

# Devon Economic Partnership Executive

## Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2009, 8.30 am via Audio Conference

### Present:

Tim Jones	DCBC/Enterprise Plymouth
Steve Pitcher	North Devon Council
Andrew Lightfoot	DEP Executive Officer
Leanne Crawford	DRN
Andrew Southall	SWRDA
Tony Skeel	LSC
Richard Ball	Exeter City Council

### Apologies

David Incoll	Devon CEX Group
Graeme Bell	DCC

### 1.0 Action Points arising from meeting 29 April

- Swine Flu – a watching brief was in place
- Economic Bulletins – a number of points were raised:
  - The media were detached from how they could effectively influence the strategic business debate, and did not have a strategy for building momentum. Some media representatives had expressed concern over the sustainability of the printed press in the multi-media world
  - Devon – sustained contact and dialogue should be built up with the media and bigger links made
  - It was questioned whether the Bulletin could be hyperlinked to the WMN website
  - **Action: media dinner to be arranged for discussion of issues, including multi-media**
  - It was questioned how DEP members should feed in to the Bulletin. It was explained that each Bulletin would focus on one or two of the DES strategic priorities and requests for information are sent round beforehand
  - There needed to be an understanding of process in terms of media and a system in place for validation of comments
  - Lucy was looking into multi media possibilities for the DEP
  - Action Forces – Andrew S was still putting a protocol list together
  - A coherent response was needed – Plymouth was cited as an example needing more of a coordinated approach
- Infrastructure – no contact had been made **Action: Andrew L to organise meeting with Karime**
- **Action: Andrew S to put together list of local business forums**
- FE and HE – was there a need for a structured dialogue, to include the health sector (following comment from Cornwall). The replacement agencies for the LSC would not have to capacity to engage at the level the LSC has to date
- **Action: Single event for FE, HE and health sector as employers, also widen to public sector**
- Membership – Mid Devon Teignbridge and the HCA all needed representation
- Deputy Chairs **Tim to action**
- Solutions for Business: Andrew L suggested that various partners in addition to Local Authorities should be involved in local discussions

### 2.0 Draft Delivery Plan for DES

#### **Action: update to be circulated by Andrew L**

It was confirmed there would be no major changes to Strategy but refinements would be completed over the next week. Adjustments for current economic conditions were to remain under review.

Response to big issues needed focus, including the final RSS to be released in June.

Karime to be invited to Chair a new infrastructure group, based around Priority A of the Economic Strategy.

### **3.0 Draft Economic Bulletin**

**Action: draft to be circulated electronically for comment before publication**

### **4.0 Update on 'response to the recession' initiatives**

- Local independents were faring better in the current climate
- Housing – there had been 340 new builds in North Devon, which was not a huge reduction from last year
- Resilience was patchy with both good and not so good anecdotal evidence
- Personal debt monitoring needed a greater focus – CAB were providing some funding for Exeter to address this
- The next issue would be sustaining recovery and identification of barriers to growth that were in place even during the buoyant growth period
- A strategic approach for inward investment was required
- Housing and planning issues needed to be addressed
- The role of Local Government in delivery needed to be recognised
- Local finance structures – a conversation had been initiated at a previous DRN meeting around potential local banking structures, for both domestic and business use: **Andrew L to arrange initial meeting to consider the options**
- Low carbon economies and green jobs were significantly moving up the agenda
- DCC had committed £500K to a number of actions to respond to the recession following the 'Weathering the Storm' event

### **5.0 Meeting and actions**

Extra point to be added around the next phase of strategy

### **6.0 Agenda for DEP: low carbon economy**

A meeting was organised for 28<sup>th</sup> May with Pauline Warner, Paul Gompertz, Alex Huke, Mel Sealey, Paul Sadler and Ian Hutchcroft to discuss the low carbon economy, to inform the next DEP meeting.

A new contact from the Environment Agency was needed to feed into this work.

**Action: Paul Sadler to be approached to provide replacement and note of thanks to be issued to Cathy Doidge**

### **7.0 Minutes of last meeting**

Agreed

### **8.0 News round up**

- North Devon Plus were in the next phase of development
- Tim was meeting with Mary Ridgway to discuss affordable housing delivery
- A successful meeting had been held with around 100 representatives from the Marine Industry. There was strong indication of the potential benefits of a pan regional marine network
- Team Devon – action plan to be launched at Youth Games in Barnstaple on July 5th
- DCC had committed £45K for work around the development of a rural business park at Holsworthy

**Date of next meeting: 14<sup>th</sup> July, 8.30am**