

**BLACK COUNTRY EXECUTIVE JOINT COMMITTEE****Wednesday 22 June 2016, 11.15am**

To Be Held at:

**Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council,  
The Council House, Committee Room 2****DRAFT MINUTES****VOTING MEMBERS**

Councillor Steve Eling, Sandwell MBC (Chair)  
Councillor Roger Lawrence, Wolverhampton CC  
Councillor Sean Coughlan, Walsall MBC  
Councillor Sparks, Dudley MBC (sub)

**NON VOTING MEMBERS****IN ATTENDANCE**

Sarah Norman, Dudley MBC  
Jan Britton, Sandwell MBC  
Paul Sheehan, Walsall MBC (Secretary)  
Keith Ireland, Wolverhampton CC  
Sarah Middleton, The Black Country Consortium Ltd

**INVITED GUESTS**

Simon Neilson, Walsall MBC

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**1. Apologies**

Councillor Peter Lowe, Dudley MBC  
Stewart Towe, Black Country LEP Board  
Stuart Everton, BC Director for Transport

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**2. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair for 2016-17****16/0028 It was resolved that:**

Councillor Peter Lowe, Leader of Dudley MBC be Chairperson for 2016/17 municipal year.

**It was resolved that:**

Councillor Sean Coughlan, Leader of Walsall MBC be Vice Chairperson for 2016/17 municipal year.

**It was resolved that:**

Councillor Steve Eling (Sandwell MBC) Chair today's meeting.

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**3. Meeting Dates and Forward Plan Publication Dates for 2016-17****16/0029 It was resolved that:**

The meeting Dates and Forward Plan Publication Dates for 2016/17 be approved.

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**4. Notes of Previous Meeting held on 20 April 2016****16/0030 It was resolved that:**

The notes of the meeting held on 20 April 2016 be confirmed as a true record

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**5. Matters Arising from the notes of the previous meeting**

None.

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**6. Declarations of Interest**

None.

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**7. Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended):****It was resolved that:**

The public be excluded from the private session during consideration of the agenda items indicated for the reasons shown on the agenda - see Private Session of the Agenda.

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**8. Re-confirmation of the Constitution and Protocols****16/0031 It was resolved that the BCJC:**

Re-confirm the Constitution and Protocols as presented.

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**9. Black Country Local Growth Deal – Accessing Growth - Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro - Tranche 2 – Approval to Amend the existing Accessing Growth Grant Agreement**

Sarah Norman presented the report to the Committee. Sarah advised that Approval is sought to allocate initial development funding to begin the planning of the Metro link between Wednesbury and Brierley Hill. Following the West Midlands Combined Authority Devolution Deal announced by George Osborne on Tuesday 17th November, the DfT have provisionally allocated funding to the proposed East/West Metro link. The Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro forms part of this wider scheme. The scheme has been identified as a priority for a number of years within the Black Country. Extensive development work has already been undertaken for this scheme previously and it has already secured Transport and Works Acts Powers from the DfT.

In light of the recent decision, a refresh of the scheme, design and business case needs to be undertaken. The review work would be undertaken by Centro and the appointed framework consultants to review the business case, scheme programme and costs to accurately reflect 2016 prices.

The work needs to start in earnest now to allow the scheme to meet the DfT requirements and prevent the funding offer from the DfT being withdrawn. The work has already commenced in 2015/16 following approval of £100k to commence advanced development works.

**16/0032 It was resolved that the BCJC :**

2.1 grants approval for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to amend the existing Grant Agreement with Wolverhampton City Council

for the Accessing Growth programme of work **to the value of £300,000** of development funding to deliver the initial Local Growth Fund (LGF) elements of the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro project.

- 2.2 notes that work would commence in 2016/17 and is expected to be completed in July 2016.
- 2.3 notes the Confirmation that Dudley MBC will underwrite these costs.

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10. **Black Country Local Growth Deal - Elite Centre for Manufacturing Skills Additional Funding – Amend the Existing Grant Agreement**

Sarah Middleton presented the report to the Committee. Sarah advised that Wolverhampton University are leading on the ECMS development following completion of the detailed Business case, previously approved by the LEP Board. The University have deployed an established effective Project structure, contracting in expert support for each element of the overall scheme.

Complications have arisen with the provision of a Foundry Training Centre “spoke” adjacent to the existing Thomas Dudley Foundry, at Dudley Port. Experts working on design and delivery of the ECMS “Spoke” at the Thomas Dudley Foundry site have advised significant problems that will inhibit delivery of the Spoke as presently planned as detailed in the report.

The University led Project Team have performed an extensive options analysis to establish the viability of alternate sites. Foremost in the Options appraisal has been the need to sustain the USP of having the Foundry Training Centre located adjacent to a working Foundry. Findings have indicated minimal financial savings from transferring to alternate locations, with the risk of devaluing the USP clearly evident.

