



## Devon Economic Partnership

Held on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2008, 2pm  
Cardinal Newman Centre, Exeter

### Present:

Tim Jones (Chair)

Dawn Eckhart

Chris Jenkins

Edward Chorlton

David Incoll

Sue Smith

Steve Schlemmer

Lynne Del Greco

Cllr Humphrey Temperley

Ian McGregor

Karen Chapman

Jane Rickhards

Jeremy Filmer-Bennett

Ian Morris

Peter Tansey

Ian Hutchcroft

Ellen Vernon

Andrew Lightfoot

Andrew Ashley

Leanne Crawford (Scribe)

### Apologies

Jamie Evans

Derek Phillips

Cathy Doidge

Jen Brogan

David Parlby

Vanessa Saunders

Richard Ball

Richard Adams

### 1.0 Welcome and Introductions

Introductions round the table were given. It was announced that Ian Hutchcroft will be leaving DCC and was thanked for all his work on the LAA.

### 2.0 Local Area Agreement: 4<sup>th</sup> Theme

Ian Hutchcroft gave an update on the Task Group, set up to oversee the LAA 4<sup>th</sup> Theme. This has a wide remit and covers economy, environment, transport, waste, housing, culture and sport. The task group brings in a number of partnerships that have responsibility for each of these sectors.

There are 38 outcomes for the LAA, of which 23 relate to the 4<sup>th</sup> Theme, and 10 of which (known as designated outcomes) have National Indicators attached to them. One of these will be the number of those with learning difficulties in employment; the definitions for this will be set by the DDA. These will be signed off by the Secretary of State and DCC on behalf of the DEP.

Of the 10 designated outcomes, 7 already have established bases lines. These are waste, carbon emissions, affordable housing, skills, worklessness, physical activity, and housing delivery. The remaining 3 do not have baselines, and these are biodiversity, access, and fuel poverty.

Associated targets for these will look at resources and delivery. The Task Group are at the stage of finalising baselines and targets, although it was explained that there is unlikely to be a clear idea of these by sign off, and that many indicators will have new targets.

It was questioned on how responsive the LAA will be to the current economic situation, and how quickly it will be able to adapt and mitigate the effects of this. It was stated that there will be a yearly refresh from government.

Concern was expressed over the state of the economy and how it will impact on baseline information and delivery, especially in terms of affordable housing and employment space. It was agreed that SMEs, particularly in the

food industry will be worst hit. It was agreed that there will need to be adaptations to assumptions made regarding delivery. Comments from the DEP will be fed back to central government via GOSW. It was explained that the RDA and Peninsula Enterprise have discussed mitigating effects of the economy and increasing redundancies.

***Action: group to be formed to create prediction scenarios and monitor the economy and baselines. Group to be pulled from industry***

It was agreed that the LAA group should continue and remain to report to the DEP.

It was suggested that there is a piece of work to look at the criteria for SMEs to access contingency funds through organisations such as Finance SW etc.

***Action: Andrew Ashley to look at rules and regulations surrounding this***

It was agreed that the DEP should remain involved in the LAA monitoring process, as the DEP has taken a broad overview and taken in a wide number of partners within its task groups. It was suggested that there needs to be a delivery action plan to look at capacity and resources. It was agreed that this plan would be available either on the DEP website or through physical distribution.

### **3.0 Devon Economic Strategy – monitoring arrangements**

It was reported that a monitoring group has been set up, with a Champion for each of the six priorities and full geographical coverage. The RDA also sit on this group.

A monitoring table will be produced and will be available on the DEP website for regular updating. The group will also look at harder outputs for these priorities.

It was reported that Productive Skills for Devon have commissioned a report from SLIM and Step Ahead that can also be used to monitor the skills element of the DES. Steve Smith has produced a briefing paper for this report, which can be found at [www.devoneconomy.co.uk](http://www.devoneconomy.co.uk) under meetings, Productive Skills for Devon, meeting 9<sup>th</sup> April.

