

Attendees

ACH	Ana Christie	Sussex Chamber of Commerce	KT	Katy Thomas	East Sussex CC
ACo	Alex Colbran	East Sussex CC	MA	Marwa Al-Qadi	East Sussex CC
BH	Ben Hook	Rother DC	MC	Matthew Chenery	East Sussex CC
BS	Clr Bob Standley	Wealden DC	ME	Martin Ellis	Recruitment South East
CB	Clr Christine Bayliss	Rother DC	MS	Martin Searle	FSB
CE	Christina Ewbank	ACES	PJ	Philip Johnson	Locate East Sussex
CS	Clive Soper	FSB	Psm	Penny Shimmin	Sussex CDA
DE	Dave Evans	East Sussex CC	PSp	Peter Sharp	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC
DG	Diana Garnham	Skills East Sussex (SES)	RD	Richard Dawson	East Sussex CC
DSp	David Sheppard	D-RisQ Ltd	RM	Rhiannon Mort	South East LEP
DT	Clr David Tutt	Eastbourne BC	RN	Rebecca Newby	East Sussex CC
GP	Graham Peters (CHAIR)	ES Rural Partnership	RS	Clr Rupert Simmons	East Sussex CC
HD	Helen Dyer	South East LEP	SB	Sue Baxter	University of Sussex
IG	Isabel Garden	Wealden DC	SD	Stewart Drew	De La Warr Pavilion
IM	Iain McNab	BEIS	SS	Sally Staples	East Sussex CC
IS	Ioni Sullivan	East Sussex CC	VC	Victoria Conheady	Hastings BC
JHv	Jo Havers	University of Brighton	ZN	Clr Zoe Nicholson	Lewes DC
KG	Clr Keith Glazier	East Sussex CC			

Apologies

DSy	Dan Shelley	East Sussex College Group	JHr	James Harris	East Sussex CC
IF	Ian Fitzpatrick	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC	JM	Clr James MacCleary	Lewes DC
IN	Ian Noble	ACES	KF	Clr Kim Forward	Hastings BC
JB	Jonathan Buckwell	Developers East Sussex (DES)	PD	Pranesh Datta	Hastings BC

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/tes201207

1. Welcome & introductions

- 1.1. **GP** welcomed everyone to the meeting and ran through the apologies.
- 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. Previous TES minutes, 2 Nov 2020

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

3. Comprehensive Spending Review

- 3.1. **RD** ran through the summary paper and highlighted some of the key points of the Comprehensive Spending Review, delivered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 25 Nov 2020. Moving forward we'll need to ensure that any significant policies and interventions are reflected in our Economy Recovery Plan and SELEP's Recovery and Renewal Strategy.
- 3.2. The group discussed the Spending Review and made the following comments:
 - The reform of the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb) lending terms may have an impact, so is something to keep an eye on.
 - The high level of bureaucracy associated with EU funding is something we'd ideally want the Government to iron out of the new UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
 - Within the labour market support from DWP, let's ensure childcare is not forgotten.
 - The Levelling-Up fund will undoubtedly have a focus on the north of England, so it's our job to make a strong case for our own deprived areas in the south east. This will probably involve some sort of 'shift in the narrative' from SELEP and TES to ensure we convey the right messages. **IM** inferred that we'll have a job to convince Ministers that we need Levelling-Up funding in the

south, but confirmed that it will be available to all parts of England, and should be a competitive fund rather than allocated per capita.

- Closer alignment with London is something to be considered, and this is very much on SELEP/ Chris Brodie's radar. However, we're mindful that the challenges and needs of East Sussex and other SELEP partners are completely different to London, and over the years we've stressed the point that London and the south east are not one area. Closer alignment could therefore be quite a radical and potentially contentious move, risking us getting overshadowed in our arguments and losing our distinctiveness.

4. SELEP funding programmes

Local Growth Fund (LGF)

- 4.1. **MA** provided an update on the LGF programme, noting that SELEP has extended the Growth Deal period by six months to 30 Sep 2021 in recognition of the delays caused by Covid-19. Three of our projects have been given further approval to spend beyond this extended period, ensuring their completion and delivery of outputs/outcomes, and a report will go to this week's SELEP Strategic Board meeting seeking a similar extension for another two East Sussex LGF projects.
- 4.2. SELEP previously agreed that LGF underspend should be utilised by existing projects experiencing a funding gap due to the impacts of Covid-19. Any such projects were asked to submit applications to the 'LGF Covid Response Fund' – in East Sussex this included the Plumpton College Agri-Food project and the Eastbourne Fishermen's project, both of which were independently assessed as having a strong case for the additional funding and were endorsed by TES. The LGF gap-funding pipeline will be prioritised at this week's SELEP Strategic Board meeting.
- 4.3. **RD** reminded the group that if the value of the unallocated LGF exceeds the value of the LGF pipeline, the remaining LGF will be moved to the *Growing Places Fund (GPF)* pot for investment as GPF capital loan funding, as previously agreed by the SELEP Strategic Board. This is good news for East Sussex as we currently have two Phase 2 projects in the GPF pipeline.

