



Attending:	Board Directors: Paddy Bradley (PB) Mandy Clarke (MC) – Co-Deputy Chair Doug Gale MBE (DG) Andrew Gudgeon, OBE (AG) – joined I lam Carole Kitching (CK) Paul Moorby, OBE (PJM) – Chair Keeran Vetriko (KV) Pam Webb (PWe) Prof Ian White (IW) Suzanne Wigmore (SW)	Board Advisers: Susie Kemp (SK), Swindon Borough Council Observers: Cllr Gary Sumner – representing David Renard
Apologies:	Richard Clewer (RC) / Col Nev Holmes / Alison North (AN) - Co-Deputy Chair / David Renard (DR) - SWLEP Board Directors Sam Fox (SF) / Terence Herbert (TH) and Leanne Sykes (LS) - Wiltshire Council	
In attendance:	Claire Alexander (CA) / Tim Burghes (TB) / Phil Clement (PC) / Tom Marshall (TM) / Debby Skellern (DS) - SWLEP Rory Bowen (RB) / Alison Robinson (AR), representing Leanne Sykes - Wiltshire Council Anwen Jones (AJ) and Emily Manser – representatives from Cities & Local Growth Unit	
Guest(s):	Members of the SWLEP Joint Scrutiny Panel Cllr Junab Ali and Cllr Oladapo Ibitoye, Swindon Borough Council Member of the Joint Scrutiny Panel and of SWLEP Limited Andy Hogden, Chemring Member of SWLEP Limited Lee Hughes, YTKO Ltd Thomas Harrison – PA Consulting Sarah Pearce, Melody Thompson and Amy Wetherill - SWLEP Esther Gordon-Smith – National Highways Ltd Col Gary McDade – MoD Parsa Mohammadpour and Dr Maik Schneider – University of Bath	
Chair:	Paul Moorby (PJM)	
Minutes:	Deborah House (DKH)	
Location:	Via conference call	

Item	Narrative	Deadline
1.0	Welcome / Apologies / Conflicts of Interest / Board Appointment	
	The meeting opened at 9.35am and the Chair welcomed attendees. Particular welcome was extended to members of the public who had joined the meeting, members of the SWLEP Joint Scrutiny Panel and members of SWLEP Ltd. Apologies were noted.	



Item	Narrative	Deadline
	<p>PJM reminded attendees of the Conflict of Interests policy and of standing items. IW advised of the University of Bath’s involvement with the Swindon Carriageworks under iCAST and the partner working with the Business Cyber Centre at Item 6.0. No additional conflicts were declared.</p>	
2.0	Review of minutes and matters arising	
2.1	<p>The minutes of the Board Meeting held on 25 November 2021 were reviewed and approved.</p>	
2.2	<p>Matters Arising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work towards holding the March Board Meeting face-to-face. SWLEP’s Annual General Meeting (AGM) would be held in conjunction with the Board Meeting on 24 March. The AGM allowed companies which were members to come to question the Board on its policies and procedures. Owing to Government policy, the AGM would have to be held as a face-to-face meeting unlike last year when there was a dispensation for it to be held virtually. 	
3.0	Submitted Questions	
	<p>No submitted questions had been received for this agenda.</p>	
4.0	Strategy update	
	<p>Draft Green Hydrogen Plan DS spoke to the paper and updated the meeting on the status of the green hydrogen plan. SWLEP had started to mobilise some of the work from the Plan and would be in a position to take opportunities as funding came on stream. SWLEP had reached this point via all the work undertaken to draw up the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) and there were three main areas of focus for the SWLEP.</p> <p>Stimulating the supply of green hydrogen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ascertaining a range of locations where we could establish small-scale green hydrogen energy production • looking across the SWLEP area and extending to a wider geography, using the links with LEPS along the M4 and the Western Gateway into South Wales to form a hydrogen corridor • the feasibility study on the placement of a green hydrogen Demonstrator at Wroughton would be published soon. This had been delayed owing to Christmas and consultants falling ill to COVID. <p>Stimulating the demand for green hydrogen</p>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to map potential users including bus and coach operators, logistics operators of HGVs with potential for aviation and rail. Green hydrogen seems to fit better with larger vehicles. Lots of partnership collaborations coming through with interest building. <p>Stimulating innovation activity and investment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovation competitions available. Focus targeted activity in engaging our communities and Universities. <p>The UK Hydrogen Strategy was recently published, so this would be the catalyst for public source of funds, but the question was raised as to where the market price for hydrogen would be, as this would impact on the feasibility of the programme. Another question was asked as to whether other LEP groupings were also looking into doing this work and was Research & Development being carried out elsewhere. Should SWLEP be tapping into this?</p> <p>In response, DS advised that large production of hydrogen was being investigated for district heating using blue, black or brown hydrogen and biomass as well, but SWLEP's USP was the production and use of green hydrogen. The Western Gateway Conference in March, which had a strong net-zero focus, would extend our knowledge and relationships. The Western Gateway had an ambition to be the leader in this technology with increasing interest from aircraft, developers and mechanics based out of Bristol airport,</p> <p>This project was not looking for immediate success, as green hydrogen would be seen as the version to use in future, as hydrogen made from fossil fuels would be subject to increasing taxation.</p> <p>DS was thanked for her enthusiasm and the clear presentation of the paper.</p> <p>The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Board: APPROVED the draft Swindon and Wiltshire Green Hydrogen Plan; and NOTED the activity which is already underway.</p>	
<p>5.0</p>	<p>Chief Executive's report</p>	
	<p>PB spoke to the paper and advised the meeting of the following:</p> <p>Board Directorship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Col Nev Holmes had resigned as a SWLEP Director, as he had been promoted to Brigadier and was moving to a new role heading up the Cadet Force across the UK, based in Surrey; PB should like to pass on SWLEP's appreciation for his significant contribution during his tenure, particularly with his essential links to the development of the Business Cyber Centre and strong attendance at the Project Steering Group; and 	



