

BROMLEY ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

Minutes of the meeting held at 4.00 pm on 15 January 2019

Present:

Councillor Peter Morgan (Chairman)
Katy Woolcott, London Biggin Hill Airport (Vice-Chairman)
Sharon Baldwin, Orpington 1st BID Company
Frances Forrest, Your Bromley BID Company
Dave Freeborn, Proctors
John Gledhill, LBB Head of Leisure
Alex Henderson, Henderson Biomedical
Michael Humphries, Handelsbanken
Mike Lewis, Michael Rogers LLP
Colin Maclean, Community Links Bromley
Lee Thomas, Fairlight Group

Also Present:

Councillor Vanessa Allen
Nick Barclay, i dverde Bromley
Sally Callaghan, Churchill Theatre
Neil Coates, London South East Colleges
John Coupland, South East London Business Network
Stuart Freeman, World Technologies Ltd
Chris Glover, Churchill Theatre
Councillor Hannah Gray
Councillor Colin Hitchins
Councillor Josh King
Karen Lubbock, Bromley Education Business Partnership
Stuart Marsh, Cannon Cars Ltd
Lorraine McQuillan, LBB Environment & Community Services
Richard Nudd, QED Consultants
Mark Perkins, insight6
Tina Powley, Nugent Shopping Centre
Virgil Rappa, Regeneration & Transformation Service
Robert Sargent, Acorn Commercial
Chandra Sharma, Federation of Small Businesses
Paul Spiers, OrangeDoor
Louise Wolsey, London South East Colleges

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Carol Arnfield – LBB Head of Service for Early Years, Schools Standards and Adult Education, Zoe Brown – Beckenham Together and Penge SE20, Mark Haynes – The Glades, Katie Ryde – LBB Planner and Caroline Tatchell – Splash Damage.

Apologies had also been received from Lesley Holland – LBB Operations Manager, Bromley Education Business Partnership and Karen Lubbock attended on her behalf.

The Chairman introduced Mr Chris Glover, Theatre Director – Churchill Theatre, and thanked him on behalf of the Partnership for hosting the meeting at the Churchill Theatre.

Mr Glover welcomed members of the Partnership to the Churchill Theatre. The Churchill Theatre was part of the HQ Theatres and Hospitality portfolio, the second largest commercial theatre company in the UK. Over the past eighteen months, there had been investment of £600k which had included reinstating an old kitchen, and installing two further kitchens, a bar, black box studio space and a flexible space for events.

These improvements had brought a real energy to the building as on a single night there could be two or three events taking place, broadening the range of attractions. There were workshop and rehearsal spaces, which they had taken full advantage of to encourage productions to start their shows in Bromley. There were a number of shows that would be premiering at the Churchill Theatre, including ‘Cabaret’ and ‘An Inspector Calls’ in August 2019, and a new production of ‘We Will Rock You’ in September 2019.

Members were invited to attend a tour of the Churchill Theatre at the end of the meeting.

2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16TH OCTOBER 2018 AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th October 2018 were agreed, and signed as a correct record. There were no matters arising.

3 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

Virgil Rappa, LBB Town Centre Development Project Planner attended to provide an update on Town Centre Development across the borough. Progress was continuing across the sites that made up the Bromley Town Centre Area Action Plan.

With regards to Opportunity Site G: West of the High Street, the proposed Churchill Quarter development, the Council’s development team were

continuing to liaise directly with property owners regarding site acquisitions, in advance of a planning application that would be considered in early March 2019. Benefits from the development of the site included: 410 new homes, of which 35% would be affordable; transformation of part of the high street and townscape; increased commercial floor space on the ground floor; and the creation of jobs.

Phase 2 of the Bromley Town Centre High Street Public Realm Improvement works had commenced, from the south of the library towards the Elmfield Road junction. Raised planters and new lighting columns had been installed, and a substantial area of new granite paving had been laid. Three further planters were due to be installed shortly. The market had been moved to its permanent location, and feedback indicated it was settling in well. Work was being undertaken to finalise the current design of the Elmfield Road junction, which was expected to be completed by Easter 2019. The carriageway works at the High Street and Elmfield Road junction may require a full road closure for six to eight weeks. Discussions were taking place regarding the provision of temporary bus stops on Kentish Way, and the use of a 'U-turn' facility at the top end of the High Street, outside Boots. A meeting regarding this would be taking place with Transport for London, and an update would be provided to the next meeting of the Partnership.

