

# ADVANTAGE WEST MIDLANDS

## NON CONFIDENTIAL

Minutes of the 104<sup>th</sup> Board meeting held on 29 July 2008

### Present:

Nick Paul Chairman  
Cllr Richard Hyde  
Jas Bains  
Dr David Brown  
Brendan Connor  
Cllr Roger Lawrence  
Angela Maxwell  
Michael Oakes  
Prof Michael Sterling  
Cllr Ken Taylor  
David Smith

### Executive:

Michael Laverty Chief Executive  
Tim Gebbels Corporate Director, Strategy and Communications  
Richard Hutchins Corporate Director, Economic Development  
Mark Pearce Corporate Director, Economic Regeneration  
Karen Yeomans Corporate Director, Operations

### Apologies:

Gerard Coyne  
John Crabtree  
Sue Prince  
Cllr Diane Rayner  
Trudi Elliott Regional Director, Government Office West Midlands

### In attendance:

Sue Marwa Board Support Executive  
Dylan Murphy Head of Board Support

ITEM	DETAILS	ACTION
<b>1</b>	<b>Minutes of the last meeting</b>	
1.1	The Board approved the minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2008.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Matters arising</b>	
2.1	<u>Business Support Simplification Programme</u> Dr Richard Hutchins was meeting representatives of the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform later that week to discuss the inclusion of the "Advantage Business Transformation Fund" in the list of approved products. Richard Hutchins would circulate an update note following the meeting.	<b>Richard Hutchins</b>

<b>3</b>	<b>Item 3 - confidential</b>	
<b>4</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
<b>4.1</b>	Angela Maxwell declared an interest in item 10, International Business Action Plan, (minute number 11) as she was engaged in consultancy work with UK Trade and Investment (UKTI).	
<b>4.2</b>	Brendan Connor declared an interest in item 7, Chief Executive's Report, (minute number 7.7) as a Board Member of Motorsport Development UK.	
<b>5</b>	<b>Declarations of items of any other business</b>	
<b>5.1</b>	The Board agreed that a consideration of electric vehicles be included under "any other business."	
<b>6</b>	<b>Chairman's Report</b>	
<b>6.1</b>	The Chairman presented his Report and drew particular attention to the following items:	<b>Board Support</b>
<b>6.2</b>	<u>Item 1 - RDA Chairs' Meetings – BERR Select Committee</u> The deadline for submitting evidence to the BERR Select Committee was 19 September and the Committee was due to sit on 14 October. The Board agreed that a note would be circulated to members outlining the arrangements surrounding the Select Committee.	
<b>6.3</b>	Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) would provide evidence to the Select Committee both jointly and individually. Evidence would be provided in a proscribed format and individual responses would include common themes and underlying messages but would be tailored to reflect the regional position.	
<b>6.4</b>	<u>Item 1 - RDA Chairs' Meetings – Dinner with Martin Temple, Executive Chairman, EEF</u> Arrangements were being made for Martin Temple, Executive Chairman of EEF, the manufacturers' organisation, to visit the Agency to discuss the Business Support Simplification Programme.	

<p><b>6.5</b></p> <p><b>6.6</b></p>	<p><u>Item 2 - RDA Chairs' and Ministers' Meeting</u> RDAs were required to submit a report to Ministers outlining what RDAs and the Treasury could do to aid the local economy during the "credit crunch." Measures would then be jointly launched by RDAs/Treasury and the first launch was to take place in Yorkshire the following day. If such events continued to be rolled-out across the country the West Midlands event would take place in early September.</p> <p>The Board noted the Chairman's Report.</p>	
<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>Chief Executive's Report</b></p>	
<p><b>7.1</b></p> <p><b>7.2</b></p> <p><b>7.3</b></p> <p><b>7.4</b></p> <p><b>7.5</b></p> <p><b>7.6</b></p>	<p>The Chief Executive presented his Report and drew particular attention to the following items:</p> <p><u>Item 4 - Pitt Review</u> The Agency's effective response to the 2007 flooding had been recognised in the Pitt Report. The Agency was assimilating the lessons learned during this period (and during other responses to significant events) to develop an appropriate approach to future economic shocks.</p> <p><u>Confidential item</u></p> <p><u>Item 7 - University Challenge</u> University Challenge had a dual aim to increase student numbers and promote regeneration. It was the Regional Minister's intention that one or two well-developed cases should be prepared (rather than a number of competing proposals). Support from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) would be crucial to the success of any proposals.</p> <p><u>Item 8 - Clusters Quarterly Report - Automotive</u> Discussions with Tata around its proposed European Technology Centre were ongoing. This development could be very significant as it would deliver a top-quality research and development facility, with associated high-quality jobs, and the building itself would be at the forefront of building technology.</p> <p>It was agreed that further information on the Lightweight Technologies Centre of Excellence would be circulated to the Board.</p>	<p><b>Richard Hutchins</b></p>

