Committee: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 13 January 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject:</th>
<th>Enterprise Elmbridge Action Plan 2015-2017 update</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lead Officer:</td>
<td>Natalie Anderson, Head of Organisational Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portfolio Holder:</td>
<td>Councillor Christine Cross, Community Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Link to Council Priorities:</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exempt information:</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delegated status:</td>
<td>For information to Cabinet 13 January 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Decision:</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Elmbridge is an economically resilient area. Changing national policy means that economic development over recent years has become a top priority for the authority.

The Council made a commitment to prioritise this area of work in 2012 with the agreement of the Enterprise Elmbridge Action Plan 2012-2015. In June 2014 the Council made a further commitment by supporting the permanent recruitment of an Economic Development Officer post. An updated Enterprise Elmbridge Action Plan 2015-2017 was approved in March 2015 alongside an extension to the Elmbridge Civic Improvement Fund until 2017 and the creation of a new £50,000 start-up fund.

This report sets out the progress in relation to the implementation of the Enterprise Elmbridge Action Plan 2015-2017, monitors key economic data (Appendix A) and identifies any further opportunities to support priority areas.

RECOMMENDED: THAT


REPORT:

1.0 Background and context

1.1 The Elmbridge economy has shown considerable resilience during the recent downturn and continues to show strong signs of recovery. However, the national growth outlook is still uncertain with China showing signs of weakening growth and a stagnant Eurozone helping to push up the strength of sterling, hitting exports and making UK growth more reliant on domestic consumer demand.

1.2 At a local level Elmbridge continues to play a leading role in the Surrey economy. The Borough has excellent transport links with access to the M3 and M25 motorways, easy access to both Heathrow and Gatwick Airports and several South West train lines into London Waterloo. This connectivity is coupled with high level skills, entrepreneurship and employment supporting a mix of micro enterprises, SMEs, national HQs, high value sectors and retailers across our towns and villages.
1.3 Following the 2008/09 financial crisis the Council repositioned its relationship with local businesses with its commitment to take a pro-active approach to economic development, support for our town centres, tourism attractions and businesses through the adoption of the first Enterprise Elmbridge Action Plan in 2012.

1.4 Although the recovery from the financial crisis is underway, other national policy changes such as the localisation of Business Rates, that establishes the link between economic growth (or decline) and future council funding, highlight the continued importance of supporting the economy locally.

2.0 Enterprise Elmbridge 2015-2017

2.1 The Elmbridge economy generates £3.2bn in Gross Value Added (GVA). With over 8,200 businesses and approx 57,800 employees the Borough has the largest business base across the County of Surrey and the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership area.

2.2 The economic base is built on a strong and thriving small business community and is not dependent on any one sector or large employer. The area has a long-standing reputation for business growth and resilience with supportive town centres and local amenities.

2.3 The latest economic stats for Elmbridge include:

- 8,270 active businesses in 2015 (up from 7,700 in 2014)
- 57,800 employees in 2014 (up by 1,900 from 2013)
- 53.2% of the working age population educated to NVQ level 4 compared to 39.1% for the South East
- 354 (0.4%) JSA claimants for October 2015 (down from 510 (0.6%) in October 2014)
- Comparison (non-food) spending retention rate of 29% in 2015 (up from 15.5% in 2005)
- Town centre vacancy rates below the national average
- 1,255 start-ups in 2014 (up from 1,235 in 2013)

2.4 The Enterprise Elmbridge Action Plan 2015-2017 outlined key actions where the Borough Council and partner organisations could play a central role in supporting our businesses, town centres and growth sectors to help meet challenges including:

- Online and offline challenges to the strength and success of our town & village centres (IMRG online retail association estimates £107bn was spent online in 2014 equating to 21% of retail sales)
- A tight employment market and high levels of out-commuting among the highly skilled (Net out-commuting of approx. 15,000)
- A business survival rate behind the Surrey average in year 1
- A lower ratio of total employment to working age population than Surrey or Local Enterprise Partnership area comparators (Elmbridge: 0.85, Surrey/Ent M3 LEP: 0.89/0.89)
• Lower proportion of companies in each employment size band over 10 employees than South East comparators

2.5 Enterprise Elmbridge completed a range of targeted initiatives in 2015 to help meet these challenges including:

Town Centres
• Record number of votes and nominations received in the 2015 Elmbridge Independent Retailer of the Year Awards
• 3x shop local initiatives delivered: Did you know campaign, 72 hrs shop local pledge and Small Business Saturday
• Piloted Elmbridge Street Live adding interest and life to Weybridge town centre with live music and street dance
• Supported Thames Ditton to launch a new farmers market attracting 1,200 people to the inaugural event
• Launched a new retail welcome pack to provide a simple guide to key info for new entrants to our town centres
• Re-established Elmbridge Borough Council relationship and communication with the Weybridge Town Business Group

Tourism
• Over 11,000 people attended the 2015 Elmbridge Food Festival
• 41 out of 67 business and community groups involved in the food festival were from within Elmbridge
• @DiscoverElmb social media feed helped to generate over 66,000 twitter impressions and over 2,000 profile visits during the food festival
• Approx £7,000 of free print publicity generated for the food festival and Painshill
• 5 ‘Hidden Gems’ social media video clips produced to encourage residents and visitors to explore the Borough

