

## MINUTES OF WLEP BOARD MEETING ON 2<sup>ND</sup> APRIL 2015

**Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2015 3.00pm – 5.00pm  
Coomber Electronics, Worcester**

### PRESENT:

Peter Pawsey (Chair)	(PP)	Retiring Executive Chair
Mark Stansfeld	(MS)	Non-Executive Chair
Carl Arntzen	(KA)	Managing Director, Worcester Bosch Group
Chris Walklett	(CW)	Partner, Bishop Fleming
Cllr Margaret Sherrey	(MS)	Leader, Bromsgrove DC (rep Northern DCs)
Cllr. David Hughes	(DH)	Leader, Malvern Hills DC (rep Southern DCs)
Cllr Simon Geraghty	(SG)	Deputy Leader, Worcestershire County Council
Dr Simon Murphy	(SM)	CEO, Worcester Community Trust
David Green	(DG)	Vice Chancellor, University of Worcester
Roy Irish	(RI)	Director, Financial Partnership and Support Ltd - Representing Francis Christie

### IN ATTENDANCE:

Gary Woodman	(GW)	Executive Director, WLEP
Ian Edwards	(IE)	Growth Plan Project Manager, WLEP
Claire Bridges	(CB)	Strategy & Partnership Executive, WLEP
David Irish	(DI)	Research Executive, WLEP
Diane Dwyers	(WS)	Executive Assistant, WLEP (Note Taker)
Mike Ashton	(MA)	CEO, H&W Chamber of Commerce
Jack Hegarty	(JH)	Managing Director, Wychavon District Council
Graham Pendlebury	(GP)	DFT, LEP Senior Sponsor

### APOLOGIES:

Francis Christie	(FC)	Managing Director, Francis Christie Ltd
Nick Baldwin	(NB)	Chairman, Office for Nuclear Regulation
Stuart Laverick	(SL)	Principal & Chief Executive, Worcester College of Technology

1	<b><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></b>	<b>ACTION</b>
	<p>Peter Pawsey/Mark Stansfeld (Chair) welcomed the Board and he noted that there were apologies from Francis Christie, Nick Baldwin and Stuart Laverick.</p> <p>PP welcomed Jack Hegarty, Managing Director as observer.</p>	
2	<b><u>Minutes from the Board Meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2015</u></b>	
	<p>The Minutes of the previous meeting were signed off as a true record by the Board. With the agreed change under item 14 - Combined Authorities, the WLEP Board had no position at this stage related to any potential boundary and/or structure related to a combined authority for Worcestershire or larger area.</p>	
3	<b><u>Matters Arising</u></b>	
	<p>The action points from the January Board Meeting were reviewed and</p>	

	<p>noted.</p> <p>The actions that were not on the Meeting's Agenda were:</p> <p>3.1 PP confirmed that he had spoken to Andy Street and a positive approach was agreed to investing in North Worcestershire projects.</p> <p>3.4 The promotion of 50 days of sport was noted and DG asked that WLEP recognised the European Blind Football Championship which was taking place in Hereford the week before the European Wheelchair basketball championships in Worcester.</p> <p>3.5 GW outlined the process was near a conclusion of recruitment of a Business Board Chair. This would be concluded in April.</p> <p>3.6 GW would circulate the national LEP network think piece. Graham Pendlebury commented that this was helpful although a little defensive in places with a new ministerial team in place highly likely to make changes to LEPs policy.</p> <p><b><u>Correspondence:</u></b></p> <p>Correspondence was noted and the significant points would be discussed in agenda items of Growth Deals and EU Programme.</p>	<p><b>G Woodman</b></p> <p><b>G Woodman</b></p>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b><u>Worcester Business Central</u></b></p> <p>4.1 Mike Ashton presented an outlined model for an improved service for the Worcestershire Growth Hub, known as 'Worcestershire Business Central'. The key points being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building on the successful existing WBC service.</li> <li>• Being pro-active in its approach to supporting Worcestershire Businesses.</li> <li>• Drawing on private sector specialist support.</li> <li>• Other partners' being engaged in a co-ordinated way i.e. UKTI, Growth Accelerator, Small Business Service and Local Government.</li> </ul> <p>4.2 The WLEP Board agreed that Business Central is better located close to the promoters of business (the Chamber) as WCC is not a natural draw for businesses and there are more natural synergies between established promoters of business and businesses themselves.</p> <p>4.3 The LEP proposed that the new model should be resourced by the existing contributors/partners (cash/resource/people) as a partnership.</p> <p>4.4 The WLEP Board agreed the proposal put forward to host that partnership under the name and style of the existing brand 'Worcestershire Business Central' which will be fully resourced/funded by the partnership with a management/hosting fee. Further discussion and detail needed to be worked up by WLEP/Business Board/WCC/HWCC.</p> <p>4.5 The WLEP approved further development of the model, with particular view that this focused on becoming sustainable over an agreed period</p>	

