



Thames Gateway Kent Partnership AGM

Approved Minutes of the **16th Thames Gateway Kent Partnership Annual General Meeting** held in Darwin Room, Innovation Centre Medway, 2.30pm on **Tuesday 6 December 2016**.

Present:

Board members and observers

Kamal Aggarwal, Thomson, Snell and Passmore
Rob Bennett, BBP Regeneration (Chair)
Cllr Andrew Bowles, Leader, Swale Borough Council
Cllr Rodney Chambers, Medway Council
Cllr Mark Dance, Kent County Council
Robert Goodman, Bluewater, Land Securities
Ann Komzolik, North Kent College
Paul Spooner, Ebbsfleet Development Corporation

Also present:

Jan Challis, Highways England
Neil Davies, Medway 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
David Smith, Kent County Council
Silvia To, LTC Cascade

Apologies:

Rehman Chishti, Member of Parliament
Cllr John Cubitt, Leader, Gravesham Borough Council
Alan Everard, Tarmac
Julie Foley, Environment Agency
Terry Fuller, Homes and Communities Agency
Cllr Jeremy Kite, Leader, Dartford Borough Council
Professor Alan Reed, University of Greenwich

Item 1: Welcome, Apologies and Matters Arising from the Minutes of the 15th Annual General Meeting held on 3 December 2015

1. The Chairman welcomed the Board to the 16th AGM. An ordinary Board meeting would follow-on from this AGM.
2. The Chairman welcomed: Jan Challis, Stakeholder Engagement/Communications Manager, Highways England, and Silvia To, Stakeholder Engagement Manager, LTC Cascade, who were attending for Item 3 on the Board Agenda 'Update on the Lower Thames Crossing'.
3. The Chairman informed the Board of apologies received (see list above).
4. The Chairman advised this would be Abdool Kara's last Board meeting as he would be leaving Swale Borough Council in February 2017 to take up a senior post at the National Audit Office. The Chairman thanked Abdool on behalf of the whole Board for the tremendous contribution he had made to the Partnership's work, both at Board meetings and in the Officers' Group, over more than seven years.
5. The Minutes of the AGM held on 3 December 2015 had been previously agreed at the Board meeting held on 23 February 2016.
6. Matters arising:

Paragraph 24: The Chair reported that, as agreed, the scope for rearranging timings of 2016 Board meetings had been explored and, as a result, the 12 September meeting had been moved to a later time of 4.30-6.30pm. Canvassing for availability for 2017 Board meetings had led to three out of four meetings next year being arranged for the later 4.30-6.30pm time slot.

Item 2: Chairman's Report 2016 - paper TGKP(16)18

7. The Chairman introduced his Annual Report and began by thanking all Board members, observers and their advisers for their positive and constructive contributions to the Partnership's work over the year.
8. The Chairman noted that in his Report he had described 2016 as a 'tumultuous year' in terms of national/international events, not least the EU referendum in June. However, the policy and organisational landscape in which the Partnership operated had been more settled this year than in the recent past. There had been changes, of course. A new Government Ministerial team had been appointed in the Summer, and that included a change in Ministerial responsibility for the Thames Gateway with Gavin Barwell MP taking over from Mark Francois MP.
9. An important new initiative to impact on the Partnership's work had been the setting up of the Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission headed by Lord Heseltine. The Chairman said he welcomed the establishment of the Commission; he felt it was a recognition by Government of the continued importance of the Thames Gateway. The Partnership had been heavily engaged with the Commission and its officials from the

outset. He saw this as an opportunity to raise our sights above the more immediate challenges we faced, and to think through some of the longer-term, strategic issues that were vital to the future success of the area.

10. The Chairman said we had a strong and established partnership, which had continued to work closely with SELEP at the overall LEP level, and with the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership at the federal level. He was pleased that partnership working with our neighbouring areas had broadened further during the year, for example with the London Borough of Bexley on building the business case for the Crossrail extension, with Maidstone Borough Council on the North Kent Enterprise Zone, and with Thanet and Canterbury Councils on the Thames Estuary Growth Commission.

11. The Chairman drew attention to a number of highlights this year:

- The TGKP team had devoted a significant proportion of its time to getting ready for the (now renamed) North Kent Enterprise Zone (NKEZ) coming into force on 1 April 2017. The newly established NKEZ Strategic Board had met twice this year to consider the arrangements, including the Memorandum of Understanding and the draft Implementation Plan. The three locations that made up the NKEZ - Ebbsfleet Garden City, Rochester Airport and Kent Medical Campus – had been busy drawing up the plans for their specific sites. The Chairman thanked all colleagues for their continued hard work in preparing for the EZ and, in particular, Richard Longman for his work as project group coordinator.
- In March the Partnership had agreed and submitted a detailed and comprehensive response to Highways England’s consultation on the route of the Lower Thames Crossing, despite the differing views held within the Partnership on the preferred location for the new crossing. A decision by Government on the preferred route was still awaited; this issue was to be discussed at the Board meeting following the AGM.
- As previously mentioned, TGKP had been working closely with the Thames Estuary Growth Commission, both directly through our response to the ‘Call for Ideas’, and indirectly, with our Essex and London partners, through the Thames Gateway Strategic Group (TGSG). This work was important, not least because, as the Commission included Ministers in its membership, its recommendations could be expected to carry weight with Government.
- We had again been active in supporting the work of TGSG during the year, for example in responding to the then Thames Gateway Minister’s challenge to identify priority transport infrastructure projects. TGKP, working with Kent County Council (KCC), had led on the development of a Thames Gateway Transport Prospectus setting out the ‘Top Ten’ transport investments needed to unlock the potential growth in the Gateway. The Prospectus had been well received and endorsed by TGSG.
- One of the ‘Top Ten’ investment priorities identified in the Prospectus was the extension of Crossrail from Abbey Wood to Ebbsfleet and Gravesend. TGKP, KCC,

Dartford and Gravesham Borough Councils, and the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation had been working closely with London partners to develop the outline business case. £20,000 of TGKP's budget had been committed to the work, and TGKP had played a useful role in facilitating senior-level discussions on the strategic issues that needed to be considered alongside the technical preparation of the business case. The Chairman said he was grateful to Dartford Council for hosting a meeting with Bexley Council in October.

