



Thames Gateway Kent Partnership AGM

Minutes of the **13th Thames Gateway Kent Partnership Annual General Meeting** held in Darwin Room, Innovation Centre Medway, 2.30pm on **Friday 29 November 2013**.

Present:

Board members and observers:

Rob Bennett, BBP Regeneration (Chair)
Cllr Andrew Bowles, Leader, Swale Borough Council
Cllr John Burden, Leader, Gravesham Borough Council
Mark Dance, Cabinet Member, Kent County Council
Ann Komzolik, North West Kent College
Andrew Pearce, Environment Agency
Naisha Polaine, Homes and Communities Agency
David Simms, Lafarge Tarmac

Also present:

Barbara Cooper, Kent County Council
Neil Davies, Medway Council
Terry Fuller, Homes and Communities Agency
Ross Gill, Kent County Council
Graham Harris, Dartford Borough Council
Katharine Harvey, South East Local Enterprise Partnership
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
Paul Whittlesea, Department for Communities and Local Government

Apologies:

Kamal Aggarwal, Thomson, Snell and Passmore
Professor Tom Barnes, University of Greenwich
Cllr Rodney Chambers, Leader, Medway Council
Rehman Chishti, Member of Parliament
Robert Goodman, Lend Lease
Cllr Jeremy Kite, Leader Dartford Borough Council

Item 1: Welcome, Apologies and Matters Arising from the Minutes of the 12th Annual General Meeting held on 30 November 2012

1. The Chairman welcomed the Board to the 13th AGM. An ordinary Board meeting would follow on from this AGM.
2. The Chairman welcomed Katharine Harvey to the meeting in her capacity as Deputy Director, SELEP. He also welcomed Terry Fuller from the HCA, in attendance along with Naisha Polaine.
3. The Minutes of the AGM held on 30 November 2012 had been previously agreed at the Board meeting held on 1 March 2013.
4. Matters arising:

Paragraph 6: Private Sector Board member vacancy. This issue would be covered in the Chairman's Report at Item 2 of the AGM.

Item 2: Report from Chairman - paper TGKP(13)13

5. The Chairman introduced his Annual Report and began by thanking all Board members, and their advisers, for their helpful and constructive contributions to the Partnership's work over the year. This had taken place not just in the TGKP Board meetings, but also at the Thames Gateway Strategic Group, in the TGK Officers' Group and, this year, in the TIGER Strategic Board and Approvals Panel.
6. The Chairman said his previous year's comment that he was optimistic about the future for North Kent remained justified. There were clear signs the economy was improving, with businesses feeling the outlook was more positive and developers/house builders being more upbeat about prospects for development going ahead. There were sites available for new development, and the TIGER loan fund was providing a new mechanism to help businesses grow.
7. Plans for Paramount Park on the Swanscombe Peninsula had been moving forward, with the potential to create 27,000 jobs and huge supply chain opportunities for local businesses.
8. During the year, the Partnership had sought to ensure that North Kent's investment and economic priorities were reflected in county-wide, LEP-wide, and national programmes, so that our project priorities attracted the funding they required. Following Lord Heseltine's Review, and the Government's response, it was clear the main mechanism for funding economic development and regeneration in local areas in the future would be via

Local Enterprise Partnerships and through the newly created Single Local Growth Fund (SLGF).

9. In terms of the Partnership's work there had been a number of highlights this year. One important milestone had been the launch of the £20million TIGER loan scheme in April, funded through the Regional Growth Fund and providing interest-free loans to enable businesses to grow and create new jobs. The Chairman thanked KCC as the accountable body, the TGKP team, and all the partners for all their efforts in getting the scheme up and running, particularly Mark Dance, as Chair of the North Kent Approvals Panel, and Jacqui Ward and her programme management team at KCC. The first presentational cheques had been awarded to successful applicants at the North Kent B2B event on 17 October this year.
10. We had continued to reach out to the North Kent business community, for example, by way of a further Business Breakfast event held on 20 November. The event had been well received, with businesses very willing to get involved. The Chairman said he was keen to develop this engagement and to hold a further similar event next Spring. TGKP had been a headline sponsor for the North Kent Business to Business event in October organised by Kent Invicta Chamber, and also sponsored the Manufacturing Expo event in July at the Historic Dockyard. The Partnership ran seminars and exhibited at both events, and the Chairman thanked local authority partners who had participated in the panel sessions.
11. The Chairman said it was important now to build on, and to strengthen, this engagement with the private sector over the coming year. He went on to highlight a number of other key areas of the Partnership's work. A revised draft Growth Plan had been produced to provide an up-to-date statement of our economic and investment priorities so that we could feed these into the Kent and Medway 'Unlocking Potential' and the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan.
12. He also highlighted the support that Board members, Local Authority officers and the TGKP team had given to the work of the Thames Gateway Strategic Group. A major exercise had been carried out to examine progress on over 200 key development sites across the Thames Gateway. The aim had been to identify the obstacles to progress and, where appropriate, to seek Government assistance through TGSG to speed-up delivery. Since first reporting back to the TGSG in June, two special 'focus group' meetings with the Thames Gateway Minister had been held to consider measures that could be developed to stimulate development in the Gateway. The Chair thanked Barbara Cooper and her team at KCC and the TGKP team for their work on supporting this exercise, particularly as TGSG had no dedicated support or resources.

