

Strategic Board Meeting

Friday 11th December 2015, 10:00am –12:00pm

High House Production Park, Purfleet, Essex, RM19 1RJ

South East

Local Enterprise Partnership



10.00	1	Welcome and apologies including introduction of new Board Member and economic round up (Spending Review)	George Kieffer
10.10	2	Minutes and actions from 25 th September 2015 meeting	George Kieffer All
Strategic Agenda			
10.20	3	Skills – Defining SE LEP’s Strategic Role	Graham Razey
10.45	4	Establishing SEFUND	Graham Peters David Rayner
11.00	5	Housing: Progress and next steps	George Kieffer
11.15	6	Lower Thames Crossing	Geoff Miles
Governance			
11.25	7	Recruitment of Chairman & Director (commercially sensitive report circulated separately)	Terry Osborne
Updates			
11.35	8	ESIF Update	George Kieffer Lorraine George
11.45	9	Devolution Deals: Greater Essex	Nicola Beach Mark Carroll
Information			
-	10	Annual Conversation	George Kieffer Adam Bryan
-	11	Growth Hub Marketing	Adam Bryan
-	12	Future Meeting Dates <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 11th March 2016 TBC (Please note amendment)• 24th June 2016• 23rd September 2016• 9th December 2016	George Kieffer
11.55	13	AOB	

SE LEP Strategic Board Meeting Minutes

Friday 25th September 2015, 10:00am – 12:00pm

High House Production Park, Purfleet, Essex RM19 1RJ



Full Board members & alternates present

George Kieffer	Interim Chair
Christina Ewbank	Alliance of Chambers East Sussex & Eastbourne Chamber of Commerce
CLlr Alan Jarrett (Alternate for CLlr Rodney Chambers)	Medway Council
CLlr David Elkin	East Sussex County Council
CLlr David Finch	Essex County Council
CLlr Howard Rolfe (Alternate for CLlr Graham Butland)	Uttlesford District Council & Essex District/Borough Authorities
CLlr John Kent	Thurrock
CLlr Keith Glazier	East Sussex County Council
CLlr Paul Carter	Kent County Council
CLlr Paul Watkins	Dover District Council
CLlr Peter Chowney	Hastings BC
CLlr Peter Fleming	Sevenoaks District Council
CLlr Ron Woodley	Southend BC
David Burch	Essex Chambers
David Rayner	Greater Essex Businesses
Derek Godfrey	Ellis Building Contractors
Douglas Horner (Alternate for Graham Brown)	Trenport Investments & Kent Businesses
Geoff Miles	Maidstone Studios
Graham Peters	East Sussex SME Commission & East Sussex Rural Partnership
Graham Peters	East Sussex SME Commission & East Sussex Rural Partnership
Graham Razey	East Kent College
Jo James	Kent Invicta Chambers
Julian Crampton	University of Brighton
Julian Drury	C2C and South Essex Businesses
Nick Sandford	Godinton House & CLA
Perry Glading	Forth Ports and Thurrock Businesses

Apologies

Apologies had been received from CLlr Graham Butland, Graham Brown, CLlr Rodney Chambers, CLlr Kevin Bentley

1. Welcome

- 1.1.** Vice Chairman Graham Peters took the role of Chair for the meeting and welcomed all members including our LEP Whitehall Sponsor Graham Pendlebury, Iain McNab from BIS and Terry Osborne from Essex County Council representing the Accountable Body.

2. Minutes and actions from May 2015 meeting

- 2.1.** The minutes of the meeting held on Friday 22nd May 2015 were agreed to be a correct record of proceedings. All actions had been completed or were covered elsewhere in the agenda with the exception of Assisted Areas.
- 2.2.** With regards to this David Godfrey advised that in light of the recommendations agreed at the meeting, the Secretariat was to support the Coastal Group in taking forward recommendations on Assisted Areas Group. It was agreed that an update report would be taken to the further SE LEP Board meeting and that this would incorporate information relating to Coastal Communities, CORE and Housing.

3. Approval of Accountability Board Recommendations

- 3.1.** The Chairman referred to Accountability Board earlier in the month and advised that the while the recommendations were unanimously agreed at the meeting, these were being presented for approval of the Strategic Board due to the fact that the Accountability Board was not yet fully constituted.

Skills Equipment Fund Approval

- 3.2.** Geoff Miles, Accountability Board Chairman, commented that the meeting was very positive and welcomed Mike Rayner to discuss the Skills Equipment Fund approval.
- 3.3.** Mike Rayner informed the Board that SE LEP has received a £11m allocation in 2015/16 of Skills Funding of which £2m is available to fund the Skills Equipment Capital bids. A further £2m of funding for Skills Equipment Capital is expected to be allocated in 2016/17 placing £4m in the SE LEP Skills Equipment allocation.
- 3.4.** Mike Rayner explained that an Assessment Group (with increased business representation) was formed to evaluate bids. This was robust and in line with the Assurance Framework and advice from the SFA. Of the 7 bids received, 5 were recommended, for fund approval, totalling **£702,364**, as follows:
- South Essex College – purchase of Engineering Equipment - £73,475

- Writtle College – Science Lab Equipment - £73,910
- South Downs College – Science Lab Equipment - £46,720
- Colchester Institute* – purchase of advanced manufacturing and fabrication and welding equipment - £161,68
- Harlow College* – purchase of Engineering Equipment - £346,57

*Subject to confirmation from the Skills Funding Agency of a robust financial plan being in place

3.5 Mike Rayner informed that board that the remaining funding of £3.3m is proposed to be allocated through a further bidding round.

3.6 Geoff Miles commented the that approach taken to form an Assessment Group with greater business representation was very effective and focussed, with bids judged on the basis of business cases. He thanked all those involved in the process

The decision was taken to APPROVE all recommendations.

Southend Central Area Action Plan

3.7 Ron Woodley informed the Board that Southend was seeking to re-profile the funding allocated to this project in order to accelerate delivery in 2015/16 subject to business case approval and funding availability.

3.8 Geoff Miles commented that the Accountability Board was in consensus that this should be supported

The decision was taken to APPROVE this request.

4. Chairmanship: Review of Arrangements

4.1. Graham Peters advised that, as circulated via email, the Vice Chairs and David Godfrey had met with Government Officials to discuss matters of Chairmanship, SE LEP geography and Growth Deal delivery.

4.2. It was re-emphasized that the position from Ministers is to retain the SE LEP geography. There was a clear focus on assurance of delivery and recognition that the SE LEP had continued to move programmes forward.

4.3. Graham Peters maintained that there was a need to now move on from these past discussions and focus on the benefits and successes that can be achieved.

4.4. Board members unanimously expressed their thanks to Peter Jones who has made a significant and positive impact over the previous two years.

4.5. In reference to their covering report, the Accountable Body referred to the procedures undertaken to date which are in keeping with SE LEP governance. Christina Ewbank commented that matters of chairmanship should not just be considered by the Accountability Board and this was fully

supported by all. David Godfrey assured that the recruitment process must have full board engagement.

4.6. In light of the recommendations listed in the covering report all recommendations were **APPROVED.**

It was agreed that:

4.6.1. George Kieffer will act as Interim Chairman

4.6.2. The recruitment of a permanent Chairman will commence with full Strategic Board engagement and final selection. Board members will have the opportunity shape the role profile and recruitment strategy. A clear timetable will define all stages.

4.6.3. The role of Vice Chairmen will also be considered as well as the option of including a fourth to represent the South Essex growth area.

4.6.4. The Appointment's Panel would have a business majority

5. Strengthening our Federal Arrangements

5.1. George Kieffer took the Chair and commented that the wealth of positive activity operating under SE LEP's federal model was communicated strongly to Government Officials. He indicated that the federal model goes hand-in-hand with the changed role of Chairman and asked for some initial thoughts on how this could be strengthened. George suggested that a wider paper with recommendations on this matter would be taken back to the December meeting. This was **AGREED.**

5.2. George handed over to David Godfrey who presented an update to the Board on current ways of working and key achievements.

5.3. In strengthening the federal model, Board Members discussed how improvements could be made to restate local arrangements and ensure clear prioritisation to Government. This included suggestions to:

- consider prioritisation with ministers and civil servants to best fit principles of localism and subsidiarity but recognise that SE LEP needs to promote the strongest business cases with a common appraisal methodology
- structure business rep engagement outside of Board meetings and to link with Senior Officer Group activity
- consider opportunities / share priorities at a pan SE LEP level but also with other LEPs across the county
- ensure that working groups continue to be supported as a key aspect of SE LEP activities

5.4. It was **AGREED** that a further paper with recommendations would be taken to the December Board meeting.

5.5. John Kent raised the need for stability within the LEP Secretariat and the use of secondments and was assured that further permanent recruitments would take place.

6. European Structural Investment Funds update

6.1. George Kieffer updated the Board on the progress made and confirmed that a great deal of activity had taken place since the last Board meeting to deliver the SELEP EU Structural Investment Funds. He warned the Board that a currency revaluation will present some significant challenges and that this is being carefully managed.

6.2. George reflected on a very successful ESIF meeting in July which made the following recommendations:

- **ERDF:** 13 applications were received (+1 for Technical Assistance) of which 2 were ineligible. A total of 9 projects have been invited to go to full application approximately £20 million grant value
- **ESF:** 4 applications were received for the Youth Employment initiative – only the Thurrock area is eligible for this funding. 1 application was invited to go to full application stage worth £1.3 million grant value
- **EAFRD:** 17 submissions were received to support projects in support of rural SMEs. 10 have been invited to full application worth approximately £1.3 million in total
- Those projects selected will now go to full application stage, returning to the ESIF Committee in November for formal endorsement and are expected to reach contract stage by January 2016.

