

Crawley Economic Recovery Taskforce (CERT) Group and Town Deal Board

Wednesday, 22 July 2020

Confidential Working Draft

Meeting Notes

ITEM

1. Welcome

Chris Maidment (CM) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies received from:

- Catherine Scott
- Patrick Warner, substituted by Nick Hill
- John Redfern, substituted by Vicky Beard
- Paul Scrivens, substituted by Gary Peters
- Thomas Easton, substituted by Nicole Rudland
- Adam Joolia, substituted by Ian Ross

CM extended a special welcome to Abi Cunliffe-Hall who has replaced Cath Goodall at MHCLG and will be working with the CERT & Town Deal Board from now on.

Peter Smith (PS) introduced today's agenda, highlighting the main purpose of today's meeting was to look at the first working draft of the Town Investment Plan and invite feedback from Board members.

Crawley BC is also bringing forward a new Economic Development Strategy, aligned to the Local Plan, and a first draft will be presented to the CERT & Town Deal Board in September.

The minutes of the previous CERT & Town Deal Board meeting ([10 June 2020](#)) were accepted and, in doing so, the Terms of Reference for the CERT & Town Deal Board were formally approved.

2. The Emergency Response in Crawley - update

Employment Support Services - Alison Barratt (AB) updated the Board on proposals to deliver new employment support services for Crawley, in response to the Covid-19 crisis and the impact on employment within the town.

A number of bids for funding are currently being prepared which, if successful, will deliver a new Crawley Youth Hub, a BAME Hub and a Gatwick Hub. Funding is limited (DWP can invest up to €500k over five years in Crawley) so the team is looking at the best way to allocate the funding in order to achieve the greatest impact.

Clem Smith (CS) highlighted the importance of these proposals which, if successful, will deliver intensive employment support to priority groups within the local community, improve employability and increase access to work.

ACTION

ALL to note

Peter Lamb (PL) expressed the need to be realistic in that the proposals, on their own, will not create jobs and support from central government has, to date, been limited with no clear solution provided.

AB acknowledged that, through targeted support, the Hubs will give local people the best possible chance of securing employment, where jobs are available.

The in-meeting chat suggested developing a central place for Crawley Businesses to post job vacancies and link existing jobs boards. LoveLocalJobs would be happy to work with partners on this including the DWP and Crawley College. To be discussed at the next skills sub-group meeting.

JK/GP/AB

Manor Royal Recovery Plan - Steve Sawyer (SS) presented details of the [Manor Royal Recovery Plan](#) and highlighted the following:

- 2020 is likely to present the 7th cycle of recession in Manor Royal however there has always been a resurgence after previous cycles and the Manor Royal BID is well prepared.
- Business intelligence has informed the Recovery Plan.
- A robust risk assessment has been carried out by the BID.
- We know what our underlying strengths are and how to build on them i.e. 'Build Back Better' i.e. Crawley is extremely well connected and has access to a diverse local work force.
- As companies look to relocate and regionalize, Crawley must present itself as the destination of choice.

More information about the Manor Royal Recovery Plan can be found by visiting the [Manor Royal BID website](#)

Gatwick Airport - Alison Addy (AA) presented a verbal update on the situation at Gatwick.

Since the last CERT & Town Deal meeting, the North Terminal has reopened (15 June) and the Government lifted quarantine restrictions for inbound passengers. This has enabled airlines to resume flights to 75% of destinations however not at the same frequency as before Covid-19 and passenger numbers are low.

Gatwick Airport Ltd is working closely with its airline partners and currently has 14 airlines flying to 42 destinations in 23 countries.

British Airways has resumed flights to the Caribbean, with others soon to follow, including Air Transat to Canada and Emirates to Dubai.

Gatwick Airport Ltd's continued focus is on the safety and wellbeing of passengers and staff at the airport and preserving jobs. It will be a long road to recovery for the aviation industry and a number of companies are in active consultation with regard to job losses, so the full impact is yet to be realized.

There is a clear commitment to get the airport moving again and Gatwick Airport Ltd is doing all it can to make that happen.

Economic Impact in Crawley – CS referred to the latest statistics with regard to Crawley including:

- 20,000 residents have been furloughed (1 in 3)

- UC claimant count saw a slight reduction from 7.2% (May) to 7.1% (June) but the overall figures remain significantly above regional and national levels.

Responding to a question about the imbalance of funding that Crawley has received, CS confirmed that the CERT & Town Deal Board has a role to play in lobbying Government for additional support.

