
Minutes of the meeting of the SELEP Accountability Board, held Online on Friday, 18 September 2020**Present:**

Sarah Dance	Chair
Cllr David Finch	Essex County Council
Cllr Roger Gough	Kent County Council
Cllr Rodney Chambers	Medway Council
Cllr Keith Glazier	East Sussex County Council
Cllr Ron Woodley	Southend Borough Council
Cllr Mark Coxshall	Thurrock Council
Rosemary Nunn	Higher Education representative
Simon Cook	Further Education/Skills representative

Also Present:

Suzanne Bennett	SELEP
Amy Bernardo	Essex County Council
John Brunton	WRNV
Lee Burchill	Kent County Council
Joanne Cable	Medway Council
Paul Chapman	Essex County Council
Howard Davies	SELEP
Richard Dawson	East Sussex County Council
Helen Dyer	SELEP
Amy Ferraro	SELEP
Ian Lewis	Opportunity South Essex
Gary MacDonnell	Essex County Council
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
Vivien Prigg	SELEP
Christopher Seamark	Kent County Council

Peter Shakespear	Essex County Council
Lisa Siggins	Essex County Council
Jess Steele	White Rock Neighbourhood Ventures
Stephen Taylor	Thurrock Council
Simon Thomas	Canterbury City Council
Ceri Williams	Canterbury City Council
Charles Wimborne	Somerlee Homes Ltd

1 Welcome and apologies for absence

The following apologies were received.

- Cllr Rob Gledhill substituted by Cllr Mark Coxshall

2 Minutes 03.07.20

The minutes of the meeting held on Friday 3rd July were agreed as an accurate record.

3 Declarations of interest

Simon Cook – declared a potential interest in item 14 (Skills Fund) owing to his position of Principal and Chief Executive of Mid-Kent College. ELS legal representative queried whether the potential interest was a pecuniary interest to which Simon Cook confirmed that it was not as he was not planning to bid. On the basis that the interest appeared to be a potential non-pecuniary interest, ELS representative advised that Simon Cook was not required to leave the room when item 14 was discussed.

4 Questions from the public

There were none.

5 Local Growth Fund Capital Programme Update

The Accountability Board (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.

Sarah Dance confirmed the positive news that the final third of LGF had been received from Central Government

The Board discussed the position regarding reallocation of funding to additional projects, in unallocated LGF becomes available. Rhiannon confirming that this issue will be considered by the Strategic Board in October 2020.

Councillor Finch wished to make it clear that funding in respect of M11 Junction 8 will be available.

Resolved:

1. **To Note** the updated total spend in 2019/20 of £62.788m LGF excluding DfT retained schemes and £96.394m including DfT retained schemes, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
2. **To Agree** the updated total planned LGF spend in 2020/21 of £81.992m excluding DfT retained schemes and increasing to £111.714m including DfT retained schemes, as set out in Table 1 and Appendix 1 of the report.
3. **To Note** the deliverability and risk assessment, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report.
4. **To Agree** the reallocation of £2.111m LGF from the Exceat Bridge project to the LGF project pipeline.
5. **To Agree** to place LGF spend on hold for the M11 Junction 8 project and for a further update report to be provided by Essex County Council to the Board in November 2020.
6. **To Note** the mitigation/action required in relation to high risk projects as set out in Appendix 3 of the report.

6 Digitally Connected Kent and Medway – Getting Building Fund

The Board received a report from Rhiannon Mort the purpose of which was for the Board to consider the award of £2.290m Getting Building Fund (GBF) to the Digitally Connected Kent and Medway project (the Project), detailed at Appendix A of the report. The Project is one of 34 schemes included in the £85m package of projects agreed with Government in July 2020.

The Board were advised that the grant and associated grant conditions have not yet been received from Government. The Board stressing that clarity in this respect was urgently needed.

Resolved:

1. **To Approve** the award of £2,290,152 GBF to support the delivery of the Project as set out in Appendix A of the report, subject to sufficient GBF being received by SELEP from Central Government.
2. **To Note** that the GBF grant and the associated conditions have not been received from Central Government, at the point of this report being published.

