



Public Document Pack  
**TONBRIDGE & MALLING**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE SERVICES**

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**Chief Executive**

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**NB - This agenda contains proposals, recommendations and options. These do not represent Council policy or decisions until they have received proper consideration through the full decision making process.**

Contact: Committee Services  
[committee.services@tmbc.gov.uk](mailto:committee.services@tmbc.gov.uk)

14 February 2014

To: MEMBERS OF THE ECONOMIC REGENERATION ADVISORY BOARD  
(Copies to all Members of the Council)

Dear Sir/Madam

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the Economic Regeneration Advisory Board to be held in the Civic Suite, Gibson Building, Kings Hill, West Malling on Wednesday, 26th February, 2014 commencing at 7.30 pm

Yours faithfully

JULIE BEILBY

Chief Executive

**A G E N D A**

**PART 1 - PUBLIC**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Declarations of interest
3. Minutes

5 - 12

To confirm as a correct record the Notes of the meeting of the Economic Regeneration Advisory Board held on Tuesday 12 November 2013

**Matters for Recommendation to the Cabinet**

- |    |   |         |
|----|---|---------|
| 4. | SELEP Strategic Economic Plan, Kent and Medway Unlocking the Potential and West Kent Priorities for Growth    | 13 - 22 |
| 5. | Local Retail Centres - Engagement   | 23 - 26 |
| 6. | Escalate Business Loan Fund - Update  | 27 - 46 |
| 7. | Draft Economic Regeneration Annual Action Plan 2014/15  | 47 - 54 |
| 8. | A Local Partnership between Businesses, South East LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) and Regulatory Services | 55 - 64 |

**Matters submitted for Information**

- |     |                                 |         |
|-----|---------------------------------|---------|
| 9.  | West Kent Partnership - Minutes | 65 - 72 |
| 10. | Urgent Items                    |         |

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent due to special circumstances and of which notice has been given to the Chief Executive.

**Matters for consideration in Private**

- |     |                               |  |
|-----|-------------------------------|--|
| 11. | Exclusion of Press and Public |  |
|-----|-------------------------------|--|

The Chairman to move that the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting during consideration of any items the publication of which would disclose exempt information.

**PART 2 - PRIVATE**

- |     |              |  |
|-----|--------------|--|
| 12. | Urgent Items |  |
|-----|--------------|--|

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent due to special circumstances and of which notice has been given to the Chief Executive.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Cllr C P Smith (Chairman)  
Cllr Miss S O Shrubsole (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr R W Dalton  
Cllr M O Davis  
Cllr S M King  
Cllr R D Lancaster  
Cllr Mrs S Luck  
Cllr M Parry-Waller

Cllr T J Robins  
Cllr A G Sayer  
Cllr Miss J L Sergison  
Cllr Mrs E A Simpson  
Cllr R Taylor

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## TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### ECONOMIC REGENERATION ADVISORY BOARD

Tuesday, 12th November, 2013

**Present:** Cllr C P Smith (Chairman), Cllr Miss S O Shrubsole (Vice-Chairman), Cllr M O Davis, Cllr S M King, Cllr Mrs S L Luck, Cllr M Parry-Waller, Cllr A G Sayer, Cllr Miss J L Sergison and Cllr Mrs E A Simpson.

Councillors Mrs Anderson, Balcombe, Baldock, Bishop, Bolt, Coffin, Cure, N Heslop, Luker, Mrs Murray, Rhodes, Rogers and Sullivan were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dalton, Lancaster and Taylor.

#### PART 1 - PUBLIC

**ERG  
13/022**

#### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Balcombe declared an Other Significant Interest in the item concerning the Christmas Lighting Scheme on the grounds of being a member of Aylesford Parish Council and withdrew from the meeting during its consideration.

Councillor Mrs Luck advised in connection with the item on Local Retail Centres that she had a business in West Malling and was a member of the Chamber of Commerce.

**ERG  
13/023**

#### **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the notes of the meeting of the Economic Regeneration Advisory Board held on 11 September 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET

**ERG  
13/024**

#### **WEST KENT PRIORITIES FOR GROWTH - DRAFT DOCUMENT**

Decision Notice D130133MEM

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Executive regarding a draft of the West Kent Priorities for Growth document produced by the West Kent Partnership to inform the content of the Kent and Medway growth strategy and, in turn, the higher level plans being prepared by the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP). It was noted that the document focused on identification of the main

locations for future growth in West Kent, its key future infrastructure requirements and needs in respect of business, skills and learning development.

A number of comments were made regarding the drafting of the references to transport links and these were noted by the officers for reflection in the final document to be submitted in the tight timescale available.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the draft West Kent Priorities for Growth document, as set out at Annex 1 to the report, be endorsed subject to modification to clarify where good and bad transport links exist and include further examples as appropriate.

**ERG  
13/025**

### **LOCAL RETAIL CENTRES - PROPOSED FUNDING SUPPORT**

Decision Notice D130134MEM

Further to Decision No D130083MEM, the joint report of the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and the Chief Executive provided an update on the engagement process with local chambers of trade/traders associations. A time-limited grant scheme was proposed, utilising some of the funding from the Government's Innovation Fund to support measures to help boost trade in the Borough's local retail centres.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the grant scheme for local retail centres, as set out in Annex 1 to the report, be endorsed.

**ERG  
13/026**

### **CHRISTMAS LIGHTING SCHEME - REVIEW**

Decision Notice D130135MEM

The report of the Chief Executive summarised the background to the scheme of annual financial support for Christmas lighting in local centres adopted in 2006 following a review by the former Scrutiny Committee. Consideration was given to a proposal that Aylesford village be included in the scheme following a request from Aylesford Parish Council and a recent review of floor space which indicated that the village now met the criteria for inclusion of local retail centres within the scheme.

**RECOMMENDED:** That Aylesford village be included in the scheme for Christmas lighting support on the terms set out in paragraph 1.2.2 of the report.

### **MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION**

**ERG  
13/027**

### **BUSINESS SUPPORT UPDATE**

The report provided an update on various business support initiatives available locally with particular reference to the launch of the Escalate

Loan Fund in December. Members also discussed support for businesses based at home and the Be Your Own Boss programme.

**ERG  
13/028**

**WEST KENT PARTNERSHIP - MINUTES**

Members received the minutes of the meeting of the West Kent Partnership held on 18 October 2013 which had focused on business support programmes, the Escalate loan scheme and issues regarding future funding via the Local Enterprise Partnership and the LEADER programme.

**MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE**

**ERG  
13/029**

**EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no items considered in private.

The meeting ended at 2021 hours

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF DECISION**

**Decision Taken By: CABINET MEMBER FOR  
Economic Regeneration**

**Decision No: D130133MEM**

**Date: 12th November 2013**

**Decision(s) and Reason(s)**

**West Kent Priorities for Growth - Draft Document**

**(Report of Chief Executive)  
(Annex)**

**Consideration was given to a draft of the West Kent Priorities for Growth document produced by the West Kent Partnership to inform the content of the Kent and Medway growth strategy and, in turn, the higher level plans being prepared by the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP). It was noted that the document focused on identification of the main locations for future growth in West Kent, its key future infrastructure requirements and needs in respect of business, skills and learning development.**

**A number of comments were made and noted by the officers for reflection in the final document to be submitted in the tight timescale available.**

Following consideration by the Economic Regeneration Advisory Board, the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration resolved that:  
The draft West Kent Priorities for Growth document, as set out at Annex 1 to the report, be endorsed subject to modification to clarify where good and bad transport links exist and include further examples as appropriate.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Economic Regeneration Advisory Board of 12 November 2013.

Signed Cabinet Member for J Balcombe  
Economic Regeneration:

Signed Leader: N Heslop

Signed Chief Executive: J Beilby

**Date of publication:** 15 November 2013

This decision will come into force and may then be implemented on the expiry of 5



working days after publication unless it is called in.

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF DECISION**

**Decision Taken By: CABINET MEMBER FOR  
Economic Regeneration**

**Decision No: D130134MEM**

**Date: 12th November 2013**

**Decision(s) and Reason(s)**

**Local Retail Centres - Proposed Funding Support**

**(Joint report of Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and  
Chief Executive)  
(Annex)**

**Further to Decision No D130083MEM, the report provided an update  
on the engagement process with local chambers of trade/traders  
associations. A time-limited grant scheme was proposed, utilising  
some of the funding from the Government's Innovation Fund to  
support measures to help boost trade in the Borough's local retail  
centres.**

Following consideration by the Economic Regeneration Advisory Board,  
the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration resolved that:  
The grant scheme for local retail centres, as set out in Annex 1 to the  
report, be endorsed.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Economic  
Regeneration Advisory Board of 12 November 2013.

Signed Cabinet Member for J Balcombe  
Economic Regeneration:

Signed Leader: N Heslop

Signed Chief Executive: J Beilby

**Date of publication: 15 November 2013**

This decision will come into force and may then be implemented on the expiry of 5  
working days after publication unless it is called in.

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF DECISION**

**Decision Taken By: CABINET MEMBER FOR  
Communities and Health**

**Decision No: D130135MEM**

**Date: 12th November 2013**

**Decision(s) and Reason(s)**

**Christmas Lighting Scheme - Review**

**(Report of Chief Executive)**

**The report summarised the background to the scheme of annual financial support for Christmas lighting in local centres adopted in 2006 following a review by the former Scrutiny Committee. Consideration was given to a proposal that Aylesford village be included in the scheme following a request from Aylesford Parish Council and a recent review of floor space which indicated that the village now met the criteria for inclusion of local retail centres within the scheme.**

Following consideration by the Economic Regeneration Advisory Board, the Cabinet Member for Communities and Health resolved that: Aylesford village be included in the scheme for Christmas lighting support on the terms set out in paragraph 1.2.2 of the report.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Economic Regeneration Advisory Board of 12 November 2013.

Signed Cabinet Member for B Luker  
Communities and Health:

Signed Leader: N Heslop

Signed Chief Executive: J Beilby

**Date of publication: 15 November 2013**

This decision will come into force and may then be implemented on the expiry of 5 working days after publication unless it is called in.

In accordance with Paragraph 2, Annex 1 of the Executive Procedure Rules, the Leader nominated the Cabinet Member for Communities and Health to take this decision in the absence of the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration.

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**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL  
ECONOMIC REGENERATION ADVISORY BOARD**

**26 February 2014**

**Report of the Chief Executive**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)**

**1 SELEP STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PLAN, KENT AND MEDWAY UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL, AND WEST KENT PRIORITIES FOR GROWTH**

**To update the Board on the development of growth plans for the South East, for Kent and Medway, and for West Kent and to set out proposals for the development of a local commissioning plan to draw future funding into Kent and Medway from the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to support local economic priorities.**

**1.1 Background**

1.1.1 A report was made to the previous meeting of this Board in November 2013 regarding the development of various plans for growth. In summary:

- At the local level, the West Kent Partnership has prepared a West Kent Priorities for Growth plan setting out the need to invest in local infrastructure and business support initiatives.
- For the Kent and Medway area, Kent County Council has prepared a growth plan entitled 'Unlocking the Potential – Going for Growth' covering the same infrastructure and business needs as above. This has taken account of priorities set out in plans prepared by the sub-areas of Kent including West Kent, North Kent and East Kent.
- For the South East Local Enterprise Partnership, Government requires the publication of a Strategic Economic Plan (SEP). This is being informed by the preparation of plans for the Kent and Medway, Essex and East Sussex areas.

