



**WORCESTERSHIRE LEP BOARD MEETING**

**Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022**  
**10:00 – 12:00**

**Virtual Via Teams**

**PRESENT:**

Mark Stansfeld	(MS)	Non-Executive Chair
Gary Woodman	(GW)	Chief Executive, Worcestershire LEP
Cllr Marc Bayliss	(MB)	Leader Worcester City Council (Representing Southern DCs)
Cllr Simon Geraghty	(SiG)	Leader of WCC and Cabinet Member for Finance
Jane Britton	(JB)	Director of Communications and Participation of University of Worcester
Jennifer Long	(JL)	Director, Ice Blue Marketing and Design
John Dillon	(JD)	Managing Director, GJS Dillon
Julie Snell	(JS)	Non-Executive Director of Hereford & Worcestershire Health & Care Trust
Stuart Laverick	(SL)	Principal & Chief Executive, Heart of Worcestershire
Jeremy Cieslik	(JC)	Chief Operating Officer, Mettis Aerospace

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Ian Smith	(IS)	Assistant Director West Midlands and South West, BEIS
Luke Willetts	(LW)	Director of Operations, Worcestershire LEP
Phoebe Dawson	(PD)	Director of Business Engagement, Worcestershire LEP
Vic Allison	(IM)	Wychavon District Council
Kate Snell	(KS)	Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership
Linda Smith	(LS)	BetaDen
Neil Cassidy	(NC)	Rolls Royce Defence and Aerospace (Worcestershire Innovation Board Member)
Steph Simcox	(SS)	Head of Finance, Worcestershire County Council

**APOLOGIES:**

Carl Arntzen	(CA)	Managing Director, Worcester Bosch Group
Cllr Karen May	(KM)	Leader of Bromsgrove District Council
Sue Jordan	(SJ)	Non-Executive Board Member
Cllr Helen Dyke	(HD)	Ward Councillor for Wyre Forest District Council

1.	<b><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></b>	<b>ACTION</b>
1.1	Mark Stansfeld (Chair) welcomed the Board to our first board meeting for the year. Hoping this will be last of our virtual meetings with face to face meeting planned for next time.	



1.2	Apologies were received and noted from Carl Arntzen, Cllr Karen May, Cllr Helen Dyke and Sue Jordan.	
1.3	Luke advised that Neil Cassidy will be joining us later on in the agenda for the Innovation item.	
<b>2.</b>	<b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b>	
2.1	MS asked the Board if there were any declarations of interest.	
2.2	None were raised.	
<b>3.</b>	<b><u>Minutes of WLEP Board Meeting on 08<sup>th</sup> October 2021.</u></b>	
3.1	Remainder of notes were agreed to be correct and the minutes were signed off as a true record.	
<b>4.</b>	<b><u>Matters Arising and Action List from 08<sup>th</sup> October 2021 Meeting - Correspondence.</u></b>	
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Action list</b>	
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
4.3	The Chair asked Gary to review action list from previous board meeting.	
4.4	GW updated on business led Net Zero ambitions in Worcestershire with LW referencing meeting this week between Faun Zoeller and MHDC and WDC on a potential collaboration around the Council's waste fleets and a data logging exercise underway to understand energy requirements.	
4.5	GW updated that the forward plan re: digital connectivity, following discussion at October's board meeting would be fed back to the board later on in the year with progress.	
<b>5.</b>	<b><u>WLEP Priority Setting for 2022/23 – Gary Woodman / Luke Willetts.</u></b>	
5.1	GW presented the powerpoint presentation to the board on the LEP's objectives to date.	
5.2	National LEP review, Levelling Up White Paper, Economic Recovery post-Covid and UK transition from the European Union were discussed by the board and their impact on the local context for 2022/23 period.	
5.3	JD queried what was meant re: LEP's role in supporting the delivery of Towns Fund and other funds which went to District Councils. GW clarified that whereas LEP has been money winner in past, recent government policy has been to route funding via Local Authorities.	



