

**Minutes of the Meeting**

**Monday 5th December 2016**

**Tindal Board Room, Anglia Ruskin University**

**Attendees:**

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| David Rayner | Birkett Long (Chair) |
| Sam Graves | ECC (minutes) |
| Georgia Searle | BEST Growth Hub |
| Chris Burr | Southend Borough Coucil |
| Anne Holland | Southend Deputy Leader |
| Kevin Carlton | Leonardo Company |
| Mark Carroll | ECC |
| Gagan Mohindra | ECC |
| Kevin Bentley | ECC |
| George Kieffer | Haven Gateway / SELEP VC / Estuary Housing  |
| Anita Thornberry  | Haven Gateway Partnership |
| Ian Vipond | IGF Chair / Colchester Borough Council |
| Vanessa Cuthill | University of Essex |
| Paul Dodson | ECC |
| Fiona Bodle | Anglia Ruskin University  |
| Haydon Yates | Harlow E2 / West Essex |
| Graham Butland | Braintree District Council |
| Jim Sims  | SEP / The Service Design |

**Apologies:**

Chris Newenham, Tiptree Julian Drury, C2C / Opportunity Essex
Peter Williams, Williamsgroup Kate Hilyard, CRL
Christopher Barnes, Marks and Spencer Keith Rowling, Firstdata
Tim Rignall, Thurrock Council Marcelle Day, Ford
Michael Lawrence, LV Perry Glading, Port of Tilbury/Thurrock Business Board
Mike Gilbert, Leonardcompany Xavier Woodward, DPWorld
Cllr Cutmore, Rochford Council Andrew Campling, BT
Deborah Hunt, ifdsgroup Chris Wiggan, Stansted Airport
Travis Bowles, Msamlin Cllr Gledhill, Leader of Thurrock
Ian Morehouse, flaktwoods William Martin, FedEx
Cllr Ricki Gadsby, ECC Chris Wilkins, Wilkins and Sons
Rob Day, ThinkBDW

1. **Introductions & Apologies**

David Rayner opened the meeting at 6.00 pm and took introductions from around the table.

Apologies were noted.

1. **Review of last meeting minutes**

Minutes from the last meeting on the 10th May were agreed.

1. **Growing Places Fund: Project Review and EBB Recommendations**

Paul Dodson briefed the Board on the GPF. The Growing Places Fund was established by DCLG in 2011 to unlock economic growth. A total of £49.2m has been made available, of which £48.7m has been invested through previous rounds of GPF loans. This round, the total amount of capital loan investment available is expected to be up to £9.3m.

In terms of process, this comes in three stages:

* Expression of interest
* Schemes prioritisation and;
* SELEP Accountability Board funding decision

It was highlighted that bids have so far come through from: University of Essex, Anglia Ruskin University and Northern Gateway.
The process is set out by SELEP and a delegated group from the Integrated Growth Forum and is reviewed by SDG.
Paul Dodson explained that, to ensure that a proportionate approach to the scale of funding available no federated are should nominate projects or programmes to SELEP for stage 2 that exceeds the £9.3m by more than 50% (£4.65m).

The Board raised a point of where the remaining funds will be and what can be done with this. It was highlighted that the projects will come back to SELEP and the remaining money will be recycled and available. The earliest this will be available will depend on how much funding is allocated and will be in the autumn of 2018 based on SELEP. It was reiterated that the nature of the funding is a short term loan fund, for a short number of projects that can use this effectively.

Paul Dodson outlined the following projects which are recommended to EBB to be nominated for the Essex Federated Area:

1. Parkside Office Village Phase 2, recommend £2m request for funding
2. Colchester Northern Gateway community infrastructure – sports and leisure hub, recommended £2m request for funding
3. Parkside Office Village Phase 3 – recommended £0.65m as part of the original £2m request for funding
4. SELEP will be made aware of all 4 submissions to ensure they are included in any forward pipeline of potential projects

David Rayner confirmed that EBB are happy to endorse the recommendations and the projects will go to SELEP.

1. **Presentation of the Revision of SELEP / SEP**

Jims Simms presented a discussion around the refresh of the SEP.

JS gave a brief background:

The last SEP was pulled together within 6 weeks as a bidding document, this needs to be changed. The new document will be 50 pages long but cover a large amount. The SOG meeting is held regularly to pull together an evidence base, what makes us unique.

Government are still spreading growth around the country and Essex is a slow-growth economy, so what can we do to change this.

The Government is reinvigorating LEPs trying to localise and increase productive capacity which is a new agenda to some extent.
The three main questions that have been asked so far are:

* What would we love the economy to become?
* How will we cope with the changes/challenges we face?
* How can we move to a more sustainable financial footing, attracting more funds to achieve better outcomes?

JS also briefly mentioned the 10 priorities.

On the 15th December a draft SEP will be put to the SELEP Strategic Board.

It was evident that GEBB is very light on businesses and it would be beneficial for JS to have this conversation with just businesses. An action was to get all known business contacts to receive this discussion and presentation from JS.

It was highlighted that North Essex is embarking on potentially one of the largest housing developments. It is critical that this is not about units but the development of communities which will create jobs. A big emphasis on bringing these two together, otherwise there is a worry that at some stage this will fail as planning.

