

SELEP Strategic Board Meeting

Minutes of 25th October 2018 meeting (DRAFT)

Attending	Company	Representing
Chris Brodie	Chair	
Adam Bryan	Managing Director	
Graham Peters	Vice Chairman for East Sussex	East Sussex – Business
Clive Soper	Federation of Small Businesses	East Sussex – Business
Ana Christie	Sussex Chamber of Commerce	East Sussex - Business
Cllr Rupert Simmons (for Cllr Keith Glazier)	East Sussex County Council	East Sussex – Local Authority
Cllr David Tutt	Eastbourne Borough Council	East Sussex – Local Authority
Cllr Peter Chowney	Hastings Borough Council	East Sussex – Local Authority
George Kieffer	Vice Chairman for Essex and South Essex	Essex – Business
David Burch	Essex Chambers of Commerce	Essex – Business
David Rayner	Birkett Long	Essex – Business
Colette Bailey	Metal	South Essex – Business
Perry Glading	Opportunity South Essex	South Essex – Business
Cllr Rob Gledhill	Thurrock Council	South Essex – Local Authority
Cllr John Lamb	Southend on Sea Borough Council	South Essex – Local Authority
Cllr Graham Butland	Braintree District Council	Essex – Local Authority
Cllr Chris Whitbread	Epping Forest District Council	Essex – Local Authority
Cllr Gagan Mohindra (for Cllr Kevin Bentley)	Essex County Council	Essex – Local Authority
Geoff Miles	Vice Chairman for Kent and Medway	Kent – Business
Jo James	Kent Invicta Chamber	Kent – Business
Douglas Horner	Kent and Medway Economic Partnership	Kent – Business
Paul Thomas	DLS Limited	Kent – Business
Cllr Martin Cox (for Cllr Peter Fleming)	Sevenoaks District Council	Kent – Local Authority
Cllr Mark Dance (for Cllr Paul Carter)	Kent County Council	Kent – Local Authority
Cllr Rodney Chambers	Medway Council	Kent – Local Authority
Monica Illsley (for Prof Anthony Forster)	University of Essex	Higher Education

Apologies received	Cllr Paul Carter, Cllr Kevin Bentley, Cllr Keith Glazier, Cllr Peter Fleming, Cllr Simon Cook, Graham Razey, Penny Shimmin, Anthony Forster
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1. Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1. Chris Brodie welcomed board members and observers to the meeting.

2. Minutes and Actions from 29 June 2018 and 28 September 2018 meeting, Matters Arising and Declarations of Interest

- 2.1. The minutes of both meetings were agreed.

Matters Arising – Declarations of Interest

- 2.2. There were no declarations of interest raised.

Matters Arising – Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) Route Consultation

