

GREATER BRIGHTON ECONOMIC BOARD

10.00am 20 OCTOBER 2020

VIRTUAL MEETING (ZOOM)

MINUTES

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

Business Partners: Trevor Beattie, Prof Debra Humphris, Clare Mason, Henry Powell, Gavin Stewart, Andrew Swayne, Prof Adam Tickell

PART ONE

10 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

10a Declarations of substitutes

10.1 Councillor Allcock was present as substitute for Councillor Platts.

10b Declarations of interests

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

10c Exclusion of the press and public

10.3 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.

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

11 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

11.1 **RESOLVED-** That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 July 2020 be approved as the correct record.

12 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

12.1 The Chair provided the following communications:

“On behalf of the Board, I would like to welcome Andy Green. Andy has recently taken up the role as Interim CEO of Greater Brighton Metropolitan College on a secondment from the Chichester College Group, where he has been Executive Principal and Deputy CEO. The FE sector faces a significant challenge; against the backdrop of increased financial pressures our FE providers have a crucial role to play in reskilling and upskilling city region workers who’s jobs and careers have been impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. We look forwards to working with the sector over the coming months, and this Board will make the strongest possible call on Government to deliver the essential funding that our FE institutions need.

Formerly known as the Central Research Laboratory, Plus X was one of the early projects in the Greater Brighton Pipeline and received £7.7m in LGF funding. It’s great to see that this exciting and innovating co-working space open in the summer. Despite challenging conditions due to Covid-19, which resulted in a slower start than anticipated, the building currently has around 100 memberships on flexible plans. On 1 October Plus X launched its scale up innovation programme, The Brighton Research Innovation Technology Exchange (BRITE). BRITE is a business innovation programme for ambitious and established businesses primarily based in the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership region.

The Annual Report for the One Public Estate Programme was due to be presented at this Board Meeting. The current priority of One Public Estate Programme Manager is to co-ordinate a response to the latest funding call, which is running through this autumn. It has therefore been decided that the Annual Report will be pushed back to the January 2021 Board meeting.

At our last Board meeting we agreed the Greater Brighton Energy and Water Plans. Here is a brief update on some of the innovative projects being delivered as part of the Energy Plan;

- The new Greater Brighton Hydrogen Group is creating partnerships for a long-term strategy to deliver hydrogen-fuelled transport and heating and the production of ‘green’ hydrogen. A Hydrogen Hub is included in Coast to Capital LEP’s forward plan.
- The University of Sussex is leading on a Greater Brighton Innovation Forum, with support from the University of Brighton, to deliver regular funded workshops throughout the year to keep us at the forefront of new thinking on Energy and Water, and investment and business models.
- EDF Energy launched its Future Heat project in Sussex in September inviting off-gas grid homes with oil or LPG to take advantage of a funded Air Source Heat Pump with Smart Controls installed alongside the existing boiler. The next step will be to invite homes to join the SmartHubs SLES project which will explore potential for monetising aggregated heat flexibility services.
- Sussex local authorities promoted Solar Together, a group-buying scheme for home-owners to purchase solar panels cheaply. Over 4,500 individuals had registered by the deadline of 6 October.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank Clare Mulholland, Greater Brighton Business Manager for her support and contribution to the Board. Clare leaves us in December to join the Cities and Growth Unit within the Department for Business, Energy

and Industrial Strategy and this will be her last Board meeting. Clare's new role covers the Coast to Capital region and so we look forward to working with her in the future".

13 GREATER BRIGHTON COVID 19 RECOVERY PLAN

- 13.1 The Board considered a report of the Chair, Greater Brighton Officer Programme Board that sought approval for the Covid 19 Recovery Plan which was in line with the Board 5 Year-Priorities.
- 13.2 Councillor Mac Cafferty commended the report and asked if improved east/west rail links could be listed in the transport section.
- 13.3 The Chair confirmed this could be added along with the impact of unlocking the Croydon rail bottleneck.
- 13.4 Councillor Nicolson stated that safety improvements to the A259 and A27 should be included in transport discussions.
- 13.5 **RESOLVED-**
- 1) That the Board approve the recommendations made within the Recovery Plan which is aligned with Coast to Capital's recovery strategy for the region.
 - 2) That the Board agrees to work with partners to progress the actions outlined in the plan and report on progress within an agreed timeframe.

14 GREATER BRIGHTON BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

- 14.1 The Board received a presentation from Gavin Stewart and Henry Powell providing an update on the Greater Brighton Business Partnership.
- 14.2 Councillor Walsh stated that the Arundel bypass was very important in this context. Highways England had recently chosen the 'grey' route and he hoped for unanimity on the matter.
- 14.3 Councillor Nicholson advocated for informal discussions at regional level with the public sector, businesses and communities on how they could work together for example, on setting up public sector registered holding companies. The Chair agreed to the suggestion.

15 GREATER BRIGHTON GB10 PLEDGES

- 15.1 The Board considered a report of the Chair, Greater Brighton Officer Programme Board that sought approval for the Board to sign up to the 10 Environmental Pledges.
- 15.2 The Board welcomed and endorsed the pledges and highlighted the importance of climate change and carbon neutrality.
- 15.3 Andrew Swayne highlighted that the Infrastructure Panel would shortly be developing its work as there were many sectors beyond energy and water to look at.

15.4 RESOLVED-

- 1) That the Board sign up to the 10 Environmental Pledges at Appendix 1.
- 2) That Member organisations do all they can so support these pledges through their existing work and emerging projects within the Greater Brighton Energy and Water Plans.
- 3) That progress against the pledges is brought back to the Board.

16 GREATER BRIGHTON INVESTMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE

16.1 RESOLVED-

- 1) That the Board note the report and the Investment Programme Update at Appendix 1.

The meeting concluded at 11.48am