There is the need to collaborate in projects and activities, a greater need to get business engagement at this Board.

GK – There is a lack of productivity in businesses, how can we get up from 1% to 2%.

JS –Lack of real solid emphasis around skills, to the extent that children come home with trading cards of scientists rather than footballers. Do have an interesting debate on how we reengage capital investment. Data, labour pooling but no elementary sectors. Collective series of interventions are needed. How do we create innovation?

There was some confusion on what conversation is happening. Adam Bryan mentioned at the annual report that we ‘Want something that is sector focused not geography focused’ others responded negatively towards this. It is really important that we do have something that thinks about skills but in particular places. Need to think our diversity of the county in terms of growth, lots of encouragement of geography.

It was mentioned that there is the need to tread carefully when talking about competition with other areas in the LEP. In a global context we need to be in competition, not with each other. This is an opportunity to be seen to be leading on this process and to an extent we need to answer the question on how we create productive new economy.

1. **LGF Programme Update & Mercury Theatre Project**

Paul Dodson went through the LGF Programme and it was evident that EBB is content with the projects that are ongoing, no member had any comments.

In terms of the Mercury Theatre project, which is looking to expand a redevelop the theatre, the Board recognised a number of reasons why this project should go forward. Not only will this project create world class facilities for artists and audiences and will increase future capacity for visitors, but will provide a new hub housing ten new creative businesses.

After consideration the Board voted in favour for this project to be put forward.

1. **BEST Growth Hub Presentation**

Chris Burr and Georgia Searle presented the Essex Growth Hub to the Board.

The hub originated in Manchester and the idea grew, in 2014 in Southend were awarded the city deal which gave funding to pilot a growth hub for one year. It was emphasised that the pilot was very successful and in 2015 BIS created 39 growth hubs to cover the UK.

It was highlighted that in 2015 the South East growth hub was created along with a SELEP growth hub which leads businesses to Essex, Southend and Thurrock.

The work commenced so far has been extensive. There are 3 pillars of service with 36,000 visitors with plenty of information for businesses. There is also an annual workshop programme and there have been 288 workshops delivered to date which have ranged from face to face to online. Furthermore, the annual conference begins at the start of each year and has around 350 business delegates.

In terms of 1-2-1 support, each team has a dedicated area and support ranges from meeting with businesses and offering analysis support. For example, FunkyMedical has increased turnover by 50% in the first year of working with the growth hub.

Since the launch, 1665 businesses have been supported, 688 business diagnostics have been carried out and 606 referrals have been made. In June 2016, an independent evaluation was carried out and 88 businesses responded. Out of those 88 businesses there was an 80% positive feedback. It was also mentioned that the South East Businesses Boost will be a core hub activity that will run from 2017 to 2019 and will provide an enhanced growth hub.

Chris and Georgia then presented on the future of the Growth Hub. In terms of future funding, this will not be renewed in March 2018. This is be on a match funding basis to continue service delivery. The Board were then asked to seek support on advocacy to lobby to central government from this environment. It would be much appreciated if the Board could speak to district and county colleagues. It was, however, suggested that this may not be the best time to ask government for money.

1. **Revision of the EBB Terms of Reference & chairman Specification and process for appointments to the board.**

The Board agreed that the changes to the EBB Terms of Reference will be taken offline, however the Board were still keen to point out where changed ought to be made.

Graham Butland pointed out that in 4.5 it states Local Authority members, but in 6.1 states Local Authority elected members, there needs to be the consistency within the document.

Business membership looking for 9 businesses, split 6 and 3 to make sure there is a business majority, this needs to be looked at on 8.1.

4.4.2 and 4.5.1 both have reference to the growth corridor but is inconsistent which needs to be changed. It was highlighted that this needs to be throughout the whole document.

In terms of the discussion of the chairman specification, it was agreed that the new chair be someone with regional interest and is from a business.

There also needs to be a firm timetable with the intention of having a person identified by November’s EBB meeting.

In the specification the Board agreed that we need to outline; the role of the chair, what is the hook for them being appointed, they need to be excited about joining and becoming chair. There is the need to change the language, spearheading to change the shape and economy.

The board agreed that the panel so far for appointing the new chair is not very diverse, David Rayner recognises this and will look to the Board for suggestions. The chair of the ESB should be considered.

It was highlighted that every avenue possible needs to be engaged in order to find the right person. The specification will also be circulated to the SELEP website.

It was agreed that the Terms of Reference and Chair Role Specification will be rewritten.

1. **Relationship with Opportunity South Essex**

David Rayner confirmed that the split on SELEP will be three from EBB and two from OSE.

It was also agreed that a joint meeting be set up to make sure that both are conducting the best for businesses across Essex.
George Kieffer is a member on both Boards and will encourage good relations.

The Board confirmed they are happy with the split.

1. **Funding of EBB**

In terms of future funding of EBB, it was confirmed that the need to get a new Board together is the priority before asking businesses for contributions.

It was also mentioned that the Board can look at what KMEP have done in the past.

1. **Any Other Business**

Letter from George Kieffer will be circulated with the minutes.

David Rayner thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 19:45