Growing Places Fund (GPF)

- 4.4. **MA** advised that the Observer Building Phase 1 project in Hastings (£1.75m GPF loan), which received SELEP Accountability Board approval in Sep 2020, is now finalising its loan agreement to defray the funding to the project. The Barnhorn Green Phase 1 project in Bexhill (also £1.75m GPF loan) has submitted its business case for SELEP's Independent Technical Evaluator (ITE) review, with a funding decision to be taken at the Feb 2021 Accountability Board meeting.
- 4.5. Existing GPF projects, including Charleston Centenary, North Queensway and Sovereign Harbour, have been permitted flexibility on their GPF loan repayment schedules due to the financial impacts of Covid-19. The revised repayment schedules have now been approved.

Getting Building Fund (GBF)

- 4.6. **RN** provided an update on the GBF programme, confirming that all eight of East Sussex's GBF project submissions have now received SELEP Accountability Board approval. ESCC is in receipt of the GBF Service Level Agreement from SELEP, and ESCC officers are supporting scheme promoters through the process of entering into the necessary back-to-back grant agreements. The GBF monitoring and reporting framework is also being formalised by SELEP and we expect to begin submitting reports from mid-Jan 2021.
- 4.7. In terms of the GBF 'reserve list', **RM** advised that SELEP is required to maintain a pipeline of projects that can be considered for capital investment should any of the current allocations be returned, so a single prioritised list of projects will need to be agreed at the Mar 2021 Strategic Board meeting. The approach to develop this *short* GBF pipeline will be discussed at this week's SELEP Strategic Board meeting. **RD** clarified that the reserve pot is expected to be around £1-2m and will only fund projects that were included in the original long-list of GBF projects submitted to MHCLG in the summer; projects will also need to pass certain other eligibility criteria around deliverability in such an exceptionally short timescale. We'll consider how best to approach this in East Sussex over the next few weeks.

5. East Sussex Reset

- 5.1. **RD** ran through the summary paper and highlighted some of the key actions/achievements in each mission, demonstrating the huge amount of work already undertaken on implementing the Economy Recovery Plan. To date, through various investments, a total of £71m is being invested into East Sussex as a result of 'East Sussex Reset'. An up-to-date copy of the detailed Action Plan is available to view on the [ESCC website](#).
- 5.2. The group discussed the Economy Recovery Plan and made the following comments:
 - The environment is changing very quickly, e.g. 'greener' targets should now be 'net zero', so we need to ensure our thinking post-covid-19 is widespread and flexible.
 - Technology is also moving very fast, e.g. the construction sector is looking at innovative ways of building (different materials, retrofitting etc). We should apply that adoption of new technology across all sectors.
 - Conversations on retrofitting, including the need to overhaul the supply chain, are happening across various groups; we need to bring that discussion here too, and ensure all of the conversations are joined up.
 - Upskilling is particularly important across all sectors, as is *long-term* skills development.
 - The 'shop local' drive is vital but there's always a danger of duplication and mixed messages, so we need to ensure we've got our comms right across all partners.
- 5.3. **GP** agreed that the Economy Recovery Plan was always intended to be flexible and dynamic, so the Mission Leads will consider all of the above moving forward.

6. Business East Sussex (BES) / Growth Hub

- 6.1. **IS** and **DSp** provided an update on the progress and achievements of the BES Growth Hub since its transfer to ESCC in Apr 2020, including policy development matters that are likely to influence the future development of the service beyond 2021.
- 6.2. The Growth Hub is currently responding to several new requirements that have recently been announced, including two small pilot cohorts of 'peer networking' through the national Peer Network initiative to support businesses improve productivity and adapt to a post-Covid-19 and post-EU Transition landscape, additional BEIS funding for EU Transition advice and support directed through Growth Hubs, and the procurement of a successor to the Scale Up East Sussex programme through legacy funds secured from SELEP/ERDF, due to go live in the New Year.
- 6.3. It is imperative that a flexible Growth Hub delivery model is maintained so that it can adapt to continually changing circumstances, so a paper setting out proposals on the future direction of the Growth Hub will be discussed at this week's SELEP Strategic Board meeting.
- 6.4. TES members **endorsed** the summary paper presented by **IS** and **DSp**, as well as the proposals set out in the SELEP Strategic Board paper to evolve the service moving forward – in particular the commitment set out in the paper to undertake the work in partnership with the federated areas.

7. EU Transition and Covid-19 – latest implications

- 7.1. **ACH** provided an update to the items discussed at the previous TES meeting, noting that there are still a lot of outstanding/unanswered questions for both Covid-19 (such as precisely when business support funding will come to an end, implications of moving up to Tier 3) and EU Transition (food and drink labelling, dispute resolution, tariff rates, quotas).
- 7.2. All of the concerns around EU Transition are still being recorded by the British Chambers of Commerce on their Guidance Dashboard, an updated version of which has been published today: [EU Transition Guidance Dashboard Dec 2020](#).

