

Crawley Economic Recovery Task Force
10 June 2020

The following is a record of the 'in-meeting' chat and subsequent responses.

The Chair of the Task Force thanked everyone who contributed to the meeting, both verbally and via the in-meeting chat.

[9:40 AM] [steve.sawyer@manorroyal.org](mailto:steve.sawyer@manorrooyal.org) - Re Terms of reference. It is not clear to me how decisions will be made about the content of the plan i.e. how the content and priorities will be agreed. **Noted in the meeting notes**

[9:41 AM] admin@thecompanyconnectorltd.onmicrosoft.com - Do we have a hotels & hospitality representative on the call? It's a key industry & massively impacted by CV19,

[9:44 AM] Hainge, Lynn - The Arora Group were invited although I cannot see they have joined the call.

[9:45 AM] steve.sawyer@manorroyal.org - The chair of the Gatwick Hoteliers Association is prepared to contribute. **Noted – LH will invite Peter Ziekle to join the Task Force**

[9:49 AM] Jeff Alexander - Do we know why low proportion of Crawley businesses qualifying for the grant? **We believe this is due to the fact that rateable values for premises are relatively higher in Crawley meaning fewer premises fall under the £51,000 RV PA threshold – and in addition Crawley has a larger proportion of medium and larger businesses who were not eligible.**

[9:49 AM] Louise Blackwell - Creative Crawley - Do we know how many sole traders and micro businesses are accessing support so far? And can we find ways to support them too? **We should have a clear idea of that once the Discretionary Business Grants programme funding has been distributed and we will subsequently report back to the Taskforce / Town Deal Board.**

[9:50 AM] agodfrey@shw.co.uk - Is Crawley's low take up on the Business Grant scheme because it is only available to small Business'? **No – please see explanation above.**

[9:51 AM] admin@thecompanyconnectorltd.onmicrosoft.com - There's a big challenge for Home-based SME Ltd Company businesses unable to access support aside from some Furlough money.

[9:55 AM] Patrick Warner, Metrobus - Of the £25m town deal funding, had you considered what proportion you might like to see allocated to the areas you indicated could benefit from it and would you welcome suggestions for how best that funding could impact those areas from specialists in each sector? **Yes we would very much welcome ideas and suggestions – that is one of the key roles of this Town Deal Board. We look forward to hearing from you and others.**

[9:59 AM] Brahma-Pearl, Natalie - On government funding Crawley received the lowest allocation for business grants. We received £12m.

[9:59 AM] Adam Joolia - Do you see support/incubation of new start ups as part of the recovery/town deal and could the community and voluntary sector play a role in this e.g. around social mobility/inclusion? **In the context of the physical business space infrastructure that might accommodate start-ups yes potentially – since the Towns Fund programme is predominantly a capital programme.**

[10:00 AM] admin@thecompanyconnectorltd.onmicrosoft.com Just to say that Henry has been supportive with Government - but he needs data from businesses to submit to Treasury -- write to your MP!

[10:01 AM] ana.christie@sussexchamberofcommerce.co.uk There was mention the Economic recovery Plan would be finalised for the Autumn, However, many businesses will not survive this long. An economic recovery plan needs to consider activities, support, lobbying and an action plan over the next 4 months, then 12 months and then longer term. **Further lobbying activity is taking place to seek government resources to address the more immediate crisis.**

[10:02 AM] Brahma-Pearl, Natalie Other LA received: Adur £17m, Chichester £37m, Horsham £29m, Arun £39m, Mid sx £26m, Worthing £26m. Allocation reflects number of eligible businesses SME's. Doesn't address or recognise Crawley's larger business base.

[10:05 AM] steve.sawyer@manorroyal.org Next quarter rents will start to fall due soon. This could be a problem for some and expose further vulnerabilities. A worry.

[10:05 AM] agodfrey@shw.co.uk Hearing from Alison regarding the freeing up of movement slots, surely if there is demand from Airlines to want to expand at LGW whilst others are contracting, this is an easy and quick win, assume this is one for Henry? **We will follow this up and respond to you.**

[10:08 AM] steve.sawyer@manorroyal.org In the interest of openness. In case anyone is interested the Manor Royal Recovery Plan is available on our website www.manorroyal.org/covid19 (See Section 18)

[10:09 AM] Smith, Peter - Suggest that CBC will collate all questions and requests and assign them appropriately. This will be especially helpful to Henry, I hope, in that there will be one list!

[10:11 AM] Jeff Alexander Regardless the extent to which existing businesses are able to survive and hopefully recover attracting new business investment into the area will be a critical part of the mix with potential to attract operations from London in particular.

[10:11 AM] Brahma-Pearl, Natalie In addition to Clem's update and current significant economic shock- we need to brace ourselves for changes to Governments furlough scheme. Likely we will see additional shocks in August when employers are required to make a contribution and October when scheme falls away. Essential we have collaborative plans that focuses on immediate, short, medium and long term.