- Col Gary McDade would take over as the Army Commander South West on 14 February.

The Chair recommended that SWLEP retain military personnel on the Board as the MOD had such a strong presence in the area and put the appointment of Col Gary McDade to the Director vote.

Decision: the Directors approved the appointment of Col Gary McDade to the SWLEP Board.

Action: appropriate paperwork to be forwarded for completion.

- Six Directors were coming to the end of their three-year tenure, but this could be extended for a further three years should they wish to stay on the SWLEP Board;
- the appointments and / or resignations would be advised at the Board Meeting in July, so Directors were to let the Chair know of their intentions.
- SWLEP was committed to achieving a 50:50 male/female representation on the Board and was also very keen to hear from parts of the community which were under-represented.
- The Board would welcome applications and Directors were requested to promote amongst their networks.

Plan for Growth

The draft Plan for Growth document was not available for this meeting because there was too much uncertainty about the future role of LEPS. It was hoped that the publication of the Levelling Up White Paper would make this role clearer. Until then, it had been decided not to go out to public consultation with the Plan for Growth.

The Business Action Plan would be submitted to the March Board.

Annual Performance Review with BEIS

- All LEPS had a process of review with BEIS, which included a formal Annual Performance Review and a less formal mid-year conversation.
- 10 February was the date set for the formal annual performance review with BEIS colleagues, which was also to be joined by a colleague from the Local Growth Assurance Team as part of the moderation process
- This would be a focussed discussion as to whether SWLEP had met Government requirements on governance, strategy and delivery.
- Directors would be informed as soon as the results of the review were known. SWLEP had received positive outcomes from previous Reviews.

The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: OFFERED its appreciation to Colonel Nev Holmes who is stepping down as a director; and NOTED the following:



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • six directors reach the end of their three-year tenure in July 2022; • the delay in consulting on a draft Plan for Growth until there was clarity on the role of LEPs and the policy of levelling-up the country; and • the arrangements in place for the SWLEP’s annual performance review undertaken by BEIS. 	
6.0	Natural Capital PhD project – six-monthly update	
	<p>PM presented to the meeting on the progress of the Natural Capital PhD project since the last up-date given at the July Board Meeting. The presentation can be accessed by using the following the link.</p> <p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/board-meetings/2022/27-jan-2022/swlep-board-presentation-parsa.pdf?sfvrsn=cec89672_6</p> <p>PM provided a summary of why the information from the Ph.D project was of value to the SWLEP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it was vital for understanding the potential environmental impact of policy options and making evidence-based decisions; • Natural Capital and environmental safeguarding underpinned sustainable local economic growth; and • measuring it can help us understand the local contribution to the Government's Green agenda. <p>PM provided a provisional estimate of the value of the natural capital in our area (£9.6bn in 2019) and the main contributory features.</p> <p>The Board recognised that this study could be taken into account when making investment decisions, as we could gauge the impact on the natural environment due to a particular development. In addition, the study had great potential which could be shared with other LEPs and passed up to BEIS. It was research that would be very influential.</p> <p>PM was thanked for his presentation and the Board looked forward to his next update in six-months’ time.</p>	



