

Economic Development Member Working Group

6 February 2008

Present: Cllr Boyce
Cllr Mrs Gore
Cllr Kaufman
Mark Hall
Martin Cregg
Rob Harbour
Rebecca Miles
Adrian Thorpe

Apologies: Cllr Mrs Morris
Cllr Griffiths
Cllr Loydall
Cllr Gore

Cllr Boyce apologised for the change of date of the meeting due to personal commitments.

Minutes and Matters Arising: Agreed

Business Improvement Districts / town Centre Partnerships:

A draft report on the potential for a BID and how a town centre partnerships could be created has been received. Consultants recommend that we look at Wigston initially with plans for Oadby and South Wigston to follow.

A capacity building event will be held on 29 February at 8am – 2pm. Need to nominate. Three Councillors to attend. AT to drop Cllr Boyce an email to remind him of this.

Mark Hall asked the purpose of the event and whether it was intended that it would become self sustaining or would need additional officer time. Rebecca Miles replied that it was to identify the main issues in the town centre and the consultant would recommend the way forward with a view of forming town centre partnerships to take some responsibility for actions.

Cllr Mrs Gore wondered whether it was short notice, however, it was stated that the date was set due to the tight timescales set by EMDA. Cllr Kaufman asked who we were targeting to attend. Rebecca Miles replied that it was retailers, businesses in town centres etc. 15-30 people should be present.

Rob Harbour asked if setting up a Town Centre Partnership would create extra work for the Economic Development Officer beyond existing commitments of the post.

Rebecca reported that the consultants considered that it should be self sustaining, however, it was of note that the Borough does not have a town Centre Manager and that it would come to Economic Development Officer. Cllr Boyce suggested that this issue requires further investigation.

Cllr Kaufman suggested that it may be worth approaching the people who are involved in CROW with a view to them attending.

If the event proves not possible then the consultants will make some one to one contact with businesses.

The Council Offices were the suggested venue but it was thought that an alternative location may be more appropriate. Cllr Mrs Gore suggested IOSH at the Grange.

Economic Development Strategy

Rebecca had asked if anyone had completed the questionnaire which had been circulated because a seminar event could not be held.

Cllr Boyce suggested key issues were:

- Three viable town centres
- Business Environment Conducive to those who need it
- Research and deliver a business environment that people want
- Need to allocate more commerce – offices and professions/service
- Plenty of manufacturing, but appropriate locations

Cllr Boyce suggested that this issue should form the basis of a draft strategy to be presented to members and then this could then form the basis of further discussion/members seminar. Rebecca noted comments in brief had been received by Cllr Mrs Morris.

Business Breakfast

Tuesday, 19 February 2008. Cllr Boyce, Cllr Morris, Cllr Gore and Cllr Kaufmann would attend. Rob Harbour and Martin Cregg will also attend.

18 companies are confirmed to attend at this moment in time. Business Link and the Chamber of Commerce will also be invited.

Business Database

The data has been received and Steve Shute is currently preparing this for the website. Cllr Boyce asked for a firm date as to when this would be completed.

Farmers Market

Rebecca has had an approach from a Farmers Market who would like to run one in Wigston. Cllrs agreed that they are willing to support a Farmers Market in Wigston, but she would be required to enter into negotiations with Leicester City Council and find any negotiations/permissions herself.

Rob Harbour pointed out that they would need to comply with risk assessments/ Environmental health etc.

Date of Next Meeting

6 March 2008