

Crawley Economic Recovery Taskforce (CERT) Group and Town Deal Board

Wednesday, 19th January 2022

Meeting Notes

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
<p>1. Welcome Chris Maidment (CM) welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies received from: Simon Cuckow, Ana Christie, Henry Smith, Andy Green, Vicky Illingworth, Paul Scrivens, Alison Addy, Tony Middleton, Jayne Tyler, Toby Shaw and Jo Ward.</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting (1st December 2021) were accepted, noting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water Neutrality – Clem Smith (CS) confirmed that the local authority’s planning process for screening householder and minor applications for water neutrality is up and running and at the last Planning Committee, three major applications for business investment in Manor Royal were recommended for approval, following the submission of water neutrality assessments undertaken by the applicants, demonstrating that they are able to deliver water neutrality on site. Planning Committee approved all 3 of the applications, unlocking hundreds of new jobs to benefit Crawley. Following extensive discussions at Leader and Chief Executive level, with Natural England, Southern Water and the Environment Agency, Crawley BC planning officers are now able to assess sites where developers are able to demonstrate that water neutrality can be achieved. For those unable to do so, developers are being asked to bring forward proposals for appropriate water offsetting programmes and the process going forward will be governed by a Water Neutrality Strategy, which is in the process of being drawn up. <p>Steve Sawyer (SS) welcomed the discussions with the Council on the development of water efficiency programmes in Manor Royal in support of the ‘Re-Energise Manor Royal’ project.</p> <p>Councillor Peter Smith (PS) reported that Crawley BC is also working with WSCC, Horsham DC and Chichester DC to raise the issue (and particularly concerns regarding the financial implications for developments) through local MP’s and with the DLUHC, in order to press for a long term water supply solution in the Sussex North supply zone, of which most of Crawley is part.</p> <p>CS agreed to circulate a briefing note to the Town Deal Board.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">CS</p>
<p>2. Crawley Towns Fund Project update</p> <p>a) Green Business Infrastructure & Town Centre Cultural Quarter – Neil Darwin (ND) from Deyton Bell provided an update on the business case development for two of the three Towns Fund projects they have been commissioned to produce. ND reported good progress is being made, lots of information shared and contact with stakeholders established. Key focus is on outcomes, starting with the economic and strategic business case requirements, including benefit cost ratios. Once the Green Business</p>	

Infrastructure and Town Centre Cultural Quarter cases are complete, the team will move on to the Arterial Cycle Route project. No issues to report. CM thanked ND for his update and the work undertaken to date.

b) Gigabit project update – Olly Loveless (OL) from Analysis Mason presented an update on the Manor Royal Gigabit project, highlighting that, following an initial assessment of the opportunities, three options will progress to the next stage; CFC extension, FTTP network (covering 100% premises) and town wide business park backhaul routes. Four opportunities were removed due to uncertainty over what they would deliver. OL explained that the assessment criteria used to determine priorities included analysis of service demand, market interest, Towns Fund objectives, links to the Economic Recovery Plan, speed of deliverability and ongoing demand – all aiming to select the most suitable outcomes for Crawley.

SS expressed thanks to the Town Deal Board, Crawley BC and OL for the work completed to date, believing the highlighted projects to be the key priorities for Manor Royal. SS happy to endorse the presentation and support the proposed way forward.

c) Manor Royal Business Environment Micro-Parks – Steve Sawyer (SS) confirmed that the first four micro-parks, supported by Towns Fund 'accelerator' funding, are now complete and open to the public in Metcalfe Way, Gatwick Road, Priestly Road and Rutherford Way. The main Towns Fund project aims to deliver another 4-5 similar spaces around Manor Royal, including the Woolborough Lane linear park. SS shared evidence in the form of a recent tweet, demonstrating the value of this investment and importance of the project to local people.

SS explained that a project team is holding interviews next week with potential suppliers of a superhub site in Manor Royal. Funded through the Crawley Growth Programme, the project is closely linked to the micro-parks project and will seek to improve and enhance people's experience whilst waiting for buses.

SS is close to sharing the new Projects Pack for Manor Royal, prior to the BID's third term ballot in early 2023.

CM thanked SS for his update and recommended people visit the excellent new micro-park spaces if they get the opportunity to do so.

Patrick Warner (PW) thanked SS for bringing these projects forward in partnership and changing perceptions of what Manor Royal is as a place to work in.

