



In attendance:	Board Directors: Paddy Bradley (PB) Amanda Burnside (AB) - arrived 9.25am Mandy Clarke (MC) Col Andrew Dawes (AD) Doug Gale (DG) – arrived 9.35am Andrew Gudgeon (AG) Carole Kitching (CK) Becky Middleton (BM) Paul Moorby (PM) John Mortimer (JM) – Chair Alison North (AN) Alex Reed (AR) David Renard (DR) Mark Smith (MS) Keeran Vetriko (KV) Philip Whitehead (PW)h Peter Wragg (PW) – Deputy Chair	Board Advisers: Alistair Cunningham (AC) Susie Kemp (SK) Ian Durston (ID) Sam Fox (SF) Philippa Venables (PV) Board Observers: Oliver Donachie (OD) – not in public session
Apologies:	Pauline Church (PCh) / Andrew Gudgeon (AG) / Carole Kitching (CK) / Karen Leigh (KL)	
Guest(s):	Chris Hilton (CH) and Leanne Kendrick (LK), Wiltshire Council Debby Skellern (DS), SWLEP	
Chair:	John Mortimer	
Minutes:	Deborah House (DKH)	
Location:	Committee Room 6, Swindon Borough Council Civic Offices, Euclid Street, Swindon, SN1 2JH	

Item	Narrative	Deadline
2.0	Welcome / Apologies / Conflicts of Interest / Board Appointment	
	<p>The meeting opened at 9.55am and the Chair welcomed attendees. Particular welcome was extended to Chris Hilton and Sam Fox of Wiltshire Council who would be speaking to items on the agenda.</p> <p>Apologies were noted.</p> <p>JM reminded attendees of the Conflict of Interests policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PW stated his Conflict regarding the LGF General Account for the Royal Artillery Museum (RAM); • AR stated his Conflict regarding the IoT, as Catalent was an anchor employer; • AB stated her Conflict regarding the Local Growth Fund 3 allocation for Wiltshire College & University Centre for both the Salisbury and Lackham campuses; 	



Item	Narrative	Deadline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PM stated his Conflict of Item 6.3, the Rapid Transit project, as he was a resident of Tadpole Garden Village and a member of the Tadpole Garden Village Community Interest Company (TGVVIC). 	
3.0	Review of minutes and matters arising	
3.1	<p>The minutes of the Board Meeting held on 26 September 2019 were reviewed and approved, with the following comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Item 3.2 Page 2 – an error was noted in the date of the Business Case coming to the Board. This was cited as November 2019 but should have read March 2020. Since that Board Meeting in September, the date had moved to November 2020. <p>Action: DKH to amend the minutes accordingly.</p>	30 Nov
3.2	<p>Matters Arising not on the agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southern Connector Road – PV updated the Board on the deep dive which had taken place with the New Eastern Villages board to look at the critical time frame of the project and these discussions would be fed into the Steer Davies Gleave review. Points made to the Board were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> planning approval would be sought in the following week; Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) inquiry would take place in February 2020; the project would be put out to tender at the beginning of May for a contractor to be appointed in August 2020; if the CPO were approved then that would give legal approval for the land acquisition; land would fall into Swindon Borough Council's (SBC's) ownership; and the spend profile was still on track for March 2021 at this point. Governance Framework – this was due to come to the November Board meeting but owing to a lack of capacity within the SWLEP team, this would now be brought to the Board Meeting in January 2020. 	Jan 2020
4.0	Submitted Questions	
	<p>The Chair invited Charmian Spickernell to the table. Her submitted questions and SWLEP responses had been circulated to Directors. (Attached with these minutes.)</p> <p>Mrs Spickernell questioned whether the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) allocated monies of £75m provided enough sustainable transport because roads had to be built in order to take cars away from the housing, but asked alternatives to be considered. There had yet to be any public consultation as this was due to start early 2020. She maintained that up until now, consultation on the bid</p>	