1.1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide an update regarding each of the plans mentioned above. The Board is reminded that funding from both Government and European sources for local infrastructure projects and to support economic initiatives is now being channelled via Local Enterprise Partnerships across the country. The level of funding to be awarded to the South East LEP from 2015 will

be determined by the strength of case to be set out in the Strategic Economic Plan. £152M of regional growth funding along with a further £165M funding from European sources is potentially available to the South East LEP provided a convincing case of need is established. The challenge for local areas is to achieve funding for local projects from this overall allocation.

## **1.2 The West Kent Priorities for Growth Document**

- 1.2.1 A draft of the plan for West Kent was presented to your previous meeting for endorsement. Further revisions and updates to the plan have been made and a final version of the plan was formally adopted by the West Kent Partnership at its meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2014.

## **1.3 Kent and Medway Unlocking the Potential: Going for Growth**

- 1.3.1 A first draft of the growth plan for Kent and Medway was published for consultation in early January. A copy of this document can be viewed at:

<http://www.kmep.org.uk/pdfs/Unlocking-the-Potential-v31191213.pdf>

- 1.3.2 In broad terms, the Kent and Medway Plan reflects a number of the key priorities for West Kent as set out in the West Kent Priorities for Growth document and there is much within the draft Kent and Medway Plan that can be supported.
- 1.3.3 A report was made to the West Kent Partnership outlining a number of comments on the plan. These are set out at Annex 1 to this report. The West Kent Partnership endorsed these comments and a further draft of the Kent and Medway Plan is now being produced. The Advisory Board is invited to endorse the comments on the Plan as submitted by the West Kent Partnership.

## **1.4 The Strategic Economic Plan**

- 1.4.1 A first draft of the Strategic Economic Plan was published in late December 2013. A copy of the full document can be viewed at:

<http://www.southeastlep.com/about-us/activities/262-developing-a-growth-strategy-and-prioritising-investment-in-the-south-east>

- 1.4.2 The draft SEP reflects many of the local priorities for infrastructure improvements and business growth as set out in the Kent and Medway Plan. It provides a balanced view of local needs across the SELEP area as a whole and a convincing case for project funding. When reported to the West Kent Partnership, the only concern noted with the SEP was the wording of a summary regarding West Kent which was not felt to be an adequate reflection of the degree of ambition and scale of growth for West Kent. Revised wording for this section was agreed by the Partnership, as set out in Annex 1, and the Advisory Board is invited to endorse these comments.

## **1.5 Future Timetable**

1.5.1 A final version of the SEP needs to be submitted to Government by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014. Feedback from the Government on the first draft is still awaited. It is hoped that the final draft will reflect the comments made by the West Kent Partnership both on the Plan itself and picking up comments made in the Kent and Medway Plan.

## **1.6 Proposed Kent and Medway Commissioning Plan**

1.6.1 Work is now underway across Kent and Medway, in parallel with work to finalise the growth plans, to prepare a commissioning plan to set out in more detail the specific projects and infrastructure improvements that will require funding. The West Kent area, along with other sub areas of Kent, needs to inform and influence this process to ensure that it secures the funding needed for its local priorities.

1.6.2 There is likely to be considerable competition for funding for Kent and Medway's transport infrastructure needs. Some of the projects listed in the West Kent Priorities Plan, for example, M20 junction 4 improvements, A21 dualling, A228 Colts Hill Link will, in any case, require funding direct from the DoT/Highways Agency and not from LEP funds. Further work will be required to prioritise the list of West Kent's transport infrastructure projects for inclusion in the commissioning process. The area of work is best taken forward by the Planning and Transportation Advisory Board.

1.6.3 In terms of economic priorities, it would be useful at this stage to seek the Board's endorsement of a set of local projects of particular importance to Tonbridge and Malling. Based on the projects mentioned in the West Kent Priorities for Growth document, the following economic projects are suggested as the Borough's specific priorities along with an indicative funding need:

- Funding for business start-up hubs (capital funding, to be specified)
- Funding to enable the current West Kent Business Support programme to be extended to cover the next 7 year period (a total investment requirement of £500,000)
- Additional funding to enable the Escalate Loan Fund for business to be extended beyond March 2015. Strong local take up of the £5.5M existing fund suggests that a further £20-25M fund over the next 6/7 years could be required
- Rural support projects (in addition to a further LEADER programme for West Kent) - £300K
- Projects to support skills development and vocational learning programmes linked to the needs of local business. These need to be further developed by a skills sub group of the West Kent partnership. Indicative funding - £500K.

- Community-led Local Development Projects (CLLD) to address the three key areas of deprivation in Tonbridge and Malling (£100K pa) and the needs of local market towns including Tonbridge town centre.

1.6.4 Further work on the commissioning process will continue over the rest of this year. As stated above, it remains crucial that West Kent continues to set out a strong case for local investment over this period to ensure the area receives its fair share of support relative to other needs across Kent and Medway.

1.6.5 A further issue, yet to be resolved, is the degree to which Government funding which will be awarded to the LEP, will then be devolved to local area partnerships such as the Kent and Medway Partnership. If significant levels of funding are held centrally by the LEP and administered by the LEP board only, there is a risk that a fair distribution of funding across the LEP area may not be achieved. It is therefore suggested that the Leader is invited to write to the Chairman of the South East LEP setting out the Borough's Council strong support for a largely devolved funding model to be adopted.

## 1.7 Legal Implications

1.7.1 n/a

## 1.8 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.8.1 As set out in the report.

## 1.9 Risk Assessment

1.9.1 As set out in the report

## 1.10 Equality Impact Assessment

1.10.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report

## 1.11 Recommendations

1.11.1 That the comments submitted by the West Kent Partnership on the draft Kent and Medway Growth Plan and the Strategic Economic Plan **BE ENDORSED**;

1.11.2 That the draft priority list of local economic projects, as set out in paragraph 1.6.3 of this report, **BE ENDORSED**;

1.11.3 That the Chairman of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership **BE INFORMED** of the Borough Council's strong support for Government funding to support growth being devolved to the Kent and Medway Partnership.

The Chief Executive confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and policy Framework.



Background papers:

contact: Mark Raymond

Nil

Julie Beilby  
Chief Executive

<b>Screening for equality impacts:</b>		
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Explanation of impacts</b>
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?	No	This report deals with future funding for a range of transport and business projects aimed at supporting the local economy to the benefit of all.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	N/A	As above
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.*

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## WKP Comments on Unlocking the Potential: Going For Growth

The following specific transport schemes have been identified in the West Kent Priorities document should now be included in UTP:

Improvements to Bat and Ball Railway Station  
Congestion alleviation measures – Swanley Town Centre  
M20 Junction 5 improvements  
Hermitage Lane/ and A26/A20 junction improvements  
A227/A25 Borough Green and Platt Bypass  
Enhancement of Tonbridge to Hastings services  
Enhancements to Medway Valley line services

Other comments on UTP:

1. Supporting entrepreneurship is a major priority for West Kent as set out at page 19 of the West Kent Priorities document. UTP gives insufficient attention to this objective and this does not adequately reflect the aims of Priority 2 (para 4.35) of the SEP. More needs to be said in UTP about support for business start-ups, provision of business hubs and the importance of helping start-ups progress to stability and growth. The West Kent Business Support Programme, currently funded by the Kent Regeneration Fund for 2013/14, should be a specific initiative highlighted in UTP and one where future funding from SELEP will be required.
2. Whilst there are numerous references to areas of deprivation in the Kent's coastal towns, there needs to be similar references included to tackling smaller pockets of deprivation in more affluent places including West Kent and a similar commitment made to attract funding to these areas to address a range of deprivation issues.
3. Whilst there is a focus on the delivery of housing generally, there is insufficient emphasis given to the need to address local skills deficiencies and staff retention issues faced by local businesses due to the lack of affordable housing. This situation is particularly relevant to West Kent. UTP should therefore indicate that, working with the HCA, additional models of housing delivery are required, including share equity schemes, directly aimed at supporting local people in employment on lower levels of pay but who are key employees of local businesses.
4. The Opportunities section on page 11 of UKP appears to suggest that West Kent (alone) has no appetite/capacity for growth. The West Kent Priorities document indicates a number of locations for growth where targeted investment is required to unlock development. This should be acknowledged in UTP.
5. Additional emphasis needs to be included in the Places for Growth/Rural Kent section at page 23 of UTP. West Kent's economy is largely rural in

nature. References should be included to the future continuation of Kent's two highly successful Leader programmes and the need to support the viability of rural market towns and other rural service centres. A specific reference to East Malling Research's ambitions for its M9 research facility should also be included here.

6. Places for Growth/West Kent (page 21 of UTP) does not adequately reflect the issues and priorities set out in the West Kent Priorities document. The following revisions are suggested:
  - § the Challenges section should include references to local skills shortages, capacity pressures on the local rail network, the need for better access to the motorway network and existence of pockets of deprivation.
  - § The Solutions section should refer to the need for 'targeted investment in infrastructure to unlock sites with support from the Kent and Medway Development Fund' rather than 'unlikely to require significant public sector intervention'; the 'New solutions to unlock housing' could also refer to the need for housing models to help address local skills issues.
7. The Skills for Growth section (page 47) could better reflect the ambitions for West Kent set out at page 22 of the West Kent Priorities document regarding the need to deliver vocational learning options from age 14 and above which could potentially be delivered by studio schools.
8. Places for Growth/Transport. It is suggested that the final paragraph should be worded as follows. 'Where funding is required to unlock a specific development site, we will only invest public money... etc'. There is a need to differentiate between funding needed to unlock specific sites and funding required to unlock congestion.
9. Solution 4 The Kent and Medway Development Fund. The West Kent Partnership seeks an assurance that such funding will be distributed across the County on a fair and consistent basis.
10. Solution 12 Reducing concentrated deprivation. This is not just an issue for coastal areas and we suggest a reference being included to the use of such powers being applicable to other parts of Kent where deprivation is a problem.
11. Solution 14 Kent and Medway Business Hub. This needs to indicate that the proposed business 'hub' is a means by which the current level of business support services currently available to business can be further funded and extended.
12. Solution 16 Employer-led careers advice. There should be an added commitment to ensuring adequate and timely careers advice to all young people is made available and the primary means of delivery should be within schools.

## **Comments on the SE LEP Strategic Economic Plan**

The above changes suggested to UTP should be reflected by similar changes made to the SEP.

There is a concern that the SEP does not adequately reflect the degree of ambition and scale of growth for West Kent that is set out in the West Kent Priorities document.

The summary for West Kent set out at page 85 of the SEP should be revised as follows:

### **Opportunities**

Add: a strong rural economy and a long history of horticultural research and innovation; high level of entrepreneurship and sustained, indigenous business growth.

### **Challenges**

Add: High levels of congestion especially at town centres and motorway junctions; limited local rail capacity; high house prices and issues of affordability for younger people in employment.

### **Solutions**

Add: funded business support measures to encourage innovation, entrepreneurship and business growth; new solutions to unlock housing building on the Keir Kent initiative and to develop housing with a mix of tenures accessible to local key workers.

