



## Devon Economic Partnership Executive Meeting

Held on Thursday 19th November 2009, 8:30am  
Audio Conference

### Present:

Name	Organisation
Tim Jones (Chair)	Devon and Cornwall Business Council / Enterprise Plymouth
Andrew Lightfoot	DEP Executive Officer
Andrew Southall	South West Regional Development Agency
Andy Wood	South West Regional Development Agency
Daniel Bailyes	DEP Project Assistant
David Incoll	West Devon District Council
Graeme Bell	Devon County Council
Leanne Crawford	Devon Rural Network
Richard Ball	Exeter City Council
Steve Pitcher	North Devon Plus
Tony Skeel	Learning and Skills Council

### Apologies:

Name	Organisation
Paul Sadler	Environment Agency

### 1. Introduction of Daniel Bailyes

Daniel graduated in the summer from Reading University and is replacing Lucy Gough, who recently moved onto her next assignment on the National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP). He will be working for the DEP (based at the RDA) until 31 March 2010. His placement is organised by Exeter University as part of the Graduate Business Partnership (GBP).

### 2. DEP review, including updates from SWRDA and DCC

#### Update from DCC

Graeme began with an update from DCC. The new administration, including Cabinet Member for the Economy Will Mumford, is still in the process of finding its feet. Moreover, a report was presented to Cabinet on 3 November which took into account the Council's new duty for economic assessment, a new DCC Strategic Plan and the economic context. It details the role of DCC as the lead public authority in supporting participants in the Devon economy and its work with partners, including the DEP.

Graeme also informed the meeting of structural changes within DCC itself. Rob Hetherington has been appointed Head of the economy group. This arrangement was brought about with mainly financial considerations in view with the need to save costs. It is likely that with the future of public sector finances being so bleak that staffing levels will be reduced in time, with about one fifth of posts being lost this year in the economy service.

#### Update from North Devon +

Steve also provided an update from North Devon +. They now have a new business plan and a new board in place. In the context of the economic assessment, North Devon + is a delivery agency and does not produce its own intelligence, for which it relies on the County Council for up-to-date data to inform its activities. Graeme confirmed that DCC would be taking its intelligence work seriously, not only economically but also socially. Finally, Steve reported that partnership work is emerging in Exmoor and also in Cornwall on specific projects.

#### Update from the RDA

Andy reported that the RDA is now taking stock of what is now a complex picture of sub-regional partnerships and is currently mid-way through its review. This has been initiated by the new duty assumed by DCC and the financial context. What is critical to the RDA is an understanding of how to smooth the transition to the new arrangements and how to secure stronger partnerships, linked to a performance management framework. The next step is to provide a further report to the board in December. **He is happy to circulate the papers to those who request them.**

#### DEP Review

Richard shared his views on the DEP review. With fewer resources, increased partnership working becomes of even greater importance (reflecting the general view of the meeting). There is a continued need to avoid duplication, to focus on outputs and to engage in dialogue. However, Graeme pointed out that the current DCC administration appears to lack any enthusiasm for MAAs or targets. The current administration is very Devon centric but he agrees that MAAs and increased partnerships are important reflecting the diversity within the county, and may be picked up through the 'Total Place' initiative.

Referring to Ian Morris' review of the DEP, specifically concerning Plymouth, Andrew Lightfoot pointed out that Plymouth had failed to attend yesterday's DEP Infrastructure meeting. Plymouth's involvement is an aspiration, though not necessarily a reality yet.

**Action (Tim): To have an informal chat with his contacts in Plymouth.**

Concerning contact with Torbay, Kevin Atkinson did attend yesterday's meeting, though there was uncertainty over higher level dialogue.

There was also a discussion concerning the championing of rural Devon. Leanne brought to the attention of the meeting that the Devon Rural Network was the only Devon wide partnership in existence and that it would need replacing if the DRN ceased to exist.

There was also a concern that the review did not cover rural issues. It was suggested that Melanie Hall (NFU) be invited to the executive to solve the problem. However, she is very much agriculturally focused. **A discussion will be needed on this point in the future.**

Other points made included:

- we should focus on outputs more than process;
- need to be open and honest about when some partners are better placed to undertake certain activities than others;
- should establish what needs to be done at a Devon-wide level;
- need a stronger voice for the private sector;
- we should avoid being too distracted by government initiatives

On the back of the review the group were still happy with the broad thrust of the DEP paper.

**Action (Andrew L): To draft proposed outputs for the revised Partnership for discussion on 10 December.**

### **3. Devon Economic Strategy update**

Andrew Lightfoot reported that Karime Hassan had taken responsibility for signing off the DESS at the DEP Infrastructure group meeting yesterday.

Other progress would be reported in the Economic Bulletin.

#### **4. Proposals for spend by March 2010**

Andrew Lightfoot told the meeting that the DEP does have a current budget allocated mainly from DCC and the RDA. He would appreciate any suggestions to steer the focus of the spending, particularly in the context of the future of the DEP.

**Action (All): If anyone wishes to contribute to this, please contact Andrew.**

#### **5. Agenda for DEP Meeting**

Tim suggested that an audit of the activities the DEP was involved in would be of use due to the confusion involved with a proliferation of initiatives. An overview of what the DEP is involved in and funding, and how value is being added in providing the various programmes would be of help.

**Action (Andy Wood): To put together a few paragraphs.**

An item on the timescale of the economic assessment would also be helpful.

**Action (Andrew Lightfoot): To email around a broad outline.**

The DEP meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> December will take place in the morning with three seminars in the afternoon. Tony Norton will give a seminar on 'ESCOs', Kevin Osborne on 'Financial Inclusion' and Nigel Tremlett from Step Ahead Research.

The meeting will be held at the Ringswell Centre, details to be sent shortly.

**Action (Daniel): Email details of the meeting and seminars.**

Possible topics for the following meeting included EU funding and the HCA single conversation.

#### **6. Devon Economic Bulletin, November Edition**

A draft of the bulletin will be circulated either next Tuesday or Wednesday with publication at the end of the month. It will include a number of highlights from all six priorities within the DES along with a note on the review of the DEP and details of the meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> December.

**Action (All Executive and Daniel): All Executive to review / edit the draft bulletin for Daniel to circulate.**

#### **7. Notes on last meeting, 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2009**

**Action (All): Any comments to be sent to Tim.**

#### **8. Agree dates for meeting in 2010**

**Action (Daniel): Daniel to coordinate with all to arrange a suitable date.**

#### **Closing Comments**

There was a plug for both 'Catching the Tide' by Graeme and the 'Community Resilience Conference' by Leanne. Andrew Lightfoot also mentioned that the DEP would be presenting on its work on 3 December at the Devon Strategic Partnership conference. He would be highlighting successes such as PSfD and also on the future of the DEP.

**Action (All): If there is anything anyone would like Andrew to include in the presentation, please get in contact with him.**