Item	Narrative	Deadline
	<p>has been behind closed doors; the Inspector had thrown it out previously and was likely to do so again. On a separate matter, she added that Swindon was in a water-stressed area and if this trend continued, would it be wise to build more housing?</p> <p>PB responded to Mrs Spickernell agreeing with the need for sustainable transport and gave the example of the Chippenham Station Hub project where cycling and walking featured strongly in the revised plans. The local economy needed the means to grow which meant improved transport connectivity in order to attract jobs into the area.</p> <p>PWh responded regarding the query about the public consultation and commented that there had been significant input previously from the public about the need to relieve the town centre of Chippenham from traffic congestion. The HIF plan would improve connectivity to the centre and the high street with cycleways, walking, and a proposed car-free school run. The proposed car-free school run was unusual and had been included in the bid and scored highly. People would still have cars, although these maybe hydrogen or electric. There was discussion around the Chippenham Local Plan and the need for significant housing in the area. There had already been significant positive support for it in Chippenham.</p> <p>The Chair commented that it made sense for stakeholders to discuss firstly before it went out to public consultation to ascertain appetite for the project, otherwise there would be no point in progressing a scheme. It was at this point that SWLEP had offered its support in principle. Whether or not this did go ahead depended on the project clearing all the requirements and assurance was given that Wiltshire Council would not compromise the planning process simply to get plans approved and the planning inspector operated within the public domain.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Mrs Spickernell for her continued interest in SWLEP activity.</p>	
5.0	Growing Places Infrastructure Fund (GPIF) update	
	<p>AR spoke to the meeting and explained that approval had been given in the private session for three loans to businesses and two programmes of grant funding. These had been discussed in private session owing to their commercial sensitivity, but that this would be made public in due course.</p> <p>The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: NOTED the contents of the report and that loan applications and grant allocations were considered in private session due to reasons of commercial sensitivity but authorised the loans to be approved.</p>	
6.0	Local Growth Deal	
	ID spoke to the paper.	



Item	Narrative	Deadline
6.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the Local Growth Deal Programme <p>ID spoke to the paper which was a summary of a number of Business Case items.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chippenham Station Hub Phase 5 of the scheme was the station forecourt and more detail was given in paper 6.2. This phase involved improved wayfinding, moving the taxi rank and improving car park access. This phase amounted to £1.4m of the overall scheme. • Rapid Transit The details of the scheme were given in paper 6.3. This was Phase 2 of the overall project - from Tadpole Garden Village to Swindon town centre. This project had been reviewed by an Independent Technical Advisor (ITA), the Steer Group, which had been comfortable it should be approved, with some minor adjustments. Once these had been made the project's Full Business Case would come back to board for approval. • Salisbury projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1.1m of LGF had been set aside and some projects had already been allocated funding • £300k for preparing planning application for Salisbury Station forecourt • For RIBA Stage3 for Fisherton Street • the Artisan Arcade would be able to lever some funding from South Western Railway and the Future High Streets Fund • Atkins was the term contractor • A request for £100k for the A36 Southampton Road for feasibility and scoping to be carried out alongside the Highways Agency. • Chippenham station Hub <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable transport schemes which included improved bus stops and cycle lanes - the Business Case was not yet ready and would come to the January Board meeting instead of the meeting today. • The Link Bridge from the station into the Town Centre – there had been objections from stakeholders and Wiltshire Council was now looking for options to be considered because the project would not be feasible within the necessary timescale. PWWh commented that there had been opposition from Chippenham Town Council as the councillors felt they had not been adequately consulted. It was recognised that local stakeholders needed to be brought along with projects. Although he was confident that there would be a reconsideration, unfortunately it would be too late for the SWLEP timetable. <p>More proposals would be brought forward for this money, and a range of options, including outside Chippenham, could be considered. The Maltings Outline Business Case would be ready for January 2020.</p>	<p>Jan 2020</p> <p>Jan 2020 Jan 2020</p>



