

MINUTES

Thurrock Business Board
Meeting Monday 29th October at 14:00

Meeting venue
IKEA Lakeside, West Thurrock RM20 3WJ

Attendees: Perry Glading (Chair), Lisa Duxbury (LD), Robert Edge (RE), Brett Smallcombe (BS), Louise Ince (LI), Amanda Sweeney (AS), Marco Simon (MS), Ian Lewis (IL), Mark Bentley (MB), Andy Vickers (AV), Georgia Searle (GS), Steve Cox (SC), Anna Eastgate (AE), Howard Oldstein (HO), Angela O'Donoghue (AD), Lyn Carpenter (LC), Westley Mercer (WM), BJ Chong (BJ), Stephen Taylor (ST), Sophie Coston (SC), Oliver Treneman (OT), Gareth Burton (GB), Georgia Searle (GS)

Apologies: Kristina Jackson (KJ), Lucy Harris (LH)

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>GIFT Update The Giving for Thurrock information pack was nearly ready to go out; a press release around Giving for Thurrock Day 2019 would also be going out W/C 29th October 2018. GIFT are the chosen charity to be supported at the Grays Christmas Lights event on 24th November.</p> <p>GIFT are looking for donations to help support Giving for Thurrock day and for local businesses to contribute to an event/activity. IKEA and C2C have pledged support for GIFT already, AS would like TBB members to signpost businesses directly to her who might be interested in supporting the cause.</p> <p>Future plans include recruiting an apprentice to assist with social media and event planning, AS has asked if any members of the board can sponsor the role over a 12 month period to contact her directly.</p> <p>Broadband Update BS gave an update on the project. BS stated he has met with Officers at Thurrock Council and is waiting for information on</p>	<p>EM to circulate AS contact details and support information</p>

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	<p>case studies that demonstrate the effectiveness and need for the scheme. The board still felt that the initiative was unproven.</p>	
<p>2.</p>	<p>Mark Bentley – ILT Technology bid</p> <p>MB introduced The Institute of Technology which is an initiative designed to develop and support the next generation of Professional Logisticians and Engineers. The initiative will focus on Level 3 to Level 5 courses and will encompass the whole supply chain from procurement through the last mile logistics.</p> <p>The curriculum will be designed with the industry to support skills needs and there are key industry partners engaged in the development of the programme. The skills provision will be supported by a new Hub Building on DP World Logistics Park. Five key partners colleges are involved and all will contribute different specialisms and develop the offer based on local need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Essex College • Mid Kent College • PROCAT • Sussex Coast College • Chelmsford College <p>These organisations will have the capacity for 1000 learners, giving students an insight into what the logistics sector is and what it will become in the future, making this a good opportunity for students in Thurrock. The final submission for the Institution of Technology bid is November 2018; South Essex college will present the bid February 2019 with the new building looking to open by March 2021.</p> <p>PG asked what can the group do to help support the bid. MB stated that the TBB group is powerful and can effectively get the message out to businesses in Thurrock as well as putting together case studies of the need for logistics training in Thurrock.</p> <p>PG asked about a back-up plan if the bid is not successful. MB stated that there is a general excitement for the project and businesses are on-board with it, however if it's not successful they hope to continue as much of the skills provision as possible.</p>	<p>EM to circulate PowerPoint presentation to the group and MB contact details</p>

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	<p>PG stated to the group that this project is important to support as logistics involves lots of different companies and industries etc. MB added that lots of industries involve logistics in some manner, for example IKEA is seen as retail but logistics is a big part of it.</p> <p>LD asked if IKEA could offer apprenticeships through this project, MB stated that they can do this from now. MB asked that any businesses interested in the project contact him directly as it will be beneficial to have lots of businesses behind the scheme.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>BEST Growth Hub</p> <p>GS gave an overview of BEST performance. Supporting existing businesses in Essex, Southend and Thurrock, the BEST Growth Hub is funded by Government to help businesses identify and realise their potential with free business support available. The hub provides a focal point for businesses that are looking to increase their competitiveness and grow; it offers a great choice of advice, training, networking and more, all tailored to individual business needs. From 1st April they no longer support pre-starts.</p> <p>BEST takes a bird's eye view of the business and signposts / refers to relevant support packages and grant funding schemes. To date the Hub has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported 3,385 businesses, of these 271 were Thurrock businesses; • Carried out 1,432 diagnostics, of these 114 were Thurrock businesses; • Awarded 128 grants through the SEBB (South East Business Boost) programme with £829,510, of these 8 were Thurrock businesses with grants totalling £47,810; <p>The overall satisfaction with BEST support services averages at 85%; 75% of these were 'very likely' to recommend the service to a friend or colleague.</p> <p>The group expressed some concern at take-up in Thurrock and asked what could be done to improve rates. GS clarified that the BEST Growth Hub is more established in Southend than other boroughs as it began there and is based there.</p> <p>ST asked how businesses in Chelmsford have generated more interest than Thurrock, GS stated this is through their annual showcase, networking events and some work the hub has supported with the Environmental Health team.</p>	<p>EM to refer businesses who are interested in the growth hub to GS.</p>

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6.	<p>Updates</p> <hr/> <p>LGF – Local Growth Funding</p> <p>SC stated Thurrock Council’s expressions of interest were all given the green light and Outline Business Cases have been submitted.</p> <p>ASELA – The Association of South Essex Local Authority</p> <p>LC stated that work is moving ahead as well as work on the place narrative; thoughts from the group would be beneficial.</p> <p>SELEP – South East Local Enterprise Partnership</p> <p>SELEP has agreed a response to the LEP review which is due to be submitted to Government imminently. The response reflects SELEPs view that the current geography should be maintained, it also seeks to address some of the concerns raised by Government.</p>	
7.	<p>Economic Commentary</p> <hr/> <p>PG asked board members for an update on the local economy.</p> <p>RE – A number of companies have put capital investment on hold and annual leave has been suspended in a number of places over the Brexit period. A wait and see attitude has been adopted by a number of businesses;</p> <p>LD – This half term shop floor sales have been down compared to other years, however food and online sales have been up. It is too early to compare to previous years because half term has been staggered this year;</p> <p>BS – Good year overall;</p> <p>LI – Good year, positive;</p> <p>AV – No worries, steady year;</p> <p>AE – Sales in general have been up, however sales in fashion have been down, entertainment sales have been strong;</p> <p>WM – Construction has been down;</p> <p>BJ – Commercial work has been high, residential property market has been slower than usual</p>	

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8.	Close/AOB	Thurrock Council to contact Board Members about arrangements for electing a chair.
	<p>PG suggested we need more of a focus on Lakeside at the next meeting . PG also suggested : Lakeside to have a sub group to the TBB, which PG is investigating with HO, LD and LC</p> <p>The chair term will come to an end January 2019, PG is happy to continue for another year with the support of the board, however if anyone wants to come forward and chair then they should contact Emma McCulloch in the first instance. The Council will contact Business Board members to arrange election of a chair in due course.</p>	

Date of Next meeting

Wednesday 23rd January 2019 The Old Courthouse, Grays
 Board Members asked to suggest venues for future meetings