

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
ECONOMIC REGENERATION ADVISORY BOARD

17 July 2013

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 WEST KENT PARTNERSHIP – MINUTES

To report the minutes of the meeting of the West Kent Partnership held on 19th April 2013.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 As Members will be aware, the West Kent Partnership, involving the Borough Council, Sevenoaks District and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council along with a range of partners, is the primary partnership body addressing economic and infrastructure issues which are common to the West Kent area. Minutes of its meetings will now be reported to this Board for information.

1.2 West Kent Partnership – 19th April 2013

1.2.1 Minutes of the previous meeting of the Partnership are attached as Annex 1 to this report. The following key matters were discussed:

- The Escalate Programme (reported elsewhere on this agenda) and support available across Kent for businesses with high growth potential;
- The West Kent Business Support Programme and the Leader Programme, also the subject of separate reports;
- The Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the Government's Single Growth Fund. The LEP covering Essex, Kent, Medway, Hastings, and East Sussex has recently decided to adopt a new 'federated' model of operation which involves the Kent and Medway area acting as one part of the wider federation. This decision was taken to reflect local concerns about the wide geographical coverage of the LEP and the consequent lack of local engagement. In particular, the Government's proposed Single Growth Fund along with EU funding streams will be channelled via the LEPs and the LEP will be invited to prepare its own growth strategy to set out a case for local investment. Under the new federated model of operation, Kent and Medway will be preparing a local growth strategy called 'Unlocking Kent's Potential' to feed into the LEP strategy. The West Kent Partnership will be

a consultee in this process and the Borough Council may also wish to make representations via the Planning and Transportation Advisory Board.

- Transport issues including the A21 scheme, for which funding has now been confirmed, and the emerging options for the proposed Lower Thames Crossing.
- Consultations being undertaken by the Skills Funding Agency regarding the future operation and management of K College. This will be a matter that will be discussed in more detail at the next West Kent Partnership meeting being held on Friday 19th July 2013.

Background papers:

contact: Mark Raymond

Nil

Julie Beilby
Chief Executive

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	n/a	
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	n/a	
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.