

**AGENDA –KMEP meeting - Monday 15 January
2024, 15.30 – 17.30
on MS TEAMS**

	Approx time	Page/Presenter
1. Welcome from Chairman Apologies for absence & Declaration of interests	15:00	Liz Gibney
2. Minutes from last meeting	15:05	Steve Samson
3. LEP Transition Update	15:10	Steve Samson
4. KMEP Board recruitment 2024-25	15:30	Liz Gibney / Steve Samson
5. KMEP Future structure proposals and discussion	15:40	Liz Gibney / Steve Samson
6. Any other Business	16:45	

Future Meeting Dates:

Fri 15 March	3pm-5pm
Tues 9 April	3pm-5pm
Weds 15 May	3pm-5pm
Thurs 11 July	3pm-5pm
Thurs 5 Sept	3.30pm-5.30pm
Tues 5 Nov	3pm-5pm
Thurs 5 Dec	3pm-5pm

Attendees:

KMEP Board Members:

Liz Gibney (KMEP Chairman & Lee Evans Partnership)	Cllr Alan Baldock (Canterbury CC)
Vince Lucas (VA Rail)	Cllr Noel Ovenden (Ashford BC)
Miranda Chapman (Pillory Barn)	Cllr Lauren Edwards (Medway Council)
Andrew Metcalf (Maxim PR)	Cllr Roger Gough (Kent CC))
Carol Ford (Horticultural Task Force)	Cllr David Burton (Maidstone DC)
David Milham (FSB)	Cllr Jim Martin (Folkestone and Hythe DC)
Graham Razey (EKC Group)	Cllr Monique Bonney (Swale BC)
Prof Jane Harrington (University of Greenwich)	Cllr Rick Everitt (Thanet BC)
	Cllr Robert Thomas (Kent CC)
	Cllr Justine Rutland (Tunbridge Wells BC)

Jo Nolan (Screen South)
Mayer Schreiber (Discovery Park)
Natalie Benville (Getlink)
Tudor Price (KICC)
Nick Fenton (Kent Housing and Development
Group)

Additional Attendees:

Steve Samson (Kent CC)
David Smith (Kent CC)
Emma Watson (Kent CC)
Chris Townend (Dover DC)
Detlev Munster (Sevenoaks DC)
Jessica Jagpal (Medway Council)
Jeremy Whittaker (Tonbridge and Malling BC)
Tracy Kerly (Ashford BC)
David Candlin (Tunbridge Wells BC)
Chris Inwood (Maidstone BC)

Board Member Apologies:

Cllr Kevin Mills, Dover DC; Mario Caccamo NIAB; Roland Cooper, Considine; Cllr Matt Boughton
Tunbridge and Malling BC.

Item 1 – Welcome, introduction and apologies.

- 1.1 Liz Gibney (the KMEP Chairman) welcomed attendees to the meeting. Apologies were stated by Steve Samson (listed above).
- 1.2 There were no declarations of interest made.

Item 2 – Minutes from the last meeting

- 2.1 The minutes of the 5 December 2023 meeting were agreed.

Item 3 - LEP Transition Update

- 3.1 Steve Samson provided an update on the LEP Transition Process.

LEP Transition Update

Additional Government Guidance 19 Dec 2023 to supplement Aug 2023 guidance

Confirms three main functions being transferred from 1 April 2024:

1. Business Representation
2. Local Economic Planning
3. Delivery of Government Programmes

Adhering to government guidance may be a factor for future funding

Kent & Medway 'functional economic area' geography remains

Requirement for formal Local Growth Board (KMEP)

LEP Transition Update: Business Representation

Private sector / employer perspectives expected to enhance local economic strategies and interventions including:

- business, trade and investment support
- challenge / insight on business impacts of public sector initiatives
- providing delivery expertise, market credibility and a vehicle for leveraging match funding for public sector programmes

A strong business voice is an eligibility requirement for some government programmes

Membership: a wide range of business types, sizes, diversity of voices, involvement of business representative organisations, conflict of interest policy

Role and responsibilities: local authorities to consider how business boards can feed into local economic priorities and how will business boards have representation on other local fora.

