staff affected by mental health issues are not discriminated against. Mental Health is embedded in staff induction and annual training made available to all staff by Shropshire Council. The LEP has appointed a Staff Mental Health Champion to ease discussion. From time to time, information on mental health and wellbeing is		

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	circulated to all staff. Managers are encouraged to speak regularly with team members about how they are doing and to encourage flexible working and a good work/life balance.		
Risk No	S1.15	Date Added	29 Apr 2021
Risk Description	The Marches is perceived as being exclusive and not providing the same opportunities to all people and businesses in the region.		
Risk Rating	6	Target Score	2
Risk Mitigation	The LEP prioritises projects that remove barriers and drive growth. The LEP is working to ensure that the composition of the LEP Board and its sub-groups reflects the diverse communities of the Marches. The LEP continues to make its communications and promotions accessible and transparent. An Equality and Diversity Champion has been nominated at Board level and an Inclusive Economy and Diversity Policy has been produced, together ensuring the LEP promotes diversity and equal opportunity, and eliminates discrimination in its activities and decisions. LEP Board Members, its sub-groups and all members of the LEP Executive team will undertake regular equality and diversity training. All members of the LEP Executive team have a duty to promote equality within their job descriptions and objectives. LEP Board will work with local partners, stakeholders and business community to identify barriers to growth.		

Main amendments to the Programme (P) Risk Register:

Risk No	P2.13	Date Amended	1 Apr 2021
Risk Description	LEP does not receive its full 21/22 allocation of Getting Building Fund for projects from the Government due to concerns around spend.		
Risk Rating	4	Target Score	2
Risk Mitigation	Project Engagement Visits have been held and the team is working closely with projects to ensure spend is in line with the GBF 20/21 programme profile. A Freedoms and Flexibilities letter has been developed by Bevan Brittan solicitors to enable projects to utilise Freedoms and Flexibilities to meet 20/21 spend profiles. Interim financial monitoring meetings were held with projects in February and March. The team worked closely with the projects, solicitors and the accountable body to put variations for two GBF projects and GBF Freedoms & Flexibilities side agreements in place and signed-off by 31 March 2021 enabling projects to spend, achieving a final outturn position of £7,575,599 for the 20/21 Financial Year. At the Emergency LEP Board on 24 February 2021 the Board approved the use of MIF funds as a cashflow facility for the Getting Building Fund, ensuring the LEP is able to meet its contractual commitments during the 2020/21 Financial Year.		

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Risk No	P3.9	Date Amended	1 Apr 2021
Risk Description	The funding profile provided by the Government does not match the funding required by the Growth Deal 1, 2 & 3 projects as submitted by the LEP to government - if the projects spend to their profiles there will be insufficient funding from Government in 2017/18 through to 2019/20.		
Risk Rating	9	Target Score	4
Risk Mitigation	<p>The LEP had its APR with Government on 9 February 2021 and was rated as 'Requires Improvement' due to the Q2 return being historically quiet in terms of spend and outputs. A report was provided to Government highlighting the risk mitigation measures the LEP has in place and the use of Freedoms and Flexibilities to ensure that the programme is not underspent. An Emergency LEP Board was convened for the 24 February 2021 to look at risk mitigation around potential underspend.</p> <p>At the Emergency LEP Board meeting on 24 February 2021 the Board received an update on spend and risk mitigation measures. The Board noted the potential LGF underspend in relation to the Tannery project and approved options for managing the risk of underspend, including allocating underspent LGF to a project on the LGF Approved Project Reserve List. On 3 March 2021 the LEP was notified by Shropshire Council that the Tannery would not be able to spend the full value of the grant and the underspend was awarded to the Bishops Castle workshop project under Delegated Authority as the highest scoring project on the LGF Approved Project Reserve List to maximise Growth Deal funds.</p>		
Risk No	P3.16	Date Amended	1 Apr 2021
Risk Description	Limited time for the LEP to consider Grant Funding Agreement variation requests from Growth Deal 3 projects in line with the timescale for spend.		
Risk Rating	4	Target Score	2
Risk Mitigation	<p>The LEP has worked closely with Bevan Brittan solicitors to develop a Variation template in response to a number of LGF projects requesting variations. Requests have been received from the HEZ, Tannery, Oswestry IP and Allied healthcare projects. As variations may require LEP Board approval and an Emergency LEP Board was convened for 24th February to outline the position. Variations were signed-off by 31 March 2021 enabling LGF spend by the end of the funding period. A new funding agreement for the Bishops Castle workshop project was signed-off by 31 March 2021 to utilise underspend from the Tannery project by programme closure.</p>		
Risk No	P3.17	Date Amended	1 Apr 2021
Risk Description	Limited time for the LEP to consider Grant Funding Agreement variation requests from Getting Building Fund projects in line with the timescale for spend.		
Risk Rating	4	Target Score	4

