

5 WLEP Chair Recruitment

WLEP BOARD RECOMMENDATION

The Board is asked to:

- Note the update on the initial WLEP Chair recruitment process;
- Note the engagement of Hewett Recruitment by WLEP Executive Team to support with WLEP Chair recruitment;
- Review and agree the proposal to appoint Julie Snell as interim Chair until recruitment process completed and a long-term successor appointed; and
- Agree the proposal to commence recruitment of the remaining WLEP Board vacancies (private sector).

5.1 Context

- 5.1.1 This report provides an update to the WLEP Chair recruitment process approved by WLEP Board following the item discussed at the meeting in April 2022.
- 5.1.2 The WLEP currently have 3 vacancies on the Board, resulting from decisions taken not to recruit until the outcome of the National LEP Review was published. Each of these vacancies are private sector seats on the WLEP Board. Linked to this, there are three distinct roles on the WLEP Board, specified as a requirement within our WLEP Local Assurance Framework (LAF), which are currently vacant for similar reasons. These roles are as follows:
- WLEP Chair
 - Vice-chair (private sector)
 - Diversity champion
- 5.1.3 At the WLEP Board in April 2022, it was decided that the WLEP Chair role appointment should be prioritised, recognising that the current incumbent, Mark Stansfeld, was coming to the end of his term of office.

5.2 WLEP Chair recruitment update

- 5.2.1 Following the WLEP Board meeting in April 2022, the WLEP Executive Team actioned the recommendation to advertise for the WLEP Chair role, using local channels including our website, newsletter, and social media channels. In addition, we also purchased some advertorial space in regional business publications to raise the profile of the opportunity.
- 5.2.2 Despite several leads, and conversations with prospective candidates, this process yielded a small number of formal applications.
- 5.2.3 The applicants have had their applications acknowledged and have been advised that the WLEP Board will now be consulted on the recommendation to extend the recruitment process to increase the field of candidates. Lines of communication remain open.

5.3 Executive Search engagement

- 5.3.1 The WLEP CEO has now engaged a local recruitment practice, Hewett Recruitment, to support the WLEP with an executive search and to identify a short-list of prospective candidates.

- 5.3.2 This process commenced in early July and is set to run into the Autumn, recognising summer is a challenging period to ensure availability of candidates, due to holidays.
- 5.3.3 Additionally, the WLEP and Worcestershire Growth Hub (WGH) team are identifying additional potential leads in parallel.

5.4 Interim Chair Proposal

- 5.4.1 In order to maintain momentum and ensure WLEP can meaningfully engage with central Government, local / regional partners, and stakeholders, the WLEP Board are advised to approve the recommendation to appoint Julie Snell, an existing WLEP Board member, as the interim Chair until the recruitment exercise is successfully concluded.
- 5.4.2 This recommendation would ensure WLEP have an active WLEP Board chair in role in anticipation that national Government will look to re-engage with LEPs and MCAs post-summer recess.

5.5 Next Steps

- 5.5.1 Subject to WLEP Board decision, the interim WLEP Chair role can be appointed with immediate effect.
- 5.5.2 The WLEP Executive Team will execute the recommendations and communicate outcomes to partners and stakeholders during August 2022.
- 5.5.3 This would leave the Board with three outstanding vacancies (including the Chair). These could be advertised to existing WLEP NEDs, who are supporting WLEP sub-Boards or could potentially be recruited from the pool of candidates identified through the Chair recruitment process.
- 5.5.4 Once all vacancies have been filled, the WLEP Board will need to assign the vacant roles of vice chair (private sector) and diversity champion.

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