

Strategic Board Meeting

Friday 9th December 2016, 10:00–11:30

High House Production Park, Purfleet, Essex, RM19 1RJ

10.00	1	Welcome and introductions	Chris Brodie
10.05	2	Minutes and actions from 23 rd September 2016 meeting page 2 Matters arising Declarations of Interest	Chris Brodie
10.10	3	General update page 7 <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Growth Deal Round Three- Autumn Statement – SELEP impact- Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission- Report on Annual Conversation (1st December)	Chris Brodie
10.20	4	Refreshing our working arrangements page 9 <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Including <u>decision</u> on updated Terms of Reference and Assurance Framework	Chris Brodie & SELEP Team
10.45	5	Lower Thames Crossing page 54 <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Including <u>decision</u> on next steps- <i>Highways England in attendance</i>	Zoe Gordon
11.00	6	Skills and Employability Strategy presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Update, next steps and partner engagement	Louise Aitken
11.10	7	Capital Programme update presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 16/17 spend to date, forward look to 17/18- Growing Places Fund	Rhiannon Mort
11.20	8	Working Group highlights page 57	Amy Beckett
11.25	9	AOB	Chris Brodie
11.30	10	Close & Thanks	Chris Brodie

Note: The meeting finishes at 11.30am to allow travel time, for those board members involved, to the Wider South East Summit (1pm – 4pm, Kings College)

Attached for information only:

- Material from [18th November Accountability Board](#)

Future Meeting Dates

- 3rd March 2017
- 9th June 2017
- 22nd September 2017
- 15th December 2017
- 16th March 2018

Strategic Board Meeting

Friday 23rd September 2016 10:00–11:30

High House Production Park, Purfleet, Essex, RM19 1RJ

South East
Local Enterprise Partnership



Attending	
Chris Brodie	Chairman
George Kieffer	Essex Vice Chair, Haven Gateway Partnership
Geoff Miles	Kent Vice Chair, Maidstone Studios
Graham Peters	East Sussex Vice Chair, East Sussex SME Commission
Lucy-Anne Harris <i>for Perry Glading</i>	Pixelwork
Cllr Gagan Mohindra <i>for Cllr Chris Whitbread</i>	Councillor, Epping Forest District Council
Jo James	Kent Invicta Chambers
Derek Godfrey	Ellis Building Contractors Ltd & Eastbourne Chamber of Commerce
Julian Drury	C2C
Cllr Bob Standley	Leader, Wealdon District Council
Cllr Rob Gledhill	Leader, Thurrock Council
Cllr Peter Fleming	Leader, Sevenoaks District Council
Graham Razey	East Kent College
Martin Searle	East Sussex FSB
Nick Sandford	CLA
Cllr Kevin Bentley	Deputy Leader, Essex County Council
Cllr Paul Watkins	Councillor, Dover District Council
David Rayner	Birkett Long LLP, Greater Essex Business Board
Haydon Yates <i>for David Burch</i>	Greater Essex Business Board
Cllr John Lamb	Leader, Southend on Sea Borough Council
Cllr Rodney Chambers	Deputy Leader, Medway Council
Cllr Paul Carter	Leader, Kent County Council
Paul Thomas	Kent Developers Group & Orbit Homes
Cllr Keith Glazier	Leader, East Sussex County Council
Cllr Peter Chowney	Leader, Hastings County Council

Also in Attendance:

Cath Goodall, BEIS

Graham Pendlebury, DfT – Senior Whitehall Sponsor

Apologies

Apologies were received from David Burch, Perry Glading, Cllr Graham Butland and Cllr Chris Whitbread.

1. Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1 Chris welcomed the board members and observers to the meeting
- 1.2 Chris thanked all for their warm welcome and support since he has been in post.

2. Minutes and Actions from 24th June 2016 Meeting and Matter Arising

- 2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed, with an amendments noted from Cllr Glazier to note his attendance at the meeting 24th June 2016 which was not recorded.

3. General Update

a. Growth Deal Round Three submission and follow up

- 3.1 Adam noted the growth fund submission, which was submitted to Central Government July 2016 and was a very positive bid document, meeting Governments expectations for a thematic, single list approach.
- 3.2 Initial viewpoints from Central Government departments have been positive and the bid has been well received.
- 3.3 Adam noted that whilst this was a positive piece of work, further work will need to be carried out to ensure the next round of bidding enables the South East LEP to maximise its opportunities.
- 3.4 Adam thanked the group for their lobbying to date, including letters of support received by local MPs and requested board members continue to lobby Government.

b. Government's Industrial Strategy

- 3.5 The Industrial Strategy is being worked on at pace, with Greg Clark heading the work up; the South East LEP are keen to influence the impending strategy as much as possible, ensuring this resonates with the collective view of the LEP.
- 3.6 In light of the Industrial Strategy's implementation, it is timely to refresh the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) at this time, enabling this to be in line with the new Industrial Strategy.
- 3.7 Chris noted each LEP now has a ministerial local growth champion from BEIS, the South East LEP's has been announced as Jo Johnson. Chris will be having an initial conversation with him in the coming weeks. Chris feels this is a very positive step for relationships with BEIS and LEPs and the group should be encouraged by this.

c. SEP Refresh and Supporting work

- 3.8 Adam advised that the SEP refresh will build on the Growth Deal submission's thematic and unified approach, having a succinct style and be a functional document.
- 3.9 Adam commented the refresh will require additional consultancy support; however this will not be at the same level that the previous SEP required.
- 3.10 Adam advised the group it is an important step forward for the LEP and will clearly align with the Industrial Strategy and strengthen the federal model.
- 3.11 The refresh will take into account the opinions and views of the board, local authorities and working groups.

d. Growing Places Fund – process and approach

- 3.12 Adam advised the group it is anticipated by year end there will be approximately £6million of loan repayments available.
- 3.13 It is important all areas are fully signed up to the Growing Places Fund dissemination, which will be covered within the SEP refresh, available for pipeline projects.
- 3.14 The Infrastructure and Investment Strategy will have a single approach to how funds are allocated, ensuring all pipeline projects are considered; the strategy will be available for board member approval at an upcoming board meeting.

e. Consultations and responses

- 3.15 Adam advised the board any responses Government receive from the South East LEP will not duplicate or override responses received from Local Authorities or working groups.
- 3.16 In a recent response to the Thames Estuary 2050 Commissions call, the LEP noted their support to the local level and pointed Government to the direction of these responses.
- 3.17 Adam advised the group the Thames Estuary Commission will be holding a meeting, 26th October 2016, in which the LEP will be playing a co-ordinating role; this is an opportunity to place the South East LEP strongly in the eyes of the Commission.

f. SELEP Team Update

- 3.18 Recent additions to the team include: Amy Beckett, Programme Manager (Lucy Spencer-Lawrence's maternity cover), Rhiannon Mort, Capital Programme Manager and Louise Aitken, Skills Manager.
- 3.19 As advised in the board papers, it is planned for one addition to the team in the future (Strategy Manager).
- 3.20 Adam thanked the team for their hard work to date.

g. Lower Thames Crossing Update

- 3.21 Adam welcomed Zoe, who gave an update on the Lower Thames Crossing including the Industry Stakeholder Working Group which took place earlier in the week. Therefore, due to the timescales it had not been possible to provide a written update.
- 3.22 Highways England have received and reviewed in excess of 47,000 responses to the Lower Thames Crossing; and are now liaising with key partners; they will be making their recommendations in mid-October. This will be considered by Ministers and we are hopeful of a decision and possible preferred route announcement in late November / December 2016.
- 3.23 Zoe highlighted to all board members now is the time to be active in lobbying local MPs and members of Government.
- 3.24 SELEP intends to write to all MPs in our area and relevant cabinet ministers. However with this on their agenda already we need to operate more widely, ensuring other Government departments are aware of why this is important. Therefore, we will also write and make the case to senior cabinet ministers. Letters will be short and to the point; emphasising the need for the crossing, the need to support investment in infrastructure at this time, the impact on local productivity, the need to rebalance the economy/equalise investment. These are the areas we understand are a priority for the Autumn Statement. We will specifically be calling for the need for local connectivity and the importance for a Lower Thames Crossing to be announced and moved forward in an efficient manner.
- 3.25 The Industry Stakeholder working group are intending to send a letter requesting a round table meeting with the Chancellor; they are also looking to diversify the group and welcome retail representation from Lakeside and Bluewater as well as developer and housing representatives.
- 3.26 In anticipation of a potential announcement, it was also identified the South East LEP could helpfully play an additional role, bringing together all local transport schemes which would become even more critical should the crossing go ahead. This 'prospectus' would bring together details of those schemes, which local areas are already working on, demonstrating that we are thinking holistically and as a corridor for investment. It would also help build the case for the schemes to be considered for funding at a later stage. It was agreed that this would be progressed with Transport Officers in the local authorities, SELEP Capital Programme Manager and SELEP Communications Manager.
- 3.27 Jo James agreed the crossing would be stage one of a wider projects and that local pinch points should also be looked at.
- 3.28 Paul Carter advised the group that Kent County Council has a preferred option and that an additional crossing cannot sit next to the current crossing.
- 3.29 Rob Gledhill advised the group, whilst Thurrock agree there is a need for second crossing, they currently oppose each option as they run directly through Thurrock; however if an option D was available Thurrock Council would support this. Kevin Bentley expressed the need to work in effective partnership with Thurrock. John Lamb advised the board if option D was available it would be a far more efficient with connectivity and links to main roads in the area.
- 3.30 Peter Chowney expressed views that Growing Places Fund must be re-invested as soon as possible; Adam advised the group that the work on this will be accelerated and work will be completed to ensure the funds are re-invested well.

- 3.31 Nick Sandford urged that throughout the Lower Thames Crossing process, we must concentrate on, and support environmental protection, investing in work to be completed once an option has been decided so as to avoid future delays in construction.

4 Refreshing our working arrangements

- 4.1 Chris advised the group the refresh of working arrangements must be clear from the start, looking at ways the South East LEP could and should work together; this will be through a review of governance and procedures.
- 4.2 The board are being asked today to agree the scope of work with proposals being brought to December's meeting to agree next steps.
- 4.3 It was reiterated this is not a major piece of work as the South East LEP has made positive progress and is currently working in line with Government expectations.
- 4.4 Adam emphasised the work will not look to reinvent how the LEP currently works, however there are some areas and gaps to address, most of which will be addressed by Government's upcoming National Assurance Framework refresh for LEPs.
- 4.5 Adam advised the group that working groups will be a focus of the review; ensuring the LEP board is informed on their actions and updated regularly.
- 4.6 Chris is keen for the LEP's ambitions to be known; with a wide acknowledgement of where the LEP wants to progress and the ambition to be the best performing LEP in the Country.
- 4.7 Chris advised the group that whilst it is important to get higher education engagement the focus should be on all education.
- 4.8 Adam reviewed the board papers, advising the group of key points within the refresh which include: responses to calls for funding and the approach taken; officer structure within Senior Officers Group and Skills Advisory Group; how the LEP engages businesses who are looking for direct involvement with the LEP; how the workings of the South East LEP are communicated; transparency within the framework inclusive of the assurance framework, conflicts of interest and complaints policy and clear structure how the LEP works with the federated areas.
- 4.9 Government have advised the South East LEP that there is only 48% business representation on the board; this will need to be addressed.
- 4.10 The paper was commended by several board members for the uniformed approach to working groups, further business board membership and further emphasis on skills, Keith Glazier commented the federal areas should be able to work in different ways as part of the federal model, with which Adam agreed.
- 4.11 Several board members welcomed the work as outlined in the paper and the clarity which is aimed for. All supported the aim to better engage SMEs. There was also agreement around the need to ensure that decisions around working arrangements are not prolonged, and that the Terms of Reference are agreed at the December board meeting, enabling clarity for the group. David Rayner queried how feedback should be received; Adam confirmed all feedback should come back to the South East LEP team.
- 4.12 **Agreed to progress paper.**

5 EU Funded Projects

- 5.1 Lorraine George noted the South East LEP were in the Top 7 for commitment of ESIF funds and were on track for very strong delivery before Brexit.
- 5.2 George Kieffer commented on the National Growth Board; a letter has been received stating all projects contracted prior to the Autumn Statement would proceed for the contracted period of time; future projects would need to align with national aspirations.
- 5.3 Lorraine advised the group any projects funded pre-Brexit would need to adhere to EU standards.
- 5.4 Lorraine and Jo Simmons are currently compiling a list of pipeline projects for DCLG next Friday.
- 5.5 There is information that calls for all 3 priorities will be open in the near future.

- 5.6 EAFRD Funding – to date only £214,000 grant money has been awarded; they are currently waiting for the next call to open.
- 5.7 Louise Aitken thanked her predecessor and partners for work completed to date.
- 5.8 Louise advised the group the ESIF funding is well aligned with aspirations of the South East LEP. There is currently £14million available, calls for ideas will be closed next Friday and Louise will be working closely with local partners to reflect priorities.
- 5.9 Jo Simmons offered a high level summary on current and pipeline ERDF projects.
- 5.10 Kevin Bentley requested further information on the 8 projects within ERDF and also to find out how businesses hear about support that is available for them. Kevin also asked if the board should be advising local businesses of the offers; this was confirmed.

6 North Kent Enterprise Zone: MOU & Progress

- 6.1 Adam commented on the excellent progress that has been made in the last year by the North Kent enterprise zone. Responsibility for the submission of the MoU has been delegated to Adam Bryan; this was decided at the recent Accountability Board meeting.

7 AOB

- 7.1 The provisional calendar of board meetings up to March 2018 has been shared with the board papers; these will be confirmed and sent out in the near future.
- 7.2 Jo James asked for further information regarding the universities' expressions of interest for the Science Innovation Audit; Adam advised Jo that when this has been approved the South East LEP will play a stronger role, working with the U9 group.
- 7.3 Paul Thomas made the group aware that Redbridge Council has purchased temporary housing within Kent and other Kent locations are being looked at by Boroughs of London. Paul will be raising his concerns to Government about this.
- 7.4 Nick Sandford advised the group the CLLA, 4 point plan for post Brexit is very practical and asked for the board to endorse this.
- 7.5 Chris thanked all for their attendance.

For decision	
For endorsement	
For information	x
<i>mark with 'x'</i>	

General Update

1. Purpose:

1.1 To bring board members up to speed on some key areas of work for SELEP.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Board is asked to **note** the report.

3. Details

3.1 Growth Deal Round Three

- At the time of writing (Friday 2nd December) SELEP's Growth Deal settlement is not yet announced. All LEPs were given indicative figures in early November which seemed to reflect a certain priority for LEP areas which are home to advanced devolution discussions or have some of the machinery of devolution already in place.
- After a sustained advocacy effort from SELEP officers, board members, local MPs and other supporters; and positive intelligence on the impact of the LEP movement nationally on decision-making, we can now expect SELEP's final allocation to be significantly in excess of the £45-55m envelope which was mooted originally.
- The Autumn Statement document, released alongside the Chancellor's parliamentary address, indicated that LEPs in London and 'the South East' would receive funding totalling £492m. While it is unclear as to exactly how many LEPs Government have categorised as 'South East', that aggregated figure does suggest that some degree of the weighting in favour of devolution areas has been removed and that we can indeed expect a fairer share of the funding - and an amount closer to what we all think is required to enable growth in our area.
- We should be very clear that the priority list indicated in the submission document in July will not change when the final allocation is confirmed.

