

# **LARGER PRINT COPY AVAILABLE PLEASE TELEPHONE: 01493 846325**

## **ECONOMIC REFERENCE GROUP**

**17 July 2013 – 4.00 pm**

### **PRESENT:**

Mr L Brooks (Angle) (in the Chair); Councillor T Wainwright (GYBC), Nova Fairbank (Chamber of Commerce), Peter Wright (Economic Development Officer GYBC), Tony Wright (Port Users Association), Alan Carr (Tourism GYBC), David Wiles (Press Officer – GYBC), David Marsh (Greater Yarmouth Tourist Authority/NALEP), Ian McCreadie (Chair of enterprise-GY), Paul Cheeseman (GYBC), David Glason (GYBC), Penny Wycherley (Great Yarmouth College), David Martin (Marine East), David Dukes (Economic Development Manager Norfolk County Council), Eunice Edwards (New Anglia LEP) and Mrs K Smith (Senior Member Services Officer GYBC).

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Simon Gray, James Gray and Cellia Anderson from EEEGR, Jan Fuller, Tracey Jones, Russell Leggett and Daphne King (East Norfolk Sixth Form College).

### **2. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2013 were confirmed.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

#### **(a) Pinch Point Funding**

It was reported that Norfolk County Council working with the Borough Council had been successful in receiving Pinch Point Funding of £4.7m for the A12/A143 link road. It was reported that Lowestoft also had been successful in one of their bids.

#### **(b) LEP**

It was reported that LEP had been successful in their RGF bid for an extra £9m and so they now have £12m for the Growing Business Fund.

#### 4. NEW ANGLIA PLAN FOR GROWTH

The Economic Development Officer reported that the Reference Group now had the opportunity to comment on the Growth Plan and that Alistair Rhind would talk to them about the EU investment plan for 95 million Euros.

Alistair reported that they had now issued the Towards a Growth Plan document for consultation and that this sets out the high strategic issues for growth. He reported that the pre consultation had been carried out earlier in the year and this would be 90% of what the growth plan would be with the consultation running until the end of August. The growth plan was currently on the NALEP website and a summary version would be placed on there within the next week. A general discussion then ensued.

A representative for the Port Users Association stated that timescales concern him as they had a 2020 vision and now they have a 2025 vision. He stated that he felt there needed to be a more realistic approach about what is achievable instead of keep moving the goal posts and dates.

David Martin stated that tourism and energy are key sectors in Great Yarmouth and felt that they should be detailed further in the document. It was therefore suggested that all individuals comment on the document.

The Economic Development Officer from Norfolk County Council suggested that the New Anglia Area be changed to Norfolk and Suffolk as the New Anglia Area is not a place in existence.

Nova Fairbank reported that the Chamber of Commerce would be having this document as a one agenda item at the end of July and would be happy to include any further comments received from this committee.

#### 5. EU STRUCTURAL AND INVESTMENT FUNDING

It was reported there would be £80m available for Norfolk and Suffolk to be spread over two schemes, the ERDF and the ESF. Management arrangements would be changing with financial responsibility staying at the national level with LEP's to provide the strategic context for programmes. It was reported that the consultation for the 2014-20 programme requested consultees to look at the following themes: innovation, ICT, SME competitiveness, low carbon, climate change adaptation, environmental protection, sustainable transport, employment and skills, social inclusion and institutional capacity. It was reported that consultation events were being held next week, however if Members were unable to attend they could complete the ranking online. Via the website [www.gov.uk/government/policy/making-european-funding-work-better-for-the-uk-economy](http://www.gov.uk/government/policy/making-european-funding-work-better-for-the-uk-economy) or via [www.newanglia.co.uk](http://www.newanglia.co.uk).

It was noted that the EU funding has to be match funded at a ratio of 50/50 by the partners. It was stated that the co-financer could be the LEP or the Skills Funding Agency or the DWP.

Penny Wycherley from Great Yarmouth College spoke of an engineering course stating that she was working with EEEGR and the advanced manufacturing sector group and asked if this would fit into this funding. It was suggested that yes this would fit into the ESF Funding Scheme. It was hoped that one application for either the ERDF or the ESF Funding could be submitted.

