

### ITEM 3A

**Subject:** DRAFT MINUTES of the Kent & Medway Economic Partnership (KMEP) meeting held at the Village Hotel, Maidstone on Monday 28 January 2019.

---

#### Attendees:

##### KMEP Board Members

Geoff Miles (Chair | The Maidstone Studios)  
Gerry Clarkson (Ashford Borough Council),  
Bob Bayford (Thanet District Council)  
James Beatton (Cripps LLP)  
Andrew Bowles (Swale Borough Council)  
Paul Carter (Kent County Council)  
Rodney Chambers (Medway Council)  
Miranda Chapman (Pillory Barn Design Ltd),  
Gavin Cleary (Locate in Kent)  
Simon Cook (Mid Kent College)  
Martin COX (Maidstone Borough Council)  
Sarah Dance (Sarah Dance Associates)

Richard Finn (Richard Finn Ltd)  
Peter Fleming (Sevenoaks District Council)  
Douglas Horner (Kent Ambassador)  
David Jukes (Tunbridge Wells Borough Council)  
Jeremy Kite (Dartford Borough Council)  
Andrew Metcalf (Maxim PR),  
David Monk (Folkestone & Hythe District Council),  
Jane Ollis (IOD)  
Prof. Rama Thirunamachandran (Canterbury  
Christ Church University)  
Paul Thomas (Dev. Land Services Ltd)  
Paul Winter (Wire Belt Company Limited)

##### Observers & Presenters in attendance

Allan Baillie (KCC), Chris Brodie (SELEP Chairman), Kevin Burbridge (GBC), Lee Burchill (KCC), Rupert Clubb (TfSE & ESCC), William Cornall (MBC), Barbara Cooper (KCC), John Foster (MBC), David Godfrey (KCC), Graham Hammond (FHDC), Richard Hicks (MC), Dave Hughes (KCC), Jess Jagpal (Medway), Tracey Kerly (ABC), Chris (Highways England), Matthew Norwell (TGKP), Sarah Nurden (KMEP), Michael Payne (KCC), Karla Philips (KCC), Joe Ratcliffe (KCC), David Smith (KCC), Jeremy Whittaker (TMBC), Mike Whiting (KCC), Mark Radford (SBC).  
Mark Radford (SBC),

#### Apologies:

##### KMEP Board Members

Simon Cook (Canterbury City Council), Nick Fenton (Hodson Developments & Kent Developers' Group), Nicolas Heslop (Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council), Jo James (Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce), Keith Morris (Dover District Council), Jon Reagan (Hugh Lowe Farms Ltd & Weald Granary Ltd), David Turner (Gravesham Borough Council)

## **Item 1 – Welcome, introduction and apologies.**

- 1.1 Mr Geoff Miles (the KMEP Chairman) welcomed attendees to the meeting, and accepted the apologies as listed above.

## **Item 2 – Declarations of interest**

- 2.1 No declarations of interests were received.

## **Item 3 – Minutes of previous meeting, matters arising and action tracker**

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting on 26 November 2018 were accepted as an accurate record of the discussion.
- 3.2 Paul Carter received clarification that the board minutes from 24<sup>th</sup> September referenced KMEP's decision to prioritise existing LGF schemes seeking a change in scope ahead of new funding requests, as part of the LGf3b process.