[10:12 AM] admin@thecompanyconnectorltd.onmicrosoft.com Further to Natalie's point, this will be especially so in hotels.

[10:14 AM] steve.sawyer@manorroyal.org There was a specific ask of Government in the letter from Peter Lamb and Henry Smith about the Space / Property Furlough Scheme (similar to the Denmark scheme). We are supportive of this. What are the realistic prospects of this being introduced? **At the moment this is looking unlikely – there does not appear to be support for it in government.**

[10:17 AM] Catherine Scott DWP are really keen to work with the group to address skills gaps and co-ordinate training opportunities.

[10:17 AM] agodfrey@shw.co.uk Jeff, I totally agree, with a ready and able workforce (nil unemployment has in the past been a barrier to Companies wanting to relocate into Crawley), good range of employment buildings and a Pro Active Council there is an opportunity for Crawley to promote itself further. Is it worth exploring: Rates Holidays, Enterprise Zone status, Grants for job creation? **Yes, these should all be considered as part of the process of pulling together, updating, refining and finalising the Town Investment Plan / Recovery Plan.**

[10:17 AM] admin@thecompanyconnectorltd.onmicrosoft.com Great idea Adam - is Govt looking for more EZ sites? **This is a question we will follow up with Cath Goodhall and come back to you on.**

[10:18 AM] gary@icpsearch.com - The anticipated volume of job losses is unprecedented. Some businesses have been brave, announcing foreseen financial losses and likely redundancies. Many other businesses have not, nervous it will affect their already slim supply chain, debtor cash flow and overall company reputation. More than ever we need to pull together to provide positive options for employers and job seekers alike, whether passive or active. Anxiety levels are very high across the board and a visible 'coming together' will be welcomed by all. @DWP I'm committed to following up with you and the great and good to make this happen.

10:19 AM] steve.sawyer@manorroyal.org - On Rates. Relief only extends to Retail, Leisure and Hospitality sectors. However, there are business e.g. in the event sector clearly linked to the leisure sector who get no help on rates. What discretion has the Council got to make sensible judgements about these businesses who can't trade, not technically in R,H or L but clearly dependent on and supporting these vulnerable sectors? **We need to look at this in the context of the Discretionary Grants programme and see what comes out of that and then review.**

[10:20 AM] admin@thecompanyconnectorltd.onmicrosoft.com - Towns Fund, can I check the numbers? 101 towns at up to £25m each = up to £2.525bn but the budget is £3.6bn. Can Govt open up access to the other £1bn? **We will follow this up with Cath Goodhall from the HMG Cities and Local Growth Unit.**

[10:21 AM] Lamb, Peter - Yeah, I've been wondering that since the fund was announcement last Autumn.

[10:21 AM] Tony Middleton - We need to find an series of assessment metrics to identify the high growth potential businesses that require support to lead us out of the Covid impact. As Steve S said we need to support growth of businesses that in the short to medium term have strong viability prospects. These will be the businesses that have the greatest likelihood of recruiting and helping absorb people who have been put into the labour market through redundancy. Tony M - C2C **Tony – definitely – would be great to discuss further with you in the context of working together to design a place based business grants programme for Crawley.**

[10:26 AM] Goodall, Cath (Cities & Local Growth) On the overall Towns Fund envelope -it did include some High Street funds already out there. Plus the Prospectus said there would be a further competitive element for towns not in the 100/101 towns invited to proposed Deals

[10:26 AM] ana.christie@sussexchamberofcommerce.co.uk - A recovery plan should have some key ambitions and a clear action plan (asking delivery partners to be involved and help support key asks). Include activities short term, mid-term and longer term.

Some specific asks for consideration: (1) attract inward investment (we need to continue to attract investment from neighbouring areas and from overseas – therefore building confidence globally this is a safe place to do business, repurpose empty properties and respond to demand.) (2) support leisure, hospitality, culture and tourism economy (3) support larger businesses (4) adaptation – help business adapt, restart, recover and grow (5) support employment, retain our skills and help develop the skills base, increase digital skills, build workforce resilience (6) supply chain and procurement (7) place making – adapt and improve (8) increase and improve digital connectivity – Thank you for this contribution – really helpful suggestions. We will consider these as part of the drawing up the Recovery Plan proposals with consultants.

[10:29 AM] [steve.sawyer@manorroyal.org](mailto:steve.sawyer@manorrooyal.org) Assuming the Council has the research by the Manor Royal BID on ideas for the Towns Fund as well as plans for Recovery. Happy to supply again. We would be grateful if you could re-send this to us Steve so we can take account of it. Many thanks.

