

Attendees:

ACh	Ana Christie	Sussex Chamber of Commerce	IF	Ian Fitzpatrick	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC
ACo	Alex Colbran	East Sussex CC	JHa	James Harris	East Sussex CC
AN	Cllr Ann Newton	Wealden DC	JHv	Jo Havers	University of Brighton
AR	Alex Riley	South East LEP	KG	Cllr Keith Glazier	East Sussex CC
BP	Brett Pearson	Locate East Sussex	KT	Katy Thomas	East Sussex CC
CBa	Cllr Christine Bayliss	Rother DC	LS	Lisa Simmonds	East Sussex CC
CBe	Chris Bending	Wealden DC	ME	Martin Ellis	Recruitment South East
CS	Clive Soper	FSB	PB	Cllr Paul Barnett	Hastings BC
DE	Dave Evans	East Sussex CC	RB	Ross Boseley	East Sussex CC
DH	Donna Harfield	East Sussex College	RD	Richard Dawson	East Sussex CC
DS	David Sheppard	D-RisQ Ltd	RS	Cllr Rupert Simmons	East Sussex CC
DT	Cllr David Tutt	Eastbourne BC	SB	Sue Baxter	University of Sussex
GP	Graham Peters (CHAIR)	ES Rural Partnership	SD	Stewart Drew	De La Warr Pavilion
HA	Holly Aquilina	East Sussex CC	SV	Sarah Valentine	Transport for the South East

Apologies:

AT	Alison Turner	FSB	PSm	Penny Shimmin	Sussex CDA
BH	Ben Hook	Rother DC	PSp	Peter Sharp	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC
CE	Christina Ewbank	ACES	RC	Rebecca Conroy	East Sussex College
DG	Diana Garnham	Skills East Sussex (SES)	VC	Victoria Conheady	Hastings BC
LR	Lisa Rawlinson	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC	ZN	Cllr Zoe Nicholson	Lewes DC

1. Welcome and introductions

- 1.1. **GP** welcomed everyone to the TES workshop meeting, and extended a particular welcome to **PB** as the new Leader of Hastings BC, and **DH** as the new Vice Principal of East Sussex College Group, both of whom introduced themselves.
- 1.2. **GP** asked the group for any specific conflicts of interest with today's agenda items and for any additional interests not already held on record; no interests were declared

2. Previous TES minutes, 20 June 2022

- 2.1. **GP** confirmed that all of the previous actions had been completed or were to be covered on today's agenda.
- 2.2. The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

- 3.1. **CBe** provided an update on the Borough and District Councils' UKSPF Investment Plans, which are due to be submitted to Government at the end of the month. All of the Plans are still being finalised, but work is progressing at speed, so today's update is just a snapshot of a very fast-moving picture.
- 3.2. *Wealden DC* has agreed that 10% of its overall funding allocation will go towards county-wide Business Support programmes in years two and three. 7% of the funds will be allocated to People and Skills, again for years two and three (Government recommended the third year only, but as that would leave a funding gap, Wealden DC will also support this strand in the second year). 4% will be used for administration/management of the fund, leaving 79% for Communities and Place (which will include addressing climate change). A report went to Wealden DC Cabinet last week, so the aim is to submit the Investment Plan this Wednesday, 20 July.
- 3.3. *Eastbourne BC* and *Lewes DC* also plan to ringfence 10% of their overall allocations for Business Support programmes and 4% for administration. For the remaining funds, both Councils have undertaken a short competitive process, with prospective bidders given a three-week window to submit project proposals. Following an assessment of the proposals, 7 projects in Eastbourne and 6 projects in Lewes have been recommended for approval. This will leave a small amount of funding remaining for both Councils, the allocation of which is to be discussed/agreed at the next meeting of the stakeholder subcommittee. **DT** advised that the subcommittee meeting is taking place tomorrow, 19 July. Some of the proposed projects have been asked to provide points of clarification, which will be presented by officers to the meeting, meaning that all of the projects will hopefully be signed-off this week. **IF** added

that a final Local Partnership Group meeting is planned for 29 July ahead of the 1 August submission deadline.

- 3.4. *Rother DC* officers have not been able to provide any specific detail for today's meeting as things are progressing so quickly, but they are supportive of the county-wide Business Support programmes (particularly 'Start' and 'Specialise'). **CBa** noted that officers have also taken on board previous discussions on the skills gap, and **HA** confirmed that Rother DC does intend supporting People and Skills, and as with Wealden DC will look to do this in years two and three.
- 3.5. *Hastings BC* officers have also been unable to provide specific detail, but **PB** confirmed that the Investment Plan will concentrate on trying to level-up within the town itself, focusing on particular communities. As the overall funding allocation is such a small amount, Hastings BC cannot commit to top-slicing funds for county-wide Business Support in the same way as the other Boroughs and Districts, but is not ruling it out altogether at this time.
- 3.6. **ACH** highlighted the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) and reiterated the need for continued dialogue between our Boroughs and Districts and the LSIP Board to ensure that UKSPF People and Skills interventions are aligned with LSIP priorities, with no unnecessary duplication.
- 3.7. **GP** asked that each Borough and District share information on their Investment Plans with TES (or copies of the actual Investment Plan submissions if not commercially sensitive) as they are finalised and signed-off by their respective committees.

