

Devon Economic Partnership

Held on 19th June 2008, 10am
Larkbeare House, Exeter

Present:

Tim Jones	DCBC/Enterprise Plymouth	Nigel Harrison	East Devon DC
Andrew Lightfoot	DEP Executive Officer	Rachel Butler	Job Centre Plus
David Parlbay	Plymouth Chamber of Commerce	Joan Farleigh	Job Centre Plus
Jen Brogan	Devon Rural Network	Ian Morris	GOSW
Philip Wagstaff	Devon Rural Network	Carl Budden	SWRDA
Jamie Evans	DCC	Martin Wickham	North Devon+
Gordon Oliver	Torbay Hospitality Association	Ellen Vernon	North Devon Council
Liz Abell	Devon Renaissance	Vanessa Saunders	Torrige DC
Derek Phillips	Exeter Chamber of Commerce	Chris Jenkins	West Devon Councillor
Tony Skeel	LSC	Edward Chorlton	DCC
Jeremy Filmer-Bennet	DCBC	Peter Harding	CCD
Terry Murch	Midas Group	Leanne Crawford	DEP Administrator

Apologies

Peter Halse	East Devon Councillor	Karen Chapman	Job Cente Plus
Steve Schlemmer	University of Plymouth	ClIr Bill Hitchins	South Hams
Andrew Ashley	Enterprise Plymouth	Richard Ball	Exeter City Council
Peter Cloke	GOSW	Karime Hassan	East Devon DC
Karen O'Donnell	GOSW	Jane Rickhards	PLUSS

1.0 Welcome and Introductions

Introductions were given round the table.

2.0 Devon Economic Strategy implementation and monitoring arrangements

The partners were reminded that the Strategy is available on the Devon Economy Website www.devoneconomy.co.uk under 'Reports and Research'.

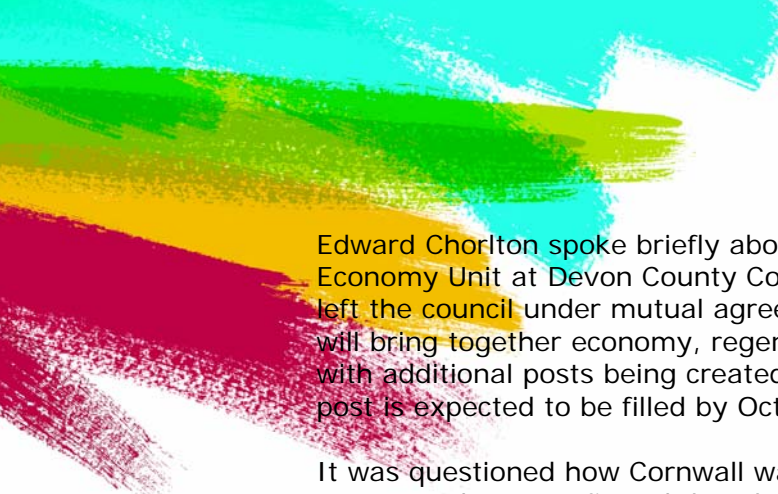
It was reported that a monitoring group has been set up, with champions for key themes and linked in with geographical areas. The representatives were given:

- Karime Hassan – Business Infrastructure and Communications
- Karen Chapman – Disadvantaged Communities
- Ian Hobbs – Economic Inclusion
- Tony Skeel – Skills
- Richard Adams – Business Support Mechanisms
- Paul Gompertz – Greener County
- Steve Pitcher – North Devon
- Richard Ball – Exeter and Heart of Devon
- David Incoll – South and West Devon
- Lynn Del Greco – SWRDA

The group meets virtually to keep an overview of the implementation of the delivery plan.

It was suggested that the work commissioned by SLIM/Step Ahead for indicators and outcomes for skills provides a good framework and this model should be adopted for all aspects of DES monitoring, including the relevant LAA outcomes.

