
Minutes of the **Thames Gateway Kent Partnership Board Meeting** held in the Darwin Room, Innovation Centre Medway, from 3.00pm to 4.30pm on **18 November 2011** (Meeting followed on immediately after the AGM).

Present:

Board members and observers:

Rob Bennett, BBP Regeneration (Chair)
Cllr Andrew Bowles, Leader, Swale Borough Council
Cllr. Rodney Chambers, Leader, Medway Council
Cllr. John Burden, Leader, Gravesham Borough Council
Cllr Kevin Lynes, Cabinet Member, Kent County Council
Rehman Chishti MP
Ann Komzolik, North West Kent College
Abby Raymond, Homes and Communities Agency
David Simms, Lafarge Cement
Andrew Pearce, Environment Agency

Also present:

David Liston-Jones, Thames Gateway Kent Partnership
Katharine Harvey, Thames Gateway Kent Partnership
Abdool Kara, Swale Borough Council
Neil Davies, Medway Council
David Hughes, Gravesham Borough Council
Barbara Cooper, Kent County Council
Ross Gill, Kent County Council
Graham Harris, Dartford Council
David Hughes, Gravesham Borough Council

Apologies:

Kamal Aggarwal, Thomson, Snell and Passmore
Professor Tom Barnes, University of Greenwich
Cllr Jeremy Kite, Leader Dartford Borough Council
Naisha Polaine, Homes and Communities Agency

Item 1: Welcome and Introductions

1. In addition to those welcomed at the beginning of the AGM, the Chair welcomed Richard Hicks, Assistant Director, Medway Council who was attending to give a presentation on Medway City Status bid. The apologies were again noted.

2. The Chair asked the Board to consider an issue raised in the Chief Executive's Report. This was whether TGKP meetings should be made open to the press and public. A decision on this had been deferred in January 2011, at the first meeting of the restructured TGKP Board. The Board's view then was that we should wait until the full Board had been appointed before making a decision. After some debate it was agreed that, as private sector recruitment to the Board was still not yet complete, we should maintain the current position for the time being.

Action: The issue of whether TGKP Board meetings are made open to the press and public should be reconsidered when the Board has its full complement of members in place.

Item 2: Minutes of TGKP Board Meeting on 26 September 2010 and Matters Arising

3. The draft minutes were agreed. On matters arising:
 - Paragraph 9: Actioned. This item had been discussed at the last Officers' Group meeting. Nathaniel Litchfield & Partners (NLP) had been appointed to carry out the consultancy study. A Steering Group comprising a number of partners has been established to oversee this commission.
 - Paragraph 15: Actioned. This was covered in the Chief Executive's Report.
 - Paragraph 24: Actioned. A copy of the consultation response prepared by TGKP had been circulated with the Chief Executive's Report.

Item 3: Medway City Status Bid– Presentation by Richard Hicks, Assistant Director, Medway Council

4. The Chair invited Richard to give a presentation on Medway's bid for City status. The presentation outlined the reasons behind the bid, pointing to its rich historical and cultural heritage and its exciting future as a thriving 21st century home for a growing population of more than 250,000 people.
5. The Chair thanked and commended Richard for his presentation and invited Cllr Chambers to add any further comments. Cllr Chambers reiterated how deserving Medway's case was for City status, particularly when one remembered the transformational journey the area had made, from the closure of the docks in 1984, to the dynamic and growing place it had become today.
6. The Chair noted the quality of Medway's submission and recorded the Board's strong support for the bid.

Item 4: Growing Places Fund – paper TGKP(11)28

7. The Chair invited Ross Gill, KCC, to introduce this paper. Ross explained that LEPs had been invited to submit proposals for the allocation of the £500m Growing Places infrastructure fund by 20 Dec 2011. The prospectus

gave an indicative funding allocation of £32.5m for the South East LEP (SE LEP), based on a formula derived from population and employed earnings.

