



Minutes

Name of meeting

Economic Development Board (EDB)

Date and time

Tuesday 1st April 2025, 10am-12pm

Venue

Boardroom, Building 41, Cowes

Attendees

Julie Jones-Evans, Ian Stephens (all IWC), Rachael Randall (HTP), Peter Thomas (IOW Grain), Gavin Stride (Creative Island), Victoria Egerton (IOW College)

Observers Chris Brammall, Lee Mathews

1.

Welcome

2.

Apologies Alex Minns (IWC), Dominic Ward (IOW Tech Group), Graham Biss (Natural Enterprise) – deputy Peter Thomas (IOW Grain), Colin Rowland (IWC), Janet Stevens (IW College), Will Miles (Visit IOW), Steve Holbrook (IOW Chamber), Rob Sauven (Net Zero)

3.

Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

Minutes approved.

4.

Presentation – Isle of Wight College

Victoria Egerton outlined the college's strategic plan going forward over the next 5 years. She outlined the current and future curriculum offers. She introduced new initiatives including the South Coast IOT and the aspirations to broaden the HE offer. Finally she highlighted the use of technology in courses in Health and Social Care using the college's immersive rooms and equipment.

ACTION – Share IOW College's slides with Board.

5

Board comments on Draft IOW Growth and Prosperity Strategy – Lee Mathews

LM reported on progress on the IOW Growth and Prosperity Strategy. He highlighted the emerging themes and the board were invited to a further

meeting in May to consider priorities, It was hoped the strategy would go to committee in July.

6

Get Britain Working update – Lee Matthews

LM introduced the Get Britain Working plan for the Solent. This work is ongoing and is expected to finish by August with the creation of a Solent plan. It includes a review of all initiatives aimed at facilitating people back to work. It was noted that, while a comprehensive approach was welcomed, there would be possible resource issues around the council's involvement with it's delivery.

7

Connect to Work – Lee Matthews

LM reported that DWP had not yet approved our delivery plan. There were widespread delays across the system with the national adoption of this scheme . it was anticipated that delivery would not start on the Island until early in the New Year.

When it was up and running, the scheme would be reporting to EDB and the governing body – PCC.

8

Devolution – Lee Matthews

Work towards devolution was progressing across the region. The board were directed to the link for the consultation. Also, a meeting on the Solent Cultural Strategy was to take place on 3rd April.

9

Current project updates:

a. UKSPF – Chris Brammall

i. Building 41 – still going well. High level of occupancy and several events taking place. Large occupier is close to agreeing terms for their lease.

ii. Go for Growth – Programme had finished in March, achieving over its targets. Funding was available for this financial year – contract to be negotiated.

iii. Inclusive Island – programme had finished in March – highly successful and achieving its targets. It had been hoped that this programme could be supported by Connect to Work, but the delay until the New Year means that alternative short term funding was being investigated.

b. Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) – Chris Brammall

All the funding has been spent and a press release is being planned. Funding for a further scheme has been announced so a similar, if smaller scheme will be run this financial year.

c. DWP programmes Youth Hub – Lee Matthews

Scheme has been very successful and a further 2 year contract is being investigated.

d. Levelling up fund – Lee Matthews

i. East Cowes - report next meeting

ii. Greenlink – The project is being reprogrammed as the government has moved the goal posts around level of funding and timetable -

e. Ryde Town Fund – In SH's absence, Rachael Randall reported. The government had redefined this programme. The key changes were a renaming as the Ryde Neighbourhood Board, a change of focus to encourage more partnership working with IWC as the accountable body, a focus on delivery with infrastructure and health as a priority. This was all to be considered at a meeting on 16th April. There was also a move to the fund benefiting the Island as a whole.

f. PTEC Tidal energy – Chris Brammall The council are working with island companies about taking this project forward.

g. IOW Film Studio – Julie Jones-Evans The project is progressing and has already attracted a level of investment.

h. Student Accommodation – Julie Jones-Evans – A feasibility study is underway about creating student accommodation within Newport. In particular , the level of demand is being investigated.