



Attendees

BH	Ben Hook	East Sussex CC	KF	Cllr Kim Forward	Hastings BC
BS	Cllr Bob Standley	Wealden DC	KG	Cllr Keith Glazier	East Sussex CC
CE	Christina Ewbank	ACES	ME	Martin Ellis	Recruitment SE
CM	Cllr Carl Maynard	Rother DC	NHa	Nigel Hannam	Wealden DC
CS	Clive Soper	FSB	PJ	Philip Johnson	Locate East Sussex
DG	Derek Godfrey	Ellis Builders	PS	Penny Shimmin	Sussex CDA
DT	Cllr David Tutt	Eastbourne BC	RD	Richard Dawson	East Sussex CC
GB	Graham Burgess	Rother DC	RM	Rhiannon Mort	SELEP
GP	Graham Peters (CHAIR)	ES Rural Partnership	RS	Cllr Rupert Simmons	East Sussex CC
JC	Jack Chipudhla	East Sussex CC	SD	Stewart Drew	De La Warr Pavilion
JH	James Harris	East Sussex CC	SH	Simon Hubbard	Hastings BC

Apologies

AB	Adam Bryan	SELEP	NHu	Nazeya Hussain	Lewes DC / Eastbourne BC
AS	Cllr Andy Smith	Lewes DC	PC	Cllr Peter Chowney	Hastings BC
CC	Clive Cook	Sussex Coast College	SB	Sue Baxter	University of Brighton
DE	Dave Evans	East Sussex CC	TL	Tony Leonard	Rother DC
MS	Martin Searle	FSB			

1. Welcome & introductions

- 1.1. **GP** welcomed the attendees and delivered the apologies; round table introductions were made.
- 1.2. **GP** asked for any additional interests not already held on record, and for any specific conflicts of interest with today's agenda items; none were declared.

2. Review of previous minutes (27 Feb 2017)

- 2.1. **GP** ran through the actions of the previous minutes, noting that all had been completed. The previous TES minutes were approved by the group as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Elections update

- 3.1. **KG** provided a short update on last month's local elections; the County Council is now made up of 30 Conservative members, 11 Liberal Democrat, 4 Labour and 5 Independent. The leaders of the various groups remain unchanged, and **KG** has been re-elected as Leader of the County Council.

4. Wealden Local Plan

- 4.1. **NHa** presented an update on the Wealden Local Plan, providing background information on the plan's development and highlighting the key issue of air quality and nitrogen deposition around the Ashdown Forest. Nitrogen monitoring has highlighted damage to the Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), particularly in areas close to roads. Wealden DC's previous preferred option for testing – 20,000 homes – would deposit further nitrogen *above acceptable levels* alongside the forest roads. Having already considered and maximised mitigation, the proposed approach to address this is to look at 'compensatory' measures, providing alternative habitat as compensation (e.g. developing new heathlands where growth is affecting existing areas); the commitment levels have also been remodelled to around 11,000 houses, with a revised timescale to 2028. The approach is now being discussed with the Minister, Natural England, Ashdown Forest Conservators and neighbouring authorities. Next steps will involve the completion and publication of studies / evidence base, followed by production of a revised draft of the Wealden Local Plan.
- 4.2. One of the main consequences of the above is that some developments are unable to be progressed until compensatory measures are established, and any new planning applications that produce additional journeys cannot be agreed at this point. Applications with existing outline planning permission already in place will not be affected, but anyone who lets that permission expire could put their development at risk.
- 4.3. **CE** referred to the A27, noting that this upgraded route will actually take traffic away from the forest. **BS** noted that this has been discussed with the Minister and will be taken on board.

- 4.4. **RS** queried whether commercial and residential developments were in close proximity, and whether additional commercial development would actually reduce commuting journeys by enabling local employment. **NHa** suggested that there would need to be strong evidence from the developer that the number of journeys would be reduced.