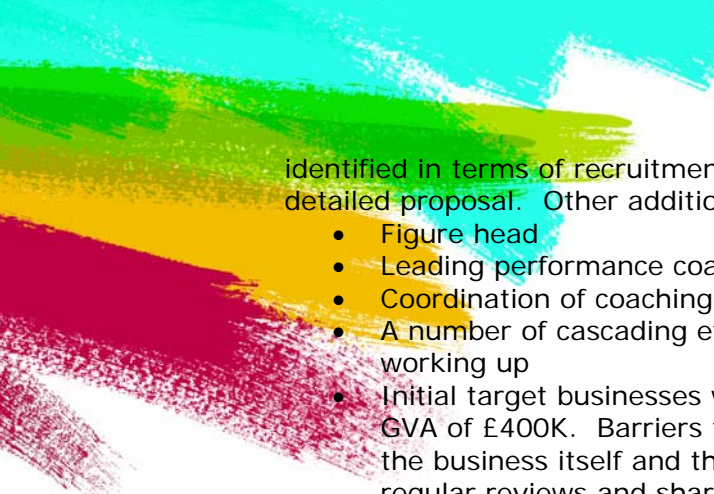
It was confirmed that the monitoring group meets virtually, and that champions will be reporting progress made on each priority. It was questioned how the DEP will ensure the DES is actually being delivered, beyond the reporting process. This will be achieved by the combined efforts of the monitoring group, Partnership and individual action groups.

A wallet size version of the DES has also been produced for general distribution.

### **4.0 Devon Billion – concept presentation**

Steve Schlemmer presented a concept idea on an incremental project to show DEP progress.

It was stated that there are potentially around 2800 businesses in Devon that could be targeted for growth. It was suggested that there will be an overall meta-intervention of all current business growth schemes to target these businesses and inspire them to develop on behalf of Devon, though support and advice. It was stated that the incremental costs may not yet be



identified in terms of recruitment etc and these could be included in a more detailed proposal. Other additions to be made to the plan are:

- Figure head
- Leading performance coach
- Coordination of coaching support
- A number of cascading events, starting with 20 businesses and working up
- Initial target businesses will be key sector with 20+ employees and a GVA of £400K. Barriers to growth are expected to come from within the business itself and the project will provide the opportunity for regular reviews and sharing of good practice.

It was stated a more detailed proposal with costs will be worked up if the DEP sees the idea as viable; all agree that this would be useful.

**Action: Steve Schlemmer to provide detailed project proposal with costed budget**

It was agreed that there is a flaw in the plan in terms of the type of businesses in Devon, i.e lifestyle, with no desire to develop or grow and unreceptive to approaches. It was agreed that core businesses are often not present in Devon. It was stated that only businesses that wish to develop would be approached.

It was stated that similar work has been done in the past and that engagement will be the key to this project, and it was suggested that an 'under the radar' approach may be the most effective for many businesses. It was agreed that a consortium approach would be key and that the project could build on previous mentoring programmes.

It was suggested that the entrepreneurial element of Devon had not been captured in the proposal or identification of potential markets.

It was suggested that examples of good practice are taken from Finland and Sweden.

It was reiterated that the project approach will be phased and continually refined. The project will link in with the DEP and the LAA.

## 5.0 Partnership Budget

It was confirmed that the budget has almost been signed off by the RDA. Monies will be allocated to research and feasibility, and communications and events.

It was stated that the budget will be discussed more fully by the Executive group; however thoughts from the wider DEP are welcomed.

**Action: comments to Andrew Lightfoot**

## 6.0 Group Reports

PS4D – main focus of the last meeting was the Step Ahead report on indicators, and the group will also look at monitoring processes to deliver outputs with PS4D but also DES. It was reported that the 3 year programme for the agreed public service agreement has almost been delivered and it was anticipated that most of the reward money would be payable. The group will be looking at allocation of funds. Jeremy Filmer-Bennett gave an overview of the employer engagement event held in Barnstaple, the next will be held in Exeter.

