

Item 2: Sector Support Fund (SSF)

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek Strategic Board (the Board) endorsement for two Sector Support Fund (SSF) projects which have been submitted to SELEP for revenue funding support. This report follows the discussion of the projects at the Board meeting on 12 March 2020. As the meeting was not quorate at the time of the item being discussed, agreement is required for the recommendations of this report through electronic procedure
- 1.2. A third application was also submitted for consideration by the Board for the South East Export Development (SEED) project and several Board members spoke in support of the project. The SEED project does not currently meet the criteria for SSF, as set out in section 8 below, but as an additional £1.0m SSF was agreed at the last meeting of the Board, there is an opportunity for the application to be further developed for resubmission at a future date.
- 1.3. The report also provides an update to the Board on the delivery of the 12 SSF projects which have been endorsed by the Board to date. As part of the update on existing SSF projects the Board is asked to agree an extension of the England's Creative Coast project.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Board is asked to:
- 2.2. **Endorse** the following projects which have been assessed as meeting the SSF eligibility criteria for funding:
 - 2.2.1. Delivering skills of the future through teaching: teaching for growth (extension proposal) (£76,000)
 - 2.2.2. Buy Local South East (£69,510), subject to verbal confirmation at the Board meeting that the Project has received endorsement from the Federated Boards
- 2.3. **Note** that a further application for funding has been received for the SE Export Development (SEED) (£129,860) project which is not recommended for approval at this time, as not all the eligibility criteria has been met.
- 2.4. **Agree:** England's Creative Coast be allowed to extend its delivery by one year
- 2.5. **Note:** the update on the delivery of the SSF programme
- 2.6. **Note:** that if the Board Endorse the two projects listed in 2.2, a total of £1,060,990 SSF will be remaining for future applications (subject to approval at the Accountability Board meeting July 2020). This includes the remaining carry forward of £60,990 from 2019/20 and a further £1.0m SSF in 2020/21, as agreed by the Board in June 2020.

3. Background

- 3.1. In June 2017, the Board agreed to establish the SSF using the Growing Places Fund revenue monies, with the intention of offering revenue funding to support the pan-LEP sector-based activities of the SELEP working groups.
- 3.2. The aim of the funding is to support projects which:
 - 3.2.1 impact across all Federated areas;
 - 3.2.2 demonstrate a positive contribution to SELEP's mission to create the conditions for increased numbers of jobs and homes, safeguard existing jobs and raise skills levels across the area;
 - 3.2.3 support the delivery of SELEP's Strategic Economic Statement; and
 - 3.2.4 provide high value for money
- 3.3. Full details of the criteria are available on the SELEP website, [Guidance Note](#). This guidance has been updated to reflect the additional criteria agreed by the Board in June 2020, to ensure projects act to support the COVID-19 economic recovery
- 3.4. In addition to the SSF being available to support the activities of SELEP's working groups, the decision report to the Board in June 2017 set out the scope for SSF to support the establishment of Enterprise Zones. This is due to the precedent which has been set through the previous awards of revenue funding to the Harlow Enterprise Zone.
- 3.5. The SSF funding totals £500,000 per annum and is intended to be made available on an annual basis over a three-year period, between 2017/18 and 2019/20, with a maximum of £200,000 being available per project.
- 3.6. There remains £206,500 unspent SSF available from 2019/20 for which projects may bid for, as set out in Section 5 below. In addition, a further £1m SSF has been agreed by the Board in June 2020 as an extension to the SSF. This increases the available SSF to £1.206m.
- 3.7. The carry forward of £206,500 and £1.0m SSF extension needs to be approved by Accountability Board and any endorsement of SSF applications is subject to this.
- 3.8. For projects to secure an SSF allocation the proposal must secure support from at least one Federated Board and be endorsed by the Strategic Board. However, the formal funding decision is made by the SELEP Accountable Officer, being the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) with delegated responsibility, following endorsement of the project by the Board.
- 3.9. An Independent Assessment is also completed by the SELEP Accountable Body, Essex County Council (ECC), for all SSF applications. This assessment considers the project's suitability against the agreed assessment criteria, made available on the SELEP website and the requirements of the SELEP Assurance Framework.

