

Economic and Skills Development Partnership
Tuesday, 6 March 2018
8.30 - 10.30 am
Capitol Building, Oldbury, Bracknell, RG12 8FZ



Present: Bob Collis, Chair of the ESDP
James Taylor, Bracknell & Wokingham College (Vice-chair)
Campbell Christie, Bracknell & Wokingham College
Nancy Lalor, Learning to Work
Peter Smith, Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce
Councillor Bob Wade, Small Business Champion
Andrew Hunter, Bracknell Forest Council

In attendance: Councillor Mrs Tina McKenzie-Boyle, Mayor
Atif Bain, Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce
Paul Britton, Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce

Apologies: Tony Bellis, 3M
David Orren, Thames Valley Business Advisers
Julie Rowe, WWP The Key Group
Harry Pickering, Schroders
Anneken Priesack, Bracknell Forest Council

Action Points

Minute	Item
103	<p>Action Points from Last Meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2018 were approved as a correct record. Arising from the minutes, the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Campbell Christie had met with the financial business director of Wellington College, who had joined the ESDP's Partnership Board and Employment and Skills subgroup.• Ingrid Dunbar from Maxis was also joining the Infrastructure sub-group..• Nancy Lalor agreed to follow up with Paul Thomas of Newsquest regarding support for the Photography Competition. (Action: Nancy Lalor)• The 2 year plan would be reviewed as a result of the ESDP summit discussions.• Members commented that the Mayor's Business Forum had been a great success with a focus on apprenticeships, ahead of National Apprenticeships week (5-9 March). The Mayor thanked all for their support and attendance.

Sub-group Updates

Infrastructure subgroup

Bob Collis provided the following programme updates on behalf of the Infrastructure subgroup:

Programme 1: Local Plan and Policy documents – Heathrow airport had announced 2 further consultations running from 17 January to 28 March on the infrastructure design options and the design principles for airspace. Flight paths would not be consulted on.

Andrew Hunter commented that the Council was in the process of submitting a response to these consultations, which would be shared with the ESDP. **(Action: Andrew Hunter/Bob Collis)**

It was suggested that a Heathrow representative be invited to update the Partnership on plans and the consultation. **(Action: Nancy Lalor)**

Programme 3: LEP and advice to Train Operating Companies – the subgroup had commented on the revised South Western railway timetable to request no reduction in the service to Martins Heron. A response from South Western railway was due in March..

Programme 4: Superfast Broadband – City Fibre would be attending the ESDP summit to discuss the superfast broadband needs in Bracknell Forest..

Programme 6: Sustainable transport – Stuart Jeffries from Bracknell Forest Council was keen for the ESDP to assess the impact of flexible working and travel times. The ESDP Summit would discuss the impact of broadband, housing and office space, flexible working would fit in with this.

Programme 7: Rented and graduate accommodation – it was agreed that this was a difficult topic and was an issue for government.

The Partnership discussed the implications of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), which could include up to 6 bedrooms without planning permission.

Andrew Hunter commented that affordable housing was delivered through developer plans, and the Local Authority had some influence over the housing mix on new developments.

Photo competition

Bob Collis updated the Partnership on the proposed Photo Competition which would be run jointly with the Local Authority Parks and Countryside photo competition. The competition would run from April/May throughout the year, and the topic had been broadened to cover the urban business environment. The subgroup was looking for prize sponsors, and it was suggested that photographic supply chains in the borough might be approached.

The Partnership discussed the publicity element of the competition, and agreed

	<p>that all partners would promote the competition through their own channels, and a piece in the Bracknell News may be pursued.</p> <p>Bob Collis commented that the latest edition of Bob's Blog had been circulated, and that future editions would be tailored for circulation to a wider business audience. (Action: Bob Collis)</p> <p><u>Employment and Skills</u></p> <p>Campbell Christie presented the Employment and Skills subgroup update.</p> <p>Stephen Crouch, Wellington College had joined the subgroup. Philip Cook of Involve and a representative of Romans were also keen to get involved in the group's work. A new NHS representative was expected to join shortly. The secondary schools were now represented by the Operational Headteacher of Edgbarrow School, Stuart Matthews.</p> <p>Apprenticeship schemes were discussed, including the Bracknell Forest Council scheme and how it would be able to recover the levy.</p> <p>Campbell raised some concerns around the Elevate Berkshire project, and suggested that a representative from Elevate be invited to speak to the ESDP about the project and targets across Berkshire.</p> <p>Schools were required to publish a careers advice policy by September 2018, and the subgroup had recognised a range of approaches to this.</p> <p>The ESDP discussed the importance of promoting apprenticeships and associated training to parents. It was suggested that twilight meetings at business locations might encourage interest from parents as well as young people. It was also noted that parents evenings were key events to promote apprenticeships.</p>
105	<p>Chamber of Commerce presentation</p> <p>Paul Britton (TVCC Chief Executive) and Atif Bain (Project Manager, Sales and Support) presented the current work of the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce.</p> <p>The Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce was made up of local chamber councils, who feed into national Chamber decision making; forming a powerful position for influencing government policy. The Thames Valley Chamber was the fifth largest (by represented employees) in the country. The Chamber had agreed to join the Thames Valley LEP's Skills and Employment subgroup.</p> <p>The Chamber's 2017 Workforce Survey of its members is aimed at understanding more about the education, skills and talent requirements of its businesses and has provided them with a strong basis for policy setting and lobbying government.</p> <p>The Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce Business Manifesto contains 6 pillars</p>

