

 Swindon & Wiltshire LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP	Minutes of Infrastructure, Ideas and Place (IIP) Subgroup Meeting 21 September 2021
--	---

Date: Tuesday, 21 September 2021

Time: 9am – 11am

Venue: via Microsoft Teams call

Name of Member	Organisation	Attendance
Claire Alexander (CA)	SWLEP	Apologies
Paddy Bradley (PB)	SWLEP CEO	✓
Phil Clement (PC)	SWLEP	✓
Dragana Houston (DH)	SWLEP	✓
Debby Skellern (DS)	SWLEP	✓
Pam Webb (PWe)	SWLEP Director	Apologies
Suzanne Wigmore (SW)	SWLEP Director	✓
Guest(s)	Lewis Durling, SWLEP David Dewart, Swindon Borough Council Rory Bowen, Wiltshire Council	
Chair	Suzanne Wigmore (SW)	
Minutes	Deborah House (DKH)	

Item	Narrative	Deadline
1.0	Welcome, introductions and apologies	
	The meeting opened at 9.04am. SW welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted.	
2.0	Minutes and Matters arising	
2.1	Approval of minutes from 24 June 2021.	
2.2	Matters Arising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DS to amend Terms of Reference to reflect discussion (as part of the Governance Review 2021). DS advised that the Governance Framework was undergoing its annual review. Any changes to the main body of the Subgroup Terms of Reference would apply to all Subgroups and not on an individual basis. 	

Item	Narrative	Deadline
	Other Matters arising were completed.	
Ideas		
3.1	<p>Growing Places Infrastructure Fund (GPIF)</p> <p>PC spoke to the papers and explained that through the freedoms and flexibilities which the SWLEP can use, it transferred £5.6m from unused LGF the GPIF fund and that there was currently £12.71m in the fund. Loans offered ranged from £150,000 to £2m. To date, £8m of loans had been awarded to 12 projects creating 250,000 sq ft of employment space, 100 jobs and 850 further jobs in the pipeline over the next three years. GPIF loans were for capital loans only. Loan sums awarded to a company but which had not been drawn down were charged a reduced amount of interest. GPIF revenue and capital funds were held separately. Two loans have been fully repaid with £5.35m currently at the offer stage. Circa £1m in interest has been accrued over the last five years of operation, which has helped fund other SWLEP economic activity.</p> <p>The GPIF Working Group was tasked with undertaking due diligence checks on a range of documents required as part of the online application. Loans were selected according to a range of criteria including alignment to the strategic priorities of the Local Industrial Strategy. The interest rate applied varied according to the level of risk associated with the project. Loans tended to be medium to high risk and some had been pre-revenue.</p> <p>The Chair requested that GPIF was a standing item on the agenda with a summary detailing the level of loans issued, on offer, in the pipeline and remaining unallocated funds.</p> <p>Action: PC to provide summary as requested.</p> <p>PC thanked Alison Robinson of Wiltshire Council, SWLEP's Accountable Body, for the good work she did in working with PC to issue the loans.</p> <p>The Ideas, Infrastructure and Places Subgroup: NOTED the performance of the GPIF Programme to date.</p>	
3.2	<p>Inward Investment Programme</p> <p>The EU ERDF funded programme had been running since 2018 and would close on 31 December 2021, local match had been secured from SWLEP, Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council with the SWLEP being the largest single cash contributor. There were no plans to continue the programme beyond 31 December 2021. PC outlined the successes achieved by the programme, the events attended and the activity which had taken place online. Activities had targeted the life sciences, biodefence and</p>	

