



Greater Brighton Economic Board

9 July 2025

11.00am

**Gallery Room 1, 3rd Floor,
Bramber House, University of Sussex**

AGENDA

Members:	Councillors: Sankey (Chair), Cox, Eggleston, Jones, Nicholson, Gardner and Lury Business Partners: Tim Slaney, Prof Rusi Jaspal, Prof. Debbie Keeling, Dean Orgill, Dan Power and Andrew Swayne
Contact:	Francis Mitchell Democratic Services Officer 01273 294183 Francis.Mitchell@brighton-hove.gov.uk



ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS



Lewes District Council



MID SUSSEX
DISTRICT COUNCIL



University of Brighton



University of Sussex



Chichester
College
Group

AGENDA

PART ONE

Page

1 RATIFICATION OF THE CHAIR

2 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

(a) Declaration of Substitutes: Where Members of the Board are unable to attend a meeting, a designated substitute for that Member may attend, speak and vote in their place for that meeting.

(b) Declarations of Interest:

- (a) Disclosable pecuniary interests not registered on the register of interests;
- (b) Any other interests required to be registered under the local code;
- (c) Any other general interest as a result of which a decision on the matter might reasonably be regarded as affecting you or a partner more than a majority of other people or businesses in the ward/s affected by the decision.

In each case, you need to declare

- (i) the item on the agenda the interest relates to;
- (ii) the nature of the interest; and
- (iii) whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest or some other interest.

If unsure, Members should seek advice from the committee lawyer or administrator preferably before the meeting.

(c) Exclusion of Press and Public: To consider whether, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, or the nature of the proceedings, the press and public should be excluded from the meeting when any of the following items are under consideration.

NOTE: Any item appearing in Part Two of the Agenda states in its heading the category under which the information disclosed in the report is exempt from disclosure and therefore not available to the public.

A list and description of the exempt categories is available from the Secretary to the Board.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

To consider the minutes of the previous meeting held on 2 April 2025 to follow.

GREATER BRIGHTON ECONOMIC BOARD

4 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

5 SUSSEX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE – INVITATION TO JOIN THE GREATER BRIGHTON ECONOMIC BOARD 7 - 20

6 SUSSEX ENERGY UPDATE 21 - 28

7 GREATER BRIGHTON ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25 & OPE ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25 29 - 68

8 SUSSEX SIX PRESENTATION

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For further details and general enquiries about this meeting contact Francis Mitchell (01273 294183, email Francis.Mitchell@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or email democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Date of Publication - Tuesday, 1 July 2025

The Date of the next meeting is

Subject:	Sussex Chamber of Commerce – Invitation to join the Greater Brighton Economic Board		
Date of Meeting:	9 July 2025		
Report of:	Chair, Greater Brighton Officer Programme Board		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Andy Hill	Tel: 01273 291873
	Email:	Andy.Hill@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The Greater Brighton Economic Board (“the Board”) was established in 2014 as part of the Greater Brighton City Region Deal with Government.
- 1.2 The Board comprises the Greater Brighton Economic Joint Committee (“GBEJC”), on which the local authorities are represented; and the Greater Brighton Business Partnership (“GBBP”), on which the business, university and further education sectors, NHS and South Downs National Park Authority are represented. Meetings of the Board compromise concurrent meetings of GBEJC and GBBP.
- 1.3 Sussex Chamber of Commerce is the accredited voice of business across Sussex. Established in 1945, the Chamber has built an 80-year legacy of supporting local enterprises, from ambitious startups to long-standing manufacturers, by offering an integrated suite of services designed to help businesses grow, trade internationally, and influence policy. As a member of the British Chambers of Commerce network, Sussex Chamber delivers expert advice on importing and exporting—handling everything from Certificates of Origin and EUR.1 movement certificates to ATA Carnets—while also providing accredited training in customs procedures and regulatory compliance. Through its comprehensive programme of networking events, sector-specific forums, and the widely circulated Business Edge magazine, Sussex Chamber fosters collaboration between SMEs, corporates, academia, and government. Moreover, it acts as a powerful advocate for the region’s business community, liaising directly with decision-makers in Westminster, Brussels, and beyond to ensure the concerns and opportunities of Sussex firms are heard at the highest levels. The Chamber has expressed an interest in becoming a formal member of the Board, which would bolster the pan-Sussex geographical reach of the Board and the connection to local businesses.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Board agrees to formally invite the Sussex Chamber of Commerce to become a constituent member of the Board, joining the GBBP subject to both their agreement and formal ratification from the Board’s member organisations.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 The following bodies are the current members of the Board:

- i. Adur District Council
- ii. Arun District Council
- iii. Brighton & Hove City Council
- iv. Crawley Borough Council
- v. Lewes District Council
- vi. Mid Sussex District Council
- vii. Worthing Borough Council
- viii. Adur & Worthing Business Partnership
- ix. Brighton & Hove Economic Growth Board
- x. Chichester College Group
- xi. University of Brighton
- xii. University of Sussex
- xiii. South Downs National Park Authority
- xiv. NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board (ICB)

3.2 The GBEJC comprises the bodies specified in paragraphs 3.1(i) to (vii); and GBBP comprises the bodies specified in paragraphs 3.1(viii) to (xiv).

3.3 Board membership has been extended three times since the Board's inception; Crawley Borough Council and Arun District Council joined the GBEJC in February 2018 and in October 2019 respectively. NHS Sussex ICB joined the GBBP in January 2025.

3.4 The Sussex Chamber of Commerce attended the Board meeting as observers on 2 April 2025.

3.5 When considering the request by Crawley to join the Board in 2018, it was agreed that the Board should adopt a fair and consistent approach to organisations that express an interest in joining, and for proposed new members consideration would need to be given to the following five questions;

- i. Does the organisation buy into the Board's agreed vision and priorities?
- ii. Do they share economic characteristics and represent the Greater Brighton functional economic area?
- iii. Do they add capacity to help the Board deliver on its agreed vision and priorities?
- iv. Will they add to the Board's reputation, in terms of legitimacy, standing and reach?
- v. Are they going to actively participate and commit resource to supporting the Board and deliver the work programme?

This methodology was also employed with regards the request to join by Arun District Council in 2019 and NHS Sussex ICB in 2025.

3.7 The Board is asked to extend its membership; formally inviting the Sussex Chamber of Commerce to become a constituent member of the GBBP. This is subject to the approval of Sussex Chamber of Commerce. It would also trigger a

variance in the Board's Heads of Terms (see Appendix 1) that will require the formal ratification of all Joint Committee members.

3.8 Some points for consideration are summarised below;

Does the organisation buy into the Board's agreed vision and priorities?

3.8.1 Sussex Chamber of Commerce has a vision "to support and drive sustainable economic growth and champion key issues in Sussex".

The priorities are to allow businesses to:

- Grow – through business support, discounted services and through networking forums and events;
- Develop skills – to increase skills and knowledge, through training courses and through the Local Skills Improvement Plan work to reduce skills gaps challenges, working with providers and education to address gaps;
- Discover global markets – to unearth export and import prospects through its international trade services to allow businesses to export and import;
- Influence business – through its campaigns by having a voice.

3.8.2 The Sussex Chamber's priorities are:

- Global Britain – opening the door to expansion and exports;
- People and Work – attracting and retaining people with the right skills and addressing skills gaps;
- Local Economy of the Future – making Sussex the best place to build and grow a business;
- Green Innovation – driving sustainability and the climate agenda for a better future;
- Digital Revolution – better connectivity, more efficient process and skilled employees.

Its vision and priorities are aligned with the Board's focus on economic development, the environment, climate change and infrastructure.

Do they share economic characteristics and represent the Greater Brighton functional economic area?

3.8.3 Sussex is a vibrant and diverse economy. Businesses have no borders, and many businesses work with local, national and global supply chains. Having two airports, two international seaports and three Universities in Sussex, Sussex Chamber works across the county (as well as with its counterparts across the UK) to ensure businesses are aware of opportunities to drive sustainable, inclusive economic growth.

Will they add to the Board's reputation, in terms of legitimacy, standing and reach?

3.8.4 Sussex Chamber of Commerce covers the entirety of Sussex. As an Accredited Chamber of Commerce, and part of the British Chamber network, which sits at the heart of 51 county Chambers in the UK, with the British Chambers represents the business voice in government. Sussex Chamber also has links with over 75 global British Chambers around the world, providing businesses with essential links locally, regionally and internationally.

3.8.5 Sussex Chamber celebrates its 80th year in July 2025, having supported businesses since 1945. Sussex Chamber is also an Accredited Chamber which undergoes a strict governance review by the British Chambers. Sussex Chamber also holds licences in export documentation and customs declarations, to ensure businesses have the right paperwork and can move their goods and shipments around the world.

Are they going to actively participate and commit resource to supporting the Board and deliver the work programme?

3.8.6 Sussex Chamber will actively participate and commit resource to supporting the Board deliver its work programme, as this will help support and drive sustainable economic growth.

Governance

3.8.7 Sussex Chamber of Commerce attended the April Board meeting and a Chamber Board member is part of the Sussex Energy Partner Group to provide the business/skills voice. They are attending Sussex Energy meetings and playing an active role, so are already participating in and adding value to the Board's work. The Chamber have nominated a prospective representative to sit on the Board as well as a deputy and have also nominated a member of the Team to sit on the Greater Brighton Programme Board.

4 ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 The alternative would be for the membership to remain as it is currently, but for the reasons outlined in 3.8.1-3.8.7, the recommendation is that Sussex Chamber of Commerce should be formally invited to join the Board.

5 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

5.1 The governance committees of constituent Board members will be consulted as part of the changes to Heads of Terms.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 The Board is asked to note the benefits of Sussex Chamber of Commerce joining the Board and accordingly approve the extension in membership; formally inviting the Chamber to become a constituent member of the Business Partnership. Changing the Board's membership will trigger a variance in the Board's Heads of Terms that will require the formal ratification of all Joint Committee members.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 In joining the Greater Brighton Economic Board, Sussex Chamber of Commerce would be required to make a budgetary contribution towards operational costs in line with other Business Partners as agreed as part of the Operational Arrangements 2025/26 at the board meeting on 2 April 2025.

Finance Officer Consulted: Haley Woollard, Head of Corporate Finance
Date: 26/06/25

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 The legal implications in relation to the recommendations are contained within the body of this report.

Lawyer Consulted: Siobhan Fry, Head of Legal (Commercial) BHCC
Date: 26/06/2025

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 To follow.

Sustainability Implications

- 7.4 To follow.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

Greater Brighton Economic Board Heads of Terms

Appendix 1: Heads of Terms for Greater Brighton Economic Board (Jan 2025)

1. Establishment, Purpose and Form

- 1.1. The Greater Brighton Economic Board ("The Board") shall be established from the Commencement Date.
- 1.2. The over-arching purpose of the board is to bring about sustainable economic development and growth across Greater Brighton ('the City Region'). To achieve this, the principal role of the Board is to co-ordinate economic development activities and investment at the regional level.
- 1.3. The Board comprises the Greater Brighton Economic Joint Committee ("GBEJC"), on which the local authorities will be represented; and the Greater Brighton Business Partnership ("GBBP"), on which the business, university and further education sectors will be represented
- 1.4. Meetings of the Board comprise concurrent meetings of GBEJC and GBBP.
- 1.5. GBEJC shall be a joint committee appointed by two or more local authorities represented on the Board, in accordance with section 120(1)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 1.6. The Board may appoint one or more sub-committees.
- 1.7. For the two years starting with the Commencement Date, the lead authority for the Board shall be Brighton & Hove City Council ("BHCC"), whose functions in that capacity shall include the provision of scrutiny (see paragraph 4.3), management of the call-in and review process (see paragraph 8), and the support detailed in paragraph 12.
- 1.8. Unless the Board resolves otherwise, before the start of the third year following the Commencement Date, and every two years thereafter, the Board shall review the lead authority arrangements and, subject to paragraph 1.9, invite each of the local authorities represented on the Board to submit an expression of interest in fulfilling the role of lead authority for the subsequent two year period. The Board shall then instigate a procurement exercise to select the most appropriate authority for that role.
- 1.9. Notwithstanding the appointment of a successor lead authority pursuant to paragraph 1.8, the incumbent lead authority may retain such of their Accountable Body functions as are necessary to enable that local authority to comply with its on-going commitments and liabilities associated with its Accountable Body status.

2. Interpretation

- 2.1. In these Heads of Terms –
 - i. 'Commencement Date' means 1st April 2014.