The Economic Development Officer asked if it would be more advantageous to put forward a Norfolk-Wide Scheme. It was reported that with only £80m for the two programmes spread across the two counties it was thought that fewer and larger schemes would be more advantageous. It was pointed out they could also work with any other LEP area in England.

Clarification was then sought on any courses that were about to start asking if they could apply for retrospective funding. It was suggested that this would be quite risky, however if they already had funding in place for the scheme and would like to extend this, they could apply for funding to extend the scheme.

## **6. ENTERPRISE GY**

The Economic Development Officer stated that Enterprise GY had just entered a new era as the A4E contract had ended in June 2013 and Great Yarmouth Borough Council had decided to take on the enterprise development role and had TUPE'd the two members of staff across to Great Yarmouth Borough Council. It was reported that as the Coastal Communities Bid was successful EGY now had funding to take them through to March 2015.

## **7. COASTAL COMMUNITIES FUND**

Paul Cheeseman reported that Great Yarmouth didn't receive the funding until February and March 2013 and that some of the money would be to continue some previous schemes. He reported that £600,000 had been awarded for three things, the first was localised employment support to help the long term unemployed and this had seen 152 people helped into 30 or 40 jobs. Great Yarmouth College were advertising for a Social Enterprise Support worker and Enterprise GY had continued their business support activity from 1 April.

## **8. ENTERPRISE ZONE**

Eunice Edwards tabled a report which gave the following:-

The Norfolk and Suffolk Energy Alliance (NSEA), consisting of Norfolk County Council, Suffolk County Council, Waveney District Council, Great Yarmouth Borough Council and North Norfolk District Council, EEEGR, Chambers of Commerce for Norfolk and Suffolk, have overall responsibility for the Great Yarmouth and Waveney New Anglia Enterprise Zone. The Enterprise Zone Working Group consists of Peter Wright, David Dukes, Paul Moss, Mike Dowdall, Chris Starkey and Eunice Edwards. The group reports into NSEA and is instrumental in the progress made to date.

It was reported that marketing is in place and on-going. James Gray the NSEA appointed Inward Investment Director, TMS is the PR company assisting with NSEA's East of England Energy Zone. Seven LDO's have been approved by the Secretary of State six cover the Enterprise Zones and one non Enterprise Zone is at Power Park, Lowestoft. An initial partnership agreement has been reached between all local authorities and NALEP, this has been accepted by DCLG. A draft Enterprise Zone Delivery Plan has been accepted by DCLG. The Enterprise Zones have been established as a top priority in Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils for the delivery of super fast broadband in the region. Communication with central government agencies such as UK TI, DFT, SFA, BIS, HCS, DECC Crown Estates, DCLG, HM Treasury to assist with the delivery of the Enterprise Zone.

**a) Updates June/July 2013**

Local infrastructure Fund (LIF) - three Enterprise Zones sites in Waveney have now been included and their site owners will now progress to the due diligence stage with the HCA representatives. Given the delay it's likely that construction on all sites will start from September/October 2013. LIF has strict guidelines that all work must be completed by March 2015. This infrastructure investment will allow all sites to then be able to offer open ready opportunities for land owners themselves or developers to build speculative or pre-commissioned business units.

New companies - Venco Offshore Limited are now resident in the Enterprise Zone in South Denes. This is a Dutch company who have now taken occupation of office space in existing East Port buildings, they also have rented warehouse and external hard standing areas. This is their first UK base Venco's Offshore Division specialise in carrying out coating work on projection platforms, drilling platforms and measuring platforms. They work on both the Dutch Continental Shelf and the UK Continental Shelf.

Pinchpoint Funding - The Department for Transport announced on the 31 May that the Pinch Point Scheme for the Great Yarmouth/A12/A143 Link Road had been successful and would receive a contribution of £4.7m from Government and that the completion of the Lowestoft Northern Spine Road Phase 5 in Suffolk would also receive a contribution of £4.6m. Both would improve accessibility to the Enterprise Zones.

