

2010 – 2011 KEB Sector focus meetings
Taking forward the Kent Sectors Strategy: Engaging with the business community

July 2010

1. Introduction

Unlocking Kent's Potential, KCC's Regeneration Framework, made a strong commitment to building a new relationship between the County Council and the business community. As part of this, it outlined a need to develop a strategy to support the county's key business sectors.

A draft strategy, Opportunities for Growth, was considered at the January meeting of the Regeneration Board. This strategy proposed that we take forward a series of action-oriented sector-specific strategies, which should incorporate substantial input from the business community.

In line with this approach, Kent Economic Board will in 2010/11 have a greater emphasis on facilitating engagement with key economic sectors as set out in its new business plan.

This note sets out how we intend to take forward this work.

2. The key sectors

During 2010/11 KEB will arrange a series of major seminars to pull together business in the following sectors:

- Low Carbon / Environmental Technologies (draft date 22nd September).
- Land Based (late in October).
- ICT, Creative & Digital Media (early December).
- Construction (late February).
- Advanced Engineering & Marine (late March).

Where possible KEB will work with others (sector councils, existing employer groups, etc) to combine forces to maximise value.

Aims

- To bring together businesses in the chosen sector to achieve a broad representative group that can reflect the issues, opportunities, barriers to growth and prospects for the given sector in Kent.
- To drill into the skills, enterprise & innovation, and business critical infrastructure issues for the sector.
- To capture from business what they believe would be the most effective forms of public sector support / intervention that will result in growth.

Format

The style of these meetings will be informal and participative.

Sector Champions will be invited to come forward from the KEB Business Advisory Board to introduce each event.

To stimulate input “thought leaders” from the business community will be invited to share in five minutes, their perspective of the particular challenges and priorities for growth in respect of the three themes of skills, enterprise & innovation and business critical infrastructure.

Facilitated discussions on the three themes will then be conducted with conclusions and recommendations shared in a concluding plenary session.

There will be an opportunity for networking at the end of the meeting.

Target Audience

A range of small, medium and large businesses from each sector will be targeted for invitation. Where appropriate representation would be sought from any key cluster groups and a representative mix from West, Mid, North and East Kent.

These will be large meetings – the intention is have 100+ participants at each event, there may be some variation depending on the scale of the sector presence in Kent.

Intended outcomes

The identification of public sector interventions required to take forward, to support and address the needs of individual sectors - which can then inform the establishment of sector support action plans.

An expanded business community network to help shape the priorities of KCC, Kent Partnership and KEB with a sharper sector and business focus.

Feedback reports will be made to the main KEB Board of each event; these will also be shared with participants and posted on the KEB website. Each event will be recorded and video footage will also be posted on the KEB website: www.keb.org.uk

Event running order

Welcome and introduction

Thought Leaders – 5 minute briefings

Thematic discussion groups – Skills, Enterprise & Innovation, Business Critical Infrastructure

Plenary discussion - summary of conclusions and recommendations

Refreshments and networking

Depart