



Thames Gateway Kent Partnership

## **BOARD MEETING**

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Approved Minutes of the **Thames Gateway Kent Partnership Board Meeting** held in the Darwin Room, Innovation Centre Medway, from 2.30pm to 4.30pm on **Tuesday 18 February 2014.**

### **Board Members and Observers Present:**

Kamal Aggarwal, Thomson Snell and Passmore  
Professor Tom Barnes, University of Greenwich  
Rob Bennett, BBP Regeneration (Chair)  
Cllr Andrew Bowles, Swale Borough Council  
Cllr John Burden, Gravesham Borough Council  
Cllr Rodney Chambers, Medway Council  
Mark Dance, Kent County Council  
Cllr Jeremy Kite, Dartford Borough Council  
Ann Komzolik, North West Kent College  
Naisha Polaine, Homes and Communities Agency

### **Also present:**

Barbara Cooper, Kent County Council  
Robin Cooper, Medway Council  
Neil Davies, Medway Council  
Ross Gill, Kent County Council  
Graham Harris, Dartford Borough Council  
David Hughes, Gravesham Borough Council  
Abdool Kara, Swale Borough Council  
David Liston-Jones, Thames Gateway Kent Partnership  
Richard Longman, Thames Gateway Kent Partnership  
Linda Searle, Thames Gateway Kent Partnership

### **Apologies:**

Rehman Chishti MP  
Robert Goodman, Bluewater/Lend Lease  
Andrew Pearce, Environment Agency  
David Simms, Lafarge Tarmac  
Paul Whittlesea, DCLG

## Item 1: Welcome and Introductions

1. Apologies were noted.

## Item 2: Minutes of the AGM and TGKP Board Meetings held on 29 November 2013 and Matters Arising

2. The draft AGM Minutes were agreed.
  - Paragraph 14: The issue of a new private sector Board member was on the agenda for this meeting.
3. The draft Board Minutes were also agreed. On matters arising:
  - Paragraph 8: Naisha Polaine advised that a useful meeting had taken place in December between HCA and Swale Borough Council to discuss taking forward the proposals for Queenborough and Rushenden (Q&R) based on the ideas discussed at the Minister's focus group meeting. However, the Minister had since made it clear that, in terms of identifying sites where he could get involved with partners in assisting delivery, he was looking for us to come forward with sites other than HCA-owned sites. This did not mean that the ideas for Q&R should not continue to be progressed, just that it would not be as part of this exercise. Naisha said that discussions between HCA and Swale Borough Council would continue. Board members were invited to consider which other North Kent sites should be put forward in response to the Minister's request. **Action: Board members to advise of any other site deemed suitable.**
  - David Liston-Jones advised that a letter from Kris Hopkins to TGSG members following up the focus group meeting was expected shortly. **Action: David Liston-Jones to circulate Kris Hopkins' letter to Board members once received.**
  - Paragraph 16, future Board agenda items: David Liston-Jones said that he had discussed with Professor Barnes having HEI links to business as a future agenda item. He asked that Board members let him know of any topics they wished to see on a future agenda. **Action: Board members to advise David of suggestions for future agenda items.**
  - Paragraph 20: David Liston-Jones advised that the visit by Graham Pendlebury to North Kent had been rescheduled for 25 April. He would be contacting officers in due course to revise the programme for the visit. **Action: David Liston-Jones to consult officers on revised programme.**

## Item 3: Next Steps on South East LEP Strategic Economic Plan, and Kent and Medway '*Unlocking the Potential*' – paper by Ross Gill.

4. The Chairman invited Ross Gill to introduce his paper. Ross explained that the paper updated the Board on progress in developing 'Unlocking the Potential' and the South East LEP Strategic Economic Plan. It set out the work that needed to be done to finalise the Plan for submission to Government on 31 March. The paper also described the proposal to develop a 'Delivery Plan' setting out in more detail how the funds devolved to Kent and Medway would be invested. Ross said that the Board was invited to note the update, to consider the brief for the proposed

Delivery Plan and note the proposals for ongoing involvement of TGKP and other partners.

