

North Kent Enterprise Zone Strategic Board

Approved Minutes of 4th meeting held on Thursday 15th June 2017 in the Darwin Room, Innovation Centre Medway.

Board Members Present

Bernard Spring (Chair)
Cllr Rodney Chambers, Medway Council (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Alan Jarrett, Medway Council
William Cornall, Maidstone BC & the Accountable Body
Richard Longman, TGKP
Paul Wookey, LiK
Kevin Burbidge, Gravesham BC (for David Hughes)
Georgina Button, SELEP (for Adam Bryan)

Apologies

Adam Bryan, SELEP
Alex Hicken, DHA Planning
David Hughes, Gravesham BC
Matthew Norwell, TGKP
Prof Alan Reed, University of Greenwich
David Smith, Kent CC
Paul Spooner, Ebbsfleet DC

Also attending

Richard Hicks, Medway Council

1. Welcome & Introduction

- 1.1. The Chairman welcomed Georgina Button, newly appointed at SELEP representing Adam Bryan, and Kevin Burbidge representing David Hughes.
- 1.2. There were no declarations of interest.
- 1.3. Board Members were reminded that any items that were confidential (commercially or otherwise) should be identified as such for exclusion from the published minutes.

2. Minutes of last meeting and actions arising (SB04-01)

- 2.1. The minutes were agreed. On matters arising not on the agenda:
 - Paragraph 4.3: The policy propositions in section 2 of the Implementation Plan were streamlined in consultation with the project group and the final version incorporated into the Plan submitted to DCLG on 31 March.
 - Paragraph 5.1: As noted in the progress update (item 3), a press release announcing the launch of the NKEZ was issued on 1 April, with simultaneous news release by DCLG, SELEP, KMC, KMEP and Locate in Kent amongst others. There had been some positive press coverage in local media.
 - Paragraph 7.1 A separate NKEZ response to the Industrial Strategy Green Paper consultation was not submitted; instead, the TGKP response covered issues relating to enterprise zones (TGKP's response can be seen [here](#)).

3. Progress Report – Paper SB04-02

- 3.1. Richard L introduced paper SB04-02 giving a summary of progress. Board Members emphasised the importance of taking a pan-EZ approach to progress monitoring.
- 3.2. Rochester Airport Technology Park. Richard H advised that a planning application for the runway and related elements of reconfiguring Rochester Airport was expected soon. The proposals needed to be robust, particularly on issues of noise and safety. Medway Council welcomed the agreement from SELEP to contribute towards the costs of preparing Local Development Orders for the EZ: this work would be progressed as quickly as possible. The Council was working with ZEST on the marketing and branding of the site. A planning application from Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance had been approved on 13th June.

The CEO of KSSAA was evidently interested in the potential for supply chain and other collaborations with companies locating onto RATP. The variation made in the Airport's lease meant that the Council would take back the land identified for the EZ in 2018 in any event: this was not contingent on the outcome of Rochester Airport Ltd's planning applications.

- 3.3. Kent Medical Campus. William C reported that the s.106 agreement associated with the outline planning consent for the site had been signed off. The Cygnet development is progressing well and a planning application received for a step-down facility was due to be determined in July. Maidstone have been exploring different models for providing innovation hubs and have contracted with 31ten Consulting to provide detailed financial and business rates modelling to inform investment plan decisions (to be taken to MBC's Policy & Resources Committee in July). Overall, KMC is on target or even slightly ahead of the Implementation Plan. However, KMC partners were struggling to gain traction with the NHS, and would welcome any assistance or pointers from colleagues as to appropriate contacts at a senior level. Paul W echoed this concern: lack of NHS engagement was a barrier to converting company interest into investment decisions. Richard H suggested that the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership for Kent & Medway might provide a way in. **Action: William C to provide some narrative to Richard H and Alan J, as a basis for taking some soundings at the next STP Board meeting.**
- 3.4. Ebbsfleet Garden City. Kevin Burbidge reported the latest developments in relation to Northfleet Embankment East. Discussions with Lafarge about Northfleet Embankment West were at an early stage. For Northfleet Rise, the main complication was around the logistics of the 'lift & shift' strategy; consultants acting for the landowning consortium and separate consultants acting for EDC and HCA were offering differing assessments on the viability of the central commercial zone and discussions were ongoing to try and reach a common view. Discussions and negotiations are ongoing.

