



Greater Brighton Economic Board

**24 June 2026
10.00am**

Ricardo Centenary Innovation Centre, Old Shoreham Rd, Shoreham-by-Sea, BN43 5FG

AGENDA



ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS



Lewes District Council



MID SUSSEX
DISTRICT COUNCIL



University of Brighton



University of Sussex



Chichester
College
Group

Members:	<p>Councillors: Sankey, Baxter, Eggleston, Jones, Nicholson, Gardner and Lury</p> <p>Business Partners: Tim Slaney, Prof Rusi Jaspal, Prof. Debbie Keeling, Dean Orgill, Dan Power, Andrew Swayne and Karl Roberts</p>
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Contact:	<p>Francis Mitchell Democratic Services Officer 01273 294183 Francis.Mitchell@brighton-hove.gov.uk</p>
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AGENDA

PART ONE

Page

1 RATIFICATION OF 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

7 - 10

To consider the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 March 2026.

GREATER BRIGHTON ECONOMIC BOARD

4 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

5 SUSSEX ENERGY UPDATE

11 - 22

Presented by Natasha Bridge

6 SUSSEX ENERGY MAP

Presented by Natasha Bridge and Aadarsha Dhakal

7 SOLAR ACROSS SUSSEX

Presented by Abigail Dombey, Graeme Maclean and Doug Gregg

8 GREATER BRIGHTON ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

23 - 38

Presented by Andy Hill

9 PRESENTATION FROM SBSA

Presented by Steve Skelton

10 TRANSITION AND DISSOLUTION PATHWAY

39 - 46

Presented by Andy Hill

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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 – Wednesday, 17th June 2026

GREATER BRIGHTON ECONOMIC BOARD

11.00am 25 MARCH 2026

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Sankey (Chair) Cox, Eggleston, Jones, Gardner and Lury

Business Partners: Tim Slaney, Prof Rusi Jaspal, Prof. Debbie Keeling, Dean Orgill, Dan Power, Andrew Swayne

PART ONE

1 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

1a Declarations of substitutes

1.1 There were none. .

1b Declarations of interests

1.2 There were none.

11c Exclusion of the press and public

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

1.4 **Resolved-** That the press and public not be excluded.

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 The item was deferred to the next meeting.

3 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

3.1 The Chair provided the following Communications:

"Good morning everyone and thank you for joining today's meeting. Thank you to Arun for hosting us.

Before moving on, I would also like to recognise a long-standing member of this Board. Dean Orgill, Chair of the Brighton & Hove Growth Board, is stepping down and today will be his final meeting with us. Dean has been part of this partnership since the early days of the Greater Brighton Economic Board and has played an important role in strengthening the collaboration between the public and private sectors across the city region. On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank Dean for his commitment, insight and support over the years and we look forward to working with the Growth Board's new Chair once appointed.

Before we move into the main agenda items, I'd like to begin with a few updates that reflect the significant progress being made across our region.

Firstly, an important milestone has been reached in the devolution journey for Sussex and Brighton. The Statutory Instrument was laid in Parliament in February starting the final stage in formally establishing the Sussex & Brighton Combined County Authority. We expect the new authority to be created later this spring.

It is worth noting that Sussex and Brighton is one of the leading areas within the Devolution Priority Programme to reach this stage, placing the region in a strong position as an early mover on devolution. The devolution programme continues at pace, led by the constituent councils. Ministers have confirmed their commitment to transferring significant powers and funding to the new authority, including a £1.14 billion long-term investment fund, alongside early funding of £30.4 million over the next two years and £9 million in capacity funding to support the establishment of the authority.

Taken together, this provides a strong platform to move quickly into delivery and turn these new powers into tangible outcomes on the ground.

Turning to the Sussex Energy mission, it is encouraging to see real momentum building behind the regional collaboration.

Today marks the formal start of the Solar Site Identification and Prioritisation work, with advisors now appointed and beginning work to identify and prioritise potential solar sites across Sussex. This is an important step in developing a pipeline of investable renewable energy projects for the region.

This momentum is also reflected nationally. Just yesterday, Government confirmed the Future Homes Standard, which will see the majority of new homes built with solar panels and clean heating as standard, alongside new measures to expand access to technologies such as plug-in solar. This provides clear national policy alignment with the direction of Sussex Energy — accelerating clean, homegrown energy, reducing bills and strengthening energy security.

We have also seen a major milestone in the delivery of low-carbon infrastructure with phase one of the Worthing Heat Network now live, supplying buildings including Worthing Town Hall and the Connaught Theatre through a new town-centre heat network. This first phase alone is expected to reduce emissions by around 3,000 tonnes of CO₂ each year. Sussex Energy was proud to support the launch events and sustainability showcase in Worthing, which brought together partners from across the region and demonstrated the breadth of practical energy transition activity already underway.

Alongside this, the Greater Brighton Economic Board has written to Great British Energy to express support for a proposal from Sussex's community energy organisations seeking £33 million of investment over four years to deliver 88MW of new community-owned renewable energy capacity across Sussex. This reflects the strength of Sussex's community energy sector and the role it can play in ensuring the benefits of the energy transition are felt locally.

Taken together, these developments show that Sussex Energy is moving beyond strategy into visible delivery, building the partnerships, project pipeline and regional profile that will help position energy as a key investment priority for the new Combined County Authority.

With that context, I will now turn to the agenda and provide a short introduction to each of the papers before us today”.

4 ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES STUDY

4.1 The Board considered a report and presentation from Litchfields detailing the finding of the Economic Study they had undertaken.

4.2 Matters raised in discussion included logistical constraints of the transport system in the South East region and the need for a strategic transport strategy including an integrated transport system. Board members also referred to potential regional enhancement relating to the Local Government Reorganisation and Mayoral Combined Authority.

4.3 Resolved-

- 1) That the Board agrees with the seven key opportunity areas outlined in 3.11.
- 2) That the Board agrees that the Economic Opportunities Review be included within the Integration Proposal.

5 PAPER - GBEB TO SBCCA INTEGRATION PROPOSAL

5.1. The Board considered a report that sought approval of a Sussex and Brighton Combined County Authority Integration Proposal.

5.2. The Board welcomed the proposal noting that it would be determined by the pace and speed of the Combined Authorities Plan.

5.3. Resolved-

- 1) That the Board notes and reviews the draft Board to SBCCA Integration Proposal (Appendix 1).
- 2) That the Board endorses the draft Integration Proposal, subject to any agreed amendments arising from discussion.
- 3) That the Business Managers are authorised to incorporate any agreed amendments and to use the endorsed Integration Proposal as the basis for formal engagement with SBCCA officers.
- 4) That the Board nominates Councillor Eccleston to support senior engagement with SBCCA leadership during the transition period and to act as a Board-level link between GBEB and the emerging Combined Authority.

6 GBEB OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS 2026/27

6.1 The Board considered a report that sought endorsement of the preparatory steps needed to support the operational aspects of the Greater Brighton Economic Board (“the Board”) in 2026/27.

6.2 Resolved-

That the Board:

- 1) Agrees the annual budget as set out in Table A;
- 2) Agrees on the future of the Board by no later than 24 June based on criteria outlined in [3.1], covering the period 1 October - 31 March 2027;
- 3) Agrees to release tranche 2 of the agreed budget in Table 3.1 if members agree to extend the Board;
- 4) Agrees that if members agree to dissolve the Board, the Lead Authority will make arrangements for dispensing with all liabilities (including employment liabilities) and that all associated costs will be apportioned across the Local Authority Members;
- 5) Agrees the proposed member contributions detailed in Table B and Part 2 of this report;
- 6) Note that Brighton & Hove City Council shall continue to act as Lead Authority for the Board in 2026/27;
- 7) Agree the process set out at sections 3.13 to 3.18 by which the Chair of the Board shall be nominated for 2026/27.

