

Minutes of the Heart of the South West (HotSW) Joint Committee

Plymouth City Council, Council House, Plymouth PL1 2AA

10.00am, Friday 23 March 2018

Attendance

Voting Members

Cllr John Hart	Leader - Devon County Council
Cllr David Fothergill	Leader - Somerset County Council
Cllr Ian Bowyer	Leader - Plymouth City Council
Cllr David Thomas	Leader – Conservative Group, Torbay Council
Cllr Paul Diviani	Leader - East Devon District Council
Cllr Peter Edwards	Leader - Exeter City Council
Cllr Clive Eginton	Leader - Mid Devon District Council
Cllr Mike Edmunds	North Devon District Council (Substitute)
Cllr John Tucker	Leader - South Hams District Council
Cllr Jayne Whittaker	Leader - Torridge District Council
Cllr Philip Sanders	Leader - West Devon Borough Council
Cllr Ric Pallister	Leader - South Somerset District Council
Cllr John Williams	Leader - Taunton Deane Borough Council
Cllr Anthony Trollope-Bellew	Leader - West Somerset Council
Andrew Cooper	Secretary of State Appointee - Dartmoor National Park Authority
Cllr Andrea Davis	Deputy Chairman - Exmoor National Park Authority

Non-voting Members

Steve Hindley	Chairman - Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership
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Officers

Keri Denton	Head of Economy, Enterprise and Skills -Devon County Council
Phill Adams	Senior Manager - Employment and Skills - Devon County Council
Sue Rose	Policy Lead - Devon County Council
Pat Flaherty	Chief Executive - Somerset County Council
Julian Gale	Strategic Manager/Partnership Governance - Somerset County Council
Mark Ford	Service Manager - Communications and Operations - Somerset County Council
Peter Stiles	Clerk to the Joint Committee - Somerset County Council
Tracey Lee	Chief Executive - Plymouth City Council

Alison Ward	Regional Portfolio Manager - Plymouth City Council
Steve Parrock	Chief Executive - Torbay Council
Richard Cohen	Deputy Chief Executive - East Devon District Council
Karime Hassan	Chief Executive - Exeter City Council
Lorraine Betts	Policy Officer - Exeter City Council
Stephen Walford	Chief Executive - Mid Devon District Council
Mike Mansell	Chief Executive - North Devon District Council
Phil Shears	Chief Executive - Teignbridge District Council
Jenny Wallace	Chief Executive - Torridge District Council
Sophie Hosking	Head of Paid Service - South Hams District and West Devon Borough Councils
Stuart Brown	Chief Executive - Mendip District Council
Doug Bamsey	Corporate Director - Sedgemoor District Council
Alex Parmley	Chief Executive - South Somerset District Council
Bruce Lang	Assistant Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer - Taunton Deane Borough and West Somerset Council
Shirlene Adam	Director of Operations - Taunton Deane Borough Council
Chris Garcia	Chief Executive - Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership
Eifion Jones	Head of Strategy and Operations - Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership

Apologies

Phil Norrey	Devon County Council
Mark Williams	East Devon District Council
Cllr David Brailey	North Devon District Council
Cllr Jeremy Christophers	Teignbridge District Council
Cllr Harvey Siggs	Mendip District Council
Cllr Tom Killen	Mendip District Council
Cllr Duncan McGinty	Sedgemoor District Council
Cllr Dawn Hill	Sedgemoor District Council
Alison Griffin	Sedgemoor District Council
Penny James	Taunton Deane Borough Council
Cllr Bill Hitchens	Dartmoor National Park Authority
Sarah Bryan	Exmoor National Park Authority
Kate Spencer	Corporate Support – Torbay Council

1. Appointments

1.1 Election of Chairman

On the motion of Cllr Hart, seconded by Cllr Edwards, Cllr Fothergill was elected Chairman for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

1.2 **Appointment of Vice-Chairman**

On the motion of Cllr Hart, seconded by Cllr Trollope-Bellew, Cllr Diviani was appointed Chairman for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

2.1 Details of councillors' appointments to local authorities were displayed in the meeting room and therefore there was no need to verbally declare these as personal interests.

3. **Minutes**

3.1 The Minutes of the Shadow Joint Committee meeting held on 11 November 2017 were confirmed and signed as correct.

4. **Public Question Time**

4.1 There were no public questions.

5. **Update**

5.1 **Discussions with Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)**

Tracey Lee, Plymouth City Council, reported on:

- a very positive meeting that had taken place in furtherance of devolution discussions with BEIS' South West England and West Midlands Cities and Local Growth Unit which was headed by Tony Bray, Area Director. Officials had praised the approach taken by the HotSW Partnership and gave encouragement to continue. BEIS officials were particularly impressed by: the unity and clarity of purpose of the Partnership; the productive relationship between the public and private sector, illustrated by close working with the HotSW Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP); the clear leadership and governance arrangements which provided reassurance of the Partnership's commitment and capacity to deliver; and the ambitious vision set out in the Productivity Strategy, building on the Partnership's strengths.