- 2.3. Adam Bryan highlighted to the Board that the statutory consultation on the LTC had been launched on 10 October 2018 and would run until 20 December 2018. The Director of the LTC team, Tim Jones, is scheduled to attend the next Board meeting on 7 December 2018.
- 2.4. Adam reminded the Board that SELEP would be looking to respond to the consultation.
- 2.5. Cllr Rob Gledhill, Thurrock Council, asked to speak first on this subject. Cllr Gledhill clearly stated that Thurrock remained opposed to the LTC and that Thurrock Council was considering launching a judicial review, challenging the process, and there would be a meeting next week within the Council to discuss this. Cllr Gledhill outlined for Thurrock it was not just about the proposed option or format which they strongly object to, it was also about issues which had been excluded. For example, the issue with access from and to the eastbound junction from the A13 which would lead to increased congestion for the local area. Cllr Gledhill expressed the view that for Thurrock Council the benefit of the current LTC format, for local growth and businesses, was negligible. Cllr Gledhill would be writing to everyone in SELEP outlining these issues in detail and wanted to in order to make it clear to SELEP again (he noted that he had shared Thurrock's views before) and that Thurrock Council would remain strongly opposed to the LTC as proposed.
- 2.6. Cllr John Lamb, Southend Borough Council, informed the Board of a conversation with Highways England regarding the LTC consultation, and Southend Council's view that the proposed route was in the wrong place and they supported colleagues in Thurrock with this view. Cllr Lamb acknowledged that Thurrock had made their opposition to the LTC proposal frequently in these meetings and other forums. Though, from Southend's perspective, the feeling was 'we were where we were' and if it was the route in the consultation which will happen, then attention should be given to a fourth crossing if the south east generally and South Essex is going to get the growth needed. Cllr Lamb stressed that Southend's view was that discussion and planning for the fourth crossing needed to start now, including options for a multi-modal crossing.
- 2.7. Cllr Mohindra, Essex County Council, outlined that from Essex's perspective, they understood it was a critical programme, and whilst not necessarily happy with the fine detail, and aware of Thurrock's objection as Cllr Gledhill has shared at Board meetings on many occasions, ECC's view was that it did provide businesses with confidence in the road infrastructure.
- 2.8. Cllr Rodney Chambers, Medway Council, noted that Cllr Gledhill and Thurrock had been consistent in their views with the Board about the proposed LTC and understood the strength of feeling. Cllr Chambers stated that he welcomed the consultation and noted that it was refreshing to see that the programme was keeping to schedule and on target for the specified end date. Cllr Chambers noted that while he understood Thurrock's position, from Medway's perspective they felt it could only bring major relief to Dartford.
- 2.9. Cllr Graham Butland, Braintree District Council, spoke about liaising with Transport East, and how he had found this helpful and noted that it felt Government was beginning to take more notice of them. While they were not coterminous with the SELEP area, they are useful partners to engage with on the LTC issue.

Matters Arising: LGF3b

- 2.10. Adam Bryan informed the Board that KMEP met on 18 October 2018 and resolved to remove their paper with the recommendation concerning underspends and LGF3b. This was the reason the item on the draft agenda relating to LGF3b was now not on the agenda for today's meeting. Adam Bryan noted that a report on LGF3b would be coming to the December Strategic Board meeting.

Matters Arising: in response to Cllr Kevin Bentley's question relating to the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and the associated costs at the last Strategic Board meeting

- 2.11. Adam Bryan outlined that the original budget agreed for this piece of work was £70,000, which would increase to £112,286 if you equated 50% of the former Strategy Manager's time (including all on-costs and contributions) to the calculation.
- 2.12. Adam went on to explain that that two commissions had been undertaken to date of £35,880 and £14,150, that £3,133 had been spent on room hire and equipment. Adding 50% of the full salary costs to this (£42,286) put the work at £95,449. The variance being £16,837 under budget.

3. LEP Review

- 3.1. **Chris Brodie introduced the item on the LEP review.** He outlined to the Board his understanding around LEPs which did not fully comply with the LEP Review requirements could prejudice their entitlement to a share in the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (which would come on stream from 2021) and other funds. Chris Brodie had been expecting a letter from the Government on this point, though he had not received one to date.
- 3.2. **Chris Brodie outlined the position regarding the geography element of the LEP review,** and the submission made in September. From his conversations with Government, he felt that there was no suggestion of a merger for SELEP with another LEP. Chris Brodie stated that based on the current information he was confident the geography for SELEP would remain as it was.
- 3.3. Chris Brodie noted that there was still a question regarding overlaps between LEP areas. As the Board was aware, for SELEP there were two areas in this position. The first was the overlap with Greater Cambridgeshire and Peterborough in terms of Uttlesford which included Stansted. Given there was a Mayor for the combined Greater Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area, Chris Brodie indicated that resolving this would be a conversation between himself and the Mayor.
- 3.4. The second area was Lewes which included Newhaven Enterprise Zone. The Coast to Capital LEP had made a strong economic case for Newhaven's inclusion in their area. Chris Brodie also stated that the idea of 'losing' the county town of East Sussex, if it were to happen, would be difficult for SELEP to contemplate. He drew a conclusion by stating that there was a strong case linking Lewes with rest of the SELEP area. Chris Brodie outlined that the Government's expectation was that the issue would be resolved locally through a conversation with the C2C chair.
- 3.5. Graham Peters, TES Chair, informed the Board that conversations had already marginally started with Lewes District Council though now was the time to start the conversation in earnest.
- 3.6. Cllr David Tutt, Eastbourne Borough Council, said that it would be helpful for SELEP to prioritise the Newhaven Enterprise Zone.
- 3.7. Cllr Rupert Simmons, East Sussex County Council, spoke about the County Council leading in conjunction with Lewes District Council on a significant investment programme which was starting now and that it would be incoherent to remove Lewes from SELEP at this time.
- 3.8. Graham Peters informed the Board that he would be phoning Cllr Andy Smith, Leader of Lewes DC, this afternoon.
- 3.9. Chris Brodie noted that having greater clarity on geography would be helpful.
- 3.10. **Chris Brodie introduced the next element of the LEP review item. He reminded the Board about the need for an agreed response to the Government by Wednesday 31 October 2018.** Chris Brodie gave his sense of the current situation. He advised that it was the start of a negotiation and it was helpful to be responsive and to make every effort to comply where the Board felt it could. Although Chris

