

Meeting Minutes



DRAFT

Meeting
Date and Time
Venue

OSE Board
23rd September 2020, 14:00
Microsoft Teams Meeting

Attendees

Mark Curle	Henderson Curle
Murray Foster	Southend Business Partnership
Perry Glading	Glading Consultancy, High House Production (Chair)
Lucy-Emma Harris	Pixelwork
Cllr Chris Hossack	Brentwood Council
Chris Lines	Leonardo
Cllr Aidan McGurran	Basildon Council
David O'Connell	DBD Communications
Angela O'Donoghue	South Essex College
Cllr Kevin Robinson	Southend Council
John Rowe	
Aideen Sadler	City Fibre
Rob Singh	University of Essex
Nicholas Smith	Cantel Ltd
Cllr Norman Smith	Castle Point Borough Council
Caroline Southgate	Doris Jones

Apologies

Colette Bailey	Metal
David Barnes	Basildon Business Group
Cllr Rob Gledhill	Thurrock Council
Glyn Jones	Southend Airport
Geoff Pearce	Swan Housing

Officers/Observers/Presenters

Jaki Bradley	Thurrock ACL
Mark Carroll	Essex County Council
Alison Griffin	Southend Council
Tomasz Kozlowski	Basildon Council
Andy Lewis	Southend Council
Ian Lewis	Opportunity South Essex
Iain McNab	Cities & Local Growth Unit
Helen Russell	SELEP
Shaun Scrutton	Rochford District Council
Jim Sims	Basildon Council
Tristan Smith	Essex County Council

Meeting Minutes

Agenda Item	Notes	Actions
1	Introductions	
1.1	Chair welcomed Alison Griffin (Chief Executive, Southend Council) and Helen Russell (Strategy & Intelligence Manager, SELEP) to the meeting	
1.2	Chair also reflected on the significant work of local authority partners over the last couple of months in response to the Covid 19 lockdown and the support given to businesses through this challenging time.	
2	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	None made	
3	Minutes of Last Meeting	
3.1	The Board agreed the minutes of the 6 th June Meeting	
4	Action Tracker	
4.1	Reminded Members of opportunity to become Member of the SELEP company, and highlighted that the AGM will be taking place on the 2 nd October	Interested Board Members to contact IL for info
4.2	Outstanding invitation for Jon Birkett to present to Basildon Business Group	DB to follow up
4.3	South Essex website is nearly complete and will be ready shortly	IL to let Members know when ready
4.4	Board noted the update	
5	Directors Report	
5.1	<p>Kickstart Scheme – key points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme will fund 25 hours (at minimum wage) for work placements for new roles. £1,500 will also be available to support the placement with training and other support. Placements will last 6 months • South Essex College will be putting forward a proposal for the college and employers for around 30-40 places • We should aim to use the scheme to ultimately develop apprenticeship places • Southend Council are also offering to operate as an umbrella organisation for South Essex, covering both smaller local authorities and businesses. • Board Members wanted to be clear that we need to make sure that what we put in place works with other proposals that will come forward. We must also avoid duplication • Board Members would welcome the creation of a South Essex Umbrella scheme because the 	IL to keep Board informed of progress with scheme roll out