3.2 Influencing Government's Industrial Strategy

- We have been engaged, through the LEP Network, in trying to influence the direction of Government's forthcoming Green Paper on the Industrial Strategy for the benefit of us and of all LEPs.
- At the time of writing, we expect the Green Paper to be published around mid-December. We believe that it will be light on detail and will take the form of a set of consultation questions.
- We have taken the pragmatic step to pause on the release of our consultation specification for our own revised Strategic Economic Plan until we have been able to factor in the essence of the Green Paper. It is vital that SELEP takes this opportunity to align itself squarely with Government policy as it pertains to the Industrial Strategy and that we position ourselves as strongly as possible vis-à-vis other LEPs.

- The original aim of launching a revised SEP, as previously described, around April and in tandem with the updated Skills Strategy and Infrastructure and Investment Strategy, is still in place. It is likely that timescales will slip, but we will keep the Board aware at all times.

3.3 Impact of Autumn Statement

- We should all be encouraged by the focus afforded to housing and infrastructure investment in the Autumn Statement and SELEP will be looking to engage with Government as it starts to bring the Chancellor's plans to fruition. As emailed previously, the LEP network produced a useful summary of the statement, which is available [here](#).
- On the flip side, Government have recently announced the outcome of the Large Local Majors Scheme process, which affords little priority to the South of England and supports no projects in the SELEP area. The detail is available here: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2016-11-28/HCWS286/>

3.4 Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission

- The SELEP Team were asked to assist in the organisation of two separate meetings with Lord Heseltine's commission.
- We organised a two-hour session for local partners, led by Chris Brodie, to talk to the Commission about local ambition for the Thames Estuary on 26th October. This meeting afforded the commissioners a depth of knowledge that they previously did not have, and produced a range of follow up actions which have been taken forward by partners across the area.
- We also organised a meeting on 2nd November for Lord Heseltine and SELEP and East London universities. Again, this was a very positive meeting, with full attendance from the universities and an agreement to meet again to continue the dialogue.

3.5 Annual Conversation

- Chris Brodie, George Kieffer, Geoff Miles, Graham Peters, Adam Bryan and Suzanne Bennett (for the Accountable Body) undertook the 'Annual Conversation' with senior Government officials on 1st December.
- The meeting went particularly well, and officials were pleased with the continued progress that we were able to articulate. The breadth of our working agenda was also positively remarked upon. Resultantly, officials are making the recommendation to Ministers that we are afforded full programme-level flexibility in respect of the management of our existing capital programme. We await confirmation over the coming weeks.
- The slide pack which was prepared for the meeting has been sent to Strategic Board members in the same email as these board papers.

Author: Adam Bryan
Position: Managing Director
Contact details: adam.bryan@essex.gov.uk, 07884 475191
Date: 2nd December 2016

For decision	x
For endorsement	
For information	
mark with 'x'	

Refreshing our working arrangements

1. Purpose

1.1 To agree the updated documents which detail SELEP's operating structure.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Board is asked to

- 2.1.1 **Agree** the updated SELEP Terms of Reference (Appendix A) which includes (2.2.2) the appointment of one new board member to enable SELEP to satisfy Government's requirements around majority private sector membership and engagement with the SME community; and (2.9.2) a series of measures to ensure closer alignment of federated boards with the overarching Assurance Framework. Issues for discussion and clarification are highlighted in the document.
- 2.1.2 **Note** the progress made on the draft Assurance Framework (Appendix B), in line with Government's new National Assurance Framework, and **agree to approve the new Assurance Framework via Electronic Procedure in January**. This is to enable all Terms of Reference changes to be reflected in the Assurance Framework and to allow for transmission to Government ahead of their 28th February deadline.
- 2.1.3 **Note** the intention of the SELEP team to undertake to implement any changes by 31st March 2017.

3. Background

3.1 The positive steps that SELEP has made over the past year in respect of its working arrangements are broadly recognised and it is generally felt that the federal model is working well. There are, however, a few areas where we need to modify our approach or think differently around how we work smarter, more efficiently, and eliminate any misunderstandings or 'grey areas'.

3.2 Further, Government have recently issued a revised 'National Assurance Framework' and have requested that all LEPs adapt their own Assurance Frameworks in accordance with their expectations. Whilst our current Assurance Framework met the requirements of the original National Assurance Framework, we need to ensure that we are fully compliant with the revised expectations. Compliance with the Framework is a requirement for receipt of future Local Growth Fund allocations.

3.3 Following the agreement at the 23rd September board meeting, the SELEP team has, as intended, undertaken a soft consultation exercise. This has included discussions with:

- 3.3.1 Board members who have engaged directly with the Chairman and the SELEP team, both informally and formally
- 3.3.2 Federal boards through presentations and discussions at their meetings and through subsequent written submissions back to the SELEP team

3.3.3 Cities, boroughs and districts through normal engagements and meetings with the SELEP Chairman and Managing Director

3.3.4 SELEP working groups on an ad hoc basis

3.4 The exercise has always been light-touch. Conversations undertaken since September have, almost without exception, both supported this approach and made it very clear that any substantial change to the way SELEP works would not be welcomed. The Terms of Reference have been reviewed in that spirit exactly.

3.5 This version of the Terms of Reference includes a record of all SELEP's working groups, their membership by organisation and a short commentary on their purpose - describing exactly how they should operate to support SELEP's strategic agenda. Gaps in representation on existing groups are highlighted for board discussion.

3.6 Following consultation discussions, clarity and some standardisation is needed on the operation of the federal model (2.9, in Appendix A, below). In particular, clarity is needed on arrangements in Essex. In the spirit of working with local areas in the way that local areas want to work with us and in following the advice of the Vice Chairmen in maintaining the status quo, the Chairman proposes that no operational changes are made. Reflecting this, SELEP's business in Essex will continue to be administered by both the Greater Essex Business Board and by Opportunity South Essex (formerly Growth Partnership), and the shared interests of Essex overall should continue to be represented by one Vice Chair who should be a member of both boards. This is reflective of a joined-up approach across various strands of economic growth work, specifically around housing, skills and the Growth Hub; but two distinct partnership organisations and approaches to local growth strategies, housing market assessments, strategic planning and business engagement.

3.7 Board members should be clear that the form of the federated model locally should have no detrimental impact on the equitable approach to funding allocations – where and when applicable - across SELEP. As we build the project pipeline (which will form as part of the Infrastructure and Investment Strategy) to position us strongly for future rounds of Growth Deal, it is vital that the strongest projects are prioritised locally according to the approach stipulated in the Assurance Framework. At the SELEP level, our task is ensuring that the distribution of priority firstly recognises the relative merits of the projects, but secondly, that the shares of funding reflect the previous tacit agreement that, over time (but clearly *not* on a case by case basis), no area of the LEP should be disadvantaged.

3.8 It is the Chairman's ambition to make SELEP the most university friendly LEP in the country. The importance of the skills agenda to the area and the vital role played by Universities, Further Education Colleges and training providers will be important to support as we move forward. Tweaks are suggested to working group memberships below to tighten the link between the Skills Advisory Group and the U9 group and to better reflect their important position in SELEP's operating structure.

3.9 Board members are asked to note that while some content has been simplified or made substantially sharper in this version of the Terms of Reference; all the substantive additions come as a result of Government's National Assurance Framework for LEPs. **Changes of material significance are highlighted in blue,** but drafting changes are present throughout. For your convenience, the previous terms of reference, agreed in December 2014, is included as Appendix C.

3.10 List of appendices:

- A. SELEP Terms of Reference 2017 (inclusive of its own 'Annex I')
- B. SELEP Assurance Framework 2017

4. Next steps

- 4.1 When agreed, the first two documents appended below will necessitate further work by the SELEP team. This relates mainly to the Assurance Framework and to us putting those things in place which will provide Government with more confidence around the transparency of our working practices. While we would all agree that the Accountability Board provides a beacon of best practice in terms of the good governance of LEPs, there is a little more to do following Government's revision to the National Assurance Framework.
- 4.2 We propose that SELEP team should, working with board members where necessary, undertake to implement all changes as soon as practicable; and not later than 31st March 2017.
- 4.3 We will also issue a Governance Handbook which will provide a summarised version of both documents as soon as is practicable upon their endorsement.

Author: Chris Brodie and Adam Bryan
Position: Chairman and Managing Director
Date: 2nd December 2016



**DRAFT Terms of Reference
Version December 2016**

1. PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

1.1. Role of the Local Enterprise Partnership

1.1.1 The South East Local Enterprise Partnership (the LEP) is a strategic partnership which brings together the public and private sectors to support economic growth across the local authority areas of East Sussex, Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock. It has a federated model of operation which is principally supported by the Greater Essex Business Board, Kent and Medway Economic Partnership, Opportunity South Essex and Team East Sussex.

1.1.2 The LEP will:

- a) progress priorities of cross-border economic importance where there is added value in working together
- b) support priorities of local importance where they are designated as priority by local partners
- c) support the conditions through which a more creative, responsive and flexible working relationship can exist between business and government at all levels
- d) seek resources, freedoms and flexibilities to progress strategic growth priorities
- e) operate transparently, openly and in collaboration
- f) work in collaboration with neighbouring LEPs, including London, where the agenda dictates

1.1.3. In pursuit of this role, the LEP will bring together intelligence and expertise to identify priorities and develop solutions to maximise particularly private sector investment into the area and to address barriers to growth.

1.2. Legal status

1.2.1. The LEP is an informal partnership. It does not have legal status to enter into contracts and will act through one of its local authority partners as Accountable Body. This role has been undertaken by Essex County Council since the LEP's inception, but need not remain the case.

1.3. Subsidiarity

- 1.3.1. The LEP operates on the principle of subsidiarity. This means that decisions should be taken at the practical level closest to the communities and businesses affected by those decisions. The LEP's 'federal' model of operation provides a clear structure for this approach. This allows for local decision making around individual projects and for decision-making of a more cross-cutting nature at the LEP Strategic Board.
- 1.3.2 Designated as a s.101 committee as defined by the Local Government Act (1972), the Accountability Board provides the accountability structure for decision-making and the approval of funding within the overarching vision set by the Strategic Board.
- 1.3.3 This document articulates the principal machinery around the LEP for the benefit of Board members and other interested parties. This should not preclude the emergence of new groups to support the working agenda, or indeed advisory arrangements to support the work of the SELEP team. Future iterations of this document will record any material change.

2. GOVERNANCE

2.1. General

- 2.1.1. The LEP is governed by two boards, the Strategic Board and the Accountability Board. The Terms of Reference for the Accountability Board are enshrined within the SELEP Assurance Framework.

2.2. Strategic Board

- 2.2.1. The Strategic Board, supported by the SELEP team, is responsible for:
 - a) setting the vision, strategic direction and priorities of the LEP overall
 - b) ensuring the development and maintenance of the Strategic Economic Plan and for determining its key funding priorities.
 - c) ensuring that that adequate capacity and expertise is maintained to deliver against b)
 - d) considering and agreeing a position on major items of strategic importance
 - e) publishing arrangements for developing, prioritising, appraising and approving projects with a view to ensuring that a wide range of delivery partners can be involved
 - f) development and approval of a Skills Strategy for the area
 - g) approval of European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF) strategy
 - h) deciding how the activities of the LEP should be delegated
 - i) championing the LEP and the LEP area in all other forums
 - j) supporting pan-LEP activity undertaken by the working groups
 - k) working closely with federal boards to oversee Growth Hub, Enterprise Zone and City Deal activities
 - l) endorsing local areas' efforts to advance projects for economic growth which may not be directly linked to the LEP.

2.2.2. The Strategic Board has a private sector Chair, with the majority of the remaining members also coming from the private sector. It is constituted as follows (terminology changed to reflect federal model, numbers are the same):

Count	Membership
5	Business representatives taken from Greater Essex Business Board and Opportunity South Essex
5	Local Government representatives taken from Greater Essex Business Board and Opportunity South Essex
4	Business representatives from Kent and Medway Economic Partnership
4	Local Government representatives from Kent and Medway Economic Partnership
3	Business representatives from Team East Sussex
3	Local Government representatives from Team East Sussex
1	1 representative of the Higher Education sector
1	1 representative of the Further Education sector
1*	1 representative of SMEs/Social Enterprise TBC
27*	

Note for discussion: Government do not include HE/FE in the calculation for private sector and they require a private sector majority. This necessitates the appointment of 1 additional private sector representative to the board – the above is suggested - for discussion

Note: Previous Terms of Reference stipulated that three of the five local authority representatives should come from South Essex

2.2.3 The process for selecting representatives from business and local government shall be determined within each of the federal boards, with the area Vice Chairman providing the final list to the LEP Chairman as necessary. Each area should consider selecting private sector Strategic Board members through an open, transparent and non-discriminatory competition which assesses each candidate on merit. Local authority representation should be at a senior political level, namely the Leader of the Council or a Cabinet Member.

2.2.4 The process for selecting the FE/ HE representatives shall be determined by the Skills Advisory Group and the U9 groups respectively, with final approval given by the SELEP Chairman.

2.2.5 **TBC re SME/Social Enterprise representative according to board decision on incorporation to the board.**

2.2.6 **Board members are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with Nolan’s Seven Principles of Public Life (see link). In the following circumstances, following adjudication by the Accountable Body’s Standards Committee, Board Members can be removed from SELEP office as a result of:**

- a) failure to comply with the Seven Principles of Public Life
- b) failure to attend Strategic Board meetings for six months without pre-approval from the Chair
- c) failure to maintain their Declaration of Interests and/or continued participation in decisions where there is a clear, yet undeclared, conflict.

2.2.7 The LEP will ensure that representation at its Strategic Board and working group meetings is diverse and that membership is reflective of the business communities that it serves.

2.2.8 In accordance with Government’s expectations, the LEP shall designate the following board members or members of the SELEP team with responsibilities pertaining to the good governance of Government funding as follows:

<i>Maximising the LEP’s connections with SMEs across the area</i>	Chairman
<i>Ensuring that the LEP’s investments represent value for money</i>	Chair of the Accountability Board
<i>Ensuring that business cases are subject to scrutiny</i>	Chair of the Accountability Board
<i>Identification and management of risk of all the projects supported by the LEP’s programme</i>	TBC

2.2.9 The Strategic Board will be supported by the SELEP Team and the Senior Officer Group in identifying opportunities to work with LEPs across the national network according to the working agenda and priorities of the time.

2.3 Chair and Vice Chairs

2.3.1 The Chair shall be appointed by the Strategic Board following an open, transparent and non-discriminatory competition that assesses each candidate on merit.

2.3.2 The Chair’s performance will be subject to annual review by the Strategic Board, led by the Vice Chairs.

2.3.3 Duties of the Chair will be to:

- a) ensure the smooth and effective operation of the Strategic Board
- b) lead on the development of strategy
- c) participate in the appointment of and directly manage the Managing Director of the LEP bringing any significant performance or staffing issues to the attention of the Strategic Board and the Accountable Body
- d) ensure effective liaison with all constituents of the LEP and Government and to undertake representation, communication and advocacy as required and as according to LEP’s extant strategies

- 2.3.4 The Strategic Board will have three strategic Vice Chairs, one for Essex and South Essex, one for Kent and Medway and one for East Sussex. Their election and terms of office shall be determined by the federal boards who will work in partnership to agree the approach where required.

2.4 Representation and Attendance

- 2.4.1 Each member of the Board can name one alternate to attend in his or her place who is authorised to take decisions on his or her behalf. Alternates from Local Authorities shall be elected members.
- 2.4.2 For the Board to be quorate for decision making at least 17 of the 28 members must be present. Of these:
- a) At least 9 of the 17 should be business reps (ensuring business majority);
 - b) There should be at least 1 business rep per partnership area; and
 - c) At least 3 representatives must be from the 6 county/unitary councils
- 2.4.3 Only members of the Strategic Board or their alternates may sit at the meeting table and vote. Others may attend and take part by the invitation of the Chair.
- 2.4.4 Meetings of the Board are open to the press and public as observers, with the exception of any items that should be treated confidentially for commercial or other reasons. Filming or recording of proceedings should be agreed in advance with the SELEP team. The number of observers may be limited at the discretion of the Chair.

