

Summary Notes and Actions

This meeting was convened to discuss: the Industrial Strategy green paper; LGF3 and future funding; current and future LEP Network activity; LEP transparency and accountability; the annual conference.

1. Welcome and introductions

Mark Reeve welcomed everyone to the meeting, and Frances Brennan who was standing in for Steve Hindley.

2. Current LEP Network Operations

- 2.1. **Industrial strategy.** Metro Dynamics are ready to help with our response to the industrial strategy green paper by the 17th April deadline. It was noted by the Board that there may be an additional charge if Metro Dynamics's time exceeds the original estimated time allocated for this task in November 2016 - when the green paper was expected to be a much shorter document.
- 2.2. It was noted that George Freeman MP is active in this space and is playing a significant role on industrial strategy working with Rt Hon Greg Clark MP.
- 2.3. Discussing the nature of the LEP Network response, the Board agreed that the LEP Network response would not speak for individual LEP areas. Board members offered real life examples of challenges in their LEP areas (skills shortages, labour market shortages, changing demographics) and how these could be fed into our response. As "place" is fundamental to the industrial strategy, it was agreed that LEPs should be encouraged to submit their own responses, and that the LEP Network would not simply collate all the responses to produce an overall LEP view. It was agreed that the LEP Network's response should be top level and that it should focus on 4 or 5 key topics. The Board agreed that the LEP Network response should provide solutions, not problems.

ACTION: Warren to liaise with LEPs and Metro Dynamics to produce a LEP Network response. This will be started at the LEP CEO meeting on 9th February.

- 2.4. **Transparency and peer reviews.** Warren told the Board that LEP buddy peer reviews are now underway. Although mindful that LEP resources are stretched, the Board was clear that this is an issue that affects all LEPs, and that it is important that every LEP continue to take seriously the issue of transparency/conflict of interests. It was noted that LEPs will be signing off their Assurance Frameworks by the deadline of end-February. The Board asked for an update on the buddy/peer review activity at the next Board meeting on 1 March.

ACTION: Warren to provide an update.

- 2.5. **LEP Annual Conference 2017.** The Board provided views on the Conference. It was agreed that the message should be to show the "difference that LEPs have made", and also look at the future through the lens of Industrial Strategy. Everyone agreed that the LEP Chairs who speak will showcase LEP achievements providing a representative view across their LEP areas. There will need to be a pre-agreed script so Chairs know what will be said. The discussion also looked at the format and delivery of this element, and involving BROs at the conference.

ACTION: Warren and team to take away the Board's suggestions, input in to the shape of the Conference programme, and table for discussion with the CEOs at the meeting on 9th February.

- 2.6. **2017/18 LEP Network Operations Plan.** Warren said that he had received no further comments on the Operational Plan for 2017/18. Three queries were received from LEPs on the proposed increase of the annual contribution, from £5K to £6K, and that these had been answered to the LEP's satisfaction. The Board confirmed that no other comments have been received on either the 2017/18 operations or the increase in sponsorship.

ACTION: The Board agreed that the LEP Network would action the raising of £6,000 invoices for LEP sponsorship of the LEP Network for 2017/18.

- 2.7. **LEP Network Management Board membership 2017/18.** As was noted at the last Board meeting, in the case of a number of Board members their term as Chair of their LEP will be coming to an end in 2017/18. Chairs agreed to continue on the Board until their term as LEP Chair ends, and then the LEP Network would seek a replacement.

3. Government programmes and policy

Jacqui Ward and Tom Walker joined the meeting.

- 3.1. **Local Growth Deals.** CLoG confirmed that there will be phased announcements on LGF Round 3 funding over the coming weeks. The timetable is not currently available. CLoG noted that LEPs are placed in a difficult situation and that in some cases the information is starting to leak out from non-LEP or CLoG sources. They agreed to take LEP concerns back to ministers and suggested that a call is made to Andrew Percy MP about this. Mark Reeve volunteered. CLoG confirmed that there will not be any changes to the content of the deals, as previously discussed with LEPs.

ACTION: Mark to call Andrew Percy MP.

- 3.2. **Industrial Strategy.** CLoG noted that this provides a great opportunity for LEPs. The suggestions from CLoG as to the nature of the LEP response aligned with the discussions held earlier in the meeting: a collective response, organised around the 10 pillars but picking the key elements which are most relevant. CLoG said that plans for ministers are still being drawn up for consultation on the Industrial Strategy, but they are keen to go out and about. CLoG said they would do everything they can to ensure that LEPs are involved.
- 3.3. **Annual conference.** CLoG agreed to continue helping to secure ministerial attendance. They suggested also trying to involve university Vice Chancellors as well as BROs. Their suggestions for conference themes included: place; business growth and productivity; skills; infrastructure; science and innovation.

4. Any other business.

- 4.1. **Engaging closer with Treasury.** It was noted that Baroness Neville-Rolfe is attending the next Management Board meeting (1st March), it is assumed in her HM Treasury capacity. Tom suggested that contact is made with his equivalent at HMT, or other officials in Treasury, and invite them to attend a future Board meeting. CLoG agreed to pass over the relevant contact details.

ACTION: Warren to liaise with CLoG on these details.

The meeting closed at 1pm.

Future meeting dates

- 11am-1pm Wednesday 1st March 2017 (Wesley room, QEII Centre, Westminster, London, SE1P 3EE).
- 11am-1pm Wednesday 5th April 2017 (Hawking room, QEII Centre, Westminster, London, SE1P 3EE).
- 11am-1pm Wednesday 31st May (Hawking room, QEII Centre, Westminster, London, SE1P 3EE).
- 11am-1pm Wednesday 19th July (Hawking room, QEII Centre, Westminster, London, SE1P 3EE).
- 11am-1pm Wednesday 13th September (Hawking room, QEII Centre, Westminster, London, SE1P 3EE).
- 11am-1pm Wednesday 22nd November 2017 (Hawking, QEII Centre, Westminster, London, SE1P 3EE).
- 11am-1pm Wednesday 10th January 2018 (venue tbc).
- 11am-1pm Wednesday 28th February 2018 (Hawking, QEII Centre, Westminster, London, SE1P 3EE).

Attendees

- Mark Reeve (Chair, Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough) *representing GCGP, New Anglia, Northamptonshire, South East Midlands and South East LEPs.*
- Christine Gaskell (Chair, Cheshire & Warrington) *representing LEPs in the North West.*

- Barry Dodd (Chair, York, North Yorkshire & East Riding) *representing YNYER, Humber, North East and Tees Valley LEPs.*
- Geoff French (Chair, Enterprise M3) *representing LEPs in the Greater Thames Valley.*
- Graham Wynn (Chair, The Marches) *representing LEPs in the West Midlands.*
- Frances Brennan (Vice Chair, Heart of the South West), *representing LEPs in the South West.*
- Tom Walker, Cities & Local Growth Unit.
- Jacqui Ward, Cities & Local Growth Unit.
- Richard Smith, Cities & Local Growth Unit.
- Warren Ralls (Director, LEP Network).
- Mike Dennehy, (Communications Manager, LEP Network).
- Jayne Atkinson (Administration Executive, LEP Network).

Apologies:

- Peter Richardson (Chair, D2N2).
- Roger Marsh (Chair, Leeds City Region).
- Steve Hindley (Chair, Heart of the South West).