- ii. 'City Region' means the area encompassing the administrative boundaries of BHCC, Adur District Council, Worthing Borough Council, Lewes District Council, Mid Sussex District Council, Crawley Borough Council and Arun District Council; and 'regional' shall be construed accordingly;
- iii. 'economic development' shall bear its natural meaning but with particular emphasis given to :
 - Employment and skills;
 - Infrastructure and transport
 - Housing;
 - Utilisation of property assets;
 - Strategic planning;
 - Economic growth.
- iv. 'Accountable Body' means the local authority represented on the Board carrying out the function set out in paragraph 12.2.

3. Functions

3.1. The Functions of the Board are specified in paragraph 3.2 below and may be exercised only in respect of the Region.

3.2. The functions referred to in paragraph 3.1 are as follows:

- i. To make long term strategic decisions concerning regional economic development and growth;
- ii. To be the external voice to Government and investors regarding the management of devolved powers and funds for regional economic growth;
- iii. To work with national, sub-national, regional and local bodies to support a co-ordinated approach to economic growth across the region;
- iv. To secure funding and investment for the Region;
- v. To ensure delivery of, and provide strategic direction for, major projects and work stream enabled by City Deal funding and devolution of powers;
- vi. To enable those bodies to whom section 110 of the Localism Act 2011 applies to comply more effectively with their duty to co-operate in relation to planning of sustainable development.
- vii. To incur expenditure on matters relating to economic development where funds have been allocated directly to the Board for economic development purposes; and for the avoidance of doubt, no other expenditure shall be incurred unless due authority has been given by each body represented on the Board.

3.3. In discharging its function specified in paragraph 3.2 (Viii) above, the Board shall-

- i. (save in exceptional circumstances) seek to invest funding on the basis of-

- a Proportionality, by reference to the economically active demographic of each administrative area within the city Region;
 - b Deliverability;
 - c Value for money and return on investment / cost benefit ratio; and
 - d Economic impact to the City Region as a whole.
- ii. Delegate implementation of that function to the lead authority, who shall also act as Accountable Body in relation to any matters falling within that function.

4. Reporting and Accountability

- 4.1. The Board shall submit an annual report to each of the bodies represented on the Board.
- 4.2. The Greater Brighton Programme Board shall report to the Board and may refer matters to it for consideration and determination.
- 4.3. The work of the Board is subject to review by an ad hoc joint local authority scrutiny panel set up and managed by the lead authority.

5. Membership

- 5.1. The following bodies shall be members of the Board:

- i. Brighton & Hove City Council
- ii. Adur District Council
- iii. Worthing Borough Council
- iv. Lewes District Council
- v. Mid-Sussex District Council
- vi. Crawley Borough Council
- vii. Arun District Council
- viii. University of Sussex
- ix. University of Brighton
- x. Chichester College Group
- xi. Brighton & Hove Growth Board
- xii. Adur & Worthing Business Partnership
- xiii. South Downs National Park Authority
- xiv. NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board

- 5.2. GBEJC shall comprise the bodies specified in paragraphs 5.1(i) to (vii); and GBBP shall comprise the bodies specified in paragraphs 5.1(viii) to (xiv).
- 5.3. Each of the bodies listed in paragraph 5.1 shall be represented at the Board by one person.
- 5.4. Each local authority member shall be represented at the Board by its elected Leader.
- 5.5. Each business sector member shall be represented at the Board by the Chairman of that member or by a person nominated by the Board of that member.

5.6. Each university member shall be represented by a Vice Chancellor or Pro Vice-Chancellor of that university or by a person nominated by that university member.

5.7. Each further education member shall be represented by its Principal or the Chair of its Governing Body or by a person nominated by that further education member.

6. Chair

6.1. The Chair of GBEJC shall, by virtue of his/her democratic mandate, be Chair of the Board

6.2. If the Chair of GBEJC is unable to attend a Board meeting, the Board shall elect a substitute from its local authority member representatives provided that no such member representative attending in the capacity of a substitute shall be appointed as Chair of GBEJC / the Board.

6.3. The Chair will be elected annually by members of the GBEJC. Election of the Chair will be conducted through a formal process performed by the Democratic Services Team of the Lead Authority. The elected Chair will be appointed at the first meeting of the Board in the new municipal year. A Chair may be re-elected but shall not serve as Chair for more than 4 years.

7. Voting

7.1. Each person represents a member of GBEJC, and each person representing a member of the GBBP, shall be entitled to vote at their respective meetings.

7.2. Voting at each of the concurrent meetings of GBEJC and GBBP shall be by show of hands or, at the discretion of the chair, by any other means permitted by law, and voting outcomes reached at those meetings shall be on a simple majority of votes cast.

7.3. Where voting at a meeting of GBEJC results in an equal number of votes cast in favour and against, the Chair of GBEJC shall have a casting vote.

7.4. Where voting at a meeting of GBEJC results in an equal number of votes cast in favour and against, the motion/proposal/recommendation under consideration shall fall in relation of GBBP.

7.5. Where the respective voting outcomes of GBEJC and GBBC are the same, that shall be taken as the agreed Board decision and the Board may pass a resolution accordingly.

7.6. Where the respective voting outcomes of GBEJC and GBBP differ, the Board –

- i. May not pass a resolution relating to that matter; and
- ii. May refer the matter to the Chief Executive of the lead authority, who may consult with members of the Board or such other persons as are appropriate, with a view to achieving agreement on the matter between GBEJC and GBBP by discussion and negotiation.

7.7. Where, pursuant to paragraph 7.6(ii), agreement is reached the matter at issue shall be remitted to, and voted upon at, the next meeting of the Board.

7.8. Where, pursuant to paragraph 7.6(ii), no agreement is reached the motion/proposal/recommendation at issue shall fall.

8. Review of decision

8.1. Decisions of the Board will be subject to call-in and review in the following circumstances:

- i. Where a local authority voted to agree a recommendation at a GBEJC meeting, but the decision of the Board was not to agree the recommendation.
- ii. Where a local authority voted against a recommendation at a GBEJC meeting, but the decision of the Board considered that the interests of the body they represent had been significantly prejudiced; or
- iii. Where any local authority represented on the Board considered that the interests of the body they represent had been significantly prejudiced; or
- iv. Where any local authority represented on the Board considered that the Board had made a decision beyond its scope of authority.

8.2. The procedure for requesting, validation, and implementing a call-in and review is specified in Schedule 1.

8.3. Where a request for call-in is accepted, the Board decision to which it relates shall be stayed pending the outcome of the call-in.

8.4. Following call-in, the panel convened to review a Board decision may refer the decision back to the Board for re-consideration. Following referral, the Board shall, either at its next scheduled meeting or at a special meeting called for the purpose, consider the panel's concerns over the original decision.

8.5. Having considered the panel's concerns, the Board may alter its original decision or re-affirm it. Paragraph 8.1 shall not apply to the Board's follow-up decision. In consequence, the latter decision may be implemented without further delay.

9. Substitution

9.1. Subject to paragraph 9.2, representatives are expected to attend all meetings however, where a representative of a member of the Board is unable to attend a Board meeting, a substitute representative of that member may attend, speak and vote, in their place for that meeting.

9.2. A substitute member must be appointed from a list of approved substitutes submitted by the respective member to the Board at the start of each municipal year.

10. Quorum

10.1. No business shall be transacted at any meeting of the Board unless at least one third of all member bodies are present, and both GBEJC and GPBBP are quorate.

10.2. Quorum for GBEJC meetings shall be three member bodies.

10.3. Quorum for GBBP meetings shall be three member bodies.

11. Time and Venue of Meetings

11.1 Ordinary meetings of the Board shall be convened by the lead authority and will rotate around the City Region.

11.2 The Chair of the Board may call a special meeting of the Board at any time, subject to providing members with minimum notice of two working days.

12. Administrative, financial and legal support

12.1 The lead authority shall provide the following support services to the Board:

- i. Administrative, as more particularly specified in the Memorandum of Understanding pursuant to paragraph 13;
- ii. Financial (including the Accountable body function specified in paragraph 12.2); and
- iii. Legal, comprising Monitoring Officer and Proper Officer functions in relation to GBEJC meetings.

12.2 The function of the Accountable Body is to take responsibility for the financial management and administration of external grants and funds provided to the Board, and of financial contributions by each member of the Board, as more particularly specified in the Memorandum of Understanding Pursuant to paragraph 13. In fulfilling its role as Accountable Body, the lead authority shall remain independent of the Board.

12.3 Other members of the Board shall contribute to the reasonable costs incurred by the lead authority in connection with the activities described in paragraphs 12.1 and 12.2, at such time and manner as the Memorandum of Understanding shall specify.

13 Memorandum of Understanding

13.1 Members of the Board may enter into a memorandum of understanding setting out administrative and financial arrangements as between themselves relating to the functioning of the Board.

13.2 The memorandum may, in particular, provide for –

13.2.1 Arrangements as to the financial contributions by each member towards the work of the Board, including:

13.2.1.1 The process by which total financial contributions are calculated;

13.2.1.2 The process for determining the contribution to be paid by each member;

13.2.1.3 The dates on which contribution are payable;

13.2.1.4 How the Accountable Body shall administer and account for such contributions;

13.2.2 Functions of the Accountable Body; and

13.2.3 The terms of reference for the Greater Brighton Officer Programme Board.

14 Review and Variation of Heads of Terms

14.1 The Board shall keep these Heads of Terms under review to ensure that the Board's purpose is given full effect.

14.2 These Heads of Terms may be varied only on a resolution of the Board to that effect, and subject to the approval of each body represented on the Board.

Subject: Sussex Energy Update
Date of Meeting: 9 July 2025
Report of: Chair, Greater Brighton Economic Board
Contact Officer: Name: Natasha Bridge
Email: Natasha.Bridge@brighton-hove.gov.uk
Ward(s) affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 On 16th July 2024 the Greater Brighton Economic Board (“the Board”) supported the launch of the Sussex Energy mission.
- 1.2 An update was provided in the subsequent Board meetings highlighting the progress made since the launch event.
- 1.3 This report gives a further Sussex Energy update setting out the work undertaken since the last Board meeting and the next steps in developing the mission.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Board notes the progress on Sussex Energy.
- 2.2 That the Board supports the next steps needed to take Sussex Energy forward as set out in section 3.4.
- 2.3 That the Board agrees to receive a further update on Sussex Energy at the next Board meeting.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Sussex Energy aims to achieve net zero energy status by 2040 in the Sussex and Brighton region. This ambitious goal seeks to ensure that our community's energy use equals the amount of zero-carbon energy generated locally, thereby enhancing energy security, driving down energy bills and addressing urgent climate concerns, at the same time as driving economic growth.
- 3.2 This is a priority for the Greater Brighton Economic Board. Pace is needed to progress this in 2025/6 because climate change is cumulative, accelerating, and characterised by tipping points. This means delaying action makes solutions more challenging, costly, and potentially less effective.

3.3 This report is structured in line with the Sussex Energy 2025 Plan presented at the April 2025 Board meeting.

3.4 **UPDATE**

Network

The **Sussex Energy Partner Group's membership** has expanded to include the Sussex Chamber of Commerce, providing a business and skills perspective, along with representation from community energy organisations. This expansion enriches our monthly meetings and addresses the Board's feedback on incorporating a business viewpoint.

The first **Sussex Energy Forum** meeting is planned for Wednesday, 9 July. The Forum brings together individuals working on low-carbon energy solutions in Sussex to strengthen connections, accelerate their efforts, and co-create Sussex Energy. The inaugural, non-political meeting will focus on building relationships, exploring the challenges of scaling up low-carbon energy work, identifying where Sussex Energy can add the most value and spark momentum toward practical next steps and ongoing collaboration. The current proposal is to cultivate this community through three annual meetings (two virtual and one in-person) and a continuous online discussion. However, the 9 July meeting output might impact this proposed approach.

Work Plan

A **survey** has recently closed that sought to identify the challenges to low carbon energy work in Sussex. This survey was targeted at people working in energy in the region. Its results will inform the agenda for the Sussex Energy Forum on 9 July and help shape the Sussex Energy work plan.

Responding to the Board's aspiration for more rapid delivery, a working relationship has been established with the University of Sussex Sustainability Communications Manager and as a result a **communications plan** is being developed and a working group is forming to help build out the plan and to set up a communications workstream to provide ongoing support to Sussex Energy. It is clear there are some objectives of Sussex Energy that can be facilitated through communications (list below), so these are the starting point for the communications plan. These are all linked to either increasing the amount of zero carbon energy produced in Sussex, or reducing the amount of energy used (either via generating funding for the work or by helping residents / businesses / communities to make energy changes).