- TGKP had again sponsored, exhibited and hosted a seminar at this year's North Kent B2B event in June at Buckmore Park. Also, as part of our efforts to support key sectors in North Kent, working with Kent County Council, TGKP had hosted two meetings of the Construction Guild at the Innovation Centre, and were actively involved in the development of the Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Guild.
 - Finally, as ever there had been a number of interesting and stimulating presentations at our Board meetings; for example from Paul Spooner, in May, on the exciting plans and progress being made to create Ebbsfleet Garden City, and from Robert Goodman and Neil Carron, in September, on the plans for expansion and evolution of Bluewater.
13. The Chairman advised that there had been several changes in Board membership and representation since the last AGM:
- Alan Everard had replaced David Simms as Tarmac's representative on the Board;
 - Paul Spooner had taken over as Chief Executive of Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, and hence become the Corporation's representative on the Board;
 - Professor Alan Reed, University of Greenwich, had taken Martin Davies' place as the HE representative; and
 - Julie Foley had replaced Andrew Pearce as the Environment Agency's representative.
14. The Chairman said TGKP's income for 2016/2017 was forecast to be £235,368. A budget has been set for the year of £267,725. Actual expenditure for the year would depend largely on how much of the discretionary activities budget was utilised, but the current forecast was for an outturn of £272,271. The excess of expenditure over in-year income could be accommodated through utilising some of the Partnership's accumulated reserve.
15. The Chairman said he was very grateful to the five local authorities, and to Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, for their financial support for the Partnership and to Medway Council for providing the financial services.
16. The Chairman also thanked Medway Council for continuing to provide legal services and Swale Borough Council for providing HR services to the Partnership.
17. There had been no changes to the TGKP team in 2016 and the Chairman thanked David, Richard, and Linda for their continued hard work and commitment.

18. The Chairman asked the Board to note that, although this was not David's last Board meeting, it would be his last AGM, as he was retiring in April 2017. He therefore wanted to record his gratitude and thanks to David for his contribution over the last eleven years.
19. Looking forward to 2017, the Chairman said some of the key priorities for 2016/2017 were already becoming clear:
 - We should continue to engage actively with the Thames Estuary Growth Commission and be ready to respond creatively and constructively to their interim report in March and final report next Autumn.
 - We must make renewed efforts to press the case with Government for the investment needed in infrastructure. The inadequacy of the infrastructure, notably transport infrastructure, was the single biggest impediment to sustainable economic growth.
 - Whatever the Government's decision was on the preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing route, the Chairman said he wanted the Partnership to come together to agree an approach that recognised the need to get the Crossing delivered as quickly as possible, whilst minimising and mitigating environmental impacts to the greatest possible extent, and that also recognised the need to tackle the wider transport infrastructure needs on the routes to the Crossing from the Channel Ports.
 - Another key priority would be the successful implementation of the Enterprise Zone. This would be the single most important action we could take to support key industry sectors in North Kent. However, the Chairman said he would also want to focus on the needs of businesses in our key sectors more generally, so that we could reflect their concerns in our plans and actions.
 - In that context we needed to ensure that new access to finance regime being launched early next year, using recycled Tiger funds, met the requirements of North Kent businesses.
20. The Chairman said it had been a great privilege to serve as TGKP's Chairman in 2016, and he thanked everyone for the help and support they had given to him over the year. Furthermore, he said he looked forward to working with everyone over the next year, which he felt sure would bring new and interesting challenges.
21. Cllr Andrew Bowles, as Vice Chairman, thanked Rob Bennett on behalf of the whole Board for the continued dedication and commitment he had shown as Chairman throughout the year.

Item 3: Board Elections – paper by the Chief Executive TGKP(16)19

22. David Liston-Jones introduced the Board Elections paper and explained the requirement to elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the Board.

23. Chairman: Cllr Andrew Bowles nominated Rob Bennett to be Chairman. This was seconded by Cllr Mark Dance. Rob Bennett was duly re-elected as Chairman of the Board.
24. Vice Chairman: Cllr Rodney Chambers nominated Cllr Andrew Bowles to be Vice Chairman. This was seconded by Mark Dance. Cllr Andrew Bowles was duly re-elected as Vice Chairman of the Board.
25. David Liston-Jones 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.
26. Lead Body for Employment of Staff: Cllr Andrew Bowles confirmed Swale Borough Council was content 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.
27. Lead Body for Financial Services: Cllr Rodney Chambers confirmed that 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.
28. The Chairman reported that a timetable for future meetings of the Board had been scheduled for 2017 as below. All meetings would be held at the Innovation Centre Medway, Maidstone Road, Chatham:
 - Tuesday 21 February 4.30-6.30pm
 - Tuesday 16 May 2.00-4.00pm
 - Thursday 21 September 4.30-6.30pm
 - Thursday 14 December 4.30-6.30pm

Item 4: Any other Business

29. There were no items of other business.