5. The Board discussed the proposal for a SELEP investment fund and how that might operate. Ross said that he was circulating a pro-forma to local authorities with a deadline of 14 March seeking project proposals that might be taken forward by a fund of this kind. The extent to which a fund could assist with the necessary forward funding of infrastructure was discussed, and how the fund could complement and relate to other forms of support available.
6. More generally, the Board discussed the proposals for finalising the Strategic Economic Plan. In discussion, it was argued that it would be essential for the Plan to identify clearly what would be delivered by the Local Growth Funding being sought, over and above what was happening already. Demonstrating additionality was key. It was also essential to respond to the 'something for something' challenge from Ministers. The Plan needed to be clear about what local partners were offering in return for the 'asks' of Government.
7. An additional Kent and Medway Economic Partnership meeting would be taking place on 11 March. It was important for TGKP to be clear about its own priorities in advance of that meeting. **It was agreed**, therefore, to schedule a special TGKP meeting to be held just before the 11 March KMEP meeting, to give the Board the opportunity to take stock of the position on the development of the Plan at that point.
8. The Chairman thanked Ross for his paper and update. **Action: TGKP team to arrange a special TGKP Board meeting immediately before the KMEP meeting on 11 March.**

#### **Item 4: TGKP Growth Plan – paper TGKP(14)2 by Richard Longman**

9. Richard Longman introduced his paper which provided an update on the revision of the Growth Plan. Formal feedback from Government was still awaited on the draft LEP Strategic Economic Plan, and until that was received it would be premature to finalise our own Growth Plan. That feedback was expected to include specific responses to the proposals in the Thames Gateway 'Stimulus package'. The revised draft took account of comments on the consultation draft and feedback from the 20 November business breakfast, as well as the drafts of 'Unlocking the Potential' and the Strategic Economic Plan.
10. Richard explained that the paper outlined the main changes made and proposed a process for finalising the Plan. It was recommended (paragraph 13) that the Board approve this version as a near final draft and authorise the Chairs of the Board and Officers' Group and the TGKP Chief Executive, in consultation with the Officers' Group, to sign-off the final version.
11. Following a brief discussion, the **recommendations in paragraph 13 of the paper were agreed.**

#### **Item 5: Airports Commission Consultation – paper TGKP(14)3 by Robin Cooper, Medway Council**

12. Robin Cooper introduced his paper which set out the latest position on the Airports Commission consultation. He explained that the Airports Commission had published their interim report in 2013, which had proposed the development of Gatwick Airport and Heathrow Airport as the preferred way forward to meet Britain's aviation needs. However, in addition, the Commission had decided to carry out further work on the "Inner Thames Estuary" proposal to see whether it was a credible option to be taken forward, alongside Gatwick and Heathrow, for detailed development work.
13. The Commission had given until 23 May for submissions on the Inner Thames Estuary proposal. It would publish the results of its further studies in early July and seek comments on those studies by August. It intended to take a decision on whether the proposal was a 'credible option' by September. The Commission would submit its final report to the new Government in Summer 2015.
14. Robin circulated copies of an Airports Commission presentation which gave additional details of the further feasibility studies and impacts work which the Commission was planning. For their part, Robin said that Kent County Council and Medway Council were considering carrying out further work/studies including: British Trust for Ornithology (birds/migration); ComRes (attitude survey); Airlines Survey (will they move); effects on fishing and navigation; effect of tidal surges and flooding; local access to the airport, and improvements to capacity on M25/M2/M20 and Lower Thames Crossing.
15. The Chairman thanked Robin for his presentation and invited the Board to consider, firstly, whether the Partnership should make a submission to the Airports Commission, and, secondly, we should seek to establish the views of the private sector in North Kent on this issue. Following a discussion, **the Board agreed** that a letter should be submitted by the Partnership to the Airports Commission setting out TGKP's opposition to a Thames Estuary airport proposal. It was also agreed not to undertake any specific consultation exercise, as this should be a response by the TGKP Board, which was itself a public/private sector body, recording the Board's views. **Action: David Liston-Jones/Richard Longman, in consultation with Robin Cooper, to prepare a draft letter for the Board to consider at its next meeting.**

**Item 6: Report by Centre for London (CfL) – "Go East: Unlocking the potential of the Thames Estuary" – paper TGKP(14)4 by Richard Longman**

16. Richard Longman introduced this item and informed the Board of the report by Centre for London which set out new proposals for the Thames Gateway. The report had been edited by Lord Adonis and CfL researchers and was in the form of a collection of essays with a foreword by Lord Heseltine. A launch event had been held at Canary Wharf and the report's publication had been picked up in the media.
17. The report made a number of suggestions for accelerating delivery on stalled sites and contained six specific recommendations. These included a recommendation that the Government should consult on establishing a New Town at Ebbsfleet, together with a New Town Development Corporation.