Item	Narrative	Deadline
	<p>pharmaceuticals sectors, digital technologies and the advanced manufacturing sectors including the Honda supply chain. Programme targets had been met and the pipeline of projects was strong, particularly within the manufacturing and distribution sectors. PC was thanked for all his hard work over the three years.</p> <p>The Ideas, Infrastructure and Places Subgroup: NOTED the performance of the Inward Investment Programme to date; and NOTED that the EU funded Joint Inward Investment Programme ceased on 31 December 2021.</p>	
Infrastructure		
4.0	New Energy Vehicle Fuelling Infrastructure: Hydrogen	
4.1	<p>UK Hydrogen Strategy summary DH spoke to the paper and outlined the direction of the UK's Hydrogen Strategy. Three hydrogen consultations were open until 31 October; they were on the UK Hydrogen Strategy, Net Zero Hydrogen Fund and the Hydrogen Business Model.</p> <p>The Ideas, Infrastructure and Place Subgroup: AGREED to develop responses to current consultations, focussing on two core areas: transport and green hydrogen production.</p>	
4.2	<p>Draft Swindon and Wiltshire Green Hydrogen Strategy</p> <p>DS presented the headlines of the draft Green Hydrogen Strategy to the Working Group.</p> <p>Further work had been undertaken over recent months to understand where SWLEP and the wider M4 LEP collaboration could add value to the work undertaken nationally. The USP was identified as small scale green hydrogen demonstrators i.e. using renewable energy to enable electrolysis.</p> <p>The draft Green Hydrogen Strategy would be shared at the November meeting as an agenda item.</p> <p>The SWLEP's emphasis on green hydrogen did make it stand out from other national and regional approaches which included the production of blue hydrogen. The methods used to produce blue hydrogen produced carbon dioxide. Green Hydrogen was genuinely as close as possible to zero emissions.</p>	2 Nov 21
4.3	<p>New Energy Vehicles (NEV) Fuelling infrastructure update DH spoke to the meeting and the presentation can be accessed by following the link below.</p>	

Item	Narrative	Deadline
	<p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/sub-groups/infrastructure-ideas-and-place-subgroup/nev-update---iip---sep2021.pdf?sfvrsn=fbeebc09_4</p> <p>SWLEP had convened a Working Group of neighbouring LEPs working together along the wider M4 corridor comprising SWLEP, GFirst, West of England, and Thames Valley and Oxfordshire. In 2020, four strategic outline business cases had been produced and were aligned to the Swindon and Wiltshire Energy Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hydrogen energy demonstrator; • hydrogen inter-city bus and coach travel demonstrator; • hydrogen logistics demonstrator; and • community charging. <p>Work on the green hydrogen energy demonstrator was being progressed to feasibility stage and looked at stimulating supply. Conversations were underway with potential users to stimulate the local demand for hydrogen energy. A big was the higher costs associated with switching fleet to hydrogen amongst early adopters; this was likely to need public sector intervention. SWLEP had written some letters of support and could potentially help businesses to make bids and thus try to stimulate demand.</p> <p>Local hydrogen work had caught the attention of BEIS and SWLEP had been invited to a conversation.</p> <p>The community charging work was focussed on electric vehicles and would probably be something the local authorities were better placed to work on. For example, Bradford on Avon had been awarded monies from the Rural Community Energy Fund and SWLEP had supported the bid on where these charging points would need to be sited.</p> <p>The Ideas, Infrastructure and Place Subgroup: AGREED to explore ways to create more formal working relationships with the M4 Local Enterprise Partnerships and the Western Gateway to achieve scale in deploying hydrogen across transport applications and improve the commercial viability of the local hydrogen projects; and AGREED to continue to progress the three hydrogen SOBCs, seeking funding and partners for the subsequent phases.</p>	
5.0	<p>Rail Strategy update</p> <p>DH presented to the meeting. The presentation can be accessed by following the link.</p>	