8. SELEP Co-opted Directors

- 8.1. **GP** explained that as the five co-opted Directors of SELEP have a tenure of just one year, it's now time to consider which organisations/sectors should be represented on the SELEP Board as co-opted

members from Apr 2021. The HE, FE and Social Enterprise co-opted members will be nominated by the U9 Working Group, the Skills Working Group and the Social Enterprise Working Group respectively, but the process for the two local authority co-opted members involves the SELEP Board discussing which two of the three shire areas should be invited to put forward a representative, *aligned with the agreed priorities for the year*. Given the potential impact of Brexit on our region, the SELEP Secretariat is recommending that the Borough/District representatives come from councils “most likely to be hit hardest by these changes”, implying they would *again* be drawn from the Essex and Kent shire areas.

8.2. The group discussed these proposals in detail. All agreed that it’s frustrating to have so few Borough/District representatives on the SELEP Board, but such a composition was a requirement from Government that we have to adhere to, and while we strongly maintain that we also have areas that will be deeply impacted by Brexit – particularly Newhaven – we acknowledge that Freeport status will be a fundamental focus at the heart of SELEP next year, which will be pursued by the larger ports in Kent and Essex.

8.3. TES members therefore agreed to **support** the above proposals, but with the following caveats:

- We’re conceding the possibility of having a Borough/District member from East Sussex so that Kent and Essex can put forward representatives from Port local authority areas. But it’s not enough to ‘strongly suggest’ this in any guidance issued by SELEP – we would want it confirmed that the reps will definitely come from such an authority.
- In agreeing to the above we would absolutely want it confirmed that one of the local authority co-opted members for 2022/23 will definitely come from East Sussex.
- We would ask the SELEP Board to consider offering East Sussex a local authority co-opted position for 2022/23 *and the following year as well (2023/24)*. This would of course be dependent on the strategic/operational activities at that time, but we would still like it agreed now that this would be SELEP’s preferred course.

8.4. TES members agreed to raise all of the above points at this week’s SELEP Strategic Board meeting.

[Action: TES members attending the SELEP Strategic Board meeting on 11 Dec 2020 to raise the points/caveats set out by TES on co-opted SELEP Directors for 2021/22]

9. SELEP Strategic Board, 11 Dec 2020

9.1. **RM** quickly ran through some of the other items on the agenda for this week’s SELEP Strategic Board meeting, including a progress update on the Recovery and Renewal Strategy, the proposed operational priorities for the next financial year, approval of Sector Support Fund project applications (already endorsed by TES), and updates on other national/regional initiatives.

9.2. There will also be a separate hour-long session on EU Transition, discussing the SELEP area’s readiness for leaving the EU, which is open to all.

[Action: DE to share the invitation to the SELEP EU Transition session taking place on 11 Dec 2020]

10. Additional updates & stakeholder reports (for info)

10.1. **GP** highlighted the Culture East Sussex update, noting that it will be presented and discussed properly at the next main TES meeting in Mar 2021.

10.2. **RD** highlighted some of the key figures in the Economic Profile report. **CS** queried whether we know (or can find out) the number of furloughed people who were subsequently made redundant; **RD** agreed to look into that statistic with colleagues and report back.

[Action: RD to determine figures for the number of furloughed people who were subsequently made redundant]

11. TES round table / AOB

11.1. **ACh** advised that the grant offer letter for the Kickstart scheme has been received from DWP, so the scheme can now start to move at pace.

11.2. **DSp** commented on a conference he recently attended with Boeing where they described the impact of the pandemic on the aviation industry and its forecast recovery over the next 5-10 years. The growth

trajectory actually suggests recovery in just 3 years, with the whole industry expected to sell more than 18,000 aircraft in the next 10 years, and a further 43,000 aircraft over the subsequent 20 years.

[Action: DSp to share the Boeing commercial market outlook presentation with DE, for circulation to TES]

- 11.3. **BS** advised that a consultation on the next stage of the Wealden Local Plan has been launched, and he'd like to encourage participation from businesses in particular. The consultation closes on 18 Jan 2021; all of the information can be found on the [Wealden DC website](#).

[Action: BS to share the link to the current Wealden Local Plan 'direction of travel' consultation]

Summary of actions

- 8.4 **TES** members attending the SELEP Strategic Board meeting on 11 Dec 2020 to raise the points/caveats set out by TES on co-opted SELEP Directors for 2021/22.
- 9.2 **DE** to share the invitation to the SELEP EU Transition session taking place on 11 Dec 2020.
- 10.2 **RD** to determine figures for the number of furloughed people who were subsequently made redundant.
- 11.2 **DSp** to share the Boeing commercial market outlook presentation with **DE**, for circulation to TES.
- 11.3 **BS** to share the link to the current Wealden Local Plan 'direction of travel' consultation.