



Attendees	<p>Paddy Bradley (PB) - SWLEP Ruth Lambert (RL) – Federation of Small Business Tim Major (TM) - Thames Valley Chamber Swindon Jo Minnaar (JoM) - SWLEP Growth Hub Leigh Robinson (LR) – Thames Valley Chamber Dee Temple-Multon (DT-M)- Business West Peter Wragg (PW) – VisitWiltshire John Mortimer (JM) – SWLEP Chair Chris Stevens (CS) – SWLEP Higher Futures Mandy Paterson (MP) - Inspire by Wessex Chamber Andy Rhind-Tutt (AR-T)- Salisbury Chamber</p>
Apologies	<p>David Andrews – VisitWiltshire Phil Clement – SWLEP Kathryn Crosweller – Chippenham BID Ian Durston – SWLEP Ian Larrard - Business West Diane Powell - Swindon BID Guy Tullberg - Institute of Directors ICAEW – awaiting replacement name for Martin Warren Andrea Witcombe – NFU Colette Mallon – SWLEP Robin McGowan - Salisbury BID Stephen Tulip – Make UK</p>
Guest(s)	<p>Andrew Mercer (AM) – Business West, SWLEP Growth Hub Jim Davison (JD) - Make UK, representing Stephen Tulip Tom Hutchinson (TH) – Wiltshire Council Peter Allen (PA) – General Manager, Catalent</p>
Chair	Peter Wragg (PW)
Minutes	Deborah House (DKH)
Venue	Catalent Pharma, Frankland Road, Swindon, SN5 8YG
Start time	12 noon
Finish Time	2pm

1.0	Welcome and Introductions	Date
	<p>PW welcomed attendees to the meeting and apologies were noted. Particular welcome was extended to Tom Hutchinson, representing Wiltshire Council Trading Standards.</p> <p>Peter Allen gave an introduction to Catalent Pharma, its history and the types of products it produced. Catalent would be taking on about 20 apprentices this year. The company consistently struggled with the Skills gaps, particularly within the STEM subjects. If the company did not capture science graduates early after graduation, it struggled to fill the role in the labs. The</p>	



	<p>situation was also similar with engineers, although filling operative roles was easier. Graduates from University of Bath and UWE were often employed, as Swindon was within commutable distance from Bath and Bristol. Catalent currently had 26 open vacancies.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Catalent for kindly agreeing to host the BROG meeting at its offices.</p>	
2.0	Minutes of meeting on 7 August 2019 and matters arising	
	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 7 August 2019 were read and approved.</p> <p>The meeting heard of the demise of the Chippenham Business Improvement District (BID). Businesses had voted to discontinue with the BID and it would finish in March 2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Boscombe – PB advised that there was no update available. SWLEP involvement was not strong and there was even a question over whether Boscombe was the preferred location for Boeing. • Business Health Report – later on agenda. • Place Marketing – there would be a strong piece in the Local Industrial Strategy about place. • FSB was keen to speak to BIDS in the area – the existing relationship with Salisbury BID was good. RL had made contact with Di Powell of InSwindon and was sorry about the demise of the Chippenham BID. <p>Industrial BIDs were based around industrial parks. For example, Bumpers Farm looked into issues such as access and safety. BIDs varied in popularity. BIDs had a five-year remit, operating via subscription and taking a slice of the business rates. Salisbury BID just got voted back in for another five years, but AR-T feels this was due in part to the special circumstances which occurred in Salisbury and Amesbury last year. Salisbury BID had an active group working closely with the Chamber and FSB.</p> <p>The meeting was concerned that Chippenham businesses did not feel alone and isolated once the BID was disbanded and should try to ensure that some of the work being undertaken by the BID continued.</p> <p>Action: contact existing BID people in Chippenham and follow-up.</p> <p>Action: co-ordinate meeting with Chippenham businesses and introduce to other members of BROG to support.</p>	<p>Nov 2019</p> <p>Jan 2019</p>
3.0	Round Table Discussion – local intelligence	
	<p>Dee Temple-Multon of BusinessWest:</p> <p>DT-M advised that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew Wells had left BusinessWest and had moved back to Swindon Borough Council; 	



