

‘BUSINESS, ENTERPRISE AND CULTURE’ BOARD MEETING

Date: Tuesday 13th May 2010
Time: 2.00 p.m.
Venue: Cheshire West and Chester HQ, Chester .

Attending:

Representing:

Sara Mogel (Chair)	West Cheshire College
Charlie Seward (Vice Chair)	Cheshire West and Chester Council
David Horstead	Prosperity Commission & CWEA
Emma Clark	Visit Chester and Cheshire
Andrew Donaldson	BIG Storage
Colin Billingsley	Job Centre Plus
Shaun Daley	Total Place
Chris Cook	Cheshire West and Chester Council

Apologies: Annette Moor (Chester Cathedral), Lisa Conway (West Cheshire Employability Partnership). Rita Waters (Chester Renaissance). Representation from West Cheshire and North Wales Chamber of Commerce

Visitors : Mark Abram (Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service), Virginia Peet

Support: Fil Prevc, Gill Rogerson, Andrea Mageean, Iain Paton, Martin Peace (Cheshire West and Chester Council).

Item No.1	<p>Welcome, introductions and apologies</p> <p>No apologies had been received from the Chambers of Commerce. It was unclear if Mike Jones had now left the Chambers and if there was to be a replacement.</p>
Action - Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chambers of Commerce to be approached to seek clarification regarding representation on the Board.
Item No.2	<p>Minutes of last meeting and matters arising:</p> <p>Minutes and Action notes of the meeting held on the 18th March 2010 were agreed.</p> <p>Iain Paton presented a table to the Board, setting out the range of Employment and skills provision in the North West. Members commented on the comprehensiveness and coverage of the information but wanted to have the information distilled to highlight the issues relevant to the Cheshire West area. It was suggested a second draft version could be worked up with the assistance of a handful of Board members, a refined version could then be presented to the next meeting of the Board in July.</p>

Action - Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iain Paton to refine the table, following discussions with Charlie Seward and Andrew Donaldson. Redraft to be presented to the next meeting of the Board scheduled for July.
Item No.3	<p>Linkages to the Fire & Rescue Service.</p> <p>Mark Abram from the Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service provided an overview of how his Service was already working in partnership and in particular the contacts made with Businesses primarily via inspections of premises. The opportunity was highlighted of linking with other organisations that also need to enter premises, to share intelligence and reduce duplication. The Board were made aware of a Business Liaison Team and the work of volunteers a small number of which work on business liaison matters.</p> <p>Members recognised the benefits that the Fire and Rescue service could bring to the Board.</p>
Action - Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service through Mark Abram to be invited to join the Business and Enterprise Board.
Item No.4	<p>Enterprise and Business</p> <p>Following an earlier discussion between the Chair and Vice-Chair it was suggested to present a key issue for discussion at each meeting of the Board that would result in a re-focusing on actions to help drive the work of the partnership in meeting its key priorities. Enterprise and Business was to be the first area to be addressed.</p> <p>Following a brief presentation of the underlying economic issues facing business and enterprise, members raised the following key points:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The LSP workshop held in April highlighted a number of partner concerns including the need to look also at rural areas, the role of technology, communication and in particular third generation Broad-band. The culture of enterprise linked with the growth of SME's. - The part that social enterprise has to play. <p>Geography might help to determine the focus for action. Underperforming areas are well known, but the underlying culture of an area also needs to be fully understood in order to direct the appropriate interventions; for example Winsford is not reliant on large employers, and as such has a greater self-reliant and entrepreneurial culture than perhaps Ellesmere Port.</p> <p>Further refinement and definition can also be made to help our understanding of the needs of an area; for example in relation to Ellesmere Port key target groups can be identified, such as young</p>

	<p>mothers with common aspirations to set up life-style businesses, and to be self-employed – possible blockages include access to the right information and support and strong role models.</p> <p>A number of measures were identified by the Board as key ingredients towards helping local areas kick-start enterprise and business growth, these include, increasing awareness, growing ambition, increasing trust using a neutral medium (not a public agency); having strong role models.</p> <p>Finance and resources also identified as a key ingredient. This needs to be routed through the creation of local links rather than using the usual high-street route. Perhaps a role for the finance and banking sectors to make an in-kind contribution to the local area.</p> <p>The need to target and reduce risk to individuals – to reduce the risk of people falling into a benefits trap if they decide to try and run a business venture.</p> <p>In terms of possible doorways to engage with people - libraries, leisure centres, drama and dance, clubs such as mother and toddlers.</p> <p>Suggestion made to target existing SME's, to encourage each to employ an additional person.</p> <p>Some reshaping of European funding, ERDF is helping to redirect resources to assist small firms in deprived areas with recruitment.</p> <p>The need was identified to pull together an Offer Package to target existing businesses and start-ups & individuals.</p>
Action – Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sub-group to be established to include Andrew Donaldson, Sara Mogel, Anne Davies, Martin Peace and Colin Billingsley. Martin to arrange a meeting date. <p>The group will aim to identify a targeted package of initiatives that could be delivered at a small geographical area in Ellesmere Port.</p>
Item No.5	<p>Housekeeping Issue</p> <p>Recession Action Plan – Gill Rogerson provided a brief update on the work of the Recession Committee. The Board agreed that Gill report key issues to the Board in future meetings.</p> <p>Members of the Board welcomed the update and in particular the number of businesses that had benefited from rate relief (2,500).</p> <p>Discussion followed on the staging of a major Business Show event for the Cheshire Sub-region, with a planned lead-in time of between 12 – 18 months. Members wanted to explore the possibility of staging an earlier event for businesses in cheshire West.</p>

	<p>Virginia Peet presented the draft Performance and Risk assessment template for the Business Enterprise and Culture thematic group. The Board were asked to consider whether the objectives, risks were right and to provide scores for the risks both in terms of current and target. It was suggested that the officer technical group provide the detailed information when they meet.</p>
Action – Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board members to feed back to Fil Prevc intelligence of any business to business events planned in the near future. • Technical officer group to consider the actions requested by Virginia Peet when they next meet – Results to be presented to the Board at the next meeting. Culture objective also to be added to the register (Chris Cook to provide appropriate wording).
Item No.6	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Helen Woolacott (Skills Funding Agency) to be invited to join the Board.</p> <p>Geoff John-Terry (Executive Chairman of the Weaver Valley Board) to be invited to join the Board.</p> <p>Andrew Donaldson updated members on the successful formation of a non-for-profit co-operative trust to manage the Chester Football Club. The principle building blocks are to be based on the community and the support of local agencies and businesses. A general request for assistance was made by Andrew to partners, potential assistance and linkages suggested by Job Centre Plus, West Cheshire College and Cheshire West and Chester Council. Andrew also made a request for any assistance partners could offer towards the funding of a Community Coach.</p> <p>Substantial items for future meetings of the Board were tabled – it was agreed to focus on Business to Business Supply Chain for the next meeting scheduled in July and Culture and Heritage at the following meeting scheduled for September. Worklessness was also flagged as an item for a future meeting.</p>
Action – Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gill Rogerson to contact Helen Woolacott on behalf of the Board to invite her to join as a member. • Fil Prevc to contact Geoff John-Terry on behalf of the Board to invite him to join as a member.

Details of next meeting: 15th July – **Room 3.3** CW&C HQ