Agenda Item	Notes	Actions
	<p>requirements for payroll and other aspects of the scheme are complex. The need to create a minimum of 30 places rules out most businesses being able to run themselves</p>	
5.2	<p>Local Growth Fund Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board informed that Tilbury Riverside Business Centre and Forum 2 projects were not proceeding. Funding allocated to these projects would now be available for SELEP to reallocate to other projects • Board Members were disappointed that these projects are not proceeding, but recognised that the risks to local authorities wider capital programmes, reviews of project viability post Covid and funding pressures from Covid have led to these decisions. • Board members were keen to firstly not lose the funding, but more concerned about SELEP not being able to support other projects and the funding being ultimately returned to Treasury. Board members wishes to avoid this outcome. Board members also asked that SELEP be approached in relation to providing funding for other South Essex projects. 	PG and IL to progress with SELEP
5.3	<p>The Chair thanked the Board for their input during the Get Building Fund process during July 2020</p>	
5.4	<p>The Board agreed to endorse the Sector Support Fund applications for Rebuilding Demand in the Visitor Economy and Gourmet Trails, noting the latter may be dependent on the availability of match funding.</p>	
5.5	<p>The Board confirmed the priority order of the Get Building Fund reserve projects.</p>	
6	South Essex Recovery & Growth	
6.1	<p>Alison Griffin Introduced the work that ASELA are taking forward to support the South Essex economy in the coming months. Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASELA have put in place a Growth and Recovery group to oversee and drive forward a range of actions • We need to strengthen the South Essex economy through our residents and businesses purchasing locally • Local Authority Chief Executives will be contacting the top 10 businesses within their respective areas to get a temperature check on their current position and seek views on the next 6-12 months. This will give real insights, rather than just data • We need to recognise how our town centres may need to change as the return to a 5 day commute seems unlikely 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to get the construction pipeline moving, and support where we can • The report outlined the programme areas that ASELA are working across. A business voice in each of these would help us strengthen the case and pitch, and help us identify the right interventions and projects • Devolution White paper is not expected soon. This will outline the future for local and regional structures but has been delayed. View that now may not be the time for local government shake up. Expectation currently is the first half of 2021. • Advised that MP's should be used as a direct route to Ministers 	
6.2	<p>In relation to the Kickstart scheme, AG confirmed that Southend are offering to become an umbrella organisation for employers and local authorities within South Essex. The scheme would be offered across South Essex. Should be noted that Kickstart does not replace apprenticeships, and is available to people on universal credit. It will not fix the problems faced by 16-18 year olds who have seen apprenticeship places reduce by over 70% this year, driving an increase in full time vocational courses. However, this means that the practical work based experience is not being gained.</p>	AG and AO'D to discuss further
6.3	Details of South Essex Kickstart schemes to be shared when available	IL
6.4	<p>In discussion, the Board made the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to make sure that procurement from both local authorities and businesses leads to spend in the local economy. What can we do to ensure this? • We need to have something that publicises these opportunities, and consider a marketing campaign to engage businesses in using local suppliers – this has been done with the supermarkets • There are a lot of companies recruiting. How can we link those being made redundant to these opportunities, and retraining? • Real concerns about the end of the furlough scheme, and a replacement is needed. Post Meeting Note: Chancellor announced a follow on scheme to follow Furlough the day after the meeting • In terms of planning white paper, we need to share common ground and measures to support delivery. We must focus on what would be best for business • Can we streamline local procurement to make it easier for small local businesses to access opportunities • When considering local procurement, we need to recognise that there are a range of other institutions that can support this such as hospitals and the wider business community. 	IL to follow up

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A jobs matching function to link people to opportunities is essential. Worth noting that unemployment levels are already high • We should also be lobbying local MP's to pick up the key issues we have locally 	IL to follow up
6.5	<p>Helen Russell (SELEP) updated the Board on the data collection and analysis that SELEP are currently undertaking. Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4.1% unemployment nationally, disproportionately affecting under 24 age group • 32% of eligible employments furloughed across SELEP area • 193k claiming self employed income support across SELEP area • 164k claiming universal credit across SELEP, double March 2020 number • £120m of support grants paid out in South Essex • Retail, hospitality, arts, food and air travel all severely impacted. • Noted that the volume of calls to the Growth Hubs had increased 4 fold since March 2020. 	
6.6	Board are asked to make any comments on the presentation to Helen Russell	
6.7	Local Industrial Strategy development on hold, but material to be used to support recovery and renewal strategy. HR indicated that SELEP will wish to engage with OSE on the development of the strategy over the Autumn	HR and IL to coordinate
6.8	Universal credit figures to be shared in more detail, with comparison to national figures	HR to share
6.9	Link to web page for data, which will be regularly updated, is: https://www.southeastlep.com/our-strategy/economic-data-and-intelligence/ . SELEP have offered to offer different cuts of the data if this is required.	
6.10	Wider point made about the funding streams available and the activity that is required, and how we bend the funding to meet clear needs. We need to make sure that there is the flexibility in business support to meet the needs of business.	
6.11	SELEP were asked if there was an intention to put in place opportunities for subcontractors to register in advance of major projects being let, to ensure that the benefits of large projects are retained locally	HR to consider within SELEP major projects group
7	SELEP Covid Response programmes	
7.1	The Board made the following comments and observations on the proposed programmes SELEP are considering for Covid response:	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timescales need to be much faster, especially with the business support • Priority order needs to be reconsidered – waiting until next year to address digital felt too far into the future • Delay between call being announced and entering into contracts will not see these programmes start until well into next year. Skills programmes need to allow delivery in specific locations rather than being thinly spread across the whole SELEP area. This will allow much better targeting of funding and increased benefits realisation. LEP wide contracts do not allow for local focus • We have identified a clear capacity issue right now with growth hubs (call traffic increased four-fold by SELEPs own figures) and anecdotal evidence of businesses waiting 4 weeks for appointments. Support programme should provide funding now to provide the clearly needed additional capacity 	PG to follow up with SELEP to explore options for increased resource
7.2	All above points are to be reflected by SELEP Board Members at the next meeting of the LEP strategic board (2 nd October) and also directly with SELEP	PG, AS plus Cllr Gledhill and Cllr Woodley
7.3	BIES are bidding for a 40% increase in funding to Growth Hubs through the Spending Review, but this will be for 2021-22 at the earliest	
8	Inward Investment	
8.1	The Growth Hub may have a role in supporting an inward investment function. There is also a role for ASELA in supporting this function	IL to explore

Next Meeting

2nd December 2020, 2pm. Details to be confirmed.