

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF FULL COUNCIL ON 17 JULY 2019

PART A : REPORT

SUBJECT:

PROPOSAL FOR ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL TO JOIN THE GREATER BRIGHTON ECONOMIC BOARD

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DATE: June 2019

EXTN: 37846

PORTFOLIO AREA: Economy Group

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report seeks formal approval from Full Council for Arun District Council (ADC) to become a member of the Greater Brighton Economic Board (GBEB).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Full Council is asked to agree and note the following:

- a) that Arun District Council becomes a constituent member of the Greater Brighton Economic Board (“the Board”) joining the Greater Brighton Economic Joint Committee (GBEJC);
- b) that the Leader of the Council will represent the Council on the Board or a substitute on the Leader’s behalf;
- c) it be noted that Arun District Council by joining the GBEB is also subject to approval by all the local authorities represented on the Board in addition to a formal decision by the Board; and
- d) the cost of membership which is approximately £23k per annum.

1. BACKGROUND:

- 1.1. Greater Brighton became a formally recognised City Region in March 2014, following the area’s success in securing a City Deal Agreement with Government. A key commitment in the City Deal Agreement was the establishment of a legally constituted Economic Board. It comprises the Greater Brighton Economic Joint Committee and the Greater Brighton Business Partnership.

1.2. The City Region membership comprises the local authorities of Adur, Brighton & Hove, Crawley, Lewes, Mid Sussex and Worthing - the Greater Brighton Joint Committee; and, the Greater Brighton Business Partnership comprising; Adur & Worthing Business Partnership, Brighton & Hove Economic Partnership, Coastal West Sussex Partnership, Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership, the South Downs National Park Authority, Gatwick Airport Ltd, the University of Brighton, Greater Brighton Metropolitan College and the University of Sussex.

1.3. Greater Brighton is currently home to 830,000 people, 525,000 of whom are of working age and it provides 360,000 jobs. Greater Brighton has 35,500 active businesses and generates over £21bn in gross value added (GVA), and therefore has a crucial part to play in driving growth across the LEP region and wider south east.

1.4. Key assets of the City Region include a growing international airport, a major road and rail transport corridor to London, two universities, and unique natural capital including the coast, South Downs National Park and the UNESCO Biosphere.

1.5. The overarching aim of the Board is to protect and grow the economy, by co-ordinating economic development activities and investment at City Region level. By joining together places and working collaboratively to build on the area's economic assets and unblock its barriers, the City Region will be able to fulfil its economic potential to become one of the United Kingdom's top performing urban economies.

1.6. To that end the Board has been successful, as it has helped to secure over £160m in Local Growth Funds (LGF) through several funding rounds. It is predicted this funding will unlock around £2bn of private sector investment, create 24,000 jobs, build 18,000 homes and deliver 750,000m² of employment floor space over its lifetime. The funding is supporting projects across the City Region ranging from flood defences in Shoreham and Newhaven, new buildings at the University of Brighton and Greater Brighton Metropolitan College, and transport infrastructure improvements in Burgess Hill and Worthing.

1.7. A further £48m has been secured from the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) to unlock the development of key strategic sites where progress has stalled. As per the LGF funds, HIF allocations will be supporting projects across the City Region where there is high housing demand; Burgess Hill, Crawley, Hove, Lewes and Shoreham.

1.8. Since 2014 the Board made enormous progress in creating a strong brand that is recognised by Government, investors and key stakeholders. It is a united partnership that has a detailed understanding of its functional economic area (and the barriers and challenges to increased productivity) and has the ability to shape priorities and target interventions across the City Region. Through the Board's activities there has been an increased profile for the City Region. This has helped the region to engage with Government.

1.9. At the start of 2019 the Board agreed its Five year strategic priorities which aim to build a modern, growing economy that is international, creative, connected, talented and resilient. These five themes each have two key priorities attached and they have been identified as the key areas of focus for the Board. An action plan is being developed to take forward the work.

1.10. Key work streams include building water and energy resilience; building a high spec digital infrastructure, working with Coast to Capital LEP in developing its Local Industrial Strategy, building a strong investment pipeline, working with national stakeholders and sub-regional bodies such as Network Rail and Transport for the South East to promote the aspirations of the City Region; and making the strongest possible case for investment to Government and the private sector.

