

Attendees

AB	Adam Bryan	South East LEP	JS	Jo Simmons	South East LEP
AC	Ana Christie	Sussex Chamber of Commerce	KG	Cllr Keith Glazier	East Sussex CC
AN	Cllr Ann Newton	Wealden DC	KT	Katy Thomas	East Sussex CC
AT	Alison Turner	FSB	LR	Lisa Rawlinson	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC
BH	Ben Hook	Rother DC	ME	Martin Ellis	Recruitment South East
BP	Brett Pearson	Locate East Sussex	PD	Pranesh Datta	Hastings BC
CBe	Chris Bending	Wealden DC	PSm	Penny Shimmin	Sussex CDA
CS	Clive Soper	FSB	RD	Richard Dawson	East Sussex CC
DE	Dave Evans	East Sussex CC	RS	Cllr Rupert Simmons	East Sussex CC
DT	Cllr David Tutt	Eastbourne BC	TW	Tom Wolfenden	University of Sussex
GP	Graham Peters (CHAIR)	ES Rural Partnership	VG	Vera Gajic	East Sussex CC
JH	James Harris	East Sussex CC			

Apologies

CBa	Cllr Christine Bayliss	Rother DC	SB	Sue Baxter	University of Sussex
DG	Dianna Garnham	Skills East Sussex (SES)	SD	Stewart Drew	De La Warr Pavilion
DS	David Sheppard	D-RisQ Ltd	VC	Victoria Conheady	Hastings BC
PSP	Peter Sharp	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC	ZN	Cllr Zoe Nicholson	Lewes DC
RC	Rebecca Conroy	East Sussex College			

1. Welcome and introductions

- 1.1. **GP** welcomed the group, and extended a particular welcome to **AN** who joins TES as the member for Wealden DC, replacing Cllr Bob Standley, plus **AT** who is the new Development Manager on the FSB, filling the role previously held by Martin Searle.
- 1.2. **GP** noted that local authority elections recently took place in Hastings, and unfortunately Cllr Kim Forward, the TES member for Hastings BC, was not re-elected. **PD** clarified that the replacement member on TES is still to be confirmed, so will advise in due course.

[Action: DE to liaise with VC and PD on confirming the TES member for Hastings BC]

2. Previous TES minutes, 3 May 2022

- 2.1. **GP** ran through the actions of the previous meeting and confirmed they were all completed.
- 2.2. Regarding action 4.4, TES colleagues are encouraged to continue sharing the *Working Well From Home* link, <https://wellbeingatwork.eastsussex.gov.uk/working-well-from-home>, through their networks and media channels.
- 2.3. The minutes were approved by the group as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

- 3.1. **CBe** provided an update on the progress made since the last TES meeting, noting that many more meetings have taken place between the Borough and District Councils, ESCC colleagues and other partners. Collaboration has been key, sharing information on the current approaches and working through the various local priorities to ensure that the eventual way forward aligns with the overall priorities of TES and the county as a whole.
- 3.2. Funds from UKSPF will be substantially smaller than the various funding streams they're replacing, but the scope is much broader so the funds can be spread over a wider range of fields – hence the Boroughs and Districts are receiving a very large number of requests/appeals from groups and organisations.
- 3.3. Each Borough and District Council is to submit its own Investment Plan by 1 Aug 2022. As their geographies (and therefore requirements) are different, they are each following slightly different approaches:
 - Wealden – **CBe** advised that a draft Investment Plan will be taken to WDC Cabinet on 13 Jul 2022, so the full draft can be presented to TES at the next meeting on 18 Jul 2022 for endorsement. No definite outcomes have been decided yet, but there is a clear direction of travel.

- Eastbourne and Lewes – **LR** advised that a consultant has been appointed and organisations have been invited to submit applications between 1 and 20 Jun 2022. A list of preferred projects will be compiled over the coming weeks.
- Hastings – **PD** commented on the recent change of political leadership at the authority, which means assessing any new/updated priorities and direction of travel. The focus is likely to be on ‘targeted’ investment, framed (provisionally) around health and inequalities, the cost-of-living crisis and supporting local businesses in deprived areas.
- Rother – **BH** advised that RDC is seeking to work county-wide where possible, particularly on business support. The next stakeholder meeting is planned for 24 Jun, at which the overall outcomes will be determined. The current expectation is that years 1 and 2 will involve specific interventions, with broader outcomes considered in year 3.