7 GREATER BRIGHTON ECONOMIC BOARD OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2026/27 (EXEMPT CATEGORY 1)

7.1 As per the Part One minutes.

The meeting concluded at 12.45pm

Subject:	Sussex Energy Update
Date of Meeting:	24 June 2026
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”) approved the launch of the Sussex Energy mission.
- 1.2 This report provides a further update on Sussex Energy progress since the January 2026 Board meeting and sets out the next steps in developing the mission.
- 1.3 The update also sets out how Sussex Energy is being positioned to support transition of GBEB work into the Sussex and Brighton Strategic Authority (SBSA), with a focus on maintaining momentum, strengthening the project pipeline, and attracting investment into the region.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Board notes the progress on Sussex Energy.
- 2.2 That the Board supports the:
 - i. Next steps needed to take Sussex Energy forward as set out in section 3.9, 3.16, 3.21, 3.26, 3.30, 3.34 and 3.40.
 - ii. Progression to the 2nd phase of Solar Across Sussex running from August 2026 to December 2026, focused on stakeholder engagement and enabling actions to accelerate delivery of investable solar projects across Sussex.
 - iii. Progression of the procurement of the Regional Energy Finance Strategy with the contract planned to be awarded in July, ending in December 2026.
- 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 energy neutrality across Sussex by 2040, ensuring that the region's energy demand is matched by the supply of locally generated, renewable energy. The mission seeks to enhance energy security, reduce energy bills, address climate change and support inclusive economic prosperity.
- 3.2 The Mission remains a strategic priority. As regional governance changes through devolution, it is important that the momentum, partnerships and programme infrastructure developed through Sussex Energy are maintained and positioned effectively within future SBSA arrangements.
- 3.3 Energy security, energy affordability and the economic opportunities linked to clean energy infrastructure are expected to remain important regional priorities irrespective of future political or governance arrangements. Sussex Energy is therefore increasingly being positioned not only as a net zero programme, but also as a practical platform to support investment, infrastructure resilience, local job creation and long-term economic growth across Sussex.
- 3.4 MCS-certified renewable energy installations across Sussex local authorities increased by around 27% between 2024 and 2025, compared with around 5% growth the previous year. This demonstrates increasing momentum in local energy deployment across Sussex during the period Sussex Energy has been operating and reinforces the opportunity for coordinated regional action to accelerate investment, energy resilience and supply-chain growth.

UPDATE

Summary

- 3.5 Sussex Energy has continued to make strong progress across all workstreams. Key developments include:
 - The **Sussex and Brighton Energy Briefing**, developed by net zero, energy and environment leads across the three upper-tier authorities to give the Strategic Authority a clear starting point on energy, has been reviewed with districts and boroughs and will be presented to the Sussex Energy Forum to strengthen regional alignment before being shared with the SBSA.
 - A survey is being developed to **collate a regional pipeline of clean energy and energy efficiency projects**. This will support the Energy Briefing, inform potential community energy proposals to Great British Energy, and help position Sussex as an investable region for wider public and private sector funding opportunities. Early modelling from Sussex community energy partners suggests that coordinated regional investment could unlock significant renewable energy deployment, community benefit and local economic value.

- The **Solar Across Sussex identification and prioritisation work** is reaching a key milestone, with consultants presenting findings at this Board meeting of the 1st phase. Subject to the outcomes of this phase, a 2nd phase is proposed from August 2026 to December 2026 to engage stakeholders, focus efforts in more favourable locations and address delivery barriers to enable - and assist - viable sites to progress towards development. This phase is expected to be funded from the remaining Sussex Energy allocation previously agreed by the Board.
- The **Regional Energy Finance Strategy** is in procurement, with an intention to award the contract in July 2026 and complete the work in December 2026. This work will assess funding and investor opportunities and recommend how Sussex can attract and coordinate finance into energy decarbonisation. Early investor engagement suggests that the scale of investment is hundreds of millions of pounds, substantially larger than individual projects or organisations can typically attract alone, reinforcing the value of a coordinated Sussex-wide programme capable of building and maintaining a regional pipeline.
- A **Sussex Energy Forum in-person session is planned for 14 July 2026**, in collaboration with the University of Sussex, to strengthen partner relationships, provide an update on Sussex Energy progress, and draw on the collective expertise of the network to explore practical opportunities to improve energy security, attract investment and support delivery of local energy infrastructure projects across Sussex, helping inform the emerging priorities of the Strategic Authority.
- Communications work has progressed, including **publication of a Sussex Energy article** on the [Sussex Green Edit website](#) and securing a University of Sussex intern to support development of a “pick and mix” content library and shared communications calendar over the summer.
- A University of Brighton master’s student with Brighton & Hove City Council support has developed a **regional map dashboard showing energy decarbonisation projects across Sussex**. Work is underway to bring this into Brighton & Hove City Council digital infrastructure so it can be published via the Greater Brighton website.
- Brighton Metropolitan College, part of Chichester College Group, together with Vaillant and Optimus Heating Ltd, is **launching the UK’s first Vaillant training facility** focused on low-carbon heating skills. The new Centre of Excellence will help develop the skilled workforce needed to support the transition to heat pumps and low-carbon heating systems, strengthening Sussex’s position in the growing clean energy economy.

Workstream: Devolution – Transition to SBSA

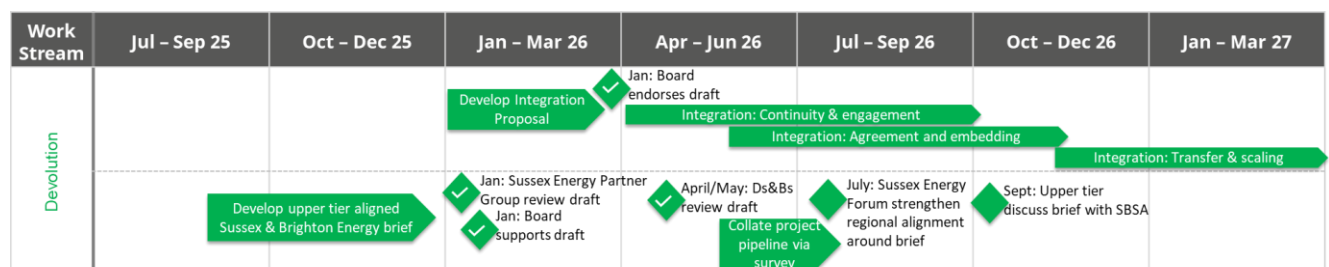
- 3.6 Engagement is ongoing with the SBSA on the Integration Proposal, including how Sussex Energy could be taken forward within future regional governance arrangements. Discussions are exploring how Sussex Energy can support wider regional priorities including energy security, investment, infrastructure resilience and local job opportunities, alongside the transition to lower-carbon energy systems. Regular meetings are in place with the SBSA and Board representation (including the nominated Board member – Cllr Eggleston).

- 3.7 Sussex Energy is being positioned as a delivery-ready, investable regional programme. It already has active partners, established governance through the Partner Group, communications channels, commissioned work and an emerging pipeline of projects. This gives the SBSA a practical platform to demonstrate early regional delivery on energy, net zero, infrastructure and economic growth. It also provides an emerging mechanism for the SBSA to help coordinate regional energy investment opportunities and develop project portfolios of a scale capable of attracting institutional investment.
- 3.8 Maintaining Sussex Energy through the transition period remains important. The work currently underway — particularly the Energy Briefing, project pipeline, Solar Across Sussex and Regional Energy Finance Strategy — is creating the evidence and investment proposition needed to help the SBSA understand the value of adopting and supporting this work.
- 3.9 Next Steps:
- ***Continue engagement with SBSA officers and leadership on the Integration Proposal, using Sussex Energy outputs to demonstrate the value of the programme.***
 - ***Continue activity to allow the current programme and investment work to be completed and transitioned effectively.***

Workstream: Devolution – Sussex and Brighton Energy Briefing

- 3.10 The Sussex and Brighton Energy Briefing has been developed by net zero, energy and environment leads across the three upper-tier authorities. Its purpose is to give the SBSA a clear starting point on energy, building on activity already underway so the Strategic Authority can move quickly, demonstrate early progress and begin attracting investment into the region.
- 3.11 The briefing has now been reviewed with districts and boroughs and will be presented to the Sussex Energy Forum in July to strengthen regional alignment before being shared with the SBSA.
- 3.12 A survey is being developed to collate a regional pipeline of energy projects. This pipeline will support the Energy Briefing by identifying projects where regional coordination, funding or investment could unlock faster delivery or greater scale.
- 3.13 The project pipeline also has wider value beyond the devolution briefing. It is helping to identify investable opportunities that could support bids to Great British Energy and attract wider institutional, philanthropic and private investment into Sussex, including place-based investment approaches. Early discussions with place-based investors indicate that aggregated regional energy programmes in the range of £300m-£500m may be attractive to institutional capital, provided a sufficiently mature and investable pipeline can be developed. This highlights the importance of Sussex Energy's work to identify, aggregate and prepare projects capable of attracting investment at a scale that individual organisations would struggle to achieve independently. All investment approaches would be reviewed in the Regional Energy Finance Strategy work.

