

Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce
NORTH KENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP MEETING
 18th October 2016 – 8am
 Medway Innovation Centre – Sunderland Room

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Chris Hare (Chair)	(CH)	Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce
Ann Komzolik	(AK)	North Kent College
Charlotte Bland	(CB)	Caxtons
David Edwards	(DE)	DE Management Solutions Ltd
Kaz Macklin	(KM)	Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce
Mark Smith	(MS)	Mainstream Group
Richard Longman	(RL)	Thames Gateway (Kent) Partnership
Suzanne Wood	(SW)	Construction Composites Ltd
Wayne Saunders	(WS)	Medway Council

IN ATTENDANCE:

Prem Velayuthamsmith	(PV)	Medway Council
Mandy Pegg (Minutes)	(MP)	MidKent College

Agenda Item	Discussion / Action	By Whom
1.	<u>Minutes of Previous Meeting & Matters Arising – 28th June 2016</u> Approved.	
2.	<p><u>Chairman’s Update</u></p> <p><u>Relevant Updates from KICC Board</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KICC AGM is due to take place on 23rd November 2016 • Innovative Sector Exchange – Various free sector events are scheduled to support innovation and internationalisation. CH to invite Steve Samson who is leading on the project to a future meeting (details on slides attached). <p><u>Correspondance email – Swale Borough Council Application No: SW/13/1571</u></p> <p>Members were informed of a public enquiry appeal that is due to take place on the 25th October regarding a planning application to erect four wind turbines at new Rides Farm in Eastchurch. Please click on the link for further information.</p>	CH

3.

Main Discussion: Medway Council

Laying the Foundations – What’s happened so far – Wayne Saunders

History

- Medway is a unitary authority that reports directly to government.
- The population is expected to increase from 273k to approximately 330k by 2036.
- Medway had 24% unemployment in the mid 80’s.
- A new high speed link train is available from Medway to London.
- UTC offers 14+ vocational courses in engineering and construction.

Development Projects

- Development of the Medway riverside includes 2000 new dwellings, community facilities and 12000m2 of business space. Countryside Properties are drawing up a development plan.
- St Mary’s Island (previously a derelict industrial site) now has 950 residential units and a university complex.
- The dockyard has been reconfigured and the dockyard pump house has been converted into [The Copper Rivet Distillery](#), a gin distillery which offers meals and tasting sessions.
- [Chatham Place Making Project](#) – The council have been awarded £4m of government money for regeneration works in Chatham. Work has already taken place at Sun Pier. Plans are also being produced on the reopening of the original entrance to Fort Amherst. Work will commence in March for one year.
- Gillingham North – A new marina is planned along with student accommodation.
- Chatham waters – Plans are being drawn up to redevelop the dock area. A new Asda and the UTI are both now on site and the project is moving into the next phase. Around 2000 dwellings will be on the site. Commercial development will also take place along with additional walk ways and public transport.
- Lodge Hill is the main preferred site for a proposed new settlement and infrastructure containing 5000 extra homes. An enquiry is expected to take place shortly regarding a number of birds which have moved onto the empty site causing the project to be delayed. A transport impact assessment will also take place.
- Rochester Airport Technology Park – The airfield is owned by Medway Council and leased to the airport operator. Planning permission is being progressed to close one runway and tarmac the remaining one. The reconfiguration will release land for new commercial development. An Environmental Impact Assessment is currently being progressed. Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council is the local authority for part of the site and so agreement will be required from them on the protocol with regards to the assessment and planning. The 800m runway currently has circa 28,000 air movements a year which will increase to a maximum cap of 38,000. ½ a million to 1 million square feet of commercial space will be gained if the project goes ahead. Medway Council is considering the development options for the commercial land.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation Studios, Strood – A new centre is being built that will open in April 2017 opposite the old civic centre. It will contain 15 units. • There are approximately 800 engineering and manufacturing companies in Medway, many of which are end user niche market companies. • Thames Crossing - A decision on the 3 options for the crossing will be made later this year. Highways England have talked to various stakeholders. Continued lobbying to government will take place as the link is critical to the development of the local area. <p><u>The Local Plan Update - Prem Velayuthamsmith</u> The local plan focuses on a vision for Medway’s growth up to 2035. A consultation of issues and options has taken place and a strategy is being formulated. Policies will focus on increasing the GVA in the area. Feedback will be sought on the location and expansion plans. There is currently a skills deficit for what’s required in the area.</p> <p>For inclusion onto the local development framework consultation database please email Planning.policy@medway.gov.uk.</p>	All
4.	<p><u>Round Table Sector Updates</u></p> <p>A discussion took place and the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 8 fast food restaurants in the local Wigmore area, with two only 1.5 miles apart. Members agreed there should be a focus on a healthy lifestyle in the development of Medway going forward. • The existing Medway local plan expires in 2018, when a new one will be adopted. Local authorities will be required to fully self-fund from 2020. • Development of digital skills in the Medway area (graphic design to programming) – There is currently a digital skills shortage in Medway and employers are taking on employees from outside the area to grow their businesses. Some companies have resorted to ‘growing their own’. CH stated a meeting will be organised for local businesses who are experiencing similar issues to discuss growing higher and degree apprenticeships. • It would be mutually beneficial for enterprise hubs and innovation centres to be built adjacent, or as close to university campuses as possible, to enable successful links to develop. Medway Innovation Centre was built in its current position as the council owned the land. • 50 thousand people commute out of Medway each day. If relevant employment and business opportunities were available in the local area graduates would be retained. 	CH

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members agreed they would like to invite the universities to a future meeting for an item covering destination surveys and why they choose Medway as a place to study. • The profile of new business start up's shows they are highly likely to be second generation boomers, with no mortgage and of an age where their children have left home. They often employ family members rather than graduates. • Thames Tideway are a company building a sewer tunnel under the River Thames. The project will be running for the next 10 years. Members agreed they would like to invite the company in to a future meeting to discuss opportunities and ways of supporting them. • Members discussed what was being done to articulate job opportunities coming out of future local developments and communicating these to up and coming graduates. Members agreed the seed should be sown and the required skills marketed to parents now via social media. 	<p>CH</p> <p>CH</p> <p>CH</p>
5.	<p><u>Any other business</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisional meeting dates for 2017 - MP to circulate 2017 meeting dates. • Members agreed greater business representation was necessary, with a wider spread (i.e. the retail sector etc). KM to assist in widening the membership of the group. • Timings & venues for 2017 – Members agreed they would like to hold the meetings at 8am with the venues rotated. MP to confirm venues/presentation items for future meetings to the group. 	<p>MP</p> <p>KM</p> <p>MP</p>
6.	<p><u>Date of next meeting:</u> 13th December 2016 – 8am – North Kent College</p>	