

Minutes of the Board Meeting  
Wednesday, 16 March 2016



<b>Attendees</b>	<p><b>Board:</b> Amanda Burnside (AB) / Shahina Johnson (SJ) / John Mortimer (JM) / Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE (JS) / Peter Wragg (PW) / George Gill (GG) / Brigadier Jez Bennett (JB) / Simon Patten(SP) / Nicky Alberry (NA) / Vic O'Brien (VO) / Adam Schallamach (AS) / Marc Richards (MR)</p> <p><b>Advisors:</b> Dr Carlton Brand (CB)</p> <p><b>Observers:</b> Fleur de Rhé-Philippe (FRP)</p> <p><b>Secretariat:</b> Paddy Bradley (PB) / Alistair Cunningham (AC)</p> <p><b>Others:</b> Leanne Sykes (LS) / Parvis Khansari (PK) / Richard Walters (RW) / Ian Durston (ID)</p> <p><b>Guests :</b> Jonathan Eddy (JE), BIS</p>
<b>Apologies</b>	Graham Deane (GD) / Rob Angus(RA) / David Renard (DR) / John Gilbert (JG) / Garry Perkins (GP) / Shahina Johnson (Part II only) / George Gill (Part II only)
<b>Chair</b>	Barry Dennington
<b>Minutes</b>	Kieran Elliott (KE)
<b>Venue</b>	Wiltshire College Campus, Cocklebury Road, Chippenham, SN15 3QD
<b>Start time</b>	9.30am
<b>Finish time</b>	1.30pm

Item	Summary of Issues Discussed and Decisions – Part 1	Deadline
<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome and Introductions, Conflicts of Interest</b>	
	<p>The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting and in particular new Board Members Vic O'Brien, Adam Schallamach and Marc Richards.</p> <p>NA and AB declared general interests due to potential involvement in bids that may receive ESIF funding through their interests in Business West and Wiltshire College respectively.</p> <p>PW declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Board Member of the Royal Artillery Museum, and JB as a former officer of the Royal Artillery.</p>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Board Minutes, Actions and Chair Update</b>	
	<p><u>Minutes</u> The minutes of the public meeting held on 20 January 2016 were presented for consideration and it was,</p> <p><b><u>Resolved:</u></b></p> <p><b>That subject to a correction to Minute 2 to amend 'National Local Enterprise Partnership Board' to 'LEP Network Management Board' and a correction to Minute 3 to confirm that assessments and reports to date had confirmed the route of a proposed tunnel under the M4 would not be underneath Junction 16,</b></p> <p><b>To APPROVE and sign as a correct record.</b></p> <p><u>Actions</u> The Board noted the status of the current actions as detailed in document 3.2 of the agenda papers, with additional information provided by AC and PB. It was confirmed there had been meetings with Bath University in relation to developments regarding High Value Manufacturing.</p> <p><u>Chairman update</u> The written update on the Chairman's activities at document 3.3 was received and noted. The Chairman in particular noted the appointment of</p>	

	<p>three new Board Members as introduced at the start of the meeting. He did state that the Board was still very keen for a suitable representative from the south of Wiltshire be found, and urged all those present to encourage those with the right profile to put themselves forward.</p> <p>On behalf of the Board the Chairman thanked in their absence outgoing Board members RA and GD for their much valued work on the Board and its subgroups during their tenure. The Chairman also thanked the outgoing Vice-Chair, NA, for her tremendous support for him and the Board and her positive impact from the beginning of the LEP process and on its achievements.</p> <p>It was also stated that JB was being transferred to a new military posting, and the Board duties would be undertaken by Colonel Toby Bridge. Through the Chairman the Board expressed its thanks to the Brigadier for his service on the Board, and wished him well in his new posting.</p> <p>It was also confirmed that following a selection process PB had been selected as the new SWLEP Director from 11 April 2016. A new director representing Swindon Borough Council would therefore be appointed by the council in due course.</p>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Submitted Questions</b>	
	<p>A series of questions were received from Mrs Charmian Spickernell on behalf of the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE). Written responses were provided as attached to these minutes.</p> <p>Mrs Spickernell asked supplementary questions in relation to public consultation on the plans for J16, and it was stated in response a business case for funding approval was progressed through the Board processes, but that consultations of the scheme had been covered through the planning application processes.</p> <p>A further supplementary was asked about the western access project at Witchestowe and it was stated this was a requirement under the planning permission for Wichelstowe. Its implementation is the responsibility of the Joint Venture Partnership between Swindon Borough Council and Barratt Homes and any new information in relation to the scheme would be taken into account by the appropriate authorities.</p>	
<b>4</b>	<b>Papers for Approval</b>	
	<p><b>i) Finance Report</b></p> <p>A written update was presented by Leanne Sykes, Principal Accountant, Wiltshire Council, on the finances of the SWLEP and its Subgroups for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 predicted as detailed at document 3.5 in the agenda papers.</p> <p>It was noted the general revenue account covering income and expenditure for the core SWLEP activities was forecast with a £0.180m underspend, up from £0.105m in October 2015. This was as a result of local authority staff assisting with delivery of the Strategic Economic Plan and EU investment Strategies, partly offset by a recommended reallocation of the underspend to fully fund a Policy Project Manager post and funding to support the joint work on the local Plan Strategic Housing Market Allocation Assessment</p>	

(SHMAA) and Functional Economic Market Areas Assessment (FEMAA).