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<p>Risk Mitigation</p>	<p>The LEP has worked closely with Bevan Brittan solicitors to develop a Variation template in response to a number of GBF projects requesting variations. Requests have been received from the Pride Hill Remodelling and Tackling Fuel Poverty projects. As variations may require LEP Board approval an Emergency LEP Board was convened for 24th February to outline the position. The variations were signed-off by 31 March 2021 enabling the LEP to meet spend commitments.</p>
<p>Risks to be noted by the LEP Board in the short term from a PRMC's perspective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst the Government continues its review on the future role of the LEPs and new TORs are being drafted, the LEP must continue to deliver on its commitments and manage its people's expectations, in relation to risk 6.4 in the Strategic Risk Register. • Due to delays at Treasury's end, LEP Core funding of £500k for financial year 2021/22 is still to be confirmed. Colleagues at MHCLG have indicated that this matter is affecting all LEPs but that letters on funding should be dispatched towards the end of May. Based on current available reserves, without core funding, the LEP would be able to operate until September 2021. <p><i>Recommendation – That Board members take note of the outcomes of the last PRMC meeting on 29 April 2021 and the latest changes to the Strategic and Programme Risk Registers.</i></p>	
<p>Financial implications: The LEP needs to monitor risks to the projects accurately and ensure these do not impact negatively on its performance.</p>	
<p>Legal implications: None</p>	
<p>Risks, opportunities and impacts: None</p>	
<p>Equality implications: None</p>	
<p>Additional information/ attachments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategic Risk Register 2. Programme Risk Register - latest 21.05.21 	
<p>Background papers/documents: None</p>	
<p>Report Author: Ilia Bowles, LEP Director of Corporate Services</p>	

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Marches LEP Chair and Chief Executive's Report

Marches LEP Ltd Board meeting on 25 May 2021

This report provides updates on a range of issues. The purpose of the report is to provide Board members with a brief overview of other LEP activities. The LEP Chair and CEO will take questions on any of the below items at the Board meeting.

1. Marches LEP 2020/21 Annual Performance Review (APR)

The LEP CEO was advised on 10 May 2021 by Becky Miles the Area Director for the Communities and Local Growth Team of the following:

“As set out in the 2020-21 Annual Performance Review Guidance (December 2020), following the Annual Performance Review meeting, officials in the Cities and Local Growth Unit undertook a review to look at the performance of each LEP across the three themes: governance, delivery and strategic impact.

I can confirm the outcome for the three themes for the Marches LEP are:

Governance: Met
Strategic Impact: Met
Delivery: Met”

Please note before the formal APR meeting in January 2021 the Marches LEP had been rated for Delivery as “Action Needed”. The final claims from projects before the 31/03/21 deadline and the use of Freedoms and Flexibilities enabled the LEP Programmes Team to demonstrate full spend on both Local Growth Funds and Getting Building Funds in the 2020/21 financial year (FY), which is a great achievement and enabled the performance rating to be changed to “Met”. The LEP team and our project partners are to be congratulated on their hard work in achieving the required delivery. The paper for Agenda Item 9 outlines the details on this.

2. Business Support

a) 2021/22 Marches Growth Hub Funding

Notification of Marches Growth Hub allocation of £462k was received in a letter from BEIS on 4 March 2021 as part of a £22m national allocation. The application for funding (Schedules 1 and 3) was only received on 21 April 2021 and submitted to BEIS on 6 May 2021. It is important to note that funding has not yet been received and that the delay in receiving the funding application has meant that the local authorities have had to pause delivery using sub-contracted business advisers/deliver at own risk. Partners are trying to ensure that there are no gaps in support being offered locally.

b) West Midlands Growth Hub Cluster

Participation in the West Midlands Growth Hub Cluster continues with weekly calls to share best practice and align activities. The regional EU Transition Project is continuing to support businesses affected by trading changes relating to EU Exit and is signposting to local and regional Department for International Trade (DIT) support. More information on support available may be found [here](#).

c) Peer Networks

The Peer Networks pilot programme concluded on 31 March 2021 with the LEP's 3 contracted providers having delivered 5 cohorts, comprising a total of 39 participants. Of these, 95% were either very satisfied, or satisfied, with the support that the programme had provided to their business.

