

Economic Reference Group

Minutes

Thursday, 17 October 2013 at 16:00

PRESENT:

Laurence Brooks (ANGLE) (in the Chair); Paul Cheeseman (GYBC), Eunice Edwards (New Anglia LEP), David Glason (GYBC), Jill Hardy (Eastport), Julia Howard (GY College), Tracey Jones (GYBC), Russell Leggett (GY Chamber), Councillor Trevor Wainwright (GYBC), Peter Wright (GYBC), Tony Wright (GY Port Users Association) and Miss S Davis (GYBC).

1 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Ian McCreadie (enterpriseGY Chair), David Marsh (GYTA/NALEP), Jason Middleton (NALEP), Jonathan Newman (Town Centre Partnership) and Seb Duncan (GYBC).

2 **Minutes**

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

3 **Matters Arising**

(a) **Pinch Point Funding**

The Group was informed that the A12/A143 link road that had received £4.7m funding was on track and hopefully a planning application would be submitted shortly with site clearance work commencing in April 2014.

(b) **Norfolk and Suffolk Energy Alliance/CORE**

Reference was made to the Government's Offshore Wind Industrial Strategy which aimed to develop a UK manufacturing and supply chain. Negotiations would also take place with suppliers re the cost of electricity, with similar conversations taking place with wind energy suppliers. The aim was to get them to produce a Supply Chain Plan which would hopefully involve local companies. There was a new Programme of help for the Offshore wind industry called "Grow" which was a manufacturing Advisory Service for Wind and used CORE's to promote Offshore

Wind Organisations looking at the Port Infrastructure Fund and the Green Investment Bank. The point was made that a lot depended on how contracts were drawn up and negotiations on price as this would influence how effective the supply chain was.

4 The Great Yarmouth Core Strategy

The Growth Group Manager reported that the Core Strategy was a high level strategic document that showed the future development of the Borough over the next 15 years. It was currently out to consultation until 8 November 2013 and when adopted would be a material consideration for planning applications. An Examination in Public would be held in the Summer of 2014 and it should be adopted by Autumn 2014. To supplement this, a Site Specifics document would be produced and hopefully be available for comment in the Summer 2014.

Reference was made in particular to Policy CS6 "Supporting the Local Economy" and it was noted that discussions had been held with Eastport and presentations given to Port Users. Members were also informed that there would be a public launch on 5 November to tell people what was happening to regenerate the South Denes area.

The Manager also highlighted the section on "Safeguarding Existing Local Employment Areas" which included a listing of 300 hectares of existing local employment land with a new allocation of 10-15 hectares to the west of Beacon Park. It was highlighted that the Council had to show in the document that land was achievable and deliverable. He also referred to retail policies such as CS7 "Strengthening our Centres" and CS8 "Promoting Tourism, Leisure and Culture".

It was noted that the document promoted two specific areas for significant development; the first was a mixed use development of 1000 homes and commercial development along a waterfront area in Cobholm, North and South Quay. It was noted that a detailed Area Action Plan was being developed which is available to view on the corporate website. The second was south of Bradwell and west of Beacon Park which included over 1000 homes as well as 10 to 15 hectares of employment land, a new primary school, sports facilities, play areas etc. Members were informed that the Development Control Committee had also recently approved an application for a Superstore on the Park. It was also noted that the Enterprise Zone to the south of Beacon Park was progressing well with significant interest.

A query was raised as to the future of the former Co-op building in the Market Place and it was noted that the Council was liaising with the Co-op and other agencies to determine options.

5 NALEP Update

The Group received a written report in relation to the New Anglia LEP's activities which included the Growing Business Fund, City Deals for Norwich and Ipswich, Assisted Area Status, European Strategic Investment Plans and the Strategic Economic Plan. The point was made that there was a need to provide funding support to large businesses as well as SME's. With regard to the European Plans, it was noted that the one submitted by NALEP had reflected our own with priorities being shown as education, skills, energy etc. The Economic Development Officer also referred to the fact that each LEP could opt-in to giving Agencies a share of the money which would then reduce the amount available for local providers to bid for.

6 Assisted Area Status Bid

The Group received the NALEP update referred to above.

7 Operational Updates

The Group received the following updates:

(a) enterpriseGY

Members were reminded that part of the Programme was being supported by Coastal Communities Funding and it was noted that another round of bids would be held shortly. Reference was made to Global Enterprise Week and it was agreed that a list of events would be circulated for information.

(b) NSEA

It was noted that around 15 companies from the Region had attended the recent Aberdeen Offshore Europe event and the European Wind Energy Exhibition would be held in Frankfurt between 19-21 November.

(c) Enterprise Zone

Eunice Edwards reported that an electrical company would be expanding into a facility on Beacon Park as they had their main base in Aberdeen. 14 industrial units on Mobbs Way Enterprise Zone site would be ready in February 2014. She added that £100M Capital Grant Funding was available to Local Authorities and each LEP could bid by 18 November 2013. It was also reported that Great Yarmouth had been chosen as one of only ten areas nationally to receive a visit by two Cabinet Office researchers to see how the LEP worked in the Enterprise Zone. An update was given in relation to the Enterprise Zone which included the fact that £8.5M private investment had been made in the Zone to date.

8 Economic Strategy Update

9 Skills Update

The Economic Development Officer reported on discussions at the recent Employment and Skills meeting and indicated that, once approved at the Energy Alliance meeting, a copy of the Skills Strategy would be circulated to Reference Group members. The Skills Group had also discussed the success of the Community Budget Programme and a copy of the statistics would also be circulated to Members. An update had been given on the investment at Great Yarmouth College, JobCentre Plus project, Turn of the Tide Report and the need to so undertake some joint working with other seaside towns.

Julia Howard reported that, together with six other Colleges in the LEP area, Great Yarmouth would receive £400K from a £2.8M ESF Project aimed at providing training for SME's across a broad range of activities.

It was reported that a New Anglia Skills Conference would be held on 28 November 2013 and hopefully all the information would be discussed and a skills strategy put in place. Concern was expressed that there had not been many businesses at a recent LEP meeting in Norwich and bearing in mind the LEP had control over SFA funding, it was hoped that the skills requirements of businesses and the education providers could be brought together. The point was made that a lot of businesses did not understand all the different pots of money available and how they could be accessed and also they had to bring in a skilled workforce from elsewhere as local people did not have the necessary skills. Julia Howard indicated that the College was at capacity which meant businesses also needed to look at other ways to get skilled workers eg apprenticeships. She added that a Training Allowance for businesses would help and suggested that Government should be lobbied to make changes to the Apprenticeship Scheme.

10 Any Other Business

It was noted that the Youth Advisory Board had funded £10K towards Nexus for NEET.

11 Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on 6 February 2014 at 4pm.

The meeting ended at: 17:25