Item	Narrative	Deadline
	<p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/sub-groups/infrastructure-ideas-and-place-subgroup/rail-update---iip-21-sep2021.pdf?sfvrsn=b6ece81a_4</p> <p>DH explained that there were a number of timetable changes proposed which would affect services in Swindon and Wiltshire; the Western Gateway Subnational Transport Body has responded to the consultation. Owing to time pressures, the item was curtailed and postponed to the next meeting which should explain the Swindon and Wiltshire Rail Strategy and where the Devizes Gateway fitted in and how its business case would be viable.</p> <p>The item would be revisited, and an update be given at the November meeting.</p>	2 Nov 21
Place		
6.0	Levelling up agenda	
6.1	<p>Swindon update</p> <p>David Dewart of Swindon Borough Council (SBC) spoke to the meeting and outlined the plans of the council. The Town Investment Plan and the Towns Fund Board focussed on town centre regeneration and levelling up. The draft local plan had identified the Oldfield Campus area as a neighbourhood renewal zone and SBC was working with Homes England on this.</p> <p>SBC was also looking at the skills of Swindon residents, which were shown to perform below national skills indicators alongside its place focus. Swindon was an affluent, vibrant town and its areas of deprivation could get lost in this perception. It was noted however, that Swindon received Towns Fund monies in part because it met the deprivation criteria of the scheme.</p>	
6.2	<p>Wiltshire update</p> <p>Rory Bowen of Wiltshire Council spoke to the meeting and outlined some key areas on which the council was focussing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melksam House, which would be a project following the TEN format; • an active travel integrated scheme; and • the Longfield gyratory outside County Hall, Trowbridge which would link the town centre to deprived areas. <p>The Council's revitalised emphasis on place would involve much greater engagement with town and parish councils, using the High Street Task Force approach to bring forward deliverable projects. It would be a long exercise looking how to group particular High Streets together; that is, principal settlements, heritage settlements and transition towns.</p>	

Item	Narrative	Deadline
	<p>Wiltshire Council was purchasing data to produce the evidence base to have a better handle on the town centres and be in the right place for when bidding opportunities became available. The procurement exercise would use money from the Welcome Back Fund.</p> <p>Wiltshire Council's draft economic renewal plan and emerging council business plan would be brought together for prioritisation and administration and be cascaded over the next three months.</p> <p>DD advised that Swindon did not yet have a levelling up strategy. The focus would be on areas which SBC knew need intervention.</p> <p>The SWLEP and both local authorities were keen to engage regarding the Plan for Growth and to align the approaches, supporting each other and ensuring that there were no duplication nor gaps. If government did not see LEPs having a significant role, then Plan for Growth would be advisory.</p> <p>Action: Strategies and plans to be a standing item on Exec Team Plus Meeting.</p> <p>SWLEP had a live request for quote for the local economic assessment. However, there would be some gaps such as footfall data for Melksham, which Wiltshire Council would have to find separately.</p>	immediate
7.0	<p>New name for the subgroup discussion</p> <p>The new name for the Subgroup would need to be aligned to the new Plan for Growth. Further discussion required, all to give it some thought.</p>	
8.0	<p>Business Representatives on the Subgroup</p> <p>Business representatives would need the right skills and experience, for example, climate change, energy.</p> <p>Another SWLEP Limited membership drive would be undertaken after the Annual Conference which may identify some suitable business representatives; social media channels would also be used.</p> <p>Action: PB and DS to discuss and bring to the next meeting.</p>	2 Nov 21
9.0	<p>Reporting progress</p> <p>DS spoke to the paper. RAG rating was deemed a good way to monitor progress, but the group needed to recognise the difference between mobilisation stage for projects and the Highlight Reports to the Board which related to monitoring funded schemes and programmes.</p> <p>The Ideas, Infrastructure and Places Subgroup:</p>	

Item	Narrative	Deadline
	NOTED the reporting processes which were in operation.	
10.0	Items for the next meeting Standing items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing Places Infrastructure Fund (GPIF); and • monitoring. Future meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hydrogen strategy next iteration; • Rail strategy; • Business representation; • Future High Streets Fund: basic plans for Swindon, Salisbury and Trowbridge; • Broadband infrastructure and Project Gigabit roll out plans; and • EV infrastructure plans of SBC and Wiltshire Council. 	
11.0	AOB	
	None.	
	Date and time of the next meeting Tuesday, 2 November 2021 – 9am to 11am Dates for 2022 To be advised.	
	Meeting closed at 11.03am.	