



Attendees

AMM	Anna McCollin-Moore	Hastings BC	JM	Clr James MacCleary	Lewes DC
AR	Alex Riley	South East LEP	KG	Clr Keith Glazier	East Sussex CC
BS	Clr Bob Standley	Wealden DC	ME	Martin Ellis	Recruitment South East
CE	Christina Ewbank	ACES	MS	Martin Searle	FSB
CS	Clive Soper	FSB	ND	Neil Darwin	Deyton Bell Consultants
DE	Dave Evans	East Sussex CC	PC	Clr Peter Chowney	Hastings BC
DO	Clr Doug Oliver	Rother DC	PJ	Philip Johnson	Locate East Sussex
DSP	David Sheppard	D-RisQ Ltd	PR	Paul Roberts	University of Sussex
DT	Clr David Tutt	Eastbourne BC	PSm	Penny Shimmin	Sussex CDA
GM	Graham Marley	Let's Do Business Group	PSp	Peter Sharp	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC
GP	Graham Peters (CHAIR)	ES Rural Partnership	RC	Robert Cottrill	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC
HA	Holy Aquilina	East Sussex CC	RD	Richard Dawson	East Sussex CC
HD	Helen Dyer	South East LEP	RN	Rebecca Newby	East Sussex CC
HR	Helen Russell	South East LEP	SD	Stewart Drew	De La Warr Pavilion
IG	Isabel Garden	Wealden DC	SH	Simon Hubbard	Hastings BC
JHr	James Harris	East Sussex CC	TL	Tony Leonard	Rother DC
JHv	Joanna Havers	University of Brighton			

Apologies

AB	Adam Bryan	South East LEP	LR	Lisa Rawlinson	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC
AC	Ana Christie	Sussex Chamber of Commerce	RS	Clr Rupert Simmons	East Sussex CC
DSy	Dan Shelley	East Sussex College Group	SB	Sue Baxter	University of Sussex
IF	Ian Fitzpatrick	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC	ZN	Clr Zoe Nicholson	Lewes DC

All of the papers and any presentations delivered at the meeting can be viewed on the following page of the ESCC website: www.eastsussex.gov.uk/business/eastsussex/selep/tesminutes/tes190729

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 additional interests were declared.
- 1.3. **GP** advised that a separate 'TES Business Members' meeting took place immediately prior to this TES meeting. *The main discussion points of that Business Members meeting are given in Appendix 1.*

2. Review of previous minutes (24 Jun 2019)

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

3. Local Industrial Strategy

- 3.1. **HR** presented a progress update on SELEP's Local Industrial Strategy (LIS), noting that East Sussex colleagues have already provided a raft of data for the evidence base and have participated in various engagement sessions. Throughout the process local authority Senior Officers have been closely involved in the LIS's development through Core and Stakeholder working groups.
- 3.2. To date seven other LEPs have published their LIS documents; **RD** suggested that TES members take a look through these strategies as they're all well worth a read.

[Action: DE to circulate links to the Local Industrial Strategies that have already been published]

- 3.3. **HR** led a discussion on the key opportunities and challenges that TES would like to see included in the final LIS document. The main points of the discussion are as follows:
 - As so many local authorities have now declared a 'climate emergency', aiming to be carbon neutral by 2050 (or 2030 in some cases), this should be included as part of the overall narrative.
 - SELEP includes a lot of large towns and cities (rather than having a single central city as many other LEPs do) so consideration needs to be given to how we identify a sense of place.

- We know our infrastructure still presents a significant challenge and we need to address issues in road, rail, broadband and mobile connectivity (including 5G rollout) to overcome barriers to growth, but let's not make the document a series of fault-finding grievances. Rather we should be focusing on what we're good at and emphasising our USPs, such as natural capital or high tech SMEs. Broadband in particular has shown substantial improvement over the past few years, with superfast coverage across the county expected to reach close to 100% through the current contract.
- The recent SELEP AGM highlighted a productivity gap, with the south east slightly below the national average in terms of GVA. Suggested ways of addressing it included investment in strategic infrastructure, targeted investment in coastal and rural towns, and investment in skills (not just numeracy/literacy but leadership and management skills too).
- We have a high elderly population in this area, some of whom will choose to move back into work after retirement, using their skills and experience to drive productivity. In this sense an ageing population is actually an advantage rather than a disadvantage – this should feature in the LIS, making a positive contribution to addressing one of the key Grand Challenges.
- Creative industries, culture and tourism must feature strongly but in a joined-up way. This is already being pursued by SELEP's culture subgroup and the Thames Estuary Production Corridor, with coastal assets being joined to form a 'creative coast'.
- In terms of tourism and the visitor economy, particularly accommodation provision, what might be appropriate for urban areas is not necessarily the same for rural tourism.
- Clean Tech and the application of AI should be considered for inclusion.
- Agri-tech, Agri-food and particularly Viticulture (vineyard management, wine production etc.) is an industry that must feature strongly in any strategy based in the south east of England.
- The LIS should clearly demonstrate crossover/synergy with our neighbours, e.g. Brighton being one of our economic drivers.
- In order for the LIS to be taken seriously by business it must have an Implementation Plan.
- Strategies as a whole tend to favour particular sectors, so we need to ensure there's sufficient counterweight to acknowledge those businesses that don't normally think they're being considered. There should be something in there that appeals to everyone.
- 'Inclusive growth' requires significant thought and attention to proactively address our deprived communities. Moreover, Social Enterprise must be included in the LIS, not just with regard to inclusive growth but in terms of overall productivity.
- Skills will feature heavily, certainly in terms of increasing lower skills levels, but let's not forget the importance that Digital Skills will play throughout all industries.

