

# TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL



## EXECUTIVE SERVICES

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### Chief Executive

Julie Beilby BSc (Hons) MBA

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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)

28 June 2017

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 Thursday, 6th July, 2017 commencing at 7.30 pm

Yours faithfully

JULIE BEILBY

Chief Executive

## A G E N D A

### PART 1 - PUBLIC

- |    |                          |       |
|----|--------------------------|-------|
| 1. | Apologies for absence    | 5 - 6 |
| 2. | Declarations of interest | 7 - 8 |

3. Minutes 9 - 12
- To confirm as a correct record the Notes of the meeting of the Economic Regeneration Advisory Board held on 22 February 2017

4. Business Rates 2017/18 - Presentation 13 - 14

**Matters for Recommendation to the Cabinet**

5. North Kent Enterprise Zone 15 - 20
6. Service Level Agreements with Visit Kent and Tourism South East 21 - 32
7. 'Building Our Industrial Strategy' Green Paper Consultation 33 - 44

**Matters submitted for Information**

8. West Kent Partnership - Minutes 45 - 52
9. Urgent Items 53 - 54

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**

10. Exclusion of Press and Public 55 - 56

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**

11. Urgent Items 57 - 58

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 B J Luker (Chairman)  
Cllr F G Tombolis (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr M C Base  
Cllr R P Betts  
Cllr T Bishop  
Cllr J L Botten  
Cllr T I B Cannon  
Cllr S R J Jessel  
Cllr S M King

Cllr R D Lancaster  
Cllr Mrs S L Luck  
Cllr L J O'Toole  
Cllr Miss J L Sergison  
Cllr C P Smith  
Cllr B W Walker  
Cllr T C Walker

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Apologies for absence

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Declarations of interest

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## TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### ECONOMIC REGENERATION ADVISORY BOARD

Wednesday, 22nd February, 2017

**Present:** Cllr B J Luker (Chairman), Cllr F G Tombolis (Vice-Chairman), Cllr M C Base, Cllr R P Betts, Cllr T Bishop, Cllr J L Botten, Cllr T I B Cannon, Cllr Mrs S L Luck, Cllr Miss J L Sergison, Cllr C P Smith, Cllr B W Walker and Cllr T C Walker

Councillors Mrs J A Anderson, O C Baldock, P F Bolt, D J Cure, N J Heslop, D Lettington and Mrs A S Oakley were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S M King, R D Lancaster and L J O'Toole

#### **ERG 17/1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

However, with regard to the Skills and Work Readiness item and in the interests of transparency Councillor Heslop advised Members that he was employed by the Edge Foundation, which was an organisation dedicated to improving practical and vocational learning. This was not considered to represent either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or an Other Significant Interest and Councillor Heslop remained in the meeting.

#### **ERG 17/2 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the notes of the meeting of the Economic Regeneration Advisory Board held on 7 September 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **ERG 17/3 PRESENTATION FROM NIAB/EMR**

The Operations Manager (Mr Ross Newham) of East Malling Research (EMR) and Dr Roger Carline of the National Institute of Agricultural Botany (NIAB) attended the meeting to provide an update on latest developments regarding the site

EMR was a horticultural and agricultural research institute specialising in fruit production. Following challenging financial pressures the facility was threatened with closure and administration in 2016 but became part of NIAB at that time, which was a plant science research company based in Cambridge primarily specialising in agriculture.

Since the integration with NIAB economies of scale and robust cuts had been introduced and although income continued to climb significant challenges remained. It was reported that the vast majority of contracts successfully won only attracted 80-100% of full economic recovery, which meant that the site potentially operated at a loss; glasshouse facilities were outdated and infrastructure equipment required to solve future technical challenges related to the industry were necessary. Alternative solutions and opportunities for use of the current site buildings would also be explored.

New initiatives such as Water Efficient Technologies (WET), a PhD Studentship Programme from October 2017 to September 2023 and industry training were being developed and promoted to support the next generation of scientists, productivity and new technologies.

In July 2016, EMR had submitted a Local Growth Fund Round 3 bid, supported by the Borough Council, which had been unsuccessful due to the lack of housing provision included in the submission. This had led to the conclusion that any future bid for investment on behalf of the East Malling estate would need to include housing. These proposals were now being considered. Members were reassured that any housing development would not adversely impact on EMR's current work as it was possible for this to continue on a much smaller area due to the intensive growing now adopted. In addition, a portion of the research work could be done offsite and in collaboration with other organisations.

Finally, Members were advised that there was huge potential for the site and EMR although the position remained challenging due to a number of external factors, such as the lack of Government support and the need to secure its own funding. The support from Tonbridge and Malling and Kent County Council were greatly appreciated.

Reference was made to engagement with the local community and although there were no current plans for the traditional Open Day (last held in 2013 to celebrate the site's centenary) EMR remained committed to effective communication with local residents. Members of the Advisory Board were offered an opportunity to tour the site during the summer and the invitation would be considered for either June or September.

The excellent work of NIAB EMR was recognised and Members were proud that such an asset was within the borough of Tonbridge and Malling.

**MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET****ERG 17/4 ECONOMIC REGENERATION STRATEGY ACTION PLAN - REVIEW AND UPDATE**

Decision Notice D170017MEM

The report provided a detailed overview of the progress made in delivering the Economic Regeneration Strategy Action Plan during 2016. Overall, good progress was being made on a wide range of initiatives and these were set out in Annex 1 to the report.

It was indicated that 'business advice and support' would also offer guidance regarding the changes to business rates and the Borough Council would continue to lobby Government on behalf of local businesses. Business rates represented a significant impact to many businesses and this approach was supported.

In addition, it was confirmed that the business support workshops would be held in Kings Hill on 28 February 2017.

Reference was made to the three year survival rates, set out in Annex 2 to the report, and it was suggested that comparisons throughout Kent and the United Kingdom be included in future to provide context.

The award of £4.64m of Local Growth Fund Round 3 funding towards the Leigh Flood Storage Area, including Hildenborough, and East Peckham was reported and welcomed by Members.

**RECOMMENDED:** That

- (1) the Borough Council Economic Regeneration Strategy Action Plan update, as set out in Annex 1 to the report, be endorsed;
- (2) the amendments to the targets relating to certain indicators reflecting 'previous performance', as set out in paragraph 1.2.7 of the report, be agreed; and
- (3) the priorities for 2017/18, as set out in paragraph 1.3.1 of the report, be agreed.

**ERG 17/5 SKILLS AND WORK READINESS**

Decision Notice D170018MEM

The report provided feedback on the findings of the Skills Panel held in November 2016. A series of actions intended to contribute towards improving skills attainment and careers guidance were also set out.

In addition, proposals for new initiatives were outlined and included the establishment of an Enterprise Adviser Network, taster days and Make It Work and Speed Networking events.

Members recognised the value in encouraging young people to learn and gain skills in order to increase their potential and opportunity in gaining employment and being ready for work.

**RECOMMENDED:** That

- (1) the feedback from the Skills Panel be noted; and
- (2) the proposed next steps and initiatives set out in paragraphs 1.3.1 – 1.3.7 of the report, and summarised above, be supported and endorsed.

### **MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE**

#### **ERG 17/6 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no items considered in private.

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm

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

**06 July 2017**

**Report of the Director of Finance and Transformation**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Information**

**1 BUSINESS RATES 2017/18**

**A presentation will be given at the meeting setting out the changes to business rates from 1 April 2017, for Members' information.**

**1.1 Introduction**

1.1.1 As Members are aware, a number of changes to business rates have occurred, or are in the pipeline, from April 2017.

1.1.2 A presentation will be given by Glen Pritchard, the Principal Revenues Officer, highlighting the changes as a result of:

- 1) Business Rate Revaluation
- 2) Transitional Relief
- 3) Small Business Relief
- 4) Rural Rate Relief
- 5) Other changes such as the support for pubs, 'supporting small businesses' and the discretionary fund announced by the Chancellor.

**1.2 Statistics**

1.2.1 An initial analysis of the business rate accounts in T&M for the financial year 2017/18 - before the implementation of the 'extra' reliefs announced in the Chancellor's budget - is given below. At the time of writing, we are still awaiting the finer detail of the extra reliefs.

1.2.2 The information is subject to change as more information emerges but for now:

- Approximately 1100 businesses will have no liability at all ( about 31% of all cases) compared to less than 800 last year;
- Approximately 1000 will be paying less than last year (about 28%);

- Approximately 800 will be paying <10% more than last year (22%).

1.2.3 Of those paying more than the previous year, the impact of the 'extra' reliefs will need to be offset in due course to those accounts that qualify.

