Towards a Greater Brighton Five Year Strategic Plan:
Discussion Paper October 2018

Background & Context

The Greater Brighton Economic Board ("the Board") was established in 2014 as the governance structure that would oversee and implement the Greater Brighton City Deal. The over-arching purpose of the Board is to bring about sustainable economic development and growth across the Greater Brighton City Region. To achieve this, the principal role of the Board is to co-ordinate economic development activities and investment at the City Region level. Particular emphasis has been given to;

- Housing
- Economic Growth
- Infrastructure and Transport
- Employment and Skills
- Utilisation of Property Assets
- Strategic Planning

Four years on from signing the City Deal, great progress has been made against delivering on the key commitments agreed with Government and these are outlined in the 2017/18 Annual Report. The Board has secured over £160m in Local Growth Funding which will;

- Create 24,000 jobs
- Build 18,000 new homes
- Deliver 750,000m^2 employment floor space
- Unlock £2bn in private sector investment

Over the last 12-18 months we have reached the completion phase for several key projects that received LGF Funding through Growth Deal rounds 1 & 2. In addition there a number of other projects either close to completion or well underway. Full details of these projects can be found in the 2017/18 Annual Report.

Greater Brighton Partners have also secured funding from other streams such as the Housing Infrastructure Fund. Local authorities from across Greater Brighton have secured over £48m to unlock sites that for a number of reasons had stalled. This will accelerate the delivery of nearly 6,000 new homes across the City Region.

Rationale for a Five Year Strategic Plan

1. Changes to the political and economic landscape
   Whilst the Board has been very successful over the last four years, the regional and national economic and political context has shifted considerably over the last year. The landscape will continue to evolve as the Government negotiates the United Kingdom out of the European Union, and through whatever transitional arrangements are ultimately agreed. The EU Referendum vote, new Government policy including the Industrial Strategy and Clean Growth Strategy, and at a more local level the new Coast-to-Capital Strategic Economic Plan, all mean that the world in 2018 is a very different place to what it was in 2014.

2. Growing ambition
There is growing level of ambition and aspiration from Board Members, and this has in part been demonstrated by the increase in communications activity. The Board has been delivering good outcomes for residents over the last four years but the messaging around this has been fairly quiet and generally inconsistent. In April 2018, as part of the 2018/19 Operational Arrangements, it was agreed that a more front-foot and proactive approach should be taken with regards communications, and since June 2018 activity levels have increased as part of an enhanced communications offer.

3. Central Government engagement
The Board has had success in attracting attention from Central Government, as demonstrated from the 2-day Charrette in September 2017, and subsequent interactions with key departments. Private sector bodies also want to work with Greater Brighton; Southern Water are chairing the Infrastructure Panel and are leading on the development of the Water Plan; to which they are committing resource. The Board's activities and successes have also been noticed by neighbour organisations, and in February 2018, Crawley and Gatwick Airport joined the Board. They are the first two new members since the Board was established in 2014 and Gatwick and Crawley joining the Board extends the geographical and reach of the Board. That is further argument to support the development of a five-year strategy at this time.

At the Greater Brighton Economic Board meeting on 16 July 2018, the new chair of the Board, Cllr Garry Wall, outlined his views on a vision for the next five years and Board members were asked to provide their responses to this vision. These responses have formed the basis of this paper.

Opportunities & Challenges

Before looking ahead to the next five years it seems sensible to review what has occurred since the Board was established in 2014. Some of the successes have been highlighted above and in the table below the perceptions of Board members have been captured.

