

Minutes

Name of meeting	Economic Development Board (EDB) Executive Partners Meeting
Date and time	<i>Thursday 26 January 2022, 10 pm - 12 pm</i>
Venue	Conference Room 4, Floor 4 at County Hall
Apologies	<i>Will Myles</i>
Attendees	<i>Holly Jones (online), Rob Sauven, Chris Ashman, Julie Jones-Evans, Janet Stevens, Ella Clapham, Amy Stubbs, Norman Arnold, Ashley Curzon, Steven Holbrook.</i>
1.	<p>Minutes of the Economic Development Board meeting held on 27th October 2022 (attached)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes from previous meeting - Investment Plan to be circulated by CA. • EC provided update on Building 41 and business courses here. Business plan for Building 41 to be circulated by EC.
2.	<p>Mission Zero Hubs and the Economy - Holly Jones and Rob Sauven</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure by which they are working to needs to be understood. • Biosphere is running separately to IWC and is not governed by the council. • Want to look at IOW's footprint and are passionate for every human being to get involved in order to make the change to net zero. • Hubs are trying to access and implement everything we do on the Island. Active hubs = land, energy, housing, active travel hubs. Tourism, coastal/waterways, arts/culture/heritage hubs all initiated. • Biosphere Steering Group formed as well as Mission Zero Community Hub and Steering Committee. • Events and waste and resource management committee forming. • Need for Green Impact Programme (GIP) to be updated so that it includes a section on reducing carbon footprint. • The Carbon Trust has very good tools for reducing carbon footprint - to see if this can sit alongside the GIP. • Biosphere is about all 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals.

- RS is seeking a business led group to take the lead on the net zero agenda for business and build on what has already happened.
- There is a skills shortage in construction so despite grants, IOW is unable to make more homes energy efficient.
- Trustmark accreditation is making it difficult for IOW businesses to be able to undertake these green measures.
- RS would like the chamber to take a leading role in creating another hub and hopefully acts as chair. Challenge is that there is a lot of emphasis behind what is going on, but then national issues occur (covid etc) and businesses have other things to think about. Key to get timing right for when you engage with businesses. SH happy to discuss and thinks this is likely to be run by Chamber of Commerce volunteers.
- In terms of comms, there is potential to focus on on a Green Impact Prog business that is doing well (monthly?).
- ACTION - NA and SH to speak with RS more about Chamber of Commerce support for this project.
- ACTION - To bring Chamber of Commerce vision 2023 to future EDB meetings

3. Council budget (inc Business rates- revaluation/transition) - CA

- SH highlighted issues around mail outs and GDPR - CA to look into this.
- Need to encourage as many people as possible to be a part of this budget consultation.
- Need to have a business in the room to provide feedback on this from business perspective.
- Seeking advice on how best to promote that the business rates change is coming.
- CA handed out overview for non-domestic rates/business rates explained. Also includes information on rates relief etc.
- Feedback can be taken back to the business rates team for how they can do more in the future - think about comms, GDPR, covid grants etc.

4. Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) - AC

- AC presented on the aims of LSIP including what its key focus is.
- Desk based research due to be conducted by the end of March 2023.
- Need to ensure Island skills issues are properly reflected in a document that is covering the whole Solent region.
- Report to be published by end of May/June 2023. Annual reviews will take place in Spring 2024 and 2025 where the document can be updated as necessary.
- Dale Howarth is going to assist the Chamber with engaging/communicating with businesses and help to drive the process. Hitting tight timeframes and completing surveys etc.

- Main stakeholder engagement event taking place on 1st March. Opportunity for businesses to attend, however Island event will be taking place on 24th March at IW College.
- Opportunity to take the information learned here and alter what we are doing slightly. Whatever its future use might be, it will add value to what we are doing here.
- JJE asked how local decision making will happen. LEP doesn't commission training anymore, so what is the local governance going to look like in respect to education providers? Who has the monitoring capability of this - is it local or national? - CA queries
- ACTION - Compare the output of this with existing skills plan.

5. Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF)

- REPF is additional funding on top of UKSPF - capital money.
- Discussions have been ongoing about how to allocate this funding, and a number of different projects that could be supported were highlighted. The IWC has submitted a generic plan around a small grants scheme and a major premises refurbishment. More detail was requested and provided principally on draw down of funds for HM Treasury. Assurance that they can amend as projects change. Small grant scheme (under £250k) and a large project based on one specific capital project (in year 2).
- Consider some of the issues, and which project(s) we are going to progress with.
- No more funding available from LEP for Branstone Farm.
- Needs to align the funding with the UKSPF.
- The outbuildings at B41 have been handed back to IWC – and provided best opportunity for REPF in terms of deliverability and creation of maker space aligned to needs of cultural sector and “dirty space” estimated spend circ £300k on renovating the three sheds. This is a reasonably straightforward project so would be good to push ahead with this. Need for condition survey and review of what's needed, basic fixtures and fittings, watertight and have working heating and electric etc.
- There is a need to consider that part of the REPF to cover a tourism project, accessibility.
- Possible to reduce the amount for small grants scheme in order to have more funding for other priorities. Could narrow this down so the grants are specifically for hospitality businesses to improve their accessibility.
- Any budget that is left can be allocated to accessibility for beaches, linked to work being pursued by RoW but with no capital support. Need to complete a feasibility study (Ryde, Shanklin and Sandown).
- Board confirmed that the Building 41 sheds was the key project for REPF funding.

6. Board member updates - ALL

7. AOB

- JS increasing number of T-levels as these have been successful.
 - Feedback on the IWC Business Survey is to add an option for ceasing trading and adding a 'open comments' box at the end of the survey.
 - ACTION - AS to circulate the link to test survey for comments
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- Should there be a question about the business rates changing included in the business survey? – JJE