

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SHROPSHIRE BUSINESS BOARD

HELD ON
MONDAY 21st NOVEMBER 2016
4.15 pm – 6.30 pm

Present:

Mandy Thorn MBE (Chair)	Marches Care Ltd, Shrewsbury
Paul Bennett (Vice Chair)	Shropshire Business Partnership
Lindsay Barton	Golden Kite Solutions Ltd
Catherine Baxter	Harper Adams University (Agri-technology sector rep)
William Morris	Utilities Representative – Managing Director of SSE Retail
Simon MacVicker	Shropshire Chamber of Commerce
Arthur Hill	CH Hill & Sons, Much Wenlock
Gill Hamer	Director Marches LEP
Paul Kirkbright	University Centre Shrewsbury
Matthew Snelson	Grainger & Worrall Ltd (Vice Chair)
Shaun Carvill	Clicking Mad Ltd
Tony Bywater	Salop Leisure
John Pitchford	Barclays Bank
Mandy Stoker	E4 Environment
Lyn Surgeon	Shrewsbury College
CLlr Nic Laurens	Shropshire Council
Kully Chahal	Department for Work and Pensions

Shropshire Council Officers

George Candler	Director of Place and Enterprise
Andrew Stirling	Regeneration Manager
Lisa Ashby	Economic Growth Coordinator
Amy Farley	Growth Hub Coordinator
Janine Vernon	Learning and Skills
Sam Williams	HR Services Manager
Hannah Owen	Marches Technical Assistance

70 Welcome, Apologies and Introductions

- 70.1 The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and also welcomed Lyn Surgeon, Interim Principal of Shrewsbury College. Lyn confirmed that James Staniforth had been confirmed as the new Principal and Chief Executive of the Shrewsbury Colleges Group and he would be starting in the role in Easter. The Chair confirmed that the Skills and Learning representative on the Board was still vacant and would cover recruitment onto the Board later in the meeting.
- 70.2 The Chair notified the Board that Fay Easton has tendered her resignation from the board.

70.3 The Chair asked the Board if the order of the agenda could be changed slightly to allow for all the update items and discussion on Board and Ambassador roles and responsibilities and then to cover the round table updates if time allowed.

70.4 Apologies for absence were received from Tim Downes [JR & MC Downes & Son], Lindsay Barton [Golden Kite Solutions Ltd], Cllr Steve Davenport [Chair of Shropshire Councils Enterprise and Growth Scrutiny committee] and Tudor Griffiths [Tudor Griffiths Group Ltd]

71 Declarations of Interest

71.1 No declarations of interest received.

72 Minutes and Matters Arising

72.1 No matters arising recorded and the minutes of the meeting held on the 12th September 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and that actions had been followed up.

72.2 Gill Hamer gave a brief Marches LEP update to the Board on the Manufacturing Skills Hub and confirmed that they were looking for further sponsorship. The Chair suggested that Gill and Matthew do a short presentation on this at the next Business Board Meeting.

GH/MS

73 Apprenticeship Levy

73.1 Janine Vernon and Sam Williams gave an update on the Apprenticeship Levy which included what the levy is and how it will work. Janine and Sam also gave a good overview of which businesses within Shropshire would be affected by the levy and also Shropshire Council's approach, which includes setting up an Apprenticeship Board. Sam also confirmed that Shropshire Council would need to go through the procurement process and would be posting tenders for a supplier in January. The Board discussed various issues around the apprenticeship levy including implications with Ofsted, where employees live and the current spend on training in relation to the levy. Lisa Ashby to circulate presentation.

LA

74 Update on the Economic Vision for Shropshire

74.1 Andrew Stirling gave an update on the Economic visioning work for Shropshire and confirmed that the Council were still waiting on for the draft document from IPPR.

