



#### Attendees

<b>BS</b>	Cllr Bob Standley	Wealden DC	<b>ME</b>	Martin Ellis	Recruitment South East
<b>CS</b>	Clive Soper	FSB	<b>MK</b>	Cllr Martin Kenward	Rother DC
<b>DE</b>	Dave Evans	East Sussex CC	<b>MS</b>	Martin Searle	FSB
<b>DS</b>	David Sheppard	D-RisQ Ltd	<b>RD</b>	Richard Dawson	East Sussex CC
<b>DT</b>	Cllr David Tutt	Eastbourne BC	<b>RM</b>	Rhiannon Mort	South East LEP
<b>GP</b>	Graham Peters (CHAIR)	ES Rural Partnership	<b>RS</b>	Cllr Rupert Simmons	East Sussex CC
<b>IF</b>	Ian Fitzpatrick	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC	<b>SDr</b>	Stewart Drew	De La Warr Pavilion
<b>JHv</b>	Joanna Havers	University of Brighton	<b>SH</b>	Simon Hubbard	Hastings BC
<b>KG</b>	Cllr Keith Glazier	East Sussex CC	<b>TL</b>	Tony Leonard	Rother DC
<b>KT</b>	Katy Thomas	East Sussex CC	<b>WA</b>	William Annandale	Quadrant Consultants Ltd
<b>LR</b>	Lisa Rawlinson	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC			

#### Apologies

<b>AB</b>	Adam Bryan	South East LEP	<b>JHr</b>	James Harris	East Sussex CC
<b>AC</b>	Ana Christie	Sussex Chamber of Commerce	<b>KF</b>	Cllr Kim Forward	Hastings BC
<b>AS</b>	Cllr Andy Smith	Lewes DC	<b>PC</b>	Cllr Peter Chowney	Hastings BC
<b>CC</b>	Clive Cooke	East Sussex College Group	<b>PJ</b>	Philip Johnson	Locate East Sussex
<b>CM</b>	Cllr Carl Maynard	Rother DC	<b>PS</b>	Penny Shimmin	Sussex CDA
<b>DG</b>	Derek Godfrey	Ellis Builders	<b>SB</b>	Sue Baxter	University of Brighton
<b>IG</b>	Isabel Garden	Wealden DC	<b>SDn</b>	Sean Dennis	Let's Do Business Group

*All of the papers and any presentations delivered at the meeting can be viewed on the following page of the ESCC website: [www.eastsussex.gov.uk/business/eastsussex/selep/tesminutes/tes181019](http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/business/eastsussex/selep/tesminutes/tes181019)*

### **1. Welcome & introductions**

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

### **2. Review of previous minutes (24 Sep 2018)**

- 2.1. **GP** ran through the actions of the previous TES minutes noting that all had been completed.
- 2.2. The minutes were approved by the group as an accurate record of the meeting.

### **3. LEP Review – SELEP Response**

- 3.1. **RM** delivered a presentation on the second of SELEP's two responses to the government's LEP Review. Whereas the first submission answered the question of geography only, this second response covers the more general areas of LEP structure and governance, broken down into eleven government recommendations. **RM** ran through the current draft response to each of the recommendations. *The key points from the TES discussion are listed in Appendix 1.*

*[Action: TES members attending the SELEP Strategic Board meeting on 25 Oct 2018 to vote in favour of Option 1 for Recommendation 4; TES members to endorse the overall submission, making sure the key points from the TES discussion are raised and taken into account]*

### **4. East Sussex Business Survey 2018**

- 4.1. **WA** delivered a presentation on the Business Survey conducted earlier in the summer. The overall methodology and economic context were explained, along with a summary of the findings for each of the survey's seven themes – Employees, Markets & Business Advice, Finance, Transport, Energy, Business Accommodation and Skills.
- 4.2. **ME** queried the margin of error on the survey, which **WA** clarified is approximately 3% on a sample size of 1,000.
- 4.3. **MS** observed that the data will be of great benefit to Growth Hubs so should be picked up and discussed by the Business East Sussex (BES) group.