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**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL  
ECONOMIC REGENERATION ADVISORY BOARD**

**26 February 2014**

**Report of the Chief Executive**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)**

**1 LOCAL RETAIL CENTRES – ENGAGEMENT**

**To provide an update on the engagement with traders from the Borough's local retail centres and to agree a revised process for approving applications for grant support.**

**1.1 Background**

- 1.1.1 A process of engaging with traders from the Borough's local retail centres was agreed at the meeting of this Board in July 2013. The intention was to seek views from traders and other interested parties, including Parish Councils, about the strengths and weaknesses of each centre and to explore how the Borough Council might assist with the offer of some grant support.

**1.2 Update**

- 1.2.1 Meetings have now been held with West Malling Chamber of Commerce, Snodland Chamber of Commerce, Martin Square Traders Association, and informal traders groups in Borough Green, Wrotham, Hadlow, and Aylesford. Two further meetings are being arranged with East Peckham and Kings Hill traders.

- 1.2.2 All meetings held to date have resulted in positive and productive discussions. The main issues arising for each centre can be summarised below:

West Malling – parking issues, need to help promote independent traders, need for wider marketing/advertising for the centre, some concerns about anti-social behaviour.

Snodland – need to upgrade street furniture, organise a wider range of markets to attract more trade, more marketing of the centre, road signage from the bypass, possible interest in a local loyalty scheme.

Martin Square – concern about long term parking in the square, need to link with traders on the A20, concern about potential loss of library which helps generate trade, disabled access to shops, street lighting issues.

Borough Green – need to form new traders group possibly to include Wrotham, organise local events eg wedding fair, interested in loyalty card scheme, local marketing/business directory.

Wrotham – additional local events such as a Farmers' Market, improved shop signage, signage to the village from main roads and the Pilgrims' Way, new bus shelter with local information.

Hadlow – lack of short stay parking reducing passing trade, need for additional car parking spaces, loss of local shops, need for better parking enforcement.

Aylesford – need to promote village to local residents via marketing, re-launch of annual events eg annual festival, develop a website, better signage to the centre, street cleaning issues, need for a formal traders group.

### **1.3 Grant Funding**

1.3.1 As agreed at the meeting of this Board in November 2013, local traders groups have been advised that grant support of up to £7,500 is available for them to bid for. This offer of support had been well received by local traders and each group engaged with to date are now working on applications. Feedback, however, suggests that the original deadline of the 31<sup>st</sup> March to receive grant applications may be difficult to achieve for some groups, particularly where meetings have only just taken place. In the light of this, it is suggested that late applications beyond the original deadline should now be accepted. To enable grant decisions to be made quickly and funds released to local groups without further delay, it is suggested that authority be delegated to the Cabinet Members for Economic Regeneration and for Finance, Innovation and Property to determine grant applications and for those decisions to be reported to a future meeting of this Board for information.

### **1.4 Legal Implications**

1.4.1 None

### **1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

1.5.1 Assessed when grant support to local centres was agreed.

### **1.6 Risk Assessment**

1.6.1 n/a

### **1.7 Equality Impact Assessment**

1.7.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report

### **1.8 Recommendations**



- 1.8.1 That the outcome of discussions with local traders held to date **BE NOTED** and that authority **BE DELEGATED** to the Cabinet Members for Economic Regeneration and for Finance and Transformation to make decisions regarding applications for grant support from local traders groups.

The Chief Executive confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Mark Raymond

Nil

Julie Beilby  
Chief Executive

<b>Screening for equality impacts:</b>		
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Explanation of impacts</b>
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?	No	Not relevant to the subject of this report.
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.*

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**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL  
ECONOMIC REGENERATION ADVISORY BOARD**

**26 February 2014**

**Report of the Chief Executive**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Information**

**1 ESCALATE BUSINESS LOAN FUND – UPDATE**

**To provide an update on the Escalate loan fund scheme and the level of interest generated to date.**

**1.1 Background**

1.1.1 The Escalate Loan Fund was formally launched in December 2013 and the scheme is now open to applications. As reported previously, the fund is a £5.5M pot for providing 0% interest loans to local businesses with growth potential. The scheme covers the districts of Tonbridge and Malling, Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells and Maidstone in Kent, and Wealden, Rother and Hastings in East Sussex. A copy of the guidance for the scheme is attached as Annex 1 to this report.

**1.2 Progress to Date**

1.2.1 A launch of the programme for Tonbridge and Malling businesses was held on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2014 at K College. This event was well attended and included a welcome and introduction from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration. Following a presentation from KCC on the loan scheme, participants were able to access more detailed advice about the application process on a one-to-one basis.

1.2.2 The loan fund is being widely publicised by a number of agencies including the Borough Council. Full details of the scheme are available on the business support pages of the Council's website and a mail shot to some 600 local businesses has been undertaken using data from the Borough Business Directory.

**1.3 Expressions of Interest**

1.3.1 The most recent update provided by the County Council shows a strong interest in the scheme from West Kent businesses.

1.3.2 Whilst there has been only one formal application submitted to date, there is already a formal 'pipeline' of a further 19 businesses who are progressing towards an initial application. It is pleasing to note that 6 of these businesses are located in

Tonbridge and Malling, the highest count for any of the seven participating districts. The total value of the bids in the pipeline (assuming that all are progressed and get approved) is just under £2.5M.

- 1.3.3 In addition to this formal pipeline, the County Council are aware of a further 15 local companies expressing some interest in pursuing an application. If all of these came forward and approved, a further £2.5M of loans would be offered.
- 1.3.4 As Members can appreciate, there appears to be considerable early interest already generated in the Escalate programme and the likelihood that all of the fund might be taken up very quickly once the approval process commences. As reported elsewhere on this agenda, this strong evidence of local demand points to a future need for additional loan funding for West Kent businesses well in excess of the £5.5M currently allocated. There is potential, therefore, for a good case to be made to the Local Enterprise Partnership, via the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership, to secure a significantly larger loan fund from 2015 for the next seven years.

#### **1.4 Future Publicity**

- 1.4.1 A further opportunity to promote the Escalate fund and to engage generally with local businesses will be provided by a Business to Business event being held on 30<sup>th</sup> April at the River Centre, Tonbridge. This event is aiming to attract some 800 local businesses and aims to be the largest business event ever held in the area.

#### **1.5 Legal Implications**

- 1.5.1 None

#### **1.6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

- 1.6.1 n/a

#### **1.7 Risk Assessment**

- 1.7.1 n/a

#### **1.8 Equality Impact Assessment**

- 1.8.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report

Background papers:

contact: Mark Raymond


Nil

Julie Beilby  
Chief Executive

<b>Screening for equality impacts:</b>		
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Explanation of impacts</b>
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?	No	For information only
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.*

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Supported by the  
 Regional Growth Fund

# Escalate

[www.kent.gov.uk/escalate](http://www.kent.gov.uk/escalate)



You are recommended to read the Escalate Application Guidance notes before completing the pre-application and full application forms.

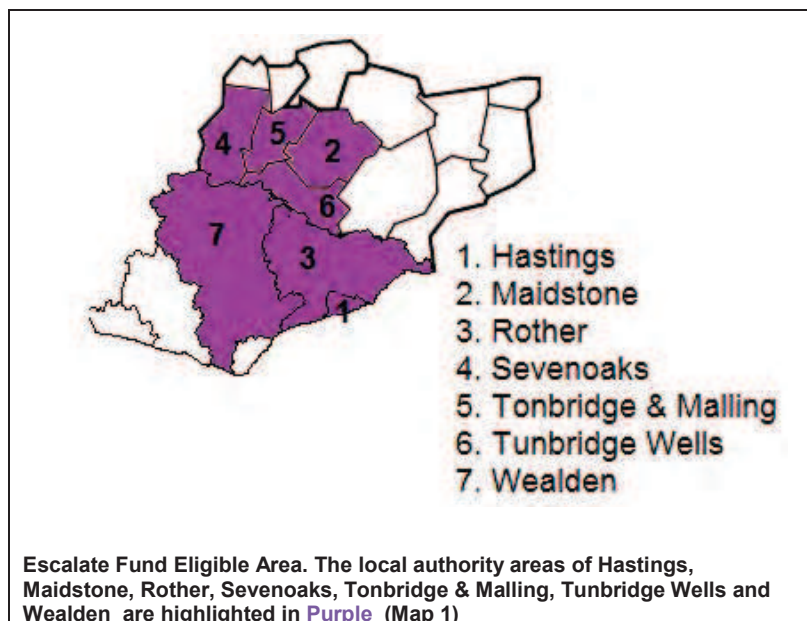
You must complete all parts of the pre-application and full application forms except where exceptions are indicated; for example where questions relate to parent companies and none exist. The pre-application and full application forms are only part of the application documentation required. Please ensure that a written business plan forms the basis of your application. See Section 12 for guidance on the content of the Business plan.

You are advised to complete the application form and business plan in co-operation with a business adviser.

### 1. What is the Escalate Fund?

The £5.5m Escalate Fund is supported by the Government's Regional Growth Fund. The Fund seeks to offer targeted 0% loan support to small and medium sized businesses in the local authority areas of Hastings, Maidstone, Rother, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling, Tunbridge Wells and Wealden with high growth potential. Kent County Council is the Accountable Body for the scheme with support provided by the other public and private sector partners.

### 2. Where is the Escalate Fund eligible area?





### 3. The funding available through the Escalate Fund

Provides 0% interest loans of less than £1,000,000 to support businesses with a high growth potential within the Escalate eligible area to develop new or expand existing products, services, or processes, where these will lead to sustainable new employment.

### 4. Who can apply?

You can apply for investment support from Escalate if you meet the following criteria:

- **Type of Business** - Are a sole trader, partnership, limited company or a not-for-profit business (see **Glossary** for definition).
- **Size of Business** - You must qualify as a small and medium sized enterprise (SME) e.g. with less than 250 employees - see **Glossary** for definition.
- **Level of Funding** - The minimum loan that can be applied for is £10,000. The maximum loan is £999,999. In addition, the Escalate loan cannot constitute more than 50% of total eligible costs. Therefore for an eligible investment totalling £100,000 the maximum Escalate loan contribution is £50,000.
- **High Growth Potential** – Escalate is intended to support businesses with high growth potential. As such businesses will be encouraged to seek support from a business service provider – see Appendix 3
- **Escalate Sectors** - We will particularly welcome applicants operating in one of the following sectors – Manufacturing, ICT, software development and information management, Media and creative industries, Pharmaceuticals and life sciences and Technology Development. However, applications from other sectors are also eligible, where they can demonstrate added value and sustainable job creation as long as they are not within the Ineligible Sectors listed in **Section 7** below.
- **Location** – Applicants must be located or seeking to locate in the Escalate eligible area i.e. the local authority areas of Hastings, Maidstone, Rother, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling, Tunbridge Wells and Wealden (see **Map 1 page Section 2 eligible areas are indicated in Purple**).

### 5. Eligibility Criteria?

In addition to meeting the criteria in **Section 4** above, all investment proposals must fulfil the following conditions:

- **Employment & Economy** - All proposals must have a positive impact on employment and the wider economy of the Escalate eligible area and must, specifically, create or safeguard jobs within the business. These jobs can be either full-time or part-time. Only jobs directly employed by the business are eligible.
- **Demonstrate Need** – The applicant must be able to demonstrate the need (additionality) for financial support to go ahead or in exceptional circumstances would go ahead on a smaller scale.