7 Queensway Gateway Road Project Update

The Board received a report from Richard Dawson, Head of Service - Economic Development, Skills and Infrastructure, East Sussex County Council and Helen Dyer, SELEP Capital Programme Officer.

Updates on the delivery of the Queensway Gateway Road project (the Project) were provided to the Board in February and July 2020. The updates set out the current position in relation to the land acquisition issues which are impacting on the delivery of the final section of the new road and which represent a significant risk to delivery. It was noted that the Board will be provided with regular updates on the Project whilst work continues to address the ongoing land acquisition delays.

The Board requested to receive a further update on the delivery of the Project and the timescales for the delivery of the permanent solution.

Councillor Glazier gave the Board an update on the progress, with the Board proceeding to discuss the proposed CPO process.

Resolved:

1. **To Note** the latest position on the delivery of the Project; and
2. **To Agree** that the Board will be provided with a further update on the Project at its meeting on 20th November 2020. This report will provide a full update on the delivery of the permanent connection, including consideration of progress on the required land acquisitions, the delivery programme and the Project budget.

8 A28 Sturry Link Road Project Update

The Board received a report (Appendix 1 was considered under Exempt items) from Rhiannon Mort, the purpose of which was for the Board to receive an update on the delivery of the A28 Sturry Link Road project (the Project), Canterbury, Kent.

The Chair advised the Board that a letter had been received from Canterbury City Council. The letter reaffirmed Canterbury City Council's commitment to the delivery of the scheme and of the scheme's importance. The letter outlined the impact on local housing developments should the scheme not go ahead and its importance to the Local Plan.

Simon Thomas from Canterbury City Council gave the Board an update regarding the planning permission advising that this was positive and encouraging.

The Board proceeded to discuss the issue with Councillor Gough speaking in support and asking for support in respect of Option 2.

Following the discussion the Board felt that it was sensible to delay making a decision until the November meeting.

Resolved:

1. **To Agree** to extend the deadline until 20th November 2020 for planning consent to be secured for:

- 1.1 The Broad Oak Farm and Sturry development; and
- 1.2 The Project itself; and

2. **To Agree** that written confirmation must be provided by Kent County Council to SELEP Accountable Body, by 12 February 2021, to confirm the funding package is in place for the Project, to enable the release of the remaining £4.791m LGF to Kent County Council for the delivery of the Project beyond 31 March 2021.

3 **To Note** that SELEP Ltd will also be required to approve the spend of LGF beyond the Growth Deal.

9 **Bexhill Enterprise Park North Project Update**

The Board received a report from Richard Dawson, Head of Service - Economic Development, Skills and Infrastructure, East Sussex County Council and Helen Dyer, SELEP Capital Programme Officer.

Updates on the delivery of the Bexhill Enterprise Park North project (the Project) were provided to the Board in February and July 2020. The updates set out the current planning position and intended next steps, following the decision by Rother District Council planning committee to refuse the reserved matters application for the site. The decision to refuse the reserved matters application presents a significant deliverability risk to the Project and therefore the Board will be provided with regular updates on the Project whilst work continues to address this risk.

The purpose of this report, therefore, was for the Board to receive a further update on the delivery of the Project and to set out the delivery options currently under consideration.

Councillor Glazier spoke in support the project, stressing its importance.

Resolved:

- 1 **To Note** the latest position on the delivery of the Project;
2. **To Agree** that the Project remains on hold until the planning appeal has been concluded and, if successful, planning consent has been granted;
3. **To Agree** that LGF spend on the delivery of the Project, beyond the £440,000 already transferred to East Sussex County Council, should remain paused until the planning appeal has been concluded and, if successful, planning consent has been granted; and
4. **To Agree** that if the planning appeal is unsuccessful that the full £1.94m LGF allocation will be returned to SELEP for reallocation through the LGF project pipeline.

10 **Award of Growing Places Fund Funding**

The Board received a report from Helen Dyer, SELEP Capital Programme Officer, the purpose of which was to allow the Board to consider the award of £5,820,000 Growing Places Fund (GPF) funding to the three projects (the Projects) detailed at Appendix B of the report. These Projects were included in the GPF project pipeline agreed by Strategic Board on 12th June 2020.

