

**Attendees:**

<b>ACh</b>	Ana Christie	Sussex Chamber of Commerce	<b>JHv</b>	Jo Havers	University of Brighton
<b>ACo</b>	Alex Colbran	East Sussex CC	<b>JS</b>	Jo Simmons	South East LEP
<b>AT</b>	Alison Turner	FSB	<b>KG</b>	Cllr Keith Glazier	East Sussex CC
<b>BH</b>	Ben Hook	Rother DC	<b>KT</b>	Katy Thomas	East Sussex CC
<b>BP</b>	Brett Pearson	Locate East Sussex	<b>LR</b>	Lisa Rawlinson	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC
<b>CBa</b>	Cllr Christine Bayliss	Rother DC	<b>LS</b>	Lisa Simmonds	East Sussex CC
<b>CBe</b>	Chris Bending	Wealden DC	<b>MEI</b>	Martin Ellis	Recruitment South East
<b>CE</b>	Christina Ewbank	ACES	<b>MEv</b>	Cllr Maya Evans	Hastings BC
<b>CS</b>	Clive Soper	Hailsham & District Chamber	<b>PC</b>	Cllr Paul Coleshill	Wealden DC
<b>DC</b>	Douglas Chapman	East Sussex CC	<b>PD</b>	Pranesh Datta	Hastings BC
<b>DE</b>	Dave Evans	East Sussex CC	<b>PH</b>	Paul Hetherington	HIS Ltd
<b>DH</b>	Donna Harfield	East Sussex College	<b>PS</b>	Penny Shimmin	Sussex CDA
<b>DS</b>	David Sheppard	D-RisQ Ltd ( <b>CHAIR</b> )	<b>RD</b>	Richard Dawson	East Sussex CC
<b>ES</b>	Emma Smith	DLUHC	<b>SB</b>	Sue Baxter	University of Sussex
<b>HA</b>	Holly Aquilina	East Sussex CC	<b>ZN</b>	Cllr Zoe Nicholson	Lewes DC
<b>JHa</b>	James Harris	East Sussex CC			

**Apologies:**

<b>DG</b>	Diana Garnham	Skills East Sussex (SES)	<b>SD</b>	Stewart Drew	De La Warr Pavilion
<b>HR</b>	Helen Russell	South East LEP	<b>VC</b>	Victoria Conheady	Hastings BC
<b>PB</b>	Cllr Paul Barnett	Hastings BC			

**1. Welcome and introductions**

- 1.1. **DS** welcomed everyone to the TES Board meeting, and in particular **AT** who returns following a period of illness. **AT** thanked everyone for their messages of support during her absence.
- 1.2. **DS** 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 additional interests were declared.

**2. Previous TES minutes, 9 October 2023**

- 2.1. **DS** ran through the previous actions, which are all in progress or completed.
- 2.2. Regarding action 10.1, visiting the Plexal Innovation Hub in London, **DS** advised that seven TES colleagues attended on 22 November 2023 and it was a worthwhile trip. **PH** added that there is a lot of learning we can draw from the Hub, and it is a model that might be replicated on a smaller scale.
- 2.3. The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

**3. LEP Transition**

- 3.1. **RD** delivered a presentation on the work undertaken to integrate LEP functions into Upper Tier Local Authorities (UTLAs) by 31 March 2024, including a progress update, the impacts on Team East Sussex and some of the outstanding risks/dependencies. The draft SELEP Integration Plan was approved by the SELEP Strategic Board in October, and the final version will be taken to this week's SELEP Strategic Board meeting. A more localised *East Sussex Integration Plan* has also been developed by ESCC officers, where the activities of the SELEP plan are arranged into county-specific actions, and a draft was shared with TES ahead of today's TES Board meeting for endorsement. **JS** commented that the SELEP and East Sussex Integration Plans sit side-by-side and complement each other very well.

**Decision: The TES Board endorsed the draft East Sussex Integration Plan.**

- 3.2. The group discussed the overall transition process and raised some queries, so **RD** clarified the following points:
  - East Sussex County Council will become the local Accountable Body for capital funding programmes from 1 April 2024, reporting directly to Government where required on our East Sussex LGF, GBF and GPF projects. While there were previously six UTLAs involved in decision-making through the SELEP Accountability Board, there will now be just one making decisions for our own county. Further Government guidance for local authorities is expected in January.

