

**Minutes of the meeting of the Heart of the South West (HotSW) Joint Committee held at the Padbrook Park Hotel, Cullompton at 11.45am, Friday 25 January 2019**

**Attendance**

**Voting Members**

Cllr John Hart	Leader - Devon County Council
Cllr David Fothergill	Leader - Somerset County Council (Chair)
Cllr Tudor Evans	Leader - Plymouth City Council
Cllr David Thomas	Leader - Torbay Council
Cllr Ian Thomas	Leader - East Devon District Council
Cllr Peter Edwards	Leader - Exeter City Council
Cllr Clive Eginton	Leader - Mid Devon District Council
Cllr Des Brailey	Leader - North Devon District Council
Cllr John Tucker	Leader - South Hams District Council
Cllr Jeremy Christophers	Leader - Teignbridge District Council
Cllr Jane Whittaker	Leader - Torridge District Council
Cllr Philip Sanders	Leader - West Devon Borough Council
Cllr Harvey Siggs	Leader - Mendip District Council
Cllr Dawn Hill	Substitute - Sedgemoor District Council
Cllr Jo Roundell-Greene	Substitute - South Somerset District Council
Cllr John Williams	Leader - Taunton Deane Borough Council
Cllr Anthony Trollope-Bellew	Leader - West Somerset District Council
Cllr Andrea Davis	Deputy Chairman, Exmoor National Park Authority

**Non-Voting Members**

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

Phil Norrey	Chief Executive - Devon County Council
Peter Doyle	Head of External Affairs - Devon County Council
Sue Rose	HotSW Joint Committee Support - Devon County Council
Pat Flaherty	Chief Executive - Somerset County Council
Julian Gale	Strategic Manager/Partnership Governance - Somerset County Council
Peter Stiles	Clerk to the Joint Committee - Somerset County Council

Tracey Lee	Chief Executive - Plymouth City Council and Senior Responsible Officer
Alison Ward	Regional Portfolio Manager - Plymouth City Council
Steve Parrock	Chief Executive - Torbay Council
Mark Williams	Chief Executive - East Devon District Council
Karime Hassan	Chief Executive - Exeter City Council
Stephen Walford	Chief Executive - Mid Devon District Council
Mike Mansell	Chief Executive - North Devon District Council
Sophie Hosking	Executive Director and Head of Paid Service - South Hams District and West Devon Borough Councils
Phil Shears	Chief Executive - Teignbridge District Council
Jenny Wallace	Head of Paid Service - Torridge District Council
Stuart Brown	Chief Executive - Mendip District Council
Doug Bamsey	Corporate Director - Sedgemoor District Council
James Hassett	Chief Executive Designate - Somerset West and Taunton Council
Alex Parmley	Chief Executive - South Somerset District Council
Kevin Bishop	Chief Executive - Dartmoor National Park Authority
Eifion Jones	Head of Strategy and Operations - Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership
David Ralph	Chief Executive - Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership
Tony Bray	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy/Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Suzanne Bond	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy/Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Nigel Jump	Consultant for BEIS/MHCLG
Ian Collinson	Homes England

## Apologies

Cllr Bill Hitchens	Dartmoor National Park Authority
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## **1. Declarations of Interest**

- 1.01 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. There were no other declarations of interest.

## **2. Minutes**

- 2.01 The Minutes of the Joint Committee meeting held on 5 October 2018 were confirmed and signed as correct.

## **3. Public Question Time**

- 3.01 There were no public questions.