- Build reputation of low carbon energy work in Sussex to help attract funding. This would include messaging around why low carbon energy work is needed to combat climate change and the benefits of it.
- Encourage proactive investment by homeowners and businesses in energy efficiency and renewable installations to further the Sussex Energy mission.
- Promote Solar Together Sussex (aggregated buying of solar panels) to increase uptake.

- Highlight the proven track record and impact of community energy organisations to build public understanding and encourage participation in their projects.

Over time, as the challenges to low carbon energy work in the region are understood further and as more low carbon energy projects develop, other objectives that can be progressed with communications will become apparent. Therefore, having a communications workstream as a continual, supporting function will be useful.

Sussex Energy Funding

From the July 2024 Sussex Energy report, a total of £100,000 was agreed to be set aside from the Greater Brighton Economic Board Operational Budget to support Sussex Energy - £50,000 from 2024/25 and £50,000 from 2025/26. The Sussex Energy Partner Group has held several discussions, culminating in a workshop on 29 May to recommend how best to allocate this Board funding for the Sussex Energy mission.

During that session, we evaluated fourteen distinct options and identified four top priorities: (1) appointing a programme manager to attract funding and drive Sussex Energy projects forward; (2) cultivating a network of community energy champions; (3) expanding and aggregating large scale solar installations across Sussex to leverage economies of scale (referred to as “Solar Across Sussex” in this paper); and (4) conducting a strategic analysis of existing low-carbon energy initiatives—identifying gaps, anticipating changes under devolution, and advancing pipeline development.

The Sussex Energy Partner Group’s recommendation is to engage dedicated finance and technical expertise to serve as the linchpin for advancing regional energy initiatives. The responsibilities will encompass funding generation and investor engagement; spearheading the Solar Across Sussex initiative and working work with the Greater Brighton Economic Board Business Manager on regional resource and network coordination; and programme management and project delivery.

Their objective would be to identify, research and pursue national, regional, and private funding and financing opportunities (grants, capital investment, public & private) to a) increase the flow of investment into Sussex low-carbon energy projects and b) provide a case for financial backing for the role’s ongoing work. This would be critical to avoid the risk of losing momentum on the work. The UK Spending Review increases energy security and net zero investment spending (excluding Sizewell C) by 2.6%, with £8.3b to be invested in ‘homegrown clean power’ over the spending review period, while the government’s investment strategy identifies clean energy industries as a priority growth sector—highlighting strong policy and financial support for renewable energy infrastructure and long-term projects.

Under the Solar Across Sussex initiative, the objective is to work with the Greater South East Net Zero Hub to identify viable large solar generation sites; engage local authorities and land owners; advise on community engagement; develop aggregation models; navigate planning processes; and structure financing arrangements so that multiple solar projects can be progressed to become investment ready, with the potential of packaging them together into several, larger procurement opportunities to realise the benefits of economies of scale.

Concentrating resources on seasoned, renewable-energy expertise has the potential to accelerate momentum, unlock capacity through centralised coordination with partners, drive tangible progress against the Sussex Energy mission, and deliver a strong return on investment by attracting additional funding and reducing project costs through economies of scale.

Research is currently underway to determine the cost and optimal engagement model—whether via a consultancy contract, direct recruitment by a local authority or partner organisation, freelance arrangement, or secondment from an existing partner—with an emphasis on securing the right blend of experience and skills while ensuring rapid onboarding.

The estimated ballpark cost of the expertise (for a 12-month term) is £75,000, depending on the chosen engagement model. In addition, we recommend setting aside £25,000 to cover ancillary support, including commissioning targeted studies, communications and branding services, design and marketing collateral, and specialist consultancy to improve grant application success rates. These allocations will allow some resources necessary to deliver against the Sussex Energy mission effectively while maximising the impact of the Board's £100,000 investment.

Why Solar Across Sussex?

- Solar is a tried and tested renewable technology.
- Sussex enjoys one of the highest levels of annual sunshine in the UK.
- Through a network of experienced Community Energy Organisations, Sussex possesses deep expertise in community financial models that fund projects in ways that benefit local communities and secure buy-in.
- Sussex has technical know-how in solar installations.
- Localised electricity generation helps to enable other decarbonisation work. For example, technologies that transition from burning fossil fuels as their energy source to electricity, such as heat pumps, put a greater demand on the electricity grid. By having generation sources nearby, it can help to relieve local pinch points on the grid.
- The technology's value can be further enhanced by pairing installations with battery storage to enable load balancing, access flexibility services and increase self-consumption.
- By expanding large scale solar installations across Sussex, there will be jobs generated (e.g. electrical servicing, cleaning, grounds people), demand for skills and opportunities for start-ups.
- There is a potential to build procurement power by aggregating projects and where possible, principles could be built in to use this power to benefit the region e.g. by giving a weighting to local suppliers in procurement.

- There is potential to explore how the Solar Across Sussex initiative can support social benefits; for example by exploring the opportunity to provide cheap, clean energy to community shared facilities or charities/CICs delivering community benefits; by looking at policy around, profits from sites, or funds collected via section 106 or the community infrastructure levy being re-invested in the local community; or by increasing awareness of the Community Energy Organisation financial offer to allow communities to financially benefit from solar installations.

Devolution – Environment & Climate Change

In the Devolution White Paper, Environment and Climate Change was highlighted as an area of competence for Strategic Authorities. Officers from West Sussex County Council, East Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council, and Adur & Worthing Councils—each a member of the Sussex Energy Partner Group—have begun collaborating on a document to clarify the challenges and opportunities for Environment and Climate Change within a devolved Sussex and Brighton to use as a brief for senior officers involved in shaping devolution. Having this clarity, along with visibility of a project pipeline and of existing pockets of expertise could enable the newly formed Sussex & Brighton MCCA (Mayoral Combined County Authority) to deliver more effectively in the first years.

To inform this work, officers met with the Director for Environment at the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA). Key learnings included:

- **Established Collaboration:** GMCA's ten constituent authorities already had a mature, collaborative working relationship, long before devolution.
- **Political Commitment:** The GMCA mayor's manifesto featured carbon neutrality as a cornerstone policy, demonstrating high-level political buy-in which is a strong foundation to build on.
- **Funding Model:** A small number of Environment roles in the GMCA are funded through modest contributions from the local authorities. The remainder are funded through government/European programmes and small income streams.
- **Environment Combined Authority / Local Authority Relationship:** The GMCA Environment team supports local authorities to deliver their priorities by running collaborative, regional initiatives, such as grant funding opportunities. Local authorities remain independent and have a choice about whether they want to collaborate with the GMCA's initiatives.
- **Local Authority Energy Plans:** Local Authority Energy Plans (LAEPs) are useful as a basis for investment discussions. More useful to be online and dynamic rather than a single point of time report.
- **Governance Structures:** Task and finish groups have large memberships, only a small number actively contribute, which can risk the Combined Authority becoming a blocker rather than an enabler. To avoid this, more regularly refresh the groups.
- **Environmental Management System:** Implementing an environmental management system (or similar framework) from the outset ensures that climate and environmental considerations are embedded in all decision-making across the Combined Authority.

- **Cross-Functional Integration:** Embedding climate and environment staff within other teams reduces siloed working, even if positions remain funded by the climate budget.

Further meetings are being pursued with other Mayoral Combined Authorities—such as West Midlands, West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, York and North Yorkshire, and West of England—to gather additional insights.

Sussex Energy Next Steps:

- *Network: Deliver the Sussex Energy Forum on 9th July capturing the outputs, processing them to inform the Sussex Energy work plan and harness the power of the forum to drive the work forward.*
- *Work plan: Analyse survey results to understand challenges to low carbon energy work in Sussex that can be improved through the Sussex Energy regional collaboration. Use this insight to guide the direction of the Sussex Energy work plan.*
- *Work plan: Prepare for a meeting with Sussex comms professionals from partner group organisations to discuss the idea of setting up a comms working group to progress a comms plan.*
- *Work plan: Further define the scope for the finance and technical expertise and investigate the cost and optimal engagement model to fulfil this function.*
- *Work plan: Brief Greater South East Net Zero Hub to start research on potential large scale solar generation sites in Sussex and Brighton.*
- *Devolution E&CC: Progress the development of the Environment and Climate Change brief.*
- *Devolution E&CC: Organise discussions with other combined authorities to learn from their journeys.*

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 The Board is unlikely to have sufficient funding directly for projects, but even if it could, the impact would be far less than incubating collaborative working to attract funding into the region for energy solutions, culminating in the implementation of scaled solutions which could make a large impact to the UK net zero goals. The Government has highlighted decarbonisation of energy as a priority with aims to transition to a zero-carbon electricity system by 2030, create 650,000 new jobs by 2030 through investment in clean energy and infrastructure and install thousands of clean power projects which local people directly benefit from.
- 4.2 The Government's energy ambition confirms the right approach is an ambitious goal that the Sussex Energy mission aligns strongly with.
- 4.3 Alternative individuals or consultants could lead on shaping the Environment and Climate Change approach in the submissions for the proposed Sussex and Brighton Mayoral Combined County Authority. However:
 - Sussex Energy is working on the same geography as a future proposed Sussex and Brighton Mayoral Combined County Authority.

- A wide network of contacts has been built (from Sussex local authorities and other organisations) that have the necessary expertise to inform an Environment and Climate Change approach for the proposed Sussex and Brighton Mayoral Combined County Authority in a way that can gather input from many stakeholders, so increasing buy in to the approach.
 - A Steering Group, including representation from the 3 Sussex upper tier authorities, has been established and is working together successfully.
 - Conversations about ways to leverage strategic level coordination to drive growth and add value have started in the Sussex Energy Steering Group.
- 4.4 The Greater South East Net Zero Hub work with public sector organisations and their stakeholders to support the development and financing of local net zero projects to increase the number, scale and quality of projects. They will be part of the Sussex Energy Core Network and will support to progress Sussex Energy e.g. with their expertise and sector knowledge. Whilst they will be an active partner, they are not in a position to deliver the range and scale of activity with the geographical focus envisaged for Sussex Energy.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Community engagement is an important principle to Sussex Energy. As mentioned in 3.4 under 'Network' the first Sussex Energy Forum meeting is planned for Wednesday, 9 July. The Forum brings together individuals working on low-carbon energy solutions in Sussex to strengthen connections, accelerate their efforts, and co-create Sussex Energy. The current proposal is to cultivate this community through three annual meetings (two virtual and one in-person) and a continuous online discussion. However, the 9 July meeting output might impact this proposed approach.
- 5.2 As mentioned in 3.4 under the 'Sussex Energy Funding' section, as part of the Solar Across Sussex initiative, advice on community engagement would be provided, along with awareness promotion of community financial models that fund projects in ways that benefit local communities and secure buy-in.
- 5.3 The ongoing approach will vary depending on the proposed energy solution, from consulting the community, offering community ownership options to enabling communities to implement their own solutions. Community engagement options will be different for each working group / project but will be considered and prioritised.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Board is asked to agree the recommendations 2.1-2.3, which will mean the work to operationalise Sussex Energy will continue.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 In July 2024, the board agreed to earmark a total of £100,000 from the Greater Brighton Economic Board Operational Budget to support the Sussex Energy mission. An initial £50,000 was allocated from the 2024/25 Operational Budget (agreed by the board to be carried forward to 2025/26 in April 2025), and a further £50,000 was allocated from the 2025/26 Operational Budget.
- 7.2 Section 3.4 of this report outlines the proposals for utilising this funding to advance regional energy initiatives, including work to attract further funding opportunities. All activity described within Section 3.4 is expected to be delivered within the £100,000 allocation.

Finance Officer Consulted: Haley Woollard, BHCC Head of Corporate Finance & Deputy Chief Finance Officer

Date: 26/06/25

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

Lawyer Consulted: BHCC Head of Legal (Commercial), Siobhan Fry

Date: 26/06/25

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 Sussex Energy is aiming to ensure that the benefits of the transition to net zero energy will be shared across the City Region, whilst addressing fuel poverty.

