



Devon Economic Partnership Infrastructure Group
Friday 23 April 2010, 10am
County Hall, Exeter

Minutes

Present:

Name:	Organisation:
Karime Hassan (Chair)	East Devon District Council
Allie Clark	Teignbridge District Council
Andrew Lightfoot	Devon Economic Partnership / Devon County Council
Daniel Bailyes	Devon Economic Partnership
Keri Denton	Devon County Council
Lee Bray	South Hams District Council
Maureen Gori-de-Murden	Exeter City Council
Russell Endean	Work Experience Placement (DEP)
Sean Kearney	Torridge District Council

Apologies:

Name:	Organisation:
Ellen Vernon	North Devon Council

1. Welcome and Introductions

Russell introduced himself to the group. He is a second year business and economics student at Exeter University, who has taken the opportunity to arrange a work experience placement with the Devon Economic Partnership and County Council during the Easter break. Karime welcomed him to the group.

Andrew also informed the group that Daniel's six month placement working for the partnership is shortly coming to an end, with his replacement, Matthew Jones, due to begin his spell next week. Matthew will also be involved in some of the work being conducted by colleagues in the market towns, taking advantage of his MA in planning.

2. Employment Space Strategy, Priority Sites

Karime began the meeting by assessing the current position. The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) have allocated a comparatively small amount (£12m) for the Exeter and Heart of Devon area. This raises an issue concerning our work to date: 1) is it worth our effort compiling a list of priority sites that will feed into the HCA investment framework, considering the low sums available; or 2) do we continue with the work for its own value.

Karime argued that the work being done to compile a list of priority sites, with the feasibility work alongside, is of value in itself. This work will mean that Devon is able to compete with other areas for future funding. Without this work, Devon will fall behind.

Therefore, we need to understand that although the pot is small now, there is a real need to push ahead to keep Devon competitive. Planning is the main issue at the moment, not capital.

The aim thus far has been to capture all the sites that need to be delivered. All the sites are to be recorded on the A4 template, including those sites being delivered by the market. The A3

template is more detailed and is designed to record those sites considered priorities for public sector intervention.

The task now, having identified those sites, is to prioritise them. These priorities need to be decided upon in an appropriate forum in order to fit into local strategic strategies. For instance, the Exeter and East Devon templates will be assessed by the Exeter and Heart of Devon (EHOD) Economic Partnership next week, from where priorities can be gleaned.

The issue to consider, however, is how these priorities are to be made. Are they 1) to be made by strategic economic concerns, or 2) by deliverability. For this year, Karime suggested a focus on deliverability, but to continue working on those projects due to take longer so that a solid proposal can be written for the future.

As well as identifying priorities, we also need to arrange feasibility studies and the production of a detailed appraisal to justify our choices and to strengthen any funding bids.

Action Points arising from this discussion:

- 1. Those who have yet to complete the priority sites templates to do so and return to Daniel / Matthew. So far we are waiting for Torrington, Teignbridge, Plymouth and Torbay. Also, there is a need to determine which sites really are priorities;**
- 2. Lee to have a conversation with Mary Ridgway to make sure that this work is fed into the HCA Single Conversation properly;**
- 3. Andrew will make initial enquiries with colleagues at County Hall to determine whether there is any scope for DCC to pull the various strands of this work together.**

3. ICT (Keri Denton)

Karime invited Keri to share the latest developments as regards ICT:

Keri reported that, to date, the team have pinpointed areas of no or poor or intermittent connectivity in Devon. Not surprisingly this has focused on rural areas, though pockets remain in Exeter and Plymouth. There have been various conversations with BT to understand their strategy. Moreover, the team have been working on understanding the work being done by the private sector, and to evaluate its effect and impact on Devon.

Having completed the 'not-spot' exercise, a map has been produced overlaying this data with the location of businesses and business type. This will help to understand where the business' are that need the connectivity, and that currently don't have sufficient access.

Having done this work, the priority will be to develop an approach / strategy to deal with the problems identified.

With regards to new developments, frustration was aired at the difficulties experienced in getting fibre optic connectivity to the door, particularly at developments such as Sky Park.

Action points arising from this discussion:

- 1. ICT and the Carbon agenda to feature in future meetings, along with the employment space strategy;**
- 2. Need to reflect on who best to invite to the next meeting, on the above agendas, to facilitate a productive meeting.**

4. Managed Workspace (Keri Denton)

DCC have commissioned a study on supply and demand on managed workspace, along with a series of good case studies and a delivery plan. Stage 1 identified the priority towns with a mixture of qualitative and quantitative data.

The team are currently in the process of conducting business surveys to feed into the analysis and recommendations. However, the response to the business survey has been poor. Keri would be grateful for any help that the group could provide with their contacts. The links to the survey are found below:

www.surveymonkey.com/s/devonworkspace

or as a home based business...

www.surveymonkey.com/s/devonhomebusiness

To date, only very broad conclusions have been reached. Andrew also shared the work being carried out by South Devon College, with their new centre at Heathfields, which has a very impressive set-up.

Action point from this discussion:

1. Promote the above survey with contacts!

Agree date for next meeting

To be confirmed by email.