4. SSF Investment to Date

4.1. To date, the Board has endorsed twelve projects for SSF support to a maximum value of £1,293,500 as set out in Table 1 below. Further information on each of the projects listed above can be found in Appendix B.

Table 1 – Existing SSF projects

Existing SSF projects	
Project	SSF
2017/18 Endorsement	
South East Creative Economy Network (SECEN) Cultural Coasting	£150,000
Tourism and SECEN Colours and Flavours	£60,000
North Kent Enterprise Zone	161,000
2018/19 Endorsement	
Kent Medical Campus Enterprise Zone – Innovation Centre Design Work	£156,000
Good Food Growth Campaign	£60,400
Future Proof: Accelerating Delivery of High-Quality Development	£110,000
Planning and prioritising future skills, training and business support needs for rural businesses	£96,000
Coastal Communities Supplement to the SELEP Strategic Economic Plan project	£40,000
SELEP Skills Advisory Group – Delivering skills of the future through teaching	£166,600
Creative Open Workspace Master Plan project	£49,000
2019/20 Endorsement	
Energy and Clean Growth – Supply Chain Mapping	129,500
Accelerating Opportunities within the Newhaven Enterprise Zone	115,000
Total	£1,293,500

5. SSF Applications against the 2019/20 pot

5.1. Several new applications are being developed to seek funding through the SSF opportunity and three applications have been submitted to SELEP for consideration and endorsement by the Board at this time.

5.2. The applications that have passed the Independent Assessment by the SELEP Accountable Body are:

5.2.1 *Delivering skills of the future through teaching: teaching for growth (extension proposal)*

5.2.2 *Buy Local South East*

5.3. The application that did not pass the Independent Assessment by the SELEP Accountable Body is

5.3.1 *SE Export Development (SEED)*

5.4. The outcome of the assessments is presented in Appendix C

5.5. There are currently no further applications which have completed the independent assessment process ready for consideration by the Board. Although it is understood that areas are looking at possible proposals, to bid for the remaining £1,060,990 unallocated SSF available.

5.6. Table 2 below shows the balance of 2019/20 SSF after the two deducting the bids in this report.

Table 2: 2019/20 SSF allocation

Remaining SSF from 2019/20	£206,500
<i>Delivering skills of the future through teaching: teaching for growth (extension proposal)</i>	£76,000
<i>Buy Local South East</i>	£69,510
Balance of SSF 2019/20 allocation remaining	£60,990

6. Delivering skills of the future through teaching: teaching for growth (extension proposal) (The Project)

Overview of earlier project

- 6.1 In November 2018, the Skills Working Group submitted a successful SSF proposal to address this. Due to SSF availability at this time, a scaled down version was agreed. Given the success of the earlier project, an extension is now proposed. This was also endorsed at 23rd April 2020 Skills Working Group particularly in response to covid-19 challenges.
- 6.2 The earlier project has delivered:
- Bursaries to suitably qualified participants to train as teachers in the post-16 sector by studying for teacher training qualifications at Level 3, 4+
 - Establishment of <https://www.becomealecturer.org/> to answer generic questions regarding post-16 teaching as a career and signpost enquirers to vacancies
 - Development and implementation of a high-profile publicity campaign using web, social media and radio to raise the awareness to industrial practitioners of opportunities the post-16 sector provides for a second career
Production of videos featuring industrial practitioners who have become teachers at <https://www.becomealecturer.org/>
- 6.3 Applications have been nearly 300% above target and match funding has exceeded the target by 45%.

