

**Minutes of the meeting of the Heart of the South West (HotSW) Joint Committee  
Virtual Meeting, 12.00pm on Friday 9 October 2020.**

**Attendance**

**Members:**

Cllr Val Keitch	Leader – South Somerset District Council (Chair)
Cllr Tudor Evans	Leader - Plymouth City Council (Vice-Chair)
Cllr David Fothergill	Leader – Somerset County Council
Cllr Bob Deed	Mid Devon District Council
Cllr Philip Bialyk	Leader - Exeter City Council
Cllr David Worden	Leader - North Devon District Council
Cllr Judy Pearce	Leader - South Hams District Council
Cllr Ken James	Leader - Torridge District Council
Cllr Claire Hodson	Deputy Leader - Torridge District Council
Cllr Neil Jory	Leader - West Devon Borough Council
Cllr Ros Wyke	Leader - Mendip District Council
Cllr Gill Slocombe	Deputy Leader - Sedgemoor District Council
Cllr Paul Hayward	East Devon District Council
Cllr Alistair Dewhirst	Teignmouth District Council
Cllr Pamela Woods	Dartmoor
Cllr Swithin Long	Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing - Torbay Council
Cllr Paul Arnott	Leader - East Devon District Council
Cllr Marcus Kravis	Somerset West and Taunton Council
Cllr Andrea Davis	Deputy Chairman - Exmoor National Park Authority
Cllr Liz Leyshon	Mendip District Council
Cllr Liz Brookes-Hocking	Devon/Somerset Associations of Local Councils

**Officers/Local Enterprise Partnership etc:**

Phil Norrey	Chief Executive – Devon County Council
Sue Rose	Policy Lead – Devon County Council
Scott Wooldridge	Strategic Manager, Governance and Democratic Services – Somerset County Council
Andrew Randall	Clerk to the Joint Committee – Somerset County Council
Tracey Lee	Chief Executive – Plymouth City Council and Senior Responsible Officer, Heart of the South West Partnership
Alison Ward	Regional Portfolio Manager – Plymouth City Council
Mark Williams	Chief Executive – East Devon District Council

Anne-Marie Bond	Chief Executive – Torbay Council
Stephen Walford	Chief Executive - Mid Devon District Council
Ken Miles	Chief Executive - North Devon Council
Pat Flaherty	Chief Executive – Somerset County Council
James Hassett	Chief Executive - Somerset West and Taunton Council
Alex Parmley	Chief Executive - South Somerset District Council
Karl Tucker	Chair - Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership
David Ralph	Chief Executive - Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership
Andy Bates	Chief Executive - South Hams District Council
Doug Bamsey	Strategic Director – Sedgemoor District Council
Michael Tichford	Head of Place - North Devon Council
Mike O’Dowd- Jones	Strategic Manager Highways & Transport – Somerset County Council
Steve Hearse	Strategy Manager (Resources) - Torrington
Suzanne Bond	Cities & Local Growth, BEIS

## **1. Apologies**

Apologies for absence: No apologies were received in advance of the meeting.

## **2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **3. Minutes of the Previous HotSW Joint Committee Meeting**

The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2020 as a correct record, following an amendment for Councillor Leyshon to be listed under Mendip District Council and not Somerset County Council.

## **4. Public Question Time**

No Public Questions were received in advance of the meeting.

## **5. HotSW Budget Update 2020/21 and Draft Budget 2021/22**

Scott Wooldridge, Monitoring Officer for the Administering Authority, presented the Budget update 2020/21 and set out the Draft Budget for 2021/22.

The report provided an update for the Constituent Authorities on the Joint Committee's pooled budget for 2020/21. The report set out recommendations for budget allocations from the available residual budget. It also set out proposals for a draft 2021/22 Budget and partner contributions, to recommend to Constituent Authorities.

In recent months the Joint Committee had reviewed and updated its Governance arrangements in the light of experience, since its establishment in early 2018, and in response to changing Government policy and local circumstances. Some changes are required to the Committee's Arrangements document as a result and these need to be formally agreed by the Constituent Authorities. It is essential that the Joint Committee remains fit for purpose, represents a sustainable way of working into the future, and delivers value for the resources committed to it by the Constituent Authorities.

The Joint Committee approved the 2020/21 Budget at its meeting in September 2019. The Committee also re-appointed Somerset County Council as the Administering Authority until 22 January 2022.

During the consideration of the item there was a request for future contributions from Exmoor and Dartmoor National Parks Authorities to be lower due to their annual budgets being lower than district partners, along with existing budgetary pressures and the prospect of voluntary redundancies being faced within the next year. The Committee was supportive of the National Parks Authorities situation. It was acknowledged that a review of the National Parks Authorities contribution would be undertaken as part of setting 2022/23 budgets.

### **RESOLVED**

The Committee agreed that: -

(a) funding is allocated, and Plymouth City Council are re-appointed to provide Officer support for the Project Management Office for 2020/21 and until 22 January 2022 (see section 4.4 and table in 4.5.1).

(b) funding is allocated, and Somerset West & Taunton Council are reappointed for 2020/21 to provide staff resources to support the HEROG work (see section 4.4 and table in 4.5.1).

(c) funding is allocated for project officer resources to support and develop the Housing Task Force priorities during 2020/21 (see table in 4.5.1).

(d) the draft 2021/22 Budget is considered in section 4.6 together with recommending to the Constituent Authorities that the Joint Committee budget contributions for 2021/22 should be:

- County Councils - £21,000
- Unitary Councils - £8,000
- District Councils and National Park Authorities - £2,800

Note: see para 4.6 in the supporting report for the detail behind this recommendation.

## **6. Local Industry Strategy**

David Ralph, CEO of the HotSW LEP outlined that the Heart of the South West was invited to co-develop a Local Industrial Strategy with Government in July 2018. Building on the strongly evidence based HotSW Productivity Strategy, published in March 2018, work commenced to distil local priorities that matched the Government's Industrial Strategy criteria. The LEP, councils, universities and businesses worked with central Government colleagues to develop the HotSW Local Industrial Strategy, reaching a final draft by the end of 2019.

Changes at the top of Government and a gradual policy shift has meant that the Local Industrial Strategy has not been finally ratified by Government and is unlikely to be published in its originally intended form as a co-owned document. The impact of Covid-19 has been significant but the underlying structural challenges and opportunities within the HotSW economy remain; the latest Oxford Economics work forecasts a 0.6-1.2% per year growth rate across the four upper tier areas to 2025 compared with 1.3% nationally; the challenge of clean and inclusive growth remains.

The LIS was based on a robust evidence base that was extensively tested by Government. Despite not receiving Ministerial sign-off, officials have consistently praised the HotSW LIS, its rigour, clarity and evidence-based approach. Alongside the vital response work currently under way, the LIS therefore is still highly relevant as a guiding strategy for planning HotSW's recovery, sitting within the wider context of the Productivity Strategy. The intention therefore is to publish it locally and to use it as the basis for developing the recovery work.

## **RESOLVED**

The Committee endorsed the publication of the Heart of the South West Local Industrial Strategy.

### **6. Closing Remarks and Planning for the Public Meeting**

The Chair recognised the collective efforts of all partners and the Committee acknowledged the 2021 meeting dates as follows:

29<sup>th</sup> January 2021

12<sup>th</sup> March 2021

25<sup>th</sup> June 2021

1<sup>st</sup> October 2021

(The meeting ended at 12.25am)

Cllr V Keitch  
Chair