

Swindon Enterprise Group

Meeting

Tuesday 10th April 2007
10.00 – 12.00

4th Floor, David Murray John Building, Canal Walk

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Notes and Review of last meeting
3. Summary of Issues
4. Activity Map and Summary of Priorities
5. Action Plan for 2007/08
6. Chamber of Commerce Update Christina Howell
7. Swindon Strategic Economic Partnership Update David Evans
8. Date of Next Meeting

Agenda Item 2

Swindon Enterprise Group

Wednesday 28th February 2007

14.00-16.00

Basepoint Business Centre, Rivermead, West Swindon

MINUTES

1. Welcome

Chaired by Daphne Milner (DM) – GWE/Business Link

Attendees:

David Evans (DE) – Economic Development Directorate, SBC
Matt Spencer (MS) – Economic Development Directorate, SBC
Andrea Fitzgerald (AF) – Swindon College
Evelyn Little (EL) – Swindon College
Beverley Reynolds (BR) – Basepoint Manager
Jim Pettipher (JP) – Co-Operative Futures
Christina Howell (CH) – Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce
John Bennett (JB) – Young Enterprise South West
Peter Beech-Allen (PBA) – GWE
Simone Wilding (SWI) – SWERDA
Andy Reeve (AR) – Business Link
Mark Beard (MB) – Beard Construction
Graham Taylor (GT) – New College
Sue Watkins (SWA) – Learning & Skills Council

Apologies received from:

Tim Mason & Geoff Tate – SBC Youth Service
Mike Foyle – BMW Swindon Pressings Ltd
Phil Merrick – Swindon Innovation Centre
Marc Braddock – University of Bath in Swindon

2. Notes of Last Meeting

The minutes from the meeting on 23rd January 2007 were accepted.

3. Submission of a Swindon Bid to the UK Enterprising Town Competition

DE informed the group that the Enterprising Britain 2007 competition was launched on 29 January 2007. This competition will look for the town, place, city or area that will be named champion of UK enterprise.

Agenda Item 2

This may be anything from a town that has introduced specific ways of reducing unemployment in the area, to an individual project which has gone back to basics and implemented an innovative enterprise strategy to overcome a challenge.

Enterprising Britain is run in two phases - a regional stage and a national competition. During the regional stage 12 regional winners will be selected from across the UK before going forward to the national final when the overall Enterprising Britain 2007 winner will be selected.

DE asked for a couple of volunteers to help prepare the bid. JP, CH and GT put their names forward.

Action: DE & MS to produce 1st draft of application form and present to the group.

4. Business Support Simplification Programme

SWI presented the RDA's Business Support Simplification Programme. The programme will review its current business support services and will provide clarity on provision of that support. The programme will also provide a synergy with Business Link, who will now act as the primary access channel.

Please see the attached presentation.

MB commented that Business Link service could be patchy and that the standard and consistency of the support that they provide could be improved. DM replied that Business Link is undertaking a programme to standardise the quality of their services. CH added that when the Enterprise Group produces the Enterprise Strategy, all support providers need to be included.

5. Swindon Skills & Employment Board

SWA gave an update on the Skills and Employment Board. She stated that the Swindon Strategic Economic Partnership (SSEP) has approved the project. Various issues need to be looked at including, unemployment, migrant workers and training. Membership may include employers, training providers, Learning and Skills Council, and the Chamber of Commerce. Perhaps the group should be formed as a sub-group of the Enterprise Partnership?

DE added that the Skills and Employment group needs to be led by employers' issues but should also include barriers to employment. CH added that the Chamber of Commerce are happy to help out with marketing the Skills and Employment group and that the Chamber of Commerce are planning a skills day in association with Swindon college. JB stated that every person around the table needs to look at their own "engaged" employers lists and SW added that a couple of workshops with local employers will be needed.

DM suggested that the skills and employment agenda could be seen as a sub-section of the Enterprise Partnership and be a regular item on the Enterprise Partnership agenda. MB added that this might be in conflict with the opinions of the

Agenda Item 2

Swindon Strategic Economic Partnership who see skills and employment issues dealt with by a separate group.

Action: DE & SWA will look at the Economic Development Vision and see where the Skills and Employment Group should sit.

6. AOB

Action: SWA will provide MS & DE with a list of PHD programmes in the area, and they will circulate this information with the minutes.

Action: At the next meeting, MS/DE will provide information of start-ups rates in Swindon compared to other areas of the UK

7. Schedule of future meetings

The next meeting will be held at **(TBC)** at 10.00am on Tuesday 10th April.

