

 Swindon & Wiltshire LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP	Minutes of Infrastructure, Ideas and Place (IIP) Subgroup Meeting 7 March 2022
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Date: Monday, 7 March 2022
Time: 11am – 12.45pm
Venue: via Microsoft Teams call

Name of Member	Organisation	Attendance
Rory Bowen (RB)	Wiltshire Council	✓
Paddy Bradley (PB)	SWLEP CEO	✓
Phil Clement (PC)	SWLEP	✓
David Dewart	Swindon Borough Council	Apologies
Tom Harrison (TH)	PA Consulting	✓
Prof Maik Schneider (MS)	University of Bath	✓
Debby Skellern (DS)	SWLEP	✓
Pam Webb (PWe)	SWLEP Director	✓
Suzanne Wigmore (SW)	SWLEP Director	✓
Guest(s)	Layla Burrows (LB) – Innovate UK ✓	
Chair	Suzanne Wigmore (SW)	
Minutes	Deborah House (DKH)	

Item	Narrative	Deadline
1.0	Welcome, introductions and apologies	
	The meeting opened at 11.02am. SW welcomed everyone to the meeting and particular welcome was extended to Prof Maik Schneider who was joining the group as an academic technical adviser. Introductions were made and apologies noted.	
2.0	Minutes and Matters arising	
2.1	Approval of minutes from 18 January 2022.	
2.2	All matters arising were completed or on the agenda.	

Item	Narrative	Deadline
	Dr Maik Schneider declared a standing interest as the mentoring professor for the Natural Capital PhD project.	
3.0 Place		
3.1	<p>Levelling Up White Paper DS spoke to the paper which summarised the headline areas within the Levelling Up White Paper and the opportunities for Swindon and Wiltshire.</p> <p>SWLEP was waiting for a letter from Government setting out the role and responsibilities it was assigning to the SWLEP for delivery during 2022/23. Once this had been received, SWLEP would be in a better position to set out its response to the White Paper and its action plan, which would focus on specific, deliverable projects.</p> <p>RB highlighted that support for foreign direct investment would continue despite the ERDF funded programme having come to a close.</p> <p>Levelling Up White Paper Feedback from Wiltshire Council RB spoke to the meeting. Comments made were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RB was not aware whether the UK Shared Prosperity Fund would be equivalent to the Levelling Up Fund. Wiltshire Council had not been informed of its allocation, but it was anticipated that Places and Business would be dealt with in the first two years and that People and Skills would be the focus in the third year. There was a lot of guess work as it was very early days; • SWLEP was not getting sight of briefings as the money was going through the Local Authorities, but it would be happy to deliver workshops to help build local capacity but needed both LAs to be involved; • it was expected that bids would need to be submitted at short notice and that local bids would need to be of higher quality because the Swindon and Wiltshire area was a low priority nationally; and • Wiltshire Council's Executive Group was trying to understand what the Levelling Up agenda would mean for Wiltshire; <p>PB explained that the British Business Bank (BBB) had a £200m investment fund for the southwest and was expected to use the format previously used for the Midlands Engine and the Northern Powerhouse. Fund managers would be located around the southwest and they would have targets to reach. There would be debt and equity investment, but it would deal mainly with loans. Wales also had some allocation and there could be a possibility of alignment with the Western Gateway. There would be an Oversight Board to which some LEPs would be invited. The money would be coming out late 2022 or early 2023 and no match-funding would be required.</p>	

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3.2	<p>MS commented that the most important capital in the Levelling Up White Paper was human capital, making healthy life choices. According to research the most valuable educational investment was in children aged 3–6-years. However, all investment announced would be around secondary, not primary education.</p> <p>It was expected that the metrics against which delivery would be monitored would be announced in the Spring 2022.</p> <p>The Ideas, Infrastructure & Places Subgroup: DISCUSSED the Levelling Up White Paper in relation to SWLEP's work over the next 12-24 months to support innovation, infrastructure and place-based activity.</p>	
3.3	<p>Towns Fund and Future High Streets Fund update RB presented to the meeting on the current situation with the Future High Streets Fund plans for Trowbridge and Salisbury.</p> <p>The presentation can be accessed by following the link below.</p> <p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/sub-groups/infrastructure-ideas-and-place-subgroup/2022/08-mar-2022/why-a-place-partnership.pdf?sfvrsn=f5aad1dd_4</p> <p>Lessons learned for Salisbury Recovery after Novichok would be rolled out in the Council's approach to regeneration in Chippenham and Trowbridge.</p>	
4.0 Infrastructure		
4.1	<p>Hydrogen Feasibility Study update and opportunities along the A303 Kiwa had been appointed to carry out the hydrogen generation feasibility study and a report had now been submitted to SWLEP for final sign off. There did appear to be a commercial case for this activity but would be down to negotiations between the landowner and operator.</p> <p>National Highways was involved with the infrastructure improvements on the A303, which included the tunnel around Stonehenge. There was a desire from National Highways to commit to using hydrogen in the plant equipment for the project and in employing 75-100 apprentices. SWLEP, together with Local Authority Officers, had met together to move that piece forward.</p>	
5.0 Ideas		
5.1	Inward Investment Programme final report	