18. Richard invited the Board to note the report and to consider whether or not the Partnership should issue a response to its publication. Following a brief discussion it was agreed not to make any specific response to the report. It was, however, felt that we should look for opportunities to publicise the progress being made, and the delivery taking place, in the Kent part of the Thames Gateway. Abdool Kara offered to make enquiries with the Municipal Journal on the options for getting an article in that publication, and it was agreed that this should be followed up. **Action: Abdool Kara to contact the Municipal Journal and provide further details to the Officers' Group for consideration at its next meeting.**
19. **It was also agreed** that it was important for North Kent to ensure that its case, as a key part of the Thames Gateway, was properly recognised and well argued in the South East LEP Strategic Economic Plan. **Action: TGKP team and Ross Gill, KCC, to provide input on Thames Gateway/North Kent to the Strategic Economic Plan.**

#### **Item 7: TGKP's Board Membership – Rob Bennett**

20. The Chairman reported on progress in filling the private sector vacancy on the Board. He reminded members that at the last Board meeting he had expressed his desire to fill the remaining Board place as soon as practicable. He had sought suggestions on candidates from Board members and, as agreed, had subsequently met with Andrew Bowles and David Liston-Jones to consider the names that had been submitted. At that meeting the clear view was that, from the candidates put forward, James Speck, Director of the Kent Science Park (KSP), should be recommended to members for appointment to the Board. In his role at the Kent Science Park, James had an excellent perspective on the issues facing businesses in the sectors that we wished to encourage, such as life sciences, high-tech engineering, environmental sciences, ICT, and medical technology. The KSP also had strong links to the wider business community through the many events, seminars etc which it arranged.
21. **The Board agreed** that James Speck should be invited to join the Board, and to attend the next meeting in May. Rob Bennett said that, if the Board was content, he would arrange to meet James, with the Vice-Chair, for an introductory discussion and, following that meeting, make the necessary arrangements for the appointment to be confirmed. This was also agreed. **Action: David Liston-Jones to inform James Speck of the Board's decision and to make arrangements for an introductory meeting with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.**

#### **Item 8: TGKP Work Plan – paper TGKP(14)5**

22. David Liston-Jones introduced the paper which set out a draft Work Plan for January 2014 to March 2015. David said this followed a similar format to last year's Work Plan. Its purpose was to act as a guide for TGKP, and the TGKP team's work over the coming year. The work under most of the sections in the Plan was well defined and already underway. The least developed section was Section 3 which dealt with improving opportunity and life chances for North Kent residents, and in particular with improving skills and access to employment. More

work was needed to identify the added value that TGKP could bring over and above what was already being done by local authorities, the SFA and Jobcentre Plus.

23. In discussion it was suggested that there should be more emphasis on strengthening partnership working with South Essex, in Section 4. Subject to that point, the Board agreed the outline Work Plan. **Action: David Liston-Jones to amend Work Plan to include specific reference to partnership working with South Essex.**

**Item 9: Updates on current issues from members** – verbal updates

24. There were no updates from members.

**Item 10: Chief Executive's Report** – paper TGKP(14)6

25. David Liston-Jones introduced his report, which was mainly for information. Board members were invited to note:
- Draft New Assisted Areas Map – the Medway-Swale Arc has been included in the new map, and the Government was consulting on the draft map. Rob Bennett had again written to Ministers in support of the inclusion of the area in the new map and a copy of the letter to Michael Fallon was attached to the report.
  - Greening the Gateway Kent and Medway (GGKM) would be winding up on 31 March 2014. **Action: The Board asked for its thanks to be recorded for Martin Hall's work as Director of GGKM over the last seven years.**
  - The Board was also asked to note the current position on meetings of the Thames Gateway Strategic Group. No new date for the postponed December 2013 meeting had yet been confirmed, but it was hoped a meeting could be scheduled in the near future.

**Item 11: Budget Report** - paper TGKP(14)7

26. David Liston-Jones introduced the Budget Report, which was for information. **The Board to note** the position on income and expenditure for 2013-14 set out in the report.

**Item 12: AOB**

27. No other business, the meeting closed at 4.50pm.

**Thames Gateway Kent Partnership  
February 2014**