6.3. Lorraine George then advised that the second round of calls for applications under ERDF, entirely focussed on Priority Axis 3 (support for SMEs), are to be considered by the ESIF Committee in November and advised that upcoming calls were expected as below:

- CLLD – expected imminently
- ESF – expected in October
- EAFRD – expected in January 16

6.4. Lorraine George also confirmed that, working with partners, she is in the process of refreshing the ESIF strategy, in line with Government's request to update and finalise by October 2015.

6.5. Lorraine George thanked all those involved, with special mention to Lorraine George and Nick Sandford for his support on the rural programme.

7. SEFUND & Growing Places Fund

- 7.1. David Godfrey informed the Board that Officers were asked to bring forward for future Board approval, a detailed options paper for the longer term management of SEFUND including costing of the Limited Partnership model and advised that a full paper on SEFUND will be brought to the Strategic Board meeting in December.
- 7.2. In the meantime existing investments through the Growing Places Fund continue to be delivered - and the fund now has a surplus of £1m to re-invest from loan repayments.
- 7.3. The Board were asked to consider options for re-investment and discussed the SEFUND model at length. It was established that there was a need to clarify the strategy for SEFUND within the paper as agreed by the Strategic Board in March.
- 7.4. A question was also raised about 15% top sliced funding, but it was clarified this related to the Growth Deal and Local Growth Fund proposals not to SEFUND/GPF which was a pan-LEP programme. SEFUND/GPF was wholly separate from the £488m LGF investment which had primarily been invested according to locally set priorities.
- 7.5. However, federal areas would have a clear role in SEFUND investments as proposed, in providing a local gateway to ensure any private sector schemes coming forward for funding fitted with local economic priorities before they were considered in detail.
- 7.6. It was **AGREED** to postpone the investment decision to the December Board meeting.
- 7.7. Under **Growing Places Fund** the Board were asked to consider a change in strategy for the delivery of the Live Margate Project, from the redevelopment of existing residential units to development of larger sites.
- 7.8. The outcomes of the project remain the same, as does the investment required.
- 7.9. This request was **AGREED** by the Board.

8. Setting our strategic direction

- 8.1. George Kieffer reminded Board Members that a paper on this matter was discussed in brief in May but was returning as a number of people had been keen to focus on particular issues within a wider work programme where SE LEP can work to add value to the activities of the local areas.
- 8.2. David Godfrey then introduced two particular areas of strategic importance – the Lower Thames Crossing and Skills, which are issues that require continued focus.
- 8.3. A discussion ensued on the Lower Thames Crossing which remains a top priority for Government infrastructure. Jo James and David Burch informed the members on the consultations underway and advised that they are working to ensure that comment is as far reaching within the business community as possible. The LEP secretariat would support them in circulating information on any business surveys.

- 8.4.** David Godfrey then advised that the Interim Chairman and the Vice Chairs had recently met and considered, along with other issues, the request from KMEP to fund further research into economic impact and the wider strategic route. While the necessity to have the most up-to-date economic information was without doubt critical, further liaison with the LTC project team had at the same time indicated that most economic research considered in selecting a preferred route was now in place and that the overwhelming need was now to promote engagement in the forthcoming consultation. A paper would be brought to the next meeting.
- 8.5.** It was fully agreed by the Board members that this remains a matter of key importance and an issue that the SE LEP must play a role in.
- 8.6.** Graham Razey reiterated that skills remain a real priority and for the SELEP to influence it must have a focus at a strategic level. The other dimension within this was the Area Based Reviews for the provision of 16+ education and training which were beginning to be rolled out, starting in East Sussex. LEPs were required to have a view and it was **AGREED** that guidance papers should be circulated with an understanding that this is an emerging process.
- 8.7.** George Kieffer then opened the discussion for further subjects to form part of a strategic work programme.
- 8.8.** David Finch commented that given the scale of SE LEP, partners ought to be punching above their weight in lobbying and suggested that a communications strategy to include lobbying be developed. This suggestion was **AGREED** by the Board.
- 8.9.** David Rayner commented that Bradwell Nuclear Power Station must be considered. This suggestion was **AGREED** by the Board.
- 8.10.** George Kieffer summarised the discussion and the Board **AGREED** six strategic themes for inclusion with ongoing work programmes, as follows:
- Lower Thames Crossing
 - Skills
 - Telephony
 - Aviation
 - Energy
 - Broadband
- 8.11** A further paper will be presented to the Board.

9 New Enterprise Zones

- 9.1** It was noted that the SE LEP area Enterprise Zone applications had been submitted and this was officially endorsed by the SE LEP Board as required by Government.
- 9.2** Four priority zones had been put forward: the North Kent Innovation Zone; East Sussex Coastal; Haven Gateway; and Thames Enterprise Park. A further submission from the Channel Corridor linked to Operation Stack was also supported.
- 9.3** The outcome of the bids was expected in the Spending Review announcement on 25th November.

10 Any Other Business

- 10.1** Cllr Howard Rolfe commented that communications is the message to leave with and encouraged all to get the message out and promote the work of SE LEP
- 10.2** Christina Ewbank took the opportunity to comment that the Annual Plan was gratefully received by the business community in East Sussex and commented that it was a very clear and concise document that framed the broad range of activities from the previous year.
- 10.3** Andrea Stark updated the Board on the work of the Creative Industries Group and shared their prospectus which set out the ambitions for the sector across the SELEP geography.

11. Close & Lunch

- 11.1.** The Chairman thanked all Board members, presenters and guests for their attendance and contribution and the meeting concluded at 12.15pm

Skills: Defining SE LEP's Strategic Role

1. The purpose of this paper is to:

- Discuss SE LEP's strategic role of the LEP in skills provision

2. Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- Note the report and presentation
- Agree the SE LEP's role in:
 - Delivering the SE LEP Growth Deal
 - Developing a combined LEP-wide Skills Strategy to maximise funding and extend influence for local Employment & Skills Boards
 - Leading, through the Skills Advisory Group, pan-LEP projects, eg Institutes of Technology
 - Providing ongoing support and development of ESIF funding opportunities
 - Ensuring a clear project pipeline to take maximum advantage of any future capital funding opportunities
 - Investing in SE LEP skills evidence base to support local Employment & Skills Boards
 - Promoting best practice eg Skills Portal (see below)
 - Providing a strong private sector voice in SE LEP relationships with key national agencies
 - Promoting high level skills and career opportunities wherever this can be achieved best at SE LEP-level

All of the above would be achieved through the Skills Advisory Group (SAG), working closely with local Employment & Skills Boards and who also sit on SAG, which would additionally monitor Government announcements, policy and wider skills issues and developments.

3. Supporting Papers

- None

4. Background

Further to the successful establishment of the Skills Advisory Group (with representatives from the local Employment & Skills Boards) and the Skills Capital process, the ongoing development of the ESIF funding programmes and wider moves to increase influence over skills provision both through our Growth Deal and emerging devolution deals, this paper aims to clarify the role of SE LEP in enabling the skills that business needs to support a growing South East economy.

5. SE LEP achievements to date

Through our Growth Deal and work to deliver the European Structural & Investment Funds in support of skills and employability, SE LEP has responsibility and influence over:

- £22m of Skills capital funding for capital projects and equipment, distributed through a highly regarded and flexible competitive process which prioritises economic and business growth
- c£60m of ESIF funding to support our “escalator of opportunity” supporting skills development and employability

We have established a Skills Advisory Board to support the SE LEP Strategic Board with appointees from local Employment & Skills Boards giving a clear link to local priorities.

Through distribution of the “Data Cube”, we are now responsible for providing skills data for the SE LEP area.

To support business, we are joint-funding with the local Employment & Skills Boards and local councils the “Skills Portal” connecting businesses with the training they require.

Finally, we have developed strong and ongoing strategic relationships with the Department for Communities & Local Government, the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, Department for Work & Pensions, the Skills Funding Agency and other key agencies.

6. The SE LEP Skills Portal

Recognising the support of partners, the Strategic Board was advised in the Skills Update that SE LEP would support the SE LEP Skills Portal (up to c30k, match funding), a web based system developed through previous European funding for Skills Support for the Workforce, which was supported.

The Portal is unique in providing training information across the SE LEP area for businesses, enabling them to identify the appropriate courses they require, connecting them directly with skills providers and, for specialist needs, enabling them to group with other businesses to provide the critical mass required for providers to establish bespoke training courses to meet this demand.

The Portal has received very positive feedback from businesses and providers alike and is completing “beta testing” prior to going live across the LEP. It is hoped that the joint funded project will provide the initial funding to enable SE LEP to take ownership of the Portal and to roll out and manage its operation for one year, with the scheme becoming self-funded in future years. Work is currently underway to review the way forward and further information and decisions will be brought back to the appropriate boards in the new year.

7. SE LEP skills priorities

SE LEP’s skills priorities are those local priorities aggregated from local Employment & Skills Boards, built up into a SE LEP strategy with the aim of adding value, scale, impact and influence for local areas.