Model & Governance:

- Any new business board members must be appointed through an open process
- appointees to provide a constructive check and challenge on local decision making

LEP Transition Update: Local Economic Planning

- Areas to produce economic strategies to support local decision making.
- **Strategies should:**
 - include a strong evidence base, local economic opportunities & challenges and opportunities for strategic connections across regions
 - Strategies to link to other relevant local plans e.g. LVEPs, (Visit Kent), Local Transport Plans (LTP5), and local planning and skills provision plans (LSIP & LSIF)
- Any future LGF opportunities to demonstrate fit with local economic strategy

Kent & Medway Economic Framework Update:

- Stakeholder Feedback included
- More explicit references to align with government guidance
- Additional action area: “Developing Kent’s Rural Economy”
- Final approval from KCC GEDCCC 18 January
- Design and publication of final document asap

LEP Transition Update: Funding & Resources

Government to provide up to £240,000 per local area for 24-25 and KCC & MC to receive allocation of SELEP residual funding

Short funding application form to be submitted to DLUHC:

- Details of how the area intends to use the funding
- Confirmation that all UTLAs in the area are included in delivery plans
- Funding should support local economic strategies

Government allocations subject to final business case and integration plan approval

Where multiple upper tier local authorities are working together, one should be appointed as the accountable body

LEP Transition: Resources

Staffing: (first call on SELEP residual funding)

- 6 roles proposed by KCC and MC
- SELEP staff consultation begins 15 Jan (45 days)
- If interest, interviews w/c 4 March
- Roles to start 1 April – fixed term basis

Funding could cover:

- Additional staff resource to support enhanced KMEP activity
- Activity budget for KMEP implementation
- Staff resource for legacy capital programme oversight
- Etc.

LEP Transition: Partnerships & Networks

- **Greater South East Net Zero Hub** – Kent & Medway will have a seat on board
- **Discussions underway about future resourcing for the 3 groups to continue:**
 - SECEN
 - Housing
 - Major Projects
- **Local work ongoing to establish Kent & Medway groups**

LEP Transition: Data & Intel

Establish data requirements in order to:

1. Monitor the state of the local economy and respond to new challenges
2. Inform the work of KMEP and sector / thematic Groups
3. Monitor KMEF implementation progress
4. Provide evidence base for government funding bids

Potential to:

- Continue Kent & Medway Economic Dashboard (monthly or possibly quarterly in Jan, April, July, October)
- Produce annual ‘State of the Kent & Medway Economy’ report integrating sector analyses (subject to resource)

LEP Transition: Data & Intel

KMEP Workstream / Kent & Medway Economic Framework Link	Kent & Medway Data Requirement
<p>KMEF Ambition: Enable innovative, productive and creative businesses</p> <p>Action Areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Developing an enhanced place -based innovation partnership</i> • <i>Focusing support to business on measures that will increase long-term productivity resilience and the adoption of new ideas</i> • <i>Attracting and welcoming investors to Kent and Medway</i> • <i>Supporting the conditions for growth</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GVA • Business count (Size, turnover, births & deaths, survival, cash Reserves, PAYE, vulnerability) • Payrollemployees) • Sector reports (creative, life sciences, food & drink production, manufacturing, transportation & storage, emerging / growth sectors (cost for data – through DataCity) • Exports, Innovation (R&D Tax Credits)
<p>KMEF Ambition: Secure resilient infrastructure for planned, sustainable growth</p> <p>Action Areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Maximising the benefit of international connectivity</i> • <i>Understanding our infrastructure needs and developing new solutions</i> • <i>Ensuring that Kent and Medway’s digital infrastructure meets the dynamic evolution of business need and technology development</i> • <i>Supporting Kent and Medway’s energy potential</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce arrangements (hybrid/home/workplace), travel to work patterns • Energy Prices • Port Passengers, Imports & Exports • Broadband Access • Carbon Emissions • EV Charging

