

Economic and Skills Development Partnership
Tuesday 22 October 2019
9.00 am – 11.00am
Fujitsu, Lovelace Road, Bracknell, RG12 8SN



AGENDA

Item	Description	Page	By	Time
1.	Apologies for Absence		Lizzie Rich	
2.	Presentation on M4 Junction 3 - 12 Smart Motorway Project		Nick Cooper, Engagement and Communications Manager	
3.	Action Points from Last Meeting	1 - 4	Bob Collis	
4.	ESDP 2-Year Plan Update	5 - 8	Bob Collis	
5.	Sub-group Updates			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment and Skills • Infrastructure 	9 - 10	Bob Collis, Nancy Lalor	
6.	Proposed ESDP Spring Event 2020		Bob Collis	
7.	Bracknell Forest Business Surveys		Anneken Priesack	
8.	BID Update		Bob Collis, Anneken Priesack	
9.	Dates of Future Meetings		All to note	
	21 January 2020			

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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>Presentation on the Thames Valley Berkshire Business Growth Hub</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 berkshirebusinesshub.co.uk or to call 01344 388005 or email info@berkshirebusinesshub.co.uk</p> <p>In response to questions, the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • 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. • 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. • The Growth Hub worked with nearby universities and colleges and accepted referrals from anyone over 16 years of age. • All referrals and discussions were confidential, and Growth Hub professionals could sign non-disclosure agreements. • It was noted that Oxford Innovation had been contracted by Thames Valley LEP to deliver the Berkshire Growth Hub from 2017 to 2021.
154	<p>Action Points from Last Meeting</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>Sub-Group Updates</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>Presentation on proposed Bracknell Forest Business Surveys - Ocean Consulting</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>ESDP Spring Event - A Walk and Talk in the Park</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>BID Update</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>Dates of Future Meetings</p> <p>22 October 2019</p>



Bracknell Forest Economic & Skills Development Partnership (ESDP) 2-Year Action Plan: March 2017 to March 2019 'Building on Local Strengths'

Actions and Objectives Progress Update – 7 October 2019

Action	Status	R/A/G
1. Build on Local Strengths: hold a business workshop to establish local strengths, business needs and expectations.	Meeting Held: 29 March 2017.	Action Complete
2. Set Objectives: reflecting Bracknell's local strengths and the outcome of the workshop, establish a new set of high level objectives.	Objectives Agreed by Partnership Board: 2 May 2017. Plan continued into 2019.	Action Complete
3. Deliver Work-streams: making a positive impact on the local business environment.	Employment and Skills Sub-Group: New Chair appointed. Programme revised. Membership increased.	Green
	Infrastructure Sub-Group. Programme revised. Membership increased.	Green
4. Enhance Membership: ensuring the Partnership Board and Sub-Group memberships remains representative of local business needs, and that there is continuity of Chair/Vice Chair.	On-going: membership remains strong with several new members joining in 2019. Vice-Chair required following James Taylor moving job location.	Green
5. Identify Funding Opportunities: supporting the work of the ESDP and Bracknell's local businesses.	BFC applications for funding under National Productivity Investment, Transforming Cities Funds and Future High Streets Fund supported by ESDP.	Green
6. Provide Support to the BID: programme managing to the early-stage development of the Western and Southern Areas BID.	Steering Group membership supportive under chair of Maria Sabey (Fujitsu). Specialist BID management company Partnerships for Better Businesses (PFBB) successful. BID at ballot stage following thorough consultation process.	Green
7. Improve Engagement: identify the potential for collaboration with the Berkshire Thames Valley LEP, Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce and other business organisations.	Liaison with TVCC continues with goal of seeking a joint event.	Amber

<p>8. Communicate: talking to ESDP members and outside organisations to build on Bracknell’s local strengths.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Bob’s Blog’ now at Issue Number 7. • 3 Spring/Autumn ESDP Events held • Joint photography competition with BFC in second year. 	<p>Green</p>
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Objectives