7.0	Business Cyber Centre	
	<p>TM spoke to the paper and updated the meeting on the progress of the Business Cyber Centre and wanted to add his personal thanks to Col Holmes for his contribution to the progress of the project.</p> <p>The presentation can be accessed by following the link below.</p> <p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/board-meetings/2022/27-jan-2022/202260127---bcc---board-update.pdf?sfvrsn=b9f6a86d_4</p> <p>This was a presentation in the public session of the Board to update Directors on the spend of the £3.7m public money from the Government’s Getting Building Fund. This fund was focussed on capital projects in an effort to create jobs in response to the COVID pandemic. As this was a public session, no commercially sensitive information would be shared.</p> <p>Mobilisation To date the BCC had contracted with 17 suppliers. The BCC had tried to procure goods and services with local businesses wherever possible and there was a significant number within Swindon and Wiltshire, or further afield in the Southwest.</p> <p>UKC3 had received £700,000 from DCMS to establish cyber clusters throughout the UK to represent businesses in their regions focussing on skills and innovation. The SWLEP’s Business Cyber Centre had now received recognition and funding from UKC3 to establish the Swindon & Wiltshire Cyber Cluster.</p> <p>Recruitment Two additional staff were now recruited to the Business Cyber Centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one Assistant Manager to oversee the operation of the building; and • one Project Manager responsible for the Cyber Network Cluster and provide additional co-ordination support to events management. <p>Budget</p> <p>TM outlined the spend of the £3.7m funds and most was now spent or contracted. PB advised the meeting that SWLEP was paying out from its account on spend to date with three claims having been submitted to Wiltshire Council as the SWLEP’s Accountable Body. The SWLEP was now in a position where these funds were needed and stressed the need for Wiltshire Council to process these claims swiftly.</p> <p>Launch</p>	