3.4. **DT** reiterated the point that funding is limited and is also back-ended into year 3; he also commented that continued business support is critical. **AC** added that skills support is also vital, and noted the crossover with the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).

3.5. **GP** clarified the timescales over the coming weeks. The next TES meeting is a workshop scheduled for 18 Jul 2022, at which our Borough and District colleagues can present their draft Investment Plans to TES for endorsement, prior to their submission to Government on 1 Aug 2022.

[Action: Borough and District colleagues to present their draft UKSPF Investment Plans to TES on 18 Jul 2022 for endorsement]

3.6. **RD** noted that the Multiply programme, which ESCC is leading on, has a much shorter deadline, with Investment Plans to be submitted by 30 Jun 2022. It will not therefore be possible to present a draft to TES prior to submission, but a copy of the final submission will be shared with TES for information.

[Action: RD to share ESCC’s Multiply programme submission with TES members, for information]

4. Levelling Up Fund (LUF) Round 2

4.1. Borough and District colleagues provided an update on their plans to submit bids to LUF Round 2, the deadline for which is 6 Jul 2022.

4.2. Wealden DC and Rother DC will each submit revised versions of their Round 1 bids, focusing on Hailsham Aspires and the De La Warr Pavilion respectively. Whilst the original bids were unsuccessful, Government’s feedback was positive, so both are hopeful for a successful outcome in Round 2.

4.3. Eastbourne BC was successful in Round 1, and is now working on a new bid for Round 2 to support the town’s key Cultural Heritage assets. Lewes DC was also successful in Round 1, but is not submitting a Round 2 bid.

4.4. Having not bid at all in Round 1, Hastings BC had intended submitting a Round 2 bid (around sports health at its Summerfields site) but has since decided not to bid. The proposal is not quite ready to meet Round 2’s tight deadline, but Hastings BC is committed to submitting a bid for Round 3.

4.5. **GP** noted that, due to the short deadline, it will not be possible to present the final bids to TES prior to submission. However, if any of the Boroughs/Districts wish to add ‘TES endorsement’ to their submissions, TES members will be happy to oblige via electronic procedure over the next two weeks.

5. Growth Hub transition

5.1. **KT** provided an update on the SELEP Growth Hub delivery model, highlighting the report in the agenda pack for this week’s SELEP Strategic Board meeting. On 30 Mar 2022 SELEP received confirmation from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) that Growth Hub core funding *would* be forthcoming for 2022/23, but with a *50% reduction* compared to the previous year. This means that the delivery model will require modifications in order to continue providing a core Growth Hub service across the region within the substantially reduced funding envelope.

5.2. **JS** ran through the main points of the SELEP report, noting that while the overall number of Navigators will be reduced, the key principles of signposting, triage and diagnostic must continue. The website will be upgraded to make it easier to ‘self-serve’, allowing the Navigators to be more targeted.

Communications, marketing and website content generation will be streamlined and delivered once for all area Hubs.

- 5.3. **KT** commented that East Sussex colleagues, through our Business East Sussex (BES) Growth Hub, have been working closely with SELEP and the other two Hubs on Growth Hub evolution, and are happy that the report in the SELEP agenda pack reflects the priorities and direction of travel they have all agreed. We are obviously disappointed with the Government's decision to cut funding by 50%, but we are in a good position in East Sussex to respond to this, having previously insourced the BES Growth Hub and already having worked to reduce liabilities ahead of the funding announcement. The BES team are aware of the proposed changes and are working constructively to get ready to implement them.

