



<b>Attendees</b>	<p>Paddy Bradley - SWLEP          Kathryn Crossweller – Chippenham BID          Ian Durston – SWLEP          Robin McGowan - Salisbury BID          Tim Major - Thames Valley Chamber Swindon          Colette Mallon – SWLEP          Jo Mills - representing Higher Futures          John Mortimer – SWLEP Chairman          Alison North – representing Federation of Small Business, joined the meeting at 12.40pm          Mandy Paterson - Inspire by Wessex Chamber          Andy Rhind-Tutt - Salisbury Chamber          Stephen Tulip – Make UK          Martin Warren – ICAEW          Andrew Wells - Business West          Andrea Witcombe – NFU          Peter Wragg - VisitWiltshire</p>
<b>Apologies</b>	<p>David Andrews – VisitWiltshire          Tom Bown – SWLEP          Phil Clement – SWLEP          Ruth Lambert – Federation of Small Business          Ian Larrard - Business West          Jo Minnaar - SWLEP Growth Hub          Diane Powell - Swindon BID          Leigh Robinson – Thames Valley Chamber          Mandy Timbrell – Higher Futures          Guy Tullberg - Institute of Directors</p>
<b>Chair</b>	John Mortimer (JM)
<b>Minutes</b>	Paddy Bradley (PB)
<b>Venue</b>	The Boardroom, Wiltshire College, Cocklebury Road, Chippenham, SN15 3QD
<b>Start time</b>	12 noon
<b>Finish Time</b>	2.05pm

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>	<b>Date</b>
	JM welcomed attendees to the meeting and apologies were noted. A special welcome was extended to Stephen Tulip from MAKE UK, who was attending his first meeting.	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Minutes of meeting on 13 February 2019 and matters arising</b>	
	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2019 were read and approved.</p> <p><b>Matters arising:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>BROG to produce a combined report on the state of</b></li> </ul>	



	<p><b>business health of the area. Chambers and BIDs to agree on the sources of the data.</b> The Group agreed on the concept of an annual survey carried out by all members and using a common set of questions. PB and RMcG to work up the proposal and circulate before the next meeting.</p>	<p><b>End July</b></p>
<p><b>3.0</b></p>	<p><b>Round Table Discussion – local intelligence</b></p>	
	<p><b>Robin McGowan of Salisbury BID:</b> High Streets were going through a torrid time, but there were a range of initiatives to fund High Street regeneration, with the process of bidding helping to build collaborative approaches. Salisbury BID was successful in the recent Charter vote. There would be more focus on interventions to prevent crime and disorder.</p> <p><b>Mandy Paterson of Inspire by Wessex Chamber:</b> Re-emphasised the rise in concern on social disorder incidents and the decline in footfall in Town Centres. There was a mixed picture on SME performance; significant gains and losses. No noticeable place marketing activity happening for Swindon and Wiltshire.</p> <p><b>Action: PB to bring to the Group a report on a proposed Place Marketing campaign to operate with the UK.</b></p> <p>Skills remain a limiting factor on business development. ST supported this view from the Engineering Employers' standpoint.</p> <p><b>Kathryn Crossweller of Chippenham BID:</b> There was a relatively static performance of the Town Centre. Benchmarking was being pursued to assess relative performance. Starting the use of a new digital platform, ShopAppy, to engage the public more in retail activity. Changes have been noted in business response to Climate Change; hospitality in particular was reducing packaging, plastic straws etc.</p> <p><b>Tim Major of Swindon Chamber:</b> Honda had been a prominent issue in the media, but no definitive position had been reached yet. The political uncertainty was leading to investment delay. Exporters were maintaining markets, but did not appear to be actively seeking new markets. Swindon was steady, attracting interest from outside the area.</p> <p><b>Andrew Wells of BusinessWest:</b> The Honda supply chain was looking to broaden their customer base. Larger businesses were expanding. BMW was building a new line, upgrading and replacing existing provision. Apple had moved onto a site in West Swindon (100 people), with expansion plans in place. Jobs to do with design of semi-conductor chips linked to Dialog Semi-Conductor. There was more corporate provision going into Swindon Town Football Club. There had been a very positive response from the business community to the Institute of Technology announcement. The number of children requiring educational and social care plans had now doubled after ten years of austerity and so there was concern about the impact on future</p>	

**07/08/2019**



employment opportunities for this group of young people.

**Martin Warren of ICAEW:**

Environmental attention was reaching higher levels – for example, would my product sell in the future? This was at discussion level rather than action at the moment. Farmers were diversifying owing to the pending exit from the EU. There had been a lot of stockpiling by businesses on the run up to 29 March, but stock was now being used and they were not buying as much during this time. There were concerns that as EU migrants had left, and we move towards Summer, fruit and vegetables would remain unpicked and the visitor economy would be lacking staff. There was a similar situation within the construction sector. More pressure from the business community on government to reform the business rate structure was anticipated.