1.2.4 If appropriate, updated information will be given during the presentation.

### **1.3 Legal Implications**

1.3.1 Details and regulations for the reliefs announced in the Chancellor's Budget are awaited.

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

1.4.1 Reliefs are funded via s31 grant.

### **1.5 Risk Assessment**

1.5.1 N/A

### **1.6 Policy Considerations**

1.6.1 Community

Background papers:

Nil

contact: Sharon Shelton  
Glen Pritchard

Sharon Shelton  
Director of Finance & Transformation

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

**06 July 2017**

**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 NORTH KENT ENTERPRISE ZONE**

**To provide an update on progress with the North Kent Enterprise Zone initiative (which includes a site at Rochester Airfield), and approve next steps in the delivery of the project.**

**1.1 Background**

1.1.1 Established in 2012, Enterprise Zones (EZ) are at the heart of the Government's long-term economic plan, supporting businesses to grow. Since starting in April 2012 they have attracted over £2.4 billion pounds of private sector investment, building world class business facilities and transport links and attracting over 24,000 jobs. The success of the programme led to more Enterprise Zones being announced in the Autumn Statement in 2015 and in the March 2016 Budget. By April 2017, 48 Enterprise Zones were in place across the country.

1.1.2 Businesses that locate on an Enterprise Zone can potentially access a number of benefits:

- Up to 100% business rate discount worth up to £275,000 per business over a 5-year period.
- Simplified local authority planning, for example, through Local Development Orders that grant automatic planning permission for certain development (such as new industrial buildings or changing how existing buildings are used) within specified areas.
- Government support to ensure that superfast broadband is rolled out throughout the zone, and, if necessary, public funding.
- 100% enhanced capital allowances (tax relief) to businesses making large investments in plant and machinery on 8 Zones in Assisted Areas (these fall outside of the North Kent Enterprise Zone area).

## **1.2 North Kent Enterprise Zone**

- 1.2.1 In September 2015, an Enterprise Zone bid was submitted by the Thames Kent Gateway Partnership to the Department for Communities and Local Government. The bid proposed a 'North Kent Enterprise Zone' comprising sites in three locations – Kent Medical Campus (Maidstone), Ebbsfleet Garden City and Rochester Airfield. An announcement was made by Government in November 2015 that this submission had been successful.
- 1.2.2 Whilst owned by Medway Council, a small section of the Rochester Airfield site falls within Tonbridge & Malling Borough (see Appendix 1) and as such the Borough Council supported the bid submission and is currently represented on the project working group and keeps a watching brief of progress.
- 1.2.3 With the North Kent Enterprise Zone going 'live' on 01 April 2017, the 'Rochester Airport Technology Park' site is currently being promoted as offering "high-value technology, engineering, manufacturing and knowledge-intensive businesses the opportunity to grow in a bespoke commercial development with a collaborative business environment". One of the main promotional tools is the new website – [www.northkententerprisezone.co.uk](http://www.northkententerprisezone.co.uk) which is designed to provide outline information for each site and signpost visitors to the sites for individual schemes where they exist.
- 1.2.4 To date, progress on taking this site forward has been delayed. However, planning consent was given in March 2017 for the first stage of airport redevelopment (hangar replacement and refurbishment) and work on implementing this permission is due to commence shortly. A second stage application is expected to be submitted later in the year, taking account of ecological and other studies which have been undertaken.
- 1.2.5 Work is also currently being undertaken to design a masterplan for the site, which will give an indication of the layout and density of development. Once this has been produced, it will provide a good indication of how the area of the site within our borough could come forward for development.
- 1.2.6 Medway Council are interested in pursuing a Local Development Order (LDO) for the entire site. An LDO is effectively a permitted development tool for particular activities within a defined location which aims to simplify processes and provide certainty for potential investors, developers and businesses. We expect a formal approach from Medway Council about applying the LDO to the area that falls within Tonbridge & Malling Borough shortly. Once this information is received, this matter will go to the relevant committee for consideration.

## **1.3 Accountable Body Role**

- 1.3.1 The Accountable Body for the North Kent Enterprise Zone is Maidstone Borough Council. At a recent project working group meeting, a formal request was made by Maidstone Borough Council for contributions towards the cost of this role. These



costs are essentially legal, financial and administrative. The level of proposed contribution was pitched at £4,000 per site per annum.

- 1.3.2 Given that the majority of the Rochester Airfield site falls within the Medway Council area, it is proposed that a 15% contribution be made towards this cost. This would equate to £600 per annum, which can be met through existing economic development budgets.

#### **1.4 Legal Implications**

- 1.4.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

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

- 1.5.1 These are addressed in Section 1.3.2 of this report.

#### **1.6 Risk Assessment**

- 1.6.1 Not applicable.

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

- 1.7.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

#### **1.8 Recommendations**

- 1.8.1 That the updated information in this report **BE NOTED**.
- 1.8.2 That the support given to the North Kent Enterprise Zone to date **BE ENDORSED**.
- 1.8.3 That the proposal to contribute £600 per annum towards the Accountable Body function **BE AGREED**.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and the Chief Executive confirm that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

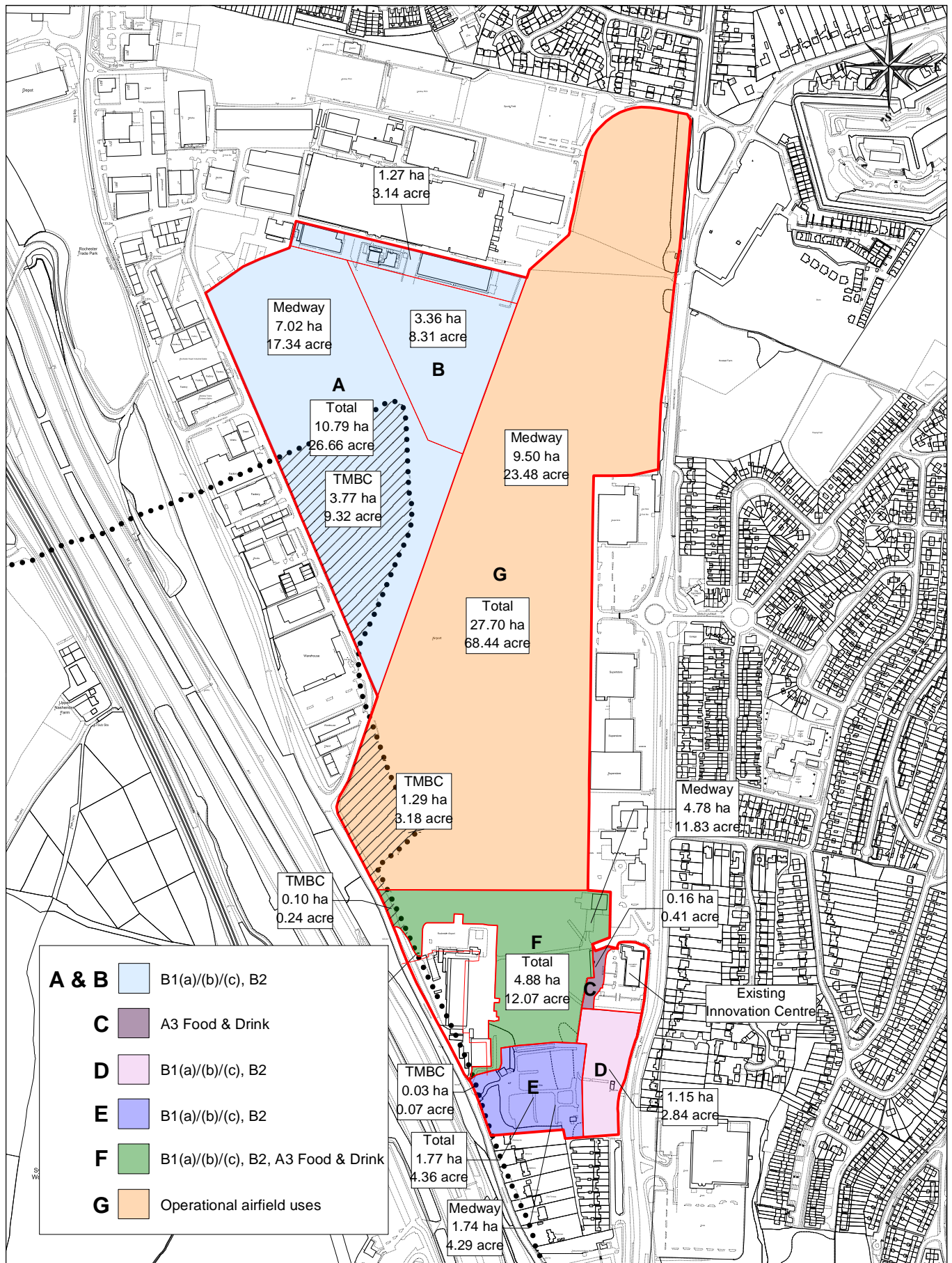
Background papers:

None

contact: Jeremy Whittaker,  
Economic Regeneration  
Officer

Julie Beilby  
Chief Executive

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# Rochester Airport Innovation Park



Serving You

Scale: 1:7500 17/11/16

© Medway Council, 2012

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

**06 July 2017**

**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 SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS (SLA) WITH VISIT KENT AND TOURISM SOUTH EAST**

**This report provides information on the Service Level Agreements that the Council currently has with two tourism bodies – Visit Kent and Tourism South East – and sets proposals for 2017/18.**

**1.1 Background**

1.1.1 In 2015, around 2.8 million people visited Tonbridge & Malling, spending approximately £119 million in the local economy. Tourism activity in the borough supports in the region of 3,000 jobs.

