

REGENERATION, CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

17 JANUARY 2017

ATTENDANCE OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR INWARD INVESTMENT, STRATEGIC REGENERATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Report from: Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic
Regeneration and Partnerships Councillor Rodney
Chambers

Summary

This report sets out progress made within the areas covered by the Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships Councillor Rodney Chambers which fall within the remit of this Committee.

1. Background

1.1 The areas within the terms of reference of this Overview and Scrutiny Committee covered by the Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships Councillor Rodney Chambers are:

- Inward investment
- Strategic Regeneration and Planning
- Strategic Partnerships
- Medway Ambassador
- Heritage Champion

1.2 Achievements for 2016 are detailed by services area below.

2. Inward Investment

2.1 Medway Council decided to increase its level of financial support for inward investment in 2015 in order to raise its profile, as a desirable location for businesses. Medway Council and Kent County Council decided to work in partnership to procure a new inward investment services contract worth £3 million over three years, which commenced in August 2016. Medway

Council's contribution to the contract is £210,000 over the contract period. Medway was fully involved in the tender assessment to select Locate in Kent as the preferred service provider.

2.2 A significant inward investment attractor to businesses has been the successful award of Enterprise Zone status for Rochester Airport's commercial development, which was notified in the Chancellor's 2015 Autumn Statement. This will allow companies that locate to the site to benefit from up to a maximum of £55,000 in business rates relief per year, for a maximum period of five years (Total maximum incentive £275,000 per business).

2.3 Overall this was a good year, in terms of successful investments and jobs created and retained for Medway. Three companies invested in Medway during the second half of 2015-16 (compared to two in the first half of 2015-16), which led to the creation of 73 jobs.

Overall for the year, five companies invested in Medway, creating 318 new jobs and retaining two jobs. One company was already based in Kent & Medway and two were new to Kent. Four companies were UK-owned, and the other was Swedish owned. Investing companies were in Construction & Property, Financial Services, Transport & Logistics, Environmental Technologies and the ICT sector.

Details of the companies that invested in Medway between April 2015 and March 2016 are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Companies investing in Medway, April 2015 – March 2016

Company	Nature of Success	Jobs in 3 Years	Jobs Retained	Sector	Sq ft	Country of Origin
April – September 2015						
Totally Bespoke Joinery	Expansion within Kent	5	2	Construction & Property	1,200	United Kingdom
Vanquis Bank	Expansion within Kent	240	0	Financial Services	48,000	United Kingdom
October – March 2016						
Herts Traffic Management	Expansion into Kent	10	0	Transport & Logistics	3,964	United Kingdom
Recapture Plastics	New Start Up	25	0	Environmental Technologies	25,000	United Kingdom
Icomera UK Ltd	Expansion within Kent	38	0	ICT	5,091	Sweden

- 2.4 In November 2016, Medway, led by Councillor Rodney Chambers OBE, hosted David Fitzsimmons, Chairman of Locate in Kent, and CEO Paul Wookey, on a guided tour of the major commercial sites in the unitary authority area. This was an extremely useful fact finding mission for David Fitzsimmons and allowed him to understand Medway's investment priorities, economic position and strategic position at the start of the new contract to deliver inward investment services. A further visit will take place in June 2017.

3. Strategic Regeneration & Planning

The Portfolio Holder is responsible for securing strategic investment to aid the delivery of the Local Plan and regeneration vision.

- 3.1 The following provides an update on current strategic regeneration schemes in Medway:

3.1.1 Rochester Riverside

In March 2016 Countryside Properties, working with The Hyde Group, were selected by Medway Council and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to take forward the development of Rochester Riverside. Around 1,300 homes are scheduled to be built. There will also be a new school, nursery, two hotels, restaurants, gym, healthcare facilities, office space and a number of retail units. The first public consultation was held on 6 September 2016. Feedback received is being considered and an initial planning application is due next year along with a further public consultation is being planned prior to the submission of the application. The new 321 space multi-storey car park opened for the Sweeps Festival 2016.

3.1.2 Chatham Waterfront Development Site

The Council has now acquired the necessary interests to bring forward Chatham Waterfront Development site aside from two small strips of unregistered land, which can be acquired through a CPO process, once the developer has been selected. An outline application has been submitted and is due to go before Planning Committee very early in the New Year. Marketing has begun on the site which we are hoping to launch at the Medway1 event in April.

