

A G E N D A

West Kent Partnership Meeting

Thursday 16 October, 2008, 10am Kings Hill Conference Centre

- 1. Minutes and Matters Arising**
 - Dualling A21 (update Roy Bullock)
 - Consultation – Kent Regeneration Board – WKP response (Paper A)

- 2. West Kent Partnership – Future Priorities and Investment Strategy – Discussion paper – Paper B (Tony Bartlett)**

- 3. Presentation - KA2 Themes - Economic Success Indicators/Learning for All – presentation on skills in West Kent**

(Roger Gabriel, Manager, Kent and Medway Local Skills for Productivity Alliance,
Bill Fearon, Principal and Chief Executive, West Kent College and
Kate Wilson, Kent 14-19 Strategy Manager, KCC)

- 4. Presentation - West Kent Leader (Caroline Lingham)**

- 5. Co-ordinator Report – Paper C (Wendy Wood)**
 - West Kent Annual Conference
 - Financial Report
 - West Kent Business Awards (verbal update)

- 6. Hot issues**

- 7. Dates of Next Meetings – all 10am, Kings Hill Conference Centre**
 - Thursday 22 January 2009
 - Thursday 23 April 2009
 - Thursday 16 July 2009
 - Thursday 15 October 2009

Paper A



West Kent Partnership

working together to tackle key issues

c/o Sevenoaks District Council, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, TN13 1HG

10 July 2008

Adam Wilkinson
Managing Director for Environment and Regeneration
Kent County Council
Invicta House
Maidstone
Kent ME14 1XX

Dear Adam,

New Regeneration Partnership for Kent

Further to the Leaders/CEs meeting and your offer to receive additional comments on the proposed Kent Regeneration Board the West Kent Partnership has the following comments.

Governance is a key aspect and there is a need to ensure that a balance of interests is achieved representing different areas within the County be this at a District or area based level. The current proposal suggests limiting the membership though it is quite vague as to whom the members will actually be. The proposal mixes seats for delivery boards, growth points, area partnerships and some individual districts. Individual representation for each District would be the preferred solution as this would provide the most direct and equitable input into the Board from all parts of Kent and Medway.

This should also be seen within the context of future delivery. Kent Districts and Medway, in particular via their role as local planning authorities in preparing Local Development Frameworks, are setting out spatial strategies which will enable the regeneration agenda to be delivered across the County. Indeed the likely outcome of the Sub-National Review, will be to commission regeneration activities and projects across Kent using a variety of local delivery bodies (including districts and area partnerships). This role could be significantly enhanced if, as proposed, SEEDA are willing to delegate area-based funding to the Board separately for the Thames Gateway Kent and for the rest of Kent. Area Partnerships such as West Kent could then bid for such funding based on the local needs assessment to take forward projects, which are considered to be important locally.

We are supportive of a role for the new Regeneration Board in having responsibility for the delivery of relevant Kent Agreement 2 targets and taking an advocacy role in

the wider region. We agree that there is a need for a County wide body to look at issues such as transport, skills and sustainability, provided this includes appropriate representation as above. We are also supportive of the idea of an internal KCC Regeneration Board that will coordinate service delivery against strategic regeneration objectives.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Fleming
Chairman, West Kent Partnership

PAPER B

West Kent Partnership - Future Priorities and Investment Strategy – Discussion Paper

At the November 07 meeting it was agreed that the WKP and its associated sub groups should continue to operate strategically with a specific emphasis on the implementation of the Area Investment Framework (AIF) and the need to address other common sub regional issues.

Following presentations from Kent County Council (KCC) and (South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) at the last WKP meeting in June and further discussions at a workshop also held in June, to scope the new West Kent Investment Strategy, it is now appropriate to consider how the WKP can move from a largely lobbying role to a delivery role in recognition of potential opportunities and threats. The national, sub-regional and county context are changing to allow greater opportunity for sub-regional partnerships to draw in funding to deliver on local priorities and the current economic climate raises new challenges which must be addressed.

Each Local Authority and its LSP will be responsible for prioritising and delivering the KA2 targets. However, it may be appropriate for the WKP to consider having a main focus for future co-ordination and project delivery on those KA2 issues which benefit from adopting a sub-regional approach

The WKP is requested to consider the following priorities:

- Complete delivery of actions set out in the existing West Kent AIF
- Deliver the West Kent Leader Programme
- Commence work on the development of a West Kent Investment Strategy to establish a clear position on the need for local regeneration investment in anticipation of the development of a Kent Regeneration Strategy and the availability of programme funding from SEEDA in line with RES objectives. Briefing document for consultant to be drawn from outcomes from scoping workshop (see Annex 1)
- Focus the work of the WKP sub groups on supporting delivery of relevant KA2 indicators including economy, skills, housing and transport
- Continue to lobby on behalf of West Kent in relation to infrastructure and other common issues such as health transport and community safety

