
Summary of decisions taken at a meeting of the SELEP Accountability Board, held at MidKent College, Maidstone Campus, Oakwood Park, Tonbridge Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 8AQ, on Friday, 15 July 2022

Published on Friday 15th July 2022. Provided a decision has not been called in by close of business on Wednesday 20th July 2022 it can then be implemented.

Please note that this is a summary of decisions taken at the meeting only. A full account of proceedings will appear in the minutes of the meeting which will be published on the Council's website by Tuesday 2nd August 2022.

Enquiries to Lisa Siggins, 033301 34594, lisa.siggins@essex.gov.uk

Present:

Cllr Lesley Wagland	Essex County Council
Cllr Roger Gough	Kent County Council
Cllr Rodney Chambers	Medway Council
Cllr Keith Glazier	East Sussex County Council
Cllr Mark Coxshall	Thurrock Council
Rosemary Nunn	Higher Education representative
Simon Cook	Further Education/Skills representative

1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

- Sarah Dance – Simon Cook acted as Chair
- Cllr Kevin Bentley substituted by Cllr Lesley Wagland
- Cllr Stephen George

2 Minutes 27.05.22

Sarah Dance had requested an amendment to the minutes for the Finance Update. The minutes currently state 'The Chair offered her thanks to all those involved'. This should read 'The Chair offered her thanks to SELEP and the Accountable Body for all their work and acknowledged the challenges that had been faced during a very uncertain period.'

The minutes of the meeting held on Friday 27th May 2022 were thereafter agreed as an accurate record.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were none

4 **Questions from the public**

The following question was received from Mr Bernard Brown

The question does not comply with SELEP's Public Question policy and was therefore not answered during the meeting. However, in the interests of transparency, Adam Bryan, SELEP Chief Executive Officer, read out the question during the meeting. A formal written response to the question will be provided within 10 working days of the meeting and this response will also be published on the SELEP website.

I refer to the Agenda Pack of the Accountability Board meeting held on 27 May 2022.

Page 117, paragraph 6.2 LGF Deliverability and Risks. This reads:

“Changes to the Structure of Appendix D have been made to ensure that it is possible to differentiate between those projects which have completed their LGF spend but which are continuing to deliver against their agreed Business Case and those projects which have completed both LGF spend and delivery in accordance with their agreed Business Case. This change in approach has meant that a small number of projects which were previously reported as complete, due to their LGF spend allocation having been spent in full, now being shown as ongoing. Delivery of the remaining works required as per the agreed project Business Case will continue to be monitored.”

For clarity, please confirm that the cases referred to were reported by the Body responsible to SELEP for the delivery of the projects to SELEP as being completed when, in fact, they were not complete? Has this reporting change been promoted by enquiries from Residents of East Sussex?

Can SELEP confirm this change actually applied to only 2 projects out of some 114 projects reported in Appendix D?

Can SELEP confirm that in both cases the body responsible was East Sussex County Council and the Supplier Contractor/Delivery Partner was Sea Change Sussex?

Appendix D LGF Deliverability and Risk on page 49 of the agenda pack for the meeting on 15 July 2022 still shows both these projects as being incomplete will SELEP advise:-

On the North Bexhill Access Road additional funding had been provided to undertake environmental mitigation measures. These were conditions set out in the Planning Consent for the Road granted by Rother District Council. As at the 27 May meeting these works had not been undertaken. As the total allocation of LGF allocated has been reported as spent, what is the cost value of the remaining works to be funded by Sea Change Sussex to complete the project?

What date has been given for the completion of the North Bexhill Access Road Project? Why is this date not in the report to the Board for 15 July?

On the East Sussex Strategic Growth Project, this was made up of several inter-related component parts. Which of these parts have been delivered? Which parts have not been delivered? Which parts have yet to be commenced? By March 2021 509 new jobs were scheduled to have been completed, what is the actual total to date? As the total allocation of LGF has been reported as spent, what is the cost value of the remaining works to be funded by Sea Change Sussex to complete the project. What date has now been given for the completion of the project? Why is this date not in the report to the Board for 15 July?

