



Thames Gateway Kent Partnership Board

Approved Minutes of the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership Board Meeting held in Darwin Room, Innovation Centre Medway, 4.30pm on Tuesday 21 February 2017.

Present:

Board members and observers

Rob Bennett, BBP Regeneration (Chair)
Cllr Andrew Bowles, Swale Borough Council
Cllr Rodney Chambers, Medway Council
Cllr Mark Dance, Kent County Council
Alan Everard, Tarmac
Ann Komzolik, North Kent College
Paul Spooner, Ebbsfleet Development Corporation
Cllr David Turner, Gravesham Borough Council

Also present:

Neil Davies, Medway Council
Graham Harris, Dartford Borough Council
David Hughes, Gravesham Borough Council
David Liston-Jones, Thames Gateway Kent Partnership
Richard Longman, Thames Gateway Kent Partnership
Matthew Norwell
Sarah Nurden, Kent County Council
Richard Penn, Environment Agency
Linda Searle, Thames Gateway Kent Partnership
David Smith, Kent County Council
Jacqui Ward, Kent County Council
Emma Wiggins, Swale Borough Council

Apologies:

Kamal Aggarwal, Thomson, Snell and Passmore
Rehman Chishti, Member of Parliament
Cllr John Cubitt, Leader, Gravesham Borough Council
Julie Foley, Environment Agency
Paul Jackson, Dovetail Games
Robert Goodman, Bluewater, Land Securities
Paul Kitson, Homes and Communities Agency
Cllr Jeremy Kite, Leader, Dartford Borough Council
Professor Alan Reed, University of Greenwich

1. Welcome and Apologies

- 1.1. The Chairman welcomed: **Emma Wiggins**, Regeneration Director, Swale Borough Council who would be attending Board meetings following Abdool Kara's departure and **Matthew Norwell**, who would commence employment as TGKP's Chief Executive on Wednesday 8 March.

- 1.2. The Chairman informed the Board of apologies received (see list above).
- 1.3. The Chairman advised this would be David Liston-Jones' last Board meeting, as he would be retiring as TGKP's Chief Executive on 30 March. The Chairman thanked David on behalf of the whole Board for the tremendous contribution he had made to the Partnership's work for over 11 years.
- 1.4. David said he had very much enjoyed his time at TGKP and thanked all Board members, observers and advisers for their help and support, which had been greatly appreciated. In particular, he wanted to give a huge thanks to Rob Bennett, as Chairman, for his wise counsel and advice over the years, and also to Cllr Andrew Bowles, as Vice-Chairman, and Neil Davies, as Chair of the Officers' Group, for their guidance and advice. Finally, David thanked the TGKP Team, Richard and Linda, for their hard work and for the tremendous support they had given to him as Chief Executive.
- 1.5. David advised he would be holding a leaving event at the Innovation Centre Medway on Wednesday 29 March and invitations would be sent out shortly.

2. Minutes of the AGM and Board meeting held on Tuesday 6 December 2016

- 2.1. The Minutes of the 16th AGM held on Tuesday 6 December were agreed as a true record. There were no matters arising.
- 2.2. The Minutes of the Board meeting held on Tuesday 6 December were agreed as a true record. On matters arising:
 - Item 2.1 Paragraph 2.1 (Paragraph 7.5): David Liston-Jones confirmed he had invited Paul Kitson to represent HCA at TGKP Board meetings and he had agreed. Paul was unable to attend today's meeting, but confirmed he would be attending the May Board meeting.
 - Item 2.1 Paragraph 2.1 (Paragraph 7.5): David Liston-Jones said the TGKP team was continuing to explore scope for further joint working with HCA on the Partnership's priorities. For example, there had been an item on the HCA's Accelerated Delivery proposals on the agenda of the last Officers' Group meeting. **ACTION: TGKP Team to continue to explore scope for further joint working with HCA.**
 - Item 2.1 Paragraph 2.1 (Paragraph 7.6): David Liston-Jones advised that no suggestions from members had so far been received of an event around which a Ministerial visit could be organised. However, Gavin Barwell had recently visited Medway to see a couple of housing schemes as part of a wider trip to Essex and Kent.
 - Paragraph 3.3 and 3.4: Actioned. The TGKP Chair had written to the Secretary of State for Transport on the Lower Thames Crossing. However, no reply had yet been received. [Note: a reply has subsequently been received and is circulated with these minutes for information]. There followed a brief exchange of information on other correspondence Board members were having with DfT Ministers on the issue.
 - Paragraph 4.1: Actioned. Paul Jackson had agreed to join the Board, although he was unable to attend today's meeting due to illness.
 - Paragraph 5.6: David Smith confirmed he would be putting a proposal for the use of the business rate pooling mechanism in writing to local authority members for consideration.

