

## Economic and Skills Development Partnership

Tuesday, 16 July 2019

9.00 - 11.00 am

Panasonic, Maxis 2, Western Road, Bracknell, RG12 1RF



Present:

- Bob Collis, Chairman
- Nancy Lalor, Learning to Work
- Peter Smith, Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Councillor Bob Wade, Small Business Champion
- Natasha Sedgwick, Thames Valley Berkshire
- Kashif Nawaz, Bracknell Forest Council
- Simon Cridland, Bracknell Forest Council
- Colin Willman, Federation of Small Businesses
- Councillor Ankur Shiv Bhandari, Large Business Champion
- Simon Fryer, Fryer Commercial
- Andrew Hunter, Bracknell Forest Council
- Peter Reynolds, Bracknell and Wokingham College
- Pam Sharman, Regus
- Julie Rees, Wellington College
- Lesley Hoey, Adviza
- Anneken Priesack, Bracknell Forest Council

Apologies:

- Laura Kean, Kean HR
- David Burrows, ON Semiconductor

### Action Points

Minute	Item
153	<p><b>Presentation on the Thames Valley Berkshire Business Growth Hub</b></p> <p>Natasha Sedgwick, Thames Valley Berkshire Business Growth Hub, attended the meeting to present on the work of the Hub.</p> <p>Business Growth Hubs had been set up by government to simplify the business support landscape, and to provide impartial fully-funded support for Berkshire businesses. The Growth Hub worked with Local Authorities, the Federation of Small Businesses and Chamber of Commerce.</p> <p>The Business Growth Hub was joint funded by the EU and LEP until March 2021. Following Brexit, it was likely that the LEP would continue to fund the work of the Growth Hub with government funding.</p> <p>The Growth Hub provided support over phone and email, alongside online information and resources. 1-to-1 advice clinics were also available on specialist subjects such as legal, marketing and accountancy advice. Programmes of support for Pre-Accelerator, High Growth and ScaleUp (for turnover of £1m and over, and 20% year-on-year growth) were available. The Growth Hub also supported an online Marketplace Directory to connect local businesses.</p> <p>The Growth Hub had helped businesses make £4.9m to date, from their creation in 2014, and had received a high satisfaction and impact rates in evaluation</p>

	<p>surveys.</p> <p>The Growth Hub worked with businesses from entrepreneurs through to large businesses.</p> <p>Natasha asked all Partnership members to send any referrals to <a href="mailto:berkshirebusinesshub.co.uk">berkshirebusinesshub.co.uk</a> or to call 01344 388005 or email <a href="mailto:info@berkshirebusinesshub.co.uk">info@berkshirebusinesshub.co.uk</a></p> <p>In response to questions, the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Growth Hub worked with businesses across Berkshire, but were based in Bracknell. If a referral was made of a business outside Berkshire, the Growth Hub could refer on to other neighbouring Growth Hubs.</li> <li>• The only criteria for accessing the Growth Hub was to be based in Berkshire, and to be an SME. The specific programmes had additional criteria attached.</li> <li>• Natasha provided fliers to partners to promote the Growth Hub and advised that there was a number of e-shop materials and social media resources.</li> <li>• The Growth Hub worked with nearby universities and colleges and accepted referrals from anyone over 16 years of age.</li> <li>• All referrals and discussions were confidential, and Growth Hub professionals could sign non-disclosure agreements.</li> <li>• It was noted that Oxford Innovation had been contracted by Thames Valley LEP to deliver the Berkshire Growth Hub from 2017 to 2021.</li> </ul>
154	<p><b>Action Points from Last Meeting</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2019 were approved as a correct record.</p> <p>Arising from the minutes, Bob Collis agreed to liaise with Pam Sharman, Regus around agile working practices.</p>
155	<p><b>Sub-Group Updates</b></p> <p><u>Employment and Skills Subgroup</u></p> <p>Nancy Lalor, Chair of the Employment and Skills subgroup commented that the group's membership had been strengthened by Councillor and Activate Learning representation.</p> <p>The subgroup had been informed that there had been a rise in unemployment figures for young people in Bracknell Forest in spite of investment to prevent young people being NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). The subgroup combined covered all secondary schools in Bracknell Forest in some form.</p> <p>The next meeting would be held at the new job centre in Bracknell, and Sue Boor from the Lexicon would be invited to join and advice on The Lexicon's recruitment processes.</p> <p>It was noted that the Berkshire Apprenticeship scheme had stopped due to lack of resourcing.</p>

The subgroup continued to work its way through the workstream, and revise sections where necessary.

