



Membership

Name of Member	Organisation	Attendance
Paddy Bradley (PB)	SWLEP CEO	✓
Mandy Clarke (MC)	SWLEP Board Director	Apologies
Tom Marshall (TM)	SWLEP	✓
Alison North (AN)	SWLEP Board Director	✓
Chris Stevens (CS)	SWLEP	✓
Prof Ian White (IW)	SWLEP Board Director	✓

Guest(s)	Melody Thompson (MT) ✓
Chair	Alison North (AN)
Minutes	Deborah House (DKH)
Venue	Via video / teleconference call
Start time	2pm
Finish Time	3.40pm

1.0	Welcome and Introductions	Date
	The meeting opened at 2.02pm. The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and apologies were noted.	
2.0	Minutes and Matters Arising	
	Minutes from the meeting of 9 May 2022 were approved. The Matters Arising had been completed.	
3.0	The aspects of the Delivery Plan to be overseen by the Business Environment Subgroup.	
	<p>PB spoke to the paper provided and updated the meeting on aspects of the Delivery Plan to be overseen by the Business Environment Subgroup. He advised that the Delivery Plan had been taken to the May Board in draft and the final version had been submitted to BEIS and was now published on the SWLEP website. Points mentioned were:</p> <p>Growing Places Infrastructure Fund (GPIF)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> that GPIF sat better within this Subgroup rather than the Ideas, Infrastructure & Place Subgroup and would be moved; and the KPIs for GPIF were that £3.25m of loans were to be issued by the end of the year and that £600,000 of annual income would be acquired from the interest on the loans. 	



Growth Hub

- KPIs for the Growth Hub were that 800 businesses would receive light touch support (three hours);
- 290 businesses medium touch support (between three and six hours) and 216 businesses intensive support (six hours plus); and
- the aim of the Growth Hub was to have a community membership of 2,800 businesses.

Business Cyber Centre

- the KPIs for the BCC were to have 90% tenancy rates;
- 100 jobs, 20 businesses, 475 learners, and
- a membership of 200 business signed up to the Swindon & Wiltshire Cyber Cluster.

The Subgroup was to monitor the GPIF, Growth Hub and BCC and report against progress, discussing any risks foreseen in reaching the targets. The Delivery Plan for 2023/24 had already been started as it had to be submitted to BEIS in November 2022 and would form part of the funding mechanism. A draft would be brought to the Board in September once reviewed by the various Subgroups.

Clarification was sought on the policy regarding the use of the interest generated from the GPIF loans. The interest was paid by the loanee to the Accountable Body and a transfer was made each quarter to the SWLEP bank account. SWLEP had used some of the interest to fund the Inward Investment post and to subsidise the set-up costs of developing a commercial business support offering. The overarching consideration was to build up reserves in order that the money could be recycled as further loans. However, any money generated by the BCC was ring-fenced for the BCC.

**The Business Environment Subgroup:
NOTED the contents of the update.**

4.0 Business Cyber Centre update

TM presented to the meeting and highlighted the progress of the Business Cyber Centre project.

Conference activity

- The Careers Hub held a conference on 16 June at which there were 70+ attendees, with a further 20 people accessing remotely with glowing feedback on the facilities.
- The Cyber ICE Conference had attracted 77 registrations. With many last-minute messages of illness, there were 33 attendees on the night with some speakers dialling in from as far afield as Boston, USA and one New Zealand attendee looking for a UK base travelling from London specifically for the conference.
- Four more events would take place before the end of the summer, with the Careers Hub looking for another event in August.



Cyber Cluster

- There were already 97 members of the Swindon & Wiltshire Cyber Cluster.
- The next Cluster event would be held in September and be open to any business that was interested in cyber activity, not just cyber businesses.