3. Green Paper on Government's Industrial Strategy - paper TGKP(17)1 - Richard Longman

- 3.1. Richard Longman introduced his paper which recommended that TGKP should respond to the Government's consultation on its industrial strategy. The paper invited members' initial views on what the focus of TGKP's response should be, and sought agreement to the handling arrangements. Annex A to the paper set out the 'ten pillars' on which it was intended the Industrial Strategy should be built. The Green Paper posed 38 questions for consultation. Annex B listed the questions together with, in the right hand column, suggestions on which of the questions TGKP should respond to. In terms of handling, Richard proposed that, subject to the Board's agreement, TGKP's response should be finalised via the Officers' Group, with a final draft circulated to the Board for comment and then sign-off by the Board and Officers' Group Chairs.
- 3.2. The Board was asked to note the deadline for responses was 17 April 2017. SELEP would discuss their approach at a SELEP Strategic Board on 3 March. The Business Advisory Board (BAB) would consider the Green Paper on 9 March, with a draft response taken to KMEP on 30 March.
- 3.3. Richard said the stated overall objective of the strategy was to "improve living standards and economic growth by increasing productivity and driving growth across the whole country". The Green Paper referred to the importance of the 'Northern Powerhouse' and the 'Midlands Engine'. The TGKP response would provide an opportunity to dispel the perception that all areas of the South East were equally prosperous, and to press the point about the importance of the Thames Estuary as a national priority for growth.
- 3.4. There followed a wide-ranging discussion. It was argued that TGKP should submit a response. A number of organisations would be sending in responses, including the South East LEP, KMEP, business representative organisations such as the Chamber of Commerce and individual local authorities. It was suggested it would help reinforce the key messages if, as far as possible, we could coordinate our responses. The TGKP response should include the core messages but, in addition, the distinctive messages on the offer and opportunities in North Kent as part of the Thames Gateway growth area.
- 3.5. In the context of innovative approaches to construction, Mark Dance informed Board members that he had been invited to attend an event at a housing development in Chatham on 22 March using off-site construction methods. Mark suggested that it would be worthwhile for TGKP to be represented at the event. **Action: Mark Dance to email David Liston-Jones with details of the event.**
- 3.6. **The Board agreed** that TGKP should prepare a response to the consultation, coordinated as suggested by members. It was not felt necessary for TGKP to engage in any separate direct canvassing of business views, but we should take account of views expressed by business-led groups such as the Business Advisory Board. **The Board further agreed** the arrangements for finalising and agreeing TGKP's response set out in paragraph 13 of Richard's paper. **ACTION: TGKP team to develop a draft response for consideration by the Officers' Group, with a final draft to be circulated for comment and clearance by the Board electronically, and with subsequent sign-off by the Board and Officers' Group Chairs.**

4. Thames Estuary Growth Commission and Thames Gateway Strategic Group – paper TGKP(17)2 – David Liston-Jones

- 4.1. David Liston-Jones said the purpose of the paper was to update the Board on the meetings of the Thames Gateway Strategic Group (TGSG), including the TGSG Task and Finish Group (TAFG), and also the work of the Growth Commission.

- 4.2. The next meeting of TGSG would be taking place on 7 March and Lord Heseltine would be attending. This would be an opportunity for TGSG members to put their views to Lord Heseltine in advance of the publication of the Growth Commission's Interim Report. The agenda was also likely to include a progress report on Crossrail C2G project and future chairing arrangements. David said he wanted to make sure the Board was content with the handling arrangements going forward and with the proposals for chairing arrangements.
- 4.3. The paper updated the Board on the work of the Task and Finish Group (paras 3 to 8). David said that, since the paper was prepared, there had been a further meeting of the Task and Finish Group on 16 February. It had been a good meeting with the new Kent business representatives – Paul Winter and Jane Ollis – making a very positive contribution. The TAFG meetings had been chaired by Kate Willard, Chair of Opportunity South Essex, and Kate would be making a presentation on the emerging thinking of the group at the 7 March TGSG meeting. David commented that the TAFG, with its enhanced business representation, had developed into a valuable Thames Estuary-wide forum and there would be merit he felt in it continuing its work beyond the next TGSG meeting.
- 4.4. David said that the future Chairmanship of TGSG needed to be determined. The Officers' Group had considered this at its last meeting on 9 February and concluded that the most appropriate arrangement for the next few meetings would be to rotate the chairmanship between Kent, Essex, and London. The Growth Commission was due to issue its final report by the end of the year, and the issue of chairmanship for next year could be considered alongside future arrangements for TGSG more generally.
- 4.5. Following a brief discussion, **the Board:**
- **noted the latest position** on the work of TGSG and the Growth Commission, and
 - **confirmed it was content** with the Officers' Group proposal that the chairmanship of TGSG be rotated for the next few meetings between Kent, Essex, and London.
Action: David Liston-Jones to feed this proposal into the agenda planning for the 7 March TGSG meeting.