Brodie outlined that he wanted to make it clear that he was a firm believer in the federal model which provided for getting close to local issues and brings them to the fore. Therefore, Chris Brodie made it clear to the Board that if he felt at any point that the federal model was being diluted then the Board might have to look for a new Chair. Chris Brodie expressed that SELEP had found a way of making things work and he wanted to preserve as much as possible of this as it allowed SELEP to serve its stakeholders, communities and local businesses well.

- 3.11. Cllr John Lamb welcomed Chris Brodie's comments. Cllr Lamb noted that there might be a need for some compromises though it was important that the Board was also clear on 'red lines'. Cllr Lamb stressed that federated areas were working well and while they should be prepared to listen to the Government, as a Board it was important to be clear and agree on the 'red lines'.
- 3.12. Adam Bryan introduced the presentation on LEP Review, which summarised the proposed response to the Government. Adam Bryan emphasised that this was based on conversations with partners across SELEP. He noted that there was a lot that SELEP could go back to the Government on with regard to positive responses and was in a good position to provide what was being asked for.
- 3.13. **Recommendation 1: Produce Annual Delivery Plan and end of year report.**
Adam Bryan stated that SELEP already had an approach for the Annual Delivery Plan which could be built on.
- 3.14. **Recommendation 2: Consult widely and transparently before appointing Chair and Deputy Chair**
Adam Bryan stated that SELEP's approach to appointment of Chair was already transparent although there was more which could be done in order to develop the process further and to demonstrate how transparent and exhaustive SELEP intended to be.
- 3.15. **Recommendation 3: Introduce defined term limits for Chair and Deputy Chair**
Adam Bryan noted that in June 2018 the Board agreed for all Board members to have two-year renewable terms. The proposal was to have 2+2+2-year terms.
- 3.16. **Recommendation 4: Private sector must represent 2/3 of the Board. Maximum board size of 20**
Adam Bryan noted that the proposal was to retain the status quo.
- 3.17. **Recommendation 5: Improve gender balance and representation of those with protected characteristics**
Adam Bryan noted that the Board could demonstrate a commitment to this and could look to achieve gender balance sooner than the Government's requirement of 2023.
- 3.18. **Recommendation 6: Provide a secretariat independent of local government**
Adam Bryan explained that this included for example not having a LEP director who had a permanent position within a Local Authority and was seconded into the LEP post. This was not the position for SELEP. As outlined in the report, the SELEP director did not report to Essex County Council, rather the arrangement was based on 'pay and rations'. Therefore, the proposal was to remain as it is.
- 3.19. **Recommendation 7: Should have a legal personality**
Adam Bryan advised that the proposal was to pursue this on the basis that standards of transparency and the federal model were maintained. He further advised the Board that to move towards achieving this by 2019, based on advice obtained so far, felt difficult. Therefore, the proposal was that given the advice and following a decision made by the Government on the LEP review response it would take approximately nine months to prepare for and move to a legal personality status.
- 3.20. **Recommendation 8: Identify a single Accountable Body**
Adam Bryan noted that some LEPs did not have a single Accountable Body. However, SELEP did. He advised that Chris Brodie would be asking Essex County Council if they would be willing to continue in the role for at least the duration of the LEP review.
- 3.21. **Recommendation 9: Hold an Annual General Meeting open to the public.**
Adam Bryan noted that this was the case already. He stated that meetings were held in public, a forward plan for the Accountability Board had been put in place and SELEP was clear about future agenda items for the Strategic Board.
- 3.22. **Recommendation 10: Set out exactly who is accountable for spending decisions**

Adam Bryan outlined that this was set out in the Assurance Framework and would be reviewed taking into account the Assurance Framework refresh and the LEP review.

