

KENT INVICTA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
MINUTES OF ASHFORD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP

HELD AT ASHFORD BUSINESS POINT

ON
THURSDAY 19th January 2011

Present:	Richard Lavender - Chair (RL)	Bill Fox (BF)
	Heather Grigson (HG)	Andrew Osborne (AO)
	Graham Galpin (GG)	Christopher Calcutt (CC)

Apologies:	Linda Marsh (LM)	Hugh Summerfield (HS)
	Richard Stafford (RS)	Paul Rickards (PR)
	Terry Botfield (TB)	Geoff Hilton (GH)
	Viv Kenny (VK)	David Maddison (DM)
	Jo James (JJ)	

1) **Minutes of the last meeting.**

Minutes of the last meeting were approved with the following changes requested:-

Section 3 line 3, No Social Housing on the Conningbrook site was not fully explained in the minutes and clarification was requested.

Conningbrook had not been allocated any Social Housing at this stage as the Borough percentage of Social Housing required was being delivered in other areas and therefore was not a requirement to this development.

2) **Actions from Minutes.**

Section 3 para 8

Waterbrook Development Extension to timescale AO said this was an extension to existing Planning Consent to prevent resubmission.

3) **Chairman's Report**

Due to the small number of attendees it was decided to have a general discussion that concerned those who had attended and topics sent in for the agenda.

RL read the following report from VK:-

1) Chilmington Green. The item has not been discussed at Management board level at this stage, but these are the comments from Christine Green, chair of the ATCP Environment group and Vice Chair of CACF (Central Ashford Community Forum)

"I am concerned that the proposals seem to indicate a self sufficient area, which may work against the Town Centre if not properly done. I think that we need to stress the importance of good links into town for all modes of transport. I feel that comments not dissimilar to those for the Conningbrook application would apply, using innovative transportation ideas to create a two way flow between the area and the Town Centre."

2) Getting Ashford town ready for 2012

A proposal supported by our Management board is to have a multi agency approach to getting the town ready for 2012, a draft brief is attached. Having met with Ashford Borough Council Engineer Ray Wilkinson and KHS Manager, Lisa Holder last week, in principle the idea of moving the project forward sounds a positive joint venture to enable the town to be clean, green and safe and ready for hopeful increased visitor numbers for 2012 with the Diamond Jubilee celebrations and Olympics. We would now ask if the link could be formed to ascertain interest and support from the Education/ training sector and perhaps the KCFG in supporting this through their own skills and expertise (dilapidations schedule, programme of works etc)

In answer to the 1st question GG commented that although the full planning application had not been submitted he could not see that such a situation would arise and it was Ashford Borough Councils intention to encourage the

use of the Town Centre and proposals were already in place to encourage public support to suggest ways of bringing the Town Centre alive again. AO endorsed this saying that there was not an intention to create a separate town environment at the Chilmington Development.

Item two was not fully discussed as it was felt we needed other group members present to do the subject justice.

Regarding future areas of concern for the group AO thought that the Borough Future Development Plans, Employment and the creation of jobs would be the centre of most meetings.

Both BF and HG were asked on their views regarding the direction the AEDG was taking and if they felt happy we were on the right track.

Both were satisfied with the course being taken and looked forward to more participation in the future once they got both feet under the table.

HG and RL would discuss a future meeting with the new CEO of the GSE Group regarding the Lorry Park.

The meeting finished ahead of schedule and RL thanked everyone for attending.