
Minutes of the meeting of the SELEP Accountability Board, held in High House Production Park Vellacott Close, Purfleet, Essex, RM19 1RJ on Friday, 31 March 2017

Present:

Geoff Miles	Chairman
Cllr Graham Butland	Essex County Council
Cllr Paul Carter	Kent County Council
Cllr Rodney Chambers	Medway Council
Cllr Keith Glazier	East Sussex County Council
Cllr Rob Gledhill	Thurrock Council
Cllr John Lamb	Southend Borough Council
Angela O'Donoghue	FE & Skills (FEDEC)
Myroulla West	Higher Education representative

ALSO PRESENT**Having signed the attendance book**

Amy Beckett	SELEP
Suzanne Bennett	Essex County Council
Steven Bishop	Steer Davies Gleave
Adam Bryan	SELEP
Dominic Collins	Essex County Council
Richard Dawson	East Sussex County Council
Sunny Ee	Medway District Council
Katherine Harvey	Shepway District Council
Ben Hook	East Sussex County Council
Stephanie Mitchener	Essex County Council
Rhiannon Mort	SELEP
Lorna Norris	Essex County Council
Sarah Nurden	Kent and Medway Economic Partnership
Ann Osola	Thurrock Council
Lisa Siggins	Essex County Council
Paul Turner	Essex County Council

1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Kevin Bentley. Councillor Graham Butland was acting as his substitute at the meeting.

2 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 February were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 Declarations of Interest

None were made.

4 A13 Widening LGF award

The Accountability Board (the Board) received a report from Rhiannon Mort and a presentation from Steer Davies Gleave, the purpose of which was to seek Board approval for the award of Local Growth Fund (LGF) to the A13 Widening project (the Project) in Thurrock, subject to Government Minister Approval.

The Board were advised that the final Government approval is expected imminently.

Resolved

To Approve the award of £66.1million LGF to the A13 Widening to support the delivery of the Project, as set out in the Business Case, subject to Central Government Minister Approval.

5 Devonshire Park LGF funding decision

The Board received a report from Rhiannon Mort and a presentation from Steer Davies Gleave, the purpose of which was to make the Board aware of the value for money assessment for the Devonshire Park Business Case which has been through the Independent Technical Evaluator (ITE) process to enable £5m funding to be devolved to East Sussex County Council for scheme delivery.

Resolved

To Approve the allocation of £5m LGF to Devonshire Park Quarter Re-development Project to support the delivery of the Project identified in the Business Case and which has been assessed as presenting high value for money with a medium to high certainty of achieving this.

6 Kent Sustainable Interventions Programme LGF funding decision

The Board received a report from Rhiannon Mort and a presentation from Steer Davies Gleave, the purpose of which was to make the Board aware of the value for money assessment for the Kent Sustainable Interventions Project which has been through the Independent Technical Evaluator (ITE) process to enable £500,000 Local Growth Fund (LGF) to be devolved to Kent County Council for scheme delivery.

Resolved

To Approve the allocation of £500,000 LGF to Kent Sustainable Interventions Project to support the delivery of the Project identified in the Business Case and which has been assessed as presenting achieving high value for money with low to medium certainty of achieving this.

7 **Capital Programme Management of the Local Growth Fund**

The Board received a report and presentation from Rhiannon Mort providing an update on the latest position of the Local Growth Fund (LGF) Capital Programme, as part of SELEP's Growth Deal with Government.

Rhiannon gave details of the net slippage and how the risk is being managed.

During discussion it was suggested that underspends should be reinvested to incorporate additional projects in the Growth Deal programme or used as contingency funds. Rhiannon confirmed that this was in fact incorporated within the new assurance framework.

It was further suggested that once projects are completed, the sharing of information should be encouraged. This should include reasons for both under and overspends and enable retrospective updates to be provided to the Board.

Councillor Glazier pointed out that North Bexhill Access Road as referred to in 5.5 in the Report will not in fact be completed until Spring 2018.

Resolved

1. **To Agree** the total LGF slippage from 2016/17 to 2017/18 of £19.078m (excluding Department for Transport retained schemes), as follows (see Appendix 1 for project breakdown):

- 1.1 £7.736m net slippage for projects in East Sussex
- 1.2 £2.356m net slippage for projects in Essex
- 1.3 £4.843m net slippage for projects in Kent
- 1.4 £1.133m net slippage for projects in Medway
- 1.5 £0.200m net slippage for projects in Southend
- 1.6 £5.215m net slippage for projects in Thurrock
- 1.7 £0.065m net slippage for Capital Skills projects

2. **To Agree** the total LGF slippage from 2016/17 to 2017/18 of £0.973m net slippage for Department for Transport retained schemes (see Appendix 1 for project breakdown)

3. **To Approve** the acceleration of LGF spend in 2016/17 for:

- 3.1 Strood Town Centre Journey Time Improvements by £0.520m; and
- 3.2 Medway Cycle Action Plan by £0.150m.

