
Minutes of the meeting of the SELEP Accountability Board, held in Village Hotel Forstal Road, Maidstone, ME14 3AQ on Friday, 20 January 2017

Present:**Members**

Mr Geoff Miles	Chairman
Cllr Rodney Chambers	Medway Council
Cllr Mark Dance	County Council
Cllr Keith Glazier	East Sussex County Council
Cllr Rob Gledhill	Thurrock Council

ALSO PRESENT

Louise Aitken
 Suzanne Bennett
 Adam Bryan
 Lee Burchill
 Jake Cartmell
 Kim Cole
 Richard Dawson
 Sunny EE
 Ben Hook
 Stephanie Mitchener
 Rhiannon Mort
 Lorna Norris
 Sarah Nurden
 Tim Rignall
 John Shaw
 David Smith
 Paul Turner
 Lisa Siggins

Having signed the attendance book

Essex County Council
 Essex County Council
 SELEP
 Kent County Council
 Steer Davies Gleave
 Essex County Council
 East Sussex County Council
 Medway Council
 East Sussex County Council
 Essex County Council
 SELEP
 Essex County Council
 Kent and Medway Economic Partnership
 Thurrock Council
 Sea Change Sussex
 Kent County Council
 Essex County Council
 Essex County Council

Councillor Kevin Bentley was unable to attend the meeting due to traffic issues took part in the meeting by speaker phone. Whilst he took part in the discussions, he was unable to vote and therefore did not take part in any of the decision making.

1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Paul Carter who was substituted by

Councillor Mark Dance, from Councillor John Lamb and from Angela O'Donoghue and Myroulla West.

2 **Declarations of Interest**

None were made.

3 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meetings held on 18 November were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 **Business Case Approvals**

The Accountability Board (The Board) received a report from Rhiannon Mort, and a presentation from Steer Davies Gleave, the purpose of this which was to make the Board aware of the value for money assessment of business cases for schemes having been through the Independent Technical Evaluator (ITE) process to support decision making for Local Growth Funding (LGF) to be devolved to scheme sponsors (county and unitary councils) **subject** to an LGF 3 allocation to the two projects in question.

Steer Davis Gleave confirmed that with regards to the East Sussex Growth Strategy Project, the condition set out in paragraph 4.15 of the report had since been satisfied, and therefore now showed as a medium to high certainty of achieving value for money

Resolved

Subject to an LGF round 3 funding being allocated by the Government to these two projects and sufficient funds being made available to SELEP by the Government :

1. Approve the allocation of £8.2m of LGF to East Sussex Strategic Growth Project, to support the delivery of the project as identified in the Business Case and which has been assessed as presenting high value for money, with a medium to high certainty of achieving this.
2. Approve the allocation of £1.6m of LGF to Eastside Business Park, to support the delivery of the project as identified in the Project Business Case and which has been assessed as presenting high value for money, with a medium to high certainty of achieving this.

Further resolved

3. Approve the recommended option 1 for the management and oversight of the £2m LGF spend on the Coastal Communities Group Housing Regeneration Project via the three upper tier authorities; East Sussex County Council, Essex County Council and Kent County Council.

5 **LGF Change Requests**

The Board received a report from Rhiannon Mort the purpose of which was to make the Board aware of changes to the spend forecast for Local Growth Fund

(LGF) projects included in SELEPs Growth Deal.

Members discussed the funding in connection with the projects, stressing that the same is of critical importance and that the Department for Transport should be pressed for assurances in this respect.

Resolved

1. **To Agree** the amended spend forecast for A127 Network Resilience, Essex; and
2. **To Note** the potential risk of the spend profile for A127 Fairglen Junction Improvements extending beyond the current Growth Deal period.

6 Options For Skills Capital Underspend (Sussex Downs College)

The Board received a report from Louise Aitken to seek Board approval for utilisation of underspend associated with the Sussex Downs College 'Refurbished Science Facilities' project and of Local Growth Fund (LGF) allocated to colleges.

Members discussed the options available stressing that the utmost encouragement should be given to the college.

To **Approve** Sussex Downs College utilisation of all or some of the underspend to the broader project, enhancing their first floor laboratory with the new STEM Centre, subject to a full Business Case being provided and approved by the Board. Any business case would need to meet the requirements of the SELEP Assurance Framework.

7 Finance Update including 2017/18 Budget

The Board received a report from Suzanne Bennett the purpose of which was to update the Accountability Board (the Board) on the forecast financial position of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) as at the end of quarter three (December) of the 2016/17 financial year and present the Secretariat Revenue Budget for 2017/18 for agreement.

The Board were advised that Government core funding in 2017/18 would be on the same basis as in 2016/17; that is £500,000 per LEP with a match required of £250,000 locally.

A discussion followed regarding the budget with the Board strongly feeling that the funding provided by Government is not sufficient and is in need of review. Members agreed that funding would be made for the forthcoming financial year but that this would be continue to be subject to yearly review.

It was suggested that a letter be sent to Government setting out the concerns of the Board.

Resolved

1. **To Note** the latest forecast outturn for the Secretariat 2016/17 budget at Table 1 in the report; and
2. **To Agree** the Secretariat budget for 2017/18 at Table 2 in the report, including the local contributions.

8 **Transport Improvements to support The Open Championship**

The Board received a report from Sarah Nurden which described the transport improvements necessary to support the bid for Royal St George's as the venue for the 2020 Open Championship.

The Board were advised that there would be an enormous amount of economic opportunity to the local areas and it was suggested that a degree of support should be shown at this stage. A brief overview was then provided which highlighted that the benefits would outweigh the financial contributions.

Resolved

1. **To approve** the draft letter of support to be submitted to the Royal & Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews (the R&A) in relation to the transport improvements at Sandwich Station **subject** to the letter being amended to remove any specific reference to an amount of funding contribution.
2. **To note** the intention for the transport improvements at Sandwich Station project to be considered at a future Board meeting for approval of funding allocation following consideration of the Business Case by the SELEP ITE and identification of an appropriate funding stream.

9 **Urgent Business**

With the agreement of the Chairman Rhiannon Mort provided the Board with an update regarding M20 Junction 10A. She advised that a letter had not been sent to the Secretary of State as agreed at the last Board meeting as Government officers advised that assurances should be sought from Highways England. A letter has been provided by Highways England and a further update will be provided to the Board at the February meeting.

10 **Dates of Future Meetings**

The following meeting dates were noted by the Board:

Friday 24th February 2017
Friday 31st March 2017
Friday 26th May 2017

The meeting closed at 11.00 am.

Chairman