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	<p>PC spoke to the meeting and outlined the successes of the programme as the European funding had now drawn to a close.</p> <p>The presentation can be accessed by following the link below.</p> <p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/sub-groups/infrastructure-ideas-and-place-subgroup/2022/08-mar-2022/inward-investment-overview-2018-22.pdf?sfvrsn=f3319c0_6</p> <p>PB advised that, as PC was now being seconded to Gfirst for 3.5 days per week to work on its Inward Investment programme so there was a potential for Conflicts of Interest. For this reason, Melody Thompson, one of the Growth Hub's Business Navigators, would be taking over responsibility for SWLEP's inward investment activities and a handover had been completed.</p> <p>The Ideas, Infrastructure and Place Subgroup: NOTED the Inward Investment Programme final report.</p>	
5.2	<p>Growing Places Infrastructure Fund (GPIF) programme update</p> <p>PC presented to the meeting and detailed the loan applications currently being assessed and those potential applicants in the pipeline.</p> <p>The presentation can be accessed by following the link below.</p> <p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/sub-groups/infrastructure-ideas-and-place-subgroup/2022/08-mar-2022/gpif-overview-march-2022.pdf?sfvrsn=4f67b46b_4</p> <p>The Ideas, Infrastructure and Place Subgroup: NOTED the performance of the Growing Places Infrastructure Fund (GPIF) programme to date.</p>	
5.4	<p>Innovate UK Action Plan</p> <p>The item was taken out of order. LB presented to the meeting on the current status of Innovate UK's Action Plan.</p> <p>The presentation can be accessed by following the link below.</p> <p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/sub-groups/infrastructure-ideas-and-place-subgroup/2022/08-mar-2022/innovate-uk---plan-for-action---mar-22.pdf?sfvrsn=20603c97_6</p> <p>Details were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovate UK was currently writing business cases to BEIS on how to deliver the portfolio for the next three years; • there were three areas of funding for NetZero; • there was £600m of funding for the next financial year; 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> considering what to replace the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund with; Adviser Services would be carried out by Innovate UK Edge, in collaboration with the British Business Bank; Innovate UK had established a new directorate called Regions and Nations, which reported directly into the CEO, Indro Mukerjee; this was with Place in mind in relation to the Levelling Up agenda; looking for a replacement to the Strength in Places Fund; the three pilots for innovation-based clusters were in Glasgow, the West Midlands and Greater Manchester. The areas had been pre-determined by BEIS, although Innovate UK would be responsible for the delivery; Equality, Diversity & Inclusion pilot would be held in the southwest to lead that pilot activity; PB stated that LEPs would be interested in shaping these funds, exactly as they were doing with the BBB; and LB explained that any legal UK registered entity, including CICs and charities which were working on commercial-led innovation, were entitled to apply for innovation grants. <p>LB was thanked for her participation.</p>	
5.3	<p>Sustainable Technologies initiatives</p> <p>Innovation Centre for Applied Sustainable Technologies (iCAST) PB advised the meeting of a recent letter of support to iCAST for the production of biodegradable tree guards. iCAST was a collaboration of funding from Research England, the Getting Building Fund through SWLEP, SBC's Towns Fund and Heritage Lottery funding bid. iCAST was an arm of ICCE.</p> <p>Innovation Campus for the Circular Economy (ICCE) ICCE was looking for a physical presence in the area and Wroughton was a possibility.</p>	
6.0 AOB and items for the next meeting		
6.1	<p>Fuel costs discussion SW had added this to the agenda as a discussion point in order to understand how micro/small businesses were dealing with increasing fuel costs. PB explained that feedback was given to BEIS on the business environment on a regular basis as Growth Hub Navigators were constantly speaking to the business community. Currently, they were also looking out for businesses impacted by the situation in Ukraine.</p>	
6.2	Items for the next meeting	

Item	Narrative	Deadline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carried over from previous meeting – update on SBC Towns Fund from David Dewart • Porton Science Park • Draft Plan for Growth update • Business Action Plan • Feedback on hydrogen study • Growing Places Infrastructure Fund (GPIF) – an in-depth look at which businesses were being supported. 	
	<p>Further dates for 2022 Further dates to be advised for: May, still to be advised Wednesday, 6 July – 10am to 12 noon Monday, 12 September – 1pm to 3pm and Thursday, 3 November – 10.30am to 12.30pm</p>	
	Meeting closed at 12.50pm.	