The East of England Energy Zone took a stand at the Renewable UK Offshore Wind 2013 Conference and Exhibition in Manchester on the 12 and 13 June with Inward Investment Officers, Economic Development Officers and Managers in attendance.

TMS had been awarded the PR contract assisting with the NSEA's East of England Energy Zone PR requirements replacing TRIBE.

**9. NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK ENERGY ALLIANCE/CORE**

The Economic Development Officer reported that NSEA were currently concentrating on wind energy because of the scale of the possible new investment in the area. The new industrial strategy for offshore wind had been published and there was a consultation out on the Government's strike price for renewable power. East Anglian Offshore Wind expect to hear about their phase 1 application early in 2014.

In Round Two there are wind farms still being approved and built ie Dudgeon and Triton Knoll in the Wash and Galloper the extension of Gabbard off the Suffolk Coast.

The Economic Development Officer for Norfolk County Council stated that good progress had been made in the last year through the work of the investment director with colleagues in the councils together with EEEGR and the Chambers and the PR agencies, Tribe and now TMS. A brand had been created with common themes, materials and graphic panels. The East of England Energy Zone offer has been promoted strongly to an international market.

It was reported that the new Chair of NSEA was Councillor Bruce Provern from Waveney District Council.

## 10. SKILLS ROUND UP

The Economic Development Officer reported that the EPIS centre was in the news as the industry had decided they wanted to go ahead with a new training facility as soon as possible.

### Norfolk and Suffolk Apprenticeships Scheme

It was reported that this was mentioned at the Chamber of Commerce meeting. Penny Wycherley reported that the LEP had not been awarded money to create a plan for the Enterprise Zone. The Enterprise Skills Plan was now being created and an updated version would be sent to all partners in the near future.

The Committee then discussed the Catch Skills School which was a school for Energy Training. Penny reported that the way this was run was very inflexible and was not a model she would want to follow.

The Committee then discussed the You Explore Scheme and how it was hoped to achieve national funding and that LEP would be talking to both Suffolk and Norfolk County Councils about contributing funding to the scheme.

## 11. ASSISTED AREA STATUS

The regional guidelines had now been published and a bid from Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft would be submitted. Statistically there was a good case to be made for Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft and the LEP would be submitting this.

## 12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

### (i) Great Yarmouth College

It was reported that the Great Yarmouth College merger with Lowestoft College would now not be taking place. Penny was now in post until June 2014 when a permanent replacement would be found. She asked the Committee to look at the press on Friday for Great Yarmouth College's great news.

### (ii) Tourism

Alan Carr reported that Great Yarmouth Seafront now had World Host status and that they were looking to bid for the whole of Great Yarmouth Borough which it was hoped to be in place by April 2014. Alan Carr reported that Visit England had rated Great Yarmouth eighth in the league table for towns.

### (iii) Marine East

David Martin reported that Marine East were struggling and were looking as part of their rescue plan to business brokering. He then spoke of the Norwich for Jobs Campaign stating that there were things that Great Yarmouth could learn from this campaign.

(iv) **Peter Wright (Economic)**

It was reported that the EEEGR Conference would be held on the 18 September 2013, Chris MacDonald's replacement had now been appointed and would start in August 2013. Peter then spoke of the death of Marion Forsyth who had worked for the Chamber of Commerce in the town and had been a stalwart of the Great Yarmouth Marketing Initiative.

(v) **Paul Cheeseman**

Paul spoke of the Welfare Reforms stating that there was a need to watch the outcomes of this for Great Yarmouth as data had shown that there was a £35m reduction in the Great Yarmouth's economy next year due to the household income being reduced. It was reported that neighbourhood budgeting was popular with the government.

(vi) **Chamber of Commerce**

Nova Fairbank reported on the £99 Chamber start up membership offer and that there was a 60% renewal rate from these. She then spoke of the next Skills Breakfast to be held on the 12 September 2013 and this would be on the Energy Sector.

**13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed the next meeting would be held on Thursday, 17 October 2013 at 4.00 pm.

**14. CLOSURE**

The meeting ended at 5.50 pm.