Item	Narrative	Deadline
6.2	<p>The Chair advised that if there were delays to the Business Cases this would open out the funding for the Board to consider other options as per Section 2.6 in Paper 6.1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chippenham Station Hub Phase 5 – Outline Business Case (OBC) <p>There was debate on the level of the development costs quoted in the paper, whether they represented good value for money; were these at the expected levels or too high? ID responded that Cost Benefit Ratio (CBR) levels had been ascertained and that the Chippenham Station Hub had been through this process. Everything the council did was through the tender process in order to get value for money. A request was made to make this clearer in the papers and to state that due diligence had been completed. The Chair questioned the make up the contingency fund and whether this had been used on visible items actually on the ground or on such items as insurance, design fees, or planning application fees. AC explained that the fees employed were industry standard.</p> <p>Action: ID to complete a breakdown of these costs and send out to Directors.</p> <p>The contingency amount remaining from Digital Mansion Corsham was £144,315 and Wiltshire Council was looking into how to return that money to SWLEP as it could be used for further activity. The question was raised as to whether an independent auditor was employed when projects finished, and ID advised that the audit was carried out by the scheme promotor.</p> <p>The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: APPROVED the Chippenham Station Hub Phase 5 OBC, including the proposed design solution.</p>	Dec 19
6.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rapid Transit Phase 2 Outline Business Case (OBC) <p>Refer to Item 6.1 above for more detail.</p> <p>The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: APPROVED the Outline Business Case for Rapid Transit – North Swindon Quality Bus Corridor, enabling the continuation of design and development work and the production of a Full Business Case.</p>	
6.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissioning Group Project Highlight reports <p>ID spoke to the paper.</p> <p>Chippenham Station Hub</p>	



Item	Narrative	Deadline
	<p>Phase 5 was discussed above and Phase 1b (lift) was on-going. Construction had been delayed until January 2020 for Phase 2 (Sadlers Mead carpark). The RAG rating remained at AmberRed because of these delays.</p> <p>Yarnbrook / West Ashton The RAG rating had deteriorated to RED as the grant agreement for Homes England Housing Infrastructure Fund was not yet signed because of the on-going negotiations with Persimmon. This agreement would need to be completed within the next month in order for construction to start in July.</p> <p>The Maltings The RAG rating for The Maltings was AMBER RED. Work had commenced on plot 1; demolition had started. Subsequent phases would start next month. This had also now received approval of the Full Council.</p> <p>Swindon Bus Boulevard Although the RAG rating was still at AMBER/RED because of the risk over the funding for the wider scheme from Future High Street Fund the project was progressing well. The Outline Business Case for the scheme would come to the January Board Meeting.</p> <p>Southern Connector Road This was the most difficult of all the projects. PV had already discussed the deep dive above within Item 3. ID would be following up with the Swindon Borough Council team in due course, but SBC was still confident that funding could be spent by March 2021. DfT would still have to sign off and the ITA would check the deliverability. There had been considerable difficulties with land assembly as the project involved over 100 landowners. In the meantime, SBC was undertaking concurrent activity and working at risk. SK advised that the project would be taken to Planning on Monday, 2 December. There was real risk around the CPO, which could take six months. So, it would be the end of summer before anything was heard.</p> <p>A420 Gablecross The negotiations regarding land assembly were ongoing, but Sainsburys agreement to the sale of its land had unlocked the project as a whole and it was now in a much healthier state.</p> <p>Wichelstow Southern Access DfT had signed off the Full Business Case and construction work was underway. The project had previously been one to keep under constant review owing to its technical complexity, but it was now on track.</p> <p>Royal Artillery Museum (RAM) The Chair asked whether the project was on track because there was a deadline to submit a business case. ID advised he was meeting with the project manager on 5 December to go through the critical dates. Col Dawes believed it would</p>	Jan 2020



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	<p>be ready for the January Board, since the MOD had been content to lease them the land.</p> <p>A request for a simple metric of value added, project by project, was made so that impact could be measured.</p> <p>The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: APPROVED £200k for preparing a planning application for Salisbury Station forecourt, design work to RIBA Stage 3 on Fisherton Street and scoping out related projects of an Artisan Arcade and Heritage Living;</p> <p>APPROVED £100k to support investigative work with Highways England to improve traffic flows on the A36 around Salisbury;</p> <p>The Chair commented that SWLEP had not heard much about this since it gave support to convince Highways England to invest in this project. PWWh added that Highways England had committed to doing this work and Wiltshire Council was providing match-finding from in-kind contribution. The involvement of SWLEP would be essential if it were a funder for this work and would put SWLEP at the table in these discussions. The Wiltshire Council team was to note.</p> <p>NOTED that a decision on continuation of funding for the remaining elements of the Chippenham Station Hub project, and the Maltings project, will be sought at the January 2020 Board Meeting.</p> <p>The Chair stressed that these projects must come to the Board in January. If not, the Board would recommend withdrawal of funding, which would mean the £3m from the Link Bridge and £6m from The Maltings project.</p> <p>The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: AGREED that the highlight reports were an accurate representation of current status of all LGF projects.</p>	<p>Jan 2020</p> <p>Jan 2020</p>
7.0	Finance and Outputs Reports	
7.1	<p>LGF projects</p> <p>ID spoke to the paper and referred the meeting to Fig 1, which had not changed significantly since the last report. The forecast underspend had decreased slightly from £19.8m to £19.2m as the Salisbury College project was progressing faster than expected. In Fig 1a the actual spend is 50% of what was forecast, although for DfT funded projects spending was further behind, but as some projects had now been unlocked, the spend was expected to catch up. Although the figures were an accurate summary of where we were, it did not reflect where we should be, and this was causing some concern to Board Directors. ID had been in constant contact with the project managers in the Unitary Authorities, but it was difficult to know how ready the proposed replacements projects were in addition to those listed in Section 2.6 in Paper 6.1. The Chair reminded the Board that the GPIF programme could be the backstop option if all else failed. The Board acknowledged that it would have to make some hard decisions next year.</p>	



