

Minutes of meeting held by the
East Kent Economic Development Group (EKEDG)
27/1/2016
Held at: Thanet District Council
The Austen Room

1. Welcome and apologies

Present:

Ray Johnson (RJ) (Chair)

Lee May (LM)

Kimberly Anderson (KA)

Dan Deed (DD)

Kate Wilson (KW) Economic Development – Community Regeneration Officer - Thanet DC

Abigail Raymond (AR) Head of Built Environment - Thanet DC

Apologies:

Jo James

Daniel Sanguseppi

Andrew Cruttenden

Tim Ingleton

Catherine Harvey

Jonathan Clark

Linda Marsh

Brian Hall

Paul Sayers

Jane Hughes

Absent:

Roy Attack

Richard Christian

David Hall

Danny Martin

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Approved subject to correction on final page clarifying that the new manufacturing focus group will be run by the Chamber and chaired by Tim Allen from MJ Allen Manufacturing.

3. Outstanding Actions

RJ confirmed that he had circulated the list of approved local plans and information requested on the minimum wage.

4. Chairman's Comments and Report

RJ drew attention to the consultation document on solutions to Operation Stack. The Chamber is supporting Sandford West option. A letter from Chamber has been sent to Highways Agency. A decision is expected in Autumn 2016.

RJ reported that Port of Dover are doing some works on site to increase capacity. In addition the tunnel operators have recently completed improvements to the booths at Jct 11A which should improve the flow of lorries into the site.

KA said that if Stone Park is developed for housing/shops etc, then having the area inundated with trucks is not ideal.

5. Presentation from Thanet District Council

KW and AR delivered a presentation on economic development and regeneration in Thanet District. The slides are available on request. Key points to note:

- Regeneration - Thanet is known for the Turner Contemporary/Dreamland. These are headline projects but more beyond that. For example, manufacturing is a significant sector.
- Housing Development – there are a number of local developers building in addition to the big national developers e.g Persimmon/Abbey. The Local Plan is likely to go for Examination in Public in 2017.
- Economic Development - Consultants have been appointed for an Economic Development Strategy Refresh. There is a target of 5000 jobs. Local initiatives include Kent & Medway Growth Hub – Growth Hub Local Business Support – focused on getting the business survival rate up. EK Leader Programme – Investment Grants for rural and land based businesses. Huw.jarvis@kent.gov.uk. Community led local development – for hard to reach communities. Skills are a big issue for the area. Coastal Community Team – Thanet Economic Plan. DCLG scheme providing funding. There is a shortage of affordable manufacturing space in Kent – Thanet/East Kent could help to deliver this e.g Stone Park.
- Infrastructure – Key projects are (i) Thanet Parkway and (ii) Inner Circuit. Thanet Parkway is essential – encouraging people to see the area as connected to London/accessibility for housing on business.
- Ramsgate Port – The port is increasingly coming back into operation. There is a need to increase awareness that from the Port of Ramsgate travel time to Darford Crossing is the same as for Dover.

- Manston Airport – The policy is currently to retain as airport. It is understood that Riveroak may be applying for it to be declared a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. The owners are in pre-application discussions with the Council. An application may be submitted in in April 2016.

Date of next meeting

Next meeting 30th March 2016 in Shepway