

Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership

Business Forum

BioPark, Broadwater Road, Welwyn Garden City, AL7 3AX

12<sup>th</sup> January 2017

## **Present**

Nick Brown- Welwyn Hatfield Chamber  
Mel Hilbrow- STANTA/St Albans Chamber  
Pam Charman - FSB  
Lee Walsingham- Watford Chamber

## **LEP Executives**

Paul Witcombe- Hertfordshire LEP  
Molly Curtis- Hertfordshire LEP

## **Apologies**

Adrian Hawkins – Biz 4 Biz  
Yolanda Rugg - Hertfordshire- Chamber  
Edwin Whittingham - IoD  
Mark Bretton – Hertfordshire LEP  
Nina Hosking – Three Rivers Chamber  
Tara Clark – Green Triangle  
Alexis Ernst- IoD  
Graham Lane- Cheekymunkey  
Keith Hoskins- Herts Town Centre Initiative  
John Barfoot- Cz Design and Print  
Rupert Matthews- Fourways Accountants  
Geraint Burnell- Dircon

### **1. Permitted Development Rights and potential actions**

The forum reflected on the previous board meeting where PDR was discussed. The Three Rivers District Council voiced their frustrations over commercial property being converted to residential. It was suggested that the LEP and District Councils should seek to produce an overall strategy of which they all agree on. Paul confirmed that the issues around PDR are included in the Strategic Economic Plan Refresh and the deadline for responses is the 23<sup>rd</sup> January.

Nick Brown shared information on the Commercial Property Data Base, 'Leaseholders Unite' created by Andrew Baker. It delivers information on the rental prices for commercial property dated from 1988. Paul expressed interest to meet with Andrew to discuss PDR in more depth.

## **Action:**

- The Forum to respond before 23<sup>rd</sup> January with any comments on the SEP Refresh.
- Nick Brown to introduce Andrew Baker to Paul Witcombe. A meeting to be arranged for mid-Feb.

## 2. Herts LEP Growth Deal 3 Update

Paul gave an update on the GD3 of addressing that the Government will also consult on leading local authorities up to £1 billion to new local infrastructure rates of Gits + Go basis points for three years to support infrastructure money.

Stevenage is a main focus for the Herts LEP, as well as the regeneration of Hatfield. Nick Brown expressed interest in speaking with Adam Wood, the strategic infrastructure manager at the LEP to discuss the plans.

### Action:

- Paul to ask Daniel Barcroft (Herts LEP Communications Intern) and share press releases of the GD3
- Nick Brown to speak with Adam Wood mid-February

## 3. Cyber Crime

Cyber threats to businesses are on the rise. Lee Walsingham stated that it's the Business Forum's responsibility to inform businesses of the matter.

If Hertfordshire County Council can run a local cyber security programme, Herts LEP are happy to match the funding through European Regional Development Fund. Paul suggested a voucher mechanism process for businesses to have a 'check on businesses system'. Nick and Lee are hoping to host another 'Cybercrime Awareness' event this year. Lee also suggested a roadshow to advertise the potential programme throughout Herts.

### Action:

- Paul to request an update by HCC on the potential Cyber Security Programme

## 4. LEP Governance

The Government has issued guidelines to all LEP's around their Assurance Frameworks to ensure consistency across all LEPs. Herts LEP are currently reviewing its Assurance Frameworks in line with the guidelines.

The Business Forum needs to appoint a new SME member to replace Graham Lane on the LEP Board in 2018. The process of appointing the new member will be in accordance with the revised Assurance Framework.

## 5. AOB

Pam requested the Forum to propose other issues for discussion at future Forum meetings.

### Action:

- To encourage all Business Forum Members to attend the next meeting.
- To invite Mark Bretton and formally introduce him to the forum.