5. Business support

- 5.1. **PJ** provided details of the new South East Invest (SEI) programme; the total programme budget is now £420k per year, enabling Locate East Sussex to continue with, and to expand, the service for attracting inward investment – encouraging the growth of East Sussex companies, encouraging companies to move into East Sussex, and promoting East Sussex as space for growing business.
- 5.2. 2016/7 saw 9 ‘inbound’ companies receive assistance; £6m of ESCC and RGF funding was delivered through grants and Loans, generating £25m of match-funding; 200 companies were supported, creating more than 850 jobs.
- 5.3. Moving forward Locate will continue building partnerships, engaging with Districts and Boroughs, private sector companies, developers, and making connections with universities. Locate will also be getting a new marketing resource to help the support team. **PJ** noted that one area that would make marketing much easier would be to have a single point of differentiation within East Sussex that can be shouted about – an East Sussex USP.
- 5.4. **SD** delivered a presentation on the ‘image’ of East Sussex, and provided feedback from the workshop that took place in Feb 2017 (facilitated by two renowned image/PR experts). Some of the main points highlighted included:
- Identifying the audience – business and professional audiences, including SMEs, education, healthcare, public sector, hospitality and tourism;
 - Motivations – affordable homes, availability of jobs, earning potential, cost of living, feeling of community, rural accessibility;
 - The East Sussex offer – access to Gatwick, better-than-average digital connectivity, natural environment, a distinctive heritage, rural/coastal contrasts, favourable climate;
 - Selling East Sussex – clear and consistent messages, ‘touchpoints’ to radiate out a message, better use of social media, greater exposure through TV and film.
- 5.5. **SH** commented that we need to ensure this work doesn't duplicate or overshadow the work already being undertaken locally. **DT** highlighted the campaign to reduce VAT on tourism and requested that this is also included in the work.
- 5.6. **GP** suggested that the next step should involve putting a small ‘project team’ together to ensure the work continues to build, and a plan for moving forward is developed; as well as **SD**, **ME** and **PJ** the group ought to include a representative from County Council, a Borough/District rep and someone from ESCC Comms. **JH** reiterated that not having a place on the group does not mean losing out on having input; the group will focus on establishing the mechanism/process rather than form/content.

[Action: PJ to liaise with colleagues on nominating representatives to the Image Project Team and set up a meeting]

6. Tourism & culture

- 6.1. **SD** delivered a presentation on the *East Sussex Tourism Data Warehouse*, a repository of intelligence designed to provide a county-wide overview of the visitor economy in East Sussex. It pulls together and collates existing research and compares it to national statistics.
- 6.2. The East Sussex in Figures (ESiF) website now has a new section, broken down into Industry Data and Visitor Data. **SD** provided some examples of the current data – £1.42bn total turnover in the visitor economy; 92% of people rate their enjoyment of their visit as high or very high; 90% are likely or very likely to recommend East Sussex; nearly 50% of staying visitors come from within the South East region; 45% of international visitors stay longer than 8 nights; East Sussex has almost 75,000 beds, many of which are caravans in the Rother and Hastings areas; new boutique B&Bs are experiencing very high occupancy rates and represent a definite growth opportunity.

- 6.3. Next steps will involve training sessions with key stakeholders, as well as work to maintain and enhance overall digital visibility and optimise the online presence for East Sussex. The data warehouse is to be updated every 3 years.