In Beckenham town centre, the public realm improvement works had been substantially completed. The High Street had been returned to two-way traffic and all bus diversions had reverted back to normal. New architectural building lighting and the application of a resin bonded surfacing to the Beckenham Green market area had been completed. There were additional works taking place over the next few weeks, which included the installation of planters at Kelsey Square and Village Way, and any outstanding snagging work. The public realm improvement works in Orpington town centre were in the final stages, and would be completed by March 2019.

The improvement works in Penge High Street were now completed, and cleaning and snagging work would be taking place. As part of the shopfront improvement project, You & Me architecture and their sub-contractors had started work on two shops, which should be completed by March 2019. Members were advised that the Council had been unsuccessful in its Good Growth Fund bid, which had been submitted back in September 2018. Officers would be meeting with representatives from the GLA the following day to get feedback regarding the outcome. Work would be undertaken with the borough's BID companies regarding a bid to the Future High Street Fund.

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

b LOCAL PLAN DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Katie Ryde, LBB Planner provided a written update on the development of the Draft Local Plan.

1. Bromley's Draft Local Plan

Since the last meeting of the Bromley Economic Partnership, the Council had received the Inspector's report on the Local Plan. The Inspector concluded that, with the Modifications on which the Local Authority consulted in the summer, the Plan is sound, and could be adopted.

Officers had recommended that the Council proceed to adoption and special meetings had been arranged. A meeting of the Development Control Committee would take place that evening (15th January 2019), and had been asked to recommend the Plan for adoption to the Council's Executive. A meeting of the Council's Executive would take place the following day (16th January 2019), who had similarly been asked to recommend adoption to full Council (a meeting of which would take place following the Executive tomorrow evening).

Should the Council resolve to adopt the Plan, from Thursday 17th January 2019 the Local Plan would take the place of the Unitary Development Plan for the purpose of determining planning applications and appeals. Officers were making arrangements for the consolidated version of the plan – i.e. including all Modifications – to be made available as soon as possible, and to fulfil their legal obligations, which included formally notifying stakeholders.

2. The New London Plan

The Examination in Public of the New London Plan had started today (15th January 2019). This consisted of hearing sessions at City Hall led by a panel of three Inspectors. These sessions continued until May, and officers would be attending to give evidence in person. Some written statements had already been submitted and this process continued with regular deadlines. Amongst other issues, Bromley would be contesting the overall housing target and particularly the "small site" element which it considered to be undeliverable. The Local Authority was also raising concerns over the lack of protection for garden land and some green infrastructure which the London Plan did not appear to protect adequately.

Following the public hearings, the Panel would consider all the evidence and prepare a report – which should be during the summer. The Mayor and the Assembly would then consider the report and its recommendations, however it should be noted that the process of the London Plan examination was different to that of Local Plans and, in the end, the Mayor could reject the Panel's recommendations and adopt the Plan anyway. The Secretary of State did have powers to intervene and had already made a strong representation about ways in which he considered the London Plan not to have had "due regard" to national policy. There was no fixed timetable for adoption as yet but when the consultation draft Plan was published in 2018 the Mayor was hoping to adopt the new plan by the end of 2019.

RESOLVED that the update on the Local Plan be noted.

c BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS AND BUSINESS SUPPORT UPDATE

Lorraine McQuillan, LBB Town Centre Manager gave an update on Business Improvement Districts and Business Support in Quarter 3, 2018/19.

The London Borough of Bromley now had four BID areas, and a feasibility study was currently being undertaken with regards to the possibility of establishing a BID in West Wickham. The report was due to be completed by the first week of February 2019, and an update would be provided to the next meeting of the Bromley Economic Partnership.

Business support events that were planned included Successful Mums taster sessions on the 12th and 26th February 2019, to support mums, dads and carers in returning to work after a break, or considering setting up their own business. Further dates for business support events would be confirmed shortly. A review of the business pages on the Council's website and the format and style of the Bromley Business e-bulletin would be undertaken, and would include information on the town centre development work.

Work was also continuing on the Local Parades Initiative, which had received further applications, and had funded lights along Chatterton Road and a tree in Eden Park over the Christmas period.

Ms Frances Forrest, Your Bromley BID Company advised members that it had funded Operation Gemini, which had provided extra security in the town centre over the Christmas period, giving businesses additional reassurance. It was intended that this would be replicated over the February half term, which usually saw a spike in shoplifting and anti-social behaviour, and an area of focus would be rough sleeping and aggressive begging in the town centre.

From March 2019, Your Bromley would be introducing a service of cost-reducing analysis, which would measure a business' use of things such as electricity, water, gas, phones and credit card machines, and suggest alternative suppliers.

Events taking place included an inter-business bowling competition at the Pavilion Leisure Centre on Tuesday 29th January 2019. Health and Wellbeing week would be taking place in February, during which there would be various offers, and a guide to highlight and promote ways to help people make long-term changes.