Scope of current application

- 6.4 Delivery of skills is a priority for the SELEP area. This project will deliver against the following objectives:
- Apprenticeship and industry relevant training growth

- Higher, technical and STEM based qualifications
- Raising skills levels overall
- Delivering against the skills capital projects to meet the training needs of more employers
- Piloting sector-based tutor training

6.5 The project extension for an additional 12 months will enable:

- The production of five additional areas to increase project reach targeting alternative priority sector skill areas including Professional, scientific and technical, Transport and Logistics, Accommodation, food and logistics and Manufacturing Engineering
- Funds to cover the award of 60 more bursaries spread across level 3 and above to March 2021 to appeal to those joining the post-16 sector in the post Covid-19 period of June 2020 and beyond
- Continuation of the high-profile social media campaign
- The further development and subsequent legacy maintenance of the www.becomealecturer.org website for a period of 12 months

Funding

- 6.6 The total cost of *Delivering skills of the future through teaching: teaching for growth extension proposal* is estimated at £126,000.
- 6.7 A £76,000 SSF grant to the project would cover 60% of the project costs, with the remaining £50,000 being provided by FE Sussex and granting of 60 new bursaries at an average rate of £800 per bursary (from FE employers) as shown in Table 3
- 6.8 The project is expected to be delivered within 12 months, with the re-launch of bursary opportunities utilising www.becomealecturer.org taking place over the summer. It is currently expected that the project will complete in June 2021.

Table 3 Funding Breakdown: Delivering skills of the future through teaching. Teaching for Growth (extension proposal)

Source	2020/21
SSF	£76,000
Other funding sources:	
Project administration by FE Sussex and processing of bursary requests for 12 months	£2,000
Granting of 60 new bursaries at an average rate of £800 per bursary	£48,000
Total Project Cost	£126,000

Outcome of Independent Technical Review

- 6.9 The Accountable Body has independently assessed the project bid and has confirmed that the Project meets the criteria for funding, including the Assurance Framework requirement with supporting evidence provided to demonstrate value for money and a benefit cost ratio (BCR) of 6.5:1.
- 6.10 The BCR has been calculated based on the economic benefits to the individuals taught by the tutors.
- 6.11 The Project aligns with SELEP's strategic objectives to increase skills levels and STEM sector growth across the SELEP area.
- 6.12 The Project is stated to be pan-LEP as the benefits arising from the Project in terms of increased recruitment to skilled jobs, through increased provision of tutors and training opportunities will be experienced across the entire SELEP area. The project has been supported by the three Employment and Skills Boards across the SELEP area.
- 6.13 The Independent Technical Review has confirmed that the project meets the criteria for funding (see Appendix C)

7. Buy Local South East

Scope of Project

- 7.1 The Food and Drink sector has become increasingly important on the regional government agenda in recent years, with food tourism growing in the South East. British food (Buy British) has become hugely popular in and outside the UK, with customers growing more environmentally aware. There is a shift toward local and sustainable food.
- 7.2 The current COVID-19 pandemic has brought the role of the food and drink sector in our regional rural economy into sharp focus. With the forced shutdown of pubs, restaurants and cafes has had a disastrous effect on the hospitality sector and its supply chain of growers, producers and distributors. This Project aims to capitalise on a renewed focus on local buying to support all businesses in the food and drink sector to weather the storm and rebuild a sustainable business in the recovery period.
- 7.3 The proposal will produce:
- 7.3.1 A **regional website and portal** to signpost customers to local food and drink businesses showing the SELEP region (www.buylocalfoodanddrink.co.uk), which is a centralised food and drink platform for the area aimed at consumers(B2C page) and businesses (B2B page) looking to buy local in the Southeast
 - 7.3.2 A SELEP area wide **Buy Local Food and Drink marketing campaign** focussed on local producers, retailers and followed by hospitality and tourism experiences
 - 7.3.3. Central **database for food and drink businesses** in the SELEP area. East Sussex will link their existing map to the regional 'landing page'
 - 7.3.4 A series of **business recovery support activities** for food and drink businesses based on a sector Covid-19 impact and recovery survey: This could include: surveys, training, 1-2-1 support, connecting suppliers with buyers, and knowledge exchange conference. The activities do not relate to financial support, which might overlap with Government/County