- Dave Battrick, previously at fsb, had taken on the role;
- the Brexit helpline being managed in Leigh Court had been very busy, with support from SWLEP, BEIS and WECA;
- the Brexit events which had been running had proved very popular;
- Innovate2succeed was fully funded to help businesses that are developing new products and processes and covered from Gloucestershire to Plymouth; and
- a new manufacturing cluster of Innovate2succeed would be starting in January/February next year.

Jim Davison of MAKE UK:

JD advised that:

- with the depreciation of Sterling, the tough trading conditions were putting lots of pressure on margins;
- its members were match-fit to trade when Brexit happened;
- the movement of people was getting more complex;
- businesses would adapt, they just need to know the transition period.

JoM added that very specialist Brexit enquiries had been coming in, for example, legal, finance and skills.

John Mortimer, CLA

JM advised the meeting that:

- the threat of a no-deal Brexit was significant to the agricultural sector, as it was the most-tariffed sector with +50% tariffs on beef, cheese, pork products etc;
- the Government had said that it would intervene in some products;
- there would be disruption in the domestic food supply market if tariffs were to hit, so
- there were real risks and threats;
- £3.4bn per annum were paid to the agricultural sector;
- the Government had guaranteed to pay this money until 2022, but
- how would payments be made in the future;
- all payments would be for environmental bids and benefits, not for agricultural production.

Mandy Paterson, Inspire by Wessex Chamber:

MP advised that meeting that:

- most of its members had forward planned and pre-borrowed money in anticipation;
- there were a handful of businesses in panic, but;
- being able to direct members to the BEIS road-show going around the county had been really helpful; and
- the Brexit links on its website would be kept live for the time being.

Tom Hutchinson, Wiltshire Council Trading Standards



TH advised the meeting that:

- they had received a small handful of enquiries;
- regulated consumer product, weights and measures, descriptions;
- enforced based on the EU directive;
- information from government transposed into UK legislation;
- with Brexit the EU regulatory bodies ceased to be recognised in the UK and vice versa;
- would be happy to speak to businesses to advise;
- Government advised there would be a light touch approach to any changes, even if the regulatory framework was different; and
- the enquiries had been mainly about export to Europe.

Ruth Lambert of Federation of Small Business:

RL advised that:

- a Brexit hub was on the website;
- its members were more concerned with domestic issues, for example, like the threatened postal strike at Christmas;
- many had tied up cash in stock-piling in case it was required;
- now all they wanted was certainty;
- Q3 results on business confidence was the 5th Quarter of negative confidence;
- there was a gloomy outlook for the next couple of quarters;
- not many of the businesses were planning on new investments or taking on extra staff;
- 24% of their businesses expected to see an increase in exports;
- FSB's Broadband report had been published - 41% felt their broadband coverage was insufficient and 56% felt their mobile reception was bad. (The link below would take you to a copy of this report.)
https://www.fsb.org.uk/docs/default-source/fsb-org-uk/fsb-broadband-mobile-connectivity-report-final.pdf?sfvrsn=b1ddf721_0
- FSB's business crime report stated that 34% of businesses had suffered traditional crime, and 20% cybercrime. (The link below would take you to a copy of this report.)
https://www.fsb.org.uk/docs/default-source/fsb-org-uk/fsb-businesscrime-report-v03.pdf?sfvrsn=2135f721_0

Andrew Mercer of BusinessWest:

AM advised that:

- demand for start-up and growth loans was strong;
- a Salisbury business planning workshop was taking place on 20 November;
- the rural development programme had been relaunched; with
- grants starting at £25k up to the De Minimus limit; and
- SWMAS would be offering workshops soon.