Details were also provided on the Growing Places Fund, Higher Futures, Growth Hub Extension and Local Growth Fund Subgroups.

The Board discussed the finance update, and the level of underspend and if there was a need to reassess focus on spending in specific areas and reallocate to more vital areas. The Board also discussed the difference from the planned SWLEP profile and the managing program provided by the Department of Communities and Local Government and the impact on the Local Growth Fund, and that to ensure the full amount was utilized within the financial year as the DCLG requested, it was proposed to accelerate 2016/17 and some later schemes.

It was also clarified in response to queries that the paper's reference to Digital Corsham related solely to the physical aspect of the Corsham Mansion House.

#### **Resolved**

#### **To note the update.**

#### **ii) and iii) Budget 2016/17 and Local Growth Fund Summary 2015/16**

A proposed budget for the SWLEP and its Subgroups was presented by Leanne Sykes, Principal Accountant, Wiltshire Council, as detailed at document 3.6 in the agenda papers.

It was noted that total planned expenditure for the Local Growth Fund at £14.366m was £0.049m in excess of planned income at £14.317m, and this would be managed in year through measures such as scheme slippage.

In response to queries on the listed items for expenditure, it was confirmed that projects such as Chippenham Station were not included as they were retained schemes. Retained scheme funding is held by DfT and will be released upon full approval.

The Board then discussed the general account, with income and expenditure of £0.730m, and discussed the proposals, in particular ensuring there was sufficient budgeting to increase the visibility and engagement of the Board, its plans and its impacts, through media and public marketing and events.

At the conclusion of discussion, and taking account that no representatives from Swindon Borough Council were present, the budget was approved. Swindon Borough Council was asked to confirm its position on the budget.

#### **Resolved:**

**That subject to approval from the Board representatives from Swindon Borough Council, to APPROVE the budget proposals as outlined.**

#### **iv) Marketing and Communications Strategy**

At the meeting on 20 January the Board resolved to make further amendments to the strategy, which would be approved by electronic consent of Board members. This had taken place and the work was

therefore continuing on brand guidelines and preparing appropriate support to make effective use of the strategy. This would involve appointing a full time marketing officer within the secretariat for longer term support, and provision for interim support until such an appointment.

The Board supported the proposal, agreeing there was a need to create a strong, positive brand and effectively communicate the potential of and successes driven from the SWLEP, but noted that it would not be the role of the new appointment to revise the strategy, but instead to delivering it. It was also requested the Board receive regular updates on marketing progress.

It was also proposed the Board approve a contract to produce a web enabled and other versions of the Strategic Economic Plan for publication in April.

At the conclusion of discussion, it was,

**Resolved:**

- 1) **To note the awarding of the contract to RE-D to produce a publishable version of the SEP.**
- 2) **To endorse the action of the SWLEP Director to employ interim support for up to four months to develop the Marketing and Communications implementation plan using a budget allocation of up to £10,000.**
- 3) **To authorise the SWLEP Director, supported by SWLEP Board members as appropriate, to recruit a Marketing and Communications Officer on a fixed term contract for two years with a budget of up to £45,000.**

*A recess was taken from 10.40am -11.05am*

**v) Health and Life Sciences**

A presentation was received in addition to document 3.7 as detailed in the agenda papers from a steering group, providing details of the current state of and perceived potential of the Health and Life Sciences industry across Swindon and Wiltshire, which was also subject to the first LEP wide sector strategy, for UK growth and foreign investment. It was also seen as able to be closely coordinated with the expansion of digital sector services across the LEP area.

Details were provided on existing clusters of Health and Life Science industries centred around London, Oxford, Southampton, West of England, Wales, and Swindon and Wiltshire, with its own cluster around Porton Down and the A303. This cluster reflected Swindon and Wiltshire's positioning as in the centre of southern England with the connectivity to the other clusters a strong point for the cluster around Porton Down. However, it was recognised that while some in the sector like Dstl was expanding and increasing job opportunities, others such as Public Health England was reducing functions, moving some to Harlow. This does present an opportunity though, as there will be a number of well-qualified staff who do not want to move away from the area when PHE functions relocate.

