

MINUTES of the meeting of Marches Enterprise Joint Committee held at Plowden Room, Craven Arms Community Centre, Newington Way, Craven Arms SY7 9PS on Tuesday 18 July 2017 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor AW Johnson (Chairman)
Councillors L Carter and N Laurens
Non-voting member: Mr G Wynn OBE

Officers: Gill Hamer and Kathy Mulholland

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were noted from Councillor S Davies and Councillor P Nutting.

2. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)

Councillor L Carter attended for Councillor S Davies.

Councillor N Laurens attended for Councillor P Nutting.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

4. MINUTES

Resolved that:

the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The LEP Director confirmed that the paper requested at the previous meeting on how the Marches Investment Fund would be managed had been drafted and would be presented to the next meeting of the LEP board.

5. GROWTH DEAL 3

It was confirmed that all members had had the opportunity to read the paper presented. The chairman asked for comments and questions.

A query was raised about the risks surrounding the NMITE project, in particular that the match funding might not be secured.

The LEP director confirmed that this risk was known and that work was ongoing to address this. Officers from the LEP, Shropshire and Herefordshire Councils had met with representatives of the Department for Education and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to discuss the project. A submission had been made to the secretary of state for £15m in match funding for the project. It was hoped that a decision on this would be made in the next two to three weeks.

It was noted that Herefordshire and Ludlow College had indicated it would be willing to act as the accountable body for the £8m Growth Deal allocation. The £15m match funding might also go direct to the college but this would depend on how the money was distributed from central government. If the match funds were made available as a Section 31 Grant then this would need to go through a council instead. Shropshire Council had indicated that it would not wish to take on accountability for non-LEP funds.

On the matter of potential additional funding, it was noted that although there had been a firm commitment of an additional £3m from Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) underspend the outcome of the general election and recent pressures on the government had put this in some doubt. A decision on this additional funding was not expected until parliament returned from its summer recess.

The chairman reported that Jesse Norman, MP for Hereford and South Herefordshire, was due to meet with the Secretary of State for Education and the Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation to press the case for NMITE.

It was noted that there was a new LEP champion for the Marches, Richard Harrington MP, who was a junior minister at BEIS.

It was resolved that:

- (a) Single Local Growth Funding of a minimum of the value shown in column 3 of Table 1 be allocated to the named Growth Deal 3 projects, set out in Table 1; and**
- (b) Should additional funds for this purpose be forthcoming, funding of a maximum value of that shown in column 2 of Table 1 be allocated to the named Growth Deal 3 projects, set out in Table 1.**

The meeting ended at 4.12 pm

CHAIRMAN