7.7	<p><u>Item 8 - Clusters Quarterly Report – Rail and Motorsport</u> Brendan Connor delivered an update on the future of Motorsport Development UK and reported that the position would become clearer following a meeting with funding bodies later that week.</p>	
7.8	<p><u>Item 8 - Clusters Quarterly Report – Screen, Image and Sound</u> It was agreed that further information on the launch of the Channel 4 Digital Media Fund would be circulated to the Board.</p>	<b>Richard Hutchins</b>
7.8	<p><u>Item 9 - Regional Skills Partnership</u> The membership of the Regional Skills Partnership had been amended to strengthen private-sector involvement and letters were to be sent to key organisations representing businesses requesting nominees to join the Partnership. The Board supported efforts to ensure the Partnership remained business-led and the retention of secretariat services within the Agency.</p>	
7.10	<p><u>Item 10 - Business Support Simplification Programme</u> The Transition Plan had been revised and resubmitted and had achieved a “green” rating. Progress had been achieved but lobbying was ongoing and further work was required around the branding of products.</p>	
7.11	<p><u>Item 11 - Launch of WMES Delivery Framework</u> A series of tailored letters and emails had been sent to launch the new Delivery Framework. A report would be submitted to the Board once responses had been received.</p>	<b>Tim Gebbels</b>
7.12	<p><u>Item 12 - Corporate Plan 2008-11</u> The Corporate Plan 2008-11 had been approved without amendment but the Minister had drawn attention to a number of key issues for the Agency.</p>	
7.13	<p><u>Item 13 - Spotlight Awards</u> Zabir Hussain had been awarded the Agency’s spotlight award for his excellent work arranging post-flooding networking events at Worcestershire County Cricket Club.</p>	
7.14	<p>The Coventry and Warwickshire Partnerships Managers team had been awarded a team spotlight award for their excellent work under difficult circumstances in producing a submission to the National Audit Office for its review of physical regeneration. This submission was available for Members to view at the meeting.</p>	

<b>7.15</b>	<u>Midlands Excellence Submission</u> The Agency's submission to the Midlands Excellence Awards 2008 was available for Members to view at the meeting. The assessment was scheduled for September and the results were expected in December.	
<b>7.16</b>	The Board noted the Chief Executive's Report.	
<b>8</b>	<b>Item 8 – confidential</b>	
<b>9</b>	<b>Update on the Sub National Review (SNR)</b>	
<b>9.1</b>	The Board noted that the discussion the previous evening had been productive and that Mark Pearce and Rose Poulter would produce notes of the discussion. The Board agreed that future SNR discussions would include a consideration of the role of the Agency's Board.	
<b>10</b>	<b>Item 10 - confidential</b>	
<b>11</b>	<b>International Business Action Plan</b>	
<b>11.1</b>	Dr Richard Hutchins and Doug Mahoney, International Trade Director, UKTI, presented a new integrated International Business Action Plan.	
<b>11.2</b>	The Board noted that the Action Plan would replace the existing agreement between the Agency and UKTI.	
<b>11.3</b>	Members noted that Priority 5, which related to enhancing the region's reputation internationally and building on the region's network of global connections, was linked to one of the Regional Minister's ten priorities. This work included the development of Action Plans for both India and China.	
<b>11.4</b>	Members stressed the importance of ensuring that lead agencies were made fully aware of their responsibilities within the Action Plan.	
<b>11.5</b>	The International Business Forum would be the successor to the Regional International Trade Steering Group and would be a private-sector led body.	
<b>11.6</b>	The Board noted the submitted report and approved the Action Plan attached at Annex A.	
<b>11.7</b>	The Board approved the International Business Forum terms of reference as appended to the submitted report.	

