



East of England

All Party Parliamentary Group

Co-Chairs: Jess Asato MP and Andrew Pakes MP

Vice-Chairs: Blake Stephenson MP & Marie Goldman MP

**Investing in the East of England to Maximise its Growth Potential
14:00 to 15:30, Committee Room 16, Monday 4th November**

NON-VERBATIM MINUTES

WELCOME

- Jess Asato MP took the chair and commented on how fantastic it was to see so many people in attendance. She went on to welcome all MPs, Peers and wider stakeholders and in particular our key speakers, Dan Tomlinson MP, Government Champion for its Growth Mission, Cllr Graham Butland, Chair of East of England LGA and Jackie Sadek, Chair of the UK Innovation Corridor partnership.
- She explained that because Dan Tomlinson MP and Growth Mission champion can only be with us for the first 25 minutes the agenda has been changed so that we will start by looking at inward investment, then discuss the Budget and then local Government finance. There are a number of housekeeping items but we will deal with those at the end of the meeting.

MAXIMISING THE REGION'S POTENTIAL FOR GROWTH THROUGH INWARD INVESTMENT

- Jackie Sadek, Chair of the UK Innovation Corridor (UKIC) partnership said it was a delight to take part in the meeting and emphasised that she is an independent chair of what is in effect a partnership of the willing. She remarked that UKIC is big on convening power but small as an organisation.
- She said that the East of England is an under-sung story. It was the only region in 2008 that did not suffer a recession and, in particular, Cambridge is a global brand. However, the region needs to get its act together to secure the recognition and support from the Government that it deserves and needs.
- She concluded her remarks by welcoming the Government's economic growth focus and, in particular, on inward investment. She informed all present that UKIC will be launching an Inward investment prospectus shortly. She looks forward to what the Growth Mission 'champion' has to say.
- Dan Tomlinson MP for Chipping Barnet first clarified that he is not the Minister but the Growth Mission champion from the backbenches. He said some people think economic growth is not the answer but we have had the longest squeeze on wages in the last decade. Growth will provide more income for people – the OBR suggests 0.5% more which is twice as much as during last the Parliament.
- He drew attention to Page 62 of the Budget where seven pillars of growth are listed: economic and fiscal stability; investment, infrastructure and planning; people; places; industrial strategy and trade; innovation; net zero. He concluded his remarks by saying that to improve living wages we must get rid of the blockers to growth and that he would be very happy to visit a range of sites in East of England.

- In the follow up Q & A a number of points were raised:
 - East of England is an economic success story but that must not obscure our need for infrastructure investment
 - Harlow has ambition to be part of the UKIC inward investment and growth agenda
 - It will be important to understand how devolution impacts the growth agenda
 - MPs and Stakeholders should work together across party lines to secure best deal for the region
 - Investment in Haughley as well as Ely Junctions is well overdue – these are of national importance
 - UKIC Chair and the Growth “champion” would be welcome in Chelmsford which wants to be part of an expanding innovation corridor
 - There is an infrastructure investment deficit in the East of England
 - We need to flex the muscle of the UKIC plus the rest of the region to secure investment from both the Government and the private sector
- ***It was subsequently agreed:***
 - To write to the Minister for Investment drawing on the contributions at the meeting and the background briefing paper
 - To establish an Inward Investment Working Party to be chaired by Jack Abbott MP and the Secretariat to be provided by the UK Innovation Corridor

IMPLICATIONS OF THE BUDGET FOR THE EAST OF ENGLAND

- Andrew Pakes MP took the Chair and invited comments on the Budget (other than those relating to local government which would be discussed next). A number of comments were made:
 - The East of England has had low investment but highest growth – but it is now really starting to creak. Can we be a magnet for private investment if we don't have the transport infrastructure or adult social care services that are required
 - Adult social care is one agenda that needs to be moved forward
 - In Peterborough child poverty is experienced by 50% of families – it is important that we push for inclusive growth
 - Large parts of constituency are “dead spots” when comes to mobile and broadband. Digital inclusion is a big issue for many
 - The Cambridge Development Forum has worked very well. Has sought to deliver ready-made employment spaces and skills packages that investors want
 - Looking at the Industrial Strategy one could be forgiven for thinking the East of England does not exist apart from Cambridge.
 - Norwich Research Park, Freeport East and many other areas within the innovation corridor are also important
 - When the Group acts with unanimity - with cross party support - it is stronger
 - There is plenty that unites MPs across the political parties for example we should keep pushing for improvements to Ely and Haughley Junctions
- ***It was subsequently agreed:***
 - Parliamentary Officers will write to the Chancellor
 - If possible, there should be a response to the Industrial Strategy consultation
 - A regional submission to the Spending Review should be prepared for approval of the APPG at its meeting in January

DELIVERING STRONG AND FINANCIALLY SUSTAINABLE COUNCILS

- Cllr Graham Butland, Chair of the East of England LGA, Leader of Braintree District Council and Executive Member for Devolution on Essex County Council highlighted a number of key points in the briefing paper updating attendees on the Budget.
- He remarked that financial sustainability is the key issue for councils and that there were therefore some aspects of the Budget to be welcomed; In particular the move to multi-year settlements and extra sums for local Government and in particular for SEND were appreciated.
- He went onto say that social care and SEND expenditure for county councils and unitary authorities is crippling many and the sums allocated are unlikely to be sufficient.
- He added that the biggest single pressure for district and borough councils is temporary accommodation for homeless households. For Chelmsford alone spends £3.7m. Not addressing this issue was an oversight.
- He concluded that the East of England is still the best region but transport infrastructure such as the A120 which links Freeport East still requires improvement.
- A number of points were made in the subsequent Q & A:
 - It will be important to clarify what is in the local government settlement in particular what the NIC liability is (line in red book said will be compensated).
 - There are wider concerns regarding the impact of increases on NICs on small businesses and life sciences.
 - Don't forget your roots. Never known Local government to be so difficult.
 - We will need to work together to make case that local government cut to the bone.
 - Local Councils need multi-year settlements. ASC and SEND are undermining councils' ability to deliver wider statutory functions.
 - The future is likely to remain bleak, and that local authorities were currently experiencing unprecedented funding restraint combined with accelerated demand increases.
- It was subsequently agreed:
 - The Parliamentary Officers write to the relevant Minister, Jim McMahon MP, and seek a meeting.