2.5 Decisions

- 2.5.1 The Board shall operate on the basis of consensus. If consensus is not achieved, decisions will be determined by majority vote, with the Chairman's casting vote deployed if required.
- 2.5.2 All urgent matters to be considered for decision must have been circulated in writing to all members of the Strategic Board at least two clear working days before the meeting. No decision can be taken without notice having been given.
- 2.5.3 In the event that a decision is required outside of a scheduled meeting, the Chair may decide to hold an Extraordinary Meeting. Such meetings shall be coordinated by the SELEP team, and shall operate according to normal Strategic Board rules.
- 2.5.4 In certain circumstances, the Chair may decide to seek agreement to a proposal via Electronic Procedure. In such cases, the SELEP Team will write to each Board member requesting agreement to a specified course of action. Board Members shall be given no fewer than five working days to respond. For a decision to be made, the provisions of paragraph 2.5.2 shall apply. The rules of quorum (paragraph 2.4.2) will apply.

- 2.5.5 All decisions made by Electronic Procedure shall be ratified at the next scheduled meeting of the Board.

2.6 Meetings and Papers

- 2.6.1 The Board will meet at least four times a year. A calendar of future meetings will be set for a year at a time.
- 2.6.2 The agenda and papers for meetings shall be approved by the Chair and issued at least five working days in advance of the meeting.
- 2.6.3 The agenda and papers shall be disseminated by the SELEP Team. Board members wishing to propose items for the agenda should contact the Secretariat. Final papers for Board discussion shall be made available on the LEP website as soon as they are disseminated to the Board, except for papers which are not suitable for release into the public domain, for example, due to them containing commercially sensitive data or information pertaining to the employment of individuals.
- 2.6.4 Minutes of meetings of the Board shall be approved in draft form by the Chair and disseminated to Strategic Board members no later than ten working days following the meeting. Minutes shall remain in draft until approval by the Board at the Board's next meeting.
- 2.6.5 Minutes shall be made publicly available in draft on www.southeastlep.com no more than ten days after the meeting and will similarly be published in final form no more than five working days following approval by the Strategic Board, except for minutes which are not suitable for release into the public domain for example due to them containing commercially sensitive data. Any minutes which are not released into the public domain will be stored confidentially by the SELEP Team.

2.7 Conflicts of interest

- 2.7.1 Strategic Board members and their nominated alternates shall complete the declaration of interest form on an annual basis, even if no change is reported.
- 2.7.2 The Chair will ask for declaration interests to be declared at the start of each Strategic Board meeting.
- 2.7.3 The SELEP Team shall maintain a Register of Strategic Board Members' Interests. This shall include all company directorships, trusteeships, elected offices, remunerated posts and other relevant interests. The Register of the Strategic Board Members' Interests will be published on the LEP website and shall be made available to any interested party at any time. Strategic Board members shall supply information to the Secretariat for inclusion in the register, or a nil return, on joining the Board, in response to any request for an update and on becoming aware of any new interest. The secretariat will circulate a request for information about interests annually.
- 2.7.4 Should an item be discussed by the Strategic Board which presents a conflict of interest to a Strategic Board member, the Strategic Board Member shall declare

the conflict of interest, regardless of whether s/he has previously declared the interest in the Register of Board Members' Interests. Such declarations shall be minuted and the Strategic Board member shall abstain from discussion and may be asked to withdraw at the Chair's discretion and shall not participate in any vote on the item.

2.8 Accountability Board

2.8.1 The SELEP Accountability Board is the main performance management structure within the LEP. It provides the accountability structure for decision making and approving funding within the overarching vision of the Strategic Board. This satisfies the accountability processes of the Accountable Body and the requirements of Government.

2.9 Other Board and working group arrangements

2.9.1 As described in section 1.3.1, the LEP operates a federal model, which allows for decision-making and project prioritisation at a local level.

2.9.2 In discharging those responsibilities relevant to the LEP, federal boards should provide the following responsibilities as a minimum and include these in their own Terms of Reference:

- a) ensure that the Managing Director is informed of all **meetings** and that the SELEP team is given the opportunity to attend
- b) working with the incumbent Vice Chair, provide the SELEP Team with clear and updated **nominations** for membership of the Strategic Board
- c) finalise local **priorities** and/or a vision for the federal area which is in line with the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan and the LEP's approach to project prioritisation
- d) coordinate **reports** as required to the LEP Strategic and Accountability Boards and monitor and report on all LEP investments in the area
- e) **champion** the work of the LEP to local communities
- f) ensure the **transparency** and accountability of decisions and recommendations made at local level
- g) enable **collective engagement** with all local authority leaders within the Federal Area to ensure that there is a clear mandate for decision making on growth priorities and supporting collaboration and joint delivery at executive level.
- h) ensure on-going local engagement with **public and private sector** partners to inform key decisions and set out how they will evidence effective engagement
- i) ensure that there is local engagement with and feedback to the general **public** about future strategy development and progress against delivery of the SEP, including key projects and spend against those projects and that this can be evidenced
- j) work with the LEP to **publish** arrangements for developing, prioritising, appraising and approving projects, with a view to ensuring that a wide range of delivery partners can be involved

H-J all National Assurance Framework requirements

2.9.3 The LEP’s working agenda is supported by a range of advisory, working and interest groups. Over the course of the LEP’s existence, some activity has ceased naturally and some has increased exponentially. Now termed simply as SELEP working groups, the groups and their top-level purposes are detailed below. Broad membership of the working groups is listed as **Annex I** of these Terms of Reference.

2.9.4 The Working Groups listed below should provide the following as a minimum:

- a) a simple Terms of Reference, which will be made available on the LEP website
- b) notification of future meetings and meeting notes made available on the LEP website
- c) clarifications around how federal areas have been engaged in any process which culminates in recommendations being made to the LEP Strategic Board
- d) an action plan which clearly associates milestones, outputs and monitoring arrangements when LEP funding is being spent
- e) an assurance that LEP funding will not be used until approval, where required, has been obtained from the LEP Strategic Board.

2.9.5 The Working Groups are accountable to the LEP Strategic Board and will be required to provide updates to each Strategic Board meeting. Where there is specific local interest to their work, the Working Groups should also report to federated boards.

Group	Function	Purpose
Senior Officer Group	Advisory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To provide resource and advice to the SELEP team on particular items of work, to link with local political members, to support effective decision making and to generally expedite the work of the LEP. - For more urgent matters, the Director of the LEP can call a ‘Directors Group’ of lead federal area representatives together.
Transport Officer Group (covering Strategic Infrastructure)	Advisory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To develop a strong pipeline of transport schemes linked to the SEP and to exert significant influence over Government, Network Rail and Highways England - To broaden an approach across other strategic infrastructure, such as broadband.
Coastal Communities (inc. CORE?)	Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To help develop the economies of our coastal areas and address regeneration needs through targeted intervention - To build on previous work in support of the Offshore Renewables sector across the LEP

Creative	Working Group	- To implement practical and scalable initiatives to overcome barriers to the growth of the creative sector by aligning the efforts of businesses, education bodies, strategic organisations and local authorities.
Growth Hub	Working Group	- To develop and deliver Growth Hub activity at the LEP level and across the three local sub-hubs.
Housing	Working Group	- To contribute to the acceleration of housing delivery and commercial development and ensure that we have the homes built to support consistent growth across the LEP area
Urban Growth	Working Group	- To ensure that the ambitions of our growing urban areas are well represented in the LEP's plans, to establish areas of joint work and to ensure that the ambition for our bigger towns is firmly lodged with Government.
Rural	Working Group	- To coordinate and support activities to enable growth in the rural economy, maximising access to all available funding sources.
Skills Advisory Group	Working Group	- To provide a strategic, joined up, holistic LEP view and input to skills issues and to deliver solutions where possible. These include funding opportunities, new projects and government priorities such as apprenticeship reforms and Area Reviews.
Social Enterprise	Working Group	- To be determined
Tourism	Working Group	- To be determined - Link to the creative group to also be discussed.
U9	Working Group	- To promote the interests of universities across the LEP, to follow best practice, to coordinate around funding bids and to drive the LEP's work around innovation.

2.9.6 It may be the case that working groups either cease to exist or are created to reflect the LEP's operational Strategic Economic Plan and the levels of priority and engagement from Government. The LEP does not preclude the inauguration of further groups which would exist to help deliver its objectives and will work with the federated boards in developing plans.

2.9.7 The Working Groups shall have a designated direct link to the SELEP board, either through existing representation, or through an existing board member acting as a champion for the sector.

2.9.8 There are two meetings external to, but coterminous with the LEP. The ESIF sub-committee, administered by DCLG for the discharge of European funding in the LEP area, continues to operate and is well aligned with the LEP team. The

Thames Gateway Strategic Group, which incorporates South Essex, North Kent and East London, continues to meet to progress the delivery of Government policy objectives in the area and continues to benefit from special ministerial attention. Both of these groups are critical to the LEP's successful discharge of its duties and will therefore continue to be resourced.

2.9.9 Added to this, the LEP shall be represented on the Strategic Boards of the Enterprise Zones in its area by either a board member or a senior member of the SELEP team.

3. SECRETARIAT AND ADMINISTRATION

3.1. Secretariat

3.1.1 The Strategic Board is supported by a secretariat which is generally referred to elsewhere as the 'SELEP team'. The SELEP team has responsibility for:

- a) ensuring the efficient administration of the Strategic Board, the Accountability Board and the other LEP sponsored working groups
- b) ensuring the Boards operate within their Terms of Reference
- c) providing information and support to the Chair and Vice Chairs
- d) monitoring work commissioned by the Board and reporting on progress to the Board
- e) coordinating the production of papers and agenda items
- f) managing communications activity on behalf of the LEP
- g) undertaking such tasks as directed by the Board, Chair and Vice Chairs
- h) maintaining a dedicated website through which local partners and the public can check progress on the delivery of the Growth Deal and access key documents such as the SEP

Additional Assurance Framework requirements:

- i) ensuring compliance with financial regulations of the Accountable Body and using all reasonable endeavors to ensure that partners in receipt of funding fulfil their obligations with regard to that funding, including maintaining a robust audit trail to demonstrate compliance
- j) ensuring arrangements are in place for the lawful and effective implementation and delivery of projects by partners
- k) ensuring that an appropriate process is followed for setting of budgets and preparation of accounts within the LEP which are approved by the Accountable Body
- l) reporting to the Accountable Body as required
- m) liaising with and reporting to Government, particularly in respect of the Local Growth Fund Capital Programme

3.1.2 The SELEP Team will be employed by an upper tier local authority and will work within the policies and procedures of the employing body.

- 3.1.3 The SELEP Team will seek support and advice from other local organisations to the extent that it supports the advancement of the LEP's overall work programme. The Managing Director is also responsible for managing the LEP's operational revenue budget and for reporting spend to the Accountable Body and other board members on request.
- 3.1.4 The costs of the SELEP team and any financial liabilities of the Accountable Body resulting from being the Accountable Body of the LEP shall be borne equitably between the six upper tier authorities using population figures as the basis for calculating their contribution. Financial contribution towards secretariat costs may be used as a contribution to match funding made available from Government or other sources and should be agreed annually.

3.2 Communications

- 3.2.1 The Board shall operate on the basis of transparency, openness and good communication.
- 3.2.2 The SELEP team shall be responsible for the LEP's communications approach. This shall include communications to Board members and the wider public and shall include the maintenance of an up-to-date, relevant and accessible website. The team shall also be responsible for implementation of a communications strategy.

4. AMENDMENTS TO TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 4.1 The Board may amend these terms of reference at any time.
- 4.2 These terms of reference (version 4) replace the version agreed by the Board in December 2014 to establish the Accountability Board. Prior to that, SELEP's Terms of Reference were agreed in previous forms in February 2014 and October 2012.

Annex I: Working Group Memberships

Group	Membership (suggested additions/gaps in blue)
Senior Officer Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair: SELEP Managing Director - SELEP team members - Accountable Body representative - Up to 2 reps per Upper Tier Local Authority - Federal area directors/lead coordinators where different - 2 HE/FE reps
Transport Officer Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair: SELEP Capital Programme Manager - SELEP Managing Director - Up to 2 reps per Upper Tier Local Authority - Federal area directors/lead coordinators where different - Up to 3 business representatives (not yet determined) - Highways England invited - Network Rail invited
Coastal Communities Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair: Cllr Giles Watling, Tendring DC - The main membership is drawn from an invitee list of <i>all</i> SELEP districts and boroughs with a coastline. Other members include: - SELEP team, Federated areas reps - Cities and Local Growth Unit - DCLG - National Maritime Development Group - Natural England - Princes Trust - Environment Agency - The Crown Estate
Creative Economy Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-Chairs: Sally Staples, East Sussex CC; Sarah Dance, Independent Cultural Consultant and Chair of Kent Cultural Transformation Board; Lorna Fox O'Mahoney, University of Essex - Creative Businesses (open door policy) - Districts, Borough, Unitary and County Councils (all welcome) - Creative and Cultural Skills - Arts Council England - Artsworld South East Bridge Organisation - GFE South
Growth Hub Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair: SELEP Business Engagement and Communications Manager - SELEP Growth Hub Data Coordinator - SELEP ERDF facilitator - Accountable Body representative - 1 representative per Upper Tier Local Authority - 1 rep for Business East Sussex - 1 rep for Business Essex, Southend and Thurrock (BEST) - 1 rep for Kent and Medway Growth Hub
Housing Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Representatives from local Developers Forums (from which the

	<p>Chairman and Vice Chairman will be drawn)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SELEP Housing Advisor - SELEP Team member / Federal board reps - Representatives from local housing and planning groups - Representative from the Homes and Communities Agency - Representative from Home Builders Federation - Representative from National Housing Federation
Key Towns	- To be determined
Rural Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair: Nick Sandford (Kent and Medway Economic Partnership) - SELEP EU Funding Lead - SELEP Rural Advisor - Graham Peters (SELEP Vice Chair) - East Sussex CC - Greater Essex Business Board representative - Additional business representative per federated board - Rural lead officer for each area
Skills Advisory Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair: Graham Razey, East Kent College - SELEP Skills Lead - 1 skills rep per Upper Tier Local Authority - 1 rep per ESB if different to the above - Sussex Council of Training Providers - Essex Provider Network - KATO - Sussex Coast College - South Essex College - Mid Kent College - Canterbury Christchurch University - To add – - 2 university reps from U9 - Voluntary sector rep
Tourism	- To be determined
U9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair: Carole Barron, University of Kent - SELEP Managing Director / SELEP team member - Anglia Ruskin University - Canterbury Christchurch University - University of Brighton - University of Creative Arts - University of Essex - University of Greenwich - University of Sussex - Writtle University College <p><i>Ensure that one of the members sits on the Skills Advisory Group</i></p>

SOUTH EAST LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

DRAFT ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

Last Date Approved: 11th March 2016

Revised date:

Contents – To be Updated

Description	Page no:
1. Overview of SELEP	
2. Governance and Decision Making	
2.1 Overview	
2.2 The Strategic Board	
2.3 The Accountability Board	
2.4 The Federated Boards	
2.5 The Working Groups	
2.6 The Accountable Body	
2.7 Equality and Diversity	
2.8 The Principles of Public Life	
3. Transparent Decision Making	
3.1 Overview	
3.2 Arrangements for making and recording decisions	
3.3 Communications and Publications	
3.4 The SELEP website	
3.5 Information Requests	
3.6 Complaints to SELEP	
3.7 Declarations of Interest	
3.8 Local Engagement	
3.9 Maximising Social Value	
4 Accountable Decision Making	
4.1 Devolution of Funding	
4.2 Process for transferring funding	
4.3 Managing Project Slippage in the Local Growth Fund Programme	
4.4 Arrangements for Underspend of SELEP Grant Funding	
4.5 Project Delivery Organisations	
4.6 Accounting and Audit	
4.7 Scrutiny Arrangements for SELEP	
4.8 Conflicts	
5. Ensuring Value for Money	
5.1 Managing the Capital Programme and ensuring value for money	
5.2 Allocation of funding – Priorisation	
5.3 Approving Projects	
5.4 Independent Technical Evaluator	
5.5 Business Cases	
5.6 Value for Money	
5.7 Monitoring and Evaluation of Projects	
5.8 Reporting on Local Growth Fund	
5.9 Approving Changes to the Local Growth Fund Projects	

