

**MINUTES OF WORCESTERSHIRE LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP
BOARD MEETING**

**Thursday, 25 July 2013 3.00pm – 5.45pm
Coomber Electronics, Brindley Road, Warndon, Worcester WR4 9FB**

PRESENT:

Peter Pawsey (Chair)	(PP)	Chairman Robert West and Director Midland Heart
Dean Attwell	(DA)	MD Oakland International
Clr Simon Geraghty	(SG)	Deputy Leader Worcestershire County Council
Clr John Campion	(JC)	Leader, Wyre Forest District Council (rep Northern DCs)
Ed Webb	(EW)	Executive Chairman, Webbs of Wychbold
Clr David Hughes	(DH)	Leader, Malvern Hills District Council (rep Southern DCs)
John Callaghan	(JCa)	Principal, North East Worcestershire College
Jacqui Bayliss	(JB)	Director, Harris Lamb (alternate for Carl Arntzen)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Gary Woodman	(GW)	Worcestershire LEP
Claire Bridges	(CB)	Worcestershire LEP
Carole Rudolf	(CR)	Worcestershire LEP
Jan Bailey	(JBai)	Worcestershire LEP
John Hobbs	(JH)	Worcestershire County Council
Kim Rowlands	(KR)	BIS
Tony Bray	(TB)	BIS
Marc Bayliss	(MB)	Worcester Research Ltd
Graham Russell	(GR)	AMION Consulting

APOLOGIES:

Carl Arntzen	(CA)	MD Worcester Bosch Thermotechnology
Alan White	(AW)	MD Malvern Hills Science Park

1.	<p><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></p> <p>Peter Pawsey (Chair) welcomed the Board, Kim Rowlands, Tony Bray, John Hobbs, Marc Bayliss and Graham Russell. He also noted the apologies and welcomed Jacqui Bayliss as alternate for Carl Arntzen.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Minutes of the Board Meeting – Thursday 23 May 2013</u></p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 23 May 2013 were agreed as a true record.</p>	
3.	<p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <p>Action List – 23 May 2013</p> <p>GW briefly went through the list.- The Approvals process was communicated to partners. The Away Day would be a topic of September’s Board. The actions related to</p>	

	<p>the case. MB said that a report would be issued to all Board Members. He commented that the LEPs are a fairly new concept, consequently many companies were not aware of who the WLEP is or what they can do.</p> <p>JB asked for confirmation that 65% of businesses would consider relocating out of Worcestershire. MB confirmed that this was the case if they found themselves unable to develop within the county.</p> <p>JCal asked if it was possible to have a geographic breakdown, North, City & South. MB responded that the survey had been more focused on sectors and company size.</p> <p>65% of businesses were saying their premises were insufficient, particularly larger businesses, SG asked whether this unusual? MB responded that this was particularly high and an issue that he did not perceive when commencing the project. It was something for the WLEP to consider moving forward and has been reflected in comments from Redditch businesses in particular.</p> <p>PP thanked MB for his efforts and would await the report with interest.</p>	<p>GW to issue report</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p><u>LEP Growth Plan and EU Investment Strategy</u></p> <p>GW outlined some of the key points within the report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Task and Finish Group met for the first time yesterday. • Since the comprehensive spending review, government guidance had just been received, which made the following changes. The Growth Plan was now called the Strategic Economic Plan and would be used to negotiate a growth deal with government. • In aligning the Government and EU funding streams, WLEPs' Growth deals are expected to comprise robust, imaginative and holistic solutions. • The Strategic Economic Plan needs to be in position by Spring 2014 with connections made to the emerging EU Investment Strategy. • We have a budget of 250k per annum to cover input costs over the next two years. • As a priority the WLEP is expected to lead the development of the EU Investment Strategy to demonstrate objectives, priorities, proposals and allocation of supporting resources to enable delivery. • We need to submit our EU Investment Strategy in September 2013 and LEPs will receive initial Government feedback in November 2013. A final EU Investment Strategy is required in January 2014 with implementation commencing in March 2014. • The WLEP Business Plan provides a sound starting point as the basis to work up the WLEP Growth Plan. <p>Tony Bray then gave a presentation (slides attached) highlighting the feedback from the comprehensive spending review, the task facing the WLEP and the co-ordination required between local partners.</p> <p>SG commented that there was much data to absorb and he agreed that a further meeting needed to take place prior to the September Board.</p> <p>GW to distribute Guidance to all Board Members.</p> <p>Graham Russell presented a detailed and full analysis using National Statistics and nationally available data (presentation attached).</p> <p>SG concluded that this was a very useful piece of work as it started to pick out themes.</p>	<p>GW</p> <p>GW</p>