## **Item 4 – LEP Review & Annual Performance Review**

- 4.1 The KMEP Chairman welcomed Chris Brodie (SELEP Chairman) to the meeting.
- 4.2 Chris Brodie gave a presentation about the LEP Review and Annual Performance Review. Comments he made included:
  - The Government wants to distribute the UK Shared Prosperity Funding through LEPs, and has undertaken a review to ensure LEP governance is fit-for-purpose. The consultation about the UK shared Prosperity Fund is due to be issued once the Parliamentary Brexit votes have concluded.
  - The Government's LEP review follows scrutiny by the Daily Mail and in-depth questioning by the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee into the governance of GCGP LEP.
  - All LEPs were asked to submit geography proposals in September 2018, and a governance implementation plan in October 18.
  - Chris Brodie has met with the Secretary of State (Rt Hon Greg Clark MP) and Minister for Local Growth (Jake Berry MP) to discuss SELEP's implementation plan.
  - The Government has said SELEP's implementation plan is compliant in all respects apart from two: 1) The board member size should be limited to 20 people, with the ability to co-opt 5 more people for one year based on specialisms; and 2) Private sector representatives should make up at least two-thirds of the board.
  - SELEP is one of four LEPs that are not yet compliant. The remaining thirty-four are.
  - LEPs will not receive funding until they have become compliant. The Government Ministers feel the time to discuss geography has passed.
  - SELEP is unique in terms of its size, and the Government has now recognised the federated board structure.
  - The Government wants the SELEP Chairman to write to them to confirm that SELEP will comply with the board structure requirements.
  - Chris Brodie suggested that SELEP's articles of association could include District Council Leaders as Special Delegates, who would then be invited to attend the board meetings, entitled to participate in the debate, but not vote.

- 4.3 The Chairman thanked Chris Brodie for his presentation, and invited questions and comments from the KMEP board members. These included:
- Questions exploring the Government's rationale in capping LEP board size at 20 members, when this will severely limit council leaders participating. The answer that Chris Brodie received from Ministers is that all modern governance suggests smaller boards operate more effectively.
  - A question was asked about the repercussions for SELEP if no governance deal was agreed with the Government. It was felt that the Government would not allow one of the largest LEPs to fail. However, the Government had explained to Chris Brodie that no funding will be available for SELEP until it complies.
  - Local authority members provided the historical context for the inception of SELEP: - the current geography was devised by and strongly championed by the Government, and local stakeholders were told that if they became one of the largest LEPs in the country, then they would receive additional freedoms and flexibilities; this did not happen. The LEP Review now directs how LEPs will be run.
  - The universal board size being applied to all LEPs means disproportionate representation in the various geographies across the UK.
  - All local authority leaders were very disenchanted that the democratic mandate was being diminished and several district leaders, including Peter Fleming, Andrew Bowles and David Jukes, strongly voiced their concern against accepting the conditions of the LEP Review.
  - Board Members felt that it was unfortunate that the issues of geography and board membership had been decoupled, and that LEP geography had to be agreed first. If KMEP board members had known that there would be no flexibility in board member representation at the outset, they may have chosen a more localised geography, and followed the recommendation of the Thames Estuary Commission to split SELEP.
  - Chris Brodie said the Government has confirmed that the four federated boards in SELEP can continue to operate as they currently do. Chris Brodie confirmed that the LEP Review rules regarding board size and private-public representation do not need to be applied to the federated boards.
  - The Government also confirmed to Chris Brodie that the membership of the SELEP Accountability Board and the SELEP Investment Panel can be retained and no changes are required to their operation.
  - Rodney Chambers, supported by his fellow board members, put to Chris Brodie that if the agreement is to retain SELEP then there must be a re-evaluation of the activities undertaken at the SELEP and federated board level, and some decision-making ability must be passed down from the LEP to the federated boards. Chris Brodie agreed, and said that the function of the SELEP board is to receive the decisions of the federated board, and to look at the few pan-LEP matters, such as rural, creative and coastal issues.
  - Andrew Bowles asked the KMEP business members for their views as at previous KMEP meetings they had expressed reservations about them taking decisions on the spending of public money without having any democratic accountability. Geoff Miles said that the business members have always agreed that the final funding decisions must be made at the Accountability Board, whose voting members are solely local authority leaders.
  - Gerry Clarkson, like his colleagues was disappointed by the limited democratic representation. However, he was reassured by the comments that Chris Brodie had made that little would change in the way the LEP preforms. He, like others, wishes to focus on the major infrastructure opportunities and challenges on the horizon, and feels

that the governance issues ought to be resolved swiftly to ensure local growth funding is received from the Government.