- **Viability** - The organisation undertaking the investment proposal must be viable, have good growth potential and be self-sustaining by the completion of the investment.
- **Private Sector Match Funding** - All investment proposals requires support from other funding sources – also known as match funding - see **Section 8** for further details.
- **Number of Applications** - Applicants can only submit one application for the Escalate scheme at any one time. The opportunity to submit further applications would be dependent on such a loan not breaching State Aid rules, permission should be sought from the Escalate Programme Management Team (for contact details see **Section 14**) prior to any further submission.
- **Repayment** - We would normally expect all loans to be repaid within a period of 5 years. It may also be possible to negotiate a repayment holiday. Repayment profiles involving “balloon payments” (an unusually large payment due at the end of the loan) and also those offering to repay over a period in excess of 5 years are not encouraged.

## 6. What we can fund

Provides loans to support businesses investing in plant, machinery, buildings and equipment where this will lead to increased production and job creation or safeguarding. An eligible investment proposal must relate to setting up a new business, expanding an existing business or mobile investments e.g. diversifying into new additional products or a fundamental change in production process. Preference is given for investments in Escalate Focus Sectors (see above).

**Tangible assets** - This includes assets relating to land, buildings, plant, machinery and equipment. Examples include (see **Appendix 1** for further details):

- Land & building purchase
- Land – Development/works
- Buildings – Construction/improvements
- Certain professional fees
- Fixtures and fittings
- Equipment and machinery
- Wage costs for new permanent employees

**Intangible assets** - Examples of eligible costs include: Patent rights; Licences; Know-how; Unpatented technical knowledge.

In addition, assets must be used primarily in the Escalate Fund eligible area and remain in the eligible area for at least 3 years after completion of the investment; assets must be regarded as amortizable assets; assets must be purchased from third parties under market conditions and assets must be included in the assets of the undertaking.

### 7. What Escalate cannot fund?

- **Ineligible Sectors** - Escalate cannot accept applications from firms active in the following sectors as they are ineligible and they cannot be considered for support:
  - Fisheries and aquaculture (SIC 03).
  - Primary production of agricultural products (SIC 01).
  - Processing and marketing of agricultural products (SIC 10).
  - Coal (SIC 05).
  - Steel production (SIC 24.1).
  - Shipbuilding (SIC 30.11).
  - Synthetic fibres (SIC 13.1).
  - Franchises.

We also acknowledge that for some investment proposals it may be difficult to easily define which sector they fall within. Therefore please submit a pre-application form so that the Escalate Programme Management Team (for contact details see **Section 14**) can assess eligibility.

- **Ineligible Expenditure** - We cannot fund what we consider ineligible expenditure such as: Costs already incurred before approval of the loan (see below); Purchase of shares of another business; Goodwill; Funding for working capital.
- **Non- Viable Investment Proposals and Businesses** - Due to State Aid regulations Escalate cannot be used to support non-viable investment proposals from non-viable businesses.
- **Expenditure already incurred** - Expenditure incurred before a formal offer is made by Escalate is ineligible for support. A full application must be submitted and an offer made before expenditure on an investment proposal is commenced.
- **State Aid Limits** - Any offer of finance assistance would lead to State Aid limits being exceeded, please discuss with the Escalate Programme Management Team (see **Section 14** for contact details).
- **Limited Private Sector Investment** - Escalate will not provide 100% funding or cover all the costs of an investment and will seek an element of private sector investment (match funding). See **Section 8** for further information.
- **Reputation** - Investments which would result in potential damage to KCC and its partners' image and reputation.

### 8. Private Sector Match Funding

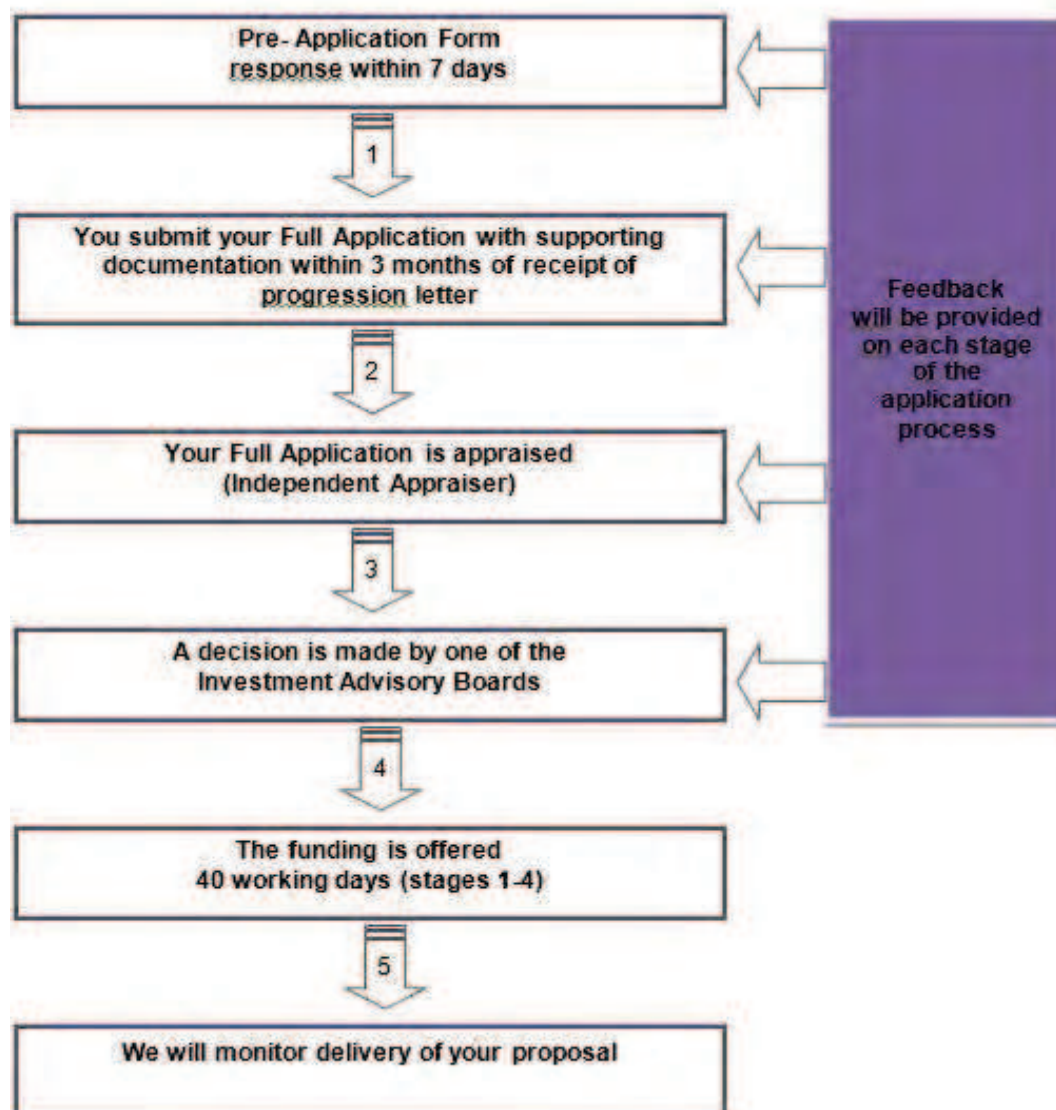
Applications must demonstrate a requirement for Escalate investment. A significant percentage of the costs are required to be funded from private sector sources, such as the applicant's own resources or commercial lenders. The level of private sector match funding required is 50% of the total eligible costs.

Eligible private sector match funding includes: Owners/Partners/ Directors/ Members' loan; Personal funds etc. (see **Appendix 2** for further details). Sources

regarded as ineligible match funding include: Costs already incurred; Loans or overdraft facilities which have been committed to cover previous expenditure and potential future profits.

It is not a requirement of the Escalate that all match funding must be secured at the time when the pre-application is submitted, however, applicants should aim to have secured match funding by the time that they submit their full application. Conditional offers of support may be sufficient to progress a full application to appraisal (see **Appendix 2a** for further details) but no Escalate funding will be allocated until all match funding has been secured and finalised (see **Appendix 2b** for further details). The potential use of other types of match funding can only be undertaken with the express approval of the Escalate Programme Management Team (for contact details see **Section 14**)

### 9. Escalate Application Process



### 10. Escalate pre-application

The Escalate pre-application is a key part of the application process and is undertaken to determine:

- The eligibility of your organisation and your investment proposal.
- Whether your investment proposal meets the Escalate Fund objectives.
- Whether there are funds available to support your investment proposal.
- Eligibility to proceed to an Escalate full application.

The on-line pre-application form will be available from **Monday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2013**. Receipt of an Escalate pre-application form will be acknowledged within 3 working days.

A decision on whether you have been given permission to progress to full application will be communicated to you by with 7 working days. Unsuccessful applications will be provided with feedback.

### 11. Full Application & Appraisal

A copy of the Full Escalate full application form will only be provided once the pre-application has been approved and the investment proposal is deemed eligible to continue to the next stage. Escalate full application form will completed and submitted on-line.

A copy of your completed full application form must be received in the post within three months of the Escalate Programme Management Team confirming your progression to the full application stage.

The applications must be signed and include all supporting documents that are relevant to the proposal. **Three copies** of the following documents are requested to be sent through the post:

- A business plan detailing the business history and future plans (see **Section 12** for further details).
- A completed copy of the excel spreadsheet found attached to the on-line full application form.
- Up to 3 years' statutory audited/unaudited/drafted accounts (this would depend on how long the business has been in existence - this documentation is not required for start-ups).
- Your most recent management accounts and aged debtor/creditor list (for existing businesses).
- At least 2 years projected balance sheet, profit and loss and cash flow (including forecasted loan repayments). In the case of cash flow these should be provided on a monthly basis.
- Your last 6 months bank statements.
- Your Certificate of Incorporation (if relevant).



- A copy of any planning approval or licence (if relevant).
- Detailed CVs for the Directors, Management Team and if applicable key project staff.
- Confirmation of offers of financial support listed in the on-line full application form.
- In the case of a not-for-profit business please enclose a copy of the relevant clauses from your memorandum and articles of association, rules or governing documents, which relate to how the organisation distributes profits.

On receipt through the post of this full Escalate Application and supporting documentation the Escalate Programme Management Team will undertake an appraisal of your application. All full applications will be appraised within 40 working days of the complete full application documentation being received by the Escalate Programme Management Team. Escalate Programme Management Team will make recommendations to the Escalate Approval Panel. Final decisions on awarding or withholding investment will be at the discretion of KCC.

Please note that by submitting an Escalate application your organisation is agreeing to KCC seeking necessary credit references or reports. All proposals and supporting documents must be the property of the applicant and must not infringe any existing patent or copyright and all applications will be deemed as commercial and in confidence.

If your application is successful you will be sent an offer letter detailing the level of finance and the conditions associated with the funding. This will constitute part of the contract with KCC as the Accountable Body for the Escalate Fund. If your investment proposal is unsuccessful then your letter will provide information on the reasons for this decision.

