

EPPING FOREST LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

TASK AND FINISH TEAM - MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF THE CREDIT CRUNCH

NOTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 30 APRIL 2009 (2.30 - 4.00 P.M.)

COMMITTEE ROOM 2, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING

In Attendance:

John Preston (Director of Planning and Economic Development EFDC - in the Chair)
Tina Dulieu (Federation of Small Businesses)
Jacqui Foile (VAFF)
John Houston (LSP Manager - EFDC)
Julia Milanovic (Epping Forest CAB)
Barbara Stock (Epping Forest College)
Yvette Wetton (Essex County Council)
Chris Overend (Policy and Research Officer, EFDC)

Apologies:

Liz Hand (Job Centre Plus)
Keith Hughes (Business Link Essex)
Vicki Willis (Economic Development Officer, EFDC)

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1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Following a major review of how it was working, the LSP had determined a new, more outcome focused approach to carrying out its role. As part of that approach it had agreed to the setting up of a number of Time-Limited Task and Finish Teams of which this, dealing with how the District could best respond to the challenges of the 'Credit Crunch', was one of the first. The LSP Board had asked John Preston to chair the Team.

Agreed Terms of Reference as follows:

"To review the nature and extent of the economic downturn in the Epping Forest District;

To assess how the local economy and employment might be best supported;

To assess how the partners should invest in, or change the focus of, public services to better support local residents; and

To work with local expert groups and academic institutions in producing recommendations to the LSP Board".

Noted that the LSP was expecting a quick turnaround time from the team in terms of completing its work with finalisation due by September 2009 and, as such it was agreed that, dependant on resources, viability and practical considerations, the Team might ALL

ACTION

have to prioritise between 5-10 of any measures/improvements it identified, as being those it would recommend for more immediate implementation.

Agreed that any more readily achievable quick win measures identified by the Team should be reported to the LSP Board in June, with the full list of proposals to be included in the Team's final report to be submitted to the LSP Board at its September 2009 meeting.

JH/JP

2. MEMBERSHIP OF TEAM

Agreed that the list of partners set out on the agenda for the meeting seemed to cover most of the obvious organisations who needed to be represented on the Team but that involvement by EXDRA and others from the business community should be explored.

JP/VW

3. EXISTING PROVISION

Agreed that all partner organisations represented on the Team should provide details of activities and initiatives already being carried out which are helping alleviate the impact of the economic situation.

ALL

Also agreed that further information on the background to the setting up and operation of Essex Savers Credit Union should be obtained.

CO

Further agreed that full details of the background to the operation of 'Banking on Essex' should be obtained.

YW

Noted details of the EEDA event to be held at Epping Hall on Tuesday 5 May, to which all were welcome to attend.

ALL

4. WORK PROGRAMME

Agreed that, to get a picture of the impact of the 'Credit Crunch' on the Epping Forest District, each organisation represented on the Team should provide relevant information for key areas (redundancies, business start-up, business closures, numbers seeking debt advice, income from business rates, rent arrears, numbers employed/ unemployed were some of the areas identified) broken down by categories as appropriate, comparing the situation now with (say) a year ago, and the Epping Forest District with other Districts.

ALL

Also agreed that a final decision regarding the remaining work programme would be determined at the next meeting when the gap in required provision and needs analysis could be determined in the light of details of existing provision (as per 3 above) and the information on key areas described in the paragraph above.

ALL

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5. GUIDANCE AND GOOD PRACTICE ELSEWHERE

Members of the Team were in receipt of a list of potential measures for implementation compiled by C Overend from good practice guidance documents prepared by LSPs and other partner organisations from a variety of other Districts.

Agreed that the list represented an excellent base to start from and that the Team could begin the process of reviewing that list, adding to it or amending it as required at the next meeting in the light of further information received. ALL

Further agreed that the newsletter produced by South Staffordshire LSP represented a good model and that the possibility of something similar being produced for the Epping Forest District LSP should be explored with the District Council's Public Relations staff.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed that the next meeting should be held at 10.00 a.m. (to finish no later than noon) on Friday 29 May 2009.

Also agreed that, at the next meeting, there would be a presentation on the method deployed and measures introduced by Essex County Council in response to the economic situation. YW