In response to a query raised by Councillor Woodley regarding “mix and match” and GBF funding, Rhiannon confirmed that this will be considered by the Strategic Board.

Resolved:

To Approve the award of:

1.1 £600,000 GPF by way of a loan to support the delivery of the Wine Innovation Centre project, as set out in Appendix C of the report, which has been assessed as presenting high value for money with low/medium certainty of achieving this;

1.2 £3,470,000 GPF by way of a loan to support the delivery of the Green Hydrogen Generation Facility project, as set out in Appendix D of the report, which has been assessed as presenting high value for money with high certainty of achieving this;

1.3 £1,750,000 GPF by way of a loan to support the delivery of the Observer Building, Hastings (Phase 1) project, as set out in Appendix E of the report, which has been assessed as presenting high value for money with high certainty of achieving this.

11 Growing Places Fund Update

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

Resolved:

1. **To Note** the updated position on the GPF programme;
2. **To Approve** the revised repayment schedule for the Eastbourne Fisherman’s Quay and Infrastructure Development project and agree that, despite repayments not being made in line with the original repayment schedule, no interest will be charged on the loan.

12 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 an update on risk management following the declaration of the

Covid-19 Pandemic and updates on items of governance. The financial update was included in a separate report.

The Board discussed the reprocurement of the ITE evaluator and the advantages and disadvantages of the options available.

Resolved:

1. Agree to call-off the Bloom consultancy framework and award the ITE contract directly to Steer on a 1+1 years basis;
2. Note the proposed updates to the Assurance Framework and the updated Assurance Framework monitoring; and
3. Note the Risk Register at Appendix C of the report.

13 Update on SELEP Revenue Budget 2020/21

The Board received a report from Lorna Norris, Senior Finance Business Partner the purpose of which was for the Board to consider latest financial forecast position for the SELEP Revenue budget for 2020/21.

Councillor Woodley wished to place on record his thanks and recognition for the hard work of all the officers involved.

Resolved:

To Note the current on-line forecast revenue outturn position for 2020/21.

14 SELEP Revenue Skills COVID-19 Recovery Programme

The Board received a report from Louise Aitken, Skills Lead, the purpose of which report was to allow the Board to agree to award £2m to the revenue Skills COVID-19 Recovery Programme (the Programme) and to delegate decision making authority to the SELEP Chief Executive Officer in respect of delivery of the Programme.

The Chair offered her thanks to Louise for all her hard work.

Resolved:

1. **To Agree** the award of £2m to the Programme, based on the case for investment set out in section 4 of the report;
2. **To Agree** the proposed procurement approach for the delivery of £1,545,000 through a new training framework which can be divided into separate Lots
3. **To Agree** to procure for the delivery of £375,000 Consultancy Services (covering innovative approaches to skills barriers) with authority delegated to SELEP Chief Executive Officer to determine the procurement route
4. **To Agree** to £80,000 of the £2 million funding pot to be used for Project management, legal, procurement and contingency costs
5. **To Agree** to delegate authority to the SELEP Chief Executive Officer, to

sign off the award of grant funding and/or contracts, for the specific interventions included in the Programme; and

6. **To Agree** to delegated authority to the SELEP Chief Executive Officer to amend the value of funding identified to each project by up to £100K, if so required, subject to:

6.1. The total value of investment remains within the total £2m budget allocated to the Programme;

6.2. minimum project benefits, set out in Table 1 of the report, still being achieved; and

6.3 Ensuring the maximum value of any of the projects included in the programme does not exceed £1m.

7 **To Note** that the procurement of the projects included within the Programme will be completed in accordance with Essex County Council procurement advice and regulations.

15 Date of next meeting

The Board noted that the next meeting will take place on Friday 16th October 2020 either online at High House Production Park.

There being no urgent business the meeting closed at 11.56 am.

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 A28 Sturry Link Road CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX 1

The Board noted A28 Sturry Link Road CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX 1.

Chair