

BROMLEY ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

Minutes of the meeting held at 4.00 pm on 11 April 2017

Present:

Councillor Peter Morgan (Chairman)
Katy Woolcott, London Biggin Hill Airport (Vice-Chairman)
Carol Arnfield, LBB Head of Service, Education
Sharon Baldwin, Orpington 1st BID Company
Frances Forrest, Your Bromley
Dave Freeborn, Proctors
Michael Humphries, Handelsbanken
Terri Johnson, South East London Chamber of Commerce
Mike Lewis, Michael Rogers LLP
Colin Maclean, Community Links Bromley
Martin Pinnell, LBB Head of Town Centre Management and Business Support
Melanie Ross, Barclays Bank PLC
Lee Thomas, Fairlight Group

Also Present:

Councillor Vanessa Allen
John Baker, The John Baker Group
Lee Holland, The Glades
Max Mulcahy, Bromley Education Business Partnership

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Alex Henderson – MSE UK, Lesley Holland – LBB Operations Manager, Bromley Education Business Partnership, Kate Miller – The Glades, Sam Parrett – London South East Colleges, Robert Sargent – Acorn Commercial and Steve Wheeler – Federation of Small Businesses.

2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10TH JANUARY 2017 AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the meeting held on 10th January 2017 were agreed, and signed as a correct record. There were no matters arising.

3 PRESENTATION BY JOHN BAKER, THE JOHN BAKER GROUP - REGARDING THE REDEVELOPMENT OF WELLS HOUSE, ELMFIELD ROAD, BROMLEY

Mr John Baker, Chief Executive, The John Baker Group gave a presentation regarding the redevelopment of Wells House, Elmfield Road, Bromley. The John Baker Group was a property development and investment company that

had started as property advisors in Mayfair during the 1960's. The group had carried out some of the most prestigious development schemes in the UK and continental Europe. These included Burlington Arcade and No. 25 Hanover Square, the world's most expensive office building when built in 2006, and the first to achieve £100 per sq. ft. The group were now pursuing projects south of London, with office schemes of 200,000 sq. ft. in Crawley and 250,000 sq. ft. in Haywards Heath, and now in Bromley where they proposed to develop over 0.5m sq. ft. on the Wells House site on Elmfield Road.

Wells House was situated around 200m north of Bromley South Railway Station. The site was close to Bromley High Street and was bounded by Kentish Way to the east and Elmfield Road to the west, from which it was currently accessed. The site was neighboured by office units to the north, south and south west which were mainly brick faced, and directly opposite was a multi-storey car park above The Mall retail space which was painted concrete.

The majority of the office buildings had been built during the 1980's and when The John Baker Group purchased Wells House, it had initially been as an investment with the intention to demolish the building once the lease had expired. They had planned to build residential apartments, but following an analysis of the site, they had considered what else could be achieved. The space analysts believed that the redevelopment of Wells House could double the amount of space on offer, and as a result The John Baker Group were looking at the whole of Elmfield Road as a development opportunity to amass a larger scheme over the next five to seven years. They had spoken to all the land owners in the street, and the scheme had been well received. It was proposed that Wells House would be used as a 'guinea pig' to see what could be achieved.

A pre-application meeting had taken place with the LBB Planning Department the previous week, at which the scheme had also been well received. The planners had preferred a more compact building, so a few design changes were to be made and then a brochure would be produced within the next couple of weeks. Planners were keen to see a conglomerated scheme to change the areas position within Bromley.

Mr Baker felt that Bromley had a number of qualities and attributes which were important to attracting businesses. These included it being a compact town which was clean and safe with restaurants and shops; it had a fine airport and was only sixteen minutes by rail from Victoria Station, all of which would attract big space users that needed these types of facilities. Mr Baker said that people go where the product is. This was highlighted by their development in Crawley which was already pre-let.

The development in Elmfield Road was a great opportunity for proper, sophisticated marketing, and would be put on an international electronic register. It would be advertised as office space of 150,000 sq. ft. to 200,000 sq. ft., which it was noted was hard to come by, with the whole of the Elmfield Road site being between 600,000 sq. ft. and 1.2m sq. ft. It was now a case of

moving forward with the planners to conceive something from all the suggested ideas.