3.4. The next steps will involve the production of a draft Evidence Base Report, which will hopefully be prepared (and shared) ahead of the next TES meeting on 30 Sep 2019. **HR** will again be invited to that TES meeting to conduct a further engagement session. A first-draft LIS document will then be produced during the autumn.

4. TES Communications Strategy

- 4.1. **ME** provided a progress update on the work he's been leading on promotion/engagement, including suggestions for how TES could be presented to any group using a small number of slides (an adaptable presentation to be tailored for any audience) and a proposal for how this might be achieved using an 'Easy Sussex' brand.
- 4.2. The presentation was discussed, and whilst the group is eager to take the work forward, the response to 'Easy Sussex' was mixed. On balance it was felt that it might not be the most appropriate brand to pursue.
- 4.3. Business members had already discussed the presentation and provided feedback at the earlier TES Business Members meeting; *those additional comments are given in Appendix 1.*
- 4.4. **RD** remarked that we should certainly be communicating our achievements, so this work is coming at precisely the right time as we have lots of completed projects with tangible outcomes. Let's use **ME's**

suggested slides as a platform to get our successful messages out there and illustrate what TES has delivered so far.

- 4.5. **HR** suggested liaising with Zoe Gordon, the Communications Manager at SELEP. **ME** confirmed that whilst this work is specific to TES rather than the whole of the LEP, he has engaged with Zoe and will continue to do so.
- 4.6. **DT** asked if a 'communications plan' could be put together covering what we want to say, to whom and by when. **ME** agreed to consider this ahead of our next TES meeting.
- 4.7. **ME** proposed some straightforward actions to take forward, including organising social media training for TES members, defining the target audiences and allocating responsibility, creating images, themes and stories, and adding Communications to TES's agenda as a standing item. He also highlighted a few other tasks such as creating a website and organising specific events with partnerships and other groups, but these can be picked up again a little further down the line. All agreed that these actions are achievable and should be pursued further.

[Action: ME to take forward the actions highlighted in his Comms Strategy presentation, including putting together an overall 'communications plan', and report back to the next TES meeting on 30 Sep 2019]

5. Coastal Communities Economic Prospectus

- 5.1. **SH** and **ND** delivered a presentation on the development of a Coastal Communities Economic Prospectus, with an overview of its purpose, the coastal geography covered and the progress to date. All of the East Sussex districts/boroughs are involved, with a total of 17 authorities across the SELEP coastline included overall. The aim is to enable them all to speak with a single voice on coastal matters.
- 5.2. **JM** suggested looking to other coastal regions (e.g. northern, Blackpool) to see if any similar prospectuses have been successful and draw any comparisons.
- 5.3. **AMM** commented that whilst the stakeholder engagement phase is nearing completion, she'd be happy to receive any further comments/feedback directly over the coming few weeks.
- 5.4. A draft report will be produced over the next month, with a final draft Prospectus to be presented to the SELEP Strategic Board in Oct 2019. **AMM** suggested presenting the final draft to the next TES meeting for federated board endorsement.