Sustainability Implications

- 7.4 The driving force behind Sussex Energy is to reduce carbon emissions and accelerate the journey to net zero, which will help protect the environment, enhance natural capital, limit the effects of climate change, and build resilience in key infrastructure and the supply of energy. This is the foundation of all work under the Sussex Energy umbrella.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

None

Subject:		Greater Brighton Annual Report 2024/25 and One Public Estate Programme Annual Report 2024/25	
Date of Meeting:		9 July 2025	
Report of:		Chair, Greater Brighton Officer Programme Board	
Contact Officer:	Name:	Andy Hill	Tel: 01273 291873
	Email:	Andy.Hill@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:		All	

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The reporting and accountability arrangements for the Greater Brighton Economic Board “the Board” are set out in the [Heads of Terms](#). These arrangements require the Board to submit an annual report to each of its representative bodies.
- 1.2 The Board’s 2024/25 Annual Report is attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.3 The One Public Estate (OPE) Memorandum of Understanding between the Local Government Association (LGA), Cabinet Office and the Greater Brighton OPE Partnership (“the Partnership”), led by Brighton & Hove City Council, requires the Partnership to “provide an end of year report highlighting overall achievements and progress with delivery of OPE projects”. The Greater Brighton One Public Estate Programme Annual Report 2024/25 is attached at Appendix 2.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Board:

- 2.1 Approves the 2024/25 Annual Report and Board members submit the report to their respective organisations.
- 2.2 That the Board notes the content of the One Public Estate Programme’s 2024/25 Annual Report.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 As outlined in section 4.1 of the [Heads of Terms](#), the Board shall submit an annual report to each of the bodies represented on the Board. The annual report for 2024/25 can be found at Appendix 5.
- 3.2 The 2024/5 Annual Report both reviews the previous twelve months and ahead to the next period. Main contents are as follows:
 - Foreword from the Chair

- Greater Brighton highlights
- Preparing for devolution
- Greater Brighton; past, present, future
- Sussex Energy: driving us to net zero
- Our thriving tech sector
- Focus on quantum computing

4 ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 The proposed recommendations are in accordance with the governance arrangements agreed by the Board.

5 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Not applicable

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 To ensure that the Board transitions smoothly into the new municipal year, Board members are asked to agree to submit the Annual Report to their respective organisations.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. All activity in 2024/25 as outlined in the Annual Report at Appendix 1 was undertaken within the GBEB Operational Budget.

Finance Officer Consulted: Haley Woollard, BHCC Head of Corporate Finance & Deputy Chief Finance Officer
Date: 27/06/25

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 The recommendations of this report are in line with the Heads of Terms and the One Public Estate Memorandum of Understanding.

Lawyer Consulted: Siobhan Fry, BHCC Head of Legal (Commercial)
Date: 26/06/2025

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 None.

Sustainability Implications

- 7.4 None.

Any Other Significant Implications:

7.5 None

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Greater Brighton Economic Board Annual Report 2024/25
2. Greater Brighton One Public Estate Programme Annual Report 2024/25

Background documents:

1. [Greater Brighton Economic Board Heads of Terms \(January 2025\)](#)

An aerial photograph of Brighton, UK, showing the city's dense urban landscape and the beach. The text 'GREATER BRIGHTON ECONOMIC BOARD' is in orange, and 'ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025' is in white.

GREATER BRIGHTON ECONOMIC BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

GREATER
BRIGHTON

GREATER BRIGHTON ECONOMIC BOARD MEMBERS

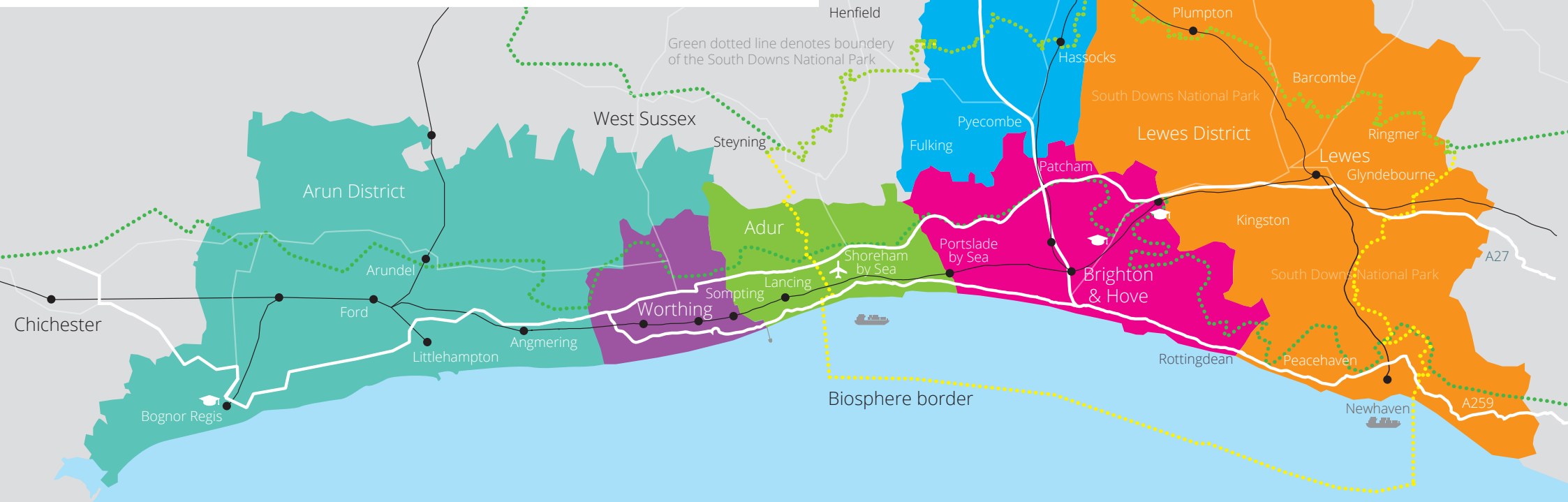
LOCAL AUTHORITIES

- Adur District Council
- Arun District Council
- Brighton & Hove City Council
- Crawley Borough Council
- Lewes District Council
- Mid Sussex District Council
- Worthing Borough Council

BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVES

- Adur & Worthing Business Partnership
- Brighton & Hove Economic Growth Board
- NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board (ICB)
- University of Brighton
- University of Sussex
- Chichester College Group
- South Downs National Park Authority

Greater Brighton is all about recognising that the economy knows no boundaries. The whole really is greater than the sum of the parts.



FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIR OF THE GREATER BRIGHTON ECONOMIC BOARD

It is my pleasure, on behalf of the Board, to introduce this year's Annual Report. Sussex and Brighton has been selected as one of only six regions to be in the Government's **Devolution Priority Programme** and work is progressing at pace to deliver a Mayoral Combined County Authority by May 2026. Devolved powers will enable investment to be directed where it matters most—reflecting local priorities and delivering better outcomes for our citizens, businesses and the wider economy. The Board will leverage its influence and standing to ensure that Greater Brighton and Sussex as a whole seize every opportunity this historic moment affords.

Keeping up the momentum, our Board continues to grow in stature and impact. This year we welcomed NHS Sussex to our membership, and Sussex Chamber of Commerce has requested to join—solidifying our status as a crucial, collaborative forum where the public and private sectors can work together in a solutions-focused space. We have commissioned a study to identify and prioritise the highest-value economic opportunities arising from devolution, and we remain firmly on the front foot throughout this transition, helping to shape policy and direct resources.

Our commitment to the **Sussex Energy** mission—to achieve energy neutrality by 2040—remains our key priority. It now has a dedicated partner group with representation across Sussex and across sectors, a roadmap to 2040, and a focused 2025 action plan. In the year ahead we will launch the Sussex Energy Forum, bringing together practitioners from across the region to accelerate low-carbon energy projects and ensure that, as powers devolve, we speak with one coordinated voice on environment and climate change.

Engaging Central Government has been another strategic focus. The Department for Business & Trade's visit to Greater Brighton showcased our thriving tech ecosystem—from technology providers headquartered in the region valued at \$1 billion to record breaking quantum computing start-ups. Sussex's reputation as a leader in **Industries of the Future** is stronger than ever. Our quantum computing sector has delivered groundbreaking modular architectures and world-class training programmes, while spin-outs such as Universal Quantum have raised over £100 million in funding. Follow-up discussions with ministers and officials, to get support to unlock critical sites and explore opportunities in quantum and beyond, have begun. Leading on from the first visit, together with the University of Sussex, we hosted central Government tours of the Sussex Centre for Quantum Technologies lab.

Looking forward, the Board stands ready to maximise the benefits of devolution, to deepen collaboration across sectors, and to champion Sussex on the national and global stage. I would like to thank my fellow Board members, our partners and every stakeholder whose dedication and ingenuity power our progress.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bella Sankey". The script is fluid and cursive.

Cllr Bella Sankey

Chair of Greater Brighton Economic Board
Leader of Brighton & Hove City Council

GREATER BRIGHTON HIGHLIGHTS 2024/25



DEVOLUTION HAS LANDED

- Sussex and Brighton to be one of the first areas granted devolved powers under new framework
- Devolved powers to support targeted investment based on local need and priorities
- Better outcomes for region's citizens, businesses and the wider economy
- Board will use its influence and standing to maximise opportunity for Greater Brighton residents and businesses



KEEPING UP THE MOMENTUM

- Board growing in status; NHS Sussex joined and Sussex Chamber to follow
- Board will be pro-active and on front-foot through transition
- Continue to be a crucial, collaborative, safe space for public sector and business
- Commissioning a study to understand the devolution priority opportunities



ENERGISING SUSSEX

- Sussex Energy mission to achieve energy neutrality by 2040 leverages regional collaboration to tackle climate change, improve energy security, and drive economic prosperity.
- Sussex Energy Partner Group has been established, a roadmap to 2040 and 2025 action plan has been developed and work on aligning Environment and Climate Change devolution plans is in progress.
- Sussex Energy Forum is launching, bringing together practitioners from across the region to accelerate low-carbon energy projects in Sussex.

GREATER BRIGHTON HIGHLIGHTS 2024/25



ENGAGING CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

- The Department for Business & Trade visit to Greater Brighton showcased the thriving tech sector.
- Technology providers valued at \$1 billion, record breaking quantum computing start ups, growth infrastructure and strong, supportive ecosystem.
- Follow-ups with government departments to unlock critical sites and explore growth opportunities.



INDUSTRIES OF THE FUTURE

- Sussex is a global leader in quantum computing research.
- Groundbreaking achievements including a powerful new modular quantum computing architecture, exceptional training programmes and a thriving sector ecosystem, including Universal Quantum, a spin out who has raised over £100 million in funding.
- Board facilitated central government visits to the Sussex Centre for Quantum Technologies lab.

PREPARING FOR DEVOLUTION

DEVOLUTION FOR ALL

In December 2024, the Government published the English Devolution White Paper, setting out its ambition for devolution to all areas of England and inviting applications from areas to join the Devolution Priority Programme. In early February Sussex and Brighton was confirmed as one of six regions to be accepted on to the Programme. Being on the Priority Programme means that Sussex and Brighton will be working to the most ambitious timetable for devolution, including the establishment of a Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA) over the next 10 months and the first Mayoral elections expected in May 2026.

A NEW DEVOLUTION FRAMEWORK

The English Devolution Bill will create a statutory requirement for all Mayoral Strategic Authorities to produce a Local Growth Plan which sets out a long-term

vision for growth in their region over the next decade and a roadmap for how this can be achieved.

Strategic Authorities will have a defined list of 'Areas of Competence', set out in law. These are designed to strengthen, not detract from, the functions and roles of other public bodies, such as NHS England, Environment Agency or Local Authorities. Proposed Areas of Competence are;

- Transport & local infrastructure
- Skills & employment support
- Housing & strategic planning
- Economic development & regeneration
- Environment & climate change
- Health, wellbeing & public service reform
- Public safety

Devolution unlocks funding and powers that would provide certainty, allowing a locality to plan spend more strategically, over a long period. This would support targeted investment based on local need and priorities that will result in the best return for a region's citizens, businesses and the wider economy.

Established Mayoral Authorities will receive a consolidated budget (Integrated Settlement) covering housing, regeneration, local growth, transport, skills, retrofit and employment support rather than individual funding pots, with less reporting requirements back into Government.



