

GREATER BRIGHTON ECONOMIC BOARD

10.00am 27 APRIL 2021

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: Councillor Humphreys (Chair) Allcock, Ash-Edwards, Lamb, Mac Cafferty, Parkin and Gunner

Business Partners: Sue Baxter, Trevor Beattie, Andrew Green, Prof Humphris, Dean Orgill, Henry Powell, Andrew Swayne

PART ONE

27 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

27a Declarations of substitutes

27.1 Councillor Allcock was present as substitute for Councillor Platts.

27.2 Sue Baxter was present as substitute for Prof Tickell

27b Declarations of interests

27.3 Andrew Swayne declared a non-pecuniary interest as Chairman as Ricardo as one of their workstreams was referenced on the agenda.

27c Exclusion of the press and public

27.4 In accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 ("the Act"), the Board considered whether the public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any item of business on the grounds that it is likely in view of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during it, there would be disclosure to them of confidential information as defined in Section 100A (3) of the Act.

27.5 **RESOLVED-** That the press and public not be excluded.

28 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

28.1 **RESOLVED-** That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 January 2021 be approved as the correct record.

29 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

29.1 The Chair provided the following communications:

Last month Cllr Nancy Platts announced that she will be shortly standing down as leader of the Labour Group at Brighton & Hove City Council. Cllr Platts cannot be here today but she has served this Board, both as Leader of Brighton & Hove City Council and Leader of the Opposition, and the Board thanks her for her contribution over the last few years. In her place today we have Cllr John Allock.

Earlier in the spring Coast to Capital invited partners across the LEP region so prepare and submit expressions of interest regarding projects that needed financial support to get off of the ground. A number of projects were put forward from the Greater Brighton region including a proposal for the emerging inward investment desk, a hydrogen bus conversion scheme and a Healthy Futures Accelerator. These projects are all aimed at supporting the region grow back stronger from the Covid pandemic, and many are strongly linked into green recovery. The variety in these projects shows what a diverse and ambitious region Greater Brighton is, and we look forward to seeing how these bids progress over the coming months. A full list of the projects will be outlined in the Recovery item later in the agenda

Work on projects within the Greater Brighton Investment Programme has continued at pace as demonstrated in the quarterly updates on each Board agenda. I am pleased to report that the Eastside South in Newhaven has recently completed. Eastside South is one of the eight key strategic sites within the Newhaven Enterprise Zone. The completed project provides just under 8,000 square metres of new commercial floor-space and all of the units within the site are now let.

29.2 On behalf of the Board, Councillor Mac Cafferty expressed thanks to the Chair stating that in his years term, he had acted fairly with a focus on the entire Grater Brighton region.

30 HYDROGEN SUSSEX UPDATE

30.1 The Board considered a report of the Chair, Greater Brighton Officer Programme Board that updated on developing a hydrogen economy locally in the previous 6 months, especially through the work of the Hydrogen Sussex group. The report also reaffirmed the governance of Hydrogen Sussex, through the Greater Brighton Infrastructure Panel, and sought sign up of the Greater Brighton Economic Board to a proposed Hydrogen Strategy.

30.2 The Chair stated that whilst he believed some of the terminology used required additional thought, the update provided was genuinely exciting.

30.3 Councillor Walsh commented that the update was exciting however, it was important going forward that all partners be involved.

30.4 Prof Humphris welcomed the report and stressed the importance of investment in research and development locally as the science behind hydrogen energy would continue to evolve.

30.5 Councillor Mac Cafferty suggested that an approach be made to present at COP26.

30.6 RESOLVED-

- 1) That the Board notes the progress of and wide interest in Hydrogen Sussex, and its launch event in February 2021.
- 2) That the Board notes and supports the proposal to develop a hydrogen strategy for Greater Brighton and the wider Sussex region.
- 3) That the Board provides funding of £13,696 for core activities of Hydrogen Sussex, using existing Board core funding.
- 4) That the Board agrees the proposed Governance arrangements and agrees that Hydrogen Sussex report back progress every 6 months.