Members noted that a nearby development had been refused due to height restrictions, and enquired what the height of the proposed development would be. Mr Baker responded that they would build as high as the planners would allow, and proposed between ten and twelve storeys, but only if it would 'sit right'. Members asked what sort of rent per sq. ft. Mr Baker expected the site to achieve. Mr Baker replied that around £40 per sq. ft. was anticipated, and he was confident it would be achieved. This was due to the scale of the development which would attract a wider market. Members enquired as to the timescale of the proposed development. Mr Baker responded that it would depend on efficiency with regard to applications and that there were still a lot of discussions to take place to ensure the development was right, but that there should be between two and seven years of real activity.

The Chairman thanked Mr Baker for his interesting presentation, and asked to be kept updated on how the scheme was developing. A number of members commented that they were thrilled and excited to see the proposals, and fully supported the scheme as they felt it was a fantastic opportunity for Bromley.

4 UPDATES ON MAIN PARTNERSHIP THEMES AND OTHER RELEVANT COUNCIL INITIATIVES:

Members of the Partnership gave an update around progress across the main themes of the Partnership.

a TOWN CENTRES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE (VERBAL UPDATE)

Progress was continuing across the sites that made up the Bromley Town Centre Area Action Plan. The Chairman informed members that Countryside Properties (UK) Limited had been selected as the Council's preferred development partners for Site G: West of the High Street. Following the signing of a development agreement, a planning application would be submitted, following which a compulsory purchase order would be issued.

With regards to Site A, Bromley North Station, Prime Place had entered into a development agreement with Network Rail. A planning application would be submitted for an eighteen storey structure as the first phase of the development, situated to the south of Bromley North Station.

Sharon Baldwin, Orpington 1st BID Company, advised members that The Pure Lake Group were to redevelop the former Dairy Crest Depot into a residential scheme, which was expected to make a huge impact on the conservation area. A new restaurant would also be opening at that end of the high street, in the unit which had previously housed the 'Gesti' restaurant. Further good news was that one private landlord owned four properties in that area and had agreed to invest in them and improve their appearance and upkeep.

The Berwick House site development had now been completed and a further 105 new housing units were proposed to be built by McCulloch Homes on Homefield Rise. The Berkeley Homes Health and Wellbeing Centre had also been agreed and signed off. The Premier Inn hotel was currently operating at 88% capacity, and the Odeon cinema continued to perform extremely well. It was noted that Dean's Diner had closed down, but another company was already lined up to take the vacant unit.

The Chairman reported that at the Full Council meeting on 10th April 2017, proposals for the £3.5m Bromley Town Centre High Street Public Realm Improvements had been agreed, for the area between Market Square and Metrobank. The first phase would be implemented between July and November 2017, to be paused before the Christmas trading period. The remainder of the works would take place between January and November 2018, subject to agreement on further funding. The Orpington Walnuts Shopping Centre Public Realm Scheme was underway, with the second phase due to be completed by September 2017. Further public realm improvements were also taking place in Beckenham and Penge town centres funded by TfL and the New Homes Bonus.

RESOLVED that the update on the town centre development programme be noted.

b LOCAL PLAN DEVELOPMENT UPDATE (VERBAL UPDATE)

Martin Pinnell provided an update on the draft Local Plan on behalf of Mary Manuel, LBB Head of Planning Strategy and Projects. The Partnership was advised that officers were currently working through the responses received from the most recent stage of consultation, which had closed on 31st December 2016. A report would then be put to Members at the meetings of the Council's Development Control Committee on 6th June 2017 and Executive on 14th June 2017. Following this, the Local Plan would be submitted for Examination in Public.

The Chairman informed members that the Local Plan would be adopted in approximately twelve months, at the same time as the Bromley Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This was a levy that Local Authorities could charge on new developments in the area and put towards other projects.

RESOLVED that the update on the Local Plan be noted.

c BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS AND BUSINESS SUPPORT UPDATE (VERBAL UPDATE)

Mr Martin Pinnell, LBB Head of Town Centre Management and Business Support, gave an update on Business Improvement Districts and Business Support in Quarter 4, 2016/17.

