

**BOROUGH, ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE EXECUTIVE
ADVISORY BOARD**

3 April 2017

* Councillor Jenny Wicks (Chairman)
Councillor Liz Hogger (Vice-Chairman)

* Councillor Philip Brooker	* Councillor Bob McShee
Councillor Nils Christiansen	* Councillor Mike Parsons
* Councillor Andrew Gomm	* Councillor Mike Piper
* Councillor Angela Goodwin	Councillor Matthew Sarti
* Councillor Julia McShane	

*Present

Councillors were also in attendance.

BEI62 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillors David Bilbé, Nils Christiansen, Liz Hogger, Nigel Kearse, Matt Sarti and Paul Spooner submitted apologies for absence.

In accordance with procedure rule 23(j), Councillor Dennis Paul attended as a substitute on behalf of Councillor Nils Christiansen.

**BEI63 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT AND DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE
PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest.

BEI64 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2017 were confirmed as a true record and were signed by the Chairman.

**BEI65 LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIPS - THE WIDER PICTURE & ENSURING A
SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY**

Due to unforeseen circumstances, neither the LEP representative nor her deputy had been able to attend the meeting to give their presentation. Consequently, the Board was advised that this item had been withdrawn from the agenda and would be rescheduled to the next meeting.

BEI66 'EXPERIENCE GUILDFORD' DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN 2018-23 CONSULTATION

The Board heard about the origins of the BID scheme, which came to the UK in 2005. The premise of the scheme was for businesses to pay a local levy on their rates, which would provide funds for projects to enhance the experience of people using retail and leisure facilities. The Board was advised that the Guildford BID was currently in its first term, was owned by local businesses, and was administered on a not-for-profit basis. Around 520 local businesses were represented in the BID, and they would be balloted in October 2017 on the draft business plan for 2108-2023. Some of the benefits of the BID were explained, including a privilege card, customer services awards, website, social media marketing, the little book of offers. The BID also organised free events such as Guildford on Sea, and Thank Guildford its Friday, and provided support for Guildford in Bloom, the Christmas lights, Best Bar None, the Purple Flag and the Emergency Services Community Safety Day. The BID provided town rangers, who were trained in first aid and provided with link radios, as well as taxi marshals. In addition, the BID administered an on-line platform for the Crime Reduction

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Partnership, to help retailers prevent, detect and report incidents, with a separate platform available for the night-time economy and PubWatch. The Board heard that four prosecutions had been made due to information logged on the platform. The BID had funded some new signage in the town centre, and was actively promoting the 'Secret Guildford' brand.

Furthermore, the BID had negotiated free parking from 4pm on Thursdays in the pre-Christmas trading period, and had developed an official Guildford app, which included live car parking information and a digital version of the privilege card, using similar technology to the council's car parking app. The BID team also organised free training to participating businesses, including First Aid, as well as social media surgeries and networking events. The General Manager of Experience Guildford advised that the Board would be provided with hard copies of the draft business plan. The Board was informed that consultation on the draft document would end in June 2017, and was asked for any feedback.

The Board enquired about how the BID planned to work with the pop-up village, and was reassured that the BID would welcome anything that would bring more people into Guildford, although it was cognisant that businesses in the pop-up village would not be paying the levy. The Board also discussed the issue of accessibility, and whilst it was acknowledged that solutions were not straightforward, the General Manager of Experience Guildford did keep in touch with the Access Group in order to support issues raised through that forum. The Board suggested that DDA Awareness could potentially be included in the BID's training portfolio, and further suggested that consideration could be given to providing awards to retailers for improving disabled access, not just for customers with physical disabilities. The Board's suggestion that a vehicle akin to a golf caddy might be an appropriate way to help disabled access in and around the High Street was welcomed. The issue of disabled access from the parking spaces on York Road was raised and the General Manager of Experience Guildford agreed to discuss this with Kevin McKee.

The Board asked about the BID's involvement in promoting local markets, but was advised that markets did not fall within the BID's remit as they were not levy paying businesses. There was a suggestion that the number of stalls on North Street was decreasing, and the Director of Environment agreed to report back to the Board with more information on current take up and marketing approaches. The BID did promote local markets via its social media and website, and had helped the farmers' market to get airtime on local radio. The Board also enquired whether it would be appropriate to widen the BID area by including businesses on Walnut Tree Close, and was advised that the current BID area extended along Walnut Tree Close as far as the railway station: beyond that point, there were not many retailers who would be eligible for the levy.

In response to queries about funding sources for the BID, the Board was advised that the levy currently brought in around £500k per annum, though in its second term, there was potential for this to increase to nearer £600k per annum. More funding would be welcome, so the BID was also looking at sponsorship. In its first term, the BID consulted and engaged with the office sector, as well as with retail and leisure, but the office sector did not warm to the idea of participation. Potentially the BID could attempt to re-engage with the office sector as part of its third term consultation.

The Board was keen to understand how the BID was administered, and the General Manager of Experience Guildford explained that the BID had 15 voluntary directors who were representative of the levy payers. Smaller businesses had as much say as larger ones to ensure that membership was fair.

The Board offered to help promote events organised by the BID via their own social media accounts and websites, and was offered promotional material from the BID team to support them with this.

Whilst £500k was not sufficient for the BID to undertake large projects, and it was not able to fund infrastructure, the Board was advised that streetscape items such as benches and furniture could be funded, and last year the BID had funded new Christmas lights. Available funding was used to meet requests from levy payers, and the BID team worked with partners to fund other activities. There was a suggestion from the Board that the BID team might be

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interested in reinstating the Guildford Carnival as a partnership project, and it was agreed that this suggestion merited further exploration by the BID team.

BEI67 PROGRESS WITH MATTERS PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED BY THE BOROUGH, ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE - EXECUTIVE ADVISORY BOARD

The Board asked to be provided with information on progress in respect of North Downs Housing Ltd since the Executive meeting on 23 February 2016, specifically who the directors were, when they took up post, when the first business plan would be published, when work would start, and what the target dates were. The Director of Environment confirmed that the Directors were himself, Councillor Gordon Jackson, Sarah Creedy, and Sue Reekie, and that work to acquire a number of properties had already begun. The Director of Environment also confirmed that a business case would be taken to the Executive in the near future, and undertook to provide a full update of progress to date.

BEI68 EAB WORK PROGRAMME

The Board was advised that the Executive Advisory Board meeting scheduled for 22 May 2017 would be cancelled. The item scheduled for discussion on 22 May would be taken forward to the June meeting, together with the item on LEP's. The Chairman asked the Board to contact her with suggestions for other matters that might be appropriate for consideration, and advised that the management team had also been asked for its assistance in respect of providing the Board with topics. The Director of Environment was asked for his support in this matter.

The meeting finished at 8.06 pm

Signed

Date

Chairman