

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Heart of the South West (HotSW) Joint Committee held at The Padbrook Park Hotel, Cullompton on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 at 12.00 noon**

**Attendance**

**Voting Members:**

Cllr Val Keitch	Leader - South Somerset District Council (Chair)
Cllr Nick Kelly	Leader - Plymouth City Council
Cllr John Hart	Leader - Devon County Council
Cllr Steve Darling	Leader - Torbay Council
Cllr Philip Bialyk	Leader - Exeter City Council
Cllr Bob Deed	Leader - Mid Devon District Council
Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts	Leader – Somerset West and Taunton Council
Cllr Gill Slocombe	Deputy Leader - Sedgemoor District Council
Cllr David Fothergill	Leader - Somerset County Council
Cllr Hilary Bastone	Deputy Leader – South Hams District Council
Cllr Judy Pearce	Leader – South Hams District Council
Cllr Ken James	Leader – Torridge District Council
Cllr Andrea Davis	Deputy Chairman - Exmoor National Park Authority
Cllr Liz Brookes-Hocking	Devon/Somerset Associations of Local Councils
Cllr Neil Jory	Leader – West Devon Borough Council

**Officers/Local Enterprise Partnership etc:**

Andy Bates	Chief Executive – South West Devon County
Phil Shears	Chief Executive – Teignbridge Borough Council
Eifon Jones	Chief Operating Officer - Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership
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
Anne-Marie Bond	Chief Executive - Torbay Council
Karime Hassan	Chief Executive - Exeter City Council
Giles Perritt	Deputy Chief Executive – Plymouth City Council
Stephen Walford	Chief Executive - Mid Devon District Council
Steve Hearse	Chief Executive - Torridge District Council
Scott Wooldridge	Strategic Manager, Governance and Democratic Services - Somerset County Council
Doug Bamsey	Deputy Chief Executive - Sedgemoor District Council

James Hassett	Chief Executive - Somerset West and Taunton Council
Jane Portman	Chief Executive - South Somerset District Council
David Ralph	Chief Executive - Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership

## **Apologies**

Cllr Alistair Dewhirst	Deputy Leader - Teignbridge District Council
Cllr Darren Cowell	Deputy Leader – Torbay Council
Cllr James McInnes	Deputy Leader – Devon County Council
Cllr Rachel Sutton	Deputy Leader – Exeter City Council
Cllr Luke Taylor	Deputy Leader – Mid Devon District Council
Cllr David Worden	Leader – North Devon Council
Cllr Paul Arnott	Leader – East Devon Council
Cllr Ros Wyke	Leader – Mendip District Council
Cllr Patrick Nicholson	Deputy Leader – Plymouth City Council
Cllr Liz Leyshon	Corporate Projects Portfolio Holder - Mendip District Council
Stuart Brown	Chief Executive – Mendip District Council
Pat Flaherty	Chief Executive - Somerset County Council
Bob Brown	Chief Executive - Sedgemoor District Council
Pamela Wood	Chair - Dartmoor National Park Authority
Paul Johnson	Devon Clinical Commissioning Group
Ian Collinson	Homes England
Suzanne Bond	BEIS
Kate Goodenough	BEIS
Karl Tucker	Chair - Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership
Mark Williams	Chief Executive – East Devon Council
Sue Rose	Devon County Council
Phil Norrey	Chief Executive – Devon County Council
Tracey Lee	Chief Executive – Plymouth City Council

### **1. Apologies**

Details of apologies received were recorded as set out above.

### **2. Election of Chair**

Having been nominated and seconded Cllr Val Keitch was duly elected as Chair of the Joint Committee.

### **3. Appointment of Vice-Chair**

Having been nominated and seconded Cllr Nick Kelly was duly appointed as Vice-Chair of the Joint Committee.

### **4. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **5. Previous Minutes**

The Minutes of the Joint Committee meeting held on 25 June 2021 were confirmed and signed as correct.

### **6. Public Questions**

There were no public questions.

### **7. Chair and LEP Update**

The Committee received the report from David Ralph, Chief Executive of the HotSW LEP, which provided an update on the work of the LEP.

The background information presented included: that Covid has accelerated many trends and changes that were already occurring pre-pandemic. The restructuring of retail, transforming town and city centre roles, remote working and virtual meetings, the increasing digitalisation of business, markets, commerce and society – have all taken a big leap in the past 18 months.

That whilst between 1 and 2 million job losses have been forecast between 2019 and 2021, jobs creation is rebounding quickly, and the labour market is tightening due to the loss of 1.3 million foreign-born residents. There is also significant supply chain disruption to the UK economy and youth unemployment, exclusion and inequality, business indebtedness and continued uncertainties over international trade and investment are some of the main challenges.

And that policy and institutional change for local economies is going to happen in Autumn. It is unlikely to depart radically from competitive grant funding and a few new areas given modest devolution powers and funding. A “Green Recovery” package could help to accelerate economic recovery and deliver on climate change targets – but implementation of low carbon and sustainable solutions and structural change is slow.