- 3.23. Recommendation 11: Ensure external scrutiny and expert oversight, inc. local government scrutiny**
Adam Bryan outlined that there was an external scrutiny already in place, with all decisions of the Accountable Board being subject to Local Authority call-in. Adam Bryan, and other SELEP representatives, had attended Economic Growth and Planning committees of local authorities when invited, and were happy to do so in the future. Adam Bryan highlighted that there could be an anomaly, with LEPs being mutated into a private company, therefore there was a need to ensure that scrutiny arrangements were perfectly articulated and that the Board was satisfied that the current levels of scrutiny were at least maintained, and further embellished.
- 3.24. Adam Bryan spoke to slide 3 of the presentation, describing the **current Board composition** and noting that clarification had been provided by the Government confirming that Further Education (FE) should be considered as non-public sector. Adam Bryan also noted that over the life of SELEP, the Board had reduced from 46 to 28 members. From conversations with partners across SELEP the feeling was that the current 28 was representative of the area, with Federated Boards having extensive engagement with businesses and local authority partners.
- 3.25. Adam Bryan spoke to slide 4 of the presentation, which outlined the **Board composition based on the current members plus two more business members**. At a meeting with the Cities and Local Growth Unit on Monday 22 October 2018 a question was posed, ‘what was more important to Government, Board numbers or ratio?’ The response in that meeting was ratio. Therefore, Adam Bryan shared an option which could increase the percentage of private sector members, by adding two more business representatives. Adam Bryan stated that this was not the option being recommended to the Board.
- 3.26. Adam Bryan summarised that for most of the recommendations, SELEP was in a strong position, and did better than most LEPs. Following the summary he handed over to Chris Brodie for a further discussion around the legal personality, Board composition and Accountable Body.
- 3.27. Chris invited comments from Board members before moving onto points regarding legal personality and Board composition.**
- 3.28. Jo James noted that on the slides the proposed date for the Board to agree a refreshed Assurance Framework was March 2019. She stated that given the proposed timeline for the legal entity work stream, she thought that it might be better to move the March 2019 date back. She further noted that at the last meeting there had been agreement that the diversity question was an important one, and as such the pool of people which the Board could draw from should be widened, appointing the right person with appropriate skill set should also be taken into consideration.
- 3.29. Cllr Gagan Mohindra confirmed that Essex County Council (ECC) was happy to remain as the Accountable Body for the duration of the LEP review. Chris Brodie thanked ECC for this. Additionally, Cllr Gagan Mohindra shared that Epping Forest District Council broadcasted all public meetings via webcast in order to ensure transparency. He added that this might be something SELEP would want to consider in the future.
- 3.30. David Rayner commented that in terms of the £200k request for funding, it could be a suggestion not to put in an exact £200k figure. David Rayner also added that in terms of diversity, there needed to be an emphasis on private and public sector representation from Federated Boards.
- 3.31. David Rayner emphasised that in the response to Government it was important to be clear where SELEP was exceeding and setting tough targets for ‘themselves’. David Rayner stated that the terms of 2+2+2 years needed to relate to both private and public sector. He thought that it would also be helpful to add something into the recommendation regarding scrutiny, for example additional ‘checks and balances’ made by the Federated Boards.
- 3.32. Colette Bailey raised a point regarding diversity and the comment made at the last meeting around ‘the best person for the job’. She stated that she couldn’t recall the Board discussing diversity at the

last meeting or agreeing on it. Colette Bailey stressed that there were many issues relating to diversity, for example the nuances of a pipeline, how people arrived to be invited or apply for positions. Colette Bailey noted that there was not a person specification for a member on this Board and any of the Federated Boards. She stated that the draft response included strong responses on majority of the areas, including Board composition, but the response on diversity was weak. It did not have the same language or detail, there was no roadmap for how the actions would be achieved. Colette Bailey outlined that the Board should be serious about diversity and should ensure that a roadmap was put in place. Colette Bailey pointed out that the diversity response should receive equal attention to the other points discussed, for example geography, public and private sector ratios.

