

Minutes of 16th March 2018 meeting

Attending	Company	Representing
Chris Brodie	Chairman	
Adam Bryan	Managing Director	
Graham Peters	Vice Chairman for East Sussex	East Sussex – Business
Christina Ewbank	ACES	East Sussex – Business
Clive Soper	East Sussex FSB	East Sussex – Business
Cllr Keith Glazier	East Sussex County Council	East Sussex – Local Authority
Cllr Peter Chowney	Hastings Council	East Sussex – Local Authority
<i>Cllr Martin Kenward for Cllr Bob Standley</i>	Rother District Council	East Sussex – Local Authority
George Kieffer	Vice Chairman for Essex	Essex – Business
David Burch	Essex Chamber of Commerce	Essex – Business
David Rayner	Birkett Long	Essex – Business
Perry Glading	Thurrock Business Board	South Essex – Business
Colette Bailey	Metal	South Essex – Business
Cllr John Lamb	Southend on Sea Borough Council	Essex – Local Authority
<i>Cllr Tom Cunningham for Cllr Graham Butland</i>	Braintree District Council	Essex – Local Authority
Cllr Kevin Bentley	Essex County Council	South Essex – Local Authority
Geoff Miles	Vice Chairman for Kent & Medway	Kent – Business
Jo James	Kent Invicta Chambers	Kent – Business
Douglas Horner	Trenport Investments	Kent – Business
Paul Thomas	DLS Limited	Kent – Business
Cllr Peter Fleming	Sevenoaks District Council	Kent – Local Authority
Cllr Simon Cook	Canterbury City Council	Kent – Local Authority
Cllr Paul Carter	Kent County Council	Kent – Local Authority
Cllr Rodney Chambers	Medway Council	Kent – Local Authority
Graham Razey	East Kent College	Further Education
Penny Shimmin	Sussex Community Development Association	Social Enterprise

Apologies received	Cllr Graham Butland Cllr Rob Gledhill Prof Anthony Forster
Voting Members/Alternates attending	25 out of 28 (quorate)

1. Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1. Chris Brodie welcomed the board members and observers to the meeting.
- 1.2. Chris welcomed three new board members - Perry Glading and Colette Bailey from Opportunity South Essex and Penny Shimmin, the new board member for Social Enterprise.
- 1.3. Hannah Rignell, Deputy Director, and Iain McNab, SELEP Relationship Lead, from the Cities and Local Growth Unit, were also welcomed as guests to the board meeting.

2. Minutes and Actions from 15th December 2017 meeting, Matters Arising and Declarations of Interest

- 2.1. The board agreed the minutes as a matter of record.

Matters Arising – Housing Infrastructure Funding (HIF)

- 2.2. Adam Bryan made the Board aware of the recent success of the Housing Infrastructure Fund awards in the SELEP area. Details available [on the website](#).

Matters Arising – Marketing and Website update

- 2.3. Adam advised the Board there had been a large amount of work completed to both the LEP website and communications using electronic media sources. This has greatly enlarged the LEP's footprint online. Adam thanked Paul Martin for his work on this.

Matters Arising – Sub-national Transport Bodies updates / nominations

- 2.4. Adam advised the Board that the two Sub National Transport Bodies across the LEP area require representation from the LEP.
- 2.5. Transport for the South East hold two seats for the five LEPs in its area. Adam advised that SELEP should offer an alternate when the two representative LEPs cannot field a board member.
- 2.6. Transport East have recently met and each LEP has a position on the board. Councillor Kevin Bentley advised the board George Kieffer is currently sitting on the board and would be well positioned to offer LEP representation.
- 2.7. Nominations to deputise on the Transport for the South East can be sent to Adam directly and any dissent on the matter of George sitting on the Transport East board should also be sent to Adam.

Declarations of Interest

- 2.8. Jo James declared an interest in the Growth Hubs. Kent Invicta Chambers are the delivery partner for the Kent and Medway Growth Hub.
- 2.9. Douglas Horner declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Historic Dockyard at Chatham as a trustee.

