

SB04-01**North Kent Enterprise Zone Strategic Board**

Approved Minutes of 3rd meeting held on Thursday 2nd March 2017 in the Darwin Room, Innovation Centre Medway.

Board Members Present

Bernard Spring (Chair)
Cllr Rodney Chambers, Medway Council (Vice Chairman)
David Hughes, Gravesham BC
Dawn Hudd, Maidstone BC (representing William Cornall & the Accountable Body)
Richard Longman, TGKP
Prof Alan Reed, University of Greenwich
David Smith, Kent CC
Paul Spooner, Ebbsfleet DC
Paul Wookey, LiK

Also attending

Richard Hicks, Medway Council

Apologies

Adam Bryan, SELEP
Cllr Alan Jarrett, Medway Council
Alan William Cornall, Maidstone BC
Alex Hicken, DHA Planning
David Liston-Jones, TGKP

1. Welcome & Introduction

- 1.1. **Introduce new Board Members and representatives.** Those attending introduced themselves and apologies were noted as above.
- 1.2. **Election of NKEZ Strategic Board Chair.** As outgoing Interim Chair, Paul Wookey proposed Bernard Spring to become Chair of the NKEZ Strategic Board. This was seconded by Cllr Chambers and endorsed unanimously by the Board. Bernard took over the chairmanship with thanks to Paul for overseeing the Board to date.
- 1.3. There were no conflicts of interest registered.
- 1.4. **Aims update.** Bernard invited Board Members to outline their aims for the Enterprise Zone.
 - **Ebbsfleet.** David H emphasised the role of Northfleet East in addressing the pressing need for quality commercial space in Gravesham borough. Paul S concurred that the two embankment sites would primarily serve more localised markets and SME growth; the centrality of the Northfleet Rise site positioned it potentially to compete for national or even international investment. In particular, EDC were looking to promote the health and life sciences opportunities, meeting a need that the saturated London-Oxford-Cambridge triangle was increasingly struggling to serve.
 - **Kent Medical Campus (KMC).** The shared ambition was for KMC to be a centre of excellence for clinician-led medical health, science and education. The site would include patient provision (e.g. Cygnet mental health hospital and a step-down unit, complementing KIMS on the adjacent site), business space for med-tech innovation and enterprise, and academic training building upon Canterbury Christ Church University's involvement already delivering programmes at KIMS. Development of an innovation centre was a critical ingredient to enable SME occupancy and growth. Without an interest in the land, Maidstone BC's influence was largely through policy and planning, hence the importance of the local delivery board to agree common purpose.
 - **Rochester Airport Technology Park (RATP).** Richard H outlined the core ambition to create, grow and retain higher skilled and higher GVA jobs, particularly in specialist

engineering and advanced manufacturing. Medway Council were keen to capitalise on the presence and involvement of University of Greenwich and BAE Systems, both already involved in the Medway Innovation Board

2. Minutes of last meeting and actions arising

- 2.1. **Review of Actions.** All points had either been actioned or were on this agenda. On 6.1, Paul W reported that he had met Department for International Trade on 27 February. They want to engage with Enterprise Zones and will be feeding back into the consultation process on the Industrial Strategy. The KMC proposition was understood; DIT wanted to see the specific delivery proposals for the other NKEZ sites and in particular the likely sector focus.
- 2.2. **Board minutes (SB03-01).** Richard L advised the intention, in the interests of transparency, to post agreed Board minutes on the resources page (currently inactive) of the NKEZ website, but recognised there could be issues of commercial confidentiality raised. Following discussion it was agreed that the Board should be able to discuss commercially sensitive matters freely without details being reported in the published minutes. Members could advise when commercially sensitive points were not for minuting.
- 2.3. **Terms of reference – amendment (SB03-02).** Richard L explained that minor changes were needed to the wording of the Terms of Reference to reflect the strategic nature of the Board and the limitations on the scope of decision-making. These changes were agreed and the revised TOR adopted unanimously.