Payment of funding is dependent upon agreed investment and/or employment milestones being achieved by the recipient (to be set out in the offer letter).

- Suitable milestones will be identified from the information contained in your business plan; these will then be monitored for a period of 3 years.
- All details will be fully documented in the offer letter.
- Finance awarded under the scheme may become repayable in its entirety if the investment should move outside the eligible area within 3 years of funding.

## 12. Guidance on the content of the Business Plan

Your business plan is an essential part of the application process and you must submit a copy of this document along with copy of your full application form and other supporting documentation (see **Section 11** above). Your business plan will remain “commercial in confidence”. Feel free to “cut and paste” from the plan to the form, marking with a reference. However it is essential that you complete **ALL** the answers on the form and do not just refer to your plan unless asked to.

The business plan must be specific to your proposal but should also refer to how your proposal links to any other parts of your business already in place, if appropriate. The business plan must (at least) contain details of:

- Your business name, status, address, and some details of your history.
- Your business objectives and strategy
- Business financing details
- Cashflow and forward trading estimates
- Anticipated future costs and when they are likely to arise
- Information on your company's products and markets
- Your strategy for managing key risks (e.g. loss of key staff)

A Business Plan template has been provided but another format will be accepted provided that it contains similar information to the template.

### 13. This Guidance

Copies of this guidance are available in an alternative format on request.

### 14. Contact for further Information

#### Escalate Programme Management Team

Kent County Council

Website: [www.kent.gov.uk/escalate](http://www.kent.gov.uk/escalate)

Email: [escalate@kent.gov.uk](mailto:escalate@kent.gov.uk)

**Glossary of Terms**

<b>Additionality</b>	Applicants must describe the additionality of their project and the ways in which this will be achieved. For example, demonstrate the reasons why Escalate funding is necessary to enable the proposal to succeed? Provide the reasons why the project would not go ahead without Escalate funding.
<b>Jobs Created</b>	A job that must last for 2 years from funding receipt.
<b>Jobs Safeguarded</b>	A job that would otherwise have ceased to exist within 15 months of receipt of funding.
<b>Loans</b>	Escalate loans are offered at 0% interest to eligible businesses. There are no arrangement fees and repayments terms are flexible within certain parameters.
<b>Not for Profit Business</b>	Either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charities</li> <li>• Community Interest Companies</li> <li>• Companies limited by guarantee</li> <li>• Industrial &amp; Provident Societies</li> </ul>
<b>Small and Medium Sized Enterprise (SME)</b>	The EU defines Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employing less than 250 people</li> <li>• Having a balance sheet that is less than €43 million</li> <li>• Annual turnover less than €50 million pa.</li> </ul>



## Appendix 1 - Eligible Expenditure

<b>Tangible assets</b> - This includes assets relating to land, buildings, plant, machinery and equipment. Assets can be purchased outright or by using lease finance or hire purchase.	
<b>Land – Purchase &amp; Buildings – Purchase</b>	These can be funded as part of a bigger investment proposal. As a rule Escalate can fund expenditure related to an area of land or building which does not constitute more than 50% of the eligible investment. Planning permission and building warrant costs are eligible. Acquiring land or buildings may not commence before funding has been approved.
<b>Land – Development/ works</b>	These can be funded as part of a bigger investment proposal. As a rule Escalate can fund expenditure related to an area of land or building which does not constitute more than 30% of the eligible investment. Development works may not commence before funding has been approved.
<b>Buildings – Construction/ Improvement</b>	A range of costs associated with construction of new premises and/or refurbishment of existing premises, including internal sub-division of existing premises. New provision and improvement of premises must relate to buildings which have an industrial, or business use.
<b>Certain professional fees</b>	Escalate is able to fund “certain professional fees” but these are specifically orientated around the development of capital projects. We can therefore support both pre-contract professional fees, e.g. design or technical advice relating to value for money/reasonableness of cost and post-contract professional fees e.g. project management can be included. As a rule, professional fees for architectural, landscape design and engineering services can only be funded up to a maximum level of 10% of the total building costs. Up to an additional 5% may be granted for projects with a particularly intensive planning element, e.g. work on protected buildings or technically complex projects. Legal fees are not eligible.
<b>Fixtures &amp; Fittings</b>	There is no definitive list of what is an eligible fixture or fitting. The rationale is that such items are deemed as those items essential to the delivery of the project e.g. the purchase of a PC to be used to deliver a training course. In such cases, the onus is on you as the Applicant to fully justify the need for the proposed items of equipment. Each project is treated on its own merits. Additionally in the case of moveable equipment there must be an assurance that the equipment is for the sole use of the project and the benefit is maintained in the eligible area.
<b>Equipment &amp; machinery</b>	Equipment and machinery must be relevant to the project. Costs related to the acquisition of equipment and machinery assets under lease are eligible provided the lease takes the form of financial leasing and contains an obligation to purchase the asset at the expiry of the term of the lease.
<b>Leases</b>	Under Escalate the cost of new leases on land or buildings can be capitalised as eligible assets. Normally we are therefore expecting to capitalise leasing costs for a maximum of 5 years; to be eligible the lease would need to have a duration of a minimum of 5 years.
<b>Wage costs for new employees</b>	Escalate can contribute towards wage costs. Wage costs mean the total amount payable by the employer in respect of the employment concerned, comprising the gross wage, before tax, and includes compulsory social security contributions (Employer’s NI, SSP and SMP).
<b>Intangible assets</b> - This includes assets acquired from third parties by the transfer of technology/knowledge; Patent rights; Licences; Know-how & Unpatented technical knowledge.	
Queries regarding the eligibility of various items of expenditure should be raised with the Escalate Programme Management Team (for contact details see <b>Section 14</b> ).	

## Appendix 2 - Match Funding

Type of match funding	2b Minimum requirement to support funding at initial Full application stage	2c Finalised paperwork required at contract stage / <u>prior to release of any funds.</u>
<b>Bank loan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of Heads of terms <u>or</u> conditional offer letter provided by the Bank. N.B this should confirm offer of funds to your Company (£ value), and be provided on Bank letterhead paperwork or similar.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of Bank Loan contract document duly signed / in force, confirming funds (£ value) have been provided to your Company.</li> <li>• N.B. if the loan contract is <u>not</u> new, then a copy of current business bank account statement showing that the loan provided remains available to the Company. (i.e. not already exhausted).</li> </ul>
<b>Company own funds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of current bank statement of Company confirming availability of funds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refreshed copy of current business bank account statement showing that the funds (£ value) remain available to the Company. (i.e. not already exhausted)</li> </ul>
<b>Overdraft facility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of letter from Bank confirming overdraft facility available to Company.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of letter from Bank confirming overdraft facility available / together with;</li> <li>• Copy of current business bank account statement showing that the overdraft remains available to the Company. (i.e. not already exhausted).</li> </ul>
<b>Own funds inc. Owner, Partner's, Director's, Member's loan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of a current bank statement showing where monies are held confirming availability of funds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of current business bank account statement showing that the funds have been provided / transferred to the Company / are available. (i.e. not already exhausted).</li> </ul>
<b>Pension funds from Company</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter of commitment from trustees of pension fund.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustee resolution confirming funding (£ value) available to the Company.</li> </ul>
<b>Private investor/ New share capital/ New equity investors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of Heads of terms <u>or</u> conditional offer letter provided by the investor. N.B this should confirm offer of funds to your Company (£ value), and be provided on the investors letterhead paperwork or similar.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of current business bank account statement showing that the funding has been provided / transferred to the Company / are available. (i.e. not already exhausted).</li> </ul>
<b>Shareholder contributions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heads of terms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shareholder agreement duly signed / in force confirming funds (£ value) have been provided to your Company, <u>or</u></li> <li>• Company bank statement showing credit values into the accounts identifying the shareholder contribution.</li> <li>• N.B. if the shareholder agreement</li> </ul>

		is <u>not</u> new, then a copy of a current business bank account statement must be provided identifying the shareholder contribution and showing that these funds remain available to the Company. (i.e. not already exhausted).
The potential use of other types of match funding can only be undertaken with the express approval of the Escalate Programme Management Team (for contact details see <b>Section 14</b> ).		

## Appendix 3 – Business Services

We encourage **all** applicants to seek support to complete their application. The following companies are available to offer you support and guidance.

### Eastbourne and District Enterprise Agency - EDEAL

Contact: Christine Ewbank  
Title: Chief Executive  
Email: [Christina@eastbournechamber.co.uk](mailto:Christina@eastbournechamber.co.uk)  
Tel: 07715 519957

**EDEAL** is your local Enterprise Agency. Providing business support for small and medium sized enterprises at all stages of business development and growth through a range of practical and cost effective business solutions.

### Growth Accelerator

Contact: Philip Beavan  
Title: Growth Manager – Access to Finance  
Email: [p.beavan@oxin.co.uk](mailto:p.beavan@oxin.co.uk)  
Tel: 07436 108298

#### **Client Criteria**

The Growth Accelerator service has two separate tests when assessing client businesses – eligibility and suitability.

To be eligible for the service a business must be:

- Registered in England (so a Limited Company or LLP or Partnership) (we can work with sole traders on a case by case basis)
- Independently owned (i.e. must not be a subsidiary of a larger company)
- Less than 250 employees
- Under £40m turnover

To be suitable for the service a business must be able to demonstrate that it has the:

- Ambition;
- Opportunity; and Capacity

### High Growth Kent (BSK-CIC)

Contact: Jane Ollis  
Title: Chief Executive Officer  
Email: [Jane.Ollis@bsk-cic.co.uk](mailto:Jane.Ollis@bsk-cic.co.uk)  
Tel: 07880 710895

#### **Client Criteria**

To be eligible for the service a business must be:

- Based in Kent
- Activities based in Kent – relocation in to Kent
- An SME – EU description (the equivalent of up to 249 FTE and up to 40m in T/o) – sometimes depending on circumstances and proposals link-enterprises are being supported with the discretion of the HGK team.

If potential HGK applicant not registered as an entity yet or trading but with less than £500,000 T/o – needs to have the potential to reach £500,000 T/o within 3 years  
To be Sustainable for the service a business must be able to demonstrate that it has the:

- Growth (in T/o) – in order to be classified as high growth the business needs to be:
- Growing with the rate of 20% or more year on year already
- Have the potential to grow 20% year on year for the next 3years
- The management team must have the ambition i.e. (capacity, capability, and confidence) to execute the growth plan and potential and turn it in to reality.
- The business needs to be innovative and have the potential for internationalisation.
- The business needs to have: Scalable products or services

Executive team is coachable

#### **Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce**

Contact: Tudor Price  
Title: Business Development Manager  
Email: tudor.price@kentinvictachamber.co.uk  
Tel: 07899 982392

- Seeking advice or considering applying for Escalate
- Seeking support in completing Escalate full application
- All services free of Charge
- Business based or planning to operate within the qualifying area
- Start up (0-2yrs) or Established businesses (2yrs +)
- SME as defined by EU

#### **Let's Do Business Group**

Contact: Ian Smallwood  
Title: Head of Business Services  
Email: ian.smallwood@ldbgroup.co.uk  
Tel: 08444152272

To be eligible for support from the Let's Do Business Group the business may be based in either Kent or East Sussex.

