

**Attendees**

BH	Ben Hook	East Sussex CC	KT	Katy Thomas	East Sussex CC
BS	Cllr Bob Standley	Wealden DC	MS	Martin Searle	FSB
CE	Christina Ewbank	ACES	NH	Nigel Hannam	Wealden DC
CM	Cllr Carl Maynard	Rother DC	PC	Cllr Peter Chowney	Hastings BC
DE	Dave Evans	East Sussex CC	PJ	Philip Johnson	Locate East Sussex
DS	Dan Shelley	Sussex Coast College	RD	Richard Dawson	East Sussex CC
GM	Graham Marley	Let's Do Business Group	SB	Sue Baxter	University of Brighton
GP	Graham Peters (CHAIR)	ES Rural Partnership	SH	Simon Hubbard	Hastings BC
JH	James Harris	East Sussex CC	SS	Sally Staples	East Sussex CC
JS	Jim Sims	Service Design Co	TL	Tony Leonard	Rother DC
KG	Cllr Keith Glazier	East Sussex CC			

Apologies

AS	Cllr Andy Smith	Lewes DC	MAA	Monica Adams-Acton	Hastings BC
CC	Clive Cooke	Sussex Coast College	ME	Martin Ellis	Recruitment SE
CS	Clive Soper	FSB	Psm	Penny Shimmin	Sussex CDA
DG	Derek Godfrey	Ellis Builders	PSp	Peter Sharp	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC
DT	Cllr David Tutt	Eastbourne BC	RS	Cllr Rupert Simmons	East Sussex CC
LR	Lisa Rawlinson	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC	SD	Stewart Drew	De La Warr Pavilion

1. Welcome & introductions

- 1.1. **GP** welcomed the attendees and delivered the apologies. **GP** asked for any additional interests not already held on record, and for any specific conflicts of interest with today's agenda items; no interests were declared.

2. Review of previous minutes (18 Sep 2017)

- 2.1. **GP** ran through the actions of the previous TES minutes noting that all had been completed. **BS** requested that the minutes be amended to include comments he made on the Wealden submission to the Housing Infrastructure Fund (7.3) and to clarify that it would definitely proceed as a Forward Funding bid (7.4); all agreed to the amendment.
- 2.2. The previous TES minutes were otherwise approved by the group as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Matters arising

- 3.1. **RD** again referred to the Housing Infrastructure Fund, advising that Chris Moore from the Homes & Communities Agency gave an update at the recent DES meeting – applications will be assessed over the next month so we should have feedback by the end of Nov 2017.

4. TES DISCUSSION GROUP – Business Survey 2018

- 4.1. In the early part of next year we plan to conduct another Business Survey in East Sussex. It's been 3 years since our last survey, and with so many strategic documents now being produced (SELEP SEP, Industrial Strategy with emphasis on productivity and innovation, SELEP Skills Strategy etc.) it now seems like an appropriate time to ensure we fully capture and understand the views of our businesses in East Sussex.
- 4.2. A copy of the previous Business Survey questionnaire from 2014 has already been shared with TES and lots of feedback has already been received; the purpose of today's discussion is to take a broad look at any new areas/themes that may have been missing last time, to collectively review the sections, and to consider communication of the survey.
- 4.3. **A summary of the main discussion points are given in Appendix 1.**
- 4.4. Following today's meeting all of the feedback will be reviewed and a new draft questionnaire will be produced, to be brought back to the next TES meeting for approval/endorsement on 11 Dec 2017. Consultants will then be commissioned to conduct the survey (and subsequently a full analysis of the data) in the early part of 2018. Initial survey results can then be brought back to TES in Spring 2018, after which they'll be made publically available and circulated widely. The final reports will come back to this group to help shape our future plans and aid revisions to our Growth Strategy.

5. TES DISCUSSION GROUP – SELEP Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)

- 5.1. **JS** thanked everyone for their feedback and involvement in the process so far. He stated that there are plenty of excellent strategies already working across the SELEP area, and reiterated that it's not the intention of the revised SEP to 'compete' with any of them, nor will the SEP be a detailed Skills document or an Infrastructure programme (as they will be covered in the Skills Strategy and the Infrastructure & Investment Strategy). The SEP is more about presenting a 'coherent narrative and set of ambitions'.
- 5.2. **JS** highlighted the current Evidence Base document, noting that it's a 'live' document so is in no way definitive or complete, and encouraged further feedback.
- 5.3. One of the proposed sections will focus on 'place-based interventions'. **JS** has come up with a list of possible strategic priorities that can be translated into local priorities; these have not yet been approved and are still evolving, but include:
 - Infrastructure, Skills and Business Support as the 3 main themes.
 - Productivity.
 - Thames Estuary; Lower Thames Crossing; Ports; Dover and 'frictionless borders'.
 - Key routes (including the A27) supporting the Local Transport Body.
 - Transport majors, pinch points and roads that unlock development.
 - Rail issues.
 - Garden communities (including links to universities and the construction sector).
 - Commercial Property; Incubation; Localised Energy Solutions.
 - Broadband (where SELEP can add value).
 - Shaping Skills for the future (ensuring people don't drop out of the labour market).
 - Science and Innovation.
 - Rural / Coastal / Town Centre regeneration.
- 5.4. TES spent some time discussing the above strategic priorities and the following key points were made:
 - The group agreed that Skills is important, as is Productivity; it's also pleasing to see road and rail infrastructure dovetailing with the Local Transport Body (as TfSE has now been recognised by the Secretary of State as the LTB for our area).
 - How will Housing Development be incorporated into the SEP and what exactly is the LEP's role? For Commercial Property we would want to emphasise 'creative workspace' as we have a high level of entrepreneurship in East Sussex.
 - Energy largely translates as 'utilities' for us in East Sussex and how we can better engage.
 - Social Enterprise doesn't seem to be sufficiently covered so far.
 - Can we stress 'Natural Capital & Environment', i.e. the role the environment has as an enabler to good growth.
 - We need to make sure these priorities can be properly translated into clear actions that can be achieved by the LEP, local authorities, businesses etc.; what will we actually need to do here in East Sussex, what issues will we need to lobby on, and what tools will we have (e.g. Prosperity Fund) to achieve this?
 - How will this SEP link to the C2C LEP and the Greater Brighton Economic Board? Are they working together to ensure we're all speaking with a single voice for the whole region or will we have several documents saying different things (particularly around Lewes/Newhaven which crosses LEP boundaries) perpetuating the myth that we're not well connected?
[Action: JS to consider this further]
 - We mustn't forget that the SEP's key audience will be the Government; the document should be as succinct as possible with clear outcomes, and will need to tell a compelling story about an area with untapped potential. It should also be pinned clearly to the key pillars of the Government's Industrial Strategy.
- 5.5. **JS** noted that whilst it was originally the intention to present a draft SEP at the SELEP Strategic Board meeting on 15 Dec 2017, it's now likely that this draft will be pushed back to the new year, for approval at the next Board meeting in Mar 2018.