8. Our SE LEP Growth Deal

In addition to the £22m Capital Funding and ESIF programmes, the SE LEP Growth Deal also won a number of Government commitments with the potential to have growing influence over national skills funding. These commitments include:

- *The Government commits to working with the Local Enterprise Partnership to help ensure that local priorities are fed into the operations of the new National Careers Service providers in local area. Government, through the Skills Funding Agency, will support the process to ensure that provision meets local priorities and that increasing responsiveness is delivered through a three-pronged approach:*
- *Procurement of New Provision: The Local Enterprise Partnership will be involved throughout the procurement process (e.g. co-commissioning skills with the Skills Funding Agency through use of its European Social Funding match funding); and providers' track records against its requirements will be considered as part of this assessment.*
- *Accountability: Providers will be required through their funding agreements with the Skills Funding Agency to explain to the Local Enterprise Partnership details of its provision and planning and we are testing ways in which it can be most effectively held to account for being responsive to local economic priorities.*
- *Allocations and Intervention: In future years providers' records in delivering to Local Enterprise requirements will be taken into account when setting allocations and triggering interventions. From 2015/16 the Skills Funding Agency will take into account the outcomes of three national Skills Incentive Pilots in making allocations to those providers in scope; subject to evaluation of the pilots, these mechanisms will be rolled out to the South East Local Enterprise Partnership in future years.*
- *Government will set out revised information for the Local Enterprise Partnership on how they can take advantage of this approach and options for seeking advice if provision is not responsive to its needs. The Skills Funding Agency will publish information during summer 2014 on how the Local Enterprise Partnership can influence the use of all skills budgets in its local area, and the steps they can take if they are dissatisfied with the pattern of delivery.*
- *Government will seek to improve the provision of skills data for Local Enterprise Partnerships and will develop and publish new reports that will quantify and assess responsiveness to local skills needs. In the summer of 2014 the Skills Funding Agency will provide the Local Enterprise Partnership with a data set that updates them on the provision delivered in their areas.*

The SFA document "LEPs; Increasing their influence on skills budgets" included at both the May and September Strategic Board meetings set out detail of how the Government and Skills Funding Agency (SFA) intended to ensure that commitments made in the Local Growth Deals would be met through the skills funding system.

9. Devolution Deals

More recently, a number of Devolution Deals have been agreed with local areas, primarily Cities, which offer the potential to build on the Growth Deals and provide even greater influence over local skills provision. By participating in Area Based Reviews they are working to reshape local skills systems.

Amongst others, these include:

Sheffield City Region:

- Increased influence over careers guidance.
- Locally determined skills strategy focused on meeting employer needs.

Greater Manchester:

- Delegation of apprenticeship incentive grants.
- Local recommissioning of the FE system in collaboration with SFA and other government agencies.

Cornwall:

- Increased pooling and influence over local budgets (including adult skills budget) to reshape the local skills system to be more responsive to local need.

The emerging Greater Essex Devolution Deal, 3 Southern Counties Devolution Deal and work to develop a proposition in Kent & Medway are strongly supported, with the LEP's role clearly stated to sign off proposals. The over-riding aim of SE LEP is to bring decisions around skills provision as close as possible to the businesses and learners who will benefit and who will drive local economic growth.

10. Areas Based Skills Reviews

Earlier this year, the Government launched a wide-ranging review of post-16 education and training institutions, a process through which the sector in East Sussex is currently undergoing. The aim of each review is to "establish the appropriate set of institutions to offer high quality provision based on the current and future needs of learners and employers within the local area".

Through the Skills Advisory Board, SE LEP has provided support to the SE LEP Vice Chairman for East Sussex and is engaged closely with East Sussex County Council and the Coast to Capital LEP that is leading on LEP involvement across the wider review area.

The Government identifies the close involvement of LEPs in these reviews, with the SE LEP approach developed through the Skills Advisory Board being to support local areas and local Employment & Skills Boards in fulfilling the LEP role and involving local business closely in the process.

Pan-LEP, there is emerging agreement that:

- Not all post-16 provision is covered and that this needs to be taken into account, especially in areas where school 6th forms dominate
- There is a concern about the potential for a proliferation of models to confuse and dissipate the market
- Statutory provision at entry-level 2 needs to be covered as well as high level skills and specialisms

In developing a pan-LEP position built up from local areas, these factors should be considered.

11. What is SE LEP's Skills role?

Recognising the importance of skills to drive economic growth, the need to deliver the SE LEP Growth Deal and the emphasis Government is placing on LEPs, and the exciting activity within the SE LEP area to develop local Devolution Deals, there is a need to further focus the role of SE LEP, which the Skills Advisory Board will then support.

The responsibilities of this role are defined as:

- Delivering the SE LEP Growth Deal
- Developing a combined LEP-wide Skills Strategy to maximise funding and extend influence for local Employment Skills Boards
- Leading, through the Skills Advisory Group, pan-LEP projects, eg Institutes of Technology
- Providing ongoing support and development of ESIF funding opportunities
- Ensuring a clear project pipeline to take maximum advantage of any future capital funding opportunities
- Investing in SE LEP skills evidence base
- Promoting best practice eg Skills Portal (see above)
- Providing a strong private sector voice in SE LEP relationships with key national agencies
- Promoting high level skills and career opportunities wherever this can be achieved best at SE LEP-level

Further comments from the Skills Advisory Group will be presented at the meeting.

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Position: Skills Lead

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Date: 4th December, 2015

Establishing SEFUND

1. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to:

- Provide clarification on questions that have been raised about the South East Fund (SEFUND)
- Enable SEFUND to begin operating as a revolving investment fund to support growth across the South East LEP area
- Procure interim and long term fund management support

2. Recommendations

Following the agreed delays in implementing previous recommendations while SE LEP boundaries were re-considered, the Board is now asked to:

- Further instruct the SE LEP Secretariat to procure interim (6 months) fund management support for SEFUND to:
 - Manage SEFUND investments and processes
 - Develop the SEFUND project pipeline and brand
 - Provide support for federal areas in project development and GPF scheme delivery
 - Assess all funding options, including project re-financing, recognising the ambition to build both the fund and project level investment considerably
 - Provide brokerage support to bring institutional investors together with local projects
 - Promote SEFUND and its project pipeline to institutional corporate and niche investors
- Subject to the satisfactory assessment by the Accountable Body of wider investment fund structure and management options:
 - Procure long-term (2 year) fund management support through the OJEU process
 - Agree to establish SEFUND as a separate legal entity as appropriate, possibly in the form of a Limited Liability Partnership
- Agree that George Kieffer should replace Peter Jones on the SEFUND Board
- Note the agreed SEFUND Investment Strategy

The above recommendations both complete and update the recommendations made in March 2015, when the Board agreed to:

- Create 'SEFUND' and to treat all monies in the Growing Places Fund as the initial contribution to SEFUND
- Establish the SEFUND Shadow Board as the SEFUND Board for these interim arrangements
- Adopt the draft SEFUND Investment Strategy for all future funding decisions as consulted upon through the SEFUND Shadow Board and local meetings

- Note that officers will bring forward for future board approval a detailed options paper for the future longer term management of that fund
- Continue discussions with the Accountable Body, partners and SEFUND legal advisers on the structure and future management of SEFUND, including the options of creating a limited liability partnership

3. Supporting Detail

In support of this paper, appendices contain:

- SEFUND Design Phase, including Investment Strategy (as agreed by the SE LEP Board), March 2015
- SEFUND – Additional Options Analysis, July 2015 from Pinsents
- SEFUND/GPF repayment schedule (Accountable Body)
- Evergreen Case Studies

The SEFUND Board members are currently: George Kieffer (replacing Peter Jones) (Chairman), Murray Foster, David Rayner, Keith Glazier, Paul Carter, Graham Peters, Graham Brown, David Finch, Niamh Matthews (Cabinet Office).

4. Background

This paper is intended to provide clarification on questions that have been asked about SEFUND to inform the Board discussion and to enable the fund to begin operation in two distinct, interim and long-term, phases.

It draws on further research by Board members on the success of similar funds and discussions before the Summer between the Accountable Body and Pinsents on the fund structure.

It completes the recommendations to establish SEFUND as a revolving real estate investment fund for the SE LEP area which were paused by the SE LEP Board in March while the General Election was underway and the SE LEP boundaries were under consideration.

4.1 SEFUND: Questions & Answers

Some highly relevant questions have been asked about SEFUND, the answers to which are listed below. Together, they provide further insight into how the fund will operate and how it is distinct from other forms of business finance available in the SE LEP area.

- **Why do we need an investment fund?**

SEFUND is a very specific fund to support our economic strategy by providing loans to private sector sponsors for strategically important development schemes where bank finance is not available. Schemes will be viable but have a funding gap which SEFUND investment can fill, thereby making a project happen (which would otherwise not) or accelerating its delivery.

- **What about the £50m Growing Places Fund (GPF)?**

The Growing Places Fund will become SEFUND. In March, the Board agreed that all monies in the Growing Places Fund should be treated as the initial contribution to SEFUND. SEFUND is intended to make GPF investment work harder by investing and re-investing funds much more quickly across the LEP.

GPF has provided support to some excellent projects but, for a number of reasons, final investments made to agreed schemes are only just being drawn down after 3 years. This is against the backdrop of increased Government pressure on our spending performance which may affect our future funding success.

While GPF is being administered by the Accountable Body, there is no formal fund management in place which is critical in ensuring effective investments and protecting their value now that all risk resides with the fund itself. SEFUND will provide this fund management.

A table showing the current GPF repayment schedule is attached.

- **Isn't SEFUND going to be a £5billion fund?**

The Strategic Economic Plan set out this ambition and received a commitment from Government within our Growth Deal to help deliver the fund.

Initially, SEFUND will take over management of the £50m Growing Places Fund and, in providing funding gap investment, will lever significant private and public funding at project (rather than fund) level.