Or, looking to relocate into Kent or East Sussex.

To be suitable for support the business must display a desire for growth and an ability to deliver a robust business plan.

The business may be a start up or an established enterprise. We work with sole traders, partnerships and limited companies.

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**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL  
ECONOMIC REGENERATION ADVISORY BOARD**

**26 February 2014**

**Report of the Chief Executive**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)**

**1 DRAFT ECONOMIC REGENERATION ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2014/15**

**To consider and endorse an annual action plan for 2014/15.**

**1.1 Introduction**

1.1.1 The theme of economic regeneration was adopted as one of the Council's key priorities in 2012/13. To guide this work in the future, it is suggested that an annual action plan be prepared and reviewed each year to set out the work that needs to be undertaken to take this agenda forward and to recognise the wider, corporate nature of this particular key priority.

**1.2 The Draft Action Plan**

1.2.1 A draft action plan for economic regeneration for 2014/15 is attached as Annex 1 to this report. Comments of the Board are invited.

1.2.2 The draft plan seeks to identify key actions on economic regeneration embracing issues related to strategy and external funding (at the current time, principally related to the LEP strategies), business support activities (as previously described in various reports to this Board), business engagement (an area where additional activities are perhaps needed), and corporate initiatives (identifying those activities undertaken by the Council which have an influence on economic matters). A set of simple 'success measures' have been suggested to provide a means to review and adjust the plan on an annual basis. Future versions of the plan are likely to include a further column outlining the progress achieved over the previous year against each action.

**1.3 Peer Challenge Review**

1.3.1 A Tonbridge and Malling peer challenge review, focusing on economic regeneration as well as a number of wider, corporate issues has been arranged for 28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> April. This will be undertaken by an independent team arranged by the Local Government Association. Further details on this will be reported to the next meeting of the Cabinet in early March. Adoption of a short and concise action

plan on economic regeneration will assist with that review and will enable the Council to more clearly articulate what specific actions need to be undertaken to fulfil our obligations to deliver against one of our key priorities.

#### **1.4 Legal Implications**

1.4.1 None

#### **1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

1.5.1 As set out in the report and draft action plan.

#### **1.6 Risk Assessment**

1.6.1 n/a

#### **1.7 Equality Impact Assessment**

1.7.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report

#### **1.8 Recommendations**

1.8.1 That the draft Economic Regeneration Annual Action Plan 2014/15 **BE ENDORSED.**

The Chief Executive confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Mark Raymond

Nil

Julie Beilby  
Chief Executive

<b>Screening for equality impacts:</b>		
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Explanation of impacts</b>
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?	No	The action plan focuses on support for the wider local economy.



<b>Screening for equality impacts:</b>		
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Explanation of impacts</b>
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.*

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<b>Action</b>	<b>Success Measure</b>
<b>Strategy and External Funding</b>	
Work to ensure West Kent priorities for infrastructure and business investment projects are included in the Kent and Medway Commissioning Plan.	The number and range of priorities included.
Lobby the SELEP to seek as much funding as possible to be devolved to the Kent and Medway Economic Board for local distribution	The amount of funding delegated from SELEP to Kent and Medway
Work with the West Kent Partnership to address local skills issues and the employment needs of the area's key employment sectors	The number and effectiveness of skills-related initiatives in place locally.
Via the West Kent Partnership, explore opportunities to access future external funding sources for economic projects including future ERDF and ESF funds.	Number of successful funding bids made
<b>Business Support Activities</b>	
Subject to available funding, continue to deliver and expand support for those starting up in business and young and established small businesses looking to expand.	The number of businesses receiving support provided by the Invicta Chamber commissioned via the WKP
Subject to available funding, continue to deliver and expand support for home-based businesses	The number of home-based businesses receiving support provided by the Centre for Micro Business commissioned via the WKP
Subject to available funding, continue to deliver and expand support for rural businesses and the land-based sector	The number of rural/land-based businesses receiving support provided by the Produced in Kent and the West Kent Leader team commissioned via the WKP

Subject to available funding, deliver and expand support to encourage young entrepreneurs	The number of young people accessing support provided by Kent Foundation commissioned via the WKP
Subject to available funding, continue to deliver and expand support to encourage business start-ups in the Borough's deprived communities	The number of start-ups achieved and the number of these businesses surviving beyond 6 months via support provided by the Centre for Micro Business commissioned via the WKP
Promote the take up of the Escalate Loan Fund scheme by Tonbridge and Malling businesses	The number of Tonbridge and Malling businesses making successful funding applications
Promote the take up of available grant support for the Borough's local trading centres.	The number of success funding applications made
Ensure the Business pages of the Council's website are kept up to date and signpost visitors to business support and services provided by external agencies.	The number of hits on the business pages of the TMBC website
Assist with the preparation of a bid to establish a further LEADER programme for West Kent by 2015	The award of funding for a new Leader programme
Support the roll out of high speed broadband services in the Borough to meet the needs of local business	The number of businesses in the Borough receiving a good broadband service
Work with local partners including Russet Homes and Job Centre Plus to establish and sustain job clubs and employment support in East Malling, Trench and Snodland.	The number of people accessing support
Provide funding support to Tonbridge town centre and qualifying local centres to assist with local Christmas lighting schemes.	The number of schemes assisted.

<b>Business Engagement</b>	
Develop the Council's ability to communicate with local businesses via more innovative means including social media.	The number of businesses engaged
Support and promote the first West Kent Business to Business event delivered by Kent Invicta Chamber and sponsored by the West Kent Partnership	The number of businesses in the Borough registered for the event
Refresh the Borough Business Directory and use the database to promote (via e-mail alerts) future business support initiatives to local companies.	The number of businesses agreeing to be included in the directory
Continue to liaise with local traders groups in the Borough's retail local centres and Tonbridge Town Centre address key issues arising.	The number of trader groups engaged
<b>Corporate Initiatives</b>	
Create a corporate economic regeneration officer group to co-ordinate and develop economic initiatives across Council services.	The number of actions delivered successfully
Manage the Corporate Peer Challenge process and implement measures to reflect its recommendations.	Achieve a positive outcome of the peer review
Promote affordable housing opportunities to key staff from local businesses to aid staff retention	The number of affordable houses accessed by those employed locally
Ensure local businesses have the opportunity to access the council's procurement on-line portal so that they are aware of any contract opportunities and to address the requirements of the Social Value Act when procuring local services.	The number of local businesses providing services to the Council
Seek to support local businesses via training and advice as part of the council's regulatory services eg food law.	The number of businesses supported
Adhere to the requirements of the Prompt Payment Code	The number of council invoices paid promptly

Continue to support and promote tourism in the Borough in liaison with Visit Kent, and organise and support visitor events	The number of tourism jobs created/supported and the overall spend generated by local tourism activities
Ensure there is a sufficient range of quality of employment land allocated via the Local Plan to meet local needs.	Successful adoption of the Local Plan
Liaise with local businesses to ensure all receive the appropriate level of entitlement regarding business rate reliefs and reductions	The number of businesses claiming business rate relief or reduction.
As a local employer, support the young people into employment by hosting apprenticeships across Council services	The number of apprenticeships in place and the number successfully placed in employment.
Improving the street scene to assist with the vitality and viability of local and town centres.	The delivery of improvements as set out in the Street Scene Action Plan.

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL  
ECONOMIC REGENERATION ADVISORY BOARD**

**26 February 2014**

**Report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)**

**1 A LOCAL PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN BUSINESSES, SOUTH EAST LEP (LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP) AND REGULATORY SERVICES**

**Summary**

**This paper considers how local authority regulators in the South East might work with the LEP to help regulatory services work more effectively with business, with the aim of supporting economic regeneration.**

**1.1 Background**

- 1.1.1 Good regulatory delivery provides essential protections from risks posed by day-to-day business operation. It protects citizens from unsafe food and products, from public and occupational health risks, and from fraud and financial detriment. It also protects businesses, ensuring fair competition and a level playing field.
- 1.1.2 Good regulation is also good business. This is an important message to convey to the business sector. Regulatory services should be seen to positively support businesses. It can reduce compliance costs by clarifying requirements, providing accessible advice about solutions, developing monitoring processes, and enabling recognition of investment in compliance. By supporting local and national businesses to grow, it can also contribute to the development of economic wellbeing within communities, creating new jobs, raising levels of income and providing greater choice and availability of local services.
- 1.1.3 It is no surprise perhaps then that Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) have identified that regulators have a potentially important role to play in supporting economic development. The Government response to the consultation on Transforming Regulatory Enforcement published in January 2012 also highlighted the potential for LEPs to bring regulators and business together.
- 1.1.4 The report recognises that, to create the conditions for growth, not only does legislation need reviewing but there also needs to be consideration of the way in which regulation is delivered and enforced. The majority of legislation affecting businesses is enforced by local authority regulators.

1.1.5 Among the report's key findings is that:

- the local regulatory system is too often a burden;
- businesses complain of inconsistency and unpredictability; and
- there is a need to transform the relationship between regulators and business from one based on central oversight and intervention towards one built upon better local accountability and transparency.

1.1.6 In response, the report made a number of proposals. They include:

- LEPs using their position to promote best practice across business sectors.
- Building greater understanding between local authority regulatory services and the business community.
- Identifying ways to work together to simplify things for business and save money for local authorities.
- Combining the work of regulators with other business services (e.g. creating a 'one stop shop' for businesses).
- Using business forums to discuss regulatory priorities and agree key priority areas.

## 1.2 Scope of the Multi-Agency Group

1.2.1 The aim of this Group is to develop the Better Business for All Partnership model **[Annex 1]** in the South East LEP area. The model is intended to promote co-operation between local regulators and businesses to deliver specific support and improvements to assist businesses comply with the law quickly, easily and economically.

1.2.2 Regulatory service delivery is both about the way in which inspections, advice, notices and prosecution are carried out and the attitudes, competency and actions of inspectors. All these activities have potential for greater co-operation and sharing of good practice amongst Kent, Southend, Thurrock, Essex, East Sussex and Medway regulators. It is suggested that initially the local regulatory functions within the scope of this work in the South East could include Environmental Health, Licensing, Trading Standards, Fire and Rescue, with the potential to widen it out to other regulators as the scheme gains momentum.

1.2.3 Locally the Food and Safety Team are already engaged in promoting this approach through the delivery of seminars to support small food businesses achieve the aims above. For example, in November 11 Indian food businesses attended a free seminar aiming to help them improve their Hygiene Rating and In February a similar seminar was delivered to ten Chinese food businesses. It is



important that through coordinated corporate working across the Council we continue to develop the culture of regulatory services adding value to business in a positive way. This can apply across the board to a range of services and be coordinated through a cross cutting group of officers.

### 1.3 Priorities for the South East

1.3.1 Pilot projects have already been established in a number of LEPs across the country, supported by the Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO), aimed at improving regulation in their locality. These involved the LEPs consulting businesses to identify their priorities. These local consultations reinforced the findings of the Government Consultation response and highlighted some additional specific areas. Responses to the consultations revealed very similar results and the following were identified as priorities for regulators to address:

- building stronger partnerships between local authorities and business
- improving accessibility to information, advice and support, such as a single point of contact;
- developing clear, simple and consistent messages/communication;
- helping officers to understand business pressures;
- ensuring the transparency of inspections;
- improving communication and coordination across regulatory services.