3.5. The Board noted the written and oral reports.

4. Monitoring Delivery – Dashboard and Risk Register: Paper SB04-03

- 4.1. Richard L gave a short presentation to set the scene for the discussion. The presentation offered a purely illustrative and subjective comparison between the outcomes set out in the original EZ bid (September 2015) and the likely outcomes based on the current implementation plan and known risks. Whilst the eventual outcomes in terms of jobs and companies might be relatively close to the bid, the yield of retained business rates would be reduced as would the quantum of business rates discounts made available to businesses. Outcomes delivered over the next five years would be significantly below the expectations in the bid. This illustrated the importance of taking whatever steps we can, at local delivery level and via the Strategic Board, to help accelerate progress and secure earlier delivery.
- 4.2. Discussion then focused on the Monitoring Dashboard and Risk Register as tools to assist the Board in tracking progress. **The Board endorsed the principle of the dashboard as a tool to inform monitoring and discussion at future meetings.** The Board agreed that there should be no re-basing of the dashboard each quarter. A single document was preferred if possible that combined the dashboard with narrative drawn from the risk register to explain what was being done to mitigate risks or address departures from the timetable – perhaps similar to the dashboard used by the SELEP Accountability Board. It would be helpful to clarify what was on the critical path and to show the direction of travel. **Action: Richard L to circulate his presentation and refine the dashboard into a single document, in consultation with the project group, for use in future meetings.**

5. Marketing Plan: Proposals for marketing the NKEZ in 2017-18: Paper SB04-04

- 5.1. Paul Wookey introduced the paper, summarising activity to date. There had been a respectable level of traffic to the NKEZ website, though this had tailed off slightly. Further work was needed to improve search engine optimisation to increase profile. Paul explained that the CRM system sitting behind the website enabled LIK to track and, if appropriate, follow up enquiries.
- 5.2. The main thrust of the suggested marketing programme was to stimulate occupier interest. A key proposal was the intention to exhibit at MIPIM UK in October 2017. The Board agreed that this would be helpful to build the profile of NKEZ in investor circles. The marketing programme budgeted for around £21k of activity funded by LIK; up to a further £20k of activity would be enabled out of the additional funding agreed by SELEP, which was welcomed by the Board. Paul W also drew attention to the new visitor centre at Ebbsfleet International Station: this could be a wider marketing opportunity for NKEZ.
- 5.3. **The Board approved the marketing plan. Action: LIK to take forward.**

6. Update on funding bids to support development of the NKEZ: Paper SB04-05.

- 6.1. Mention had already been made under other items that the SELEP Strategic Board had endorsed our bid totalling £161k for a package of funding to support LDO preparation at Rochester Airport Technology Park (£126k), NKEZ marketing (£20k) and evaluation (£15k). **The Board welcomed this outcome and endorsed the recommendation for the project group to liaise with the Accountable Body to sort out the details, and to bring further proposals on evaluation to the next meeting.**
- 6.2. There had also been two rounds of commercial grant funding by DCLG. NKEZ had received £27k grant from the first round which was being used for business rates modelling at KMC (underway) and commercial market appraisal and development options modelling at RATP (being re-tendered). A further bid had been submitted to DCLG for feasibility studies on bringing forward speculative innovation hub space. The outcome of that bid was still awaited. Kevin B asked whether there might be scope to modify our bid, or the purposes of any grant secured (particularly any possible under-utilisation) if further expert advice is required on options relating to sites at Ebbsfleet. **Action: Richard L to examine with project group in light of the outcome of the 2nd round bid.**
- 6.3. In discussion, Paul W drew attention to the substantial ESIF resources available via SELEP and that there might be scope to bid for grant up to 50% of the costs of actually constructing innovation space. **The call for applications is open. Action: Richard L to take to the project group to explore potential.**

7. Accountable Body resources: Paper SB04-06

- 7.1. Paper SB04-06 set out proposals to establish a central fund to cover any Accountable Body expenditure incurred on NKEZ business. **The Board endorsed this proposal and the suggested initial level of £12k funded by a £4k contribution from each of the three schemes. The Board endorsed the other recommendations in the paper, including action by the Accountable Body to put the necessary administrative arrangements in place and by each of the three NKEZ schemes to arrange for payment of their contributions.**

8. Future meeting dates

- 8.1. The Board noted the proposed meeting dates for the remainder of 2017, for which calendar invitations would be sent:
 - Friday 29th September 1000-1200
 - Thursday 7th December 1000-1200

9. AOB

- 9.1. Richard L explained that TGKP was reviewing its work programme and priorities. The nature of TGKP's ongoing involvement with NKEZ would be included in this (with no pre-conceptions as to the outcome). These matters were to be discussed at a meeting of the TGK Officers' Group on 12 July, with outcomes taken to the TGKP Board in September. There will also be a report back to the next NKEZ Strategic Board.
- 9.2. The Board noted this report. A number of members emphasised the value they placed on TGKP's role in relation to NKEZ. Rodney C stated that, as a funding partner in TGKP, Medway Council would hope to see TGKP continuing to support NKEZ.
- 9.3. There was no other business. The meeting finished at 16.25.

Richard Longman

TGKP

23 June 2017