[10:30 AM] Adam Joolia Creative and cultural industries are one of the biggest growth sectors in the country but links between CBC Cultural Services and Economic Development Dept seem distant. Do you see creative and cultural industries as a significant part of recovery as (even pre-covid) the high street shrinks? Yes, they should be a key part of the recovery programme.

[10:30 AM] Marie Ovenden We have a great track record of collaboration in Crawley, an example being the Crawley growth programme- (capital infrastructure programme), partners- West Sussex County Council, Crawley Borough Council, Coast to Capital Lep, Manor Royal Bid, Metrobus and GAL- we should be building on these relationships and ensuring the plans feed into and compliment/further grow this work, Crawley should be well placed to utilise existing plans- such as the Manor Royal recovery plan to help feed into the Bid.

[10:30 AM] Julie Kapsalis There is also an opportunity to address some of the skills challenges through a bid for an Institute of Technology - this could enable us to look at higher skills and progression opportunities. The College is discussing this opportunity with Coast to Capital. It would be good to ensure this links with this work

[10:31 AM] Louise Blackwell - Creative Crawley In terms of urban regeneration and skills and enterprise - creativity and culture can play a big part. Also in terms of wellbeing of residents and workforce. I represent a group of local people who worked on a project seeking arts council funding (paused because of Covid) and I'm very happy to feed in where we got to with that and share ideas. Thanks Louise – we look forward to working with you.

[10:31 AM] Brahma-Pearl, Natalie In response to rates relief to other sectors. The Government criteria of eligible business is very tight. Whilst councils can provide limited discretion, our hands are tied. In terms of business rates collected 85% is pass-ported straight back to central

Govt, approx 10% WSCC and around 5% CBC retains. If we waive this we have to make up and underwrite sums Govt is expecting. CBC tax payers cannot afford to do this.

[10:32 AM] Louise Blackwell - Creative Crawley - Also I have a question about how the recruitment of the Towns Fund project management team will happen. And how we can help with that. **We are likely to pursue several options on this – an internal / external recruitment process plus whether they might be an appropriate secondment opportunity for a temporary period.**

[10:32 AM] shelagh.legrave@chichester.ac.uk Crawley College will have some funding for programmes for the unemployed and we are discussing with DfE opportunities to gain more.

[10:33 AM] admin@thecompanyconnectorltd.onmicrosoft.com Whilst travel is paused, it will return & I do feel that there could be a work stream to develop international opportunities. This would have to be delivered virtually to start with, but will build links with key destinations that were well served before CV19. This could be especially relevant to helping build air routes back out to the world. **Thank you, we will pick this up for consideration as part of the Recovery Plan development process.**

[10:33 AM] Jayne Tyler thanks Louise and Adam for your comments re-cultural and creative sectors...I am from Arts Council England and we are working with the cultural sector in Crawley to help support development.

[10:35 AM] Goodall, Cath (Cities & Local Growth) On the Min letters I understand DfT passed their letter to BEIS - so will not be responding separately

[10:37 AM] agodfrey@shw.co.uk Is it worthwhile looking at some form of centralised Crawley 'Jobs Board' that is available to all to local Business'? **Thanks Adam. We will be progressing conversations about the employment support programmes required, working closely with DWP / JCP and we will consider this in that context**

[10:37 AM] Brahma-Pearl, Natalie In response to Institute of technology point. C2C are aware we are very supportive of this in terms of up skilling, retraining and supporting many of the advanced engineering and technology sectors in the Borough. We have been suggesting this for almost 3 years- now is the time! We need to make sure we stop haemorrhaging our local talent and not waste this crisis for the benefit of our communities.

[10:37 AM] steve.sawyer@manorroyal.org - Supportive of investment in culture. In Manor Royal, but elsewhere too, this can play an important role in rebuilding places. We certainly have a vision for this in Manor Royal but funding does need to follow.

[10:39 AM] Julie Kapsalis - Is it worth considering a smaller sub group to look at skills and re-training? **Brilliant - thanks for suggesting this. Sounds good. If the Board are happy we will help you progress this.**

[10:40 AM] Brahma-Pearl, Natalie – Hi Julie, I am very happy to be part of this and help drive this forward.

[10:40 AM] Goodall, Cath (Cities & Local Growth) - Recognising not specific to Crawley but BEIS have just set up 5 Working Groups chaired by SoS of businesses and academics to look at what's needed under 5 aspects of recovery. If there are broad points to be made on these there's an opportunity to provide comments. Topics include levelling up, attracting investment, accelerating innovation, start and scale. Rapid exercise to inform thinking on recovery. Details on BEIS website.

[10:40 AM] Nick Burrell - The Crawley growth programme has an excellent track record of collaboration and would be a good format to support Creative and cultural industries skills and learning as well as town centre recovery.

[10:41 AM] Sophia Sami - DWP are already working with Steve Sawyer and think it would be great to bring together College and Gatwick in those meetings.

