	Minutes of Business Environment Subgroup Meeting 9 November 2021

Membership

Name of Member	Organisation	Attendance
Claire Alexander (CA)	SWLEP	✓
Paddy Bradley (PB)	SWLEP CEO	✓
Phil Clement (PC)	SWLEP	✓
Dragana Houston (DH)	SWLEP	Apologies
Tom Marshall (TM)	SWLEP	✓
Alison North (AN)	SWLEP Board Director	✓
Debby Skellern (DS)	SWLEP	Apologies
Chris Stevens (CS)	SWLEP	✓
Prof Ian White (IW)	SWLEP Board Director	✓

Guest(s)	Hugh Williams (HW)
Chair	Alison North (AN)
Minutes	Paddy Bradley (PB)
Venue	Via video / teleconference call
Start time	3pm
Finish Time	4.40pm

1.0	**Welcome and Introductions**	Date
	The meeting opened at 3.02pm. The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and apologies were noted.	
2.0	**Minutes and Matters Arising**	
	Minutes from the meeting 16 September 2021 were approved. Matters Arising: • AN and DS to have offline conversation to reword the ToR (as part of the Governance Review 2021). The Chair suggested a further meeting with the SWLEP Governance lead, DS, to look at wording and accountability of the Subgroup. **To pick up at the Governance Group and between AN and DS as required.**	

3.0	**Business Cyber Centre update**	
	TM gave an update to the meeting on the status of the Business Cyber Centre project.	
	- The lease was signed on 30 September 2021. - Signing of the lease had resulted in: - contracts let to refurbish the building from 18 October, a week ahead of schedule; - attention paid to the type of work required which was commensurate with a nine-year lease; - contract let to furnish the building with order planned to be agreed pre-Christmas; - other contracts covering security of the building were in train; - all tenders processed comply with requirements for the use of public money; and - overall, good progress made to-date. - BCC Budget update would be made to the Board on 25 November. - Meeting held with Defence Digital (MoD Corsham) to confirm the nature of the business relationship between the BCC and Defence Digital. - As a result of the meeting, the BCC was able to reallocate funding with its capital allocation to improve other features of the building and reduce expenditure on achieving very high levels of security. - SWLEP had faced difficulties in achieving recognition of its ambitions to manage a cyber cluster in Swindon and Wiltshire. The organisation which decided on cluster recognition was UKC3. Following discussions with the Chair of UKC3, its board would review its existing position at its meeting on 11 November. - The Business Environment Subgroup discussed options to escalate the issue with UKC3 if necessary, including seeking support from the local MP. - The BCC budget, once finalised, would feature in future meetings of the Business Environment Subgroup.	
	Action: Future performance reports should include budget details covering the use of public funds with detail on actual v budgeted and if there were any issues – the impact of the issue both positive and negative. (TM)	**Jan 2022**
	Action: BCC reports, written or verbal, should provide a good briefing for AN and IW ahead of the upcoming Board Meeting so that they can respond to questions from a position of knowledge.	**On-going**
	TM was thanked for his comprehensive report.	
4.0	**Growth Hub update**	
	CS spoke to the paper and gave a summary of performance against business support KPIs agreed with BEIS.	

	• Actual performance measures cover both what the Growth Hub had achieved on its own and in collaboration with partners. • Budget performance shows a current underspend and CS identified how the spend profile for the whole year would be achieved. • CS updated on staffing changes; one new appointment, one resignation and the post advertised. • Questions were raised about the profile of the intensity of the support. CS explained that in 2020-21 much attention was paid to signposting to grant support. This continued into Q1 of 2021-22, with the situation moving to be more intensive support. • Suggested that the Growth Hub should explore evidence to find out if this had a significant impact on the survival of SMEs, and, if so, this would be very good to publicise. • SWLEP keen to enable cross-programme expertise. **Action: investigate interactions between businesses and Growth Hub to understand the extent to which business support from the SWLEP had been essential to business survival. (CS)** CS was thanked for his very informative report.		**Jan 2022**
5.0	**Business Action Plan reporting**		
	PB spoke to the paper and explained the Business Planning process. Areas covered by the Business Environment Subgroup were RAG-rated GREEN.		
6.0	**Developing our strategy to support the Green Economy and SWLEP's approach to net-zero**		
	HW presented to the meeting. The presentation can be accessed by following the link below. https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/sub-groups/business-development/business-environment-subgroup---main-meeting/2021/09-nov-2021/bus-env-subgroup-nz-presentation-9-nov-2021.pdf?sfvrsn=a5e87264_4 • HW summarised SWLEP initiatives to support the green economy ranging from strategic developments around Natural Capital to running workshops and providing 1:1 support to businesses. • The SWLEP was looking to sign up to the SME Climate Hub initiative. • The SWLEP was taking the lead to identify the vast range of work on hydrogen technology in the Western Gateway.		
7.0	**Plan for Growth update**		
	PB spoke to the meeting and explained the Government's policy change from local industrial strategies to a Plan for Growth.		

	• The SWLEP was developing its Plan for Growth Strategy and Plan, aiming for a first draft at the January 2022 Board Meeting, followed by a period of consultation and a final draft for approval at the March 2022 Board meeting. • Each of the SWLEP's Subgroups would be asked to contribute to the development and subsequent oversight of the Plan for Growth Strategy. • SWLEP encouraged to engage early with stakeholders to find out about, and potentially apply some existing good ideas, such as the involvement of the students in projects to understand whole system approaches to tackling problems. **Action: Engage early with stakeholders to understand what current practice may translate into the Plan for Growth. IW to provide an example from the University of Bath. (DS)**	**Dec 2021**
8.0	**Items for the next meeting**	
	• Performance reports on the Business Cyber Centre and the Growth Hub. (TM and CS) • Developing the Business Environment Subgroup's contribution to the Plan for Growth. (PB and DS) • Business opportunities arising from a green economy. (HW)	
9.0	**AOB**	
	All reports, written or verbal, should provide a good briefing for AN and IW ahead of the upcoming Board Meeting so that they can respond to questions from a position of knowledge.	
	Date and time of next meeting	
	Next meeting: Monday, 17 January 2022 – proposed Further meetings: Wednesday, 9 March 2022 – 2pm to 4pm Future Dates for 2022: To be advised.	
	Meeting closed at 4.35pm	

18 January 2022