*Team Devon* – There are 5 areas of activity – business opportunities including an initiative “Fit for Profit” which looks at business inefficiency through sick leave etc, Ian Tearle is leading on this; “Escot group” are formulating a number of events for Devon, both locally and county wide; School agenda, with 370 schools prepared for sports initiatives; cultural projects and community projects. Team Devon has been invited to coordinate the training camps for which Devon has been awarded 16.

*Infrastructure* – Cooper Simms has produced a draft report for the Infrastructure task and finish group, which will be available by 22<sup>nd</sup> April. Keith has consulted with all Local Authority planning departments with a list of potential sites, and has also taken LDFs into account.

**Action: Peter Tansey to circulate draft report when available**

This report needs to be signed off by the DEP.

*DES action D5* – Steve Schlemmer fed back on progress made on graduate retention and work experience opportunities. A number of actions have been proposed:

- Secondary, further and higher education promotion of benefits to employers and referral to [www.graduatesouthwest.com/devon](http://www.graduatesouthwest.com/devon) website. DEP members agreed to promote the benefits of student and graduate engagements to enterprises and to refer enterprises to gradsouthwest in order to engage with service providers.
- Development of integrated targets for Devon
- Support for continuing or adapting opportunities

It was stated that the ultimate intention is to have more graduates employed in Devon, though it was agreed that salary levels need to be taken into account. It was confirmed that a large amount of research has already been done around retention.

*Emerging groups* – all minutes of DEP and its task groups are available on the website [www.devoneconomy.co.uk](http://www.devoneconomy.co.uk). It was reported that as a result of the presentation by Serio at the last DEP meeting that there has been discussion around forming 3 additional groups to look at climate change adaptation; global trends and their affect on Devon; and current and local trends. These groups will inform longer term work and will be sourced from industry. It was agreed that these groups should be developed.

## **7.0 Consultation Opportunities**

*Sub National Review* – it was confirmed that the deadline for responses is 20<sup>th</sup> June, with a consultation event to be confirmed for 14<sup>th</sup> May. It was agreed that a small group should respond on behalf of the DEP, Jeremy Filmer-Bennett offered to feedback the Devon & Cornwall Business Council response to help inform this.

**Action: small response group to be formed**

*Business Support Simplification Programme* – Peninsula Enterprise have recognised a practical support vacuum that results from the terms of their contract. The RDA is to take forward regional business support as specified in the SNR and a Regional Transitional Board has been formed. It was stated that there is a consensus in Devon that the proposed model will not deliver and that progress needs to be made on this.

It was agreed that DEP should be prepared to comment on consultation opportunities which will impact on delivery, and the DES.

**Action: small response group to collate responses**

**8.0 Notes of meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2008 and matters arising**

All agreed minutes were an accurate record and no additional matters were arising.

**9.0 News Round Up**

- Delivery of Sherford progressing
- A new DMO Chief Executive has been appointed, Nicola Poultney from Visit Cardiff. It was agreed she should be invited to the group
- The Ivybridge Watermark project has been opened
- The One Stop Shop in Illfracombe has now opened
- Devon Renaissance is plotting its future and capacity to deliver across Devon, with work on behalf of the DEP welcomed **Action: to be discussed at next DEP meeting**
- DR is also looking at direct business support
- Business support in Devonport, Plymouth, has now been launched, providing ICT for SMEs and early stage business start ups to maximise their business potential. This has been funded by New Deal
- North Devon – Joint Delivery in Torridge and North Devon has been agreed through a partnership of NDC, Torridge DC, DCC and the RDA
- The model for North Devon will be used as a template for the LAA indicator for unlocking potential of disadvantaged communities
- Torbay – Mike Yeo was engaged to replace Richard Morgan on the DEP, however the meeting was informed that Mike Yeo will be leaving Torbay Council
- Plymouth Chamber of Commerce are currently looking at the relevance of geographic issues and is likely to become more outward facing
- Knowledge economy and innovation – there is an intention to form a group, including Robin Jackson, Tamar Science Park, South Devon College, industry, and Andy Labato (North Devon Plus) to look at and audit what is on the ground in preparation for an action plan and delivery. This will form a sub group of the DEP.

**10.0 Dates of future meetings**

19th June, 10am Larkbeare Exeter