- 3.14 For example, Sussex community energy organisations, working with Community Energy Pathways, are developing a proposal to Great British Energy seeking £33m of investment over four years into a Sussex Community Energy Revolving Fund. Early modelling suggests this could unlock around 88MW of new community-owned renewable energy generation and approximately £66m of project value, alongside wider community benefits including fuel poverty support, energy advice and local supply-chain development.
- 3.15 The pipeline work being coordinated through Sussex Energy will help identify, evidence and aggregate projects that could contribute towards opportunities of this nature, demonstrating how Sussex Energy can support not only net zero objectives but also inward investment, economic growth and community wealth-building across the region.
- 3.16 Next Steps:
- **Present the Energy Briefing at the Sussex Energy Forum.**
 - **Publish and promote the project pipeline survey and analyse submissions to identify investable opportunities.**
 - **Refine the briefing and project pipeline before engagement with the SBSA.**
 - **Use the pipeline to support investment conversations.**



Workstream: Solar Across Sussex (Commissioned Work)

- 3.17 The Solar Across Sussex identification and prioritisation work is reaching a key milestone, with phase 1 completing in July. The work has focused on identifying and assessing rooftop and ground-mounted solar opportunities across Sussex.
- 3.18 The project is intended to strengthen Sussex's long-term energy security and affordability by accelerating deployment of locally generated solar energy, reducing reliance on imported fossil fuels and increasing the amount of energy produced within the region. Solar represents a significant opportunity for Sussex due to the region's high levels of annual sunshine, established community energy expertise, and growing technical capability in renewable energy deployment. Increasing local solar generation can strengthen energy security, reduce exposure to volatile energy prices, support electrification of heat and transport, and help relieve pressure on parts of the electricity grid. Expanding solar deployment also has the potential to attract investment, stimulate local supply chains and jobs, and retain more economic value within Sussex through community and public-sector investment models. For rural areas, solar can provide an important additional income stream for farms and landowners, as well as reducing their energy bills,

helping support the long-term viability of agricultural businesses, while contributing to regional energy resilience.

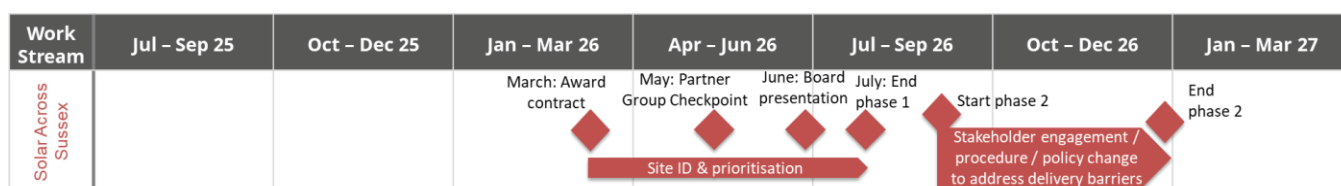
3.19 Subject to Board support and finalisation of the phase 1 outputs, phase 2 is proposed from August 2026 to December 2026, funded by the remaining Sussex Energy allocation previously agreed by the Board. This phase would focus on stakeholder engagement and addressing policy or delivery barriers and procedure changes required to unblock solar development. The aim is to enable and assist viable sites to progress towards development and identify changes that would make future solar projects easier to implement.

3.20 Asks of Board:

- **Board support is sought to progress phase 2 of Solar Across Sussex, focused on stakeholder engagement, project assistance and enabling actions to accelerate delivery of projects that improve energy security, reduce exposure to volatile energy prices, attract investment and increase locally generated energy across Sussex.**

3.21 Next Steps:

- **Review consultant phase 1 findings of priority opportunities for progression.**
- **Finalise scope and commissioning arrangements for the proposed phase 2.**
- **Develop a communications and stakeholder engagement approach for phase 1 findings.**
- **Align Solar Across Sussex outputs with the wider regional investment pipeline, community energy proposals and SBSA engagement.**



Workstreams: Regional Energy Finance Strategy (Commissioned Work)

3.22 The Regional Energy Finance Strategy is in procurement, with an intention to award the contract in July 2026. The work is due to complete in December 2026.

3.23 This strategy will set out how Sussex can attract and coordinate investment into energy decarbonisation, including consideration of revolving funds, blended finance, institutional investment and community wealth-building approaches. It will review funding and investor opportunities, assess potential models, and recommend how Sussex should position itself to draw finance into the region.

3.24 As part of this work, potential investors and finance models will be reviewed to assess their match for Sussex. This will be key to moving Sussex Energy from a collaboration and planning platform into an investable regional programme capable of attracting external funding and finance.

3.25 Asks of Board:

- **Board support is sought to progress procurement of the Regional Energy Finance Strategy.**

3.26 Next Steps:

- **Complete procurement and award contract in July.**
- **Use the strategy to support SBSA engagement and future investment propositions.**

Work Stream	Jul – Sep 25	Oct – Dec 25	Jan – Mar 26	Apr – Jun 26	Jul – Sep 26	Oct – Dec 26	Jan – Mar 27
Regional Energy Funding & Investment Strategy					July: Award contract 	Nov: Regional Energy Funding & Investment Strategy 	
					Sept: • Sussex Energy Landscape & Funding Baseline • Regional Benchmarking & Case Study Summary	Dec: • Investor and Funding Landscape Summary • Implementation Plan	

3.27 Should the Board be dissolved in September 2026, there would be a requirement for an organisation to administer and manage the contracts to completion for the Sussex Energy commissioned work. Delivery oversight will be provided by an agreed group from the Sussex Energy Partner Group, responsible for monitoring progress and confirming deliverable sign-off. The role would therefore be limited to contract administration, including verification of signed-off deliverables and processing payments to suppliers. Further consideration will be given to which organisation could appropriately house this role and whether any additional costs arise from this arrangement. These costs would be covered by the GBEB Contingency budget.

Workstream: Network – Sussex Energy Forum

3.28 The second in-person Sussex Energy Forum is planned for 14 July 2026, in collaboration with the University of Sussex. The event will bring together partners working across low-carbon energy in Sussex to strengthen relationships, share progress and identify opportunities for further collaboration. This builds on the success of the first in-person Forum event in July 2025, which brought together over 50 individuals from 35 organisations across Sussex, and the online LinkedIn Forum group of over 80 practitioners continuing the dialogue, collaborating on energy project site visits, sharing knowledge and news.

3.29 In addition to providing an update on Sussex Energy progress and strengthen regional alignment on the Sussex and Brighton Energy Brief and projects survey, the Forum will be used to draw on the collective expertise of partners to discuss the emerging Community Energy proposal (see paragraph 3.13) and help formulate a pipeline of projects that could form part of the proposal.