- Jeremy Kite spoke positively about the responsiveness of SELEP to date. He had spoken to his legal counsel that had explained there could be a change in the legal responsibility placed on private sector LEP members, as local authorities can now hold these business leaders accountable/liable for their decisions affecting the boroughs/districts. In light of this, Jeremy Kite said that KMEP needs to amend its constitution to outline the delegated powers that business leaders would have, and the repercussions if a business leader were not to act in accordance with KMEP's mandate. He proposed that a KMEP business leader should be immediately removed from KMEP and SELEP if they had not followed the decisions agreed locally at KMEP.
- Jeremy Kite felt that the way KMEP operates will have to change whereby KMEP meetings will need to occur a week before the SELEP Strategic Board meetings, so that KMEP can pre-examine the decisions that SELEP will make, so delegates are informed of the local KMEP position. It is regrettable that this will limit the time for KMEP to discuss other topics.
- Douglas Horner spoke positively about Chris Brodie's suggestion to have special delegates at SELEP. Douglas Horner was a member of several boards which had adopted a similar approach successfully.
- Douglas Horner shared his perspective as a business leader. He felt the underlying matter of importance is to foster trust. SELEP, unlike its predecessor SEEDA, is not a government agency but a partnership. For a partnership to work there must be trust. Douglas Horner did not think that businesses seek dominance over councils, rather businesses are reliant on the councils for support. Businesses wish to work together in the KMEP and SELEP partnership to get the best deal for local residents and businesses. However, businesses would welcome a steer from councils about whether they feel they can trust SELEP to operate in a manner that will serve their constituents appropriately.
- Paul Barrett echoed Douglas Horner's comments, reiterating that he did not seek the additional responsibilities which the government had set. It was vitally important that councils are at the table when decisions are made. Being pragmatic, it sounds like a system can be created to ensure that business members reflect the view of KMEP, so he is minded to vote in favour of retaining SELEP.
- Chris Brodie confirmed that the Higher Education representative is viewed as a private sector partner.
- Chris Brodie said that the SELEP board members from the private sector would be selected by the federated boards. Geoff Miles said the onus is on the federated boards to ensure that the KMEP members that sit on the various SELEP boards represent the views of KMEP and are clear about their mandate.
- Peter Fleming strongly emphasised his concern that business members appointed to the LEP board will have to act by law in the interest of that company, and cannot be directed by another body to vote in a particular way. He did not believe that delegation could operate when the LEP becomes a company limited by guarantee, and the business members become Directors of the LEP.
- In response to these comments, Chris Brodie said directors must act on behalf of the company, but also act on behalf of the people that appointed them. If a director no longer acts on behalf of the people that appointed them, then it results in termination. Peter Fleming said that this would only work with shareholders, and KMEP are not shareholders in the SELEP structure. Chris Brodie said this is yet to be determined. Peter Fleming felt unwilling to vote in favour until this issue had been resolved.

- Jeremy Kite agreed that a Director is only accountable to the stakeholders or to the company. However, a solution can be found whereby a business member is removed from the KMEP board, and de facto from the SELEP board, if they do not support the KMEP mandate. All support would be removed from the business member.
- Paul Carter explained his belief that the Company Limited by Guarantee will be responsible for the pay and terms of the LEP staff, but that the Accountable Body will still remain Essex County Council. Paul Carter felt that there was a need to be pragmatic and redesign how the governance of SELEP works with the federated bodies.
- Geoff Miles made a personal statement that he will always stand by the mandate of KMEP.
- In response to Simon Cook's question, Chris Brodie confirmed that SELEP's Strategic Board currently has 28 members. Moving to 20 members would result in a reduction of four local authority leaders.
- The council leaders indicated their views, and then a vote of the whole KMEP board was taken.
- The question posed to the board was: Do you agree that the SELEP Chairman should write to the Government to confirm SELEP will comply with the board structure requirements (i.e. 20 board members, 5 co-opts, and 2/3 private sector representation)? This would be subject to delegation being incorporated into the KMEP and SELEP constitutions.
- 20 KMEP board members voted in favour, 0 KMEP board members abstained, and 4 KMEP board members voted against.
- Andrew Bowles sought confirmation that SELEP's Strategic Board meetings are open to the public and members of the press to attend. Chris Brodie confirmed this is the case, and all meetings are recorded with the audio available on the SELEP website.