31 GREATER BRIGHTON SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY PLAN UPDATE

31.1 The Board considered a report of the Chair, Greater Brighton Officer Programme Board that provided a progress update on the Board's Covid-19 Recovery Sustainable Recovery Plan.

31.2 RESOLVED-

- 1) That the Board note the information in the report, including the update on the pandemic, and progress made against the plan agreed in October 2020.
- 2) That the Board agrees that going forward recovery actions form part of business as usual, with recovery outcomes included in all workstreams, especially the actions linked to the Greater Brighton Digital Action Plan.

32 GREATER BRIGHTON DIGITAL ACTION PLAN

32.1 The Board considered a report of the Chair, Greater Brighton Officer Programme Board that presented an update on the Greater Brighton Digital Action Plan.

32.2 Councillor Allcock stated that the pandemic had presented critical challenges for access to digital services particularly for disadvantaged people. Councillor Allcock stated that he was pleased the Board was taking a lead and enquired whether progress could be sped up.

32.3 Simon Hughes replied that discussions were underway with key partners on that and it was important to diversify the market and not allow monopolisation.

32.4 Councillor Ash-Edwards stated that he endorsed the proposal to speed up progress as full fibre rollout was economically highly impactful. Councillor Ash-Edwards noted the importance of funding full fibre rollout in rural areas that business would not prioritise.

32.5 Simon Hughes noted that DCMS were interested in alternative funding methods for rural areas and there were market providers that specialised in the area that were already funded.

32.6 **RESOLVED-** That the Board agrees to the revised key priorities and projects outlined in this paper and the Action Plan at Appendix 1.

33 SUSSEX TOURISM AND CULTURE RECOVERY GROUP

33.1 The Board received a presentation from Donna Chisholm on the work and priorities of the Sussex Tourism and Culture Recovery Group.

33.2 Prof Humphris noted that the University of Brighton had a good educational offer in short course tasters, amongst others.

33.3 Donna Chisholm replied that there was an emerging cultural tourism sector and work was ongoing to understand the motivations behind that and improve the region's messaging.

33.4 Councillor Mac Cafferty highlighted the importance of the tourism offer in the 'off-season' and part of that might include connecting the growth of digital industry in the region and the potential growth in tourism.

34 GB10 PLEDGES: KELP - SUSSEX BAY

34.1 The Board received a presentation on the Kelp at Sussex Bay, a project they intended to boost biodiversity while sequestering carbon emissions and one of the GB10 Pledges.

35 GREATER BRIGHTON OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS 2021/22 AND ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

35.1 The Board considered a report of the Chair, Greater Brighton Officer Programme Board that that set out its Operational Arrangements for 2021/22 and the Annual Report for 2020/21.

35.2 **RESOLVED-** That the Board:

- 1) Agree and secure the budgetary contributions sought to fund the cost of running the Board and delivering its workplan in 2021/22.
- 2) Note that Brighton & Hove City Council shall continue to act as Lead Authority for the Board in 2021/22.
- 3) Agree the process set out at sections 3.13 to 3.15 by which the Chair of the Board shall be nominated for 2021/22.
- 4) Approves the 2020/21 Annual Report and Board members submit the report to their respective organisations.
- 5) Note the date by which the Lead Authority must be notified of all named substitutes and instruct any necessary actions within their respective organisations.

- 6) Note the date by which the Lead Authority must be notified of all nominations to the Greater Brighton Call-In Panel and instruct any necessary actions within their respective organisations.
- 7) Agree to extend the current communications contract with the Adur & Worthing Communications Team by another year.

36 GREATER BRIGHTON INVESTMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE

- 36.1 **RESOLVED-** That the Board note the report and the Investment Programme Update at Appendix 1.

The meeting concluded at 12.10pm