3.1.3 Chatham Placemaking

In relation to the £4 million Local Growth Funding already secured for Chatham placemaking, consultation took place in January 2016, on a range of public realm proposals along the route from the station area to the town and waterfront in Chatham. This has informed the design, which is being tendered to appoint a contractor for delivery. Work will begin on site early 2017 with the improvements scheduled to be completed by March 2018. Improvements to the River Walk and Sun Pier are complete.

3.1.4 Strood Waterfront

A review of the 2006 Masterplan and development brief for Strood Waterfront is being carried out, including the Civic Centre site as phase 1, and is due to be complete in Spring 2017. Balfour Beatty were appointed to carry out the flood risk management works; the detailed design will be complete by July 2017, with a view to start the works on site in August 2017. The offsite fit-out of 15 business units and 21 storage units at Watermill Wharf has begun, with works on site being due to be completed in April 2017.

4. **Strategic Partnerships**

- 4.1 In addition to the £28.6 million of successful bids for Round 1 Local Growth Funding via the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) linked to five Medway transport projects, Medway has successfully secured a further £4.4 million of Round 2 Local Growth Funding in April 2016 for Rochester Airport's redevelopment, which will lead to the closure of one runway and the release of land for commercial development.
- 4.2 Medway Council has submitted further bids for Round 3 Local Growth Funding linked to commercial development and placemaking, including:
 - 4.2.1 Rochester Airport – a £3.7 million bid to undertake site enabling infrastructure development to make land plots ready for business occupier development.
 - 4.2.2 Strood Civic site flood defences – a £3.5 million bid to develop flood defences leading to the mixed use redevelopment of the site, including up to 350 new homes, and the creation of 510 direct new jobs.
 - 4.2.3 Chatham Placemaking - a further bid of £4 million to undertake regeneration works to enhance the Paddock area in front of the Pentagon, including removal of vehicle / pedestrian conflict and the creation of a civic space, and improved wayfinding.
- 4.3 The Chancellor's 2016 Autumn Statement has so far advised of LGF allocations on a regional basis with an expectation of an announcement in early 2017.
- 4.4 For the North Kent Enterprise Zone, which incorporates Rochester Airport as well as Kent Medical Campus and Ebbsfleet Garden City, a strategic board has now been set up. Two meetings have been held since September 2016, with Medway Council represented by Councillor Rodney Chambers OBE (as Vice Chairman) and the Leader, Councillor Alan Jarrett. The Board oversees the governance arrangements for the overall Enterprise Zone (EZ,) and will report on key performance indicators, once the EZs officially start in April 2017.
- 4.5 At the RCC O&S Committee meeting in January 2016, details of five submitted bids were given, two of which have since become successful:
 - 4.5.1 A SELEP partnership bid with Thurrock for Creative Industries Growth Hubs European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funding via the LEP has been nominally successful, subject to final ratification. This should see £90,000 of

support for creative businesses in Medway.

- 4.5.2 Funding for Pocket Parks at Luton Millennium Park has been successful. In addition to the 15,000 bid, BIG Local contributed an extra £10,000 and Tesco contributed a further £8,000. The Pocket Park was opened by Tracey Crouch MP.

5. Medway Ambassadors

- 5.1 2016 commenced with 13 Ambassadors involved in the scheme. These individuals had joined at various times between 2008 and 2015.
- 5.2 Following a re-launch of the Medway Ambassadors in June 2016, the eligibility to join the scheme was widened to participants from local Universities, businesses, the Historic Dockyard Chatham, Mid Kent College, Visit Kent, Locate in Kent and the Kings School who were invited to sign up.
- 5.3 Ambassadors are provided with quarterly updates and invited to site visits and events, as appropriate or when consultation events were held.
- 5.4 The relaunch event in June 2016 was attended by 15 Ambassadors and 15 officers, who were present to give an update on each of their regeneration projects.
- 5.5 Ambassadors have been invited to events linked to development of Rochester Riverside, development of green spaces in Medway and the opening of the Turkish restaurant Pasha Meza in the newly refurbished Theatre Royal.
- 5.6 The format of the Ambassador scheme is being revised to arrange a schedule of meetings during 2017. Invitations to these meetings will be sent out in January 2017.

6. Heritage Champion

- 6.1 Operational responsibility for heritage lies with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services.
- 6.2 The role of Heritage Champion is more of a strategic role, promoting heritage in Medway and working with key partners to ensure a joined up approach and to encourage links between heritage, regeneration, planning and inward investment.

Appendices

None

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Background documents

None