8. The debate had yet to be had as to how the SE LEP would allocate these funds across the area, and what arrangements would be put in place. This was to be discussed at the next SE LEP meeting on 7 December. One issue to be considered was whether to handle this on a LEP-wide basis or devolve funding into three separate pots, with one each for Essex, Kent and East Sussex.
9. The Chair invited Barbara Cooper to add any further comments. Barbara said that the fund was about unlocking infrastructure to deliver jobs and homes as quickly as possible and, as the Thames Gateway was an agreed priority area within the LEP, schemes in North Kent should be a key contender for the funding.
10. The Chair invited a roundtable discussion about the proposal and what role TGKP might play in administering the fund. It was agreed that Thames Gateway and the wider Kent area would be best served by being 'on the front foot', armed with potential schemes where infrastructure investment from the funds could deliver jobs and homes quickly. Katharine Harvey mentioned that SEEDA commissioned consultants to identify schemes for the SE Regional Infrastructure Fund in 2009 and that this study might be useful for this exercise. It was also pointed out that there were synergies between this work and that which Nathaniel Litchfield & Partners were doing on sites in North Kent.
11. **It was agreed** that it would be important for both private sector and public sector LEP representatives from Kent & Medway to be fully briefed to agree the position for the 7 December LEP meeting and to understand the schemes that could potentially benefit from this infrastructure fund in Thames Gateway Kent. **It was also agreed**, therefore, that it would be useful to do an initial search across North Kent for projects on the basis that a robust set of early proposals would stand North Kent in good stead in relation to the wider LEP, regardless of eventual governance arrangements.

Action: Abby Raymond to obtain the study for the South East RIF from ex-SEEDA colleagues at the HCA, and pass on to Ross Gill. Ross to undertake an initial trawl to identify possible North Kent projects in preparation for the discussions at the LEP on 7 December 2011.

Item 5: Thames Gateway Strategic Group

12. The Chair invited David Liston-Jones to report back on the Thames Gateway Promotions Working Group that had been established under Cllr Jeremy Kite's chairmanship. The Group met on 24 October 2011 to consider arrangements for coordination of inward investment arrangements at the Thames Gateway level, and also the scope for marketing/promotion activities for the Gateway more generally. David reported that there appeared to be little appetite for the development of a specific website to promote the Thames Gateway. It was important for UKTI to be fully aware of the opportunities for investors in the Thames Gateway. UKTI was

organised on a sectoral basis so a paper was being prepared on the sectoral offer in the Gateway, to be forwarded to UKTI. On promotion more generally, the working group felt we should seek to 'piggyback' on private sector activity. So, for example, where there are private sector companies located in the Thames Gateway that are promoting themselves, these should be approached to also include 'Thames Gateway' in their material. The example cited was Southend Airport which included a Thames Gateway strapline on its website.

13. David reported that the Thames Gateway London Partnership was being wound up by end March 2012 (but in practise by the end of December 2011) and was to be replaced by a new public/private sector partnership in due course. In the meantime, the GLA has agreed to take over the secretariat responsibilities for TGSG that had previously been undertaken by TGLP.
14. The next meeting of the TGSG was being held on 1 December 2011. This would be chaired by Sir Edward Lister, Deputy Mayor at the GLA, with the Thames Gateway Minister, Bob Neill MP, also due to be in attendance. There would be presentations of the key issues and concerns facing each of the TG sub regions at this meeting.

Action. David Liston-Jones to provide feedback on the TGSG meeting on 1 December 2011 at the next TGKP Board meeting.

Item 6: TGKP Work Plan – paper TGKP(11)29

15. The Chair invited David Liston-Jones to present the progress on the activities contained in the TGKP Work Plan for 2011-2012. Following advice at the TGKP Officers' Group, each activity had been given a Red/Amber/Green (RAG) rating to reflect progress to date. There were no 'red' flagged items but a number were 'amber'. David envisaged that further progress would be made on these items over coming months with the additional capacity in the team following Katharine's appointment.
16. In relation to the item on championing the interests of North Kent, Rehman Chishti offered his support to TGKP and suggested that, should it be required, he would be happy to submit a request to the Speaker of the House of Commons for a Westminster Hall debate on a topic relating to Thames Gateway. He indicated that this could take place approximately two weeks after the request submission. The Board thanked Rehman and were keen to take up his helpful offer. It was important to make the best use of such a debate, and to choose the most appropriate time. It would also be important to raise the issue with colleagues on TGSG.