The primary sector opportunities were detailed, and proposals on how the



	<p>how to best add value with the current Scrutiny Task Group and Joint Strategic Economic Committee, in terms of assessing the work of the Board and providing democratic accountability.</p> <p>It was also requested that assurance that rural economy matters would receive appropriate attention through the governance structure and focus on priorities.</p> <p><u>Fast Growth Cities Group</u> The Board was informed of an initiative linking together five towns and cities, including Swindon, Oxford, Norwich and others, with similar community issues, challenges and certain opportunities, and suggested further information be sought.</p>	
<b>8</b>	<b>Confidential Item</b>	
	<p><b><u>Resolved</u></b> To agree that in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the meeting for the business specified in Items Number 9-10 because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.</p>	
<b>Item</b>	<b>Summary of Issues Discussed and Decisions – Part 2</b>	
<b>9</b>	<b>GPIF Report</b>	
	<p>The Board received a confidential update on the current position of the GPIF and options for how to progress investments through the fund.</p> <p>At the conclusion of discussion, it was,</p> <p><b><u>Resolved:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) That officers pursue the current approved projects to secure funding agreements</li> <li>2) To seek confirmation on draw down and confirmation of profile for Kimmerfields</li> <li>3) In the event that a project cannot proceed to draw down, that the GPIF Subgroup return to the SLWEP Board with proposals for the investment of remaining GPIF</li> <li>4) That the SWLEP Board agrees that Wiltshire Council shall repay its commitment for the Castledown Business Park when funding is required to satisfy the drawdown requirements of other projects as they come forward</li> </ol>	
<b>10</b>	<b>Project Prioritisation</b>	
	<p>The Board received a confidential update on the prioritisation process for projects, and were provided with reassessed categories following their comments at the last meeting.</p> <p>At the conclusion of discussion, it was,</p> <p><b><u>Resolved:</u></b></p>	

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|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
|  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) That four groups of category 1 projects (explained in paper) are taken forward as the potential projects to be submitted for funding in the next round of LGF.</li><li>2) That Scheme Promoters for these projects are asked to prepare an Outline Business Case.</li><li>3) That the approach presented in Appendix B of the report is used as a basis to form the SWLEP Investment Plan.</li></ol> |  |
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Draft

**Public Participation**

**From Mrs Charmian Spickernell, CPRE North Wilts & Swindon Group Committee Member**

**To SWLEP Board**

**Re Junction 16 and Wichelstowe Infrastructure from Charmian Spickernell, CPRE Group Committee Member.**

**Question 1**

In the case of Junction 16, will members please consider, from a common sense point of view, whether it is in the public interest to spend so much time and money without asking if a project can be made to work and whether it makes sense to relieve one bottle-neck only to create another one immediately adjacent or whether a better solution should be found?

It may be noted that:

- a) Transwiltshire trains go from Trowbridge to Swindon every two hours. Passenger usage increased from 18,000pa in 2013 to 183,400 in 2014. A new road in the station area in Wootton Bassett already facilitates the re-opening of the station.
- b) The response to my letter of 1 February to the Chairman said SWLEP is confident that all the issues have been dealt with adequately by the approving authorities. However, the planning permission was minded to be granted in 2004 and finally had permission in 2007 but many of the problems have come to light since that date.

**Response**

The Junction 16 scheme has been through the same comprehensive review and selection process as all the other schemes put forward for funding. It was agreed that this scheme should be funded by the SWLEP due to the very significant benefits it will provide. As with all SWLEP schemes, the final approval of the funding is subject to approval of the Full Business Case. The Junction 16 scheme is a condition of the Wichelstowe development, and has been agreed by all three highway authorities.

**Question 2**

In the case of Wichelstowe Infrastructure can it be asked whether a scheme that makes local traffic take longer journeys and go through a motorway junction is really better than a scheme with shorter local journeys that reduces the railway barrier between north and south Swindon and gives direct access to the town centre?

It may be noted that the work done recently by Peter Brett Associates

- a) does not mention these problems and
- b) does not appear to follow the Government guidelines (TAG Unit A2-2) re regeneration impacts as there is no mention of links to the town centre.



## Response

The purpose of the Wichelstowe Western Access is to provide additional access across the M4 to the Wichelstowe housing development, together with associated connecting infrastructure. The strategic and economic case for this infrastructure has been considered and supported by the LEP. This assessment was supported by a detailed options analysis, based on Stage 1 of the DfT Transport Analysis Guidance (WebTag) process and this information can be viewed in full on the Wichelstowe website ([www.wichelstowe.co.uk](http://www.wichelstowe.co.uk)). Once the Wichelstowe Joint Venture is formed, it will review the report and any new information before taking the scheme forward.

## Question 3

Has the work done by Peter Brett Associates been considered by Councillors in Swindon Borough Council?

## Response

Yes

## Question 4

The letter from the chairman of 10 February states that flood risk has been reassessed in detail in 2014. However, it is the flooding in December 2015 that has been a game changer according to the Inspector for the Chippenham Site Allocations. Why therefore, does it appear that there is no mention of flooding, the considerable costs of pumping and where to pump to in the analysis done by Peter Brett Associates?

## Response

Please see response to question 2.