	<p>with the partners. WLEP to ask WCC to define the legal position of the partnership and transfer to the delivery body and corral the partnership resources to enable the new model to proceed as soon as reasonably practicable in the 2015/16 financial year.</p> <p>4.6 The Board Members asked the following questions:</p> <p>CW wanted to know what mechanisms would be put in place for Herefordshire as the Chamber covers two counties.</p> <p>MA replied that all resource and delivery would be focussed on solely Worcestershire.</p> <p>SG asked how the model would become self-sustaining.</p> <p>MA answered – example over the last 2 or 3 years would be the delivery of Destination Worcestershire.</p> <p>SM asked how we would know if the model had been successful.</p> <p>MA answered – reporting and answering to the WLEP, Board and Business Board with targeted KPIs.</p> <p>4.7 GW to bring progress reports to future Board meetings.</p>	<p><b>G Woodman</b></p>
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b><u>Growth Deal Update</u></b></p> <p>Ian Edwards gave the board a progress report on implementation of the projects supported on Growth Deal rounds 1 and 2.</p> <p>This included a number of risks that were currently being managed by the Executive Team and projects sponsors.</p> <p>Also the development of a project pipeline which could be used to allocate towards future funding provisions under future Growth Deals. IE went on to explain the Assurance Framework and Monitoring &amp; Evaluation Framework.</p> <p>SG questioned the assumption on Phase 4 of the MHSP, however, agreed that Phase 5 needed to be worked up and be prepared for delivery this financial year.</p> <p>IE reminded the Board members that £1M of funding for this financial year and £3M next financial year.</p> <p>DG commented that if there is an underspend on the programme this year, a more balanced approach to Skills Funding away from Transport infrastructure should be considered.</p> <p>It was agreed that a Pipeline focussed across the next 4/5 years would be presented back to the Board at regular periods.</p> <p>SM asked if the Assurance Framework could be circulated to the Board for approval.</p> <p>GW commented that this had already been approved and we would</p>	

	<p>arrange for circulation to the Board.</p> <p>Finally a RAG type balanced scorecard to be developed for each project to be reported to future Board meetings.</p>	<b>I Edwards</b>
<b>6</b>	<p><b><u>Dashboard of Performance Metrics</u></b></p> <p>David Irish presented the Performance Tracker for the County which is a living document based on research and taken from other LEPs.</p> <p>It was agreed that this was an excellent piece of work and would be published electronically to allow the Board Members and key partners to access.</p>	<b>D Irish</b>
<b>7</b>	<p><b><u>WLEP Business Plan 2015-2018</u></b></p> <p>Gary Woodman presented the Business Plan framework, highlighting the consultation exercise that had been used to involve partners to sharpen the key outputs and measurables over the next 3 to 5 years. The Board members made the following comments:</p> <p>SG asked the WLEP Executive to check the Housing figures relating to local plans.</p> <p>SM was encouraged by the inclusion of disadvantaged groups and a focus with the Employment and Skills theme, although asked how monitoring would take place.</p> <p>GW commented that if the Board agreed the recommendation a 2015/2016 plan would be created and a dashboard of performance reporting would be created.</p> <p>DG would like the inclusion of work/job placements within objective 2 of Employment and Skills.</p> <p>The Board agreed the recommendation of a prioritised business plan for 2015/2016 with budget resources allocated and the creation of a risk register to come to the next Board Meeting in May.</p>	
<b>8</b>	<p><b><u>EU Structural Investment Fund Strategy Update</u></b></p> <p>Claire Bridges provided an update on ESIF progress, particularly in terms of the UK Government adjustments to the Local ESIF Committee roles and its continuing negotiations with the European Commission which are now scheduled to conclude in June/July 2015.</p> <p>The Worcestershire ESIF Committee had met a second time and confirmed selective areas of the Worcestershire ESIF programmes which would be the subject of Calls in March 2015. These have been chosen to continue the successful initiatives being delivered under the existing EU Programme period and to avoid losing crucial momentum.</p> <p>The selected Calls include Low Carbon (Resource Efficiency Programme), Innovation (Proof of Concept), SME Competitiveness (UKTI and Growth</p>	

