

BOARD MEETING



Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 9 July 2008, 5.00pm
Harlow Study Centre

Board members present:

Stephen Castle	Essex County Council	John Keddie	Independent Director
Nicholas Falk	Independent Director	Dearbhla Lawson	GO-East Observer
Steve Hammond	Independent Director	Chris Millington	Harlow Council
Eddie Johnson	Essex County Council	John Spence	Chair

Apologies:

Simon Bishop	English Partnerships	Martin Reynolds	Independent Director
Steve Cox	EEDA	Jackie Sully	Independent Director
Andrew Johnson	Harlow Council	Mark Wilkinson	Harlow Council

Others present:

Chris Beasley	Development Director	Louisa Martland	Office/Project Manager
Nicola Bowland	Communications Manager	Mike Seager	Transport & Enterprise Programme Manager
Andrew Bramidge	Chief Executive		
Jennifer Burns	Harlow Council	Malcolm Morley	Harlow Council
Martin Ebbs	Ancer Spa	Cath Shaw	Harlow Council
Mike Evans	English Partnerships	Rob Sibley	BAA Stansted
Ian Hatton	Essex County Council		

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

The Chairman welcomed Mike Evans from English Partnerships who attended on behalf of Simon Bishop, Rob Sibley from BAA Stansted and Martin Ebbs from Ancer Spa.

Harlow Council has nominated Andrew Johnson, Chris Millington and Mark Wilkinson as their representatives. Harlow Renaissance (HRL) is thrilled that all party leaders will be represented.

2. Declarations of conflicts of interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed to be a true record.

4. Matters arising not covered elsewhere

Members meeting: Andrew Bramidge and John Spence have met with Henry Cleary, DCLG. A meeting will be convened in September with HRLs members to discuss the future of the company. Members will be contacted next week with dates. This will then be brought to the Board for discussion.

Future Board meetings: From September Board meetings will begin at 6.30 pm. From January they will move to the first Wednesday of the month. A schedule of dates, times and venues will be circulated.

Action: L Martland to circulate a schedule of meeting dates, times and venues.

5. Harlow Stansted Study – results & recommendations; presentation from Ancer Spa

Martin Ebbs from Ancer Spa gave a presentation on the initial findings from the Harlow Stansted Study. A copy of the full report will be circulated before the end of July.

Ancer Spa thoughts/recommendations:

- Harlow should focus on office activity, hotels and specialised distribution. To attract new businesses there needs to be an increase in hotel sites, business parks, distribution centres and high quality office accommodation.
- Harlow should establish a niche sector. E.g. management functions could be based in Harlow as they do not have to be on the airport site.
- High quality office accommodation could be provided in Harlow Town Station area. Further sites could be developed in the south of Harlow and towards Epping.
- Stansted is beginning to become an intercontinental airport. New capacity can be attracted from emerging economies such as India and China.
- A case study was completed on Schiphol. A branded area around the airport is marketed which has attracted 1,200 major multinational companies. The sub-region around Stansted needs to be promoted.

Key points from the Board discussion:

- Rob Sibley indicated BAA supports the broad thrust of the document. New airlines from China and India are looking for long haul opportunities in London. Heathrow is at capacity so BAA is working to bring them to Stansted.
- Understanding the market at Stansted will enable Harlow to focus on particular market segments. Do we understand what the airport will be in the future?
- Why would we want to encourage more distribution centres in Harlow as our road network is already very busy?
- We should establish an Employment and Skills Board that includes commissioners and not just practitioners.
- Suitable development sites need to be sourced.
- Why does Briantree have a higher proportion of the employment from Stansted airport? What have other places done to best utilise the links between the airport and the local community? What have they done to create competitive advantage? We should look at Uxbridge which is a very successful town near Heathrow airport. This model could be repeated in Harlow. Also the Gatwick Diamond.

Going forward:

1. Short-term – work with BAA on opportunities for employment and business growth in Harlow.
2. Longer-term – look at emerging markets to see what we can do to work with BAA to target businesses from those locations to come to Harlow.
3. Longer-term – look at the Gatwick Diamond. Is this a model we can pursue for Harlow?
4. Longer-term – link with the Employment Land Review to identify potential sites for development.
5. Longer-term – establish an Employment Skills Board.

Action: Final version of report to be circulated to the Board.

6. Economic climate – suggested actions

Key points from the Board discussion:

- The paper puts forward a sensible programme of work.
- In the foreseeable future there needs to be clear leadership from the public sector.
- We should use this opportunity to scope and cost the A414 bypass, giving confidence to investors that key infrastructure issues can be resolved.

