



Attending:	<p>Board Directors: Cllr Richard Clewer (RC) ✓ Ramona Derbyshire (RD) ✓ Doug Gale MBE (DG) ✓ Tom Harrison (TM) ✓ Iain Hatt (IH) ✓ Mark Matthews (MM) Apologies Basit Mohammed (BM) Apologies Paul Moorby, OBE (PJM) ✓ Alison North (AN) - Deputy Chair ✓ Cllr Jim Robbins (JR) Apologies José St Clair (JSC) Apologies Debby Skellern (DS) ✓ Prof Ian White (IW) Apologies Suzanne Wigmore (SW) ✓</p>
In attendance:	<p>SWLEP Ltd Tim Burghes (TB) ✓ / Charlotte Skinner (CSk) ✓ / Chris Stevens (CS) ✓ Swindon Borough Council Richard Bell (RBe) ✓ Wiltshire Council Rory Bowen (RB) ✓ Parvis Khansari (PK) ✓ Victoria Moloney (VM) ✓ Representatives from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) Chris Parsons (CP) ✓</p>
Guest(s):	<p>Bevan Brittan Richard Hiscoke (RH) ✓</p>
Chair:	Paul Moorby (PJM)
Minutes:	Deborah House (DKH)
Location:	Online via Teams

Item	Narrative	Deadline
1.0	Welcome / Apologies / Conflicts of Interest	
	<p>The meeting opened at 9.31am. The Chair welcomed attendees to the public meeting of the Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Limited and apologies were noted. Particular welcome was extended to all officers from both local authorities attending the meeting.</p> <p>Conflicts of Interest There were no new conflicts of interest declared.</p>	



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2.0	Review of minutes and matters arising	
2.1	The minutes of the public Board Meeting held on 25 January 2024 were reviewed and approved.	
2.2	<p>Matters Arising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SWLEP to follow-up with Bruce Bodio (BB) of Bioviron on improved communication channels. <i>Update: the Chair had contacted BB, but dairies had not allowed a discussion.</i> 	
3.0	Submitted questions	
	No submitted questions had been received for this agenda.	
4.0	Governance	
	<p>LEP Transition</p> <p>DG, as Chair of the Board LEP Transition Working Group, opened the item. He acknowledged the preparation work carried out behind the scenes by DS and officers at both local authorities to reach the preferred option for LEP Transition. SWLEP had requested some assurances from Wiltshire Council which would allow for this to be carried forward.</p> <p>DS spoke to the paper which outlined the background and details required to enable the preferred option to progress. The LEP Board Working Group and the Local Authority Working Group had been meeting regularly to enable the chosen process to be achieved ahead of 31 March 2024. For this reason, the Board LEP Transition Working Group was recommending that SWLEP Directors were asked to step down from the Board. Given this proposal, the Commander of the South West had declined the Board's invitation to join the meeting ahead of becoming a Director.</p> <p>The seven assurances from Wiltshire had been negotiated and would be discussed in Part Two of the meeting plus a deed of assurance which needed to be signed by each outgoing board director before they could step down from the Board. With these steps underway, SWLEP was meeting government expectations. However, partners were still to receive confirmation of LEP Core, Growth Hub and Careers Hub funding allocations for 2024-25; the latter being because of the school funding cycle with DfE. A draft costed business plan for 2024/25 had been submitted to both local authority partners for their review.</p> <p>Communications were to be shared and a joint draft press release had been produced. It was also important to celebrate the legacy of SWLEP activity</p>	



