

EDG Meeting June – Minutes

Minutes

Attending:

Suzanne Wood, Chairman (SW)	Medway Fibreglass
Chris Inwood (CI)	Gravesham Borough Council
Clem Smith (CS)	Medway Council
Peter Cooper (PC)	Penshurst Planning
Steven Boxall (SB)	Regeneration X
Emma Harraden (EH)	Hatten Wyatt
Martin Garside (MG)	Port of London Authority
David Liston-Jones (DLJ)	Thames Gateway Kent Partnership
Janet Robinson (JR)	Springfield Education & Training
Stephen Parker (SP)	Willmott Dixon
Richard Lavender (RL)	Chair Ashford EDG KICC

Apologies:

Alastair Gale	Port of London Authority
Robert Goodman	Bluewater
Gareth Edwards	Gem Merchandising
Richard Longman	Thames Gateway Kent Partnership
Lewis Kirnon (LK)	Dartford Borough Council
Phil Matthews (PM)	North West Kent College / SUSCON
Stacey Driver (SD)	Stickleback Manufacturing
Graham Moody (GM)	North West Kent College / Maritime
Carlo Gargiulo (CG)	Swale Borough Council

TIGER FUND:

DLJ - Going well and have 30-40 applications across NK and Thurrock which will be approx. £6-7 m if approved. Rate and quality is good. Gravesham's response is poor due to the sector definition which may need reviewing. The September board meeting may determine if this is to be the case. Mail shot going out from Kent County Council shortly..

CI - Few companies in Gravesham fit into the sector definitions and some are ineligible due to EU regulations. Many ICT businesses work from home so have limited access to the business magazines and mail shots – but the information about TIGER is readily available. Possibly a couple coming through soon.

Paramount: Requirement for more information on this

Lodge Hill and Chatham Waters:

SB - Requirement for more information on these to enable decisions.

SW – plan to gather feelings from group at next meeting

Can we look at getting universities to join the group – this is still being considered – possibly early Autumn?

ACTION: If anyone knows any universities then pass information on.

SP - Kent Business School – John Morley may be a possibility.

SW - Needs to be one of the 4 in the area – it is essential we have representation from higher education

Manufacturing event (now taken place)

70 stands sold and well received and advertised.

SB - LEP – John Spence keen to keep the meetings as they are and coordinate them centrally – possibly some separate meetings will take place but to remain as is for now. Focus for LEP projects is on mobile phone black spots and coastal communities.

There is push for more progress on free flow tolls at the Dartford crossing

There is £49m in the fund to be spent on infrastructure - £21m of that is for Kent and Medway

DLJ: Areas to come forward with suggestions and continue to send proposals in. Katherine is going round to all EDG's to ask them to propose and each business would have been asked to put forward their top 4.

There is a requirement for the group to identify 2 priorities for the available government funds. Local Authority has to bid and put programme together.

DLJ - We will know this week what size the pot will be – so important to get plans and proposals together.

JR - Responses and requirements to be in by July

Local Authority and businesses input - put through to LEP

DLJ - Ross is in charge of pushing this and getting responses in and prioritising.

SB - There are more EU funds available from next year

ACTION: Suggest arranging a meeting to put across status and thoughts for NK and establish if views are in-line. Ross will have sector based approach.

SB - New economic development strategy will not be completely different – can be found online.

DLJ - need to ensure NK views are included and input feeds into wider document.

ACTION: All to come back with thoughts and Ross needs to be at next meeting.

Lower Thames Crossing:

SB - was at meeting previous day and Government recognise the need. Identified 3 broad locations including Dartford/Swanscombe/ East of Gravesend – and question over bridge or tunnel. Once location decided decision will be made on bridge or tunnel.

DLJ - Question over option B as may affect Paramount development – decision needs to be made quickly.

SB - requirement for more information on all of them to enable decision

DLJ – Option A would ease crossing congestion but little for economic growth. C would be better for economic growth but would be costly and has several environmental impacts. This one is not favoured by Gravesham Borough Council.

CI - Gravesham not favouring options C & B – C will not open any gateway opportunities and has environmental issues.

DLJ - anything that releases congestion is good.

C is favoured but need to know the views of NK. A – Locals feel will clog the roads and B may affect Paramount. C is far enough east that may bring benefits but has a local issue and need to get Kent involved. Need NK views to get into perspective.

CI - Confirm requirement for NK views to input into proposal – can Chamber canvas NK views?

Could poll members via website to ask for thoughts?

MG - need to consider vessel traffic and C is weak for that area.

CI - need to get feel and representation of NK and most Chamber members are in the East

MG - Option A is more practical and feasible to be done.

** We can put in a provision if NK does go against the preferred option

Clem - Option A will increase congestion. C enables a split and serves the rest of the community better and is strategically better - also may help Thamesport.

SW - If option C went ahead this would create more capacity

SB - Raised question over Lorries from Dover to Essex

DLJ - There needs to be review from international perspective too. The routes are marked – but are just illustrative at moment. Deadline for consensus is 3 weeks away and decision will be made in September and this will effect on building of Paramount

** If the tolls are removed then it will need to come under the London Congestion charges.

Most people have personal views at this stage

ACTION SW will canvas views of the group and put forward

CI - question if members can be split down into Boroughs?

RL – is sending out a full survey to all KICC members in response to the LTC proposals and will reply with survey results to the DoT, KCC and SELEP. Results should be available for next meeting. RL said that he would be attending the Radio Kent/Essex LTC debate on the July 2013 representing KICC.

Local Authority updates:

CI - TIGER events with high street banks and agents taking place. 103 businesses attended networking event. Local plan is quiet at moment.

DLJ - Housing development will start but not this year.

Clem - Rochester airport – results from consultation going to cabinet in Jul. 8 acres of additional meeting space – proposal to extend Innovation Centre. And market alongside Kent and Medway innovation hubs.

Approved planning application for Kingsmill plant with Goodman,

Chatham Water: Hit block. Phase 2 rejected – need for increased clarity on first phase of employment and commercial space – as need to be progressed in line with other areas.

Lodge Hill: waiting response from inspector.

Manufacturing Expo: Focus on young people and added value in area.

DLJ - NK B2B 17t October – key event for local SME's

National Maritime event: 18 July

AOB:

JR - HOP asked JR to help with trainees – will feedback at next meeting

CI - Need for local procurement update and work being achieved

ACTION: Bring to next meeting