The overall success of the programme nationally, with over 4,300 businesses receiving support, has seen BEIS secure funding for delivery of the programme in FY21/22 with the aim to reach a further 5,700 SMEs. The LEP has been granted funding to deliver a further 3 cohorts during the second year of the programme, which runs until 31 March 2022. A new Grant Funding Agreement is now in place and a [tender](#) has been published seeking providers to deliver these new cohorts. Board Member Paul Kalinauckas has agreed to form part of the Tender Evaluation Panel.

d) Department for International Trade (DIT)

Following submission of a successful business case, DIT has granted £48,000 for FY21/22 to deliver the Key Account Management (KAM) programme across the Marches. This provides a contribution towards the costs of the local authorities' Inward Investment teams to support locally based foreign-owned businesses. Last FY saw the Marches' programme formally account-manage 14 companies. This added 7 inward investment projects to the 2021/2022 pipeline, which have the potential to drive capital investment, create new employment opportunities and secure existing jobs. One of these projects has already come to successful fruition creating up to 44 new jobs. Delivery resource in two out of three local authority areas has been identified with Shropshire needing to undertake recruitment in order to build capacity for delivery.

3. Skills and Labour Market Support

a) Skills Project Manager

Aggie Caesar-Homden will be leaving her post with the University of Wolverhampton (co-funded by the LEP) in early June, having secured a position with Growing Mid-Wales to set up their Regional Skills Partnership. A new skills post fully funded by the Marches LEP will be advertised.

b) Skills Advisory Panel (SAP)

Skills Advisory Panel funding of £75k was confirmed by email on 14 April 2021, pending the completion of a MOU to be submitted to Department for Education (DfE) by the end of May 2021. Once the funding has been agreed, tenders will be issued to identify providers to carry out the data analysis role to support the SAP and for the research activities prioritised in the [Local Skills Report](#) that was approved by the Marches LEP Board at their last meeting. In the meantime, an extension will be issued to Black Country Consortium using funds carried forward from 2020/21 to enable the data work required by DfE to be continued.

c) Careers and Enterprise Company/Marches Careers Hub

Confirmation of funding beyond 31 August 2021 is currently awaited following receipt of a letter of comfort from the Careers & Enterprise Company in March 2021. The same level of funding has been assumed for planning purposes, but confirmation is required to extend the contracts of both staff employed within the LEP team and those employed by the three local authorities (contracts are currently to 31 August 2021 only).

The Marches Careers Hub was launched on 28 April 2021 via a live [on-line event](#) attended by over 160 delegates. The launch featured television presenter and author, Radzi

Chinyanganya and live scribe, Hannah Williams from Scribble Inc and brought together employers, schools, colleges and Enterprise Advisers from across the Marches to launch the new service hub, which will unify careers support for young people across the region.

d) Skills Accelerator

Marches wide expressions of interest (EOIs) for both a Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) Trailblazer and a Strategic Development Fund (SDF) pilot will be submitted by 25 May 2021. The college principals from Herefordshire, Ludlow and North Shropshire College, Shrewsbury Colleges Group and Telford College have agreed to collaborate to develop the SDF EOI which will focus its activities on the health sector. The two Chambers of Commerce with the support of the Business Boards will be submitting an EOI on behalf of Employer Representative Bodies in the Marches. The LEP Team have supported both EOIs with data collated by the Skills Advisory Panel and the SEP and LIS.

4. Achievements against 2020/21 Delivery Plan

A report on achievements against the Marches LEP Delivery Plan for 2020/21 has been compiled. This may be found at [Delivery-Plan-Achievements-2020-2021-MAY-Board-Meeting-1.pdf \(marcheslep.org.uk\)](https://www.marcheslep.org.uk/Document/1157/1157-2020-2021-MAY-Board-Meeting-1.pdf) . The LEP Team will develop the draft 2021/22 delivery plan for consideration at the July Board meeting.

5. Recruitment of the new LEP CEO

Board members are sought to join the new CEO appointments panel

As you have already been advised, our LEP CEO, Gill Hamer will be standing down at the end of July 2021. The Chair and Deputy Chair procured Berwick Partners to support them with their search for a new CEO at the end of March 2021 after which a background search for candidates was initiated. The job advert was published after LEP Board Members and LEP staff were advised of Gill's departure on 27 April 2021. The search for candidates will close on 7 June 2021, shortlisting will be undertaken the week commencing 14 June and a two-day formal interview process will be undertaken the week commencing 21 June 2021.

Action - The LEP Chair is seeking Board members who would be willing and available to assist with the shortlisting process the week commencing 14 June and also to participate in the appointments panel during the week commencing 21 June. It is envisaged that the appointment panel will comprise the Chair and Deputy Chair plus two non- local authority board members, one Local Authority Leader or their Deputy and the MHCLG area lead.

Gill Hamer DL, LEP CEO

Mandy Thorn MBE DL, LEP Chair

End