75	Business Rates	
75.1	Andrew Stirling gave an update to the Board on Business Rates. Andrew confirmed that the ratings list will be updated from the 1 st April 2017 and that the rateable value has been increased to £230,020,354. Andrew discussed the impact for Shropshire Council and rate relief for businesses in the County and confirmed that Shropshire Council would be looking at options for discretionary rate relief. As part of this initial work Andrew invited the Board to contribute towards a paper that would go to Cabinet. The Chair suggested that an email should be sent out to the Board inviting those who would be interested to contribute. Andrew confirmed that the presentation would be circulated.	AS/LA
76	EU Funding Update	
76.1	Hannah Owen from the Marches Technical Assistance team gave the Board a useful overview of the European and Structural Investment Funds for Shropshire, particularly focussing on ERDF. Hannah discussed the allocation priorities for the Marches LEP and gave an overview of the funding so far in Shropshire. Hannah also updated the Board on the future of ERDF funding and also projects still in pipeline such as the Broadband Grant which is waiting for approval. Hannah confirmed that an update on this would be provided when approved. Hannah asked the Board to contact her directly to discuss any gaps or expressions of interest. A discussion was had around the room regarding potential gaps. Mandy Stoker raised the need for district heating systems and possible funding for demonstrators. Simon MacVicker, highlighted an issue with the gas supply in Bridgnorth. Gill Hamer suggested that a separate discussion on utilities and funding needed to take place.	ALL/HO
76.2	Hannah also reminded the Board that an event focussed on all the EU funds available to Shropshire businesses would be taking place on Tuesday 29 th November at the Shrewsbury Town Football Club. Lisa Ashby to recirculate the link and also the EU presentation.	LA
77	Marches Growth Hub Shropshire Update	
77.1	Amy Farley from Shropshire Council gave a useful update to the Board on the Shropshire Growth Hub and achievements to date. The Board agreed Amy's update was really useful. The Board agreed that there was further need for hot desking provision within the Growth Hub together with better signage. George Candler agreed with the Board that branding for the hub could be strengthened. Matthew Snelson also added that there would be a Growth Hub office incorporated into the Manufacturing Hub. The Board thanked Amy for her update.	
78	Business Board Roles and Responsibilities	
78.1	The Chair put forward a suggestion to the Board of forming three distinct	MT/PB/AS

sub groups, one to look at policies which would look at Terms of Reference and other associated policy documents. The second to act as a feedback on consultations, such as Business Rates and skills. This group could then shape the agenda for further meetings. There was a discussion around the table on the formation of sub groups with the LEP looking to reinvigorate the Skills Board. Lyn Surgeon confirmed that this would be an ideal time to work together on skills, with Paul Bennett confirming that there was opportunity for upskilling. Shaun Carvill also added that digital skills were inadequate in the County. The third group proposed by the Chair would be an appointments committee to look at representation and recruitment to the Board. The Chair confirmed that herself and Paul Bennett were currently looking at Board membership and identifying particular gaps, such as representatives from the retail, construction sectors, as well as filling the vacant positions on the Board. It was agreed that there should be a focus on business representation as well as looking at sector representation, particularly sector champions. The benefits of sector representation was discussed, particularly which sectors to champion and how the Board could feed into sector groups and bidding opportunities if they had more of a sector focus. The Chair also asked the Board to consider the inclusion of wider business networks. The Chair thanked the Board for a positive discussion and also asked for any Board members to email if interested in sitting on any of the sub groups or views on Board representation. The Chair confirmed that they would look to start interviewing in January. Andrew Stirling confirmed that he was in the process of reviewing the Terms of Reference for the Board and would send to the Chair.

ALL
MT/AS

78.2 The Chair highlighted that Telford Business Board had outsourced their administrative support and suggested to the Board this could be a future option to consider.

79 Ambassadors Network and Future Programme

79.1 The role of the Ambassadors network was discussed and the question raised whether it should be encompassed within the Board membership. Some of the Board members started as Ambassadors and progressed to Board membership while some Board members retain both Board and Ambassador membership. The Chair proposed writing to Ambassadors to consider Board membership. The Ambassadors normally have a New Year gathering, however Andrew suggested that it was looking likely that a presentation on the IPPR work would be given in January so a combined Business Board and Ambassadors event could be held at the same time.

80 AOB

80.1 Paul Bennett thanked George Candler for the invitation for himself and another Board member to attend a recruitment panel for the Head of Economic Growth and Paul hoped the appointment would be successful.

Next Meeting Dates 2017

Monday 16 th January 2017	Shirehall, Shrewsbury
Monday 13 th March 2017	Shirehall, Shrewsbury
Monday 15 th May 2017	Shirehall, Shrewsbury
Monday 10 th July 2017	Shirehall, Shrewsbury
Monday 18 th September 2017	Shirehall, Shrewsbury
Monday 27 th November 2017	Shirehall, Shrewsbury