4 To Agree the proposed measures to mitigate LGF slippage, as set out in Table 3

5 To Agree the use of Option 4 and 5 mitigation (as set out in section 4 of the report) for any further slippages of LGF spend which occur to the end of 2016/17.

6 To Agree the planned LGF spend in 2017/18 of £115.179m excluding DfT retained schemes and £145.943m, including retained scheme, subject to SELEP receiving sufficient funding from Government in 2017/18 as per the amount indicated in the provisional funding profile, set out in Table 4.

7 To Note the planned LGF spend for future years of the LGF programme, as set out in Appendix 2.

8 To Approve the combining of the Hastings and Bexhill Junction Capacity Improvement Package and Hastings and Bexhill Walking and Cycling Package.

8 Skills Capital Programme Update

The Board received a report from Louise Aitken providing an update on the latest position of the Skills Capital Programme, further to the update provided in February and to seek approval for slippage to the next financial year.

Councillor Butland asked the Board to note his appreciation of the cooperation of Alison Andreas in respect of STEM training at Braintree College, Colchester Institute (5.2 of the report).

Resolved

1.1 **To Note** the updated spend forecast for 2016/17;

1.2. **To Note** the project delivery and risk assessment, as set out in paragraph 5;

1.3. **To Note** the progress of Employability and Skills business cases within Local Growth Deal Round 3, as set out in paragraph 3.6.

1.4. **To Approve** the slippage of funds as set out in paragraph 5, to the next financial year in the event that any college is not able to fully spend their grant allocation but has clear commitments in place to do so

1.5. **To Approve** slippage of the remaining uncommitted skills funding at 31st March 2017, up to a maximum of £79,900, to the next financial year for South Downs College, Refurbishment of Laboratory space project, (subject to the approval of the Board of a full Business Case in May 2017).

9 Growing Places Fund update

The Board received a report from Rhiannon Mort providing an update on the latest position of the Growing Places Fund (GPF) Capital Programme.

Resolved

1 To note the updated position on the Growing Places Fund programme.

2 To Approve the amended Growing Places Fund loan repayment schedule for the following projects in East Sussex as set out in the report, namely;

- 2.1 North Queensway; and
- 2.2 Priory Quarter

10 **Finance Update – SELEP Core Budget**

The Board received a report from Suzanne Bennett which presented the Secretariat budget for 2017/18 for approval.

The Board discussed the fairness in the allocation of funding and stressed that SELEP must continue to lobby the Government to ensure that a fair allocation is received.

Resolved

To approve the SELEP Secretariat revenue budget as at Table 1 of the report.

Agreed that a further letter be sent to the Government in this respect and that talks would be had with the LEP network to enable there to be a joint effort and “louder voice” in the lobbying.

11 **Assurance Framework Implementation Update**

The Board received a report from Adam Bryan, the purpose of which was to make them aware of progress made by the SELEP executive team and the federal areas in implementing the changes necessitated by the refreshed Assurance Framework. This follows on from the presentation provided to the SELEP Strategic Board on 3rd March 2017.

The Board discussed the issue of how European funding monies are spent within the SELEP region. It was **Agreed** that the possibility of requesting representatives from the relevant organisations such as DWP and ESIF Committee, to attend either an Accountability Board or Strategic Board meeting to report on this issue, be looked into.

Resolved

1 **To note** both progress to date and that progress reports will be prepared for the following Board meetings until such point as the changes are fully implemented. The Board is reminded that it is accountable for assuring that all requirements are implemented; it is a condition of the funding that the Assurance Framework is being implemented;

2 **To approve** that the Board papers, minutes and Forward Plan, as defined in paragraph 3.2.1 of the report is made available on partner websites; and

3 **To recommend** for ratification at the next Strategic Board that any paid Strategic Board member expenses are made publically available, via the website.

12 **Date of Next Meeting**

The Board noted that the next meeting will take place on Friday 26 May 2017.

There being no urgent business the meeting closed at 11 am

Chairman