**Andrea Witcombe of NFU:**

Reinforced the issue of skilled EU migrants leaving and not being easy to replace. Rural crime was still an issue. Weather changes were leading to some inconsistency in harvest outcomes. The challenges were to balance a desire to contribute to a zero-carbon economy with regulatory and financial constraints.

**Peter Wragg of VisitWiltshire:**

Hospitality, food and drinks sectors were most badly affected by the loss of labour and was beginning to have an effect now. Wages were not markedly increasing, but the general picture was that wages in Wiltshire had risen slightly. Tourism was broadly resilient; inbound tourism was strong, with staycation not as prominent. More tourist accommodation was needed. The Great West Way was proving popular as a product, with a press launch in Westminster w/c 13 May 2019.

**Alison North of Federation of Small Business:**

Making tax digital was seen as a negative by many micro businesses. Small businesses tended to be isolated, but were not collaborating to grow. They needed more support about how to develop and grow, not just about what to do. The challenge was to enable these small businesses to meet up and work with larger businesses.

**Jo Mills of Higher Futures:**

Positive views from some businesses about recruitment. There were more complex issues in manufacturing; further support needed to enable businesses to use their apprenticeship levy effectively and this included transfer of the levy through an operator's supply chain.

**Stephen Tulip of MAKE UK:**

The apprenticeship levy was not working for the manufacturing sector. The levy was well-intended, but the money was not being used as intended. Lobbying the government to change. The minimum limit of £30k salary for new EU migrants, under government proposals, was considered too high. Businesses were building up a matrix approach to back up the skills gaps. Quarter One showed full order books, helped by the desire for stockpiling. Involved in Local Industrial Strategy development and noticed a difference across the region. Manufacturers were trying to redress the balance of media coverage on the use of plastics, emphasising the positive aspects.

**Andy Rhind-Tutt of Salisbury Chamber:**



	Free parking after 3pm had had an effect in Salisbury, by increasing numbers into the City and bucking the national trend. Salisbury remained resilient. Great ideas had been generated by children and young people during the Schools Challenge – making Salisbury the first European Hearing Friendly City; re-using empty shops as a storage base for users of park and ride.	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)</b>	
	PB updated the group on the progress of the LIS.	
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Proposed future agenda items:</b>	
	The group agreed to include items at a future meeting from Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service and Crimestoppers, as long as the link to the business community was made.	
<b>6.0</b>	<b>AOB</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boeing's plans at Boscombe were still in discussion.</li> <li>• Collaboration across LEPs in the South West – meets as a regional grouping, but more practical work was being developed with West of England, GFirst and Dorset LEPs.</li> </ul>	
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Date and time of next meeting</b>	
	7 August 2019, – 12 noon - 2pm. Location TBC (Salisbury)	
	<b>Dates of future Meetings:</b> 6 November 2019, – 12 noon - 2pm. Location TBC (Chippenham/Swindon)	
	<b>Meeting closed at 2.05pm</b>	

*Pete Why*  
7<sup>th</sup> Aug 2019



<b>Membership</b>	<p>John Mortimer – SWLEP Chairman</p> <p><b>Business Improvement Districts (BIDs):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chippenham – Kathryn Crowweller, (KC)</li><li>• Salisbury – Robin McGowan, (RMc)</li><li>• Swindon – Diane Powell, (DP)</li></ul> <p>BusinessWest – Ian Larrard (IL) OR Andrew Wells (AW)</p> <p>CBI – Deborah Fraser, (DF)</p> <p><b>Chambers of Commerce:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Devizes – Richard</li><li>• Inspire by Wessex Chamber – Rob Perks (RP) OR Mandy Paterson (MP)</li><li>• Salisbury – Andy Rhind-Tutt, (AR-T)</li><li>• Thames Valley – Leigh Robinson, (LR)</li><li>• Thames Valley Swindon – Tim Major, (TM)</li></ul> <p>CLA – name to be advised</p> <p>Federation of Small Business – Ruth Lambert (RL)</p> <p>Icaew – Martin Warren, (MJW)</p> <p>Institute of Directors – Guy Tullberg, (GT)</p> <p>NFU – Andrea Witcombe</p> <p>SWLEP – Paddy Bradley, (PB) / Tom Bown, (TB) / Phil Clement, (PC), / Ian Durston, (ID) / Colette Mallon, (CM) / Jo Minnaar, (JoM) / Mandy Timbrell, (MT)</p> <p>VisitWiltshire – David Andrews (DA) OR Peter Wragg (PW)</p>
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