1 Overview

- 1.1** The South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) is one of 39 LEPs established to “provide the clear vision and strategic leadership to drive sustainable private sector-led growth and job creation in their area” [Local Growth: Realising every place’s potential, HMG, October 2010]. It encompasses the local authority areas of East Sussex, Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend and Thurrock.
- 1.2** The purpose of the Assurance Framework is to set out the systems and processes in place that are necessary to manage the delegated funding from Central Government Budgets effectively. It is intended to provide Government and Partners with the assurance that decisions over funding are proper, transparent and deliver value for money. This Assurance Framework reflects the expectations of Government as set out in the National Assurance Framework published October 2016.
- 1.3** The Strategic Board sets the strategic direction of SELEP, providing clear strategic leadership and championing shared SELEP priorities. It is the main SELEP interface with Government, bringing together both private and public sectors to drive local growth and job creation and to oversee all SELEP activity to deliver this aim.
- 1.4** Formal democratic decision-making is through the Accountability Board which approves all funding decisions and is responsible for monitoring delivery of SELEP’s capital programme and actively reviewing associated risks, informed by local area management information. The Joint Committee structure of the Accountability Board roots decision-making firmly in the democratic process and enables it to be subject to democratic scrutiny.
- 1.5** Federal Boards are responsible for local delivery and managing their local programme within tolerance levels for both spending and delivery.
- 1.6** Funding decisions made by the Accountability Board are based on impartial advice provided by an Independent Technical Evaluator who makes recommendations based on value for money assessments of individual business cases.
- 1.7** As Accountable Body, Essex County Council, retains overall legal accountability for the SELEP investment programme, supported by Essex’s Section151 Officer.
- 1.8** Federal Boards, local councils and project sponsors are required to adhere to this Assurance Framework in relation to allocations of SELEP funding and to ensure consistency of prioritisation, programme management and investment, cost control and approval and programme/risk management.
- 1.9** The Assurance Framework should be read in conjunction with the SELEP Terms of Reference agreed by the Strategic Board in December 2016 and published on the SELEP website.
- 1.10** The Assurance Framework will be reviewed and updated as required and will be agreed annually by the Strategic Board.

2 Governance and Decision Making

2.1 Overview

- 2.1.1 The SELEP is a clear partnership between business and public sector at both SELEP and local partnership levels. At the heart of this partnership is the devolution of local accountability and funding to ensure decision-making at the most appropriate level. Democratic accountability for funding decisions made by the SELEP are provided through local authority leader representation on the Accountability Board, with accountability to the business community flowing through the business leader representatives on the Strategic Board.
- 2.1.2 The SELEP operates a Federated Model under which there are two main decision making boards which are supported by the Federal Boards and a range of working groups. Each board and group has their own terms of reference which is available on the SELEP website.
- 2.1.3 The SELEP is committed to ensuring fairness in its decision making and ensures through regular reviews that its practices follow the best standards. In doing so SELEP has due regard to the general equality duty and the principles of public life.

2.2 The Strategic Board

- 2.2.1 The Strategic Board is the primary private/public partnership board within the SELEP structure. It is responsible for setting the LEP's strategic direction and providing clear strategic leadership to the SELEP.
- 2.2.2 Working collectively, Strategic Board members are responsible for:
 - (i) Setting the strategic direction and priorities of the SELEP;
 - (ii) Ensuring the delivery of the Strategic Economic Plan and the Growth Deal;
 - (iii) Ensuring that the SELEP business plan is in accordance with the strategic direction and that the milestones are sufficiently ambitious;
 - (iv) The approval of an Investment Strategy and Common prioritisation approach of pipeline of projects;
 - (v) Considering and agreeing a position on major items of strategic importance;
 - (vi) Monitoring performance of the operations and activities of the SELEP;
 - (vii) approval of the Skills Strategy;
 - (viii) approval of European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF) strategy and any other strategies
 - (ix) monitoring performance of the operations and activities of the SELEP;
 - (x) Deciding how the activities of the SELEP should be delegated; and
 - (xi) Supporting pan-LEP activity on Rural and Coastal regeneration, U9 Universities activity, Centre for Offshore Renewable Engineering (CORE), priority sectors as appropriate (eg Creative) and the Growth Deal.
- 2.2.3 The Strategic Board is made up of 27 members selected by their local private/public sector partnerships or their representative bodies and at least 50% of the members are required to be from the private sector. The Strategic Board membership is as follows:
 - (i) The Chair of the LEP Board (taken from the private sector);
 - (ii) 5 business representatives from Essex, Southend & Thurrock;
 - (iii) 4 business representatives from Kent and Medway;
 - (iv) 3 business representatives from East Sussex;
 - (v) 5 local government representatives from Essex, Southend & Thurrock;
 - (vi) 4 local government representatives from Kent and Medway;
 - (vii) 3 local government representatives from East Sussex;
 - (viii) 1 representative of the higher education sector;
 - (ix) 1 representative of the further education and skills sector.

2.2.4 One Strategic Board member will be nominated by the Strategic Board to represent and engage with the SME Business Community.

2.3 The Accountability Board

2.3.1 The Accountability Board provides the accountability structure for decision-making and approval of funding within the overarching vision of the Accountability Board. By doing so, SELEP satisfies the accountability processes for the Accountable Body and the national LEP Assurance Framework.

2.3.2 The Accountability Board is responsible for the final sign-off of funding decisions having regard to the Independent Technical Evaluation process (see para xxx) and any funding received directly for projects following direct awards of funding from the Government. Thereafter flexibilities have been implemented to allow for minor project changes as referenced in para xxx.

2.3.3 Within the SELEP's Growth Deal and Strategic Economic Plan and such other plans as may be approved by the Strategic Board, the Accountability Board is responsible for the implementation of the Assurance Framework and will agree all processes by which bids are assessed, risks considered, approvals made and performance managed. The responsibilities are set out in the Accountability Board Joint Committee Agreement, signed on 13th November 2015, and are summarised below:

- (i) Appraisals and approvals of grants and loans in accordance with Independent Technical Evaluator recommendations;
- (ii) Monitoring project assessment/implementation and delivery;
- (iii) Ensuring accountability from each of the federated areas relating to expenditure and programme delivery (through their responsible S151 officer);
- (iv) Approving variations to schemes;
- (v) Quarterly performance reporting on an exceptions basis (within approved tolerance levels) to the Strategic Board;
- (vi) Reporting on progress to central government;
- (vii) Any other accountability or assurance function required by central government or recommended by the Partnership's auditors or the Chief Finance Officer of the Partnership's Accountable Body;
- (viii) Approving an Annual Report to be made available to the Partner Authorities; and
- (ix) Agreeing all new or revised processes, including the Assurance framework.

2.3.4 The Accountability Board is advised by the Accountable Body's Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer.

2.3.5 The Accountability Board membership is as follows:

(a) Voting Members

- 1 member appointed from each of the 6 member councils

(b) Non-voting Co-opted members

- The Vice Chairman of the Strategic Board appointed by the Chairman of the SELEP Strategic Board

- One member appointed by the Accountability Board on the nomination of the higher education sector
- One member appointed by the Accountability Board on the nomination of the further education sector

2.3.4 Any funding allocated for pan-LEP projects will be managed in accordance with the arrangements agreed at the time of the allocation by the Accountability Board, with updates provided to the Strategic Board as required.

2.4 The Federal Boards

2.4.1 SELEP is supported by Federal Boards who are the local public/private partnerships for East Sussex, Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend and Thurrock. The Federal Boards have responsibility for:

- Nominating members to the Strategic Board
- Setting local priorities aligned with the Strategic Economic Plan and Growth Deal
- Responsible for the reporting of local delivery to Strategic and Accountability Board
- Identify and prioritising local investments in line with the agreed LEP prioritisation approach
- Represent all the local authorities and wider business community in their geographical area to the Strategic and Accountability Boards
- Represent and champion the SELEP to their communities
- Ensure transparency and accountability of decisions and recommendations made at a local level and SELEP representation at all meetings;
- Monitoring of all SELEP investments within their area;
- Effective engagement with private and public sector stakeholders to inform decisions; and
- Ensuring local engagement with, and feedback to, the general public about future SELEP strategy developments and progress against the delivery of the SEP.

2.4.2 The Federal Boards engage local business and utilise public and private sector knowledge and expertise to ensure prioritisation and delivery to provide greatest benefit to the SELEP area in terms of achieving economic growth through the delivery of development, infrastructure and regeneration projects. They are responsible for prioritising, monitoring delivery and management of the SELEP programme within local tolerance levels for spending and delivery agreed by the Accountability Board, and for agreeing a prioritised list of growth schemes that will deliver on SELEP objectives.

2.4.3 Each Federal Board shall determine their own processes for the selection and term of office of their membership. The process shall be conducted through a competitive procedure which is open, transparent and non-discriminatory. The process will be set out within their terms of reference, which is available on the SELEP website.

2.5 The Working Groups

2.5.1 From time to time SELEP may establish non decision making working groups to provide expertise and support to the Strategic and Accountability Board in shaping its strategy or delivering pan LEP priorities, as it considers appropriate. Each group will ensure that its terms of reference are available on the SELEP website.

2.5.2 Currently the SELEP is supported by the following groups:

- (a) Sector Working Groups
 - Rural
 - Coastal/CORE
 - U9
 - Growth Hubs
 - Skills Advisory Group
 - Creative Economy Network
 - Key Towns
 - Tourism
 - Housing

- (b) Officer Working Groups
 - Senior Officer Group
 - Transport Officer Group
 - Programme Consideration Group

2.6 The Accountable Body

- 2.6.1 By agreement of the Strategic Board, Essex County Council is the Accountable Body for SELEP and through its Section 151 Officer, or their representative, supports the SELEP. The complementary roles of both the financial responsibilities of the Accountable Body and the leadership role and accountabilities of the SELEP are supported by a set of agreed systems and practices and managed through the Accountability Board. This ensures proper, transparent decision making which delivers value for money and also supports timely, informed decision making by the SELEP.
- 2.6.2 All funding allocated to the SELEP is transferred to the Accountable Body who is responsible for the proper use and administration of the funding, in line with any requirements set out in the grant determination letter. The Accountable Body is not able to use this funding for its own purpose without a clear mandate from the Accountability Board.
- 2.6.3 The Accountable Body, (through its Responsible Financial Officer - the Section 151 Officer), is responsible for ensuring that:
- (i) grant income received, payments out and any applicable repayments are accounted for and administered correctly;
 - (ii) all decisions are made in accordance with any requirements stipulated by the grant awarding body;
 - (iii) all reports for Strategic and Accountability Board are reviewed and signed-off by the Accountable Body prior to publication;
 - (iv) all grant is transferred to partner authorities under a service level agreement which reflects the grant requirements of the awarding body;
 - (v) decisions and activities of the SELEP conform with all relevant law (including State Aid and Public Procurement), and ensuring that records are maintained so that this can be evidenced and shall be responsible for its management if challenged;
 - (vi) the SELEP Assurance Framework is adhered to;
 - (vii) the official record of the LEP proceedings is maintained and holding copies of all SELEP documents relating to LGF and other funding sources received from Government;
 - (viii) account for all spend allocated to the SELEP;
 - (ix) there are arrangements for local audit of funding allocated by Local Enterprise Partnerships at least equivalent to those in place for local authority spend;
 - (x) SELEP is supported in accounting to Government on programme delivery and financial management;
 - (xi) appropriate responses to FOI requests with regard to the responsibilities of the Accountable Body;

- (xii) all necessary legal agreements are in place, including:
 - SLA's between the LEP and Local Area Delivery Boards/Partnerships and individual county/unitary authorities; and
 - Grant agreements and conditions.
- (xiii) the use of resources will be managed in accordance with the Accountable Body's established processes including financial regulations and contract regulations.

2.6.4 SELEP and the Accountable Body have agreed timescales and operating practices to support the effective implementation of decisions. These are reflected in the Service Level Agreements between the Accountable Body and the delivery agent and include ensuring that:

- (i) arrangements are in place for monitoring delivery;
- (ii) there are clear expectations in relation to the information required from scheme partners and delivery agents; and
- (iii) when the SELEP awards funding for a project, that there are written agreements in place between the Accountable Body and the delivery agent, clearly setting out ownership of responsibilities and makes adequate provisions for the protection of public funds (e.g. arrangements to suspend or claw back funding in the event of non-delivery or mismanagement).

2.7 Equality and Diversity

2.7.1 SELEP is covered by the general equality duty as set out within the Equality Act 2010. Accordingly all decisions taken by the Accountability Board will pay 'due regard' to:

- (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the act;
- (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people from different equality groups; and
- (iii) foster good relations between people from different equality groups.

2.8 The Principles of Public Life

2.8.1 SELEP board members are required to maintain high standards in the way they undertake their duties. As a member they are a representative of the SELEP, and therefore their actions can have both a positive and negative impact on the way in which the SELEP is viewed by the public.

2.8.2 All board members are required to have regard to the Principles of Public life, known as the Nolan Principles, contained within the provisions of S.29(1) of the Localism Act 2011, and set out below:

- (i) SELFLESSNESS - To serve only the public interest and never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.
- (ii) INTEGRITY - Not to place themselves in situations where their integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.
- (iii) OBJECTIVITY- Make decisions on merit, including when making appointments, awarding Contracts or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.
- (iv) ACCOUNTABILITY - To be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their Office.
- (v) OPENNESS - To be as open as possible about their actions and those of the SELEP and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.
- (vi) HONESTY - Not to place themselves in situations where their honesty may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should, on all occasions, avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

- (vii) LEADERSHIP - Should promote and support these principles by leadership and by example and should always act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.

3. Transparent Decision Making

3.1 Overview

- 3.1.1 Arrangements are in place to support the effective and meaningful engagement of local partners and the public. The Strategic and Accountability Boards operate on the basis of transparency, openness and good communications, and has in place processes to ensure that these principles are replicated as part of the decision making processes.

3.2 Arrangements for making and recording decisions

- 3.2.1 Meetings of the Strategic and Accountability Boards are open to members of the press and public with the exception of any items that should be treated confidentially. The Policy for public questions is available on the SELEP Website and sets out the process under which questions can be made by a member of the public to the Accountability Board. Filming or recording of proceedings can take place provided that they are agreed in advance with the Secretariat.
- 3.2.2 All decisions undertaken by either the Strategic or the Accountability Board must be supported by a full written paper setting out details of the decision being sought from the respective board and contain all relevant information so as to enable the decision maker to make an informed decision. All reports will be signed off by the Accountable Body prior to publication of the meeting's agenda.
- 3.2.3 All papers relating to the Accountability Board are made available on both the SELEP and the Accountable Body website (see below), papers relating to the Strategic Board are made available on the SELEP Website. All papers are published at least 5 clear working days before the meeting, except for those papers which are not suitable for release into the public domain as they are exempt from publication by virtue of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended or in extreme circumstances where it is not possible to circulate papers in advance.
- 3.2.4 In particular all key decisions taken by the Accountability Board are also published on the Forward Plan, available on both the SELEP and Accountable Body Website, 28 days before the decision is taken. This ensures transparency around future decisions where there is likely to be a significant impact or the decision involves a saving or spend of over £500k.
- 3.2.5 Draft minutes of all meetings are publicly available on SELEP website, pending formal approval by Strategic or Accountability Board at their next meeting. Those minutes relating to exempt items under Schedule 12A are not published, but are stored confidentially by the Secretariat.

