

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
ECONOMIC REGENERATION ADVISORY BOARD

07 September 2016

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 WEST KENT PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

To receive the minutes of the recent meeting of the West Kent Partnership and to outline a recent visit of the Chairman of SELEP to West Kent.

1.1 West Kent Partnership

1.1.1 The minutes of the West Kent Partnership meeting held on 22nd July are attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

1.1.2 The meeting focused on the following key issues:

- Skills and recruitment issues for West Kent with presentations from the Tunbridge Wells and Maidstone NHS Trust and Hadlow College
- Business support including growth hub recommissioning now underway and a report on the successful West Kent business support programme (detailed elsewhere on this agenda)
- Post Brexit issues for local businesses and partners
- Feedback from three local businesses who had received loan support from the West Kent 'Escalate' programme and the positive effects these have had on business growth.

1.2 SELEP Visit to West Kent

1.2.1 The Chairman of SELEP, Christian Brodie, was invited to visit key sites in West Kent and the visit took place on 8th July 2016. The Chairman of the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership, Geoff Miles, also attended. The purpose of the visit was showcase key economic regeneration opportunities in West Kent to link with local bids submitted to the third round of the Local Growth Fund (dealt with in a separate item on this agenda).

1.2.2 The visit involved engagement with a number of key local partners and included the following locations:

- NIAB-EMR, East Malling – investment proposals
- Tonbridge Town Centre - regeneration
- Swanley Town Centre - regeneration
- Fort Halstead – key location for growth
- North Farm, Tunbridge Wells – transport/access issues
- Tunbridge Wells town centre – major development opportunities.

1.2.3 Attached as Appendix 2 to this report is a letter from the SELEP Chairman to the the West Kent Partnership Chairman which demonstrates the overall success of the visit.

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