

Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent LVEP Governance

The Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Local Visitor Economy Partnership requires new governance arrangements. This paper sets out the proposed approach to evolving existing structures to make them fit for purpose for the new entity and contains draft terms of reference for the LVEP board, its sub committees and a new reference group.

1. Structure of LVEP governance

The existing Destination Management Partnership is the starting point from which the new LVEP governance structure will evolve.



The LVEP will be managed by a board of voluntary members. It will be streamlined and slimmed down from the current 25 members, who attend principally in a representative capacity, so that is able to take decisions and direct activity more effectively. Though its members will retain a representational role to a degree, specifically those from the Public Sector, those appointed will have the necessary skills and knowledge to manage a partnership and oversee its work.

The main board will support the Star Operators subcommittee responsible for the operational delivery of the LVEP Growth Plan. It may also create task and finish groups with responsibility for ensuring that projects and time-limited activity is carried out effectively. Sub-committees and task and finish groups will report to the main board through formal reporting mechanisms and their chairs. At least one sub-committee has been identified to be established at the outset: Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Attractions, Operators and Retailers (STAR) sub-committee which will focus on marketing, sector trends and intelligence and strategic sector priorities.

There will be at least one key reference group, the Local Authority Stakeholders Group, that will liaise directly with the board through its nominated members. It will represent the interests of the local authorities as principal investors in the LVEP. The group's purpose is to

ensure investing authorities can shape the LVEP strategy and that local authorities are kept up to date and involved in the LVEP's activity.

Currently the board is led by an interim chair who is seeking to secure a permanent board and appoint a permanent chair. The permanent chair will be supported by the LVEP staff team, specifically the two strategic managers, who will perform the function of secretariat to the board and its sub committees and task and finish groups.

2. Role of the board

The board's responsibilities are to develop a Growth Plan for the area's visitor economy which is endorsed and approved by VisitEngland. The Board will provide support to stakeholders in the visitor economy, contribute expertise and knowledge to help the LVEP fulfil its function. It will provide an oversight and scrutiny of plans and performance of staff, partners and stakeholders.

The board also has an ambassadorial role, championing the visitor economy and ensuring that the partnership is active and inclusive.

It will be led by a chair drawn from the private or voluntary sector who will provide a figurehead for the LVEP and will ensure that Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent's visitor economy is represented at the highest levels of decision making nationally, regionally, and locally.

3. Composition of the board

The composition of the board will reflect the nature of the LVEP which is a partnership and will be balanced to reflect the sectors that are central to the visitor economy and the strategic partners that support it. There will be up to 12 board members, including the chair, all of which will act in a non-executive voluntary capacity. They will be appointed for their experience and knowledge in relevant fields and the skills they bring to the LVEP.

The public sector will be represented by up to four directors drawn from the Local Authority Stakeholders Group and these may be a mix of elected members and senior officers. The remaining board members, which form the majority, will be drawn from the private and third sectors including accommodation, visitor attractions, hospitality, retail, visitor services providers, higher and further education, business networking and support organisations, the travel trade and landscape management organisations.

Knowledge and skills that will be sought among potential board members include financial management and audit, marketing, communications, skills development, event development, business support, commercial development, and sourcing funding. Board members will be expected to utilise their professional network to the benefit of the LVEP and abide by a code of conduct.

Board members will be expected to proactively contribute to the work of the LVEP in several ways:

- As ambassadors for the LVEP and the visitor economy, which includes attending key events in the tourism calendar.
- By supporting sub-committees linked to the board.
- By leading an area of work as requested by the chair.
- By using their professional networks to communicate the work of the LVEP to a wide range of stakeholders and provide input from those networks to inform the work of the LVEP.

A senior member of the VisitEngland team will be invited to attend board meetings as an observer. This will usually be the regional representative for the North West and West Midlands.

Appendix 1

LVEP partnership board terms of reference (proposed)

Objective

The objective of the LVEP partnership board is to lead and support the development of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent's visitor economy and ensure that it bring benefits to the area and the communities that live within its boundaries.

Board membership

The board will consist of between 10 and 12 members that will act in a non-executive and unremunerated capacity. The optimum number is 12.

The make-up of the board will be a mix of people from the public, private and third sectors with the majority coming from the private and third sectors. The public sector should comprise no more than 40 percent of the members.

Private and third sector board members will be drawn from the sectors that are part of the visitor economy. These include, but are not limited to, accommodation, visitor attractions, hospitality, retail, visitor services providers, higher and further education, business networking and support organisations, the travel trade and landscape management organisations.

A formal selection process will be used to appoint members with applications made in writing and attending an interview. Applications will be assessed against a skills matrix to ensure that the board can effectively manage the work of the LVEP. Candidates that fit LVEP requirements could be invited for to interview with the chair of the board and a representative from the Local Authority Stakeholder Group.

The Local Authority Stakeholder Group will have the right to recommend members to the board, both elected members and senior offices. The number of members they can appoint must not exceed 40 percent of the total number of members.

The LVEP will be led by a chair who will be supported by a vice chair. The appointment of the chair will be made by the interim Chair and a qualified panel. The chair will be drawn from either the private or third sector. The vice chair will be selected from the public sector.

Candidates for the permanent chair position will be subject to a formal appointment process that includes application and could include an interview.

