

Thames Gateway Kent Partnership Board

APPROVED Minutes of the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership Board Meeting held in Darwin Room, Innovation Centre Medway, on 3 June 2019 commencing at 4.30pm.

Present:

Board members and observers

Rob Bennett, BBP Regeneration / SQW (Chair, RB)
 Cllr Monique Bonney, Swale Borough Council (MB)
 Cllr John Burden, Gravesham Borough Council (JB)
 Cllr Martin Cox, Maidstone Borough Council (MC)
 Cllr Mark Dance, Kent County Council (MD)
 Cllr Alan Jarrett, Medway Council (AJ)
 Cllr Jeremy Kite, Dartford Borough Council (JK)
 Robert Goodman, Land Securities/Bluewater (RG)
 Tony Inglis, University of Kent (deputizing for Carole Barron, TI)
 Ann Komzolik, North Kent College (AK)
 Ian Piper, Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (IP)

Also present:

Cllr Paul Carter, Kent County Council (PC)
 Cllr Roger Truelove, Swale Borough Council (RT)
 Neil Davies, Medway Council (ND)
 John Foster, Maidstone Borough Council (JF)
 David Godfrey, Kent County Council (DG)
 David Hughes, Gravesham Borough Council (DH)
 Richard Longman, TGKP (RL)
 Iain McNab, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (IMcN)
 Matthew Norwell, TGKP (MN)
 David Smith, Kent County Council (DS)

Apologies:

Kamal Aggarwal, Thomson, Snell and Passmore
 Carole Barron, University of Kent
 Alison Broom, Maidstone Borough Council
 Adam Bryan, South East LEP
 Rehman Chishti, Member of Parliament
 Daniel Ghinn, Creation Interactive Ltd
 Graham Harris, Dartford Borough Council

Mark Heeley, Tarmac
 Sarah Nurden, Kent County Council
 Paul Jackson, Dovetail Games
 Paul Kitson, Homes and Communities Agency
 Richard Penn, Environment Agency
 Emma Wiggins, Swale Borough Council

Action

Item 1. Welcome and Apologies

- 1.1. Following the local elections, the Chairman welcomed new Council nominees Cllr Monique Bonney for Swale Borough Council and Cllr John Burden for Gravesham Borough Council. He also welcomed Cllr Paul Carter and Cllr Roger Truelove who had a particular interest in item 3 of the Agenda.

Item 2. Presentation – TGKP today

- 2.1. Matthew Norwell (MN) gave a brief [presentation](#) to advise both new and existing Board Members of some of TGKP's key achievements, objectives, metrics and work programme components related to current challenges and opportunities.
- 2.2. A series of questions and answers highlighted the growth that has already taken place but shortfalls in promised infrastructure and the ongoing challenge of getting sufficient traction with Government over the need for investment. The Partnership had a role in articulating the case for infrastructure to address both existing deficits and new provision to support further growth, recognizing the Government's overwhelming focus (in this context) on housing. Members

suggested there could be value in carrying out or commissioning a specific piece of work distilling gaps where promised infrastructure has not yet been delivered and what mechanisms might be needed (e.g. land value capture) to address these.

Action: MN and RL to examine further.

- 2.3. Particular concerns were expressed about health-related infrastructure, where debates around provision might be most effectively pursued (e.g. the Sustainability & Transformation Plan Board), and whether there was a role for TGKP on this agenda. This might be a matter for the Board to consider at a future meeting.

Item 3. Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission and Government's Response – TGKP 19030(1)

- 3.1. MN introduced the paper which set out: the main ingredients of the Government's response to the Commission's recommendations; initial thinking about both the role and process for establishing a Thames Estuary 'Envoy' and Growth Board; key work streams of particular interest to TGKP; a possible 'launch' event involving the Secretary of State; and potential next steps on raising the Thames Estuary's profile through place branding and marketing.
- 3.2. In discussion, Board Members and Observers made a number of observations:
- The Government's response was generally positive and provided a number of 'hooks' to shape future interventions in the Estuary.
 - The opportunity was there for North Kent partners to engage with enthusiasm and seek to influence things that are particularly important to us, such as C2E and Thames Estuary Production Corridor. It would be short-sighted not to seize the opportunities the Commission's work and Government's response provided.
 - The funding commitments in the Government's response (e.g. to set up the Envoy and Growth Board, next steps on C2E, Cultural Development Fund award and other minor sums for feasibility studies etc) were potentially the tip of the iceberg. It was up to TGKP and other Estuary partners to set the agenda.
 - North Kent authorities had a stronger voice working collectively. Both strategically and tactically we should not forget that the Thames Estuary was competing for investment and attention with other areas (e.g. Northern Powerhouse, Midlands Engine, Oxford-Cambridge Arc).
 - Partners did have a number of misgivings:
 - There was a degree of scepticism about the role of the Envoy and how seriously Government would engage with him/her;
 - The remit of the proposed Growth Board needed to be crystal clear both to avoid the shortcomings of past attempts at pan-Gateway governance and to avoid conflict where powers and responsibilities rightly lie at local level. The Board was reminded that the proposed nature and composition of that Board had been agreed by TGSG in November 2018.

