



Attendees

AA	Andy Arnold	East Sussex CC	MS	Martin Searle	FSB
AC	Ana Christie	Sussex Chamber of Commerce	MT	Michael Turner	Environment Agency
AR	Alex Riley	South East LEP	PJ	Philip Johnson	Locate East Sussex
CB	Cllr Christine Bayliss	Rother DC	PSp	Peter Sharp	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC
CS	Clive Soper	FSB	RC	Robert Cottrill	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC
DE	Dave Evans	East Sussex CC	RD	Richard Dawson	East Sussex CC
DSp	David Sheppard	D-RisQ Ltd	SB	Sue Baxter	University of Sussex
DT	Cllr David Tutt	Eastbourne BC	SDn	Sean Dennis	Let's Do Business Group
GP	Graham Peters (CHAIR)	ES Rural Partnership	SDr	Stewart Drew	De La Warr Pavilion
IG	Isabel Garden	Wealden DC	SH	Simon Hubbard	Hastings BC
JS	Jo Simmons	South East LEP	TL	Tony Leonard	Rother DC
KF	Cllr Kim Forward	Hastings BC	ZN	Cllr Zoe Nicholson	Lewes DC
ME	Martin Ellis	Recruitment South East			

Apologies

AB	Adam Bryan	South East LEP	JH	James Harris	East Sussex CC
BS	Cllr Bob Standley	Wealden DC	KG	Cllr Keith Glazier	East Sussex CC
CE	Christina Ewbank	ACES	LR	Lisa Rawlinson	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC
DO	Cllr Doug Oliver	Rother DC	PC	Cllr Peter Chowney	Hastings BC
DSy	Dan Shelley	East Sussex College Group	PSm	Penny Shimmin	Sussex CDA
GM	Graham Marley	Let's Do Business Group	RS	Cllr Rupert Simmons	East Sussex CC
HR	Helen Russel	South East LEP	SS	Sharon Spicer	South East LEP
IF	Ian Fitzpatrick	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC			

All of the papers and any presentations delivered at the meeting can be viewed on the following page of the ESCC website: www.eastsussex.gov.uk/business/eastsussex/selep/tesminutes/tes191104

1. Welcome & introductions

- 1.1. **GP** welcomed the attendees and delivered the apologies; round table introductions were made.
- 1.2. **GP** asked the group for any specific conflicts of interest with today's agenda items and for any additional interests not already held on record; **GP** declared an additional interest as Interim Chair of the Newhaven EZ Board. No other interests were declared.

2. Review of previous minutes (30 Sep 2019)

- 2.1. **GP** ran through the actions of the previous TES minutes noting that all had been completed. For action 7.3 (new GVA methodology for creative industries) **SB** advised that the academic believes he's developed an excellent model so **SB** just needs to clarify whether C2C LEP is happy to share it.
- 2.2. The minutes were approved by the group as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Environment East Sussex

- 3.1. **AA** and **MT** delivered a short presentation on the draft *East Sussex Environment Strategy*, giving some background to the Environment East Sussex (EES) group, including its membership, and explaining some of the reasons why an updated strategy is necessary – such as the 25 year 'green future' plan from DEFRA and the climate change ambitions to be net-zero in terms of carbon emissions.
- 3.2. The draft Environment Strategy has been developed with five key environmental themes to focus on: Climate Change; Natural Capital; Air Quality; Water; and Resource Efficiency. Each of these will be underpinned by a strong evidence base (which will be available as an appendix to the strategy).
- 3.3. An action plan will accompany the strategy, setting out the long-term aims and the steps required to achieve them. A draft action plan has already been produced – not a long list as it's intended to be 'achievable' goals with actions that can be delivered in the next 1-2 years. The EES group would like to bring the action plan back to TES each year for comment, giving TES strategic oversight.

