

## Bude Partnership

### Theme Groups: Economy Employment and Skills



### Minutes of a Meeting held on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2007.

Present: David Chadwick (NCDC), Nigel Pearce, Birgit Dell, Val Newman and Ali Rowe: facilitator.

#### Agenda:

- 1 What (if anything needs changing in preparation for the second public consultation event on 10<sup>th</sup> Nov?
- 2 What can be pulled out from the comments so far, and what research can we be carrying out now?
- 3 How and when will this group meet next?

#### 1 Further Consultation Event(s)

The comments etc on the subject of Economy Employment and Skills had been circulated before the meeting. It was agreed that Stratton should be included as a separate 'subject' on Saturday.

(Action: Ali)

- 2 **Discussion Based on the Comments Received so far** (To be read in conjunction with the précis of comments previously circulated.)

#### Business Involvement in the Group

David Chadwick asked about whether local businesses had been invited to participate in this group. David has a North Cornwall Business Forum and will inform Bude members of that group and invite them to the next meeting of the Theme Group. (Action: David)

#### Business Surveys

David reported that the last time he carried out a survey, businesses reported that they have difficulty recruiting local people with high enough levels of skills. They have to recruit elsewhere and re-locate employees, and these people do not qualify for local housing. It would be much better to improve the skills of local people see 2.3 below.

Ali informed the group that a survey of businesses been undertaken by the Chamber in 2004 and she was asked to consider how up to date the responses received then still are. (Action: Ali)

#### Skills Levels

It was agreed that there is a crucial need to improve the skill level of local people (as in 2.2 above). Although there may be funding from Convergence, this is likely to be <sup>1</sup>ESF/LSC for training, not <sup>2</sup>ERDF for capital spend. Sadly, Bodmin and Launceston are seen to be the major North Cornwall towns in Convergence thinking. The ideal solution would require the presence of/ improving the contact with, college and universities. Discussion took place around the need to encourage the universities and colleges to become involved in the town.

It was also noted that fuel prices, now escalating, affect the people of Bude badly, because Bude is so remote facilities, colleges etc - and employment opportunities - are so far distance.

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<sup>1</sup> ESF European Social Fund LSC Learning and Skills Council

<sup>2</sup> ERDF European Rural development Fund

## CUC

Ali reported that the <sup>3</sup>CUC are reported to be eager to have a centre in Bude (and one in Bodmin) David confirmed that they do not wish to have new build but would welcome a building that could be up-dated or up-graded using the best modern technology. Ali explained that the Gregson Centre is full to capacity and cannot accommodate any more. David reported that he had visited Tripos and the great iconic building is half empty, with offices and a restaurant lying empty. Val suggested that the CUC should be encouraged to use the space at Tripos. This was welcomed as a wonderful idea. David and Ali will work on the together, talking to Tripos and to Ian Tonbridge, the CEO of CUC. (Action: David and Ali)

It was agreed that the presence of the CUC in Bude might also encourage new businesses to come to and invest in Bude, and would therefore be an incredibly important 'feather in our hat'.

## Graduates

Interestingly, although Budehaven School has a great record of sending people to University, these graduates do not – or cannot – come back to Bude to work. They say that the wages around the area are too low and the house prices too high.

## Employment Land

It was noted that land identified for employment uses by NCDC is sparse in Bude (most is in Bodmin) and although there is land that has planning permission, this is dependent on private owners deciding to proceed to development. This has proved to be a real difficulty. There are reported to be businesses in Bude, who wish to move to bigger premises and these are not available, they may have to re-locate to another town which would be a calamity.

## 3 Future Meetings:

It was agreed that Ali should send copies of the minutes to all those on the Economy, Employment and Skills Theme Group who had not managed to attend today, for their comments and information. All members will communicate with each other on their actions etc between now and the next meeting.

**The next meeting** of the Theme Group will be fixed when there is something to talk about. A meeting was penciled in for the afternoon of **Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December (2 pm)** in case there is a need to receive feedback from Ali and David: provided everyone can make that date and it is agreed that a meeting is needed.

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<sup>3</sup> CUC Combined Universities of Cornwall