A clear message that came across from the discussions was the need for the Partnership to be flexible and willing to work collaboratively with other areas beyond the HotSW LEP boundary. Tracey Lee referred to current successful cross-LEP collaboration and an emerging consolidation around a south west peninsula grouping of the three LEPs (Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, HotSW and Dorset) which would

provide a coherent geography, a greater critical mass and a stronger voice to Government where necessary and appropriate

- the development of a pilot Local Industrial Strategy for HotSW based on the Productivity Strategy which on completion would put the Partnership in a good position to benefit from the Government's Prosperity Fund and the proposed approach to BEIS to become an 'early adopter'
- suggested Government participation in the South West Rural Productivity Task Force focusing on rural and coastal communities which was supported by BEIS. The next step would be to approach DEFRA. It was understood that Public Works Loan Board funding might be available at discounted rates of interest for projects supported by the Task Force
- work being undertaken by south west LEPs to help roll out high speed broadband internet connectivity throughout the region.

5.2 Sub-Regional Transport Board

5.2.1 Pat Flaherty, Somerset County Council, reported on a proposal for the establishment of a sub-national transport board to facilitate joint working on strategic transport issues and act as a strong voice to Government for the south west. Discussions thereon between local authority chief executives, highway authority representatives etc had been very positive and the concept was supported by most authorities in the wider south west and BEIS. The proposal was being developed and was due to be considered by the south west leaders next month.

5.3 Housing

5.3.1 Karime Hassan, Exeter City Council, provided an update on the Housing workstream. He referred to the need, when developing the Partnership's housing 'ask', to identify barriers to delivery in urban and rural areas as well as funding opportunities. To this end he suggested that there should be an audit of the position on housing provision in each district within the Partnership followed by a housing summit to help shape the 'ask'.

5.3.2 **RESOLVED:** to support the proposed housing audit and housing summit and that a report thereon be brought to the next meeting.

5.4 South West Institute of Technology (SWIoT)

5.4.1 The Joint Committee considered a report by Phill Adams, Devon County Council on a £15.1 million joint bid by HotSW and Cornish partners to the Government's Institute of Technology competition. The report was presented by Keri Denton, Devon County Council and Phill Adams.

5.4.2 Bringing together a consortium of five of the region's colleges, both of its universities and five core business partners, the SWIoT bid sought to secure designation for a distributed IoT model to be rolled out across the HotSW Partnership area from 2019 focusing on enhancing digital and advanced engineering and manufacturing skills. The scope existed for a wider group of colleges and businesses to join the initiative at a later stage. A successful bid would enable six interlinked training centres or hubs to be developed across the peninsula, delivering a range of tailored provision to businesses and individuals within the 'golden opportunity' sectors and beyond. Co-located with the existing college and university offer, the new provision would be industry led, incorporating the latest in process and digital content, as well as drawing on the experience of key industrial partners from across the area.

5.4.3 The SWIoT bid was complementary to the ongoing focus on productivity and skills development, meeting the Partnership's emerging ambition to secure additional technical training capacity set out in the Productivity Strategy, as well as the broader ambitions of the Government's Industrial Strategy.

5.4.4 The SWIoT bid to the Government's £170m fund had been submitted on 1 March 2018, lobbying was taking place and a response was awaited. Keri Denton and Phill Adams were optimistic about the prospect of the bid being successful.

5.4.5 **RESOLVED:** to note the content and ambition of the South West Institute of Technology bid and seek to support the bid with Government Ministers and wider stakeholders/influencers as appropriate.

6. HotSW Productivity Strategy and Delivery Plan

6.1 The Joint Committee considered a report on the HotSW Productivity Strategy which had been developed over the past year through a range of engagement and consultation with partners and stakeholders through which the Partnership could achieve its aims, and the principles on which the associated Delivery Plan would be prepared. The report was presented by Tracy Lee, Plymouth City Council, as the Committee's Senior Responsible Officer.

