



Attendees

AC	Ana Christie	Sussex Chamber of Commerce	KG	Cllr Keith Glazier (part)	East Sussex CC
BK	Beth King	Let's Do Business Group	ME	Martin Ellis	Recruitment South East
BS	Cllr Bob Standley	Wealden DC	MS	Martin Searle	FSB
CSO	Clive Soper	FSB	PSp	Peter Sharp	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC
CSw	Cllr Colin Swansborough	Eastbourne BC	PJ	Philip Johnson	Locate East Sussex
DSp	David Sheppard	D-RisQ Ltd	RD	Richard Dawson	East Sussex CC
DSy	Dan Shelley	East Sussex College Group	SB	Sue Baxter	University of Sussex
EW	Eloisa Whiteman	East Sussex CC	SD	Stewart Drew	De La Warr Pavilion
GP	Graham Peters (CHAIR)	ES Rural Partnership	SH	Simon Hubbard	Hastings BC
IG	Isabel Garden	Wealden DC	TL	Tony Leonard	Rother DC
JW	Jon Wheeler	East Sussex CC	ZG	Zoe Gordon	South East LEP

Apologies

AB	Adam Bryan	South East LEP	LR	Lisa Rawlinson	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC
CB	Cllr Christine Bayliss	Rother DC	PC	Cllr Peter Chowney	Hastings BC
DE	Dave Evans	East Sussex CC	PSm	Penny Shimmin	Sussex CDA
DT	Cllr David Tutt	Eastbourne BC	RS	Cllr Rupert Simmons	East Sussex CC
GM	Graham Marley	Let's Do Business Group	ZN	Cllr Zoe Nicholson	Lewes DC
JH	James Harris	East Sussex CC			

All of the papers and any presentations delivered at the meeting can be viewed on the following page of the ESCC website: <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/business/eastsussex/selep/tesminutes/tes200127/>

1. Welcome & introductions

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

2. Review of previous minutes (2 Dec 2019)

- 2.1. **GP** ran through the actions of the previous TES minutes.
- 2.2. For action 5.2 (information on SELEP Ltd liabilities and insurance), **GP** noted they were still awaiting detail on insurance for directors.
- 2.3. Action 5.4 (update to ToR and start recruitment process for vacant TES member position) is ongoing, as is 10.3 (future TES meeting to be held at Newhaven Enterprise Zone).
- 2.4. Action 9.2 (raise matter of 'lengthy EU projects approval') to be followed up by **ZG**.
- 2.5. The minutes were approved by the group as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)

- 3.1. **ZG** delivered a presentation on the draft *South East Local Industrial Strategy*. This most recent draft had taken on previous comments from the strategic board and federated boards, and a section has been developed on 'London and the Greater South East' to emphasise the area's connections to London, and the importance of the SELEP region to the Greater South East Economy. Currently working with nearby LEPs to build a common narrative for Southern LEPs.
- 3.2. Timelines have been relaxed by Government so there is no longer a hard deadline of 31 March for LIS completion; it is now anticipated there will be an early summer sign off, allowing for more time to have conversations with partners and Government. The evidence base is due to be presented to the Government Local Industrial Strategy Analytical (LISA) panel on 11 February.
- 3.3. TES members discussed the draft strategy and the following comments were made:
 - The executive summary needs to be far more punchy and attention-grabbing and draw out the three strategic objectives much more to illustrate what SELEP's true focus and intentions are, as this currently gets lost in addressing all the other parts. There would be benefit in having two or three big ideas that give specifics of what SELEP will be doing, as has been shown in several

other LIS strategies that have been produced thus far, which then engage certain Government departments.