5. Driverless Vehicles – impact on our future infrastructure plans? – Board discussion

- 5.1. David Liston-Jones advised that this item had arisen from discussions he had held with Paul Jackson, Dovetail Games, and it had been intended that he and Paul would introduce the discussion. Unfortunately, as indicated earlier in the meeting, Paul was unwell and therefore unable to attend today's meeting. **The Board therefore agreed to defer this item until a future meeting.**

6. North Kent Enterprise Zone – paper TGKP(17)3

- 6.1. Richard Longman introduced his paper, which updated the Board on the ongoing work to implement the North Kent Enterprise Zone. The paper covered arrangements for branding and the preparation of the NKEZ website (paragraph 2), planning (paragraph 3), and progress on the sites (paras 4 to 6). A Chair designate for the Strategic Board had been identified – Bernard Spring, formerly Managing Director of RHF Frozen Foods. Bernard would be proposed for election as Chair at the 2 March meeting of the Strategic Board. That meeting would also be considering a near-final draft of the implementation plan for 2017-2020.
- 6.2. In discussion, members drew attention to paragraph 11 of the paper which referred to the challenging timetable for delivering the enterprise zone sites. Members argued that whilst we should not underestimate the challenges, and we should look for every opportunity to drive forward and accelerate action, it was important to recognise publicly

the very significant progress that had already been made, and the huge opportunities that the NKEZ would bring for business growth in the area.

6.3. **The Chairman thanked Richard for his report, which was noted.**

7. Kent and Medway Business Fund and Tiger Update – Jacqui Ward, Kent County Council

7.1. The draft Minutes of the 12 September TIGER Strategic Board meeting had been circulated for information and approval. **The Minutes were duly agreed. On matters arising:**

- Paragraph 1.8: No amendments to the TGKP Constitution had, to date, been identified as being necessary to enable the TGKP Board to carry out any responsibilities in relation to any residual TIGER activity, or in relation to North Kent aspects of the new 'access to finance' arrangements.

7.2. Jacqui Ward tabled an update paper on the TIGER Programme, which detailed funding awarded, defrayment of funds, profile for repayment of funds (as at 31 December 2016), and monitoring returns (October-December 2016). The paper showed that £3.262million had been repaid by September 2016. This was 99% of the target amount. A further £1.347million was expected to be repaid in March 2017. The position on the monitoring returns showed 93% being allocated Green or Amber status. In discussion it was pointed out that the Tiger programme had performed extremely well in terms of jobs created, high levels of repayments and low levels of bad debt.

7.3. Jacqui then updated the Board verbally on the new Kent and Medway Business Fund which had replaced Expansion East Kent, TIGER and Escalate. The proposed Terms of Reference for the new Kent and Medway Investment Advisory Board were tabled. The new fund had been launched in January and an initial call made for new pre- applications. As previously agreed, all repayments from loans made to companies in North Kent would be ring-fenced to be recycled to companies in North Kent.

7.4. In discussion a number of Board members expressed concern that, whilst the broad outline of the new Kent and Medway Business Fund had been discussed at previous TGKP Board and Tiger Strategic Board meetings, there appeared to have been no proper consultation with the TGKP Board, or with other local authorities, on the detailed arrangements for the new Fund, on the composition of the new Advisory Board, on the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Board, or on the launch of the new fund. Members argued that it was important for TGKP to have the opportunity to help shape the way that the new fund operated, and on the way in which the recycled funds from North Kent were put to use. It was reported that the first meeting of the new Advisory Board was scheduled to take place on 20 March.

7.5. Following discussion **it was agreed** that the TGKP Board needed to maintain close interest and involvement in the operation of the new fund as it impacted on North Kent. The new fund should be a standing item on future Board agendas. The Officers' Group meeting on 13 March would provide a further opportunity for discussion of this issue and for any further North Kent views to be fed in before the first meeting of the Advisory Board. **Action: Members to forward any comments on the draft Terms of Reference to David Liston-Jones and Jacqui Ward. David to include the Kent and Medway Business Fund on the agenda for the forthcoming Officers' Group meeting.**

8. Budget Report – paper TGKP(17)4

8.1. David Liston-Jones introduced the Budget Report which was for information. **The Board noted** the position on income and expenditure for 2016/2017, the budget position for the next financial year and also noted that a budget would be submitted for approval at the May Board meeting.

9. Updates on current issues, including verbal updates from members

9.1. There were no further updates from members.

10. Chief Executive's Report – paper TGKP(17)5

10.1. David Liston-Jones said that his report covered a number of items, for information, not covered elsewhere on the agenda, including:

- Housing White Paper
- Lower Thames Crossing
- Crossrail to Gravesend (C2G) project
- Thames Estuary Production Corridor, and
- HCA Accelerated Construction.

10.2. **The Board noted** the Chief Executive's Report.

11. Date of Next Meeting

11.1. The next TGKP Board meeting would be held on Tuesday 16 May at an earlier time of 2.00-4.00pm.

12. Any Other Business

12.1. No other business, the meeting closed at 6.50pm