Action	Status	R/A/G
Identify Bracknell Forest’s ‘local strengths’ as the basis for understanding Bracknell’s collective business needs and lobbying on their behalf.	The April Breakfast Meeting on High Performing Workplaces used to help define future initiatives. Subsequent events covered Agile working and workplace welfare.	Green
Through the Partnership’s work-programmes provide a co-ordinated voice and support for the local business community, building on Bracknell Forest’s local strength.	ESDP continues to support the proposed Bracknell BID and provided a business view under Heathrow 3rd Runway and the BLIS consultations.	Green
Be the effective voice of local business in responding to government and local planning consultations. In collaboration with the local authority, aim to build on Bracknell Forest’s strengths as a provider of the right environment for businesses to thrive.	Lobbying has included the Heathrow Consultation, South Western Railways service improvements, the BLIS and funding for improvements on the A322/A329 (BFC) and A329/A33 (LEP).	Green
Support Bracknell Forest businesses in seeking funding from government and private sector initiatives in areas such as technology development and cyber security.	See above for government initiatives and support of BFC and the LEP. ESDP own initiatives developing in area of workplace welfare and agile working.	Amber
Lobby on behalf of Bracknell Forest’s businesses to seek funding for first-class communications and transport infrastructure, such as telecoms, road, rail, cycle and walk access.	As above. A successful BID will provide opportunities to initiate schemes that could be adopted across Bracknell Forest.	Green
Steer and support the development of first-class programmes and initiatives (e.g. Elevate) for training, apprenticeships and skills development in Bracknell.	On-going. See Employment and Skills Sub-Group Workstream.	Green

Support plans for the provision of appropriate housing and leisure facilities for the business community’s employees.	Infrastructure Sub-Group unable to identify a role for the ESDP. Topic removed from Workstream.	Amber
Establish Bracknell’s first Business Improvement District (BID) covering the Western and Southern Business Areas.	See Action 6 above.	Green
Help establish a vibrant town centre through the promotion of business interest and employment programmes.	No activity identified to date. Need to understand where and when the ESDP can support.	Amber
Establish collaborative relationships with the LEP, Chamber of Commerce and other business organisations.	See Action 7 above.	Green
Increase the membership of the ESDP, ensuring that Bracknell’s businesses are appropriately represented.	See Action 4 above.	Green

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ECONOMIC & SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

INFRASTRUCTURE SUB-GROUP



WORK STREAM – UPDATE: September 2019

Programme 1: Consultations	Lead:
Represent the ESDP Membership and associated businesses in responding to consultations relating to local and central government infrastructure schemes, including roads, railways and airports.	BC
Update: In June, the ESDP wrote in response to Bracknell Forest Council's expression of interest to the Future High Streets Fund for a grant towards the development of Bracknell Town Centre.	Review Date: 1/9/19
In June the ESDP submitted its response to the TVLEP's consultation on the draft Framework Document for the Berkshire Local Industrial Strategy (BLIS)	
Programme 2: Agile Working	Lead: SJ
Work with Partners/Business etc. to help promote a working environment for staff that helps generate community-wide benefits, such as reduced peak hour travel to ease transport congestion and also help reduce personal stress. Develop a series of Case Studies to be shared with Bracknell Forest businesses.	
Update: Case Studies have been requested through Bob's Blog. Whilst the BID Workshops did not provide a hoped-for steer on the way forward with Case Studies on agile working from businesses, there was enthusiasm for co-ordinating agile working initiatives in the BID area at the recent BID Business Plan launch event.	Review Date: 1/9/19
Programme 3: Electric Vehicle Charging	Lead: SJ
Support and encourage the private sector to lead the way in providing suitable charging infrastructure for electric vehicles. Focus on business areas and Council owned properties/leisure facilities/car parks to help with kick start locations.	
Update: As with the above, it was agreed that the BID Workshops should be used to steer the way forward with this topic. Bob to then circulate a questionnaire to businesses. The idea of including a co-ordinated approach to increasing the number of Electric Vehicle Charging (EVC) points in the BID area as part of the initiative for a shared parking initiative was positively received. A Report by PBA on EVC is anticipated shortly and will be used in assessing potential initiatives to be led by the ESDP.	Review Date: 1/9/19
Programme 4: The Natural Estate	Lead: SC
Develop ideas on how the borough's natural estate can be promoted or enhanced to benefit local businesses, e.g. open spaces used to provide 'outdoor offices' by providing IT charging points, WiFi and outdoor workstations or options for businesses to demonstrate Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) through tree planting or volunteering schemes. Seek support and sponsorship for a demonstration project.	
Update: The outdoor demonstration event, 'A Walk and Talk in the Park', was held at lunchtime on 23 May in South Hill Park. The theme of staff Well-Being and Mental Health in the Workplace was well received, with a round 30 attendees.	Review Date: 1/9/19

Programme 5: Photographic Competition	Lead: BC
Provide support to the joint annual BFC/ESDP Photographic Competition. Liaise with BFC's Parks and Countryside Department over competition theme, sponsorship and judging.	
Update: The 2018 competition has been completed with the ESDP sponsoring £300 covering six prizes. The best images were shown at South Hill Park in May and a photo call held on 4 June followed by a press release. The ESDP is joining BFC Parks and Countryside Dept. in the 2019 competition which has now been launched under the theme 'Inspirational Bracknell Forest'	Date: 1/9/19