In the Agenda Pack for 15 July under LGF Queensway Road there is a claimed reporting procedures/accountability relationship between East Sussex County Council and Sea Change Sussex. This follows on from my public question at the last Accountability Board. If the reported process is valid as claimed why were both these projects reported as completed when they clearly were not? Is it not the case East Sussex County Council have failed in their duty in this regard?

If this information is not readily available for the 15 July meeting does this indicate the monitoring of these projects has been deficient and how will it now be improved?

Can the Board explain why no update has been given on either of these incomplete projects for the last 6 months?

5 Queensway Gateway Road LGF Project Update

The Accountability Board (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 Manager, the purpose of which was to provide the Board with assurances regarding the actions being taken by East Sussex County Council to ensure that the updates provided by Sea Change Sussex (as delivery partner) in relation to the Queensway Gateway Road Local Growth Fund (LGF) project (the Project) are robust and complete.

Richard Dawson also provided a verbal update on project delivery to the Board.

Resolved:

- 1. To Note** the assurances provided by East Sussex County Council within the report.
- 2. To Note** the verbal update on delivery of the Project provided during the meeting.

6 Local Growth Fund Programme Update

The Board received a report from Helen Dyer, the purpose of which was for the Board to consider the overall position of the Local Growth Fund (LGF) capital programme, as part of SELEP's Growth Deal with Government.

Resolved:

1. **To Agree** the reported LGF spend on project delivery in 2021/22 of £41.931m excluding DfT retained schemes and increasing to £44.821m including DfT retained schemes, as set out in Table 1 and Appendix A of the report.

2. **To Note** the deliverability and risk assessment, as set out in Appendix D of the report.

3. **To Agree** the updated completion date for the following projects which have experienced a delay of more than 6 months:

3.1. Eastbourne Town Centre – project completion delayed from March 2022 to May 2024

3.2. Eastbourne and South Wealden Walking and Cycling Package – project completion delayed from December 2022 to December 2024

3.3. Colchester Grow On Space – project completion delayed from July 2022 to June 2024.

7 LGF High Risk Project Update

The Board received a report from Howard Davies, SELEP Capital Programme Officer, the purpose of which was for the Board to receive an update on the delivery of the following Local Growth Fund (LGF) projects which are currently ranked as high risk: A13 Widening, A28 Sturry Link Road, Maidstone Integrated Transport Package and Grays South.

Resolved:

A13 Widening

1. **To Note** the update on the project

2. **To Note** that a further update will be brought to the September 2022 Board meeting

A28 Sturry Link Road

1. **To Note** the update on the project

2. **To Agree** that, despite the project continuing to be ranked as High Risk, update reports will now be presented at alternate Board meetings, with the next update report required for the Board meeting in November 2022. Noting that this is due to the longevity of the workstreams currently being undertaken, as set out in Section 10 of the report, and that should there be any significant developments or new risks identified that the project will revert to providing update reports at each Board meeting.

Maidstone Integrated Transport Package

1. **To Note** the update on the project
2. **To Note** that, due to the risk rating for the project reducing to High/Medium following the confirmation of listed building consent, updates will no longer be provided at each Board meeting. Noting that the project will continue to be closely monitored and further update reports will be provided to the Board if new risks are identified.

Grays South

1. **To Note** the update on the project
2. **To Note** that a further update will be brought to the September 2022 Board meeting

8 London Gateway/Stanford-le-Hope LGF Project Update

The Board received a report from Keith Rumsey, Interim Assistant Director – Regeneration and Place Delivery, Thurrock Council and Howard Davies, the purpose of which was to provide an update to the Board on the delivery of the London Gateway/Stanford le Hope project (the Project).

Resolved:

1. **To Note** the update on delivery of the project
2. **To Note** that the updated Business Case required to demonstrate that the Project continues to be deliverable and that it continues to offer High value for money was not submitted in time for consideration at this meeting as previously agreed by the Board.
3. **To Agree** that although an updated Business Case has not been provided, as set out in the report presented to the Board at the May 2022 meeting, the LGF funding should remain allocated to the project on condition that an updated Business Case is submitted for consideration at the Board meeting on 23 September 2022.