1.1.2 Although tourism is comparatively a small contributor to the local economy in comparison to other parts of the county, the Borough Council currently has annual Service Level Agreements with Visit Kent and Tourism South East that aim to promote and increase awareness of Tonbridge & Malling as a tourism destination.

1.1.3 The management of these agreements was passed over from Leisure Services to Economic Regeneration in March 2017.

**1.2 Overview of the Service Level Agreements for 2016/17**

1.2.1 The Visit Kent Service Level Agreement was £4,035 (plus £675 for additional research) in 2016/17, reduced from £13,135 in 2015/16. In 2016/17, the agreement covered the following areas:

- **Press and Marketing:** via the Visit Kent website ([www.visitkent.co.uk](http://www.visitkent.co.uk)), e-newsletter, press releases, familiarisation trips and InsideKent magazine.
- **Business Support:** via the collation of market intelligence (business barometer) and business advisory service.
- **Communications:** via networking events, weekly e-bulletin and district liaison meetings.

1.2.2 The Tourism South East Service Level Agreement was £2,000 in 2016/17, reduced from £3,645 in 2015/16. This 2016/17 agreement covered the following areas:

- **Press and Marketing:** via the Tourism South East website ([www.tourismsoutheast.com](http://www.tourismsoutheast.com)), social media (re-tweeting), familiarisation trips, annual media events, press releases and an Annual Group Travel Guide.
- **Communications:** via networking events and awards ceremonies, as well as lobbying on national issues on behalf of partners.
- **Discounts:** on campaigns, research services and training courses.

1.2.3 A comparison of the content of the two Service Level Agreements is set out in Appendix 1. This illustrates the extent to which the two agreements overlap. It is clear from this analysis that there is some overlap in the following areas:

- **Press and Marketing:** especially in terms of web presence, familiarisation trips, press release support and publications.
- **Communications:** including events and information sharing.

1.2.4 On the basis that there is duplication between the two agreements, it raises the question as to whether both agreements are still required and offer value for money, especially given the budgetary pressures that the Borough Council is currently experiencing.

### 1.3 Delivery during 2016/17:

1.3.1 An outline of the main activities that Visit Kent delivered during 2016/17 is set out in Appendix 2. This shows that Visit Kent have generally met the targets within the Service Level Agreement, apart from the following:

- Number of visits on to the Tonbridge & Malling webpages: this was down on the previous year, in part due to the fact that the website was completely redesigned.
- No familiarisation tour for trade operators took place
- The Business Advisory Service was not used by local businesses.

1.3.2 However, there was some additional activity in the form of additional social media activity and inclusion within new marketing campaigns.

1.3.3 The relationship with Tourism South East is more akin to a membership subscription, although there is a Service Level Agreement in place. The Service Level Agreement is reliant on the individual member organisation having a level of tourism resource that can take advantage of the support that they can provide, for example sending out tourism-related social media messaging that can be retweeted, actively taking part in campaigns or training in order to access

discounts or the provision of information that can then be supplied to Tourism South East in order to raise the profile of the borough as a tourism destination.

- 1.3.4 As such, whilst there has been some activity in promoting the borough on their website and marketing materials, the level of value for money extracted from the agreement has been limited.

#### **1.4 Proposed Next Steps:**

- 1.4.1 It is proposed that the council does not enter into a new annual agreement with Tourism South East, but the Service Level Agreement with Visit Kent is retained, albeit at a reduced level – up to a maximum of £3,500 for 2017/18. Such an approach would offer up additional savings on existing budgets.

- 1.4.2 The main reason for retaining Visit Kent rather than Tourism South East is simply that there is scope for Tonbridge & Malling to have a higher profile with Visit Kent than it can through Tourism South East simply due to geographical scale. This is illustrated at present through the existing websites of the two organisations. In addition, Visit Kent has the dedicated resources to proactively promote our tourism offer and include our businesses within their various campaigns.

- 1.4.3 A Service Level Agreement with Visit Kent for 2017/18 could look to retain the following as a minimum:

- Dedicated presence for Tonbridge and Malling on [www.visitkent.co.uk](http://www.visitkent.co.uk) – at present the site has dedicated pages for ‘Tonbridge’ and ‘Malling’. However, with the ‘Malling’ page getting lower visitor numbers, there could be scope to merge the two pages in order to attract greater traffic for the ‘Malling’ attractions.
- Inclusion of the Borough within Press Releases and Social Media
- Coverage of the Borough within InsideKent Magazine
- Business Advisory Service (carried forward from 2016/17)
- Receipt of regular e-bulletins and business intelligence.

- 1.4.4 The majority of the actions that the Borough Council would look to discontinue (such as some of the travel trade activities) could potentially be picked up through arrangements between existing private sector members in our Borough and Visit Kent.

#### **1.5 Legal Implications**

- 1.5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

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

- 1.6.1 These are addressed in Section 1.4.1 of this report.

#### **1.7 Risk Assessment**

1.7.1 Not applicable.

## **1.8 Equality Impact Assessment**

1.7.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

## **1.9 Recommendations**

1.9.1 That the proposal to not renew the Service Level Agreement with Tourism South East in 2017/18 **BE AGREED.**

1.9.2 That the proposal to reduce the Service Level Agreement with Visit Kent in 2017/18 to a maximum of £3,500 **BE AGREED.**

1.9.3 That the inclusion of the activities set out in 1.4.3 **BE AGREED.**

The Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and the Chief Executive confirm that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

None

contact: Jeremy Whittaker,  
Economic Regeneration  
Officer

Julie Beilby  
Chief Executive



## Appendix 1 - Comparison of Tourism Service Level Agreements:

| Subject Areas              | Visit Kent (VK)  | Tourism South East (TSE)  | Notes   |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|
| Cost for 2016/17           | <p><b>£4,035</b></p> <p>Does not include the £1,100 for business advice service as negotiated this for free this year due to value for money question marks in previous years.</p>   | <p><b>£2,000</b></p>  | <p>Total cost of the TSA agreement for 2015/16 was £3,645</p> <p>Total cost of the VK agreement for 2015/16 was £13,135</p>   |
| <b>Press and Marketing</b> |  |   |   |
| Press Releases             | <p>T&amp;M Borough included in one press release per annum.</p> <p>T&amp;M businesses featured in 3 press releases per annum.</p> <p>Priority inclusion for T&amp;M tourism businesses in press itineraries and features.</p>  | <p>Seasonal Press Releases which TMBC can provide information for – go to 3800+ journalists</p> <p>Daily alerts and requests for content/images from journalists – invite to provide editorial.</p> |   |
| Web Presence               | <p>Dedicated ‘Tonbridge’ (c.18,500 visits) and ‘Malling’ (c.10,000 visits) pages on the Visit Kent website.</p> <p>T&amp;M feature as ‘Destination of the Month’ twice a year.</p> <p>T&amp;M based business featured on ‘Things to Do’ menu once per annum.</p> <p>T&amp;M based businesses featured on the ‘Visit Kent recommends’ section 3 times per annum.</p> <p>T&amp;M event featured on ‘Things to Do’ menu once per annum.</p> | <p>‘Tonbridge’ viewed 8,150 times.</p> <p>Dedicated page on Visit South East England’s website.</p> <p>Can add events via online events form.</p>   | <p>VK webpages – two pages with up to date content. Many of the links below the text on the Tonbridge page relate to Penshurst Place.</p> <p>TSE webpage – Tonbridge page has images of Tenterden and provides links to Penshurst. No pictures of Tonbridge &amp; Malling on the ‘Kent’ page.</p> |
| Social Media               | <p>Nothing specifically mentioned in the SLA, although has been included as ‘additional activity’ in recent updates.</p>   | <p>Will re-tweet social media messages where appropriate.</p>   | -   |
| Media Events/Activities    | <p>1 Familiarisation visit to T&amp;M per annum for travel trade operators.</p>  | <p>Familiarisation Trips for press – collaborate with destination partners.</p>   | <p>Both offer familiarisation trips.</p>  |

|                                     |  |   |   |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|
|                                     |  | Opportunity to supply information for 'Annual Media Events' + receive press contacts.   |   |
| Guides and Newsletters              | Event or destination featured once per annum in the e-newsletter.<br><br>Inclusion of T&M in at least 1 feature for InsideKent Magazine.                               | Free listings + up to 5 events in the Annual Group Travel Guide.  | -   |
| <b>Business Support</b>             |  |   |   |
|                                     | 31 T&M businesses to take part in the Business barometer.<br><br>Face-to-Face business advice and support through the Business Advisory Service – maximum of 6 visits. | -   | VK – TMBC probably not the main direct beneficiary of this. |
| <b>Networking and Lobbying</b>      |  |   |   |
| Networking                          | 2 District Liaison Meetings per annum.<br><br>Visit Kent to join Kent Economic Development Officers Group twice per annum.<br><br>Invitation to 3 networking events.   | Invitation to the TSE Annual Destination Management Forum.<br><br>Free ticket to the Beautiful South Awards.<br><br>Invitations to networking events and the Annual Tourism Conference. | -   |
| Lobbying                            | -  | Lobbying on national issues on behalf of partners.  | -   |
| <b>Professional Advice and Info</b> |  |   |   |
|                                     | TMBC staff to receive weekly e-bulletin.   | Free advice across a range of tourism-related issues such as research services, marketing and bid writing.  | -   |
| <b>Commercial Membership</b>        |  |   |   |
|                                     | See 'Press and Marketing'  | Attractions and Facilities in our ownership are   | Relevant to our Parks and                                   |

|                  |   |   |   |
|------------------|---|---|---|
|                  |   | eligible for various discounts/free listings/entry to awards  | Tonbridge Castle.   |
| <b>Discounts</b> |   |   |   |
|                  | - | 40% discounts on international marketing campaigns, travel marketing and fairs, and domestic campaigns<br><br>20% discount on research services and 10% discount on training courses. | TSE – unlikely to have the other 60-90% in order to take advantage of these offers. |

## Outline Analysis:

| Area of SLA                    | Comments   | Initial View  |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| Cost                           | The Visit Kent SLA is more expensive but has been reduced by the greatest % in recent years.   | VK offers better value for money as there are a number of areas of the TSE agreement that TMBC won't be able to take advantage of.          |
| Marketing – Press              | TSE SLA is reliant on TMBC providing information in order to tap into their PR machine. VK are more proactive in this respect and have the ability to incorporate T&M relevant editorial themselves due to local knowledge.                                | VK offer meets our needs more clearly.  |
| Marketing – Website            | VK has more locally relevant information and a greater number of visits. The TSE webpage is a bit dated, some of the images are not from our borough and you have to click a fair few times before you reach information on our area.                      | VK website has more prominent information on Tonbridge & Malling.   |
| Marketing – Social Media       | Nothing specifically from VK on social media in the Service Level Agreement, although they are doing a fair amount of additional work in this area now. TSE mention re-tweeting, so we can tap into their extensive network with any messaging at present. | VK is a bit more proactive in this area.  |
| Marketing – Events             | Quite similar in this regard – both offering up our borough to be included in familiarisation trips (albeit to different audiences)  | Very similar but TSE also offers up sharing contacts so that we can make our own connections (although this wouldn't be high on our agenda) |
| Marketing – Newsletters/Guides | A little light in both agreements  | VK probably gives T&M more publicity.   |
| Business Support               | Only VK includes any direct business support. In recent years, it has been unclear as to the   | VK offers more in this area.  |

|                                   |  |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
|                                   | extent to which the business support has been taken up by borough businesses   |  |
| Networking                        | Both offer networking opportunities, but at different geographical scales!   | A similar offer (but do we need both?)                   |
| Lobbying                          | TSE offers to lobby on behalf of its members, no mention of this by VK although I imagine they have some pretty influential members and board members.   | TSE articulates their approach to lobbying more clearly. |
| Professional Advice & Information | TSE offers a more extensive package of support and advice for the council.   | Do we need this though?                                  |
| Commercial Membership             | Both offer incentives to businesses in our borough, BUT to what extent is this added value of just adding private sector members within our borough into our agreement when they will be paying their own fees anyway? |  |
| Discounts                         | TSE offers discounts, but not sure we have the resources to provide the match-funding.   |  |

**Conclusion:** There is overlap in the two contracts (especially re. press and marketing and networking). Visit Kent provides a more obvious platform for T&M simply due to the smaller geographical scale that they operate under in comparison to TSE, and whilst there are elements of the TSE Agreement that are not provided by Visit Kent, such as lobbying and discounts, it is not clear what impact these actually have, especially given that we are not really in a position to take advantage of the latter.

The approach would be to continue with the VK SLA, with a view to reducing the cost down to around £3,500 for 2017/18 and to withdraw from the TSE SLA (unless there are elements within the TSE contract that are deemed worthy of retaining). This course of action would result in a cost saving of around £2,500 per annum.

## Appendix 2: Overview of Delivery for 2016/17.

| Action  | Target   | Delivered  |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Digital Marketing</b>  |  |  |
| Provision of dedicated pages on visitkent.co.uk   | Tonbridge page:<br>18,489 visits.<br><br>Malling page:<br>10,078 visits. | Tonbridge page: 15,515 visits<br><br>Malling page: 9,674 visits  |
| Tonbridge & Malling borough featured as 'Destination of the Month' on the Visit Kent website. | 2 dates  | 2 dates – June 2016 and January 2017.  |
| Tonbridge & Malling businesses featured on the 'Visit Kent Recommends' page                   | 3 dates  | 4 dates – July 2016 (Buckmore Park); January 2017 (Tonbridge Castle); February 2017 (Ightham Mote); March 2017 (Buckmore Park)   |
| <b>Press Releases</b>   |  |  |
| Inclusion of Tonbridge & Malling content in Press Releases                                    | 4 Press Releases   | 7 Press Releases:<br><br>April 2016 – Head to Kent for a Bank Holiday bonanza (Ightham Mote)<br><br>October 2016 – Half Term & Halloween Haunts in the Ghoulish Garden of England (Ightham Mote)<br><br>November 2016 – Kent Visitor Numbers Soar to Over 60 million a year (T&M)<br><br>November 2016 – Experience Kent's Seasonal Sparkle this Christmas |

**Appendix 2: Overview of Delivery for 2016/17.**

|   |              |   |
|---|--------------|---|
|   |              | <p>(Tonbridge Christmas Festival and Tonbridge Castle)</p> <p>February 2017 – Registration Now Open for Kent’s Big Weekend! (Tonbridge Castle)</p> <p>February 2017 – Last Chance to Bid for Kent’s Big Weekend Tickets (Tonbridge Castle)</p> <p>March 2017 – Mother’s Day in the Garden of England (Ightham Mote)</p> |
| <b>Travel Trade</b>   |              |   |
| Tonbridge & Malling featured on a dedicated trade website, trade newsletter and news story. | 3 features   | <p>3 features:</p> <p>Hotel of the Month – Bridgewood Manor</p> <p>Travel GBI – Kent Events on Key Anniversaries – Tonbridge and Jane Austen.</p> <p>2017 Group Travel Guide – featuring Bridgewood Manor; Ightham Mote; Great Comp Gardens and Buckmore Park</p>   |
| Familiarisation visits for travel trade operators within Tonbridge & Malling Borough        | 1            | 0   |
| <b>Marketing Campaigns</b>  |              |   |
| Encourage Tonbridge & Malling Borough businesses to take part in Kent’s Big Weekend         | 5 businesses | 7 businesses – Hop Farm Family Park; Great Comp Gardens; Nemes Diving & Water Sports Academy; Tonbridge Castle; Tonbridge River Trips; Ightham Mote; Buckmore Park Kart Circuit   |

**Appendix 2: Overview of Delivery for 2016/17.**

|  |                        |   |
|--|------------------------|---|
| Encourage Tonbridge & Malling Borough businesses to take part in 2for1 promotion                                     | 2 businesses           | 3 businesses – Ightham Mote; Great Comp Gardens; Nemes Diving & Water Sports Academy  |
| <b>Business Support</b>  |                        |   |
| Tonbridge & Malling Borough businesses to receive face to face business advice through the Business Advisory Service | 6 businesses supported | 0 – The allocation of six appointments with the Tourism Business Advisory Service consultant will be carried in to 2017/18. |

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

**06 July 2017**

**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 'BUILDING OUR INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY' GREEN PAPER CONSULTATION**

**To endorse the Council's consultation response to the Government's 'Building our Industrial Strategy' Green Paper, the deadline for which closed on 17 April 2017.**

**1.1 'Building our Industrial Strategy' Green Paper**

1.1.1 In January 2017, the Government launched a consultation on its 'Building our Industrial Strategy' Green Paper. This document sets out a vision for a modern strategy that aims to improve living standards and economic growth by increasing productivity and driving growth across the whole country.

