



Thames Gateway Kent Partnership

BOARD MEETING

Approved Minutes of the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership Board Meeting held in Darwin Room, Innovation Centre Medway, at 3.00pm-4.30pm, on **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
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

1. Item 1: Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1. The Chairman welcomed attendees to the Board meeting, apologies were the same as for the AGM and noted above.

2. Item 2: Minutes of TGKP Board Meeting on 12 September 2016 and Matters Arising

- 2.1. The draft minutes of the 12 September 2016 Board meeting **were agreed as a true record**. The Chairman advised that the short TIGER Strategic Board meeting, which had taken place in the middle of the last meeting, had been minuted separately. **On matters arising:**

- Paragraph 1.2: Actioned. The Chairman confirmed he had written to Ross Gill to thank him, on behalf of the whole board, for his work in support of the Partnership.
- Paragraph 2.1 (paragraph 7.5): David Liston-Jones stated that he had met with Chris Moore and Rob Moore of HCA last week to discuss a number of issues, including the historically low take-up of HCA programmes in North Kent. HCA reported that there had been an increase in take-up recently. David said that HCA had also briefed him on their current restructuring exercise. A new operating model was being introduced, with streamlined management tiers. As a result there was no HCA representative able to attend today's meeting; a new HCA representative to sit on the TGKP Board would be confirmed in due course. In discussion it was reported that Paul Kitson was to be the new General Manager for East and South East, and it was proposed that Paul be invited to attend the Board meetings. **ACTION: David Liston-Jones to contact Paul Kitson to invite him to represent HCA at TGKP Board meetings.**
- The Chairman commented that the Partnership should do more to explore the opportunities for working with HCA on taking forward key developments, particularly its investment activity. In discussion it was argued that there was considerable flexibility in the types of assistance that HCA could now offer. It was suggested that Paul Kitson, and also Sir Edward Lister, as the new HCA Chairman, should be invited to visit North Kent to see some of the development sites. The Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework would be a good place to start in identifying the key projects. **ACTION: TGKP team to explore scope for further joint working with HCA on the Partnership's priorities.**
- Paragraph 5.5: Actioned. TGKP's response to the Thames Estuary Growth Commission's 'Call for Ideas' had been submitted. An update on the work of the Growth Commission was included in the Chief Executive's report.
- Paragraph 7.5: David Liston-Jones advised that the process for recruiting his successor had been actioned as agreed. An update on the process was included in the Chief Executive's report.
- Paragraph 7.6: Invitation to the new Thames Gateway Minister, Gavin Barwell MP, to visit North Kent. David Liston-Jones said he had explored with BEIS/DCLG the possibility of the Minister attending the next Board meeting in February, but the Minister would not be available on that date. In discussion **it was agreed** that a proposal for a visit should be built around an appropriate event - for example an opening or completion, or other key milestone - on one of the major

housing developments. **ACTION: Board members to forward suggestions to David Liston-Jones.**

- Paragraph 8.2: Actioned. David Liston-Jones said he had contacted Professor Reed and had met with him to brief him on the Partnership's work.