9 LGF Additional Funding Awards

This item was not required as no LGF funding was returned to SELEP for reallocation as a result of decisions taken by the Board during the course of this meeting.

10 Getting Building Fund Programme Update

The Board received a report from Helen Dyer, the purpose of which was for the Board to consider the overall position of the Getting Building Fund (GBF) capital

programme. The report included an update on those projects which have received approval for retention of GBF funding beyond March 2022 and provided an update on GBF spend to date.

Resolved:

1. **To Note** the current reported spend across the GBF programme for the 2021/22 financial year of £50.666m, as set out in Table 2 of the report.

2. **To Note** the deliverability and risk assessment, as set out in Appendix C of the report

3. **To Agree** that the **Better Queensway project** can have an extension until the September 2022 Board meeting to provide the required assurances, as detailed in Section 5.14 of the report, regarding continued delivery of the wider project.

11 UTC Maritime and Sustainable Technology Hub GBF Project Update

The Board received a report from Helen Dyer, the purpose of which was for the Board to receive an update on the delivery of the UTC Maritime and Sustainable Technology Hub Getting Building Fund (GBF) project (the Project) which has been identified as being high risk.

The report also provided an update on the Project Change Request and the revised Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) calculations submitted in relation to the Project and sets out the outcome of the Independent Technical Evaluator (ITE) review. The Board were also asked to consider whether the Project continues to meet the requirements of the SELEP Assurance Framework and to decide whether GBF spend on the project can recommence, following the Board's decision to place GBF spend on hold at the last meeting.

Resolved:

1. **To Note** the update on project delivery, including completion of the acquisition of the building.

2 **To Note** that, following submission of a Project Change Request and updated BCR calculations, the Project has been assessed as offering High value for money with High certainty of achieving this.

3. **To Approve** the increase in total project cost for the Project from £1.778m (as set out in the Business Case) to £2.350m, as required under the terms of the Assurance Framework

4. **To Agree** that GBF spend on the Project should recommence following receipt of confirmation that the Project continues to offer High value for money.

5. **To Note** that a further update on project delivery will be provided at the September 2022 Board meeting.

12 Growing Places Fund Programme 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 accelerated drawdown of funding for the No Use Empty Commercial Phase II project.
3. **To Note** the steps being taken by the Eastbourne Fisherman's Quayside and Infrastructure Development project to develop a proposed repayment schedule for consideration by the Board in September 2022.

13 Finance Update

The Board received a report from Lorna Norris, Senior Finance Business Partner, the purpose of which was for the Board to consider the update to the 2022/23 budget including specific grants.

Resolved:

1. **To Approve** the proposed 2022/23 updated SELEP revenue budget set out in Table 1 of the report, including the specific funds summarised in Table 3 of the report (and detailed in Appendix A of the report);
2. **To Approve** the re-purposing of the uncommitted funding from the Covid-19 Skills Reserve of £35,000 set out in section 3.12.3 of the report, to be transferred to the Operational Reserve to support future service delivery;
3. **To Approve** the reduction in the Redundancy Reserve of £52,000 and for this funding to be transferred to the Operational Reserve to support future service delivery;
4. **To Note** the on-going uncertainty from Government regarding the future funding position for SELEP beyond 2022/23.

14 Date of Next Meeting

The Board noted that the next meeting will take place on Friday 23rd September 2022, venue to be confirmed

15 Urgent Business

Councillor Gough enquired as to whether the electronic procedure concerning the process for reallocation of the available GBF funding had been circulated.

Helen Dyer confirmed that it was expected to be circulated early in week commencing 18 July.

Councillor Wagland raised an issue regarding risk registers for the capital programme, understanding the common risk themes across the programme and how/at what level these risks should be managed, with inflation identified as a significant risk to project delivery. Adam Bryan responded and agreed to take the matter away for further consideration.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.32 am