

Highlights of the visit to Dover District Council:

Welcome

Leader Of Dover District Council Cllr Kevin Mills
Chris Townend Head of Growth and Place, Dover District Council
Apologies from Nadeem Aziz, Chief Executive of Dover District Council

Avtar Sandhu Chair of GEDCCC thanked DDC for facilitating the visit on behalf of KCC

Main focus of the visit was Dover town centre

DDC area is made up of three urban areas Dover, Deal and Sandwich but Dover is the priority from a growth perspective for the district council. DDC has a long list of projects with a collective approach working with partner organisations.

DDC Ten Year vision:

- increasing employment with higher pay retaining skills locally
- improved education standards generally
- broaden the employment base

DDC feel a more resilient local economy is key as well as keeping trained, qualified people living in the area. New East Kent College facilities locally to help young people train and stay local.

Dover's image: Queues at the port affects brand perception therefore need to rebrand

DDC feel Dover is now at a "tipping point" with:

- Major private sector investment
- Chris Townend quote 'our time is now'
- Momentum behind push for growth now
- Strategies in place
- Must ensure Dover does not miss out on the current opportunities
- Public sector investment to realise full potential
- Unlock potential of Dover town centre
- Lobbying for improved transport infrastructure
- Investing in our heritage and culture
- Reversing long-term deprivation and unemployment

Intention is to adopt the Local Plan early next spring with cross party support.

Public Funding and support

LUF £18.1million totalling a £20million project to increase jobs and establish links to sea front as the four lane road deters pedestrian access

DDC can only do so much itself needs to collaborate with Homes England and KCC

Positive working relationship with KCC and Locate in Kent

Emphasis on employment:

- Hospitality sector was worth £302million reduced by £80million in recent years with the loss of 2000 jobs
- 500 jobs lost at P&O
- Employment land critical - houses being built but also need jobs

Site visit to Tridax Business Park

- 24 business units all sold bar 4 units
- developer would like more land
- great location huge demand
- supported by KCC's No Use Empty Commercial
- 97 square metres individual units seems to be most popular opportunities

Transport Infrastructure

Morning tour of Fastrack route

Dover Fastrack services Whitfield urban extension via the new Leisure Centre and Connaught Barracks site to Dover town centre. Funding contributions includes Homes England £22.8m, DDC £1.14m, KCC £3m

DDC consider principle is that public transport should be used to meet rising housing numbers by providing East - West public transport such as Fastrack

DDC issues:

- To assist Dover Port at peak times - Ashford Sevington could be used as overflow?
- Potential funding issue for Fast Track post subsidy in a few years' time
- TAP is seen as critical
- Brenley Corner improvements
- A2 Dualling – Lydden to Dover
- Bifurcation of traffic to Port of Dover

DDC consider A2 dualling / bifurcation as best option to reduce the impact of traffic through the town centre A20 route to the Port.

Working Lunch

Tourism & Culture

Main issues

- Renewed emphasis on heritage and archaeology
- Renewed tourism strategy and economic development strategy
- Need to re brand Dover and make more of the coast as a tourist and leisure attraction
- UK's second busiest cruise terminal
- Tourism and economic benefit
- Investment in new leisure centre
- Investing in heritage/visitor assets:
 - Maison Dieu
 - Kearsney Parks
 - Roman Painted House

Walking Tour Dover Town Centre

Emphasis on heritage and connectivity to seafront

- Maison Dieu project now well underway
- Market Square – newly refurbished and transformed space for events
- Discovery Centre – continued close working on the redevelopment, including reaching an agreement on the presentation and access to Local Studies collections

Major new flagship projects:

- Proposed Dover Beacon building currently being constructed with business centre, campus, creative centre on Fishmongers Lane and Town Wall St
- Proposed new/refurbished access to the seafront via underpass.

Site visit to the Port of Dover

Talk by Doug Bannister CEO Port of Dover on their extensive and transformational initiatives around the use of the land making up the port.

Key Asks of KCC:

- Discovery Centre - continued close working on the redevelopment, including reaching an agreement on the presentation and access to Local Studies collections
- M2/A2Brenley Corner improvements
- A2 Dualling – Lydden to Dover
- Bifurcation of lorry traffic to Port of Dover via M2 and Folkestone via M20
- Potential improvements at Whitfield roundabout is a DDC priority.