Successes & Opportunities	Challenges & Barriers
• Access to Local Growth Funds • Attention from Central Government and other stakeholders • Shared vision & objectives of Board members • Sense of partnership & common purpose • Open debate and discussion between members • Co-operation and collaboration • Coming together with a single voice around key strategic priorities • Enhanced relationship with Coast-to-Capital	• Lack of clear, consistent messaging • Lack of proactive communications • Lack of private sector involvement • Too much process & too little discussion at times • Limited Greater Brighton awareness outside of immediate circles • Still seen as overly Brighton-centric and not always resonating with all partners • Business members struggle to engage with some of the content/discussion

• Increasing ambition and aspiration	• Modest about successes
• Great potential if partners put the effort in	• Focus needs to shift now that LGF ending

Objectives of a Five Year Strategic Plan

The strength of the Board lies in the collaboration and co-operation of bringing together a strong mix of partners; local authorities, the education sector, the business sector including Gatwick Airport, and South Downs National Park. There is a general sense and understanding that all partners benefit from each other's successes, and what is good for one partner or partners usually has benefits for the wider City Region. The aim of a new piece of work will be to set out what the Board wants to achieve in the next 4-5 years and a clear idea of how this will be achieved.

Three main questions will need to be considered;

1. **ASPIRATIONAL & STRATEGIC**
   Purpose and vision of the Board – what does the Board want to achieve?
   What are going to be the key objectives of the Board over the next five years and what is the clear vision and messages? This must be developed in the context of the environment in which the Board operates e.g. the post-Brexit world, and must tie in with other key strategies and work including the recently published Strategic Economic Plan, Transport for the South East (TfSE), Local Industrial Strategies etc.

2. **OPERATIONAL & GOVERNANCE**
   How does the Board need to be organised to achieve the agreed vision and priorities?
   As part of increasing the Board's ambition, and setting the vision and objectives of the next five years, the governance and reporting structures currently in place should be reviewed to ensure that they are fit-for-purpose. Current and future membership of the Board will also need to be considered as well as the relationship with other stakeholders. A plan around engaging with businesses and the wider private sector may need to be developed.

3. **RESOURCING & DELIVERY**
   What resources need be in place or available to deliver the agreed vision and priorities?
   Once the key strategic aims and objectives have been identified we need to understand the methods by which these will be delivered, including the resourcing requirements over the medium term.

Aspirational & Strategic

There is a general consensus that after four years of operation the time has come for the Board to step-up its level of ambition and aspiration. The Board has been successful at securing investment, particularly the £160m LGF funding awarded, but with LGF ending as a stream there is a need to refocus and reprioritise. To continue seeing success in the future, the Board needs a clear direction of travel accompanied by the strongest possible political voice.

Vision Statement

In terms of the high-level vision statement for Greater Brighton, one member can be quoted as suggesting this vision;

"To become a beacon of sustainable growth in the South of England, uniting greater economic prosperity with radical improvements in health and wellbeing and the abolition of homelessness"

This is a lofty ambition and one that would resonate with other members, wider stakeholders and also with Central Government. If we want to set out in one sentence what the Board stands for and what it is trying to achieve, this is a good starting point for discussion. The potential challenge is that this is possibly a very long term vision, rather than just a 4-5 year one.

A slightly different vision provided by another member would be for Greater Brighton to become;

"A centre for innovation and a trailblazer for new flexible working patterns that reduce the need to commute whilst increasing local wages, the environment and high-value employment"

Again, as per the first possible vision, the focus is very much around sustainable growth and clearly links in with Greater Brighton objectives and the Government's views around economic growth.

In preparing any kind of vision for the region, it is clear that it should focus on what makes Greater Brighton unique from other city regions. Unique aspects include; the level of partnership and collaboration already evidenced by Greater Brighton partners; the quality of the natural environment, including the coast, countryside and wider recreational offer; creativity and innovation; skills (2 universities); inclusive culture; national and international connectivity. We need to demonstrate that Greater Brighton is the best place to live **AND** work **AND** invest.

Another aspiration forwarded is that Greater Brighton be recognised alongside the Midlands Engine and Northern Powerhouse in terms of generating growth and prosperity. The Midlands Engine and Northern Powerhouse are well advanced compared to Greater Brighton, and have elected mayors who are able to drive the agenda with links into senior echelons of Central Government.

Whilst Greater Brighton does not have that level of access, there are lessons that can be learned from those partnerships. One respondent suggested that Greater Brighton needs to

become for the City Region what the elected mayors are in the combined authorities; the legitimate voice for the region and recognised by local, national and national stakeholders as such. Furthermore, Government can be left in no doubt as to the collective ambitions for the City Region.

