

**Minutes of the Board meeting of Opportunity South Essex**

**Wednesday 7 June 2017 at 14.00**

**Towngate Theatre, Basildon**

**Present**

**Kate Willard Stobart Group (Chair)**

**Cllr Kevin Bentley, Essex County Council**

**David Marchant, Castle Point Borough Council**

**Cllr Colin Riley, Castle Point Borough Council;**

**Cllr Terry Cutmore, Rochford District Council**

**Rob Moore, HCA**

**Shaun Scrutton, Rochford District Council**

**Julian Drury C-2**

**Dominic Collins Essex County Council**

**Cllr Linda Allport-Hodge, Basildon Borough Council**

**Cllr John Lamb Southend-on-Sea Borough Council**

**Rhiannon Mort, SE LEP *(for Adam Bryan)***

**David Burch, Essex Chambers of Commerce**

**Lyn Carpenter, Thurrock Council**

**Mark Carroll, Essex County Council**

**Dominic Collins, Essex County Council**

**Murray Foster, Southend Business Board/Partnership**

**Cllr Robert Gledhill, Thurrock Council**

**Simon Harper, Forth Ports (Port of Tilbury)**

**Lucy Harris, Pixel Works limited, Thurrock Business Board**

**Trevor Hutchinson, DP World London Gateway**

**Cllr John Lamb, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council**

**Chris Burr, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council *(for Andrew Lewis)***

**Bala Mahendran, Basildon Borough Council**

**Marc Myers, Intu Lakeside**

**Claire Hamilton, Basildon Borough Council**

**Gunilla Edwards, Basildon Borough Council**

**Tim Rignall. Thurrock Council**

**Mark Evershed, Castle Point Borough Council**

1. **Introduction and apologies**

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The Chair welcomed Cllr Allport- Hodge, Basildon Council to the Board and Marc Myers, INTU Lakeside.

1. **Declaration of Interest**

JD declared an interest in two LGF projects which C2C are associated with - Stanford-le-Hope interchange and Grays South Town Centre projects. TH also expressed an interest in Stanford-le-Hope interchange

1. **Minutes of last meeting**

No matters arising and Minutes were approved as a true record.

1. **Election of Chair and Vice-Chair of Opportunity South Essex**

DM asked the Board to consider KW nomination for Chair and the Board approved the nomination. KW accepted the appointment and expressed thanks to have the Board’s confidence in continuing chairing the OSE Board. She also expressed her commitment to South Essex and that she intends to devote more time to promote the success of the partnership. KW said she would continue to hold the OSE meetings in the same style ie short and focussed but wanted to assure Board Members she would endeavour to be available some time before or after the Board meetings should members want to discuss issues.

KW also wanted to review the timings of the meetings to fit in with SELEP Board and Accountability Board meetings to ensure an effective feed in and feedback process. KW suggested the meetings would be held at various locations including at businesses. JL offered to host the next OSE Board at the end of Southend Pier which was welcomed by all.

DM asked the Board to consider Cllr John Lamb for the nomination as Vice Chair and Board Members duly approved the appointment.

1. **OSE Partnership Agreement**

ME confirmed that the Partnership Agreement had been circulated for comments and responses have been received. It was agreed that the document was far too long and the EDM Officer group would review the document. KW said it needed to be shorter and much sharper and it was agreed that an electronic revised copy would be circulated and signed off before next Board meeting.

**ACTION: EDM group to review the Partnership Agreement and Governance and produce new draft. Circulate for electronic approval before next meeting.**

1. **Finance Report / Resource Plan for OSE**

Castle Point as the accountable body provided an update on the financial position of OSE and then in particular the gaps in funding mounting up to £66,000 by 31/3 2019. ME confirmed that all local authority partners had raised Purchase Orders for their yearly contribution to be invoiced”

KB stated it was important to come up with a plan with Board partners on how to resource the future OSE partnership. KW confirmed that a meeting with a few OSE private sector Board Members had already taken place (see item 7). However a proposal for a solution needs to be developed and the EDM group was tasked with coming up with this. TH confirmed that DPWLG are willing to consider a financial contribution as did SH from Tilbury Ports. MM also offered to discuss a financial contribution with his Board and will confirm at a later stage.

LC offered Thurrock to provide additional resources to support the Partnership and JL also offered additional resource from Southend. ME recognised the additional resources already provided by Basildon to support the Chair and KW recognised the offers of support from all during the last couple of weeks and thanked colleagues for all of their help to date.

**ACTION: EDM group to develop a proposal for future resourcing.**

1. **Private Sector Board Member Contributions**

TH reported on the recent task and finish group meeting and pointed out the poor attendance at the meeting from private sector Board Members. He emphasised that the private sector needs to actively and meaningfully participate if continuing as a Board Member and expressed the opinion that anyone seeking to have a ‘watching brief’ should step down to the ‘Observer Member’ group. Active participation to include participation in the development of recommendations (i.e. Task and Finishing groups) to the board. TH highlighted that DPWLG have previously made a commitment to actively participate for a period of 18 months following which involvement in OSE will be reviewed. Such commitment was intended to give stability and confidence.