	<p>We must remember that the plan has to be driven by evidence not chasing the money. DH added that this was an excellent analysis which would enable the WLEP to understand local government and local government to understand the WLEP but now we need to focus on priorities both spatially and thematically.</p> <p>It was agreed that the WLEP would bring together all the Leaders and executive representatives from the Councils to achieve understanding of the opportunity before us. PP added that it was important that we made a case for Worcestershire working across our borders to ensure that we made the most of our assets.</p> <p>GW concluded by stating that the next stage of the process is split into 3 areas.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evidence base – it was agreed that research and intelligence at WCC would be the library of all local government information and external partners would add their evidence into this library. It was felt that an independent panel with authority would evaluate this evidence base and bring forward recommendations with a robust baseline to build the growth plan on. 2. Vision and Ambition – we need to bring all our partners in the WLEP together under one vision, particularly the political element. 3. Delivery – we would need to build capability and capacity to show that we can deliver our plans. <p>PP extended his thanks to Graham, Tony and Kim.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p><u>LEP Funding and Accounts</u></p> <p>GW introduced the Board Paper and gave a commentary on the 2012/13 accounts, with particular highlights on the Local Transport Body funding, which arrived in late March therefore was carried forward. Also, Central Government core funding under spend was carried forward.</p> <p>The final year accounts reflected the grant-based approach that the WLEP was operating on at the start of the year, whereas the 2013/14 budget monitoring reflected the format of company accounts that would be anticipated. The Board approved the 2012/13 accounts, subject to any work that the FAR&A committee wish to undertake.</p> <p>The 2013/14 budget monitoring did not include a likely change to the capacity fund which is to be treated in a similar fashion to the core funding, hence zero spend.</p> <p>The £100k fees which were used as match to the £250k showed a balance transfer in and out under other fees and contributions. The budget position was noted by the Board.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p><u>Chair’s Report</u></p> <p>The Chair’s report was noted with particular reference to the 39 LEP Chairs’ meetings.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p><u>Executive Director’s Report</u></p> <p>GW presented the Employment and Skills Board paper, which outlined progress that the Board had made on the strategy which was developed in 2012.</p> <p>The QUAD had considered a contribution from the WLEP where it was very supportive of the project and the difference it could make to the WLEP plan.</p>	

	<p>SG gave a strong message of support of the programme of activity. Although, it was agreed that a one-year review on a three-year commitment was recommended. PP supported this reiterating that checks and balances be carried out on the way, with a condition of our funding being that the WLEP logo be represented on all projects. This was approved by the Board.</p> <p>GW continued with the EU Funding – Financial Engineering Instruments paper, outlining the regional recycled funds formerly from AWM. Also, looking at a fund of funds which could bring significant resources into the 6 West Midlands LEPs. The proposal to fund the study which would be led by the Regional Finance Forum was agreed.</p>	<p>GW to progress with the Regional Finance Forum</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p><u>Feedback on LEP Sub Groups</u></p> <p>DA gave a brief update of the sub groups as reported in the papers. He highlighted his concern that the WLEP needed to focus on delivery and the removal of barriers which would be detrimental to the success of Worcestershire businesses. It was felt as a partnership there was more that we could do locally. DA’s concern was that Central Government was not supporting LEPs to maximise their roles.</p> <p>SG stated that there would always be the issue of the government changing the goalposts. Any local issues picked up should be voiced and this works both ways.</p> <p>JH suggested the plan mirrored what LEPs wanted, and this was where the partnership needed to focus as this was the sweet spot of success.</p> <p>KR highlighted that the Growth Deal was not just about money but also the freedom and flexibility that the partners could gain from Government, particularly around planning, skills and pooling resources.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p><u>National Profile and Promotion</u></p> <p>JBai circulated the Draft Plan, although the sub-group had met on Monday and made minor changes to the proposals. Overall the plan looked to progress deliverable PR and promotion activity, not wait for a county-wide brand. A brief discussion took place on county signage, the message being ‘keep it simple’. A further meeting is scheduled in September.</p> <p>PP informed the meeting that Press Releases would now be issued to all Board Members by JBai. Everyone commented that this would be very useful.</p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p><u>WLEP Annual Conference</u></p> <p>JBai confirmed that the conference will be held on Thursday, 10 October from 8.00 am to 12.30 pm, with an optional ½ hour networking session afterwards. JBai also informed the meeting that a tender process had been followed and subsequently Opening Doors & Venues had been appointed as Conference Organiser.</p> <p>PP commented that the challenge would be to improve on last year’s very successful conference.</p> <p>GW stated that the conference agenda would be structured around reporting back on activities since the launch of the Business Plan, a case study of successes and the way forward.</p>	

<p>12.</p>	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>GW issued the first cut of the WLEP Organogram, which was welcomed.</p> <p>Public Loans Board – a project for each LEP was nominated within the Heseltine Report. WLEP had received positive feedback on the definition of a project being for strategic sites, i.e. the game changers. Discussions were continuing with the WCC about bringing this forward as a project by the September deadline.</p> <p>PP highlighted the work of the 39 LEP Chairs as opposed to the LEP Network. Also the fact that we are one of 8/10 LEPs nationally to lead the debate on the future of a National LEP Network.</p> <p>The Meeting closed at 5.45 pm.</p>	<p>GW/JH</p>
	<p><u>Next LEP Board Meeting</u></p> <p>It was agreed that an additional Board Meeting would be arranged for end August 2013. Date and venue to be agreed.</p> <p>26 September 2013 - 3.00 pm to 5.00 pm Coomber Electronics, Brindley Road, Warndon, Worcester</p>	