

Economic Reference Group

Minutes

Thursday, 06 February 2014 at 16:00

PRESENT:

Laurence Brooks (ANGLE) (in the Chair), Councillor T Wainwright, David Martin, Margaret Farrow (Federation of Small Businesses), Jonathan Newman (Town Centre Manager), Jill Hardy (Eastport) and David Dukes (Norfolk County Council).

David Glason, Peter Wright, Toby Matthews, Tracey Brooker and Karline Smith (GYBC Officers).

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Eunice Edwards (NALEP), Nova Fairbanks (Norfolk Chamber) and Tracey Jones (GYBC).

2 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2013 were confirmed.

3 Matters Arising

(a) Pinch Point Funding

The Planning application for the A47 link road had been submitted to Norfolk County Council and would be decided in the next few weeks.

(b) Enterprise Zone Report

Paul Spooner was writing an Enterprise Zone report and visited Beacon Park and stated that this was one of the best in the Country.

4 Energy Park Launch (Tracey Brooker)

Tracey Brooker tabled a plan showing the Great Yarmouth Energy Park and stated that this had been publicised from 5 November 2013. Tracey reported that there were 92 businesses in this area and she would be visiting sites 2,6,7 and 8. Interest had been shown in site 4 which was Asco's and that they were stimulating demand by

advertising as this is a long term project which is demand led.

The representative from the Federation of Small Business stated that they have members from across Great Yarmouth and Suffolk who are interested in moving to the area. The Economic Development Officer stated that the Council needed to look at what is available and then meet peoples needs.

5 Inward Investment Update

The Economic Development Officer reported that James Grey was funded by Norfolk and Suffolk Energy Alliance.

He reported that the news at Hinkley is positive and Sizewell will follow Hinkley and that EDF has already joined the chambers. He reported that oil and gas is happening now and that decommissioning is starting in 2015.

The Federation of Small Businesses asked if a solar wind farm would be coming to the borough and it was reported that one was under construction in Caister.

The Gallagher Wind Farm would be having their Operations Management Base at lowestoft (2015)

Dudgeon, The Wash have announced Great Yarmouth is their chosen port for their Operations Base. (2016)

Hornsey (2018)

The East Anglian Offshore Wind Windfarm - would be announced in June 2014 for planning permission)

Race Bank, The Wash - Dong are interested in this site.

It was reported that all tier 1 and 2 companies are in contact with the Council.

Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft are listed as 1 of 6 Centres for Offshore Renewable Engineering (CORE).

Grow Offshore are seeking to assist the offshore supply chain development.

It was agreed that James Grey would be asked to attend the next meeting.

6 NALEP update - Strategic Economic Plan, European Investment Strategy, Greater Norwich City Deal, Ski

Business Growth Programme

£3.9m of business support across Suffolk and Norfolk. The activity forms the enterprise element of the Ipswich and Norwich City Deals as was originally going to operate in just Ipswich and Norwich. however, we have worked to persuade civil servants that support should be accessible across Norfolk and Suffolk.

The programme is made up of five area of activity:-

Small Grant Scheme

This is a £1.4m of grants to create jobs in SMEs and sits beneath the Growing Business Fund.

SMEs are eligible for grants between £5,000 and £25,000 at 20% of costs, and in return we ask that they create one full time job for every £10,000 of grant given. The minimum number of jobs created is 1, even if a £5,000 grant is given to the business. The scheme is open to all types of SMEs (apart from primary agriculture) and has a simple application process, with support for applicants. The final date for applications is March 2015, as all grants have to be claimed by June 2015.

Business Start-ups

£750,000 of funding to increase start-up levels across Norfolk and Suffolk. In-depth start-up support will be provided by MENTA and NWES, including one to one support, advice and training. The programme would link to other business support activity to ensure that those taking part receive the support they require once they have started their business.

Innovation Voucher Scheme

£750,000 of support to increase levels of innovation through the provision of specialist support from UCS, UEA and NUA. The scheme will provide support valued between £5,000 and £20,000 with businesses having to provide match funding at a 1:1 ratio. Support will include a wide range of activity, including access to mentors, internships, consultancy and use of facilities.

Innovation Readiness Programme

Two specialist innovation advisors will be employed to provide advice and guidance to SMEs to signpost them local, national and EU innovation support and schemes, with an aim to double take up of innovation support across Norfolk and Suffolk.

Growth Hub

The Growth hub will for the umbrella under which all future businesses support will be delivered across Norfolk and Suffolk. The idea of the hub is to provide a framework under which a wide range of public and private business support activity can be easily accessed by business.

By taking a 'No Wrong Door' approach to business support, business will be able to access a wide range of business support, whoever they contact, as the Growth Hub will make cross referral between partners easy.

To ensure that businesses have good access to support, whoever they are located, nine Growth co-ordinators (including the two innovation advisors) will be based across the whole of Norfolk and Suffolk, with hotdesks located geographically around both counties. The sole aim of the co-ordinators is to signpost businesses to the wide range of business support, so they receive the support they need quickly and effectively.

there will also be a new Growth Hub wesbsite, build on the www.bizinfoportal.co.uk, where businesses can register and gain access to dedicated business support and

guidance tailored to their business needs. there will also be access to a national business support telephone line (0300 456 3565), which will link back to the national and local support found on the website.

The Growth Hub will be delivered on behalf of New Anglia by Suffolk Chamber, with a new CMS system on track businesses through the different stages of business support.

Over the next year, the Growth Hub will engage with 3,000 businesses across the LEP area, with Growth Hub activity being rolled out from February and April 2014.

7 Assisted Area Status Bid Update

Assisted Area Status permits the granting of additional financial support, via Regional Aid, to businesses in the economically disadvantaged locations. The support aims to encourage business in these areas to grow, innovate and thrive, which can positively affect these locations and help improve the UK economy.

The UK Government is conducting a two stage review the current areas included in the AAS map, as part of the new EU funding period 2014-2020. The first stage proposed the principles for devising the new AAS map, and sought local intelligence on economic opportunities. Stage two of the consultation was launched over the Christmas Holidays and has invited comments on a proposed 'draft' Assisted Areas Map 2014-2020. It is envisaged that the final map will come into effect in July 2014 following European Commission approval.

A successful first stage submission was made in September 2013, which outlined 20 wards in Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft, with a robust case for each ward to be included. Following on from this the draft map has now been published, with 22 wards in Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft included, two wards were added to ensure a contiguous map without gaps. the 22 wards area as follows:-

Bradwell North
Bradwell South and Hopton
Caister South
Central and Northgate
Claydon
Gorleston
Gunton and Corton
Harbour
Kessingland
Kirkley
Lothingland
Magdalen (additional)
Nelson
Normanston
Oulton
Oulton Broad
Pakefield
Southtown and Cobholm
St Andrews
St Margarets

Whitton
Yarmouth North (additional)

The LEP has now submitted a Stage Two submission to BIS, supporting the 22 wards proposed in Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft.

Strategic Economic Plan

The LEP is producing a Strategic Economic Plan which is designed to be a blueprint for economic growth across Norfolk and Suffolk for the next six years.

The document sets out our vision and a clear set of growth targets. It highlights our strengths and opportunities for us to grow our economy creating more jobs, with an emphasis on higher value jobs.

The document also sets out how the LEP intends to realise these ambitions through a Growth Deal with Government and funding we are seeking from the Single Local Growth Fund.

A first draft was submitted to Government at the end of December and the final version of the document needs to be submitted at the end of March.

EU Structural Investment Fund Strategy

NALEP has been tasked by the Government to submit a SFIS, to inform how the LEP intends to allocate its EU funding for the period 2014-2020. Over the last few months the LEP has consulted widely to establish the framework for the SFIS, including 163 people attending events, representing 95 different organisations, an online survey attracting 157 responses and a number of one to one meetings.

The SFIS has now been approved by the LEP board and submitted to Government and is on the LEP's website.

It is anticipated that the final document will be approved towards the end of 2014.

8 Operational Updates (EGY, NSEA and EZ)

(i) Ent-GY

It was reported that in the last three months an additional member of staff had been employed and that a Small Business Saturday event had been held. There had been over 40 start ups in the last quarter.

(ii) NSEA

Brochures would be taken to the EEGR conference in March 2014 which is a two day event.

Would be visiting exhibitions such as London Oceanics , Energy in Aberdeen, UK Renewable Glasgow, Germany in September as this is a major European event, offshore energy Amsterdam and UK renewables in November.

(iii) Enterprise Zone

Paul Spooner was writing a report on Enterprise Zones. The Council would be

building some speculative buildings and that wellington would be building units.

9 Economic Strategy Update (Toby Matthews)

Headline Figures

3,199 JSA claimants in December. This was the lowest December figure since 2009.

6.6% of 18-24 year old in GY were classified as NEET in December 2013, this is down from 7.4% in 2012. The county level is 5.9% and national level 5.2%.

Tourism update: total value of tourism in Great Yarmouth was an estimated £532.6m, supporting an estimated 10,300 tourism related jobs within the district.

Key Sector Development

College: For all 16-18 year old learners the college has increased its focus on work-experience opportunities to help learners to be more 'job ready' when they finish their vocational programme. Through the GYBC Coastal Communities project we are currently working with and supporting 10 potential Social Enterprises in Great Yarmouth.

Enterprise Culture

GYTCP: four late night shopping events held prior to Christmas weekly on Wednesdays from week commencing 25th November 2013 with majority of retailers in prime shopping area staying open until 8.30 or 9.00pm. The Town Centre Partnership supported late night shopping events with 3x rooftop firework displays and 1x community lantern parade. Year on year increases in footfall (as measured by monitor on King Street) were experienced in weeks one and two, with week on week increases of 36% and 16% seen for weeks three and four respectively. Market Gates shopping centre reported year on year improvement in footfall for all four late night shopping evenings.

Workforce Development

COLLEGE: The college has developed a new level 3 programme in energy skills which started in September 2013 and has been developed in response to local energy sector employer needs to act as a gateway to apprenticeships in the energy sector.

COLLEGE: We have renewed our contract with TCHC (TCHC offers practical business and workforce development solutions across all industry sectors) to provide more support and opportunities for 16 and 17 year NEET young people through the Youth Contract.

COLLEGE: The College is continuing to work with JCP to run Sector Based Work Academies for the unemployed with 1 course running during this quarter and 3 planned for the next quarter.

NCC: Between October and December, the Apprenticeships Norfolk Fund has continued to grow. With 97 starts for October and 124 starts for November, the fund has now reached the target of creating 441 new apprentices within Norfolk's SMEs an impressive 9 months early. Specifically for the Great Yarmouth district, the fund has

enabled 47 young people to enter into apprenticeships in the area and 36 Great Yarmouth-based businesses have been positively affected over the life of the scheme. Currently, there is an evaluation underway to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the programme and what will be the next steps taken to try and continue the growth in apprenticeships in the region. Coastal Communities Fund:

The Coastal Communities Fund is now fully underway in Norfolk, with 17 young people entering into engineering apprenticeships in the Great Yarmouth area, working for 10 local companies. It is anticipated that the next group of apprentices starting courses which will qualify for the grant will be around March/April, due to the intake patterns of the local colleges and training providers.

Private sector improvement: 3Sun academy. They have gone from 30 to over 200 students since moving to Great Yarmouth, with two thirds being external. This could show the private sector beginning to address a market need. One company director sated in the EDP this week " I can see Great Yarmouth going full circle back to its 1980s heyday provided there are the right business people, like Mr Hacon and Blair Ainslie of Seajacks, driving it forward."

Improving the physical Environment

STRATEGIC PLANNING: Persimmon/Bidwells planning application for South Bradwell submitted to Great Yarmouth Borough Council which included 10ha of new employment land, 850 new homes and a primary school.

Great Yarmouth Energy Park launched, Local Plan Core Strategy, Regulation 19 consultation completed, document to be submitted in spring 2014, Sainsbury's planning application approved for Beacon Park.

Improving the Infrastructure

STRATEGIC PLANNING: We reported at the last meeting that funding for the A12/A143 link road had been received. The planning application has now been submitted to Norfolk County Council which is to be determined later this month.

Creating pathways to Employment

College: The College is continuing to work with JCP to run Sector Based Work Academies for the unemployed with 1 course running during this quarter and 3 planned for the next quarter.

Ensuring public bodies work together

STRATEGIC PLANNING: New Anglia LEP draft Strategic Economic Plan submitted to government. Assisted Area Status - Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft included in the draft map publicised in December 2013.

10 Any Other Business

(i) Eastport UK

It was reported that Jamie Frater was leaving the EastPort , however, the local management team would still be in place. Their Annual Report would be placed on their website in the next few days.

(ii) Tourism BID

It was reported that the Tourism BID would be going out for consultation in the near future to 1,200-1,300 businesses who would then vote on this and if it was successful the new BID would assume responsibility for tourism. Gorleston High Street, Gorleston Seafront and large Supermarkets in the Borough would be included.

(iii) College Shop

Councillor T Wainwright reported that the Town Centre Partnership was in the process of looking for a vacant shop in a prominent town centre location for students at Great Yarmouth College to be able to sell their items.

11 Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would be a joint meeting with the Employment and Skills Group. It was suggested that the next Economic Reference Group meeting be held on either the 8th or 15th May 2014.

The meeting ended at: 17:15