Actions undertaken were noted including: a cabinet reshuffle; and the LEP review; accelerating delivery of the Hinkley Point C project. The LEP AGM scheduled to be held on the 22 October was also highlighted.

Points raised included: the impact of Covid; changes in retail expectations; transforming town and city centres; increasing digitalisation; forecast job losses, but with the expectation of a quick rebound; and supply chain disruption.

### **RESOLVED**

The Committee noted the report.

### **8. Progress Report of Delivery**

The Committee received the report by Tracey Lee, Chief Executive Plymouth City Council, which was presented by David Ralph, this highlighted the delivery plan progress against the key headings of: business leadership and ideas; housing, connectivity and infrastructure; employment skills and learning; distinctive sector opportunities; inclusion; and details of major funding secured.

Next steps were detailed, including the Build Back Better plan which outlines the key medium-term actions across the partnership, setting out the key programmes and placing a central emphasis on clean and inclusive growth. The Joint Committee will continue to be updated on progress against this in the future.

### **RESOLVED**

The Joint Committee noted the content of the report and that the Build Back Better plan will be the route to implement the Strategy over the medium term.

### **9. Housing Task Force Update**

The Committee received the report from Stephen Walford, Chief Executive, Mid Devon District Council. The update provided members with a brief overview on matters relevant to the housing theme. It outlined some of the key factors pertinent to housing delivery across the area, and also highlights upcoming issues.

### **RESOLVED**

The Committee noted the report.

### **10. Coastal Productivity Plan**

It was highlighted that the purpose of the Heart of the South West (HotSW) Coastal Productivity Plan (CPP) is to articulate the unique challenges and issues which face the seaside towns and coastal resorts across the local geography, and to co-ordinate and drive action to address the same. Since the presentation of the CPP to the HotSW Joint

Committee in January 2021 both the Coastal Delivery (officers) and Strategic Groups (elected members) have been setup, the recommendations within the CPP have been reviewed and prioritised, along with the development of outline business cases (OBC) for each identified priority. These are:

- Digital Tourism Business Hubs
- Centres of Excellence for Training
- Coastal Action Zone (CAZ)
- Centres of Excellence for R&D
- Lobbying Central Government

An update on progress was provided with the following points highlighted: the next step for the five identified priorities is the development of full business cases in preparation for any appropriate upcoming funding opportunities. At the meeting of HotSW CEO Group on 11 August a paper was presented that set out that an estimated £240k was required to support the development of the five identified priorities so that full business cases can be developed. No solution to funding these priorities has been identified. The LEP has reviewed the opportunities but are unable at this stage to support the funding required to develop these outline business cases due to the reasons listed below. The feedback from the LEP identified the following areas for the group to consider as it further develops its outline business cases:

- More development required around low productivity and poor social mobility
- Greater focus required on health as per the Chief Medical Officer Report
- Increased emphasis on housing stock and digital connectivity
- Need to link OBCs to existing initiatives and work being undertaken in the area.

In relation to the lobbying work the coastal delivery group have been informed that whilst no funding will be forthcoming to support a public affairs campaign the issues pertinent to the coastal work will be represented in the wider lobbying being undertaken by the LEP throughout the autumn. The coastal delivery group considered the feedback at their meeting on 17 September and resolved to:

- To make contact with organisations such as the Innovation Board and Skills Advisory Panel to explore what work they are undertaking on coastal issues and how the coastal group could work with them moving forward.
- Undertake a mapping exercise across the HotSW local authorities to understand what each local authority is doing or plans to do in relation to coastal issues. The group will then review this mapping to understand what next steps it needs to undertake.

In summary it was noted that the delivery group will reconvene on 20 October and will consider the outcome of the above actions and will then consider the next steps that it will propose undertaking so that these can be considered by the strategic group that meets on 29 October.

## **RESOLVED**

The Committee noted the update.

### **11. HEROG**

The Committee received a report from Phil Norrey, Chief Executive for Devon County Council which provided an update on the work of Heart of the South West Economic Resilience and Opportunities Group (HEROG) between Spring and Autumn 2021 in support of the Joint Committee and HotSW Local Enterprise Partnership (HotSW LEP) objectives.

## **RESOLVED**

The Committee noted the continuing work of HEROG to support the economic recovery of the sub-region.

### **12. Peninsula Transport**

The Committee received a presentation from Andrea Davies, Chair of The Peninsula Transport Board. The update included a detailed progress update and noted: the support of local MPs; the consultations undertaken; economic corridor studies and the freight strategy.

## **RESOLVED**

The Committee noted the update.

### **13. HotSW CSR Asks**

The Committee considered the final letter presented by LEP.

## **RESOLVED**

The Committee considered and noted the final letter as presented by the LEP.

### **14. Any Other Urgent Business**

None was raised.

### **15. Agree the Dates of 2022 Meetings**

The Committee agreed the dates for 2022 meetings as set out below, with the venue to be confirmed.

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2022

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2022

Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022

(The meeting ended at 13.15pm)