

LLEP Board of Directors

3pm, Tuesday, 23 November 2021

Face to Face

Organiser: Sharif Chowdhury

Chair: Kevin Harris (KH)

Directors: Emma Anderson (EA), Sonia Baigent (SB), Peter Bedford (PB), Chas Bishop (BP), Lorraine Boorman (LB), Anne-Marie Hunt (AH), Clare James (CJ), Dr Nik Kotecha OBE (NK), Ajmer Kaur Mahal (AKM), Anil Majithia (AM), Neil McGhee (NM), Cllr Jonathon Morgan (JM), Cllr Danny Myers (DM), Andy Reed OBE (AR)

In Attendance: Sharif Chowdhury (SC) Alison Greenhill (AG) Stewart Smith (SS) Sue Tilley (ST) Jo Dexter (JD)

Apologies: Nishan Canagarajah (NC), Verity Hancock (VH), Jaspal Singh Minhas (JSM), Mandip Rai (MR), Cllr Terry Richardson (TR), Colin Sharpe (CS)

Minutes Taken By: Sharif Chowdhury (SC)

CC To: All

MINUTES

1.	<u>Welcome and Apologies</u>	
1.1	KH welcomed those present at the meeting.	
1.2	Apologies were received from MR, NC, VH and CS, TR and JM.	
2.	<u>Declarations of Interest</u>	
2.1	There were no Declarations of Interest.	
3.	<u>Minutes and Actions LLEP Board of Directors Meeting Held on 21 September 2021</u>	

<u>Minute</u>		<u>Action</u>
3.1	The Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 September 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record.	
3.2	The action points from the meeting were noted as completed.	
4.	<u>Investment Panel – MIRA EZ Investment</u>	
4.1	AR provided feedback from the Investment Panel meeting on 18 th November 2021 where Andy MacDonald presented the case for funding the MIRA Low Carbon Innovation Hub and Phase One Infrastructure, and the opportunities that could be lost if the terms of the Forward Funding Agreement are not agreed between the LLEP and Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC).	
4.2	NK emphasised that the Panel scrutinised the risk assessment and case put forward by HBBC for an interest rate of 4% above the Public Works Loan Board rate, understanding the enormous benefits of the projects for the region.	
4.3	EA noted the challenges in receiving alternative funding for this project as HBBC were the only authority to prepared to provide the investment.	
4.4	<p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. noted the negotiations of the Forward Funding Agreement (FFA) with HBBC regarding the two MTP EZ projects, Low Carbon Innovation Hub and Phase One Infrastructure; ii. AGREED the interest rate of 4% above the Public Works Loan Board rate being payable to HBBC on the forward funding recommended by the Investment Panel; and iii. AGREED to advance funding of £100k from the historic Enterprise Zone rates receipts currently held by the LLEP for the Phase One Infrastructure Project. 	
5.	<u>LLEP Governance – Net Zero Board</u>	
5.1	CB provided background on Zero Carbon where a group has been meeting monthly to consider local, regional, and national strengths, strategies and priorities and sought Board approval to establish a Zero Carbon Board and the draft Terms of Reference.	
5.2	<p>The Board agreed the recommendations and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Approved the Report; and ii. Endorsed the Zero Carbon Board Terms of Reference 	

<u>Minute</u>		<u>Action</u>
5.3	CB emphasised that the group intend to simplify programmes where possible, align with other LEP strategies and collaborate with other partners including the Midlands Engine to exploit opportunities.	
5.4	NM added that the group would aim to motivate Leicestershire businesses to act on Low Carbon initiatives by translating high-level objectives to increase their understanding of their role and responsibilities to help Leicestershire be successful in the Net Zero agenda.	
5.5	NM highlighted plans with Zellar to match students with SMEs to support them for several weeks to identify carbon footprint numbers. The initiative allows students to gain experience and skills whilst educating businesses in Zero Carbon.	
5.6	NK noted the Terms of Reference outlined three Board Members for the Zero Carbon Board and opened a discussion on the potential addition to the already appointed Chas Bishop and Neil McGhee.	
5.7	DM recommended for the Deputy Mayor for Net Zero, Cllr Adam Clark to be on the Zero Carbon Board. A conversation followed regarding ensuring balance between public and private sector members. KH asked for any interested members to inform KH and MR.	
5.8	AM emphasised the importance that the Zero Carbon Board does not become a silo group which is independent of other LLEP sub-boards. AM encouraged board members to work on shared priorities when it comes to programme delivery and investment decisions.	All
5.9	NK agreed and highlighted examples of opportunities where the Innovation Board chair can collaborate with the Net Zero board. KH agreed with the comments and highlighted opportunities of working with wider local and regional partners on Zero Carbon shared objectives.	
6.	<u>LLEP Finance Report</u>	
6.1	AG updated the Board on the financial position where the forecast position is a deficit of £186k at the year-end, an improvement of £204k than previously reported. This would usually be a positive, however this is mostly due to the vacant posts impacted by the uncertainty of the LEP review.	
6.2	The Board was informed of the risks surrounding core funding. The government has now confirmed that the £250k for the second half of the year will be provided to LEPs.	

