

Attendees

ACh	Ana Christie	Sussex Chamber of Commerce	JW	Jon Wheeler	East Sussex CC
ACo	Alex Colbran	East Sussex CC	KF	Clr Kim Forward	Hastings BC
AE	Alan Elder	EBS Consulting	KG	Clr Keith Glazier	East Sussex CC
BS	Clr Bob Standley	Wealden DC	KT	Katy Thomas	East Sussex CC
CBa	Clr Christine Bayliss	Rother DC	MAQ	Marwa Al-Qadi	East Sussex CC
CBe	Chris Bending	Wealden DC	ME	Martin Ellis	Recruitment South East
CE	Christina Ewbank	ACES	MS	Martin Searle	FSB
CS	Clive Soper	FSB	PD	Pranesh Datta	Hastings BC
DE	Dave Evans	East Sussex CC	Psm	Penny Shimmin	Sussex CDA
DM	Darren Marchant	East Sussex CC	PSp	Peter Sharp	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC
DSh	Dan Shelley	East Sussex College	RD	Richard Dawson	East Sussex CC
DSp	David Sheppard	D-RisQ Ltd	RN	Rebecca Newby	East Sussex CC
GB	Graham Burgess	Rother DC	RS	Clr Rupert Simmons	East Sussex CC
GP	Graham Peters (CHAIR)	ES Rural Partnership	SB	Sue Baxter	University of Sussex
HA	Holly Aquilina	East Sussex CC	SD	Stewart Drew	De La Warr Pavilion
IS	Ioni Sullivan	East Sussex CC	SH	Clr Stephen Holt	Eastbourne BC
JH	James Harris	East Sussex CC	VC	Victoria Conheady	Hastings BC
JM	Clr James MacCleary	Lewes DC			

Apologies

BH	Ben Hook	Rother DC	IF	Ian Fitzpatrick	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC
DT	Clr David Tutt	Eastbourne BC	IG	Isabel Garden	Wealden DC
DW	Deborah Wyatt	EBS Consulting			

Meeting to discuss East Sussex's application to the UK Community Renewal Fund; papers and slides are CONFIDENTIAL so have not been uploaded to the ESCC website.

1. Welcome & introductions

- 1.1. **GP** welcomed everyone to the meeting and ran through the apologies.
- 1.2. **GP** indicated that whilst he would normally ask the group for any conflicts of interest with the agenda items, today's meeting is slightly different as TES is not being asked to make any decisions – all of the material is being presented for information only. Therefore, no additional declarations are necessary. TES members are reminded to please keep their recorded declarations of interest up-to-date, and if anyone does want to make any particular declarations today, although unnecessary, please email them to **DE** after the meeting.

2. Previous TES minutes, 15 Mar 2021

- 2.1. **GP** noted that there were no actions from the previous TES meeting.
- 2.2. **CE** highlighted an error in paragraph 3.5 of the minutes (it was actually **ACh** who had shared the British Chamber Budget Outcomes, **CE** had shared details of the East Sussex Visitor Survey), which **DE** agreed to correct.
- 2.3. Otherwise the minutes were approved by the group as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. UK Community Renewal Fund

- 3.1. **AE** delivered a presentation on the East Sussex application to the UK Community Renewal Fund, covering the background to the fund and the timeline, the role of ESCC as Lead Authority, and the overall assessment and prioritisation process undertaken.
- 3.2. Of the 52 'intentions' to bid that ESCC received in response to the published invitation, 32 project applications were actually submitted by the 30 Apr 2021 deadline, with a total combined value of more than £12m. The majority of the bids came from the voluntary and private sector (roughly 40% each) with the rest from the public sector. Following the assessment process, 11 projects were prioritised to go forward for submission to MHCLG, with a total combined UK CRF ask of £5.08m. **AE** provided a brief explanation of each of the bids selected to go forward, their delivery against strategic priorities, plans and strategies, and a summary of their cumulative impacts on the county.

3.3. TES members discussed the prioritised list of projects and made the following points:

- The prioritised shortlist contains an attractive and exciting range of projects, with a good spread across themes and sectors, and across geography (within the limitations imposed by MHCLG's prioritisation of Hastings and Lewes).
- It's important to be aware of the linkages between these projects so we're better prepared for any future opportunities coming forward through the likes of UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- Once the project bids were submitted, no further communication with bidders was permitted (stated clearly on the initial invitation on the ESCC website), thereby ensuring fairness and consistency. However, this was actually a frustration for officers who would normally wish to go back to applicants with points of clarification, and meant that some of the less experienced bid writers may have fared less well (e.g. rejected due to the application form not being properly completed).
- The assessment was largely dictated by MHCLG's gateway and deliverability/strategic fit criteria, so our East Sussex process mirrored that as closely as possible, with additional consideration given to local strategic priorities.
- Borough and District officers were consulted as part of the assessment process, as their input was crucial in providing local expert intelligence (e.g. knowledge of possible duplication) and also necessary in providing their support to shortlisted projects.
- In the cumulative project impacts, Value for Money does not appear to have been measured. While it is of course a consideration, it does not form part of the assessment criteria from MHCLG.
- The timescale for project delivery is extremely tight, so there is little scope for a 'contingency plan' in case any of the shortlisted schemes don't come to fruition. However, the assessment process has been rigorous and robust, so the prioritised schemes are of the highest quality and really do stand the best possible chance of delivering.
- There were also some very attractive projects just outside of the envelope, sitting on what is now a long list of potential 'opportunities', so constructive feedback will be provided to all project applicants in order to help them with any future funding bids, such as UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- After submission, monitoring and evaluation will continue for the remainder of the programme. Every project applicant was required to set out a full monitoring and evaluation plan as part of their application, with a minimum of £10k of their funding bid to be allocated to it.
- The review process also involves East Sussex County Council providing feedback to MHCLG on the 'lessons learnt', such as the above points made on communicating with applicants on issues of clarification and MHCLG having a more robust set of assessment criteria (to include VFM, more weighting and less duplication).

3.4. GP asked the group if they were happy with the information presented today and would support the overall submission to MHCLG – ***TES Board members confirmed that they are happy to support the East Sussex application to the UK Community Renewal Fund.***

3.5. RD confirmed that all of the project applicants will be advised this week whether they've been shortlisted to go forward as part of the East Sussex submission, so ***TES members are asked to please keep the details of this meeting confidential*** until the final application is submitted to MHCLG on Friday 18 Jun 2021. We expect MHCLG to advise us of their decisions regarding which projects will be awarded UK CRF funding during Jul 2021.

3.6. GP thanked all of the people involved in getting the East Sussex application ready in such a short timeframe, particularly colleagues at ESCC and the Borough & District Councils, plus AE and DW at EBS Consulting.

4. TES round table / AOB

4.1. GP highlighted the success of Hastings BC in their Towns Fund bid, with a confirmed award of £24.3m announced last week. Thanks to everyone involved in achieving this.

Summary of actions

None.