3. Governance and Transparency

- 3.1. Chris advised the Board that following on from the review of SELEP after the Annual Conversation, the positive Deep Dive feedback and the recent letter from Hannah Rignell, there are a number of steps to be taken to ensure SELEP are fully compliant with the National Assurance Framework and requirements as laid out in the Mary Ney report.
- 3.2. Hannah Rignell formally thanked SELEP for engaging so positively in the recent Deep Dive process, this had given her an opportunity to put in writing that SELEP is indeed considered to be operating well, but that there are a few areas that require improvement.

- 3.3. Adam noted there are 6 areas that require board agreement to unlock future funding, including the core LEP funding and future Local Growth Funding. There are 2 further areas for noting at this meeting.
- 3.4. Firstly, to **adopt the updated Terms of Reference**, this has been updated to be fully aligned with the recent changes to the Assurance Framework which the board had agreed via electronic procedure.
- 3.5. **This was agreed.**
- 3.6. Secondly was for SELEP to have **oversight of recruitment to Federated Boards**. Adam confirmed this is already done but for there to be a written process with a systematic and consistent approach, which will continue to work alongside the Federated Boards in our established culture. This will ensure all board recruitment is done in an open and transparent manner.
- 3.7. David Rayner confirmed the LEP Chairman and Managing Director are already engaged, is this process to do so on a public basis at the Strategic Boards? Adam confirmed this was correct; and that recruitment would be confirmed to subsequent meetings of the Strategic Board.
- 3.8. Cllr Peter Fleming suggested this is agreed in principle and that further updates to requirements are brought to the June Strategic Board Meeting. Adam confirmed there will be no requirement for fundamental changes to processes following the recent letter from MHCLG. For completeness, a further paper will be brought to the June Strategic Board Meeting with procedural detail.
- 3.9. Councillor Kevin Bentley asked for confirmation on the meaning of the LEP having oversight. Adam confirmed this is reporting to the SELEP Strategic Board.
- 3.10. **This was agreed.**
- 3.11. Thirdly, the board are asked to **re-affirm the Investment Panel**, which they agreed in principle at the June 2017 Strategic Board Meeting. The Investment Panel is explicitly a sub-board of the Strategic Board and will agree the prioritisation of projects, when required. It was confirmed there will be no changes to the Accountability Board and its functions, the Investment Panel allows SELEP to respond to funding calls from Government when opportunities arise outside of the Strategic Board cycle.
- 3.12. Terms of Reference will be agreed subsequently at the June Strategic Board.
- 3.13. **This was agreed.**
- 3.14. Fourthly, Adam went on to advise the board the next point for consideration is the building of a **single pipeline of projects**, this will be used when slippages occur and further funding opportunities emerge.
- 3.15. Adam confirmed the Accountability Board manage the current process for SELEP underspend well; having a pipeline of projects will offer clear sight on projects.
- 3.16. Cllr Paul Carter noted there was a conversation at the Accountability Board discussing what options there are to support with overspend on a project when delays are unseen; he would like the process to support with both over and underspend of projects.
- 3.17. Cllr Keith Glazier recommended when agreeing a pipeline of projects, consideration must be given for changes to circumstances which would result in a moving list.
- 3.18. **This was agreed.**
- 3.19. Fifthly, a **standard approach to calls for projects across all areas of SELEP** needs to be formalised. Whilst this is something all Federal boards currently complete; a consistent approach must be adopted across all areas, ensuring the same message and communication channels are being utilised to reach our wider audience.
- 3.20. Councillor Keith Glazier asked if there will be a signposting method of members of the public who require further information. Adam confirmed this will be part of the SELEP marketing strategy.