Having concluded that the Thomas Dudley site remains the preferred option, the Project is now seeking additional LGF support of £440k to deliver the ECMS Spoke as originally envisaged.

The University has confirmed that the additional works to stabilise the site and secure the continued stability of the Oil Pipeline can be completed without any knock on delay to opening the facility in August 2017.

**16/0033 It was resolved that the BCJC :**

grants approval for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to proceed to amend the existing Grant Agreement with University of Wolverhampton **to the grant value of £440,000** to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) elements of the Elite Centre for Manufacturing Skills (ECMS) Project. Additional funding is to be awarded in the 2016/17 financial year.

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11. **Black Country Local Growth Deal – Accessing Growth – Major Scheme Development 2016/17 – City East Gateway – A454 (Black Country Route) Willenhall Road Corridor – Walsall to Wolverhampton – Approval to Amend the existing Accessing Growth Grant Agreement**

Sarah Middleton presented the report to the Committee. Sarah advised that The A454 Willenhall Road/Horseley Fields corridor is a key arterial route accessing Wolverhampton City Centre. It forms part of the Strategic Highway Network and stretches between Wolverhampton and Walsall, it is the major link for Wolverhampton bound traffic exiting the M6 at Junction 10 and also serves the heavily populated and commercial areas of Willenhall, Darlaston, Wednesbury and Bilston. The route connects the growth opportunities in the Neachells Industrial area, Canalside Quarter, Southern Growth

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Corridor and City Centre of Wolverhampton and suffers severe congestion as detailed in the report.

The proposed scheme seeks to provide a multi-modal corridor to improve access and flow for buses, cyclists and general traffic as well as providing high quality pedestrian facilities.

The next stages for development of any viable schemes have been identified as traffic modelling of the corridor and further design of identified preferred/viable option with outline costs and sufficient detail to inform CPO requirements, and business case development. The development funding available in 2016/17 will support the commissioning of some of these elements.

**16/0034 It was resolved that the BCJC :**

grants approval for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to amend the existing Grant Agreement with the City of Wolverhampton Council **to the value of £150,000** to support the development of proposals to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) funded elements of the A454 (Black Country Route) Willenhall Road Corridor, Walsall to Wolverhampton Accessing Growth development project.

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12.

**Black Country Local Growth Deal – Accessing Growth – Major Scheme Development 2016/17 – City North Gateway – A449 Stafford Road Corridor - Wolverhampton to I54 – Approval to Amend the existing Accessing Growth Grant Agreement**

Sarah Middleton presented the report to the Committee. Sarah advised that the Stafford Road A449 corridor is identified within the West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan (WMSTP) as a phase 2 HS2 Connectivity Package potential SPRINT route and a key element of the metropolitan cycle network. The Wolverhampton Stafford Road Area Action Plan (AAP) includes a 2026 vision for the corridor as having enhancements to public transport, walking, cycling and highway networks, which will have taken place to maintain sustainable transport patterns. The AAP also includes detail for transport proposals within the corridor, and relevant policy considerations. In Dec 2015 the ITA endorsed the conclusions of the Black Country Rapid Transit Study, which placed the public transport connectivity between Wolverhampton City Centre and i54 as one of 4 Black Country priorities.

As a major regeneration corridor within the Black Country it is essential that access for businesses, residents, workers and students is maintained and that growth can be accommodated. In order to progress major scheme proposals for essential transportation improvements along the corridor, development funding for initial study work is required.

There are a number of junctions along the corridor which present existing issues of congestion. Given the size and scale of the corridor and likely costs it is proposed to take a phased approach to delivery of improvements across a number of years. The detail of the phasing, specific junctions for improvement, the type of works required and realistic cost estimates; along with indicative BCR's for each deliverable element will need to be established initially. The development funding available in 2016/17 will support the commissioning of a corridor model and initial design options for pinch points on the network.

Phase 1 of the corridor has already been identified as Vine Island to Junction 2 and a Strategic Outline Case and Initial Proposal to the LEP have been submitted. As part of the corridor development work a full business case for this element will also be progressed to allow (subject to funding) for delivery on site to commence this financial

year.

**16/0035 It was resolved that the BCJC :**

grants approval for the Accountable Body for the Growth Deal (Walsall Council) to amend the existing Grant Agreement with the City of Wolverhampton Council **to the value of £150,000** to support the development of proposals to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) funded elements of the A449 Stafford Road Corridor, Wolverhampton to I54 Accessing Growth development project.