## **4. Chair's Update**

- 4.01 Cllr Fothergill reported on developments since the last meeting, referring to:
- the sustained high level of activity as reflected in the current agenda
  - the national profile of the Joint Committee continuing to grow. There was ongoing engagement with Government officials and MPs on Brexit following the letter to the Rt Hon James Brokenshire, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and MPs seeking more information and support on preparations for EU withdrawal. A reply from the Minister had been promised but was still awaited. Cllr Fothergill referred to significant media interest in the work of the Joint Committee and his interviews on television and radio
  - continuing discussions with Government officials on other topics and he welcomed Tony Bray and Suzanne Bond from BEIS to the meeting and looked forward to regular engagement with them
  - the welcome choice of Exeter as one of five cities that the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) would work with to produce an infrastructure strategy. Linked to the Commission's 'Next Steps for Cities' programme, the strategy would bring together urban transport with planning, housing and other infrastructure requirements such as digital to help cities thrive and grow. It would also provide the basis for devolving budgets to cities in the future. This announcement would hopefully help the Joint Committee's case for the A303/A358 Corridor Study
  - although there had been no announcement in the Autumn Budget Statement about the Corridor Study bid, a further letter having been received from Sir John Armitt, Chair of the NIC, encouraging the Joint Committee to continue in its ambition. The possibility of pursuing the bid under the Comprehensive Spending Review was being looked at
  - Plymouth having succeeded in securing their Transforming Cities bid in September 2018.

4.02 At Cllr Fothergill's invitation, David Ralph, Chief Executive of HotSW LEP and Steve Hindley, Chair of HotSW LEP, gave updates on activities of the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership.

4.03 David Ralph referred to local successes and developments since the last meeting, as follows:

- the launch of the HotSW Careers Hub and Enterprise Advisor Network on 17 January 2019. This was one of 20 Career Hubs across the country established in collaboration with the Careers and Enterprise Company to help transform careers education for young people by providing them with high quality and impartial careers information, advice and guidance. The HotSW Careers Hub was a partnership between the LEP, the Careers and Enterprise Company, local authorities, education providers, employers and enterprise sectors; it hosted the already well-established Enterprise Advisor Network
- progress on work with Devon County Council on establishing, and securing Government funding for, a Skills Advisory Partnership to formulate relevant policies for the Local industrial Strategy
- progress on work with BEIS on the Nuclear Sector Deal and the opportunities it provided for funding for: unlocking growth opportunities in the nuclear supply chain through joint Government and industry support for smaller companies to access higher value contracts and new markets; research and development to support continued innovation; and developing nuclear clusters of expertise - the South West being well placed to capitalise on these opportunities in view of the construction of Hinckley C nuclear power station, decommissioning on other sites etc
- Government support for a bid to the EU for Inward Investment funds
- suggested collaboration on developing bids to the Government's Future High Street Fund
- Plymouth's successful bid to the Government's Cultural Development Fund - £3.5m to improve Plymouth's arts and cultural industries. The outcome of a bid to the Strength in Places Fund was awaited
- the LEP's willingness to share with the Joint Committee the outcomes of its recent annual performance review by Government
- the establishment of the HotSW LEP Joint Scrutiny Committee.

4.04 Steve Hindley, Chair of the HotSW LEP, gave an update on the Great South West initiative to further cross-LEP regional working and promote shared objectives and opportunities with neighbouring areas. In so doing, he referred to progress on the campaign to highlight the South West's economic potential, seek formal Government recognition for a 'Great South West' brand and make a case for Government investment on a par with other UK regions.

Steve encouraged other LEPs in the northern part of the South West region to join the HotSW, Dorset and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly LEPs in the Great South West partnership, referring to the benefits of so doing during the evolution of Local Industrial Strategies and the support for the GSW initiative

that he had received from Jake Berry, MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Steve referred to meetings of the Chairs of the 38 English LEPs with the Prime Minister on a regional basis, and his intention at a future such meeting to press for Government funding for the provision of appropriate infrastructure - the lack of which was inhibiting development - to maintain credibility with developers and industry generally.

## **5. Heart of the South West Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)**

- 5.01 David Ralph, Chief Executive, HotSW LEP, reported on the current position and next steps with the development of the HotSW LIS.
- 5.02 David outlined the process that would lead to consideration of the LIS Command Paper at the forthcoming LEP Board meeting. If accepted by the LEP Board the document would then be published and would form the basis of the development of the LIS. A project board would draft the LIS and an update would be provided to the March Joint Committee meeting.
- 5.03 RESOLVED unanimously to accept this approach to the development of the HotSW Local Industrial Strategy.