#### **Item 5 – Transport for the South East (TfSE)**

- 5.1 The KMEP Chairman welcomed Rupert Clubb (Lead Officer for TfSE, and a Director at East Sussex County Council) to the meeting.
- 5.2 Rupert Clubb gave a presentation about Transport for the South East (TfSE), which is the local Sub-National Transport Body (STB). Comments he made included:
  - The Government has been clear that regional rebalancing is an important aspect of their agenda.
  - The South East has the highest GVA outside of London however, the per capita investment in major infrastructure in the South East lags behind other regions, such as the Northern Powerhouse and the Midlands.
  - The South East needs to act with one voice to maintain our strategic position as the Gateway for the country (as evidenced by the high volumes of goods travelling through the Ports of Dover and Southampton, etc).
  - The Cities and Devolution Act 2016 set out the role of the Sub-National Transport Bodies (STBs), which is to facilitate economic growth. The Secretary of State for Transport must have regard to the STBs.
  - Membership of TfSE includes 16 local highway authorities, 5 LEPs, 2 National Park Authorities, and 44 Boroughs and Districts.
  - The South East LEP has a seat on the Transport Forum for TfSE. Michael Payne, KCC's Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste, has a seat on TfSE.

- TfSE is recognised by DfT and has been granted £1m to develop strategy. It also receives subscriptions from constituent authorities.
- The current chairman of TfSE is Keith Glazier (who is the Leader of East Sussex County Council).
- TfSE has a small staff of 7.5FTE.
- TfSE's geography spans from Hampshire and Berkshire in the west, to Kent and Medway in the east.
- TfSE is working with Highways England on a collaborative approach to developing Road Investment Strategies.
- TfSE is seeking statutory recognition, to be able to have greater influence over the Secretary of State's plans for aviation, maritime, road and rail. Having this recognition will support TfSE to develop a Regional Transport Strategy with statutory force. TfSE is currently informally consulting local stakeholders on their views.
- TfSE is aiming to submit its proposal to become statutory to the Government in Autumn 2019. (Its draft proposal will be formally consulted on between May and July 2019).

5.3 The Chairman thanked Rupert Clubb for his presentation, and invited questions and comments from the KMEP board members. These included:

- Douglas Horner encouraged TfSE to fundamentally reappraise the South East's transport infrastructure for next 50 years.
- He gave a list of examples of current infrastructure that is at capacity (e.g. Heathrow) and infrastructure that has taken decades from its inception to build/completion, e.g.:
  - The M25 was mooted in 1960s, construction started in the 1970s, and completed in 1986, but within 20 years it was overwhelmed.
  - The Dartford Crossing was mooted in the 1930s; the Western Tunnel was built in 1963 and then overwhelmed; the Eastern Tunnel was built in the 1980s but then overwhelmed; the QEII Bridge was built in 1991 but then overwhelmed; and now the Lower Thames Crossing is proposed but is still nearly a decade away.
  - The M25, M20 and M2 are currently overwhelmed.
- He mentioned that the Commons' Select Committee has stated the M20 smart motorway is a flawed plan to add capacity.
- Between 2017 and 2037, Kent is asked to accommodate an additional 224,000 homes on top of the existing 788,000 houses (which is a 28% increase), with a pattern of development built around car dependency.
- Kent is the gateway to the UK, with increasing volumes of freight travelling through the Port of Dover.
- Nationally, traffic growth on the secondary road network is outstripping the growth on the motorway network by a third. Despite this, 18% of the secondary network across the UK is structurally unsound.
- Road growth is lagging behind traffic growth by 13:100.
- In addition, there are the issues of public transport, rail, sea and air.
- Douglas Horner concluded by asking TfSE to please take an active role in securing the bold and transformative infrastructure that is needed, both for now but also for the future.
- Rupert Clubb commented that the Transport Strategy will run to 2050.
- Gerry Clarkson echoed Douglas Horner's call for TfSE to be bold and visionary across a longer timeframe. High Speed 1 rail is already reaching capacity. Large transformative programmes of works must be considered now.