3. Crawley Towns Fund – Crawley Innovation Centre - CS presented an update on the business case development for the Crawley Innovation Centre, including:

- Pleased to report that the Coast to Capital LEP Investment Committee has recommended for approval investment in the scheme (£8.6m from Getting Building Fund)
- Towns Fund allocation £2.5m of which £1.6m will be used as revenue 'pump priming' for the project.
- The project fits the Economic Recovery Plan's 'Green Transformation' priority by focusing on technological development of clean and low-carbon energy appliances to retrofit homes and commercial premises.
- Two location options being considered within Manor Royal
- Delivery objectives to design, build and launch the Centre, appoint a third-party managing agent to run it and create flexible, versatile space for micro-

businesses and SMEs to grow and scale activities.

- Proposed technology 'USP' includes clean and green energy, transportation and quantum technologies.

Next steps to submit business case to Crawley BC Cabinet in February 2022 for approval and DLUHC (Towns Fund) before the end of March. This will be followed by design development and planning (2022), construction, marketing, procurement of a managing agent and formal opening (2023/24)

CM congratulated Crawley BC and CS on the speed of progress and this excellent example of partnership working.

PW welcomed the project and updated the Board on the latest developments with regard to the Metrobus fleet, including a new hydrogen re-fueling contract with Air Products. This will see a third of the fleet in Crawley upgraded, creating the largest fleet of hydrogen buses in Europe. This fantastic achievement has only been possible by the level of partnership working in the local area.

Jeff Alexander (JA), as Chair of the sub-group, thanked CS for his update and is very pleased to see how well the project has advanced and to hear of positive discussions with Gatwick Airport. JA believes that the project has the potential to have an even greater impact on the local jobs market and economic recovery.

SS endorsed the project and echoed previous comments about the efforts of CS. SS particularly welcomes the proposal as it responds to the long-held view about a lack of support/amenity space in Manor Royal and the Centre will serve as a focal point for activities, collaboration and meeting space. SS highlighted the need to consider provision of sufficient, suitable grow-on space within the local area in order to prevent occupants of the Innovation Centre from looking outside the Crawley area.

The Town Deal Board noted the presentation and endorsed the business case for the Crawley Innovation Centre, prior to consideration by Crawley BC Cabinet.

4. Institute of Technology Overview – Julie Kapsalis (JK) began by thanking those members of the Town Deal Board who supported the consortium's bid for a regional Institute of Technology (IoT). Following a robust process through the DfE, it was announced in December 2021 that the bid had been successful.

The project team is beginning to work through the detail of the project which anticipates a £13m allocation, of which £10m is earmarked to build a brand new, state-of-the-art Hub on the Crawley College site that will deliver higher education-level qualifications for the people of Crawley and the surrounding area. Facility will focus on skills in engineering, construction and digital sectors and the curriculum development process has been informed by a number of local businesses including Roche, Pfizer, Gatwick Airport, Waites and around 50 SMEs.

Currently at the pre-contract award stage however the team hope to start some delivery from this September and, subject to planning permission, the new building should be complete in 2024. JK affirmed that there is a real opportunity for the IoT and Innovation Centre projects to work together to meet local skills needs.

CM thanked JK for her update and congratulated all involved in the bid development process.

<p>5. Latest economic headlines for Crawley – Lynn Hainge (LH) presented the latest headlines including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Credit Claimant count - latest figures (Nov'21) show a steady decline but the local rate remains the highest in West Sussex • Cumulative total of furloughed employments in Crawley = 29,700 • Self Employment Income Support Scheme - 18,900 claims from individuals registered in Crawley, totalling £50.9m • Latest Covid grants and business rate relief schemes announced – for full details and how to apply online, visit www.crawley.gov.uk/business-support-grants <p>SS noted the difficulties in recruiting staff which will hold back economic growth.</p> <p>JA noted the local recruitment issues related to matching skills with job vacancies.</p> <p>CM endorsed the need to spread the word about the various initiatives and projects which are available.</p>	
<p>6. Next Steps and Any Other Business</p> <p>Local Plan review – Jeremy Taylor requested an update on the Local Plan review. CS responded that the ability to submit the Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate for public examination is on hold, pending the finalization of the Water Neutrality Strategy, which should be complete by the end of March. There will then be consideration as to whether the Plan can be submitted for examination or whether additional adjustments to the Plan are required, due to the impact of the Water Neutrality Strategy.</p> <p>Update from Patrick Warner – PW announced that at the end of this month, he will be taking up a new role at the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. CM thanked PW for all his efforts in Crawley (this was echoed by many comments in the in-meeting chat) and wished him all the best in his new role.</p>	
<p>7. Date of the next meeting 2nd March 2022 at 9.30am.</p>	