

## Economic development consultations (business support organisations + WK Leader) – Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> March

<p><b>Employment &amp; skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problems finding suitably qualified staff</li> <li>• Perception of the skills gaps in the workforce</li> <li>• Links with local colleges, universities or job centres</li> <li>• <i>Other challenges, key issues or opportunities</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding the right jobs &amp; linking to skills</li> <li>• Young people's employability tied to numeracy/literacy</li> <li>• Shaping &amp; working with further ed providers/colleges</li> <li>• General info &amp; support about recruitment – how do you employ people?</li> <li>• Apprenticeships – too many agencies need clear info</li> <li>• Homebased support</li> <li>• Education/private integration</li> <li>• Return to work – older people an important target</li> <li>• Apprenticeships to link with Hadlow</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tourism</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouraging more tourists to the district</li> <li>• Providing more places for tourists to stay</li> <li>• Providing tourism advice &amp; support for tourism businesses</li> <li>• Providing networking opportunities for tourism businesses &amp; accommodation providers</li> <li>• <i>Other challenges, key issues or opportunities</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public funded – setting up as 'official' impacts on other organisations</li> <li>• Controlled tourism: perfect location, close to London, big opportunity</li> <li>• Stone Street, Knole, Fairlawne, Foxbury Lavender Farm</li> <li>• LEP collaborative projects</li> <li>• Education – trips from big cities, Hadlow/enterprise</li> <li>• LEP must link with business</li> </ul>
<p><b>Support services for businesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you need business support &amp; advice? What areas of expertise are most important?</li> <li>• Are business loans sufficiently available?</li> <li>• What do you think the Council can do to help businesses in the district be more successful?</li> <li>• <i>Other challenges, key issues or opportunities</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Such a large amount of support is confusing – clarity needed</li> <li>• A, B, C of setting up a business</li> <li>• Focus support information</li> <li>• Website is difficult to access</li> <li>• Fixated on Chamber &amp; business loans</li> <li>• HMRC tax courses are excellent</li> <li>• Enterprise Nation is good</li> <li>• Planning regulations must be more accessible – could provide seminars to guide</li> </ul>
<p><b>Energy &amp; sustainability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What can the Council do to help businesses use energy more</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEP – grant funding renewables</li> <li>• Biomass &amp; Solar in rural areas – more assistance and guidance necessary</li> </ul>

<p>carefully?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What can the Council do to help businesses to adapt to the changing climate e.g. the impact of severe weather and flooding?</li> <li>• <i>Other challenges, key issues or opportunities</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Places for growth &amp; improvement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there areas or locations in the district that should be identified for growth or improvement?</li> <li>• <i>Other challenges, key issues or opportunities</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Ash Green</li> <li>• Swanley TVOC (training centre) – business opportunities/business hub</li> <li>• Banqueting suites</li> <li>• Market car parking to raise profile of north of the district</li> <li>• Strategy must be to satisfy demand</li> <li>• Downsizing residential</li> </ul>
<p><b>Transport</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lobbying for improved rail transport</li> <li>• Including Swanley in the outer zone of TfL fare zone 6</li> <li>• Improve Swanley train station</li> <li>• Improve Bat &amp; Ball station</li> <li>• Improve roads/junctions that get very congested – specify or identify on the map</li> <li>• <i>Other challenges, key issues or opportunities</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swanley parking is poor</li> <li>• Restricted rail services to Farningham Road</li> <li>• Need bold public transport strategy which is sympathetic to the environment</li> <li>• Integrate bus/train services in rural areas</li> <li>• Rural road quality is poor</li> <li>• Large deliveries causing congestion in New Ash Green</li> <li>• East/West access – Sevenoaks to Ebbsfleet</li> <li>• M25 closures – where does the traffic go?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Making the district a good place to do business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting the district as a great place to set up a business</li> <li>• Making sure there is employment space to set up and expand a business – what premises’ are in short supply</li> <li>• Helping town centres to be more vibrant</li> <li>• <i>Other challenges, key issues or opportunities</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List of premises/offices (clear communication needed)</li> <li>• Greater provision of affordable offices for start ups</li> <li>• Affordability of start up nests</li> <li>• Orchards academy</li> <li>• Villages &amp; hamlets more vibrant, could create rural enterprise</li> <li>• Social enterprise – take over pub</li> <li>• Firestation at Horton Kirby</li> </ul>
<p><b>Broadband</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What areas in our district need faster broadband</li> <li>• Helping rural areas have faster broadband</li> <li>• Helping areas who want faster broadband to find local solutions</li> <li>• <i>Other challenges, key issues or opportunities</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Horton Kirby missing out on cable</li> <li>• Where are the upgrades?</li> <li>• Move to digital switch</li> <li>• Mobile coverage is variable</li> <li>• Masts 4G to 5G</li> </ul>

## **Additional comments**

- Communications:
  - Enterprise Nation
  - Libraries
  - Timely & up to date
  - Mobile friendly
  - Applications for smartphones
- Affordable housing key worker
- Public transport apprentices
- Directory of business support services needed (home based enterprises)
- Newsletter & InShape
- Consultancy info