- TES will continue to perform its ‘strategic oversight’ role in supporting ESCC as the Accountable Body, providing support, recommendations on project consideration (prioritisation), strategic advice and ultimately endorsement of decisions made by the Accountable Body on current and any future funding streams made available. TES’s strategic oversight role also includes ownership of the new East Sussex Economic Growth Strategy currently in development. (Overall responsibility for economic strategy will also pass to ESCC as the UTLA.)
- Government will issue a new ‘assurance framework’ in January to replace the current National Local Growth Assurance Framework (which SELEP currently adheres to). ESCC officers will update the TES Terms of Reference to accommodate the new assurance framework, and share it with the TES Board for approval.

3.3. **KG** commented that the best thing to come out of SELEP for East Sussex is Team East Sussex – our ability to share and collaborate in order to bring out the best for our county. We’ve worked well together and achieved so much over the last ten years, and despite the LEP now coming to an end we can continue to collaborate through TES into the future. **ES** added a DLUHC perspective, recognising TES for what it does and commenting on how well the TES Board fits the remit set by Government.

#### 4. Levelling Up Partnerships

4.1. **DS** introduced Levelling Up Partnerships (LUPs), announced by Government in March 2023 at the Spring Budget, where twenty places across England – including Hastings BC and Rother DC – were invited to form a ‘Partnership’ with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), with each authority set to receive £20m in new funding. For information, the methodology/metrics used to select the twenty places across England can be viewed on the [Gov.UK website](#).

4.2. **BH** and **PD** provided a progress update, advising that a team from DLUHC has undertaken an extensive ‘data deep dive’ at each authority, assessing the needs and focus of each area. A wide range of potential projects have come forward, from which DLUHC has formed a project long-list for each area. DLUHC will narrow these down to shortlists in the coming weeks, but the shortlisting requires a Ministerial decision. The programme runs until March 2025, so deliverability is likely to be a key factor in shortlisting, as projects will have just over a year to deliver.

4.3. **PD** clarified that LUPs are not part of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF), which is a separate competitive programme aimed at borough and district authorities, and from which East Sussex has already benefitted through two bidding rounds – Eastbourne BC and Lewes DC received LUF Round 1 funding in October 2021, and Rother DC was awarded funding from LUF Round 2 in January 2023. A third round of LUF has also taken place but this was not competitive (funding was awarded to further bids from Round 2 in November 2023).

4.4. **PD** also described the Government’s new [Long Term Plan for Towns](#), published by DLUHC in October 2023. Fifty-five towns across the UK – including Hastings and Bexhill – have been invited to develop a ‘Long-Term Plan’, with each town set to receive a further £20m in funding and support over ten years. More guidance is expected from DLUHC shortly, so a broader update will be provided to TES in due course. **BH** noted that given the longer-term ‘strategic’ aspect to these Plans, it’s important that TES has a voice and can feed in. **DS** added that this is particularly true in regard to the new East Sussex Economic Growth Strategy being developed, to ensure alignment to the county’s long-term aims.

#### 5. East Sussex Economic Growth Strategy

5.1. **KT** provided a progress update on the development of the new Economic Growth Strategy (EGS) and ran through a presentation covering the overall timeline and recent consultation activity.

5.2. Throughout November a series of consultation workshops took place, including five place-based workshops hosted by borough and district colleagues, four thematic workshops (on the topics of Net Zero; Economic Impacts of an Ageing Population; Artificial Intelligence and Digital Transformation; and Sustainable Wealth Creation), plus additional consultation activity including a Future Skills event, a young people’s consultation and an event attended by business support providers.

5.3. All of the workshops involved some very rich and diverse conversations, with lots of useful outputs for further consideration. Those outputs will feed into the next stage of EGS development, which is to

produce an overall 'storyboard'. A further update, including an outline of the storyboard, will be presented to the next TES meeting in January.