- 3.21. Paul Thomas noted the communication is a two way channel and thanked the LEP for endorsing the last round of HIF bids as this worked very well.
- 3.22. Councillor Simon Cook suggested SELEP utilise local authorities existing connections with the business community. Jo James reminded the board there is currently an excellent reach to the wider business community through board members such as herself at the Chamber of Commerce and colleagues at the Federation of Small Businesses.
- 3.23. Douglas Horner welcomes the opportunity to engage with the wider private sector; Douglas requested Hannah Rignell could share best practice from other LEPs, enabling us to fully capture the variety of methods to do so.
- 3.24. Hannah confirmed she will action this, and share best practice from other LEPs with SELEP.
- 3.25. **This was agreed.**
- 3.26. Adam commented further on business engagement SELEP currently has, with over 200 businesses regularly engaged with SELEP through a variety of methods; this is far greater than a number of other LEPs.
- 3.27. Sixthly, the last recommendation that requires a decision is to **formalise the board induction process**; Adam reiterated, this again happens at all Federal Areas a variety of methods, and this action requires us to formalise a consistent process.
- 3.28. David Burch commented that a written, glossy document to give to prospective board members would be a positive action. He further noted that all information should be in plain English with details of all acronyms.
- 3.29. **This was agreed.**
- 3.30. Adam advised the board the next two recommendations do not require a decision today; however they are to be brought to the board's attention.
- 3.31. **First** of these are to have **time limited tenures for all board members**, including federal boards. Currently only the Chairman has a time limited tenure and it would be best practice to widen this.
- 3.32. Concerns were raised about the board members who could be lost as a result of time limited tenures, Hannah clarified it is best practice to have positions time limited, however, if appropriate existing board members can be renewed, the process will allow for changes to be made when required.
- 3.33. Councillor Kevin Bentley commented that as a voted, public sector member, his position is reappraised every year. To engage new business members who are enthused by the work carried out through SELEP is an exciting opportunity.
- 3.34. In principle the **recommendation has been agreed**, a paper with more detail will be brought to the next SELEP board.
- 3.35. The final recommendation which does not require a decision is **Gifts and Hospitality process**. Cities and Local Growth Unit have been explicit that all board members who are in receipt of gifts and hospitality are required to declare these.
- 3.36. Adam confirmed the process for declaring gifts and hospitality will be shared with the Board in the coming week, there is currently no lower threshold for declarations. Adam confirmed all declarations will be shared on the SELEP website for full transparency.
- 3.37. Perry Glading requested a minimum threshold is used that sits in line with other LEPs, Hannah confirmed this is £50.
- 3.38. The process for reports gifts and hospitality were agreed in principle, changes will be made to the existing policy to bring our minimum threshold in line with other LEPs.
- 3.39. **This recommendation was agreed.**

- 3.40. Hannah Rignell confirmed, following on from the conversation she has heard this morning, that SELEP are well placed for the release of next year's funding. She confirmed, subject to an open call for funding being agreed, that SELEP are compliant with the National Assurance Framework.

4. Chair Recruitment

- 4.1. Adam confirmed that the item and paper is withdrawn as Chris has accepted the offer to extend his position as Chairman for a further two years.
- 4.2. Jo James commented that SELEP has taken great strides in the past two years, and currently has a strong voice into Government under Chris' chairmanship which she thanked him for.

5. South East Business Hub

- 5.1. Suzanne Bennett updated the board on the latest position of the South East Business Hub. The Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) have announced a further two years funding; the principles of funding are currently in draft format.
- 5.2. Suzanne noted, whilst no confirmation has been received, Growth Hubs nationally will be driven to support high growth businesses.
- 5.3. Suzanne confirmed the Growth Hub will come back to the board in June to agree the forward plan approach for the next 24 months.
- 5.4. Jacqui Ward, Strategic Programme Manager, Kent County Council, Graham Marley, Let's Do Business Group and Murray Foster for Business Essex Southend and Thurrock (BEST) Growth Hub gave presentations on the set up of the local Growth Hubs, delivery and governance of the Growth Hub model. Their presentations can be found [here](#).
- 5.5. Cllr John Lamb reiterated Southend on Sea Borough Council are very supportive of Growth Hubs and highlighted the need for start-up businesses to not be forgotten about if the direction from BEIS is to support high growth businesses.
- 5.6. David Rayner commented the Growth Hubs are a fantastic success story for the LEP and is unsure why we would want to change the model. He raised concerns on where start-ups would seek advice if this was not driven through the Growth Hub.
- 5.7. Cllr Simon Cook raised the wider issue of retaining potential entrepreneurs in the University towns around SELEP. Whilst there is start up space available, affordable housing needs to be considered alongside this in a holistic manner.
- 5.8. Cllr Kevin Bentley requested numbers were provided to the Board on the amount of businesses support, by location and sector. Suzanne confirmed she would get this sent over. Once the reporting definitions are available from BEIS we will ensure data is fed back to the Board on an ongoing basis.
- 5.9. Penny Shimmin noted there will be links between the Social Enterprise working group and the Growth Hubs and she is keen to see this progress. Graham Razez advised the board the Skills Advisory Group and the Growth Hub are working closely together.
- 5.10. Chris thanked the group for their presentations and contributions

