

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

Wednesday, 29 September 2021

## Meeting Notes

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<p><b>1. Welcome</b> Chris Maidment (CM) welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies received from: Marie Ovenden, Peter Rainier, Steve Burston, Kathryn Ripley, Mel Munro, Vicky Beard, Paul McConnalogue, Simon Cuckow and Adam Godfrey.</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting (<a href="#">21<sup>st</sup> July 2021</a>) were accepted.</p>	
<p><b>2. Crawley's Economic Recovery / Headline Information</b></p> <p><b>Gatwick Airport</b> – Alison Addy (AA) reported that passenger numbers are increasing and expected to reach 1 million in September 2021. This follows 1million passengers in August and is good news however, when compared to 5 million in August 2019, numbers are still low. Load factors (passengers) on aircraft are increasing with an average of 70% being achieved. Positive news from airlines include Emirates announcing to restart daily operations from Gatwick in December, EasyJet increasing capacity, WhizzAir (expanded its short-haul services from Gatwick in 2020) plan to restart further services in November including the return of one based aircraft at the Airport and JetBlue launching their new JFK service on 30<sup>th</sup> September.</p> <p>The furlough scheme ends tomorrow and Gatwick Airport Ltd is putting in a number of measures to avoid further job losses as they plan to bring all GAL staff back on full pay. The situation remains challenging as we head into winter.</p> <p>AA referred to the recently launched consultation on Gatwick's Northern Runway Proposal and encouraged all members of the Town Deal Board to explore the online exhibitions and resources and respond by 1 December 2021. GAL is holding a number of virtual briefings for stakeholders on a wide range of topics, including the Economy and Business. To register for a briefing, please email <a href="mailto:info@gatwickfutureplans.com">info@gatwickfutureplans.com</a>.</p> <p>Full details of the consultation, including how to book a 'Call the Expert' telephone session can be found at <a href="https://www.gatwickairport.com/business-community/future-plans/">https://www.gatwickairport.com/business-community/future-plans/</a></p> <p><b>Town Centre BID</b> – Neil Cooper (NC) reported that footfall in County Mall during August was up 6.9% on the previous year, boosted by the Back to School period and a Paw Patrol event. Heads of Terms are out with 3 new retailers looking to take up units in the Mall. Debenhams' signage has been removed and there are plans in place to let the upper floor to start-up businesses in an effort to stimulate new growth and entrepreneurship. Visitor numbers between January-August 2021 were 2.5 million; down 6.9% on the previous year but steadily improving.</p> <p>Wendy Bell (Town Centre BID Manager) reported progress against the BID's Business Plan including the recruitment of Street Ambassadors, a new contract for footfall monitoring across the town centre and a vibrant events programme that began with a successful launch event in August '<a href="#">Stories of Strength</a>'. Plans for</p>	<p><b>ALL</b></p>

<p>Christmas are well underway.</p> <p><b>Manor Royal BID</b> – Steve Sawyer (SS) reported lots of development activity underway and planned in Manor Royal including a new 200,000 ft<sup>2</sup> industrial unit on Fleming Way and redevelopment of the Office Building. Manor Royal is evolving to become a slightly different space, driven by demand for logistics and warehouse space. A number of new tenants have moved in including the Winebox Company, Rentokil HQ and AO.com however SS warned that we should brace ourselves for some less positive ‘surprises’ in the coming months.</p> <p>MRBID is offering back to work workshops for businesses to find out how people will be using offices in the future. SS expressed thanks to LoveLocalJobs for their continued support to businesses through the <a href="#">Manor Royal Jobs Board</a>, where a wide range of employment opportunities are advertised, including a vacancy for a new Manor Royal Business Ranger.</p> <p>SS reported that, over the last three months, there have been 165 job postings and 187 applications. This compares to 37 postings and 175 applications during the same period last year, demonstrating a wealth of job opportunities but a lack of supply, both in the number of applicants and skills.</p> <p>MRBID busy preparing a new Projects Pack for consultation. This will be linked to the Towns Fund projects including the Micro-Parks, already under construction.</p> <p><b>Crawley College</b> - Andrew Green (AG) introduced himself to the Board as the new CEO of Chichester College Group (CCG), taking over from Shelagh Legrave. AG reported that recruitment of student numbers is strong, particularly in construction skills. There are issues with recruiting staff to deliver construction-related courses but they will continue try and meet demand.</p> <p>The new STEM Centre is open and CCG is awaiting the outcome of a bid for the Institute of Technology. The planned merger with Greater Brighton Metropolitan College is underway and should be complete by August 2022.</p> <p>In addition to further education, AG is passionate about entrepreneurship and particularly the high street and independent retailers and is keen to continue building positive relationships within the local community through projects and social action.</p> <p><b>Crawley Economic Recovery Plan</b> – Clem Smith (CS) reminded the Board that consultation on the draft Economic Recovery Plan has been extended to 11 October and urged all members of the Board, either as businesses or individuals, to share their views by visiting <a href="#">Crawley Economic Recovery Plan Consultation</a></p>	<p><b>ALL</b></p>
<p><b>3. Updates from the Towns Fund</b></p> <p>Nigel Tidy (NT) highlighted the following key updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MHCLG, as referred to in the Towns Fund documents, is now known as the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.</li> <li>• We are required to submit baseline monitoring information to the Towns Fund by 29 October 2021. Looking ahead, more detailed monitoring information will be required on a six and twelve monthly basis.</li> <li>• Support from Towns Fund partners (central advisors) will end next month. They have already reviewed a number of the draft PIDs and provided some useful feedback.</li> <li>• We are required to publish the full Town Investment Plan (TIP) on our website (<a href="http://www.investcrawley.co.uk/townsfund">www.investcrawley.co.uk/townsfund</a>). The site currently includes a summary document. <u>The Board agreed to publishing the full TIP</u>, with the opportunity to update it after businesses cases have been approved.</li> </ul>	<p><b>NT</b></p> <p><b>NT</b></p>

#### 4. Project Initiation Documents (PIDs)

NT referred to the ten PIDs that had been circulated prior to the meeting and summarized each one. These have been produced as part of an iterative process of project development, starting with project summary documents (May 2021) and moving shortly towards full business case development.