- It was queried how 10% increase in skills base will be measured, and whether this is ambitious enough. There was also a query about how the ambitious targets of £28bn GVA growth by 2030 have been determined.
- With the additional time, it would be beneficial to follow up with other committees and others who have contributed to the LIS, in addition to the federated boards.
- The rural economy needs to be addressed in greater detail to illustrate the growth potential in the South East.
- On p29 under infrastructure – the importance of the strategic route of the A22 is not covered and this needs to be included, especially in light of the future growth plans in the Wealden district in particular on this growth corridor route.
- The emphasis on ‘proximity’ to London does not apply to many parts of East Sussex (and it was said parts of north Essex), that are not well connected to London as it takes two hours travel time. So while we might be close geographically to London, connectivity in places is poor.
- The case for digital connectivity and mobile has been made in the LIS and this is welcomed.
- There is little about working with all forms of utility firms (gas, elect, water) and Government with some form of ‘utilities taskforce’ to ensure planned development and investment strategies are aligned and brought forward in a timely manner to overcome existing barriers.
- There is a lack of any implementation plan or clear asks/commitments made in the LIS. Without these, there is little to manage it against, and in the current draft it is unclear how accountability for the delivery of the LIS will be ensured.
- There is a danger in associating ourselves too closely with ‘Greater South East’ that we are grouped in with far more prosperous counties, and the many ways in which we are distinct and less prosperous than them could be lost in this narrative.
- A clear identity, distinct and separate to London and the Greater South East, is necessary to communicate the importance of the SELEP Gateway to not only London and the Greater South East, but also to the North and the rest of the UK. Associating too closely with London and neighbouring counties detracts from the significant role the SELEP Gateway serves for the rest of the UK’s economy.
- While there is work being done with neighbouring LEPS, there is a need to understand how London is shaping its LIS, so as to understand how it views its relationship to the surrounding regions, including the South East. A suggestion made would be to arrange a joint session that enables the London LEP and Southern LEPS to come together with Treasury economists to be clear on how we should be positioning ourselves.
- There is clear recognition of the role that Higher Education Institutions (universities) have in driving up the Research and Development percentage in SELEP, but we would certainly advocate there is equally a role for Further Education and specialist colleges that are in their own right centres of excellence, e.g. Plumpton, that can and will be investing in R&D in the growing sectors in our economy.

[Action: TES comments will be voiced at the SELEP Strategic Board meeting on 31 January. In addition, these notes will be shared with Helen and Sharon from the SELEP team who will address the above areas].

4. Strategic Infrastructure update

- 4.1. JW delivered a presentation to the group updating on several of the areas included in the regular Infrastructure update reports circulated in the TES papers.
- 4.2. The group was informed that the East Sussex Local Transport Plan had been due to run until 2026 but, so as to respond to policy changes since it was adopted in 2011, it was planned to start reviewing the Plan this year.

- 4.3. Following a consultation which closed in January, Transport for the South East (TfSE) have developed a draft transport strategy, with a formal response going to East Sussex County Council's Cabinet on 28 January 2020. TfSE are progressing with plans for statutory status, with approval required from Government. A report is expected to go to the County Council's Cabinet in early March giving the Council's consent for TfSE to submit their proposal to Government.
- 4.4. **MS** queried the progress on the Queensway Gateway road. **JW** responded that there had been challenges for the contractor around land assembly with third parties, but East Sussex County Council is working with them to resolve these to deliver both a temporary solution linking the constructed section of the road to the A21 whilst the issues with the permanent scheme are resolved.
- 4.5. **CSO** asked about the progress on the Exceat Bridge (A259). **JW** responded that a planning application is being worked on with the South Downs National Park, and would be submitted later in the year.
- 4.6. **PSP** sought clarification that potential high speed rail services would run into Eastbourne. **JW** confirmed that this was the case and that Eastbourne would be the terminus for such services. **SD** welcomed the continued work on introducing high speed rail services into East Sussex and **SH** also highlighted the potential link to the Stronger Towns Fund bid that was being developed for Hastings.
- 4.7. **PSP** also sought an update on the progression of the A259 corridor study. **JW** responded that he has been awaiting the scope and methodology of TfSE's Area Based Studies, which is being finalised in the next month, to ensure that any work commissioned for the A259 complemented rather than conflicted with the Area Based Studies.
- 4.8. **MS** asked about the A21. **JW** reiterated that the A21 was one of the two priorities in the county (the other being the A27 Lewes to Polegate) that East Sussex and TfSE's have put forward to Government for inclusion in the Roads Investment Strategy 2020-2025 and that three particular sections of the A21 have been identified as needing improvement in the respective responses – Kippings Cross to Lamberhurst, Flimwell, and Hurst Green.

5. SELEP Communication Strategy

- 5.1. **ZG** outlined the aims of the strategy: to establish practice and protocols for how SELEP communicates messages to various key audiences, to provide guidance for doing so, and to set out the success criteria for these communications. The communications strategy is a requirement of the assurance framework approval by Government, and will be a working document which will continue to evolve and change in response to feedback and the final SELEP LIS. The document aims to improve credibility, provide transparency, and establish good practice.
- 5.2. **BK** queried the lack of a 'content strategy' and noted that partner content could be used more, such as Locate East Sussex. **ZG** responded that they were keen to share partner content, and were looking at how they could best use partner content to help deliver and complement SELEP's messaging.