- While development at Harlow North would not fit with the Government's Ecotown criteria, there is no reason why we shouldn't be pursuing more of an eco model for development in this area, to ensure that we achieve the highest quality and standards for Harlow. Government is keen to see more developments comply with the highest environmental standards which gives us further opportunities to demand higher quality developments.
- How do we integrate an ambitious vision for Harlow through the LDF process while keeping to the rigid and specific framework that the government are looking for? The principles of the Integrated Development Programme feels right for Harlow. This can fit with the LDF and help to inform the LDF process.
- Despite a legal challenge, the RSS still stands and momentum needs to be maintained. Harlow Renaissance has a key role to help with visioning work.
- Support was given for the establishment of a Property/Land Owners forum which could help de-risk the investment opportunities being offered to the market. We need to get developers interested in Harlow. Harlow Council and Essex County Council have a role to play in this.
- English Partnerships have cash-flowed infrastructure work in Bedford. This is very costly for the public sector, but lots of towns are taking to English Partnerships about opportunities such as this. Harlow also needs to begin talks.
- The recent Transport Board was dominated by how to get the A414 re-alignment into the regional allocation funding. Essex County Council confirmed that the A414 link is one of their top three priorities.
- Harlow Renaissance attended a meeting with Land Securities who are focused on the long-term.

Actions: A Bramidge to organise a meeting with English Partnerships

7. Town Centre North; three month review

This agenda item was moved to the end of the meeting and conducted as a confidential section.

8. Audit Committee Report

Annual Accounts: HRL's annual accounts will be brought to the Board in September.

Audit Committee Chair: The Audit Committee recommended Philip Chamberlain from Baker Tilly joins the committee as Chair following the resignation of Ian Luder. This was agreed by the Board.

Membership: Margaret Lee, an officer from the Finance Department at Essex County Council and Simon Carter, Deputy Leader of Harlow Council have been nominated to join the committee. The Board agreed to these nominations.

EEDA Systems Audit: EEDA has asked Harlow Renaissance to address the following:

- Develop a more detail project management framework
- Present a more detailed risk management register. A traffic lights colour coding system was suggested, with any 'red' items brought to the Board for immediate discussion.

These points are being addressed and a formal response to the report will be sent to EEDA.

Risk Register: *Office accommodation* – there is a break point in the lease in March 2009, which needs to be exercised in September. A discussion will take place at the October Board meeting about the future scale of HRL.

Gifts and Hospitality Policy: A draft version was presented to the Audit Committee. They recommended the Board should adopt this policy.

Actions: A Bramidge and J Spence to review the Risk Register.
Actions: Board review of the Risk Register to be on the agenda every six months.
Actions: A Bramidge to contact landlords re: change to notice period for lease break.

9. Infrastructure Audit and Employment Land Review – Draft first phase findings

Chris Beasley gave a presentation about current project status.

Infrastructure Audit: To alleviate future infrastructure constraints site options and interventions need to be looked at now. This process may take longer than anticipated as due to the RSS. An Options Appraisal will take into account the deliverability of growth. Maps detailing site options have been started but need to be discussed with the consultants. Ashford is a good model to show how to prioritise investments.

Employment Land Review: 23 hectares of current employment land have been identified as not in use. Need to look again at the strategy of zoning and future employment patterns. There are unusable sites in the two key locations. The base lining work is complete and the Stage 1 Report is now ready to be presented to the Board. The Stage 2 Report will need to be done in parallel with the LDF process early next year.

10. Town Centre interim use activity

No discussion took place at the meeting.

11. Cycling Projects update

No discussion took place at the meeting.

12. Harlow Town Show

No discussion took place at the meeting.

13. Chief Executives Report

Incubation Centre: The opening of the centre will provide an opportunity to promote Harlow in regional, national and trade press, helping attract major companies from the eastern region. HRL is looking to launch the property in November.

GAF II: All planning applications are in. We hope to have achieved outline planning consent by September. Some of the demolition work has already begun at Clifton Hatch and St John's ARC. Work on the playground at Prentice Place is due to start in September.

At Prentice Place and Old Harlow the first phase of housing is due to commence Spring 2009. The re-development of the Health Centre at Old Harlow has been taken out of the plans submitted as there have been concerns locally. We will now be able to look at future Health Centre needs for this area, bringing the project in line with funding available from the PCT, not on stream until 2012.

Sub-regional Structures: EEDA are consulting on the shape of sub-regional partnerships across the East of England. They have asked to have a discussion with Harlow Council and Harlow Renaissance. Thoughts from the Board are welcomed as we wish to make a case for recognition as a sub-region.

Action: A Bramidge to circulate draft submission to EEDA before final version is sent.

14. AOB

There were no AOB's.

15. Rolling Agenda

Attached with the Board Papers.

16. Date and time of next meeting

Wednesday 3rd September 2008, 6.30 – 8.30 pm, venue TBA.

Approved by the Board of Directors

Chairman:

Date: