

**HEREFORD ENTERPRISE ZONE
EXECUTIVE BOARD
31 January 2017**

Present:	In attendance:
Bill Jackson (BJ) Chair	Dorothy Coleman (DC)
Tracey Goodwin (JG)	Nick Webster (NW)
David Harlow (DH)	
Geoff Hughes (GH)	
Neil Kerr (NK)	
Mark Pearce (MP)	

	ACTION
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
Glyn Morgan	
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
As per Register of Members' Interests.	
3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 13 DECEMBER 2016	
The minutes of the meeting held on 13 December were approved as a correct record.	
4. MATTERS ARISING NOT ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA	
<u>Acquisition of freehold</u> GH reported that a report on the selling of Council freehold interest on current long term lease hold properties was being prepared for Cabinet Member approval. A copy of the draft report would be sent to the EZ for comment.	GH
5. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION	
<p>a) Chair Recruitment A draft advertisement for the position of Enterprise Zone Board Chair was tabled. The aim was to recruit by October to allow for a handover before BJ stepped down at the end of December. The remainder of the application pack used for the previous appointment would be updated.</p> <p>Consideration was given to the skills that would be needed, and the importance of regional and national perspective and local knowledge. Experience of commercial property and public/private partnership were important. BJ also emphasised the requirement/benefit of serving as a member of the Marches LEP Board.</p> <p>It was agreed that an advert be placed in the local media initially.</p>	
<p>b) Sales issues/plot disposals MP and BJ reported on new investor interest. Consideration was given to each enquiry</p>	

<p>and action agreed.</p> <p>c) Goodwin land TG advised the Board that the Goodwin Trust had decided to develop the remaining plots on Skylon North themselves and offer units for rent to eligible businesses.</p> <p>d) Treatment of Business Rates post 2017/18 MP reminded the Board that the current regulations specified that new investors on the Zone needed to occupy their new premises by 31 March 2018 in order to qualify for the 5 years' business rates exemption. Potential investors had been asking what the situation would be post 1 April 2018. A spreadsheet had been prepared which included every planned and actual entry onto the Zone with calculations of future income generation. It had been calculated that by the end of March 2017 the 24 investors on the Zone could generate approx. £13m for the Marches LEP in the lifetime of the EZ (to 2038).</p> <p>Investors to date had considered this exemption a valuable benefit. It was understood that there was no appetite nationally in policy terms to extend the incentive.</p> <p>MP outlined the impact of a local extension of business rate relief for 1, 2 and 5 years. GH explained that these options would need to be presented to the Leader/Cabinet Member for Corporate Strategy and Finance for decision. A report would need to set out the financial cost/benefits balance to the local authority.</p> <p>GH agreed to arrange an early meeting with Mark Taylor, s151 officer / lead accountant to discuss. GH and MT would then bring it to the Leader's attention at one of their weekly meetings.</p>	GH
6. MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT	
<p>a) Sales Progress MP reported on progress with sales.</p> <p>It was noted that contracts for the largest land sale to date (6.3 acres to KGD Industrial Services) had been exchanged before Christmas.</p> <p>Worked had start on the LDP Engineering site on Skylon Central, and it was expected that both the Erebus and GB Electrical and Building Services sites would be complete and occupied before the end of March.</p> <p>Advanced negotiations were continuing for the sale of 5 further sites, with several other sites also under negotiation.</p> <p>b) Marketing <u>Communications and PR</u> Plots for sale had been publicised in a recent feature article in the Hereford Times and this</p>	

had generated some interest.

Work was continuing on the development of a video of the Estate highlighting particular sites, which would be used on the website and at MIPIM 2017.

Inward Investment Activity and Events & Exhibitions

- Herefordshire Defence and Security Expo

Over 300 delegates had signed up to attend this event which would be taking place on 1 February at the Courtyard Theatre.

- MIPIM 2017

MP reported that he would be attending MIPIM 2017 from 14-17 March representing the Marches LEP as part of the Midlands Engine exhibition team, and would be looking out for inward investment opportunities. He was currently attending meetings with other delegates from the Midlands to plan input and activity.

All agreed that it was important to be involved with Midlands Engine activities as it was likely that future funding would be delivered through this mechanism.

- Return Maryland visit to the UK

MP was supporting the development and planning of the return Maryland visit to the UK in June 2017, which would include attendance at Infosec 2017.

- DSEI 2017

A stand had been booked for this event from 12-15 September at ExCel London.

Mike Price was continuing to work for the Zone, and was picking up on new national defence contracts and looking at supply chain opportunities.

c) Infrastructure

Broadband

MP would be arranging the first of the regular meetings with ITS Technology Group to review the implementation of the ultrafast broadband services on the estate. It was agreed that DH would attend and that Matt Smith from the Fastershire team also be invited to attend. Meeting to take place at the end of March.

Greenway Cycleway Lighting

A revised design for lighting on the Greenway had been approved through the planning system. MP was awaiting confirmation from Balfour Beatty when those works would be implemented.

It was suggested that some of the £1.6m recently awarded to the Council for sustainable transport could be used for additional lighting beyond the Greenway bridge, and noted that improved cycleway signage was also being considered.

<p><u>Straight Mile Cycleway</u> MP reported that sign off of the detailed designs was awaited from the transport authority. The works would then need to be planned around seasonal environmental constraints.</p> <p><u>Other infrastructure works</u> MP outlined further infrastructure works needed on site which included ground raising, utilities, site access and security fencing. Funding was already allocated within the Council's capital programme, and submission of a business case would allow further funds to be drawn down in 2017/18.</p> <p>d) Business Support and Networking Suitable subject areas for future network events would be considered with Qinetiq and the University of Wolverhampton following the Defence Expo event.</p> <p>e) Direct developments <u>Shell Store: Incubation and Development Application Centre</u> A decision on the outline bid to the Marches Growth Deal fund was awaited, and expected the following week.</p> <p>Options for match funding this project were discussed, and it was agreed that MP, GH and NW discuss further.</p> <p><u>Centre for Cyber Security</u> The University of Wolverhampton were awaiting the outcome of their funding bid to the Marches Growth Fund. Should this be successful they would be seeking further match funding.</p> <p>MP was on the University's Board for this project and was encouraging links with Qinetiq due to their expertise in this area. Designs had not yet been commissioned.</p>	MP, GH, NW
7. RELATED PROJECTS	
<p><u>Skylon Tower</u> The outcome of the planning application for the Skylon Tower was expected in March. It was agreed that NK attend the EZ Stakeholder Group on 8 February to present the proposal.</p>	NK
8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
<p><u>LEP Conference</u> MP reported that he understood that the LEP was organising 2 conferences this year, one in the north and one in the south, in Hereford, on 9 June at the Racecourse. There was an expectation that this would showcase Herefordshire projects, including the EZ.</p>	
9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING	

1.30pm on 7 March at the Rural Enterprise Centre (Members' Board followed by Executive Board)	
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