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Minutes of the **Thames Gateway Kent Partnership Board Meeting** held in the Darwin Room, Innovation Centre Medway, from 2.30pm to 4.30pm on **20 February 2012.**

**Present:**

**Board members and observers:**

Kamal Aggarwal, Thomson, Snell and Passmore  
Professor Tom Barnes, University of Greenwich  
Rob Bennett, BBP Regeneration (Chair)  
Cllr Andrew Bowles, Leader, Swale Borough Council  
Cllr. Rodney Chambers, Leader, Medway Council  
Cllr Jeremy Kite, Leader Dartford Borough Council  
Ann Komzolik, North West Kent College  
Cllr Kevin Lynes, Cabinet Member, Kent County Council  
David Simms, Lafarge Cement

**Also present:**

Stephen Clare, National Westminster Bank  
Barbara Cooper, Kent County Council  
Neil Davies, Medway Council  
Graham Harris, Dartford Council  
Katharine Harvey, Thames Gateway Kent Partnership  
David Hughes, Gravesham Borough Council  
Abdool Kara, Swale Borough Council  
David Liston-Jones, Thames Gateway Kent Partnership  
Rob Moore, Homes and Communities Agency  
Linda Searle, Thames Gateway Kent Partnership

**Apologies:**

Cllr. John Burden, Leader, Gravesham Borough Council  
Rehman Chishti MP  
Andrew Pearce, Environment Agency  
Naisha Polaine, Homes and Communities Agency

**Item 1: Welcome and Introductions**

1. The Chair welcomed Stephen Clare, Director of Commercial Banking, Maidstone and Medway, National Westminster Bank, to the meeting. Stephen had been invited by way of an introductory meeting, prior to any decisions being taken on Nat West's appointment to the Board.

## **Item 2: Minutes of TGKP AGM on 18 November 2011 and Matters Arising:**

### **2. The draft Minutes were agreed.** On Matters Arising:

- Paragraph 6: Included in Chief Executive's Report.

## **Item 2: Minutes of TGKP Board Meeting on 18 November 2011 and Matters Arising:**

### **3. The draft minutes were agreed.** On Matters Arising:

- Paragraph 2: The issue of whether TGKP Board meetings were made open to the press and public should be reconsidered when the Board had its full complement of members in place.
- Paragraph 11: Actioned.
- Paragraph 14: This was covered on the Agenda.
- Paragraph 16: On the issue of whether to seek a Westminster Hall debate, it was argued that it was important to get the timing and topic right, as there was only likely to be one opportunity. **It was agreed** come back to this issue at the next meeting.
- Paragraph 18: This was covered on the Agenda in the Budget Report.

## **Item 10: Chief Executive's Report – TGKP(12)4**

4. Private Sector Members. David advised the Board that he had met with Robert Goodman, who had taken over from Andrew Parkinson as General Manager, Bluewater. Robert had indicated his willingness to join the Board. **The Board agreed** that Robert Goodman should be appointed as Bluewater's representative.

**Action: David to complete appointment procedures.**

5. Board Workshop. David also asked the Board's view on the idea of a workshop session with Board members, to discuss TGKP Board's role. It was suggested that this be in the form of a ½-day event, to take place within the next month or so, maybe breakfast time or early evening. In discussion it was argued that a workshop session would be helpful in building relationships within the Board and developing the effectiveness of the Board. The output from the workshop should be used to shape the Workplan for the 2012/2013 year. The Bluewater Management Suite was suggested as a good venue for the workshop.

**Action: It was agreed that a workshop should be arranged and that a facilitator be appointed for the event. The TGKP team were asked to make the arrangements.**

6. Thamesteel: Kevin Lynes updated the Board on the current position at Thamesteel, and outlined the measures being put in place to assist workers and their families.
7. TG Marketing and Promotion: A workshop, chaired by Cllr Jeremy Kite, would be taking place on 28 February.

8. Coastal Communities Fund: The possible opportunities for North Kent from the recently announced Coastal Communities Fund was briefly discussed.
9. Thames Gateway Strategic Group: Concern was expressed about the demise of the Thames Gateway London Partnership, and whether this would lead to more of a London-wide emphasis rather than the Thames Gateway. It would be important for South Essex and North Kent to work together to ensure that the interests of the outer Gateway were recognised. It was pointed out that with the London Mayoral elections and the 2012 Games taking place over the next few months, we would not be able to properly establish a new set of relationships until those events were over.