Building on the USP identified by members and the collective ambition of the Board, a list of possible options for a vision has been drafted below for discussion.

Vision Statement Options for discussion:

Greater Brighton will become the best place in the South East/UK to live, work, learn, visit and invest.

Greater Brighton will be a centre of innovation and sustainable growth in the South East, recognised for the quality of its natural environment, high value businesses, products and people.

Greater Brighton will be the beacon of innovation, education, connectivity and sustainable growth in the South East.

Greater Brighton will be the global gateway for the South East attracting significant inward investment, increased productivity and sustainable growth

Greater Brighton will be recognised for its connectivity as a global gateway to the South East, a centre of innovation and productivity and the best place to live, work, learn, visit and invest.

Question for discussion:

Do any of these best describe the vision? If not, what's missing?

Key Objectives & Priorities

Once the vision has been framed and agreed there needs to be a number of objectives and priorities that will help to deliver the vision. The objectives and priorities will be honed as the vision is agreed, but members forwarded many suggestions around what the key priorities should be. These are summarised below:

- Generating growth
- Increasing prosperity
- Supporting businesses
- Creating well paid and secure jobs
- Delivering a better place to live
- Increasing the quality of life
- Making more housing affordable

This list of basic priorities could be clustered into four main components within a Five Year Strategic Plan;

1. **Employment and Skills**
   A strategy supported by activities to bring further education and other training into line, in order to better match current and future skill needs which in turn delivers the stated aims of the Board. Employment has geographical context, meaning that some areas of our region e.g. Brighton, Manor Royal, Newhaven Enterprise Zone and Gatwick Airport, carry a disproportionately greater responsibility in providing centres for employment.

2. **Housing**
   A core component of Board thinking should include housing supply and affordability. Individual Councils are striving to build more homes, but a five year strategy may need to look beyond traditional authority boundaries towards solutions at a wider geography. Housing demand is linked to employment and skills in that areas of predicted job growth such as Brighton, Manor Royal, Newhaven Enterprise Zone and around Gatwick Airport, may see the highest increased demand for housing.

3. **Infrastructure**
   Infrastructure is the collective descriptor for all aspects of support to make every businesses, employer and employee as productive as possible. The medium to long term examination of the Road, Rail, Digital, Health, Education, FE and utilities provision all need to be factored in. Starting an early conversation about how we relate strategically identified (new work) sites for employment and housing would lead us into the medium and longer term planning for infrastructure investment. In terms of transport, there needs to be a focus on the two key corridors; the north-south A23 and Brighton Mainline, and the A27/A259 coastway corridor between Newhaven and Worthing.

4. **Local Industrial Strategy**
   Another objective is for Greater Brighton to become *the* trusted partner of Coast-to-Capital and Central Government to deliver common objectives for the region, and this will become extremely important through the period that the Five Year Strategic Plan will cover. In November 2017, Government published the Industrial Strategy White Paper in which it sets its priorities and direction for the future of the UK Economy. In July 2018 Coast-to-Capital published its Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and Vision from 2018-30, and this document will form the basis of a Local Industrial Strategy for the LEP area that will be negotiated with Central Government. The Board will need to work with Coast-to-Capital to develop a Local Industrial Strategy which will deliver maximum benefit to Greater Brighton residents and businesses. It has been suggested that Greater Brighton should develop its own Local Industrial Strategy given its regional focus.

Question for discussion:

Are these the key priorities? If not, what's missing?

Key Messages

In response to the increase in ambition from the Board, a more front-foot and proactive approach is being taken with regards communications as demonstrated by the recent article in the well-regarded Municipal Journal. If the Board is going to best represent Greater Brighton there needs to be an increased confidence and agility in speaking out on behalf of the City Region. The Communications Support Team have a key role to play, first in helping to shape the key messages and secondly in transmitting and building a narrative around them. Key messaging arising from engaging with Members include;

- The best place to live and work – a quality environment for quality investors
- A natural incubator for new ideas, always open to them and with a flexible, skilled workforce ready to exploit them
- Greater Brighton as a global gateway for the South East, open for business, increased productivity and growth

It is crucial that clear messaging is provided to partners and is understood so that they can be advocates and ambassadors for the City Region. Likewise, when transmitting messages to Central Government, press or media we need to use commonly understood language which explains in simple terms how the Board is growing the region.

