

Minutes of Marches Growth Hub Steering Group 27.09.2018
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Present			
Paul Hinkins	PH	LEP Board Member and Chair of Telford Business Board	
Frank Myers	FM	Chair of Herefordshire Business Board - Director, MCP Systems Consultants Ltd	
Paul O'Neill	PO	Director - Marches Skills Provider Network	
Amy Bould	AB	Marches LEP, PR & Marketing Consultant, Be Bold Media Ltd	
Gary Dimmock	GD	University of Wolverhampton (UOW) – Manager, Business Solutions Centre (Attending on behalf of Marc Fleetham)	
Maisy Owen	MP	Chamber Member - Chair of Members Committee, Director of MO Management Consultancy Ltd	
Lindsay Barton	LB	Shropshire Business Board Representative, FSB Branch Leader (Shropshire), Managing Director of Golden Kite Solutions Ltd	
Steve Havins	SH	Department for International Trade, Head of Business Development & Partnerships	
Louise Pierce	LP	Marches LEP Data & Marketing Support Officer	
Yasmin Sulaman	YS	Marches LEP Business Support Officer	
Kathryn Jones	KJ	Marches LEP Partnership Manager	
Apologies:			
Kathy Mulholland - Telford & Wrekin Council - Inward Investment & Business Support Service Delivery Manager			
Marc Fleetham – University of Wolverhampton – Director Business Solutions, Regional Knowledge Transfer Partnership Director, Chair KTP National Forum			
Johnny Themans - Telford Business Board Representative – Director, Good 2 Great Ltd			
Nick Webster - Herefordshire Council - Economic Development Manager			
Matt Potts – Shropshire Council – Business Growth & Investment Manager			
Not Present:			
Michelle Kynaston – Marches Area Lead - Cities and Local Growth Unit, BEIS			
ITEM			ACTION
1.	Welcome and introductions PH welcomed everyone to the meeting and welcomed LB in her new capacity as Shropshire Business Board representative. YS gave apologies for the members unable to attend.		
2.	Declarations of interest None were declared		

3.	<p>Attendance update</p> <p>PH expressed his disappointment that the figure for some attendees was 0% and the group concurred. It was agreed that where someone is unable to attend, a substitute should be sent. It was also agreed that members should aim for an attendance figure of 75% or above.</p>	
4.	<p>Minutes of the last meeting and actions</p> <p>The group agreed and signed off the minutes from the 28/06/18 meeting. KJ explained that the Marches LEP board vacancies have not yet been advertised so the action to circulate a post description was still outstanding. YS confirmed that all the other actions had been completed and updates would follow during the course of the meeting.</p>	
5.	<p>LEP Update</p> <p>KJ updated the group as follows:</p> <p>Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)</p> <p>Draft number four of the SEP was presented to the Marches LEP Board on 25th September. The consultation process continues and the final draft should be completed and signed off by the Marches LEP Board at their November board meeting.</p> <p>Review of LEPs</p> <p>The government is currently reviewing the LEP network. They are looking at geographies and removing any areas of overlap. The government is also looking at reducing the number of LEPs. There are also discussions around the governance of LEPs and moving towards a more common model. LEPs will become companies limited by guarantee or community interest companies. The LEP board makeup is being reviewed in terms of diversity and there will be some work required to attract more women to apply to join the board. The government is also looking at how self-contained the LEP areas are. The Marches is able to demonstrate that it is a functioning economic geography, although it is a little low in terms of population.</p> <p>Ministerial visit August</p> <p>David Gauke MP, Secretary of State for Justice, visited the region on 29th August and a couple of board members were involved with this meeting hosted by Marches Growth Hub – Telford & Wrekin. The focus of the visit was to help understand the impact of Brexit on the local economy. Discussions echoed some of the work around skills and how schools and employers can work together more effectively.</p> <p>Further discussions</p> <p>FM put forward the notion that the Local Industrial Strategy is a business rather than industrial strategy and he added that the business community want to see more of a business voice emerging from the SEP.</p> <p>There was a discussion around schools and recruitment. The Telford Business Board has a skills sub group to look at engagement with schools in addition to further education establishments. MO suggested that intervention should start at the primary rather than secondary school level and is concerned that a skills shortage is crippling small businesses. SH commented that apprenticeships are not being pitched to schools. YS suggested inviting</p>	YS