3.4. TES discussed the draft strategy and action plan; the following comments were made:

- The current plan is to review the strategy every 5 years, but it really ought to be iterated sooner as it needs to be more dynamic and agile to respond to any changes (e.g. technology will undoubtedly develop rapidly in that time). Similarly, the pace of travel for the action plan should be increased to see some of the actions achieved sooner.
- This strategy very much supports the emerging SELEP Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) with good synergies. The Environment Strategy will sit alongside other strategies so should avoid unnecessary duplication, e.g. with the SELEP LIS, SELEP Economic Strategy Statement, Tri-LEP Energy Strategy and East Sussex Growth Strategy amongst others, plus future strategies such as the Local Transport Plan 4, East Sussex Walking & Cycling Strategy, EV Charging Policy, a revised East Sussex Growth & Productivity Strategy, plus all of the Borough/District Council's Local Plans and their own Climate Emergency responses.
- Further to the above, the Environment Strategy may 'appear' to be missing some key hooks simply because they're already covered in other strategies. It's therefore vital that this strategy makes reference to any other such strategies, with clear links to any specific policies or guiding principles within those documents, making it very clear why they aren't included in this one.
- Note that some aspects of other strategies may be too significant to omit, e.g. with transport elements, the strategy could simply mirror the main points of TfSE.
- In terms of the draft action plan, additional actions could be created around resource efficiency; circular economy; low carbon economy; grey water; biodiversity net gain; sources/uses of renewables; and increasing the number of charging points (which may already be covered in the separate EV Charging Policy).
- As boroughs and districts revise their Local Plans, and in some cases update planning policies with regard to the climate emergency, any such changes will need to be reflected in the strategy. One such change is the deadline of 2030 (rather than 2050) that Borough/District Councils have set to achieve net-zero carbon emissions.
- The strategy could be bolder in taking the opportunity to innovate; perhaps Research & Innovation should be woven in.
- Consideration should be given to how this strategy is communicated to businesses, to inform/educate and explain why this is so important.

3.5. **MT** thanked the group for its input, which he'll now take away and consider. He noted that **AC**, **CS** and **SB** all sit on both the EES and TES Boards, providing excellent crossover between the two groups, so any further consultation can be done through those individuals. **MT** and **AA** will bring a revised draft of the strategy back to TES for endorsement when ready.

4. Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)

4.1. **AR** reviewed the overall timeline of the LIS development and provided a quick update on progress. The evidence base has been completed, on the back of which a number of emerging themes and cross-cutting priorities have been identified. We're now at the stage of diving deeper into those themes to ensure they're fully developed.

4.2. The four emerging themes for further consideration are 'Accelerating business productivity and growth', 'Modelling future connectivity', 'Maximising natural assets' and 'Building new communities for the future'. TES discussed the first two themes in more detail. **The key discussion points are given in Appendix 1.**

4.3. As well as the above themes, the 'grand challenges' will be woven throughout the strategy. **DSp** wondered whether SELEP ought to conceive something that brings about real transformational change in addressing the grand challenges, something so huge that the government really has to take notice. Let's not limit our ambition.

4.4. **AR** advised that there will be plenty more engagement opportunities over the next month, and views can also be submitted at any time via the SELEP website. The main next step will see a draft LIS document being prepared, hopefully in time for the next SELEP Strategic Board on 6 Dec 2019.

5. Other matters arising

- 5.1. **RD** provided an update on the latest round of *Growing Places Fund* (GPF). We've had a really positive response to the open call, with 8 expressions of interest received by last week's deadline covering a range of sectors across all our boroughs and districts. We've commissioned a consultant to liaise with the project promoters in the coming weeks and assess the EOIs. They will present a prioritised list of the projects to the next TES meeting on 2 Dec 2019 for endorsement.
- 5.2. **GP** raised the subject of *TES recruitment*. Now that work on the LEP Review is nearing completion and we know the composition of the new SELEP Board, we'll obviously have to make some changes to our own Terms of Reference and select which TES members will sit on the SELEP Board. It's been suggested that we also 'reset the clock' in terms of our own membership to align with the new SELEP Ltd from Mar 2020. Furthermore **GP** would like to get on and recruit to the vacant business position (which we delayed doing whilst the LEP Review work was ongoing). **GP** asked if the group was happy to proceed with the above, and **TES members agreed**. A briefing will be brought to the next TES meeting on 2 Dec 2019 explaining all of the changes proposed.
- 5.3. **ME** advised that *social media training* will take place on 2 Dec 2019 ahead of the scheduled TES meeting. It's for everyone's benefit so everyone is encouraged to take part. Exact timings will be circulated alongside the next TES agenda.