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	<p>over the years and an event would be held hopefully in Q1 to recognise the work achieved by SWLEP as well as future arrangement.</p> <p>DS thanked the Board LEP Transition Working Group and other directors who had been very generous and flexible with their time over the past few months; their level of support had been phenomenal.</p> <p>The date of resignation from the Board was flexible depending on the speed at which the deed of assurance could be signed but it would be co-ordinated on a date between 22 and 31 March. For this reason, the Directors were requested to sign the undated letter, giving authority for the date to be inserted in due course.</p> <p>Membership forms to the company had now been received from Wiltshire Council and Swindon Borough Council.</p> <p>The Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: AGREED that, subject to the assurances having been agreed in advance, that all directors, other than Wiltshire Council, will resign as directors of SWLEP on an agreed date between 22 and 31 March 2024; and</p> <p>NOTED that the acting CEO could not step down from the Board under SWLEP’s existing articles of association, because the role was an automatic appointment.</p> <p>NOTED that in March 2024, Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council both became members of SWLEP Limited as per their entitlement in SWLEP’s articles of association.</p>	
5.0	Chief Executive’s report	
	<p>DS outlined the contents of the paper and asked the Board to note that it had been written and circulated before the assurances sought had been agreed with Wiltshire Council.</p> <p>Annual financial accounts and audit 2023-24 The Board was recommended to continue the relationship with Monahans and Sumner Audit for the annual accounts and audit for FY 2023/24. The company was on standby to commence the work in order to complete the accounts earlier than previously, so that the accounts could be handed over to Wiltshire Council in a timely fashion.</p> <p>BCC update Airbus Defence & Space took occupancy of the BCC in January and the building was now fully tenanted. The Board agreed in November 2023 that SWLEP’s capital funding, held by the Accountable Body on its behalf, could</p>	



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	<p>be used to carry out some enabling works and purchase furniture. A claim for circa £55,000 would shortly be submitted to the Accountable Body as the work had now been completed.</p> <p>Military Service Leavers’ careers Fair At the last meeting, the Directors had been told of an event being arranged in April for the Swindon and Wiltshire Cyber Cluster (SWCC) to promote this sector as a careers option to military leavers. Unfortunately, owing to capacity issues, the lead charity had dropped out of the event. In addition, the Project Manager for the SWCC had moved onto a new role elsewhere. With these capacity constraints it had been decided to postpone the careers fair and potentially hold it in the summer.</p> <p>Swindon and Wiltshire Cyber Cluster The funding year for this programme ran from June to May. Next year’s funding had dropped from £55,000 to £25,000 which was a significant drop in resources and SWLEP’s Project Manager had moved on. With the lack of staff capacity, the SWCC was behind on year-to-date targets, and SWLEP was currently in negotiations with UKC3. SWLEP had tried but failed to recruit a replacement project manager.</p> <p>Growth Hub The paper detailed the range of events and workshops planned by the Growth Hub team from January to mid-March 2024.</p> <p>The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: APPROVED SWLEP commencing the work with Monahans on the financial accounts and audit 2023-24; and NOTED the contents of the report.</p>	
6.0	Budget management: Q4 2023-24 Report	
	<p>CSk spoke to the paper and outlined the current position with the accounts for Q4 2023-24 as at 11 March and updated on progress.</p> <p>Key points made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £174,000 of GPIF interest came into the account in January 2024, but SWLEP was still awaiting other funding to come through; • the last bills and pay run would go out at the end of March and work was underway to get outstanding funds in; • the BCC’s costs had increased because of equipping the space in readiness for Airbus’ arrival; • legal advice costs covering LEP transition were also due; and • there was no cashflow issue; there was £450,000 in the account. <p>The SWLEP was on track for a self-sustaining budget.</p>	



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	<p>DS added that the financial position should be much stronger next year given that the BCC was fully occupied. The focus now was on promoting and maximising the use of the event space and meeting rooms.</p> <p>The Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board: NOTED the financial position of the company for financial year 2023-24 to 11 March 2024.</p>	
7.0	Subgroup updates	
	<p>The Chairs of the Subgroups updated attendees of the recent meetings.</p> <p>Skills & Talent Subgroup IH outlined the items covered in the Skills & Talent Subgroup meeting of 6 March. Overall, it was a good Subgroup and attendance and engagement remained high. The presentation can be accessed by using the link below.</p> <p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/board-meetings/2024/21-march-2024/st-subgroup---march-2024.pdf?sfvrsn=de7f4bdd_3</p> <p>Apprenticeships Apprenticeships were the major theme of the meeting and discussions were around online apprenticeship applications and what support, if any, subgroup partners could provide for the unsuccessful applicants to support them heading towards securing an apprenticeship.</p> <p>Appren-T-Fest activities were led by the Swindon and Wiltshire Careers Hub. These were deemed as successful, with good employer engagement and strong numbers for students and parents.</p> <p>Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) At a previous Subgroup meeting, a question was raised around LMI for early years as an occupation. The subgroup received a presentation setting out early years occupations statistics and vacancies information.</p> <p>Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) Swindon and Wiltshire had been allocated £2.5m from the LSIF to deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • two projects in Wiltshire, an Eco house and training centre at Lackham, as well as digitalisation and media at TechTrowbridge; and • three projects in Swindon, including sustainable construction, transport and warehousing and green automotive. <p>September 2024 was the start date for courses for the first cohort of students.</p>	