Ms Sharon Baldwin, Orpington 1st BID Company informed members that footfall had been good in the town centre over the Christmas period, up 4.6% in November 2018, compared to a national average of -4.5%, and up 0.2% in December 2018, compared to a national average of -2.9%.

Events and the branding of the town had been successful in terms of the attendance and structure, and had been extended with the Santa Dash. This had been in collaboration with Mytime Active, and had seen the number of

participants increase, which meant that the town centre could retain the event in 2019.

Orpington's Finest Awards 2019 had been launched, and were open for entries until the end of January. The winners would be announced at the Gala Awards Evening on Thursday 28th March 2019.

New events would be taking place in the town centre across the year, including 'Enchanted' which was delivered by Bla Bla Productions, and had been extended to become an arts programme over a three month period. The role of the BID during its second term was to increase inward investment, and put in place a co-ordinated plan for mixed use schemes. It was important to ensure that the services provided are those that were needed and, as a modern town centre, could include car clubs, cycling and improving the attractiveness of the landscaping.

A member highlighted that parking was a challenge in Bromley town centre and advised that before Christmas, Merton Council had trialled free parking in the town centre car parks. As a result, there had been a huge uplift in footfall and sales in the shopping centre. The Chairman responded that this idea had been discussed previously, but the need was for more parking spaces to be provided, as the town centre car parks had all been full in the run-up to Christmas. As part of the town centre improvements, the Council was looking at the possible redevelopment of The Hill car park, to provide better parking space and lighting, and there had previously been discussions about adding an additional floor to the Civic Centre car park.

Another member noted that the Council had previously implemented a 'Park and Ride' service into the town centre over the Christmas period, and enquired whether this could happen again in an attempt to stop the roads from being gridlocked. The Chairman responded that this had been trialled around twelve years ago, and feedback had been that the 'Park and Ride' service had not been well used. The Chairman agreed that he would raise the issue, and see if it could be considered again.

RESOLVED that the recent work around the Business Improvement Districts and Business Support in the 3rd quarter of 2018/19 be noted.

4 PARTNER UPDATES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR JOINT WORKING TO INCLUDE:

Updates are provided in the relevant sub sections.

a BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT

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. It had created an area which

attracted high quality, low impact aircrafts which were more environmentally friendly for the local community.

The airport's existing hangar was currently full and housing aircrafts, and work was continuing to let the aviation office space that was still available. Plans for the hotel had been put on hold due to the current Brexit negotiations, but it was fully intended that this would be progressed. Work was also being undertaken with London South East Colleges to deliver the London Aerospace and Technical College, which was vital to encourage further Maintenance and Repair Organisations (MRO) to be based on-site. The number of jobs at the airport had increased to 1,300, and five new apprentices had recently been recruited on the airport side.

b COMMERCIAL PROPERTY

Mr Mike Lewis, Michael Rogers LLP informed members that at the end of 2018, the market had gone quiet, which was a usual occurrence. Since the beginning of 2019, they had 'hit the ground running' and been extremely busy. The owners of 1 Wren Court (situated on London Road, opposite the junction with Tweedy Road), were revamping the space to bring it up to prime grade 'A' standard. It was expected to be released onto the market in nine months' time, and was likely to achieve rental values of around £30 per sq. ft. It was noted that rental values had nearly doubled from the £15 / £16 per sq. ft. being achieved five years ago.

The John Baker Group were continuing with work to progress a development scheme on Elmfield Road, and were speaking with the building owners.

c COMMUNITY LINKS BROMLEY

Mr Colin Maclean, Community Links Bromley, informed members that a borough-wide review of volunteering was currently taking place, and a formal briefing would be presented to the Council's Health and Wellbeing Board. The review would be looking at increasing the opportunities for young people in the borough to volunteer.

A bid had been made to the Bromley Community Fund for raising the opportunities for, and profile of, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). It was highlighted that CSR was about 'local giving'. It was not about cash, it was about the forming of relationships and giving something back – for example giving up some of your time, rather than giving money. The outcome would be known by the end of January 2019, and the Partnership would be briefed if they were successful.

d JOBCENTRE PLUS - BOROUGH UNEMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYMENT DATA

No update was provided to the meeting.

e GENERAL NEWS ROUND

Ms Tina Powley, Nugent Shopping Park informed members that a lot of CSR work had been undertaken. Children from local schools had been visiting, and helping out at, a conservation area which had proved to be very successful. 'Knowledge Trees' had been created at their schools, allowing the children to take back what they had learned and gave them a sense of pride. More than 3,000 books had also been donated to local schools.

