

**Report to:** Lead Member for Strategic Management and Economic Development

**Date of meeting:** 22 January 2019

**By:** Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

**Title:** SELEP Sector Support Fund (SSF)

**Purpose:** To seek approval for the County Council to act as the Local Accountable Body for successful South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) Sector Support Fund projects and to enter into a legal grant agreement to transfer the Sector Support Fund grant monies as approved by SELEP

---

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** Lead Member is recommended to:

- (1) Approve the County Council acting as the Local Accountable Body for successful South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) Sector Support Fund projects and to enter into a legal grant agreement to transfer the Sector Support Fund grant monies as approved by SELEP;**
  - (2) Delegate authority to the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport to agree the terms of, and enter into, any relevant agreements with Essex County Council as the SELEP's Lead Accountable Body, necessary to secure the funding and enter into subsequent legal grant agreements with lead project sponsors; and**
  - (3) Delegate authority to the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport to approve the terms of any such agreements and to take all other necessary actions in respect of recommendations 1 and 2 above**
- 

## **1 Background Information**

1.1 The South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) Sector Support Fund (SSF) is a £500,000 per year pot from 2018/19 onwards to support one-off, discrete pieces of work of a pan-LEP nature with a sector focus that bring demonstrable benefits and have support across the SELEP. It uses Growing Places Fund (GPF) Revenue Grant (grant agreement in Appendix 1) to fund a programme of works to support the sector focussed activities that are being undertaken on a pan-LEP basis. These are predominantly led by the established SELEP working Groups. These currently include: Coastal Communities; Enterprise Zones; Housing; Rural; Social Enterprises; South East Creative Economy Network; Tourism; Transport Officers; U9 Universities; Growth Hub; and Clean Growth/Energy.

1.2 To be eligible for funding from the SSF, the project must:

- Be pan-LEP;
- Have outcomes that align with SELEPs overarching objective to create the conditions for increased jobs and homes, safeguarding existing jobs and raising skill levels;
- Align with the SELEP priorities as defined in the Economic Strategy Statement (ESS);
- Be for a discrete piece of work, not ongoing or business as usual (BAU) costs;
- Be revenue only;
- Have match funding of 30%;
- Be between £25,000 - £200,000;
- Demonstrate value for money and comply with the SELEP Assurance Framework;
- ***Be supported by an Upper Tier Authority or equivalent as Local Accountable Body***
- ***Have endorsement from the relevant Federated Board of the lead Upper Tier Authority***

## **2 Supporting Information**

2.1 Support and endorsement is normally sought according to the geographic location of the project lead. Only one bid, from the four overall that were submitted to SELEP in August 2018, is led by an East Sussex-based project lead (Plumpton College) on behalf of SELEP's Rural Working Group. This was

considered and endorsed by Team East Sussex (TES), the local East Sussex Federated Growth Board to the SELEP at its meeting on 24 September 2018.

2.2 Following a further bidding round, which concluded on 2 November 2018, a project titled 'Coastal Communities Economic Prospectus', led by Hastings Borough Council (HBC) on behalf of the SELEP's Coastal Communities Working Group was submitted. This was considered and endorsed by TES at its meeting on 3 December 2018. More projects are anticipated during the lifetime of the SSF and any led by an East Sussex-based organisation will seek support at the TES federated board level.

2.3 The County Council is therefore being requested, at present, to act as the Local Accountable Body for two projects (see 2.1 and 2.2 above), with the potential for more projects to be approved during the lifetime of the SSF. The role of the Local Accountable Body is to:

- Ensure appropriate grant agreements are in place with SELEP and the lead project sponsor;
- Oversee the required project claim, monitor outputs/outcomes and ensure reporting processes, as currently exist within the overall East Sussex led Growth programme, are met and ensure these meet the requirements internally, to TES and to SELEP;
- Ensure the lead project sponsor is defraying funds and accurately drawing down financial payments within budget;
- Manage and oversee the governance, approval or sign off processes, as required under the SELEP Assurance framework, including County Council Lead Member, TES and the SELEP Accountability Board approval as appropriate.

The tasks of the Local Accountable Body, as described above, will be delivered using existing County Council resources within the Economic Development Team, as already established under the reporting purposes for the Local Growth Fund (LGF) and Growing Places Fund (GPF) programmes. The Economic Development team will work together with other County Council support services such as Legal and Finance Services as required.

### **3 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

3.1 The Sector Support Fund (SSF) supports one-off, discrete pieces of work of a pan-LEP nature with a sector focus that bring demonstrable benefits and have support across the LEP. It will facilitate outcomes that align with SELEPs overarching strategic objectives to create the conditions for increased jobs and homes, safeguarding existing jobs and raising skill levels. Being pan-LEP it will result in benefits to the East Sussex economy, regardless of the location of the project lead/promoter.

3.2 The Lead Member is therefore recommended to approve the County Council acting as the Local Accountable Body for the two SELEP SSF projects detailed in this report together with any others that receive the necessary approvals and entering into any grant agreements required to transfer the SSF monies to the lead project sponsor. The Lead Member is further recommended to delegate authority to the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport to agree the terms and conditions of the relevant grant agreements with Essex County Council acting as the SELEP's Lead Accountable Body and subsequently with lead project sponsors.

RUPERT CLUBB  
Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

Contact Officer: Katy Thomas  
Tel. No. 01273 482645  
Email: [katy.thomas@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:katy.thomas@eastsussex.gov.uk)

#### **LOCAL MEMBERS**

All.

#### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Visit: <https://www.southeastlep.com/opportunities/sector-support-fund/>