Council initiatives, but rather focused activities dependant on the outcome of the sector survey. This will be undertaken by the University of Kent

7.4 The work is supported by the need from local producers to develop business relations with wholesale, retail and hospitality sectors to build their businesses. It also supports the SELEP Economic Strategy by:

7.4.1 Increasing the adoption of new technologies and processes by small rural businesses, who will be able to access expertise to support development of new products/services and build products/services started in response to COVID-19. Advice and training on new technologies and innovations in the areas of food production and delivery techniques, food processing, sales and marketing, routes to market and access to new markets will enhance economic development and support job creation.

7.4.2 The project, through its B2C and B2B platform, will provide an opportunity to businesses across the three federated areas to connect with each other, with larger regional, national (large retail) and international 'Buyers' as well as with customers residing within and outside of the SELEP area

7.4.3 Covid19 has shown the pivotal role the food and drink industry are playing in the local economy and communities. The Project will use its SELEP-wide marketing campaign, and by supporting growers, producers, retailers and businesses in the hospitality sector boost B2C and B2B sales and build regional supply chains, the project supports the regional economy, promotes a connected, healthy and happy community, and contributes to a well-maintained countryside and a better environment

7.4.4 The regional map and supporting marketing campaign will provide customers looking for local produce an insight into the great variety of food and drink businesses in the SELEP area, with the regional map providing a direct Call to Action, boosting sales and subsequent business growth. The map and business support activities offer the opportunity for local producers to engage with the broader market and build on the 'local produce' offer, offering a more sustainable approach to food production which directly supports local job creation and community cohesion.

7.4.5 There is an opportunity to link with another SSF project, Gourmet Garden Trails, to cross promote both projects. Produced in Kent and Visit Kent already work closely together.

7.4.6 The Buy Local campaign will also extend a hand to the hospitality sector which has suffered disproportionately from the social distancing guidelines, promoting its offering and helping with B2B business development and targeted recovery support.

7.4.7 The project, through its baseline survey, provides an opportunity to assess current skills gaps post Covid19 and offer targeted upskilling activities.

7.5 The funding breakdown is shown in Table 4;

Table 4 Buy Local South East Funding Breakdown

Source	2020/21
<i>SSF</i>	£69,510
<i>Produced in Kent (Kent)</i>	£19,660
<i>Natural Partnerships CIC (East Sussex)</i>	£5,790
<i>Rural Community Council (Essex)</i>	£4,400
Total	£99,300

Benefits

7.6 Expected benefits of the Project are:

7.6.1 Increased B2C sales by around 2-5% across companies involved, which equates to 800 companies realising £40m annually. The cash value of this has been estimated at £0.8m - £2m

7.6.2 Increased B2B sales by around 2-5% across companies involved, which equates to 300 companies realising £30m annually. The cash value of this has been estimated at £0.6m - £1.5m

7.6.3 It is estimated that 10 new products will be developed which has a cash value of circa £30,000 per product

7.6.4 Additional employment with a target of 30 FTE posts at approx. £18,000 per post = £540,000

7.7 This suggests a BCR of 44:1 and highlight the significant potential for the development of SELEP's food and drink sector

7.8 The Buy Local campaign will drive customer and business traffic to the regional website and ultimately to the businesses listed there. A regional map will attract a larger (UK and London and International) audience, which will open up regional, national and potentially international export opportunities.

