

# Worthing Chamber of Trade, Commerce and Industry

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## Context

- WCCI understood the symptoms of decline – emerging competition, declining membership, loss of influence in local government and uncertain funding arrangements.
- WCCI collectively recognised modernisation was necessary but the organisation lacked the skills to embrace change.

## Background

- WCCI – 60 year old institution formed to support trade and commerce in Worthing, a traditional coastal town in southern England.
- The organisation had become dated, using outdated working practices.
- Membership numbers were falling.
- The organisation had lost its direction.

## Embracing Change

- WCCI made their first good decision in over a decade, early in 2007, to bring in expert external support from the University of Brighton to facilitate change.
- The University worked with the directors of the organisation to understand the history and plan the future for the WCCI.

## Breaking Down Barriers

- ✓ The University using a variety of tools – namely “PEST” and “Analysis of Innovation Opportunities” which enabled the organisation to understand the environment in which they were working, the partnerships they would need to build and the needs of their members and customers.

# Unlocking The Potential

- During a series of workshops the organisation explored the political, economic and social world in which they operated.
- Considered what they had historically achieved – taking steps to extend the successes and learn from the failures.

# Organisational Ownership

- ☾ Every decision maker took the opportunity to influence the strategic plan.
- ☾ The final version of the strategic plan had unanimous support, was ambitious, innovative and deliverable over a 5 year period.
- ☾ The plan embraced new partners, novel ideas and was beneficial to members, customers partners and industry in Worthing.

## Highlights Of The Strategic Plan

- ✓ Developing a partnership to develop and manage incubator units for small businesses in Worthing.
- ✓ Developing links with education providers to raise the level of skills in the town's existing workforce.
- ✓ The confidence and organisational skill to apply for project funding at local, regional and international level – e.g. ABC 4 SME.
- ✓ ABC 4 SMEs was a project about improving the capacity of business infrastructure organisations and improving productivity and communications amongst the SME community.

## Breaking New Ground

- Developing links with local schools to capture entrepreneurial skills of young people.
- Developing policies and strategies to influence local government for the benefit of business.
- Developing the notion of partnership and cooperation and not competition.

## Other Benefits

- ☺ The provision of training and mentoring to SME's
- ☺ Networking events for members
- ☺ Support for smaller business
- ☺ Develop policies in key delivery areas
- ☺ Improve manufacturing skills base
- ☺ Promote apprenticeships
- ☺ Support volunteering
- ☺ Promote mentoring
- ☺ Develop and promote innovation and take calculated risks

## Most Importantly

- WCCI recognised the importance of being the 'Voice For All Business' and not representing a narrow section of business.

# The Future

- ☾ Rising membership.
- ☾ New partners.
- ☾ New projects.
- ☾ New programmes.
- ☾ New funds.
- ☾ A representative voice.
- ☾ A brighter future.