Greater Brighton has a brand which needs to be developed further. The recent extension of the Greater Brighton geography, to include Crawley and Gatwick, is a key opportunity to increase the weight of argument around attracting national and international investment. With two new members and a refreshed vision for the Board, it may also be an opportune moment to look at changes to branding and identity. For example, the current logo has been in place since the Board was established. At that time the logo was functional, showing the rough shape and geography of the new City Region. But that geography has recently changed and may also evolve in the future, so branding and identity that captures the new vision and ambition of the Board may be more suitable going forwards.

Questions for discussion:

Are these the key messages? If not, what's missing?

Do you agree that the branding should be reviewed?

What Will Success Look Like?

If we are to set a five year strategy for the Board we need to develop a barometer of success so that when we look back in five years we will be able to understand what has and has not been achieved.

A bid was recently submitted to the Transforming Cities Fund which, although unsuccessful, illustrated the ability of the partnership to prepare a strong, collaborative bid across a number of authorities at short notice. The bid was also only open to City Regions, so without the Greater Brighton City Deal, accessing this funding stream would have been virtually impossible.

In situations such as this it is easy to measure success but it is sometimes more difficult to assess the added value that GBEB creates. As an example it is difficult to quantify how much of the £160m secured through LGF would have been secured if Greater Brighton did not exist. Likewise, whilst Greater Brighton has had success at engaging with Government and raising the profile of the area, it is difficult to say what impact and influence that has had in achieving interventions like the recent land acquisition by Homes England in Burgess Hill.

One approach to measuring success would be to establish a current baseline of key metrics and then to track those metrics over the next 5 years. One of Government's key objectives through the Industrial Strategy is to increase low levels of productivity, which is a nationwide challenge. A key metric to follow would be gross value added (GVA) but there are others such as employment/unemployment that can also be measured.

Whilst establishing a baseline and tracking progress would be possible and achievable, the danger is that this approach may be too simplistic, especially given the uncertain economic context. In March 2019 Britain is set to leave the European Union, and as yet it is unclear what trade and other terms will be agreed with Europe. At a national and local level there will be an impact from Brexit both in terms of challenges and opportunities, but until the terms of departure are known these are virtually impossible to quantify.

It is likely that some economic sectors and geographies will be adversely affected, and for others there may be opportunities that can be exploited. An important role for the Board will be to support local businesses and other organisations to navigate through Brexit, whether that involves overcoming challenges or maximising opportunities that arise. To that end officers are currently performing preparatory work around a Greater Brighton Business Survey, part of which will seek to understand how local businesses are preparing for Brexit, and how they can be best supported through Brexit and any transitional period that follows.

A more realistic and useful measure of success may be how Greater Brighton fares compared to other city regions, the wider south east and nationally. In five years we want to be able to see that the City Region has gained ground on competitor regions in terms of generating more jobs, increasing productivity, reducing inequality etc at a time of a changing political context.

Table – Options for possible economic trackers

- Publication of a Local Industrial Strategy
- GVA
- House price affordability gap
- Housing build target
- Employment – both in terms of number of jobs in City Region and employment rates
- % Businesses and/or homes with access to full fibre
- Number of start-ups?
- Business survival rates
- Amount of new commercial floor space
- Number of homes living in fuel poverty

Questions for discussion:

Are the above suitable indicators to track? Are there others we should be monitoring?

Local Industrial Strategy

However, perhaps the overriding objective, and one that can be measured, is that in the next five years Greater Brighton should grasp the unique opportunity to develop a Local Industrial Strategy for the City Region. It is likely that a Greater Brighton Local Industrial Strategy would form a significant part of a Local Industrial Strategy covering the wider Coast-to-Capital geography. Components of a Local Industrial Strategy for Greater Brighton would include the following;

1. **USP**
    A USP will be needed to speak to the regions strengths, gain the attention of Government and relate to the Industrial Strategy. Greater Brighton has strengths in the creative and digital sectors, so this would be a creditable focus for the City Region that would interest Government.