A successful track record will also enable a future bid to Government for further investment into SEFUND through the Local Growth Fund, which could not be demonstrated at the time of the original Growth Deal proposal. Further funding has now been confirmed by Government for release through the Local Growth Fund in the recent Spending Review and we would be in a position to bid for this.

Corporate investors have also shown interest in aligning investments, but this would be in accordance with their own investment strategies. Were they to join SEFUND at fund level, they may require a change to our investment strategy to reflect their priorities, something we have not been prepared to pursue, preferring instead to align our separate investments around particular projects.

- **How big will the fund be to start with?**

The fund itself will be £50m through management of the Growing Places Fund, however most of this funding is allocated. At present £1m has been successfully recycled with a further £2m expected by the end of March.

The initial task of an investment manager would be to ensure re-investment of this recycled money with maximum leverage, to provide support to local areas as required in delivering their GPF/SEFUND projects and in building the future project pipeline.

There may also be the ability to bid for further Local Growth Fund for SEFUND.

- **Are there really any projects in the SELEP area that would benefit from or take this up?**

Initial interest from discussions and presentations with developer groups indicate that there are. Equally, our 3 inward investment agencies confirm the urgent need for high quality business space, while indications from both Ebbsfleet Garden City and Harlow Enterprise Zone are also very positive. See below.

- **What is the minimum investment proposed and how quickly would funds be recycled?**

The investment strategy currently states the minimum investment would be £1m.

SEFUND is not long-term investment funding, it is providing additional capital gap funding for projects that are otherwise viable. Funding could be returned at the end of a development period (eg when there is a capital outcome eg sale of houses, individual B1/office units or sale of created office or B1 investments) or part way through on pre-lets or sales.

In the Cutacre Evergreen project, we saw that the loan would be repaid after 2 years but the full development of the industrial warehouse space would take many years to complete. It effectively provided bridging finance to enable the infrastructure to be put in to then release the wider development.

- **We, as a local authority, can borrow money more cheaply through the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB), so why would we want to do this?**

Local authorities can borrow more cheaply and we would encourage councils to continue to do this to support economic growth. SEFUND is not competing with this funding. It is complementary but completely different. It is for private sector sponsors willing to pay reasonable interest on short loans to overcome funding gaps during the development period, which will enable their projects to commence.

- **Why do we need a fund with a costly investment manager and complex investment strategy and rules? Surely we could do this more simply and cost effectively in-house?**

Whether it is managed in house or by an Investment Manager, Growing Places capital should have a proper Investment Strategy and investments should be properly managed through the investment process, with at least an equivalent level of due diligence as a private sector investment. This is an essential element of professional management of capital, and is even more relevant where the investment is at a risk point where the market currently doesn't invest.

SEFUND will be professionally managed in line with our agreed SEFUND investment strategy. At present there is no fund management in place for GPF other than the Accountable Body and this will be essential whatever the Board's decision.

In Manchester, their GPF fund is managed in-house but by a senior team of investment professionals. GPF is often invested alongside Evergreen in Manchester, with the Private Sector Investment Manager underwriting and managing the loan. Assessment of previous GPF loans also incurred consultant costs.

- **Won't SEFUND schemes be promoted by advisors for their own benefit?**

SEFUND's investment managers when selected will manage the fund professionally, reporting to the SEFUND Board and investing according to the agreed SEFUND investment strategy.

It is anticipated that in time, payment of the professional investment managers will be funded by the investments themselves removing any incentive to invest in anything other than those projects best placed to make an impact and to enable re-investment as soon as possible.

- **Isn't the fund structure overcomplicated and costly?**

The structure may look more complicated on paper but it mirrors the very successful Evergreen Fund in the North West and is a model that private sector investors recognise and have confidence in. Costing below are only marginally higher than the “block of finance” alternative model which is perceived to be much simpler.

- **We might not have any schemes that qualify in our area and so we’d lose our money and see someone else benefit.**

The revolving nature of SEFUND means that even if projects are not currently ready, further opportunities will be presented much sooner than with GPF. It is also possible to revise the SEFUND investment strategy on an annual basis, so this can be changed if it is agreed there is a particular issue or opportunity to address.

- **Why can’t the market provide this funding in other ways?**

The market can and will provide funding but SEFUND provides a particular opportunity for gap funding for schemes which cannot raise all of their investment through private investors or public sector grant. It works alongside other sources of scheme funding, and typically provides the element that banks used to but are no longer providing. SEFUND will control which schemes benefit from this, prioritising strategically important projects.

Banks may indeed provide finance (as they did in some of the Manchester examples) but they may not provide all of it. It is about spreading the risk. A scheme can demonstrate viability but perhaps only be able to secure a proportion of the funding required from the banks since they do not want to take as much risk as they might have done 10 years ago. SEFUND can fill this gap and is perhaps a stronger model than projects where there is no bank finance at all.

- **It’s all very well for schemes to be progressing in Manchester and Sheffield, etc, but we have far higher land values in the south east and won’t they make it impossible to find viable schemes that can take up the funding, pay interest and pay back the loan on time?**

Supported by the CBRE Feasibility Study presented to the Board in March, our understanding is that there is interest in the South East. This is further supported by the 3 inward investment agencies, while indications from Ebbsfleet Garden City and Harlow Enterprise Zone are also very positive.

It is important to note that Evergreen has funded schemes in the Manchester Spinningfields CBD, and Cutacre Manufacturing Park, both of which have significantly higher land values than much of the SE and were included in the Manchester visit.

- **What added value will these projects, and this way of funding them, bring? Isn’t it just additional cost?**

Schemes supported will support the SE LEP Strategic Economic Plan and must provide new business space, jobs or homes. Without SEFUND, they may simply not happen or be delayed – as we heard very clearly from developers in the North West in relation to the Evergreen fund.

This way of continuous management of the investments will ensure that the loans are in projects for the shortest period of time possible, and will place requirements on developers to use the capital within a reasonable period.

SEFUND is as much about bringing projects forward as it is about enabling things that otherwise might not happen. It is possible for example that the Spinningfields scheme would have happened without Evergreen but the fund brought it forward (perhaps by a couple of years) and then the money was repaid.

- **Who needs a new brand?**

The Feasibility and Design phases of work undertaken by CBRE and Pinsents began to build the SEFUND brand. It is clear from the Evergreen experience that their brand is well known by developers and is seen to be a clear source of funding in its own right, attracting wider interest and giving confidence to private sector partners. We would wish to emulate this.

- **While Evergreen is structured in the same way as proposed, the Manchester GPF Fund is managed internally as you saw on your visit, why don't we just do the same?**

As above, this could be done, but a team of senior investment managers would be required as in Manchester. GPF is separate from Evergreen in Manchester, but only because Evergreen is seeded with European money with a range of stipulations to its use and management.

The Manchester Core Team, which manages their investment funds, is made up of 20 professionals with banking and accountancy backgrounds. It employs the same process as being advocated for SEFUND but carries the cost and risk internally.

- **We're managing our Local Growth Fund well, why not just put GPF money into this?**

Local Growth Fund is grant funding through our Growth Deal and is managed (very well) according to the rules and monitoring arrangements of this funding. The Growing Places Fund is separate from this.

- **How will I know I will get the right share of this money for my area?**

SEFUND, as with GPF, is a pan-LEP fund. There are no allocations, but SE LEP is committed to balanced growth that means all areas should have a chance to bid for this funding. Equally, by investing in a project themselves, local authorities can make schemes all the more attractive for SEFUND investment.

Local areas will also provide a gateway for projects that will ensure that they are in line with local economic priorities before they proceed for evaluation.

- **This is just for cities, how will a rural or coastal area ever benefit?**

SEFUND is for schemes in all SE LEP areas. The SEFUND investment strategy will be the investment guide and this will be reviewed annually, should there be a need to ensure particular areas are not excluded.

- **How does this sit with emerging "Devo deals"?**

Devolution deal proposals are still being developed but our understanding is that SEFUND would be highly complimentary to emerging infrastructure fund proposals. SEFUND is a different product.

At the Greater Essex Business Board in November, both SEFUND and the emerging devo deal appeared to be received positively by private and public sector representatives alike.

4.2 What is SEFUND?

As described to the Board in March, the South East Fund (SEFUND) is a revolving real estate investment fund for the SE LEP area.

Drawing strongly on the experience of the Evergreen fund in the North West, one possibility would be that SEFUND should be established and managed as a limited liability partnership. However, we accept that interim fund management arrangements will need to be put in place first of all, with longer term arrangements procured through the OJEU process, subject to the satisfactory assessment by the Accountable Body of wider investment fund structure and management options.

Beginning with management of the £50m Growing Places Fund, our ambition is to build the investment fund significantly both at fund and project level attracting new investment for projects across the SE LEP area.

4.3 How has it developed?

As a concept, SEFUND was introduced in our Strategic Economic Plan submitted to Government in March 2014. Further work continued to develop the potential of such a fund following our Growth Deal announcement in July 2014 and the Government's commitment to "work with the LEP to help deliver the Fund and bring forward an implementation plan". We have been grateful to the Cabinet Office throughout for their support.

On 26th September, the SE LEP Board agreed to the establishment of a SEFUND Shadow Board to oversee the design and feasibility stages of the SEFUND project. At its first meeting on 13th November at the Cabinet Office, clear terms of reference and the process to recruit consultants to undertake feasibility and design stages were agreed. Drawing on expert procurement, legal and economic development advice, CBRE and Pinsents were appointed to complete the design and delivery stages of the project with the contract awarded in December, 2014.

