

West Sussex Economic Growth Board Recruitment of an Independent Chair Candidate Brief



Færfield

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Foreword

Thank you for your interest in the critically important and exciting role.

We are looking for an outstanding independent Chair, to lead the new West Sussex Economic Growth Board (WSEGB) that will drive forward economic prosperity in the county. This strategic leadership position will play a key role in galvanising the West Sussex economy over the next ten years.

The Chair will need to have outstanding leadership, networking, and communication skills, and be able to inspire and influence others to create a common voice for the future direction of the West Sussex economy. They will also have the ability to work collaboratively with other Board members and partners to oversee the successful delivery of the County's growth and investment plans.

The Board will include business representatives appointed through an open process, elected members and councillors from the County Council and the District and Borough Councils, and representatives from further and higher education and other representative organisations.

Key to success will be the ability of the Chair and Board to create a vision for the West Sussex economy, and shape economic strategies and actions that create growth opportunities for the county's businesses, promote trade and investment and provide critical insight and advice on public sector initiatives that have an impact on the County's economy.

The Board will also be the business voice for the West Sussex economy to government and it will be a strong vehicle for leveraging inward investment into the county from both the private and public sector.

We are looking for an exceptional individual, who has the commercial acumen and local and national profile to be able to influence at the highest level, combined with the knowledge and understanding of the drivers needed to create a successful and sustainable local economy.

This is a genuine and exciting opportunity to create a legacy of success in West Sussex working with the local business community, investors as well as local and national government.

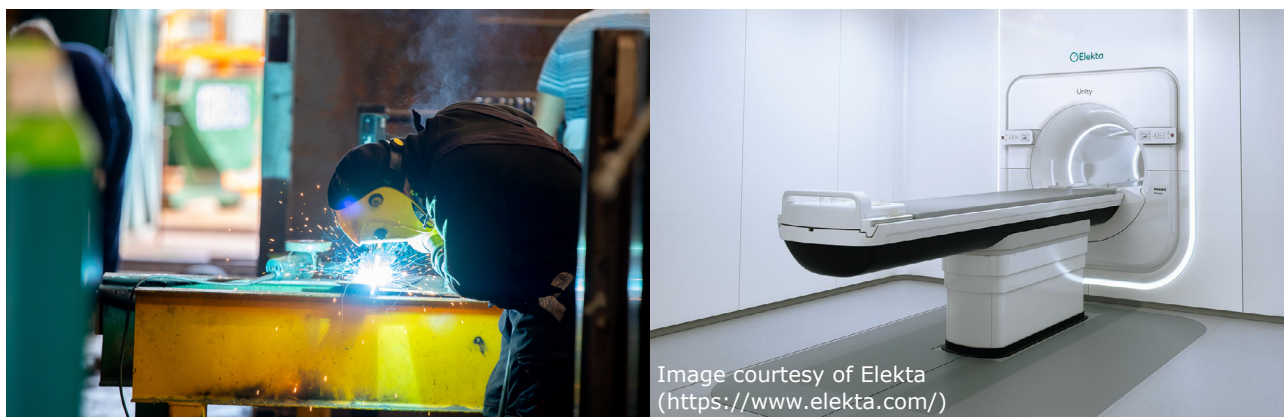
The West Sussex Economy

The West Sussex economy is worth around £27 billion and employs around 390,000 people in around 37,000 businesses. Its economic diversity provides it with both opportunities and challenges. Gatwick Airport and its surrounding area are key economic and employment assets, providing a rich source of employment and outstanding access to international markets. Much of the county also has great access to London. Whilst this connectivity is excellent for trade, it can create recruitment challenges for local businesses.

We have an outstanding rural economy, which includes one of the UK's leading horticultural clusters and a developing viticulture sector. Our coastal strip, which extends from Chichester to Shoreham is vibrant and creative, providing significant opportunities for marine based activity. We have a well-established tourism sector and a rich cultural heritage that appeals to a diverse range of visitors, whilst our natural assets make West Sussex wellplaced to be at the forefront of opportunities linked to the green economy.

