



WORCESTERSHIRE LEP BOARD MEETING

Friday 6th October 2023

10:00 – 13:00

Venue: Worcestershire County Cricket Club, New Road, WR2 4QQ.

PRESENT:

Paul Walker	(PW)	Chair Worcestershire LEP
Jennifer Long	(JL)	Vice Chair- Director, Ice Blue Marketing and Design
Gary Woodman	(GW)	Chief Executive, Worcestershire LEP
Cllr Simon Geraghty	(SiG)	Leader of WCC and Cabinet Member for Finance
Cllr Tom Wells	(TW)	Leader of Malvern Hills District Council
Jeremy Cielisk	(JC)	Non-Executive Board Member
Nigel Hall	(NH)	The Digital Consigliere
Sue Jordan	(SJ)	Non-Executive Board Member
Vic Allison	(VA)	CEO, Malvern Hills District Council
Cat Lewis	(CL)	Principal, Kidderminster College.
Cllr Dan Morehead	(DM)	Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning & the Green Agenda (Rep for N Districts)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Luke Willetts	(LW)	Deputy CEO, Worcestershire LEP
Helena Augousti	(HA)	Executive Assistant, Worcestershire LEP

APOLOGIES:

Carl Arntzen	(CA)	Managing Director, Worcester Bosch Group
James Speller	(JS)	Managing Director, Speller Metcalfe
John Dillon	(JD)	Managing Director, GJS Dillon
Jane Britton	(JB)	Director of Communications & Participation, University of Worcester

1.	<u>Welcome and Apologies</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
1.1	PW welcomes CL to the Board.	
1.2	No interests declared.	
2.	<u>Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising</u>	
2.1	Matters Arising SJ asked about apprenticeships and how they are being advertised, especially to those that want to change career at an older age. GW confirmed that the offerings around apprenticeships has grown, and that Worcestershire is doing a lot. LW also confirmed to the board, that the website has recently been re-modelled.	
2.2	NH commented on the accuracy of the previous minutes regarding EDI, he has not been involved in this. GW informed the board that there are sessions planned around the EDI Agenda.	



<p>2.3</p> <p>2.4</p>	<p>NH followed on with a question: do we have a policy in the LEP on diversity and inclusion? GW confirmed that there is, but not at Board level.</p> <p>The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record.</p> <p>Action – link to the new website sent to SJ.</p> <p>Action – link/policy to be sent to NH.</p>	<p><u>LW</u> <u>GW</u></p>
<p>3.</p> <p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p> <p>3.3</p> <p>3.4</p> <p>3.5</p> <p>3.6</p> <p>3.7</p> <p>3.8</p> <p>3.9</p> <p>3.10</p> <p>3.11</p>	<p><u>LEP Transition (DBT) and DC Leaders Correspondence</u></p> <p>PW invited discussion from the board regarding the DC Leaders correspondence.</p> <p>A discussion followed, covering their thoughts and comments on the correspondence.</p> <p>SJ asked for clarification, that after April, does the LEP not exist as an entity. SG was clear that he believes the LEP should continue doing their good work, and that WCC can help provide some stability for the next 18 months, and as it is business lead, it can then feed back into the Economic Development as WCC level.</p> <p>CL asked for clarification on whether the DC's must answer to stakeholders. GW & VA confirmed that each district does it slightly differently, but they all have boards and stakeholders that they must answer too.</p> <p>SJ asked if after April, the DC have the money and not the LEP. LW confirmed that yes, originally some money came through the LEP, and they decided priorities, now DC do this.</p> <p>SJ also stated that she could see the point of the DC's wanting to have a seat on the board and more of a say, but also doesn't want it to undo the good work the LEP has already done.</p> <p>TW voiced that while the government choosing DC's for the money, is a big change, is also aware that there still has to be a coherent county wide approach.</p> <p>PW confirmed that the board & LEP needs to have a strategic plan. The board need to stay focussed and is therefore reluctant to make radical changes before the government have released their guidance on the new structure of the LEP's.</p> <p>Members of the board agreed, that if the DC's take voting seats and the board becomes an advisory board only, that they would consider resigning.</p> <p>Members also agreed that they would need to wait for the government guidance to come out before they make any changes or decisions.</p> <p>TW asked PW to please write the DC's a reply. PW confirmed he will.</p> <p>Action – to get the views of board members not present and come back to the districts.</p>	<p><u>PW/GW</u></p>
<p>4.</p> <p>4.1</p> <p>4.2</p>	<p><u>WLEP FAR Committee update – Risk Register</u></p> <p>LW explained the function of the FAR to the board.</p>	



