

## **Housing and Development Group (HDG)**

**(Working Group to SELEP)**

**14<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

**Video Conference**

### **1. Introductions and Apologies**

The notes of the previous meeting were approved.

### **2. SELEP Update**

The group were updated the uncertainty remains with respect to the future role of LEPs as the outcome of the LEP Review and publication of the Devolution White Paper are expected soon. It remains business as usual for the group until or unless informed otherwise.

Items to note:

- South East Careers Event (19<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> October): <https://www.southeastlep.com/south-east-careers-19th-and-21st-october-watch-our-webinar-outlining-this-virtual-2-day-session-and-how-employers-can-exhibit-for-free/>
- South East Future Event: What does clean growth look like for the South East?  
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/south-east-futures-what-does-clean-growth-look-like-in-the-south-east-tickets-173922736587>

### **3. SELEP Virtual Roundtable**

Lucy Spencer-Lawrence updated the group on the planned roundtable:

The group suggested noting the difference between macro vs micro solutions in terms of green energy.

The impact of standby energy usage was also raised as a potential topic.

### **4. Lower Thames Crossing**

No update at this meeting.

### **5. Sector Support Fund**

Keith Harrison outlined the Community-led Housing Hubs SSF bid – the Housing & Development Working Group endorsed this concept.

Further information will be circulated at the appropriate time.

Note: All funding decisions from SELEP, including SSF, have been paused until December 2021 due to funding uncertainty.

## **6. Ministerial Engagement**

Brian Horton noted that there is continued engagement with officers and ministers – including the circulated letter outlining key issues for the sector.

There was a meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> June with the Housing Minister Chris Pincher and the process for setting a future meeting after the party conference season is underway.

It was noted that small sites where contractors are looking to develop residential was still an issue as there was competition with self-builders that do not build for profit. Brian requested information on this with examples and this can be taken to future discussions with senior government officials.

## **7. Phosphates & Nitrates**

The issue has been raised at the ministerial level and indications are that progress is being made – it was noted that this is becoming a national issue.

At the local level Ashford and Canterbury are looking at options to mitigate impact and believe there is a solution for the phosphates concern. Land availability for wetlands to offset the impact of nitrogen is also being explored. Planning permission for new homes on a number of larger sites could be released through the provision of onsite treatment works and environmental improvements facilitating this.

Action is still required by the government to deliver a joined-up solution if we are to mitigate the harm to jobs and housing delivery in East Kent.

## **8. First Homes**

Brian Horton noted a concern that there is little evidence of take up of the First Homes pilot in the SELEP area. The deadline has been extended but there was the assumption that there would have been dialogue between councils and developers on this if schemes to come forward in the pilot. At current value cap levels there is concerns that this policy will struggle to work in high value areas outside of London.

## **9. Homes England**

The First Homes invitation to tender was extended to the 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 the Government announced new strategic partners for the Affordable Homes Programme – there are a number of these active in the SELEP area.

Meeting closed.

### **Next Meeting:**

26 October 2021\*

\* All virtual and 10.30 am for 1 hour