6. TES round table / AOB

- 6.1. **SH** advised that both Lewes and Hastings will benefit from the government's Stronger Towns Fund. Hastings has also had its 'Opportunity' area renewed for another year. More information at www.hastingsopportunityarea.co.uk.
- 6.2. **GP** acknowledged that with the upcoming General Election some of our local authority officers may not be able to attend the next TES or SELEP meetings on 2 Dec and 6 Dec respectively, in which case they should please put forward a substitute ASAP.
- 6.3. **AR** advised that DEFRA has today launched a new round of its EAFRD Growth Programme, with a £35m national pot offering grants in the areas of business development, food processing and rural tourism. See the [SELEP website](#) for more information.
- 6.4. **MS** reminded the group that 7 Dec 2019 is 'Small Business Saturday', encouraging people to shop locally and support their local business community. See www.smallbusinesssaturdayuk.com for more information.
- 6.5. **CB** advised that Rother DC's core strategy will be launched on 19 Nov 2019, in which regeneration will play a key part.
- 6.6. **SDr** advised that the 1066 Country website has been relaunched: www.visit1066country.com.
- 6.7. **AC** advised that the Sussex Chamber of Commerce, with Locate East Sussex and Wealden DC, is delivering a 'Future Fit' event on 20 Nov 2019 at the East Sussex National. The event will provide businesses with the knowledge, insight and tips needed to ensure their business is fit for the future. See the [Sussex Chamber website](#) for more information.

[Summary of actions](#)

None.

Team East Sussex discussed two of the emerging themes of the LIS in more detail and raised the following key points:

Emerging theme: Accelerating business productivity and growth

- Innovation is always hampered by *risk*. To truly innovate you need to be prepared to take risks but most businesses are naturally risk-averse, particularly small businesses.
- This attitude to risk is an important issue nationally as the overall level of bank-lending has reduced. We need to provide better information around access to other funding sources, or better still, develop an appropriate funding model at SELEP level. One of the major benefits of the WARR Programme's funding model was the 'ability to fail', where we accept that not everything will be successful – almost a Dragon's Den style environment.
- The Wirral and Liverpool area use Community Banking to lend to SMEs.
- A lack of funding has certainly taken some of the joy out of trying to be innovative, but we know that most of our East Sussex businesses are SMEs so we can help by providing the infrastructure they need to enable innovation, e.g. shared professional accommodation. The workspace challenge is actually cross-cutting and feeds into a lot of areas.
- Whilst innovation may be happening, often businesses/individuals don't have the required skills to properly take their ideas forward (e.g. sales or marketing). We mustn't forget 'micro' businesses that don't have the funding ability to seek training in how to market, upskill employees etc. We need to make such funding more accessible.
- Education is key, addressing the skills gap from Secondary level to ensure we get people with the right skills into the workforce. Without local skills our jobs will slowly migrate. Consider whether there's a disconnect between what FE colleges and Academies are offering and what the area actually needs – linking local providers with local business is vital (the Skills East Sussex group is doing this).
- Higher Education remains a critical area to explore, in particular how business and education can collaborate on their shared challenges/opportunities. The C2C area apparently has 'innovation brokers' to help with this issue. In East Sussex there are only a handful of people across our two universities performing similar tasks so it's only ever going to be high level. Perhaps SELEP could consider commissioning innovation brokers to engage with Higher Education.
- Businesses don't always acknowledge the need to be innovative. Poor management (proper professional leadership) is also often a bar to productivity.
- Be aware that 'productivity' is not necessarily the same across the different areas of SELEP.
- Inclusive Growth needs to be at the heart of this strategy. We need to see growth in all areas, not just underperforming areas, if we're going to lift the region as a whole.

Emerging theme: Modelling future connectivity

- Connectivity is broader than just transport or infrastructure; it includes digital, 5G, broadband, connections to London and Europe, plus 'connecting businesses'.
- Our intra-urban areas are not very well connected. Under this theme the strategy should also consider bus services, east/west transport routes, and the lack of fast rail routes from East Sussex into London (compared with Essex and Kent).
- Coordinating roadworks between utility companies to ensure we're making the best of our current transport assets. Perhaps this is something SELEP can lead on.
- Faster broadband and 5G are of course important, but so is reassuring the public about the safety of these technologies (i.e. the 5G masts, using science-based evidence).
- We need to educate people about the 'future of work'. It's never easy to guess where technology is going, but with broadband, 5G etc. it could solve connectivity/infrastructure issues. Similarly, teaching digital skills to businesses, e.g. video conferencing.
- Place making in general is probably missing. If/when we get to the stage where commuting is no longer necessary then place making becomes essential. This is likely to be a cross-cutting theme.