

Forest Economic Partnership – 8th January 2018

Chair's Notes

1. Welcome & introductions

I would like to extend a warm welcome to everyone who has been able to attend today and to Vantage Point Business Village for kindly hosting the event. The idea of having a new Forest wide partnership focussed on economic growth is not a new one but one I am happy to say that the current Cabinet at the District Council is keen to support and facilitate.

The purpose of the Forest Economic Partnership is for us all to work together in a more strategic way. To ensure the Forest voice is being heard at strategic meetings that are helping to shape our economic future. We have invited representatives from the business community, education sector, voluntary and other public sector organisations to join together and to agree a common purpose and vision. This first meeting is intending to fire the imagination and to ask how people would like to be involved and what commitment they are willing to make to see some action on the ground. This new Partnership has to be more than just a Partnership in name – we are looking for the doers, and experts in their fields who can help us think about big, bold ideas that could help to transform the way we live, work and play in the Forest of Dean. Our two speakers today have been chosen to help us with this forward thinking.

So on to our first speaker

2. Leading Places 2050

I would like to introduce Adam Starkey, Vice-Chair, GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership as our first speaker. Adam has already provided a first rate presentation to the District Council's elected members on the 1st November last year which was one of the most inspiring briefing events I have attended. I will hand-over to Adam and suggest that we take any questions after his presentation.

3. Forest Growth Hub

I would like to introduce Kevan Spencer, Managing Director, Vantage Developments. Kevan is going to explain how the Growth Hub Network is being expanded in to the Forest. Kevan has kindly offered a post-meeting tour of the space that will be converted to create the Forest Growth Hub. Anyone wishing to stay on for the tour, please stay here in this room. I will hand-over to Kevan and suggest we take any questions after his presentation.

4. Forest Economic Partnership

Electing a Chair

Although I have been happy to Chair this important first meeting, I would like to you all to consider who would be best placed to Chair these meetings going forward. If you would like to volunteer or nominate somebody for this role we would like you to write this on a post-it note and leave it with us on our "Membership" board.

Draft Terms of Reference

A proposed structure has been circulated with the meeting invites for comment. The idea was for this new informal partnership to have a single Executive Board and for this Board to have Sub-Groups to tackle specific subjects eg. Severn Bridge Toll Removal. Does anyone have any thoughts they want to share now about the draft Terms of Reference?

Membership – today's event has largely been through direct invitation. The invitation list has tried to capture a flavour of individuals, businesses and organisations we thought would be interested to participate. There will undoubtedly be others who would like to join us – again, please write down any suggestions you have for people you think would like to be involved.

Activity session

We will now take a 15 minute break from speaking & listening and ask you all to use the post-its we have given you to register your interest in the topics we have identified for this year. A number of sheets have been pinned around the room and we would like you to add your name to the topics you would like to hear more about, to help us form smaller Sub-Groups so that we can work together to develop our vision, ideas and actions and report back to the next meeting of the Forest Economic Partnership in April.

It would also be really useful if you can think about the key messages you would like recorded for this first meeting. Are there local business events and activities planned this year in the Forest that we need to be aware of?

Event summary

Wrap up the event and thank the key speakers. Invite anyone who has not had a chance to speak or raise any queries to do so.

Identify several key messages coming out of the event and seek agreement from the room that they are happy for these to be used in external communications.

Thank everyone for attending today and advise that the April, August and November dates will be confirmed shortly.