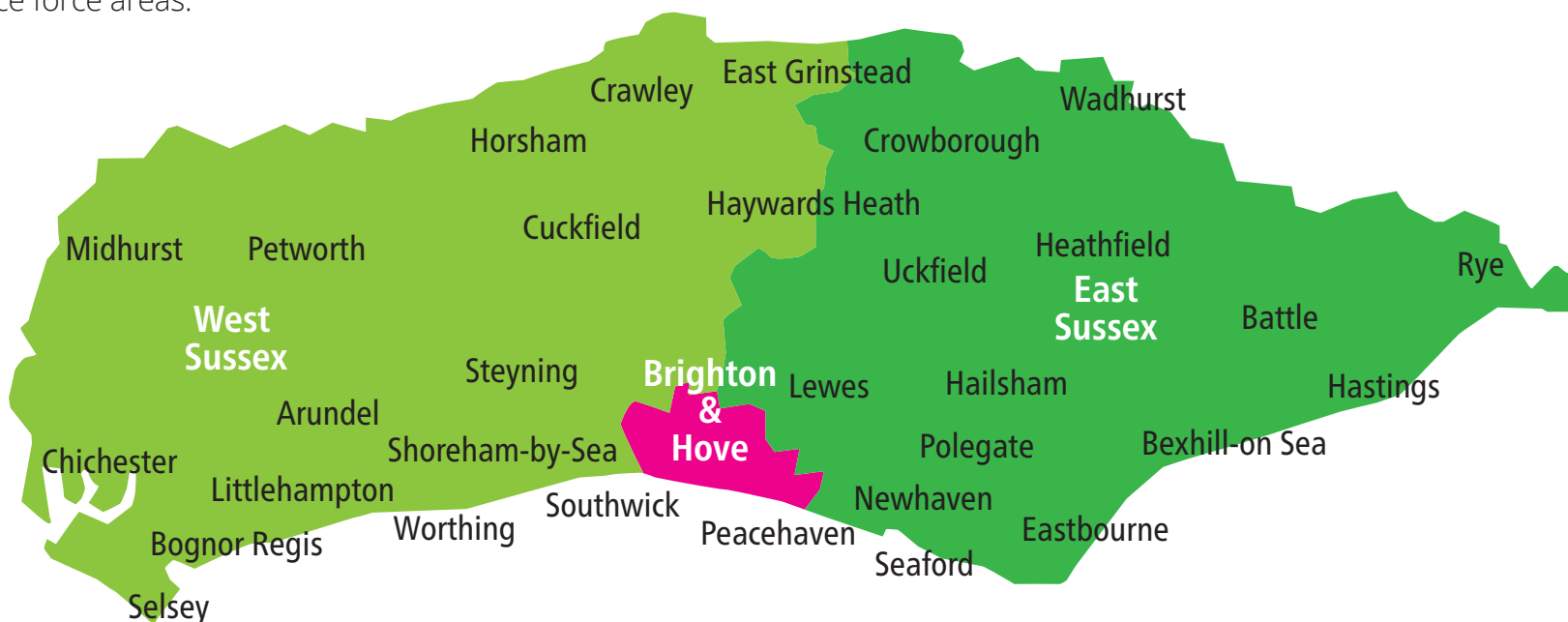
PREPARING FOR DEVOLUTION

WHY SUSSEX AND BRIGHTON?

Completing the map a recent **publication from the Institute for Government - (bit.ly/4mTQ7CS)** expressed the view that there is significant economic and social benefit to gain from a "Historic Sussex" devolution deal, which would bring together East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton & Hove. The argument put forward by the authors is that it achieves significant scale with a population of 1.7 million people and an economy of £48.7bn. It also reflects the economic geography of the region, in terms of the key travel to work and travel to learn commuter flows. On identity grounds it would align to earlier historic county boundaries, and it would also align well to both NHS Integrated Care Board and police force areas.

Sussex and Brighton is connected to Europe and beyond by major international gateways including the UK's second largest airport and the ports of Shoreham and Newhaven. The region hosts three leading universities and the unique quality of life offer includes a beautiful coastline, the South Downs National Park, the Living Coast UNESCO Biosphere and several other areas of outstanding natural beauty. The area has so much to offer.

However, whilst the region boasts high levels of economic prosperity based on some economic metrics, these can mask the true picture. The most recent figures published for Gross value added (GVA) per head see the



PREPARING FOR DEVOLUTION

Sussex and Brighton region (£23,452), as lagging behind the wider southeast (£29,415) and England (£28,096). There exist significant regional disparities, with multiple pockets of deprivation and unmet potential.

There are well-established transport links, including major roads the A23 and A27, and rail connections like the Brighton Mainline, which are crucial for regional connectivity. However, there is scope for improvement, particularly in reducing congestion and improving public transport frequency to reduce commute times and further environmental objectives. The region would benefit from investment in transport infrastructure, particularly across east-west corridors such as the A27-M27/West Coastway Line and A259/ East Coastway Line. These challenges in connectivity hinder inclusive growth. Enhancing transport links would improve connectivity between coastal towns, support business growth, and widen access to job opportunities.

Devolving powers to Sussex and Brighton presents an opportunity to reshape local governance and drive significant economic and social benefits for the region. By working together to shape a unified devolution agreement, Sussex and Brighton stands to gain enhanced financial resources, improved infrastructure, and greater strategic control. By uniting efforts on a Local Growth Plan, housing, skills, and health, devolution can spark innovation, create better jobs and deliver more responsive and integrated public services.



GREATER BRIGHTON; PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

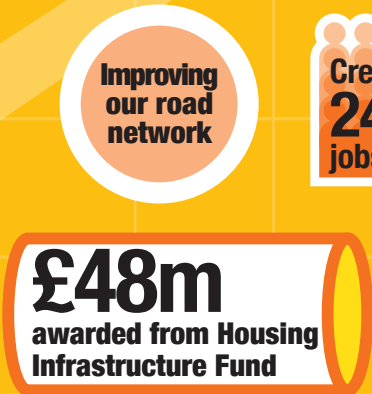
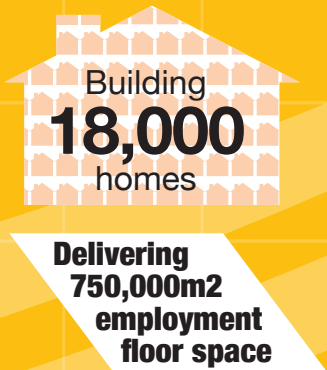
A UNIQUE SPACE FOR COLLABORATION

Since its inception in 2014, the Greater Brighton Economic Board has championed collaborative working across the sub-region, established a wide range of partnerships and networks, and provided strategic leadership around key issues - the launch of the Sussex Energy Mission in July 2024 is a recent example. It is a unique space where Districts, Boroughs, businesses, further and higher education institutions across East and West Sussex and

Brighton & Hove work collaboratively and openly. The Board boasts over a decade of experience and expertise in regional governance structures and sustainable economic prosperity and is therefore well placed to support Government as work to establish a Strategic Authority progresses.



Our successes so far



GREATER BRIGHTON; PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

DELIVERING FOR RESIDENTS

Through the Greater Brighton City Deal Agreement, the Board created the Greater Brighton Investment Programme. Since 2014, over £160m of Local Growth Funding has been secured which has unlocked around £2bn of private sector investment, created 24,000 jobs, built 18,000 homes and delivered 750,000m² of employment floor space.

As some of the early projects started in 2015, most reached the delivery phase some time ago. These include the Advanced Engineering Centre at the University of Brighton, flood defences in Newhaven, the Construction Trades Centre at Greater Brighton Metropolitan College, the BTN BikeShare scheme, Plus X, Circus Street and the Adur Tidal Walls flood defences in Shoreham.

The Investment Programme was designed to raise the City Region's productivity, and deliver sustainable economic prosperity by unlocking sites, developing infrastructure and creating space and support for high-value businesses to start-up and grow and thereby reduce reliance on lower-value industries. The Investment Programme contained a number of projects which varied in both their geography and type, including £48m secured through Housing & Infrastructure Fund to unlock 6,000 new homes and in July

2018 Homes England announced that it had purchased 176 hectares in Burgess Hill to unlock the delivery of 3,500 homes at Brookleigh.

While still in its 'infancy', the Board made enormous progress in creating a strong brand that is recognised by Government, investors and key stakeholders. It is a united partnership that has a detailed understanding of its functional economic area (and the barriers and challenges to increased productivity) and has the ability to shape priorities and target interventions across the City Region.

A GROWING AND EVOLVING BOARD

As well as being noticed by Government, the Board has also grown in standing and reputation at a more local level. Crawley and Arun were not original members of the Board but joined in 2018 and 2019 respectively.

In the summer of 2024 NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board wrote a letter to the Chair formally requesting to join the Board. The Integrated Care System that covers Sussex (NHS Sussex) is responsible for healthcare for 1.7 million people across Sussex. It employs 50,000 staff with the largest components being the 20,000 employees at University Hospitals Sussex and 8,000 at East Sussex Healthcare. The NHS in Sussex has an asset base that covers 236 GP Practices, 9 acute sites, and around 14 other



Sussex



GREATER BRIGHTON; PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

sites. The NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board (ICB) has 850 employees, and commissions the services for NHS Sussex health care providers. It currently has contracts with 267 individual providers making the organisation a big driver of economic growth in the area, both with the number of people it employs and the amount it spends on procurement.

The Board agreed that NHS Sussex ICB should join the Board and at the start of this year they officially became a member. With NHS Sussex as a member, the geographical reach of the Board has been widened to all of Sussex. This is very helpful in the context of a pan-Sussex devolution settlement being agreed.

In addition to NHS Sussex ICB, The Sussex Chamber of Commerce has also requested to join. The Sussex Chamber of Commerce is the largest business member organisation in Sussex. The Chamber champions local businesses, ensuring their voices are heard at regional and national levels. Through advocacy and collaboration with government bodies, industry leaders, and decision-makers, the Chamber helps shape policies that drive growth,

innovation, and a thriving economy. The Chamber also led on the development of the Future Skills Sussex Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), which is seen as an exemplar.

LOOKING AHEAD

The Board welcomes the Government recognition of the opportunities available from working at a larger, regional level for strategic initiatives. The formation of a Sussex and Brighton MCCA brings huge opportunity for Greater Brighton and the wider Sussex region.

Sustainable economic prosperity is the main focus of the Board, and the Board has been able to add great value and demonstrate competence in the areas of economic development & regeneration and environment & climate change. Given that the Sussex and Brighton region is on the Devolution Priority Programme, as outlined earlier in the report, it is important that the work of the Board over the next 12 months is framed within the context of devolution so that the Board remains an important, proactive and relevant governance structure through the transition period, and that key strands of work continue

into the future.

To that end, the Board has commissioned an independent study to review the economic opportunities for the region, fully considering the enhanced strategic powers, capability and perspective of a Strategic Mayoral Authority. The main objective of the study is to understand how the powers and capability devolved to the MCCA translate to economic opportunities for the region. There may be some quick wins and low-hanging fruit but the main focus of the analysis will be the medium/longer term opportunities and how they may be realised. The main output of the project will be an evidence-based report which clearly sets out a methodology, an analysis of the key opportunities, to allow prioritisation based on factors such as cost, speed and complexity of implementation, and some strategic next steps/actions to take forward to develop a business case for investment.

SUSSEX ENERGY: DRIVING US TO NET ZERO

SUSSEX ENERGY MISSION

In July 2024, Greater Brighton and partners across the region came together to launch the Sussex Energy mission—an ambition for Sussex to increase the amount of zero-carbon energy produced in the region and at the same time reduce the demand for energy, so that the Sussex region achieves energy neutrality by 2040. Sussex Energy expands upon previous initiatives by the Board including the GB10 pledges, Hydrogen Sussex, Energy and Water Plans. This Mission drives numerous strategic goals; it contributes to the net zero carbon goal to address urgent climate concerns, it builds on a strong track record in Sussex of low carbon energy work, it tackles the cost-of-living challenge, improves energy security, drives demand for green skills, drives economic prosperity and advances Government priorities, including the transition to a zero-carbon electricity system by 2030.

