

# Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

## Report of Corporate Director for Place

to  
Cabinet

on  
22 September 2015

Agenda  
Item No.

**27**

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Economy and Tourism

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### Economic Partnerships Update

Place Scrutiny Committee  
Executive Councillor: Councillor Ron Woodley  
Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

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#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on the current position and activity of key Economic Development partnerships.

#### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **Members note the position and activity of both South East Local Enterprise Partnership and the South Essex Growth Partnership as key partnerships where the Council is an active participant.**

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 Recent Council reports have appraised Members regarding the Council's relationship with Economic Development based partnerships. The shape of these partnerships has been moving swiftly in recent weeks and the following report outlines the current status of each.

##### 3.2 South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP)

- 3.3 On 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015 the two-year term of office of the Chair of SELEP, Peter Jones, expired. Given the uncertainty over the future of the LEP, the Accountability Board Members agreed to extend his term for an interim period.

- 3.4 The nominations sub-group has subsequently taken the decision not to extend his contract. As a result, the LEP is now being chaired by the three Vice Chairs on an interim basis. The SELEP Board will be asked to endorse these arrangements at its next meeting in September.

- 3.5 This decision has elicited responses from both CLG and BIS expressing concerns about the decision and the manner in which it was reached, as well as the implications with regards to Government confidence in SELEP.
- 3.6 The Council has consistently supported SELEP and was also supportive of the position to extend the contract of the Chair. This position has accorded with that of South Essex business representatives.
- 3.7 Following the last update, Members will be aware that Essex and Kent County Councils were proposing the realignment of the LEP boundaries to address the challenges they perceive of working with and through SELEP. Formal written proposals from both parties have been submitted to the Secretary of State.
- 3.8 The Essex proposal was developed by the Greater Essex Business Board, the federated board for the rest of Essex which the County Council administers. Southend Borough Council responded to the consultation drafts of the proposal reiterating our agreed and consistent position that returning to the governance debate is a distraction, but also in detail to the content of the document.
- 3.9 In a recent letter from the Secretary of State to SELEP, it was confirmed that the proposals for changing the LEP boundaries are not being considered. Any further steps by either proponent in this regard are currently unknown.
- 3.10 South Essex Growth Partnership
- 3.11 The Growth Partnership (formerly Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership-TGSEP) is the federated board within SELEP for South Essex. It is chaired by Kate Willard, Company Secretary and Corporate Affairs Director of Stobart Group.
- 3.12 The partnership has agreed its Memorandum of Understanding and a draft set of key performance indicators have been developed and shared for sign-off at its next meeting in October.
- 3.13 The partnership is now looking to refresh its strategy. It has agreed a vision with outline content which will form the basis of the strategy.
- 3.14 A separate, fluid, list of regeneration projects in South Essex will also be held. This will include those in the pipeline as well as those which are more developed. The list will be used to identify projects to be put forward for appropriate funding streams as they emerge. 15 projects in Southend, at varying stages of development, have been proposed for inclusion in the list at this stage. These can be found in appendix A
- 3.15 Ensuring that the partnership continues to be business led and local authority supported, is crucial in meeting Government plans and expectations for such boards. As a result, wider business participation is being developed on an on-going basis.

#### **4. Other Options**

1. There are no further options to be considered.

## **5. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 5.1 The economic development landscape is changing very quickly; this paper provides Members with a snapshot of current situation and evolving future options.

## **6. Corporate Implications**

### 6.1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities

- 6.1.1 Prosperity is intrinsically linked to the economic wellbeing of the town. Skills, employment and growth all support wider social issues for the town's excellent aspirations.

### 6.2 Financial Implications

- 6.2.1 Confidence by Government departments assists with Growth Deal and other funding opportunities. There are no direct additional financial resources required at present, but the opportunity cost of not pursuing the various partnership arrangements may inhibit future best value.

### 6.3 Legal Implications

- 6.3.1 There are no legal implications in relation to this update.

### 6.4 People Implications

- 6.4.1 There are no people implications as a result of this report.

### 6.5 Property Implications

- 6.5.1 There are no property implications as a result of this report.

### 6.6 Consultation

- 6.6.1 There are no consultation implications as a result of this report.

### 6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.7.1 There are no equalities and diversity implications as a result of this report.

### 6.8 Risk Assessment

- 6.8.1 There are no implications as a result of this report.

### 6.9 Value for Money

- 6.9.1 There are no value for money impacts as a result of this report with regards to Council expenditure.

6.10 Community Safety Implications

6.10.1 There are no community safety implications as a result of this report.

6.11 Environmental Impact

6.11.1 There are no environmental implications as a result of this report.

**7. Background Papers**

7.1 There are no background papers.

**8. Appendices**

8.1 Appendix A – proposed project pipeline for Southend.