

**MINUTES OF THE SHROPSHIRE BUSINESS BOARD MEETING HELD ON  
MONDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2013 4.00 PM – 6.55 PM  
HELD AT TUDOR GRIFFITHS GROUP, WOOD LANE, ELLESMERE**

**Present:**

**Businesses**

Tony Bywater MBE	Salop Leisure Ltd
Shaun Carvill	Clickingmad Ltd
Nick Chavasse MBE	NRG Direct Mail Ltd
Karen Davies MBE	Heart of England Fine Foods
Tudor Griffiths	Tudor Griffiths Group Ltd
Arthur Hill (Vice-Chair in the Chair)	CH Hill & Sons, Much Wenlock
Mandy Stoker	E4 Environment and Chair of METnet

**Representatives**

Cllr Steve Charmley	Portfolio Holder Business Growth & Commissioning (North)
Katie Foster	Tourism Strategy Board
Fay Easton	Shropshire Enterprise Partnership
Rob Hudson	Handlesbanken – High Street Bank Representative

**Observers**

Cllr Steve Davenport	Chair, Enterprise and Growth Scrutiny Committee
Will Morris	Kingsland Consulting Ltd & SSE Ltd
Richard Sheehan	Chief Executive of Shropshire Chamber of Commerce & Enterprise Ltd
Marcel Lecocq	JobCentre Plus

**Officers**

Andy Evans	Head of Business Growth and Prosperity
Julie Macrae	Business Engagement Officer
Mark Pembleton	Service Manager for Business and Enterprise
Anne Cousins	Committee Officer

**In attendance**

Paul Noon	Regional Director, UKTI West Midlands
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**Tour of Tudor Griffiths Group Ltd, Wood Lane, Ellesmere**

Prior to the formal meeting, Business Board Members went on an hour-long tour of Tudor Griffiths Group Ltd. Members heard the site has been used for quarrying sand and gravel since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and that it is now a major supplier of construction materials throughout the area and into North Wales. Members toured the recycling plant, which recycles more than 80% of material. Members were then able to view the landfill site and nature reserve and heard the whole process, from extraction through to restoration of the landscape, took approximately 25 years.

**ACTION**

## Shropshire Wildlife Trust

## ACTION

Colin Preston, Director of Shropshire Wildlife Trust, explained to Board Members how the Wood Lane site was an impressive example of sustainability which was visited by many schoolchildren and adults every year. He outlined the close links between environmental assets and business and explained how beneficial it would be for the Nature Partnership and the LEP to work in parallel. He described a number of environmental issues which affected the growth agenda, such as water quality, drought and the need to have a high quality environment next to housing. In addition, a high quality environment provided health benefits e.g. reducing obesity. He concluded by giving an example of an environmental network in Telford which helped businesses to make money and save money.

It was agreed to circulate Shropshire Wildlife Trust contact details to Board Members.

Julie Macrae

### 1. Welcome, Apologies and Introductions

The Chair welcomed all present and thanked Tudor Griffiths for his hospitality.

Apologies were received from: Duncan Gray, Ann Johnson, Glynn Jones, Simon MacVicker, Steve Wain, Nick Scott, James Thompson, Mandy Thorn (Chair), Chris White, Cllr. Mike Owen and Prof. Ian Oakes.

### 2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 1 July 2013 were confirmed as a correct record.

#### Updates

##### *European Funding (page 3)*

Mark Pembleton reported that the deadline for the draft EU Investment Strategy was 7<sup>th</sup> October so it was not possible to bring this to today's meeting. Andy Evans added that we will make sure there is an opportunity for the Board's involvement before it goes to the Marches LEP Board.

##### *Broadband (page 5)*

Nick Chavasse explained that Shropshire Council and BT had now published a map of Broadband roll-out in Shropshire, but this did not yet provide enough detail. More information would be available at the end of

October.

*Creative Industries (page 6)*

There have been no further meetings therefore Shaun Carvill was unable to provide an update. Mark Pembleton agreed to ask Gareth Profitt the support officer to contact Shaun.

**ACTION**

**Mark  
Pembleton  
Gareth  
Profitt**

**4. Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy – Delivering the action plans, monitoring performance and capacity issues**

Mark Pembleton explained this was an opportunity for Champions to update the Board. He added each Action Plan had milestones to measure performance.

Karen Davies asked who would lead on the Food and Drink Action Plan in future. Duncan Gray from Muller is a joint lead on this and he would continue in this role.

The Chairman reported a meeting for the land-based sector was planned for the end of September.

Nick Chavasse tabled information about a Broadband seminar to be held on 24 September 2013 at Albrighton Hall Hotel.

Mandy Stoker informed the Board she had the minutes of the last Woodland Enterprise Zone meeting, although she had not attended.

Will Morris reported that work on the Business Hub was on-going and it was hoped to implement this by the end of the year. Fay Easton commented that she would like to be involved and was surprised she had not yet been included in latest discussions. Mark Pembleton explained only scoping work had been carried out to date and this had been reported to the last meeting. There was discussion about the nature of the project which Will Morris described as an impartial brokerage service.