It was stated that the 1st Quarterly monitoring report will be available at the next DEP meeting (October) and also on the website.



Edward Chorlton spoke briefly about the restructuring of the Environment and Economy Unit at Devon County Council. It was reported that Sue Smith has now left the council under mutual agreement. A new post had been advertised that will bring together economy, regeneration, strategic planning and transportation, with additional posts being created within teams. It was stated that the director post is expected to be filled by October 2008.

It was questioned how Cornwall was responding to the Sub National Review report, and was confirmed that they are setting up a separate development agency, although they have received additional EU funding to assist in this. It was reported that a Stakeholder meeting for the Cornwall development company has been organised for 4th July. ***Jeremy Filmer Bennet to circulate information.***

An overview of the work ongoing in the six strategic priorities was given:

Business Infrastructure and Communications – includes the Employment Space Strategy, ICT Strategy, and Growth Point particularly east of Exeter. The impact of the downturn in economy will also be examined.

Worklessness – a meeting was held on 18th June and has been prioritised as an LAA outcome. It was explained that this outcome targets total benefit claim rates, although there was a cut off of 65 due to data availability. This group also links with the 13 priority communities, and is looking at the number of people with learning difficulties in employment.

It was suggested that traditional boundaries should be challenged and access to new opportunities should be promoted.

Action: Future DEP meeting to have only 1 or 2 items on agenda to discuss these topics in depth


Disadvantaged Communities – it was reported that the most progress has been made in North Devon, focussing on Ilfracombe, parts of Barnstaple, and Bideford. It was suggested that the historical lack of progress made in Ilfracombe should be challenged. Regeneration work in rural Torridge, Holsworthy and South Molton is also under way.

Work is also ongoing around community assets and linking the economy to the Stronger Communities element of the LAA.

Discussion followed on the structural delivery mechanisms that need to be examined around affordable housing, as predictions for housing development in 2009 will impact affordable housing heavily. A countywide initiative is being looked at to support Community Land Trusts.

Action: Homes and Communities Agency representative to be invited to future DEP meeting

Skills – it was reported that the LSC has provided nearly £750K over the last 3 years to partnership work on skills. It was stated that a Delivery Plan will be developed to reflect the main LAA focus of Level 3 Qualifications. It was reported that Productive Skills for Devon will be discussing a paper on proposed Skills Boards, for which 3 have been suggested for Devon to cover geographical areas of South Devon, Exeter and Heart of Devon (chaired by Flybe), and North Devon. A number of employer engagement events are being held to take the skills



agenda forward. Jeremy Filmer-Bennett reported that the last event was held in Exeter with a revised “speed-dating” style format proving much more successful, although engagement with SMEs was still proving difficult. David Parlby reported that an Employment and Skills Board had already been set up in Plymouth and that linkages should be made with the South Devon group.

Action: North Devon event to be reheld

Liz Abell reported that Devon Renaissance is working with the LSC to fund a pilot scheme for Teignbridge and Torbay apprenticeships.

Business Growth – It was reported that there have been publications for future business support around 3 themes, and the RDA is taking forward work on the Regional Transitional Plan. A portfolio of around 18 business growth products will be available towards the end 2008. It was reported that a workshop is being organised around innovation and themes already being pursued.

Greening - Applications to Sea Change have been made around the county. The Devon Destination Management Organisation has appointed a new Chief Executive.

Innovation – a group is in place chaired by Andy Labato (North Devon+). Minutes of meetings can be made available to anyone wishing to see them.

3.0 Devon Employment Space Strategy: progress report

Carl Budden reported that a draft final report has been received from the consultants, but that it needs a great deal of refinement to be a usable document, with calculations of employment land requiring verification. A group is in place to try and influence the revision of the document, led by Keri Denton at DCC. It was proposed that once the document has been refined, it will be passed to the Infrastructure task and finish group for a wider consultation with stakeholders, anticipated to be the week commencing 17th July. A final report will then be made available.