Tenancy

- As yet, Mastek had not moved in its employees although the deposit and first month’s rent had been paid. The take up of tenancy was slow, but we were in discussions with local commercial agents to see how they could help and their fee structure.
- A brochure was being finalised to target this market.
- Another company had just taken up new office space in Chippenham but had toured the building and was interested in using the space for meetings/conferences.
- Discussions were underway for SWLEP staff to occupy the building temporarily on rotation to give the environment buzz.

Service offer

- We were in negotiation with an IT specialist to provide a suite of cyber security products to SMEs at reasonable rates which could be BCC branded generating additional income.

The question was raised about “techlash”, that is, large tech companies now making significant numbers of redundancies, and how and if that would affect the cyber businesses coming into the BCC. In response, TM stated that if this were to happen, the BCC would change its focus and make the space available to non-cyber businesses. That contingency had already been planned for. However, given the unstable world situation, cyber-attacks may well increase so demand for our space may also increase accordingly.

Given this situation, the question was raised on whether the rental terms for the building were flexible enough for businesses. TM responded that BCC tenancies were held on 12-month licences which gave most companies the flexibility they required.

The BCC was working to its Business Plan which was aiming for 90% tenancy rates. If this were lower, then it would reflect a change in strategy and would be run past the Subgroup for approval as the income target may be impacted. To give the Board sight of this potential situation, this could be flagged in the CEO’s report and / or the Subgroup’s report for July.

**The Business Environment Subgroup:
NOTED the contents of the verbal update.**

5.0

Growth Hub update



	<p>CS presented to the meeting and updated the activity of the Growth Hub detailing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• FY 2022/23 Q1 KPI Performance;• Growth Hub Operations Budget;• planned activity for FY 2022/2023; and• progress on FY 2021/22 wrap-up activities. <p>The presentation can be accessed by using the following link.</p> <p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/sub-groups/business-development/business-environment-subgroup---main-meeting/2022/04-jul/growth-hub-subgroup-update---july-2022.pdf?sfvrsn=9d1de672_4</p> <p>There was discussion about the Growth Hub+ offering and its planned launch. The first phase would be in August with paid-for direct delivery of some webinars and workshops. There would be more phases going live in the autumn, such as the membership portal etc. As phases were launched, they would be brought to the Subgroup for advice and information. A Project Commercialisation Working Group had been established using the knowledge and skills of the team without yet incurring additional external cost for consultants. BEIS had agreed to the branding of Growth Hub+, so we could build on the current well-known Growth Hub brand, and one of the digital apprentices had developed its logo and collateral.</p> <p>The Business Environment Subgroup: NOTED the contents of the presentation.</p>	
6.0	Inward Investment	
	<p>MT presented to the meeting and outlined the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• performance in 2021-22 and early 2022-23;• activity since November 2021 and current interests;• challenges; and• planning for the future. <p>The presentation can be found by accessing the following link:</p> <p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/sub-groups/business-development/business-environment-subgroup---main-meeting/2022/04-jul/fdi-presentation-to-bus-environ-040722.pdf?sfvrsn=f0ca9b75_4</p> <p>Of particular interest to attendees were the challenges highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• availability of readily available employment land; and• power grid capacity and constraints which can impede investment. <p>Future inward investment activity would be targeted to specific sectors. Discussion with the Local Authorities should take place at Board to ascertain their levels of</p>	



	involvement, after first coming through the Subgroup. Again, put into Board report to give advance warning. The Business Environment Subgroup: NOTED the contents of the presentation.	
7.0	Items for the next meeting	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Performance reports on the Business Cyber Centre and the Growth Hub. (TM and CS)• Business opportunities arising from a green economy. (PB)• Growing Places Infrastructure Fund (GPIF), to be brought into the Business Environment Subgroup• Discussions on commercial activity	
	Date and time of next meeting	
	Next meeting: Monday, 19 September – 1pm to 3pm Future Dates for 2022: Monday, 7 November – 1.30pm to 3.30pm	
	Meeting closed at 3.31pm	

Atison North

Chair

9 November 2022