3.3 Communications and Publications

- 3.3.1 Through the Chairman, the Strategic Board shall be responsible for SELEP's communications strategy. This shall include communications to Strategic Board members, participating organisations and the wider public and shall include the maintenance of an up-to-date, relevant

and accessible website. The Secretariat shall be responsible for implementation of the communications strategy.

3.4 SELEP Website

3.4.1 A dedicated website for the SELEP is available for local partners and members of the public. As well as providing an overview of the work undertaken by SELEP it also provides access to a range of documents and information, including:

- (i) details of progress made on implementing the Growth Deal;
- (ii) Contact details for the SELEP;
- (iii) Access to key documents and policies;
- (iv) access to supporting documentation for decision making including:
 - forward plans
 - agendas
 - reports and business cases
 - minutes
 - summary of decisions of the SELEP boards.

3.4.2 The website can be accessed at <http://www.southeastlep.com/>. In addition to being published on the SELEP website, all Accountability Board Agendas, decisions and minutes are also published on the Accountable Body website, which can be accessed at: <http://cmis.essexcc.gov.uk/essexcmis5/Home.aspx>

3.5 Information requests

3.5.1 Each Council within SELEP is responsible for handling and responding to Freedom of Information and Environmental information regulation requests received relating to SELEP functions within their authority. All responses are prepared in consultation with the Secretariat.

3.5.2 All other requests received by the Secretariat and the Accountable Body shall be handled and responded to by the Accountable Body with the support of the Secretariat. All partners will support the Accountable Body in responding to requests for information in a timely manner to ensure that appropriate responses are provided within the stipulated 20 working days.

3.6 Complaints to SELEP

3.6.1 SELEP has made all attempts to ensure that it operates in a fully transparent and engaging way, with its business partners, press and members of the public. However, if a member of the public wishes to complain about a particular function of SELEP, this can be done in writing to the Managing Director at: South East LEP Secretariat, c/o Essex County Council, County Hall, Market Road, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH.

3.6.2 The Managing Director will aim to review and respond to all complaints received within 10 working days, ensuring that a full and fair response is provided. The complainant will be kept updated throughout the process and where it is not possible to respond within this time, an indicative timescale will be provided. If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the response received, they may further discuss this with the Managing Director or may choose to make a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman.

3.6.3 The Secretariat will maintain a record of all complaints received.

3.7 Declarations of Interest

- 3.7.1 All members of the Strategic Board are required to complete a Declaration of Interest form, recording details of any relationship or other financial or personal interest which might conflict with their duties to SELEP. This includes recording memberships of external bodies, undertaking outside work (voluntary or paid) with anyone who has or seeks to have, dealings with SELEP. They are also required to identify close family members who are also a SELEP representative, or has the ability to exercise significant influence over SELEP's agenda or activity.
- 3.7.2 Copies of all declarations are retained by the Secretariat, and published on the SELEP website. All declarations are reviewed annually, in accordance with the Register of Interest Policy and the SELEP terms of reference. However, each member is required to ensure that their declarations are up to date, and therefore notify the Secretariat of any changes midyear as soon as possible.
- 3.7.3 Further, all Strategic and Accountability Board members (including substitute members) are required to declare interests at the outset of the respective meetings at which an item is to be discussed. Such declarations will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- 3.7.4 Where a conflict of interest arises at a meeting, the member may be asked to leave the room by the Chair whilst the item is discussed, and in any event will not be entitled to vote on the item, but may, with leave of the Chair participate in the discussion

3.8 Local Engagement

- 3.8.1 The Federal Boards are the primary forum for engagement with local businesses, councils and members of the public, utilising public and private sector knowledge and expertise to develop projects and ensure prioritisation and delivery to provide the greatest benefit to the SELEP area.

3.9 Maximising Social Value

- 3.9.1 SELEP and local partners will, at all times, consider how added economic, social or environmental benefits can be maximised and secured and through its commissioning, procurement and delivery. All partners in the SELEP support the principles of the Social Value Act 2012.
- 3.9.2 The SELEP will endeavor to ensure a level playing field for small businesses and voluntary, charity and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations in bidding for SELEP or local delivery contracts as appropriate in the delivery of SELEP objectives.

4 Accountable Decision Making

4.1 Devolution of Funding

- 4.1.1 For all devolved funding, the Accountable Body ensures that there is a Service Level Agreement in place with the respective County/Unitary Authority (the Council), which sets out the minimum requirements and expectations relating to the grant allocations, including but not limited to:
- (i) Providing grant funding to the relevant Council for all schemes within its area approved by the Accountability Board following independent technical appraisal;
 - (ii) Devolving responsibility for all relevant requirements, including clawback provisions if applicable, as may be specified or intended by the grant awarding body;
 - (iii) All Government grant conditions shall be adhered to; and
 - (iv) Any monitoring or reporting requirements that may assist decision making and prioritisation by the Accountability Board or the Strategic Board; and
 - (vi) Committing the Council to be responsible for any project overspend.

- 4.1.2 With regards to Skills funding, the Accountable Body ensures that there is a Grant Agreement in place, on similar terms to the Service Level Agreement, between the Accountable Body and the respective College before any funding is released.
- 4.1.3 The Accountable Body will only transfer funding for the purpose of delivering the schemes for which the grant has been allocated, if the following conditions are met:
- (i) The grant allocation must have been approved by the Accountability Board;
 - (ii) A copy of the Service Level Agreement signed by the respective Council's Section 151 officer has been sent to the Accountable Body's Section 151 officer; and
 - (iii) The Accountable Body is in receipt of the grant from the Government.
- 4.1.4 The Section 151 officer of the Council is required to carry out the normal stewardship role in terms of monitoring and accounting in respect of that funding and will be responsible for providing regular reports to the Accountable Body and the SELEP Capital Programme Manager to enable quarterly reporting to the Accountability Board.
- 4.1.5 Following approval of funding for a Growth Deal project by the Accountability Board, a capped contribution from the SELEP via the Accountable Body will be made to the project cost. The promoting Council will be responsible for all cost increases that may occur through the delivery period.

4.2 Process for Transferring Funding

- 4.2.1 The grant for each Local Growth Fund Project will be paid to the Council on a quarterly basis in advance provided the conditions set out in paragraph xxx are all met.
- 4.2.2 For funding allocations made to partners through a bidding process, the process for transferring funding will be agreed and set out in the bidding documentation by the respective SELEP lead officer from the Secretariat, in consultation with the Accountable Body.
- 4.2.3 Projects must have been approved for funding by Accountability Board in line with the Business Case development and Value for Money assurance process as set out in Section 5.5 and 5.6 below.

4.3 Managing Project Slippage in the Local Growth Fund (LGF) Programme

- 4.3.1 Through effective management of the SELEP Capital Programme, opportunities are sought to reduce the levels of slippage in grant spend in any given financial year, however, where slippage exists, approval can be sought from the Accountability Board to implement mitigation.
- 4.3.2 The Accountability Board has approved a range of measures to enable slippage in spend of the LGF to be managed; these are embedded within the Service Level Agreement's which set out the conditions of use. This enables the Council, subject to the approval of the Accountability Board, to manage any slippage of the funding between financial years within one of the following options:
- (i) **Option 1:** Bringing forward of planned future year LGF spend on approved schemes being delivered in the current LGF programme;
 - (ii) **Option 2:** Bringing forward of future year LGF schemes to spend in the current year;
 - (iii) **Option 3:** Transfer of LGF spend on schemes between Partner authorities (this will be completed as a direct payment from Accountable Body to the Partner Authority, subject to Accountability Board agreement, under the grant payment process set out in paragraph xxx); and

(iv) **Option 4:** Re-profiling of spend between LGF projects and Capital Programme projects.

4.3.3 The use of Option 4 should only be applied where there is no opportunity to apply Options 1, 2 or 3, and Federated Areas are encouraged to only apply Option 4 mitigation as a last resort.

4.3.4 Should none of the options 1 – 4 above be implemented the alternative route will be for any LGF held by SELEP at the end of financial year to be carried forward into the subsequent financial year, within SELEP's accounts (Option 5).

4.4 Arrangements for Underspends of SELEP grant funding

4.4.1 Under the terms of the SLA's with the Accountable Body, the respective Council may retain the proceeds of project underspends for use on other local growth fund schemes or to offset overspend, provided that this is within the tolerance levels of no more than 10% variance on any individual local growth fund project and the underspend has been approved by Government, where required. As part of the on-going reporting process, the Accountability Board will be informed of such amendments to support its check and challenge role.

4.4.2 Where the variance is greater than 10%, the Council may request approval from the Accountability Board (and if necessary, the Government) for underspends on any individual project to be reallocated to another Local Growth Deal project. In requesting approval for re-allocating underspends, the impact on outputs and outcomes for all projects affected by the re-alignment of funding must be reported to the Accountability Board and the replacement scheme must be an agreed local priority within the Federal Area's pipeline of projects.

4.4.3 Where no suitable scheme is identified for re-allocating funding too, the Council must return the funding to the Accountable Body, who will seek agreement from the Accountability Board on how the funding will be utilised going forward. In such instances, the Accountability Board will review requests for funding from across the SELEP area, with priority given to projects on the agreed investment pipeline. Factors taken into account when determining projects to be funded are:

(i) Strength of strategic fit with SELEP objectives;

(ii) Value for Money;

(iii) Scale of the intervention and the amount of investment being sought, relative to funding availability; and

(iv) Phasing of the investment being required.

4.4.4 The Accountable Body will continue to monitor the process for managing underspends as set out in paragraph xxx, in conjunction with the Accountability Board to ensure that the arrangements are operating effectively.

4.5 Project Delivery Organisations

4.5.1 Project Delivery Organisations refers to those organisations which the Accountable Body has a Service Level Agreement or Grant Agreement with. They have a responsibility to support the delivery of the Growth Deal and SELEP Strategic Economic Plan, through supporting the Strategic Board, Accountability Board, Federated Board, Secretariat and working groups.

4.5.2 Partner Delivery Organisations agree to specific conditions in relation to Local Growth Fund or other funding, which are set out in Service Level Agreements or Grant Agreement between the

Accountable Body and the respective Council or alternate delivery authority responsible for the delivery of Local Growth Fund projects.

4.5.3 In receiving Local Growth Fund or other funding, and entering into a Service Level Agreement or Grant Agreement, Partner Delivery Organisations are responsible for:

- (i) Ensuring the delivery of projects, including the spend of funding received through SELEP and local partner funding contributions to the scope agreed in the Project Business Case.
- (ii) Providing regular and accurate reporting to SELEP Secretariat on SELEP Projects. The requirement for reporting on Local Growth Fund projects are set out in paragraph xxx below. Reporting is required on a quarterly basis for all projects receiving funding from SELEP, including Local Growth Fund and Growing Places Fund. This funding must be completed in the format and to the timescales specified by the SELEP Secretariat.
- (iii) Ensuring sufficient resource is allocated to support the delivery and the post scheme Monitoring and Evaluation of all projects.

4.6 Accounts and Audit

4.6.1 With the support of the Accountable Body, the SELEP will prepare annual accounts which will incorporate all funding received from Government, including the Local Growth Fund.

4.6.2 The Accounts will be reviewed and agreed by the Accountability Board and will be published on the SELEP website in a timely manner, and will be subject to an external audit.

4.6.3 The use of resources by the SELEP are subject to the usual local authority checks and balances, including the financial duties and rules which require councils to act prudently in spending, which are overseen and checked by the Responsible Chief Finance Officer, the Section 151 Officer.

4.6.4 All SELEP funding transferred to partners is, by agreement, subject to audit by the Accountable Body and, where required, by external auditors appointed to provide the required assurances with regard to appropriate use of the funding.

4.6.5 Partners are required to maintain a robust audit trail of the use of Government funding to demonstrate compliance in fulfilling its obligations with regard to use of that funding.

4.6.6 The Accountable Body will ensure that there are arrangements for local audit of funding allocated by Local Enterprise Partnerships at least equivalent to those in place for local authority spend.

4.6.7 Through the nominated Section 151 Officer, SELEP will undertake an audit of the Partner's project to ensure the correct use of funding and may, if necessary, arrange for the recovery of any funds.

4.7 Scrutiny arrangements for SELEP

4.7.1 The SELEP is a multi-authority partnership with different scrutiny arrangements in place in each of the respective local authorities; the over-arching scrutiny arrangements put in place for the LEP need to take this into account.

4.7.2 Decisions made by the Accountability Board are subject to the individual scrutiny arrangements of each partner authority, and the provision of call in are set out in the Joint Committee Agreement dated 13th November 2015. This provides each Council the ability to challenge a decision made by the Accountability Board which affects their area, providing checks and balances to the operation of SELEP, and ensures that scrutiny is managed in a way that gives equal footing for all partners in the SELEP.

4.8 Conflicts

4.8.1 The Accountable Body would not be required to comply with an Accountability Board decision in the following circumstances:

- (i) the decision does not comply with the Financial Regulations of the Accountable Body;
- (ii) the decision would be contrary to any requirements laid out in all agreements, including the Service Level Agreement and the Joint Committee Agreement, for which the Accountable Body is responsible;
- (iii) the decision is unlawful; or
- (iv) the decision does not comply with the requirements of this Assurance Framework.

4.8.2 In circumstances where there is a conflict between the Accountable Body and the Accountability Board, the following process will be used in order to resolve the issue:

- (i) In the first instance, any dispute will be escalated to the Chairman of the Strategic Board and the Section 151 Officer of the Accountable Body within 10 working days of the dispute arising. The Chairman of the Strategic Board and the Section 151 Officer will discuss the issue and, in good faith, attempt to resolve any such dispute in order to bring about an agreement on the action required to resolve issue.
- (ii) In the event that the Chairman of the Strategic Board and the Section 151 officer of the Accountable Body are unable to resolve the dispute, the matter will be referred to the Government (or grant awarding body of not the Government) for consideration.

4.8.3 In circumstances where there is a conflict between the Accountable Body and the Strategic Board, the following process will be used in order to resolve the issue:

- (i) In the first instance, any dispute would be escalated to the Chairman of the Strategic Board and the Section 151 Officer of the Accountable Body within 10 working days of the dispute arising. The Chairman of the Strategic Board and the Section 151 Officer to agree to discuss and, in good faith, attempt to resolve any such dispute and try and reach agreement on the action required to resolve the decision.
- (ii) In the event that the Chairman of the Strategic Board and the Section 151 officer of the Accountable Body are unable to resolve the dispute, the matter will be referred to the Government (or grant awarding body of not the Government) for consideration.

5. Ensuring Value for Money

5.1 Overview

5.1.1 The SELEP recognises the need to have robust arrangements in place to ensure value for money and effective delivery, through strong project development, project options and appraisal, prioritisation and business case development. This section of the Assurance Framework sets out the arrangements in place for ensuring that effective processes are in place.