6.2 The Productivity Strategy - which would replace the HotSW Strategic Economic Plan - set out the ambition of the Partnership to double the size of the Partnership area's economy over the next twenty years, thereby creating higher productivity and prosperity for all. The Strategy focused on creating the conditions to increase productivity and thereby drive prosperity and: identified the long-term ambition to raise productivity, the main themes and the approach; supported the devolution of greater power and autonomy for the area; and outlined how the Partnership would support the Government's Industrial Strategy.

6.3 The Productivity Strategy was not a community strategy for the HofSW area but rather an umbrella strategy which would sit over the local strategies and plans of

each organisation within the Partnership, which in turn sat above the neighbourhood plans of local communities.

6.4 The Strategy identified three strategic themes to focus Partnership activity to improve productivity which involved strengthening and developing: the leadership and ideas within businesses; the housing, connectivity and infrastructure people and businesses rely on for living, moving goods, accessing jobs and training, and exploiting new opportunities; and the ability of people to work, learn, and improve their skills in a rapidly changing global economy, and to maximise their economic potential. In addition, there were three cross-cutting themes referred to throughout the Strategy: inclusive growth for people, communities and places; capitalising on the area's distinctive assets; and maximising the potential from digital technology.

6.5 The report commented on the process of consultation, communication and engagement on the Strategy the results of which had been used to inform its development.

6.6 The next steps would involve drawing up a Delivery Plan for the Strategy alongside an Investment Framework.

6.7 Steve Hindley, HotSW LEP, reported that the LEP had endorsed the Strategy.

6.8 Joint Committee members looked forward to seeing progress on the Delivery Plan and some tangible early achievements.

6.9 **RESOLVED:**

(a) to adopt the Heart of the South West Productivity Strategy attached as Appendix 1 to the report and to authorise Tracey Lee (as Senior Responsible Officer), in consultation with the Chairman, to agree any final minor proofing changes required prior to publication

(b) to agree the principles that the Delivery Plan for the Strategy should be based on attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

7. **Statement of Strategic Intent**

7.1 The Joint Committee considered a report by the Chief Executives' Advisory Group setting out a Statement of Strategic Intent for the Committee as a policy framework document.

7.2 The report was presented by Pat Flaherty, Somerset County Council, who indicated that the Statement would ensure that the Joint Committee embraced a flexible approach to position itself to take advantage of any policy opportunities

arising from Government. The Statement complemented existing documents by describing the proposed relationship of the Joint Committee: with neighbouring local authorities; with other areas in the south west; and nationally, in order to support the delivery of the Productivity Strategy and when engaging with Government on different issues. It also set out the approach that the Joint Committee (and the LEP) would adopt in delivering the Productivity Strategy.

7.3 **RESOLVED:** to adopt the Statement of Strategic Intent to guide the Joint Committee's work moving forward.

8. Joint Committee Leadership and Management Support Arrangements

8.1 The Joint Committee considered a report presented by Julian Gale, Somerset County Council, on the leadership and management arrangements at officer level and in support of the Committee.

8.2 It was critical that the Joint Committee had adequate support to drive its business and ensure that it met its objectives. Particular attention was being given at this stage to the Delivery Plan for the Productivity Strategy and discussions with Government officials on the wider opportunities presented by devolution.

8.3 **RESOLVED:** to endorse:

(a) the leadership and management support arrangements set out in the diagram attached as Appendix 1 to the report

(b) the working arrangements of the Chief Executives' Advisory Group attached as Appendix 2 to the report

(c) the working arrangements of the Chief Executives' Delivery Board attached as Appendix 3 to the report.

9. Next Meeting

9.1 Date

9.1.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Joint Committee would be held on Friday 25 May 2018 at 10.00am.

9.2 Venue for Future Meetings

9.2.1 Members discussed whether future meetings should, as a good democratic principle, be held at different locations within the Partnership area or at a single easily accessible venue, given concerns about travelling time.

9.2.2 After discussion, the Joint Committee supported a suggestion by the Chairman that meetings should be rotated, subject to the venues being reasonably accessible.

9.3 Work Programme for 25 May 2018 meeting

9.3.1 It was noted that this would include:

- an update on discussions with BEIS
- to agree principles for the Productivity Strategy Investment Framework
- to agree a revised budget for recommendation to the constituent authorities
- a report on housing audit/summit.

9.3.2 The Project Management Office (PMO) was asked to research the background to tourism tax options for report to the Committee. Potential for use of Second Homes Council Tax income for tourism would be reviewed under the Housing work-stream. Both items were raised by Cllr Tucker.

(Cllr Hart declared a personal interest in the item involving a Tourism Tax and stated that he would not be taking part in that part of the discussion by virtue of receiving an income from a business activity connected with the tourism industry).

(The meeting ended at 11.25am)

CHAIRMAN