[Action: ZG and BK to discuss further the development of a 'content strategy' and how LES content will work with SELEP and partners to ensure this strategy maximises its reach to its intended audiences]

- 5.3. **ME** noted some concerns with the strategy, including its tendency to concentrate on internal audiences and a lack of focus that would hinder messages being communicated effectively.
- 5.4. **ME** queried if SELEP logo would need to be used on all projects/activities. **ZG** confirmed it would for anything funded through SELEP.
- 5.5. **ME** updated on TES communication work, and outlined a plan to produce two further presentations. He had volunteered to speak at a Sussex Chamber meeting about TES, and asked TES if they were happy for him to approach other chambers and business groups in the county, and **TES members agreed**.
- 5.6. **ME** also let the group know he would like to write a blog post and asked TES members whether he should write it as himself, or more formally as a TES member. It was agreed that a draft would be provided to the Chair of TES and ESCC for review, written representing **ME** rather than TES.

[Action: ME to draft blog post and provide to Chair of TES and ESCC for review]

- 5.7. The communications strategy is due to be agreed at the Strategic Board on 31 January. TES members supported the purpose of the communications plan as shown to meet with the assurance framework

requirements, but asked to be involved in working through the future content strategy and implementation phases with SELEP team.

6. Other matters arising

- 6.1. **RD** advised TES members on *Local Growth Fund (LGF) programme extension*, that 5 projects across SELEP were being put to the Strategic Board for endorsement of spend beyond March 2021. If endorsed, these will be considered by the Accountability Board to agree spend for these projects beyond March 2021. East Sussex has put forward one project: Exceat Bridge. Additionally, there are 10 projects listed as being also at risk of LGF slippage beyond 31 March 2021. East Sussex has raised 4 projects that may not be fully spent before March 2021. The amount of money represents a small proportion of the overall LGF funds, with around £1-2 million left on each project that may then be considered to be profiled beyond March 2021.
- 6.2. **GP** asked TES if they were happy to support this, and ***TES members agreed.***
- 6.3. **RD** explained to the group that the *SELEP Assurance Framework* had been checked by East Sussex County Council colleagues and TES colleagues, and is due to be agreed at SELEP Strategic Board, subject to the approval of the ESCC Lead Member on 11 February.
- 6.4. ***TES members endorsed the governance papers.***
- 6.5. **GP** advised the group that the current Chair of the SELEP board, Chris Brodie, has indicated that he would like to continue as Chair for the two-year period ending 21 March 2022 (item 7 on Strategic Board agenda).
- 6.6. ***TES members expressed their support for the extension to the term of the current Chair by two years.***
- 6.7. Under item 9 on the Strategic Board agenda, *Board Membership*, ***TES members approved the content of the paper and expressed personal thanks to several Borough and District Authority leaders who have provided excellent guidance, support and challenge over the years.***

7. TES round table / AOB

- 7.1. **SD** informed the group of the [The Bexhill Jobs & Apprenticeships Fair](#) fair on 6 March, taking place at the De La Warr Pavilion.
- 7.2. **IG** informed the group of the decision of the Planning Inspector to find that it cannot proceed with its current draft Wealden Local Plan. It had been decided they would be recommending to Wealden District Council to withdraw the plan.
- 7.3. **DSy** advised that the college were unsuccessful in their proposal to take over the Newhaven University Technical College site and it was now in open market. Noted that the college had been issued a notice to improve financial health, and the college had responded with a new business planning model to make improvements in the next financial year.
- 7.4. **MS** advised that the [FSB South East Business Awards](#) closes to entries on 7 February, with the final to be held on 26 March 2020.
- 7.5. **DSp** advised that the BES subgroup is currently reorienting its strategic and influencing role, and being amalgamated with the business representative group of TES. The group would now work to provide a list of informed, evidence-based business priorities, identify gaps in business support provision, and feed these into TES. The group would work to support business promotions and events across the county and ensure a coordinated approach. The group would also play a role in advising the BES Growth Hub, due to be insourced to the County Council at the start of April.
- 7.6. **AC** informed the group that the British Chamber network were continuing their work on how Brexit will impact on businesses, including export documents, immigration, and data. Additionally noted the British Chamber of Commerce [Workplace Training and Development Commission](#) is open for feedback until Monday 3 February.

Summary of actions

3.3 TES comments will be voiced at the SELEP Strategic Board meeting on 31 January. In addition, these notes will be shared with Helen and Sharon from the SELEP team who will address the above areas.

5.2 ZG and BK to discuss further the development of a 'content strategy' and how LES content will work with SELEP and partners to ensure this strategy maximises its reach to its intended audiences.

5.5 ME to draft blog post and provide to Chair of TES and ESCC for review.

Actions rolled forward from last meeting (2 Dec 2019):

5.4 DE to update the TES Terms of Reference during Jan & Feb 2020 and start the recruitment process for the vacant TES business-member position.

10.3 PSp to liaise with DE on holding a TES meeting at Newhaven Enterprise Zone during the early part of 2020.