5.2 Allocation of funding – Prioritisation

- 5.2.1 As the SELEP covers such a wide geographical area encompassing a number of local authorities facing competing challenges, prioritisation of projects is most effectively managed within local areas through the federal model, with the exception of any pan-LEP priority projects which will be prioritised by the Strategic Board. This will ensure that the priorities of the strategic economic plan within functional economic areas can be delivered. The Accountability Board will oversee the delivery of the overall programme of investment and seek to ensure value for money across each of the projects.
- 5.2.2 Prioritisation will be undertaken by the Federal Boards through their submission to the Growth Deal and Strategic Economic Plan or to other funding opportunities. Each Federal Board shall ensure that they comply with the prioritisation system, as approved by the Strategic Board in order to ensure a consistent approach is utilised by the Federal Boards.
- 5.2.3 The assessment criteria for future prioritisations will be approved by the Strategic Board and will be published on the SELEP website.
- 5.2.4 In completing the local prioritisation of projects, Federated Areas will engage with the Independent Technical Evaluator, who will make recommendations to the Strategic Board, to help inform the Strategic Boards decision making.
- 5.2.5 Each project put forward for funding by Federal Boards will be supported by a Strategic Outline Business Case using the SELEP Business Case template. This Strategic Outline Business Case will set out:
- (i) Description: A short description of the scheme and the geographical area
 - (ii) Purpose and Objective: The strategic impact that the project/programme will have in meeting the objectives of SELEPs Strategic Economic Plan and the relevant local policy objectives. The outputs, outcomes and benefits to be achieved through the investment in the project.
 - (iii) Financial: The cost of the intervention, including both the spend profile for the investment being sought, along with the availability of local funding sources and other public/ private funding contributions.
 - (iv) Need for public sector investment: Description of the market failure and the additionality which will be achieved through investment, with appropriate consideration for factors such as deadweight and displacement
 - (v) Evidence: The rational for investment in the project, supported by quality data and an evidenced based approach to justify the need and/or opportunity created through the investment and;
 - (vi) Delivery and Management: The delivery and management of the project, including a risk assessment and mitigation measures. The cost of implementing these mitigation measures must be clearly understood.
- 5.2.6 The level of detail included in the Strategic Outline Business Case should be proportionate to the scale of the intervention and the stage in the project's development.
- 5.2.7 Once scheme prioritisation has been completed, it is expected that scheme promoters will further develop the projects case for investment from a Strategic Outline Business Case to an Outline Business Case. This Outline Business Case will support any funding bid submissions to Central Government.
- 5.2.8 Before a project can be considered for funding from the SELEP, they must first gain local partnership support and shall be developed in consultation and agreement with the local partnership at every stage of the project.

5.3 Approving projects

5.3.1 All funding decisions made by the Accountability Board to approve funding for a specific project or programme must be supported with a robust Business Case which has been independently assessed. This impartial advice on the merits of project Business Cases is provided by SELEP Independent Technical Evaluator.

5.4 The Independent Technical Evaluator

5.4.1 An Independent Technical Evaluator has been appointed by SELEP, to provide technical advice to the Strategic and Accountability Board and local project sponsors on value for money and project deliverability. They are required to make recommendations to Accountability Board on funding decisions, taking into account the agreed criteria for funding.

5.4.2 The Independent Technical Evaluator assessment is based on adherence of scheme business cases to Her Majesty's Treasury's *The Green Book: Appraisal and Evaluation in Central Government*, and related departmental guidance such as the Department for Transport's WebTAG (Web-based Transport Analysis Guidance) or the Homes and Communities Agency's *The Additionality Guide*. The Green Book, WebTAG and the Additionality Guide provide proportionate methodologies for scheme appraisal (i.e. business case development).

5.4.3 A Pro Forma has been developed based on the criteria of *The Green Book*, a 'checklist for appraisal assessment from Her Majesty's Treasury, and WebTAG. Assessment criteria were removed or substituted if not relevant for a non-transport scheme. The Pro Forma is available in **Appendix XX**.

5.4.4 Each project is assessed and then given a 'RAG' (Red – Amber – Green) rating. The consistent and common understanding of the ratings are as follows:

- **Green:** approach or assumption(s) in line with guidance and practice or the impact of any departures is sufficiently insignificant to the Value for Money category assessment.
- **Amber:** approach or assumption(s) out of line with guidance and practice, with limited significance to the Value for Money category assessment, but should be amended in future submissions (e.g. at Final Approval stage).
- **Red:** approach or assumption(s) out of line with guidance and practice, with material or unknown significance to the Value for Money category assessment, requires amendment or further evidence in support before Gateway can be passed.

5.4.5 All funding decisions sought by the Accountability Board will be supported by a recommendation from the Independent Technical Evaluator.

5.5 Business Cases

5.5.1 Business cases must follow Her Majesty's Treasury's 'The Green Book' guidance on appraisal and evaluation, and include a Value for Money statement.

5.5.2 Business cases will also follow Government departmental guidance such as the Department for Transport's Transport Analysis Guidance (WebTAG) or similar non-transport guidance

appropriate to their scheme with appropriate proportionality as set out. Schemes will be expected to pass the equivalent of a Programme Entry with an Outline Business Case.

- 5.5.3 For transport schemes, central case assessments shall be based on forecasts consistent with the latest version of National Trip End Model (NTEM) and the appraisal results included in the business case to be considered by the SELEP.
- 5.5.4 For skills schemes funded by the current Local Growth Fund programme, the business cases will be evaluated based on Skills Funding Agency good practice, advice and guidance, tailored to reflect local circumstances as appropriate.
- 5.5.5 Each business case shall set out a statement of objectives and the specific outcomes that the scheme is intended to achieve. The business cases will include sign-off by the promoting local authority and its Section 151 Officer before being submitted at each stage of the gate process.
- 5.5.6 The Independent Technical Evaluator will ensure that the approach taken by partners is technically robust, consistent with technical guidance and able to withstand scrutiny. In so doing, the Independent Technical Evaluator will collaborate with partners to minimise the time and cost associated with preparing business cases by adopting practices which are proportionate to the specifics of each scheme.
- 5.5.7 All business cases will progress through a controlled development progress, known as Gates 0 – 5. Only certain schemes will go through a Gate 4 and 5 review. This may include schemes where there is an LGF allocation of over £8m and/or the project is determined as high risk by Accountability Board go through Gate 4 and 5. The schemes to go through the Gate 4 and 5 review will be agreed with Accountability Board on a case by case basis.
- 5.5.8 A Gate 4 and 5 review may also be required where there is a Project Change necessitates the review of the Project Business Case, see paragraph XX
- 5.5.9
- 5.5.10 **Gate 0:** Through the SELEP Capital Programme Manager, the Independent Technical Evaluator will provide advice to scheme promoters on applying the assessment process on a scheme by scheme basis, including the appropriate approach and the process, procedures and timescales.
- 5.5.11 **Gate 1:** Following Gate 0, scheme promoters must develop a business case commensurate with an Outline Business Case as guided by Her Majesty's Treasury's 'The Green Book' guidance on appraisal and evaluation and relevant Government departmental guidance.
- 5.5.12 To progress through Gate 1, the Independent Technical Evaluator will independently assess the draft Outline Business Cases using a standard assessment template, and will, in the first instance, make recommendations to the Capital Programme Manager and local authority scheme promoter and relevant partners.
- 5.5.13 **Gate 2:** All projects will have an opportunity to make changes to the draft Outline Business Case. Once resubmitted, the Independent Technical Evaluator will conduct the Gate 2 Assurance Review, using the same assessment template for Gate 1.
- 5.5.14 On the basis of the Gate 2 Assurance Review, recommendations are made by the Independent Technical Evaluator to the Accountability Board on the Value for Money Assessment and the

certainty of that assessment's accuracy. The Accountability Board will then decide whether or not to approve the funding recommendation.

- 5.5.15 **Gate 3:** This is for schemes that have funding retained by the Department for Transport. Gate 3 is the Assurance Review for the business case submission to the Department for Transport. In these instances, the role of the Independent Technical Evaluator is to review the business case and provide professional advice to the Accountability Board of any key risks or issues arising from that assessment that need to be considered by the board to support the associated decision for funding.
- 5.5.16 **Gates 4 and 5:** For large schemes over £8 million it is unlikely that scheme promoters will have been through procurement and detailed design following the Outline Business Case. These schemes, and those considered high risk by the Accountability Board, may be required to go through Gate 4 and 5 to develop a Full Business Case, where agreed with Accountability Board on the completion of Gate 2. As the project is further developed, costs could be significantly different from those estimated at Outline Business Case stage, altering the Value for Money assessment. This change to project cost would also lead to a requirement for Gate 4 and 5 review of a Full Business Case under the Change Request process.
- 5.5.17 The Gate 4 and 5 review will enable a proportion of the funding to be approved to the project to support capital spend on the development of the project prior to Full Business Case approval. The approval of funding on this basis is at the discretion of Accountability Board.
- 5.5.18 Gate 4 is commensurate with Gate 0, outlining the approach, process, procedures and timescales for development of the Full Business Case.
- 5.5.19 Gate 5 is an Assurance Review of the submitted Full Business Case. It is not anticipated that this process is iterative. Based on the Assurance Review, recommendations are made by the Independent Technical Evaluator to the Accountability Board on the Value for Money Assessment and the certainty of that assessment's accuracy. The Accountability Board will then make a decision whether or not to recommend the scheme for funding (see Value for Money below).
- 5.5.20 For projects seeking funding to support development of business cases, the role of the Independent Technical Evaluator will be to provide professional advice to the Accountability Board, highlighting any key risks or issues. In such instances, the advice will include an indication of whether or not the business case to be developed will be expected to meet the value for money assessment criteria as set out below.
- 5.5.21 For projects that have their business case assessment undertaken by Government, or their nominated evaluator, due to the significance of the scheme or due to the funding being retained centrally, the role of the Independent Technical Evaluator will be to review the business case assessment and provide professional advice to the Accountability Board of any key risks or issues arising from that assessment that need to be considered by the board to support the associated decision for funding.
- 5.5.22 For projects seeking funding to support the development of a specific business case, the role of the Independent Technical Evaluator will be to review the case to develop the business case and

to provide professional advice to the Accountability Board of any key risks or issues arising from that assessment that need to be considered by the board to support the associated decision for funding. In such instances, it is expected that the advice will include an indication of whether or not the business case to be developed with the funding will be expected to meet the value for money assessment criteria as set out below.

- 5.5.23 The Outline Business Case will be made available on the SELEP website at point of submission to SELEP and the Independent Technical Evaluation, [insert time] months in advance of the Accountability Board decision being taken in relation to the project, subject to the removal of those parts which are commercially sensitive and confidential.
- 5.5.24 The Gate 2 Outline Business Case for the project will be published on the SELEP website when it is submitted to the SELEP Secretariat and Independent Technical Evaluator for the Gate 2 review, [insert time] in advance of the Accountability Board meeting at which the funding decision is taken, subject to the removal of those parts which are commercially sensitive and confidential.
- 5.5.25 For those projects completing a Gate 4 and 5 review of the Business Case, the Full Business Case will also be updated at point of submission to SELEP Secretariat and Independent Technical Evaluator at Gate 4 submission, [insert time] months in advance of the Accountability Board decision for the project, subject to the removal of those parts which are commercially sensitive and confidential.
- 5.5.26 The Gate 5 Full Business Case for the project will be published when it is submitted to the SELEP Secretariat and ITE for Gate 5 review, [insert time] month in advance of Accountability Board meeting at which the funding decision is taken, subject to the removal of those parts which are commercially sensitive and confidential.

5.6 Value for Money

- 5.6.1 The Independent Technical Evaluator shall assess that all evidence provided by the partner, including Value for Money, is robust and relevant, and report back to partners on any inconsistencies that need to be addressed if the scheme is to go forward for consideration for funding. Value for money is assessed on the basis of the methodology outlined in The Green Book published by the Treasury; this assessment includes the calculation of the benefit cost ratio, used as an indicator of value for money.
- 5.6.2 To receive a recommendation for approval, schemes should have:
- (i) A clear rationale for the interventions linked with the strategic objectives identified in the Strategic Economic Plan;
 - (ii) Clearly defined outputs and anticipated outcomes, with clear additionality, ensuring that factors such as displacement and deadweight have been taken into account;

- (iii) Considered deliverability and risks appropriately, along with appropriate mitigating action (the costs of which must be clearly understood);
 - (iv) A Benefit Cost Ratio of at least 2:1. For certain schemes which either do not present High Value for Money (a Benefit Cost Ratio of over 2:1), but have a Benefit Cost Ratio value of greater than 1.5:1 or schemes where the project benefits are notoriously difficult to appraise in monetary terms, may be eligible for exemption from condition, if the following conditions must be satisfied:
 - (a) the scheme must be less than £2.0m and to conduct further quantified and monetised economic appraisal would be disproportionate;
 - (b) where there is an overwhelming strategic case (with minimal risk in the other cases); and
 - (c) where scheme benefits are notoriously difficult to appraise in monetary terms and there are qualitative benefits which if monetised would most likely increase the benefit-cost ratio above 2:1.
- 5.6.3 On completion of a business case review, the Independent technical Evaluator will make recommendations to Accountability Board on projects that perform well against the assessment criteria and therefore should be funded, and where projects should be reconsidered due to poor performance.
- 5.6.4 The Accountable Body will ensure that all projects sent for approval to the Accountability Board include a value for money statement that has been prepared in line with the requirements set out in this Assurance Framework.
- 5.6.5 The Accountability Board will review the recommendations made by the Independent Technical Evaluator, including the value for money statement when schemes are presented for approval to ensure that they meet the criteria set out above.
- 5.6.6 Successful schemes will progress to delivery via the Partner. Unsuccessful schemes will be considered by the local area for deletion, revision or adding to a reserve list.
- 5.6.7 As necessary, the economic cases shall be reviewed and updated to reflect changes in scheme scope, cost, and WebTAG/NTEM or relevant guidance (if this could be material in decision making).
- 5.6.8 The SELEP will identify a named individual with overall responsibility for ensuring value for money for all projects and programmes and a named individual (which may be a different person) responsible for the scrutiny of, and recommendations relating to each business case. These responsible individuals will be independent of the promoting organisation, or where this is impractical, will sit outside the management unit responsible for developing and promoting the business case.

5.7 Monitoring and Evaluation of projects

- 5.7.1 For each scheme that is included in the programme, the partner will be required to provide an initial project programme including:
- (i) Outline/detailed design
 - (ii) Statutory requirements
 - (iii) Consultations

- (iv) Procurement
- (v) Construction
- (vi) A statement of expected outputs and outcomes
- (vii) A risk and mitigations statement

5.7.2 The Accountability Board through the Project Delivery Organisations and nominated Section 151 Officer shall require the partners to submit regular detailed project monitoring reports in accordance at quarterly intervals. This process will be managed by the Capital Programme Manager and will enable on-going monitoring and evaluation of individual schemes and the programme generally.

5.7.3 A proportionate approach to monitoring and evaluation will be implemented, ensuring that evaluation objectives relate back to the business case and builds on assumptions used in the appraisal process.

5.7.4 Monitoring and evaluation will focus on those outcomes that are most relevant to the impact of the project's objectives as defined in the project business case, but will include, where appropriate, an evaluation of the impact of the intervention on the following Growth Deal outcomes:

- (i) Housing unit completion
- (ii) Jobs created or safeguarded
- (iii) Commercial/employment floor space completed
- (iv) Number of new learners assisted
- (v) Area of new or improved learning/ training floor space; and
- (vi) Apprenticeships

5.7.5 Federal Boards will manage programmes within the agreed tolerance levels and reporting regularly to the Accountability Board regarding delivery and risks. Amendments required outside the tolerance levels or significant modifications to project scope, delivery or outcomes arising during development or even construction, must be clearly reported for decision.

5.7.6 For monitoring of transport schemes, partners shall provide an initial report, in accordance with the DfT's Monitoring and Evaluation Guidance, to the Accountability Board on data collected on both one year post scheme opening and approximately five years post scheme opening. The Accountability Board through the Secretariat shall ensure this is published on the SELEP's website.