Background to Agenda Items 3 & 4

Enterprise Group

Progress Report

10th April 2007

At the last meeting, we carried out the following:

1. We mapped our activities against a broad framework
2. We each presented our top 5 priorities
3. Daphne Milner summarised the priorities into the following:
 - a. Need to create an Enterprise Culture in Swindon via initiatives targeted at particular groups and locations.
 - b. Need for provision of skills required by businesses.
 - c. Simplifying the range of business support on offer.
 - d. Creating business networks, sectors, and improving the interface between support agencies.
 - e. The availability of finance and support for start-ups.
 - f. Encouraging sustainable and growing businesses.
 - g. Supporting innovative businesses.
 - h. Improving Swindon's image and reputation.
 - i. Advice and Support for Social Enterprises and community based enterprise.
 - j. Economic and Labour Market Research
4. Activities were cross-matched against the priorities

Conclusions:

The purpose of our next meeting is to:

- i. Confirm the priorities are accurate and fully inclusive
- ii. Identify where there is duplication and/or gaps in the services we are providing to address the priorities
- iii. Agree an action plan that the Enterprise Group can adopt

Agenda Item 3

Enterprise Group

Summary of Issues

28th February 2007

Graham Taylor – New College

- Is there an enterprise culture in Swindon?
- Need to address infrastructure problems and road congestion
- Need to raise cultural levels
- Education needs to improve

Beverley Reynolds - Basepoint

- Recruitment – shortage of trained staff
- Relocation Packages
- Road Congestion
- High production costs
- Rules, Regulation and Restrictions

John Bennett – Young Enterprise South West

- Misperceptions among young people about starting up a business, “only business people can start a business”

Simone Wilding – SWERDA

- Website Referral culture amongst Business Support Agencies
- Perception that capital grants aren't available – communications issue
- Swindon's image
- Skills issues: aspirations; ability to attract inward investment, higher education provision
- How can we encourage innovation?

Sue Watkins – Learning & Skills Council

- There has to be a University presence in Swindon
- Do we have an enterprise culture?
- Need to raise awareness amongst businesses of available funding
- Need a more cohesive way of working to clarify the support offer to businesses
- Need for business innovation centres or incubator starter units.

Jim Pettipher – Co-Operative Futures

- Swindon's enterprise culture is poor
- There is a lack of Social Enterprise funding and advice
- The success of Swindon's established enterprises needs to be advertised more.
- There is a lack of support for enterprising minorities
- No start up grants in Swindon

Agenda Item 3

Evelyn Little – Swindon College

- Need for regeneration of Town Centre
- Students don't know where to go for advice
- Lack of self-confidence in terms of skills
- Skill shortages

Christina Howell – Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce

- Issues about confidence needed to start up a business
- Where does one get support?
- The scope of support available need to be addressed
- Public and private sector support needs to be co-ordinated
- Businesses need to know how to promote and sell their products and whether their ideas are feasible
- The construction industry can't recruit in Swindon due to inadequate skills levels
- Need for adequate homes
- There is currently a one-size fits all approach to support – need to tailor it to certain groups.

Mark Beard – Beard Construction

- There is an issues around the negative image of Swindon
- The cultural offer needs to improve
- There is a need to fulfil promises – i.e. University
- Local procurement needs to be encouraged
- There is a need to develop Decision makers that are committed to Swindon
- Need for support for businesses that allows them to grow
- Need for an environment where professional organisations feel at home

Andy Reeve – Business Link

- There is a need to focus on people. Need to build confidence, increase desire, raise ambition and provide knowledge of how to start a business
- Need to engage those aged 16+
- Need for female engagement
- Need to engage disadvantaged groups
- Need to celebrate successes!

Peter Beech-Allen – GWE

- There is a need to focus
- Need to develop specific skills. This needs to be correlated to supply
- There can't be enterprise for enterprise sake – need for sustainable growth
- Need for incubation space specific to sector requirements
- Need for support specific to sector
- Need for support to businesses in the early stages

David Evans – Economic Development Directorate, SBC

- There needs to be support for start ups i.e. property advice
- Need for a better interface between businesses and agencies (Business Link, SBC, training providers)
- Need for long term sustainability of Sectors i.e. automotive sector
- Issue around Swindon's poor image
- Need for regeneration of town centre but also in other communities (Neighbourhood Renewal Areas)

Agenda Item 4

Swindon Enterprise Group

Mapping of Current Partner Activities

March 2007

Priority 1

Need to create an Enterprise Culture in Swindon via initiatives targeted at particular groups and locations.