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	<p>The question was raised about the progress made in skills and jobs in the area and how that would be translated into £s to show a financial ratio of the investment. PB explained that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wiltshire College & University Centre Lackham and Salisbury campuses had received capital investment to create the optimum conditions to recruit more students; • the Higher Futures programme had identified 1,500 + learners; and • work was going on to support opportunities for skills. <p>The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: APPROVED the paper as an accurate summary of the current LGF financial and output position.</p>	
7.2	<p>Core and Programme budgets</p> <p>PB spoke to the paper, which covered the operational side of the budget and recorded GPIF monies. A forecast to-date column had been added as requested. SWLEP continued to work with the Wiltshire Council Finance team. Expenditure was behind profile, but this would change when LEP collaboration costs were included. SWLEP needed to be a viable company going forward in the new status. Interest from GPIF added to SWLEP's capacity to undertake activity.</p> <p>Future costs would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • costs for incorporation; • Local Industrial Strategy work; • cross-border collaboration; • scrutiny arrangements; and • cost of developing the Skills Plan. <p>The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: NOTED the contents of the budget statement.</p>	
8.0	<p>Scrutiny arrangements for the SWLEP</p>	
	<p>PB spoke to the paper and explained that the SWLEP's accountability for its actions was directly to central Government and not local government. Its relationship to local government was in terms of transparency about how projects were identified and funds used. SWLEP wanted independent scrutiny outside local government to create increased transparency. The group would be made up of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the two main councils; • the business community; • with three members from each organisation and a revolving chair; and • would report annually directly to the Board. 	



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	<p>SWLEP was awaiting a cost estimate from Wiltshire Democratic Services for performing this function.</p> <p>PWh added that the quorum of the meeting should remain at three members, but that those three in attendance should not be from the same organisation to avoid any potential conflicts.</p> <p>Action: PB to amend the ToR to reflect a change to quorate rules.</p> <p>The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: ENDORSED the draft terms of reference; AUTHORISED the Director to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with the relevant partners within the SWLEP to finalise the details to establish a Joint Scrutiny Panel; • finalise the proposed terms of reference, as detailed in Appendix I, in consultation with the existing Joint Overview and Scrutiny Task Group and with approval from both authorities' relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and • conclude negotiations with Wiltshire Council and Swindon Borough Council about the cost of providing the secretariat to operate the Joint Scrutiny Panel and the funding split between the three parties to resource it. 	Dec 2019
9.0	Cross-boundary collaboration	
	<p>PB spoke to the paper. Swindon & Wiltshire LEP was in a good geographical position having England Economic Heartland (EEH) to the East and the Western Gateway to the West towards Bristol and Wales. Subnational Transport Bodies were government groupings formed to take decisions on transport needs in an economic area and to make concerted bids for funding. The differences between the Western Gateways was given below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Western Gateway Subnational Transport Body (Dorset, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, West of England Combined Authority and North Somerset); and • Western Gateway political grouping collaboration of areas, but not Dorset, and reached into Wales. <p>The question of membership was simply whether SWLEP wanted to be included in helping to shape the organisation or not.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • England's Economic Heartland (Subnational Transport Body) This was a more established grouping, well-organised, making good progress and was very clear on what it was trying to achieve. If we joined it would be for a payment of £10k. 	