7.9 As previously mentioned COVID-19 has seen a surge in businesses adapting and benefitting from the publics move toward buying local. Project training provided on developing and further building on these services (with available digital technologies) and successfully adapting one's brand and business strategy in line with this operational change, will lead to at least 10 new products developed and taken to market. Evidence of this in action has been seen with Kent businesses bringing 16 new products to market since the beginning of the lockdown

Outcome of Independent Technical Review

- 7.10 The Accountable Body has independently assessed the project bid and has confirmed that the Project meets the criteria for funding, including the Assurance Framework requirement with regard to the expectation that value for money will be achieved.
- 7.11 The Project aligns with SELEP's strategic objectives to increase skills levels and STEM sector growth across the SELEP area, including;
- Creating Ideas and Enterprise - Through its virtual business recovery support package, the project will enable small rural businesses to access expertise to support development of new products/services and build products/services started in response to the Covid19 crisis.
 - Creating Places - Covid19 has shown the pivotal role the food and drink industry is playing in our local economy and communities. By beating the Buy Local drum through its SELEP-wide marketing campaign, and by supporting growers, producers, retailers and businesses in the hospitality sector boost B2C and B2B sales and build regional supply chains, the project supports the regional economy, promotes a connected, healthy and happy community, and contributes to a well-maintained countryside and a better environment
 - Working Together - The regional map and supporting marketing campaign provide customers looking for local produce an insight into the great variety of food and drink businesses in the SELEP area, with the regional map providing a direct Call to Action, boosting sales and subsequent business growth.
- 7.12 The Independent Technical Review has confirmed that the project meets the criteria for funding (see Appendix C)

8. SE Export Development (SEED)

Scope of Project

- 8.1 This Project has been submitted for SSF assessment, however, did not meet all the Independent Technical Evaluators (ITE) criteria at this time
- 8.2 The project looks to help SELEP businesses to grow by becoming more innovative and productive, the promoters had found that exports levels in the SELEP area tended to be quite low.
- 8.3 The key areas of delivery are;
- 8.3.1 Business Engagement – a series of communication activities to recruit companies from the target sectors wishing to expand into international markets and assessing their suitability to participate in the project. It is crucial that a good representation of relevant businesses from across the SELEP area are engaged with the supported projects
- 8.3.2 Export Preparation – working to help selected companies get 'export-ready' (with hands-on support from Department of Trade (DIT) and other strategic partners) through 1-2-1 and group training activities (covering topics like market selection in a shifting global environment, complying with new trade regulations, innovation & product adaption for overseas markets, paperwork & customs, routes to multiple markets, managing risks around exports, distribution, getting paid and maximising time at exhibitions). This activity will include an element of responding to evolving business needs around export challenges and barriers to provide up to date and useful information to companies.

8.3.3 A SELEP stand at an International Trade Show (in April – June 2021) - Organisation of a SELEP stand at a major international trade show, with dedicated space for 20 companies allowing them to showcase their products / services to global audiences from the right industry sectors. This will also allow the inward investment agencies from the federated areas to promote SELEP abroad as a place to do business. A video will be produced for display on the stand showcasing the best of the sector in the SELEP area and key investment sites and assets. Representatives of the Inward Investment Agencies in the SELEP area will be invited to attend the show to meet with international business contacts and also promote the area as a place to invest and do business. Although most international trade fairs have been cancelled in 2020, it is anticipated that such activities will resume in 2021 and it is important that companies from the SELEP area are at the forefront of such opportunities to promote their products to an international audience to aid economic recovery. This option would not be an option currently

8.3.4 A SELEP trade mission -this would be organised to enable a further 30 companies to visit the same show to carry out market research and participate in a range of matchmaking, meet the buyer and market insight presentations

8.4 The project would provide intensive support to 50 businesses from the SELEP area with an estimated split per federated area of: Essex: 12, South Essex 8, Medway 5, Kent 16, East Sussex 9

8.5 The sector focus and therefore target international trade shows are due to be finalised by the delivery partners and would be decided at the start of the implementation phase when the partnership would review the most suitable trade show opportunities, thereby gaining the most up to date intelligence.