Tim Major of Swindon Chamber:



TM advised that:

- 500 people had been through their doors on Brexit seminars;
- the general mood tended to be more about “just get on with it”;
- many were unprepared for it and asked very basic questions;
- another survey would be issued on 25 November. Send PB results.
- Thames Valley Chamber fulfilled a lot of trade facilitation documentation and the volumes were significantly up.
- the Trade Attachés from China and Japan, who were based in HQ, were hugely in demand. This was a service provided to their members.

JoM requested this information from TM so that the Growth Hub could promote that offering.

JM asked whether the Chamber had picked up any sense that businesses did not know where to go to get relevant information. JoM commented that Tim Burghes (Growth Hub) had offered the Brexit service via any ‘phone interaction he had had with businesses. The funding supplied for the Brexit service was time limited, although some would be available through to March 2020.

Andy Rhind-Tutt, Salisbury Chamber of Commerce:

AR-T advised the meeting that:

- the Chamber had recently linked up with Churchfields’ businesses and held the first business forum there. John Glen had spoken and the meeting was well-attended;
- another such forum was due to take place on 6 December;
- Brexit appeared not to be an issue with Salisbury businesses;
- AR-T was aware of one business with issues and that was because it exported only to Dublin;
- a school business forum had been established, with one voice for schools. A meeting would be held every term;
- a meeting with DfT had been scheduled to discuss the Salisbury bypass. Evidence was needed and an impact study produced.;
- a survey was currently running and 150 business had responded;
- the survey could be found on the Salisbury Chamber website under the news section and AR-T requested any business impacted by the roads in the south of the county to make their opinions known.

Jo Minnaar of SWLEP Growth Hub:

JoM advised that:

- BEIS was still carrying out its survey on businesses in the area;
- any good news, deals etc to be fed into SWLEP Growth Hub.

Chris Stevens, SWLEP Higher Futures

CS advised the meeting that:



- there were 1,200 apprentices enrolled, of which 700 were Higher Level apprenticeships;
- the main topic of discussion was the issue regarding Levy vs non-levy and the work around levy transfer;
- the Learning Hub went live two months ago;
- this show-cased the Higher Education available in the area and 140 courses were currently live;
- there had been some development issues with the site, which were being rectified;
- CITB had £8.8m to invest in seven construction skills hubs;
- this was to drive more individuals into construction-related roles, to get them site ready and to form a pipeline of trained workers;
- CS was also an Ambassador for the Growth Hub's Young Entrepreneur's Swindon (YES) network of 18-35 year-olds;
- the next meeting would take place at the National Trust, with a green theme.

The meeting thanked Daniel Rhind-Tutt for the idea of such a group being established in Swindon. AR-T advised the meeting that the next Dragon's Den type event would take place in early spring.

Peter Wragg of VisitWiltshire:

PW advised that:

- the latest figures were from 2018;
- there was a bit of a dip, lost 3% because of the Salisbury impact;
- visitor numbers for Salisbury had demonstrated some recovery, but the numbers were down. But then, nationally the numbers were lower overall;
- inbound tourism was still strong, particularly from USA, not so much from Europe;
- a tourism sector deal had been launched; with
- the Great West Way being touted as one of the tourism zones, crossing geographical boundaries; with
- Discover England Fund 2 to progress with the Great West Way product; and
- Salisbury brand study work was ongoing and implementation was now underway.

4.0 LMI & Skills

PB presented to the group. (The presentation given on the day can be accessed via the following link:

https://swlep.co.uk/docs/default-source/sub-groups/business-development/brog/swlep-brog-meeting-6-november-2019.pdf?sfvrsn=ec020f21_4
)

The data was being analysed by a team from the University of Bath.



