

KENT INVICTA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Canterbury District Economic Development Group (CDEDG)

Wednesday 20th July 2016
Canterbury Innovation Centre

RECORD OF THE MEETING

Present:

Carole Barron (CB)	Chair (University of Kent)
Bob Jones (BJ)	BID
Jacqui Offen (JO)	J & J Systems UK Limited
Bryan Hall (BH)	Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce
Debbie Green (DG)	Chives Caterers
Elspeth Hardie (EH)	University of Kent – note taker

1. Welcome and Apologies

CB welcomed everybody to the meeting especially JO and EH on their first meeting and expressed her disappointment at the low turnout. CB reflected on the need to grow the group and the need to encourage people to attend.

ACTION: All – If you have any ideas on who can join the group, put them forward.

CB also reminded everyone that if they are unable to attend they can send a deputy in their place.

Apologies Received from:

Peter Hawkes

David Hurst

Paul Gardiner

Jo James

Alison King

2. Notes and Outstanding Issues Previous Minutes

ACTION: EH recirculate the minutes and check actions

3. Open issues/Actions

No open issues or actions.

4. Kent Invicta Chamber update (BH)

Q1 had net gain of 18 members small but retention rate of 98%, they have been recently clearing any debtors and lapsed members from the data base, and this caused the net gain rate of new members to appear down.

The chamber have been running “Your future” careers fairs in schools, this provides apprenticeships details for schools. The chamber have 1000s on national apprenticeship schemes, potential apprentices have to sign up in order to receive further information. These events were mini careers workshops, funded partly by Chamber of Commerce. Ashford branch were one of the most successful branches within this scheme.

They have found careers services in schools to be very hit and miss, these sessions focused mostly on being employed. The opportunities of being self-employed were mentioned briefly but not in detail.

Linda Marsh has taken over young chamber responsibility, Your Future careers will be working again with schools and businesses, and they will be looking for sponsors for these events.

ACTION: BH to send EH the handout for the Your Future Careers events requesting sponsors.

The aim is to be started for September. Sponsors will be required for time and money. BH though the sponsors would be required to provide approx. £3000.

A quarterly survey which closed just before Brexit had a low turnout, but those who replied were upbeat. The next survey should be interesting, it is due in September. BREXIT was a shock although people are being positive in the outcome and working with what is happening.

The EXPORT Doc is ahead of budget.

Recent exhibitions have gone well, 3 have happened so far and 2 left to do. Carole Black has been sending things through. Have the fliers gone round?

Jo James and colleagues have been working with BCC on BREXIT, Jo is spokesperson on the Lower Thames crossing, pushing for movement and the airport.

EU funding, a bit of a concern. Although there are a few available. Low carbon across the South East has potential grants for £19m, running from now to 2019, across East Sussex, Essex, & Kent

ACTION: BH to send EH information on grants, EH to then distribute them to CDEDG members.

Another government funded initiative re heat pumping – BH needs to find more information out about this before it can be distributed.

ERDF, over next 2 years is uncertain.

Carbon Trust Fund – open to SME business

Grants for smarter travel up to £5000 per workplace.

UoK ran courses with chamber on business start-ups, looking to do these again.

5. Higher and Further Education Impact Review Survey Talk (BJ)

BJ provided a background on BID, he chairs the review economy committee.

Overview on the Student Impact Review was first run in 2006, rerunning it in 2016 to see the changes within the City over the last 10 years.

There has been a 50% increase in students in 10 years, this is for all HE providers within Canterbury.

The survey's objective was to understand the impact the students have within the city of Canterbury in 3 different areas, the HEFE Impact Review, looks at these areas which are;

- Economy - impact
- Infrastructure – housing/flats
- Social - behaviour

HE is to be highlighted as a benefit as not every town has HE, and it is a dominant industry in Canterbury.