The Council was continuing to maintain the relationships with the two BIDs already established in Orpington and Bromley. The Orpington 1st BID Company intended to apply for a renewal which was due at the end of March

2018. A postal ballot of businesses paying the levy would take place between 6th October and 2nd November 2017. The Council was currently working with Central Management Solutions (CMS) to put in place an operating agreement which would underpin the BID for the second term.

Frances Forrest, Your Bromley BID Company, informed members that planned events in the town centre included the big television screen in Market Square during the second week of Wimbledon, and a business networking event on 25th April 2017 at Oliv Enzo restaurant. Surveys were currently being undertaken for street art projects for which commissions were needed, with themes including creative lighting in alleys and living walls. It was noted that parking was an issue, and an audit would be undertaken of what parking was currently available. It was planned for an app to link up where you wanted to travel to, where there were spaces available, how to reach the parking space and how to return to your car. The Chairman asked if part of the study could include signposting The Hill Car Park from Kentish Way.

Two further BIDs were planned for Beckenham and Penge town centres. It was proposed that ballots would take place for both in February 2018 with a view to start in spring 2018. Work was already being undertaken by CMS, and steering groups were being formed. The first meeting of the Penge steering group would take place that evening.

As part of the New Homes Bonus, pop up shops had been funded and opened in Orpington and Penge. 'Pengetout' pop up shop had nine new businesses currently represented and were all doing well.

Planned business support events included Successful Mums taster sessions at The Warren to support mums, dads and carers in setting up their own businesses. Other events included Grow Bromley, a joint event organised by the London Borough of Bromley and the South East London Business Network (SELBN), an event with the Institute of Chartered Accountants on 7th June 2017 and free monthly business surgeries.

RESOLVED that the recent work around Business Improvement Districts and Business Support in the 4th Quarter of 2016/17 be noted.

5 PARTNER UPDATES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR JOINT WORKING TO INCLUDE:

Updates are provided in the relevant sub sections.

a BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT (VERBAL UPDATE)

Ms Katy Woolcott, London Biggin Hill Airport provided an update on developments at London Biggin Hill Airport following its identification as a Strategic Outer London Development Centre in the London Plan, and as part of the LoCATE (London Centre for Aviation Technology and Enterprise) project which brought together a cluster of modern aviation-related

businesses at and around London Biggin Hill Airport to support continued economic development in the area.

Members were informed that London Biggin Hill Airport had secured a £15m loan towards the construction costs of building a new hangar and a four star hotel. A pre-application would be submitted shortly for the on-site hotel which was desperately required to look after the needs of the crew, pilots and engineers.

The airports new operating hours were on schedule to be implemented from the 1st May 2017, and additional employees had been recruited. Business confidence was felt to be good, and was reflected in the high quality and calibre of the operators using the airport.

Work was continuing in partnership with London South East Colleges, and a site had been selected for a proposed new engineering academy. London South East Colleges had been speaking with schools, universities, airports and airlines in order to look at joining up pathways for where the students could progress on to, and ensure local skills were developed.

b COMMERCIAL PROPERTY (VERBAL UPDATE)

Mr Mike Lewis, Michael Rogers LLP commented that the local office market had been quite slow recently. It was considered to have been part of the usual 'ups and downs' of that sector, and a flurry of enquiries had been received during the previous couple of weeks. The industrial market had been very busy, and although the lack of quality space was continuing to be a problem, he was extremely confident about the future.

c COMMUNITY LINKS BROMLEY (VERBAL UPDATE)

Mr Colin Maclean, Community Links Bromley advised members that work was continuing across the sector, with a focus on Health and Wellbeing. At the next meeting of the Partnership, Mr Maclean planned to provide members with an update on the evaluation of the Corporate Social Responsibility Expo that had taken place on 10th November 2016.

d GENERAL NEWS ROUND (VERBAL UPDATE)

Members of the Partnership had undertaken a range of activities since the last meeting.

Ms Terri Johnson, South East London Chamber of Commerce thanked the Chairman for attending their breakfast meeting at the Bromley Court Hotel on 16th March 2017, along with Councillor Stephen Carr, Leader of Bromley Council. The presentation they had delivered on the regeneration taking place in the borough had been very well received. The Chamber's next networking lunch would be taking place at the Bexleyheath Marriott Hotel on Thursday 13th April 2017, where the Mayor of Bexley would be giving a presentation on loneliness and the effects on mental and physical health in order to raise awareness.

