

## Summary of DEP Infrastructure Task Group Meeting Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2pm, County Hall, Exeter

### Present:

Karime Hassan (Chair)	East Devon District Council
Andrew Lightfoot	DEP Executive Officer
Tom Dixon	DCC
Keri Denton	DCC
Philip Oldfield	Exeter City Council
Dave Black	DCC
Ellen Vernon	North Devon Council
Tim Beavon	West Devon Borough Council
Kevin Atkinson	Torbay Council
James Wilson	SWRDA
Nigel Harrison	East Devon District Council
Lucy Gough	DEP Executive Officer

### Apologies:

John Baker	DCC
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Purpose of the meeting was to discuss work being done under Priority A of the Devon Economic Strategy – Infrastructure. There was a Task and Finish Group for the Employment Space Strategy (ESS), but the different components of infrastructure have never been brought together in one meeting before. Potential linkages can be looked at, and a general awareness of complementary work will hopefully be achieved.

Outcomes can then be discussed at the next DEP meeting on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October.

### Employment Space Strategy

- After an intense period of work, we now need to look at delivery and implementation – how do we take things forward?
- Recommendations within the ESS are largely about lobbying – this group and the wider DEP can provide support to partners where appropriate.
- Looking to establish a database of sites – Tom currently trying to find out how local authorities are currently recording this information. The list/database will not be made public as there are some potentially controversial sites. In light of changes in economic situation since ESS was written, each District to review their sites and respond to Tom.  
**Action: Tom to do a cut of the list for each District – all Districts to amend their list as appropriate and return to Tom.**  
**Action: James to cross check list of sites against RDA Business Plan.**
- Also now need more detailed information about each of the sites – what progress is being/has been made? Any timescales involved? What work/support is required? This can then form the basis of a delivery plan. Tom has started work on a template already.  
**Action: Tom to circulate template and all Districts to complete with as much detail as possible and return to Tom.**
- Discussion around common methodology for doing land reviews. Any local authority can call on the RDA planning consultants panel to ask them to come up with best practice.  
**Action: James to send details of RDA panel to Tom.**  
**Action: Tom and Dave to speak to DCC planners.**
- A need to capture issues around managed workspace – perhaps this could come under key findings?

## **ICT Strategy**

- Draft available on DEP website – action plan is currently being developed.

Main areas of activity are as follows:

### **Connectivity and reliability:**

- Involves the mapping of not spots and businesses. Currently a survey being done by Devon Renaissance. Interim report available which could be shared within this group.
- DCC have procured a WAN network through Siemens to be available in all DCC Market Town buildings such as offices, schools and libraries by March 2010. Will be exploring how this can be extended to businesses.

### **Capability:**

- Is about the adoption of ICT and skill development – currently running SME ICT training sessions, website health checks for tourism and food and drink sectors and software support.

### **Leadership:**

- Work around ICT hubs, in more of a lobbying and influencing role.
- Research is ongoing and trying a pilot exercise in Cullompton by funding an additional area of flexible space that can be used by businesses and public sector workers.
- Looking to share best practice, issues etc through Invest Devon website.

### **Content:**

- Trying to ensure that ICT is being used as well as possible.
- Research into community websites – feeding into Community Council of Devon.
- Pilot digital mentors project running in the Blackdown Hills.

ICT developments need to be married up with other infrastructure developments. A paragraph on the ICT Strategy could be included in ESS?

## **Transport**

- East of Exeter – progress on design of Clyst Honiton bypass and Junction 29 development is on course – the next bid is due to go to Government by Christmas.
- Kingskerswell Bypass – appeal went well. There were a few issues around common land – due to reconvene briefly in October and then go back to DfT in time to get a decision before the general election.
- East of Plymouth – not as advanced – there are still technical assessment issues. This should not hold up Langage developments as they have planning permission for 40,000 sq.ft which they could go ahead on, but they are now looking at moving this.
- Additional passing loop at Axminster to allow hourly train service from London Waterloo.
- Exeter Gateway Study - £1/2 million research project into a number of areas – Exeter gateway area, far SW, carbon, freight and a high level review of RSS – all from a transport perspective. Once completed this will be useful so we can compare ourselves with other areas of the country and use it to lobby for future developments.
- Also a lot of local accessibility work ongoing.

**Next meeting to be held mid/end of November.**