## Item 6 – Skills Presentation

6.1 The KMEP Chairman invited Paul Winter (Chairman of the Skills Commission) and Simon Cook (Principal of Mid-Kent College) to give their presentations to KMEP.

6.2 Comments made during Paul Winter’s presentation included:

- Paul Winter referred to the growing skills gap. 86% of businesses have found it difficult to recruit candidates with right skillset in Q4 of 2018. This is up from 70% in Q1 of 2008.
- Professional/managerial staff, and skilled manual/technical staff are the hardest to find, with 50% of businesses report a shortage in those categories.
- Part of the Government’s response to improve skills was to establish the Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) in 2015. The CEC’s role is help link schools and colleges to employers, in order to increase employer engagement for young people.
- The structure of the CEC is as follows:
  - CEC co-fund Enterprise Coordinators. These are trained professionals who work with clusters of 20 schools and colleges to build careers plans and make connections to local and national employers.
  - Each Enterprise Coordinator supports a group of senior business leaders, who have volunteered to act as an Enterprise Advisers.
  - The Enterprise Coordinator ideally wishes to allocate 1 or 2 Enterprise Advisers to each secondary school or college in their network.
  - These business leaders, that have volunteered to be an Enterprise Adviser, use their knowledge of the local business landscape to support the headteacher or careers team at their school to develop an effective careers plan and to create opportunities with their business contacts in the area for their school or college’s students.
- There have been two Enterprise Co-ordinators in Kent for a while, but the CEC has agreed to co-fund a further 4 Enterprise Co-ordinators that are being recruited currently.
- The key to making the system work in Kent, however is to find a further 60+ business leaders that will volunteer to be an Enterprise Adviser. Paul Winter asked any KMEP member interested in becoming an Enterprise Adviser to let him know, and to advertise the opportunity around their business networks.
- Given the changes at the CEC, the KMEP guilds are currently reflecting on their role and operation, and wish to come to a future KMEP board meeting with their proposal for the way forward. They would also like to prose to KMEP whether KMEP and the Guilds should be writing collectively to Government to ask for unspent apprenticeship levy to remain in the local area.

6.3 Comments made during Simon Cook’s presentation included:

- There has been much transformation in the FE sector over recent years, and now there are four college groups operating across twelve physical college sites in Kent and Medway (with a few further land-based sites). These four college groups are: North Kent College, Hadlow Group, Mid-Kent College, and East Kent College.
- The four colleges now come together to sit around the table and agree as a collective what they will do to transform the skills landscape. Their first joint strategic goal is “to ensure Kent FE is cohesively advocated and at the forefront of the post-16 education & skills strategy, development and delivery in Kent, the SE Region and nationally for post-16 learners.”

- Simon Cook shared some data to provide helpful context. There are:
  1. 600 schools in Kent and Medway, 120 secondary schools, 4 FE colleges and 4 Universities.
  2. Approximately 72,000 16-18 year olds in Kent and Medway.
  3. 60,000 adults studying (excluding Higher Education)
  4. 1,500 adults studying Higher Education in FE.
- Furthermore 19,000 of adults are apprentices; 10% of 16-18 year olds are apprentices; and 75% of 16-18 year olds are in full-time education.
- 57% of the 16-18 years olds that are in full-time education study at a school sixth form. Of these people, 80% will be studying A-level equivalent.
- 38% of the 16-18 years olds that are in full-time education study at a FE college. Of these people, over 50% are studying at level 2 or below (i.e. at GCSE level). Most young people at colleges are focussed at technical skills.
- The colleges have identified two key challenges:
  1. The value that individual place in education versus skills. Often people allow their own background to influence how much merit they place on academic education versus learning skills.
  2. Helping young people with careers guidance and explaining which pathway they should take to achieve their career ambitions. It is extremely difficult for careers advisers to keep up-to-date with the various options, given the face pace of change.
- An opportunity in Kent and Medway is working with employers and the councils' economic regeneration teams to collectively promote the options available.
- Another opportunity is commissioning the training of adults on roles of economic need. It will not be possible to fill the skills gap by focussing solely on 16-18year olds.
- A further opportunity is to look at how we can collectively commission apprenticeships locally, and simplify the market. There are many private providers from elsewhere in the UK who are not vested in the local results.