[10:42 AM] Marie Ovenden - WSCC would be happy to field a rep on the skills group, if helpful
Great. Thanks Marie.

[10:42 AM] steve.sawyer@manorroyal.org - If it helps through my involvement in national bodies I have seen a few plans and in some cases the bigger group is broken into smaller, subject focussed Plan Ahead Teams and similar. Can share if helpful. Yes please Steve.

[10:42 AM] Brahma-Pearl, Natalie - Hi Cath, any chance we can get LA representation for our patch on these Government Working groups. We can provide an excellent reality check- an on the ground view!

[10:44 AM] Goodall, Cath (Cities & Local Growth) - Hi Nathalie -I'll look into that though I suspect they are probably v highlevel. But I'll explore (I haven't checked out membership yet)

[10:44 AM] Adam Joolia - In Simon Clarke's letter he highlights the need to demonstrate how you will draw in the voluntary sector and strengthen community ties in the Town Fund bid. Have you already managed to articulate this in the bid and if not how can VCS Orgs represented here help? The role of the VCS should specifically be picked up within the Plan – I suggest we discuss further.

[10:44 AM] Brahma-Pearl, Natalie - Arts Council England are on this call and they are keen to work with Crawley to use arts, culture, creative industries to aid our economic and social recovery.

[10:45 AM] admin@thecompanyconnectorltd.onmicrosoft.com- Kwasi Karteng's letter offers a meeting - ask him to join the next call

[10:45 AM] ana.christie@sussexchamberofcommerce.co.uk - Also could you ensure the consultants liaise with the business membership organisations? We can provide essential feedback and input. We can also help lobby where needed. Will do.

[10:45 AM] Goodall, Cath (Cities & Local Growth) Agree ref consultants! You get a 'town co-ordinator' who can help broker the specific support you want.

[10:45 AM] Patrick - less spend on consultants and more spend on action would be good too to maximise the benefit of this funding **Agreed**

[10:45 AM] Doherty, Paula - In addition to the valuable role of arts and culture in recovery, we need to also consider the role of the voluntary, community and charitable sector and asset based approaches. **Yes, as per proposed way forward suggested above.**

[10:47 AM] sholloway@vailwilliams.com - In response to Julies & Steves points, I think there are many more opportunities for us all to continue to support & help, on more specific roles on each of the areas highlighted such as connectivity, and regeneration as the Town Plan evolves. We are keen to see how best as a private sector partner, we can assist and build on ongoing and future WSCC, C2C and CBC work. **Thanks Suzanne.**

[10:47 AM] admin@thecompanyconnectorltd.onmicrosoft.com - Are there any BAME Employer group(s) in the town not represented by Chambers & others - maybe ask GHU to be involved. **Thanks – we will follow this up.**

[10:48 AM] Brahma-Pearl, Natalie - Let's also not forget that as well as an economic salvage operation for the town- this may also offer opportunities to re-invent our town e.g. green agenda, smart tech, building social capital etc.

[10:48 AM] HILL, Andrea (SUSSEX NHS COMMISSIONERS) we also need to acknowledge the level of mental health need going forward in the recovery plan as this will influence how the town recovers

[10:50 AM] Stephen Burkes Excellent meeting. Very useful detail

[10:50 AM] agodfrey@shw.co.uk Chris, Peter and Clem, many thanks a good meeting

[10:50 AM] Nick Burrell - Fully agree Natalie and WSCC will be happy to support any refreshed growth deal or wider works.

[10:51 AM] Marie Ovenden - We can hopefully limit spend on consultants....using intel we have through this group and track record of successful bids (which had limited consultant spend), capacity may be an issue but through collaboration hopefully we can make any consultants fees efficient and effective.

[10:51 AM] ~Alison - Many thanks, a great meeting

[10:51 AM] Jeff Alexander - Excellent meeting - I will follow up on inward investment wearing my Gatwick Diamond Initiative hat.

[10:52 AM] Smith, Peter - Thank you to everyone for joining and your contributions / ideas/suggestions!

[10:52 AM] steve.sawyer@manorroyal.org - Some investment interest in Manor Royal too.

[10:53 AM] ana.christie@sussexchamberofcommerce.co.uk- Before the next meeting, any continued lobbying and business support will continue from the Sussex Chamber. Small groups

discussions should continue to ensure we are supporting those businesses that will really struggle in the next few weeks.

[10:54 AM] Doherty, Paula - Happy to report back on the work we are embarking on in terms of the impact of Covid on the broader health inequalities impacts and the work in that we are working on with Public Health

[10:54 AM] Marie Ovenden - Thanks Peter/Chris, great meeting, great to maintain momentum - look forward to seeing this work progress

[10:54 AM] Louise Blackwell - Creative Crawley Thank you - see you next time