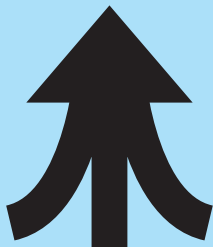
The launch brought together local authorities, public bodies, higher education institutes, businesses, and community organisations in a shared commitment to tackle one of the most urgent challenges of our time: how we generate and use energy. The strength of Sussex Energy is boosting regional collaboration on net zero. This collaboration allows:



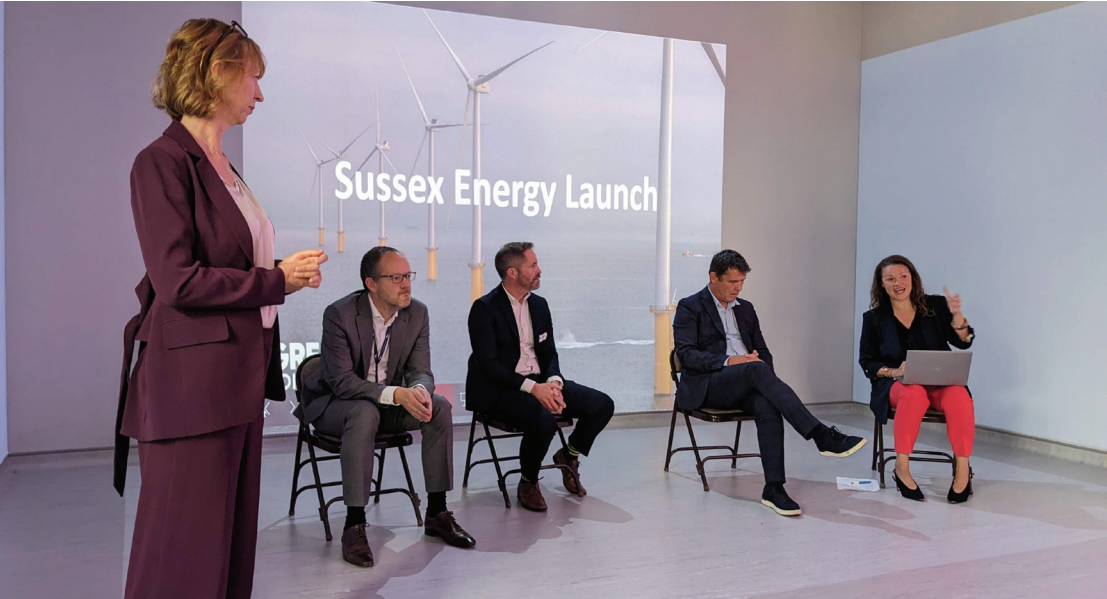
Efficiencies to be gained from spreading best practice, sharing knowledge, experience and future endeavours.



Us to be **greater than the sum of our parts**. We can unite on policy to drive regional change and speak with one voice to provide the bigger picture of the energy work in Sussex and attract investment.



Benefits from **economies of scale**. Aggregating demand will put us in a more powerful position to negotiate pricing or to build a pipeline of work giving certainty to build skills and attract suppliers.



SUSSEX ENERGY: DRIVING US TO NET ZERO

Since the launch, a dedicated Sussex Energy Partner Group has formed to drive the mission forward. This group is working collaboratively across boundaries to shape a better energy future, sharing knowledge and coordinating efforts at a scale never seen before in Sussex.

Over the past year, the mission has laid strong foundations. A roadmap to 2040 has been developed, setting out the long-term vision for decarbonising energy in Sussex. Alongside this, a focused 2025 action plan outlines the workstreams to focus on this year.

LOOKING AHEAD

There's lots more to come. In July 2025, the mission will host its first **Sussex Energy Forum**, bringing together a network of Sussex sustainability practitioners to strengthen their connections to accelerate low carbon energy work in Sussex and help to guide the direction of Sussex Energy. Work is underway to understand from people working in net zero in the region, what the challenges are impacting progress of low carbon energy work that could be tackled through the power of collaboration. This will ensure the future direction of Sussex Energy is targeted and effective.

At the same time, a **communications campaign** is being explored to raise awareness and build support across Sussex.

Crucially, the mission will be looking to explore opportunities for partners to collaborate on large-scale energy generation and energy efficiency programmes, unlocking the power of regional cooperation to drive meaningful change.

Sussex and Brighton is on the Devolution Priority Programme (as outlined earlier in the report). One of the areas of competence where devolved regions will have a mandate to provide strategic level coordination is Environment and Climate Change. Under Sussex Energy, officers from Local Authorities across Sussex and Brighton are working together to learn from other, comparable regions that have gone through the devolution process and to align on what the priorities, challenges and opportunities are for Environment and Climate Change for devolution in Sussex and Brighton. Presenting a unified view will make a smoother transition and helps the region prepare to capitalise on this unique opportunity.

The Sussex Energy mission is more than just a plan—it's a movement, and one that puts local people and places at the heart of the transition to a net zero future.

OUR THRIVING TECH SECTOR

DEPARTMENT FOR BUSINESS & TRADE LEARN WHY GREATER BRIGHTON IS A GREAT PLACE FOR TECHNOLOGY BUSINESSES

In November 2024, more than 60 people attended the Department for Business & Trade (DBT), Technology Investment Team visit to the Greater Brighton region, including 10 senior officers from DBT. The Tech Investment Team work with international technology companies to set up and grow their presence in the UK. Their visit aimed to understand and convey why Greater Brighton is an ideal location for technology businesses.



The Greater Brighton Economic Board and DBT officers

The University of Sussex hosted the first day, featuring a series of speakers and a visit to the Quantum lab at the Sussex Centre for Quantum Technologies (SCQT). The second day focused on visiting various businesses in the region.

SO WHY IS GREATER BRIGHTON A GREAT PLACE FOR TECHNOLOGY BUSINESSES?

Proven Success:

Greater Brighton is a leading base for businesses in the professional, scientific, and technical activities sector, with international employers such as American Express, Roche Diagnostics, Doosan, and Tokyo Electron. The visit showcased some of these flourishing businesses:

- Ralph Gilbert, CEO, led a tour of Focus Group Shoreham Headquarters, a tech provider recently valued at \$1 billion. Mark Bullen, MD, showcased GB Electronics, an advanced manufacturing firm, one of the growth-driving sectors identified in Invest 2035.
- Professor Winfried Hensinger, Director of SCQT and Cofounder, Chairman, and Chief Scientist of Universal Quantum, highlighted the region's leadership in quantum computing. The region has launched a doctoral training centre and successful spin outs, such as Universal Quantum which secured a €67M contract from the German Space Agency.

OUR THRIVING TECH SECTOR



Focus Group Headquarters visit



GB Electronics visit



Quantum Lab

Growth Infrastructure:

Greater Brighton boasts the largest business district in Southeast England with Manor Royal providing 9,000,000 square feet of commercial floor space and home to over 600 businesses generating 30,000 jobs. The region has higher proportions of premises with 5G, fibre, and gigabit-capable connectivity than the UK average. During the visit, the following elements of the local growth infrastructure was explored:

- Kathryn Hall, Mid Sussex Council's Chief Executive, presented an overview of Burgess Hill's Science and Technology Park, a 48 hectare site with 100,000sqm of employment floorspace unlocking more than 5,000 new jobs, which is under development within a larger growth area delivering 3,500 new homes, roads and sustainable travel infrastructure. This emphasised the significant growth being delivered in Greater Brighton, alongside local facilities, services and its gigabit connectivity.

- A panel of speakers was hosted from the comprehensive ecosystem supporting technology businesses to establish and grow in the region - including business networks (Grace Prior, Co-Founder of Silicon Brighton), business support and flexible space providers (Mat Hunter, Co-CEO of Plus X innovation and Nigel Lambe, CEO of Sussex Innovation Centre), and higher education institutions (Paul Rolfe, Director of Sussex & Surrey Institute of Technology, Chichester College Group and Professor Thar Baker Shamsa, Associate Dean (Research & Knowledge Exchange, University of Brighton)).
- The DBT team highlighted that 91% of potential GVA (over £320m) for the South East Foreign Direct Investment pipeline comes from Data Centre projects. Complimenting this, a Q&A session on data centres featured Matt Bagwell, CMO from Deep Green, and Peter Hutchinson, Data Centre Campus Manager from Digital Realty, shedding more light on the sector's opportunities and challenges.

OUR THRIVING TECH SECTOR



Technology ecosystem panel

Academic Excellence:

Home to three universities and a forward-thinking Further Education sector that fosters creativity and innovation. The region boasts one of the highest proportions of startups per capita in the UK (5,025 business births in the region in 2022 vs a UK average of 4,951) and a strong job market in creative industries with the sector job count increasing by 30% from 2015 to 2022 in Brighton & Hove, a higher rate than jobs across the economy as a whole.

Quality of Life

Greater Brighton attracts and retains talent with its draw of outstanding natural beauty, the sea, a UNESCO biosphere and a vibrant cultural scene.



Data centre Q&A

Connectivity

The region's prime location includes proximity to London, a direct rail link to Cambridge, maritime links to European ports, Gatwick Airport's extensive destinations and a leading EV charging network.

As a result of the visit there were subsequent follow ups with government departments to help realise the growth potential of the quantum sector in the region and Burgess Hill Science and Technology Park. The DBT officers were impressed by the visit and provided the following feedback:

"I've been doing these local area familiarisation tours for over 10 years, and I don't think we've ever met with such a large or wide array of local partners and stakeholders. It was a great opportunity for us to meet with senior representatives of the universities, key research leads, business support organisations and local authorities (including political leaders and Chief Executives) etc." Representative from the DBT Tech Investment team

TECH IN FOCUS: QUANTUM COMPUTING

SUSSEX 'QUANTUM SILICON VALLEY' OF THE UK

Sussex is a global leader in quantum computing research and with sustained government funding and strategic support to realise the growth potential of the sector, it could emerge as the United Kingdom's "Quantum Silicon Valley," underpinned by world-class research, pioneering education programmes and a flourishing industrial ecosystem.

WORLD-LEADING MODULAR QUANTUM RESEARCH

Under the leadership of Professor Winfried Hensinger, Director of the Sussex Centre for Quantum Technologies (SCQT) and co-founder and chair of Universal Quantum, researchers at SCQT have achieved breakthroughs that vault them ahead of long-standing competitors, including a powerful new modular quantum computing architecture. This modular quantum computing approach will facilitate the construction of quantum computers capable of solving important industry problems as a world first.

EXCEPTIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMMES

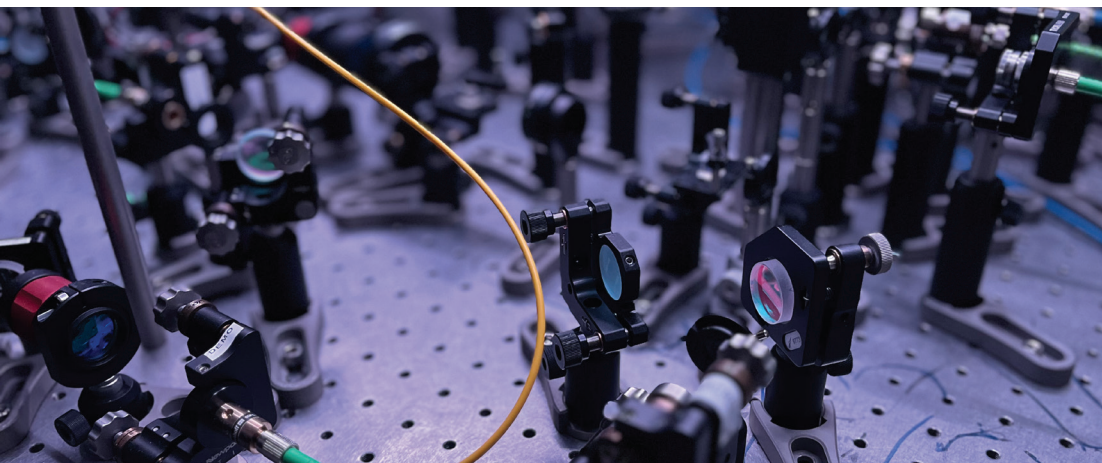
To cultivate the next generation of quantum experts, Sussex offers:

- A four-year undergraduate degree in Quantum Technology.
- The UK's first distance-learning Quantum Technology degree, widening access.
- A Quantum Technology Doctoral Training Centre, supporting PhD research at the cutting edge.
- These programmes ensure a steady pipeline of skilled engineers and scientists for the coming quantum revolution.