The chair serves a 3-year term after which they can be reappointed for a further 3-year term. Members serve a 2-year term after which they can be reappointed for a further 3-year term. Public sector members are nominated by the Local Authority Stakeholders Group and changes in representation will be determined by the group in agreement with the chair.

Decision making

To be quorate, the LVEP board needs a minimum of 50% of the total number of members to be present.

Wherever possible decisions will be made through consensus.

Should a vote be needed, the decisions will be made through a majority decision with each director holding a single vote. The chair will hold the casting vote.

Meetings

The board will meet 4 times a year.

The timetable should be set a year in advance.

Extraordinary meetings can be called by the chair to deal with urgent business or to take decisions that don't fall within the timetable of regular board meetings.

Meetings should aim to be no more than 2 hours in duration.

Secretariat services, including the compiling of agendas, production of minutes and chasing of actions, will be provided by the LVEP's strategic managers.

Papers for the board will be circulated at least one week prior to the board via email. Members of the board must notify the chair and administrative officers, in advance of items of AOB, who will hold the agreed and final papers. Circulation of the board papers will include all Local Authorities supporting the LVEP and its activity and minutes will be published to summarise decisions for transparency.

Responsibilities

- Develop the LVEP Growth Plan and oversee its delivery.
- Approve the annual budget including budget allocation to areas of work.
- Promote a culture of partnership working across the LVEP area.
- Oversee income and expenditure ensuring that funds are spend in a transparent and responsible way that will deliver the LVEP Growth Plan and related action plans.
- Establish task and finish groups as needed to take responsibility for time-limited pieces of work, appoint a chair from within the member of the board and direct and oversee their work.
- Ensure that the LVEP acts in compliance with any relevant legislation.

Reporting and monitoring

- Set KPIs in relation to the LVEP Growth Plan and monitor progress.

- Hold an annual meeting for all stakeholders
- Ensure that the work of the LVEP is communicated to stakeholders, including Visit England, on a regular basis and by publishing and circulating an annual report.
- Maintain and regularly review, at least every six months, a risk register related to the LVEP Growth Plan.
- Request reports from sub committees and provide feedback to the sub committees via board meetings.

Review of the board

This performance of the LVEP board will be reviewed by the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Leaders Board and VisitEngland with regular review of the Growth Plan activities and progress. VisitEngland will advise the national LVEP network how and when reporting will take place.

Appendix 2

LVEP Sub-committees

LVEP Sub-committees i.e. Star Operators Group will work to a common set of terms of reference that may be tailored to reflect each committee's area of responsibility. They will be established at the request of the main LVEP board and led by chair who will be an LVEP board member, or appointed by the main board.

Membership of a sub-committee will be determined by the chair of the sub-committee who may co-opt members with specialist skills and experience if required.

The parameters of the subcommittee structure will be developed in line with the needs of the LVEP.

The broad responsibilities of a subcommittee will be:

- To align the work of the sub-committee with the objectives of the LVEP Growth Plan.
- To oversee their allocated area of work as directed by the LVEP main board.
- To report regularly to the main board on progress and seek guidance as necessary.
- To liaise with stakeholders across the LVEP area in pursuit of the committee's objectives.

Further responsibilities will be determined when sub committees are established.

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Decision making

To be quorate, a subcommittee needs a minimum of 50% of the total number of members to be present.

Wherever possible decisions will be made through consensus.

If a subcommittee is unable to reach a consensus the issue will be escalated to the main board for a decision.

Meetings

Sub committees will meet as frequently as necessary to fulfil their responsibilities.

Meetings should aim to be no more than 2 hours in duration where possible

Secretariat services, including the compiling of agendas, production of minutes and chasing of actions, will be provided by the LVEP's strategic managers.

Papers and presentations will be circulated a week in advance of the meetings with AOB items being submitted at least one week prior.

Reporting and monitoring

- Identify LVEP KPIs in relation to their area of work and additional KPIs as needed.
- Provide written reports to the main board at each of the main board meetings.
- Contribute to the annual report/Growth Plan providing content for inclusion.

Review by the Board

Sub committees including their terms of reference will be reviewed and evaluated at least once a year.

Appendix 3

Specification for the role of chair

The role of the Chair of the LVEP is a new role for a new organisation that is leading the development of Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent's visitor economy. The Chair will provide leadership to Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent's visitor economy, act as a champion the sector and head up a board of directors charged with developing and delivering a growth plan for the area.

The Chair of the LVEP is a voluntary unremunerated role. The chair should be able to act independently free from conflict of interest and any business or other relationship which could impact on decision making.

The duties and responsibilities of a Chair are as follows:

- To take on an ambassadorial role for the Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent LVEP, the sector and act as a voice for the destination within the area.
- To act as the figurehead of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent LVEP, helping to raise its profile and reputation, locally, regionally, and nationally.
- To chair Board Meetings working with the secretariat to set agendas and approve the minutes of meetings.
- To set a date and chair the LVEP's annual general meeting and approve the LVEP annual report.
- To call special meetings of the Board where appropriate.
- In concert with and supported by Visitor Economy Partnership Development Manager, to determine the date, time and location of the annual Visitor Economy meeting and to develop the agenda for this.
- To identify and appoint a Vice Chair.

For more details see Job Description and Person Specification Document at www.enjoystaffordshire.com/LVEPreruitment