

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2015 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Horwood (Vice Chairman in the Chair)

Cllrs. Ayres, Mrs. Ayres, Ball, Mrs. Bosley, Mrs. Cook, Maskell and Miss. Stack

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Hogarth, Mrs. Sargeant and Miss. Thornton

Cllr. Ramsay was also present.

35. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2015, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

36. Declarations of Interest

No additional declarations of interest were made.

37. Actions from Previous Meeting

There were none.

38. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Chairman advised that the main updates were already contained within the Economic Development Strategy report.

39. Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee

There were none.

40. Update on Sevenoaks District Tourism Initiatives

The Health and Communities Service Manager provided an update on key tourism initiatives being undertaken by the Council. The Council had commissioned Visit Kent to work with their website developer to build a new tourism microsite to promote Sevenoaks District, and she was able to give the Committee first sight of the draft live site.

Members were positive about the site and made suggestions such as adding snapshots of what could be done in the District in a day, themed days out and diary of events. The Health and Communities Service Manager advised that some Councils had also done the top 20 free or almost free activities and was definitely something that could be looked at. A Member suggested that after May 2015 it may be a good idea to have local member workshops for 'story telling'.

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In response to a question the Health and Communities Service Manager advised that the site would avoid duplication of information by mainly signposting to further information which those sites would be keeping up to date. Visit Kent was also paid a small fee for keeping the site updated. She was also keen to keep an equitable footing with regards to advertising space for smaller and larger organisations.

It was noted that Visit Kent would be attending the next meeting of the Advisory Committee and Members were welcome to give advance notice of any questions they may have.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

41. Economic Development Strategy

The Head of Economic Development & Property presented a report updating Members on the Economic Development Strategy.

Since its approval in December 2014, the Council's Economic Development Strategy had been professionally typeset and published on the Council's website and was available as a hard copy. The Strategy had been formally launched by the Portfolio Holder at a meeting of the Sevenoaks Chamber of Commerce held at the District Council offices on 4 March 2015, and promoted at a number of other events including the West Kent B2B on 27 March and the Sevenoaks Business Show on 17 April 2015.

With regards to the Economic Development team, the recruitment of an Economic Development Officer was under way with a decision hopefully being made the following week. An Administrative Assistant was already in place and the process of appointing a replacement Graduate Trainee was underway.

There would be quarterly reports with six month formal reports on progress against the Action Plan.

Members discussed the need to encourage more private retirement/downsizing properties.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

42. Work Plan

Members agreed to add the following items:

June 2015

- Visit Kent
- Officer introduction and role of the Committee
- New Parking Manager to attend with the topic impact of parking provision and charges on ability to attract and retain businesses (Parking for: commuters using stations to travel elsewhere; staff commuting into towns to work; and shoppers and visitors)

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October 2015

- Economic Development Strategy Update

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.04 PM

CHAIRMAN