	<p>Aggie Caesar-Homden, Skills Project Officer for the Marches LEP to the next meeting to update the group on skills from the LEP perspective.</p> <p>PO informed the group that Skills shows are planned across the three areas. The Shropshire Careers Show will take place on 15th January 2019, the Telford Apprenticeship Show will be held on 8th March 2019 and the Herefordshire Careers Show will take place on 4th July 2019,</p> <p>A strategic IAG ‘conference’ is being planned for November 2018 in Ludlow to cover the whole of the Marches, from which operational events may follow.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>MGH 2017/2018 Year End Report</p> <p>YS confirmed that BEIS have signed off the report and she thanked the group for their input to it. She confirmed that the Marches Growth Hub has been rated in the top quartile of Growth Hubs and that our Growth Hub reports to BEIS are deemed as excellent. The bi-annual report is due in October covering outputs and outcomes for the last 6 months.</p> <p>FM commented that it would be good to make sure progress is weaved into the report and YS confirmed that the great innovative work being carried out by the Growth Hubs would be fed into the report.</p> <p>PH congratulated YS on putting together an excellent report.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>2018/2019 MGH Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend <p>YS confirmed that the actual spend figure for Q2 was for July-August only. The spend is on track although there will be some reprofiling for Q3 and Q4 as the high profile events will not be taking place until later in the year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KPI Data <p>LP provided an update as follows:-</p> <p>Telford has taken more phone call enquiries than the other 2 Growth Hubs. The Marches Growth Hub number was transferred to the National Business Support Helpline (NBSH) at the end of June. 55% of calls to the NBSH in July came from Shropshire, 35% from Herefordshire and just 9% from Telford & Wrekin. In August the breakdown of calls was 75% from Shropshire, 20% from Herefordshire and just 5% from Telford & Wrekin.</p> <p>Shropshire had a large number of face to face appointments due to the Industrial Estate initiative around the Broadband grant scheme.</p> <p>GD questioned the low number of face to face appointments in Herefordshire as he has seen a number of people engaging with the Growth Hub whilst there. GD will speak to MG Herefordshire and confirm how they are collating this data.</p> <p>Shropshire had a very high number of event attendees due to the Tech Severn Conference they supported as a Partner organisation and the Access to Finance and BEEP launch event at Shrewsbury Town FC.</p>	<p>GD</p>

	<p>Telford have a high number of customer satisfaction surveys returned and this is mainly because a lot of their surveys are handed out at events rather than emailed. Although Shropshire have had a good number of events, some of these were partner events where the partner’s satisfaction survey would have been handed out.</p> <p>The group expressed an interest in seeing the format of the survey and the scores that are received. This will be presented at the next and subsequent meetings.</p>	LP
<p>8.</p>	<p>Marketing and Social Media / Google Analytics - Stats for July – September 2018 AB updated the group as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of pages visited is down in comparison to the same period last year and the year before but the number of website views is up which suggests people are getting to the correct page quicker. • Social media figures continue to rise with Facebook providing the second highest number of referrals to the Growth Hub website after Google. • Under the new PR and Marketing contract each Growth Hub is receiving two days support a month. There will be a PR and Marketing delivery plan for the Marches Growth Hub and the three individual hubs. • An Access to Finance theme will run from now until the end of January 2019, culminating in a high profile Access to Finance event. An Export theme will run between November and February with another high profile event planned. Digital is a third theme to be taken up as it’s an area businesses are keen to explore with digital events very well attended. <p>AB attended the LEP Network communications forum. New guidance will be coming out which focuses on the 4 key themes of: free and impartial advice; a trusted government network; business support simplification and customer convenience.</p> <p>AB confirmed that there is a central Growth Hub mailing list and that each of the hubs has their own mailing list which they send emails to.</p> <p>YS confirmed that the Growth Hub is still waiting to hear about a new strapline to replace the existing one of “Your Gateway to Business Support.”</p>	

<p>9.</p>	<p>Steering Group Review Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Terms of Reference YS confirmed that this was approved by MP following on from the last meeting. The ToR will be reviewed again in twelve months time and updated as members evolve. - Data Sharing Agreements YS confirmed that this is still being reviewed before it is passed to the legal team to check that it is fit for purpose. This will be shared in due course. - Draft Partner Service Level Agreement (SLA) YS confirmed that a figure of 30 hours has been agreed as the minimum number of opening hours for the Growth Hubs each week. This has been added to the draft SLA. <p>There was a discussion around further work required to the SLA including:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification of who the agreement is between • The need for the Growth Hubs to report on Customer Satisfaction scores • The need for a legal review to ensure the SLA is fit for purpose 	<p>YS</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>MGH Review & Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Action Plan Progress Update YS reported on progress against the Action Plan. Action 3 to review and develop a Marketing plan is firmly in progress now the contract with Be Bold has been confirmed. Action 12 around scale-up will be progressed when we receive the inputs for the bi-annual report. <p>AB informed the group that BEIS does not have a national communications plan at present. The communications plan for the Growth Hub needs to be fluid, so that it can accommodate elements of the BEIS communications plan once the latter is released.</p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p>Guest Speaker – Matt Potts Unfortunately, Matt Potts was unable to attend the meeting due to unforeseen events at work.</p>	
<p>12.</p>	<p>Any Other Business MO raised two concerns on behalf of the Shropshire Chamber of Commerce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chamber of Commerce is concerned about poor broadband across the area. • There is also concern around exchange rates and the impact of Brexit on company cashflow <p>AB agreed to share the Broadband support on offer with MO.</p> <p>Dates for the 2019 meetings will be shared. The first meeting of 2019 will be in March.</p>	<p>AB</p>
	<p>Future Meeting Dates (quarterly 4.30 – 6.30)</p> <p>Thursday 13/12/18 Thursday 28/03/18</p>	