

Crawley's Local Economy Action Group (LEAG)

7 Nov 2018 – Notes and actions

1. Arrival

- Attendance list circulated separately

2. Notes and action updates

- Previous [notes and actions](#) reviewed.

3. Crawley Skills Research and Employment and Skills Plan Review

- [Presentation](#) on findings from skills research carried out and overview of upcoming employment and skills plan review.

Key points discussed included

- Skills plan will be refreshed taking stock of what has been achieved and firm up priorities going forward
- Reflect on challenges for STEM vs. foundation sectors (e.g. hospitality) jobs and skills in Crawley
- Crawley residents in lower paid jobs, potential for upskilling and career progress the resident base
- There are pockets of hard to reach people which can be supported back into employment, but need to evaluate how much resource and effort can be committed into returning the hard to reach into work, some require a high level of support and you need to find the right balance
- Unemployment level is low, need to work out how to support career progression and development, employers are key part in creating a mobile workforce
- Progress residents from low level to higher level, without stopping their progression path
- Influence through early years, education and college to create aspirations and change perception
- People need to be aware that foundation level jobs can lead to something
- Work to bring awareness of opportunities, is there more we can do to promote e.g. financial and professional services clustered around the High Street
- Need to consider how to make Crawley more attractive e.g. Bognor and Margate, it requires investment and work but it can be done, particular if you create a better environment for young people encouraging the talent pipeline
- Grasp what millennials want, create a hook e.g. 'Crawley the home of CSR'
- How do employers successfully pull unemployed women and those hard to reach back into the workplace e.g. flexible working is a key agenda for women
- Consider marketing campaign with impactful visuals that people take note of
- C2C skill board is being set up and looking for business representatives to join the board to consider skills agenda
- It is a complex environment needing various forms of intervention, multiple layers and levels of responsibilities, key to consider at what levels is it worth putting core effort into small cohorts
- Placemaking is also vital, there is still a perception issue for Crawley, need to create awareness of its offer, not worth spending main effort on small stuff, do the strategic work that with most impact
- Local people take on ambition and opportunities, but understand where do people come from to take on work, need to balance between supporting local residents but also on attracting people into town to work, employers need both pools
- Crawley not seen as dynamic, we need to recognise that we have a perception challenge with local people, need to have significant strategic effort and plan
- College as employer recognise the issues, there is a lack of skilled teachers that are affordable

- Numerous apprentice vacancies around, need businesses and schools to sell the benefits of apprenticeships, need to work collaboratively on this
- Developing the college curriculum and facilities e.g new kitchen and restaurant
- Crawley need to up its profile e.g. Manor Royal has worked to transform from an estate to a top business district location
- Need better collaboration work with strategic partners, need everyone to get together to make Crawley's offer more 'sexier'
- Placemaking make sure we are on the same page, it takes vision, but there are models out there e.g. Bristol, infrastructure, excitement, fun, opportunities is the hook into skills
- Go and look at Woking and Reading, used to be core commuting towns for London, now employers and developers are moving back into town attracting the skills that are already based there
- Important to engage with local businesses to resolve and find practical solutions to address the skills gap
- Strengthen partner relationships, skills agenda is interwoven not compartmentalised, need to work together to bid for resources
- There is a GVA cost to the skills constraints, seek understand what the opportunity employment loss and cost are to the economy
- Need to find mechanisms to get dialogue in place with businesses and move away from business saying what they need, but how they can be part of the solution

Actions:

- Share [research](#) and employment and skill programme [consultation link](#) when available (SK/LS)

4. Crawley Growth Programme Update

- [Presentation](#) on Crawley Growth Programme update and Town Centre Regeneration Update

5. Crawley Town Centre Business Space Growth Plan

- [Presentation](#) on key findings and recommendations from the Crawley Town Centre Business Space Growth study carried out on behalf of the One Public Estate partnership.

Actions:

- Share [stakeholder report](#) link (LS)

6. Gigabit West Sussex Dark Fibre and Business Voucher Scheme(s)

- [Presentation](#) on the Gigabit infrastructure investment programme and [business voucher scheme](#)

Key points discussed included

- Investment scheme has some state aid limitations
- A map of digging areas are available to share on request
- £63m is available for business vouchers from DCMS of which 16% is spent already
- List of suppliers surveyed by WSCC for business vouchers scheme and available on [website](#)
- WSCC can facilitate and assist in engagement, providing overview and promotion of scheme, contact [Michael Dicker](#) directly to request his support at events or meetings

7. AOB

- Manor Royal Matters 15 Nov
- Draft Gatwick Master Plan and Consultation

- New LEASG website
- Crowdfund Crawley Information event 21 Nov
- C2C Skills Board call for business representative applicants

Next Meetings

- TBC for 2019