<b>12</b>	<b>Item 12 - confidential</b>	
<b>13</b>	<b>Item 13 - confidential</b>	
<b>14</b>	<b>AWM Conference Update</b>	
<b>14.1</b>	Tim Gebbels presented a report outlining the proposals for the Annual Conference 2008.	
<b>14.2</b>	Members noted that the proposals had been developed following feedback from delegates at last year's event, including seeking to ensure a greater role for the private sector in the breakout sessions.	
<b>14.3</b>	Richard Hyde would compere the event and the key note speakers would be David Smith, Chief Executive of Jaguar Land Rover; the Chair or Chief Executive of Channel 4; the Regional Minister; the Chairman and the Chief Executive.	
<b>14.4</b>	The Board agreed that the breakout sessions should be business-led and as interactive and exciting as possible. Members also noted that there was an opportunity to promote the case studies on Science City's ideasforlife.tv.	
<b>14.5</b>	It was agreed that exhibits would be up-and-running from the start of the day to give delegates maximum opportunity to see them and that space should be devoted to promoting the Agency's delivery vehicles.	
<b>14.6</b>	The Board noted that the Agency had invited all regional MPs to the event and would be contacting those who had confirmed attendance to develop individual itineraries, beginning with a joint breakfast session. Members noted the importance of achieve political balance in representation at the event.	
<b>14.7</b>	A press strategy would be required for before, during and after the Conference. In the build up to the Conference there may be opportunities to showcase companies that were providing case studies at the Conference in the local business press.	
<b>14.8</b>	The Board endorsed the theme, key messages and tone of the Conference, as outlined in the submitted report.	
<b>14.9</b>	The Board noted that the timetable was still evolving and it was agreed that further thought would be given to the length of the breakout sessions and the level of interaction, including opportunities for question and answer sessions.	

<b>14.10</b>	The Board agreed that the Chairman would write to MPs who had not confirmed their attendance to encourage them to attend the event. These letters should stress that the Agency had learned lessons following previous years' events and the Conference would be a dynamic, business-led event.	<b>Chairman / Board Support</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>Birmingham Science City Annual Report 2007/08</b>	
<b>15.1</b>	Dr Richard Hutchins presented the Birmingham Science City Annual Report 2007/08.	<b>Richard Hutchins</b>
<b>15.2</b>	The Board noted that the Birmingham/Warwick Collaboration Project had attracted significant match-funding. Other notable achievements during the year included a successful programme of revenue demonstrator projects (including an excellent Ocular Energy demonstration at the Royal Society Summer Exhibition) and hosting the National Science Cities Summit in November.	
<b>15.3</b>	Priorities for the coming year would be to develop and implement communication and engagement strategies including improving engagement with the public, particularly young people, and improving engagement with businesses.	
<b>15.4</b>	Richard Hutchins agreed to investigate the East Midlands Development Agency's involvement in projects encouraging school children to engage in science and technology.	
<b>15.5</b>	The Board noted the submitted report.	
<b>16</b>	<b>Health and Safety Annual Report 2007/08</b>	
<b>16.1</b>	Karen Yeomans presented the Health and Safety Annual Report 2007/08.	
<b>16.2</b>	The Board noted that the Agency had experienced few incidents and accidents during the year.	
<b>16.3</b>	The Health and Safety Committee had shifted its focus on to external risks such as driving at work and lone working. The Committee was operating at an increasingly strategic level and work had been done to identify key corporate risks and those most likely to be affected.	
<b>16.4</b>	The Board noted the covering report and Health and Safety Annual Report 2007-08.	
<b>16.5</b>	The Board endorsed the Health and Safety Plan for 2008-09 and agreed to monitor progress against it during the year.	

<b>17</b>	<b>Item 17 - confidential</b>	
<b>18</b>	<b>Item 18 – confidential</b>	
<b>19.</b>	<b>Item 19 - confidential</b>	
<b>20</b>	<b>Any other business</b>	
<b>20.1</b>	<p><u>Electric Vehicles</u> David Smith reported that he and Brendan Connor had attended an event on 22 July which had brought representatives of the automotive and power industries together.</p>	<b>Richard Hutchins</b>
<b>20.2</b>	<p>The event had stressed the importance of continuing to develop conventional technologies and the need to develop a range of intermediate and new technologies (as there would be no “silver-bullet” solution to reducing carbon emissions). Infrastructure was a major consideration and there were huge challenges around power distribution and capacity. It was noted that a decision was required at national level whether the UK wished to develop its own battery technologies (rather than be dependent on imported technologies).</p>	
<b>20.3</b>	<p>Brendan Connor reported that the Centre for Excellence for Low Carbon and Fuel Cell Technologies (CENEX) had been jointly charged with writing a report on infrastructure needs.</p>	
<b>20.4</b>	<p>Members noted that the region would be well-placed to lead a number of demonstrator pilots. Members also noted that the Agency could potentially play an important role in developing a strategic approach within the region and it was agreed that Richard Hutchins would lead on the preparation of an event which would outline the current regional position (including that on second generation bio-fuels) and consider what could be done in the future.</p>	