<u>Minute</u>		<u>Action</u>
6.3	Board members thanked the LLEP team for their efforts during the period of uncertainty and remaining productive with the available resources.	
6.4	NM queried how the wellbeing of staff is being managed given the vacant positions and uncertainty of LEPs. KH informed the Board that staff are being conversed with regularly, but more can be done.	
6.5	AG noted that as the formal employer of LLEP staff, support is provided through the wellbeing access portal in the same way as all Leicester City Council staff.	
6.6	AG explained that the staff headcount has been streamlined due to the reduction of capacity required to manage programmes such as LGF. KH added this has been seen across other LEPs due to the uncertainty.	
6.7	AG provided insight on the position with office working, where a hybrid model is planned from early December. It was emphasised returns to office depend on individual managers and on each teams' dynamics.	
7.	<u>LEP Review</u>	
7.1	KH referred to Paper E where Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP and Rt Hon Michael Gove MP have been invited to meet the LEP network chair. A date has not been agreed.	
7.2	KH added no further clarity has been provided on the future role of LEPs, JD shared a similar picture with no further information from BEIS.	
7.3	JM referred to a speech by the Rt Hon Michael Gove MP which suggested the Levelling Up White Paper will be completed in the next few weeks where if reported correctly, the current responsibilities of LEPs may be delivered through county deals in the future.	
8.	<u>Spending Review 27 October 2021</u>	
8.1	The Spending Review Paper F was noted as read from the 27 th of October 2021.	
9.	<u>Sub-Group Updates</u>	
9.1	NM emphasised that the information on future skills needs developed by the LLEP should be shared with schools. LB agreed with this perspective as many businesses are coming forward with demands for skills which had not already been planned.	

<u>Minute</u>		<u>Action</u>
9.2	SS informed the Board that the local skills report will be refreshed shortly, and the sector profiles information is readily available on the LLEP website for the 15 sectors.	
9.3	NK updated on the last Innovation Board where the government's Innovation Strategy was discussed and the range of growth and financial support for businesses. The UK's recent Hydrogen strategy was comprehensively discussed, detailing ambitions in the upcoming years.	
9.4	A company named Delaware have been tasked with supporting 100 SMEs to support them through their low carbon journey and there has been significant demand with over 67 businesses already signed up to the programme.	
9.5	The Innovation Board have been concerned with what Innovation means to businesses with partners sharing a thirty-second clip on their perspective on Innovation.	
9.6	The Innovation Board have created a "Dashboard" to measure outputs on five pillars in mind. The group have explored tools for businesses to use including an Innovation Checklist and Thesaurus with the aim of guiding businesses and encouraging ideas to improve efficiencies.	
9.7	Innovation week 2021 was noted as a success, with the 2022 planning underway. The Innovation Board agreed for a young person to be represented on it, organised by the Enterprise Adviser Network to bring a younger perspective.	
9.8	ST provided an update on the Business Board including Rachel York's appointment as the Growth Hub Manager. Rachel has vast experience and knowledge of business support and a thorough understanding on the funding streams.	
10.	<u>AOB</u>	
10.1	KH noted that any news received from the LEP network regarding the position of LEPs may prompt a meeting to discuss the situation with LEP Board members.	
	The meeting closed at 16.03	