- Explore scope for the future proofing of the WK economy in light of the current volatile financial and economic situation including maximising 2012 and other tourism opportunities
- Provide joint responses to any consultations or proposed service changes affecting West Kent where a WK voice would add weight to responses submitted by individual partners

Recommendation

The Partnership is requested to

1. Endorse the importance of delivering relevant KA2 indicators sub-regionally as appropriate
2. Continue to prioritise delivery of Leader
3. Complete delivery on AIF action plan and produce a final outcome report.
4. Approve the commissioning of a consultant to develop a new West Kent Investment Strategy

Annex 1

Outcomes of workshop to scope potential themes and priorities for a new West Kent Investment Strategy

This workshop, held in June with partners considered the following:

1. National and Regional context to review
2. Current AIF – strengths and weaknesses
3. Potential themes and priorities for new WKIS

1. National and Regional Context to Review

- **Sub National Review (SNR) consultation**
 - Responses across a wide range from opposed, to in favour. Only 3 Northern Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) have reached a workable solution. More discussion/consultation/negotiation required on structures and democratic accountability
 - No response from Government expected before summer recess, now aiming for Christmas 2008 as any delay beyond that puts legislative process in jeopardy
 - Secretary of State has power to put planning with Government Office if agreement cannot be reached.
 - Regional assemblies will be definitely be abolished
 - Role of RDA's will become more strategic with arrangements reached with local authorities for delivery where demonstrable capacity is evident.

- **SEEDA**
 - Recruiting and restructuring to reflect future more strategic role
 - Keen to pilot rural schemes in Kent with partners
 - Funding could follow thematic schemes – dialogue welcomed
 - £500M to invest over next 3 years in South East to deliver on Corporate plan
 - KCC, KEB and SEEDA are to hold a workshop – important to understand new structures at KCC and how KEB, Kent Rural Board and other partnerships fit into picture
 - WKP to be encouraged to interface with other agencies as new structures evolve based on agreed objectives for WK
 - Important to link activity to KA2 targets as RES targets are being aligned with KA2 – targets can be shared
 - WKP to identify how it will contribute to delivery of the regeneration strategy for Kent
 - SEEDA consulting on innovation partnerships – WK should be engaged in that process

- **KCC**
 - KCC Regeneration Strategy is essentially an internal KCC document to ensure that the various directorates at KCC are aligned in their approach to regeneration. It is not intended as a regeneration strategy for Kent as a whole. It is evidence based and does not recognise West Kent issues yet.
 - Strategy will be linked to Kent Prospects and Vision for Kent
 - Strategy goes to Cabinet July 2008 after which there will be an opportunity for partners to input.
 - Annual action plan and new strategy every 3 years
 - KCC Regeneration strategy is the first step in developing a Kent Regeneration Strategy and KEB (which is to become Kent Regeneration Board) will engage with SEEDA and other partners in the development of that strategy.
 - KEB have a spending priorities sub group which will be a useful resource to help SEEDA identify Kent's priorities
 - Clarity required on how Kent Rural Board will interface with Kent Regeneration Board
 - WKP to engage with new Kent Regeneration Board when the situation is clarified

- **KA2**
 - Opportunity for WKP to adopt economic indicators for WK and become the delivery vehicle for those indicators whilst not being constrained by them in association with the Local Strategic Partnerships.
 - Business Simplification programme will streamline business support offer to Kent businesses

2. Current AIF

Strengths

- Started out as formal LSP but lacked direct links with the 3 community plans – 3 formal district LSPs are now being developed and WKP will carry out a strategic role on WK sub regional issues
- Has been successful in changing perception of WK as an area that does have regeneration/economic development needs and will continue forward as strategic partnership focussing on economic development, transport and housing issues.
- WKP has status and recognition with other economic bodies and partners and can be seen as a successful symbol of joint working.
- Has set a clear agenda for sub group working
- Has engaged well with SEEDA despite lack of funding relationship
- Has been successful in facilitating funding to support projects on the action plan – notably winning the Leader bid
- Brought together skills/learning agencies in WK for the first time

- 3 LAs working together with identified partners to deliver against strategic objectives
- Unifying influence of annual WKP conference
- AIF has been a 'symbol' of WK as a solid sub region
- Self awareness of WK as an entity (public sector)

Weaknesses

- Has been inward looking – what WK can do for itself, need to engage with more external partners now funding criteria/opportunities are changing
- Action plan tended to reflect aspirations from other agency plans
- Lack of outside influences in sub groups
- Written in context of limited resources for delivery means it can be difficult to plan appropriate actions and be seen as achieving these
- Economic analysis now a little out of date
- Lacked a mechanism to link with other Economic groups and County initiatives and action plans – as they develop
- Limited resources in terms of time and money have prevented achievement against objectives
- More business partners would have been beneficial
- Main role has been influencing while others deliver. Need to move more to delivery facilitation as in Leader
- Lacks detail on financial investment needed in the area