	DT-M commented that skills continued to be an issue for many companies and that one of the large company clients stated highly-skilled European workers had gone home, citing the fall in Sterling as a driving factor.	
5.0	Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)	
	<p>PB spoke to the meeting. (See the link to the presentation in Item 4 above.)</p> <p>AR-T- asked whether more roads would be outlined in the Local Industrial Strategy to underpin the Salisbury regeneration. PB stated that he had had some discussions regarding the A36 with Wiltshire Council, but that the SWLEP would like to be more involved. AR-T invited PB to attend the next meeting.</p> <p>Import the skills into the area for the short-term. The Institute of Technology (IoT) would take 5-10 years to bring students on-line and in the meantime, how could we attract businesses into the area? PB stated that the inward investment offer was currently focussing on digital / life sciences for example, at Porton, which was a unique offering in the country. SWLEP was developing a prospectus for both digital and life sciences, which stressed the quality of life and standard of schools, etc in the area. A co-ordinated approach to place marketing was a challenge.</p>	
6.0	Proposals for a business health report	
	<p>PB spoke to the meeting. (See the link to the presentation in Item 4 above.)</p> <p>PB had spoken with a company which would produce an Annual Report, taking all the surveys members had produced and analyse overall. Sessions would be arranged with BROG to work on some elements.</p> <p>AR-T commented that Salisbury Chamber used Insight, which was currently working on three surveys for them including Transport, carparking and visitor surveys. AR-T offered his support for the project.</p> <p>The question was raised as to who would be paying for the production of this report and PB requested contributions from the partners.</p> <p>Action: PB to discuss with partners outside the meeting.</p>	Nov 2019
7.0	SWLEP Growth Summit	
	<p>PW gave a brief overview of the Growth Summit 2019, which had taken place on 3 October, and a short film was shown running into the announcement of the Growth Summit for 2020 taking place at Salisbury Cathedral.</p> <p>AR-T stated that the Salisbury Chamber would like to work with the SWLEP on the Growth Summit, as the Salisbury Expo had been postponed until the Autumn and would fit well into that timescale.</p>	
8.0	AOB	
	TH quoted the Buy with Confidence scheme which was offering free advice etc to organisations signed up to the scheme.	



	<p>AR-T advised the meeting of the Monday afternoon Business Forums for its members, which took place at the White Hart Hotel.</p> <p>DKH requested details of further locations for 2020 with companies which would be happy to host BROG meetings.</p>	
9.0	Date and time of next meeting	
	<p>Wednesday, 12 February 2020, – 12 noon - 2pm. Location TBC (South of County)</p> <p>Future Meetings 2020:</p> <p>Wednesday, 6 May - Location TBC (North of County)</p> <p>Wednesday, 5 August - Location TBC (South of County)</p> <p>Wednesday, 4 November Location TBC (North of County)</p>	
	Meeting closed at 2.05pm	

John Mortimer

Membership	<p>John Mortimer – SWLEP Chair</p> <p>Business Improvement Districts (BIDs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salisbury – Robin McGowan, (RMc) Swindon – Diane Powell, (DP) <p>BusinessWest – Ian Larrard (IL) OR Dee Temple-Multon (DT-M)</p> <p>CBI – Deborah Fraser, (DF)</p> <p>Chambers of Commerce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devizes – Richard Inspire by Wessex Chamber – Rob Perks (RP) OR Mandy Paterson (MP) Salisbury – Andy Rhind-Tutt, (AR-T) Thames Valley – Leigh Robinson, (LR) Thames Valley Swindon – Tim Major, (TM) <p>CLA – name to be advised</p> <p>Federation of Small Business – Ruth Lambert (RL)</p> <p>Icaew – Martin Warren, has moved within the organisation, replacement name to be advised</p> <p>Institute of Directors – Guy Tullberg, (GT)</p> <p>Make UK – Stephen Tulip (ST)</p> <p>NFU – Andrea Witcombe (AW)</p> <p>SWLEP – Paddy Bradley, (PB) / Phil Clement, (PC), / Ian Durston, (ID) / Colette Mallon, (CM) / Jo Minnaar, (JoM) / Chris Stevens (CS), North / Amanda Peach (AP), South</p> <p>VisitWiltshire – David Andrews (DA) OR Peter Wragg (PW)</p>
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