8.6 The funding breakdown is shown in Table 5

Table 5 SEED Funding Breakdown

Source	2020/21
SSF	£129,860
Dedicated officer time from the partner Local Authorities (Kent, Medway, South Essex) and Chambers of Commerce	£25,000
DIT SE, DIT East & EEN SE & East International Trade Advisor time	£5,000
SME contribution towards travel and accommodation costs	£10,000
Total Project Cost	£169,860

8.7 Each partner would contribute a dedicated amount of officer time for the management and implementation of the project, although this is not specified in the application.

8.8 Beneficiary SME's would make a contribution to travel and accommodation costs for the trade shows to help demonstrate their commitment to international sales. This would be on a proportionate basis in order not to create any barriers to participation.

Benefits

8.9 Expected benefits of the Project are outlined in Table 6

Table 6

Type of Benefit	Number of benefits created	Cash value of benefit (£)
New skills and knowledge gained by participating SMEs	50 SMEs with new knowledge and boosted internal export capacity	
International exposure for SMEs	50 SMEs exposed to new international markets	
Sales leads generated for companies	20 leads per exhibiting company gained at the trade shows	
New international business contacts made	200 new contacts made by companies participating in trade mission leading to international partnership or co-operation agreements	
Export orders / contracts secured	New export orders company in the year following the project implementation	£200,000 estimate (Average £10K per exhibiting company)
Increased turnover for exhibiting companies	10% increase in turnover between the start of the project and 6 months after the end of the project	

8.10 A report published in 2008 suggest that companies participating in trade shows see an average financial benefit of £40,000. Appreciating that this project will be based on enabling 20 companies who are 'new to export' this figure may vary. It is conservatively estimated that the 20 companies, exhibiting at a trade show, would expect to create export wins of £200,000. An export win is a new orders or contracts resulting in participation in the trade shows in the year following the project. SEED would expect to secure an equal return

8.11 Department of International Trade funded shows offered £70 return for every £1 spent, which shows the value of helping businesses with this type of activity. However, the calculation for this level of return is not provided as part of the application.

Outcome of Independent Technical Review

8.12 The Independent Technical Review has confirmed that the project does not meet the criteria for funding at this time for the following reasons;

8.13 The BCR of the Project is not provided. Whilst the application suggests a return on investment of 70:1 it is not clear how this figure has been calculated.

8.14 Within the SELEP Assurance Framework there is a value for money exemption 1 for projects with a funding ask of less than £2m where a project can demonstrate an overwhelming strategic case and no substantial project risks. However, the ITE assessment of the project did not confirm the overwhelming strategic case for the project and compliance of the project with the value for money exemption, at this time, as:

- No sectors have been identified in the application and are still to be determined;

- It is not currently possible to confirm the date of Trade Shows or whether it will be feasible for such events to take place next year. If such events do take place, there may not be the previous level of interest in such events; and
- The investment in physical trade show events, as the main outcome of the project, currently presents a high risk to the overall deliverability of the project.

8.15 The outcomes do not reference jobs and homes, safeguarding existing jobs and raising skill levels. However, there is an assumed increase in these outcomes due to ultimate objective being to expand regional businesses and promote growth.

8.16 £40,000 of match-in-kind is identified; £10,000 is the expected contribution from the individual businesses selected to participate, so is not guaranteed.

8.17 It is unclear from the application as to which federated areas are providing officer time and whether this has been confirmed.

9. Update on existing SSF projects

9.1 England's Creative Coast, formerly, The South East Creative Economy Network (SECEN) Cultural Coasting Project.

9.2 This Project was originally awarded funding in June 2017 with a programme extended over three years, 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20.

9.3 By collaborating with artists, galleries, arts organisations and tourism providers the Project aims to connect people and places, celebrating the importance of creativity alongside the uniqueness of being and living by the coast.

9.4 Following guidance from Government and Public Health England it is now planned that the Waterfronts art commissions, a series of new temporary outdoor works made in response to the Essex, Kent and East Sussex coastlines will now take place in 2021.