- 3.33. Chris Brodie supported Colette Bailey's comments.
- 3.34. Cllr Chambers stated that he had been a Board member since day 1 and he agreed with Cllr Lamb's statement on 'red lines', that there should be no reduction in the role and influence of local authorities. Cllr Chamber stated he supported the proposal to maintain the current Board composition and size. Cllr Chambers felt that any reductions in the Board size would impact on local authority representation. He welcomed comments regarding the retention of the federal model, as he felt it had contributed towards the success of SELEP. Cllr Chambers stated that on the basis of what had been discussed at the meeting he was supportive of the response back to Government. However, he stated that if there was an imposed model for the LEP he would have to seriously consider whether he would want to be part of it. Chris Brodie commented that he was in full agreement with all of Cllr Chamber's comments.
- 3.35. Clive Soper stated that he supported the point made by local authorities. He said that it was important to reach out to the public, and while recordings were helpful, he would not expect members of the public to be waiting on a recording to be uploaded. He thought that by inviting press to meetings the SELEP could reach out to a wider audience. He explained that the Board's view around scrutiny was only one perspective and SELEP needed to consider other ways in order to reach out to the wider public, for example by inviting Kent press to meetings were decisions were being made that would significantly affect the area and by providing relevant information to news agencies.
- 3.36. George Kieffer shared his view from a business perspective, and explained that as trust had developed between partners, SELEP had learnt how to effectively collaborate. George Kieffer stressed that he felt that it was important to have district council representation around the table.
- 3.37. Graham Peters outlined that in terms of oversight, it was important to note that external experts were also engaged.
- 3.38. **Chris Brodie moved on to the legal entity recommendation and proposed response.** He outlined the key points about incorporation, including when a company incorporates it gains the benefit of a limited company – including limiting liabilities. Whereas, being in an unincorporated association, there was unlimited risk.
- 3.39. Douglas Horner stated that he was not aware SELEP was an incorporated partnership; his understanding was that SELEP was an unincorporated association. Chris Brodie confirmed that Douglas Horner's understanding was correct.
- 3.40. David Rayner, invited by Chris Brodie, gave an overview of incorporated versus unincorporated association. David Rayner confirmed, as Chris Brodie had stated, that currently SELEP had unlimited liabilities, for example if someone wanted to take action against LEP this could be for an unlimited amount. Though he noted that practically this would be more likely to be directed towards a Local Authority, as an insured body. Incorporated status via a limited company would bring limited liabilities and with that liability insurance for directors. Graham Peters stated that in his opinion comprehensive advice would be required to directors, which would need to be separate to the advice regarding incorporation.

