

**Minutes of a Meeting of the External
Partnerships Select Committee held at
Surrey Heath House on 24 November
2015**

+ Cllr Paul Deach (Chairman)
+ Cllr Dan Adams (Vice Chairman)

Cllr Ian Cullen	+ Cllr Adrian Page
+ Cllr Ruth Hutchinson	+ Cllr Robin Perry
+ Cllr Rebecca Jennings-Evans	- Cllr Chris Pitt
+ Cllr David Lewis	+ Cllr Nic Price
Cllr Katia Malcaus Cooper	+ Cllr Darryl Ratiram
+ Cllr Alan McClafferty	- Cllr John Winterton
+ Cllr Max Nelson	

+ Present
- Apologies for absence presented

Substitutes: Cllr Jonathan Lytle (In place of John Winterton)

12/EP Chairman's Announcements and Welcome to Guests

The Chairman welcomed Geoff French from Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership, Carol Squires from Surrey Chambers of Commerce, and Lucy Boazman and Lorna Dane from Collectively Camberley Business Improvement District.

13/EP Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2015 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

14/EP Enterprise M3 LEP

Geoff French, the Chairman of the LEP, reminded the Committee that Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) had been established in 2011. The LEP covered the area from the New Forest to the M25, incorporating a number of towns, 1 city and parts of 2 national parks.

The Committee was informed that the LEP area had one of the highest performing economies in the UK and had a highly educated workforce. The area had a concentration of growth sectors, especially science and technology, and there was some room for business to expand.

The budget for running the LEP was £800,000, of which £500,000 was received from the Government; the 14 district authorities in the LEP area contributed £10,000 each and the 2 County Councils provided £20,000 each. Further income was received from sponsorship. It was also recognised that lots of work was provided by the private sector for free.

Last year the LEP had secured £148m of local growth funds to be spent over the next 6 years. It had also secured £42m in project loans at a very low interest rate. Mr French reported that the £22m the LEP had available to loan out when it was first established had begun to be paid back, which in turn was being recycled in new loans. It was also advised that EU funds were about to be launched.

A number of projects that had been supported by the LEP across its area in the past year were noted. Included in this were road projects around the towns in the area and a number of sustainable transport packages, including a project for facilities from Blackwater Station along the Blackwater Valley.

Members were reminded that the Leader was an EM3 Board Member and the Chief Executive was a member of the EM3 European Management Group. In relation to Surrey Heath, the LEP had provided money to the Council to acquire a SANG site in order to facilitate development. It had also arranged a project loan at a very low interest rate for the Council for a project in Camberley.

The Committee was advised that the LEP was involved in plans to improve the A30/ A331 junction; the scheme for the junction was currently being revisited but remained in its programme. However, one part of the scheme relating to a cycle way from Blackwater Station to the business parks was ready to go ahead. There was also a scheme in the programme for future years for improvement along the A30 through Camberley. Members noted that Camberley had been identified as a “step up town” and recognised the importance of improving infrastructure around the Town.

It was reported that the criteria used by the government to assess the bids put forward by the LEP was the number of job opportunities and houses created by a project. It was advised that, in relation to developing the LEP’s programme, the organisation responded to the schemes primarily brought by the Highways authorities and had carried forward the Government’s methodology in ranking schemes for priority.

RESOLVED to note the presentation.

15/EP Surrey Chambers of Commerce

The Committee received a presentation from Carol Squires, who lead Business Development, International Trade and Policy for Surrey Chambers of Commerce. Surrey Chambers of Commerce was one of 53 accredited Chambers in the UK. She informed Members that she worked with a team of ten members to provide services to help ensure that businesses grew in the area.

The Chamber currently had 1,500 members and affiliate members in Surrey. It had an increasing membership and a growing suite of services. The organisation also placed a lot of importance on working in partnerships to help businesses become aware of what support was available. It also placed importance on helping businesses on their journey, from start-ups to the large international companies.

A quarterly economic survey was conducted nationally, with the results released in the quarterly economic report. The results could be drilled down to regional,

county and district results, which enabled the assessment of performance against competitors and provided a useful business development tool.

The Chamber's reputation for networking was recognised, with over 5,000 businesses having walked through its networking events in the last year.