1.1.2 In short, the Green Paper has three areas of focus:

- To build on our economic strengths and extend excellence into the future
- To close the gap between the UK's most productive companies, industries, places and people and the rest; and
- To make the UK one of the most competitive places in the world to start and grow a business

1.1.3 These three areas of focus are supported by 10 pillars which the Government believes are important to drive forward the industrial strategy across the entire economy:

- Investing in Science, Research and Innovation
- Developing Skills
- Upgrading Infrastructure
- Supporting Business to Start and Grow
- Improving Procurement
- Encouraging Trade and Inward Investment
- Delivering Affordable Energy and Clean Growth
- Cultivating World-leading Sectors

- Driving Growth Across the Whole Country
- Creating the Right Institutions to Bring Together Sectors and Places

1.1.4 The document explains the opportunities and challenges under each pillar, and sets out its approach to addressing these.

## **1.2 Response from Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council**

1.2.1 The Council's consultation response to the Green Paper is attached to this report as Appendix 1.

1.2.2 As set out at the end of the consultation response, the main points made were:

- To succeed, the strategy needs the right mechanisms at the local level to ensure effective delivery. The West Kent Partnership, feeding in to the Kent & Medway Economic Partnership, should have a key role to play in this.
- Although rebalancing the national economy is important, it should also be recognised that there are clear opportunities for building upon the successes of the South East economy, and addressing its areas of underperformance.
- Consideration needs to be given to greater protection of commercial premises and land to ensure local businesses and inward investors have the supply and range of available accommodation in order to enable local economic growth.
- Recognition of the role that R&D plays in economic growth is much welcomed, and this should be backed up by much greater investment in research facilities across the country, not necessarily just those areas with a strong University presence.
- The local impacts of national infrastructure policy need to be incorporated into the business cases and overall value for money assessments in order to ensure they are properly considered through a holistic approach to investment decisions.

## **1.3 Legal Implications**

1.3.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

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

1.4.1 These are no financial implications arising from the report.

## **1.5 Risk Assessment**

1.5.1 Not applicable.

## **1.6 Equality Impact Assessment**

1.6.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

## 1.7 Recommendations

1.7.1 That the consultation response to the 'Building our Industrial Strategy' Green Paper **BE ENDORSED**.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and the Chief Executive confirm that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

contact: Jeremy Whittaker,  
Economic Regeneration  
Officer

Julie Beilby  
Chief Executive

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## **Building Our Industrial Strategy Green Paper 2017 – A Response from Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council**

**Consultation Period Closes: 17<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council welcomes the opportunity to share its views on the Industrial Strategy Green Paper (January 2017) and believes that, given the changes that have taken place over the past 12 months, it is right that a strategy be introduced in order to ensure that our national economy goes from strength to strength. As stated below, one of the key challenges that the Industrial Strategy will need to address is how it is delivered at the local level, and how ownership or the strategy can be fostered in order to ensure that the worthy aims and objectives are met.

The following response has focused on those questions that the Council feels it is well placed to provide a detailed and considered response.

### ***1. Does this document identify the right areas of focus; extending our strengths; closing the gaps; and making the UK one of the most competitive places to start or grow a business?***

In general terms, we support the areas of focus that are set out in this Green Paper. However, there are a couple of points that need to be highlighted when considering these three priorities of the Industrial Strategy.

Firstly, in 'building on our strengths and extending excellence in the future' it should be highlighted that there are a number of strong sectors in West Kent that perform well, but with the right investment have the potential to make a massive impact both nationally and internationally. It is recognising these opportunities and investing in success that will reap the greatest rewards nationally. In this respect, it would probably be more accurate to call this strategy a 'Business Strategy' or 'Economic Growth Strategy'. By doing so, it would more closely reflect the nature of our national economy and avoid some of the negative connotations that have blighted previous 'Industrial Strategies'

Secondly, whilst it is obviously important to close the gap between the best and worst performing in order to ensure that every area of the country contributes strongly to the economy, it is far too simplistic to have an almost exclusive focus on the 'Northern Powerhouse' or 'Midlands Engine', without giving full consideration to the plight of other areas of the UK. Just as there are hugely successful areas in the North of England and Midlands that have strongly performing economies, so there are constrained and failing areas in the South of England.

It should be recognised that whilst West Kent, and more broadly, the South East of England are viewed as prosperous and relatively productive, there are still a number of areas of deprivation and underperformance within the area that need to be recognised – it is not a homogenously affluent area. For example, in Tonbridge and Malling Borough, Trench in Tonbridge has an unemployment rate of 2.2% (December 2016), which is somewhat higher than the average for Great Britain (1.8%) as a whole.

### ***2. Are the 10 pillars suggested the right ones to tackle low productivity and unbalanced growth? If not, which areas are missing?***

In general terms, the council is supportive of the ten pillars, but would like to highlight the following:

**Investing in science, research and innovation** – Kent is home to the East Malling Research Station, which although outside of the ‘golden triangle’ of Oxford, Cambridge and London, is one of the world leaders in biotech research and development.

East Malling Research Station was created by the regional fruit industry to provide essential R&D and over the last century has played a central role in the growth of the sector. East Malling Research, now NIAB EMR, remains an essential part of the sustainable economic success in the regional fruit industry and represents the key asset necessary for industry to diversify into high value markets in food and drink.

As highlighted in the Green Paper, despite the key role of R&D, there is still a fundamental weakness in the UK economy in bridging the gap between fundamental research and the translation of that research into commercial business propositions. NIAB EMR is addressing precisely this market failure in the biotech sector by:

- enhancing business access to leading-edge technology and expertise
- reaching into the research base for world-leading science and engineering
- undertaking collaborative applied research projects with business
- undertaking contract research for business
- through strong business-focused with a highly professional delivery ethos
- creating a critical mass of activity between business and research
- providing skills development at all levels.
- Risk reducing product introduction and launch

However, growth of NIAB EMR’s services is constrained by a lack of funding for capital investment, specifically greenhouse capacity and infrastructure, with a particular need for a modern greenhouse and energy centre that is up to the standard currently used by growers. If such infrastructure was available, it is estimated that over a five year period an additional £2.5 million of R&D projects and services to businesses could be delivered, which will translate into improvements in productivity and development of new products amounting to some £47 million. This would, in turn, be associated with a significant uplift in industry profitability and export capacity that would provide the basis for further investment by the industry.

**Developing skills** – it should also be highlighted that there is much work to be done in ensuring that young people have the right information to make informed decisions about what skills and qualifications are required in order to enjoy a successful career in specific sectors. Although there are examples of good careers advice, and the work of the Careers and Enterprise Company is starting to have a beneficial impact, there are still too many examples of young people not being given the support, advice and guidance required in making key decisions that will impact on their future.

Another point to make is that there is much to be gained from reaching young people well before reach 16 years old with information and guidance in order to start helping them to think about what they might do in the future. A good example of this is the Primary Engineer Programme - <http://www.primarylearning.co.uk/> - which involves promoting STEM careers to primary school children.

**Upgrading infrastructure** – whilst this section focuses on a wide range of key infrastructure (energy, transport, water, flood defence, digital infrastructure, housing etc.), it seems to ignore the very real need for modern office and industrial premises. This is especially key in West Kent as a considerable amount of commercial accommodation in our main towns has been converted to residential use, and only a small amount of this has been replaced. Whilst it is understandable that Government has had a focus on stimulating housing growth due to historic under-provision, this loss of commercial space will continue to

impact the economy if the options faced by start-ups, local businesses looking to expand or inward investors are constrained by the lack of offer. As such, part of the infrastructure debate should focus on this very real requirement.

The planning system should be able to secure an appropriate portfolio of commercial sites to meet the needs of the business community in the local authority area without the threat of change of use to housing. A range of commercial premises in terms of size, quality and price are an important part of the overall infrastructure that enables business growth.

It is the availability of land and premises that is one of the greatest constraints to growth in the local economy, and this needs to be recognised within the strategy.

**Supporting businesses to start and grow** – in recognition that growth in the economy (certainly in Kent if not elsewhere in the country) is stimulated to a great extent by start-up and micro-businesses, this section could be strengthened to have a greater focus on the promotion of entrepreneurship in the first instance, but also supporting the growth in business incubation facilities that help to nurture and grow fledgling businesses.

In addition, there appears to be very little reference to the role that Enterprise Zones could play in the growth of the economy, which is surprising given the prominence that has otherwise been given to this mechanism for stimulating economic growth.

**Cultivating world-leading sectors** – we welcome the focus of the initial work on sector deals, especially on life sciences given the role played by NIAB EMR in our national economy.