6.4 The Chairman thanked them for their presentations, and invited questions and comments from the KMEP board members. These included:

- Jane Ollis explained that on the television that evening is a programme called "We are the NHS". This is a campaign, filmed in East Kent, that focuses on recruiting people into non-medical roles in the NHS. The NHS is a large employer, actively seeking to attract people to work for it. She offered to support any of the four college principals to make connections with the appropriate NHS individuals.
- Paul Carter said do nothing is not an option. Improving Careers, Advice and Guidance must be a priority, as there are too many students receiving poor advice about potential career options and pathways. A particular concern is how students are treated when they do not achieve the necessary grades in English and Maths at GCSE level; anecdotes suggest a notable amount of these students leave school disillusioned at 16 years.
- Another priority must be to understand the impact of T-levels on the options available.
- Paul Carter suggested that skills sits more naturally in Economic Development.
- Richard Finn spoke about the productivity levels in Kent. He felt that Kent and Medway have a strategic issue if only 33% of 16 to 64 year olds have a level 4 qualification or above. He proposed that the historic approach of seeking recruits with traditional skills no longer suffices. Employers require recruits who are agile and are able to adapt. Technology constantly transforms the job landscape, and people often have 5 to 6



difference careers in their lifetime. He urged KMEP to consider how students can be encouraged to have leadership and management skills.

- Miranda Chapman spoke about the work she is doing with Brockhill Academy, who are working on the curriculum, and offered to tell the presenters more about this outside of the meeting.
- Simon Cook said that there is a list of guides for businesses about how they can help support the skills agenda. Simon Cook promised to circulate that information via email.

## Item 7 – Network Update by Highways England & Operation Brock

7.1 The KMEP Chairman welcomed Chris Welby-Everard and John Kerner of Highways England to the meeting.

7.2 Comments made included:

- Chris Welby-Everard introduced himself. He works on major capital projects in the region (excluding the Lower Thames Crossing).
- John Kerner introduced himself and explained that he is Highway England's Special Projects Director for the Regional Investment Programme; he is leading the implementation of Operation Brock.
- Chris Welby-Everard explained that the Kent Corridor was a priority in RIS 1 (Road Investment Strategy One).
- RIS 1 targeted specific hotspots and took a broader view across the wider corridors (for example, looking at the roll out of smart motorways).
- RIS 2 will differ to RIS 1, as it will look much further ahead to the future.
- The brochure "Connecting the Country" was circulated ([https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/666876/Connecting\\_the\\_country\\_Planning\\_for\\_the\\_long\\_term.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/666876/Connecting_the_country_Planning_for_the_long_term.pdf))
- Chris Welby-Everard gave an overview of the projects that are underway across Kent; these include:
  - Converting M20 J2-5 into a Smart Motorway: The works in the motorway verge are scheduled to take place between July 2018 to Mar 2019; the works in the central reserve will take place between March 2019 and December 2019. The full scheme is due to be completed in March 2020.
  - M20 J10a Junction Improvement: The works started in January 2018. There is a current road closure for bridge replacement in 2019. The end of the works are planned for Summer 2020.
  - Operation Brock: This affects Junction 8 (Maidstone) and Junction 9 (Ashford). Operation Brock will be ready to use in March 2019, and is the planned traffic management system in the event of a no-deal Brexit.
  - M2 and A2 Operations: There are various works underway on slip roads at each junction. These works are ongoing until March 2019.
- He then moved onto outline the road investment priorities for the near future:
  - A2 Bean and Ebbsfleet Junction Improvements: This scheme is progressing through the planning process. More information available at: <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/a2-bean-and-ebbsfleet-junction-improvements/>
  - M2 Junction 5: The work is due to start in 2020 with the scheme opening to traffic in 2021. More information available at: <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/m2-junction-5-improvements/>

