

EASTBOURNE TOWN BOARD

Eastbourne Town Board Full Board Meeting #5

29th November 2024 at 14.00hrs
Lansdowne Hotel, King Edward's Parade BN21 4EE

Present:

Cllr Margaret Bannister (MB)	Eastbourne Borough Council
Catherine Clifford (CC)	Board Member
Cllr Penny DiCara (PD)	East Sussex County Council
Mark Evans (ME)	Sussex Police, District Commander
Richard Garland (RG)	Chair
Mark Holland (MH)	Board Member
Julia Johns (JJ)	Admin Support, Minutes
Duncan Kerr (DK)	Board Member
Loretta Lock (LL)	Board Member
Jack Morrell (JM)	MP's Office
Simon Morris (SM)	Sussex PCC (on behalf of Katy Bourne)
Lisa Rawlinson (LR)	Eastbourne Borough Council
Joanne Rogers (JR) (via Teams)	Board Member
Dr Yusaf Samiullah OBE (YS)	Board Member
Shoes Simes (SS)	Board Member
David Wakefield (DW)	Board Member

Apologies & Distribution:

Josh Babarinde MP (JB)	Member of Parliament for Eastbourne
Alex Benham (AB)	East Sussex County Council
Katy Bourne (KB)	Sussex PCC
Alan Elder (AE)	EBS Consulting
Cllr Stephen Holt (SH)	Eastbourne Borough Council
Bryn Mabey (BM)	Eastbourne Borough Council
Jim Mathieson (JMa)	Board Member
Anna Salmon (AS)	Eastbourne Borough Council
Becky Shaw (BS)	East Sussex County Council
Mark Streater (MS)	Sussex PCC
Nicola Walker (NW)	Sussex PCC

Meeting Notes and Actions

1. Welcome, Apologies and Introductions

- RG welcomed the group to the meeting, followed by brief introductions from members.

2. Interests of Members (Conflicts of interests)

- No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. Summary of matters 'on hold' from previous minutes

- Community Safety Partnership (CSP): Meeting to review LTPfT priorities is currently on hold pending revised Government policy document. The CSP remains a valuable forum for aligning with the Board's interventions and strengthening our business case. Further coordination with the PCC required.
- Engagement Questionnaire: To be reviewed once new government guidelines are received.
- Communications Update: Update our page on the EBC website content, and prepare a press release for agreement.

4. Gov't & EBC Updates

LTPfT (Retained and Reformed):

- Funding allocation pledged is £19.5 million (approximately £2m per year over a 10 year period 2026 – 2036). Of this 75% is allocated to capital and 25% revenue.
- Of the capacity funding of £50,000, £36,635 remains, after funding the seafront strategy activities.
- Capacity funding of £200,000 is imminent, and an additional £200,000 capacity funding has been promised early 2025. This is in addition to the £19.5m allocation, bringing the total capacity funding to £436,635.
- Capacity funding is to support initial starter activities such as feasibility studies, planning, legal and professional fees. It must not be used to fund project delivery.
- The initial fund allocation will be made available in April 2026.
- The new government has committed to a 10-year programme, with plans to rename the fund and set new submission dates for the Town's vision and strategy document, as well as broadening the criteria to align with their own policies and missions.
- New Government policy document, tool kit and technical guidance to follow.
- The board expressed their gratitude to JB for his efforts in helping to secure the funding and his dedication to championing the cause.
- Great Yarmouth was highlighted as an example of a well-constructed plan.

Economic Development Strategy:

- JR proposed the board fund the development of an economic development strategy for Eastbourne to support long-term direction. Options discussed included utilising existing data and commissioning new research. Estimated cost of £30,000. The strategy would help maintain focus, align with government growth plans, and provide a foundation for enhancing the coastal economy and improving local skills.
- The board agreed in principle to proceed with developing the Terms of Reference and confirming a cost. This would be funded from the imminent capacity monies.
- JR proposed reviewing the Council's under utilised asset, as well as challenging assets throughout the Town

Seafront Strategy Consultation:

- The Seafront Strategy initial consultation ran from May to October, incorporating various engagement events, including questionnaires, surveys, and TikTok videos. The consultation received an excellent 2,400 responses to the online survey.
- The demographic reach was narrower than anticipated, with youth age groups still proving particularly challenging to engage.
- Recurring themes highlighted by respondents included environmental stewardship, heritage protection, inclusive design, improved amenities, and active travel routes.

- Next steps include the second and third round of consultations, ending in February, with a draft strategy expected by summer 2025.

