

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Transition &amp; Dissolution Pathway</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>24 June 2026</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Chair, Greater Brighton Economic Board</b>
<b>Contact Officers:</b>	<b>Name: Andy Hill, Natasha Bridge</b>
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<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>

**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
<b>Strategic recognition and sponsorship</b>	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.
<b>Governance and organisational alignment.</b>	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.
<b>Continuity of programme development and resourcing</b>	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
<b>Recognition of strategic value</b>	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.
<b>Identification of organisational “landing zones”</b>	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.
<b>Collaboration and amplification</b>	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.

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Annual Contribution 2026/27</b>	<b>Six-monthly contribution (April-September)</b>	<b>Additional contribution (October-December)</b>	<b>Total contribution (April-December)</b>
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
<b>Total Contributions</b>	<b>£117,400.00</b>	<b>£30,200.00</b>	<b>£45,398.00</b>	<b>£75,798.00</b>

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