



Attending:	Board Directors: Paddy Bradley (PB) Amanda Burnside (AB) Mandy Clarke (MC) Doug Gale (DG) Col Nev Holmes (NH) Carole Kitching (CK) Paul Moorby (PJM) - Chair Alison North (AN) David Renard (DR) Keeran Vetriko (KV) Prof Ian White (IW) Philip Whitehead (PW)h Suzanne Wigmore (SW) Peter Wragg (PW) – Deputy Chair	Board Advisers: None Observers: None, both Leaders were present
Apologies:	Andrew Gudgeon (AG) and Pam Webb (PWe) – SWLEP Directors Pauline Church (PCh) and Terence Herbert (TH), Wiltshire Council Cllr Gary Sumner (GS), Swindon Borough Council	
In attendance:	Claire Alexander (CA), and Debby Skellern (DS), SWLEP Karen Leigh (KL) and Emily Manser (EM), BEIS Representatives Rory Bowen (RB), Sam Fox (SF), and Leanne Sykes (LS), Wiltshire Council Philippa Venables (PV), Swindon Borough Council	
Guest(s):	Parvis Khansari (PK), Wiltshire Council Cllr Vinay Manro and Amanda Newbery, Joint Scrutiny Panel members	
SWLEP Limited members	Ed Dodd / Adrian Griffiths / Andy Hogben / Craig Holmes / Sharon Omar-Kaye	
Chair:	Paul Moorby (PJM)	
Notes:	Deborah House (DKH)	
Location:	Via conference call	

Item	Narrative	Deadline
	Welcome from the SWLEP Chair	
1.0	<p>The meeting opened at 9.02am and the Chair welcomed attendees to this inaugural Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP). Welcome was extended to the members of SWLEP Limited.</p> <p>The Chair explained that SWLEP was a private not-for-profit company, limited by guarantee. The ambition was to open membership of the company to all business organisations in the Swindon and Wiltshire area to increase awareness of SWLEP's role and activity.</p>	



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	<p>The CEO continued that to be completely open and transparent, the SWLEP had also established a Joint Scrutiny Panel with the two local authorities and business representatives. This comprised three back bench councillors from both Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council, together with business representatives. Officially, SWLEP was not legally bound to hold an Annual General Meeting owing to its size, but it was another way of being open and transparent to the public. SWLEP was unusual for LEPs in that it held Board meetings in public.</p>	
2.0	SWLEP Annual Accounts 2019-20 Ordinary resolution for members	
	<p>PB spoke to the paper. The accounts ran from January 2019 to March 2020. The period was slightly longer than usual because the company was incorporated in January 2019. Later accounts would take the traditional format and the next would be from April 2020 to March 2021.</p> <p>During this period most of SWLEP's accounts were held by Wiltshire Council acting as SWLEP's Accountable Body. When the SWLEP became incorporated, Wiltshire Council transferred a sum of money in order for the company to operate, but most project monies were retained by the council.</p> <p>The accountants, Monahans, carried out the audit and confirmed that money held by Wiltshire Council in this way was not appropriate to be included here. Monahans also checked our Governance arrangements and the links with Wiltshire Council and was content to sign off the accounts.</p> <p>The Resolution to receive the annual accounts and reports of the Company to the financial year ended 31 March 2020 was passed.</p>	
3.0	SWLEP Annual Report 2019-20 and plans for the future	
	<p>The Annual Report for this period included the management accounts, which were the funds held by Wiltshire Council.</p> <p>SWLEP had been working on its Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) with extensive involvement from local businesses. The Strategy was a combined view of the Board with support of major partners outside the board structure and the assistance of central Government. Although Government had paused its publication of Local Industrial Strategies, the SWLEP had continued to implement. SWLEP's efforts had gone into implementing key projects contained within the strategy with the help of the Getting Building Fund:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the Innovation Campus for the Circular Economy (ICCE);• the Business Cyber Centre (BCC);• Porton Science Park Phase 2; and• Swindon Carriageworks.	



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	<p>Other key areas of focus</p> <p>Rail Strategy The SWLEP Rail Strategy was beginning to be cited as supporting information in bids being produced.</p> <p>Skills Plan There was a need for skilled individuals to improve our productivity, increase our economic growth and close gaps in society. Prior to Covid-19, SWLEP had already included the physical and mental health of employees and employers in its Skills Plan. Now SWLEP would be working with partners on employee and employer mental health in the longer-term. The emphasis had changed because of the impact of Covid-19, with skills retraining needed for people impacted in their sectors with providers having to show agility and flexibility in their approach. There would be less capital development in future, but more engagement with people type development. SWLEP was working closely with both Local Authorities on the response to Covid-19.</p> <p>Great West Way The VisitWiltshire initiative had not progressed as much as hoped because the tourism and hospitality sectors had been badly affected by Covid-19. It was not a priority activity at present.</p> <p>The Chair cited that this had been a clear demonstration of good partnership working. SWLEP had been working with BEIS (KL and EM) and Local Authority teams on a weekly basis because of Covid-19. The Councils' response had been swift, diverting teams of people from their day jobs to distribute the grants. Joint working and sharing communications meant eligible businesses obtained their grants as quickly as possible.</p> <p>Post-2021 SWLEP was now an independent limited company and was aiming its work towards being a sustainable business and not completely dependent on Government funding. Profit generated would be ploughed back into the local area.</p> <p>There were 30,000 enterprises in the Swindon and Wiltshire area, but it was uncertain how many knew about SWLEP's role and activities. Some organisations were closely involved in the work of the SWLEP and we would encourage these companies to use their networks to inform others about the company. For example, the SWLEP Business Intelligence & Network Group (BING) used their membership networks to spread the message. Information SWLEP provided was available completely free, and thanks to Government, it was able to provide tangible programmes to deliver support.</p>	



4.0	Q & A and closing remarks	
	<p>The role of the Western Gateway and England's Economic Heartland (EEH) was discussed. These two large bodies are conglomerations of LEPs and Local Authorities to act as one voice on the economic potential of each area and thus reach Whitehall.</p> <p>Both bodies were looking to bring Inward investment into the UK. Swindon and Wiltshire were in a good strategic position between these two bodies with EEH in the East and across to South Wales in the West. We were in the middle of an amazingly productive corridor.</p>	
	Annual General Meeting closed at 9.29am	

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