Pevensy Bay to Eastbourne Coastal Management Scheme

- The Pevensy Bay to Eastbourne Coastal Management Scheme is progressing.
- Integration opportunities exist between the coastal management and cycling strategies, with insights available from the collaborative report by Bespoke and the Eastbourne Chamber of Commerce.

5. The Board – should we add new people to the board and if so what skills, connections and understanding should they bring?

- The board structure comprises Statutory Members, including representatives from the council, police, PCC, and MP and Non-Statutory Members, who have been selected from the Eastbourne community.
- Board members expressed a general desire to bring in a younger perspective, with suggestions including representatives from youth-focused organisations or individuals who can better connect with younger demographics.
- It was suggested that this is pending receipt of the Gov'ts new guidance.
- The idea of a 'shadow board' was suggested, where an alternative board considers the same challenges and decisions and shares their findings with the main board for consideration.

6. Review of Working Groups – retain, merge or re-design?

- The board discussed whether all four working groups were necessary, including a proposal to merge Marketing and Engagement, though concerns about underrepresentation (leads of each group) on a governance board were raised.
- A decision was made to maintain the current working group structure for now.
- Admin support was suggested now that capacity funding was imminent. A terms of reference/ job description should be prepared for agreement for admin support.
- Once capacity funding was confirmed, discussions with AE could take place.
- Working group meetings would restart once new guidelines were confirmed.

7. Bins to Bandstand – Six months on, what's your EB-view?

- Many changes since board's inception 6 months ago – new Gov't, new policies, cost of living getting worse, EBC and ESCC cost savings, loss of sovereign centre and town centre regeneration at risk. The board discussed a sense of what the impact of these changes is for the town.
- Plans to date have included identifying leads for each of the nine wards.
- While fairness in funding distribution is crucial, spreading resources too thinly could limit the impact of larger projects.
- Some wards may have greater needs, and it was suggested that individual wards should have a say in funding decisions.
- It had been previously recommended allocating some capacity funding to each ward to help identify, kick-start and fund local initiatives.
- Efforts should focus on identifying projects that could benefit from capacity funding, but progress is contingent on receiving updated Gov't guidelines.
- Police neighbourhood panels were noted to have been more effective than ward-based approaches in previous public engagements.
- While ward structures offer simplicity through predefined boundaries and engaging local leaders and refining communication strategies is vital for success.

- The wards can pose engagement challenges based on their diversity, for example the town centre challenges may be different from the seafront, for example pedestrianisation is a town centre issue only. These wards would require dedicated attention
- A visioning workshop was suggested to assist with the development of the strategy document.

8. Comms Strategy – what’s next?

- The announcement that the fund has been retained and reformed has heightened public expectations.
- A press release and comms update should be prepared, agreed and issued to ensure people are informed.
- This could be an opportunity to announce opportunities for youth group representatives to get involved and also announce potential paid support and consultation roles.

9. Closing & Next Meeting (January 2025)

SS proposed a casual social gathering in the new year to strengthen board connections. This was wholly supported.

The next meeting is scheduled for 7th February 2025, 2pm at the Lansdowne Hotel - JJ to send out invitations.

Ref	Action	Deliver Date	Status	Owner
1.00	Prepare draft press release and update web page with latest news.	19/12/24		RG/BM
2.00	Obtain a copy of the Great Yarmouth Plan for information.	19/12/24		LR/RG
3.00	Jo and Lisa to prepare a Terms of Reference and estimated cost for a proposed Economic Strategy for Eastbourne.	19/12/24		LR/JR
4.00	LR to share latest update from Gov't.	06/12/24		LR
5.00	LR and RG to arrange a meeting to review a plan of the Town and identify buildings and hotspots of under utilised asset.	12/12/24		RG/LR
6.00	RG to contact Chamber, Education Business Partnership, Eastbourne Schools Partnership, Youth Market and Towner to look at ways to engage with the youth groups. Individual or 'Shadow Board' opportunities.	12/12/24		RG
7.00	Prepare a ToR' for admin and/ or part time support to the board.	31/01/25		RG/LR/ AE
8.00	Discuss next steps with Alan Elder once capacity funding is confirmed.	31/01/25		RG/YS/ LR

9.00	Consider a visioning workshop in 2025 once the engagement process has taken place.	31/01/25		RG/JR
10.00	Review the engagement questionnaire once the new guidelines have been issued.	31/01/25		All
11.00	Informal gathering in the January 2025 to take place to strengthen the boards connections.	05/01/25		SS/RG