KMEP Workstream / Kent & Medway Economic Framework Link	Kent & Medway Data Requirement
<p>KMEF Ambition: Place economic opportunity at the centre of community wellbeing and prosperity</p> <p>Action Areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that everyone who wants a job can find work • Developing a strategic partnership for health and the economy • Building links between anchors of growth, key investments and community opportunity • Embedding economic opportunity at the centre of local regeneration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment / Employment Rates • Economic Inactivity data • Employment Structure (sectors) • Self Employed data • Earnings
<p>KMEF Ambition: Create diverse, distinctive and vibrant places</p> <p>Action Areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing Kent and Medway's dynamic creative and cultural economy • Supporting our network of innovative and creative places • Valuing the natural and historic environment • Developing the visitor economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism industry in Kent • Town Centre footfall data – cost for data through MRI (formerly known as Springboard) MRI OnLocation Footfall Analytics Formerly Springboard (mrisoftware.com) • Office Space data
<p>KMEF Ambition: Widen opportunities and unlock talent</p> <p>Action Areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximising the benefit of international connectivity • Understanding our infrastructure needs and developing new solutions • Ensuring that Kent and Medway's digital infrastructure meets the dynamic evolution of business need and technology development • Supporting Kent and Medway's energy potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualifications • Higher Education starters, graduate retention, graduates into local jobs (cost for data) • Jobs (knowledge-intensive sectors, low pay sectors) • Apprenticeship starts • Labour demand by sector

LEP Transition: Capital Programmes

General legal agreements to be signed transferring accountable body status to KCC & MC for legacy programmes (**LGF, GBF**)

Growing Places Fund:

Final allocations to be confirmed by SELEP (around £14m for Kent, £2m for Medway)

Kent money currently with live projects – programme to be worked up by summer 2024

Getting Building Fund Update

Five new projects approved by SELEP Accountability Board including:

- Tech Hub Workspace Gravesend
- Chatham Innovation Hub
- Maidstone Business Suite Phase 2

- Government Approval required (imminent)
- Variation Agreements to be signed (KCC/MC-SELEP)
- Back to Back Agreements to be signed KCC-GBC, KCC-MBC
- Projects to complete by end of 2024

LEP Transition Business Support

Kent & Medway Growth Hub:

- Awaiting DBT confirmation of 24-25 funding allocation
- KCC considering future delivery model & arrangements (current contract ends March 2024)

3.2 Prof Jane Harrington asked about the future of representation of Higher Education (HE) and Further Education (FE) on the board.

3.3 Liz Gibney confirmed that HE and FE would still be represented.

Item 4 - KMEP Board recruitment 2024 – 2025

KMEP Future Structures

Recommendation 1:

The KMEP board is asked to consider the current composition of the KMEP board and whether any amendments / additions might be beneficial to support future arrangements.

Current Structure:

14 Local Authority Leaders/Cabinet Members

17 Private Sector Members (2 year terms)

(including 3 permanent reps: KICC, FSB, IOD)

