

# UNIVERSITY PROJECT BOARD MEETING Notes and Action Points Monday 11 July 2016 at 10.00 NMiTE Offices, Rotherwas Industrial Estate

**CHAIR:** Alistair Neill ΑN CEO Herefordshire Council **NOTE TAKER:** Melissa Walker MW Directorate Services Officer, Herefordshire Council PRESENT: Vinia Abesamis VA Senior Policy and Funding Officer, Hfds Council Christian Dangerfield **NMiTE** CD **NMiTE** Mark Edwards ME Rob Ewing RE Commissioning Programme Delivery Manager, H Council Richard Gabb RG Programme Director Housing and Growth, Hfds Council Geoff Hughes Director for Economy, Communities and Corporate, HC GH Penny Jones Regeneration Programmes Manager, Hfds Council ΡJ

David Nolan DN Managing Director, Nth Degree Consulting
David Sheppard DS Co-Team Leader, Hereford University Project

Gavin Stephens GS Economic Development Officer, Herefordshire Council

APOLOGIES: None

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ITEM	NOTES	ACTION	
1.	ATTENDANCE / APOLOGIES / INTRODUCTIONS Attendance and apologies are recorded above. Round the table introductions took place.		
2.	NOTES OF LAST MEETING – Alistair Neill Agreed as a true record.		
	DS commented that agreements still need to be signed and exchanged.		
	ACTION: DS TO PRINT AGREEMENTS AND GET SIGNED AND THEN SEND TO HC FOR SIGNATURES.	DS	
3.	PROGRESS REPORT RE BUSINESS CASE  Useful clarification has been received since the last meeting in relation to the size and level of detail expected within the Green Book. The Director supporting Jo Johnson MP has advised that the main document should be approximately 10-15 pages, more of an executive summary, with appendices providing the supporting evidence. This is encouraging as it means that there is a level of trust in place if they are happy to receive a shorter document.  The NMiTE team had delivered an update on the project at a recent Leaders Briefing. This was a useful opportunity for them to explain the proposition to cabinet members and answer questions.		
	Potential effects from the referendum and changes within Government were discussed. It was acknowledged that nothing could be predicted at this stage. We need to ensure that Cabinet get the message directly that the project is still progressing.		
	ACTION: DS, DN, KU TO MEET WITH & UPDATE CLLRS ON THE CURRENT SITUATION	DS, DN, KU	
	It was felt that to better inform the project board a Gantt chart / timetable needs to be produced to identify key milestones together with completion times. This was agreed as a core item to accompany future agendas.		
	GH felt that there were essentially 2 strands of work to monitor via Gantt, a) the development of the GBBC which the Council are co-ordinating and, b) the Property aspect that needs clarity on delivery that NMiTE lead.		
	RG asked DS whether he should be liaising with Architype and was NMiTE paying for their input. DS confirmed NMiTE were picking up that cost.		
	ACTION: DS & GS TO CREATE A GANTT CHART SHOWING KEY COMPONENTS OF THE PROJECT AND DEADLINE DATES	DS, GS	



ITEM NOTES ACTION

### Capital Bid

It has been suggested that if we were to ask for an increased amount from Government, funds may be available. This could help in reducing the risk to the project.

The additional funding could be used to provide cycle lanes, infrastructure improvements, etc. to enable students to travel freely between the University locations. We need to ensure that this element is built into the Green Book case and that plans for cycle lanes are included within any plans / timetables as a 'must have' element.

### Managing Risk

We need a back-up plan in place in the event that any of the corporate partners are unable to provide funds. The financial research will be looking into this, and looking at what we would need to do to get the model to work if we receive less funding than expected. They will be testing various scenarios.

Support letters from Corporate Partners were requested only recently so that they will be fresh when submitted with the bid.

All universities need a financial buffer in place to ensure that students are able to complete their courses.

CD has been advised that there is a fund available within the treasury to provide loans. This could be a fall back option if the capital funds are not forthcoming. Whilst grant money is preferable, we could explore with BIS any loan schemes available that we could also use.

### **Student Accommodation**

The whole NMiTE project cannot work unless student accommodation is put in place, in time and in sequence for anticipated student numbers. This carries the initial risk of NMiTE failure to attract required student numbers, but beyond this there is potentially a strong business case. It needs to be included within the Business Case to show the net contribution that the accommodation will make to the University.

The Planning application for the first Halls of Residence needs to be submitted in November 2016 with start on site planned for Spring 2017. Completion is required by September 2018.