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Western Gateway = Midlands Engine, Northern Powerhouse This group was not fully evolved, and further discussions were taking place today. Government was supportive of the concept and the emerging body. Swindon was very pleased to be involved. The general consensus was that the name was / would cause confusion. <p>PB advised that the membership fees for both organisations had been negotiated down as SWLEP was situated between the two. He considered it worthwhile being part of them and membership of EEH would allow SWLEP to be in the group and membership of Western Gateway would allow SWLEP to be at the table right at the very formation of that group. (The Western Gateway had not engaged properly with Wiltshire Council.) A review at the end of the year would enable SWLEP to ascertain whether it had achieved value for money or might change to a different organisation / activity.</p> <p>Action: PB to report back to the Board in due course on progress.</p> <p>The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: AUTHORISED the SWLEP Director to use SWLEP revenue funding to pay a fee of £10,000 for the SWLEP to join for a year the English Economic Heartland and £5,000 to join for a year the emerging Western Gateway; and NOTED the collaborative activity associated with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the emerging Cyber Valley; the deep dive into means of supporting new energy vehicles re-fuelling and re-charging infrastructure. 	On going
10.0	Skills Plan update	
	<p>AB spoke to the paper. The newly formed Skills & Talent Subgroup had moved in the direction as required by Government and had been joined more formally by big employers and with a stronger school representation.</p> <p>The main premise of the Skills Plan was to pull all existing skills strategies into one overarching Skills Plan. The process was outlined, and the Plan would be produced for Board scrutiny by March 2020.</p> <p>The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: ENDORSED the approach to developing the SWLEP Skills Plan outlined in section 4 of the report.</p>	Mar 20
11.0	Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)	
	<p>Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)</p> <p>DG updated the meeting on the current status of the LIS. The first draft of the LIS document had now been written in a more public-facing format and would be submitted to the LIS Working Group on 4 December. It was then planned to take this new format to the Board in January 2020 together with the first draft</p>	



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	<p>of the implementation plan. As we were currently in pre-election Purdah we were not expecting any feedback from Government until after the election.</p> <p>Three pieces of work associated with LIS had recently been carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BEIS had requested a list of SWLEP's LIS commitments and the first draft had been sent; • a teleconference had been held with the cyber alliance partners, BEIS and DCMS on 18 November regarding the establishment of the Cyber Valley; and • three stakeholder workshops with industry specialists on New Energy Vehicles Infrastructure had been held to ascertain whether there was a case for public sector involvement and if so by how much. <p>PB commented that if there were to be a change of approach from a new Government, SWLEP would publish the LIS anyway because it demonstrated what the area needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business-led cyber hub <p>AG was due to speak to the item but in his absence PB updated the meeting.</p> <p>Meetings had been planned with joint forces command representatives, linking up with GCHQ through AG's contacts. We were now in the process of identifying potential university partners and where the centre might be located.</p>	
12.0	Inward Investment	
	<p>PC spoke to the paper. EU had provided £250k, which was match-funded in cash and in-kind, to attract SMEs to UK which did not yet have a base here.</p> <p>Money was being spent by making use of consultants to produce the evidence base and travelling to trade shows both in the UK and overseas. Sectors of focus were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • life sciences; • digital technology; and • advanced manufacturing. <p>Activity included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attending the Bio Convention in Philadelphia where we promoted the expertise at Porton; • hosting a US company in Porton in November which was hoping to set up a facility in Porton next year. This would be a good case study for further investment; • attending Medica 19-21 November in Dusseldorf with interest mainly from the US market, where we promoted R&D activity at Porton and manufacturing expertise from HONDA associates; • attending the Cyber RSA Conference in San Francisco in February 2020; • visiting the National Cyber Security Centre in London in January; 	



