

GREATER BRIGHTON ECONOMIC BOARD

9.30am 16 JULY 2024

LEARNING SUITE, CRAWLEY CAMPUS, COLLEGE RD, CRAWLEY RH10 1NR

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Eggleston, Gardner, Jones, Lury, Nicholson and Sankey

Business Partners: Prof: Debbie Keeling, Tim Slaney, Andrew Swayne, Prof: Rusi Jaspal (Substitute), Ian Fitzpatrick (Substitute), Ian Dury

PART ONE

1 RATIFICATION OF CHAIR

- 1.1 Dr Catherine Howe (Chief Executive Officer: Adur District & Worthing Borough Councils) welcomed the board to the meeting and requested the ratification of the new Chair.
- 1.2 Councillor Bella Sankey (Leader of Brighton and Hove City Council) was agreed as the new chair of the Greater Brighton Economic Board.

2 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

(a) Declarations of Substitutes

Paul Riley (Team Leader: Adur District & Worthing Borough Councils) attended as a substitute.

(b) Declaration of Interests

There were none for this meeting.

(c) Exclusion of press and public

There were no Part Two items, therefore the press and public were not excluded.

3 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 3.1 Congratulations to Beccy on her election to MP. It's a pleasure to take on the Chair of Greater Brighton Economic Board, especially at this exciting time of Sussex Energy launching and a new government coming into power.
- 3.2 On behalf of the Board, I would like to say a big thank you to Debra Humphris from the University of Brighton for her valuable contributions to the Greater Brighton Economic Board since 2014.

- 3.3 I would like to welcome Jeremy Gardner, Martin Lury and Sophie Cox to their first Board meeting. Jeremy will be representing Adur District Council; Martin will be representing Arun District Council and Sophie representing Worthing Borough Council.
- 3.4 I'd also like to warmly welcome Amy Galea, Chief Integration and Primary Care Officer from NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board as an observer today. Greater Brighton Economic Boards needs a wide variety of partners. The Integrated Care Board is a major part of our regional strategic infrastructure and economy so it's great to have them here and interested.
- 3.5 I'd also like to welcome a new attendee today, Cllr Ty Goddard, Cabinet Adviser in Brighton and Hove on Economic Development and Regional Partnership.
- 3.6 I have had the benefit of 121 conversations with most board members over the past few weeks and I want to thank partners for making time for this. In particular we focused on the direction we want to take the Board in. From many conversations with leaders and non-political Board members there is a great appetite for making the most of the unrealised potential of the Board to sharpen our focus, objectives and ambition and to collaborate to increase the attraction of investing in our region.
- 3.7 Greater Brighton was formed 10 years ago as part of the City Deal agreement with an aim to promote and create the conditions for sustainable and inclusive economic growth. Ten years on, we're in a time of huge democratic change, where there has been a fundamental shift in the politics underpinning our County and with a new national government kickstarting a new era with a clear and explicit ambition to boost economic growth and achieve energy independence and sustainability, which opens an opportunity for Greater Brighton to play a pivotal role.
- 3.8 Today political leaders will have received a letter from the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Angela Rayner, which includes this crucial paragraph: *"We continue to believe that new devolution settlements should be tailored to sensible economic geographies so that local leaders can act at the scale needed to effectively deploy their powers. In the majority of cases that will require local authorities to come together in new combined or combined county authorities. I encourage you to begin discussions with your neighbouring authorities on this basis."*
- 3.9 The Kings Speech tomorrow – will also set out clear ambitions for greater devolution of powers across the Country. Because we are a coalition of the willing, with extensive economic and business experience across local authority boundaries, we are well placed to be involved in discussions about opportunities for deeper collaboration. We can bring relevant people together and highlight insights about how the strengths and achievements of the different councils can complement one another to make the strongest possible case for investment in the region. We want to be part of this conversation and capitalise on the region's potential.
- 3.10 Sussex Energy is unique because it's a mission for the entire Sussex region, not held back by boundaries. Sussex has the size and scale to be able to attract investors, tackle systemic issues and to work with the government and national players like UK Power Networks. We're doing the right thing at the right time.