In completing this work, CBRE enjoyed the very active engagement and support of members of the SEFUND Shadow Board and conducted meetings across the SE LEP area with councils and developers. The work has continued to attract strong encouragement from Government and has already attracted the interest of institutional and other niche investors.

At the Board meeting in March a number of recommendations as detailed above were agreed with further work requested on fund structure and management. Subsequent Board meetings in May and July agreed paused any further agreements until both the General Election took place and SE LEP boundary issues were resolved.

Further to this, Paul Creed of the Homes & Communities Agency in the North West briefed SEFUND Board members in July on the Evergreen model and, in November, a visit was arranged to see schemes in the North West (to which all Board members or their representatives, the Accountable Body and others were invited) and to meet developers, programme managers and others to support the understanding and development of SEFUND.

4.4 Visit to Evergreen Investment projects and Manchester Combined Authority

To inform discussion at the Board meeting, all Strategic Board and Accountability Board members, together with other interested parties, were invited to visit a series of schemes funded by the NW

Evergreen fund and to meet developers and fund managers including the Greater Manchester Combined Authority. A party of 16 visited including 3 Strategic Board members, all of whom were asked to feed back their findings to colleagues.

4.5 Market demand for business space

Feedback from the 3 inward investment agencies in the SE LEP area has been very positive, identifying that SEFUND could fulfil an important role – stimulating new investment from the private sector; creating jobs and most importantly having the ability to be recycled to support other schemes. Clearly any initiative that brings commercial developments forward was to be welcomed.

With SEFUND able to intervene positively in commercial schemes at a time of rising market demand but remaining viability issues, it was noted that:

- There is a much reduced stock of 'fit for purpose' commercial space, especially industrial and serviced offices, which are in demand. (eg In the past 12 months Kent's supply, reflected in Locate in Kent's property database, has reduced from well over 2,000 properties to 1,000.) This is good in that demand and take up has increased, but demand continues to rise and supply is not being replenished.
- Developers are still facing viability issues on commercial development – lending is still 50-60% of value and rents are not rising sufficiently to justify any speculative build. A funding gap emerges and puts a block on supply.
- A lack of good quality commercial space was reported particularly given the demise of speculative developments over recent years, combined with permitted development rights resulting in office to residential conversions with examples in Essex of where office tenants have been forced to relocate as leases are not renewed and in one case a serviced office building had to close.
- Industrial space is also a problem and there are examples of schemes where funding gaps exist where SEFUND could potentially be used as a development catalyst in a similar way to Manchester's 'Evergreen' fund, with the case studies visited not dissimilar to some development schemes in the SE LEP area.
- Empty rates also blocks or adds cost to any attempt to speculatively build and, in the more risky parts, prevents it happening.

SEFUND could help with helping viability of key schemes, accelerating their development by helping to fund some of the infrastructure; providing rental guarantees in some cases to underpin a scheme which is on the edge of viability, but just needs more certainty to secure the funding; or encouraging the developer to start, or in other cases going as joint venture partner, to unlock a key scheme.

It was believed that any such fund that can assist in bringing forward speculative development of new employment space, either on stalled or new development schemes, can only be positive in contributing to economic growth providing of course, any such fund was appropriately managed.

4.6 Fund structure

Although various models will be explored, it should be noted that the Limited Liability Partnership model is recognised by institutional investors and the private sector with a strong and independent brand identity. However, we accept that interim arrangements will need to be put in place first of all, with longer term arrangements procured through the OJEU process, subject to the satisfactory assessment by the Accountable Body of wider investment fund structure and management options.

Were we to establish SEFUND as a separate legal entity, whether as a Limited Liability Partnership or otherwise, the fund would be registered with a specific purpose and as a separate corporate entity, independent from Essex County Council's wider operations. It will allow a transparent decision-making process that will offer confidence to potential borrowers who may expend considerable capital in working up loan agreements and due diligence.

Further details are attached.

4.7 Fund management

Professional investment management will be procured for SEFUND to manage SEFUND investments and processes.

The Fund Manager will develop the SEFUND project pipeline, providing support for federal areas in project development and GPF scheme delivery, assessing all funding options, including project re-financing, recognising the ambition to build both the fund and project level investment considerably.

The Fund Manager will also build the SEFUND brand, providing brokerage support to bring institutional investors together with local projects promoting SEFUND and its project pipeline to institutional corporate and niche investors.

4.8 Decision-making

All investment decisions must be in line with the agreed SEFUND investment strategy which will be reviewed annually by the SEFUND Board and agreed by the SE LEP Strategic Board.

Investment proposals will initially go to local gateways (the appropriate federal areas) to ensure strategic fit with local economic development priorities and to retain control over the type of projects that are being brought forward.

Proposals will then pass to the fund manager who will assess projects against the investment strategy and business plan and make a professional recommendation to support (or not), arranging underwriting and loan pricing as appropriate.

The SEFUND investment strategy is attached.

4.9 Cost of establishment

Initial costings to establish SEFUND as a Limited Liability Partnership including the procurement of a fund manager, governance and establishment of a General Partner and Limited Partnership are estimated at around £39,000. This compares with establishment as a Block of Finance Model which are estimated at £27,000.

Costs for fund management will vary depending on how commissioned but will, in time, be covered by investment agreements

A detailed estimate is attached.

4.10 Growing Places Fund

After 3 years, all of the original GPF investments agreed by the Board are expected to have been drawn down, the last expected to be in place by the end of 2015/16. £1m has already been paid back and a further c£3m is expected before the end of March, 2016.

The GPF payment profile is attached.

5. View of the Accountable Body

There are various options for the creation of SEFUND and professional, legal and financial advice will now be sought on those options and their respective benefits and disbenefits. A further detailed analysis and recommendation will be brought to the Board in due course for approval

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Date: 4th December 2015

SE LEP Housing: Progress and Next Steps

1. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to:

- Further update Board members on progress with SE LEP housing activity and agree next steps including support of joint activity within the SE LEP area with the national Housing Finance Institute (HFi)

2. Recommendations

The SE LEP Strategic Board is asked to:

- Note the careful work and consultation undertaken through two major housing events to develop the LEP's distinct role on housing
- Note progress and in delivering housing commitments in the SE LEP Growth Deal
- Agree to progress joint activity with the Housing & Finance Institute to support local planning authorities in delivering new housing including:
 - A full programme of support for all SE LEP authorities to be worked up for presentation in February at the Strategic Board meeting by Natalie Elphicke
 - A number of HFi "Housing Business Ready" sessions take place in December, January and February with selected councils, with feedback to the SE LEP Board

3. Supporting Papers

- "Building the Future", SE LEP and Localis, July 2014 <http://www.localis.org.uk/article/1722/Building-the-Future:-Accelerating-Housing-Delivery-in-the-South-East.htm>

4. Background

4.1 Defining a clear role supporting local councils

With strong City, Borough, District, Unitary and County councils in the SE LEP area, SE LEP's aim as a partnership in supporting housing activity has always been to add value to the excellent work already underway on infrastructure planning and new housing delivery – never to duplicate or confuse.

In SE LEP's Growth Deal with Government announced in July 2014, a number of housing commitments were made for SE LEP including positive engagement with the "Duty to Cooperate" with local housing and planning authorities to support local plans and the identification of large and priority sites to be brought forward for development - and any blockages associated with them.

Recognising the excellent work already underway, SE LEP has been very careful in refining its role in housing following the publication both of these commitments and of the earlier work of the pan-LEP Housing Group that developed a series of proposals presented in our Strategic Economic Plan.

In particular, this role has been shaped with businesses, councils and housing providers through two very well attended SE LEP "Building the future" housing events, the first with Lord Heseltine in Kent, the second in Essex chaired by George Kieffer with Elphicke/House Report author Natalie Elphicke.

4.2 SE LEP Housing aims

Drawing on discussions at these conferences and further meetings with housing practitioners and developers, to deliver our Growth Deal responsibilities - as circulated to Board members last year - SE LEP's housing aims were defined as follows:

- To bring together all parties (HCA, councils, developers, finance, utilities) involved to drive development forward
Working together with local councils, the HCA and developers on large and priority sites, assembling evidence, identifying obstacles and finding solutions
- To encourage and support councils to bring forward their local plans
Embarking on a series of meetings with planning authorities to support and review the local planning process, promoting development where it is wanted - and protecting from unwanted development where it is not
- To review the performance and involvement of utility companies
Gathering evidence of performance and taking action to ensure utility companies help - not hinder - local growth
- To promote best practice
Supporting events and meetings to share best practice and information sharing to support all to the standard of the best (eg use of HRA debt cap, establishment of local development companies)
- To look across LEP boundaries
Looking at the plans and proposals of neighbouring LEPs and their impact in preparing for accelerated growth.

4.3 Further progress

Since these aims were agreed, through the leadership of Board member for housing Graham Brown, SE LEP has continued to make progress against them including:

- Support of individual local authorities to have their debt cap lifted
- Successful Coastal Housing Renewal LGF bid
- Major LEP Housing Summit sponsored by Bouygues UK with 7 LEPs and speakers including Michael Cassidy (Ebbsfleet Development Corporation) and Natalie Elphicke

- Work to encourage the growth of developer groups across the SE LEP area
- Support of the Housing Finance Institute (as agreed by SE LEP Board, July 2015)
- Development of further activity to raise issue of utility companies and delayed development
- Liaison with the Homes & Communities Agency (which remains keen to support joint activity)
- Series of “Duty to Co-operate” workshops with local planning authorities, each meeting chaired by SE LEP Interim Chairman or Vice Chair

However, in delivering our Growth Deal commitments, we must continue to be mindful of the very clear role of local councils and the emerging infrastructure planning being undertaken at county and unitary level and through the emerging devolution deals for Greater Essex and the 3 Southern Counties.