West Sussex has significant opportunities in key sectors, such as advanced manufacturing, Greentech, creative industries, the visitor economy and horticulture. However, parts of the county underperform in productivity terms. The area has variable skills levels, and housing affordability and transport & connectivity challenges. The demographic profile of many parts of the county makes the labour market tight and difficult for recruitment, whilst income inequality means that many residents do not benefit fully from the county's economic prosperity.

Considerable work has already been done with partners, key businesses and education to identify strategic priorities and actions that are now being shaped into a new West Sussex Economic Strategy, which will be overseen by the WSEGB. The county has a strong history of working effectively together to address challenges, and to identify and respond to opportunities.



About the West Sussex Economic Growth Board (WSEGB)

Role and Purpose

To maximise the opportunities and address some of the challenges facing the West Sussex economy the local authorities in West Sussex are collaborating with the business community, broader public sector organisations and government to boost economic growth in the area. The WSEGB will play a critical role in delivering that objective as set out below.

1. The WSEGB will provide strong leadership, insight and advice for West Sussex on matters relating to sustainable economic growth, focusing on high level strategic issues, rather than operational matters.
2. The Board will Act as the single, authoritative, strategic voice for West Sussex on a wide range of matters that influence and impact on the County's ability to achieve sustainable economic growth.
3. It will develop a clear economic vision and supporting narrative for the county, and advocate externally on its behalf to raise its profile, influence national government policy decisions, and secure public and private funding and investment to support sustainable economic growth.
4. Oversee the development, implementation and monitoring of the West Sussex Economic Strategy and supporting action plan; and influence actions by partners so that they align with the county's strategic economic priorities.
5. Ensure that there is a clear and balanced business voice that shapes decisions on matters that are designed to support inclusive economic growth.
6. Work closely with existing Boards and other stakeholders within the county and externally on sub-regional and regional basis to ensure that there is a collaborative approach to supporting the county's long term economic prosperity.
7. Advise the West Sussex Leaders' Board on investment decisions, such as the Pooled Business Rates Fund, designed to improve the county's economic performance.
8. Promote West Sussex and lobby on behalf of the county to government departments and agencies, investors and other decision-makers on all matters relating to the County's strategic economic development, including influencing and responding to national Government strategies that support or impact on economic growth.

9. Ensure that there is on-going dialogue with West Sussex businesses so that their insights are clearly articulated and responded to by relevant partners in a timely and transparent way.
10. Adopt a future-focused, outward-looking and international approach to horizon scanning and advise on emerging threats and opportunities and how best to respond to them.
11. Where appropriate, convene and oversee specialist sub-groups to focus on specific economic issues, address sector specific challenges; and establish mechanisms that strengthen collaboration between public and private sector partners and which facilitate effective knowledge exchange.
12. Ensure that there is a spatially balanced approach to economic growth that considers the needs of the different economic areas and spatial economies within the county, drawing on local strategies and plans.
13. Identify and advise on investment and funding opportunities that will progress actions to support the county's economic vision, and oversee and provide feedback on government funded programme delivery in West Sussex (e.g. Careers Hub, Growth Hub).
14. Agree SMART targets and indicators, as set out in the West Sussex Economic Strategy and Action Plan, to monitor the County's economic performance and recommend interventions, where robust evidence indicates the need to address emerging opportunities and/or inhibitors to growth.
15. Oversee and lead an annual West Sussex Economic Summit.



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Membership

The Board is a designated arm's length body for the purposes of making appointments to it, with confirmation of appointments to the Board being delegated to the Leader of the Council. It reports to the Accountable Body and will have 16 Core Members, comprising the following:

An Independent Chair.

- Two Elected Members (Leader and Cabinet Member), West Sussex County Council.
- Two Elected Members – District/Borough Councils: Nominated by the West Sussex Leaders' Board
- One Further Education representative, representing the FE sector and training providers
- One Higher Education representative, representing the HE sector
- A member of the Sussex Chamber of Commerce, representing West Sussex SMEs
- Seven business representatives, drawn from key local sectors, but representing West Sussex businesses as a whole
- An Integrated Care Board representative

Governance and set up

The Board will be chaired by an independent Chair, who will be selected on the basis of:

- Their local and national profile and influence;
- Their commitment to improving the county's economic performance as a whole; and
- Their knowledge and understanding of economic and business related matters.