1.3.2 It is certainly the case that local authority regulators in this region also wish to concentrate their efforts upon these aspects of improving both direct service delivery and perception of the business community. However, the challenge coming from business is also what can be done collectively *across* local authorities to create an easier interface with a range of regulators. Specifically, what can regulators in the South East do to share good practice amongst themselves and be seen to positively support businesses across those various fields of regulation to maximise their contribution to supporting local economic development and growth?

1.3.3 It is suggested that there would be merit in tackling the issues collectively. This could involve sharing good practice and innovation, and developing new arrangements which might deliver improved benefits to business and help create an environment that attracts new business to the region.

1.3.4 It is also suggested that there would be merit in improving understanding across different regulators within the region of what each other does and how this is delivered in order to help improve linkages and better signpost business to other sources of advice and information which might also be of benefit.

## **1.4 Working with the SE LEP**

- 1.4.1 The Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO) has supported the Leicester and Leicestershire LEP as a pathfinder initiative to identify areas where progress could be made in respect of improving local regulation and supporting economic growth. This has generated a wide range of activity some of which could be replicated in the South East in working with our own LEP to deliver similar or even greater benefits. A flavour of that broad range of activity and the perceived achievement to date is captured in their first 'end of year report' which is attached with this report.
- 1.4.2 To date initial discussions have taken place between the region's regulatory services, BRDO and business organisations to explore the opportunities for the work of regulators to contribute to the South East LEP priorities for economic regeneration. Additionally the Group has been represented on the Kent Business Advisory group and responded to the consultation on the Kent and Medway Economic Plan.
- 1.4.3 Our next steps are to meet with the relevant representatives of the LEP to establish their appetite for supporting the progression of the better regulation agenda.
- 1.4.4 Our proposal to the LEP will comprise:
- Evidence that greater consistency of approach would deliver benefits to business as well as regulators;
  - a common approach to regulation could be adopted;
  - single point of contact that could be developed with their support and the support of local business organisations; and
  - progression towards the Better Business for All model promoted by the BRDO.

## **1.5 Legal Implications**

- 1.5.1 This initiative underpins the approach to regulation promoted by the Regulators Compliance Code and aims to support responsible and responsive businesses to improve compliance, whilst applying a consistent approach to enforcement to those small number of businesses that blatantly refuse to make efforts to meet minimum legal requirements, for gain.

## **1.6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

1.6.1 The Group is likely to be seeking funding from the BRDO for developing certain aspects of its work programme such as the development of a single point of contact.

## 1.7 Risk Assessment

1.7.1 This initiative has the potential to be beneficial for existing and new businesses across the area. It complements the work of a number of the Council's operations teams, including Food and Safety, Licensing and Environmental Protection.

## 1.8 Equality Impact Assessment

1.8.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report

## 1.9 Recommendations

1.9.1 It is recommended that Members **ENDORSE** the Council's involvement in this initiative.

Background papers:

contact: Jane Heeley

Nil

Steve Humphrey

Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

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?	No	Proposals are designed to assist local businesses through the application of regulatory services.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	Yes	See above.
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.*

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## Briefing Note for Regulatory Services Staff



This briefing note gives the background to *Better Business for All* and explains what is happening, who is involved, and how you can help.

### What is the national context?

The number one priority for this Government is economic recovery. To assist this growth all elements of the regulatory system need to enable businesses to create wealth and jobs as well as protect communities and citizens. The Government is committed to cutting red tape and ensuring this translates into a reduction in the burden on businesses at a local level. This means effective local regulation is required and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) can help deliver this.

### What are LEPs?

LEPs are partnerships between business and local regulators to drive local growth and create local jobs. There are currently 39 LEPs, and the representation on their governance bodies often extends to universities and the voluntary and community sector. Although the scope of their activities varies from area to area, they all provide a means to generate local solutions to local needs. LEPs can choose to adopt the Better Business for All (BBfA) programme as part of their work.

### What is BBfA?

BBfA involves the development of new relationships between businesses and local regulators to support growth by identifying the issues facing local businesses and shaping the provision of effective support services to them. While it is aimed at all businesses there is a focus on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as these generally need most support to comply with the law.

BBfA comprises a brand and a toolkit of resources for LEPs. The brand was created by Leicester and Leicestershire LEP and then adopted by Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP, both LEP regulatory pathfinders. The toolkit is being developed by the Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO), drawing on material provided by LEPs and nationally respected good practice. In essence, the elements of the toolkit grow from local LEP activity and benefit from a national perspective, but can then be adapted for delivery in accordance with local LEP needs. They also carry the BBfA brand, to give businesses and regulators greater confidence in their quality.

This is about helping those who want to be helped, while maintaining a strong enforcement profile where there is deliberate non-compliance or uncontrolled risks.



## **What are the objectives of BBfA?**

The aims of the programme are to:

- reduce the regulatory burden on businesses;
- promote two way communication between businesses and regulatory services;
- improve the business perception of regulators;
- support regulators to find the right balance between encouragement, education and enforcement;
- develop a joint offer of support from regulatory services for businesses;
- build trust of both regulators and businesses; and
- advise government how to do things better for both businesses and regulators.

## **How can I help?**

Businesses have told many LEPs that they would like advice and guidance from regulatory services officers, as it is these people who will ultimately check whether they are complying.

You may often be the only 'official' a small business encounters, which puts you in a key role. You can signpost the business to relevant sources of support, help your organisation obtain information about the local business community, and act as the 'eyes and ears' for other regulatory agencies.

Your relationship with a business may even determine whether it decides to grow. If you encourage expansion by providing solution-focused advice and removing regulatory barriers – whether real or perceived – then this supports your local economy.

The LEPs are aware that you may well be operating with reduced resources and tighter budgets due to the recession. This is forcing regulatory services to become more innovative and more risk-based in their approach to enforcement. In the face of this changing environment, you can act to ensure that what is good in the present system is not lost, while thinking more creatively about supporting businesses.

This is about a different approach rather than doing more. Helping businesses become compliant reduces the level of interaction they require with regulatory services, thus releasing resources to target non-compliant and rogue businesses. In addition, closer working between regulatory services enables the more effective use of limited resources. For example, do local businesses really need a separate newsletter or email alert from each regulator?

## **What are the benefits of BBfA for regulatory services?**

The chance of regulatory officers receiving a hostile reception when they visit premises is reduced through the new relationship with businesses. When they are perceived as enablers, their advice and support are welcomed.

More resources can be targeted at non-compliant and rogue businesses as increasing numbers of businesses become compliant and no longer need frequent regulatory interventions.

Operational tasks can be undertaken more efficiently due to closer working between regulatory services. Any duplication within the system can also be identified and eliminated.

The profile of regulatory services is enhanced by recognition of their role in assisting growth.

### **What underpins BBfA?**

To maximise the impact of BBfA in removing real and perceived barriers to growth, the LEPs view three cultural changes as necessary:

1. Businesses need to overcome their fear of accessing help from regulators.
2. Regulators need to be regarded, and regard themselves, as enablers as well as enforcers.
3. Regulatory services need to recognise their role in supporting growth.

### **How can I find out more?**

Your line manager is your first port of call (and you may well have received this briefing note during a presentation from him or her on BBfA). Your local authority will also have a representative in your local LEP who will be able to answer any questions.

Any thoughts, suggestion or ideas you have on how the current system could be enhanced are very welcome. Your views count because to achieve the desired outcomes of BBfA, all frontline regulatory services officers need to be on board. It is true that for some the required shift in approach will be greater than for others, but this is an opportunity for all to make a difference to local businesses and citizens.

To achieve the desired outcomes all frontline regulatory services officers need to be on board. For some the required shift in approach will be greater than for others but this is an opportunity to make a difference to your local area. Thriving businesses create vibrant high streets and support local communities through employment and investment.

The BBfA brand guidelines and toolkit are at: [www.bis.gov.uk/brdo/business/leps/bbfa-resources](http://www.bis.gov.uk/brdo/business/leps/bbfa-resources)

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**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL  
ECONOMIC REGENERATION ADVISORY BOARD**

**26 February 2014**

**Report of the Chief Executive**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Information**

**1 WEST KENT PARTNERSHIP - MINUTES**

**To receive a copy of the minutes.**

- 1.1.1 The West Kent Partnership last met on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2014. A copy of the minutes is attached as Annex 1 to this report.
- 1.1.2 Much of this meeting was dedicated to the SELEP and the various strategies for growth, as reported elsewhere on this agenda. A report was also made on the future management of K College and the various options now being considered by the K College Board. A verbal update on any progress will be made at the meeting.
- 1.1.3 Further updates were provided on local transport schemes and the on-going programme of support for local businesses.

Background papers:

contact: Mark Raymond

Nil

Julie Beilby  
Chief Executive

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## West Kent Partnership Meeting

Friday 24 January, 2014, K College

## Present

Lesley Game, K College  
 Tudor Price, KICC  
 Ross Gill, KCC  
 Jonathan MacDonald  
 Wayne Peet, BIS  
 Mark Raymond, TMBC  
 Pav Ramewal, SDC  
 Jane March, TWBC  
 Bridget Remy, K College  
 Roger House, FSB

Lesley Bowles, SDC  
 Julie Beilby, TMBC  
 Nicolas Heslop, TMBC  
 Peter Fleming, SDC  
 Wendy Wood, WKP  
 John Balcolombe, TMBC  
 Brian Luker, TMBC  
 David Godfrey, KCC  
 Paul Lulham, KCC

## Apologies

David Candlin, TWBC  
 John Marshall, SFA  
 Paul Sayers, SFA  
 John Regan, Hugh Lowe Farms  
 Jo James, KICC (Tudor Price represents)  
 Ch Supt Corbishley, Kent Police

Jan Van der Velde, Kit for Kids  
 Paul Bentley, Maidstone & TW Trust  
 Caroline Shaw, VAWK  
 Iain McNab, BIS (Wayne Peet attends)  
 Damian Lazenby, BIS

1. **Minutes and Matter Arising** - all covered in Agenda, except
  - item 2 Letter to DEFRA Minister re directing underspend from underperforming Leader groups to best performing groups - A letter will be sent at the appropriate time in the development of the new programme to have the best impact. Details still awaited from DEFRA on timetable. WW
  - Item 4 Economy group met with skills partners in November to scope skills needs and opportunities in West Kent. A sector based workshop will take place in early February to develop this further. WW
2. **Innovation Driving Prosperity (South East LEP Strategic Economic Plan):**  
<http://www.southeastlep.com/about-us/activities/262-developing-a-growth-strategy-and-prioritising-investment-in-the-south-east>

David Godfrey updated Partners on progress with the Strategic Economic Plan which was submitted in draft to government just before Christmas. Official feedback is awaited but unofficial feedback from Greg Clark indicates that document has a good evidence base but there's a need now to focus down and produce a compelling argument for funding in what is after all a, competitive process. There needs to be clarity on how delivery will take place within 5-6 year framework. This feedback and the civil service feedback will inform the approach up until end March when final submission has to be made.

Devolved operation is very clear and agreed at last LEP board meeting. Kent and Medway offer needs to show coherence and also demonstrate what private investment can be secured for projects.