Action: a special session of the DEP to be organised for September to sign off the report

It was stated and agreed that the strategy needs to be clear in focus and priorities, and confirmed that discussions had taken place with the consultants on this. It was stated that Regional Spatial Strategy targets will also have a direct impact on employment space.

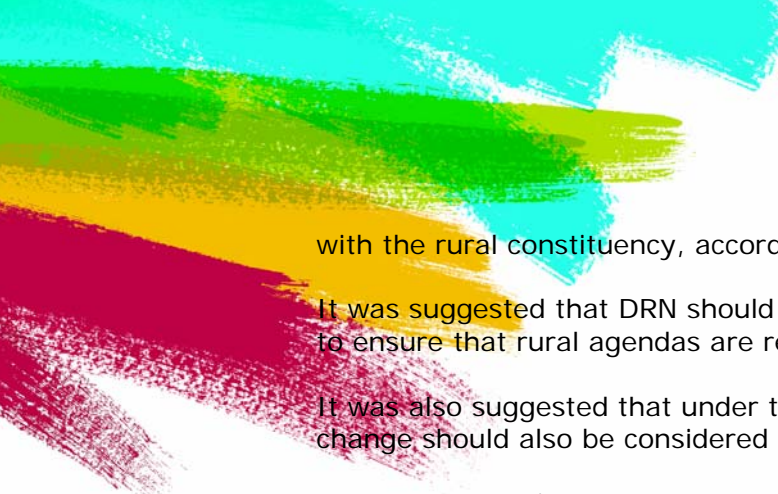
The age of the data used in the report was also questioned, as accurate assessments of growth and employment space potentials are critical.

Terry Murch reported the situation in Cornwall and reiterated the importance of linking these reports and strategies to the planning system to ensure land marked out is suitable for intended use, and to ensure that plans are made for top of market and not the current situation.

4.0 Rural Issues

4.1 Devon Rural Network

Philip Wagstaff gave a brief presentation on the background, purpose and future of the rural network, and the communication and rural proofing, and policy development opportunities it can provide to the DEP. It was stated that the future of DRN was dependant on the development of links and communication



with the rural constituency, according to the structure agreed by partners.

It was suggested that DRN should be making stronger links with planning policy to ensure that rural agendas are recognised.

It was also suggested that under the DRN priorities, the benefits of climate change should also be considered and linked in with resource efficiency.

4.2 Devon Renaissance

Liz Abell gave a brief presentation on the key purpose of Devon Renaissance, i.e. funding delivery (*see presentation handout*) and economic development, with an overview of the experience of the team given.

It was reported that the Business Survey will be repeated this year, and that Devon Renaissance has now also been accredited for assessor status for BREEAM for industrial and office buildings.

It was questioned whether the statistical service offered by Devon Renaissance duplicated Jamie Evans' role at Devon County Council. It was also questioned how small projects were encourage to apply for funding, and confirmed that two funds were available – the Capacity Building Fund and Community Boost Fund. It was confirmed that a number of small projects had already received funding, although others had been asked to form partnerships to ensure critical mass for delivery.

The sustainability of Devon Renaissance was questioned and confirmed that RDA funding ends in March 2009, with linkages with RDPE being looked at after this time. The continuation of Devon Renaissance will depend on partners. It was stated the leverage rate of DR projects has been highly successful and includes monies from the private sector.

4.3/4.4 Devon Local Action Group Applications/RDPE Project Development

Two papers were previously circulated outlining the LAG and RDPE. It was confirmed that the RDA was managing the fund and 4 applications have been submitted in Devon in response to invitation.

It was requested that paragraph 3.3 of the RDPE paper should be amended to read "Torridge and North Devon Leader" not "North Devon Leader".

The meeting agreed to endorse the applications made.