	<p>The work on the building will be completed during April 2022 and a launch event was being planned for 10 May to include representatives from Government, and relevant sector interests and key stakeholders.</p> <p>The messaging was to be more than just about the building launch, but also about the exciting services the BCC could offer to SMEs nationally and why this was needed. Although the number of tenants was not discussed in the public forum owing to commercial sensitivity, a private briefing was offered to Directors.</p> <p>TM showed the meeting a series of photographs demonstrating the progress made and the vision for the end product.</p> <p>Action: colleague from Wiltshire Council to check on status of the claims with the SI51 Officer.</p> <p>Action: BEIS representatives were requested to use their influence for ministerial attendance.</p> <p>The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: NOTED the contents of this report and the progress made to date; and APPROVED the date of Tuesday, 10 May for the launch event for the BCC.</p>	
<p>8.0</p>	<p>Q1-Q3 2021-22 Budget Report</p>	
	<p>PB spoke to the paper and advised the board on the status of the Q1-Q3 2021-22 Budget. SWLEP was currently constraining expenditure because of the uncertainty about LEP review.</p> <p>It had been a “Lumpy year” in that there were occasions when more monies were going out than coming in, for example, in claims to Wiltshire Council for the Business Cyber Centre. See Item 7.0 above. And the SWLEP core funding had been late arriving.</p> <p>However, despite this, SWLEP was in a strong position financially.</p> <p>The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: NOTED the Q1-Q3 2021-22 Budget Report.</p>	
<p>9.0</p>	<p>Programme Status report</p>	
	<p>CA spoke to the paper. The slides can be accessed via the following link.</p> <p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/board-meetings/2022/27-jan-2022/swlep-jan-2022-board-slides-ca.pdf?sfvrsn=a930b563_4</p> <p>Comments made were:</p>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swindon Carriageworks was the only project at RAG rating AmberRed. This project had been severely affected by the pandemic within the supply chain. As the Carriageworks was a Grade I listed building, there were limited suppliers to the necessary specifications. Alternative suppliers had to be sourced to alleviate some of the delays. SWLEP was looking at a Capital swap, which was a technical accounting process. BEIS had recently advised that this now needed to be dealt with in Q3, so this was an amendment to the paper issued; the Porton Science Park continued to progress; and upon completion of projects and in-line with HMG guidance on LGF and GBF capital projects, work is underway to organise a ministerial visit to one or more of the projects completed along the M4 in Swindon. <p>The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: NOTED the contents of the paper.</p>	
10.0	Subgroup updates	
	<p>Updates from the Subgroups were given and the link to the presentation can be found below.</p> <p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/board-meetings/2022/27-jan-2022/subgroup-updates-27012022.pdf?sfvrsn=fe2925eb_4</p> <p>Skills & Talent Subgroup (Slides 2-4) CK was the Chair of this Subgroup, and she updated the meeting on the subjects discussed. There was a presentation on the latest Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) for the area, and a lively debate on the theme of the Green economy. PB had been tasked with producing a summary report of the meeting for further discussions regarding future activity to be agreed.</p> <p>Business Environment Subgroup (Slides 5-7) The Chair for this Subgroup was AN. In her absence PB and IW updated the meeting on the subjects discussed which included the monitoring of the Business Cyber Centre progress and the Growth Hub activity.</p> <p>Ideas, Infrastructure and Place Subgroup (Slides 8-10) SW was the Chair of this Subgroup, and she updated the meeting on the subjects discussed which included the progress of Corsham and Devizes rail stations and the hydrogen strategy.</p>	
11.0	Business Action Plan Q3	
	<p>DS spoke to the paper and explained that some activity was on hold because of the impact of the pandemic, not the right time, a lack of staff resources or funding had not been released yet. However, really good progress had been made across the Quarter in other areas. SWLEP would continue its path to sustainability and was grateful to both Local Authorities providing staff time for match-funding etc.</p>	



	<p>The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: NOTED the progress made during Quarter 3 of the financial year 2021-22.</p>	
12.0	Growing Places Infrastructure Fund (GPIF)	
	<p>PC spoke to the paper and outlined the number of loans issued and the wide variety of businesses involved, linking to the Local Industrial Strategy and the emerging Plan for Growth. Since 2016, the programme had loaned out £12.86m to 17 projects, which had led to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 815 jobs new jobs either created or forecast to be created; • over 250,000 sq ft of new commercial floorspace; • £13m of additional funds leveraged from applicant firm’s own funds; • £17.5m of other private funds leveraged; and • £11.8m of additional funds from other public sector sources. <p>There were two businesses in the pipeline of current applications which were undergoing due diligence.</p> <p>SWLEP was less risk adverse than banks and was able to accommodate companies with a shorter trading history or even pre-revenue. SWLEP was looking at future opportunity for growth in the economy, rather than past performance history. Many of the enquiries came from conversations companies were having with the Business Navigator team within the Growth Hub regarding specific queries on skills or finance etc. We work very closely as a wider team and the client company benefits from the totality of the service.</p> <p>Outside Government funding, the interest generated from GPIF loans would be the largest source of income until such time as the Business Cyber Centre came on stream. This year, interest payments from the fund amount to £330,000 and this would increase next year; on average this was between £150,000 - £450,000 per year. As SWLEP was a not-for-profit company, the monies were reinvested to grow the economy of Swindon and Wiltshire.</p> <p>The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: NOTED the added value created by the GPIF Funds and how they support the SWLEP’s strategic priorities.</p>	
13.0	AOB	
	None.	
	Date of next meeting	
	Thursday, 24 March 2022 – location to be advised	
	Directors to meet at 9am	



	Annual General Meeting at 9.30am start of the public meeting at 10am.	
	Future Meetings Thursday, 26 May 2022 Thursday, 21 July 2022 Thursday, 29 September 2022 Thursday, 24 November 2022 Meetings will be held via video/teleconference unless otherwise advised.	
	The meeting closed at 11.30am	

**Approved
24 March 2022**