4.3	<p>LW updated the board on the register and changes made by the committee at the last meeting. Currently there are 8 live risks, 1 was downgraded, 4 were upgraded, 2 were closed, 1 stayed the same and 1 was added.</p>	
4.4	<p>The main escalation was Political change, the mitigation strategy decided by the committee, was to create an integrated plan with DC's and WCC.</p> <p>SJ stated that with the headlines focussing on the LEP's closing, going forward, businesses will be even more confused, therefore the board/LEP need to provide clarity, and be clear on the message to business.</p>	
5.	<p><u>WLEP Strategy Session: Business Environment</u></p>	
5.1	<p>JL introduced this part of the agenda & updated the board on visits carried out to the Growth Hub (GH) following the last board meeting.</p>	
5.2	<p>JL stated that she believed the board don't always understand the role of the GH. So, JL & PW arranged meetings with members of the GH and attended some events to get a better understanding.</p>	
5.3	<p>JL commented that maybe the marketing needs to be clearer on how the GH can help you as a business, and that targets being set by DC's/UKSPF and the reporting on these, is taking away from their day-to-day role.</p>	
5.4	<p>LW then showed the board a presentation on the GH.</p>	
5.5	<p>NH asked for a summary of the top 3 requirements from market. Skills was commented as one of these. CL stated that some of the issues faced are getting students into trainee positions, recruitment of staff to train these students and lack of funding from employers.</p>	
5.6	<p>SJ commented that with more money being invested in apprenticeships, there is less for CPD.</p>	
5.7	<p>LW told the board that at the recent Business Roundtable Hewett Recruitment discussed a current trend for lack of spending on recruitment and talent hoarding, i.e., keeping staff and dealing with lower productivity.</p>	
5.8	<p>JC then asked if the GH keep a list of businesses that have closed and the reason why and is a plan created for where the businesses want to be in 3 years. LW replied that the Account Managers handle this, they will keep going back to businesses and help move them forward.</p>	
5.9	<p>NH stated that there should be 10 case studies that clearly show how the GH has helped, that board members can use in their communications.</p>	
5.10	<p>The board then discussed the UKSPF outcomes, CL commented that there seems to be a lack of joined up thinking, e.g. Wyre Forest outcomes don't put a lot of money/emphasis on skills.</p>	
5.11		



<p>5.12</p> <p>5.13</p>	<p>PW suggested that there needs to be a coherent Worcestershire strategy which sits alongside WCC thinking, this could be driven by the LEP.</p> <p>JL asked if the reporting could be more automated/digital, so it frees up the Account Managers to see and manage the businesses.</p> <p>The board then discussed a Business Environment Sub Board and the merits of it.</p> <p>Action – send 10 case studies to the board. Action – board to send ideas/thoughts regarding the Business Env. Sub board to LW & JL.</p>	<p><u>LW</u> <u>All</u></p>
<p>6.</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p> <p>6.3</p> <p>6.4</p> <p>6.5</p> <p>6.6</p> <p>6.7</p>	<p><u>Innovation</u></p> <p>LW & NH present to the board.</p> <p>NH tells the board that there needs to be an innovation model in Worcestershire as there is nothing currently and asked the board if is this a journey that they want to go on.</p> <p>CL asked if there needed to be better engagement with FE's to share what innovation is and what FE's role in this is.</p> <p>PW commented that he believes the strategy needs to be homegrown and driven by the private sector, the LEP needs to be the voice of this and have a strategic plan.</p> <p>The board then discuss the possible innovation models and who could be involved.</p> <p>GW then informs the board of a planned Angel Investors Event on 21st November at WCCC.</p> <p>NH asks the board if they agree to a sub-board which will steer this. GW & LW to come up with the strategic and operational plan.</p> <p>Action – let NH know of any individuals who can sit on this board, be in this environment.</p>	<p><u>All</u></p>
<p>7.</p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p> <p>7.3</p>	<p><u>Conference</u></p> <p>GW updated the board on the plans for the conference.</p> <p>It was decided that if the board want a hybrid model, then it will need to be moved from November to February.</p> <p>The board approved the hybrid model and change in date.</p>	
<p>8.</p> <p>8.1</p>	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <p>None.</p>	