The Task and Finish Group had discussed a number of resourcing options including top slicing from initiatives where business engagement was required, sponsorships and private sector financial contribution. The group had also examined various existing membership models. KW stated that in regards to private sector contributions, it was important that businesses were not thought to be ‘buying a seat at the table’ to gain benefit from projects. The Task and Finish Group also discussed the service OSE could offer to businesses of an OSE brand to avoid confusion on the plethora of support and initiatives offered to businesses. This particular action was asked to be included in the Implementation Plan.

**ACTION: EDM group to review how OSE Branding and seal of approval could be implemented with regard to skills and business support activities.**

1. **OSE Growth Strategy – Implementation Plan**

The Board received an update on the preparation of the implementation plan for the five priorities articulated in the OSE Growth Strategy and asked for nominations for ‘Board Champions’ for the Driving Growth and Housing priorities. DB offered to champion the Driving Growth and ME proposed the Chair of the Developer Group to Champion Housing. This suggestion was second by RM.

TH stated that the implementation Plan needs to actually mean something and be more specific in terms of interventions. MM suggested to meet with business reps to flesh out the Plan. KB wanted to highlight that connectivity also means also broadband and the importance of linking developing talent in response to economic need. TC stated that intermodal connectivity is important and between business parks and transport hubs and wanted to make sure this was included.

TR set out the plan for further consultation to be completed by 30th June and a commitment to meet with Board Members to ensure they are happy with the content.

**ACTION. EDM Officer group to progress Implementation Plan.**

At this stage the Board received a presentation from SEEVIC College students who had developed three website proposals. KW thanked the students and congratulated them on their proposals. KW expressed a wish to continue the work with these students.

1. **Essex Economic Commission**

In the absence of Andrew Sentence the Board received an update from DC on the work of the Commission. The first report has been published and provides a forensic look of the Essex economy. Local Authorities are already using it to plan their work and Greater Essex Business Board is using it to develop their action plan against the findings. DC suggested OSE might want to the same. Next step is to examine three particular areas:

* Skills
* Inclusion and quality of life
* Suitable work space

JD praised the Commission’s work and has been able to draw considerable useful information from it. He also asked for hard copies to be sent to the Board. DM concurred and said it was an excellent piece of good forensic work and KW asked to make sure AS can attend next meeting and asked colleagues to ensure that there was sufficient time on the agenda for this important item. BM emphasised the need to look behind the big picture and to look at such issue as who is exporting. The Commission also need to look at company expansion and the need to have availability of land to get on the radar of potential investors.

**ACTION. MC to invite AW to the next Board meeting.**

 **DC to send out hard copies of the Commission’s report**

1. **Local Growth Fund – capital programme monitoring**

TM updated the Board on the latest position of the Local Growth Fund (LGF) Capital Programme, as part of SELEP’s assurance framework. TC enquired if EU funding approved would be secured following Brexit. TR confirmed the commitment from DCLG to secure funding to the end of the projects. JL stated the need to influence government that this commitment stayed in place.

JD enquired about the pipeline of new projects and TR confirmed that a rolling list exists. KW said we need to manage and update the list, adding new ones and taking off projects no longer relevant.

In relation to the report from the SE LEP Accountability Board, KW enquired of slippage of £22 million and why and how can we take advantage of this. RM confirmed that this is only slippage not underspend and allocated to projects. However KW stated the need to be aware of the underspend and report to the Board of any opportunities. TR stated that as a federated area we have a responsibility to look monitor underspend and to reallocate if necessary. We already have a list of priority projects and are currently also having a look at also private sector projects to be included in this list.

KW declared the need for traffic light reporting on all current projects and for this to be presented to the next OSE Board meeting. Members agreed the need for a report on lessons learned with a traffic light indication of project status. KB added the requirement for a nimble list of pipeline of projects and the ability to make quick decisions.  BM added his disappointment of previous of the transparency of prioritisation of previous LFG rounds and that deliverability is key to the process.

TR offered to circulate Accountability Board papers as soon as they become available and KW stated the need to establish the selection criteria set out at the Accountable Board when it comes to selection replacement schemes

**ACTION: TM to find out sequence of meetings and how projects are judged and decided. GE to put first on the next agenda.**

1. **SELEP UPDATE**

RM provided an update from SELEP (see attached).

1. **South Essex Transport and Economy Board**

DC updated on role, purpose and recent activity of the SE Transport and Economy Board (see enclosed). KB stated this is the delivery board to OSE Board to be used to identify project progress reporting back to OSE. JL emphasised the need to be clear on where this Board fits in with OSE and the need for clear guidance on its role. KW again stated that it has the clear role and a delivery mechanism. TR said it needed to be tied into implementing plan’s projects.

**Action: KB to present a paper outlining the Terms of reference for this Board to the next OSE Board.**

1. **OSE/GEBB Memorandum of Understanding**

KW will be discussing the MoU of understanding between GEBB and OSE and have been in contact with David Raynor and George Kieffer to also look at OSE representation at SE LEP Board. Current members of SE LEP Board are MM, KB, JD and DB.

**ACTION:   KW to meet with DR and GK (meeting subsequently set for Tuesday 8th August).**

1. **Greater Essex Business Board**

DC provided an update on GEBB and said that Simon Brice has stepped down as chair. David Raynor is the current interim chair. GEBB is going through a review and recognises it needs to be fully business led. It currently has some strong representatives from key sectors but need additional business membership from quadrants. Chair role will be advertised shortly.

1. **Date and Venue of meeting**

Next meeting is on September 6th at 2 pm and held at Mayor's Residence, Southend