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13. **Black Country Local Growth Deal - Changes to the Local Growth Fund Programme – Approval of the updated project expenditure and outputs**

Sarah Middleton presented the report to the Committee. Sarah advised that the report details the current position of the Growth Deal Projects approved by the Joint Committee, reflecting all changes to the Programme (Funding and Outputs) since the Progress Update and Output Change report considered and approved by the Joint Committee on the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

The 2015/16 LGF support approved by BIS was £24.35m. The Baseline of projects being offered Grant awards by Walsall Accountable Body for 2015/16 started at £22.7m, with a gap in spend of £1.65m. Therefore to ensure full utilisation of the £24.35m LGF and address potential underspend as highlighted by projects throughout the first year of the programme, a range of additional Pipeline projects have been brought forward for LEP and Joint Committee approval, resulting in £26.78m of live projects being approved and an over-programming of around 15%.

The 2015/16 funding allocation of £24.35m is now fully committed.

**16/0036 It was resolved that the BCJC :**

grants approval of updated expenditure and output profiles for the Growth Deal projects as set out in **Attachment 1** of the report.

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14. **Delegated Authority – Black Country Local Growth Deal – Pipeline Development Fund - Challenge Block**

Simon Neilson (Walsall) was present for this item and presented the report to the Committee. Simon advised that this bid was for £41,000 of LGF Pipeline Development funding to progress intrusive site investigation works on those areas of the site clear of buildings, desktop investigations in respect of the remainder and site security works. The overall site provides a major town centre development opportunity located in a prominent position and suitable for a range/mix of uses which could include offices, convenience/bulky goods retail, community hub and multi-storey car park. The project appraisal process concluded that there was evidently potential for the site to contribute significantly to SEP growth in terms of delivery of employment space and new jobs.

Potential outputs include remediation of up to 1.17 hectares of land for employment use.

**16/0037 It was resolved that the BCJC :**

- 2.1 notes that the Executive Director for Economy and Environment within Walsall Council in his role of Chair of the City Deal and Growth Deal Working Group has used his Delegated Authority to approve for the Accountable Body (Walsall Council) to proceed to Agreement **to the value of £41,000** to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) elements of the De-Risking the Challenge Block LGF Pipeline Fund project - with delivery to commence in the 2016/17 financial year. Approval of this approach was achieved at the February 2016 LEP Board meeting.
- 2.2 Notes that the need to use delegated authority was identified as the project was time critical and waiting for approval by the Black Country Joint Committee in April would have impacted on deliverability and was not suitable for approval using existing Special Urgency or General Exemption mechanisms.
- 2.3 notes that the Challenge Block Pipeline Development Project will be underwritten by Walsall Council.

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**PRIVATE SESSION**

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15. **Delegated Authority - Black Country Local Growth Deal – Pipeline Development Fund - Former Alexander Metals**  
(Exempt information under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended))

Simon Neilson (Walsall) was present for this item and presented the report to the Committee. Simon advised that this was to further inform existing studies undertaken as detailed in the report.

**16/0038 It was resolved that the BCJC :**

- 2.1 notes that the Executive Director for Economy and Environment within Walsall Council in his role of Chair of the City Deal and Growth Deal Working Group has used his Delegated Authority to approve for the Accountable Body (Walsall Council) to proceed to **Grant Agreement with Company 1** to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) elements of the Former Alexander Metals Wolverhampton LGF Pipeline Fund project - with delivery to commence in the 2016/17 financial year. Approval of this approach was achieved at the February 2016 LEP Board meeting.
- 2.2 The need to use delegated authority was identified as the project was time critical and waiting for approval by the Black Country Joint Committee in April would have impacted on deliverability and was not suitable for approval using existing Special Urgency or General Exemption mechanisms.
- 2.3 This Grant will be underwritten by all four Black Country local authorities and the Black County Consortium Ltd using the Growing Places Fund. This will be held and used to repay the Grant if no asset is delivered.

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16. **Delegated Authority – Black Country Local Growth Deal – Pipeline Development Fund - Former Moxley Tip**  
(Exempt information under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended))

Simon Neilson (Walsall) was present for this item and presented the report to the Committee. Simon advised that this was to provide information on issues affecting the

site.

**16/0039 It was resolved that the BCJC :**

- 2.1 notes that the Executive Director for Economy and Environment within Walsall Council in his role of Chair of the City Deal and Growth Deal Working Group has used his Delegated Authority to approve for the Accountable Body (Walsall Council) to proceed to Grant Agreement **with Company 1** to deliver the Local Growth Fund (LGF) elements of the Former Moxley Tip Walsall LGF Pipeline Fund project - with delivery to commence in the 2016/17 financial year. Approval of this approach was achieved at the February 2016 LEP Board meeting.
  - 2.2 The need to use delegated authority was identified as the project was time critical and waiting for approval by the Black Country Joint Committee in April would have impacted on deliverability and was not suitable for approval using existing Special Urgency or General Exemption mechanisms.
  - 2.3 This Grant will be underwritten by all four Black Country local authorities and the Black County Consortium using the Growing Places Fund. This will be held and used to repay the Grant if no asset is delivered.
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