At a meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, the Sub-Group Chairs reviewed and signed off the PIDs, noting the following highlights:

- 1A Innovation Centre – CS reiterated that this is reliant on Getting Building Funding.
- 3A Manor Royal Gigabit Scheme – project team is looking to reshape the scheme slightly by looking at an options appraisal in order to future proof it.
- Green Infrastructure Projects – all include links to the skills agenda and achieving carbon reductions

The Town Deal Board approved the PIDs in principle and subject to sign off by the Accountable Body.

Through the in-meeting chat, Suzanne Carey (Job Centre Plus) suggested further conversations with both Crawley College and the Town Centre BID with regards to pre-employment training for job centre customers to tie in with local vacancies.

Alison Barratt (DWP) invited a meeting with LoveLocalJobs to discuss upskilling local residents for the vacancies Steve Sawyer had mentioned.

Ana Christie (Sussex Chamber) reported that 2,500 Kickstart placements have been approved in Surrey and Sussex with a further 1,500 yet to be filled by December. AC invited Board members to attend an initial Local Skills Improvement Plan meeting and employer workshops to feed into the plan. LH to circulate details to the Board with today's meeting minutes.

Henry Smith MP welcomed the earlier headline presentations from all speakers and provided an update as Chair of the Future of Aviation group, welcoming the new international travel rules which will be significant to both Gatwick and Crawley's economy. HS warned that we are not 'out of the woods' yet and things may get slightly worse before they improve.

CM asked when the NHS vaccine passports will be recognized in all EU countries? HS confirmed that this is in development but that vaccinated Britons will be able to travel to the US from early November.

With regard to employment and skills, HS acknowledged that this is a significant issue and we must do all we can to support people back to work in the local area. HS invited members of the Board to contact him directly with key related messages for Government, specific to Crawley and the Gatwick Diamond economy. Please email [henry.smith.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:henry.smith.mp@parliament.uk).

Ana Christie (AC) reported that following an update with the Bank of England yesterday, there are 1.7million people on furlough and employers are trying to fill 1million jobs (vacancies through jobs boards). With furlough about to end, the true picture will not be seen until next week however this will only add to existing pressures (and costs) on employers to retain and attract employees. AC warned we should expect to see further issues within the local economy over the next few months.

Louise Blackwell (Creative Crawley) reported that she is awaiting a decision on a Creative People and Places application to the Arts Council to support arts and culture in Crawley; £1m over 3 years. Final decision is due December 2021, to

**SC/AG  
VI/NCo**

**AB/PS**

**LH**

**ALL**

<p>start April 2022.</p> <p>Jeff Alexander (Gatwick Diamond Business) confirmed that GDB has appointed White Label Creative to help develop its role in promoting the Gatwick Diamond for inward investment. GDB look forward to working with partners to ensure they can complement existing inward investment programmes and initiatives within the area.</p> <p>Alison Barratt confirmed that there will be a Kickstart Jobs Fair at Spectrum House on 12<sup>th</sup> October – all welcome.</p>	<b>ALL</b>
<p><b>5. Towns Fund Financial profile</b></p> <p>NT highlighted an opportunity to revise the financial profile which was previously submitted to the Towns Fund on 24<sup>th</sup> May. A revised profile, based on changing funds between the final years is proposed, had been circulated with today's meeting papers. All projects will receive the same level of overall funds.</p> <p>The Sub-Group Chairs have reviewed and agreed the revised profile, which must be submitted to the Town Fund later today. <u>The Town Deal Board approved the latest financial profile.</u></p>	<b>NT</b>
<p><b>6. Next Steps</b></p> <p>NT confirmed the next step as full business development for each project, following the HM Treasury 'Green Book' process.</p> <p>NT has shared the business case template with the Board, explaining that the size and complexity of each project will determine the level of detail required.</p> <p>Business cases must be submitted by March 2022 at the latest (fast-track projects by mid-January).</p>	
<p><b>7. Any Other Business</b></p> <p>Ana Christie highlighted the following updates from Sussex Chamber of Commerce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Launch of a new mental health and wellbeing service and portal to ensure employers are carrying out their responsibilities and supporting staff. <a href="https://www.sussexchamberofcommerce.co.uk/events/chamber-events/mental-health-and-wellbeing">https://www.sussexchamberofcommerce.co.uk/events/chamber-events/mental-health-and-wellbeing</a></li> <li>b. Green Sustainability Conference at Crown Plaza Felbridge on 2<sup>nd</sup> November – working with Global Chambers of Commerce to ensure businesses are reducing their carbon footprint <a href="https://www.sussexchamberofcommerce.co.uk/events/chamber-events/green-sustainability-and-climate-challenge-conference">https://www.sussexchamberofcommerce.co.uk/events/chamber-events/green-sustainability-and-climate-challenge-conference</a></li> </ul>	
<p><b>8. Date of the next meeting</b></p> <p>1 December 2021 from 9.30am</p>	<b>LH</b>