The comments on the SEP draft from West Kent were welcomed and will be reviewed to see if amendments can be made to the SEP draft to reflect higher priority for some West Kent issues. The Chairman re-iterated that West Kent will only be able to maintain its position as an economic driver if investment in infrastructure in particular is maintained. DG

Peter Jones, LEP Chair will be attending the next WKP meeting.

3. **Unlocking the Potential: Going for Growth: (UtP)** <http://www.kmep.org.uk/pdfs/Unlocking-the-Potential-v31191213.pdf>

This document feeds into the SEP and is appended to it. Ross Gill explained that the tight time frame for submission with the SEP had ruled out a formal consultation process and that comments were welcomed. The draft is less of a strategy and more of a bid for Investment for Growth and EU funding. Formal government feedback is awaited and the final SELEP SEP submission along with Unlocking the Potential and other county documents needs to be submitted by 31 March.

The LEP has agreed in principle to establish itself on a federated model. Work has been done on setting up the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership which replaces Kent Economic Board. The Partnership has met 3 times including last week when it considered UtP. A big issue of discussion was the way in which it represented the geography of Kent in terms of districts' relationships to one another. This was not an issue of contention for West Kent but was for Maidstone and Ashford and there will be some changes. Peter Fleming sits on new the board representing West Kent.

Unlocking the Potential needs to provide a compelling bid for a fair share of a significant amount of funding. There is just over £2B in Local Growth Fund to be distributed nationally from 2015/16 and thereafter. The Department for Transport is the largest contributor to the Growth Fund and the lion's share of funding is notionally allocated to transport. In the period to 2020 there is also £165M of EU structural funds allocated to the SELEP which is largely for 'softer' projects such as skills, low carbon, business support etc.

More detail is needed in the document and a commissioning plan which can feed into the LEP document is being worked on. Some areas, for example around transport and infrastructure will take longer to work up and the plan can be continually reviewed.

A key role for the WKP was identified in the commissioning process. The Commissioning Panel will be set up by 6 February and it is the intention to then involve Partners with specific expertise. An officer support group has also been established and together these groups are the Joint Management Group for KMEP. Julie Beilby represents West Kent.

Ross acknowledged that the WKP is the first of the sub county Partnerships to provide comments. None of the comments are a surprise and most are likely to be incorporated. For West Kent there is a concern that if UtP majors on a small number of large items then the fact that West Kent doesn't possess one of those, disadvantages us. West Kent is asking for quite soft issues and need LEP support to help deliver these. The West Kent voice cannot put the same pressure on as Kent and LEP.

4. **West Kent Priorities for Growth**

Mark Raymond introduced the Paper which is a revision of the early draft discussed at the

October meeting. It has been prepared in parallel with the SEP and UtP and has been taken into account in the drafts.

Partners commended the document and endorsed it. It was also recognised that as well as feeding into the County and LEP documents it stands alone as a strategy for West Kent. The Chairman commented that it might be necessary to deliver without any external funding as across the LEP area bigger investments may well attract the support.

It was pointed out that the infrastructure investment requirements highlighted in the document are essential not just for the health of the local economy but also to deliver on Government housing growth targets. Without appropriate transport infrastructure to support the extra homes it will be difficult to influence residents and businesses in West Kent that housing growth is desirable and money for infrastructure improvements following after housing delivered is unsustainable. David Godfrey commented that infrastructure project bids will not be successful unless they enable housing or job growth.

The Chairman commented on the impact and success of West Kent Leader and wished to register the need for the next Leader Programme to be delivered from West Kent for West Kent.

It was agreed that the focus now for West Kent would be on supporting the development of the KMEP commissioning plan.

#### 4. Escalate

Ross Gill updated the meeting on progress with Escalate and conveyed apologies from Jacqui Ward.

Escalate is now open for applications following a Tunbridge Wells launch on 6 December with Greg Clark. A successful event was held in Tonbridge & Malling on 15 January at K College and a Sevenoaks event is planned for February/March.

Further events and continual promotion will be put in place to raise awareness of the Fund and to encourage businesses to find out more about it. It is also being promoted through banks and other third parties who can help businesses to identify and secure the matched funds needed for projects. Awareness to be raised that value of leased equipment can be used as match and that salaries from new members of staff can similarly be capitalised. KICC are offering free support to businesses to bring forward pre-applications.

The programme has got off to a strong start and just 6 weeks in has received 20 pre-applications totalling overall loan request of £2.5M. The first full application has also been received. The Escalate offer has been refined learning from Expansion East Kent and Tiger and the calibre of applicants coming through is good.

Partners have given details of prospective members of the Approval Panel and the first panel meeting will take place at the end of February. The target is for announce first funding allocations in April.

Both East Kent Expansion and Tiger are on target to commit all funds by end of March 2015. There is potential however to deliver in excess of £5.5M through Escalate if funds are committed early and a strong case can be made to BIS for funds from a further round. There might also be scope to use the Escalate vehicle to deliver a further funding programme utilising European funds. Flexible terms are part of the Escalate offer and repayment terms tailored to what the business can support. However, repaid funds go back into pot and can be re-used which is another route to extending the life of the Fund.

Ross will advise position on the Accelerator Plus £150K initial fund. This was not all committed as for applicants it made more sense to wait a few months for the larger fund to be available.

RG

## 5. Transport

The West Kent Priorities document reflects the transport priorities for West Kent. This includes the A21 dualling as an announcement is still awaited on this and expected in February. The land has been purchased and at the recent Public Inquiry, most involved were in favour of the improvements.

Other major schemes for West Kent include Colts Hill bypass, M20 J4 improvements, M26 access at Sevenoaks, improvements around Tunbridge Wells town centre and Tonbridge town centre and rail infrastructure enhancements. It was also suggested that Kent Street on the A228 is very dangerous and improvements to this are a priority.

The Third Thames Crossing options have now been reduced to options A, C and C variant. More work is ongoing on air quality and environmental impacts on Dartford and East of Gravesend on these options. The KCC preference is for the East of Gravesend c variant option.

The Davies Commission is due to report final recommendations in summer 2015 after elections on where new airport capacity will be accommodated. Options are a new runway at Heathrow, a new runway at Gatwick and a Thames Estuary airport. KCC, Medway and all districts are opposed to the Thames Estuary option. Additional airport capacity is a long term project. Terminal 5 at Heathrow took 19 years in planning and construction.

KCC are working up a business case for Kent to Gatwick rail services with an objective to see an award included in the new Southeastern Franchise. The earliest date for this would be May 2018. Lobbying will continue for this at the Rail Summit in April as part of building the business case for investment in this service.

The Highways Agency is making funding available for a bridge to service the Peters Village development in Tonbridge and Malling.

Free flow tolling at the Dartford Crossing will commence in October 2014. This will use similar technology to the London congestion charge model with automatic vehicle registration and an online payment system. Free flow will help to identify if pay tolls are the cause of delays at the crossing. Government and Highways Agency studies would seem to indicate that it will only be a short term fix and that free flow will unlock suppressed demand.

## 6. K College

Bridget Remy, Campus Director updated Partners on behalf of Chris Hare on the current position regarding transition to new providers.

The competition running over last year was discontinued just before Christmas after a review by Ofsted highlighted that the competition was taking too long, was too slow and was impeding improvement at the College. The Principal and Vice Principal have now been given more say on negotiations and things are moving more rapidly. Three criteria for identifying new providers have been identified

- Local to area with local knowledge

- Grade 2 or above Ofsted rating
- Financially viable

Three Colleges meet the selection criteria, namely East Kent College, Hadlow, and Mid Kent. East Kent College are being considered to deliver for Dover and Folkestone. There was a strong case made to treat Tonbridge/Tunbridge Wells and Ashford separately and Mid Kent and Hadlow are the 2 providers being considered. The Skills Funding Agency (SFA), Education Funding Agency, the Skills Minister, the FE commissioner and the views of the local councils also have to be taken into consideration. A decision is expected by 28 January, to be confirmed on 13 February or shortly thereafter.

There was some discussion around the comparative strengths of the two providers. Concern was expressed that now it is looking probable that the SFA debt will be written off and some of the earlier competitors may have been able to put forward stronger bids. Partners are also keen to see a local West Kent College and not a college covering a catchment area including Ashford. Particularly for employers it was felt that they will engage more strongly with colleges where they are delivering training solutions for the local workforce.

Partners agreed that a local West Kent branding was important whatever the management structure lying behind it and that engagement with the local community would be essential in scoping future provision. For example, how to cater for the needs of Sevenoaks residents and businesses. It would be beneficial for any potential provider to visit the local councils to hear their ideas about the provision requirements. This made available to all bidders in the original cohort although not all took up the invitation.

There was some discussion around outreach and distance learning opportunities and Bridget explained that experience shows that students benefits most from a blended learning experience around distance learning so that they have some face to face time and ongoing access to a tutor to avoid isolation.

Opportunities for the college to deliver a greater number of bespoke training for local employers should be exploited and routes should be established to identify businesses which may have particular training needs such as those securing Escalate funding for high tech expansion.

The college is delivering some innovative courses to NEETs, drawing them into the campus to deliver skills training and delivering core and softer skills as part of the package.

## 7. Business Support

Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce are delivering workshops and 1:1 support. Tudor Price reported that overall they are engaging with the right type of businesses. 90% are established businesses with services being the main sector and an interesting rise in manufacturing businesses.

Workshops have been well taken up, especially social media and marketing. Finance not so well subscribed. For the next quarter there will be a more diverse selection of workshops including bids and tendering, food labelling and international trade. Workshop delivery was started in Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells to get a foothold and to assess take up. Delivery will now be extended to more remote centres like Edenbridge.

Delivery on 1:1's is lagging behind on original profile. It was suggested that cultural differences in the West Kent area are the cause of the poor take up. The higher net wealth has created higher expectation of service delivery in this area. Consequently established

businesses, which are the key target, are unlikely to adjust their schedule to accommodate the clinic availability. Therefore, it is proposed that a change of delivery model be adopted for 1:1 engagement which will involve the Adviser arranging with the Client a mutually convenient time to visit them. This change in approach will also serve to enhance the support of the current Escalate Loan fund.

Centre for Microbusiness are delivering programmes to support home based businesses and the unemployed.

Roger House reported that the Be Your Own Boss scheme is being run with Job Centres who have been extremely helpful and refer clients regularly.

The home based business scheme is engaging with businesses regularly through drop in events at Asda cafes. Most clients have embryonic businesses and need advice to move them on. Clients are encouraged to collaborate with each other but most also require quite a lot of individual support with an average of 20-30 hours support. The support is being promoted through county libraries across the West Kent area. A very well received presentation was made to Parish clerks in Sevenoaks District who will promote the programme and it is hoped to deliver similar in Tonbridge & Malling and Tunbridge Wells.

Roger can also see potential to work with Orchards Academy in Swanley utilising their vocational centre to provide access to resources for home based businesses.

The Young Entrepreneur Programme presented to Partners at the last meeting will commence delivery in April/May in Tunbridge Wells.

The WKP is to sponsor the first KICC West Kent B2B event on 30 April at the River Centre, Tonbridge.

8. Dates of Next Meetings – all Fridays 10am-noon

- 25 April, 2014 – St Julians, Sevenoaks
- 25 July, 2014
- 24 October, 2014