AOB AND END OF MEETING

- Jess Asato MP took the chair and informed attendees that the APPG has now been registered and all relevant forms are on website – in addition, as requested at the Inaugural meeting, APPG partners' contact details have been circulated plus a compendium of partners' key issues and asks.
 - The East of England Skills Working Group has sent a letter to the Minister for Skills, Baroness Jacqui Smith – this is available on the APPG website
 - The APPG has agreed to visit National Grid's Viking Link HVDC Converter Centre (near Boston). This will be on a Friday in the New Year. All MPs and Peers will be invited and the date will be circulated by the Secretariat shortly
 - The APPG will also visit the Port of Felixstowe plus the site of the Bathside Bay Remediation and Redevelopment project all within Freeport East at a date to be agreed in February or March.
 - It will also support EELGA's Infrastructure Conference planned for 13th March in Cambridge.
 - Finally, the Co-chair reported that the Parliamentary Officers met and agreed that the two meetings after the joint APPG and EELGA reception on 3rd December will be: on-line in January focused on climate change and the region's contribution to net zero; and in person in March in Parliament focused on skills, with an emphasis on apprenticeships.
- The Chair thanked all the speakers and attendees as well as the partners who support the APPG and the Secretariat who manage the meetings

ATTENDEES

Jess	Asato	MP for Lowestoft and Co-chair, EE APPG
Andrew	Pakes	MP for Peterborough and Co-chair, EE APPG
Marie	Goldman	MP for Chelmsford and Vice Chair, EE APPG
Blake	Stephenson	MP for Mid Bedfordshire and Vice Chair, EE APPG
Jack	Abbott	MP for Ipswich & Regional Champion, East of England
Dan	Tomlinson	MP for Chipping Barnet
Charlotte	Cane	MP for
Sam	Carling	MP for North West Cambridgeshire
Pippa	Heylings	MP for South Cambridgeshire
Pam	Cox	MP for Colchester
Alice	Macdonald	MP for Norfolk
Bayo	Alaba	MP for Southend East and Rochford
James	Cartlidge	MP
Matt	Turmaine	MP for Watford
Terry	Jermy	MP for South West Norfolk
Peter	Prinsley	MP for Bury St Edmunds and Stowmarket
Chris	Vince	MP for Harlow
Lord Andrew	Lansley	Former Secretary of State for Health
Lord John	Fuller	Former Chair of the District Councils Network
Lord James	Jamieson	Former Chair of the LGA
Adam	Fox	Office of Pam Cox MP
Isabelle	Pucher	Office of Charlotte Cane MP
Cllr Graham	Butland	Chair, EELGA and Leader Braintree District Council
Cllr Stephen	Robinson	Leader Chelmsford City Council
Cllr Kennedy	Rodrigues	Property and Resources, Watford Council
John	Keddie	Harlow Growth Board
Nick	Eveleigh	Chief Executive, Chelmsford City Council
Peter	Manning OBE	Head Inward Investment, Essex County Council
Connie	Anker	Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority
Jackie	Sadek	Chair, UK Innovation Corridor
Owen	Stratford	Lower Thames Crossing
Eden	Musyoki	Infrastructure Matters
Solomon	Westmancott	Infrastructure Matters
Lawrence	Morris	University of Cambridge
John	McGill	UK Innovation Corridor
Mark	Lucas	UK Innovation Corridor
Matthew	Stewart	EELGA
Adam	Thorp	EELGA
Dan	Gascoyne	Braintree District Council
Francesca	Day	Essex County Council
Naomi	Green	England's Economic Heartland
Ollie	Bould	England's Economic Heartland
Chioma	Obi	Anglia Water
Steve	Beel	Freeport East
Mark	Lemmon	Freeport East
Olivia	Seccombe	British Sugar
Millie	Simon	Sizewell C
Oliver	Parsons	Sizewell C
Stephen	Barwick	Secretariat

Prashant	Shah	O2H
Toby	Warren	Suffolk Chamber of Commerce
Andrew	McGowan	Cambridge Ahead
Naisha	Polaine	Harlow and Gilston Garden Town
Gavin	Winbanks	White Hawk Green Ltd
Valeria	Shorubalko	White Hawk Green Ltd
Simon	Markall	Scottish Power
Arnie	Craven	Cadent
Vicky	Grieve	Cadent
Ellis	Shelton	Logistics UK
Kevin	Keable	East of England Energy Group
Jenny	Higham	University of Suffolk
Rupert	Wood	AlmcorLtd
Ben	Copithorne	Carmargue UK
Mark A.G.	Lucas	Polydectes Ltd
Mike	Rigby	Eastern Promise
Tony	Houghton	Gresham Benevolent Fund

APOLOGIES

- LORD HASELHURST
- JAMES WILDING MP

The East of England APPG is kindly supported by:



The academic partners of the East of England APPG are:



The East of England APPG's business partners are:

