

**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE THAMES VALLEY
LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP (BTVLEP) BOARD MEETING**

Held Friday 24 October 2014 from 9.30am at
Green Dragon Rare Breeds Farm And Eco Centre Ltd, Claydon Road, Hogshaw, Bucks MK18 3LA

Present: Cllr Mike Appleyard, Buckinghamshire County Council (Alternate) (Part meeting)
Cllr Neil Blake, Aylesbury Vale District Council
Cllr Adrian Busby, South Bucks District Council
Cllr Isobel Darby, Chiltern District Council
Cllr Richard Scott, Wycombe District Council
Elizabeth Adlington, Buckinghamshire Business First (Waterside Theatre) (Alternate)
Ruth Farwell, Buckinghamshire Business First (Bucks New University)
Guy Lachlan, Buckinghamshire Business First (Jones & Cocks Ltd)
Alex Pratt, Buckinghamshire Business First (Serious Brands)
Andrew Smith, Buckinghamshire Business First (Pinewood) (Part meeting)

Apologies: Michael Garvey, Buckinghamshire Business First (Stupples Chandler Garvey)
Cllr Martin Tett, Buckinghamshire County Council

In attendance: Caroline Norbury, Creative England (Part meeting)
Richard Harrington, BTVLEP Chief Executive
Jim Sims, BTVLEP Development Manager
Ian Barham, BTVLEP Interim Partnerships Manager
Sarah Fraser

SUMMARY MINUTES

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- There were no new declarations of interest at this meeting.

2 CREATIVE ENGLAND

- Information was provided on: the scale of the Creative Industries sector within the UK; the benefits brought to the economy via the sector; and Creative England's role in this.
- Bucks engagement with Creative England is around production services and looking to support people wanting to shoot TV commercials and films etc.
- A study into the impact of screen tourism will be published in early 2015 following on from the Creative Industries Strategy published by the Creative Industries Council in July 2014.
- Work is being done to address barriers to growth in the sector for example the perception that creative businesses are risky in terms of investment. Creative England is working on policy looking at how to measure risk, to educate financiers/banks, and looking at how to value IP etc. On a practical level the organisation is also working with local banks and financial institutions to facilitate dialogue to try and help businesses.
- Creative England has a series of products to help creative businesses and has secured funds through the Regional Growth Fund (postcode dependent) to support these.
- The organisation works to connect SMEs to bigger employers and is also undertaking work on supply chain projects eg with the NHS and Birmingham Library.
- Local knowledge and the ability to help ease film makers' paths were identified as key in bringing business to the county.
- Further discussion to take place re how to draw funds into Bucks to support creative industries work.

3 **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING – 5 September 2014**

- The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

3.1 Matters arising

- **Incorporation** - A full report on pros/cons of incorporating would be brought to the next meeting.

4 **LOCAL GROWTH FUND (LGF) ROUND 2/GROWING PLACES FUND**

- BTVLEP had submitted to LGF Round 2, under much tighter timeframes than originally indicated.
- This submission had focussed on projects likely to land in 2015/16 but, at government's subsequent request, was revised to include projects across a wider timeframe, offering broader scope.
- The initial submission included project prioritisation, the subsequent submission did not as no information was available on quantum of funding, timing, or the source departmental budgets.
- The latest submission is aimed at opening up the dialogue with government and showing the scale of Bucks' ambition, outlining the projects that we want to support to unlock growth.
- Recognising that information was being produced to extremely tight deadlines, the Board asked that reports forwarded were consistent in the detail presented.
- It was suggested that areas around the country operating in an integrated manner, such as Manchester City Region, would see more success in leveraging funding and powers. Detail in support of this development was requested.
- LGF Round 2 projects prioritisation was agreed; as were the projects recommended for Growing Places Funding (subject, in one case, to presentation at the next Board meeting).

5 **LOCAL GROWTH FUND ROUND 1**

- The focus for LGF Round 1 is now on development of the assurance framework to be agreed with government. No additional resource is provided for monitoring and evaluation work.
- The first draft Implementation Plan (submitted to government on 3 October) was noted. Financial information is now available for all projects and will be included in the final version of the Plan.
- The Board approved the revised draft of the BTVLEP Assurance Framework, subject to amendment to the LEP governance diagram to show accountability and reporting lines only, and consideration of the inclusion of District Council representation on the Local Transport Body (LTB).
- It was agreed to defer discussion/approval of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and Strategic Communications Plan until the December Board meeting.

6 **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE ADVANTAGE**

(Andrew Smith re-declared an interest, in that one of the BA Board directors, is a family member)

- It was agreed the BA Board would produce and submit a draft business plan outlining the organisation's priorities (including production of a local infrastructure plan) and the resource required to deliver these, to the BTVLEP Board in December.

7 **TOURISM**

- A paper had been previously circulated via email and was tabled for information, providing a strategic view on the benefits of working collaboratively to achieve more with the current resources available, offering the opportunity to leverage additional funding from other sources and, by creating a destination management organisation (DMO), open up routes to funding not currently accessible, and speak with one voice to a single strategy for the county.

- A number of questions were raised around the proposal and it was agreed to produce a full business plan for the proposed destination management organisation including known existing LA contributions to tourism and expected business contribution, what outcomes might be anticipated, what matched ESIF funding could be leveraged and what the return on investment might be. This would be brought back to the February 2015 board meeting for discussion.

8 **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

8.1 Business Leaders' Dinner - 14 October

- Positive feedback had been received from attendees together with thoughts for future events. As a result, consideration will be given to how these events are structured in the future.

8.2 Unitary Research

- Local Authority board members expressed disappointment at the way some press/media enquiries had been reported following the publication of research into possible future local government structures.
- District Councils agreed continuing action needed to be taken to rationalise spending or to generate income and commented that considerable work had been quietly underway for several years with these aims in mind.
- Business board members again recognised the work all Local Authorities had already undertaken to manage budgets. The original call for the research work had come directly from the business community, who had been surveyed to check for support for the idea, and who then went on to donate crowd-funding to pay for this research to be carried out. BBF had brought effect to the wishes of local businesses and was not promoting any one outcome, seeing its role as being to prompt an open and constructive public debate.
- All agreed with the report summary, that no action is not an option but there were varying views as to the best way to handle debate on the subject.

9 **CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT**

- The Chief Executive's report had been previously circulated and there were no questions arising.

10 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Nothing of note.

11 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Friday 12 December 2014, from 9.30am, venue tbc.