
Approved Minutes of the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership Board Meeting held in Darwin Room, Innovation Centre Medway, 3.15pm-4.30pm, **Thursday, 3 December 2015**

Present:

Board members and observers:

Rob Bennett, BBP Regeneration (Chair)
Cllr Andrew Bowles, Leader, Swale Borough Council
Cllr Rodney Chambers, Cabinet Member, Medway Council
Robin Cooper, Ebbsfleet Development Corporation
Cllr John Cubitt, Leader, Gravesham Borough Council
Martin Davies, University of Greenwich
Terry Fuller, Homes and Communities Agency
Robert Goodman, Lend Lease
Cllr Sean Holden, Deputy Cabinet Member, Kent County Council
Cllr Jeremy Kite, Leader, Dartford Borough Council
Ann Komzolik, North Kent College

Also present:

Kathryn Carr, Swale Borough Council
Neil Davies, Medway Council
Ross Gill, Kent County Council
Graham Harris, Dartford Borough Council
David Hughes, Gravesham Borough Council
David Liston-Jones, Thames Gateway Kent Partnership
Richard Longman, Thames Gateway Kent Partnership

Apologies:

Scott Adcock, DCLG
Kamal Aggarwal, Thomson, Snell and Passmore
Rehman Chishti, Member of Parliament
Alan Everard, Tarmac
Abdool Kara, Swale Borough Council
Andrew Pearce, Environment Agency
Linda Searle, Thames Gateway Kent Partnership
James Speck, Kent Science Park
Paul Whittlesea, DCLG

1. Item 1: Welcome and Introductions

1.1. The Chairman welcomed attendees to the Board meeting, which followed immediately on from the AGM. Attendance and apologies was as for the AGM.

2. Item 2: Minutes of TGKP Board meeting on 21 September 2015 and Matters Arising

2.1. The draft minutes of the 21 September 2015 Board meeting were agreed. On matters arising:

- Paragraph 5.2: The Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework had been published and was available on KCC's website;
- Paragraph 5.2: The SELEP Board papers had been circulated as requested. David Liston-Jones said that we did not routinely circulate SELEP papers to the TGKP Board as these were made available on the SELEP website, and members could ask to be added to the SELEP circulation list if they wished to receive papers direct;
- Paragraph 5.2: A response had been received from Lafarge Holcim. As reported at the AGM, Alan Everard would be David Simms' replacement on the Board;
- Paragraph 5.3: Thames Gateway transport priorities – this was on the agenda at Item 4;
- Paragraph 6.3: The first action, to hold a meeting of private sector Board members, had been carried out. The second action referred to – to bring examples of best practice to the Board – was ongoing;
- Paragraph 6.4: No further comments on the Work Plan had been received from Board members.

2.2. **The Chairman** reported that, in relation to the action at 6.3, he had held a very helpful discussion with private sector Board members. They had agreed to meet as a group more regularly, for example in advance of Board meetings to discuss agenda items. They had also agreed to look to identify new candidates to fill vacant private sector Board positions. Finally they had agreed to participate in developing proposals for the partnership to support the key industry sector in North Kent.

3. **Item 3: Autumn Statement – implications for North Kent.**

3.1. The Chairman explained that this item was an opportunity for members to take stock of the announcements in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement, and consider the implications for North Kent.

3.2. A summary of the key points from the Statement, together with copies of the KMEP paper which Ross Gill had prepared on this topic, were tabled. Ross outlined the key measures as they affect North Kent. The approval of the Enterprise Zone for North Kent was good news. The commitment to the full £12billion nationally for the Local Growth Fund had been confirmed, although how the £5billion balance would be allocated was not yet known. Robin Cooper reported that £310million had been announced to support the delivery of Ebbsfleet Garden City. This represented an additional £110million on top of the £200million allocation previously announced. Terry Fuller outlined the key housing and planning measures in the Housing and Planning Bill and in the Statement.

3.3. There followed a general discussion on the announcements, including on what the implications might be for development of devolution proposals. Concern was

expressed on the impact of the closure of the Business Growth Service, which was a consequence of the spending announcements. **The Chairman thanked Ross, Robin and Terry for their contributions.**

4. **ITEM 4: Thames Gateway Strategy Statement for TGSG and transport priorities – Paper TGKP(15)22**

4.1. Ross Gill said the paper outlined the work underway to prepare a Thames Gateway strategy statement, highlighting the transport investments required to bring forward the key locations for growth in the Gateway. It was envisaged that the statement would contain no more than 10 to 12 priority transport schemes, all of which would be of regional or national importance. These might include linked schemes along linear route corridors. It was envisaged that the draft statement would be discussed at the next meeting of TGSG now arranged for 19 January.