- Lower Thames Crossing: The Development Consent Order will be applied for in 2019, with construction due to begin in 2021/22. More information available at: <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/lower-thames-crossing-home/>
- Managing freight traffic in Kent: A consultation was undertaken in 2019 to consider the options. More information is available at: <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/solutions-to-operation-stack-managing-freight-traffic-in-kent/>
- Chris Welby-Everard described the recent changes that had been made at Highways England, which is now highly regulated. Highways England also now produce Route Strategies that take a much more holistic approach to planning.
- John Kerner explained that Operation Brock was directed by the DfT to avoid the need for Operation Stack. It provides the Kent Resilience Forum with an option, rather than having to close the motorway.
- Highways England have completed any construction work that was required on the M20 and the M26 in advance of Operation Brock being utilised. The Highways England workforce and equipment (including the barrier) are on standby, ready to be deployed as necessary. It is the Department of Transport that will direct Highways England to deploy Operation Brock.

7.3 The Chairman thanked Highways England for his presentation, and invited questions and comments from the KMEP board members. These included:

- Peter Fleming asked if Kent Police could overrule the use of the M26 for Operation Brock. John Kerner confirmed that Kent Police is the Gold Commander, so can overrule. He agreed that the M26 is the last section of the Operation Brock plan that would be brought into use.
- Douglas Horner asked how many days it would take to deploy the Operation Brock barrier once notified by the DfT. John Kerner said there is a works package, which is not just the barrier, but also includes some re-markings and some crossovers to implement the contraflow. Highways England are scheduling four weeks to implement this works package (this includes some contingency built in for unforeseen issues like bad weather).
- Geoff Miles asked if the barrier was therefore an active, moveable barrier or static. John Kerner said, for the M20 element, once the barrier is deployed, it has an active and inactive state. The inactive state allows the coastbound carriageway to run in the same way it is running currently. The London bound carriageway would have a steel barrier between lanes 1 and 2, and would allow traffic to run either side of it. When Operation Brock is activated, that is when the contraflow system would come into play, which would give Highways England a controlled zone for lorry traffic going to Eurotunnel and the Port of Dover on the coastbound carriageway. Then, on the London-bound carriageway, there would be a dual carriageway flow of vehicles going in either direction, and maintaining access to all junctions.
- John Kerner confirmed that it would be a few hours to implement this, as Highways England would have to unshroud signs and move crossover barriers. Geoff Miles advocated for considering electronic signs in future to reduce the time lag from Operation Brock being activated, and then implemented.
- Barbara Cooper spoke of the totally integrated plan that involves multi-agency partners (such as Highways England, Kent County Council, and the Police). She spoke about the trigger points when traffic volumes exceed set levels, which results in the next stage of the plan being implemented.

- Miranda Chapman spoke as an employer that lived in East Kent, but travels daily to Mid-Kent where her firm is based. She asked about the modelling scenarios that Highways England have used, and how much disruption she should expect after March. Highways England said different multi-agency partners had different models, but the only time that Highways England would expect to enact Operation Brock is if there is a backlog of vehicles wanting to cross the channel, and the Police did not feel it was safe to maintain the queues on the network.
- Barbara Cooper said that, due to need to plan proactively, Kent County Council is working on a scenario that assumes 12 weeks of disruption. This may not be eventual outcome (it could be longer or shorter, as this is an unprecedented situation), but allows planning to occur.
- Paul Carter commented that this system is not only required because of Brexit, but to prevent the situation of 2015 when Operation Stack had to be deployed for 31 days, and caused significant costs and inconvenience to a large part of the UK economy, and to local residents. Also, once Kent is holding 11,500 to 12,000 lorries, then lorries will be stopped from entering Kent.
- Michael Payne said the main difference between Operation Brock and Operation Stack is one is a planned response, and one is reactive.
- Paul Barrett asked about enforcement; last time when Operation Stack was in force, HGVs chose to use the secondary road network inappropriately. Barbara Cooper said Kent County Council will use temporary traffic orders to put weight restrictions of 7.5 tonnes on many of the roads, but the Council is reliant on the police to enforce the rules from day one to ensure compliance. The Police are receiving extra resources to support this.
- Kent County Council is also considering with its partners how they can support local suppliers, so they do not get placed at the back of the queue.