## **6. Heart of the South West Housing Task Force Report**

- 6.01 The Joint Committee considered a progress report by Stephen Walford, Tracy Aarons and Alison Ward on the South West Housing Task Force which was presented by Cllr Harvey Siggs, Leader, Mendip District Council and Steve Walford, Chief Executive, Mid Devon District Council.
- 6.02 Housing had been identified as one of the key priorities in the HotSW Productivity Strategy to support and stimulate growth within the HotSW area. In common with other parts of the country, the HotSW region had an increasing number of areas where housing delivery was becoming more challenging as long-term under-investment in infrastructure constrained the ability of the market to deliver growth without external input/support. Through the Joint Committee there was an opportunity to take a holistic approach to housing growth and to develop a more strategic dialogue with Government departments and with Homes England. This approach would add value to the delivery of existing Local Plans by identifying common challenges and opportunities that could be tackled together, including those that required cross-boundary working and would give a greater critical mass to secure support from Homes England.
- 6.03 Following a South West Housing Summit in September 2018, a Housing Task Force had been established to co-ordinate and drive this approach and this report sought agreement on the scope, objectives and role of the Task Force and the overall proposed approach.

- 6.04 The report covered: the role and membership of the Task Force (which included Homes England), meeting arrangements/work programme; its proposed objectives; and a possible need for a technical working group to co-ordinate information across the HotSW group of councils.
- 6.05 The report also discussed: HotSW housing 'asks'; and constraints to/opportunities for housing delivery involving: funding for infrastructure; skills and capacity within Council planning and housing teams, and other agencies; and policy and funding regimes.
- 6.06 Joint Committee members acknowledged the ambitious nature of the initiative and the welcome commitment of Homes England to playing a significant role, while emphasising the need for the urgent release of more Government funding to support infrastructure provision in the region.
- 6.07 RESOLVED

(a) to agree the role and membership of the Heart of the South West Housing Task Force and the principle of the senior technical officer group as needed

(b) to agree to collaborate on developing a HotSW-wide approach to 'asks' and ambition for action, acknowledging that this built on and did not replace the relationships and activity at sub-regional level where this exists

(c) to agree the proposed approach by the Task Force as set out in Paragraph 3.1 of the report and ask the Task Force to bring a report back to the Joint Committee at its meeting on 29 March 2019 with recommendations on a proposed package and an aligned work programme to further evidence any technical position to support the Joint Committee's ambition.

## **7. Brexit Update**

- 7.01 Phil Norrey, Chief Executive, Devon County Council, presented recommendations made by the Brexit Resilience and Opportunities Group (BROG) following their recent work on local preparations for Brexit.

### 7.02 RESOLVED

(a) to authorise BROG to continue to press the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to improve its two-way communication including sharing plans for all Brexit scenarios

(b) to approve BROG moving to an operational role to assist in preparedness; supporting, not duplicating, the work of the Avon and Somerset and Devon and Cornwall Local Resilience Forums

(c) to authorise BROG to develop a set of 'asks' of Government, making an offer to work with Government Departments and the Local Government Association on the transfer of new powers and funding burdens post-Brexit

(d) to note the resource inputs required by their own organisation

(e) to approve the use of £4,138 from the Joint Committee's budget to extend Brexit officer secondment from 1 to 3 days until April 2019

(f) subject to the Brexit outcome, and only if required, to approve the secondment of the Brexit officer from 1 and up to 3 days from April - end of June 2019 in the sum of £9,104.

## **8. Investment Framework Principles**

8.01 Alison Ward, Plymouth City Council, gave a presentation on the principles for the development of an investment framework for the Productivity Strategy and the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS), referring to the evolution of both strategies and their alignment with the principles for the HotSW Partnership and the Productivity Strategy Delivery Plan.

8.02 Alison also referred to the need, in adopting investment framework principles, to: comply with Government spending rules and adapt to new funding regimes; adopt the highest standards of good governance and transparency; and ensure that the principles sat alongside a comprehensive assurance framework.

8.03 RESOLVED to agree the following principles for an investment framework:

- investment must be clearly aligned to specific objectives in the Productivity Strategy or the Local Industrial Strategy and have regard to the cross-cutting themes (*Inclusive Growth, Maximising Digital, Capitalising on our Assets*)
- there should be a sequenced pipeline of projects that will deliver the programmes in the HotSW Productivity Strategy Delivery Plan, and the LIS Implementation Plan
- investments should comprise a range of funding sources to secure broad buy-in; local, national, public, private and third sector where appropriate
- the primary benefits of investments should be easily identifiable, and the impacts should be capable of measurement and evaluation
- we will aim to maximise the benefits of investment, connecting places to opportunities to extend the impact
- any learning from the delivery of projects should be used to inform future investment decisions
- expected benefits should be proportionate to the level of investment, respecting specific local circumstances and ensuring that smaller projects receive due consideration
- partners will be ambitious and creative in seeking to maximise overall investment to benefit the HotSW area.

