

## SUMMARY NOTES AND ACTIONS

### 1. Welcome and Introductions.

- 1.1. Mark Reeve welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Chairs attending for the first time.

### 2. Local Elections (4<sup>th</sup> May, Mayors & County Councils).

- 2.1. The Board heard brief feedback on changes and new relationships, post the 4<sup>th</sup> May local elections.
- 2.2. It was too early to record any specific LEP impact. Chairs agreed to provide further updates at future Management Board meetings.

### 3. Manifestos - what we know.

- 3.1. The Board noted the summary papers of Party and Stakeholder Election Manifestos for the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrats, and held an open discussion.

### 4. Post-Election Communications with HMG.

- 4.1. The Board agreed it important to ensure the incoming government understands the unique role that LEPs play, particularly at the time the government is negotiating the terms of the UK's exit from the EU. LEPs are the only entity that exists in this space, providing a local partnership between the private and public sector, and LEPs have an added value impact in driving forward local economic growth.
- 4.2. The Industrial Strategy must be led bottom up to produce a national strategy. Chairs noted that Strategic Economic Plans provide a solid foundation upon which to build.
- 4.3. Chairs proposed common areas important to all LEPs would be around Brexit, education and skills, and various local economic drivers of housing, energy, infrastructure etc. The Chairs agreed that there continues to be a need to have a strong local engagement with DfE and DWP.
- 4.4. The Board agreed that LEPs should be proposing the right governance structure for the future post the General Election, defining our own destiny, and recognise that government will expect to see strong governance. A working group of LEP Chairs was proposed.
- 4.5. The Board agreed the following events:
  - 4.5.1. July. To invite Ministers and other LEP Chairs to the next management Board meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> July to be held in London;
  - 4.5.2. October. Hold a workshop on "skills, jobs, and industrial strategy" in October 2017 with senior officials from DfE, DWP and BEIS. This would be followed by a dinner for Chairs only.
  - 4.5.3. November. Progress arrangements for a Parliamentary Reception, once the outcome of the elections is known and which Minister could host.

### Transparency and Accountability

- 4.6. Warren Ralls covered more detail on the Transparency and Accountability review being undertaken by Mary Ney, a non-Executive Director at DCLG.
- 4.7. The Board asked Warren Ralls to provide an update on the LEP Executives budding peer review, to confirm that every LEP was taking part in this, to ask LEPs how this is working, and report back.
- 4.8. The Board also asked Warren Ralls to review information on every LEP website to confirm that every LEP is demonstrating how they are dealing with transparency and conflicts of interest.
- 4.9. The Board asked to be kept informed, and to know if they need to speak with fellow Chairs.

**ACTION:** Warren Ralls to progress.

Peter Read left the meeting. Melanie Dawes and colleagues from DCLG joined the meeting.

## 5. Discussion with DCLG

- 5.1. Melanie Dawes and DCLG colleagues joined the meeting to hear LEP Chair views on local economies and intelligence.
- 5.2. Chairs fed back in turn, in general highlighting the additional uncertainty which Brexit is bringing for business by adding a layer of complexity to some business decisions.
- 5.3. Chairs offered to provide further intelligence about opportunities and risks to local economies.
- 5.4. The Chairs requested a working group of LEP Chairs to work with Ministers post the General Election on government policies that are relevant to LEPs, business and the economy.
- 5.5. Repeated requests were made for help to open doors for improved local relationships with DfE on skills, as a lot of the growth and business issues around Brexit lie with business being able to access the right talent; and equally important with DWP in the areas of jobs and employment.
- 5.6. Chairs also highlighted the significant role of HM Treasury, and asked for Melanie's help to make connections with senior colleagues in that Department.
- 5.7. Chairs heard briefly from Melanie about the Mary Ney report, and requested information when the work is complete.
- 5.8. Chairs extended an invitation for Minister(s) to join the next meeting on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> July, and would welcome continued engagement by the Permanent Secretary.
- 5.9. After Melanie left, the Board agreed to communicate the main points with DCLG.