6. Capital Programme Update

- 6.1. Rhiannon Mort updated the board on both the Local Growth Funding (LGF) and Growing Places Fund (GPF) projects that are currently underway in SELEP.
- 6.2. Rhiannon gave an overview of the suggested principles to highlight LGF projects that are yet to be approved with a view to reallocating funding which is allocated to projects which are unlikely to spend in the period up to 2021.

- 6.3. SELEP is currently over half way through the life LGF of which there are 97 projects underway. Rhiannon gave a presentation on the progress to date of these projects, which can be found [here](#).
- 6.4. Cllr Peter Fleming raised a concern regarding the way LEPs are marked down on underspend and slippage on forecast of projects by Government. He noted the only underspend in Sevenoaks is due to delays caused centrally and does not feel it is appropriate for SELEP to be penalised because of this. Chris advised this will be raised through the Accountability Board.
- 6.5. Cllr Keith Glazier agrees with the principles outlined by Rhiannon but would like to see an extension to the end of the financial year. Rhiannon agreed to this but asked the Board to be mindful this leaves a risk of less than two years to spend.
- 6.6. Hannah Rignell advised the Board that CLoG are looking for a high quality pipeline and robust integration of projects.
- 6.7. Rhiannon advised the Board SELEP are still awaiting the grant offer letter for 2018/19, conversations to date have been positive and SELEP are anticipating to receive the offer soon.
- 6.8. The principles were agreed; Rhiannon will make changes to the timescales and bring an updated approach to the June Strategic Board.
- 6.9. Rhiannon gave the board an overview of the GPF, with GPF round 1 underway and payments coming forward. To date the Accountability Board have agreed 5 projects for GPF Round 2, with a further three projects to come forward.
- 6.10. Rhiannon advised the Board that payments coming forward to date enable the start of GPF round 2 projects in a timely manner. If slippage was to occur, this will impact on the progression of approved projects. It was agreed where more than one slippage occurs during a project's lifetime these must be brought forward to the Strategic Board.

7. Strategic Economic Plan

- 7.1. Georgina updated the Board on progress to date with the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP). Since December's board meeting work has continued to engage with all parts of SELEP.
- 7.2. Georgina noted that despite the absence of further guidance on the definitive role and responsibilities of the Local Industrial Strategies and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, development of the SEP would continue.
- 7.3. Georgina proposed that a special meeting for Strategic Board members on the draft SEP is scheduled for May, and in advance of the next Strategic Board. Engagement with all federated areas would also be maintained.
- 7.4. Adam advised the board that, irrespective of the shape or custodianship of Local Industrial Strategies or UK Shared Prosperity Fund, SELEP need an action plan and the projects we support require a means to gauge strategic fit, meaning the SEP remains a key document. Hannah Rignell agreed with this and confirmed this is Governments perspective and that a really robust evidence base that reflects the local economic analysis is required. Hannah further this by stating the document must be owned by SELEP and look like the SELEP area at a glance to engage all at Whitehall.
- 7.5. Cllr Paul Carter asked if Sir John Armitt had received the opportunity to feed into the SEP refresh, it was confirmed that SELEP has had conversations with Sir John Armitt.

8. Any Other Business and Close

- 8.1. David Rayner requested details on output of jobs and homes through the various funding stream/ Rhiannon agreed this would be available at the next board meeting.
- 8.2. The Chair thanked the Board for their attendance.