	<p>Accelerator), EAFRD (Horticulture Expansion) and Technical Assistance (National Call). The next first round Calls are currently scheduled by Government for June 2015 and October 2015.</p> <p>In terms of Opt Ins, Claire confirmed that negotiations with the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and Big Lottery Fund (BLF) had completed successfully and that the WLEP is working with both on future Call Project Outlines.</p> <p>Simon Murphy asked about the intended timescale for SFA Calls. Claire confirmed that SFA submits its project applications to the Managing Authority (DWP) of the European Social Fund Programme in April 2015 and Calls are expected to be published in June 2015 alongside other EU programme Calls.</p> <p>In terms of DWP, negotiations had proceeded constructively but at the final stage had stalled as it became apparent that DWP will not be providing any actual match funding but “in-kind” match funding. This position would result in prohibitive costs per output for Worcestershire. It was agreed that the WLEP Executive would explore other potential options which would secure complementary match funding to the ESIF allocation which would benefit Worcestershire. Alternate options will be presented to the next meeting of the WLEP Board for consideration and final decision.</p> <p>The WLEP Board noted the national EU Structural Investment Fund update and the continuing respective Government, Worcestershire LEP, Worcestershire EUSIF Committee responsibilities. It noted the WLEP’s successful progress with BLF and SFA Opt Ins and authorised further development work relating to the DWP Opt In before making a final decision.</p> <p>For the next meeting WLEP to have a table of current programme and timetable of new project calls.</p>	
<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b><u>Finance, Audit &amp; Risk Committee</u></b></p> <p>CW outlined the Board paper with the following key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satisfactory outcome regarding the Audit requirements of the accountable body.</li> <li>• Agreement of the proposed 2015/2016 Budget with note of carry forwards.</li> <li>• The creation of a risk register for the WLEP.</li> </ul> <p>The board noted and agreed the above.</p>	
<p><b>10</b></p>	<p><b><u>Budget</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note the position of spend on the LEP Budget to February 2015 within the financial year 2014/15.</li> <li>• Note the key highlights in the budget dashboard</li> <li>• Approve the 15/16 budget</li> </ul>	

	The Board agreed the recommendations.	
11	<p><b><u>Growing Places</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note the current financial statements supporting the continued activity under the Growing Places Fund.</li> <li>• Approve the 2% revenue from the fund into the WLEP account.</li> <li>• Approve the Worcestershire Cricket Club payment holiday for 12 months to develop phase 3 of the site.</li> <li>• Recommend an approach with the remaining unallocated funds of either, open another round of funding or utilise the fund to create the pipeline of projects with a return through section 106 or other mechanism.</li> </ul> <p>The Board agreed the recommendations.</p>	
12	<p><b><u>Potential Impact of the General Election outcome on WLEP</u></b></p> <p>Graham Pendlebury made some comments on this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whitehall are preparing different scenarios</li> <li>• Factual briefings</li> <li>• Heading for an overall majority</li> <li>• Minority rather than coalition – a minority would mean less legislation.</li> <li>• Future of LEPs – all governments feel a mandate for change so be prepared for some degree of change.</li> <li>• Maximum decentralisation – where do the LEPs sit in that framework?</li> <li>• Feed any information into Tom Walker.</li> </ul> <p>Gary Woodman commented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WM Chairs LEPs met this morning – they will not be publically talking about geography and boundaries.</li> <li>• LEPs need to provide evidence to prove that they are working well and are as effective as possible.</li> <li>• SG said letter received back from the Minister was very lukewarm on combined authorities and more encouraging on joint working between local government and LEP.</li> <li>• JH said that Worcestershire Local Authorities had undertaken early preparation work to investigate geographical alignments and the case for Worcestershire remaining standalone. This work would allow for quick consideration of any proposal that came out of the new central government administration.</li> <li>• SM said that the view from Coventry and Warwickshire is that they would combine. Ed Balls is impressed and is making a case for the smaller LEPs.</li> </ul>	

13	<p><b><u>Sub Group Reports</u></b></p> <p>Noted.</p>	
14	<p><b><u>How does the Board want to work and be effective</u></b></p> <p>Mark Stansfeld has set some objectives for 2015/16 for your comment. It would be helpful to receive comments/suggestions for improvement/amendment by Friday 24 April. We can then share and conclude by the end of April.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand how a sustainable and productive relationship with Government officials is developed and understand how we maximise this relationship.</li> <li>• Understand stakeholder attitudes and agree a policy of stakeholder interaction.</li> <li>• Understand the Worcestershire business sectors and their needs in order to be successful.</li> <li>• Understand what best practice is being developed in other LEP's and how we can use.</li> <li>• Understand how 'great' businesses execute transformational change.</li> </ul>	<b>ALL</b>
15.	<p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p> <p>SM raised the Midlands Connect initiative on transportation across the East and West Midlands. The initiative is designed to counter the Northern way project and requested funds at the WM LEP Chairs meeting from each LEP. It was agreed that a presentation would be made at the next Board Meeting.</p>	<b>G Woodman</b>
16.	<p><b><u>Dates of Meetings in 2015</u></b></p> <p><b>LEP BOARD:</b></p> <p>23<sup>rd</sup> July - Worcester Bosch  24<sup>th</sup> Sept - Worcester Bosch  19<sup>th</sup> Nov - Worcester Bosch</p>	