2. **Strategic Priorities**
    A Local Industrial Strategy would require a number of strategic priorities. These would be based on the key objectives outlined on page 5, but linking in with the Industrial Strategy and sector priorities;

    - Sector catalysts linked to university specialisms such as life sciences, quantum technology and advanced automotive engineering
    - Creativity and innovation
    - Digital
    - Infrastructure (road, rail, digital, energy and water)
    - Housing

- Employment & Skills
- Inward Investment and place marketing

3. **Project Pipeline**

    Development of a Local Industrial Strategy should also include the identification of a small but bold project pipeline. There is a lot of activity across Greater Brighton with a number of projects currently underway or in the development pipeline, some of which could support the delivery of a Greater Brighton Local Industrial Strategy.

Operational & Governance

In order to deliver the vision and key objectives agreed in the Five Year Plan, effective operational and governance structures need to be in place, and as part of the Plan it is sensible that current structures are reviewed.

Overview of Current Arrangements

Current membership of the Board stands as;

- 6 Local authorities
- 3 Business Partnerships
- 2 Universities
- Further Education Colleges
- Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership
- South Downs National Park Authority
- Gatwick Airport Ltd

The Board meets quarterly and is supported by the Greater Brighton Officer Programme Board (GBOPB). The GBOPB is made up from officers from across the partnership and the Greater Brighton Support Team. The GBOPB meets eight times per annum (twice between each Board Meeting).

Membership

Crawley Borough Council and Gatwick Airport Limited joined the Board in February 2018, and are the first new Board members since the Board was established. The advantages of Crawley and Gatwick joining the Board are well-documented elsewhere, but with regards future new membership, there should be clear and demonstrable benefit to both the Board and the new partner if a new organisation were to join.

Extending the membership of the Board has advantages and disadvantages. Every prospective member will have their own strengths and benefits that they can bring, so the table below is very generic.

Advantages of growing membership	Disadvantages of growing membership
• Widening Greater Brighton geography and extending its reach • Increasing voice and strength of argument to Government and other strategic bodies e.g. TfSE • Widening the Greater Brighton economy • Greater opportunities to realise the Board's vision and ambitions	• Dilution of the functional economic area that was the foundation of the City Deal • Possible conflict with other important stakeholders & geographies e.g. East and West Sussex, Gatwick Diamond • Increased numbers could reduce engagement and effectiveness of meetings • Increased numbers may require new governance structures

Board membership should relate to a redefined vision, purpose and scope of the Board. Membership should represent those who are best placed to influence prosperity at the local and national level, and further expansion should be considered in the context of how new partners will contribute to delivering the Board's objectives or enhance the Board's legitimacy, standing and reach. That needs to be balanced against the fact that one of the key strengths of the partnership is that it based on a functional economic area, which formed the foundation of the City Deal. Growing the membership in an attempt to increase the Board's reach and influence could actually have the adverse effect of diluting the current offer.

One area where the Board may want to strengthen leadership is around various economic sectors as not all key sectors are represented on the Board. This may be of particular relevance now as the Board will be looking to develop a Local Industrial Strategy with Government. The key sectors that may be relevant for a Local Industrial Strategy are outlined under Strategic Priorities on page 9, and the expertise and credibility that sector leadership would bring could be a big help in driving negotiations with Government.

Another point to consider is the Board's approach to new membership. Should the Board follow an "open-door" type of approach, where interested parties state an interest, and their membership potential is evaluated broadly in line with some of the points raised above? Should the Board follow a more selective and proactive approach to ensure best representation e.g. targeting sector leadership as in the previous paragraph?

Question for discussion:

Which of the below approaches to new membership is the most appropriate?

1. Only open to new business membership within current geography
2. Open-door approach to membership with potential members asking to join

3. Proactively seek out organisations that would add significant value to the Board e.g. economically, strategically, politically

Governance

The main discussion around governance structures will follow in the following Resourcing and Delivery section, but it's worth mentioning some high level points here.