5.8 Reporting on Local Growth Fund

5.8.1 Each Council is required to provide reports to the Capital Programme Manager in advance of each Accountability Board meeting, in a format as specified by SELEP Secretariat.

5.8.2 The reporting requirements for Local Growth Fund include the monitoring of:

- (i) The Local Growth Fund quarterly spend forecast.
- (ii) The total spend of the project to date, including Local Growth Fund and all other funding sources as identified in the Business Case approved by Accountability Board.
- (iii) Project and programme risks
- (iv) The delivery milestones, including actuals for those which have been completed and forecast for those activities to be completed in the future.
- (v) Delivery of project outputs and outcomes.
- (vi) Project Changes, as set out in paragraph XX below.

- 5.8.3 Each Council has identified a Lead Responsible Officer who is accountable for ensuring that the LGF project reporting is completed in full and to the timescales required by SELEP Secretariat.
- 5.8.4 In order to facilitate the gathering and discussion of the reporting, a Programme Consideration Meeting will be held a month in advance of each Accountability Board meeting to bring together the Lead Responsible Officer, or their nominated delegate, for Local Growth Fund spend from each Federated Area.
- 5.8.5 The Programme Consideration Meetings are held to ensure a coordinated approach to the management of the SELEP Local Growth Fund Programme in accordance with the Assurance Framework and Service Level Agreements in place between the Accountable Body and the Delivery Partners. A schedule for Capital Programme updates due to be completed and returned to the SELEP Capital Programme Manager will be agreed at the first Programme Consideration Meeting of each Financial Year.
- 5.8.6 The responsibilities of the Programme Consideration Group are to:
- (i) Report and agree Local Growth Fund spend forecast against each specific project included in the SELEP Growth Deal to be reported to Accountability Board
 - (ii) To agree the Local Growth Fund spend forecast for the next quarter transfer of Local Growth Fund, based on the conditions of the Service Level Agreement.
 - (iii) To agree the risk score for each specific Local Growth Fund project in the Growth Deal Programme and the mitigation to be put in place during the next quarter to manage project risk.
 - (iv) To agree the project outcomes to be reported to Government through the LOGASnet return.
 - (v) Share lessons learnt from the delivery of Local Growth Fund projects
 - (vi) Support the SELEP Capital Programme Manager in managing SELEP Local Growth Fund Programme in accordance with the Assurance Framework and Service Level Agreements in place between the Accountable Body and the Delivery Partners.
 - (vii) Act as officer representatives for each of the Federated Areas; and
 - (viii) Provide feedback to the Federal Boards about SELEP's management of the Local Growth Fund programme and the delivery of the Growth Deal within their Federated Area.
- 5.8.7 The Programme Consideration Group does not have authority to make decisions over the management of the Local Growth Fund programme. However, all recommendations of the Programme Consideration Group are reported to Accountability Board for consideration and formal approval. Full Terms of Reference for the Programme Consideration Group are available on the SELEP website.
- 5.9 Approving changes to Local Growth Fund projects**
- 5.9.1 Any variations to a project from the information specified the Business Case must be reported to the Accountability Board.

- 5.9.2 All changes to Local Growth Fund allocations above the 10% threshold must be approved by Accountability Board
- 5.9.3 The Council shall not make any change to projects without the Accountability Board’s prior approval. Such approval shall be notified to the Accountable Body and SELEP Secretariat who will notify and seek approval from the Government, in accordance with such processes and sign-off, as required by the Government.
- 5.9.4 The Council and Accountable Body will abide by any alternative definition of Change and any approval process for reporting Change, as imposed by the Government.
- 5.9.5 Change: means the occurrence of any one of the following:
- (i) Cancellation of a project that is included in the agreed Local Growth Plan;
 - (ii) Inclusion of a project not included in the agreed Local Growth Plan;
 - (iii) Moving forward of a project previously programmed to start in later years;
 - (iv) Delays to project start or end dates of more than six months;
 - (v) Changes to Local Growth Fund project expenditure, or to the agreed core metrics and outcomes, on any single project of more than 10%; or
 - (vi) Any further changes as may be defined by the Government

The types of scheme change to be reported include, but are not limited to:

Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change to total LGF spend - Change to total cost of a project - Reallocation of LGF
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change to project from original scope as agreed in Outline Business Case submitted to Government for the provisional allocation of Local Growth Fund - Change to project scope from Business Case approved by Accountability Board - Change to intended scheme benefits
Outcomes	Change to the expected outcomes agreed in the project Business Case or as reported to Government through LOGAS net return

A copy of the Change Request template is included in **Appendix XX**

Appendices to be added

- Business Case Template
- Pro Forma Template
- Change Request Template

**SELEP GOVERNANCE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE
DECEMBER 2014**

1. PURPOSE, OBJECTS AND PRINCIPLES

1.1. Role of the Local Enterprise Partnership

1.1.1 *The South East Local Enterprise Partnership (the LEP) is a strategic body, which brings together the public and private sectors to support economic growth in its constituent areas.*

1.1.2 *It shall:*

- a) Progress priorities of cross-border economic importance where there is real synergy and added value in working together;*
- b) Support the conditions through which a more creative, responsive and flexible working relationship can exist between business and government at all levels;*
- c) Seek resources, freedoms and flexibilities to progress strategic growth priorities; and*
- d) Operate in the spirit of transparency, openness and collaboration to support the public interest.*

1.1.3. *In pursuit of this role, the LEP may act to bring together intelligence, expertise and community and business support to identify priorities and develop solutions to maximise the LEP area's economic opportunities and address barriers to growth.*

1.2. Legal status

1.2.1. *The LEP is an informal partnership. It does not have legal status to enter into contracts and will act through one of its county/unitary local authority partners as Accountable body.*

1.3. Subsidiarity

1.3.1. *The LEP operates on the principle of subsidiarity. This means that decisions should be taken at the practical level closest to the communities and businesses affected by those decisions.*

1.3.2. *The LEP therefore:*

- a) Only considers priorities consistent with 1.1 above; and*
- b) Devolves responsibility for local prioritisation, funding and delivery to local partners as appropriate.*

1.3.3. *The LEP does not seek to establish a uniform sub-structure. Rather it recognises that partners may come together in a variety of forms to address particular issues; that these may change over time; and that this dynamism is part of the LEP's success.*

2. GOVERNANCE

2.1. General

2.1.1. *The LEP shall be governed by the SE LEP Strategic Board.*

2.2. Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Board

2.2.1. *The LEP Board shall be responsible for:*

- a) setting the strategic direction and priorities of the LEP;*
- b) satisfying themselves that the business plan is in accordance with the strategic direction and that the milestones are sufficiently ambitious;*

- c) considering and agreeing a position on major items of strategic importance;
- d) monitoring performance of the operations and activities of the LEP;
- e) ensuring that funds delegated or assigned to the LEP for investment, where the Board has determined a method of allocation, are being implemented to best effect on behalf of government; and
- f) deciding how the activities of the LEP should be delegated.

Additionally, the SE LEP Strategic Board should take a leading role in:

- a) Providing strategic leadership in agreeing SE LEP's overarching strategic vision and priorities (ie Strategic Economic Plan)
- b) Championing the SE LEP area as a whole where appropriate for growth and jobs
- c) Supporting pan-LEP activity on SEFUND, Rural and Coastal regeneration, U9 Universities activity, CORE, priority sectors as appropriate (eg Creative) and the Growth Deal
- d) Using the scale and influence of the LEP to promote and communicate shared priorities to Government and those of local importance.

The LEP Strategic Board shall also establish in partnership with the county/unitary authorities a SE LEP Accountability Board to become the main performance management structure within the LEP. Working closely with local area accountability arrangements, the SE LEP Accountability Board will provide the accountability structure for decision-making and approval funding within the overarching vision of the Board which will satisfy the accountability processes for the Accountable Body.

The membership and terms of reference of the SE LEP Accountability Board shall become an Appendix to this paper.

LEP Board membership

2.2.2. The LEP Board shall be constituted as follows:

- a) The Chair of the LEP Board (in addition to the representatives below);
- b) 5 business representatives from Essex, Southend & Thurrock;
- c) 4 business representatives from Kent and Medway;
- d) 3 business representatives from East Sussex;
- e) 5 local government representatives from Essex, Southend & Thurrock, of which 3 must be from Thames Gateway South Essex;
- f) 4 local government representatives from Kent and Medway;
- g) 3 local government representatives from East Sussex;
- h) 1 representative of the higher education sector;
- i) 1 representative of the further education and skills sector.

2.2.3. Each of the areas shall determine their own processes for the selection and term of office of their representatives.

2.2.4. The process for selecting representatives from business and local government shall be determined within each of the areas. The process for selecting the HE/ FE representatives shall be determined by the HE/FE sectors.

Chair

2.2.5. The LEP Board shall have a private sector Chair.

2.2.6. The chair shall be appointed by the Board, with their performance subject to annual review.

2.2.7. Duties of the Chair will be:

- a) to chair and ensure the smooth and effective operation of the Board;
- b) to lead on the development of strategy;
- c) to participate in the appointment of and directly manage the Director of the LEP bringing any significant performance or staffing issues to the attention of the Board and the accountable body;
- d) to ensure the secretariat is operating effectively and within its mandate, that budgets are appropriately applied and that proper policies and processes are in place and observed;

- e) to ensure effective liaison with all constituents of the LEP and government and to undertake representation / communication / lobbying activity as required according to the business plan or emerging strategies or needs; and*
- f) to comply with any reporting requirements of the accountable body.*

2.2.8. The Board will have three vice-chairs, one each covering Essex, Southend & Thurrock; Kent & Medway; and East Sussex. The vice-chairs will be drawn from the private sector and will be determined by each of the three areas.

Representation and attendance

- 2.2.9. It is important that attendance at the LEP Board is at a consistent and senior level. For local authorities, this will normally be at Leader level or equivalent.*
- 2.2.10. Each member of the Board can name one alternate to attend in his / her place who is authorised to take decisions on his / her behalf. Alternates from local authorities shall be elected members or a representative of the Leader mandated to take decisions.*
- 2.2.11. For the Board to be quorate at least 14 members must be present. Of these at least 3 representatives must be from the 6 county/unitary councils. In addition there must also be 1 business representative from each of the areas of: Essex, Southend & Thurrock; Kent & Medway; and East Sussex.*
- 2.2.12. Only members of the Board or their alternates may sit at the meeting table and vote. Others may attend and take part by the invitation of the Chair.*
- 2.2.13. Officers and members of bodies participating in the LEP but not invited to attend and participate may attend as observers. The number of observers may be limited at the discretion of the Chair.*
- 2.2.14. Meetings of the Board are open to the press and public as observers, with the exception of any items that should be treated confidentially for commercial or other reasons. Filming or recording of proceedings need to be agreed in advance with the Secretariat.*

Decisions

- 2.2.15. The Board shall operate on the basis of consensus.*
- 2.2.16. In the event that a consensus cannot be achieved on a matter requiring decision, that decision shall be taken by vote and carried if it is supported by over 50% of those present. All matters to be considered for decision must have been circulated in writing to all members of the Board at least 2 clear working days before the meeting. No decision can be taken without notice having been given.*
- 2.2.17. In the event that a decision is required outside of a scheduled meeting, the Chair may decide to hold an Extraordinary Meeting. Such meetings shall be coordinated by the Secretariat, and shall operate according to the provisions of paragraph 2.2.16.*
- 2.2.18. Alternatively, the Chair may decide to seek agreement to a proposal via Electronic Procedure. In such cases, the Secretariat shall write to each Board member requesting agreement to a specified course of action. Board Members shall be given no fewer than five working days to respond to the Secretariat. For a decision to be made, the provisions of paragraph 2.2.16 shall apply. For a decision to be taken by Electronic Procedure, the number of members participating and the composition of those members must be as required for a quorate meeting. Over 50% of members responding to the request must indicate agreement to the proposal.*
- 2.2.19. All decisions made by Electronic Procedure shall be ratified at the next scheduled meeting of the Board.*

Meetings and papers

- 2.2.20. The Board will meet 3-4 times a year. A calendar of future meetings will be set for a year at a time.*

- 2.2.21. *The agenda and papers for meetings shall be approved by the Chair and issued at least 5 working days in advance of the meeting.*
- 2.2.22. *The agenda and papers shall be disseminated by the Secretariat, with the agreement of the Chair. Board members wishing to propose items for the agenda should contact the Secretariat. Final papers for Board discussion shall be made available on the LEP website as soon as they are disseminated to the Board, except for papers which are not suitable for release into the public domain for example due to them containing personal information about individuals or commercially sensitive data.*
- 2.2.23. *Minutes of meetings of the Board shall be approved in draft form by the Chair and disseminated to Board members no later than ten working days following the meeting. Minutes shall remain in draft until approval by the Board at the Board's next meeting.*
- 2.2.24. *Minutes shall be made publicly available on the LEP website no more than five working days following approval by the Board, except for minutes which are not suitable for release into the public domain for example due to them containing personal information about individuals or commercially sensitive data. Any minutes which are not released into the public domain will be stored confidentially by the secretariat.*

Conflicts of interest

- 2.2.25. *The Board shall ensure that all conflicts of interest are fully disclosed.*
- 2.2.26. *The Secretariat shall maintain a Register of Board Members' Interests. This shall include all company directorships, trusteeships, elected offices, remunerated posts and other relevant interests. The Register of Board Members' Interests shall be made available to any interested party at any time. Board members shall supply information to the Secretariat for inclusion in the register, or a nil return, on joining the Board, in response to any request for an update and on becoming aware of any new interest. The secretariat will circulate a request for information about interests annually.*
- 2.2.27. *Should a Board Member's interests change, s/he shall inform the Secretariat at the earliest opportunity.*
- 2.2.28. *Should an issue be discussed by the Board which presents a conflict of interest to a Board member, the Board Member shall declare the conflict of interest, regardless of whether s/he has previously declared the interest in the Register of Board Members' Interests. Such declarations shall be minuted. A Conflict of Interest may pertain to the interest of a partner, family member, close friend or organisation associated with a Board member. For example if a partner, family member or close friend may be affected by a decision (to a greater extent than the majority of Council tax payers in the area will be affected) then the member should declare an interest and abstain from discussion and may be asked to withdraw at the Chairman's discretion. If the member is associated with an organisation (other than a local authority) as employee, director, contractor, trustee, member or shareholder and that organisation may be particularly affected by a decision then that board member should withdraw from any discussion and may not vote on the matter.*
- 2.2.29. *Board Members shall not vote or participate in discussions on any issues on which they have registered an interest.*

Sub groups

- 2.2.30. *The Board may initiate task and finish groups to undertake work to further the Board's objectives. Such groups must have clear terms of reference agreed with the Chair, shall be fully accountable to the Board and shall cease operation when their work is complete. Each sub group must have both elected council member and business representation or involvement.*
- 2.2.34. *Within this framework, the Board may agree sub-committees such as that for an investment fund, establish technical working groups to support activities and recognise linked sector or geographical groupings which support the LEP's ambitions and operation.*

3. SECRETARIAT AND ADMINISTRATION

3.1. Secretariat

3.1.1. The Board shall appoint a Secretariat. The Secretariat shall consist of one or more named individuals with specific responsibility for:

- a) ensuring the efficient administration of the Board;*
- b) ensuring the Board operate within their terms of reference;*
- c) providing information and support to the Chair;*
- d) monitoring work commissioned by the Board and reporting on progress to the Board;*
- e) co-ordinating the production of papers and agenda items, in liaison with the officer Support Group (see Section 3.2);*
- f) managing communications activity on behalf of the LEP;*
- g) undertaking such tasks as directed by the Board, Chair and Vice Chairs;*
- h) ensuring compliance with Financial Regulations of the Accountable Body;*
- i) ensuring that an appropriate process is followed for setting of budgets and preparation of accounts within the LEP which are approved by the accountable body; and*
- j) Reporting to the Accountable Body as required by it.*

The secretariat will be employed by an upper tier local authority and will work within the policies and procedures of the employing body.