Action: TGKP team to consider a topic and timing for a Westminster Hall debate, and report back to the Board.

Item 7: Kent & Medway Economic Assets; Update on Stewardship of ex-SEEDA land and property assets

17. The Chair invited Abby Raymond to provide an update. Abby reported that the latest meeting of the Stewardship Advisory Group had taken place

earlier that morning and that it had gone very well. Good progress was being made by HCA colleagues and partners in developing the business plan for Kent & Medway, which had to be submitted by Christmas. Abby mentioned that there were a number of key strategic sites in Kent & Medway, with 5 of these in North Kent. She believed there was a strong case for investment, as these sites had high potential for releasing further receipts for the Exchequer.

Item 8: Budget Report and TGKP Future Funding – paper TGKP(11)30

18. The Chair invited David Liston-Jones to present this item. David explained that for this financial year the TGKP budget position was satisfactory however, there remained uncertainty for the future. The funding working group had been established last year to consider TGKP's future funding and would be exploring possibilities of private sector funding and European funding sources. In the meantime, it was proposed that next year's contributions from local authorities be set at the same level as for this year.
19. In the roundtable discussion that followed, Barbara Cooper explained KCC's position and the reasoning behind the conditions attached to the Council's contribution for this year. A number of possible funding solutions were discussed. It would be necessary to make the best possible case for further funding, including reporting on progress on identifying new funding sources. David Hughes agreed to explore further one alternative funding approach with Barbara Cooper.

Action. David Liston-Jones to continue to work with funding working group on future funding options. David Hughes to meet Barbara Cooper to discuss TGKP funding.

Item 9: Update on current issues from members

20. Cllr Andrew Bowles mentioned that a number of events were happening in Swale over the next couple of weeks. These included the opening of the Sheerness Gateway, opening of the Rushenden Relief Road, completion of the Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road on 12 December 2011 and the signing of the Heads of Terms Agreement with the developers for Phase 1 Sittingbourne Town Centre redevelopment.
21. Ross Gill mentioned that Sheerness has been chosen as one of five Centres for Offshore Renewable Energy (CORE) by BIS.
22. Graham Harris mentioned that Spenhill, Tesco's development arm, had received planning permission for the development of a 9,000 sq mtr new store in the town centre. Essential Land was also planning to commence next year on the development of 1,400 new homes on the old GSK site.
23. Cllr Rodney Chambers announced that Land Securities had lodged an outline planning application for 5,000 new homes and office space on a 325 hectare site at Lodge Hill, Chattenden. Robin Cooper mentioned that a planning application had been submitted by Peel Holdings for the regeneration of 26 acres of brownfield land and the creation of offices, a

hotel, and retail and landscaped public areas at Chatham Docks. This was known as Chatham Waters.

24. Ann Komzolic said that NWKC has been working closely with the new events venue being developed at Bluewater and the Theatre of Food to provide their training needs. It should be noted that the developers had said that it had been the regular dialogue that has ensured that local residents had benefited from these jobs. If partners had aspirations for this in the future, then regular monitoring was needed.
25. David Hughes mentioned that the Edinburgh House planning application for Gravesend town centre was expected in the New Year.

Item 10: Chief Executive's Report – paper TGKP(11)31

26. This item was noted.

Item 11: AOB

27. The Kent Economic Board meeting on 14 December from 5.00-7.00pm was due to focus on the Thames Gateway. TGKP Board members were being invited to attend this meeting. There would be a presentation by Rob Bennett on Thames Gateway Kent issues, and DP World had been invited to present on their London Gateway development in Essex. TGKP Board members were to be invited to attend this meeting.
28. The meeting closed at 5.00pm

**Thames Gateway Kent Partnership
November 2011**