

Meeting Minutes

DRAFT

**opportunity
south essex**

Meeting
Date and Time
Venue

OSE Board
4th March 2020, 14:00
Green Centre, Wat Tyler Country Park, Pitsea, Basildon

Attendees

Colette Bailey	Metal
Lucy-Emma Harris	Pixelwork
Perry Glading	Glading Consultancy, High House Production
Mark Curle	Henderson Curle
Geoff Pearce	Swan Housing
Glyn Jones	Southend Airport
Caroline Southgate	Doris Jones
David O'Connell	DBD Communications
Nicholas Smith	Cantel Ltd
Aideen Sadler	City Fibre
Chris Lines	Leonardo
Murray Foster	Southend Business Partnership
David Barnes	Basildon Business Group
Angela O'Donoghue	South Essex College
Rob Singh	University of Essex
Cllr Norman Smith	Castle Point
Cllr Kevin Robinson	Southend
Cllr Mike Steptoe	Rochford
Cllr Aidan McGurran	Basildon

Apologies

John Rowe	Olympus Key Med
Cllr Tony Ball	Essex
Cllr Rob Gledhill	Thurrock

Officers/Observers/Presenters

Nigel Stewardson	Cities & Local Growth Unit
Ian Butt	Castle Point Borough Council
Shaun Scrutton	Rochford District Council
Andy Lewis	Southend Council
Laurie Edmonds	Brentwood Council
Tomasz Kozlowski	Basildon Council
Claudia McKibbin	Essex County Council
Ian Lewis	Opportunity South Essex
Adam Bryan	South East Local Enterprise Partnership
Helen Dyer	South East Local Enterprise Partnership
Dave Manning	Lower Thames Crossing
Emma Wilcox	Creative Estuary

Meeting Minutes

Agenda Item	Notes	Actions
1	Introductions	
1.1	Chair welcomed the new private sector board members to their first meeting of the OSE Board	
1.2	Member Biographies to be shared with the wider Board	IL to circulate
2	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	Board Members reminded to ensure that they declare any interests they have in the discussion items	
2.2	No Declarations received at this point	
3	Minutes of Last Meeting	
3.1	Agreed	
4	Action Tracker	
4.1	Board noted the update	
5	Directors Report	
5.1	SELEP Coastal prospectus to be circulated to the Board members	IL to circulate
5.2	Board Noted the Report	
6	LGF Capital Monitoring	
6.1	IL summarised the report for the Board, and confirmed how project RAG ratings are used.	
6.2	Basildon Council provided further detail on the Innovation Warehouse and that an update will be provided to the 15 th May Accountability Board, ahead of the Business Case being reviewed on the 3 rd July.	
6.3	NS sought confirmation that the Fairglen project would be commencing in Autumn 2020. IL confirmed that this is the case, based on information from Essex County Council	
6.4	Board Members sought further information on the mitigation and timescales in relation to projects with an amber status	IL to provide further information at next meeting
6.5	Board received the feedback from SELEP from the Independent Technical Evaluators (ITE) review of the business cases submitted in response to the recent call for projects for Growing Places Fund support. Summary to be circulated with these minutes	

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6.6	<p>Leigh Cockle Wharf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was considered that the assessment of the project was fair, based on the stage of development of the project • Board maintained its view that it is important to recognise the importance of the cockling industry to Leigh and South Essex, and its links to the vibrant places aspect of the Productivity Strategy • Noted that the repayment of the loan needs to be further explored • Further technical work is needed to confirm the design • Its important that the area continues to be productive 	
6.7	<p>No Use Empty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The only concern from the evaluation process was that the benefits are low when compared to the investment • Board view was that the benefits are too focussed on the jobs/homes outputs – bringing buildings back into use has a wide range of other qualitative benefits that the process does not recognise • It was also considered that the benefits may be on the conservative side 	
6.8	<p>South Essex Productivity Investment Fund</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational costs are revenue and not capital, and therefore not eligible for GPF funding (which is capital) • Concerns about overall viability given administration costs, interest rates and arrangement fees. However, business case does demonstrate demand for this type of product • Default risk, and ability to repay GPF in full was highlighted, but this is a risk for all GPF loans • We May conclude that GPF may not be the best source of funding for this initiative, but the need/business case for a loan fund is strong and well developed. • OSE and Southend to respond to the comments raised 	
6.9	<p>The Board confirmed that the priority order for the projects should remain:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leigh Cockle Wharf 2. No Use Empty 3. South Essex Productivity Investment Fund 	
6.10	<p>It was also confirmed that the accountable body for all of the projects is Southend Council. The Board thanked Southend Council for their support in developing the business cases for the projects</p>	

