
Minutes of the meeting of the SELEP Accountability Board, held in High House Production Park Vellacott Close, Purfleet, Essex, RM19 1RJ on Friday, 13 September 2019

Present:

Geoff Miles	Chair
Cllr David Finch	Essex County Council
Cllr Mike Whiting	Kent County Council
Cllr Rodney Chambers	Medway Council
Cllr Rupert Simmons	East Sussex County Council
Cllr Ron Woodley	Southend Borough Council
Graham Razey	Further Education/Skills representative
Lucy Druesne	Higher Education representative.

ALSO PRESENT Having signed the attendance book

Marwa Al Qadi	East Sussex County Council
Suzanne Bennett	SELEP
Amy Bernardo	Essex County Council
Steven Bishop	Steer
Lee Burchill	Kent County Council
Chris Burr	Southend Borough Council
Kerry Clarke	Kent County Council
Helen Dyer	SELEP
Anna Eastgate	Thurrock Council
Sunny EE	Medway Council
Steve Grimshaw	Kent County Council
Jessica Jagpal	Medway Council
Ian Lewis	Opportunity South Essex
Andrew Metcalfe	MAXIM
Stephanie Mitchener	Essex County Council (as delegated S151 Officer for the Accountable Body)
Charlotte Moody	Essex County Council (Legal representative for the Accountable Body)
Rhiannon Mort	SELEP
Lorna Norris	Essex County Council
Sarah Nurden	KMEP

Dawn Redpath	Essex County Council
Alex Riley	SELEP
John Shaw	Sea Change Sussex
Lisa Siggins	Essex County Council
Tristan Smith	Essex County Council
Cllr Mike Steptoe	Essex County Council
Amy Wharton	SELEP

1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The following apologies were received:

- Councillor Paul Carter (substituted by Councillor Mike Whiting)
- Councillor Keith Glazier (substituted by Councillor Rupert Simmons)
- Councillor Rob Gledhill

2 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Friday 7th June 2019 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

3 Questions from the Public

There were none.

4 Declarations of Interest

As a private businessman, Geoff Miles declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of agenda item 11 (Growing Places Fund Update).

He advised of his intention to step out of the room whilst agenda item 11 was discussed and it was confirmed that Lucy Druesne would chair this item.

Councillor Rupert Simmons declared a code interest in respect of agenda item 11 (Growing Places Fund update) as he is a Director of Sea Change. In light of this non-pecuniary code interest, Cllr Simmons remained in the room during agenda item 11 but did not participate in the discussion.

Graham Razey declared, that as CEO of the EKC Group, who have been named as the preferred solution for Ashford College as part of the further education commissioners' recommendations to the education administrators. The £11m grant from SELEP was for the development of a new campus, Ashford College. This asset would transfer to EKC Group if EKC Group agrees a deal with the education administrators.

5 USP College, Benfleet LGF funding decision

The Accountability Board (the Board) received a report from Helen Dyer, SELEP Capital Programme Officer, and a presentation from Steer the purpose which was for the Board to consider the award of £900,000 LGF to the delivery of the USP College Centre of Excellence for Digital Technologies and Immersive

Learning, Benfleet, Essex (the Project). This project has been identified by the Investment Panel as a priority through the LGF3b pipeline development process.

Resolved:

To Agree the award of £900,000 LGF to support the delivery of the Project identified in the Business Case and which has been assessed as presenting high value for money (estimated) with high certainty of achieving this.

6 Bexhill Creative Workspace, East Sussex LGF funding decision

The Accountability Board (the Board) received a report from Helen Dyer, SELEP Capital Programme Officer, and a presentation from Steer the purpose which was for the Board to consider the award of £960,000 LGF to the delivery of the Bexhill Creative Workspace project (the Project). This project has been identified by the Investment Panel as a priority through the LGF3b pipeline development process.

Resolved:

To Agree the award of £960,000 LGF to support the delivery of the Project identified in the Business Case and which has been assessed as presenting high value for money with medium to high certainty of achieving this.

7 Tilbury Riverside Business Centre Expansion LGF Funding Decision

The Board received a report from Rhiannon Mort SELEP Capital Programme Manager, and a presentation from Steer, the purpose of which was for the Board to consider the award of £2.360m LGF to the delivery of the Tilbury Riverside Business Centre Expansion (the Project), Thurrock. This Project has been identified by the SELEP Investment Panel as a priority through the LGF3b pipeline development process.

Resolved:

To Agree the award of £2.360m LGF to support the delivery of the Project identified in the Business Case and which has been assessed as presenting high value for money with medium to high certainty of achieving this.

8 Medway City Estate LGF funding decision

The Board received a report from Rhiannon Mort, and a presentation from Steer, the purpose of which was to bring forward the revised scope of the Medway City Estate (the Estate) connectivity improvements project (the Project) for a funding decision by the Board.

Resolved:

1. To Approve the change of scope for the Project which was been assessed by the ITE as presenting high value for money with high certainty of this being achieved.

2. To Note the change of project outputs as details in section 4 of the

report.