Partner	Activity	Sub-Group
Young Enterprise	Enterprise training & awareness for school students <ul style="list-style-type: none">St Joseph's School (Business & Enterprise School)	Youth
Young Enterprise	Swindon Community Enterprise Development Project, 2006-2009	
GWE	Innovation training and Development programme (rural Swindon only)	Rural
GWE	Business mentoring (rural Swindon only)	
South West RDA	Smart Business programme (rural Swindon only)	
Business Link	Women into Rural Business (Rural Swindon only)	Women
UBiS	Women into Enterprise programme as part of Small Business Hub.	
South West RDA	Women's Fund	
New College	Trade Union Learning reps, company based Direct Learning activities	Training
Young Enterprise	Swindon Community Enterprise Development Project, 2006-2009	Economic Inclusion
South West RDA/ Swindon BC	Developing economic inclusion project	
South West RDA/local learning providers	Provision of NVQ Level II in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas.	

Agenda Item 4

Swindon Enterprise Group

Mapping of Current Partner Activities

March 2007

Priority 2

Need for provision of skills required by businesses.

Partner	Activity
New College	Courses for start up businesses
New College	Courses on ICT for business, Creative & Media, Sport & Leisure, and Science
New College	ICT COVE
Thames Valley Chamber	Training and seminars for business members
Business Link	Training for Start ups
LSC	Funding provision of business skills
Swindon College	Updating skills and knowledge of the local workforce
South West RDA/local learning providers	Provision of NVQ Level II in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas.
Cooperative Futures	Training for Social Enterprises

Agenda Item 4

Swindon Enterprise Group

Mapping of Current Partner Activities

March 2007

Priority 3

Simplifying the range of business support on offer.

Partner	Activity
Business Link	Delivery of brokerage and diagnostic services to businesses.
South West RDA/ Government Office SW	Coordination of Business Support Simplification Programme in South West

Agenda Item 4

Swindon Enterprise Group

Mapping of Current Partner Activities

March 2007

Priority 4

Creating business networks, sectors, and improving the interface between support agencies.

Partner	Activity	Sub-Group
Swindon BC / South West RDA & others	Secretariat of Swindon Strategic Economic Partnership and corresponding sub groups, incl. Swindon Enterprise Group	General Business Networks
Swindon BC	Database of senior contacts in major businesses, and arranging / supporting civic events for businesses.	
Thames Valley Chamber	Delivery of a range of services and events to support members	
Basepoint Business Centre and others	Provision of networking facilities and meeting rooms for hire	
Federation of Small Businesses	Delivery of a range of services and events to support members	
Business networking organisations	Business breakfasts and member lunches	
GWE	Wired West	Sectoral Networks & Support
GWE	ICT network	
Swindon BC	Analysis of the main sectors in the Swindon economy, and engagement with businesses to create clusters.	
Swindon BC	Financial support for sector based business networks	
Swindon BC, Business Link, SWERDA and others	W&S Destination Management Partnership for tourism businesses	
GWE	Bio-Approaches South West, providing support to bio tech sector	
Cooperative Futures	Sectoral expertise and support in; transport; community buildings; community retail; child care & social care; sustainability & the environment	
Swindon BC	Swindon Hoteliers Network & Attractions group	
Swindon BC & others	Swindon Cultural Partnership	
New College	ICT COVE	

Agenda Item 4

Swindon Enterprise Group

Mapping of Current Partner Activities

March 2007

Priority 5

The availability of finance and support for start ups.

Partner	Activity
South West RDA	Fund South West Angels Investor Network (SWAIN)
South West RDA	Fund South West Ventures
GWE	Innovation training and Development programme (rural Swindon only)
Swindon BC / Business Link / GWE	Swindon New Business Competition
Workspace providers	Provision of managed workspace on easy-in & out terms
Business Link	Provide advice on accessing finance
Business Link	On-line enterprise information and guidance/tools
Business Link	Business Start up service, including training
GWE	New Entrepreneur Scholarship
GWE	Barclays 'Lets talk business' programme
New College	Courses for start ups
Cooperative Futures	Finance advice for start up Social Enterprises
Cooperative Futures	Pre-start information and advice for Social Enterprises

Agenda Item 4

Swindon Enterprise Group

Mapping of Current Partner Activities

March 2007

Priority 6

Encouraging sustainable and growing businesses.

