

## **TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **ECONOMIC REGENERATION ADVISORY BOARD**

**Wednesday, 3rd September, 2014**

**Present:** Cllr C P Smith (Chairman), Cllr M O Davis, Cllr S M King, Cllr R D Lancaster, Cllr Miss J L Sergison and Cllr R Taylor

Councillors Mrs J A Anderson, J A L Balcombe, P F Bolt, M A Coffin, D J Cure, N J Heslop, Mrs S Murray and M R Rhodes were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Miss S O Shrubsole (Vice-Chairman), R W Dalton, Mrs S Luck, M Parry-Waller, A G Sayer and Mrs E A Simpson

#### **ERG 14/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

#### **ERG 14/20 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the notes of the meeting of the Economic Regeneration Advisory Board held on 3 June 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **ERG 14/21 KENT BUSINESS PERCEPTION STUDY**

A presentation was received from Mandy Bearne of Locate in Kent regarding the key findings of a business perception study for the county. Ms Bearne provided an introduction to the work of Locate in Kent and gave details of the results of the survey of some 300 participants on the attractiveness of Kent and its sub areas to business. The results were compared to similar research undertaken in 2006, 2008 and 2010.

The recommendations arising from the survey highlighted the need to continue to promote Kent especially regarding its proximity to London and access to high speed rail and financial assistance. Members asked a number of questions and were encouraged to note the positive comments about the helpful approach of local authorities. It was requested that a copy of the presentation be made available to members of the Advisory Board with more statistics specific to Tonbridge and Malling where possible. The Chairman then thanked Ms Bearne for her contribution to the meeting.

**MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET****ERG 14/22 CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE - ECONOMIC REGENERATION ISSUES**

Decision Notice D140098MEM

The report of the Chief Executive set out the key recommendations on economic regeneration issues contained in the Borough Council's Corporate Peer Challenge Report and consideration was given to a suggested response in each case.

It was noted that the Peer Challenge Team had made a number of positive observations on the Council's current approach to economic regeneration but had recommended production of an integrated strategy based on joined up working across all services.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the suggested responses to the economic regeneration issues raised as part of the Corporate Peer Challenge, as set out in the report, be endorsed.

**ERG 14/23 SOUTH EAST LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP - GROWTH DEAL**

Decision Notice D140099MEM

The report of the Chief Executive gave details of the key components of the recent South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) 'Growth Deal' bid, how the funding had been awarded and the implications for local projects relevant to Tonbridge and Malling. Whilst welcoming the funding of two key transport schemes in the Borough, the challenges associated with local revenue funding of business support services were highlighted.

**RECOMMENDED:** That

- (1) the outcome of the Growth Deal for the SELEP area and for West Kent be noted; and
- (2) the proposed position on the provision of future business support services, as set out in section 1.4 of the report, be endorsed and a further progress report be made to the next meeting of the Advisory Board.

**ERG 14/24 WEST KENT LEADER PROGRAMME 2015-2020: UPDATE**

Decision Notice D140100MEM

The report of the Chief Executive provided an update on the development of a further LEADER programme for West Kent,

specifically addressing the geographical extent of the new LEADER area and proposed local priorities upon which comments had been requested.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the further progress in relation to the new LEADER programme be noted and the suggested priorities for the new programme, as set out in the report, be supported.

### **MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION**

#### **ERG 14/25 WEST KENT PARTNERSHIP MINUTES**

A copy of the minutes of the meeting of the West Kent Partnership held on 25 July 2014 were presented for Members' information. The main business of the meeting had been the outcome of the Growth Deal for Kent and during an update on the Escalate loan fund it was noted that high levels of interest were now being shown by local businesses.

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

#### **ERG 14/26 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no items considered in private.

The meeting ended at 8.40 pm