- 4.4. **JHv** asked if the survey questions around Apprenticeships drilled down into the different ‘types’ of apprentices. **WA** confirmed that the questions covered apprentice age and level; the Skills-themed report notes that 87% were aged 16-24 and 21% aged 25+, with the highest proportion of apprentices at Level 2 (47%) or Level 3 (45%).
- 4.5. **RD** queried whether any of the participants indicated they’d be happy for us to contact them again with details of appropriate business-support services; **WA** confirmed that in general most people were happy to be interviewed and approximately 60% agreed to be contacted with follow-up support, which is excellent.
- 4.6. **RD** confirmed that all of the information will be uploaded to the East Sussex in Figures website in due course – [www.eastsussexinfigures.org.uk](http://www.eastsussexinfigures.org.uk). ESCC colleagues working with TES members and TES subgroups will commence work to look into any ‘actions’ that may come out of the survey results, and particularly how they may be incorporated into the East Sussex Growth Strategy Implementation Plan where appropriate – there will be a series of conversations with partners to develop responses and actions. **WA** suggested also reviewing any actions from the previous survey in 2014 to see if they had any impact on this year’s results.

## 5. TES round table / AOB

- 5.1. **RD** advised that an update on the Strategic Economic Plan will be provided at next week’s SELEP Strategic Board meeting, with a brief presentation covering the content of the final draft. The final draft document is expected to be circulated early-November for comment; we’ll also look to bring it to our next full TES meeting on 3 Dec 2018 before final sign-off at the SELEP Strategic Board meeting on 7 Dec 2018.
- 5.2. **GP** noted that we have a TES Workshop scheduled for 29 Oct 2018, but advised that he may consider cancelling it or changing it to a ‘business-reps only’ meeting. **GP** will confirm this early next week.  
*- Update: GP later confirmed that the TES Workshop scheduled for 29 Oct 2018 will NOT go ahead*
- 5.3. **DT** referred to the tour of the Devonshire Quarter development that took place just prior to today’s TES meeting, and thanked TES for its continued support of Devonshire Park.
- 5.4. **RD** highlighted the Tri-LEP Energy Strategy, the final draft of which was recently circulated by Jo Simmons for comment/feedback by 22 Oct 2018. The final documents will be presented to the SELEP Strategic Board on 7 Dec 2018 and are expected to be published in Feb 2019.

### Summary of actions:

- 3.1 *TES members attending the SELEP Strategic Board meeting on 25 Oct 2018 to vote in favour of Option 1 for Recommendation 4; TES members to endorse the overall submission, making sure the key points from the TES discussion are raised and taken into account.*

The key points that came out of the TES discussion on the proposed responses to the LEP Review are as follows:

1. **Recommendation 1:** SELEP already produces an annual report and forward plan, so only a small amount of additional detail will be required to comply with this recommendation. SELEP can therefore lead the way in this regard.  
**GP** queried whether there's any expectation that federal boards will also produce their own annual response; **RM** confirmed that a single LEP-wide report will be sufficient.
2. **Recommendation 2:** this simply formalises what SELEP already does in appointing its Chair; the process will be confirmed now and then implemented in early 2020 at the end of the current Chair's tenure.
3. **Recommendation 3:** SELEP has already introduced time-limited tenures for its private sector members; TES in particular has recently undertaken a rigorous process in this regard, to be duplicated across the other federated areas.

***In terms of the Deputy Chair, rotating the role through the current Vice Chairs is sensible and practical, so is supported by TES; however the proposed introduction of an 'advisory cabinet' does not seem to serve much purpose, so TES would suggest it's not included as part of the formal response.***

In rotating the role of Deputy Chair, SELEP has three VCs covering four federated areas (as Essex has two federal boards). ***Should the suggestion of introducing a fourth VC be raised at any point, TES wants to make it clear that it will categorically oppose such a notion.*** The matter was fiercely debated by the Strategic Board back when the federal model was first introduced, and TES has no desire to re-examine the issue.