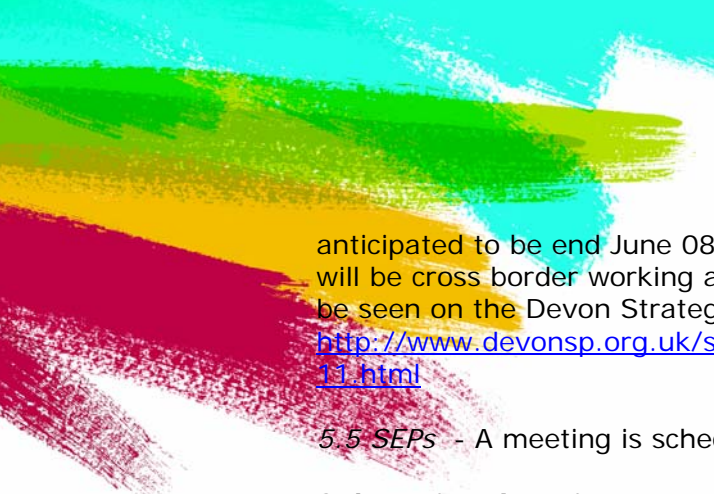
Action: Any queries on either the LAG submissions or RDPE should be made via Jen Brogan jen.brogan@devon.gov.uk

5.0 Group Reports

5.1/5.2 - minutes for both the Executive and PS4D are available on the website www.devoneconomy.co.uk

5.3 *Team Devon* – the group had a presence at the Devon County Show. It has been agreed that there will be a wider partnership and smaller executive group, and these will cover 5 themes – business, tourism, sport, culture and community. There will be four groups looking a communication, workforce, education and skills, and community support, with an additional Devon Events group. An issue with resources was reported.

5.4 *LAA* – the LAA has been submitted to Government and is awaiting sign off,



anticipated to be end June 08 if there are no queries raised. Next on the agenda will be cross border working and effectiveness of spend. The LAA document can be seen on the Devon Strategic Partnership website at <http://www.devonsp.org.uk/sustainablecommunitystrategy/outcomes/draftlaa08-11.html>

5.5 SEPs - A meeting is scheduled for the week commencing 23rd June.

6.0 Sub National Review

The DCC response was previously circulated. It was agreed that the DEP could not fully endorse this response but should make a separate submission specifically on the area based on partnerships.

Action: Andrew Lightfoot to draft and submit

7.0 Notes of meeting held 17th April 2008

All agreed

8.0 News Round Up

- Plymouth CDC is now up and running with Paul Carroll as CEO <http://www.plymouthcdc.org.uk/>
- The Post Office closure consultation ends 30th June. DRN and DCC will be responding to contest 8 of the closures
- CAPE Sea Change fund – a number of applications have been submitted, including Teignmouth Museum, Jurassic Coast Visitor Centre and feasibility studies for Westward Ho! and Torridge. Plymouth has submitted a bid and Torbay falls into the large grant category
- It was questioned whether a review of the Cooperative programme could be given at the next meeting
- A Taste of the West food and drink festival was held in Torbay, bringing together food producers and tourism businesses, with a second scheduled for 2nd October
- World Heritage Coast Interpretation Centre – the Exmouth and Seaton Boards are now up and running
- Job Centre Plus has increased the resource on partnership working, with 4 partnership managers now in place
- SWRDA – the RDA Corporate Plan has been approved; and a restructure proposal has been released for formal internal consultation. There is also a new Head of Business Development starting in September 2008
- North Devon is currently working on a feasibility study around Ilfracombe harbour
- Torridge has received funding from the RDA and other partners for regeneration work in Bideford
- It is expected that there will be an announcement on Local Government arrangements at the during the second week July
- A new fund has been launched – Springboard, with loans or grants up to £250K available for growth industries

9.0 Dates of Future meetings

6th October, 10 am Conference Room, Pynes Hill Court, Exeter

9th December, 2 pm, Conference Room, Pynes Hills Court, Exeter