Agenda Item	Notes	Actions
6.11	There is an opportunity for OSE Board/project promoters to respond to the points raised by the ITE, and this will form part of the SELEP Investment Panel review.	OSE/Southend Council to co-ordinate response
7	OSE Board	
7.1	<p>The chair facilitated a discussion around the key issues facing Board Members. The key points raised were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need recognition that some sectors are facing real challenges in terms of recruitment – eg care • Small businesses need support for their wider requirements such as accountancy, business planning, leadership development etc • We need to take a longer term perspective on infrastructure • Sustainability is clearly going to be much more prominent in decision making, we don't seem to recognise it at the moment • Having the right skilled workforce underpins everything we wish to do • We need to recognise the role of local businesses in delivering projects, and consider how we ensure a local first approach • Digital connectivity is fine – its what we do with it that's where the real value is • We need to be able to map activity so we know who is pursuing what – and look for where we can add value • We need reliable infrastructure – A127 • Sustainability is something that we might be missing, especially important given recent ruling on Heathrow expansion • We need to understand what we mean by a vibrant place, and recognise that we should consider the human scale especially in relation to large projects • Need to understand our place, our offer and what the gaps are more clearly. Same is true of businesses and understand their needs • Must recognise the convening power we have in the room to develop coherent propositions and market them. We must create groupings that enable us to swiftly respond to opportunities that support our aims • We need to make sure our business support organisations are fit for purpose and relevant – not driven by their funders. They must be able to adapt • Its important that OSE has a web presence • Small businesses have a story to tell and we must recognise this • We must recognise that we need to upskill adults but there is no funding to support this – how can we make this change 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an opportunity to tap into the part of the workforce that is nearing retirement – how do we share their knowledge and experience? 	
7.2	Comments above are to be reviewed alongside the productivity strategy to make sure that we are capturing the key issues.	IL to review
7.3	The views will also be fed into the productivity strategy implementation plan	IL, with ASELA colleagues
7.4	Website for OSE to be progressed	IL to follow up
8	ASELA Update	
8.1	Andy Lewis (Southend Council) presented an update to the Board of progress with ASELA. Presentation to be circulated with these minutes	
8.2	<p>Key point from the presentation is that South Essex will be much stronger if there is deep collaboration between public and private sectors.</p> <p>We want businesses and OSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be part of the development of the solutions – especially in bringing together ideas for the two strategic corridors To play a leading role in the delivery of the productivity strategy To help by identifying skills and capability that we can draw on Work alongside the ASELA Board on strategy and delivery 	
8.2	<p>Comments from the Board in response to the presentation included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need to make sure we have a clear position on links beyond South Essex – Lower Thames Crossing, Stansted airport and the implications of decisions elsewhere such as the future of freight paths for rail across London A strong relationship between OSE and ASELA will be vital going forward There is still a clear push from Government to focus spend in the North ASELA needs to demonstrate its scale and ambition – a path leading to a Combined Authority would provide this A Combined Authority will be able to engage with Government with a clear and distinct single message, and a costed ask. This type of approach has worked well for other areas nationally in securing investment 	

Agenda Item	Notes	Actions
8.3	A deeper conversation and engagement with business across South Essex is needed. A conversation between OSE and ASELA will be scheduled later in the spring	ASELA to confirm
8.4	The Chair thanked Andy Lewis for stepping in for Cllr Rob Gledhill at very short notice.	
9	Consultation Responses	
9.1	<u>Lower Thames Crossing</u>	
9.1.1	David O'Connell expressed an interest in this item.	
9.1.2	<p>Consultation on amendments to the scheme is currently underway, closing on 25th March 2020. Board Members raised the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to the wider network due to the changes in flows need to be incorporated – Fairglen specifically • Projects providing wider mitigation need to be constructed at the same time, not after • We must support the Thurrock position in that they are not benefitting from the project running through their area • LTC need to be open to learning from other major projects such as the Thames Tideway Tunnel • It was clear that OSE's last response was not recognised in the changes to the scheme which are the subject of this consultation • Need to ensure that local businesses benefit from the construction phase, and longer term benefits are felt across the area 	
9.1.3	Draft OSE response to be circulated w/c 9 th March for Board members comments before finalisation and submission.	IL to draft response
9.2	<u>Freeports</u>	
9.2.1	Government is currently consulting on the principles of freeports in the UK. This consultation is not about where they should be, but focusses on how they would work. Closing date is 20 th April.	
9.2.2	Draft OSE response to be prepared and circulated to Board Members for comment and input.	IL to draft response for comment
10	SELEP Update	
10.1	<p>Adam Bryan gave an update on a number of items in addition to the paper in the report pack:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government annual performance review of SELEP has been positive, recognising particular strengths in delivery of the Local Growth Fund programme, governance and accountability 	

Agenda Item	Notes	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SELEP's refreshed Board will be meeting on the 20th March, and meeting as a company board for the first time recognising SELEP's more formal footing • Local Industrial strategy is progressing, based on an evidence base which is considered to be one of the best from all LEPs nationally • There is still uncertainty over what funding streams will be available once the current Local Growth Programme comes to an end in March 2021 • SELEP now looking to press ahead with developing a clear strategic agenda for the South East. • AGM will be taking place on the 24th June in Central London. This year's focus will be women in business. • SELEP Chair (Chris Brodie) has also been appointed as chair for a grouping of LEPs covering Southern England. 	
11	OSE Board Appointments	
11.1	The appointment of a Deputy Chair will be considered at a future meeting	
11.2	OSE Representation on the SELEP Board is currently Perry Glading and Colette Bailey. However, due to work commitments this year, Colette wishes to stand down from the SELEP role. She will maintain her position on the OSE Board. A new OSE representative needs to be put forward, and will need to be female to meet the SELEP Board diversity requirements. Board Members are asked to consider this and contact the Chair if they wish to consider the role by close of play on Friday 6 th March.	
11.3	The Board thanked Colette for representing OSE at the SELEP Board	

Next Meeting

Wednesday 3rd June 2020, Venue TBC