BJ focused on Economy, as the impact of students was so much to ask, there will be further areas to review in the future such as;

- How much impact
- How much investment
- How many students stay and what do they do
- landlords
- nightlife

Students and HE establishments bring in £3.2bn for whole of Canterbury - £9.9m per year for universities (UoK & Christchurch), which is 28% of GDP of the city.

16,000 people/residents have a job as a result of University, which is 15% of workforce, these include bar staff, book stop staff and retail positions.

There is substrata of low economy jobs within the city.

A stable business model to build on, as universities have invested in buildings and estates and therefore unlikely to move from current locations.

Canterbury is a small city, the council committed to rebuilding Marlowe Theatre, this was a brave decision. Part of the reason was the stable university.

Empty buildings in city centre is currently 4%, very low compared to national average, which is just over 10%.

Student retention for Canterbury is lower than other areas, this is mainly due to Canterbury not attracting big businesses which hold onto graduates but this should not be seen as a bad thing. Freelancing, business start-ups and better mechanisms to help people to stay and start businesses is a focus and cottage industries for students, generating income for the community and tradesman. Looking for space in Canterbury Centre as a business hub, has been seen with Fruitworks, with knowledge, innovation drives and start-ups.

Students support the visitor numbers and upper level tourism. Serving different levels with students in the workforce. Students tend to come back in 30s and 40s – tend to come back once settled in life.

There are over 1000 owners of houses, which are subsequently rented out to students, some owners have multiple houses but there are others who just have 1. These landlords generate a lot of money for the local income and work men, on average £2000 per year is spend with local tradesman.

With the raise of HCMO bespoke student housing there is a concern where it has raised the standard in student housing, it has created an umbrella economically. Meaning the local trades are not employed for HCMO housing. Plus local landlords are unable to compete with the levels of service and facilities the bespoke housing provides. This could cause a divide between levels of housing and the abilities students can afford.

Canterbury holds the biggest night time economy in Kent. It is big business with most trade in the city happening between 6pm and 6am. This is not only for HE students based within Canterbury but local young people traveling into the city from around the county.

Businesses are given the opportunity to become a supplier for the university, to do this they need to;

- engage with local suppliers
- opportunities for employers
- Innovation make spaces, although cannot find out what is happening.

Kent county Council and University of Kent ran a meet the buyers' event 3 years ago, this introduced local suppliers to the university and forged links.

Wilkinson's biggest trading week of the year is 3rd week in September, particularly Canterbury, this is due to the number of students arriving in the city and requiring basic "home" supplies.

The City Council calendar is impacted by university and New Year starts September, they have released a Summer City Guide and plan to release a new guide for autumn. Although it will not be focused mainly for students it will provide information to those arriving in the city for the first time.

The Business survey received 50 returns, this produced some of the raw data. The final report will be done by November and will need to be able to show how to improve and provide outputs. Possible focus is what does the city do for HEs?

How large industries talk to people needs to be reviewed.

At University of Kent the catering team have won awards for 9 years running, these awards are not only focused on the university but are provided for the city to hire out, and shows how the university are benefitting the local economy by hosting tourists.

6. Round Table member Sector Updates

CB invited those in attendance to provide updates.

DG said business was positive with bookings already for 2018, confidence in the market place seems to be growing with more corporate events being booked in.

CB - The University of Kent master plan will be presented at the Abode on 28th July, an invitation to the events has already been sent out to the members of CDEDG.

CB – the University of Kent are looking at higher degree apprenticeships, these will benefit businesses.

CB – following the EU referendum, the university are holding breathe regarding student numbers. Those due to start 2016 and 2017 should be secure but after the UK leaves the EU, there is no information on visas and requirements so nobody can second guess what will happen with student numbers.

7. AOB

CB thanked everyone who attended, and reiterated that if you cannot attend please send a deputy in your place. Also the need to grow the group, if anyone knows somebody who would benefit from the group please invite them along.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Tuesday 27th September 2016.