[Action: Borough and District officers to share information on their UKSPF Investment Plans with TES as they are finalised]

- 3.8. **GP** also suggested that TES provide letters of endorsement to each Borough and District Council to support their Investment Plan submissions. TES members agreed.

[Action: GP to provide letters of endorsement from TES to each Borough and District Council to support their UKSPF Investment Plan submissions]

4. Multiply programme

- 4.1. **HA** reminded the group that the Department for Education (DfE) has top-sliced a portion of UKSPF funding to create the £559m Multiply programme, to help improve adult numeracy skills. The programme is to be delivered at county level, so ESCC is the lead authority and has been indicatively allocated £2.5m over a three-year period from April 2022, subject to the submission of an Investment Plan by 30 June 2022.
- 4.2. ESCC has consulted over 50 organisations to get a broad view on the best approach and has created a fitting programme to cover the three-year period, with strands to include money management, courses for parents to improve numeracy skills, ticketed courses (food hygiene, catering, first aid) with embedded maths modules, and scope to look at innovative projects with employers.
- 4.3. ESCC submitted its Investment Plan by the 30 June deadline, and a response is expected from DfE in the autumn. In the meantime, ESCC will need to conduct a procurement exercise which it will carry out between now and October 2022. When the programme begins, TES will be able to lend its support by publicising the programme to as many people as possible.

5. Transport for the South East (TfSE)

- 5.1. **SV** delivered a presentation on the Transport for the South East (TfSE) Strategic Investment Plan (SIP), covering the background, alignment with wider policy, strategic objectives (environmental, social and economic), key priorities, specific packages of intervention and an explanation of financing.
- 5.2. Overall the group was very supportive of the SIP, particularly the improvements and interventions along the east/west corridors.
- 5.3. **DT** expressed a particular dislike of electric scooters, suggesting they are a genuine menace to pedestrians and road users, so would not be in favour of their inclusion in future packages.
- 5.4. **AN** queried whether the Lewes/Uckfield rail reinstatement, which has been argued for some years, would ever truly be likely. **JHa** commented that when Network Rail last considered the route, the transport benefits did not outweigh the disbenefits, but that was some time ago and the national picture has changed dramatically. **SV** acknowledged the long history of trying to reinstate the route,

but noted that there are definite benefits in its inclusion now as it bolsters the overall strategic case for strengthened resilience.

- 5.5. **CBa** enquired about the Bus Back Better programme, as she understood that East Sussex was awarded funding but there were points of clarification that needed to be resolved. **JHa** confirmed that our Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) was submitted to Government in October 2021, and an *indicative* funding allocation was announced in April 2022, whereby East Sussex County Council was awarded £41.4m. However, this was subject to further clarification questions from the Department for Transport (DfT). ESCC has now submitted all required information, which DfT will review and either provide further feedback (to be incorporated before funding is provided) or agree that it meets their expectations and confirm our funding allocation. The proposed apportionment of our indicative allocation is actually being discussed at an [ESCC Lead Member meeting](#) today, and an update will be brought back to TES once confirmation of the funding allocation has been received from DfT.
- 5.6. **SV** advised that a twelve-week consultation on the TfSE SIP is now open, running from 20 June to 12 September 2022. TES colleagues are invited to respond, and are also asked to share the link through their networks and media channels: [TfSE Strategic Investment Plan Consultation](#). TfSE will consider all feedback before submitting a final SIP to Government in March 2023. **GP** advised that, as agreed at the last TES meeting, he will prepare a collective response on behalf of TES.

[Action: GP to prepare a response to the TfSE Strategic Investment Plan consultation on behalf of TES]

6. Public Health Annual Report

- 6.1. **RB** delivered a short presentation summarising the Annual Report from ESCC's Director of Public Health, titled "Work, Skills and Health". The report, shared with TES colleagues beforehand, looks at how employers can support the health and wellbeing of their employees, and makes recommendations to address health inequalities associated with employment. The report encourages all organisations to engage with the East Sussex [Wellbeing at Work](#) programme, and to also work towards a Wellbeing at Work Award.
- 6.2. **CBa** noted that TES has recently discussed the Working Well From Home project, as well as research into the four-day week, with colleagues from the University of Sussex. **RB** confirmed that Public Health colleagues had sight of all of that good work, and it is referenced in the report – the messages from the Working Well From Home project in particular are championed.
- 6.3. **RB** asked that the report be shared widely, and **GP** suggested that TES business colleagues share the report through their various business networks, along with the link to the [Working Well from Home](#) toolkit which continues to be relevant.