[Action: DE to liaise with AMM on sharing the final draft Coastal Communities Economic Prospectus with TES and adding it to the agenda for the next TES meeting on 30 Sep 2019]

6. Other matters arising

- 6.1. **GP** provided an update on Local Growth Fund (LGF) Round 3B grant funding, noting that last month's SELEP Investment Panel approved funding for two East Sussex projects, *Bexhill Creative Workspace* (£960k) and *Exceat Bridge Replacement Phase 1* (£1.5m). **TL** expressed his thanks to everyone involved in helping secure the funding for Bexhill.
- 6.2. **RD** added that further LGF could potentially come back into the pot in the coming months, as whilst LGF is already fully allocated there's still a possibility that some projects in Kent & Essex may not be able to deliver within the timescales, in which case their allocation will go back into the LGF pot to be reallocated to projects in the LGF-3B pipeline (meaning another Investment Panel meeting to look at how much funding might be available and which pipeline projects could utilise it).
- 6.3. **GP** reminded the group that another round of Growing Places Fund (GPF) loan funding will also be coming soon, as last month's SELEP Strategic Board agreed to open a new GPF round "sometime later this year" (rather than hold onto the recycled loan funding until next year as originally planned). The GPF funding pot is likely to be around £15-20m by the time the call is opened.

7. TES round table / AOB

- 7.1. **CE** advised that the East Sussex Business Awards are taking place on 26 Sep 2019 at the East Sussex National in Uckfield. It's not too late to enter/nominate via www.eastsussexbusinessawards.co.uk.

- 7.2. **MS** reminded the group about the East Sussex Apprenticeship Graduation event on 25 Sep 2019 at the Welcome Building in Eastbourne.
- 7.3. **SD** advised that England's Creative Coast is now launching, a new cultural tourism experience stretching from Essex to Chichester. Visit www.englandscreativecoast.org for more information. He added that our own Coastal Cultural Trail, www.coastalculturetrail.com, is also getting good press as a result.
- 7.4. **HA** advised that East Sussex County Council is extending its successful East Sussex Careers Hub to cover primary school children. In a one-year pilot from Sep 2019 the county council will be able to develop a careers strategy that covers the full age range from 5 to 19 (and up to 25 years for young people with special educational needs).

Summary of actions:

- 3.2 **DE** to circulate links to the Local Industrial Strategies that have already been published.
- 4.7 **ME** to take forward the actions highlighted in his Comms Strategy presentation, including putting together an overall 'communications plan', and report back to the next TES meeting on 30 Sep 2019.
- 5.4 **DE** to liaise with **AMM** on sharing the final draft Coastal Communities Economic Prospectus with TES and adding it to the agenda for the next TES meeting on 30 Sep 2019.

The TES business members held a separate meeting just prior to the main TES meeting. The main discussion points are described below:

LEP Review

- The SELEP subgroup looking at Strategic Board composition has made good progress, with discussions on proposed representation including, for East Sussex, upper tier representation by the Leader, the TES business Chair, one additional TES business member, plus regional representatives for the likes of Higher Education, Further Education, SME, Social Enterprise and local authority as co-opted members rotating on a yearly basis.
- We should consider whether there's any appetite amongst the business representatives to form a 'business alliance'. It might be worth pursuing.
- The subgroup is also discussing the best way to invite additional District/Borough colleagues to participate, probably as non-voting 'observers'.
- Diversity is still a challenging issue to tackle, so any suggestions are welcome.
- It would be better to have a strong diversity policy from SELEP rather than relying on federated boards; SELEP needs to be tough with ambitious targets. The risk is that all of the change will come from business rather than local authority – unless we get the Leaders to actually nominate different representatives other than themselves.
- We must also remember that diversity covers far more than gender balance. Perhaps the diversity of SELEP should be representative of the diversity of the local area (rather than be prescriptive to a set number/ratio).

Communications

- We know TES has subgroups that are more 'public facing' (BES, SES etc.) yet at the recent Best4Biz conference there was definitely an appetite for more information on LEPs in general as well as what we're doing locally.
- Any group that works to some kind of overall strategy must have a way of promoting that strategy and engaging with different audiences. At the moment there is simply nowhere to go for information on what TES is working towards and what we've achieved, hence this work is needed.
- We definitely need a website so that, assuming we manage to stimulate interest, people have a central place to look for information and to engage.
- The presentation put forward by **ME** is a step in the right direction and the suggested actions (social media training, adding Communications to TES's regular agenda etc.) should all be taken forward. However the 'Easy Sussex' proposal, which received mixed feedback from the group, may not be the most appropriate way forward so should be reconsidered.
- We must remember that whilst 'promotion' is necessary (via the proposed set of slides) it's equally important to consider 'engagement' with local businesses, e.g. localised stakeholder events, something we're not very good at presently. Think about it in terms of Promotion, Information, News and finally Engagement.
- We should avoid revisiting the name 'Team East Sussex'. It was discussed at length and voted upon way back when TES was still an 'informal' group, and was chosen to demonstrate the various elements of the county working together as a team.