

**Taking forward the Sustainable Community Strategy Commitments:  
FEEDBACK FROM WORKSHOPS 27 APRIL 2010**

**11. Supporting the development of a sustainable and resilient economy, with thriving businesses.**

**i. What particular aspects of this commitment should we be focusing on initially?**

- Greater focus on Rural Areas – although farming is very visible it contributes little to the overall GVA (in the region of 3%), however rural areas also support a great number of small businesses and provide a strong entrepreneurial base. We need to better understand the blockages, such as planning and build on the commitment made by CW&C that placed rural as one of the four key regeneration projects.
- Access to employment – providing the right conditions to enable businesses to grow via having access to business premises and workspace. Partners that have a property portfolio might be able to assist.
- Getting people into jobs – good mechanisms are already in place with partners such as LSC having in place clear routes for people to access business advice. Mechanisms are also in place to address redundancies. There needs to be a continuation of this service provision, the partnership can play a part in ensuring all agencies that can assist are involved.
- We will stimulate new business, innovation and entrepreneurship by looking at measures to support small business growth
- We will look at the support requirements of existing businesses enabling them to grow and increase their productivity
- We will support the provision of new communication technology
- We will encourage businesses to invest in energy efficiency, renewable energy and sustainable resource practices
- Improve access to communication and advice for new business
- Engagement with the private sector: two way communication
- Future Jobs Fund: is there a better way of getting the private sector more involved.

**ii. Are there any particular communities/areas/issues in need of improvement activity that we should focus on?**

- Rural areas – access to services and to technology particularly next generation Broadband.

- SME's – Greater flexibility to enable businesses to expand if they need to by improving access to a range of workspace (supply and flexible tenancy) and overcome some potential blockages for example in relation to planning.
- Opportunity to strengthen relationship with the local Chambers.
  - Attract businesses outside this area – as future business opportunities.
  - Rural – transport factors could be a barrier for the rural communities
  - Existing businesses requiring help – signposting partners/funding/help
  - Planning can impact on business development
  - Awareness raising in particular communities

**iii. Are there any areas of good practice that we can build on?**

- Procurement Portal – Potential to share some of the work of CW&C in establishing new procurement procedures. Target Payment within 10 days.
- Management of Supply Chain - Dialogue with local businesses.
- Buy Local campaign
- Work of property awarding contracts for the HQ office building to local companies where possible.
- Using a pub as a hub in rural areas
- Graduates and undergraduates – bring in business growth and pulling strands together i.e. risks, innovation

**iv. Any opportunities for innovative activity?**

- Nottinghamshire – community took over an old school – ICT video conferencing etc saving the cost on businesses.
- Bishop Heber High School – white boards etc
- Community Business Centres – hiring office space – receptions/ICT skill experts(network of such places ) – investment by community
- Virtual businesses – potential savings and strength in numbers