3.30 Next Steps:

- **Integrate outputs from workshop into Sussex Energy workstreams.**
- **Explore forum event for early 2027.**

Work Stream	Jul – Sep 25	Oct – Dec 25	Jan – Mar 26	Apr – Jun 26	Jul – Sep 26	Oct – Dec 26	Jan – Mar 27
Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jul: Forum event Jul: Forum LI group set up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feb: Worthing Heat Network - Forum drop in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jul: Forum event 	Sussex Energy forum LI group activity			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forum event: Heat Network Energy Centre site visit TBC

Workstream: Communications

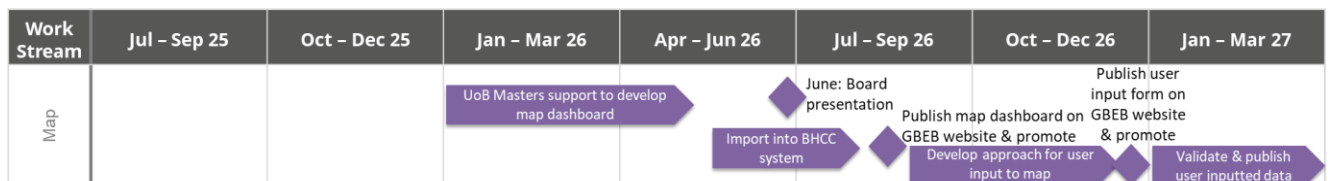
- 3.31 Sussex Energy communications activity has continued to develop. A Sussex Energy article has been published on the Sussex Green Edit website (<https://sussexgreenedit.ghost.io/from-rooftops-to-resilience-the-mission-to-make-sussex-energy-neutral-by-2040/>) by a local journalist who has been collaborating with Sussex Energy to promote positive local energy stories.
- 3.32 A University of Sussex intern is in position to support Sussex Energy communications over the summer. The intern is helping develop a “pick and mix” content library and calendar, building on previous student consultancy work, and will engage partners to align communications around shared Sussex Energy themes.
- 3.33 This work will help coordinate and amplify the region’s voice on energy, ensuring that partners can promote local success stories, raise public awareness and strengthen Sussex’s profile as a leading place for low-carbon energy activity.
- 3.34 **Next Steps:**
- **Develop the “pick and mix” content library and communications calendar.**
 - **Engage partner organisations to align communications around shared themes.**
 - **Continue working with local media and partners to promote positive Sussex energy stories.**

Work Stream	Jul – Sep 25	Oct – Dec 25	Jan – Mar 26	Apr – Jun 26	Jul – Sep 26	Oct – Dec 26	Jan – Mar 27
Comms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oct: Logo & Sussex Energy LI page set up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dec: Newsletter 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May: Article 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> June: Newsletter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dec: Newsletter 	
		UoS consultancy		UoS summer intern		Shared Comms Calendar & Content	
				Developed		Partners Engaged	
						Content Posted	
						Sussex Energy LinkedIn posts to raise profile of region’s energy work	

Workstream: Mapping Work – Sussex Energy Project Map

- 3.35 A University of Brighton master’s student has developed an interactive map and dashboard showing energy decarbonisation projects across Sussex. This responds to a key gap identified by partners: the absence of a single, visible and up-to-date view of energy activity across the region. This map will be presented at today’s Board meeting.

- 3.36 The map will help build a visible identity for Sussex as a leading place for the energy transition. It will support investment, collaboration and public understanding by showing the scale and range of activity in plan or operational.
- 3.37 The map will also help inspire replication by allowing communities, councils and delivery organisations to see examples of projects elsewhere in Sussex. It will enable organisations to showcase their work and support partnership-building, funding applications and increased delivery.
- 3.38 Work is underway to bring the map and dashboard into Brighton & Hove City Council digital infrastructure so it can be published on the Greater Brighton website. A subsequent phase of work is planned to enable users to submit project data points for verification and publication, helping to capture smaller capacity sites and those not captured by the national, public databases where the data is pulled from.
- 3.39 The map pulls data from central government and Distribution Network Operator sources that are regularly updated. The map is being handed over to the Greater Brighton Economic Board to update the map (depending on capacity) from the sources on a regular basis so the map will not be a static “snapshot”.
- 3.40 Next Steps:
- **Continue work to integrate the dashboard into Brighton & Hove City Council infrastructure.**
 - **Publish the dashboard on the Greater Brighton website and add link to it in the Sussex and Brighton Energy Briefing.**
 - **Develop the next phase to enable verified user-submitted project data.**



4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 The Board does not have sufficient funding to directly deliver large-scale energy projects. However, Sussex Energy can add significant value by convening partners, building shared evidence, developing an investable project pipeline, and laying the foundations to attract finance into the region.
- 4.2 The work now underway demonstrates that Sussex Energy is not only supporting net zero objectives, but also creating the conditions for inward investment, infrastructure delivery, community wealth-building, lower energy costs and long-term economic growth. Emerging opportunities linked to Great British Energy and other investment models demonstrate the potential scale of external capital that coordinated regional working could help unlock for Sussex. Early discussions suggest that institutional investors are often seeking opportunities at a scale of hundreds of millions of pounds, highlighting the importance of coordinated regional activity to build a sufficiently large and credible pipeline.

- 4.3 An alternative option would be to pause or reduce activity while SBSA governance arrangements develop. This is not recommended. The Energy Briefing, Solar Across Sussex, Regional Energy Finance Strategy and Project Map Dashboard all require continued coordination through to at least December 2026 if they are to produce maximum value and be effectively positioned for SBSA adoption.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Community engagement remains a core principle of Sussex Energy. The approach varies depending on the project, from awareness raising and consultation to community ownership and community-led delivery models.
- 5.2 The Sussex Energy Forum provides an important in person and online mechanism for engagement with organisations working across low-carbon energy in Sussex. The July 2026 in-person session will provide an opportunity to strengthen collaboration, test emerging proposals and draw on the experience of partners to develop a stronger project pipeline.
- 5.3 The communications content library and calendar, the Sussex Energy project map, and the public Sussex Energy LinkedIn presence – now with over 400 followers – help raise public awareness, promote regional energy activity, amplify partner messaging and strengthen local support for energy decarbonisation across Sussex.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Sussex Energy has continued to make strong progress and is increasingly moving from network-building into delivery, investment readiness and regional pipeline development. The work now underway is helping position Sussex not only as a leader in local energy collaboration, but as a credible destination for future energy investment and infrastructure funding.
- 6.2 The Board is asked to agree the recommendations 2.1-2.3, noting the progress made and supporting the next steps needed to maintain momentum, strengthen the project pipeline, and position Sussex Energy as a practical, investable regional programme for the SBSA.

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 — £50,000 from the 2024/25 Operational Budget (carried forward to 2025/26) and a further £50,000 from the 2025/26 Budget.
- 7.2 It is proposed that this funding is utilised as follows:
- £50,000 is being used to commission priority work packages that have been procured or are in procurement (the *Regional Funding & Investment Strategy* and *Solar Across Sussex – Solar Identification and Prioritisation*).

They provide specialist expertise to accelerate delivery of Sussex Energy priorities.

- £50,000 for follow on Solar Across Sussex work to enable and assist viable sites to progress towards development and identify changes that would make future solar projects easier to implement. This is not yet procured.

- 7.3 Elsewhere on the agenda the Board are considering the dissolution pathway for the board's activity. Should the Board dissolve in September 2026 the GBEB budget will need to cover contract administration for the Sussex Energy ongoing contracts (due to end December 2026). This will be met from the board's contingency budget.

Finance Officer Consulted: Haley Woollard, BHCC –Head of Finance

Date: 16/06/26

Legal Implications:

- 7.3 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. In progressing the procurement activity noted within this report, Brighton and Hove Council (BHCC) as accountable body is required to comply with the relevant Public Contract Regulations and legislation as well as its Contract Standing Orders.