- 3.41. Chris Brodie outlined that in his position as Chair of the Student Loans Company, he had a 'letter of comfort' from Government, stating that he would not be directly liable for losses, assuming that there had been no illegal intent / actions. Chris Brodie invited Kim Cole to comment. Kim Cole responded that the comments regarding unlimited liabilities were correct, though noted that this liability sat with the Accountable Body, and there was insurance to mitigate this.
- 3.42. Douglas Horner stated he would value a risk analysis of being put into an incorporated form. Cllr Chambers expressed concern of the risk of diluting Local Authority influence. From a business point of view Douglas Horner expressed that he does not wish for Local Authority influence to be reduced, as the experience of this sector was needed, for example in negotiating with Government and applying for funds.
- 3.43. **Chris Brodie sought views on the Board composition proposed response.**
- 3.44. Cllr Rupert Simmons outlined how the Local Authorities have undertaken a number of roles to facilitate the partnership, including executing the Local Growth Fund, which had been dependent on the six upper tier authorities taking a financial risk. The actions of these local authorities had ensured the programmes were executed. Cllr Simmons passed his compliments on to Essex County Council as the Accountable Body. He went on to ask, why would a business person want to give excessive amounts of time and open themselves to risk? He also noted that the time given by Vice Chairs was already growing. Cllr Simmons stated that businesses were facing vulnerability in the economy, and why would a leader of such a business chose to give his/her time, and mind away from his/her own predicament. He concluded by saying that the Government must not take business leaders generosity for granted, and that SELEP has enjoyed business expertise at the table for many years. He further added that the status quo had been ironed out over eight years. Chris Brodie supported these comments, noting that he had seen this in other fields too.
- 3.45. Chris Brodie invited further comments on incorporation. He noted that there were a range of other issues, for example expense, time, effort and that the 'devil was in the detail'.
- 3.46. Jo James commented that it was a key to retain the federal model, and it could be helpful to elaborate on the term. Jo James stated Government had at times not been so clear on what was meant by the federated model. Chris Brodie responded that at the beginning of the year, he would have agreed that the model had not been so clear to the Government. Although now he no longer had concerns that the Government did not have sufficient understanding. He concluded that currently the Government seemed sympathetic to the federal model. Chris Brodie reiterated that in going down the legal entity route, it was essential for SELEP to keep the federated model.
- 3.47. David Rayner noted that with legal entity there would be 'knock on' costs which SELEP did not have now.
- 3.48. Cllr Mark Dance stated that he supported the comments being made and firmly agreed with the strong position on the federal model. Cllr Dance commented that it would be interesting to consider how SELEP had done to date: in terms of the size of investment across the area. Chris Brodie commented that there was a need to continue to make the case for SELEP time and time again, including MPs understanding and supporting the case.
- 3.49. David Rayner, for the Essex Business Board, stated that they favoured the two thirds business and one third public sector split in terms of Board composition, though they supported the proposal in the paper i.e. maintaining the status quo, and supported the federal model. David Rayner also added that it was important for SELEP Board papers to be issued in a timely fashion in advance of the meeting and in his view they should be out at least two weeks before the meeting.
- 3.50. David Burch commented that while it would be desirable to have the papers two weeks in advance of the meeting, he would prefer to have timely good quality information rather than lots of subsequent updates to papers.
- 3.51. Cllr Peter Chowney asked whether the Board want to consider 3+3 year Board terms, rather than 2+2+2.

- 3.52. George Kieffer, as a chair of a housing association, shared this experience of imposing a maximum term of nine years, 3+3 +1+1+1 (with the last three years as exceptions), which allowed the Board to be refreshed in an orderly manner.
- 3.53. Abigail Cunliffe-Hall, from the Cities and Local Growth Unit, was invited to comment from the Government's perspective. Abigail Cunliffe-Hall commented that a nine-year term as a maximum might be against the spirit of the Government proposals.
- 3.54. **The Board moved on to discuss the recommendation regarding diversity of the Board.** Chris Brodie proposed 60/40 male / female ratio commitment. Chris Brodie spoke about his experience while on the Board of the University of Sussex and that with determination it was possible to achieve such ratios and it was important to reflect the communities served, across all groups and all protected characteristics.
- 3.55. Monica Illsley, from the University of Essex, supported Chris Brodie's comment, stating that at her time at the university she had seen a change taking place. Monica Illsley said she would be happy to share her learning experience with the Board.
- 3.56. Cllr Mohindra stated that it was important that the Board was reflective of those it served.
- 3.57. Cllr Simmons stated he supported the proposed 60/40 gender balance. However, he noted from his experience, at a company by limited guarantee, they had tried to achieve a 50/50 gender balance and found it difficult. Cllr Simmonds then provided various examples why he thought this was the case. Cllr Simmonds posed what would happen if the Board did not succeed in two years time to achieve the proposed ratio. He noted that he would be reluctant to set a target if it were to then make an imposition on the effectiveness of the Board.
- 3.58. Colette Bailey stated that from testing and learning from experience, the Board would gain insight into the main barriers and could then adapt their plans accordingly.
- 3.59. David Burch commented that regarding disability, he did not see this as a barrier to running a business and SELEP should look for a business leader. David Burch also stated that it was important to consider the age range of Board members, for example many successful businesses were being run by younger people.
- 3.60. Cllr Peter Chowney supported the Chair's comments regarding diversity and that the Board was here to represent the people it served.
- 3.61. Jo James supported the comments about the many different areas of diversity, and that as a Board, it was important to look at these too. Jo James noted that some of the changes were about working through the Federated Boards and building from the 'grassroots'.
- 3.62. Paul Thomas shared his view with the Board and in particular about getting more women into the construction industry. He expressed a worry that the construction industry might not be represented on the Board in the short term, if the drive was to engage more women and currently the industry struggled with getting women through the door. He noted that in the longer term current initiatives to attract more women into the industry would should make this less of an issue.
- 3.63. Cllr Graham Butland stated that there was a need to ask whom was the Board aiming to be representative of and he expressed that he was a little bit worried if it was trying to represent society, as that was about democracy.
- 3.64. Cllr Peter Chowney suggested that for the authority he represented, the deputy leader was a female, and just as able and competent as him and for example she could join the Board rather than him.
- 3.65. **Chris Brodie handed over to Adam Bryan to go through each recommendation - seeking Board approval to the response.**
- 3.66. **Recommendations 1 – 4, and 6 – 11. The Board APPROVED the responses.**
- 3.67. Recommendation 5, for the response to be rewritten considering the conversation at the Board meeting.
- 3.68. Adam Bryan summarised the position that overall Board members agreed with the draft paper and had approved the responses, noting:

- there needed to be tightening of the drafting
- factoring comments in from the conversation today
- a rewrite of the recommendation on diversity.

3.69. **It was AGREED that the revised version be circulated to the Board by e-mail, for information, before submitting it to the Government. This revised version would be shared with Board members on Monday 29 October 2018.**

3.70. Chris Brodie reiterated that Essex County Council was happy to continue as the Accountable Body and thanked them for this, and that the response as agreed with minor changes was all subject to conversations with officials.

4. Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)

- 4.1. Adam Bryan introduced the item, outlining that to get to this point there had been extensive consultation and that today was an opportunity to review a first draft of the SEP. Adam Bryan handed out hard copies of the report at the meeting. He explained that the proposed timetable was to allow material comments in the short term, then take it to the Federated Boards for discussion.
- 4.2. Adam Bryan introduced Ross Gill, who had brought the material and observations from the consultation together in order to produce the first draft.
- 4.3. Ross Gill outlined that the draft was based on consultation over the past year, and some more recent discussions with Federated Boards that took place over the last few weeks to confirm the findings.
- 4.4. Ross Gill noted that given the Government intention to publish Local Industrial Strategies (LIS) over the next year or so – it might be helpful to view the SEP as a bridging document, with a slightly adjusted status.
- 4.5. Ross Gill provided an overview of the evidence, for example growth challenges (with housing and population) and that productivity was in slight relative decline in recent years which was a cause for concern.
- 4.6. Ross Gill noted that the brief had been to produce a short document and therefore it had not been possible to add specific examples from across the patch as this would result in a much longer document. However, case studies, particularly from growth sectors, would be helpful.
- 4.7. Ross Gill welcomed comments from the Board.
- 4.8. David Rayner stated there had been insufficient consultation with the Essex Business (EBB) Board to date and they would welcome speaking to Ross Gill and he would be welcome to attend an EBB Board meeting.
- 4.9. Cllr Simmons said for him the most important factor was that of skills, needing to combine education factors across nine different sectors to grow skills. Cllr Simmons advocated that skills were as important as infrastructure, and it would be helpful for the report to reflect this.
- 4.10. Douglas Horner stated that he fully agreed with Cllr Simmons point. Douglas Horner also stated that it was important that SELEP through its Federated Boards took an interest in strategic spatial planning, as he was concerned about incremental development.

5. Any Other Business and Close

- 5.1. It was noted that there was a photographer in the room; it was a Communications Officer, Scott Morrow, from Thurrock Council.
- 5.2. There was no other business to discuss.

The meeting closed at 12.35.