4. **Recommendation 4:** the general makeup of the Strategic Board is the only truly contentious point in the overall response, and so Board members will be asked to choose one of three options: 1) that we retain the current status-quo of 28 Board members; 2) we agree to the government's proposed option of 20 members, two-thirds business, meaning we'd most likely lose our District & Borough members; 3) we pursue a model of 22 plus 5 'co-opted' members, a compromise bringing us closer to the government's recommendation. TES members made the following points:
  - SELEP's current model works very well and is proportionate to its geography; the proposals to limit the number of members, and especially to then make the membership two-thirds business, are both entirely inappropriate for this LEP.
  - The expectation of the government on business is unreasonable and unrealistic; our business members already offer a huge amount of their time on a purely voluntary basis, but that generosity can only be stretched so far. The government is setting up an expectation that simply cannot be met.
  - The numbers in this proposal seem entirely arbitrary. Whilst they may be appropriate for other LEPs, it is up to us to make the case for why our model works and, despite not being two-thirds business, is already truly business-led.
  - When you attempt to reduce the size of a board you inevitably end up with stakeholders feeling underrepresented, leading to them either 'splintering' into their own groups or disengaging altogether.
  - At the last Strategic Board meeting everyone, including all of the business members, made a case for maintaining the status-quo; as this recommendation pertains to 'strengthening private sector representation' we should absolutely take our lead from our business members.
  - Surely the government's chief concern is seeing evidence of *delivery*, so any proposals/counterproposals we make will carry far more weight if we can prove our current model is actually delivering.
  - A note of caution: the government is offering up to £200k to help implement the changes brought about by this LEP Review; if we push back too far and get a 'red card' from the government we could potentially lose that funding (and possibly jeopardise other future funding, such as the Shared Prosperity Fund), so whilst we should absolutely push back on this recommendation, we should also be prepared to compromise.

***The TES Board is firmly in support of retaining the status-quo and so agreed to vote in favour of Option 1.***

5. Recommendation 5: an improved gender balance is something SELEP will agree to work towards by setting out a policy and code of conduct. Rolling out TES's robust process across the other federated boards will certainly help in this area.
6. Recommendation 6: SELEP already has an independent Secretariat so no change is required here. However **GP** observed that the draft response refers to "local leads becoming more integrated into the Secretariat" – this suggestion would be stronger if *reversed*, i.e. integrating the Secretariat into each of the local federated boards.
7. Recommendation 7: we'll work towards establishing a legal personality and will agree to "explore the options" but only on the condition that, whatever the outcome, we'll want to maintain our current federated structure, governance, ways of working etc.

**RS** indicated a sense of nervousness about making changes unnecessarily – the Accountability Board has been operating successfully for quite some time and at no point has any decision been challenged or the integrity of the decision-making process been questioned.

**GP** advised that he'll want to seek independent advice on exactly what the expectation and responsibility *on businesses* will be.

**TL** commented that any legal entity will need specific Terms of Reference and cautioned that the government may try to prescribe such ToRs (meaning they'll be dictating board numbers, business member ratio etc.) Clearly this is something we'd want to avoid.

**The TES Board agreed that if this recommendation is a 'red line' for the government then we're better off giving ground here rather than say on Recommendation 4. However TES also observed that we really can't start any work in this area until the SELEP geography is confirmed, and agreed that the response to the government should give no indication of dates/milestones (the date of Oct 2019 in the current draft response should be deleted).**

8. Recommendation 8: we already have an Accountable Body in Essex CC; **KG** confirmed that East Sussex has no aspirations to take on such a role and TES is very happy for Essex CC to continue.
9. Recommendation 9: we clearly demonstrate that SELEP already meets the requirement on providing an AGM.
10. Recommendation 10: SELEP already sets out its accountability and governance very clearly through its Assurance Framework, and can easily make any required amendments moving forward to ensure continued compliance.
11. Recommendation 11: again SELEP already has robust scrutiny arrangements in place and can easily make any required amendments to ensure continued compliance. Note however that if/when SELEP becomes incorporated the scrutiny arrangements will need to be reviewed and revised.
12. General comments: **GP** observed that the 'risks' given in the draft response are very repetitive and don't scan very well so ought to be revised.

The current draft response gives a breakdown of how the additional funding from the government would be spent (up to £200k to help implement the changes brought about by this LEP Review); **GP** advised that the amount set aside for legal advice is insufficient and is likely to cost far more.

Regarding Lewes's overlapping geography, SELEP obviously wants to maintain the status-quo but C2C LEP has also indicated the same thing in their response. **KG** commented that the government expects such issues to be resolved locally, *so it's in our own interest to be proactive* and get the issue resolved one way or another; the government won't accept overlaps under any circumstances so Lewes needs to make a decision.

**MS** commented that C2C LEP used their most recent AGM to launch their Strategic Economic Plan; it was a very visual and engaging event, and SELEP should look to do something similar.