4.2. Ross went on to say that the key priorities for North Kent would consist of Lower Thames Crossing, Crossrail extension to Gravesend, A2 Bean and Ebbsfleet junctions and M2 Junction 5. Ross outlined the timetable for the work. As there was no Board meeting before the next TGSG meeting, the Board was asked to agree to comment on the draft via email.

4.3. There followed a general discussion, focusing on the key transport priorities. There was general agreement that the identified priorities were the right ones, although members emphasised that it was important to look at these priorities in the context of the impact on the whole M2/A2 corridor and not just focus on the individual transport schemes. This was particularly the case for the Lower Thames Crossing.

4.4. In the context of the forthcoming consultation on the location of the Lower Thames Crossing it was argued that it would be important for the Partnership to take a view and submit a clear and robust response to Government. The majority of Board members favoured Option C, but John Cubitt confirmed Gravesham Borough Council's opposition to Option C. Summing up this part of the discussion, **the Chairman said** there was agreement that TGKP needed to respond to the consultation with a clear view. We would need to see what options were put forward in the consultation document but, based on present knowledge, the majority view on the Board was to support a route at Option C, but any response should also clearly articulate, as a minority view, the position of Gravesham Borough Council.

4.5. **The Board noted** the work currently underway to prepare the strategy statement and **agreed** with the emerging transport priorities for North Kent. **The Chairman thanked Ross Gill** for his presentation.

4.6. **Action: Ross Gill to continue to develop the strategy statement, taking account of the Board's views, and Board members to comment on the draft Strategy Statement, when available, via email, prior to discussion at TGSG.**

5. **ITEM 5: TGKP Budget Report and funding for 2016/2017 – paper TGKP(15)23**

5.1. David Liston-Jones introduced the Budget report. This outlined the latest position on income and expenditure in 2015/2016 and put forward proposals for funding for 2016/2017.

- 5.2. Following a brief discussion, the **Board agreed** that the funding contributions to be requested from local authorities for 2016/2017 should remain at the same level in cash terms as for the current year i.e. as set out in paragraph 9 of the paper.
6. **ITEM 6: Proposal for a North Kent MD's Club** - Papers TGKP(15)24
- 6.1. Richard Longman introduced his paper which described an emerging proposal for TGKP to support the establishment of a Managing Directors' Club. This would be targeted at MDs, owner-managers and senior directors of businesses in North Kent. The emphasis would be on promoting mutual support to enable them to more effectively in their roles. There might be scope to develop such a Club in collaboration with an existing organisation, such as the Institute of Directors or Chamber of Commerce.
- 6.2. In discussion there was support from members to develop the idea further, in consultation with potential partner bodies. It would be important to avoid duplication of support and services already available.
- 6.3. **The Chairman thanked Richard** for his presentation. **Action: TGKP team to develop proposals for MDs' Club for consideration, in the first instance, by the Officers' Group.**
7. **Item 7: Updates from the TGK Officers' Group** - paper TGKP(15)25.
- 7.1. Richard Longman introduced the paper which summarised the state of play on a range of issues being considered by the Officers' Group.
- 7.2. **The Board:**
- **confirmed** it supported the TGKP team's continued involvement and commitment of time and resource to help the new Enterprise Zone (North Kent Innovation Zone) to be established;
 - **noted** the ongoing piece of work in relation to the extension of Crossrail, and the financial commitment agreed by the Officers' Group;
 - **was content** with the approach suggested for the Partnership to respond to the call for evidence by the National Infrastructure Commission;
 - **noted** the proposed workstream on what more could be done on skills development at the North Kent level; and
 - **noted** the current position on the Lower Thames Crossing and the timetable for consultation on route options.
8. **Item 8: Updates on current issues from members**
- 8.1. Members received brief oral updates on items including progress on the Swale Local Plan, the plans for Dartford town centre, and the completion and planned opening of the new Rochester railway station.
9. **Item 9: AOB**
- 9.1. There was no other business.