A major opportunity is now presented which respect to these roles and would put SE LEP at the forefront of an exciting national housing support programme owned by businesses and councils through the Local Government Association.

4.4 The Housing & Finance Institute

Recognising the need for SE LEP to engage directly with local planning authorities to implement our Growth Deal commitments, we have a unique opportunity to work with the national Housing Finance Institute (HFi) to support housing and planning authorities in accelerating housing delivery by partnering with the HFi.

In the 2015 Budget, the Chancellor stated: *“The Government will work with Keith House and Natalie Elphicke to implement a Housing Finance Institute, as recommended by their review, of the role of local authorities in housing supply, in conjunction with the Local Government Association (LGA) and businesses”*.

The HFi has now been established as an independent, not-for-profit organisation created to work with local government and housing businesses to tackle the lack of housing supply in the UK. It is based at the LGA and has the strong support of Housing Minister Brandon Lewis with its purpose to increase housing supply across all tenures, to create opportunities for councils, finance & businesses to work together to build more homes and to promote the better delivery and financing of housing.

The work of the HFi implements a key recommendation of the independent review into the role of local authorities in housing supply conducted by Keith House and Natalie Elphicke in 2014 to which a number of councils in the SE LEP area contributed.

Over the course of the year-long review, more than 400 participants from many different parts of the housing and finance industries, from local and national government were involved, with findings including that new housing projects were taking between 3 and 5 years to deliver new homes and secure long-term finance; that businesses found that they had between 300 and 400 meetings with councils, in order to secure just a single transaction; and that new businesses, new ways of financing, new tenures, were sometimes struggling to get access to the tools, resources, and people they needed to deliver additional homes.

Addressing these issues, through a range of “Housing Business Ready” programmes and benefits, the HFi aims help local councils to better articulate their housing strategy, assess the opportunities and delivery methods available to them and optimise the speed, value and fit of housing outcomes.

The first councils have already completed their housing business ready programmes and an accelerated delivery of HFi programmes is now planned to support additional councils to:

- Review housing market activity and capacity;
- Assess housing needs, growth and wellbeing plans;
- Consider asset and financial strengths and opportunities;
- Examine local resident, political and business engagement;
- Explore different partnership structures;
- Plan an effective housing delivery strategy.

From discussions with SE LEP following the joint–LEP Housing Summit in July, our support of the launch of the HFi and the earlier housing event in Essex helping to define the LEP’s role, the HFi are proposing a bespoke programme with SE LEP councils which offers a range of benefits and accelerates the national roll-out of the housing business ready programme which all councils are encouraged to undertake.

The bespoke programme would include sponsorship to provide a HBR Ready programme for every SE LEP council through a planned and structured programme the outcomes from which would enable councils to:

- Further consider the performance in housebuilding and planning decisions in their local council area to other council areas, regional and national averages and capitalise on areas of opportunity;
- Track the reliance on social sector housebuilding and stimulate other sectors where needed;
- See an instant and clear picture of the historic volatility of housing starts and completions in an area and therefore better manage a smoother delivery going forward;
- Assess historic market absorption during periods of accelerated housebuilding and put in place absorption boosting measures going forward where needed;
- Have a better knowledge of housebuilding performance by area and plan strategy when seeking out business partners making them more likely to form a greater number of successful partnerships;
- Reduce the time it takes to form partnerships and complete transactions by entering the process with a clearer strategy and better local market awareness;
- Be equipped with appropriate support in skills and understanding to know how drive successful partnerships and outcomes for their areas;
- Increase housing output in the SE area.

Approaches have already been received by local housing and planning authorities who would be very interested in pursuing this opportunity.

In agreeing to progress joint activity with the Housing & Finance Institute therefore, to support local planning authorities in delivering new housing and building on the SE LEP Board’s earlier agreement to support the work of the HFi, it is recommended that:

- A full programme supporting all SE LEP local authorities is worked up for presentation in March by Natalie Elphicke
- A number of Housing Business Ready sessions (cost dependent on number of Councils, c£20k) to take place in January, February and March, with selected councils enabling full feedback from these sessions at the SE LEP Board

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Date: 4th December 2015

Lower Thames Crossing

1. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to:

- Agree SE LEP activity to promote the greatest response to the forthcoming consultation on the preferred route for a new Lower Thames Crossing.

2. Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- Instruct the SE LEP Secretariat to commission a bespoke website providing information, business news and case studies, driving interest and responses to the official consultation.

3. Supporting Papers

None

4. Background

A new Lower Thames Crossing would be the largest strategic infrastructure project in the SE LEP area and one of the largest and most important in the country, relieving congestion, boosting local business and building the national economy. In its potential impact across the SE LEP area and beyond, the LTC project is the very essence of what SE LEP was formed to enable.

The consultation on a preferred route for a new Lower Thames Crossing is expected at the turn of this year and it is vital that we drive as many responses as possible to the official website, and for submission by other means.

Previous surveys by SE LEP indicate overwhelming support from the business community for a new crossing, primarily Option C. Recent business input from the LTC Stakeholder Group that met with Transport Minister Andrew Jones last month further confirmed this position, while emphasising the importance of a new strategic route to the national economy as well as to the SE LEP area. However, it is noted that there are some differing views across local councils and local MPs.

In addition, the Kent & Medway Economic Partnership that met in November called upon SE LEP to support further economic assessment work around the proposed routes and their business impact. This request

has been explored further but it has become clear that all economic assessment work that will feed into the preferred route selection has been completed – further studies on economic impact are likely at this stage to have limited effect. However, there is undoubtedly a clear need to update previous research undertaken by partners across the LEP which we understand is now underway by Kent County Council and others.

Informed by LTC Stakeholder meetings and further discussion with the LTC project Team, the proposed role of SE LEP is proposed to be:

- Maximising interest and driving responses to the official consultation to ensure a clear decision can be taken by Ministers; and
- Demonstrating the wider economic impact of a new crossing, primarily through engagement with LEPs across the country.

The proposed means to deliver this role is the development of a dedicated website, linked to the SE LEP website but separate from it, outlining the business/economic facts as currently understood, arguing the need and outlining the route options and cases for and against. It would profile real life examples of companies/individuals, highlight the partners behind the campaign and their positions.

Every response to the consultation will be considered equal so it is vital that we generate a strong response to make the case from business for a new crossing in the interests of both the SE LEP economy and the national economy.

Further stakeholder work to inform the outcome may also be undertaken with MPs, councils and businesses as well as the public, supported by wider communications and social media activity.

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Date: 4th December 2015

For Information: SE LEP EU Structural Investment Fund (ESIF) Update

1. Purpose:

The purpose of this paper is to update board members on:

- The progress of the three EU Funding programmes – European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) in the SELEP area, including Community Led Local Development (CLLD)
- The Outcome of the ESIF Sub-Committee meeting on the 17 November 2015, Chaired by George Kieffer
- The ESIF strategy refresh

2. Recommendations:

The Board is asked to NOTE:

- a) The progress being made with regard to the three funding programmes
- b) The outcome of the SELEP ESIF Committee meeting
- c) The approval by the ESIF Committee of the SE LEP ESIF refresh and the revised submission date of 15 January 2016

3. Introduction

Despite delays linked to the sign-off of national programmes, some very good local progress has been made regarding the delivery of the SE LEP ESIF strategy since the last Board meeting, the details relating to each programme are outlined below.

4. ERDF, ESF and EAFRD

4.1 ERDF

Nine projects submitted under the 1st Call for applications were asked to go to full submission:

- Four projects have finally reached the full application stage and should be circulated by written procedure to the ESIF Sub-Committee in December. Subject to unforeseen issues and the strategic fit being endorsed, these projects should reach contracting stage in January 2016. These projects are: Keep+, Inward Investment Kent, LoCase and the ERDF Facilitator post. The total value of these projects is approximately £14 million.

- Three projects led by applicants from outside the SE LEP area, but which require funding from our SE LEP indicative allocation and have been endorsed by the ESIF sub-committee, are also close to the contracting stage. These are: Score, the Essex Growth Programme (NWES) and Better off in Business. The total ERDF value of these projects is approximately £2 million.
- Two other projects that were presented to the ESIF Sub-Committee and successful at the outline application stage but face delays at full application stage and will be reported on at the next committee meeting. These are PITCH and Innovate to Succeed.

Project applications worth nearly £20 million were submitted under the 2nd Call for applications. The majority of these were applications for BIS national business support programmes which are now faced with uncertainty post the Comprehensive Spending Review. SEBB, the application for funding to support the SELEP Growth Hubs, was successful and is now progressing to the full application stage. The ERDF value of this project is £5,997,784.

The Call for applications for Community Led Local Development (CLLD) has now closed with applications submitted from Dover, Ramsgate, Folkestone, Hastings and Thurrock. The applications have been made to DCLG and DWP for joint funding of ERDF and ESF and, if successful, will be invited to full application stage to develop strategies for locally focussed business support and skills training and will receive a grant to support the development.

4.2 ESF

The call for applications for Social Inclusion projects matched by the Big Lottery Fund and worth £16 million has closed with some 40 applications expected.

The applications will be appraised by the Big Lottery and sent to the ESIF sub-committee by written procedure for a view on strategic fit with our ESIF Strategy.

The DWP Job Centre contract worth £10 million to support people into work is now expected to go out to tender in December.

The Skills Funding Agency Opt-in contract worth £39 million has been affected by the Comprehensive spending review which has caused delay. It is now agreed that the 5 contracts to be tendered will now have to be completed within 2 years.

The Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) project led by Thurrock council is now progressing to full application and has a grant value of £1.3 million.

4.4 EAFRD

The ESIF Sub-Committee meeting in July endorsed 10 projects and these are still working towards full applications stage when they will be sent to the ESIF Sub-Committee for endorsement regarding strategic fit in line with our ESIF Strategy.

However the programme has been effectively suspended by DEFRA in the light of the Comprehensive Spending Review which has potential impact on the match funding for the programme. For this reason the

2nd Call for applications that was expected in November has been delayed until March 2016 with Defra requiring time until February 2016 to clarify the extent of the impact on EAFRD.

It is proposed that representations should be made locally and through the National Programme Board to bring this call for applications forward and to enable businesses in rural areas to benefit as soon as possible.

5. ESIF Strategy refresh

Government requires LEPs to update and finalise their ESIF strategies in line with the final Operational Programmes agreed with the European Commission, mainly in respect of ERDF and ESF. Our “refreshed” SE LEP ESIF strategy was agreed by the ESIF Committee in November.

The update exercise was expected to be “focused and proportionate and concentrate just on those aspects which were necessary for the purpose of making ESIF strategies consistent with OPs”. (Guidance note, July 2015).

The Output targets and revised notional financial allocations also had to be taken into account.

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Date: 2 December 2015



For information: Annual Conversation

1. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to:

- To note the “Annual Conversation” progress review with Government

2. Recommendation

- To note the report

3. Supporting Paper

- SE LEP Annual Conversation agenda

4. Background

Officials from the Department for Business Innovation & Skills are leading “Annual Conversations” with all Local Enterprise Partnerships to review progress on Growth Deal delivery over the previous year and to discuss the LEP’s ambitions for the following year.

The Annual Conversation is a two-way conversation enabling a shared understanding of how each LEP is progressing with delivery on key local growth programmes and areas where Government can do more to support delivery.

Officials will wish to make sure the LEP is prepared for Growth Deal delivery the following year and to discuss next year’s allocation and spend profile, delivery milestones and expected programme outputs.

Officials from the Department for Business Innovation & Skills will chair the meeting.

Author: Adam Bryan
Position: Interim Director
Contact details: adam.bryan@kent.gov.uk
Date: 4th December 2015

South East Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Deal Annual Conversation

14.00-16.00 - 14th December 2015

Attendees

George Kieffer – Interim Chair SELEP
Graham Peters – Vice Chair SE LEP
Geoff Miles – Vice Chair SE LEP
David Godfrey SE LEP
Adam Bryan - Interim Director, SE LEP
Suzanne Bennett – Essex County Council

Louise Morgan Cities and Local Growth
Iain McNab – Cities and Local Growth
Cath Goodall – Cities and Local Growth
Wayne Peet - Cities and Local Growth
Graham Pendlebury – Department for Transport
Lee Sambrook – Department for Transport

Agenda

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 14.00 – 14.05 | Welcome and introductions (LM) |
| 14.05 - 14.20 | 2015/16 Growth Deal and LEP Highlights (DG) |
| 14.20 – 14.35 | Future Priorities for SE LEP (GK, GM, GP, AB) |
| 14.35 - 15.50 | Performance Discussion (All) |

To cover the following issues:

- Governance – Chair/Director Recruitment 5 mins.
- Growth Deal Programme Delivery 30 min
 - Capital Programme
 - Transport
 - Skills, including capital
 - Delivering SEFUND
 - Growth Hub
 - Housing
- Accountable Decision Making and Stakeholder Management 10 mins
 - Relationship between LEP, Accountable Body, and Federated Areas
- Delivery Systems 10 mins
 - Delivery Oversight Programme and Financial Management
- Other Growth Deal Programmes 10 mins
 - Enterprise Zones, Coastal, Rural
- Devolution Opportunities 10 mins
 - Devo including Southend City Deal.

15.50-16.00 Impact of Spending Review/Next Steps (LM, IM)

16.00 Meeting Closes



Marketing the South East Business Hub (Growth Hub)

1. Purpose:

Following questions at the Accountability Board in November, the purpose of this paper is to bring board members up to speed on the progress being made by the Growth Hub – specifically in relation to the marketing activity which is being undertaken in each of the local areas.

2. Recommendations:

The Board is asked:

- To note the report

3. Supporting Detail:

SELEP Growth Hub: Current Marketing Progress provides all the detail relating to the marketing approach so far.

4. Background:

The Q2 report to BIS, which summarises much of the approach undertaken so far, was supplied to the [last meeting of the Accountability Board](#) (p51 of pack).

Author: Adam Bryan
Position: Interim Director
Contact details: adam.bryan@essex.gov.uk
Date: 4th December 2015

SELEP Growth Hub: Current Marketing Progress

Summary

This report succinctly outlines completed, ongoing and planned marketing activities for Business Essex, Southend and Thurrock (BEST), Business East Sussex (BES) and Kent & Medway Growth Hub with the aim to explain how the local Growth Hubs are marketing their offer to business.

For BEST, BES and the Kent & Medway Growth Hub, any completed or planned marketing activities have been presented in tables summarising how the Growth Hubs will be marketed to business. A general overview on each of the Growth Hub's marketing activity has also been supplied.

Overarching SELEP Growth Hub Overview



A comprehensive Marketing and Communications plan has been pulled together for the SELEP Growth Hub, which details how we plan to engage with all stakeholders linked to its delivery, including businesses using the service, local partners and business support providers.

As aforementioned, in comparison to the Local Hubs, the SELEP-wide Marketing and Communications plan places a greater emphasis on how we tailor the way we communicate with a variety of key stakeholders not just limited to businesses, including BIS, National Providers, Local Support Providers and Local Partners.

Below is a summary of key elements and activities included in the Marketing and Communications Plan:

Activity	Status	Details
Ministerial Launch Event:	Ongoing	<p>A Ministerial launch event for the SELEP Growth Hub is currently in the planning, and an invitation list has been drawn up which includes members from private sector organisations and local partners. This is being created in communication with the local Growth Hubs in order to achieve maximum impact and to raise awareness of the Growth Hub at a national level. A draft budget has been drawn up for the event.</p> <p>Proposed Location: Westminster</p> <p>Proposed Agenda: BIS presentation, National Programme Provider Presentation, local growth hubs present current progress.</p> <p>When: Early 2016</p>
Evaluation of Current Market Environment	Completed	Market Research has been undertaken on the various Growth Hubs across England to get a feel for how other LEPs of varying sizes deliver their services to businesses within their locality.
Market Research: Business Simplification Review	Completed	Results from the Business Support Simplification Review carried out by EBS Consulting have been extensively reviewed by Thurrock Council and business support provision across East Sussex, Essex, Southend and Thurrock will be revised as a result of the review's recommendations.
Target Audience Mapping & Evaluation of Communications Channels	Completed	We have evaluated our target audience, deciding how we plan to tailor messages accordingly and the channels which we will use to make contact.



General Overview :

The service is currently:

- Providing information on the range of national and local business support services, including those on the Gov.uk website and is actively promoting all forms of business support available in the area. Factsheets are available online on areas such as financing, growing and starting a business.
- Directing businesses to appropriate sources of support and directly arranging referral and follow-up discussions where appropriate through “Fred”, the Business Support Navigator for East Sussex.

To date the largest driver of clients to BES has been the Networking events and Lets Do Business Exhibitions. More work is required on the website, and building the social media channels will be a further priority as we move into 2016.

Activity	Status	Details
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Launch Events / Networking Events:

Soft Launch Event	Completed	<p>Date: July 2nd</p> <p>Details: There was a soft launch of the Growth Hub at the Lets Do Business Exhibition in Eastbourne. Graham Peters, LEP Deputy Chair and Cllr Rupert Simmonds spoke at the launch, with the service being well received by those present. BES also had a stand at the exhibition which was attended by 700 business people.</p>
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Launch Event: Best4Biz	Completed	<p>Date: 16th October</p> <p>Details: The Growth Hub has had a second launch at the annual East Sussex Business Conference (Best4Biz) where over 200 businesses will attend workshops and networking events throughout the day.</p> <p>A whole range of business support agencies, colleges, media and financiers attended the event, consolidating the service and putting BES firmly on the business support map.</p>
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Promotional Events	Completed	<p>The BES team have undertaken a range of networking activities/ awareness raising events – the following events all included a dedicated speaking opportunity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business East Sussex Steering Group (including representatives from the FSB, Chambers of Commerce, Business Growth Service, FE and local authorities). ▪ Best 4 Biz Conference ▪ Sussex Chamber Networking Breakfast ▪ East Sussex Economic Advisory Board ▪ FSB Breakfasts in Wealden and Eastbourne ▪ Hastings Area Chamber of Commerce
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General Networking	Completed	<p>General networking sessions have been attended in the following locations: Eastbourne, Hastings, Lewes, Blackboys (Wealden), Ashburnham (Rother), Polegate (Wealden), Bexhill (Rother), Newhaven (Lewes)</p>
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Digital Channels/Platforms:

Social Media	Ongoing	<p>LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter profiles are all now actively being used to raise awareness of the Growth Hub to the business community and support events that are available. 6500 businesses have been reached so far via Facebook advertising. It is too early to assess performance, however further content will be added to the site over coming months to increase traffic and improve SEO.</p> <p>Facebook ‘Likes’: 291, Twitter Followers: 97</p>
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Website Statistics September 18th – 29th October	Ongoing	<p>Page Views: 1,803</p> <p>Average Session on the website for a user: 4 minutes 32 seconds</p> <p>Total Number of Sessions: 460</p> <p>Total Number of Users: 259</p>
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Print Media

Press Releases	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articles promoting the Growth Hub have been published in the Eastbourne Herald and Hastings, Bexhill, Battle and Rye Observers. BES received coverage in the FSB's East Sussex magazine.
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BEST Growth Hub	 
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General Overview:

The BEST Growth hub combines the use of the website, telephone line (both national and local) and face-to-face advisors through the business navigation team. The Business Navigation team carry out diagnostics with businesses and then act as a signposting service to all business support services that are applicable.

