

**Minutes of the Meeting**

**Wednesday 13th December**

**Anglia Ruskin University, Michael Ashcroft Building Room MAB 404a and 404b**

**Attendees:**

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| David Rayner | Birkett Long (Chair) |
| Sam Graves  | ECC (Minutes) |
| Fiona Bodle | Anglia Ruskin University  |
| Gagan Mohindra  | ECC |
| Dominic Collins  | ECC |
| Daphne White  | ECC |
| Louise Aitken | SELEP  |
| Emma Wakeling  | ECC |
| Haydon Yates  | West Essex Alliance |

**Apologies:**

Peter Williams, Williamsgroup Kate Hilyard, CRL
Christopher Barnes, Marks and Spencer Keith Rowling, Firstdata
Marcelle Day, Ford Michael Lawrence, LV
Cllr Butland, Braintree Council Mike Gilbert, Leonardcompany
Cllr Cutmore, Rochford Council Deborah Hunt, ifdsgroup
Travis Bowles, Msamlin Ian Morehouse, flaktwoods Xavier Woodward, DPWorld Ian Vipond, Colchester
Tim Burrows, CRL David Burch, Essex Chambers of Commerce Anita Thornberry, Haven Gateway Partnership Cllr Kevin Bentley, Essex County Council
George Kieffer, Essex Vice Chair of SELEP, Haven Gateway Partnership

1. **Introductions & Apologies**

Introductions were taken and apologies were noted as above.

1. **Review of last meeting minutes**

Minutes from the last meeting on 15TH August were noted and agreed.
DR noted that the terms of reference and role of the chair will need to be revisited. An EBB task and finish group was agreed to commence to agree a way forward.

1. **SELEP update and Strategic Board Briefing**

Louise Aitken gave a presentation and updated the Board on; the approach to Strategic Economic Plan and relationship with Industrial Strategy, Other Strategic Board Papers and SELEP Skills Strategy.

SELEP covers Kent and East Sussex as part of the federated structure.

In terms of the skills structure, the skills advisory group has representation from FEDEC, Essex Provider Network, Essex County Council, Southend and Thurrock Council and Community 360.

SELEP’s Skills Advisory Group (SAG) agreed that this should be an employer led concise, ambitious vision and articulation of shared priorities.

The Industrial Strategy has been published, and LA went through the skills headlines which align to what is coming through in the skills strategy.

In terms of progress the draft strategy is completed and has been signed off by SAG – LA can circulate copies. District profiles are currently under development along with key sector reports and Brexit and digital reports.

The next steps include; draft strategy and LEP evidence base circulated more widely for feedback with comments invited by end December. Supporting evidence base documents are to be produced in parallel and ensuring alignment with LEP Economic Plan & Industrial Strategy.

LA then took EBB through the sector Headlines. The headlines have to be based on reality and what the future holds. Construction is a big sector as well as health and care and IT, Digital and Creative. Brexit will have a special report and construction will be impacted by this. Finance is a priority as well as agriculture for Kent and East Sussex.

There are high numbers of vacancies across the sectors mentioned above. Apprenticeships are static and need to be in the right frameworks to increase. SELEP has lower productivity and qualification levels are poorer to our competitive neighbours.

SELEP the biggest LEP outside of London. We have the most vacancies for a LEP area. Work base earnings are also failing. These can be broken down into district areas to pinpoint.

LA highlighted that there is still £20m left from LGF.

Emerging project ideas include a pilot skills portal so everything can be found in one place. The demand still needs to be driven for STEM facilities and need to make sure people are driven at a young age. Whilst also looking at retraining as this could solve the problem also.

3 additional projects through £19.6m LGF 3 fund. Need to make sure these are being used.

Strategic economic plan will sit alongside skills strategy and need 16/17 actions that can be taken forward.

In terms of SOG for the LEP, It has identified 5 foundations for the strategy and there will be an action plan put together to take it forward. Will be presented to SELEP strategic Board to get their views.

EBB’s views on this are that SELEP Board Papers are offering 3 options on how the SEP should be taken forward:
1. SEP Lite.
2. An aligned SEP.
3. A full SEP.

Government are looking at LEPS to deliver the Industrial strategy as they are not defining what ‘localised’ means. The LEPs will look to work with federated areas.
Question is open to SELEP Board meeting of do we need a SEP anymore or go straight to Industrial Strategy. At present it seems that going straight to an industrial strategy is the way forward. No one from SELEP has come to EBB to show who is responsible for evidence gathering.

There is another discussion about resource and funding at the SELEP board meeting. There is a point about the LEPs funding pot and what it has to delivery. There could be the use of some reserves to increase secretariat of the LEP to create deputy role.

1. **Industrial Strategy Presentation and Discussion**

Daphne White from ECC gave The Board a presentation on the Industrial White Paper and followed information with key questions for the group.

The Government launched the white paper on the 27th November 2017 with the aim of boosting productivity and earning power throughout the UK.
The 10 pillars no longer exist and have been replaced with the five foundations of productivity; Ideas, People, Infrastructure, Places and Business Environment. There is plenty of money so there is the need to move quickly and think about how we can use businesses.

EBB was also introduced to the Four Grand Challenges; AI & Data Economy, Clean Growth, Future of Mobility and Ageing Society. The Government will work on these with partners to ensure that the UK is not just prosperous but socially and environmentally responsible. The Government will also work in partnership with places on Local Industrial Strategies which will help identify priorities to improve skills, increase innovation and enhance infrastructure and business growth, whilst also identifying local strengths and challenges, future opportunities and the action needed to boost productivity, earning power and competitiveness. This will guide the use of local and national funding.

In terms of the role of the LEPs, the Government will prioritise areas with the potential to drive wider regional growth, focusing on clusters of expertise and centres of economic activity. The Government is reviewing the roles and responsibilities of LEPs and will bring forward reforms to leadership, governance, accountability, financial reporting and geographical boundaries, as well as a more clearly defined set of activities and objectives and appropriate structures for holding LEPs to account.

ECC have been talking to Localis who drafted a response to the green paper – ECC working with Kent on what would a localised industrial strategy look like. Localis want to have a round table discussion on this. There is the need to have a 1-2-1 discussions to make sure they attend.
Also, there is the need to produce an engagement plan.

For this round table meeting, it needs to be more about what businesses think and to focus on a particular area otherwise this discussion will not go anywhere. Need to work with Localis to identify sectors and focus the discussion.
SG is to circulate slides.

1. **Local Growth Fund and Growing Places Fund Programme Report**

DC highlighted that the report is a more updated version than normal to be consistent with OSE. There is a considerable amount of money going through the LEP through LGF funding. There is a difference between allocated funding and funding that is being used.

There are stills pots of money in the GPF that hasn’t been spent, and if it is not spent it will be harder to get on the right side of government.

Progress is however being made on the red and amber projects.

Project funding – accountability board the Mercury Theatre has been approved.

1. **AOB**

DC mentioned that the ECC restructure has been ongoing for 18 months and that plans to recruit a head of economic growth bringing skills and economic growth together are going ahead as Paul Dodson is moving to Maldon District Council.

Emma Wakeling will be supporting as secretariat alongside Sam in place Paul Dodson. There is the need to look at resource on business engagement.

All agreed the route of an industrial strategy and a paragraph will need to be circulated on this.

KMIT project submitted expression of interest ERDF passed first round and can now submit a full bid – looking into a funding package. There are good ideas on how we can bring this together. Final decision is depending on funding options.

Soft market testing on companies – this has generated live project opportunities in science and tech.

David Rayner closed the meeting and wished members a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.