THRIVING SPIN-OUT INDUSTRY

Sussex's industrial cluster includes:

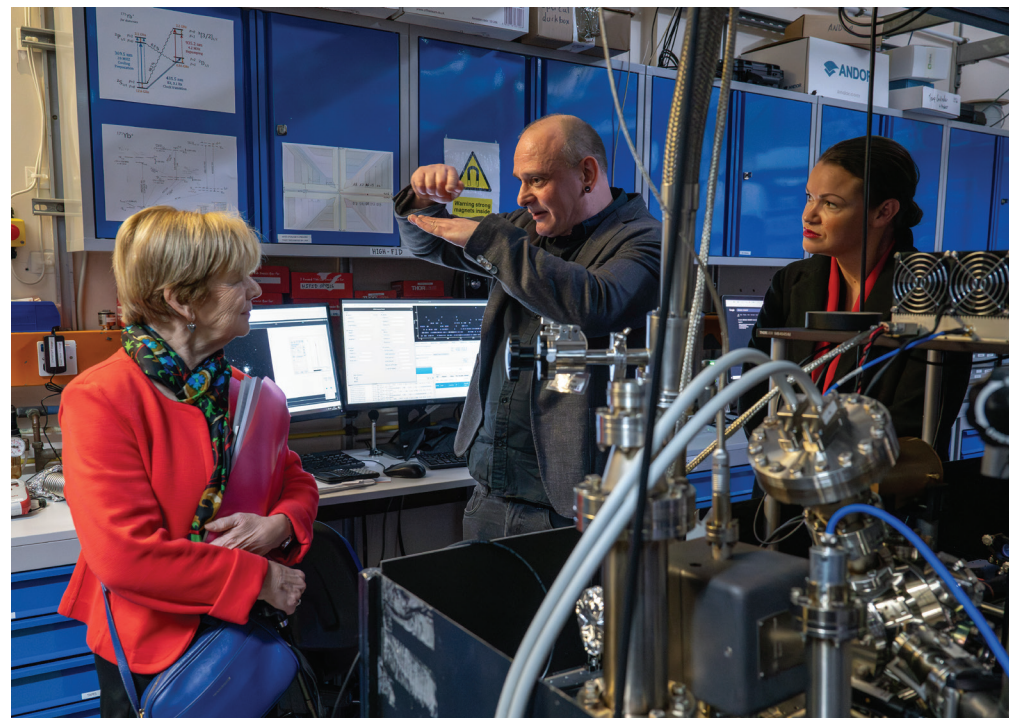
- Universal Quantum, the SCQT spin-out that has secured over £100 million in funding, including a €67 million contract with the German Space Agency and investment from In-Q-Tel, underlining its strategic role in national security and advanced computing. Bloomberg named it one of the UK's Top 25 Startups in 2023.
- Edwards Vacuum in Burgess Hill and K.J. Lesker in Hastings, supplying critical microchip and vacuum-equipment technologies.
- A growing digital and software sector, providing expertise in algorithms, cloud services and cybersecurity.



TECH IN FOCUS: QUANTUM COMPUTING

GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

This year, in partnership with the University of Sussex, Greater Brighton has been instrumental in organising two governmental visits to the quantum lab at SCQT, reinforced with letters sent to ministers, to help promote our region's strength in this sector. In February 2025 Baroness Jones of Whitchurch, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Future Digital Economy and Online Safety at the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology toured the lab. This followed a visit from the Department for Business and Trade in November 2024. Reflecting on her visit, Baroness Jones said: "Supporting innovation hubs like this one will help British researchers to continue making breakthroughs in emerging technologies that could improve everything from health diagnostics to cyber security, boosting our economy and improving daily lives. The work on quantum here at the University of Sussex is a great example of how world-leading research is evolving into successful spin-out companies, creating jobs and attracting investment right across the UK, delivering on our Plan for Change."



Reflecting on this vision, Cllr Bella Sankey, Chair of the Greater Brighton Economic Board, said:

"The Greater Brighton Economic Board recognises the immense potential of the quantum computing sector in the region to drive innovation and economic growth in the area. We are committed to supporting it, enabling our region to help the UK capitalise on its research excellence and foster a world-class quantum computing industry."

TECH IN FOCUS: QUANTUM COMPUTING

ECONOMIC IMPACT AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT



An Oxford Economics report forecasts that quantum computing could support 148,000 jobs across the UK by 2055 and add up to £12.9 billion to GDP by the same year, with productivity gains up to 8 percent. Based on these findings, at £128,000 GVA per worker, Universal Quantum alone contributes over £11.5 million to the local economy, before accounting for spill-over effects from other firms and future expansion.

LOOKING AHEAD

As mentioned earlier in the report, the Greater Brighton Economic Board has commissioned an independent study to review the economic opportunities for the region, including the quantum computing sector. The study will fully consider the enhanced strategic powers, capability and perspective of a Strategic Mayoral Authority, to explore how the powers and capability devolved to the MCCA translate to economic opportunities for the region.

With strong government backing—highlighted by a recent £121 million UK quantum investment package—Sussex is exceptionally well-placed to harness its record-breaking research, industry-leading training and dynamic spin-out ecosystem, cementing its status as the nation's Quantum Silicon Valley.

An aerial photograph of Brighton, UK, showing the city's coastline, beach, and dense urban development. The text is overlaid on the top half of the image.

GREATER BRIGHTON ECONOMIC BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

LINKS AND RESOURCES

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**GREATER
BRIGHTON**

2024/2025¹⁵
ANNUAL REPORT

GREATER BRIGHTON ONE PUBLIC ESTATE PROGRAMME

JULY 2025
GREATER
BRIGHTON

THE NATIONAL ONE PUBLIC ESTATE PROGRAMME – OVERVIEW

THE GOVERNMENT LAUNCHED ONE PUBLIC ESTATE IN 2013.

The One Public Estate (OPE) Programme is an established national programme working with more than 300 councils and is delivered in partnership by the Local Government Association and Office of Government Property within the Cabinet Office.

It provides funding and support to enable councils to deliver public property and land initiatives in collaboration with central government and other local agencies.

One Public Estate aims to get more from the collective public sector estate – whether that's unlocking surplus sites for new housing and jobs, enabling more joined-up public services for local communities, or creating further opportunities for local authorities and public sector partners to reduce running costs and generate income to deliver savings for the taxpayer.

In 2017, the national programme expanded its partnership to include the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government new Land Release Fund. The Land Release Fund aims to accelerate the release of local authority-owned land for housing to help increase the public sector contribution to land supply and innovation in housebuilding.

THREE CORE OBJECTIVES:

- 1 Economic growth – through the creation of new homes and jobs**
- 2 Delivering more integrated, customer focused services – with property as an enabler**
- 3 Generating efficiencies – through capital receipts and reduced running costs**

BROWNFIELD LAND RELEASE FUND (BLRF)

The delivery of new homes across England is a national priority for central government. Local authorities have established more than 150 housing development companies, demonstrating that local government is taking an increasingly hands-on role in developing their local area.

Since 2017, OPE has partnered with MHCLG to deliver the Land Release Fund (LRF). The LRF has accelerated the release of local authority-owned land for housing to help increase the public sector contribution to land supply and innovation in housebuilding.

The LRF is a unique programme. It targets small sites where viability issues have prevented the release of local authority-owned land for housing delivery. Previous rounds have shown LRF-funded projects can deliver at pace by bridging viability gaps to accelerate the release of land for housing.

The BLRF will support the release of local authority-owned brownfield land for housing, and in addition, the fund will also seek to support self and custom-build projects on both brownfield and greenfield sites.



THE GREATER BRIGHTON ONE PUBLIC ESTATE PROGRAMME – Overview

The local programme was established in November 2016, under the leadership of the Greater Brighton Economic Board.



It brings together representatives from the participating local authorities, health commissioner and provider trusts, emergency services and education to work on property-focused initiatives through sharing and collaboration including with central government.

The local programme recognises the importance of public sector bodies, as major landowners and as anchor institutions, in making the best use of the city region's limited land supply to help build the economic, social, and environmental resilience of the region.

In 2020 the Greater Brighton Economic Board agreed 10 ambitious Environmental Pledges to tackle climate change and move the City Region towards net zero. Where appropriate, the local programme will look to support the realisation of these pledges by considering the sustainability and resilience implications associated with maximising the potential of the One Public Estate.

Aerial photo of Shoreham looking to Brighton

THE GREATER BRIGHTON ONE PUBLIC ESTATE PROGRAMME – Partnership

The local programme aims to facilitate closer cooperation and coordination between member organisations and key stakeholders. This is supported by two partnership boards, which have been put on pause while the wider devolution and local government reorganisation process is being undertaken.

GREATER BRIGHTON PUBLIC SECTOR PROPERTY GROUP: established in October 2016, the Group comprises representatives from the region's participating local authorities, the health sector, emergency services and education, as well as from the national and West and East Sussex County Council One Public Estate programmes. The Group meets quarterly and is responsible for providing oversight of and support to the programme's projects, as well as for identifying new One Public Estate opportunities. It also provides a forum to engage public sector landowners in the delivery of key initiatives and themes relating to asset management and use and the built.

GREATER BRIGHTON HOUSING & GROWTH SITES WORKING GROUP: formed in November 2019, the Group brings together all Greater Brighton local authorities and Homes England to focus specifically on housing and regeneration, covering supply and delivery, funding and investment, policy and standards, and programmes and initiatives. The Group meets quarterly to share learning and best practice, provide peer support and review, and identify and progress opportunities for collaboration and joint work.

THE GREATER BRIGHTON ONE PUBLIC ESTATE PROGRAMME – Project Portfolio

Locally led partnerships of public sector bodies can bid for funding from the national programme to repurpose underutilised or surplus public estate for housing, regeneration, and other locally determined uses.

In , 2024-25 the local programme was awarded £178,891 in additional funding to support Land Release Fund projects in Adur & Worthing: 5-7 High St, Worthing and Marine Place, Worthing. The award for High St, Worthing was subsequently declined due to viability concerns.

The total funding awarded to the local programme now stands at £7.3M, supporting a portfolio of 39 funded projects. This comprises:

£1,347,500 in **ONE PUBLIC ESTATE** revenue funding to support the development of 12 projects that are being led by various public sector bodies. The funding is being used for a range of activities, including feasibility, viability, master planning, business case development and project management support, to provide the evidence base needed to make robust asset management decisions. It is currently expected that

these projects will facilitate the delivery of circa 1,000 new homes, £46m in capital receipts, £7.5m in reduced running costs, 5,035 new jobs (including construction), and 29,000sqm employment floorspace (excluding uses previously defined as D1).

One Public Estate projects are by nature embryonic and the local programme's projects are at varying stages of development. These forecast outputs will likely change as business cases are completed and as schemes are developed and approved.

£5.76M in **LAND RELEASE FUND** capital funding to enable delivery of 24 projects (one of which has also received One Public Estate funding) creating circa 520 new homes on local authority-owned land. The funding is being used for small-scale land remediation and infrastructure works. It is enabling the viability of these projects by filling the funding gaps caused by abnormal development costs and scheme specific complexities.

The Greater Brighton One Public Estate Programme – Project Portfolio

The Land Release Fund projects form part of:

- Adur & Worthing Council's **DEVELOPING PATHWAYS TO AFFORDABLE HOMES**, a four-year programme that will deliver at least 250 affordable homes by 2025. To date, Adur District Council has secured £1,151,000 in Land Release Fund funding to support 7 projects to provide 76 new homes on council-owned land – 100 % of which will be affordable. The projects are being delivered as part of the councils' Affordable Homes Delivery programme.
- Brighton & Hove City Council's **NEW HOMES FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS** programme that is building much-needed new rented council homes on council-owned land. New Homes for Neighbourhoods forms part of the council's package of actions to provide more housing in the city. Since 2015 New Homes for Neighbourhoods has delivered 269 homes across 14 projects, and it has a further pipeline of sites set to provide c.500 homes. Brighton & Hove City Council has secured £4,114,387 in Land Release Fund funding to date, to support the delivery of 11 projects providing 417 new homes – two of which have already been successfully completed.
- A pipeline of small sites owned by Brighton & Hove City Council being redeveloped by **BUNKER HOUSING COOPERATIVE**, a self-build housing co-operative for low-income families and individuals in the city, for affordable housing in perpetuity. The council will dispose of the sites by long lease to Bunker Housing Cooperative, subject to their securing funding and obtaining planning consent for each scheme.



The homes will be available to households meeting the council's allocations criteria and/or on Homemove, the council's housing register, via membership of the cooperative and the rents will be well below the city's market rate. Due to cost inflation and viability the programme is now focused on bringing forward the Dunster Garage site which received funding of £22,137.

The Greater Brighton One Public Estate Programme – Project Portfolio

As reported last year, we have conducted a thorough review of the GBEB programme and as a consequence have taken the decision to close out a number of projects. These are anticipated to continue in the future and the OPE funding has been crucial in providing the seed money to start the projects.

