

KENT INVICTA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
EAST KENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP (EKEDG)

WEDNESDAY 27th SEPTEMBER 2017 – 10.00am

Economic Development Group Meeting

Council Chamber, Shepway District Council, Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue,
Folkestone, Kent, CT20 2QY

1. Welcome and Apologies

Members Present:

Ray Johnson Chair

Lee May – Brachers LLP

Karen Dean – Brachers LLP

Ella Brocklebank – Jenner Construction

Paul Sayers – East Kent College

Mark Minus – MHA

Philip Clapham – Smith Wooley

Mike Marsh - Barclays Bank

Steve Wisbey – NIC Instruments Ltd

Daniel Sangiuseppe – Castlewood Hotels

Also Present:

Julia Wallace – Shepway District Council

Graham Hemming – Shepway District Council

Apologies:

Jonathan Clarke – Morgan Jones

Kimberley Anderson – Discovery Park

Katherine Harvey – Shepway District Council

Andrew Cruttenden – Martello Building Consultancy

Dan Deed – Woodley Coles

Richard Christian – Port of Dover

Tim Ingleton – Dover District Council

Richard Morsley – Betteshanger Sustainable Parks

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

RJ informed the group that David Crump had now moved on from the Folkestone Harbour Development Company and Trevor Minter was now back in charge.

3. Outstanding Action

Nothing to report.

4. Chairman's Comments and Report

RJ reported as follows:

- The Triennial was going well.
- There is a Kent Chamber Meeting regarding Lower Thames Crossing on 12/10/2017.
- A number of members attended the Port of Dover Western Dock Revival meeting regarding the Goodwin Sands. It was a very informative meeting. The Marine Management Organisation is going through a 3rd round Public consultation, the Chamber fully supports the Port of Dover's application for a licence. There is a vociferous campaign called "Save Our Sands" relating to the sands and there has been a lot of misrepresentation from this group.
- Still awaiting details of TDC team and who will be attending future meetings.

5. Otterpool Park Presentation – Julia Wallace (JW)/Graham Hemming (GH)

JW introduced herself to the group and confirmed they were representing the Council as land owners in connection with the Otterpool Development. She had a set of slides outlining the development. JW explained that this will be a new garden town in a great location. RJ read a letter the Chambers had sent to the Government supporting the development. The Council are joint land owners of the site and are working with the other main land owner which owns the former racecourse.

- Feasibility and capacity study has taken place – application being submitted in Spring of next year.
- Aracadis and Farells have been involved in marketing.
- JW confirmed that this is not just about new houses and that jobs are equally important.
- Farells have done lots of analysis on the garden town landscape.
- Looking at what makes a successful town. They have been looking at Tenterden and also visited Welwyn, Letchworth and Poundbury garden towns.
- From the Poundbury study it was recognised that there is a need for integrated commercial/residential properties. For example, supermarkets were built with office/housing space above. There is a factory in the town but lorries find access difficult with traffic.
- Main commercial usage would be the north east of the site.

- Westenhanger Castle and park to be integrated into the town.
- Employment would be close to junction 11.
- Westenhanger. Currently 1 train per hour but they are currently lobbying for high speed and more trains. Possibly being alternate stops with Folkestone West.
- Station improvements were being looked at with platform extension, footbridge and parking.
- Work would start around the station and 1 of the villages – the 1st phase will take 10 years upwards. It would be a 30 year build and start on the site would begin in 2020.

JW gave Local Planning Authority Update

- Review of core strategy
- Strategic housing market assessment
- High level growth options
- Sustainability Testing

JW reported that Lichfields were involved. They were looking at employment opportunities and how to grow. Also to make the town complementary to local towns like Folkestone and Ashford. They are also reviewing growth sectors, space typologies and implications.

PS said it would be a unique option for technical and College bringing employment and education together.

MM (Barclays) asked how Otterpool would be developed in comparison to Ebbsfleet. Ebbsfleet was currently mainly housing. GH said that industrial/office space had slowed down at Ebbsfleet.

RJ asked about infrastructure with people working from home in the future and the need for better internet connections.

SW reported from a manufacturing point there is a need for more industrial factories and in that business working from home would never be an option.

The site would be mixed usage and the pros and cons of an anchor company was discussed.

Locate in Kent had been conducting a study and they feel strongly that units will be filled as people were currently just looking for places and there is not enough available. Large companies have shown interest and space has just not been available.

It was discussed what makes Folkestone attractive – everything on doorstep, lifestyle, quality of life and value for money. RJ commented the connectivity and choice is excellent for the area for Shepway. PC felt that more leisure facilities were needed in Folkestone.

From a manufacturing prospective it is close to Dover/Tunnel giving great connectivity for export as it is so close to Europe.

JW said that it was a blank canvas and welcomed comments regarding both commercial and residential. There would be a focus on green/design.

The planning timetable next steps:

- Charter for Otterpool – draft document going on to website in next couple of days
- Housing infrastructure fund bid has to be in tomorrow. The County Council was putting in the application.

RJ offered the help of the Chamber if needed.

6. Sector Update

Ella Brocklebank – Jenner reported:

- Still very buoyant but usual issues relating to employment etc.

Paul Sayer – East Kent College reported:

- A new year of recruitment looking relatively strong.
- The merger of EKC and Canterbury College will take part in early January now as financial deal taking longer than anticipated due to long term debt restructure.

Mark Minus – MacIntyre Hudson – nothing to add.

Philip Clapham – Smith Wooley – nothing to add.

Daniel Sanguiseppe – Castlewood Hotels – nothing to add.

Lee May – Brachers – nothing to add.

Steve Wisbey – NIC Instruments Ltd – nothing to add.

7. AOB

RJ mentioned arranging talk on cyber-security with Mike Marsh from Barclays Bank. RJ said they were having a chamber events within the region which included Barclays and in addition he is presenting at the police headquarters at a cyber crime conference. LM mentioned a data protection seminar being run by Brachers and confirmed he would let the group have details. EB confirmed that Jenner would be happy to accommodate a future meeting.

Date of next meeting

29/11/2017 – Lydd Airport with presentation and tour.