3.1.2. The costs of the Secretariat and any financial liabilities of the accountable body resulting from being the accountable body of the LEP shall be borne equitably between the six upper tier authorities using population figures as the basis for calculating their contribution. Financial contribution towards secretariat costs may be used as a contribution to match funding made available from government or other sources and should be agreed annually.

3.2. Senior Officer Group

3.2.1 The Secretariat shall be supported by a Senior Officer Group (SOG). The SOG shall consist of officers employed by LEP Board member organisations (presently usually one from each of the county/unitary authorities but other officers may also participate from time to time), and shall be responsible for preparing papers as required, undertaking specific pieces of work as mandated by the Board or Executive Group.

3.2.2 The SOG shall be convened by the Secretariat according to business need. It shall have no fixed membership, and may expand or contract over time.

3.2.3 The SOG shall have no decision-making powers. It exists purely to expedite the business of the LEP and to provide support and advice to the Secretariat.

3.3 Communications

3.3.1 The Board shall operate on the basis of transparency, openness and good communications.

3.3.2 The Board shall be responsible for the LEP's communications strategy. This shall include communications to Board members, participating organisations and the wider public and shall include the maintenance of an up-to-date, relevant and accessible website. The Secretariat shall be responsible for implementation of the communications strategy.

4. AMENDMENTS TO TERMS OF REFERENCE

4.1 The Board may amend these terms of reference at any time, according to the procedure in paragraph 2.2.16. Amendments were agreed by the Board in December 2014 to establish the SE LEP Accountability Framework. They were previously amended in December 2013 and agreed by the SE LEP Board on 14th February, 2014.

(These replace those drafted September 2012 and agreed by SE LEP Full Board on 12th October 2012 and the Governance & Terms of Reference agreed at the Interim SE LEP Board Meeting 14th March 2011).

Strategic Board Meeting

Friday 9th December

Agenda Item: 5

Pages: 3

For decision	x
For endorsement	
For information	
<i>mark with 'x'</i>	



Lower Thames Crossing Update and Next Steps

1. Purpose:

1.1 To consider SELEP's position and agree next steps in its work to promote the Lower Thames Crossing, considering actions taken since September and possible outcomes from Government.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Board is asked to

- 2.1.1 **Note** actions undertaken as agreed at September Board Meeting
- 2.1.2 **Consider** SELEP's position and areas to act.
- 2.1.3 **Agree** next steps.

3. Background

3.1 On 23rd September, the SELEP Board received a verbal update on the Lower Thames Crossing. This highlighted that Highways England were expected to submit their recommendations to the Secretary of State for Transport in October for his consideration, and therefore October-November was seen as the critical time for lobbying. The LEP Board agreed a series of actions, including lobbying MPs and Ministers, gaining support from other LEPs and the development of a Lower Thames Crossing Transport Prospectus document.

3.2 Since September, the SELEP secretariat has worked with partners to undertake the agreed actions and has mobilised the discussion in Whitehall with MPs and Ministers. We were pushing for a decision on a preferred route and agreed way forward as part of the Chancellor's Autumn Statement, as the original timeline suggested by Highways England had been early December 2016. There was, however, no mention of the Lower Thames Crossing in the recent Autumn Statement and SELEP is continuing to push for clarity from Government before the end of the year.

3.3 The Lower Thames Crossing Transport Prospectus, reinforces the need and private sector support for the delivery of a Lower Thames Crossing and identifies the key wider network enhancements which are required to:

- maximise the economic benefits to be achieved through the delivery of a Third Thames Crossing; and
- ensure that an appropriate scale of wider transport network improvements is delivered to help mitigate the wider impact on our Strategic Road Network directly impacted by a Third Thames Crossing.

The document has been developed and a draft will be published shortly. It should be noted that the prospectus does not contain any new information, but brings together existing positions and information on known schemes.

3.4 The SELEP Board has been consistent in its position in the past; and, in that, will continue to note the positions of Thurrock Council and Gravesham BC which are not supportive of a Lower Thames Crossing as proposed by Highways England. However, the SELEP business community has been unanimous in the need for a crossing and recently, through the March 2016 Highways England consultation, articulated a preferred route. The Board has always been clear that a decision is needed, clarity on a route is needed, and a Government commitment to fund and deliver the project should be given as soon as possible.

4. Issue

4.1 Discussions with Highways England, following the Autumn Statement, suggest that it is unlikely that there will be an announcement this calendar year. There is no detail or information on a future timetable, although Highways England is pursuing this from the Ministers office.

4.2 It is understood that, with changes in Government and in personnel, there may have been some time lost by Government on this project, and that, in considering the options put forward by Highways England (and in line with Lord Heseltine's Thames Estuary Commission), queries are being raised as to whether the project is ambitious enough.

4.3 **SELEP Board is asked to consider its position and next steps** if a route announcement is delayed further or a decision is made not to proceed.

4.4 SELEP has called for Government to accelerate the delivery of the Lower Thames Crossing, to mitigate the negative impact on the economy caused by the congestion at Dartford, poor resilience of the network and unreliability of journey times. It is important that we continue to stress the economic need for a swift decision and the impact that uncertainty and lack of clarity has on potential investment and appetite for growth.

4.5 There are a number of scenarios / next steps for Government. SELEP needs to be prepared to respond if it does not hear anything from Department for Transport, or if the next steps will significantly delay progress on a new crossing (i.e. re-opening debate on route options or re-opening consultation).

Suggested actions:

- 4.5.1 SELEP to seek urgent meetings with Secretary of State for Transport and Chancellor;
- 4.5.2 SELEP to work with federal boards in Kent and Essex to raise the issue with local MPs and to encourage mobilisation of a strong voice asking for clarity;
- 4.5.3 SELEP to arrange meetings with business representatives from Essex and Kent who have demonstrated an interest in this issue and worked in the past with Highways England Industry Group to call for a roundtable business discussion with the Transport Minister;
- 4.5.4 SELEP to write to the Chancellor asking for the National Infrastructure Commission to be commissioned to review the case for the crossing;
- 4.5.5 Depending on the length of the potential delay, SELEP could commission a study looking at the potential impact of the crossing on international trade and productivity for business and Housing development;
- 4.5.6 Board members, Federal boards to use all opportunities in press or Westminster engagements to raise the issue.

5. Next steps

5.1 Board members are asked to consider the above actions and provide direction on SELEP next steps and agreed position for the secretariat to pursue early in January 2017.

Author: Zoe Gordon
Position: Business Engagement and Communications Manager
Contact details: zoe.gordon@essex.gov.uk 07884 475191
Date: 28th November 2016

For decision	
For endorsement	
For information	x
<i>mark with 'x'</i>	



Working Group Highlights Report

1. Purpose:

- 1.1. To update Strategic Board members on progress and matters arising from the various SELEP working groups.

2. Background

Skills Advisory Group Update

- 2.1. The Skills Advisory Group (SAG) met on 10 October and received an update from the National Careers Service (NCS) for the SELEP area. The NCS is working with SAG to support individuals into priority sectors. SAG is also supporting the new Careers Enterprise Network, working with nearly 200 schools across the LEP area.
- 2.2. The emerging SELEP Skills Strategy was endorsed and SAG reiterated the importance of the strategy being employer-led, concise and supported by a comprehensive and robust evidence base.
- 2.3. The group has been working to ensure that its, and the further reaching skills community's, priorities for the forthcoming European Social Fund (ESF) monies are being considered. Several ESF contracts are due to be announced imminently by the Skills Funding Agency and include funding for apprenticeships, numeracy and higher level skills. DWP have awarded a contract to Reed Employment, to further supporting people into work, and Reed will be attending a future SAG meeting.
- 2.4. A scoping exercise is underway to explore how the Skills Adviser Portal would be best utilised. The portal allows employers to search for training.
- 2.5. SELEP is working with Education and Skills Boards across the area as the Further Education Area Reviews continue.
- 2.6. The next SAG meeting will be held on 13 December.

Housing Group Update

- 2.7. Support has been given through the Strategic Housing Advisor to the development of the Kent Planning Protocol. Best practice and joint working is being promoted through new and existing Developer Forums and housing officer groups across the SELEP area.
- 2.8. The partnership with HFi on the SELEP HFI Housing Business Ready programme continues to be successful and is being extended to a number of coastal communities who face a different set of housing and economic challenges. Currently the partnership is working with Tendring, Southend, Hastings and Thanet.

- 2.9. SELEP is the first Local Enterprise Partnership to be awarded Housing Business Ready status by the HFi.
- 2.10. The HFi Chief Executive, Natalie Elphicke, said: “The South-East Local Enterprise Partnership very much deserve to be the first of their kind to be awarded Housing Business Ready status. Their excellent contribution to the Housing Business Ready programme has demonstrated their appetite for working closely with businesses and councils to ensure economic growth and housing stability for their region.”
- 2.11. HFi and SELEP launched the Infrastructure Capacities Mapping (ICM) Pilot in October. The ICM will examine the ways in which difference parties and public bodies can identify, plan, assess and unblock barriers to facilitate accelerated growth and housing delivery.
- 2.12. HFi are working with Kent Developers’ Group, Kent County Council, Developers East Sussex, TGSE Developers’ Forum and other interested parties to gather evidence on the performance of utility companies with regard to housing development. This evidence will be used to take action with Government and regulators to ensure utility companies help not hinder local growth.

Growth Hubs Update

- 2.13. Between April and September 2016 the South East Business Hub has:
- Engaged with and supported 1,333 businesses;
 - Referred 588 businesses to external support providers;
 - Of those, 57% of referrals were to local external support providers;
 - Over 75% of businesses stated they were very satisfied with the service.
- 2.14. Local areas have successfully re-procured delivery partners to deliver Growth Hub services in both East Sussex and Kent & Medway. The Let’s Do Business Group have successfully retained the contract in East Sussex and Kent Invicta Chamber are continuing as the service provider in Kent and Medway. This is excellent news, and is testament to the excellent work undertaken by these partners in the first year and provides continuity and maintains standards of delivery across the area.
- 2.15. Following end of year evaluation reports for 2015/16, the Growth Hubs working group has agreed that further work is needed in the following areas:
- Mapping and understanding the changing context and environment in which Growth Hubs are operating;
 - Development of revenue raising and commercial sustainability of Growth Hubs; and
 - Review of Growth Hub websites across the South East Business Hub area, with a view to restricting, improving functionality and customer experience and increased self-service options for businesses
- 2.16. To support this work, the group is currently looking to procure two small, focussed contracts of consultancy work.
- 2.17. Eloise Peters has been appointed as the Growth Hub Evaluation and Monitoring Intern. The post is facilitated by the University of Essex and provides much needed support to the Growth Hub group.

European Funding Update: European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) Strategy Delivery & European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

- 2.18. The Chancellor has confirmed that ERDF funding will be guaranteed up until the point at which the UK departs the EU, including for those projects that run beyond that date.
- 2.19. New calls for projects on the themes 'research and innovation' and 'shifting to a low carbon economy' are expected to open between 14 – 16 December and close on 17 February 2017. These will run alongside our current open call for SME support, which closes on 3 February 2017.
- 2.20. Further rolling calls for all three of SELEP's ERDF themes are expected next year running from March 2017 to March 2018.
- 2.21. Following the Chancellor's announcement, projects will need to give particular attention to demonstrating fit with national priorities and value for money.
- 2.22. ERD remains a valid source of funding during the Brexit process and SELEP will be running a number of workshops over the coming months to facilitate new, high quality project applications.

Community Led Local Development (CLLD)

- 2.23. Hastings, Folkestone and Tilbury are preparing full applications for submission to the end of January 2017 for both ESF and ERDF funding to address high levels of deprivation in their communities.

European Social Fund (ESF)

- 2.24. As mentioned at 2.3 above, Reed Employment has been awarded a contract by DWP to address employability and Skills and has started work in the SELEP area.
- 2.25. Seven Big Lottery projects delivering various social inclusion projects in the SELEP area are awaiting approval, which is expected in early December. Four project applications are still under preparation. The contracts will be worth £16 million.
- 2.26. As mentioned in 2.3 above, the SFA is in the process of contracting £24 million worth of contracts covering seven separate work packages on apprenticeships, higher level skills and numeracy.
- 2.27. Further calls are under preparation and will be announced in the New Year. These have been approved in principle by the SELEP ESIF committee.

European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)

- 2.28. Defra is working closing with SELEP to prepare to issue calls in January 2017. The focus will be on food processing, business development and rural tourism themes. They have been approved by the SELEP ESIF committee.
- 2.29. Defra is continuing to update and improve guidance and handbooks for further calls. A number of workshops to publicise the funding opportunities will be announced in the New Year.

South East Creative Economy Network (SECEN)

- 2.30. Thurrock Council is leading a sector specific business support project. The South East Creative, Cultural and Digital Support (SECCADs) project is bidding for ERDF funding.

- 2.31. Shared Intelligence research supporting the bid confirms that over 90% of people working in creative careers are freelance and therefore any interventions to support the sector need to be free-lance friendly. The funding bid will assist in the creation of a Creative Industries support programme aligned with Growth Hub. The total value of the proposed programme is £5.85m.
- 2.32. The programme includes developing cultural hubs with co-ordinators on the ground to support businesses, a grant programme aimed at stimulating co-operation and sharing between businesses and a range of specialist advice services all to be offered via the Growth Hub.
- 2.33. The SECEN is working with East Sussex County Council on workspace development and is looking at the current provision of work space. They are in discussion with Arts Council England about investing in a needs assessment to ensure fit for purpose space is available SELEP wide to enable scaling up and fostering of creative innovation networks.
- 2.34. The group is working with the national academy for skills and training for the UK's creative and cultural industries, Creative and Cultural Skills, to develop a work programme to support the talent pipeline for the creative industries as part of the Talent Accelerator led by Kent County Council.
- 2.35. This is to address the need for a STEM education (i.e. reprioritising the need for arts subjects to be encouraged in schools), matching training to skills gaps in the industry and developing clearer training pathways. The programme also aims to highlight existing good practice.
- 2.36. Recognising the volume and value of Cultural Tourism in the SELEP region and the potential for growth, and acknowledging the co-dependencies across the tourism and cultural sectors SECEN supports the development of Cultural Tourism initiatives.
- 2.37. SECEN, in partnership with Turner Contemporary and Go To Places has submitted a bid to the value of £1.37m Arts Council England/Visit England Cultural Destinations fund for Culture Coasting - a visitor experience driven by world class art.
- 2.38. Using Geocaching - GPS enabled treasure trail technology - this new trail will tempt visitors to explore the South East's internationally acclaimed galleries – discover newly commissioned outstanding art, dramatic seaside galleries, beautiful land and seascapes on the new National Trail and to be welcomed into artists' homes.
- 2.39. Building on Culture Kent, the Estuary Festival and the East Sussex Coastal Cultural Trail, Culture Coasting aims to grow the visitor economy by 3% in East Sussex, Kent and the Thames Estuary. Bids for match funding will be submitted by Go To Places to Visit England's Discover England fund. The emphasis of this programme is to develop bookable products for overseas visitors and a bookable platform "Gardens and Gourmets" to support the marketing of these products. SECEN has asked SELEP to consider a £150k contribution to this project if external funding is secured.
- 2.40. SECEN is working with the Greater London Authority to support the concept of a Thames Gateway Production Corridor facilitating complementary creative business clusters and facilities to ensure the opportunities for the creative sector are fully developed and contribute to on-going creative business growth.

Author: Amy Beckett
Position: Project Manager
Contact details: amy.beckett@essex.gov.uk
Date: 2 December 2016