The first point is that some members feel that a public meeting is not necessarily the best forum to facilitate robust, strategic conversations, and that discussion tends to shy away from real debate. Informal working sessions would allow more open debate and engagement of Board members. Outcomes/decisions from such discussions would then give a strategic steer to officers to which formal proposals can be brought to future meetings.

Through the lead-in process there is time for debate amongst the local authority Leaders and Chief Executives, but this is not always the case for the Business Partners. There are some potential options around this including having a briefing for Business Partners, and this can be explored.

One of the key priorities for Greater Brighton is infrastructure. When it comes to major infrastructure such as roads, water, energy, digital and rail, conversations go well beyond City Region boundaries, and sometimes beyond regional boundaries. The Board needs to consider how best to engage with partners and stakeholders that are not Board members. This would include other local authorities, specifically East and West Sussex County Councils. The recent Transforming Cities Fund Bid highlighted the need to be able to work closely with the counties as Highways Authorities, and relationships should be developed so that we can move quickly to respond to such funding opportunities or other initiatives for mutual benefit.

Consideration should also be given around the Board's engagement with other stakeholders like TfSE and the Gatwick Diamond Initiative to ensure that common priorities are aligned, and benefits from working together are exploited.

There is also the opportunity to engage with the business sector more widely. Part of that will be the upcoming Greater Brighton Business Survey, but from that there will be follow-up actions and the opportunity to keep dialogue with businesses open. A possible approach to this would be to hold an annual stakeholder event/workshop so that Greater Brighton can engage with businesses regarding the vision, priorities and project pipeline.

Greater Brighton has had success with engaging with Central Government, and this is another relationship that can be developed, especially as we look to build a Local Industrial Strategy for the City Region. As in the paragraph above, Greater Brighton could hold "reach-out" events with local MPs and Senior Government Officials.

Options Summary

1. Arrange Informal working sessions for Board members to inform current priorities and shape future agenda items
2. Additional pre-meetings with business and other (non-LA) members to be scheduled
3. Explore means of developing stronger relationships key with non-GBEB stakeholders
   a. Invite to Board Meetings
   b. Invite to GBOPB meetings
   c. Hold stakeholder events
4. Engage with business sector more widely. A Greater Brighton Business Survey is currently being developed and this can be built upon through stakeholder events and other communications.
5. Increased Engagement with Senior Government Officers and local MPs
   a. Large scale engagement events such as the 2017 Charrette
   b. Smaller reach-out events
   c. Informal events which could include visiting key development areas/significant projects within Greater Brighton

Question for discussion:

Which of the above governance options would you support?

Resourcing & Delivery

The third strand of the Five Year Strategic Plan is around the delivery of the plan and resources required to deliver it successfully.

Delivery

Brighton has been the lead authority for the Board, but there is consensus that the Board needs to move forwards with a wider city region focus. With input from all partners the Board can have one voice and one message for the City Region. There are a number of ways that this could be facilitated;

1. Board Members could be asked to take the lead on a particular area e.g. Housing, Transport, Skills. This would spread the leadership across the Board membership and increase ownership and responsibility amongst partners. The area lead would act as the Board "spokesperson" for that area e.g. in relation to policy decisions, funding announcements etc.
2. Specialist working groups should be established around key areas e.g. skills & productivity, innovation & enterprise, strategic planning, transport & infrastructure.

This again would distribute responsibility and ownership across the partnership and builds on the working groups that have been established to develop the Water and Energy Plans.

3. The Greater Brighton Support team are hosted by Brighton & Hove City Council but are a resource for the whole city region. The team could spend time in other authorities or institutions to support Board members leading on areas/activities as outlined in paragraph 1 above.

4. The Universities could provide greater leadership in terms of using their strengths in R&D to drive innovation and generate economic value.

Question for discussion:

Which of the above approaches to delivery would you support?

Existing governance arrangements have been in place since the Board's inception. The Board is supported by the GBOPB and the Greater Brighton Support Team (1.5 FTE Business Managers and 0.5 FTE Programme Support Officer).