*Visitor Economy Update*

Katie Foster provided a detailed update. The following documents were tabled:

- Tourism in Shropshire – Organisations and Structure
- Update on Tourism
- Report on Priority 03 of the Economic Growth Strategy Business Plan 2012 – Stimulating Our Growth Sectors – Visitor Economy Sector.

She expanded on the work of the Tourism Strategy Board and how this linked with the Destination Partnerships, which delivered the tourism strategy. Expenditure by visitors of £42 million per month on average contributed greatly to employment and economic growth in the county. An example of a success story was the Holiday Property Bond at Upper Norton Barns, which was consistently top of the league tables and was

now being enlarged to meet demand.

She explained the Tourism Strategy Board was constantly bidding for funding from a variety of sources. Business Board Members could assist with research, which was needed for funding bids.

The Chairman asked if there was any duplication in the organisational structure. Katie Foster said there had been discussions about a possible merger between North Shropshire and Oswestry, but other than that, there was no duplication. Steve Davenport suggested one Destination Partnership for Shropshire would be helpful.

The Chairman commented that with the cuts at Shropshire Council, there was a potential gap which needed to be filled. Katie Foster confirmed the Tourism Strategy Board was well aware of this.

Tony Bywater updated the Board on the caravan sector and its contribution to the economy. He informed Members one static caravan generated £12,000 spend in the local economy in Shropshire and a touring caravan pitch generated £10-£17,000 spend. He said feedback indicated visitors enjoy staying in Shropshire. It was beneficial to all if market towns had attractive floral presentations and kept litter to the minimum and he suggested local councils should be supported in their efforts. He concluded by saying he would love to see the extension of the M54 motorway to Shrewsbury.

A paper about the development of the Shrewsbury Business Improvement District (BID) was tabled.

## **5. Marches Skills Plan**

This item was deferred as Professor Ian Oakes was unable to attend the meeting.

## **6. Presentation – Paul Noon, Regional Director UKTI, West Midlands**

Mr Noon gave an informative presentation on the work of UKTI West Midlands, which covered:

- Inward investment: Mr Noon advised making everything as good as possible in the area to attract inward investment; and he also advised concentrating on the strengths of an area and not wasting time on uncompetitive or unrealistic sectors.
- Trade: there were 40 UKTI international trade advisers based in the region and their objective was to double exports by 2020. Challenges included reaching out to companies and encouraging them to have a better web presence.
- UKTI opt-in for trade and export but not inward investment due to the P.A. consulting contract. The national offer was being delivered locally to each of the LEPs and he encouraged all LEPs in the region to sign up. The funding would be apportioned and the outcomes would be reported back to the LEPs.

The Chairman asked if discussions were taking place about the opt-in within the LEP. Mark Pembleton assured that it was. Mark went on to explain that a concerted effort with UKTI and local MPs was underway to boost inward investment, although the Council itself did not have sufficient resources in-house.

## **ACTION**

It was agreed that paperwork relating the opt-in would be circulated to all Business Board Members.

**Julie Macrae**

Information on a forthcoming International Trade Breakfast on 11 September was tabled. A list of grants and loans available from Shropshire Council was also tabled. The Board said this was an excellent and every useful summary.

### **7. Jobs Fair**

Marcel Lecocq reported there were job fairs planned for Shrewsbury on 27 September and Oswestry on 4 October. Shropshire Council was hosting both with the 27<sup>th</sup> September event being in Shirehall.

Mark Pembleton commented that the recent events in Bridgnorth and Ludlow had been very successful.

### **8. Green Deal**

Written report for information only.

### **9. Economic Update – State of the Economy**

Written report for information only.

### **10. Future Agenda Items**

The following topics were suggested:

- Youth Unemployment
- Update on progress with a Shropshire university
- Update on further education and training (October -Steve Wain)
- Redundant Building Grants Scheme (October - Katie Foster)
- Use of IT by Shropshire businesses. Shaun Carvill suggested it would be helpful to commission a survey to ascertain the current position on the use of IT by Shropshire businesses. This would identify any issues, such as lack of knowledge and skills, which needed to be addressed alongside the roll-out of superfast broadband. Richard Sheehan and Mark Pembleton agreed to work with Shaun on this.

**Steve Wain  
Katie Foster**

**Shaun  
Carvill  
Richard  
Sheehan  
Mark  
Pembleton**

### **11. Any Other Business**

The Chairman made reference to the current situation regarding Shropshire Council and Heart of England Fine Foods. In the absence of the Chairman, he felt it was not appropriate for the Board to debate this. It was agreed that he and Karen Davies, of Heart of England Fine Foods, would seek a meeting with Shropshire Council. The Chairman undertook

**Arthur Hill  
and Karen  
Davies**

to report the outcomes to the next Board meeting.

**12. Dates of Future Meetings**

14 October 2013, Council Chamber, Shirehall, Shrewsbury.

2 December 2013, Bridgnorth room, Shirehall, Shrewsbury.