**Item 3: TGKP Growth Plan – Summary for business community – paper TGKP(12)1**

10. David L-J introduced paper TGKP(12)1. The Growth Plan had been produced with the aim of updating the Partnership's economic and investment priorities. The main document was lengthy and the Officers' Group had identified a need for two summary versions of the plan, one aimed at existing businesses in North Kent and the other at potential inward investors. A draft of the summary for existing North Kent businesses was attached, together with a mock up of what the brochure might look like. The Board's views were sought on the draft.
11. In discussion the following points were made:
  - the draft was a good one, but more emphasis could be given to wider quality of life issues, such as place making, leisure destinations, education etc.
  - the proposed actions were still very general. It would be necessary to set out more specific actions - if not in this summary, then in a separate document. David L-J responded that the intention was indeed to prepare a separate Work Plan, following the Board workshop.
  - we needed to be clear how we wanted businesses to respond to the document.
12. Summing up, the Chair said that any further comments, particularly from private sector Board members, would be welcome. **The recommendation in paragraph 5 of the paper was agreed** ie that a final version of the summary be produced, taking account of the comments made, for sign off by the Officers' Group and that the Plan be launched at a suitable event such as the proposed business breakfast.

**Action: The TGKP team to revise the summary document in the light of comments and submit final version to the Officers' Group for approval**

**Item 4: Business Engagement Events – paper TGKP(12)2**

13. Katharine Harvey introduced her paper which proposed two different types of event: a business breakfast aimed at large North Kent companies, to be held around April/May time; and an Investment Panel/Spotlight event aimed at

potential investors to be held late May/June. Each event would be supported by the two different versions of the Growth Plan.

14. The Chair invited the Board's comments on the proposals:

- there was strong support for holding the event for existing businesses.
- there was also support in principle for holding an event aimed at investors but the £15,000 cost quoted for the event was excessive.
- it was also suggested that the event for investors would be better held at a later date when there might be more to say in terms of progress on key sites.
- it was important to make the link between business and the FE and HE institutions. The event for existing businesses could be held at the University campus.
- there was some debate on whether it was right to focus on larger companies. Some felt that large companies, particularly national companies with HQs based outside North Kent, would not attend such an event. On the other hand it was felt that there were plenty of events held for SMEs and that this was a gap that TGKP could fill.
- it was suggested there should be a series of events, perhaps 3 or 4 per year, which ideally should be timed to coincide with major announcements.

15. Summing up, the Chair said that the clear view of the discussion was that we should proceed with an event aimed at existing, larger companies in North Kent. There was also support in principle for an event targeted at potential investors but that it was felt this second event should be deferred until a later date.

**Action: TGKP to make arrangements for a business breakfast event for existing businesses, to be held in April or May.**

#### **Item 5: Thames Gateway Strategic Group**

16. David L-J outlined the arrangements for the next TGSG meeting, which would now be held on 20 or 21 March. The focus of the meeting would be on major infrastructure issues including Junction 30/31 of the M25, the Lower Thames Crossing, and the GLA's ideas for a Thames estuary airport. David L-J asked if TGKP needed to take a view on the airport issues in advance of the meeting.

17. Following a brief discussion, **it was agreed** that it was not necessary for the Partnership to take a view at this stage. The South East LEP was about to commission a study into airport capacity, which would take about a month to complete. In addition, the Government would be consulting on airport issues. The Partnership would no doubt want to consider its response once that consultation had been issued.

## **Item 6: Growing Places Fund/Get Britain Building Programme: progress of North Kent schemes**

18. On the Growing Places Fund, the Board were informed that a number of North Kent schemes were included in the top two categories for funding. The LEP Executive had asked for further information on schemes by 9 March in order to reach final decisions on which schemes should be supported.
19. On Get Britain Building, Rob Moore, HCA, said applications had been received from the following:
  - Sittingbourne Mill
  - Victory Pier
  - St Mary's Island
  - Ingress Park
20. Rob said that HCA would be making final decisions by the end of March.

## **Item 7: Kent and Medway Economic Assets: Update on Stewardship of Land and Property Assets**

21. Rob Moore advised the Board that a Stewardship meeting had been held immediately before today's Board meeting, and he gave members a summary of the outcome of the meeting.

## **Item 8: Updates on current issues from members**

22. The Chair invited each member to give a brief update on any current issues or developments.

## **Item 9: Budget Report and TGKP Future Funding – paper TGKP(12)3**

23. The Budget Report was for noting.

## **Item 11: Economic Outlook and Policy Update – paper TGKP(12)5**

24. Katharine Harvey introduced the paper and said that comments on the format were welcomed from the Board.
25. It was argued that a simpler, more graphic, 'dashboard' style of presentation for the Economic Outlook would be helpful.
26. The Chair said it would be helpful to receive any further comments to ensure that the information was presented in the most convenient form for members.  
**Action: Katharine Harvey to revise the reports in the light of comments made.**

## **Item 11: AOB**

27. No other business, the meeting closed at 4.33pm

**Thames Gateway Kent Partnership  
February 2012**