**3. *Are the right central government and local institutions in place to deliver an effective industrial strategy? If not, how should they be reformed? Are the types of measures to strengthen local institutions set out here and below the right ones?***

As mentioned at the start of this response, one of the key issues will be making sure the strategy can be translated and delivered locally. The South East Local Enterprise Partnership, being the largest LEP in the country, is too big to effectively tackle local economic growth, and as such we feel there is a fantastic opportunity to employ public/private partnerships (at an appropriate scale) to play a role in driving forward the aims and objectives of the strategy.

In West Kent, the West Kent Partnership ([www.westkentpartnership.org.uk](http://www.westkentpartnership.org.uk)) is a well-established and well-respected public/private partnership that takes a strategic approach to economic development and regeneration across Sevenoaks District, Tonbridge & Malling and Tunbridge Wells Boroughs. Specifically, the partnership aims to:

- Represent the interests of the West Kent sub region and provide a strong and influential voice on matters of particular concern to its local communities, especially around economic development, transport and essential infrastructure.
- Identify the key issues facing the West Kent area, address the need for investment and develop joint actions.
- Promote West Kent as a great business location.
- Explore bids for external funding that will help to drive economic growth.
- Provide an effective working relationship with the Kent & Medway Economic Partnership and The South East Local Economic Partnership

- Promote effective, joint co-operative working both within the partnership and between the Partnership and other local agencies and bodies.
- Consider and influence the plans, strategies and agendas of other key agencies to ensure that West Kent interests are properly represented.
- Aim to ensure that the plans and strategies prepared by public agencies align with emerging joint priorities.
- Add value on economic development and infrastructure issues to the community strategies for each District and Borough in West Kent, promoting good practice and better joint working

It is through local institutions such as the West Kent Partnership, that the Industrial Strategy could be brought to life at the local level. *It is therefore essential that both local authorities and businesses are recognised as playing a vital part in the delivery of the strategy.*

**4. Are there important lessons we can learn from the industrial policies of other countries which are not reflected in these ten pillars?**

As well as having a view on the long-term, it is also important that we avoid the temptation for short-term distractions and the perceived need to make changes to institutions and initiatives as the strategy progresses. A case in point is the approach to skills development over the past 30 years - the dismantling of apprenticeship programmes, the desire to get as many people as possible in to University, the introduction of University fees and the attempts to re-establish apprenticeships – which has created a lack of continuity and certainty. At the same time, Germany has retained its apprenticeship programmes and to a large extent, the institutions behind them, which has helped to embed familiarity amongst business there. It has also benefited from a devolved system of governance that has enabled a localised approach to building the national economy.

Although it is difficult to enshrine long-termism when elections take place every 5 years, a stable, long term approach that provides greater certainty would be welcomed by business.

**5. What should the priority areas for science, research and innovation investment be?**

For understandable reasons, a large amount of research funding is focused towards universities. However, this does create a situation where areas without a university presence, and the associated clustering of businesses, run the risk of missing out on the positive spin-offs and widening the performance between the best and worst performing economies.

Whilst the university presence in West Kent is limited, there are a number of research institutions delivering cutting-edge work in the area, and these bodies should be fully recognised in the strategy.

**10. What more can we do to improve basic skills?**

Firstly, something is clearly not working well in the teaching of basic skills. By the time students come to apply to our local FE colleges, many do not have A\*-C grades in English and Maths. Indeed, at Mid Kent College, around 80% of applicants don't have the required basic qualifications. More needs to be done to address these problems before young people are at the point of leaving school.

Secondly, it should be highlighted that there is a fair amount of confusion about what the best routes to impartial careers advice are. At present, there is understandably an emphasis from schools on getting their students in to university rather than providing an objective assessment of the options open to them.



Thirdly, there needs to be far greater interaction between education establishments and their surrounding business community. Whilst there are some great examples of this happening at the moment, there is still a considerable amount of work to be done in this area in order for young people to:

- Be made aware of how basic skills are relevant to the needs of the business community.
- Be inspired about their career options.
- Have role models from the business community that foster aspiration.

We are currently working with the Careers and Enterprise Company at the West Kent level to establish an Enterprise Adviser Network (EAN) that will address both of these points.

**13. What skills shortages do we have or expect to have, in particular sectors or local areas, and how can we link the skills needs of industry to skills provision by educational institutions in local areas?**

The table (taken from the Kent Workforce Skills Report, 2015) below takes information from recent studies to highlight specific sector issues in Tonbridge & Malling, such as skills requirements:

| Sector             | T&M (Location Quotient) | Forecast 2013-22 (K&M) | Notes (sector related issues)  |
|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|--|
| Energy & Utilities | 2.9                     | 11%                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector currently employs 1,700 people in T&amp;M</li> <li>- relatively small sector within K&amp;M</li> <li>- diverse workforce</li> <li>- need to improve <b>image of the sector</b> and <b>ensure appropriate apprenticeship frameworks</b> are in place</li> </ul>   |
| Primary Industries | 1.7                     | -3%                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- quite small in employment terms</li> <li>- over half the workforce are in skilled trades</li> <li>- decline mostly as a result of <b>automation</b></li> <li>- <b>need for skills</b> in following areas: succession planning, environmental management skills, risk management, scientific knowledge and technology transfer and better ICT skills.</li> </ul>         |
| Transport          | 1.5                     | 10%                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector employs 3,500 people in the borough</li> <li>- around a third of the workforce are drivers</li> <li>- <b>focus on lower level qualifications</b></li> <li>- need to attract new recruits; promote clearer development pathways and professionalise the workforce.</li> </ul>   |
| Construction       | 1.5                     | 17%                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector currently employs 3,500 people in the borough</li> <li>- sector is dominated by micro-business</li> <li>- construction workforce is more susceptible to changes in the economy</li> <li>- <b>Increasing demand for higher level skills</b></li> <li>- new skills required to keep up with changes in the sector (low energy requirements/higher spec)</li> </ul> |
| Retail             | 1.3                     | 3%                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector currently employs 7,400 people in the borough</li> <li>- nearly half of all employment is focused on sales and customer services.</li> <li>- need to <b>improve image</b> of sector as a career opportunity</li> </ul>   |
| Financial &        | 1.2                     | 13%                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector employs 3,900 people in the borough</li> </ul>   |

|                         |     |      |   |
|-------------------------|-----|------|---|
| Insurance               |     |      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- highly qualified workforce</li> <li>- need for more professional staff, as well as IT, leadership and management and customer service skills</li> <li>- <b>training and skills development in risk management and regulatory compliance is a high priority.</b></li> </ul>   |
| Arts & Recreation       | 1.1 | 8%   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector currently only employs <b>100</b> people in the borough.</li> <li>- current climate of public funding increases importance in growth of self-employed workers</li> <li>- High level technical skills and knowledge will continue to be essential.</li> </ul>  |
| Digital & Media         | 0.9 | 16%  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector currently employs 2,600 people</li> <li>- demand for corporate managers</li> <li>- <b>skills shortages in a range of associate professional and technical skills.</b></li> </ul>  |
| Accomm. & Food Services | 0.8 | 12%  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector employs 3,300 people in the borough</li> <li>- 55% of workforce are qualified to Level 2 or below</li> <li>- need to increase the workforce, improve customer service, <b>improve the apprenticeship offer</b> (matching training supply to employer needs)</li> </ul>  |
| M'facturing             | 0.7 | -10% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector currently employs 3,200 people in the borough</li> <li>- sector is focussed on medium to large companies</li> <li>- diverse workforce but skilled trades account for 22% of workforce</li> <li>- issue of <b>making sector attractive to new recruits</b></li> </ul>  |
| Life Sciences           | 0.6 | 6%   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector employs <b>200</b> people in the borough</li> <li>- workforce is professional and highly qualified</li> <li>- future skills needs relate to R&amp;D, the production process and management</li> </ul>   |
| Health                  | 0.5 | 3%   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sector currently employs 3,600 people in the borough</li> <li>- although low growth, due to its size, it is expected that <b>2-3,000 additional workers</b> will be needed across the county by 2022.</li> <li>- 3 priorities for action are – <b>efficiency and innovation; having a skilled workforce and sustainability.</b></li> </ul> |

**Table 1: Sector Growth Potential**

Building upon the points made above about areas for possible improvement in provision, in simple terms it can also be highlighted that the main issues highlighted for those sectors that are high growth or have strong representation in the borough (as per the KCC Workforce Skills Evidence Base, 2015) are:

- Requirement for an improvement to the apprenticeship offer and development pathways (especially in Accommodation & Food Services; Energy & Utilities and Transport)
- Need to address shortages in technical/higher level skills (Health; Digital & Media; Finance & Insurance)
- Improvements required to the image of certain sectors (especially in Retail and Energy & Utilities)

On top of this, discussions with local businesses (via the T&M Local Strategic Partnership and the West Kent Partnership) and a recent skills working group meeting (on 08 November 2016) have also highlighted the following general issues where it is felt more needs to be done (especially with regards school sixth form students):

- The need for training in helping the development of softer/life-style skills.
- Further support is needed to fully demonstrate the real careers options that are available through greater interaction with businesses, involving opportunities for college staff to carry out visits to businesses, and the development of more courses involving real workplace experiences.
- A greater focus on pathways to employment.

