

Local Economic Development Group: Initial meeting, 22 Jan 2014

Café Art, 7 – 9.30pm

PRESENT:

Rex Henry; Ric Walker; Jill Block; Matt Hayter; Pete Giles; Peter Hutchinson; Rowena Swallow; John Higgins; Vicky White; Rita Lait; Ron Tulley; Christine Marenah

3 ELEMENTS TO THE INFORMATION WE ARE COLLATING:

1. Existing evidence – previous plans, research, statistics, census etc.
2. New evidence – collected through the neighbourhood plan/ economic strategy process
3. Aspiration – what do we want for the future of St Ives?

1. Existing Evidence

Ideas for action:

- Review evidence already collated by Rita Lait
- Also look for – revenue/economic map/business audit of St Ives; demographics; sector studies, i.e. where are we now in facts and figures?
- Find evidence from schools on school leavers from 10 years ago, are they still in the area?

2. New evidence

Ideas for ways to collect evidence:

- Need to include business owners and Chamber of Trade;
- Need to engage young people in a way that inspires them and doesn't 'shut them down';

3. Aspirations See below.

SUGGESTIONS FOR GOING FORWARD:

- Focus on creating an Economic Strategy for St Ives, then draw out appropriate parts for use in the neighbourhood plan;
- Contact Chamber of Trade, key business-people in the area;
- Collate all ideas and aspirations, select the strongest to form part of an economic strategy;
- Arrange a series of workshops focusing on key aspects of the economy – vision, objectives and practical projects;
- Specific projects to bear in mind – 'Hire Porthia' <http://www.hireland.ie>; use of the police station building as a business hub;

CORE GROUP

The following people will form the Core group going forward, with responsibility for coordinating the work of the group and arranging meetings/events etc:

Rowena Swallow – CHAIR
Ric Walker
Matt Hayter
Lucy Davis
Christine Prest
Jill Block
Pete Giles

Next (Core Group) meeting on Thurs 30 Jan, 6.30pm at Café Art.

ASPIRATIONS

What do we want for the future of St Ives' economy?

Living wages
Diversity and increase in employment opportunities, e.g. community-run 'job centre'
Fishing industry
Provision for local needs
Skills base
High-value economy – i.e. knowledge-based economy, IT; using superfast broadband
Year round employment
New industries – e.g. green energy, environment, sport
Keep wealth in the town
Business Hub – support small businesses
Self-employment – fostering initiative and creativity
Opportunities for young people to live and work in the area
Work spaces – e.g. live/work units

How do we make this happen? (case study examples)

Diversity and increase in employment (encouraging young people):

- Identify and publicise opportunities and lobby for specific groups;
- Engage young people and others (Hire Porthia);
- School/college/university apprenticeships with business;
- Identify 'growth' areas/possibilities/projects, e.g.
 - Buildings/land for projects
 - Fishing industry/leisure fishing
 - Eco-business
 - Catering sector
 - Sports/outdoor/environment
 - Leisure/tourism
 - Construction
 - IT;
- Live/work units;
- Start-up/Hub shared facilities.

Work Spaces – e.g. live/work units

- Need an Economic/Business Development Officer with vision! i.e. proactive research into funding streams, underused buildings etc.
- More small industrial/retail units with affordable rents for start-up businesses;
- Neighbourhood plan role in guiding/restricting commercial premises development – change of use. i.e. identify areas for industrial unit development;
- Tradesmen parking permits, including care workers;
- Optical Science Hub;
- Knowledge Hub;
- Artist studio space;
- Support social enterprise;
- Attracting seed research/business; (AIR – Academy Innovation Research);
- Use part of police station as business hub.

'Value-added' economic activity

- Identify gaps in tourist market, e.g. out of season courses, wildlife, birds, industrial heritage, pre-history;
- Fish processing;
- Art-based value-added;
- Entrepreneurial opportunities in developing facilities and activities for young children (identified as a gap in the neighbourhood plan research), e.g. play areas in town centre.

Potential funding sources:

- LEP;
- Seachange;
- Royal Society of Arts;
- Federation of Small Businesses;
- School for Social Entrepreneurs;
- And many more.....