

Minutes of the meeting of the Central Area Growth Board held on Tuesday 12 December 2023 at 10:00

Present: Councillor Nunn, Councillor Simmons, Councillor Smithers, Councillor Weir, Councillor Zerny and Councillor R Bradburn (In place of Marland)

H Chipping (Chief Executive - SEMLEP) and P Horrocks (Chair - SEMLEP)

Apologies: Councillor Marland (Milton Keynes City Council)

Officers: M Bracey, G Candler, L Church, M Coiffait, V Hlomuka, S Lloyd, S McNamara, L Seymour, P Thomas and P Brown

CGB13 Welcome and Introductions

In the absence of Councillor Marland, Councillor Nunn welcomed attendees to the meeting.

CGB14 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Central Area Growth Board held on 19 October 2023 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

CGB15 Disclosures of Interest

None received.

CGB16 Update on Business Engagement

The Head of Economic Development (MKCC) introduced the report and noted that governance guidance was clear to integrate the business voice within any new arrangements. The leaders had recently met and this report outlined the high level principles of engagement. These were still in their formative stages and recognised that authorities want to co-develop the future of business engagement structures with their local business communities.

It was noted that business representatives broadly welcomed the high-level principles that had been set out and they reflected the desire of the business community for a proper strategic forum, this was seen as a critical element. The mechanics of the transition of governance was also key for example who on existing SEMLEP boards who would be invited to be part of the new arrangements.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be noted.
2. To bring an update to the February meeting of the Central Area Growth Board on business engagement.

CGB17 Update on Future of LEP Functions

The Chair noted that the paper contained an exempt annex containing further recommendations / decisions. It was proposed that the meeting consider the report and then consider moving not exempt session to consider the annex.

The Head of Economic Growth and Inward Investment (WNC) introduced the report noting that the design principles were discussed and agreed at the workshop that had recently been held with leaders. There was further work required focused around governance arrangements and a revised terms of reference for the Central Area Growth Board. The Draft Integration Plan had recently been submitted to central government. West Northamptonshire Council, who would host the LEP functions going forward, had established an internal project team to look at elements such as governance, legal, HR, the funding envelope, communications etc and officers continued to work closely with the LEP to prepare for the transfer.

As the meeting would now consider the exempt annex to this report, Councillor Nunn moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Simmons:

“That the press and public be excluded from the meeting by virtue of Paragraph 3 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, including the authority holding that information) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, in order that the meeting may consider the exempt annex to the report.”

The meeting then moved into private session.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be noted.
2. That a further update on progress with LEP integration, be brought to the February meeting of the Growth Board.
3. That the press and public be excluded from the meeting by virtue of Paragraph 3 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, including the authority holding that information) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, in order that the meeting may consider the exempt annex to the report.