As part of developing the Five Year Strategic Plan current structures need to be reviewed; are the current arrangements the most suitable to support the Board deliver its vision and priorities? One question that is should be considered is the role of the GBOPB, member representation on that group and the frequency and format of meetings.

Currently, the agenda for the Board and a therefore the GBOPB is largely driven by officers. There is a perception that the GBOPB has become a bit of a "clearing house" for reports and is reactive rather than proactive in shaping direction.

As the ambition and possibly membership of the Board grows there may need to be separate Board established. This "Executive Board" or similar could be established to look after the more administrative matters, with the Full Board then being able focus on strategy, direction and budgets.

Options Summary

1. Review of objectives and terms of the GBOPB to ensure this Board is fit-for-purpose going forwards
2. Members may then need to resubmit representatives for the GBOPB and agree formal arrangement for feedback and input into GBOPB meetings
3. Review of current Board responsibilities with a view of establishing an Executive Board, which would pick up some of the more administrative duties.

Question for discussion:

Which of the above approaches to delivery would you support?

Resourcing

An area that still needs to be discussed and agreed with partners is around financial support for the Board. Over the last few years there has been an underspend which has been carried forward into this financial year. This underspend is funding an ambitious work programme in 2018/19 and with a full support team in place it is very unlikely that there will be a significant underspend at the end of March 2019.

With annual partner contributions totalling around £180,000, and the annual running costs (salaries, communications, legal and other support costs) being around £155,000, there will only be a small amount left to deliver the work-plan if we continue with the existing funding model. The £180,000 contribution from members is only the out-of-pocket financial cost. It does not include the time of officers in attending meetings, delivering projects and programmes, or otherwise supporting the Board's activities, so this underestimates the true cost to partners.

If the Board wants to deliver its objectives over the next few years it needs more financial resource to do so. There are various options which are not mutually exclusive and can be used in combination;

1. Increase contributions from existing members
2. Grow the membership
3. Seek external funding for the Board/Board activities
4. Seek sponsorship

Whilst each of the above are possible avenues for increasing funds, they all have drawbacks.

Budgets are very tight, especially for the local authorities who are already the largest contributors, so requesting extra funding from the public purse is not an easy ask. A consensus would need to be established around how additional funding demands would be distributed across the membership.

Growing the membership and its various benefits and pitfalls has been discussed above. Whilst increasing revenues could be an added benefit of increasing membership, it could risk the integrity of the partnership of increasing revenue become a driver of growing the membership.

Seeking external funding for the Board's activities is an option that we have been exploring in relation to the Inward Investment & Trade Team that the Board is looking to establish. The cost of the team would be very high; a few million over five years, so exploring external funding options is a sensible approach, however securing ongoing revenue funding is challenging. We have also had some success in this area with the Greater Brighton Energy Plan. Whilst the Board is contributing £5,000 to develop the plan the bulk of funding, €40,000 (circa £35,000), has been secured from European Funding as part of a much wider SOLARISE Programme. Whilst we have had success here, seeking funding like this does take time, and may not always succeed. For small pieces of work this approach that mean things just don't happen if funding cannot be secured.

Seeking sponsorship for the Board or individual work streams may be fruitful. In effect, Southern Water are sponsoring development of the Greater Brighton Water Plan. They are chairing the Infrastructure Panel, chairing the Water Working Group and are committing resource to delivering the plan. This methodology could be replicated elsewhere, but to gain sponsorship for other work-streams we would need to be able to identify suitable would-be sponsors and develop a suitable proposition/offer that interests them.

Question for discussion:

Which of the four above options would you support? If none of the above what alternative proposal would you support?

Recommendations & Next Steps

This discussion paper is based on the response provided by Board members. The paper has provided a list of possible options as key components of a Five Year Strategic Plan and these are summarised below for initial discussion at the Greater Brighton Economic Board on 16th October 2018.

This paper will later form the focus of a high level discussion at a facilitated Board member event in late October/early November. A final paper on the Greater Brighton Five Year Strategic Plan will be presented to the Board at the meeting in January 2019