

Business Forum Tuesday 23 November

Ryedale House 12 – 2

Meeting Notes

1. Welcome and introductions – Cllr Keith Knaggs

Present:

Henry Rayment, Castle Howard	Marie Ann Jackson, Corporate Director, RDC
Emma Watts, Federation of Small Businesses	Julian Rudd, Housing and Economy Manager
Steve Scott, Derwent Training	Jos Holmes, Economy and Community Manager
Ena Dent, Tourism Association North Yorkshire	Howard Wallis, Programme Delivery Manager
Rob Hicks, NFU Mutual	Louise Lunn, Business Liaison Manager
Cllr Keith Knaggs, Ryedale District Council	Paul Crane, NYNET

Apologies:

Willem Zwiteroot, Vion	Ian Rackham, Atlas Ward
Chris Jarvis, Westlers	Graham Bailey, Marshall Slingsby
Kevin Taylor, Perry Slingsby	Simon England, ALA Insurance

2. Broadband

A NYNET presentation was given by Paul Crane, Sales Manager. The slides are appended. Further details on the Ryedale House 'Point of Presence' were provided by Howard Wallis.

- NYNET have been successful in achieving funding to provide high speed broadband access to 27 market towns and 100 communities across North Yorkshire. Businesses require a fast and consistent internet connection.
- Procurement is beginning now, with market demand analysis to indicate where there is a market for the technology. It is therefore important for businesses to ensure NYNET is aware of their requirements from various locations.
- The project will start on the ground in winter 2011.
- NYNET has a community arm and is able to sell access directly to communities in mini hubs.
- Howard outlined the findings from the Malton & Norton Broadband Business Survey undertaken earlier in the year, which indicated the general level of dis-satisfaction with current provision.
- The POP scheme provides a radio base station at Ryedale House, to give businesses another option on how to connect. This includes the potential for WIMAX access which gives guaranteed, uncontended access. (Thereby no dip in performance if many users are on line simultaneously.)

It was felt important to publicise this widely to the business community to ensure that NYNET knew Ryedale's priority areas. Castle Howard had prepared a simple guide to the options available, for prospective tenants at the Easthorpe Business Park, as lack of web

access here had caused businesses to leave. The FSB would be happy to circulate information in their newsletter. The Rosedale Business Forum was meeting to discuss internet access that week – they currently use LN communications who are a partners of NYNET.

Paul was happy to receive feedback from businesses regarding the scheme.

3. Graduate recruitment programme

Picking up the issues raised at the previous Business Forum, Louise Lunn, outlined some opportunities which we could further develop regarding recruitment of graduates to Ryedale businesses.

- Durham University has a 'gradcrackers' programme for high tech manufacturing businesses. They promote internships and final year projects and have an Industrial Partnerships Committee.
- York University and Science City are decreasing student internships due to funding reductions.

Discussion followed.

- Perry Slingsbys have a track record with Bradford University. It would also be worth exploring Hull University.
- Young people have to make decisions before they are 16 to determine their future employment options and need as much information about the locality as possible. Louise updated the group on the recent 'Opportunity Knocks' event which showcased 10 Ryedale companies to 100 young people from schools which participated in Ryedale.
- There is the opportunity to train people from NVQ3 to foundation degree locally. It is important to retain home grown talent.
- Opportunities for sponsorship through university will be increasingly sought after.
- Scarborough Engineers Forum has recently started which is looking at the same issues. Potential to join up thinking on this idea.
- Skilled young people from Bishop Burton / Askham Bryan are always in demand in agricultural sector.

The group agreed that a pilot project with engineering businesses could be explored at this time, through the Work and Skills Partnership.

4. Local Enterprise Partnership update -

Jonathan French (North Yorkshire Partnership Unit), updated the group on the LEP. (An update for businesses is attached and on the RDC website.)

- Barriers to growth are addressed.
- It is essential for private sector to lead the LEP development.
- A steering group has formed to lead to the creation of the Board (anticipated by Easter 2011) with YNY Chamber as Chair – Sean Watts. Jos Holmes represents the Districts on this group and we are seeking private sector involvement in this group, from Ryedale.
- Anticipate 8 private sector members with sectoral coverage on the Board.
- Looking for Government to 'recognise' the YNYLEP in the near future.

- NYCC Economic Development Unit and the North Yorkshire Partnership Unit will be merging functions and becoming the delivery arm for the LEP and to take forward activity. Also inviting Districts to participate. No prospect for external funding – through the new Regional Growth Fund, so require the new unit to be sustainable.
- Working closely with East Riding as have common interest in market towns, agriculture and tourism, food production and the York economy.
- Key areas included:
 - Broadband investment
 - Enterprise support / mentoring
 - Tourism support
 - High growth companies – removing barriers to growth such as infrastructure.
 - Food and agriculture – including the agricultural supply chain and organisations such as Deliciously Yorkshire
 - Care Sector – a private sector core group may become part of the LEP.

Other issues followed in the discussion

- LEP will not replace YF funding. Jonathan French used an analogy - change of attitude from 'HM Coastguard' to RNLI – so local government building relationship with local businesses.
- Responsibility for ERDF will be from Whitehall, with local delivery points. Only projects with match funding can draw down ERDF.
- Culture is very important to maintain the tourism product. The LEP will be focussing on tourism product rather than marketing the area.

5. Key Account Management update

Louise Lunn updated the group on the Key Account Management activity. This was previously a YF programme of communication with strategic employers in the region to influence their locational decisions and to offer any early assistance or intervention.

This programme is now being delivered by local government, with Louise taking the lead in Ryedale. It will involve a quarterly visit to discuss the needs, aspirations and development plans and to maintain the link between the public and private sectors. Contact has also been made with the Manufacturing Advisory Service, which is funded by BIS, so this is an added service to the local economy support package.

- It was felt that communication is so important to understand and frame strategic or operational issues common to our locality.
- Businesses should also speak to their ward councillors whom are always willing to help.
- This process will be starting in the New Year.

6. Any other business

a. Sale of Wentworth Street Car Park

A press release was distributed by Julian Rudd regarding the Council's recent decision to sell Wentworth Street Car Park in Malton. The group discussed the project and recognised that funding for regeneration projects could be available from this sale.

7. Date and agenda Items for next meeting

It was suggested that the Forum could meet quarterly and that a date in March would be circulated. It was agreed that practical delivery was important to Ryedale businesses. Suggested agenda items included:

- a. Level 1 and 2 skills development, and Government's Work Programme for Job centre Plus clients
- b. Employment Land and the Local Development Framework