7. Developers East Sussex

- 7.1. **DG** introduced an update paper on the DES group, which has now been operating for a full year. There are currently 53 member organisations, including local authorities, housing associations, commercial developers and private housing developers, and the group has welcomed various high-level speakers including HCA, HFI, Southern Water, BT Openreach and Virgin Media. **DG** gave thanks in particular to **RD** and his team for their ongoing support, and to colleagues *Brian Horton* and *Nick Fenton* – Nick is the Chairman of the Kent Developers Forum and is the ‘go-to-guy’ for developers to overcome problems. ESCC is to provide some initial seed-funding to pay for Nick Fenton’s services for a nine-month period, by the end of which it is hoped that DES will become a self-sustaining, subscription based entity.
- 7.2. DES has tried to identify the ‘blockers’ faced by developers, and then tried to facilitate addressing them. There are many barriers, particularly in regards to planning; over 25 years the number of SMEs involved in developing housing/commercial property has reduced by over 80%, and now 70% of all houses across the country are delivered by just 7 providers. Locally this is causing real problems with brownfield and infill sites. DES hopes to encourage local SMEs by supporting them in overcoming their issues.
- 7.3. There are 120 potential problems that developers can face through the planning process, and the new *Planning Protocol* will look to address this. Two other very obvious problems that DES also hopes to tackle are the cost of building houses, which has risen disproportionately to other products, and skills in the building industry.
- 7.4. **BS** commented that problems are not always the fault of planning authorities, as developers often sit on land for years without building out; **DG** agreed that it’s one of the issues DES hopes to tackle through working with local authorities.
- 7.5. **GB** noted that S106 obligations ensure developers use local employees and provide training; **DG** commented that local builders are experiencing issues in retaining staff when larger national developers have a scheme in the area, whilst overseas workers have experienced an effective pay cut over the last year because of Brexit so are opting to work elsewhere.

8. TES business members’ meeting

- 8.1. **GP** provided a very quick review of the business-reps meeting that took place earlier in the day, noting that the main discussion was around a ‘disruptive technology’ presentation by **ME**. It was suggested by the business members that the presentation be delivered again at the next TES Workshop on 17 Jul 2017; all agreed.

[Action: ME to liaise with DE on including the ‘disruptive technology’ presentation on the agenda for the next TES workshop]

9. Assurance Framework

- 9.1. **GP** quickly highlighted the revised TES Terms of Reference, updated to reflect the recent changes to the SELEP Assurance Framework, along with a TES Action Plan detailing all of the changes that affect TES and the specific actions required as a result – both documents had previously been shared so no further discussion was necessary. **The TES Board approved the revised TES Terms of Reference.**

10. SELEP Growth Deal / Local Growth Fund

- 10.1. **BH** ran through some of the highlights of the LGF Dashboard document and provided a brief update on the new LGF schemes starting this year.
- 10.2. **RD** commented on the Strategic Economic Infrastructure paper, noting that £3m (of the £75m from Highways England for smaller-scale improvements to the A27) has now been allocated for the development of a strategic outline business case for the offline dual carriageway option.

- 10.3. **BH** highlighted the two rail consultations currently open (Network Rail's Kent Route Study and DfT's South Eastern Rail Franchise) noting that they both now close on 30 Jun 2017. The business members said they'd like to respond individually and asked for links to the consultations, plus copies of ESCC's responses (when complete) to use as a template.

[Action: BH to circulate to TES business members links to the Kent Route Study and South Eastern Rail Franchise consultations, along with copies of ESCC's responses to be used as templates]

11. SELEP Strategic Board meeting (9 Jun 2017)

- 11.1. **RM** provided a very brief summary of the agenda items for the SELEP Strategic Board meeting which will include options for Declarations of Interest (likely to recommend they're published online), an update on Sub-national Transport Bodies (with a specific update on 'Transport for the South East' from Rupert Club), and an update on the SEP refresh.
- 11.2. Regarding the relaunch of Growing Places Fund (GPF), SELEP is looking to establish an investment panel which will take the discussions and set priorities for the GPF projects. £9.3m is available and up to 50% of the pot can be bid for. It is expected that schemes will be identified by Sep 2017 with decisions on selection to be made in Nov 2017.
- 11.3. The group decided that TES representation at Friday's SELEP Board meeting will be from **GP, SD, CS, KG, SB** plus *Cllr Graham Wells* from Wealden DC.

12. Additional updates & stakeholder reports (for info)

- 12.1. No additional comments.

13. TES round table / AOB

- 13.1. No additional comments.

Summary of actions:

- 5.6 ***PJ** to liaise with colleagues on nominating representatives to the Image Project Team and set up a meeting.*
- 8.1 ***ME** to liaise with **DE** on including the 'disruptive technology' presentation on the agenda for the next TES workshop.*
- 10.3 ***BH** to circulate to TES business members links to the Kent Route Study and South Eastern Rail Franchise consultations, along with copies of ESCC's responses to be used as templates.*