Action

- There was a lack of trust in Government promises or signals about investment, based on past experience as reflected in the discussion on Item 2;
 - There was strong resistance to any suggestion that local areas might be pressured into accepting development corporations. There might be situations where the locally-led development corporation model or other special purpose vehicle could have some attractions; but generally there was a preference to work through existing structures, with a strong emphasis on democratic accountability.
 - Further thought was needed on appropriate engagement with Canterbury and Thanet, recognising that the Thames Estuary remit overlays the existing North Kent and East Kent clusters.
 - North Kent was feeling the pain of outward pressures from London e.g. in homelessness presentations, loss of commercial space to housing (particularly through PDRs) and it seemed unlikely that Mayor's goal for London to accommodate the vast majority of its own growth could be achieved.
- 3.3. In conclusion, it was agreed that the Chairman should write to the Secretary of State on behalf of the TGKP Board articulating the Board's reactions to the Government's response and highlighting our priorities, points of consensus and concerns. **Action: MN to circulate draft for clearance; Board Members to comment; Chairman to sign-off final version.**
- 3.4. The Board noted that Kent CC and LB Bexley were collaborating on hosting an event, intended to be on 16 July, to which the Secretary of State for MHCLG was being invited. This would be an opportunity to raise awareness of the Government's response to the Estuary Commission's report. KCC and LBB were keen to spread the invitation wide to businesses and community leaders and Board Members were encouraged to pass it on via their networks once issued.
- 3.5. MN reminded the Board of the work undertaken by SevenHills consultancy developing ideas on Thames Estuary place-branding and marketing. There was scope to build on these foundations and it was expected the Envoy and Growth Board would take a particular lead on this in promoting the Estuary as a location for inward investment. The Board was generally supportive of this initiative and asked to be kept up to date with any proposals as these evolve.

**MN, Board
Members,
RB**

Item 4. Minutes of the Board meeting held on 18 February 2019 (TGKP 190603(2))

- 4.1. The Minutes were agreed. On matters arising where actions were incomplete:
- 4.1.1. Budget. A note on the draft 2019/20 Budget had been circulated to the Officers' Group. ND, MN and DS had met once and action rested with them to agree proposals that could be shared first with the Officers' Group and then brought to this Board for final determination, if necessary electronically.
- 4.1.2. Vice Chairmanship. The position of Vice-Chair was now vacant following the recent local elections. RB paid tribute to Andrew Bowles' contribution as Vice Chair over many years. He suggested the public sector Members take this away for separate discussion and bring back a proposal to the next Board meeting for

ND, DS, MN

consideration. **Action: Local authority representatives to bring proposal to next Board, liaising with the TGKP Chief Executive.**

Action
AJ, JK, JB,
MC, MB, MD;
MN

Item 5. Nomination of Daniel Ghinn as Private Sector Board Member

- 5.1. Daniel was unfortunately unable to be present because of business in the USA. His nomination had been discussed at the last meeting and a biographical note circulated to the Board. Board Members were unanimous in approving Daniel's nomination to the Board.

Action: RB to write formally to Daniel Ghinn confirming his membership.

RB

Item 6. AOB

- 6.1. The Chairman and Chief Executive observed that the timing of TGKP Board meetings was not conducive to securing private sector member attendance. Whilst separate meetings were arranged with private sector members, the Board needed as full participation as possible to fulfil its role. It was proposed and agreed that a 'breakfast' meeting (8-10am) should be tried as an alternative.

Action: TGKP team to canvass for diary availability for an 8-10am meeting.

MN, RL

- 6.2. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 6.50pm.

TGKP, July 2019