[Action: TES business colleagues to share the ESCC Public Health Annual Report, plus the link to the Working Well from Home toolkit, through their various business networks]

7. Getting Building Fund (GBF)

- 7.1. **ACo** provided an update on the process for reallocating the £2.5m of Getting Building Fund (GBF) monies recently returned to SELEP from the East Sussex 'Riding Sunbeams' project. SELEP outlined its preferred approach – to reallocate funds to existing GBF projects that have experienced cost increases due to Covid/Brexit – at the SELEP Strategic Board meeting on 24 June 2022. However, following lengthy discussions at the meeting, the Strategic Board was unable to reach a consensus. SELEP will therefore circulate an updated version of its report to Strategic Board members later this week, addressing as many of the points raised during the meeting as possible, with clear recommendations for electronic approval. Once an updated approach has been confirmed, the information and guidance on next steps will be shared with TES and all applicable project leads.
- 7.2. **GP** suggested that TES members of the Strategic Board discuss the updated paper via email before responding to SELEP's request for approval.

[Action: TES members of the SELEP Strategic Board to discuss, via email, the updated recommendations on the reallocation of GBF funding before responding to SELEP's request for electronic approval]

8. Levelling Up Fund (LUF) Round 2

- 8.1. **CBe** provided an update on the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) Round 2 submissions, noting that there has been a delay in the Government opening the submission portal, so the original deadline of 6 July 2022 has been pushed back. The portal finally opened last Friday, 15 July, so the updated deadline is now 2 August 2022.
- 8.2. As indicated at the last TES meeting, 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. Lewes DC and Hastings BC do not intend submitting bids for Round 2.
- 8.3. Eastbourne BC is finalising a new bid to 'Restore the Glory of our Seafront Heritage', a major bid focused on the large culture/heritage option that has been introduced for LUF Round 2, with the ask expected to be in the region of £27m (TBC) for the refurbishment and enhancement of Eastbourne Bandstand and the Redoubt Fortress. Both TES and SELEP have already provided letters of support to help strengthen the submission.

9. TES round table / AOB

- 9.1. **SD** advised that the SELEP-funded [Sussex Modern](#) campaign is in full swing, with adverts appearing at railway stations and the launch of a new website. A social media campaign is also about to be launched.
- 9.2. **HA** highlighted the work currently underway on supporting Ukrainian refugees into employment, with a new programme to be rolled out next month. **DH** commented that [East Sussex College](#) is also supporting Ukrainian families with education and training opportunities
- 9.3. **BP** advised that Locate East Sussex placed an advert in The Times Business Supplement last weekend, promoting relocation support services for the county.
- 9.4. **JHv** advised that [Research England](#) has published its funding decisions for university research and knowledge exchange. Funding for university research with business has increased by 36%, recognition that our world-leading research collaborations are key to supporting sustainable economic growth. The University of Brighton will be working with Business East Sussex to support the development of innovation ecosystem activity around the county. **JHv** also highlighted the need to be creative in accessing other potential funding sources, given the lack of UKSPF funds, and acknowledged the work by Lewes DC and Eastbourne BC in their innovative approach to recent grant applications such as the Forestry Commission Commercial Fund.
- 9.5. **CBa** noted that local artists are being supported with studio costs at [Beeching Road Studios](#) in Bexhill, an artists' workspace run by Rother DC.
- 9.6. **DS** advised that the Breakthrough programme, funded through the South East Business Boost (SEBB), held a collaboration showcase event last week, featuring encouraging success stories on some of our SEBB-funded projects. He also noted that *Ioni Sullivan* will be leaving the County Council next month, and thanked her on behalf of TES for all of her incredible work managing the Business East Sussex (BES) Growth Hub.
- 9.7. **GP** highlighted the TES meeting schedule, noting that the date of the next TES Board meeting may be changed (as SELEP has moved the date of its next Strategic Board meeting). **DE** will confirm in due course.

Meeting closed at 16:37.

Summary of actions:

- 3.7 Borough and District officers to share information on their UKSPF Investment Plans with TES as they are finalised.
- 3.8 **GP** to provide letters of endorsement from TES to each Borough and District Council to support their UKSPF Investment Plan submissions.
- 5.6 **GP** to prepare a response to the TfSE Strategic Investment Plan consultation on behalf of TES.

- 6.3 TES business colleagues to share the ESCC Public Health Annual Report, plus the link to the Working Well from Home toolkit, through their various business networks.
- 7.2 TES members of the SELEP Strategic Board to discuss, via email, the updated recommendations on the reallocation of GBF funding before responding to SELEP's request for electronic approval.