There are a number of emerging local mechanisms for linking the skills needs of industry to skills provision by educational institutions. There include:

- A number of sector-specific guilds up and running in the county that are focussed on ensuring the skills needs of employers are prioritised by education establishments. The sectors include Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering; Construction; Hospitality; Social and Health Care; Life Sciences and Land-Based Industries.
- As mentioned previously, the West Kent Careers and Enterprise Company will, subject to funding agreements, be up and running in September 2017.

**16. *How can local infrastructure needs be incorporated within national UK infrastructure policy most effectively?***

In instances where new commitments of national importance are brought forward, greater weight needs to be given to the knock on impacts on local infrastructure. A case in point in Tonbridge & Malling is the Lower Thames Crossing. We very much welcome the inclusion of this commitment in the Industrial Strategy, however we are concerned about the localised impact on the A229/Blue Bell Hill (Variant C) which is one of the key link roads between the M2 and the M20, and is regularly congested during peak hours. When assessing business cases, greater consideration should be given to these more localised investments within the context, and as part, of national schemes.

**18. *What are the most important causes of lower rates of fixed capital investment in the UK compared to other countries, and how can this be addressed?***

There are likely a number of factors at play here. Whilst Kent does perform well when it comes to Inward Investment, as illustrated by the positive working relationship between Locate in Kent and public and private partners, one of the key issues that stifles demand is the availability of modern, high quality premises and 'oven ready' plots for commercial development.

**22. *What are the barriers faced by those businesses that have the potential to scale-up and achieve greater growth, and how can we address these barriers?***

As mentioned already, one of the key barriers in West Kent is the lack of modern, commercial premises. In recent years, there has been a steady stream of office block conversions to residential use, especially in Tonbridge, which has led to a steady loss. This loss has not been countered by a boom in new commercial developments. Whilst these conversions have helped to address the housing crisis, it has done very little to help local businesses expand and create new job opportunities. As such, more needs to be done to promote the creation of new office accommodation and to help unlock employment sites for mixed use developments that include much needed commercial provision.

It is not our local experience that the planning system has constrained business growth, especially in light of the number of unimplemented planning permissions, but it is much more a case that the financial

viability/attractiveness of residential development to developers in comparison with bringing forward commercial development means residential developments deliver a much higher rate of return to investors. Despite this, we are fortunate to have a small handful of commercial developers operating in the area that have illustrated the viability and attractiveness of commercial development – such as Nepicar Park near Wrotham and recent developments in Aylesford.

In recent years there has been a growing emphasis on Enterprise Zones as a means of achieving greater growth. It would seem somewhat of an oversight to not include these in to the discussion.

**34. Do you agree the principles set out (in the strategy) are the right ones? If not, what is missing?**

Overall, the principles set out are commendable, however it is important to note the following:

- Although London and the South East outperforms the rest of the UK economically, it will be important to not lose focus of what makes the South East economy successful, and ensure that it continues to play as strong a role as possible in driving growth.
- Related to the above, it should be stressed that the commitment to invest in rail in the North and Midlands should not mean that the case for improvements to the commuter lines, especially in from West Kent, is overlooked.

**Conclusion**

Overall, the council welcomes the Green Paper and is supportive of the aims and objectives of the strategy in stimulating economic growth and prosperity. Our key points are set out below:

- 1. To succeed, the strategy needs the right mechanisms at the local level to ensure effective delivery.** The West Kent Partnership, feeding in to the Kent & Medway Economic Partnership, should have a key role to play in this.
- 2. Although rebalancing the national economy is important, it should also be recognised that there are clear opportunities for building upon the successes of the South East economy, and addressing its areas of underperformance.**
- 3. Consideration needs to be given to greater protection of commercial premises and land to ensure local businesses and inward investors have the supply and range of available accommodation in order to enable local economic growth.** Whilst a stimulus is rightly being provided to encourage housing growth, this shouldn't be to the detriment of businesses who are looking to expand or relocate.
- 4. Recognition of the role that R&D plays in economic growth is much welcomed, and this should be backed up by much greater investment in research facilities across the country, not necessarily just those areas with a strong University presence.**
- 5. The local impacts of national infrastructure policy need to be incorporated into the business cases and overall value for money assessments in order to ensure they are properly considered through a holistic approach to investment decisions.**

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

**06 July 2017**

**Report of the Chief Executive**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Information**

**1 WEST KENT PARTNERSHIP - MINUTES**

**1.1 Meeting Held on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

- 1.1.1 Minutes of the most recent meeting of the West Kent Partnership are attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.1.2 The main theme of the meeting was a focus on the needs of the West Kent creative sector which included presentations from three local businesses: The House (Tunbridge Wells), Treatout (Sevenoaks) and MCM (Tonbridge). Issues of concern to the sector related to the retention of staff given the fast moving nature of digital technologies and the demand for suitable premises where small technology businesses can base themselves alongside other such businesses.
- 1.1.3 The House in Tunbridge Wells is a good example of such a 'hub'. Following a report to the Finance and Property Advisory Board in September 2016 to agree future commercial use of the building, a similar hub facility for small businesses will be set up by the same company at the Castle Lodge, Tonbridge.
- 1.1.4 The meeting also heard from Adam Bryan, Chief Executive of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) regarding two new strategies being developed: a new Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and a new Skills Strategy. Key to the development of both will be the need for stakeholder engagement which will include consultation with the members of the West Kent Partnership. These will be reviewed at future West Kent Partnership meetings.

Background papers:

contact: Mark Raymond

Nil

Julie Beilby  
Chief Executive

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### Minutes - West Kent Partnership – Friday 28 April, 2017

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#### Present

Nicolas Helsop, TMBC, Chairman  
Peter Fleming, SDC  
Jane March TWBC  
Brian Luker, TMBC  
Roddy Hogarth, SDC  
Sean Holden, KCC  
Adam Bryan, SELEP  
Jon Regan, Hugh Lowe Farms  
Tudor Price, KICC  
Paul Hannan, Hadlow Group  
Tracy-Anne Barker, Hadlow Group  
William Benson, TWBC  
David Candlin, TWBC  
Nigel Smith, KCC  
David Joyner, KCC  
Mark Raymond, TMBC  
Emily Haswell, SDC  
Wendy Wood, WKP

#### Apologies

Pav Ramewal, SDC  
Lesley Bowles, SDC – Emily Haswell attends  
Mark Dance, KCC – Sean Holden attends  
Julia Chapman. Roscoe Walford, Kent Police  
Richard Hayden, MTW Health Trust  
Caroline Shaw/Jon Rosser, IMAGO  
Julie Beilby, TMBC  
Henry Warde, Squerryes  
Iain McNab, BEIS  
Catherine Brunger, AXA PPP  
Roger House

#### Guests

Tony Witton, KCC  
Lucy Keeley, KCC  
Dominic Johnson, Miramedia  
Deborah Terry, Treatout  
John McMahon, MCM

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Introductions were made and the Chairman welcomed guests to the meeting.

#### Minutes and Matters Arising

Paul Hannan updated Partners on the Area Review. The report will be available on 30 June. KCC will continue to be involved in strategic planning post 16. There are to be some changes to the management of Colleges. Mid Kent and North Kent will continue to stand alone and funding will be made available for Canterbury and East Kent to merge. The governing bodies of West Kent, Hadlow and Ashford – the Hadlow Group – are to review governance and give consideration to a full merger of all three Colleges. Provision and branding would be unchanged, but a merger could be seen to provide stability and represent less risk.

#### Creative Industries

Partners received a regional perspective from Lucy and Tony and then heard of initiatives and challenges from three local creative businesses.

South East Creative Economy Network and Creative and Media Guild – Lucy Keeley and Tony Witton, KCC

## **Kent Cultural Strategy**

Tony provided partners with an overview of the Kent Cultural Strategy which is owned by the sector with KCC acting as an enabler, undertaking governance and managing strategy. More than 18 months of consultation is informing the development of a new strategy with a 10 year vision – an aspiration for arts and culture to be integrated in every day society under the 3 pillars of Create, Innovate and Sustain.

Tony to supply data on creative businesses in West Kent

## **South East Creative Economy Network**

TW

Lucy introduced the South East Creative Economy Network which is a SELEP initiative arising out of the Strategic Economic Plan recognising that building a thriving creative economy is critical to economic success. The Network has been in place for 2-3 years and is designed to among other objectives, harness the creative talent pool in London who are relocating to the LEP area.