6. TES round table / AOB

- 6.1. **DS** advised that the consultation on the proposed merger of Sussex Downs and Sussex Coast Colleges runs until 20 Nov 2017. See https://issuu.com/sdcomms/docs/merger_public_consultation_doc for more information.
- 6.2. **MS** advised that entries are now open for the FSB Small Business Awards 2018, and asked the group to please publicise anything he sends out; the south east finals will take place at Sandown Park in Surrey in Mar 2018.

Summary of actions:

- 5.4 **JS** to consider how the revised SELEP SEP will link to the C2C LEP and the Greater Brighton Economic Board.

The following is a summary of the key comments made during the TES discussion on 30 Oct 2017:

What's new since 2014 and what is coming up in the future?

- Brexit – all businesses will certainly have a view; underneath that, is there anything we can collectively do to help during the period of uncertainty?
- Also related to Brexit is 'export skills' – if you're not exporting why not, what support is needed etc.? Possibly also flesh out where they want to export to and in what sectors.
- Skills in general – what are you looking for when employing young people? If you could ask schools and colleges to focus on one thing what would it be?

Review of existing sections and questions – what's missing or needs updating?

- Overall the questionnaire is already pretty good so let's keep changes to an absolute minimum.
- We need to pick out the principle results of the last survey to ensure the same key things are covered again this time and any trends are tracked.
- A key point to consider is what we'll actually do with the answers to each of the questions; if we're doing nothing then that question can be dropped!
- Lots of the questions ask for a 'free answer', with possible prompts for the telemarketer to use to encourage answers; it may be quicker/easier to replace these with more straightforward Yes/No questions.
- The questionnaire begins with an 'employees' section which could be moved to later in the survey as lots of businesses don't actually have employees. The 'business premises' section could also be later.
- Section B makes no mention of BES or the Growth Hub (we should focus on BES rather than the overall Growth Hub as it's more customer facing).
- Could Question B8 refer to 'productivity' in some way (e.g. what affects your productivity, what measures could improve it etc.)?
- Question B16 ought to be more focused on 'innovation'.
- In question B17, what do we mean by 'local' university?
- The list of support services needs updating in question B23.
- Lots of our businesses are related to hospitality – are those businesses aware of the support we give to the cultural sector?
- Whilst we consider the relationship between business and local authority to be excellent, do all businesses agree? Do they differentiate between our various authorities and know what they provide?
- Are businesses aware of our Positive Enterprise Culture and the financial benefits of the new Enterprise Zone in Newhaven? (Note that whilst the EZ is currently looking at its marketing strategy, this survey should not be about publicity.)
- In Section C, can we ask for more detail on the level of finance people are looking for?
- Section F should include broadband speed, connectivity, parking and proximity to supply chains as considerations in relocating.
- The questions in Section G may not get to the heart of the matter in terms of current 'and future' skills needs.
- Section G should also have more detail on Apprenticeships (what sort people are looking for and at what level), but also questions on the general perception and understanding of Apprenticeships – do businesses know they can train employees to HNC or degree level, is there an awareness of the Apprenticeship Levy?

Communication & engagement

- The process of contacting businesses to conduct the survey will be down to the telemarketing contractor, but we should try to engage with businesses beforehand to raise awareness, generate interest and ultimately maximise involvement.
- We can use our various channels – ACES, BES etc. – to advise businesses that the survey is coming out and to ask them to feed in.
- Can we also consider promotion via publications, networking events and social media, including Linked-In?
- In communicating the results, we've previously published them on the East Sussex in Figures website, but we should try to publicise them more widely. How do we reach "the other 22,000" businesses and not just the 1,000 that are surveyed? Is it possible to send out a link to the results with Business Rates letters or with Your County magazine?
- We'll also need to ensure we emphasise the areas of the results that businesses are actually interested in and the 'analysis' of the stats (not just the stats themselves), with lots of Tweetable infographics.
- For future consideration in any follow-up surveys, could we consider doing a 'light' version on Survey Monkey with just the key questions? Could we start to use a web platform to upload the questions in the future (although that will affect the sampling between sectors)? Whilst we've not previously had any problem reaching 1,000 businesses, if the questionnaire becomes too long could we consider having smaller quarterly surveys? All of these points may be worth exploring with the telemarketing consultants.