The University curriculum will be included within publications from September 2018, so the earliest that any visitors would be expected is Sep/Oct 2018.

One of the action points from June's meeting was pulling together a property strategy. This needs to be done ASAP in order to allow us to show precisely what's planned.

## ACTION: DS & RG TO PULL TOGETHER A PROPERTY STRATEGY TO SHOW ALL SITES PLANNED FOR THE UNIVERSITY AND WHEN WORK NEEDS TO BE STARTED / COMPLETED TO KEEP WITHIN SCHEDULE

DS, RG

### <u>Industry</u>

NMiTE will be emailing all of the companies that they have approached previously, approx. 1,500, to participate in the questionnaire.

### **Economic Case**

A consultant is due to be appointed to undertake work on the Economic and Financial cases. Covered under Agenda Item 6.

A Long list of options has been developed that needs to be refined. The core element is the analysis of each of the options against the cost v benefit.

### Schools Survey Progress

This is moving steadily in the right direction. KP FOX were awarded the contract to undertake the required work. They have had some issues getting responses from students due to it being the end of the educational year. HC have put them in touch education contacts that are providing assistance. Contract due to be completed by 01 August.



ITEM	NOTES	ACTION
	To assist the process NMiTE are holding focus groups at various locations around the country to gauge student interest. Groups of 8-12 students are involved. So far students are saying that they would be interested.	
	Employers Survey Need to provide a questionnaire for this to be completed. Needs to be completed by the third week in August.	
4.	<ul> <li>FUNDING MONITORING Update from Herefordshire Council <ul> <li>£30k grant money from HC to NMiTE has been approved.</li> <li>The LEP executive team are due to consider the grant funding application. Anticipated amount of £30k.</li> <li>The HC loan facility of up to £300k is due to go to Full Council on 15 July for consideration.</li> <li>The report about the proposed sites is due to Cabinet on 21 July.</li> <li>It was agreed last week that the LEP Growth Fund Bid for the University was to be put forward as one of the LEP's priorities.</li> </ul> </li> <li>PJ advised that we couldn't rely on Government or EU funding to pay back loans as they do not normally cover retrospective payments. Their funding can only be used for</li> </ul>	
	<ul> <li>works/services to be carried out as specified in a bid/application</li> <li>Update from NMiTE</li> <li>Philip Dunne MP, Minister of State for Defence Procurement at the Ministry of Defence, is keen for the team to work with the MOD.</li> <li>Prof Anthony Finkelsteine, the UK government's Chief Scientific Adviser for National Security, has contacted the team and asked to discuss the proposals.</li> <li>The team are about to contact existing donors to ask them to match what they have already given. This will give them enough money to continue their work over the next few months.</li> </ul>	
5.	FEEDBACK FROM MEETING WITH BIS – David Nolan / Mark Edwards  Most points have been covered in discussions above. BIS were updated on progress to date and confirmed they are happy with everything completed so far.	
6.	APPOINTMENT OF OBC CONSULTANT – Rob Ewing The tender invitation was sent to seven consultancies and two responses were received.	
	The process of assessing the bids is underway with representatives of the council and NMiTE on the assessment team.	
7.	LEP ECONOMIC SCORE IMPROVEMENT BY 29 JULY – D Sheppard / R Ewing Outline comments on the bid have been received.	
	ACTION: DN, DS, GS TO DISCUSS WITH KPMG WHAT THEY CAN DO TO STRENGTHEN THE BID.	DS, DN, GS
8.	PROPERTY – David Sheppard  The sites being put forward to cabinet on 21 July remain the same as those agreed previously.	
	ACTION: PJ TO CIRCULATE COPY OF THE CABINET REPORT TO BOARD.	PJ
	We need to develop a plan for communications in preparation for the outcome of the council and cabinet meetings.	
	ACTION: DS TO PROVIDE DETAILED PROPOSALS FOR EACH OF THE COLLEGE SITES, ACCOMMODATIONS SITES AND ROTHERWAS SITES, PLUS A GANTT CHART / TIMETABLE SHOWING REQUIRED WORKS, COMPLETION DATES, ETC. INCLUDING SECURING OF FUNDING	DS
9.	NEXT STEPS – AII See actions above.	
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ITEM	NOTES	ACTION
10.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS – All	
	None raised.	
11.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
	<ul> <li>Monday 08 August at 10.00 at the Herefordshire Council Offices, Plough Lane</li> </ul>	
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