Closed projects include Brighton General Hospital, Burgess Hill Train Station, Hove Station Quarter, Preston Barracks co-location, Lewes NSQ + Springman House. The Future of Public Sector office project was also closed although work is ongoing through Workstyles and the East Sussex SPACES programme.

LRF projects closed include Dunster Close Hammerhead site, Natal Road and Hinton Close.

The portfolio successfully bid for two new projects, Marine Drive Worthing, and High St Worthing; however, the latter was not progressed as further surveys showed that the scope of work had changed.

A number of LRF projects have now been concluded including St Giles Close, Gardner Road, Sylvan Road, Wilmot Road, and Gravelly Crescent.

As we progress through the year and the programme matures, with completed and closed projects, we anticipate the portfolio will be eight live projects across Brighton & Hove and a further six projects in the wider Greater Brighton area.

The local programme is required to submit triannual reports to the national programme, showing the progress of each of the funded projects against their project plans and highlighting any issues and risks. As the programme matures, we have successfully completed 4 of the housing projects and our comprehensive review of all of the funded projects to assess their ongoing viability and efficiency is ongoing.

ONE PUBLIC ESTATE PROJECTS:

1. Worthing Integrated Care Centre, Worthing;
2. Preston Circus Fire Station, Brighton;
3. Preston Barracks Primary Care Centre, Brighton;
4. Moulsecomb Housing & Community Hub, Brighton;
5. Brighton General Hospital, Brighton;
6. Springman House, Lewes;
7. Hove Station Quarter, Hove;
8. Patcham Court Farm, Brighton;
9. North Street Quarter, Lewes;
10. Burgess Hill Station Quarter, Burgess Hill;
11. Morley Street/Ivory Place, Brighton;
12. Future of Public Sector Office (strategic).

The Greater Brighton One Public Estate Programme – Project Portfolio

LAND RELEASE FUND PROJECTS:

1. Kensington Street, Brighton;
2. Selsfield Drive, Brighton;
3. Victoria Road, Brighton;
4. Windlesham House, Brighton;
5. Former Hollingbury Library, Brighton;
6. Rotherfield Crescent, Brighton;
7. Moulsecoomb Housing & Community Hub, Brighton;
8. Eastergate Road, Brighton;
9. Oakley House, Brighton;
10. Portslade Village Centre, Brighton;
11. Dunster Close – Garage, Brighton;
12. Dunster Close – Hammerhead, Brighton;
13. Hinton Close, Brighton;
14. Natal Road, Adur;
15. Daniel Close, Adur;
16. St Giles Close, Adur;
17. Gardner Road, Adur;
18. Sylvan Road, Adur;
19. Wilmot Road, Adur;
20. Gravelly Crescent, Adur;
21. Ashcroft Sheltered Housing Scheme, Adur;
22. Victoria Road, Worthing;
23. Knoll House, Brighton;
24. South Street, Lancing;
25. Marine Place, Worthing;

THE GREATER BRIGHTON ONE PUBLIC ESTATE PROGRAMME – Land Release Fund Case Studies

PROJECT TITLE: Knoll House, Brighton
DELIVERY BODY: Brighton & Hove City Council
FUNDING AWARD: £ 526,400– BLRF2-2

The development of Knoll House will demolish a vacant decommissioned care facility which is no longer fit for purpose and deliver a new facility of 28 high quality supported living apartments. A refurbishment of the existing building was considered, but it would not deliver the council's requirements for numbers of apartments, wheelchair accessibility, or energy efficiency. For this project to be viable, an allocation of £526,000 BLRF2 was needed to unlock the site. The funding is being used to demolish the existing building, remove asbestos, and upgrade a substation to provide sufficient capacity for the new apartments. Some of the new homes will be specifically for people aged between 18-25, and two of the new apartments will be designed for bariatric clients. Residents of the new apartments require support to maximise their independence ranging between 10 and 63 hours per week. The funding was awarded in August 2023 allowing for an immediate start on preparatory works and demolition is underway. Construction is now well underway and in April 2025 council leader Cllr Bella Sankey laid a 'bee brick' into the wall highlighting the biodiversity considerations of the project. Construction is expected to finish in early 2026.



The Greater Brighton One Public Estate Programme – Land Release Fund Case Studies



Project Title: Victoria Road, Worthing
Delivery Body: Adur & Worthing Councils
Funding Award: £104,349.00 – BLRF2-1

This scheme is being delivered on a Council-owned site which was formerly leased by Worthing's Air Cadet HQ but has been vacant for a number of years. The award of £104,349 in October 2022 allowed the project to be brought forward and funded the demolition works, asbestos removal and enhanced groundworks.

The development has been designed by ECE Architects and will be Worthing Borough Council's first Passivhaus housing scheme delivered under its Emergency and Temporary Housing Programme. Passivhaus is a highly sustainable form of design and construction that delivers "net zero" homes which will help the Council achieve its Climate Change objectives and targets.

The development comprises 11 one and two bedroom flats which have been deliberately designed to maximise solar gain through appropriate orientation of the building and consequently won't need central heating. When completed, the flats will be well insulated, resulting in lower energy bills for tenants and promoting good health and wellbeing.

The project is progressing, and all of the substructure work was completed by March 2025. Construction is due to be completed by early 2026.

THE GREATER BRIGHTON ONE PUBLIC ESTATE PROGRAMME – Wider Project Highlights

ADUR DISTRICT COUNCIL SMALL SITES PROGRAMME. This programme is redeveloping small sites in council ownership, most of which are blocks of garages, to deliver much-needed affordable housing.

1. ST GILES CLOSE
2. GARDNER ROAD
3. SYLVAN ROAD
4. WILMOT ROAD
5. DANIEL CLOSE
6. GRAVELLY CRESCENT

Land Release Fund funding is supporting the council to deliver 6 of these sites. The sites comprise out-of-date garages, some in a serious state of dilapidation and many used for storage as they are too small for modern cars. The sites are underutilised and uninviting and are subject to antisocial behaviour, including fly-tipping. The programme will regenerate these sites, creating 33 new council homes for rent and improved landscaping for wider public use.

Bespoke plans for each of the sites have been produced and, following online public consultation on the initial proposals in summer 2020, refined by architects to also consider site surveys and feedback from planning officers.

The proposals vary from site to site and are for a range of 2 and 3-bedroom homes and 1 and 2-bedroom flats and bungalows, with some suitable for people with mobility problems to meet a range of housing needs.

In autumn 2021 planning permission was secured for 4 sites – St Giles Close, Gardner Road, Sylvan Road, and Wilmot Road and these sites are now all completed and occupied. Planning permission has been granted for Daniel Close and Gravelly Crescent and work is underway on these sites.

The new homes will achieve high standards of sustainability. A 'fabric first' approach will ensure that the homes will be very well insulated, and they will also be heated by energy efficient air source heat pumps. Solar panels will be fitted where possible to generate power and help to offset energy bills for future residents.

The Greater Brighton One Public Estate Programme – Wider Project Highlights

THE ASHCROFT SHELTERED HOUSING SCHEME

is located on Kingston Lane in Shoreham by Sea. The site consists of a main block of 21 flats (including bedsits and 2-bed flats) and 8 bungalows and has offered sheltered housing to Council tenants since 1982.

In January 2020 all residents were decanted from the main building due to fire safety concerns, and the block has remained entirely unoccupied since. The outdated state and layout of the building and the costs required to update and maintain it suggest that the building is at the end of its useful life and is now considered moribund by Adur District Council. The Council modelled options for refurbishment and redevelopment and consulted with residents.

In March 2021, a preferred option was agreed which consists of knocking the block down and constructing a new block of 43 units with modern assistive technology and flexible care packages, providing for residents with a wide range of needs in accessible, modern accommodation with attractive communal areas. The scheme has got the backing of local members and the Executive Member for Housing, and the Council's Affordable Housing Delivery Group and Sheltered Housing Team. The need to demolish the main block currently rendered the scheme unviable, so alternative support was sought to enable the scheme to be brought forward. Provision of BLRF funding addressed this challenge to enable the project to move forward,



delivering much needed purpose-built accommodation provided at social rent levels for elderly people. As a result of the scheme, 44 (up from the original 43) social housing units will come forward, releasing other desperately needed homes for general needs accommodation, and in combination, house a significant proportion of the 756 households currently on the Council's housing register (158 of which are older households and would qualify for accommodation at Ashcroft). The scheme was awarded £407,000 for demolition and other costs, under Phase 3 BLRF. Demolition has now completed in readiness for start of construction which is now expected to start in 2025.

The Greater Brighton One Public Estate Programme – Wider Project Highlights

MOULSECOOMB HOUSING AND COMMUNITY HUB

This project is regenerating an underutilised four-and-a-half-acre site in Moulsecoomb to deliver a £70 million scheme comprising 212 council homes, a new community hub and a range of open spaces and outdoor facilities. The new hub will improve the services and facilities available for residents of Moulsecoomb and Bevendean, among the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country. It will bring together GP and community health services, a pharmacy, Moulsecoomb Library, and adult learning classrooms under one roof, alongside hireable community rooms and a community café. Proposals also include a new centre for youth services within the hub, with a separate entrance. Basing these organisations in the same building will enable them to work better together and provide residents with a single purpose-built facility from which to access a range of key services. It also releases a number of sites to build much-needed new affordable homes, which are being delivered by the council's New Homes for Neighbourhood's Programme and forms part of the council's package of actions to provide more housing in the city. The proposals are for a mix of 1, 2, 3 and 4-bed homes, as well as several fully accessible homes to meet a range of housing needs. The homes will be let through the council's Homemove register, which currently has a waiting list of approximately 7,000 households. The redevelopment will also create new open spaces



and outdoor facilities, including a plaza comprising seating and play equipment, pocket parks and small-sided 3G pitches and a skate park, as well as wider public realm improvements. Following resident consultation in 2020/21, the council has been working with project partners to refine the proposals that now place the hub in the heart of the wider development to improve visibility and accessibility. In November and December 2021 councillors authorised a budget of £2.1 million to finalise and submit a planning application for the project, which was made in early March 2022. Planning permission was granted in early 2023. In order to deal with the challenge of financial viability due to increased inflation, a change in procurement route was approved at committee in March 2024. This allows the Council to reach a more competitive market enhancing value for money and shifts much of the risk to the contractor. The tender was issued during summer 2024, And construction has now begun with extensive groundworks and sub-structure work underway.

The Greater Brighton One Public Estate Programme – Wider Project Highlights

PATCHAM COURT FARM, BRIGHTON

This project sees Brighton & Hove City Council, the asset owner, facilitating the redevelopment of a vacant three-and-a-half-acre site formerly part of the wider landholding of Patcham Court but becoming physically divided from its associated farmland in the late 1980s/early 1990s following the development of the A27 bypass. The site has not been developed since that time, despite numerous attempts to bring it forward.



The relocation and consolidation of the existing Royal Mail sorting office services unlocks two significant development sites in Brighton and Hove with the potential to deliver an indicative 177 residential units and 3,000sqm of office space.

The council is currently working with Hyde Housing Association as part of its Homes for Brighton and Hove Joint Venture (JV) partnership who have progressed initial design and planning pre-app advice on the sites. Planning permission was granted for the site in November 2024 and Royal Mail and their construction advisors are completing the pre-construction works in readiness to begin on site, sometime in late 2025.



THE GREATER BRIGHTON ONE PUBLIC ESTATE PROGRAMME – Next Steps

Public sector partners working together to take a more strategic approach to asset management has demonstrable benefits, in terms of supporting the region's economic, social, and environmental productivity priorities.

THE LOCAL PROGRAMME WILL CONTINUE TO FACILITATE SUCH COLLABORATION BY:

- Supporting the progression of the existing project portfolio, through to successful completion.
- Building knowledge of partners' and government departments' new and emerging asset management strategies, wherever possible supporting plans and identifying opportunities.
- Maintaining existing and building new relationships within and beyond the partnership, to identify new collaboration possibilities – including exploring the potential for more strategic projects and/or activities.
- Identifying a pipeline of future projects and bidding for new funding, as and when calls open.
- Keeping abreast of wider initiatives and activities impacting asset management, use and the built environment – ranging from Circular Economy to Social Value and the Integrated Care Partnership – and fostering learning and links across the partnership to support implementation.
- Review the overall programme to ensure that benefits and delivery are on track and in line with current objectives.
- Co-ordinate and refine BLRF bids to optimise opportunities to win funding in competitive calls for submission.