There will be a standing Vice Chair who will be the Leader of West Sussex County Council.

All members of the Board will be invited to serve on the Board for an initial three-year term, after which they can be invited for a second and final term subject to the needs of the Board and its stakeholders at that time.

Its composition should also, where possible, reflect the diversity of the County's business population.

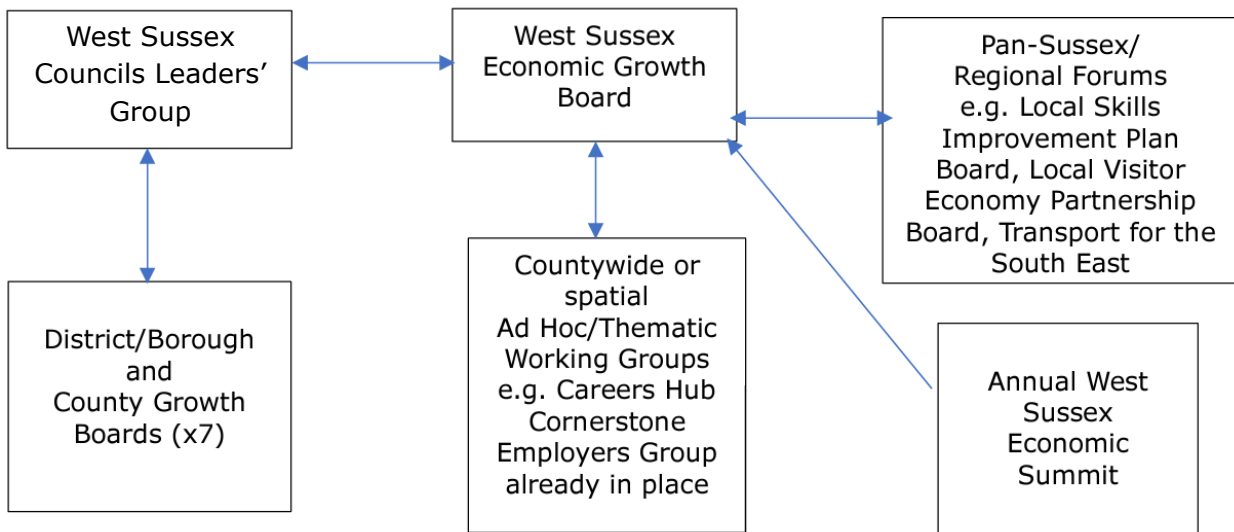
Schedule of Meetings

The WSEGB will meet frequently (bi-monthly initially) from November 2024 to oversee the development of the Economic Strategy and for it to gain the traction and authority that it requires to fulfil its objectives. Thereafter, and when appropriate, Board Members may agree to a less frequent meetings schedule, of not less than quarterly.

With the agreement of Board Members, extraordinary meetings may be held to discuss specific issues.

Relationship Map

The WSEGB’s key relationships initially are set out below.



Independent Chair - Job Description and Person Specification

Location: West Sussex

Commitment: 2 days a month

Term: 3 years (potential for a second term)

Remuneration: £Competitive

Key Accountabilities for the role

- Lead and chair the Board, ensuring that there is a clear vision for the West Sussex economy that is underpinned by clear priorities and actions (as set out in the Economic Strategy), harnessing the skills, expertise, and experience of the Board to reach agreement on complex issues and competing priorities
- Ensure that the Board is recognised as effective and credible within West Sussex and externally, and is identified as the strategic voice on matters related to its economy
- Provide advice and recommendations to the West Sussex Leaders' Board, Chief Executives Board and other forums, as appropriate, on issues relating to the West Sussex economy, including in relation to the deployment of resources to support economic growth
- Champion and represent the county's strengths and opportunities and highlight its economic needs nationally and internationally, including with government agencies, Members of Parliament, Ministers and other decision-making and investment organisations
- Champion sustainable and inclusive growth, drive economic inclusion, promote workforce diversity and take forward actions that tackle climate change
- Advocate for business and public sector investment into the county, and help to ensure that businesses have the right skills, infrastructure and connections to grow within the county
- Work collaboratively with other networks and Boards within and external to the county
- Convene and oversee the work of ad hoc sub-groups, as agreed with Board members.

