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Thurrock Business Board
Meeting Monday 3rd September 14:00pm

Meeting venue:

The Old Courthouse, Grays, RM 17 5DD

Attendees: Perry Glading (Chair), Andy Vickers (AV), Louise Ince (LI), Ian Lewis (IL), Jacqueline Sweeney (JS), Kristina Jackson (KJ), Amanda Sweeney (AS) Angela O’Donoghue (AD), BJ Chong (BJ), Howard Oldstein (HO), Lucy Harris (LH), Robert Edge (RE), Steven Swaby (SS), Neil Woodbridge (NW), Murray James (MJ), Lyn Carpenter (LC), Steve Cox (SC), Stephen Taylor (ST), Emma McCulloch (EM), Sophie Coston (SC)

Apologies: Brett Smallcombe, Wesley Pickup, Lisa Duxbury, Oliver Treneman, Dorian Hayes

Item No.	Subject	Action
1.	<p>Introductions, apologies and minutes of the last meeting</p> <p>Members of the Board were welcomed to the meeting by PG and roundtable introductions were made.</p> <p>Minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record and actions were confirmed as completed.</p> <p>PG stated BEST would attend in October to give the board a sense of what they’re doing within the area; PG encouraged businesses to come forward with any potential project ideas to feed into the Council’s pipeline of capital projects. ST stated that some project ideas have started to be put forward.</p>	EM: to invite BEST growth hub to next meeting
2.	<p>GIFT (Giving for Thurrock)</p> <p>KJ and AS introduced GIFT ‘Place Based Giving’ in Thurrock.</p> <p>Place Based Giving is a national scheme of bringing together money, time and resources in a single pot that supports and addresses local needs.</p> <p>KJ stated there is a decline in statutory funding for community groups, and an increased pressure on charities to support non statutory services. In SELEP there are increasing local inequalities in health, poverty and debt. Social isolation is increasing particularly with people aged 40 and upwards because of the increase in social media usage. Communities are not as resilient as they could be.</p> <p>Why Placed Based Giving?</p> <p>In a 2016 survey, 43% of local residents said they would trust more in a local charity than in a national charity with only 27% having faith in national rather than local. In addition 43% would also prefer to donate locally as they know</p>	

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where there money is going to, with only 17% who would rather donate nationally.

Place Based Giving was introduced as a way of helping people to give to locally based charities.

Why donate locally and not nationally?

The proportion of funding spent on front line services by National Charities is lower than for smaller local charities. National charities spend considerable amounts on overheads, marketing and other related activities.

Donating locally is good publicity for your business; most of the money will go into the frontline service delivery of that charity. It also helps to address your corporate social responsibility and community led fund raising, this is addressing the need we have in Thurrock identified by local community groups. It reduces inequality and it can involve everyone.

KJ and AS are keen to promote payroll giving in particular (give as you live), this is where you can shop online and at no extra cost, give a percentage of the cost directly to a local charity you nominate.

GIFT wants to focus on fundraising for local needs, working with local community groups as well as volunteers. They want to build strong relationships and promote good work already underway (a big issue around Thurrock is that we don't celebrate good stories, we have a lot of charity fundraising events but they don't get published well). They want to increase resources that have an in-kind rather than cash cost such as volunteering and time banking. Supporting the development of resilient communities that can look after themselves and also each other.

Since 2017 launch GIFT has raised £18,521, from donations (particularly collecting tins from partnering with Give a Gift at Christmas).

GIFT can award funding to residents that apply (information on this is available online)

Future events:

Chafford Hundred Community Event – Run by a local resident, in partnership with GIFT, all donations will go to GIFT. Charity money will stay in Thurrock.

Giving for Thurrock Day – Last Friday in March, businesses schools local authorities etc. everyone to get involved. The day will include a number of initiatives asking people to donate and to spend an hour of their day to support their local community – for example engaging with local vulnerable neighbours, local newspapers to come together to support event. Everyone will pledge beforehand for what they'll do on the day.

GIFT would like the Business Board to help promote the initiative- encourage payroll giving, pledge support for giving for Thurrock day, contribute or provide raffle prizes, anyone who wants to help support event in any way they can.

