

Local Economy Sub Group Meeting 30 May 2014

(Part of the Newmarket Vision Town Centre/Retail/Local Economy/Tourism Delivery Group)

Attendees:

- Graham Abbey (GA)
- Sara Beckett (SB)
- David Bowman (DB)
- Emma Braybrooke (EB) (West Suffolk College)
- Graeme Lockey (GL)
- Kevin Needham (KN)
- Jo Pine (JP) (West Suffolk College)
- Kirsty Pitwood (KP)
- Joanne Rogers (JR)

Apologies:

- Alison Huxley (AH)
- John Morrey (JM)

Notes and actions:

1. Welcome

- Introductions were made and the group welcomed its invited guests.

2. Notes and actions from last meeting (only those that were not covered later in the agenda)

- The district council will soon be consulting on commercial and residential land in Forest Heath. They will consult with stakeholder groups, including the Newmarket Vision groups.
- Currently development land is scarce in Newmarket and therefore it is important that we get feedback from the community about potential land opportunities.

3. Discussion on how we can increase the number of apprentices in Newmarket

- KP explained that she had invited representatives from the Education group but they were unable to attend due to other commitments – however since they are aware duplication should be avoided.

- JP and EB outlined what West Suffolk College (WSC) is already doing to increase the number of apprentices in Suffolk. This includes promotion, allocation of grant funding and recruiting the apprentice on behalf of the business.
- EB has recently been given Newmarket as one of her target areas and she is currently working on a Business Plan – however she does not currently have a specific target number of apprentices to meet.
- There are currently 33 active apprentices via WSC in the CB8 postcode. This is in addition to the racing apprentices (most racing yards have 1 or 2 apprentices).
- **JP to ascertain baseline data** including finding out how many racing apprentices there are (via the Racing School). **JP will also ensure that the Racing School is aware of all the options for funding and support.**
- GA updated the group following his discussion with Sarah Howard from ONE Haverhill – ONE Haverhill applied to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) for funding towards a post with a remit that includes delivering an increased number of apprentices in Haverhill. This role is one of an Ambassador, working with WSC. The person in post has been excellent at making contacts and marketing the concept to young people and businesses alike.
- **KP to investigate whether there is funding from the DWP for Newmarket.**
- The group discussed whether other options could be pursued rather than appointing somebody specifically for the role. For example, Business Breakfasts where businesses are made aware of the opportunities and the fact that apprentices are not a drain on resources/finances – rather they are a positive benefit to a business.
- **JP to investigate what difference the role in Haverhill has made** to the number of apprentices in Haverhill by looking at statistics before and afterwards.

4. Update from the Equine Growth Hub Working Group (EGHWH)

- GL provided an update. GL explained that whilst there is cross-over in terms of officers on the EGHWG and officers on the Newmarket Vision group, this group was set up as a result of the Economic Impact of the Equine Industry Study report jointly commissioned by the Horeseman’s Group and the district council.
- The focus of the group is predominantly horse racing, but also thoroughbred breeding and support services. The focus is not on show-jumping, etc. since these have different needs/health and safety status, etc.

- There is a desire to look at other options outside the racing season, for example Polo (although it was noted that there is already some polo in Newmarket).
- There was a discussion about the potential for an all-weather track should the one at Chelmsford not be improved/re-opened.
- Work is being done to investigate a new gallop (by the existing racecourse site) as there is a desire to increase the number of horses in training.
- There is a perceived need for new starter yards, in 'incubator' style, since there is not currently an easy way to get into training.
- The EGHWG would like to look at options for what to do with the waste in the racing sector (can a 'greener' solution be designed in Newmarket? If so, where?). The district council will investigate options for funding.
- The EGHWG looked at brand – there are obvious links to the Tourism Group and Newmarket Experience – there needs to be a consistency of branding.
- The EGHWG discussed World Heritage Status, however there are downsides to this option due to restrictions that can be put in place. Royal Newmarket status would be a better option.
- Housing was discussed, and in particular the need for collective housing/halls of residence for workers (this has the benefit of reducing isolation/loneliness).
- The EGHWG will put together an action plan.
- All agreed that the information above linked closely to the Local Economy group's action to 'explore the potential for an Equestrian/Sports Science centre of excellence'. However all agreed that we already have a centre of excellence at Newmarket – i.e. Newmarket itself. Therefore there is no need to deliver a physical building/centre; rather there is a need to better brand Newmarket (as already alluded to). **DB/KP to draft updated text for this action and to discuss this at the Delivery Group meeting on 6/6/14.** Any branding should ideally be launched at the same time as the Home of Horseracing launch.
- KN, who sits on the Horseman's Group, explained that the group wants to find out what small yards there are. Once we know them we may be better able to support them.

5. Update on the potential of a Business Improvement District (BID) in Newmarket

- JR provided an update. Following various meetings/workshops, the Newmarket Retailers Association (NRA) has agreed that they would like to pursue the option of a BID in Newmarket.
- JR has looked at potential income for the BID.

- JR has organised for a company called Mosaic to run a workshop on 16 June, 6-7.30pm, at Heath Court Hotel, with a view to commissioning this company to work alongside the NRA in developing the BID. This workshop has been paid for by the Economic Development and Growth Team at West Suffolk councils.
- At this workshop the facilitator will ask attendees what they wish to get from a BID (i.e. events, activities, etc.), and from here they will be able to help the NRA to ascertain potential costs, and in turn the appropriate boundary for the BID.
- All are welcome to attend this workshop. **KP to email the Workshop invitation. All to let JR know if they wish to attend.**
- JR explained that she had looked into the Elgin BID Annual report, which sums up what a BID can do. **KP to email out the Elgin annual BID report for information**

6. Update on Chamber Business Steering Group

- GA provided an update. The Newmarket and District Chamber of Commerce invited the Chairs of the Newmarket Vision Delivery Groups to attend a 'Business Steering Group' meeting, so that they had the opportunity to tell Chamber members what the Vision work is all about.
- It was a productive session and a good way of telling people about the Vision work (since a lot of attendees said they did not know anything about it previously).
- We agreed that we all need to be better at involving people in the Vision work and promoting where possible. **KN to put updates in the NTF newsletter.**

7. Audit of Newmarket businesses

- KP provided an update. The Economic Development and Growth team at West Suffolk Councils have gathered information on the businesses in the High Street and the businesses on Newmarket Business Parks. The team is now looking to get more information on these and other businesses through Business Rate databases and/or other data sets.
- All agreed that ideally we would like to know the following for Newmarket:
 - i. The number of unique businesses
 - ii. The number of employees in each business
 - iii. The type/sector of businesses
 - iv. The turnover of businesses
- Once we have this baseline data we will be able to see how things have improved following our interventions.

- **KP and team to continue to gather the above required baseline data. KP to ensure that any database companies used (i.e. MINT) are able to provide an adequate amount of records for our required area).**

8. Report for next Town Centre/Retail/Local Economy/Tourism Delivery Group

- The Delivery Group will meet (by invitation only, to include the Sub Group Chairpersons, Facilitators and one other representative from each sub group) on Friday 6 June. The Local Economy Action Plan report, as discussed during this meeting, will be submitted by Thursday 5 June.

9. Next meetings:

- Friday 20th June, 10am, Venue TBC
- Tuesday 29th July, 10am, Venue TBC