



Thames Gateway Kent Partnership Board

APPROVED Minutes of the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership Board Annual General Meeting held in Sunderland Room, Innovation Centre Medway, on 10th December 2019

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 Mike Whiting, Kent County Council (MD)
Cllr Alan Jarrett, Medway Council (AJ)
Cllr Jeremy Kite, Dartford Borough Council (JK)
Daniel Ghinn, Creation Interactive Ltd (DG)
Robert Goodman, Land Securities/Bluewater (RG)
Ian Piper, Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (IP)
Ann Komzolik, North Kent College (AK)

Also present:

Alison Broom, Maidstone Borough Council (AB)
Neil Davies, Medway Council (ND)
David Hughes, Gravesham Borough Council (DH)
Richard Longman, TGKP (RL)
Matthew Norwell, TGKP (MN)
David Smith, Kent County Council (DS)
Emma Wiggins, Swale Borough Council (EW)

Apologies:

Cllr John Burden, Gravesham BC
Kamal Aggarwal, Thomson, Snell and Passmore
Mark Heeley, Tarmac
Shona Johnstone, Homes England
Graham Harris, Dartford Borough Council

Paul Jackson, Dovetail Games
Sally Harvey, Environment Agency (SH)
Carole Barron and Lucy Druesne, University of Kent
Iain McNab, BEIS
Adam Bryan, South East LEP
Rehman Chishti, Member of Parliament

Item 1. Welcome, Introductions and Matters arising from the Minutes of the 18th Annual General Meeting held on 13th December 2018

- 1.1. The Chairman welcome those present and noted apologies as shown above.
- 1.2. The Minutes of the last AGM were approved by the Board at its meeting on 18th February 2019. There were no matters arising not on the agenda.

Item 2. Chairman's Report 2019 – paper AGM 191210(1)

- 2.1. The Chairman started by thanking the Board for their support over the past year. He highlighted some of the key events and activities of TGKP during 2019. Foremost among these were the long-awaited government response to the Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission's report, and the energy TGKP and its counterparts in Essex and London had injected into the process of getting the Thames Estuary Envoy appointed this autumn. The Thames Estuary Production Corridor was gathering momentum, and TGKP had played no small part in helping secure Arts Council funding of £4.3m to support a varied programme of activity to help deliver it. Similarly our work with partners in Kent and London had helped secure a commitment for £4.85m for further work on C2E, connectivity to Ebbsfleet. TGKP had continued to play a part engaging on issues of pan-Estuary significance such as the Lower Thames Crossing, well as working with partners on more localized issues (such as on high streets and town centres) and in consortia bidding for external funds (e.g. Innovate UK).

- 2.2. The Chairman expressed appreciation for the input from Private Sector Board Members through their regular separate meetings, and had been particularly pleased to welcome Daniel Ghinn onto the Board earlier in the year. The Chairman reminded the Board that there remained a Private Sector vacancy which he was keen to see filled.
- 2.3. The Board had seen some changes particularly in its public sector representation following the May local elections and more recent Cabinet changes at Kent County Council. The Chairman paid tribute to the contribution made by Andrew Bowles, David Turner and Mark Dance over a number of years. The Chairman noted that this was Ann Komzolik's last meeting as an Observer on the TGKP Board, before her retirement in January 2020. He thanked Ann, unanimously endorsed by the Board, for her firm and long-standing support for TGKP over many years and wished her a happy retirement.
- 2.4. On budget, the Chairman thanked the local authority partners and Ebbsfleet Development Corporation for their financial contributions towards the Partnership's work. Spending had been kept tight and on current trajectory would result in a modest underspend.
- 2.5. The Chairman's report also looked ahead to potential opportunities arising in the year ahead, many linked to the evolving work at Thames Estuary level. Once that agenda was more crystallized, the Board might wish to re-visit this Partnership's longer term strategy. The "Plan for Growth 2014-20" was nearing its horizon and the Board might want to look at developing a successor.
- 2.6. Medway Council and Swale Borough Council were thanked for their continued support as lead bodies for financial, legal and HR matters. The Chairman also took the opportunity to thank the TGKP team – Matthew and Richard – for their hard work and support during the past year.

Item 3. TGKP Budget – paper AGM 191210(2)

- 3.1. MN quickly summarized the paper. The outturn for 2019/20 was heading for around £210,000 (depending on any calls made on the consultancy budget) which would mean around £41,000 being added to the TGKP reserve. The underspend was largely a produce of not yet recruiting to the vacant third team member post and not making any substantive calls on the activities (consultancies) budget. The paper noted that on this basis the reserve would therefore stand at over £420,000.
- 3.2. The Chairman invited Neil Davies to report on discussions that had been held by Greater North Kent Leaders. ND explained that the Leaders had asked for a review of TGKP, which had been carried out by officers at Medway Council. The conclusion of that review was that the Leaders' Group valued the work of the Partnership and wanted to see it continue, particularly helping ensure close alignment with the work of the Thames Estuary Growth Board and Envoy.
- 3.3. The Leaders' Group appreciated that the TGKP team's efforts to run a lean operation. But the accumulated reserve now far exceeded what was needed to provide for a controlled exit, were that to happen. The Leaders therefore wanted to see the balance beyond the minimum necessary to be redistributed to partners on the basis of historical contributions at the end of this financial year. At the same time, partners committed to maintain the level of their subscriptions in 2020/21 at the current level and asked TGKP to set a budget based on income of £252k. RL commented that this might enable recruitment to the vacant post or an activities budget but possibly not both. ND advised that the North Kent Leaders did not favour recruitment in current circumstances. There might, however, be scope to draw upon the budget committed to support the Thames Estuary Envoy: that should be explored further in 2020.
- 3.4. The Board agreed that the 2020/21 budget should be set at £252,000 and that partner subscriptions should remain at the same level as 2019/20. The redistribution of uncommitted

accumulated reserve would be administered by Medway Council, **with the detail sorted out via the Officers' Group during the last quarter of the financial year.**

Item 4. Board Elections – paper AGM 191210(3)

- 4.1. Chairman. Cllr Kite thanked Rob Bennett for his continued contribution as TGKP Chairman and proposed his re-election to that role. This was approved by the Board.
- 4.2. Vice-Chairman. Following nomination by the Greater North Kent Leaders' Group, the Board approved Cllr Jarrett to serve as Vice-Chairman of TGKP.
- 4.3. Lead Bodies. Following confirmation that they were content to continue in these roles,
 - 4.3.1. Medway Council was re-appointed as Accountable Body for the Partnership and Lead Body for Financial Services and Legal Services;
 - 4.3.2. Swale Borough Council was re-appointed as Lead body for Human Resources (Employment of staff).

Item 5. AOB

- 5.1. Cllr Jarrett suggested it might be appropriate in 2020 to reconsider the name of the Partnership now that 'Thames Gateway' no longer had the same currency with government or the wider community. **This would be explored by the Officers' Group**, but the Board stressed that they had no appetite for an expensive re-branding exercise.
- 5.2. Dates of Board Meetings in 2020. These were confirmed as **9th March, 8th June, 21st September and 15th December (with AGM)**, all at 2.30-4.30pm and to be held in the Innovation Centre Medway.
- 5.3. There being no other business, the AGM concluded at 6.30pm.

TGKP
19 December 2019