3. ITEM 3: Update on the Lower Thames Crossing

- 3.1. The Chairman began by welcoming Jan Challis and Sylvia To from Highways England to the meeting. He explained to Board members that this item had originally been scheduled for this meeting in the hope, and expectation, that there would have been an announcement by the Government on the preferred route by now. Unfortunately no announcement had yet been made. However, Jan Challis and Sylvia To had agreed to attend to update the Board and answer members' questions.
- 3.2. Jan Challis advised that Martin Potts, who had represented HE at previous Board meetings, had moved on to a new post within Highways England. Jan said that 47,000 responses had been received to the route consultation. This was the biggest response to a consultation in roads history in the UK. He said that an announcement on the preferred route would be made by the Government in due course. He appreciated that this was not the message members wished to hear but he would do his best to answer any questions that members had.
- 3.3. In discussion a number of points were made, including:
 - members expressed bitter disappointment that the Government had not yet made the announcement, and expressed grave concern that there could be further delay. It was essential that the Partnership and members kept up the pressure on Government to reach an early decision. This was a critical national infrastructure issue. Traffic levels were increasing year on year, and the existing crossing and road network could not cope. Local communities were badly affected, unable to move about freely and local businesses were unable to operate effectively. Air quality around the existing crossing was poor and failing national regulations;
 - even if a decision was made now, it would take ten years before the new Crossing was operational. Members asked what measures were planned for the next five years, and for the five years after that, to minimize the problems, including delays and poor air quality, whilst we waited for the new crossing. Jan Challis replied that Highways England was looking at short term as well as long term measures;
 - members offered to assist Highways England if any further work or information was needed to support the business case, possibly by setting up a task team involving TGKP and the LEP. Jan Challis thanked Board members for the offer, and said he would take that back to colleagues and let the Board know if any assistance was required. **Action: TGKP to formalise the offer of assistance from partners. Jan Challis to let TGKP know if it wished to take up the Partnership's offer of assistance;**
 - members asked whether the delay in making an announcement meant that the planned 2025 date for completion of the new crossing was at risk. Jan Challis

responded by saying they were still working to the 2025 date for completion and had no plans to change the timescale;

- members commented that the Crossing should not be considered as being in competition for funding with other infrastructure requirements elsewhere in the country as it was widely recognised that, with tolling, the crossing would be self financing.

3.4. **The Chairman thanked Jan and Sylvia for attending the meeting and for briefing members on the latest position. The Board agreed** that, assuming no announcement was made by the end of the calendar year, the Chairman should write to the Secretary of State for Transport, copied to the Thames Estuary Growth Commission, expressing the Partnership's grave concern over the delay. **Action: TGKP team to prepare draft letter for Chairman to approve.**

4. **Item 4 : New private-sector Board members – David Liston-Jones – verbal update**

4.1. David Liston-Jones briefed the Board on two possible candidates to be invited to become Board members. Following discussion, the Board decided not to proceed with one of the invitations as there was not a consensus amongst all Board members. However, the **Board agreed unanimously** that Paul Jackson, CEO of Dovetail Games, be invited to join the Board (Dovetail Games to become the member with Paul Jackson as the company's representative on the Board). **ACTION: David Liston-Jones to notify both candidates of the Board's decisions, and the Chairman to write formally to Paul Jackson to invite him to join the Board.**

5. **Item 5: Budget Report and funding for 2017/2018 – Paper TGKP(16)20**

5.1. David Liston-Jones introduced his and Ajit Kaur's report which updated the Board on income and expenditure for 2016/17 and sought the Board's agreement to the level of funding contributions to be requested from local authorities for 2017/2018.

5.2. David said that the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation had agreed to make a contribution of £5,000 for this financial year and for the next financial year. Furthermore Maidstone Borough Council had agreed to make a contribution of £11,368 in recognition of Richard Longman's work on the implementation of the Enterprise Zone. David said that he expected the final outturn for 2016/2017 to be close to the agreed budget figure of £267,725. Forecast expenditure on consultants/activities had been reduced, but this was offset by expenditure on recruitment for the Chief executive post, which had not been included in the original budget for the year. **The Board noted the position on income and expenditure for 2016/2017.**

5.3. Turning to 2017/2018 David said that the paper set out the likely position in terms of forecast income and expenditure. Keeping local authority contributions at the same level in cash terms as for the current year would enable the Partnership to continue its operations as now. There would be a shortfall between income and expenditure but this could be accommodated through utilizing the accumulated reserve.

5.4. David reported that the Officers' Group had considered funding for next year at its meeting on 23 November. The Group's recommendation to the Board was that local authorities should agree to maintain contributions to TGKP at current levels in cash terms for 2017/2018 ie Kent County Council £90,000, Medway Council £45,000 and

Dartford, Gravesham and Swale Borough Councils £28,000 each.