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> meeting with a representative of a US company at the Workshed in Swindon on Friday, 29 November following Swindon & Wiltshire's representation at IoT Tech Expo in San Diego earlier in the month; and hosting a number of DIT sector teams <p>Swindon and Wiltshire had strong USPs and for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health & Life Sciences we promoted Porton; cyber we promoted Corsham; and skills & work force capability we promoted Honda. <p>We had this funding until Spring 2021 and would showcase back to the European Union that the funding had been spent well. We needed to land three successes to meet its criteria. Progress would be measured by the content and quality of the pipeline and PC's confidence.</p> <p>Action: PC to produce a pipeline of prospective leads for the Board's information.</p> <p>The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: NOTED the progress of the Inward Investment programme; and WOULD RECEIVE an update on progress at its meeting in March 2020.</p>	<p>Mar 20</p> <p>Mar 20</p>
13.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair's update <p>The list of meetings the Chair had attended since the last meeting was in the published Board pack. No additional questions were raised, but JM explained that the meeting on 23 September with Steve West Vice Chancellor of UWE was in his role as Chair of West of England Combined Authority.</p>	
13.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director's Report <p>The activities were listed in the published Board pack. No additional questions were raised, but PB drew the Board's attention to the recent and imminent staff changes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SWLEP had received 14 applications for the Growth Hub Manager role and would be interviewing shortly. SWLEP was undertaking an internal review of Marketing & Comms if necessary, SWLEP would put an interim in place for the critical role of Programme Manager. <p>Concern was expressed about the SWLEP staff's capacity to take on additional workload in a shrinking team.</p> <p>The Board: NOTED the contents of both the Chair's and Director's reports.</p>	
14.0	AOB	
	JM announced to the meeting that his three-year tenure as Chair finished at this Board Meeting but advised that he should like to continue in the role for a further term.	



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	<p>At this stage, JM handed over chairmanship of the meeting to PW and stepped outside. PW proposed an extension to JM's role for a further three years.</p> <p>The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: APPROVED John Mortimer's position as Chair for a further three years.</p>	
	Date of next meeting	
	<p>Wednesday, 22 January 2020 Rooms D001/D002, Wiltshire College & University Centre, Cocklebury Road, Chippenham, SN15 3QD.</p> <p>The Board Directors to meet at 9am for a 9.30am start to the public meeting.</p>	
	<p>Future Meetings</p> <p>Board Directors to meet at 9am for a 9.30am start to the public meeting.</p> <p>Locations yet to be confirmed Wednesday, 25 March 2020 Thursday, 21 May 2020 Wednesday, 22 July 2020 Wednesday, 23 September 2020 Wednesday, 27 November 2020</p>	
	Close of the meeting at 12.35pm	

Summer
19 February 2020



From CPRE Wiltshire, Charmian Spickernell, CPRE Wiltshire Vice-Chairman

QUESTION ONE

Wiltshire Council's bid to the HIF for £75m for roads to the east and south of Chippenham.

CPRE Wiltshire understands that SWLEP was consulted on this Bid and gave agreement, even though it pre-dated statutory Public consultation on the roll forward of the Local Plan post 2026 and neither the villages that will be affected nor Calne Town Council had been consulted. Chippenham Town Council were consulted behind closed doors.

As this consultation does not appear to have been mentioned in the SWLEP board meeting papers, CPRE asks: How was agreement given from SWLEP and whether the criteria on which support was based included environmental ones?

RESPONSE

The SWLEP received a briefing about the work to be developed if the HIF bid was successful. The briefing was in a closed session in January 2019 due to the commercial sensitivity of the material. The Board gave its support for the work to develop the bid and agreed to a request for a letter of support when asked for it by the bid team. Subsequently, the SWLEP Chairman and the SWLEP Director co-signed a letter of support in response to a request from the bid team. The support was based on an overall assessment of the benefits to the local area, specifically within our remit to improve productivity and support opportunities for employment.

The letter is noted in the confidential items for that meeting.

QUESTION TWO

Road and Rail Improvements

Mention is made in the documents for 27 November Meeting of a Sub-national Transport Body looking at road and rail improvements.

Apart from making roads safer, should investment now be in public transport, buses and trains?



Response

We are not yet in position to state that no further investment is required to improve the existing road network. Your comment about making roads safer is very much supported. The SWLEP has developed its Rail Strategy which has been very well received by a range of partners. Our strategy is designed to make rail travel a viable opportunity for business commuters and leisure travellers.

We maintain good contact with the bus operators in the area and discuss opportunities with them on a frequent basis. The SWLEP investment in Swindon's bus boulevard and our funding to assist the development of improved pedestrian, bus and cycle access to Salisbury City Centre are good examples of how the SWLEP Board is pursuing its transport priorities.