3. Potential Themes and Priorities for new Strategy

3.1 Objective

Future proofing¹ against economic downturn and regeneration investment elsewhere in Kent

- link to KA2, RES, Rural Board, Regeneration Board - closely interface and ensure WK strongly represented
- position for pilot rural programmes with KCC and SEEDA
- demonstrate ability to deliver against KA2 targets and for SEEDA and KCC funded projects which contribute to WK strategic objectives
- ensure adequacy of work force skills and expertise

3.2 Potential Key Themes and Priorities for WKIS

- Actively draw in funding – particularly from SEEDA and possibly Europe

¹ The phrase **future proofing** describes the elusive process of trying to anticipate future developments, so that action can be taken to minimise possible negative consequences, and to seize opportunities. (Wikipedia) Specifically in West Kent we seek to protect Gross Value Added (GVA) www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?ID=254

- Encourage innovation and enterprise
- Strengthen local economy through integration of housing, transport and other strategic issues into wider economic context
- Rural support and regeneration
- Workforce skills through Kent Skills Board (previously LSPA) and WK Skills working group
- Address sub-regional, national and global competition

Recommendations

- Establish clear need for economic regeneration in West Kent and develop strategy around key themes above
- Position WKP as a delivery body for KA2 economic and some other indicators and link closely to Kent Regeneration strategy
- Position WKP as a delivery body for SEEDA funding, initially focussed on rural development and link closely to RES
- Prioritise support of Leader - success in demonstrating delivery of Leader funded projects will give confidence to SEEDA of capacity of WKP to deliver on other projects
- Identify action on other economic issues which can be addressed at a West Kent level (skills, economic, transport, housing, environmental change)
- Maintain strong lobbying profile on key West Kent issues and voice on DEB and spending Priorities sub group.
- Constituency of, and brief for, existing sub groups to be reviewed and a cross sector, task and finish approach to issues to be explored

Proposed Timescale

- Ongoing to June 09 - Complete delivery on existing AIF
- November 08 - Produce brief for consultant to include an analysis of opportunities and threats for West Kent.
- March 09 - produce draft strategy and slipstream with Kent Regeneration strategy if available
- April-May 09 – consultation period
- June 09 – new strategy published

Co-ordinator Report – Paper C

Provisional Programme (7 October 2008)

Putting the Business in Tourism

Thistle, Brands Hatch, 22 October 2008

9.30 Arrival, registration, coffee and exhibition

10.0 Cllr Peter Fleming, Chair, WKP
Welcome and Introduction

10.05 Rosa D'Alessandro, Head of Corporate Responsibility
AEG Europe (O2 Arena) (introduced by Cllr Peter Fleming)
Vision and Marketing

10.25 Tom Lupton, Project Manager, Sissinghurst Castle (introduced by Cllr Roy Bullock)
Sissinghurst - using food as a connection between past and present to enhance the visitor experience

10.45 Sandra Barnes-Keywood, Old Chapel Forge B&B, Chichester, and Dr Andrew Clegg, Subject Leader for Tourism Management at the University of Chichester, The Green Training Company (introduced by Cllr Mark Worrall)
How Green can you Go?

11.05 Coffee and exhibition

11.20 Bob Collier, Managing Director, Tourism South East (introduced by Cllr Roy Bullock)
Potential customers for tourism, hospitality and leisure businesses – the visitor, the worker, the resident (working title)

11.40 Martyn Collins, Victor-e Winning Tourism Business (introduced by Cllr Mark Worrall)
Profit from online sales

12.0 Simon Calder, Travel Editor, The Independent (introduced by Cllr Peter Fleming)
Putting the fun (back) in tourism (provisional title)

12.50 Peter Fleming – close

1.00 Buffet lunch and exhibition

Financial Report

West Kent Partnership Budget

Sep 08

		Income
year 08/09	Partner income received	55000
	Leader grant	6331
	plus roll underspend from 03/04	36211
	plus underspend from 04/05	4595
	plus underspend from 05/06	11615
	less spend above income 06/07	-21892
	plus underspend 07/08	405
	Total available year 07/08	92265

	Spend to date	Annual Budget
Overhead		
co-ordinator costs	10014	24300
supplies, services, mobile	125	700
marketing		
general marketing	340	2000
conference		6000
Business Awards Sponsorship	2000	2000
committed to Leader Support		18100
Revision of Investment Strategy		6000
committed spend 08/09		59100
Available in budget		33165