Partner	Activity	Sub-Group
Basepoint Business Centre, GWE and others	Provision of managed workspace space and virtual office space, including growth space	Business Support & Advice
GWE	Business mentoring (rural Swindon only)	
Business Link	IDB (Information, Diagnostics and Brokerage)	
Business Link	Growth advice service	
Business Link / South West RDA	Investment Ready service	
South West RDA	South West Manufacturing Advisory Service	
South West RDA	PhD Studentships (via GWR)	
Thames Valley Chamber	Training, seminars and legal advice for members	
South West RDA	Selective Finance Initiative for most sectors	
New College	Courses on saving energy	
Swindon BC	Encouraging local procurement	
Cooperative Futures	Business health checks for Social Enterprises	Best Practice
Thames Valley Chamber	Promoting and sharing best practice amongst businesses through events and through TVCC media	
Swindon BC / South West RDA	Assist businesses to export to China, particularly via Shenzhen twinning	Inward Investment and Exporting
South West RDA	Overseas Offices to enhance business links	
UKTI	Passport to Export	
Swindon BC / South West RDA	Assist inward investors – property and other advice	
Thames Valley Chamber	Arrange inward missions, and provide international trade and advice services (eg US and India).	
Thames Valley Chamber	Support for exporters	

Agenda Item 4

Swindon Enterprise Group

Mapping of Current Partner Activities

March 2007

Priority 7

Supporting innovative businesses.

Partner	Activity
UbiS / South West RDA	Innovation Centre for ICT start ups
Basepoint Business Centre, GWE and others	Provision of managed workspace space and virtual office space
Business Link & others	SMART SME ICT programme (Rural Swindon only)
New College	ICT COVE

Agenda Item 4

Swindon Enterprise Group

Mapping of Current Partner Activities

March 2007

Priority 8

Improving Swindon's image and reputation.

Partner	Activity
Swindon BC	Destination Swindon partnership – to improve Swindon's external image to investors, visitors, conferencing
Swindon BC	'Make the Connection' campaign to attract inward investment to Swindon
South West RDA	International marketing of the South West, incl referrals to Swindon
New Swindon Company	Attracting investment to the town centre

Agenda Item 4

Swindon Enterprise Group

Mapping of Current Partner Activities

March 2007

Priority 9

Advice and Support for Social Enterprises and community based enterprise.

Partner	Activity
Cooperative Futures	Support for Social Enterprises (06/07 only)
Young Enterprise	Swindon Community Enterprise Development Project, 2006-2009
South West RDA/local learning providers	Provision of NVQ Level II in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas.
South West RDA/RISE	Funding support for RISE
Cooperative Futures	Legal Structure expertise for Social Enterprises
Cooperative Futures	Support to Swindon's two Credit Unions
Cooperative Futures	Improved access to funding for cooperatives
Cooperative Futures	Support to Swindon's two Credit Unions

Agenda Item 4

Swindon Enterprise Group

Mapping of Current Partner Activities

March 2007

Economic and Labour Market Research

Partner	Activity
GWE	Social, Economic and Labour Market Research
Swindon BC	Analysis of key sectors Annual economic reports Annual property market evaluation
Swindon Intelligence Network	Collation of intelligence on Swindon, including economy.
UbiS M4 Bus. Resource	Company searches and library of business data and intelligence

Swindon Strategic Economic Partnership

Report to meeting on 29 March 2007

Partnership Structure and Membership

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform the Partnership of the proposed new membership and structure, and obtain its approval to implement that structure.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the SSEP approves the proposed structure and the membership described.**

3 Background

3.1 The Swindon Strategic Economic Partnership is made up of all the organisations and businesses who have a role in delivering the Economic Development Vision and Framework. In order to balance inclusiveness with effectiveness it is proposed that a small management group be formed to take an overview. The responsibility for developing and delivering the key elements of the Economic Development Vision and Framework lies in the sub groups and related organisations

3.2 The Sub groups are all in the process of being established and whilst they take an inclusive approach to membership, they too will have to balance this with effectiveness.

3.3 The key to ensuring the effectiveness of the whole partnership is excellent communication. An ongoing programme of communication will be established to ensure that all Partners know what is going on and have the opportunity to add value to initiatives and activities. This will include an annual conference as well as sub group meetings, a website, newsletters etc

Partnership Management Group

Individual Roles

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Rikki Hunt | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chairman• Represent Group of Regional Level• Represent Group at Swindon Partnership Board (Local Area Agreement Board)• Report on Special Projects |
| Cllr Phil Young | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report on Regeneration |
| Mark Beard | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report on Swindon Enterprise Group |

Agenda Item 7 – Copy of Report to Swindon Strategic Economic Partnership

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Mike Godfrey | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report on Major Companies |
| Steve Richards | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Best Practice, Economic Development Policy |
| Bill Cotton | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report on Skills and Labour Market Gap• Report on Destination Swindon• Secretariat |

Report Author: Bill Cotton,
Director of Economic Development
Swindon Borough Council
bcotton@swindon.gov.uk
tel. 01793 466008

.

.

**Swindon Strategic Economic Partnership
PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURE**