6. SELEP Strategic Board, 24 Jun 2022

- 6.1. **AB** highlighted some of the other key items in the agenda pack for this week's SELEP Strategic Board meeting, which include approving the Delivery Plan for 2022/23, agreeing to start the recruitment process for a new SELEP Chair, a Capital Programme update, a strategic housing presentation from Brian Horton, and two minor policy updates.
- 6.2. **AB** went into more detail on the Capital Programme update, as the paper sets out the proposed approach to reallocating the £2.5m of Getting Building Fund (GBF) funding which has become available as a result of East Sussex's *Riding Sunbeams* project being removed from the GBF programme. As there is only one other project remaining in the GBF pipeline, SELEP's recommended approach is to re-allocate the balance of the funds to *existing GBF projects* that have experienced cost increases due to Covid/Brexit.
- 6.3. TES members discussed this, noting that alternative options include the introduction of new projects taken from the original 'long list' of projects initially considered by Government, or the addition of completely new projects into the GBF programme (which would require Ministerial approval), but agreed that to do either at this late stage would be too time consuming and the new projects would almost certainly not be able to fully spend by the deadline of 31 Mar 2023. Furthermore, there is already a risk that our other GBF projects that have experienced cost increases may not be able to deliver without further financial support, and SELEP's recommended option is also the preferred approach identified by Government (as stated in SELEP's recent Annual Performance Review).
- 6.4. **GP** voiced his regret that the *Riding Sunbeams* project is unable to continue, and disappointment in not being able to put forward new projects, but perfectly understands and agrees with the reasoning set out very clearly in the SELEP Board paper. However, when it comes to actually reallocating the funds across the GBF programme (the SELEP Strategic Board will consider an overall prioritised list at their next meeting in Oct 2022), he suggested that TES should make the case for East Sussex projects getting a higher priority, as the surplus GBF funds have come from East Sussex.

[Action: GP to suggest at the SELEP Strategic Board meeting on 24 Jun 2022 that East Sussex projects get a higher priority when reallocating surplus GBF funding]

- 6.5. **RD** added that a full update on the next steps, including how our existing GBF projects will bid for the funding and how/when TES will be asked to endorse a prioritised shortlist (if necessary), will be given at the next TES meeting on 18 Jul 2022.

7. Additional updates & stakeholder reports (for info)

- 7.1. No comments made.

8. TES round table / AOB

- 8.1. **ME** made a follow-up comment on the Working Well From Home project (2.2 above), citing conversations he (Recruitment South East) has had with colleagues/clients/employers on the topic of home working. It seems that very few have actually decided what they want to do moving forward, and as such those organisations have had more problems with staff retention, whereas those who have been clear from the outset have fared much better. Anecdotal, but potentially significant.
- 8.2. **KG** advised that a twelve-week consultation on the Transport for the South East (TfSE) draft Strategic Investment Plan is now open: <https://transportforthesoutheast.org.uk/2022/06/20/spread-the-word>.

TES colleagues are invited to respond, and are also asked to share the link through their networks and media channels. **CBe** proposed that TES might want to agree a position on the TfSE SIP and respond collectively; **RD** suggested inviting TfSE to deliver a short presentation at the next TES meeting, after which **GP** can draft an overall response for TES's approval prior to submission.

[Action: DE to invite TfSE colleagues to present their draft Strategic Investment Plan at the TES Workshop on 18 Jul 2022; GP to draft a consultation response on behalf of TES]

- 8.3. **AT** advised that she circulates a newsletter to 6,000+ FSB members every week, so invites colleagues to share news at any time for inclusion.
- 8.4. **AC** highlighted two press releases from the British Chambers of Commerce, covering the uncertainty on the future of the [CE Standards marking system](#) for manufacturing goods (extended to the end of this year but will cost more when new standards are introduced next year), and the ongoing [recruitment challenges](#) leading to record vacancies.

TES meeting closed at 16:04.

Summary of actions:

- 1.2 **DE** to liaise with **VC** and **PD** on confirming the TES member for Hastings BC.
- 3.5 Borough and District colleagues to present their draft UKSPF Investment Plans to TES on 18 Jul 2022 for endorsement.
- 3.6 **RD** to share ESCC's Multiply programme submission with TES members, for information.
- 6.4 **GP** to suggest at the SELEP Strategic Board meeting on 24 Jun 2022 that East Sussex projects get a higher priority when reallocating surplus GBF funding.
- 8.2 **DE** to invite TfSE colleagues to present their draft Strategic Investment Plan at the TES Workshop on 18 Jul 2022; **GP** to draft a consultation response on behalf of TES.