Person Specification

Experience

- A successful career in business at C-Suite, ideally board level, with connections to West Sussex, and with demonstrable experience of working with public sector organisations, including influencing national and local government decisions on policy matters relating to economic development
- A proven track record of success in chairing boards or committees in highprofile and politically sensitive environments, and in motivating senior teams to deliver a clear strategic vision through effective communication and influence
- Widely respected and well-recognised locally and nationally, as an independent business voice with a significant track record of organisational leadership and management at the highest level in the private sector
- Proven track record in promoting inclusive and sustainable growth, including in tackling inequality, supporting workplace diversity and implementing effective actions to mitigate climate change
- Proven track record of success in financial management, with commercial acumen and high standards of probity.

Skills and knowledge

- Outstanding communication and interpersonal skills that command credibility and respect amongst a wide variety of audiences locally, nationally and internationally, particularly with investors, funding bodies and key decisionmakers
- Ability to present well-ordered arguments, with knowledge and understanding of the wider strategic context
- Ability to effectively lead and chair meetings of senior executives from different sectors of the economy and to build consensus on complex issues and competing priorities
- Ability to inspire and influence the delivery of results and outcomes in highly complex political environments
- Sound understanding of and passion for West Sussex, its people and its businesses, including its economic challenges and opportunities
- Ability to understand democratic decision-making processes at national and local level, including the role of officers, Elected Members and MPs
- Excellent knowledge of the national and international trading environment and factors that impact on these

- Possession of high-level relationship management skills with the ability to challenge, articulate and question a complex range of stakeholders in an appropriate manner.

Conduct and Probity

- Act in what they believe to be the best interests of the Board and the West Sussex economy, and not in their own interest or those of any person or company/organisation
- Comply with the requirements to disclose pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests and any conflicts of interest – whether actual or potential/ perceived
- Act in accordance with the seven Principles of Public Life: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership
- Remuneration and Commitment
- It is envisaged that the role will require a time commitment of three days per month, on average
- The precise nature and timing of this commitment will be determined with the successful candidate, but candidates should expect to have to prepare for and attend 4-6 Board meetings annually, held either remotely or at varying locations around West Sussex. The Board is likely to meet more frequently initially to oversee the development of the Economic Strategy and for it to gain the traction and authority that it requires to fulfil its objectives
- The lead contact for the Chair will be the Director of Place Services and they will be expected to liaise with West Sussex County Council officers and Board Members in preparation of meetings, as determined by decisions made at Board meetings
- This role will receive an annual remuneration of £20,000 (ex. VAT), plus reasonable expenses agreed in advance
- The Chair will be appointed initially for a three-year term (subject to 12 monthly reviews) and a three-month notice period from either side. At the end of this first appointment period, the Chair will be eligible for reappointment for a further period of three years with a maximum of two terms being served

How to apply

Contact

For a private and confidential discussion, please contact:

Sean Anderson

Email: sanderson@faerfield.co.uk

Tel: 0121 592 2165

Roger Russell

Email: rrussell@faerfield.co.uk

Tel: 0121 592 2165

Indicative Timetable:

Closing date for applications: Midnight 27 September 2024

Preliminary Interviews (via Teams): w/c 7 October 2024

(these dates may be subject to slight change)

Apply

To apply for this role please visit www.faarfield.co.uk/westsussexgrowth and find the Apply button at the bottom of the page. When prompted, please submit your CV and a Supporting Statement of no more than 2 sides of A4.

Your supporting statement should express why you are interested in this role and what relevant experience you can bring to the West Sussex Economic Growth Board.



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