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

Date: 16/06/26

Equalities Implications:

- 7.4 Sussex Energy aims to ensure that the benefits of the energy transition are shared fairly across the region. This includes supporting community energy models that retain value locally; promoting investment in energy efficiency measures that help reduce fuel poverty; and ensuring that smaller organisations and community groups, which often lack capacity or technical expertise, can access support through dedicated workstreams.
- 7.5 The communications working group has a wide variety of organisations to ensure the communications shared content and calendar engagement activity will be inclusive, reaching residents, businesses, and voluntary sector organisations across Sussex. Citizens Advice and Fuel Poverty Coordinators are included in the Sussex Energy Forum so that the voices of those most affected by high energy costs or poor housing are heard when shaping solutions. The Sussex Energy Useful Resources page also signposts to Citizens Advice and support services focused on tackling fuel poverty and reducing energy costs.
- 7.6 By embedding these practices, Sussex Energy is helping to ensure that vulnerable households and smaller organisations are not left behind in the transition but instead are supported and empowered to participate in and benefit from a fairer, more resilient low-carbon economy.

Sustainability Implications

7.7 Sussex Energy supports the reduction of carbon emissions and the acceleration of the energy transition, from fossil fuels to renewables, which will help protect the environment, limit the effects of climate change, build resilience in key infrastructure and improve energy security. The programme promotes renewable energy generation, energy efficiency, and decarbonisation of heat, all of which directly contribute to the UK's legally binding carbon budgets. Co-benefits include strengthened energy security, improved air quality from reduced fossil fuel use, community wealth-building, local job creation in low-carbon industries, and the development of skills and stronger regional supply chains that will have long-term positive impacts for the Sussex economy. Sustainability principles will also be embedded in procurement processes, for example by exploring ways to prioritise local suppliers and ensure social value.

Subject:	Greater Brighton Annual Report 2025/26
Date of Meeting:	24 June 2026
Report of:	Chair, Greater Brighton Economic Board
Contact Officer: Name:	Andy Hill
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, and the Board’s 2025/26 Annual Report is attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 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”. To that end, the Greater Brighton One Public Estate Programme Annual Report is usually presented alongside the Main Annual Report
- 1.3 As agreed at the [March 2026 Board meeting](#), dependent on progress made in establishing the Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority (SBSA) and the extent to which the Boards key priorities and workstreams have transitioned, the Board will seek to dissolve in September 2026 or March 2027.
- 1.4 The current annual report is a lighter version than that produced in previous years. The suggestion is that a final, closing report will be prepared for the Board’s dissolution and this will also contain a final report for the OPE Programme.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Board:

- 2.1 Approves the 2025/26 Annual Report and Board members submit the report to their respective organisations.
- 2.2 That the Board agrees that a fuller report, including a final report from the OPE Programme, be presented at the Board’s final meeting.

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 2025/26 can be found at Appendix 1.

4 ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 The proposed recommendations are in accordance with the governance arrangements agreed by the Board.
- 4.2 There was an option to produce a more detailed Annual Report in line with previous years, but a producing a final report to coincide with the Board's dissolution would then mean some duplication of effort and content.

5 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 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 2025/26 as outlined in the Annual Report at Appendix 1 was undertaken within the GBEB operational budget.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Haley Woollard – BHCC Head of Finance
Date: 16/06/26*

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

*Lawyer Consulted: Siobhan Fry – Head of Legal (Commercial) Brighton and Hove City Council
Date: 11/06/2026*

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 None directly arising from this report.

Sustainability Implications

- 7.4 None directly arising from this report.

Any Other Significant Implications:

7.5 None directly arising from this report.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Greater Brighton Economic Board Annual Report 2025/26

Background documents:

1. [Greater Brighton Economic Board Heads of Terms \(April 2025\)](#)
2. [Greater Brighton Economic Board Operational Arrangements 2026/27](#)

GREATER BRIGHTON ECONOMIC BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026

EDWARDS
Global Technology Centre

**GREATER
BRIGHTON**

GREATER BRIGHTON ECONOMIC BOARD MEMBERS

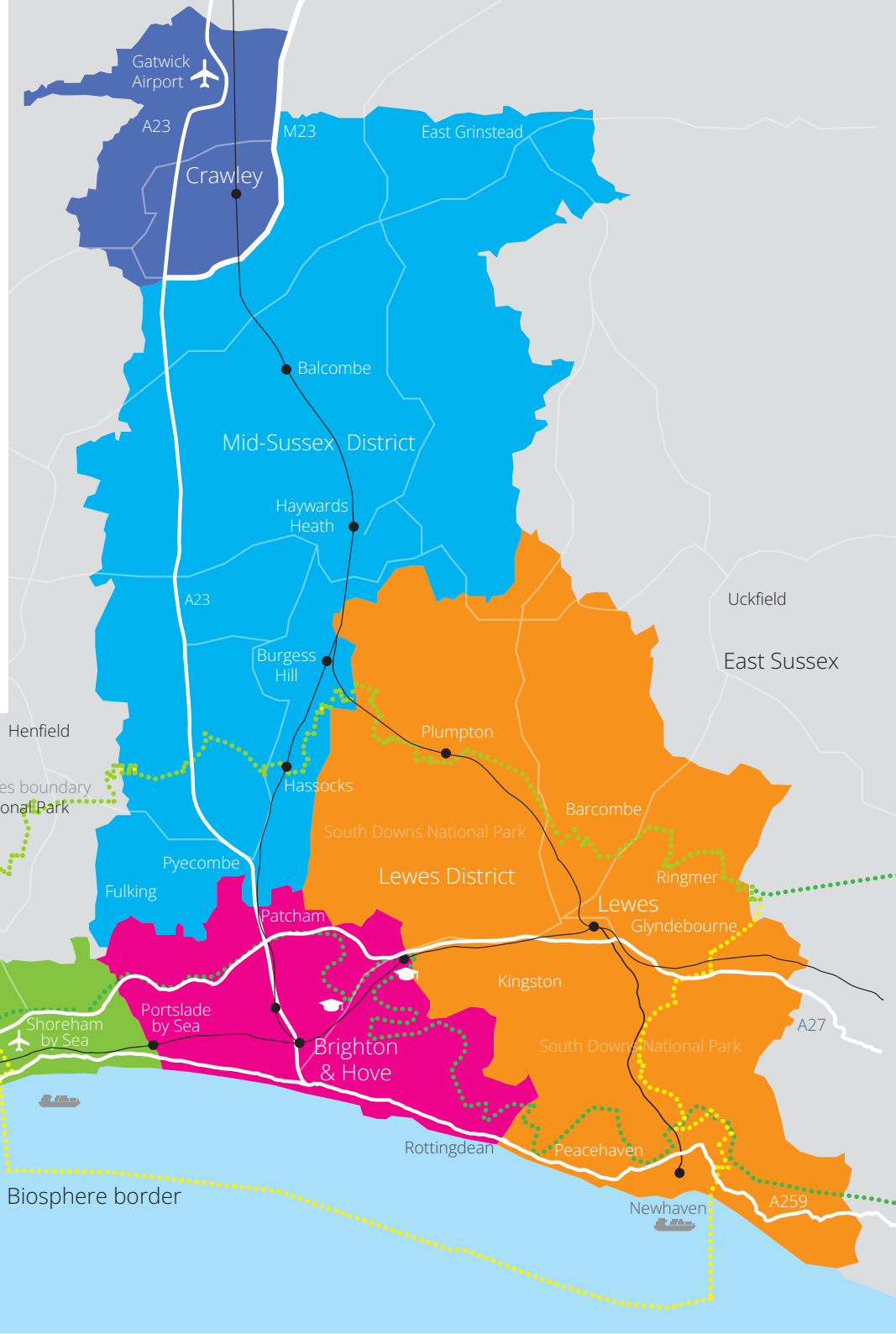
LOCAL AUTHORITIES

- 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 Surrey & Sussex 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.

This has been **an important year for Greater Brighton** and the wider Sussex and Brighton region. **Devolution** has moved from preparation into implementation, with the Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority (SBSA) now vested and beginning its work. This creates new opportunities to align investment, infrastructure, skills, housing, economic growth and energy resilience around regional priorities.

Throughout this transition, the Board has focused on ensuring that the partnerships, priorities and value developed through more than a decade of collaboration are carried forward. An independent **review of regional economic opportunities** has identified where devolved powers and a regional approach could unlock long-term benefit.

Building on this, the Board has developed an **Integration Proposal**. This provides both a transition plan for the Board and a constructive offer to the SBSA, setting out how key workstreams, partnerships and assets could be adopted, scaled or utilised. As the

Board moves towards orderly dissolution, our priority is to support continuity and protect the value created through collaboration.

Sussex Energy remains central to this legacy and is increasingly being positioned as an investable, delivery-ready regional programme. Over the past year, the Sussex Energy Forum has launched and the Board's £100,000 Sussex Energy fund has been prioritised through collaborative workshops, leading to two key workstreams: **Solar Across Sussex** and a **Regional Energy Finance Strategy**. A **Sussex and Brighton Energy Briefing** has been drafted giving the Strategic Authority a clear starting point on energy, building on activity already underway so the region can move quickly, demonstrate early progress and begin attracting investment.

The programme has strengthened **communications** and visibility through a public Sussex Energy LinkedIn presence with over 400 followers, and a **Sussex map of energy decarbonisation projects** has been developed to make regional activity more visible, help partners coordinate messages and lay foundations for future investment.



FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIR OF THE GREATER BRIGHTON ECONOMIC BOARD



Looking ahead, the Board will continue to engage with the SBSA, using the Integration Proposal as a blueprint for transition. Sussex Energy will build a project pipeline to support investor discussions, publish the energy map, progress the solar and investment work, and bring organisations working to support the energy transition across Sussex together, through the next Sussex Energy Forum in July.

I would like to thank my fellow Board members, officers, partners and stakeholders for their continued commitment and collaboration. The Greater Brighton Economic Board has always been built on the principle that our economy does not stop at administrative boundaries. As the region enters this new phase, that principle remains as important as ever.



Bella Sankey

Cllr Bella Sankey

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



Local Power Local Prosperity

A Sussex-wide public, private and community sector partnership growing clean power and improving efficiency to achieve energy neutrality by 2040.



SUSSEX ENERGY MISSION



Sussex Energy has continued to build momentum as the Board's regional mission to achieve energy neutrality by 2040, improving energy security, reducing emissions and supporting economic prosperity.

2025/6

As devolution progresses, **Sussex Energy is being positioned as a delivery-ready programme** that could be adopted and scaled by **Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority**.

A **Sussex and Brighton Energy Briefing** is being developed collaboratively to inform the Strategic Authority about early priorities, investment opportunities and longer-term actions to embed energy decarbonisation within future regional governance.

Looking ahead

Build a pipeline of investable energy opportunities to inform future work to secure funding and investment.

Sussex Energy has strengthened **regional communications** through a comms working group, a Sussex Energy branded public LinkedIn presence with over 400 followers, promoting local success stories and building Sussex's reputation in low-carbon energy.

Develop and roll out a shared "pick and mix" content library with University of Sussex students to help partners align comms around shared themes amplifying and coordinating the region's voice on energy.

2025/6

The Sussex Energy Forum launched in July 2025, bringing together organisations working to support the energy transition across Sussex to share knowledge, strengthen collaboration and identify where regional coordination can accelerate delivery.



Looking ahead

Hold a second in-person Forum to share progress and strengthen regional alignment around the Sussex and Brighton Energy Briefing.

The Board's £100,000 Sussex Energy fund was prioritised through collaborative workshops leading to two key workstreams:

1. Solar Across Sussex –

Enable and assist viable solar sites to progress towards development and identify changes that would make future solar projects easier to implement.



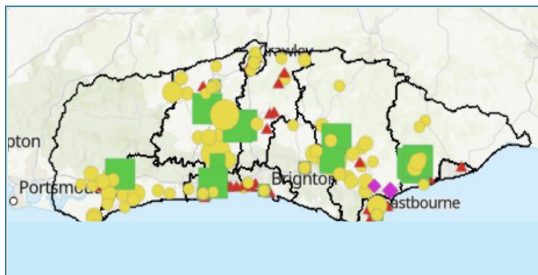
2. Regional Energy Finance Strategy –

setting out how Sussex can attract and coordinate investment into energy decarbonisation.



Complete Solar Across Sussex site identification and prioritisation, creating a pipeline of viable solar opportunities to develop.

Deliver the Regional Funding and Investment Strategy, to set out how future energy decarbonisation in Sussex could be financed.



With the support of University of Brighton, a publicly accessible **map of energy decarbonisation projects across Sussex** is being developed, helping raise the region's profile and showcase activity across Sussex.

Publish the Sussex Energy map to give a public view of energy decarbonisation projects across Sussex and promote it.

SUCCESSES

SUSTAINABILITY SHOWCASE: COLLABORATION IN ACTION



A Sustainability Showcase at the launch brought together a wide range of organisations demonstrating the strength and diversity of Sussex's energy transition work. Alongside a Worthing Heat Network stall, Community energy groups (OVESCO and Brighton Energy Co-op) showcased rooftop solar schemes, battery storage models, retrofit support for homes and businesses and explained how local residents can invest in solar and see financial returns stay within their communities.

Climate Resilience Centre Worthing (CREW) promoted their work on a community-funded model to install solar panels on industrial and commercial rooftops in Worthing. Alice Doyle was there providing practical sustainability advice for SMEs (funded through the Making Business Greener Campaign from The Naturesave Trust). Coastal and community climate initiatives (Sussex Bay and Transition Town Worthing) were also represented, highlighting how environmental action in Sussex spans energy, nature and local resilience. There was a lot of interest in the Sussex Energy stall which gave a flavour of energy transition projects happening in the wider Sussex region.

The steady flow of visitors throughout the day reflected growing appetite for practical, deliverable solutions — not just strategy, but real projects already underway.



PROUD TO SUPPORT WORTHING HEAT NETWORK LAUNCH



The new town centre network, launched in February 2026 is now supplying buildings including Worthing Town Hall and the

Connaught Theatre through more than 2km of underground pipework connected to a central energy hub. Phase one alone is expected to cut around 3,000 tonnes of CO² each year – equivalent to taking more than 2,000 cars off the road. Phase two began in March.

SUCCESSSES

UK'S LARGEST LIVING SEAWALL Launched at Southwick Reef

Over 400 members of the public pre-registered to attend the January launch of Southwick Reef, alongside civic leaders, academic partners, media and key stakeholders.

The project, is a multi-organisation collaboration between Adur and Worthing Councils, Brighton and Hove City Council, Sussex Bay, Sussex Dolphin Project and University of Brighton designed to transform the marine environment within the area.

Southwick Reef incorporates three distinct habitat enhancement features: Vertipools, Reef Cubes, and habitat panels. Together, these elements are designed to increase ecological complexity and support marine biodiversity along the Harbour Arm.

Research will monitor biodiversity above and below the tide line using camera monitoring, eDNA sampling and traditional surveying techniques, while also exploring public perceptions and the social value of marine enhancements.

The reef creates new opportunities for people to engage with the coast through education, school visits, guided tours and future citizen science initiatives, encouraging a deeper connection with the marine environment.

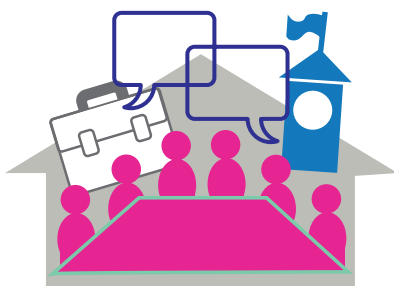


DEVOLUTION

THE REGION continues to transition towards the Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority (SBSA), which was vested early in the spring, and held the first Board meeting on 15 April 2026. The English Devolution & Community Empowerment Bill received Royal Assent in late April 2026, which mandates Mayoral Strategic Authorities to develop local growth plans, aligning regional economic strategies with national policy.

DEVOLVING POWERS to Sussex and Brighton presents an opportunity to drive significant economic and social benefits for the region. The Board commissioned an independent study to review the economic opportunities for the region, fully considering the enhanced strategic powers, capability and perspective of the SBSA. The study identified seven priority areas;

1. Embed the Sussex Energy Mission as a cornerstone to delivery
2. Ensure the adequate provision of employment space to meet business needs
3. Raising productivity levels and supporting sectoral growth
4. Develop an investment prospectus for Sussex
5. Deliver a long-term affordable and sustainable housing strategy
6. Develop a vision for Newhaven and Shoreham Ports to lead economic diversification
7. Leverage major projects to drive local economic value



AN INTEGRATION PROPOSAL has been developed which brings together the above priority areas along with some of the Board's other key workstreams including the Creative Industries, Inward Investment and Food Systems. The proposal serves two purposes;

1. **A transition plan for the Board** – setting out how the Board should manage continuity of programmes, transfer assets and relationships, and provide a clear pathway to orderly dissolution.
2. **A proposal to SBSA** – explaining why specific Board initiatives should be adopted, scaled or utilised within the new Strategic Authority.

Looking ahead



The Board has nominated a Member to support senior engagement with SBSA leadership during the transition period and to act as a Board-level link between the Board and the emerging Strategic Authority. Officers and the nominated Board Member will continue to engage with SBSA, using the Integration Proposal as a blueprint for agreeing how priority workstreams, assets and relationships can transition into the new Strategic Authority, while supporting the Board's orderly dissolution.

INTEGRATION PROPOSAL

KEY OBJECTIVE OF THE INTEGRATION PROPOSAL: Ensure the Strategic Authority can inherit and build upon delivery-ready, evidence-led work, functioning regional collaboration and delivery platforms that can help the new Authority demonstrate early impact.

Don't lose valuable collaboration infrastructure during transition

One of the strongest assets developed through the Board is not just the projects themselves, but the trusted collaborative relationships across sectors and geographies. The Board has provided a rare neutral convening space across:

- Upper-tier authorities
- District & borough councils
- Universities
- Colleges
- NHS
- SDNPA
- Businesses
- Community organisations

Recognise existing GBEB work as strategic assets

The Board has already developed:

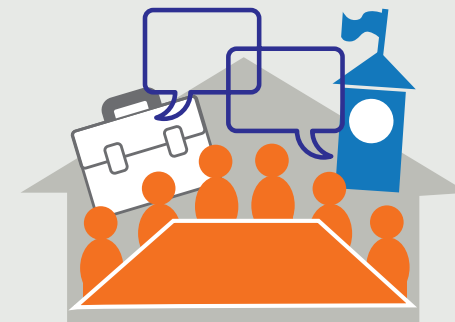
- Regional evidence bases
- Live delivery programmes
- Cross-sector partnerships
- Governance forums
- Investment pipeline activity
- Established relationships

These can help SBSA:

- Accelerate strategy development.
- Demonstrate early progress.
- Avoid duplication.
- Strengthen regional collaboration.

Provide "landing zones" inside SBSA

- Identify where initiatives logically sit within SBSA.
- Provide officer and political sponsorship.
- Maintain continuity during transition.
- Retain useful partnerships and networks.



GREATER BRIGHTON

37



Subject:	Transition & Dissolution Pathway
Date of Meeting:	24 June 2026
Report of:	Chair, Greater Brighton Economic Board
Contact Officers:	Name: Andy Hill, Natasha Bridge
	Email: Andy.hill@brighton-hove.gov.uk & natasha.bridge@brighton-hove.gov.uk
Ward(s) affected:	All

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

- 1.1 This report follows agreement at the [January 2026 Board meeting](#), that whilst the region transitions towards establishment of the Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority (SBSA), the Greater Brighton Economic Board (The Board) should continue to operate beyond 31 March 2026. The Board agreed to in-principle funding for 2026/27 and Officers were tasked with developing an [Integration Proposal](#) to be presented back to the Board at the following meeting (March 2026).
- 1.2 Whilst it was clear that the Board would be dissolved once the SBSA was established, the timing of this was subject to the maturity of the SBSA organisation enabling political consideration of the proposed initiatives for transition, and organisational structure and capacity in place to adopt them. Given the lack of clarity at the time, the [2026/27 Operational Arrangements](#) presented to the Board in March 2026, set out two budget options; one covering the period from 1 April – 30 September 2026 and another from 1 April-31 March 2027.
- 1.3 It was noted in the March paper that there would be a decision point for the Board in June 2026 whether to dissolve the Board at 30 September or continue on until March 2027. The decision to dissolve in September would need to be made in June given the Board Business Managers would be impacted by the dissolution and there would be a formal process, taking three months, that would need to be followed.
- 1.4 The Operational Arrangements paper restated the importance of previously identified Board work programmes, particularly Sussex Energy, that it would want to see adopted and taken forward. The decision to dissolve the Board on 30 September would be determined based on the confidence the Board has that these workstreams will be continued by the SBSA.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1. That the Board agree the decision considerations for orderly transition and dissolution outlined in paragraphs 3.7 and 3.9 below.

- 2.2. That the Board notes that as of June 2026, while progress has been made regarding engagement with SBSA, several transition readiness considerations remain at an early stage.
- 2.3. That the Board agrees that in September 2026 progress against the decision considerations outlined in section 3 should continue to be reported and reviewed, with a view to dissolve the Board at the following Board meeting (December).
- 2.4. That the Board notes and agrees the contributions sought from members to keep the Board operational until a December dissolution (paragraph 3.14).
- 2.5. That the Board considers the timing of the next meeting in September, taking account of the anticipated development of the SBSA Prosperity Strategy and related strategic work (anticipated to be the process for incorporating GBEB's work into the Sussex and Brighton Strategic Authority), to ensure transition progress can be reviewed at an appropriate point.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Board considers that the initiatives proposed through the Integration Proposal represent important strategic, delivery and partnership assets which have the potential to support emerging SBSA priorities, strategies and investment activity. Given the differing nature and maturity of these initiatives, the Board considers it important that sufficient progress is demonstrated regarding their future positioning, continuity and integration within SBSA arrangements before dissolution proceeds.
- 3.2 Work has continued to formally establish the SBSA. The Strategic Authority was vested in early April and held its first Board meeting on 15 April. Meanwhile, on 29 April the English Devolution & Community Bill received Royal Assent.
- 3.3 After Government's initial decision to postpone the scheduled County elections was reversed, these elections, and elections in several boroughs and districts across Sussex, were held on 7 May. The pre-election period and resulting political changes arising from the elections, will require new SBSA Board members to be appointed. The SBSA's first AGM is scheduled for 1 July, where SBSA Board membership will be confirmed and further decisions relating to governance will be made. With new SBSA Board members in place, it is anticipated that conversations regarding the transition of Board priorities can accelerate.
- 3.4 The Board has previously agreed that it wishes to see the value, momentum and collaborative infrastructure developed through over a decade of activity, transitioned responsibly into the SBSA rather than activity pausing or fragmenting during institutional transition. Given the differing nature of the initiatives proposed through the Integration Proposal, the Board considers that dissolution should not be determined by a single event or formal transfer decision alone, but by whether sufficient progress has been made to provide confidence that:

- i. live programmes can continue effectively supported by identified resource;
- ii. strategic evidence and commissioned work have identified “landing zones” within SBSA structures;
- iii. governance, accountability and sponsorship arrangements are emerging;
- iv. and the collaborative relationships and delivery capacity developed through the Board’s work can continue under SBSA arrangements.

The following considerations are therefore intended to support the Board’s assessment of transition readiness and inform future discussions regarding the most appropriate timing for orderly dissolution.

Sussex Energy transition considerations

- 3.5 The Board considers Sussex Energy to be the most operationally advanced and delivery-critical initiative within the Integration Proposal. The extent to which confidence exists regarding its future continuation within SBSA arrangements is therefore likely to be a significant consideration in determining the appropriate timing for dissolution.
- 3.6 The Board recognises that SBSA may ultimately determine its own regional targets and strategic framing through development of the Prosperity Strategy, Local Growth Plan, Spatial Development Strategy and other emerging strategies. Accordingly, the Board is not seeking formal adoption of the Sussex Energy Mission target itself (i.e. energy neutrality by 2040) as a prerequisite for transition. Rather, the priority is that the core programme, delivery activity, partnerships and regional coordination mechanisms continue and evolve within SBSA structures.
- 3.7 The Board may wish to take the following factors into consideration:

Consideration	Position at June 2026
Strategic recognition and sponsorship	Positive discussions have taken place with SBSA officers regarding Sussex Energy’s strategic relevance and potential alignment with emerging SBSA priorities. However, formal political sponsorship and organisational positioning have not yet been determined.
Governance and organisational alignment.	Discussion with officers has started to propose consideration is given to how Sussex Energy governance, coordination and communications activity could align with emerging SBSA structures.
Continuity of programme development and resourcing	Sussex Energy activity, commissioned work and partner engagement continue to progress through Board arrangements. However, no formal SBSA resource commitment or long-term delivery arrangements have yet been discussed.

3.8 Overall, whilst positive engagement has taken place and there is recognition of the value of Sussex Energy as a live regional programme, many organisational and governance arrangements within SBSA remain at an early stage. The Board may therefore wish to consider the balance between supporting an orderly and effective transition of programmes, partnerships and strategic activity, whilst enabling the SBSA to progressively assume its strategic leadership role.

Wider initiative transition considerations

3.9 The Board recognises that the remaining initiatives proposed through the Integration Proposal are primarily evidence based, strategic frameworks and partnership platforms rather than live delivery programmes. The Board may therefore wish to consider:

Consideration	Position at June 2026
Recognition of strategic value	Initial discussions with SBSA officers have indicated recognition that the initiatives represent useful regional evidence bases, partnership platforms and strategic assets capable of informing future SBSA priorities and activity.
Identification of organisational “landing zones”	Discussion with officers has started to propose consideration is given to where initiatives and evidence bases may align within emerging SBSA portfolios, strategies (e.g. Prosperity Strategy, Local Transport Strategy, Local Growth Plan and Spatial Development Strategy) and work programmes. Documents have been sent to SBSA officers to incorporate into evidence collation for the Prosperity Strategy.
Collaboration and amplification	There is positive recognition of the value of wider partnership-led initiatives and collaboration platforms, although future engagement and coordination arrangements remain to be determined through SBSA structures.

3.10 The Board may wish to use the above considerations to help inform its judgement regarding the appropriate timing for orderly dissolution. The intention is not to require completion of every element before dissolution can proceed, but to support an informed assessment of transition confidence, programme continuity and organisational readiness.

3.11 When preparing the [2026/27 Operational Arrangements](#), a dissolution in September seemed an ambitious but potentially achievable scenario. However, whilst this does remain an option, a number of discussions regarding future positioning, sponsorship and organisational arrangements within SBSA are still emerging. The Board is therefore invited to consider whether sufficient confidence

currently exists regarding the continuity and future development of Sussex Energy and wider initiatives to support dissolution at this stage.

- 3.12 The recommendation at 2.1 is intended to provide a flexible framework through which the Board can continue to assess transition progress and organisational readiness over the coming months. This would enable the Board to review progress again at the next meeting in September and determine whether conditions are emerging which would support an orderly dissolution in December 2026, whilst retaining March 2027 as the latest planned dissolution point if further transition time is considered beneficial.
- 3.13 To continue operating until December 2026, contributions will need to be sought from partners. The [2026/27 Operational Arrangements](#) presented to the Board in March 2026, set out two budget options; one covering the period from 1 April – 30 September 2026 and another from 1 April-31 March 2027. It was also agreed that Members would initially be asked to contribute to September, with a further request for funding coming a later date if agreed that the Board would continue operating beyond September.
- 3.14 Dissolution in December falls between the original September and March options. Therefore, contributions for October-December will need to be sought from Members and this is detailed in the table below. Column 3 highlights the contributions required for the period October-December.

Organisation	Annual Contribution 2026/27	Six-monthly contribution (April-September)	Additional contribution (October-December)	Total contribution (April-December)
South Downs National Park Authority	£4,550.00	£1,170.00	£1,690.00	£2,860.00
University of Sussex	£4,550.00	£1,170.00	£1,690.00	£2,860.00
University of Brighton	£4,550.00	£1,170.00	£1,690.00	£2,860.00
Chichester College Group	£4,550.00	£1,170.00	£1,690.00	£2,860.00
NHS Surrey & Sussex ICB	£4,550.00	£1,170.00	£1,690.00	£2,860.00
Adur District Council	£5,725.00	£1,475.00	£2,125.00	£3,600.00
Arun District Council	£14,100.00	£3,630.00	£5,235.00	£8,865.00
Brighton & Hove City Council	£29,840.00	£7,675.00	£11,083.00	£18,758.00
Crawley Borough Council	£11,855.00	£3,050.00	£4,403.00	£7,543.00
Lewes District Council	£8,690.00	£2,235.00	£3,228.00	£5,643.00
Mid Sussex District Council	£14,150.00	£3,640.00	£5,225.00	£8,895.00
Worthing Borough Council	£10,285.00	£2,645.00	£3,820.00	£6,465.00
Total Contributions	£117,400.00	£30,200.00	£45,398.00	£75,798.00

3.15 At the end of 2025/26 there was an underspend of £57,000 which was carried forward into 2026/27. Mindful that the Board may have been dissolved in September, to prevent a further surplus situation occurring, contributions requested from Board Members were adjusted downwards accordingly. With the £57,000 now fully utilised within the April-September budget, sought contributions for October-December are therefore higher than for the previous period.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 One alternative is that the Board be dissolved at the end of September as per one of the original timescale options. This would provide an accelerated transition into SBSA arrangements although Members will wish to consider the extent to which

sufficient clarity and confidence currently exists regarding continuity of programmes, partnerships and organisational arrangements.

- 4.2 Another approach would be to continue until March 2027. Board Members are aware that Board and SBSA arrangements would continue to operate in parallel whilst transition arrangements mature and responsibilities progressively transfer into SBSA structures. This option would provide the greatest continuity and transition flexibility, whilst potentially extending the period of overlap between the two organisations.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 There are no direct community engagement or consultation arising directly from this paper. However, stakeholder engagement is crucial to the success of Sussex Energy and relationships through the transition will be at the forefront. Further engagement with SBSA leadership and partners will need to take place to ensure a smooth transition of the Programme and other key initiatives.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Board is seeking an orderly dissolution. For this to be the case there needs to be clarity and confidence around the key initiatives proposed through the Integration Proposal regarding their future positioning, continuity and integration within SBSA arrangements.
- 6.2 Paragraphs 3.7 and 3.9 set out suggested considerations to evaluate whether or not the Board will have sufficient confidence that Sussex Energy and other key activity will continue under the SBSA. The recommendation at 2.3 is that when the Board is confident, the Board should move towards an orderly dissolution at the earliest opportunity.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 Due to the uncertainty around the timing of the dissolution of the board, the 2026/27 Operational Arrangements (presented to the board in March 2026) proposed that member contributions were collected for the first six months of the year only (April – September 2026). The recommendations within this paper propose an orderly dissolution is agreed at the board's September 2026 meeting. This proposal would require financial support until at least December 2026, and therefore a further membership contribution is required, covering the period of October to December 2026. This is shown in paragraph 3.14 and calculated in accordance with the board's Memorandum of Understanding.
- 7.2 Any further financial implications should the Board carry on past December 2026 will be reported to board members at the September 2026 meeting.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Haley Woollard, BHCC Head of Finance
Date: 16/06/26*

Legal Implications:

- 7.4 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report. The legal implications provided in report of the March 2026 Board meeting will continue to apply in respect of the process for dissolution of the Board.

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

Date: 15/06/26

Equalities Implications:

- 7.5 None directly arising from this report.

Sustainability Implications

- 7.6 None directly arising from this report.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

- None

Background Documents:

- Transitioning Towards the Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority
- Integration Proposal
- Greater Brighton Economic Board Operational Arrangements 2026/27