#### **Item 8 – Forthcoming decisions on Local Growth Funding to be taken by SELEP**

- 8.1 The KMEP Chairman invited Lee Burchill to give their presentation to KMEP. Comments made included:
- The SELEP Strategic Board made two key decisions in December 2018. Firstly, the LGF funding allocation will be withdrawn from any project that has not been granted full business case approval by the Accountability Board by 12<sup>th</sup> April 2019. Secondly, any LGF projects that are rated red must come forward with a positive delivery programme by June 2019 that outlines that the LGF can be spent by March 2021.
  - The SELEP Investment Panel will meet on 8 March 2019 to prioritise the LGF3b projects.
  - Fort Halsted project is still a key scheme, but will not be able to bring forward a full business case by 12<sup>th</sup> April due to government slippages in vacating the site. This means it cannot spend the LGF and be delivered by March 2021.
- 8.2 Gerry Clarkson spoke about the A28 Chart Road LGF Programme, and that he would be speaking to Government colleagues shortly to try and resolve the issues affecting the project. It is a vitally important scheme for Ashford.
- 8.3 The Chairman asked the KMEP Board Members to note that the Fort Halstead scheme will not come forward within the timescales of the Growth Deal, and thus to agree to propose to the SELEP Accountability Board that the project be removed from the Kent and Medway LGF programme. This approval was granted by the Board.

## Item 9 – AOB

- 9.1 Sarah Nurden (KMEP Strategic Programme Manager) notified Board Members that the National Infrastructure Commission Chairman and a fellow Commissioner wish to visit Kent and Medway on 19 March to discuss infrastructure priorities. The Board agreed to host a visit.
- 9.2 The Chairman congratulated Paul Barrett on being awarded a MBE in the 2019 New Year Honours List for services to fundraising and the community in Canterbury, Kent.

DRAFT MINUTES

## **FOR INFORMATION ITEM A**

**Subject:** Future Meeting Dates for KMEP and SELEP

---

### **KMEP Board Meeting Dates**

The next Kent & Medway Economic Partnership meeting date is:

- Mon 25 March 2019 – Village Hotel, Maidstone
- Tuesday 25 June 2019 – Village Hotel, Maidstone
- Tuesday 24 September 2019 – Village Hotel, Maidstone
- Tuesday 26 November 2019 – Hilton Hotel, Maidstone
- Tuesday 28 January 2020 – Hilton Hotel, Maidstone
- Tuesday 17 March 2020 – Hilton Hotel, Maidstone

Each meeting starts at 5pm and finishes at 7pm.

### **SELEP Strategic Board Meeting Dates**

The SELEP Strategic Board meeting dates are:

- Friday 22 March 2019
- Friday 28 June 2019
- Friday 4 October 2019
- Friday 6 December 2019
- Friday 20 March 2020

All meetings will be held at High House Production Park and start at 10am.

### **SELEP Accountability Board Meeting Dates**

The future SELEP Accountable Board meeting dates are:

- Friday 15 February 2019
- Friday 12 April 2019
- Friday 7 June 2019
- Friday 13 September 2019
- Friday 15 November 2019
- Friday 14 February 2020

All meetings will be held at High House Production Park and start at 10am.

### **SELEP Investment Panel**

**The SELEP Investment Panel will meet on 8 March 2019.**