5.5. In discussion the following points were made:

- Medway Council said that, even though it was forecast there would be a shortfall between income and expenditure next year, the Council could not increase its contribution beyond the current level of £45,000;
- Kent County Council stated that it was their intention, whilst maintaining the level their overall contribution at £90,000, to reduce the amount funded from their revenue budget to £45,000 and to fund the remaining £45,000 through the business rate pooling mechanism. A variety of views were expressed on the use of the business rate pool mechanism for making contributions to the Partnership, including on whether it would be feasible and/or appropriate for the district councils to use this mechanism to fund a proportion of their own contributions to TGKP.

5.6. **The Board agreed that the funding contributions requested from local authorities for 2017/2018 should remain at the same level in cash terms as for 2016/2017.** It would be for local authorities to determine how those contributions were funded and sourced. In that context **Kent County Council agreed** to put a proposal to the other local authorities on how the business rate pooling mechanism could be utilised.
Action: David Smith to put a proposal on use of the business rate pooling mechanism to local authority members for consideration.

5.7. Later in the meeting, under AOB, local authority members expressed the wish that any proposals for changes in the way their contributions were sourced be agreed as quickly as possible, as local authority budgets would be finalised early in the New Year.

6. **ITEM 6 – Crossrail C2G Project Update** – paper TGKP(16)21

6.1. Richard Longman introduced his paper which updated the Board on the C2G project, the anticipated work programme and milestones to complete a full Strategic Outline Business Case. It also invited the Board's views on the future governance of this initiative in order for it to achieve maximum traction with Government and other stakeholders.

6.2. There followed a brief discussion on how the outline business case could be developed and strengthened: this was another area where HCA involvement could be worth exploring, given the primary purpose was sustainable growth as opposed to purely transport outcomes. Members spoke in favour of setting up some specific task-force style governance for the project so as to ensure political engagement and direction for officers.

6.3. **The Chairman thanked Richard for his paper. The Board noted the update, and agreed that governance options be explored.**

7. **Item 7 – Chief Executive's Report** – paper TGKP(16)22

7.1. David Liston-Jones advised his Chief Executive's report included updates on Local Growth Fund Round 3, on the Thames Gateway Strategic Group and Thames Estuary Growth Commission, and on the process for recruiting his successor.

7.2. On the TGKP CE recruitment process David said a sub-group of the Officers' Group

had been taking forward the arrangements. SOLACE had been appointed by Swale Borough Council to run the recruitment campaign. Since his report was written the dates for the assessment centre/final interviews had been fixed for 18th and 19th of January. On the 18th of January there would be a stakeholder panel and also a stakeholder lunch, when Board members could meet the candidates. Any Board members or observers wishing to attend the lunch, or to take part in the stakeholder panel, should contact Emma Wiggins, Interim Regeneration Director at Swale Borough Council.

7.3. The Chairman thanked David for his report. He also thanked Emma Wiggins, on behalf of the Board, for her excellent work in coordinating the arrangements for the CE recruitment.

8. Item 8 – Updates on current issues from members

8.1. There were no further updates from members.

8.2. Richard Longman tabled a paper - TGKP(16)23 - which provided a brief progress report on the establishment of the North Kent Enterprise Zone. The Strategic Board had held its second meeting on 29 November 2016 with Paul Wookey acting as interim Chair for this second meeting, pending a permanent Chairman being appointed. The paper highlighted the added risk to enterprise zone delivery from delays on the announcement of LGF3 project allocations. **The Board noted Richard's report.**

9. Item 9 – Date of Next Meeting

9.1. The next Board meeting would be held on Tuesday 21 February at the later time of 4.30-6.30pm.

10. Item 10 – AOB

10.1. No other business the meeting closed at 4.20pm.

Thames Gateway Kent Partnership

December 2016