	<p>that form the foundation of their future working programme; influential, global, connected, competitive, working, ambitious.</p> <p>The Chamber was introducing a Young Chamber group to promote apprenticeships, student encounters with employers, experience of workplace, overseas students, opportunities and advice for entrepreneurs, careers advice and strategy, and technology and engineering. The model for the Young Chamber was being tested, and would be launched under the new Chamber of Commerce website.</p> <p>The British Chamber Council had undertaken a workforce survey in 2017, and would repeat this in May 2018. There was work to be done to better interrogate the data for local insights, but the nationwide results could be shared with the ESDP in the coming months.</p> <p>The Thames Valley Chamber had recently invested in a media suite for video recording, to complement a social media presence for small businesses. It was proposed that this facility could be used to promote apprenticeships too.</p> <p>In response to questions, the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a risk that in increasing the quantity of apprenticeships, their quality could be compromised. • Apprenticeship agencies are available to share apprenticeships between medium-sized businesses, however it was unclear how effective this 'timeshare' process would be for the apprentice or the business. <p>Atif would forward the presentations together with the 2017 survey results for London and the South East. This would be circulated to members as appropriate. (Action: Bob Collis)</p>
106	<p>Local Plan Update</p> <p>Andrew Hunter updated the Partnership on the Local Plan progress.</p> <p>The plan was currently in draft stage, and consultation was ongoing on the planning policies and sites from mid-February to the end of March. 9,000 new homes had been identified in existing plans, but sites for 3,500 additional new homes were required between 2018 and 2034.</p> <p>Andrew commented that Bracknell Forest was losing economic floorspace currently due to the conversion to residential units.</p> <p>Partners were encouraged to circulate the consultation information to their staff and memberships for information, to encourage a diverse response.</p> <p>Arising from questions, the following points were noted:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under new government proposals, Councils may be able to take past experience of developers into account to inform planning applications, but could not take into account the experience of other Councils. • An infrastructure plan was being developed to support new proposed sites. • It was unclear how many more residents would be brought to the borough in the new sites, as all sites had a mix of unit sizes. It was noted that the School Places Plan had taken into account the proposed new sites. • It was noted that the Council had a duty to co-operate across boundaries with different Local Authorities, particularly on infrastructure projects.
107	<p>ESDP Breakfast Forum</p> <p>Bob Collis informed the Partnership that the ESDP Breakfast Forum would be held on 12 April 2018 at Wellington College, between 9.30 – 11:30am. Presentations would be given by Morgan-Lovell, City Fibre, and Exponential E, and time for networking would be scheduled. The Partnership noted their thanks to Wellington College for offering to host the event for free, while the refreshment costs would be paid by the Council.</p> <p>All partners were encouraged to attend and promote the event.</p> <p>Arising from discussion, the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was suggested that coffee be served from 8:30am to allow for networking before the event. • Mayor Tina McKenzie-Boyle offered her invitation list which had been used for her business breakfast event. It was also suggested that local Councillors should be invited. • Bob thanked Anneken Priesack for her hard work in organising the event..
108	<p>BID Update</p> <p>Bob Collis updated the ESDP on the BID progress. The BIG BID steering group had led on negotiations with a management company to progress the BID to the ballot, although the company had not yet been named whilst the contract was being formalised. It was noted that their expertise was already proving invaluable. Arising from the advice of the management company, it had become clear that the existing business survey would need to be validated with an additional telephone survey.</p> <p>The steering group continued to progress well, and Bob commented that it would</p>

	<p>be good to get small businesses involved too.</p> <p>Membership fees were to be paid by levy, but the cost of the BID was not yet clear.</p> <p>The local MP, Philip Lee, had not yet been involved in the project and the Partnership suggested that, at the right time, he be informed of the project. (Action: Andrew Hunter/Bob Collis)</p>
109	<p>LEP Update</p> <p>Campbell Christie updated the Partnership on the key messages from the LEP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a recent inspection, Thames Valley Berkshire LEP had been judged to be “Good” overall with Exceptional features. The Partnership welcomed this news. • A Skills Advisory Panel was being trialled through the LEP to assess whether businesses were getting the skills they required. • The Skills Summit would be launched on 19 April 2018 • The LEP was investing in the Berkshire Apprenticeship Hub, remotely run by Aspire in Slough. • The LEP was engaging with Bracknell Forest Council on their Industrial Strategy.
110	<p>Dates of Future Meetings</p> <p>The Partnership noted that the next meeting would be held on 8 May 2018.</p>