The Network has 4 main work areas –

Workspace – an audit has been completed in Kent to ensure there is workspace fit for the needs of creative industries. The Kent Workspace Strategy will tie in with others in the LEP Including integrating with new housing developments.

Business support – an ERDF funding bid to bring investment for the creative sector has been submitted to DCLG and further work is being undertaken before resubmission. The programme includes forming cultural hubs, a grants programme aimed at stimulating cooperation and sharing best practice between businesses and advice services for the creative sector.

Talent accelerator – a programme from the Arts Council to grow a skilled workforce across the SELEP identifying interventions and training from 0-25 years old working with employers and schools.

Cultural tourism – Culture Kent build relationships between creative industries and tourism sectors. A bid to the Arts Council is being developed with the Turner Gallery in coastal Kent but should that be successful the learning will be applied across the county.

Tudor mentioned an innovative exchange programme to sell services to Europe for creative industries.

## **Creative and Media Guild**

LK

Lucy gave an overview of the Guilds which aim to create closer links between industry and education and help prepare students for the world of work. The Creative and Media Guild is one of 8 guilds established through KMEP. Set up a year ago it now numbers 40 members, is chaired by an employer and includes young people. Further employers, particularly from digital and media are being



recruited. Programmes include an inspire vocational programme run in schools, careers advice, accreditation using the model of children's university and a passport record of personal learning. The Guild supports delivery of talent accelerator and cultural learning and creative skills are proven to build creative thinking and confidence.

Partners recognised that there is quite a cross-over of programmes and initiatives in supporting young people with careers choices. This will now include the forthcoming West Kent Enterprise Adviser Network. It was noted that there are real opportunities to streamline the activity in the West Kent area through close cooperation between the West Kent Network, the Guilds and providers

#### **The House, Tunbridge Wells – Dominic Johnson, Miramedia**

WW

One of the workspace initiatives brought forward through the South East Creative Economy Network in partnership with business is a creative shared space at The House, in Tunbridge Wells.

Dominic explained how he came to be involved in the project. As a digital agency his staff are young, and whilst recruitment is straightforward, retention is more difficult. The House provides all the advantages of a larger 'cool' employer, with a strong social element and opportunity to learn new skills through mixing with other businesses.

The House allows smaller companies to not only access those qualities which build a creative vibe but delivers economies of scale and is hassle free. It provides access to freelancers and potential sub contractors and is an opportunity to share contacts. The model allows a smaller agency to compete for full service agency work without having to directly employ specialist staff. Office space can shrink and grow depending on size of a team and there is easy access to meeting space and other shared resources such as communal space including a garden. All office services such as IT support and cleaning are included in the rental cost. The model allows Dominic to stay small and dedicated but access larger business benefits.

Looking to the future Dominic sees opportunities to extend the benefits with more collaborative working, maybe a house apprentice working with different businesses, additional shared House services such as a bookkeeper, HR support and harnessing joint purchasing power.

Tudor mentioned that study visits to European countries can be very useful for developing models and cited a collaborative consortium in Poland comprising designers and manufacturers. Details to be provided.

TP

#### **Treatout – Deborah Terry**

Deborah introduced the business, which is a subscription app designed to facilitate people with food intolerances to eat out with confidence. Developed with chefs at partner restaurants, diners will have inputted the food they can't eat and the app will tell them the dishes they can eat.

The company has been set up by 3 local Mums but most of the pre-start support

they have received has been out of area – Google campus for Mums in London and London mentors through contacts. Networking is vital to help access funding needed and has been provided through Entrepreneurial Sparks in Brighton.

Deborah would like to see local businesses able to access funding, grants, mentors and training locally.

Post meeting – SDC providing support to link Treatout to local support, grant and funding streams.

### **MCM - John McMahon**

EH

John introduced his full service digital marketing agency which has been based in Tonbridge High Street for 20 years and now employs 20 people. He highlighted the rapid changes within the industry where now the vast majority of marketing is online. Activity is now highly scientific and MCM work as a Google Partner accessing their range of algorithms. The offer to agency clients is now around identifying their ideal client and then building a digital marketing plan using algorithms to reach the target audience. Websites are designed with the end user in mind, utilising search engine optimisation and sites need to be mobile friendly and load quickly.

Social media is a key tool in any marketing activity and Facebook is now able to build up a profile of people using their search history allowing targeted advertising on their home page.

John identified ongoing challenges for his business around finding and retaining staff where London, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells have a good offer. The cost of town centre parking is an issue and very little free parking now available. The town centre location is good for the business and for the town but brings bigger business rates. It is becoming easier to recruit young people locally as there is a bigger pool of people now the industry is more established and training is being delivered. It is so fast moving that the challenge in digital marketing is to keep updated enough to be relevant.

John stated that he was keen to support the development of relevant syllabuses and was pleased to connect with Hadlow Group at the meeting.

The business was involved in Growth Accelerator which was motivational for staff, involving them in the journey for the business.

TAB

### **SELEP – Strategic Economic Plan and Skills Strategy – Adam Bryan**

#### **SEP**

Adam outlined the need for a new Strategic Economic Plan following the successful lobbying to Government for more flexibility over local spend of Local Growth Hub funds. There is now no need for Government sign off and there is an enhanced decision making capability for the Federated Boards around re-distribution of allocated funds to ensure spend within a given funding year. SELEP was also successful in receiving one of the largest LGF settlements which whilst reflecting

the size of the LEP, also demonstrates that Government is influenced by the case SELEP made of the need for investment funds.

The timescale is now to go out again to tender for consultants to ensure a quality approach with the SEP being signed off at the December SELEP Board Meeting.

The new SEP will

- Be a cohesive strategy
- Reflect current economic conditions
- Capitalise on the strong relationships with universities
- Maximise opportunities around Lower Thames Crossing
- Make a powerful case for funding
- Align with Industrial Strategy
- Have concrete, achievable outcomes
- Be developed out of comprehensive stakeholder engagement
- Plan for effective management of LGF
- Incorporate cross cutting themes and have reference among others, to impacts from neighbouring LEP areas, London growth, sub regional transport bodies and devolution

There was some discussion on how West Kent can help inform the development of the new SEP and Partners suggested that

- Consultants talk separately to each of the Districts as well as being offered an opportunity to engage at a WKP level
- Case for West Kent to be supplied AB
- Plan should make strong case for redistributed former EU funds to be made available to SELEP and not weighted to other areas WW
- Incorporate the unique constituency of West Kent economy AB
  - facilitate business support locally (ie – Treatout needed to travel to Brighton to access Bright Sparks scheme and London to access Google Campus for Mums)
  - recognise that West Kent looks to London more than to the rest of SELEP – strategic issues for London have more impact in West Kent

### **Skills strategy**

AB

A new skills strategy is being developed in close cooperation with colleges and universities and will be underpinned by a very strong evidence base. Publication is expected in September/October.

The skills strategy evidence base will include a summary for every district. This model is already in place in Essex and has been adopted by business as a way to help understand the challenges and plan for college provision.

As part of the stakeholder engagement phase of the development of the plan, Partners were keen to input the needs of West Kent and Louise Aitken who is the LEP Skills Lead to be invited to attend the next WKP meeting to present the evidence base for West Kent to facilitate a discussion on the skills challenges for

the area.

WW

A skills and social inclusion event is planned on July 7 in Harlow with the Skills Minister, Robert Halfon who is the local MP. This event will also link to the SELEP enterprise adviser network which is now working with 200 schools.

Adam informed Partners there is an intention to utilise the Skills Adviser website built by East Kent College.

#### **Update – KMEP – Paper A**

Sarah highlighted some key information from Paper A

- Rail Summit at KCC on Monday 15 May
- Call for large schemes (over £100M in value) for Department for International Trade to offer to overseas investors
- Next KMEP meeting will focus on Industrial Strategy and the action plan developing from the Cultural Strategy

#### **Update – West Kent Priorities – Paper B**

Wendy summarised the key issues in Paper B

- Good progress against all 5 of key priorities – but particularly in the development of skills initiatives
  - Successful Job Fair format now delivering two events a year in partnership with Jobcentre Plus
  - Funding has now been secured from CEC and Hadlow Group for a West Kent Enterprise Adviser Network. Recruitment of coordinator will now take place so that work with schools can start in September. More detail at next WKP meeting.
  - West Kent Skillsfest will take place at The Assembly Halls on 10 October and is being delivered in partnership with WKP, AXA PPP, Education Business Partnership and West Kent Schools

#### **AOB**

None

#### **Dates of next meetings**

- Friday 28 July, 2017 – West Kent College
- Friday 20 October, 2017, Alexandra Suite, Swanley

# Agenda Item 9

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

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# Agenda Item 10

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.

**ANY REPORTS APPEARING AFTER THIS PAGE CONTAIN EXEMPT  
INFORMATION**

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# Agenda Item 11

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

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