

NOTES OF THE ECONOMIC REGENERATION & INVESTMENT BOARD

21st December 2016

Attending: Cllr Clarkson
Cllr Shorter

Tracey Kerly (TK)
Richard Alderton (RA)
Dean Spurrell (DS)
Stewart Smith (SS)
Paul McKenner (PMcK)
Ben Lockwood (BL)
Maria Seddon (MS)
Charlotte Hammersley (CH)
Terry Mortimer (TWM)
Rosie Reid (RR) – minutes

Apologies: Cllrs Bell, Galpin, Ovenden
Steve Parish

<p>1. Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Cllr Clarkson made a Voluntary Announcement as he was a Director of A Better Choice for Property Ltd.</p> <p>Cllr Shorter made a Voluntary Announcement as he was a Director of Kent Play Clubs and A Better Choice for Building Consultancy Ltd.</p> <p>TK, MS and PMcK made Voluntary Announcements as they were Directors of A Better Choice for Property Ltd.</p> <p>TK made a Voluntary Announcement as she was a Director of A Better Choice for Building Consultancy Ltd.</p>	
<p>2. Minutes of the previous meeting</p> <p>The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Economic Regeneration and Investment Board on 23rd November 2016 were agreed as a correct record.</p>	
<p>3. Major Projects Review</p> <p>RA said that corporate project management had improved a great deal, thanks to the work of the newly-appointed Programme Manager. The new project schedule provided control over resources to deliver a realistic agenda. As it was half-way through the current Administration</p>	

period he suggested this was an appropriate time to review progress. He also suggested that the concept of the 'Big 8' should remain, and that this should be a progress review on those projects alone. Progress on other secondary projects could be considered separately. Service planning should be aligned to programme management and budget setting, in particular in relation to the capital budget and choices that must be made. Decisions were also required on how to use discretionary S106 funding to complement the capital budget. The intention was to join these elements in a report to Cabinet in March, and report to the Ashford Strategic Delivery Board on a more regular basis. All strands relating to resource management would be brought together in this mid-term review. All agreed that it was important to maintain strong relationships with the rest of the Kent authorities and refresh the Council's relationship with KCC.

The Leader said he wanted the Council to be more aware of time management and to be in a position to cut down on time frames. He also considered a traffic management review was needed, particularly before the opening of the college when there would be more traffic on the road.

4. Conningbrook Update

PMcK advised that an agreement had now been reached with a developer, and the valuation was in accordance with the valuation work done by Canterbury City Council. It was expected that contracts would be exchanged the following day. Capital receipt would be used towards the College, and S106 monies would be invested in the Country Park in line with the agreement.

The Board agreed that it was essential to resolve some of the fundamental problems at Conningbrook, such as the algae in the lake and the unsatisfactory road provision. This was particularly pressing as the national triathlon championships would be held at the Julie Rose stadium next year and the Council's reputation would be at stake if conditions were not acceptable. SS advised that a report would be submitted to call over in January on the consultant's solution to the algae problem, and a decision was expected by Cabinet in February.

5. Elwick Road

PMcK said that agreements would be signed this week, and that due diligence had been completed. The cinema operator was proposing to sign during the first week of January.

6. Commercial Quarter

SS said that agreements had been exchanged and the contractors would be on site in early January. Some floors were still to be let, but most of the main marketing work had been done.

Regarding the Youth Theatre, SS advised that a meeting had been

<p>arranged with the developer for mid January, and a quotation had been received for demolition work. Notice had been served on the tenants, but there was some discussion about re-siting equipment still on site.</p>																
<p>7. Start up Business Units</p> <p>SS clarified that a possible site was the land adjacent to the grounds maintenance depot. The proposal was to create light industrial units with a view to letting them out. Consultation had been undertaken with tenants in existing industrial units which indicated a pressing demand for new units to be provided. A report would be submitted to Cabinet early next year.</p>																
<p>8. Regional Growth Fund</p> <p>RA advised that the Autumn Statement had made announcements which would affect the South East as a whole. The Spurs project was likely to be funded, but it was considered that the town centre enhancement project would miss out on funding. More information would be available in January. RA said it was important to consider how to increase the priority of existing Council projects.</p>																
<p>9. Any Other Business</p> <p>A question was asked about the recent presentation on the proposals for regenerating the Newtown Works. RA said this should be added to the list of major corporate projects over the next two years. He would provide an update to the Board every other month.</p> <p>The Leader advised that there would be some merit in locating a 5-star hotel in Ashford, with an international conference centre. There was some discussion about this proposal and the Leader explained that there was an obligation to review the Town Centre Area Action Plan, which would allow for a fresh strategic plan for the town centre as a whole.</p>																
<p>10. Dates of Next Meetings</p> <table data-bbox="284 1512 1023 1697"> <tr> <td>25th January</td> <td>2pm</td> <td>Council Chamber</td> </tr> <tr> <td>24th February</td> <td>10am</td> <td>Council Chamber</td> </tr> <tr> <td>23rd March</td> <td>2pm</td> <td>Council Chamber</td> </tr> <tr> <td>27th April</td> <td>2pm</td> <td>Council Chamber</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25th May</td> <td>2pm</td> <td>Council Chamber</td> </tr> </table>	25 th January	2pm	Council Chamber	24 th February	10am	Council Chamber	23 rd March	2pm	Council Chamber	27 th April	2pm	Council Chamber	25 th May	2pm	Council Chamber	
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Queries concerning these minutes? Please contact Rosie Reid:
 Telephone: 01233 330565 Email: rosie.reid@ashford.gov.uk
 Agendas, Reports and Minutes are available on: www.ashford.gov.uk/committees