1.11. In October 2018, following extensive discussions between the (then) Council Leader and the (then) Chairman of the Board, the Council requested to become a member of the Great Brighton Economic Board. The Council's application set out the reciprocal benefits to both parties should it be accepted as a member. The inclusion of Arun District Council on the Greater Brighton Economic Board presents the following opportunities:

- Arun would have an active involvement and engagement with the LEP in relation to the production of the Local Industrial Strategy and aligning pipeline project to strategic priorities.
- Arun exhibits strong economic and functional relationships with Greater Brighton and membership would give scope to explore coordinated investment.
- Arun's membership of the Board would provide funding opportunities to central government funds or to Local Enterprise Partnership to support local pipeline projects.
- Arun has had a leading role in the Strategic Planning Board, and there is an immediate opportunity in developing the Local Strategic Statement 3 to support better integration and alignment of strategic spatial and investment priorities.
- Membership could also pave the way for other local partners to become formally involved in the work of the Board, such as the University of Chichester which has strong links and growth plans in Arun, and would complement existing higher education partner members.
- Build a stronger strategic level influence with central government to push for transport infrastructure improvements.

Appendix A attached provides a copy of the full application document.

1.12. At the Board meeting held on 9 April 2019, the Council's Chief Executive was informed that the Board had accepted Arun's request to join. Arun District Council is now required to formally accept the invitation to join the Board and become a constituted member of the Board.

1.13. Once notice that a formal decision to join the GBEB has been confirmed by the Council all other existing local authority partners will be asked to ratify ADC's membership at the October 2019 Board meeting. A change to the Board's membership triggers a change to the Board's Heads of Terms and this can only be done with agreement from each Local Authority member. A copy of the existing Heads of Terms is attached in Appendix B which would be updated if ADC accepts the invitation to join and this is ratified.

1.14. This report is asking the Council to agree to membership of the Greater Brighton Economic Board.

2. PROPOSAL(S):

Full Council is asked to agree and note the following:

- a) Agrees that Arun District Council becomes a constituent member of the Greater Brighton Economic Board (“the Board”) joining the Greater Brighton Economic Joint Committee (GBEJC).
- b) Agrees that the Leader of the Council will represent the Council on the Board or a substitute on the Leader’s behalf.
- c) Notes that Arun District Council joining the GBEB is also subject to approval by all the local authorities represented on the Board in addition to a formal decision by the Board.
- d) Agrees to the costs of membership of approx. £23k pa.

3. OPTIONS:

The options are to either agree ADC’s formal membership of the GBEB or to not agree membership.

4. CONSULTATION:

Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		X
Relevant District Ward Councillors		X
Other groups/persons (please specify) Public, WSCC JEAAC, traders, Traders Association, stakeholders		X

**5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES:
(Explain in more detail at 6 below)**

	YES	NO
Financial	X	
Legal	X	
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		
Sustainability		
Asset Management/Property/Land		
Technology		
Other (please explain)		

6. IMPLICATIONS:

6.1. Financial:

6.1.1. Should ADC accept the invitation from the Greater Brighton Economic Board to join, then it would be required to pay an annual contribution. The financial contributions to the GBEB are calculated based on the relative size of each local authority, and the relative size is determined by the working age population. This is likely to be around £23,000 in a full financial year. The precise figure will be confirmed once membership is agreed.

6.2. Legal:

6.2.1. The Greater Brighton Economic Joint Committee (GBEJC) is a joint committee established pursuant to section 102(1)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

6.2.2. The Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Authorities Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions (England) Regulations 2012 require the constituent authorities of a joint committee to decide the membership of that committee and it is therefore necessary for each of the local authority members of the Board to decide whether Arun District Council should become a member of the GBEJC in accordance with their respective governance arrangements.

6.2.3. The decision to join the Greater Brighton Economic Board through the GBEJC is one which must be taken by Full Council by virtue of section 102 of the Local Government Act 1972.

6.2.4. The Council shall be represented at the Board by the Leader of the Council or the Leader's nominated substitute.

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:

To enable Arun District Council to become a member of the Board and so gain access to the benefits of Board membership as set out in 1.11. of this report.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Appendix A - Background Paper on Greater Brighton Economic Board

Appendix B - Heads of Terms for Greater Brighton Economic Board (26 March 2019)