13. As in previous years, the Partnership had responded to a number of consultations. The Chairman said that he had been pleased that, despite the challenges, we had been able to agree a TGKP response to the Government's consultation on the Lower Thames Crossing.

TGKP Board Membership

14. The Chair advised there had not been any changes to Board membership during the past year. However, there remained one private-sector vacancy on the Board, which he was keen to see filled as soon as possible, and certainly within the next 6 months. He proposed a process for making the appointment. Following discussion, **it was agreed that Board members should forward** suggestions or nominations to David Liston-Jones by the end of December. A list of possible candidates would then be considered by himself, Cllr. Andrew Bowles and David Liston-Jones, with a view to a short-list being put to the to the February 2014 Board meeting for consideration. In discussion, it was suggested that there could be value in identifying a number of alternates who could attend if a Board member was unable to attend a particular meeting.

Action: Board members to nominate names for a private-sector member; David Liston-Jones to bring back to February 2014 Board for consideration.

Budget

15. The Chairman drew the Board's attention to the section of his report on TGKP's budget. Budget and funding issues would be discussed in more detail in the main Board meeting. The Chairman thanked the five local authorities and the Environment Agency for their financial support to the Partnership during the year. Going forward, the Partnership would need to carefully consider funding in challenging times for the public sector. He also thanked Medway Council for providing the legal and financial services to TGKP throughout the year.

Legal and Human Resources Support

16. The Chairman thanked Swale Borough Council for providing the human resources support to the Partnership.

TGKP Executive Team

17. There had been one change to the TGKP team during the year. Katharine Harvey left in February to join Shared Intelligence and, in March, we

welcomed back Richard Longman to TGKP as our Senior Policy Officer. The Chairman thanked the whole team; David Liston-Jones, Richard Longman, Katharine Harvey, and Linda Searle, for their continued hard work and commitment.

18. In conclusion, the Chairman reiterated his optimism about the future for North Kent in 2014, and the exciting opportunities that were emerging. He said the Partnership would need to address many important issues over the coming months.
19. For example, the Government would shortly be announcing its decision on the location of the Lower Thames Crossing. That decision would have enormous implications for the economic development of North Kent, and an appropriate TGKP response would be required.
20. In December, the Davies Commission would be publishing its interim report on airport capacity. The Board would want to consider that report and decide on its response.
21. We would need to make sure that the final version of the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan, which had to be finalised by March, said the right things about North Kent, and as the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership (KMEP) became established, it would be essential for TGKP to build a close and effective relationship with this important new body.
22. Through the TIGER Strategic Board we needed to continue to support the delivery of the TIGER scheme, and, more generally, we needed to strengthen links with the business community.
23. Finally, he stated that it had been a great privilege to have served as TGKP Chairman over the past year and he looked forward to working with the Board to address the challenges and opportunities that 2014 would bring.
24. Responding to the address, Cllr. Andrew Bowles, as TGKP Vice Chairman, thanked Rob Bennett for his excellent work in chairing the Partnership during 2013, a statement that was wholeheartedly endorsed by all Board members.

Item 3: Election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman – paper by the Chief Executive TGKP(13)14

25. David Liston-Jones introduced the Elections paper and explained the requirement to elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the Board.
26. Chairman: Rob Bennett was nominated by Cllr Andrew Bowles and

seconded by Graham Harris. Rob Bennett was duly re-elected as Chairman of the Board.

27. Vice Chairman: Cllr Andrew Bowles was nominated by Mark Dance and seconded by Graham Harris. Cllr Andrew Bowles was duly re-elected as Vice Chairman of the Board.
28. The Chairman went on to explain, as laid out in the Constitution, that it was also necessary to confirm the lead bodies for HR services, financial services and legal services and to approve the timetable for Board meetings for the next 12 months.
29. Lead Body for Employment of Staff: Cllr Andrew Bowles confirmed that Swale Borough Council was happy to continue to act as Employment Lead Body providing HR services for the Partnership. Swale Borough Council was duly reappointed as Lead Body for Employment of Staff.
30. Lead Body for Financial Services: Neil Davies confirmed Medway Council was content to continue to provide the financial, accountable body, and ICT services for the Partnership. Medway Council was duly reappointed as Lead Body for Financial Services. He also confirmed Medway Council was happy to continue to provide Legal Services to the Board and Medway Council was duly reappointed as Lead Body for Legal Services.
31. Future meetings of the Board would be held on the dates set out on the meeting agenda: Tuesday 18 February 2014, Wednesday 14 May 2014, Thursday 25 September 2014, and Tuesday 18 November 2014. All meetings would be held at the Innovation Centre Medway, Maidstone Road, Chatham.

Item 4: Any Other Business

32. There being no other business, the meeting closed at 3.00pm.