	Therefore, the team were providing expertise and capacity to support partners to ensure delivery.	
5.4	GW outlined proposal to utilise local LEP resources (via GPF) to fund LEP operations in 2022/23. This would provide certainty and continuity for 12 months whilst awaiting LUWP and outcome of National LEP Review. SL supportive of this proposal and the value added by LEP particularly set against the context of a strained labour market and lack of capacity for other partners to pick up this workload in absence of LEP. MB added support and referenced the positive working relationships between this LEP and each of the Local Authorities, which is not shared across the country. JS also supported work of the LEP and agreed recommendation.	
5.5	GW then led a discussion with Board on proposed priorities for 2022/23 covering the 5 pillars of the Plan for Growth.	
5.7	BetaDen cohorts 5 & 6 starting this year and the BetaDen North in the Kidderminster area. NexGworx Health Accelerator incubator plan was discussed, and JS supported its inclusion and suggested getting closer to Mike Emery at NHS to help bring this forward and explore potential links with the GigaHub funding opportunity from DCMS. MS outlined the fibre engineer skills shortage linked to the digital connectivity agenda and felt Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership should lobby for National Centre in Worcestershire.	
5.8	JD added the commercial property market is moving within the Bromsgrove and Droitwich regions presently. Towns and city centres are slow.	
5.9	JL queried how the LEP can work on feeding information back to businesses and connect this back to 'on the ground' activity within companies e.g.: accelerator and innovation proposals. Action – chair added to action on this for future meeting.	GW
5.10	JD queried whether LEP should invite the Chamber to next meeting and seek their insights/plans/challenges for Worcestershire businesses as may provide opportunity for join-up.	GW
5.11	Chair had an updated meeting with Sharon of the Chamber end of last year and he added that they too have their own challenges.	
5.12	JC agreed with priorities but made the point that activity alone does not deliver positive results. Suggested we have a Balanced Scorecard with KPI's we are seeking to influence in 2022/23 alongside our macro-economic indicators around GVA and job growth. JC added LEP needs to promote itself more within the county.	
	Chair closed on this and thanked the board for the informative feedback, summarising that the Board approved the proposed recommendation to utilise GPF funding to support Worcestershire Local Enterprise	



	Partnership in 2022/23 in event of no/partial Government funding support.	
<b>6.</b>	<b><u>Worcestershire Innovation Action Plan – Luke Willetts / Kate Snell.</u></b>	<b>LW / KS / NC</b>
6.1	LW and KS presented to the board the update on the latest action plan of the Innovation Board. LW introduced Neil Cassidy from Rolls Royce Defence and Aerospace to the board.	
6.2	NC introduced himself to the board adding he previously worked for QinetiQ in the county but now works for Rolls Royce, the defence sector and is Director for Cyber Security, IT Risk & Compliance, Enterprise Architecture.	
6.3	The Innovation Board Membership was outlined along with their range of expertise and background.	
6.4	KS provided overview of National Govt innovation strategy and LW made point despite emerging picture nationally, LEP will continue to keep a watching brief to avoid duplication with local activity.	
6.5	NC added there are great assets within the county overall, but work was needed to integrate them better, too silo'ed currently.	
6.6	JC added that Worcestershire needs to work more with academic institutions support innovation activity.	
6.7	Recruitment was identified as an issue at a recent Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership/WCC Green Skills event within the county. There is also the potential for clean-tech opportunities in Hartlebury, linked to the EfW plant which could introduce more innovative local heating networks within that part of the county, subject to customer-demand.	
6.8	JC added on sharing good models per sectors and visions with others in our region. The role of skunkworks, originating from Lockheed's World War II project, was referenced.	
6.9	LW suggested next steps were to continue with quick wins activity i.e. Matching innovation funding opportunities with relevant local businesses/clusters, developing alliances with academic institutions etc, whilst in parallel developing the Innovation Enterprise Zone concept by shortlisting potential opportunities within the county to come back to Board in the future (taking into consideration pros/cons and existing engagement from associated innovations assets).	
6.10	The Board agreed that the overall 'direction of travel' related to the Plan for Growth and this theme. The Chair thanked LW, NC and KS on their informative presentation and feedback.	



<b>7.</b>	<b><u>Update from FAR Committee.</u></b>	
7.1	SS presented paper to the board outlining Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership are in a stable following receipt of the second tranche of Government funding for 2021/22.	
7.2	A balanced position for financial year end was forecast with potential of a small surplus possible, subject to an internal finance exercise to be conducted in early February with Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership executive Team. This will be transferred into reserves if applicable.	
7.3	Getting Building Fund scheme funding was noted as delivering, and an exercise with project partners and Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership would take place early March to understand what, if any, financial freedoms, and flexibilities might be required at end of 2021/22.	
7.4	Still awaiting on outcome of National LEP Review and therefore no certainty on core funding from 01 April 2022. Board noted this position.	
7.5	Further to earlier discussion, within the Priority Setting item, the Board formally approved the recommendation to utilise GPF funding for Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership operations in 2022/23 in event there is no or partial Government funding settlement.	
<b>8.</b>	<b><u>AOB and Close.</u></b>	
8.1	It was noted to the board that Linda Smith would be resigning from the team and leaving in April. She thanked the board for their support during her time as CEO of BetaDen. Chair thanked Linda for all her passionate work with BetaDen and noted the successes and cohorts supported, especially when considering she started from scratch.	
8.2	GW added that Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership had a scheduled Annual Performance Review meeting with BEIS, on 10 February 2022. The Board noted and will await outcomes following the meeting.	
<b>9.</b>	<b><u>Dates for 2022 –</u></b>  <b>24<sup>th</sup> March 2022 10.00 – 13:00</b> <b>19<sup>th</sup> May 2022 10.00 - 13:00</b> <b>21<sup>st</sup> July 2022 10.00 – 13:00</b> <b>22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022 10.00 – 13:00</b> <b>24<sup>th</sup> November 2022 10.00 – 13:00</b>	