Business support
• Elmbridge businesses awarded £350,000 in Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership funding escalator loans to support growth and new jobs
• Over 70 businesses supported with business masterclasses in leadership, marketing, exporting and business continuity
• £126,350 in ECIF grants awarded to 31 businesses leveraging over £43,000 of private sector investment in our town centres since April 2015
• £8,115 in start-up grants awarded to 9 new businesses since April 2015
• Over 50 businesses supported directly with advice and signposting
• Over 1,800 clicks generated through to business funding, events and opportunities from our social media, LinkedIn group and newsletter
• Re-established the Big Business Board to engage large and strategically important employers
### 3.0 Enterprise Elmbridge 2016

#### 3.1 Following the successful implementation of 2015 activities further projects have been identified in addition to those in the Enterprise Elmbridge Action Plan set out in Appendix A to support priority areas in 2016 including:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Timescales</th>
<th>Delivery Lead</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enterprising Elmbridge</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Accelerating SME business growth</td>
<td>To deliver 2x business master class events to support 30 small and medium-sized businesses grow</td>
<td>December 2016</td>
<td>Economic Development Officer, Organisational Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop support for business growth through the Elmbridge Civic Improvement Fund</td>
<td>March 2017</td>
<td>Policy Manager, Organisational Development</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Elmbridge at Work</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Directly support local people into employment</td>
<td>To deliver Elmbridge apprentices ‘our day’ to celebrate and promote apprenticeship week</td>
<td>March 2016</td>
<td>Economic Development Officer, Organisational Development</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Discover Elmbridge</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Promote Elmbridge as a tourist destination</td>
<td>Hold the Elmbridge Food Festival ensuring that 65% of businesses attending are local</td>
<td>September 2016</td>
<td>Policy Manager, Organisational Development</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Economic Development Officer, Organisational Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enhancing the quality &amp; distinctive identity of our town centres</td>
<td>To deliver a retail masterclass to upskill 10 local independent traders</td>
<td>December 2016</td>
<td>Economic Development Officer, Organisational Development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Deliver the ’72 hours in….’ shop local pledge campaign</td>
<td>March 2017</td>
<td>Economic Development Officer, Organisational Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>Completion Date</td>
<td>Responsible Officer, Department</td>
<td></td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>To deliver the independent retailer of the year competition</td>
<td>August 2016</td>
<td>Economic Development Officer, Organisational Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To co-ordinate &amp; help deliver Small Business Saturday activities across the Borough</td>
<td>December 2016</td>
<td>Economic Development Officer, Organisational Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To deliver 3 x ‘Elmbridge after five’ initiatives to support local food &amp; drink businesses</td>
<td>March 2017</td>
<td>Economic Development Officer, Organisational Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To deliver the Elmbridge Borough Council actions within the Weybridge Town Action Plan</td>
<td>December 2016</td>
<td>Economic Development Officer, Organisational Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To submit a Surrey County Council secondary town centres fund bid</td>
<td>March 2017</td>
<td>Economic Development Officer, Organisational Development</td>
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<td><strong>Sustainable Elmbridge</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Unlocking development opportunities to meet housing, infrastructure and business needs</td>
<td>March 2017</td>
<td>Economic Development Officer, Organisational Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To generate at least £100,000 in external funding/investments into the Borough</td>
<td>March 2017</td>
<td>Economic Development Officer, Organisational Development</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Promote growth in sustainable locations across the Borough</td>
<td>July 2016</td>
<td>Planning Policy Manager, Planning Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete the evidence review of planning policies to allow for housing growth whilst safeguarding the environment to inform the preparation and publication of a new Local Development Scheme detailing the next stages in our Local Plan preparation</td>
<td>July 2016</td>
<td>Planning Policy Manager, Planning Services</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
### Connected Elmbridge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Promoting an open for business culture</th>
<th>Support at least 50 businesses with signposting to funding and business support</th>
<th>March 2017</th>
<th>Economic Development Officer, Organisational Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop 5x Elmbridge Borough Council business services social media clips</td>
<td>July 2016</td>
<td>Economic Development Officer, Organisational Development</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### 4.0 Partnership working

4.1 In addition to the above actions, Surrey County Council, the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the Surrey Chambers of Commerce will continue to support businesses across the area through the implementation of:

- The business support Growth Hub to support business development across the LEP area (Enterprise M3 LEP)
- The Invest in Surrey action plan to support and attract new investments into the County (Surrey County Council)
- 36 one-to-one start up business advice clinics (Surrey Chambers of Commerce)

### Financial implications:
None

### Environmental/Sustainability Implications:
Economic development contributes to sustainable communities. Specific scheme such as the ‘Shop Local’ campaign and grants can contribute to customers buying produce locally, reducing vehicle trips.

### Legal implications:
None

### Equality Implications:
None

### Risk Implications:
Failure to promote economic growth could result in a reduction in business rate revenues, which under new legislative proposals could affect Council income.

### Community Safety Implications:
None

### Principal Consultees:
Background papers:
None

Enclosures/Appendices:

Contact details:
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E: dperkins@elmbridge.gov.uk T: 01372 474176