3. To Note the reallocation of £200,000 LGF from the Strood Town Centre Improvement to the Project.

9 A131 Braintree to Sudbury LGF Funding Decision

The Board received a report from Helen Dyer, and a presentation from Steer, the purpose of which was to bring forward the revised scope of the A131 Braintree to Sudbury Project (the Project) for a funding decision by the Board.

The Board discussed the fact that the S106 contributions as mentioned in the report remain subject to agreement as part of the planning application. It was noted that this is not likely to be determined until December 2019.

Councillor Finch stressed the importance of the improvement to Marks Farm roundabout.

In response to a Member's question, Rhiannon clarified the pipeline funding procedure, if the £1.8m funding allocation to the project requires reallocation

Resolved:

- 1. To Approve** the change of scope for the Project which has been assessed by the ITE as presenting high value for money with high certainty of achieving this, subject to confirmation from Essex County Council by the 31st January 2020, that the S106 contributions are in place to deliver the Project; and
- 2. To Note** the change of project outcomes as detailed in section 6 of the report.

10 Capital Programme Management of the Local Growth Fund

The Board received a report from Rhiannon Mort, the purpose of which was for the Board to consider the latest position of the Local Growth Fund (LGF) Capital Programme, as part of SELEP's Growth Deal with Government.

Resolved:

- 1. To Agree** the changes to 2019/20 LGF spend forecast, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report.
- 2. To Note** deliverability and risk assessment, as set out in Appendix 3 of the report.

11 Growing Places Fund update

Geoff Miles left the room due to his previously made declaration of interest. This item was chaired by Lucy Druesne as the Vice Chair.

The Board received a report from Helen Dyer, SELEP Capital Programme Officer, the purpose of which was to update the Board on the latest position of the Growing Places Fund (GPF) Capital Programme.

Steve Grimshaw from Kent County Council gave a presentation on the delivery of the No Use Empty Project which received funding from the Growing Places Fund.

Resolved:

1. **To Note** the updated position on the GPF programme;
2. **To Approve** the amended repayment schedule for the Sovereign Harbour Project.

12 Discovery Park Growing Places Update Report

The Board received a report from Rhiannon Mort, the purpose of which was to provide the Accountability Board with an update on the delivery of the Discovery Park project (the Project).

Councillor Mike Whiting spoke in support of option 2 and gave an overview of the difficulties that were involved with the project and in particular the change of ownership of the site in question. He stressed the importance of the project to the local area.

The Board proceeded to discuss the issues and the risks detailed in the report. It was stated that this was a difficult issue to resolve given the history of the project, but the Board felt that an opportunity should be given to the new owners to resolve the issues. However, they stressed the importance of the deadline date of 31st January 2020.

Resolved:

1. **To Agree** the updated repayment schedule for the Project, as set out in Table 2 of the report; and
2. **To Note** the intention for Kent County Council to seek a legal charge over the development to ensure the completion of the Project and the timely repayments of the GPF, as per the profile in Table 2 of the report; and
3. **To Agree** that if Kent County Council have not entered into a legal agreement with the project promoter by 31 January 2020, the GPF must be returned in 2019/20 to Essex County Council, as the Accountable Body for SELEP, for investment in new GPF pipeline projects; and
4. **To Agree** that before entering into a legal agreement with the Midos Group for the transfer of the loan, Kent County Council must provide the SELEP Accountable Body with confirmation that:

- 4.1. The £5.3m loan will only be spent on capital; and
- 4.2. the expenditure of the GPF does not constitute as State Aid; and
- 4.3. the GPF will be spent on contracts which are competitively procured in accordance with the UK and EU procurement guidelines and regulations, to the extent reasonably expected by a private sector company.

13 **SELEP Operations Update**

The Board received a report from Suzanne Bennett Chief Operating Officer, the purpose of which was for the Board to be updated on the operational activities within the Secretariat to support both this Board and the Strategic Board. The report included a financial update on the revenue budget by the Accountable Body, an update on risk management and updates on items of governance.

Resolved:

1. **To Note** the current forecast underspend of £301,000 against total revenue budget for 2019/20, and that this is offset by an equivalent reduction in the planned drawdown in reserves;
2. **To Note** the risk register at Appendix A of the report; and
3. **To Note** the update on the LEP Review and Assurance Framework

14 **A13 Widening Interim Report**

The Board received a report (Appendix 1 was considered under Exempt items) from Anna Eastgate, Thurrock Council, the purpose of which was to provide the Board with an interim update on the A13 widening project (the Project), as a consequence of new information which could affect the delivery of the Project.

Ms Eastgate provided the Board with a verbal update on the current position and explained the issues that had been encountered through the delivery of the project to date. Ms Eastgate explained the various ways in which Thurrock Council are working to address the issues. The Board expressed their support for the project and the efforts made by Thurrock Council.

Resolved:

To Note the interim update report on the A13 widening Project

15 **Future meeting dates**

The Board noted that the next meetings will take place on Friday 15th November 2019 and Friday 14th February 2020 at High House Production Park.

There being no urgent business the meeting closed at 12.02 pm

16 Exclusion of the Public

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the remaining items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

17 A13 Widening CONFIDENTIAL Appendix 1

The Board considered CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX 1 to A13 Widening Report which contained information exempt from publication referred to in that report (minute 14 above refers)

Chairman