## **9. Heart of the South West Joint Committee Governance Review Report**

9.01 The Joint Committee considered a report presented by Julian Gale, Somerset County Council, on the conclusions of the governance review commissioned in October 2018 covering: the role and functions of the Joint Committee; and its future meeting, budget and management support arrangements.

9.02 Key drivers for the review included:

- the revised legal status of Local Enterprise Partnerships and their lead role for the approval and delivery of a Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)
- the need for/ability of the Joint Committee to be the single 'voice' of the Devon and Somerset Councils in influencing Government and its agencies in building a HotSW profile in Westminster
- the requirement for the Joint Committee to move on from the planning and strategy stage of its work to overseeing an extensive delivery plan by a range of partners
- to ensure that the Joint Committee remained an appropriate and sustainable way of working and delivered value for money.

9.03 It was proposed that the Joint Committee's focus for the delivery phase of the Productivity Strategy should be in the following areas: strategic policy development; influence Government/key agencies to achieve direct intervention, support, funding and powers; design and deliver strategic HotSW response to Government offers and public sector reform where this would deliver improved productivity; deliver at scale; oversight of the delivery plan - working alongside and in collaboration with the HotSW LEP.

9.04 The report proposed changes to the political and management support arrangements for the Joint Committee and made a case for additional budget and management capacity to be invested in the Committee, based on a series of suggested outcomes.

9.05 More informal engagement was proposed by making greater use of Leaders and Chief Executives meetings within Devon and Somerset to reduce meetings pressures at the collective HotSW level. The Chief Executives had agreed that a significantly larger budget would be required to manage the work of the Joint Committee alongside the in-kind support provided by constituent authorities and others and, while they were looking at ways in which the current year's shortfall could be met, a stronger base funding mechanism was needed in the longer term.

9.06 RESOLVED



(a) to approve the amended arrangements document set out in Appendix C to the report (new text in red) for recommendation to the constituent authorities for approval to include the revised role/functions of the Joint Committee

(b) to approve the changes proposed to the Joint Committee's meeting arrangements

(c) to approve in principle the changes proposed to the Joint Committee's management support arrangements, noting that further work was required by the Chief Executives Advisory Group on the detail and that further recommendations would be brought to the Joint Committee in due course

(d) to note the position on the Joint Committee's budget and the actions proposed for 2019/20.

## **10. Transport for the South West Peninsula Update**

10.01 Julian Gale, Somerset County Council, gave an update on the establishment of a Shadow Sub-National Transport Board for the South West Peninsula. He reported:

- that the launch and first meeting of the Partnership had taken place on 8 November 2018
- the Partnership comprised representatives of the region's five transport authorities; the Heart of the South West and Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnerships and other agencies and had been branded Peninsula Transport
- Peninsula Transport would work with the Department for Transport on strategic transport priorities in the South West with the aim of securing investment to transform travel and boost economic growth across the region
- there was a local authority budget of approximately £320,000 to cover early running costs
- a case for longer-term funding of the operation of Peninsula Transport, built on a regional evidence base, was being developed for a July 2019 deadline
- there would be a Peninsula Transport website in due course
- the Partnership had registered an interest with the Planning Inspectorate in participating in the Public Inquiry into the A303 Stonehenge improvement scheme in Wiltshire.

10.02 The Joint Committee noted the current position.

## **11. Next Meeting**

11.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Joint Committee would be held on Friday 29 March 2019 (time and venue to be confirmed).

**12. Work Programme for 29 March 2019**

12.1 It was noted that this would include:

- progress on the Productivity Strategy Delivery Plan and Communication arrangements
- progress on the Local Industrial Strategy
- South West Housing Task Force update
- Brexit update.

(The meeting ended at 12.35 pm)