9.5 The Project has so far drawn down £100,000 of its £150,000 award. The total project value is £1,179,000.

9.6 The Board is asked under 2.4 to agree this extension.

10. Update on delivery of approved SSF projects

10.1 All twelve SSF projects which have been endorsed by the Board have now been approved by the SELEP CEO. To date £889,266 SSF has been drawn down against eight of these projects, with further draw down requests expected in relation to other SSF projects during 2020/21 financial year.

10.2 Formal monitoring and evaluation processes are in place for all projects in the SSF programme. This will allow updates to be provided to the Board on the delivery of the SSF projects on a regular basis. Detailed information about each SSF project, based on monitoring returns provided by scheme promoters, is set out in Appendices B and C.

11. Sector Support Fund programme risks

- 11.1 An important part of the SSF reporting process is the completion of a high-level risk assessment for each project. Scheme promoters are asked to assess the project risk in four specific areas:
- 11.1.1 **Delivery Risk** - What are the delivery risks that the project faces? What mitigation is required to reduce the delivery risk?
 - 11.1.2 **SSF Spend Risk** - If SSF spend is delayed relative to the timescales agreed in the legal agreement, an explanation for the delay is sought.
 - 11.1.3 **Delivery of project benefits** - Is there risk to the delivery of the project outputs and benefits as stated in the original application?
 - 11.1.4 **Other Risk** - Have any other risks/issues arisen that will impact the delivery of the scheme?
- 11.2 Each risk area is assigned a rating of Red (high risk), Amber (medium risk) or Green (low risk), with these ratings being combined to produce an overall project risk rating which is measured on the same scale. This risk analysis is set out in Appendix B. No high-risk issues have been identified to date.

12. Accountable Body Comments

- 12.1 Up to £500,000 of the GPF revenue grant was available in 2019/20 (plus carry forward of £301,600) to support the SSF programme, of which £206,500 remains unallocated. The Buy Local South East project and the Delivering skills of the future through teaching project are seeking £145,510 in total and therefore there is sufficient funding available to support the request for these Project, leaving £60,990 to support future funding bids in 2020/21.
- 12.2 At the June 2020 Strategic Board meeting it was agreed that an allocation of GPF should be repurposed to fund a targeted response to support economic recovery post Covid-19 in the region. As part of this, a further £1m SSF was agreed as an extension to the SSF. This increases the available SSF to £1.206m.
- 12.3 No key risks have been identified with the two projects and the Independent Technical Review has confirmed that the criteria for funding have been met.
- 12.4 The SE Export Development (SEED) project application did not meet the criteria of the Independent Technical Review. Key risks were identified which can be seen in Appendix A.
- 12.5 This grant is a fixed maximum contribution to the Project; any Project over spends incurred will be required to be addressed by the Project delivery partner.
- 12.6 Should the Board endorse the recommended SSF applications, the grants will be transferred to Kent County Council and Essex County Council via a grant agreement with the Accountable Body; the grant agreement will include a requirement for law back of the funding if it is not fully expended or not expended in line with the Project Bid Document.
- 12.7 The SSF carry forward balance of £206,500 from 2019/20 is subject to the Accountability Board's approval of the 2019/20 final year position and carry forward, at the July 2020 Board

meeting. At this meeting the Accountability Board will also be asked to approve the allocation of the additional £1m to SSF detailed in 12.2.

12.8 Should the Strategic Board endorse the two SSF projects put forward in this report and the projects are then granted approval by the SELEP Accountable Officer, being the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) the subsequent Grant agreements and funding transfers will be subject to Accountability Board SSF carry forward approval.

13. Appendices

13.1 Appendix A – Summary of SELEP endorsed SSF projects

13.2 Appendix B – Update on the delivery of Sector Support Fund projects

13.3 Appendix C – ITE Assessment

14. Background Paper

14.1 [Business Case for Buy Local South East](#)

14.2 [Business Case for SE Export Development \(SEED\)](#)

14.3 [Business Case for Delivering skills for the future Project extension](#)

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