The Dementia Action Group had been working with the stores at the Shopping Park, to improve the awareness of Dementia, and share tips and hints for when serving customers. Three staff members per store had taken part in training sessions, and had provided training sessions for local Councillors and community groups.

Christmas events at the Shopping Park in partnership with Talking Box Events had gone well, and it was currently a busy time for the Shopping Park.

Ms Louise Wolsey, London South East Colleges introduced her colleague, Neil Coates, Head of Business Development, LSEC. Work was continuing with London Biggin Hill Airport to develop the London Aerospace and Technical College. A public consultation had taken place in September 2018, and feedback had been pretty positive. The scheme had been redesigned with the support of London Biggin Hill Airport, and another consultation would take place in February, before a planning application was submitted in March 2019.

During that week, in collaboration with Mytime Active, 'twilight sessions' would be taking place at the College between 4.00pm-6.00pm. These were intended to reduce the number of gang incidents, and would provide after school sports and activities.

A Bromley Open Event would be taking place on Wednesday 6th March 2019, 4.30pm-7.00pm, which would provide businesses an opportunity to meet potential apprentices.

Mr John Coupland, South East London Business Network (SELBN) requested that an additional item be added to future agendas for 'Business to Business updates'.

Mr Chandra Sharma attended the meeting representing the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB). The FSB now had almost 500 members in the London Borough of Bromley, which had increased by 40 since the last meeting of the Partnership. Meetings had taken place with: BID Managers from Your Bromley BID Company and Beckenham Together to discuss how the FSB could support them; members of the FSB Development Team from the Greater London Region had met with the Leader of the Council and Councillor Morgan; and Ellie Reeves MP for Penge and Lewisham West.

Work had been undertaken to promote various small businesses, their owners and the Small Business Saturday event, with Bob Neill MP and Jo Johnson MP via social media, as well as accompanying Jo Johnson MP on his visit to businesses in Orpington. All Bromley Councillors had been emailed in advance of Small Business Saturday, encouraging them to visit small businesses in the week leading up to the event. The FSB strongly encouraged Bromley to have the Small Business Saturday bus visit the Borough during 2019.

Over 37 local businesses had attended a very successful lunchtime networking event, at which Jo Johnson MP had been the guest speaker, and the next event would be taking place in Orpington on Wednesday 13th February. The Bromley lunchtime networking event, in partnership with Your Bromley BID Company, would be launched at the Cow and Pig, East Street on Friday 15th February.

The FSB were working with officers to improve the business section of the Bromley Council website, and had requested that deadline and publication dates for the Bromley Business e-bulletin, and the listing of the FSB and South East London Chamber of Commerce as support organisations, be added to the site.

There were just under eight weeks to go for applications to be submitted for the FSB awards, which were open to all businesses, whether they were a member or not. An India-Britain Trade Expo would also be taking place on 12th March 2019 at the Queen Elizabeth Conference Centre, which would provide an opportunity for networking with key decision-makers and a platform for all those wishing to do business in India.

Mr Alex Henderson, Henderson Biomedical said that business was going well, and advised members about a European Union funded initiative called the Building Legacies Fund. Its funding had been approved for the next two years, and offered small businesses access to free workshops and business support. Further information could be obtained from <https://buildinglegacies.co.uk/>.

Members were informed that the site which housed the former Beckenham Gym, Gambado and Goals, had been purchased by Crystal Palace Football Club. Gambado and Goals would be closing shortly, and the site would be used by the Crystal Palace Football Club Youth Team.

5 BROMLEY ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19

Members of the Partnership considered the forward rolling work programme for the Bromley Economic Partnership for 2018/19.

Members were asked to send any suggestions for future agenda items to the clerk.

6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was brought to the meeting.

7 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

4.00pm, Tuesday 2nd April 2019

8 TOUR OF THE CHURCHILL THEATRE

At the end of the meeting, Mr Chris Glover, Theatre Director and Ms Sally Callaghan, General Manager, provided members with a tour of the Churchill Theatre.

The Studio was a self-contained space which seated between 60-90 people, and had recently been refurbished. It provided a space with a small stage for stand-up comedy events and one-person shows, or could be used for drama and dance classes.

The Lounge was a newly refurbished space, which had been used for dining events such as 'Only Fools and 3 Courses', and hired by local businesses for recruitment events and Christmas celebrations. The space, which had its own bar, built-in projector and PA system, could be used for up to 180 people, and seated around 100 people for dining events.

The programme for the spaces in the theatre was constructed to compliment what else was taking place elsewhere in the venue.

Members were also shown the refurbished restaurant and bars, the backstage area and the main auditorium.

The Meeting ended at 5.57 pm

Chairman