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	<p>The discussion point was raised that the costs of childcare provision was such that it was not worth some parents working, particularly for lower income families. Early years had investment through T-level capital money to invest in facilities to support, but not much for child minding per say. Salaries for this sector were also not particularly high. Other funding streams were supporting early years and nursery management.</p> <p>Business, Ideas & Place (BIP) Subgroup AN spoke to the meeting and highlighted the items discussed at the meeting on 8 March. The presentation can be accessed via the link below.</p> <p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/board-meetings/2024/21-march-2024/bip-subgroup-update-board-210324.pdf?sfvrsn=47c2bc19_3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Subgroup had received a presentation from The West of England Industrial Decarbonisation Cluster which had just secured government funding. There would be good opportunities for Swindon and Wiltshire businesses to become more involved. • There was an update on the BCC and the Swindon and Wiltshire Cyber Cluster, keeping abreast of the developments in the cyber/technology world to stay ahead and connecting with businesses beyond the immediate area. • An update on the Growth Hub and its engagement with numbers of businesses, as well as the current situation regarding GPIF loans and inward investment successes. <p>The main strategic aims of the Subgroup had been mapped to the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS).</p> <p>Thanks were given to Directors and local authority staff who regularly attended these subgroup meetings.</p>	
9.0	AOB	
	<p>RC extended his thanks to all SWLEP directors and staff for their time spent on this challenging situation which had been requested by Government moving LEP functions into local authority control.</p> <p>EB on behalf of Cllr Jim Robbins wanted to recognise the work of SWLEP, appreciating the level of support and service delivery particularly with key regeneration schemes like the Carriage Works, New Eastern Villages, Flemming Way and Kimmerfields, demonstrating joint working and bringing third sector representation onto the Board. Past and present directors</p>	



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	<p>were thanked for the work put in on SWLEP’s behalf. In particular, the chair and vice chair were thanked for their work put in over the years.</p> <p>CP thanked the board for its work over the last few years, but particularly for recent events, which had been handled with dignity and poise. Representing the business voice had been particularly important and current government policy was to back businesses and delivery support in the regions. As a result, government was keen to see that business representation would be maintained after LEP Transition.</p> <p>AN stated that it had been sad that COVID had happened in the middle of her tenure because there had not been much chance to get out and about and meet businesses as much as she had hoped. Personally, it had been a great learning experience and she had met some wonderful people. She thanked fellow Directors for working with her and for SWLEP staff working with such cheery smiles. She wished everyone good luck with the venture and added that they would be still available to offer support.</p> <p>DS thanked the Directors past and present for the great support they had freely given to the area for over a decade in overseeing the work of the LEP. In addition, and on a personal level, for current directors’ advice and guidance through this phase of the SWLEP transition which had been invaluable in progressing LEP transition and supporting her in the role of Acting CEO.</p> <p>TH was a newcomer to the region and had been amazed at the wonderful work happening in the area. The CEO, Chair and vice chair were great to work with and had laid down some fantastic foundations to take forward. He also added that Wiltshire Council was inheriting some amazing staff.</p> <p>TB added he also spoke for all the staff and thanked the board for the support they had shown over the years; it had been a genuine pleasure to work with them.</p> <p>The Chair thanked both Local Authorities for their pragmatic approach which made the job as chair easier. He requested that the LEP and successor organisation keep money locally. He praised DS as CEO in this phase of the organisation’s transition and gave heart-felt thanks to Deborah, and to the Vice Chair for the countless hours they had chatted.</p> <p>He continued that the Swindon and Wiltshire area was an incredible place to study, live and base a business. The transition would be a positive thing and had been handled in a balanced and healthy way. Business was at the very heart of our community, so he requested that the new board to be mindful of the business voice and the legacy that SWLEP Limited was leaving.</p>	



Item	Narrative	Deadline
	The meeting closed at 10.21am	

Signed by:

PKhansari.

Parvis Khansari

Dated:

31st May 2024