1 FE Rep

1 HE Rep

- 3.2 Steve Samson discussed recommendations related to the KMEP future composition before starting on this year's KMEP board recruitment.
- 3.3 Jo Nolan emphasised the need for impactful cross-sector skills subgroups, involving representatives from HE and FE.
- 3.4 Carol Ford added to this the importance of work with schools to ensure robust pipeline development.
- 3.5 Graham Razey expressed concerns about the board's size suggesting a more effective board with reduced numbers. One representative for HE and FE at this level would be enough.
- 3.6 Miranda Chapman asked if the sector groups were SIC coded. Steve Samson said that in this instance they were not as this is not always helpful, but rather headline sectors of importance to K&M were used. Miranda emphasised the importance of working with the sector strengths and mobilising this through workstreams going forward.
- 3.7 Vince Lucas said that the Transport for Southeast Partnership Board is a body on which SELEP has representation so there is a need to ensure KMEP is represented. He also said that it is important to think about getting the current Sandwich Task Force structures integrated.
- 3.8 Roger Gough agreed with Vince Lucas' comment on integrating Task Forces and recommended the importance of subgroups. Emphasised the need to streamline processes for efficient work without concerning oneself too much with the composition of the main board.
- 3.9 Mayer Schreiber expressed thanks for the board's time commitment to the Discovery Park Task Force and emphasized its importance and potential success.
- 3.10 Liz Gibney said that feedback suggested that streamlining KMEP (short meetings for example) would be a good idea. And to have as a starting point that each of the subgroups are represented on the board.

- 3.11 David Burton discussed the perception of KMEP and expressed concerns about the disconnect between elected and non-elected representatives. He said that Leaders would attend more if they felt the meetings were useful.
- 3.12 Liz Gibney said that this came down to effective communication between the two and that the relevant people get out of it what is helpful, and that effective work would happen in the subgroups.
- 3.13 Noel Ovenden said that for him there was a lot of value in his officers attending these meetings. Although he feels Leaders would turn up when decisions need to be made. He personally does get a lot of information from it. Perhaps it is seen as a talking shop as when there are no funding decisions being made.
- 3.14 Liz Gibney said that the aim is get to a position that when future funding opportunities do come up, the decisions around these can be made as quickly as possible and to keep the meetings as short as possible.
- 3.15 Monique Bonney expressed the importance of her local authority being informed and participating in KMEP but acknowledged the need for shorter meetings if funding is not discussed.
- 3.16 Liz Gibney said that if everyone is happy with general direction of travel the next step is to identify who the sector/sub group leads will be, keep the meeting as short as possible and be in a position to receive funding should this come through.
- 3.17 Vince Lucas highlighted the fact that KMEP informs the actions taken outside the meetings by private sector. Carrying out the democratic mandate. It is not necessarily reported as such.
- 3.18 David Burton reiterated the need to look at fundamental structure and efficiency.
- 3.19 Lauren Edwards highlighted the government mandate for KMEP's existence but emphasized the need for efficiency and value -added meetings. She further acknowledged the importance of information sharing and collaboration in addressing regional challenges.
- 3.20 Andrew Metcalf said also recognised the importance of collaboration that reaches across the whole region and not in specific boroughs. The private sector members span the whole region and can provide insight and solutions.
- 3.21 Liz Gibney agreed that KMEP can bring synergy to the region while acknowledging the individual needs of the boroughs etc.
- 3.22 Andrew Metcalf suggested a rebranding and repositioning opportunity for both KMEP and the Business Advisor Board.
- 3.23 Liz Gibney said that the main takeaway is that meetings going forward should purposeful and the aim is to provide such meetings in the future. Feedback from this meeting will be taken onboard. Board recruitment will be discussed at a later date.
- 3.24 Liz Gibney asked Vince Lucas if it was true that the proposed high speed trains would not go beyond Dover Priory Station.
- 3.25 Vince Lucas said he did not know. He did mention that now that the Eurostar Survey has concluded that there is an expectation that something would happen as a result of this and that it needs to be taken forward.
- 3.26 Liz Gibney did mention that perhaps going forward KMEP could look at flexible attendance so that members only needed to attend if it concerned topics relevant to their area.

- 3.27 Monique Bonney said that it was important to have the ability to dial into meetings if it is not possible to attend in person, also in subgroups.
- 3.28 Carol Ford advocated for the effectiveness of subgroups and their contributions to various task forces and other groups.
- 3.29 Steve Samson encouraged input on subgroups, seeking views on potential leads and organisations involved.

ACTION: Board members to please contact Steve with interest in subgroups.

Liz Gibney ended the meeting.