## **6. Local Transport Plan**

- 6.1. **LS** and **DC** provided a progress update on the development of the County Council's new Local Transport Plan (LTP4) and delivered a presentation covering the various stages of work to date, including the initial evidence review and early stakeholder engagement, consultation analysis, and the development of the strategy itself which has taken place throughout this year.
- 6.2. The strategy has been developed using four movement and place types (regional long distance; urban coastal areas; moving east-west along the coast; and rural and market towns) which aligns to the Transport for the South East (TfSE) Transport Strategy geographical approach. The structure of the draft strategy includes a number of themes, set out as chapters, including tackling climate change and enhancing our local environment; safer, healthier and more active travel; integrated and accessible transport for all; and keeping East Sussex connected.
- 6.3. The LTP4 Team is keen to hear views on how the structure and the chapters can be improved, so TES colleagues are encouraged to respond with any feedback. A full public consultation has also now been launched, which runs until 25 February 2024.
- 6.4. More information on LTP4, including the draft strategy, implementation plan, supporting documents and the link to the public consultation, can be found on [www.eastsussex.gov.uk/draftLTP4](http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/draftLTP4). The LTP4 Team can also be contacted directly via [LocalTransportPlan@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:LocalTransportPlan@eastsussex.gov.uk).

## **7. TES Communications Strategy**

- 7.1. **DS** advised that, following our last TES meeting in October where the possibility of developing a new communications plan for TES was discussed, he asked **MEI** to consider TES members' feedback and give the subject further thought.
- 7.2. **MEI** reported that while an overarching strategy covering TES and all of TES's subgroups is still a viable proposition, it now seems more appropriate that it should be led by the Business East Sussex (BES) subgroup rather than TES. It will present an opportunity to raise the profile of all of the subgroups, as they each have a distinct identity, but can all approach comms under a single overarching strategy. Communications should be two-way and should utilise social media, have a web presence, promote local events and networking, and must continue to involve the FSB, Chambers and other business representative bodies. Peer-to-peer communication is also to be considered.
- 7.3. **DS** invited colleagues to feed any thoughts back to **MEI** so that, working with BES, we can aim to have a draft strategy in place by April 2024 (when TES will operate independent of SELEP).

**Action: TES colleagues to feed any thoughts on the TES Communications Strategy back to MEI.**

## **8. SELEP Strategic Board, 8 December 2023**

- 8.1. **JS** ran through the agenda items going to this week's SELEP Strategic Board meeting, which aside from LEP Transition will include updates on governance, accounts, capital funding programmes and future representation on the Greater South East Net Zero Hub (GSENZH).
- 8.2. Options relating to Growing Places Fund (GPF) will also be presented, specifically in regard to a submission from an East Sussex project to amend its repayment schedule, which will have a knock-on effect on the amount of funds available in the GPF pot for disaggregation at the end of March. Unfortunately the paper has not yet been shared, but **RD** advised that it will be circulated to TES once available, and our SELEP Directors attending the SELEP Strategic Board meeting will be fully briefed.

**Post meeting update: at the SELEP Strategic Board meeting on 8 December 2023, East Sussex members proposed an additional GPF option that was accepted unanimously by the Board, enabling the decision to be passed over to the SELEP Accountability Board meeting, with a final decision to be made by the six UTLA Leaders on 12 January 2024.**

## 9. TES Business member roles

- 9.1. **DS** advised that the process for appointing the TES Deputy Chair had been on hold, but can now be moved forward. The role should be filled ahead of our next TES meeting in January.
- 9.2. For TES representation on external boards, including the Newhaven Enterprise Zone Board, Newhaven Town Deal Board and Hastings Town Deal Board, TES business members have been asked to nominate themselves on a number of occasions but so far no one has come forward. **DS** again encouraged TES business members to think about these roles.

*Action: TES business members interested in representing TES on external boards to advise DS and DE.*

## 10. AOB

- 10.1. **DS** reminded the group that AOB items are to be submitted in advance of the meeting, and none have been received for today. Please remember to send any AOB items for the next meeting in January to **DS** and **DE** ahead of that meeting.

Meeting closed at 16:45.

### Summary of decisions:

- 3.1 The TES Board **endorsed** the draft East Sussex Integration Plan.

### Summary of actions:

- 7.3 TES colleagues to feed any thoughts on the TES Communications Strategy back to **MEI**.
- 9.2 TES business members interested in representing TES on external boards to advise **DS** and **DE**.