Members were informed that the Chamber of Commerce now had Masthead Light, a weekly newsletter providing details of upcoming events. The next issue of the quarterly Masthead magazine would be published in April 2017, and members were asked to advise Ms Johnson if they required a copy.

Mr Lee Thomas, Fairlight Group reported that the serviced offices were currently full, with a waiting list and a high level of enquiries still being received. Demand was strong and more space of 15,000 sq. ft. and above was needed.

Mr Dave Freeborn, Proctors advised members that sales of land were very busy, from single buyers up to multinationals. More land was needed as demand continued to be strong. Land prices were dependent on the location, but on average were between 35%-45% of Gross Development Value (GDV).

Ms Melanie Ross, Barclays Bank PLC reported that the bank was currently very busy, with an increased number of emerging start-up businesses and lots of companies moving business premises within the borough. Barclays Bank PLC would be delivering an Economic Update event at Bromley Civic Centre on Tuesday 18th April 2017, for which there were limited places still available.

Mr Lee Holland, The Glades, informed members that footfall remained tough, with established restaurants -2-3%, but new restaurants were +2-3%. One new store, HMV, had opened on 10th April 2017 and new letting agents for the centre, Cushman & Wakefield and Lunson Mitchenall, were now in place. Several marketing events were planned over the next few months. These included fashion events in May and June 2017, a kids club during the school summer holidays and a beauty event in February 2018. It was planned that a review of the Christmas Grotto would also be undertaken. Work was continuing with Your Bromley BID Company, and there would be a charity event taking place on 30th May 2017.

Ms Sharon Baldwin, Orpington 1st BID Company advised members that their next business breakfast would focus on counter-terrorism. The next major customer events would be the Vintage Festival on 1st July 2017 and Priory Live on 12th August 2017. There would also be Priory Intro live music events taking place throughout the town in the run up to Priory Live. During the week commencing 15th May 2017, events would be taking place in Orpington town centre as part of National Dementia Awareness Week. The aim was to make the town more welcoming and friendly for people with dementia and provide training for the staff of the businesses to recognise their habits. There would be a virtual dementia bus visiting which would allow people an experience of what dementia can be like, and the Odeon cinema would be running a dementia-friendly screening of a film.

Ms Carol Arnfield, LBB Head of Service – Education, reported that as there had been a reduction in unemployment, work was being carried out to prepare people with skills for employment, and target those trying to set up their own business. Work was also being undertaken with Go Train to access the traveller community. Further work would be continuing with Jobcentre Plus,

focussing on the 50+ age category which was a growth area, and looking at using social media for job searches.

Work was also being undertaken in preparation for the new 30 hours a week funded childcare for working parents of three and four year olds that would be implemented from September 2017. The scheme was intended to free up parents for the employment market and allow part time workers to increase their hours. The Council was currently working with local providers to ensure there were sufficient places available.

Mr Michael Humphries, Handelsbanken informed member that business was currently booming, and they were inundated with enquiries. Businesses were moving and expanding and demand was currently exceeding supply.

RESOLVED that the updates be noted.

6 BROMLEY ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18 (VERBAL UPDATE)

Members of the Partnership considered the forward rolling work programme for the Bromley Economic Partnership for 2017/18.

In considering the next meeting of the Partnership, the Chairman asked for members to send any suggestions for future agenda items to Martin Pinnell, LBB Head of Town Centre Management and Business Support.

7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Members of the Bromley Economic Partnership were advised that Tolu Faleti, LBB Project Planner, Regeneration and Transformation Service, would be leading on a piece of work regarding flexible working space to understand the demands and needs of small businesses. A questionnaire would be sent out in the next couple of weeks via the e-bulletin, and members would also be sent the link and were encouraged to forward on to any contacts and ask them to respond.

RESOLVED that the issue raised be noted.

8 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

4.00pm, Tuesday 11th July 2017
4.00pm, Tuesday 10th October 2017
4.00pm, Tuesday 16th January 2018
4.00pm, Tuesday 27th March 2018

The Meeting ended at 5.23 pm

Chairman