It was reported that there were over 4,200 businesses in Surrey Heath and the Chamber worked closely with the Council's Economic Development team. Ms Squires noted the importance that was placed on commercial development of Camberley and the work carried out by Collectively Camberley Business Improvement District. The work undertaken by Siemens in local schools was also highlighted as a notable example of partnership work taking place in the borough.

The Committee was informed that in Surrey Heath there was a strong focus on international trade and it was reported that over the last 3 years there had been an increase in exporting activity.

The Committee was informed that 6 years ago the Chamber had worked with Tomlinscote School to launch the country's first Young Chamber. This had since been copied across the country. It continued to be carried out by Tomlinscote School.

It was reported that the programme for start-up businesses, which had been launched in June 2015 using investment from the Council, had been very successful. The Chamber had facilitated 30 fully booked start-up clinics where new businesses had received signposting information, assistance with business plans, and follow up support.

RESOLVED to note the presentation.

16/EP Collectively Camberley Business Improvement District

The Committee was informed that the Collectively Camberley Business Improvement District represented the business community in Camberley Town Centre. It had been established in October 2011 and had worked collectively to enhance Camberley Town Centre. Its aim was to make Camberley Town Centre the destination of choice for shoppers and visitors as well as a vibrant location for businesses and residents alike.

The BID's Chairman and Board of Directors were elected voluntary positions, with the 12 directors currently representing a range of sectors. Members were reminded that Cllr Richard Brooks, the Finance Portfolio Holder, was a member of the Board. The core team responsible for delivering the output of the BID included a Manager, an Operations Manager and a marketing intern.

The Committee was informed that Collectively Camberley worked with 386 businesses across all sectors who together contributed £263,000 in additional BID levy; the average BID levy was £561 p.a. In addition to the levy, the team sought additional income. There had been a 20% increase in additional income this year, meaning more money was available to be spent on enhancing the Town Centre.

Collectively Camberley was an elected body and therefore delivered a business plan agreed by its voters. A BID term lasted 5 years and consequently Collectively Camberley would be seeking renewal in 2016. The organisation would be consulting all businesses within the BID area on what they wanted Collectively Camberley to deliver going forward, which would be used for the business plan for the renewal period.

In 2011 the businesses of Camberley had voted on a business plan which had split the funds into the following 4 areas:

- **Marketing, Events and Promotions.** This was Collectively Camberley's primary focus
- **Access**
- **Attractiveness**
- **Business Support**

The BID had delivered 28 projects, promotions and events each year since its creation. It was noted that Camberley was becoming known for its events such as the Classic Car show. In addition it delivered workshops, promotional support, floral displays and the Town Centre website. A number of successes of the BID were highlighted, including

- the introduction of the Industry Insider card scheme
- the launch of the successful Collectively Camberley website in June 2011
- a huge increase in footfall on events days.
- the Camberley Together Against Crime radio scheme, which currently had 72 members
- the launch of the Love Camberley Facebook and Twitter brand, which had approximately 4,300 local followers
- 124 floral displays across the Town Centre which were provided in partnership with the Council

The Committee was informed that the previous Property Weekly Hot 100 Retail Locations Report had been released, which had showed Camberley as amongst the top 50 hot towns for potential retail opportunities. It was reported that Camberley was in the top 5 in the UK for a premium retail opportunity. Camberley also had consistently above average footfall when compared to national statistics.

RESOLVED to note the presentation.

Note: It was noted for the record that Cllr Paul Deach declared that he supplied social media support services to Collectively Camberley. After consultation with officers he considered that, as the Committee was not a decision making body, it would be acceptable for him to remain in the meeting.

17/EP Committee Work Programme

The Committee noted the work programme for the remainder of the 2015/16 municipal year.

Members suggested that a future meeting could focus upon youth issues, with a presentation on the Windle Valley Youth Project.

The Committee noted the economic development work that was ongoing and agreed to seek presentations from the Bagshot, Deepcut, Frimley and Yorktown & Watchmoor Business Associations. It was also suggested that at this meeting an item in relation to the Institute of Directors could be included.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the Committee's Work Programme, as set out at Annex A to the agenda, be agreed; and**
- (ii) presentations from**
 - a. the Business Associations in the borough and the Institute of Directors; and**
 - b. the Windle Valley Youth Project**

be added to the draft 2016/17 Work Programme

Chairman