The subgroup continued to encourage businesses to be Disability Confident.

Schools continued to work towards Gatsby Benchmark for careers advice, which were a new measurement against new criteria. Academic ability was still held in high regard, but work-ready skills were also valued more highly in the new criteria.

The Elevate apprenticeship programme had ceased at the end of June 2019 as it came to the end of EU funding. However, it was noted that Bracknell Forest would continue to support young people in getting the right career support.

#### Infrastructure subgroup

Bob Collis, Chair of the Infrastructure subgroup updated on the group's progress since the last meeting.

The workstream had been reviewed since the previous meeting to focus on 5 areas of work.

The subgroup had responded to the draft framework for the Berkshire Local Infrastructure Strategy, including comments that the document and format needed to be more business-like and ambitious in its early chapters. Bob Collis agreed to circulate the response. **(Action: Bob Collis)**

Andrew Hunter reported that the LEP had met with Government and had been asked to fasttrack the BLIS for implementation in October 2019. The LEP had received comments around the need for reference to climate change.

Andrew Hunter advised that the Local Authority's bid for High Street funding had been unsuccessful, however this had been expected due to the amount of investment in Bracknell recently.

Consultations with Heathrow airport were ongoing but were largely around the flight routes rather than business engagement.

It was hoped that the subgroup could partner with the Business Improvement District to work to support agile working.

Regarding electric vehicle charging, it was noted that the Council had limitations on where electric vehicle charging points could be installed, and that workplaces needed to support electric vehicles in order for this to be a success in Bracknell Forest. The subgroup recognised that until charging points became universal, it would be difficult to support all the different formats. Proposals to support electric vehicle charging had been well received at the BID meeting, and Bob Collis hoped to get this into the BID proposal plan as an exemplar for other Bracknell businesses.

It was noted that a park and ride service was not practicable in Bracknell as this required significant land use and co-operation between private owners and local authorities.

The subgroup had supported the launch of the next year's Photographic

	<p>Competition, which asked for photos around Inspirational Bracknell Forest. Bob Collis asked for any business present to consider sponsoring a prize.</p>
156	<p><b>Presentation on proposed Bracknell Forest Business Surveys - Ocean Consulting</b></p> <p>Bob Collis reported that he and Peter Smith had been in consultation with Ocean Consulting who had proposed to deliver a set of business surveys to be sponsored by the ESDP. The ESDP stressed that as long as the survey was GDPR compliant, this would be a useful process. Bob and Peter were to agree all survey question. The ESDP supported the survey.</p> <p>It was requested that the survey include a question on the size of the business.</p>
157	<p><b>ESDP Spring Event - A Walk and Talk in the Park</b></p> <p>Bob Collis reported on the ESDP's Spring Event which had included 4 speakers and a guided walk around South Hill Park's gardens, with around 30 attendees and a number of new businesses present.</p> <p>Partners agreed to use the next event to focus on the benefit of apprenticeships and higher level apprenticeships. Julie Rees of Wellington College agreed to host the event.</p>
158	<p><b>BID Update</b></p> <p>Bob Collis reported on the Business Improvement District.</p> <p>The BID continued to make significant progress through the steering group and consultation meetings chaired by Fujitsu. A consultation in June 2019 had not been well attended, and partners recognised the need to engage SMEs. The business plan for the BID was being drafted and would be put to a vote on 29 October 2019.</p> <p>The vote required two aspects for a decision; 51% of business' rateable value in the district and 51% of number of businesses had to support the proposals for the BID to take effect. Currently it was thought that the vote would win on rateable value, but there was less certainty around businesses by number due to lack of engagement from SMEs.</p>
159	<p><b>Dates of Future Meetings</b></p> <p>22 October 2019</p>