PG asked to put together an information pack to give out to businesses. Packs

KJ and AS to provide an information pack

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	are ready for residents and businesses, 'how you can give support'	to EM to share with businesses
3.	Broadband	
	<p>MJ introduced in item on Broadband and in particular the Governments Voucher scheme.</p> <p>He stated that Thurrock as a whole has reasonably good broadband, it has a 95% super-fast offering which is in line with national averages, if we look at ultra-fast Thurrock is above the national average at 70%. However there are areas of inequality in the borough with significant clusters receiving poor services in Purfleet, Grays, Tilbury.</p> <p>MJ stated we need to make sure Thurrock has the best possible broadband service to support existing and emerging businesses in our key sectors such as logistics.</p> <p>MPIF is aiming to get full fibre in the ground in order to deliver 5G network in Thurrock. Only 3% of the UK (from November 2017) had full fibre (4%, of Thurrock). Other EU countries have much better connectivity than the UK with some parts of the EU at nearly 90%.</p> <p>MJ introduced the new government initiatives for broadband vouchers(attached flyer). The Board discussed the initiative and there was some concern about the Governments approach and the impact it would have. The Board felt the initiative was unproven and that further information would be required before the Board could support the scheme.</p>	Action: It was agreed that PG would speak with Brett to discuss with MJ and report back at the next meeting
4.	Local Growth Fund 3b	
	<p>ST gave the board a brief update on the South East LEP Local Growth Fund, this call for proposals is to clear up underspends in the programme by allocating funding to new projects in the pipeline. The closing date for Expressions of Interest has now passed.</p> <p>Thurrock Council submitted a number of Expressions of Interest along the lines discussed at Business Board last time – such as the east facing slip roads off a13 at the lakeside junction and the creation of more business workspace.</p> <p>PG asked if the Business Board can do anything more to support the projects and ST said that support from the Board would be useful to cite in the Outline Business Cases now under development.</p>	

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5.	<p>Economic Commentary & Brexit</p> <p>PG asked Business Board Members around the table to update on the local economy.</p> <p>Robert Edge: Seminars 22nd, 23rd May, finance to entrepreneurs workshops at Thurrock Council. Asked for the board to promote to any businesses that would like to attend and fits the eligibility criteria to come forward.</p> <p>BJ – Broadband is poor at Palmers head office so would welcome an initiative that would help improve speeds and reliability.</p> <p>PG – Is on the Board of the Port of Dover who have stopped all leave from March 2019 to May in view of Britain leaving the EU. His view is that cargo coming from Europe is likely to be supported to flow through but that there could be greater disruption for exports .</p> <p>LH – Brexit, work with property market, looking at marketing strategy, do we need to build websites in other languages to meet demands. Spending more time building relationships with foreign businesses.</p> <p>AD – Bid for transport and logistics, broadband could be anchor to bringing more businesses into the scheme. Enrolment process currently going well.</p> <p>NW – Brexit, anxiety around employment sources and future of ESF. Economic, road closures and traffic jams, pollution etc. A large cost to businesses.</p> <p>LI – August was a busy month. Concerns surrounding GDPR, what happens with Brexit? Businesses taking advantage of EU funding while they still can in case it goes as a result of Brexit. Businesses are uncertain of the future but overall positive.</p> <p>PG – Brexit might affect the ports, too early to say what effect that may have.</p> <p>SC – National Trading Standards, money is being held in government in preparation to Brexit.</p>	
6.	<p>Opportunity South Essex/SELEP update</p> <p>The LEP Review is ongoing and SELEP are preparing their response to the Government proposals for review of all LEPs across the country. The first response will be in relation the Geographical coverage of the LEP. There will be a second around governance arrangements.</p> <p>In light of the LEP review and in particular the Governance arrangements proposed Opportunity South Essex are looking at reducing numbers of people on the board.</p>	

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7.	<p>South Essex 2050</p> <p>LC updated on South Essex 2050 - 7 local authorities are working in collaboration on the South Essex 2050 initiative. The work is focussed on a number of workstreams including development of the Joint Strategic Plan that will set direction for South Essex.</p> <p>Thurrock are hosting a business dinner in December 2018, looking to involve the Business Boards for Basildon and Southend where economics and strategy will be discussed.</p>	
8.	<p>Close/AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PG suggested that GCSE results in Thurrock this year might be below UK average, PG asked if the Board would like a report back on GCSE results next time. Important to know quality of students coming into the working environment. • Technology bid • Update on BEST Growth Hub • Lakeside update provided. 	

Date of Next meeting:

- Monday 29th October 2018, Ikea, Lakeside Retail Park