3. Progress Reports

- 3.1. **Summary of progress since 29 November 2016 (SB03-03).** Richard L outlined the key developments described in his paper, which included renewal of the outline planning consent at KMC, commencement of construction on the Cygnet mental health facility, outline consent for Northfleet West and receipt of the planning application for Northfleet East.
 - 3.2. The NKEZ website had gone 'live' on the day of this meeting (www.northkententerprisezone.co.uk); the Project Group would be working with Locate in Kent on a marketing and communications plan. Board Members asked whether NKEZ would have an active social media presence. The expectation was that most activity would be at local scheme level, and that social media would be more productive at that level; but the option (and facility) to develop social media around the NKEZ site remained open.
 - 3.3. David S advised that we should make the most of Enterprise Zone status as a marketing label. There may be a need for budgetary provision to cover production of branded materials: any proposals would be developed through the Project Group in the first instance.
- 3.4. Site-specific oral updates from Scheme Representatives.**
- **Ebbsfleet.** Paul S reported that nearly 50,000m² of commercial space were now either consented or in planning. He reiterated the earlier observations about the likely marketing focus of the different sites. Proposals for Northfleet Rise would be developed in the context of wider proposals for the commercial centre of Ebbsfleet: there were various constraints including the outcome of viability assessment by the landowning consortium and the 'lift & shift' strategy. EDC were working hard with various stakeholders to secure a high profile medical training facility on the site. Ebbsfleet would be adopting and working with the NKEZ branding.
 - **KMC.** Dawn H reported that the website, brand and brochure had been launched. The

agents report strong market interest and values being secured. Completion of the Cygnet hospital was expected by Q2 2018. Maidstone BC were working on the investment plan, focusing particularly on how the proposed innovation centre might be forward-funded. The consultancy work commissioned with DCLG support would inform this. The local delivery board now included new representatives from Locate in Kent, Canterbury Christ Church University and KIMS. CCCU are potentially interested in establishing a presence on KMC. The local board needed to agree protocols to enable candid discussion of commercially sensitive information. Very positive links had been made with the Kent, Surrey and Sussex branch of the Academic Health Science Network: it was hoped that Rob Berry (Head of Innovation and Research) might attend a future local delivery board meeting.

- **RATP.** Cllr Chambers and Richard H explained that the planning application for the 1st phase works (reconfiguration of the operational airport) was being split into two parts. The first element related to hanger replacement and refurbishment; the second, covering the runway and control tower works, would follow in the spring (for determination by the Planning Committee in the summer) once the Environment Impact Assessment was complete. Richard H reported continued strong interest from companies both within and outside Medway to locate onto the RATP, without any active marketing to date. He had also recently visited Discovery Park and was excited about what Medway could learn from their example and experience.

3.5. In conclusion, it was suggested and agreed that for future Board discussions we should aim to look at the NKEZ as a whole with a single 'dashboard' to track progress of projects as components of one overall scheme. The Chairman emphasised that we needed to maximise the synergies between the sites and partners' activities. **Action: Richard L to develop dashboard derived from Implementation Plan.**

4. Draft Implementation Plan

- 4.1. **Discussion and feedback.** The Board queried who the audience is for the implementation plan. In part it was to satisfy DCLG expectations, but primarily it was intended as a working tool for the NKEZ itself, to set clear direction and aid monitoring. It was not intended as a public document: any public material derived from it should focus on the commercial proposition and deliverability.
- 4.2. The spreadsheet summary was welcomed as the starting point for the dashboard idea referenced in 3.5 above.
- 4.3. **Policy propositions.** Richard L explained the thinking behind the policy propositions in section 2 of the draft implementation plan. In discussion the Board recognised the overall aim to raise aspiration and secure high quality outcomes on EZ sites; these aspirations needed to be tempered by considerations of viability and commercial realities. Local delivery boards would need to make judgments about what could be delivered on individual sites. Section 2 of the implementation plan could have a dual function: setting an overall framework, pared back to factual requirements, and for lobbying purposes, for which it needed to be shorter and more punchy. **Action: Richard L to re-draft in consultation with the Project Group.**
- 4.4. **Sign-off and handling arrangements.** The Board endorsed the proposed handling arrangements for finalising the draft and submission to DCLG via SELEP.

5. Events

- 5.1. **Launch of NKEZ branding and website.** Richard L explained that further work would be done through a marketing sub-group to agree a programme of events and general marketing opportunities. The Board recommended that there should be coordinated press releases marking the official commencement of the EZ on 1 April. **Action: Richard L to pursue with Locate in Kent and the marketing sub-group.**

6. Future meetings

- 6.1. The Board agreed to aim for meetings at roughly quarterly intervals. The preference for the next meeting would be in the week beginning 12 June. **Action: Richard L to schedule meeting.**

7. AOB

- 7.1. **Industrial Strategy Green Paper.** BEIS had encouraged the Project Group to consider preparing a response to the Industrial Strategy consultation. The TGKP response would include perspectives relating to the enterprise zone, but the Board agreed the suggestion that a separate letter from the Chairman, on behalf of the NKEZ Strategic Board and reiterating key messages, would add value. **Action: Richard L to consult on draft response.**
- 7.2. The meeting closed at 5pm.

13th March 2017