**KENT INVICTA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

**Canterbury District Economic Development Group (CDEDG)**

**Wednesday 27th January 2016**

**Canterbury Innovation Centre**

**RECORD OF THE MEETING**

**Present:**

Chris Hare (CH) Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce - Chair

Mona Hodgetts (MH) University of Kent – Secretary

Nick Churchill (NC) Canterbury City Council

Pat Mills (PM) Clague Architects

Debbie Trewerne (DT) Chives Catering

Peter Hawkes (PH) Furly Page Solicitiors

Alison King (AK) Canterbury College

Linda Marsh (LM) Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce

Tudor Price (TP) Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

CH Welcomed all to the meeting and explained that he was chairing the meeting on behalf of Carole Barron.

Apologies Received from:

Carole Barron – Kent Innovation and Enterprise

Paul Gardiner – BSF Consultants

Andy Davies – Handelsbanken

Donna Pearson – Wink Worth

Rachel Downer – (Resigned from the group – Maternity Leave)

1. **Notes and Outstanding Issues Previous Minutes**
   1. No outstanding issues
2. **Chamber Update – LM**

British Chamber of Commerce looking to bridge gap between Industry and Schools/Colleges with new and different initiatives and highlighted difficulty in getting all parties engaged.

Membership – Concerns raised about low membership of Canterbury District and lack of interest from business to engage. Problems such as finding central location for evening meetings, competition from other networking events, lack of knowledge of what KICC can offer and the fact that CD is so widespread offered as stumbling blocks to membership growth and involvement. KICC welcome suggestions of companies to approach and notice of events to attend to promote membership. Suggestion made to ask businesses to host a meeting to showcase their company.

**Action** - **Members to advise KICC (LM) of any upcoming networking events and/or special interest group meetings which would be useful to target**.

CH raised the point that Industry not engaging with the Student Work Experience Agenda either and may not be aware of Government Policy changes and the implications on the new Levy to be introduced in April.

**Action – AK to give an update on apprenticeships and work experience legislation at next meeting.**

1. **Nick Churchill Update**

NC gave an overview of Canterbury Council plans as follows

The Local Plan Examination in Public (EIP) is progressing from Stage 1 to Stage 2. Whereas the first stage focused on spatial strategy including strategic sites, the next stage will look at small sites and policies to manage development projects. A Local Plan has to be in place and adopted by 2017.

The Local Plan will need sufficient sites to plan for16,000 new homes although of this amount some 2,000 have already been built. The Council is currently considering a series of new and other sites to help it meet its 5 year housing supply including previously omitted or rejected sites. Of note Thanington Park, Canterbury (750 homes and 4,000m2 of business space) now has planning consent while Grassmere Pasture, Whitstable is also being (300 housing units and 3500m2) considered. In summary the new Plan would rely on over 800 new homes being built each year up to 2031. The Council is currently consulting on these proposed amendments.

Nick updated on progress with the Local Plan’s proposed strategic sites. In most cases these were either at a pre-planning or planning application stage. Some such as Herne Bay Golf Club had already been granted planning permission.

An application for the largest strategic site at South Canterbury/Mountfield Park (inc. 4,000 homes and 70,000m2 of business space) is expected in Feb/Mar 2016. Similarly the scheme for Hillborough, Herne Bay (inc. 1,300 homes and 33,000m2) is likely to see a planning application submitted in the summer 2016. This would complement Altira Business Park where 3,000m2 of industrial space is currently being built and a 10,000m2 Sainsburys will open in autumn 2016 creating some 360 jobs,

Nick also updated on the Wincheap, Canterbury West, St Andrew’s Way and Kingsmead projects in Canterbury. Of particular interest was the fact that the Thanington Park development would fund a new Wincheap offslip on to the A2 and contribute towards an expanded Park and Ride site at Wincheap.

He also referred to proposals and announcements made by the Chancellor in the Autumn Statement regarding starter homes and other forms of affordable homes. These changes will present significant challenges in terms of where exactly these might be delivered, whether they could actually be afforded by local people despite a 20% discount and impacts on the ability to provide existing forms of affordable homes.

Finally Nick highlighted that he intended to carry out enhanced inward investment marketing (working with promoters and developers of strategic sites where possible) to help promote investment opportunities in the district. He hoped this was something that CDEDG might wish to contribute to at a future meeting in terms of ideas and feedback etc.

**Action NC asked members to feedback ideas on sorts of business investment still needed in the city**

1. **Tudor Price KICC**

TP gave a presentation on the recently started “Growth Hub”



1. **Round Table Member Updates**

CH (for Carole Barron) advised that Mr Bob Jones has agreed to join CDEDG and is looking forward to working with the group.

AK stated that the new Sports Centre at Canterbury College now open. Great facility for sports as well as business and conferences. Offered to host CDEDG meeting or network event in future.

PH Took the opportunity to ask about any updates on the old Slaters Hotel site plans which are directly across from his offices. NC stated no change at the moment.

DT Stated that Catering Business was going well, very busy with weddings and trying to build other corporate events. Appeal for a robust student work experience programme which businesses like hers could depend on.

PM Commented that it is an exciting time for development in the city and welcomed the opportunity to make suggestions on the types of businesses to attract to the city but raises concerns about infrastructure in terms of parking and accommodation.

1. **Date of next meeting – 22 March 2016**

**Meeting Closed 18:50hrs**