Below is some continual activity that the BEST Growth Hub is currently undertaking:


- Host drop-in sessions every Wednesday at The Hive, providing businesses with the chance to speak a BEST team member over a coffee or tea.
- Tweet at least twice a day (at peak times) to drive traffic to the site and to encourage enquiries.
- Engage Local Authorities with marketing and events including drop in business surgeries in each area.
- Monthly newsletter approximately 20th of each month.
- Guest bloggers on website, anticipated to start December 2015.
- Tweeting re: events we attend.
- Facebook posts complimenting twitter.
- SEO campaign being carried out from September 2015 – February 2016 to improve the listing of the website on google as well as a PPC campaign and Facebook events advertising.
- Attending Colchester Network Group Meetings every other Friday.

Below is a detailed look at BEST's marketing activity:

Month	Planned Activity	Status	Details
Launch Events/Networking Events/ Meeting:			
October	BEST Growth Hub Launch Event	Completed	<p>Date: 21/10/2015</p> <p>Details: Speed networking with more than 50 participants - both national and local business support providers and EDOs. This was then followed by presentations from SELEP and BEST and more networking with intermediaries such as banks, business organisations and councillors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Press release one week before the launch event and announce the BEST Growth Hub Twitter Competition. Launch of the twitter competition – asking businesses to tweet @BESTGrowthHub with their #bestbiztip Launch of BEST Growth Hub newsletter, just after the launch event with announcement of Guest Blogging on the website 21/10 - Launch of the Growth Hub with twitter: Hourly tweets on day of launch Media release to support with traffic through website / twitter competition Support of LA's for twitter competition Press release post launch with pictures from the launch event
October	Meetings	Completed	14/10: EDO network meeting, presentation by BEST
October	Exhibitions	Completed	15/10: Rochford Business Summit, stall for BEST 15/10: Colbea's business Event
November	Exhibitions	Completed	16/11: Harlow GEP week - stand at the Harvey centre 18/11: Chelmsford City Showcase, stand at Hylands House 18/11: Open Access, stand at Victoria Centre, Southend

			19/11: Southend Business Briefing Partnership, stand at the Park Inn Palace
November	Networking Meetings	Completed	11/11: Brentwood Renaissance Meeting – presentation by BEST 12/11: Castle Point Business Forum – presentation by BEST 19/11: Thurrock Network Group, presentation by BEST at South Essex college
November	Networking Events	Planned	24/11: Networking on Sea (Essex Chambers) , presentation by BEST 24/11: Hockley Chambers networking, presentation by BEST
December	Networking Events	Planned	Attending 13 Networking Meetings throughout December.
December	Business Support Referral Network	Planned	16/12: Business Support Referral network – (Christmas Networking Event to support referrals)
January	Networking Events	Planned	Attending 8 Networking Events throughout January.
February	Networking Events	Planned	Attending 8 Networking Events throughout February.
February	Business Support Referral Networking Lunch	Planned	Details to be confirmed.
March	Networking Events	Planned	Attending 7 Networking Events throughout March.
March	Close Event	Planned	Details to be released.
Business “Drop-in” Surgeries			
October	Drop-in Surgery	Completed	27/10 AM: Drop-in surgery in Uttlesford – Faircroft House
October	Drop-in Surgery	Completed	27/10 PM: Drop-in surgery in Harlow – Latton Bush Centre
January	Pop-up Cafes	Planned	Launch of our pop-up cafes that will incorporate the private sector as seen in Growth hubs in other LEPS.
January	Mentor Scheme	Planned	Look into starting a business mentor scheme.
February	Start-up Convention	Planned	Details to be confirmed.
Print Media			
October	Featured in the Following newsletters/magazines	Completed	Featured in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chelmsford City life magazine ▪ Chelmsford newsletter ▪ Epping newsletter ▪ Southend Business Partnership newsletter ▪ Castle Point Business Forum Newsletter ▪ Email mail out from the Essex chambers of Commerce
October	Launch Event Press Release	Completed	Press release post launch with pictures from the launch event.
November	Leaflets	Completed	More BEST branded leaflets printed for distribution to local authorities and to be used at events.
November	Paid Marketing Campaign	In Process	Paid marketing campaign, through channels such as radio or print – Starting 22/11/2015 with Heart Essex.
Digital Channels/Platforms			
September – February 2016	Search Engine Optimisation / PPC	Ongoing	SEO campaign being carried out from September 2015 – February 2016 to improve the listing of the website on google as well as a PPC campaign. Key Statistics for October: Number one location based on number of visits: Chelmsford (94 clicks) Number one PPC keywords by visits: business + courses Number two PPC keywords by visits: business + grants Most clicked page from Adwords Campaign: Business Advice (634 clicks) Most effective source of traffic: Organic Searches (657 sessions)
September – March 2016	Newsletter	Ongoing	E-newsletter distributed on the 20 th of each month: Announcement of BEST workshops in newsletter.
September	Twitter	Ongoing	Followers: 429

– March 2016			Profile Visits: 3266 Mentions: 136 Tweets: 316 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tweet at least twice a day (at peak times) ▪ Launch of the twitter competition – asking businesses to tweet @BESTGrowthHub with their #bestbiztip (October) ▪ Small Business Saturday – hold competition via twitter (December) ▪ Proposed start for workshops to be run. Big twitter / online push from us and partners.
September – March 2016	Facebook	Ongoing	Likes: 115 Facebook Performance (For October): Total Number clicks to site from Facebook advertising: 515 Total Cost of Facebook Advertising: £600.71 Most successful Facebook ad campaign: Business Plan (159 clicks)
October	Website Data	Ongoing	Google analytics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 01/09 – 01/10 = 1,131 users ▪ 01/10 – 01/11 = 2176 users ▪ Bounce rate decreased by 16% during this time Overall to date: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Users: 4,277 ▪ Page Views: 17,495
December	Blog	Planned	Guest bloggers on website, anticipated to start December 2015
Radio			
November	News Item	Ongoing	22/11: News item on Heart Essex radio running for 4 days.

Kent & Medway Growth Hub  KENT & MEDWAY Growth Hub Your gateway to publicly funded business support		
General Overview : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Growth Hub contract awarded to Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce. ▪ Contract negotiations concluded on 9/10/2015. <p>The Kent and Medway Growth Hub will provide a core central signposting service, There will be 3 points of contact for the users:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business Support Helpline: This is a low cost telephone number that is supported by more than forty trained diagnostic Agents who are familiar with the current range of National Services. ▪ Web chat is available 09.00 to 18.00, Monday to Friday ▪ Navigator Field Service: 10 Qualified Navigators engaged part time under a contract for services and allocated to a local District <p>The Chamber have 8,000 followers, 15,000 email recipients, 5,000 LinkedIn contacts and attendees at over 150 networking events plus regular B2B events across the County.</p> <p>The Chamber will be working with partners to carry out the following:</p>		
Planned Activity	Status	Details
Digital Channels/Platforms		
Direct Marketing	Planned	Email campaigns targeting just over 21,000 businesses in Kent & Medway using the Growth Hub email domain. The first campaign will start on the 3 rd January and will run in conjunction with a Radio advert on Heart radio that will run for 3 months.

Social Media	Planned	The Twitter account has been opened and we are setting up a paid for campaign to build followers and raise awareness. We will also establish a LinkedIn Business Page although this strand will not be utilised until later.
Email Alerts Mailing List	Planned	Launch Date: 15 th December Details: The website will have a sign-up option
Launch Events/Networking Events		
Preview Launch Event	Planned	Date: 8 th December Details: We are delivering a preview launch at the Thames Gateway Partnership breakfast meeting on the 8 th Dec as a dry run for the main event launch on the 15 th . We anticipate 60-70 business from the North Kent area to attend.
Launch Event	Planned	Date: 15 th December Details: We have invited all Local Authority leaders, key business representatives' organisations, banks, the press and general businesses from a number of mailing lists. We have also invited the core business support providers to take up a stand at the venue to explain their offer. The launch will consist of 3 presentations. A talk by KC on loan schemes, a talk by the Better Business for All campaign and then the formal launch of the GH website with a walk through talk.
Extra Events	Planned	The size of the County means we will be running repeat events at either end of the County to ensure penetration
Networking Events	Planned	Navigators will attend a least 1 networking event a week in their allocated area and provide face to face diagnostic and signposting.
Partner Events	Planned	In the new year we have agreed already to attend or host a number of Business Support events to present a combined approach to business and ensure closer working
Print / Press:		
Press for Launch Event	Planned	We have invited the Press to cover the launch event and will be issuing press releases on the day to all print media
Print	Planned	We have submitted an article into the Thinking Business magazine which will be publish early December.
Print	Planned	We have set aside a page within the Kent Messenger to outline the Growth Hub.
Radio:		
Heart Radio	Planned	Date: Start on the 3 rd January Details: Running for 3 months
Radio Kent	Planned	We are trying to agree dates with Radio Kent and the Business Bunker for radio.