PL highlighted that the Government is not unaware of the problem as this has been raised before however the response was far from positive. This is a national issue and not just related to Crawley, although it is accepted that the town has been particularly hard hit.

It was agreed that, whilst the situation is unfair, the CERT & Town Deal Board must do all it can to get as much of the support available to Crawley, as possible.

Ana Christie (AC) highlighted the need to ensure that the Recovery Plan also considers the future, additional impact of leaving the EU, particularly with regard to supporting business with employment costs and the additional cost of importing and exporting, from December 2020.

3. Crawley's Economic Recovery

The Towns Fund – Town Investment Plan 2021-2025 – CS presented the first draft of the Crawley Town Centre Investment Plan, which is required by government to commence negotiations on unlocking up to £25m for Crawley from the Towns Fund.

The Town Investment Plan, if accepted, will form part of the Town Deal.

The Vision for 30 years' time is that ***"Crawley will be a modern, vibrant, healthy and exemplar digital town with a transformed 'green' economy, underpinned by high quality local services, state-of-the-art amenities, a pioneering advanced engineering Business Park and Innovation Centre at Manor Royal, alongside sustainable home and transport"***.

CS highlighted an initial list of proposed town fund priority projects, based around the following themes, as required by Government:

- Urban Regeneration
- Skills and Enterprise
- Connectivity

A copy of the full presentation will be added to the website.

LH

Several attendees expressed support (via the in-meeting chat) for the cultural quarter as one of the priority projects and offered to support the development of this strand, including links to Creative Crawley, the Crawley Cultural Fund and Crawley Arts proposition.

There was also strong support for the vision for skills, suggesting that the university offer would be best delivered in conjunction with the College, linked to the FE White Paper due to be published in the autumn.

The Towns Fund - Next steps – the draft Town Investment Plan will be circulated to the CERT & Town Deal Board after this meeting and all Board members invited to comment and provide feedback on the draft submission

CS

ALL

document by the morning of Tuesday 28th July.

The final draft Town Investment Plan will be submitted to MHCLG on 31st July 2020.

CS

“Get Britain Building” programme and update – Tony Middleton (TM) confirmed that the Coast to Capital LEP has received an indicative funding allocation of £19.2m. The LEP ran an extensive call for projects across the region and the Investment Committee, led by Julie Kapsalis, submitted a list of projects to Government on 17th July, for consideration.

Details of the individual projects cannot be shared at this time, however the Investment Committee felt that Crawley was a strong contender for a significant share of the funding and this was reflected in the final submission.

The LEP expects a response from Government in the next week and will share the details with stakeholders in due course.

TM

Skills & Employment Sub-group update – Shelagh Legrave (SL) reported back from a recent meeting of the Skills sub-group, attended by representatives from Crawley College, Gatwick Airport, DWP, Manor Royal BID, Town Centre Partnership and the Professional Services Forum.

The meeting had considered the immediate response and noted that current recruitment activities are focused on jobs in cleaning, driving and the care sector. A key challenge is how to identify where the vacancies are and the group is looking at potential solutions, including a business survey, unlocking DWP innovation funding and offering training courses in ‘green’ technology.

The next meeting will be in September and will feed back to the CERT & Town Deal Board.

A number of attendees offered to support this work, through the in-meeting chat, including LoveLocalJobs and Crawley BC Community Development.

SL

Economic Growth Assessment Review / Economic Development Strategy – CS confirmed that consultants have been engaged and are currently working on a draft, revised Economic Growth Assessment in response to the impact of Covid-19 and a draft Economic Development Strategy to support future planning policy. These will be presented to the next CERT & Town Deal Board meeting in September.

LH

4. Next Steps / Date of Next Meeting

CM referred to the previous item that the draft Town Investment Plan will be circulated to the CERT & Town Deal Board after this meeting and all Board members invited to comment and provide feedback on the draft document by the morning of 28th July, before it is submitted to MHCLG on Friday 31st July.

ALL

Abi Cunliffe-Hall (ACH) confirmed that once the draft Plan has been submitted, it will be reviewed by a multi-disciplinary panel who will also be looking for evidence of engagement with the Town Deal Board.

CM urged all Board members to read the Plan and submit comments.

Next meeting to be convened **on 16 September 2020 at 9.30am.**

LH

5. Any Other Business

Community representation – the in-meeting chat suggested a need for broader representation on the Town Deal Board, including from BAME groups. CM/PS to consider how this can be best achieved.

CM/PS

CM thanked all attendees for their active participation today and going forward to the future.