- 3.11 Within a week of being in office, the new government have made several announcements that demonstrate that Sussex Energy can lead the country in delivering a green energy revolution. For example, they have lifted the onshore wind ban, launched a new Mission Control tasked with turbocharging the UK to clean power by 2030 and launched a national wealth fund to support delivery of big infrastructure projects across the UK. These are important opportunities, and our County must be ready to collaborate with the new Government to ensure our region can capitalise on the benefits.
- 3.12 Today we'll be covering just 2 items in the Board meeting – Our Operational Arrangements and Sussex Energy. We have swapped these items around compared to the published agenda to improve the flow.
- 3.13 As part of the Operational Arrangements updates, we are proposing to remove a voting member of the Board from Brighton & Hove City Council. This has been proposed by me because I believe that it's important to come to the table as a partnership of equals and for each local authority to be able to speak with one voice. It is additionally being proposed that Cllr Ty Goddard, Regional Partnerships and Economic Growth Cabinet Advisor from Brighton & Hove attends as a non-voting member. I have asked Ty to support the Board's objectives particularly when deepening our regional partnership working.
- 3.14 Directly after this Board meeting, we'll be welcoming another 40 or so people to join us for the Sussex Energy launch and would appreciate your presence in the meeting.

4 SUSSEX ENERGY MISSION

- 4.1 Catherine Howe (Chief Executive: Adur District & Worthing Borough Councils) introduced the report to the board.
- 4.2 The chair invited the board to vote on the report.
- Vote
- 4.3 A vote was taken, and the board agreed the recommendations unanimously.

Resolved:

- 2.1 That the Board agrees that it will assume a strong leadership and convening role, across Greater Brighton, and wider Sussex region, and to coalesce around a focal ambition.
- 2.2 That the Board agrees that achieving net zero energy status by 2040 will be this overarching aspiration for the region over the next 15 years. Net zero energy status means the total amount of energy used by our community on an annual basis is equal to the amount of zero-carbon energy created within the community.
- 2.3 That the Board members will use their networks and influence to promote the Sussex Energy work and encourage collaboration.
- 2.4 That whilst achieving net zero energy status by 2040 will be the flagship ambition the Board agrees that resource permitting, other current and future strands of important work will continue.

- 2.5 That the Board agrees to set aside £50,000 of initial funding from the 2024/25 budget and also commit at least a further £50,000 in 2025/26.
- 2.6 That as a first step towards achieving this ambition, four working groups be convened which will draw upon expertise from Board members and wider stakeholders and new partners. The groups will cover the following four themes:
- i) Energy Efficiency & Transition
 - ii) Local Energy Infrastructure
 - iii) Key Proposition Development, Success Measurement & Funding Strategy
 - iv) Developing Jobs & Skills

5 OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS 2024-25 AND ANNUAL REPORT

- 4.1 Natasha Bridge (Business Manager: Greater Brighton Economic Board) introduced the report to the board.
- 4.2 The chair invited the board to vote on the report.
- Vote
- 4.3 A vote was taken, and the board agreed the recommendations unanimously.

Resolved:

That the Board:

- 2.1 Agree and secure the budgetary contributions sought to fund the cost of running the Board and delivering its workplan in 2024/25.
- 2.2 Note that Brighton & Hove City Council shall continue to act as Lead Authority for the Board in 2024/25.
- 2.3 Approves the 2023/24 Annual Report and Board members submit the report to their respective organisations.
- 2.4 That the Board notes the content of the One Public Estate Programme's 2023/24 Annual Report.
- 2.5 Agree the new Heads of Terms (HOTs) shown in Appendix 1, which reflect changes to the Board's membership.