**ACTION. Warren Ralls to circulate a draft letter for LEP Chairs who met with Melanie to approve before sending to her office.**

## 6. OTHER BUSINESS.

### Future Funding Research

- 6.1. The Board noted the work proposed by the LEP Executives on drawing up the LEP position, offer and new thinking on future funding - what replaces the ESIF programmes and further rounds of Local Growth Funding.
- 6.2. The Board recognised it is an important piece of work, but not for immediate commissioning until the post-Election landscape is clearer.
- 6.3. The Board asked for a scoping paper to discuss at the July meeting.

**ACTION: Warren Ralls to work with LEP Executives in drawing up a scoping paper.**

### Alex Jones

- 6.4. The Board asked if contact has been made with Alex Jones, former CEO of Centre for Cities, in her new role in BEIS as Director of Industrial Strategy, as discussed at the last meeting.
- 6.5. Warren confirmed that brief contact has been made, and he will continue to engage and invite Alex to a future Management Board meeting.

**ACTION: Warren Ralls to connect with Alex Jones and invite her to a future meeting.**

### Business Representative Organisations (BROs).

- 6.6. Raised in the previous meeting, the Board asked that if the BEIS Secretary of State has regular dialogue with the BROs, that the LEP Network executive discuss with CLoG how LEPs can also have a similar level of dialogue, perhaps joining the regular round tables currently held with the BROs.

**ACTION: Warren Ralls to explore with CLoG and report back.**

### New Chair's induction.

- 6.7. An action from the previous meeting that hasn't progressed – with the usual regular turnover of LEP Chairs during the year the Board asked the executive to look at how to help LEPs and the new incoming Chair understand the wider environment, LEP Network etc. and if outgoing Chairs would like

to be involved as an informal 'Alumni', for any new Chairs to engage if interested in their views, and learning from their experience.

**ACTION: Warren Ralls to explore further.**

The meeting closed at 1:30pm.

#### **Future meeting dates**

- 11am-1pm Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> July (QEII, Westminster, London, SW1P 3EE).
- 11am-1pm Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September (Manchester).
- 11am-1pm Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2017 (Birmingham).
- 11am-1pm Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2018 (QEII, Westminster, London, SW1P 3EE).
- 11am-1pm Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018 (Bristol).

---

#### **Attendees** (alphabetical order first name):

- Angus Knowles-Cutler (Deputy Chair, London Economic Action Partnership).
- Christine Gaskell MBE (Chair, Cheshire & Warrington) *representing LEPs in the North West.*
- Lord Christopher Haskins (Chair, The Humber LEP).
- Geoff French CBE (Chair, Enterprise M3) *representing LEPs in the Greater Thames Valley.*
- Mark Duddridge (Chair, Cornwall & Isles of Scilly LEP) *representing LEPs in the South West.*
- Mark Reeve (Chair, Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough) *representing New Anglia, South East & South East Midlands LEPs.*
- Paul Booth OBE (Chair, Tees Valley LEP) *representing Humber, North East and YNYER LEPs.*
- Peter Read (Chair, Thames Valley Berkshire LEP).
- Peter Richardson (Chair, D2N2) *representing Greater Lincolnshire and Leicester & Leicestershire LEPs.*
- *DCLG: Melanie Dawes (Permanent Secretary); Ben Pledger (Ben Pledger, Acting Deputy Director & Head of Local Growth Programmes); Naomi Green (Head of LEP Policy and Local Growth Communications) - for part of the meeting.*
- *LEP Network Executive: Warren Ralls & Mike Dennehy.*

#### **Apologies** (alphabetical order first name):

- Barry Dodd CBE (Chair, York, North Yorkshire and East Riding).
- Graham Wynn OBE (Chair, The Marches).
- Roger Marsh OBE (Chair, Leeds City Region).
- Steve Hindley CBE DL (Chair, Heart of the South West).