

ENTERPRISING COVENTRY PARTNERSHIP BOARD

22nd November, 2010

- Members Present:- Clive Benfield (Private Sector Representative)
Councillor Linda Bigham (Coventry City Council) - Chair
Geraldine Fisher (for Jane Beaver, Job Centre Plus)
June Jeffrey (Coventry Community Empowerment Network)
Councillor Ram Lakha (Coventry City Council)
Carl Pearson (Assistant Director (Economy and Community),
Coventry City Council) - Vice-Chair
Councillor Gary Ridley (Coventry City Council)
John Spencer (Private Sector Representative)
Dianne Williams (Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of
Commerce)
- Advisors Present:- Trevor Howard (City Services and Development Directorate)
Ryan McHugh (City Services and Development Directorate)
Andy Williams (City Services and Development Directorate)
Rebecca Young (City Services and Development Directorate)
- Employee Present:- Liz Knight (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
- Apologies:- Jane Beaver (Job Centre Plus)
Elaine LeMontais (Midland Heart)
Philip Roberts (Advantage West Midlands)

28. Chair's Welcome and Introduction

The Chair, Councillor Linda Bigham, welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Enterprising Coventry Partnership Board, held at the Council House, Coventry.

29. Declarations of Interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

30. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 30th September, 2010 were signed as a true record. There were no additional matters arising.

31. 2010/11 Performance and Finance Exceptions Report

Ryan McHugh presented this report that had been circulated with the papers and highlighted the exceptions that had occurred with the programme's performance and financial position since the last Board meeting on 30th September, 2010.

There had been a number of new business opportunities created through new investments. 12 new investments had been secured compared to a target of 37 (32%). Based on current performance a total of 20 new investments were forecast for the year. Despite this shortfall, a significant amount of new jobs had been created through the Investing in Coventry project. 263 new jobs have been created and over 300 forecast for

the year. The large number of jobs created indicated that larger companies were continuing to invest but smaller businesses were more cautious at this time. The report set out the reasons for the shortfall in new investments.

Following the reduction in public sector relocation work, the service was refocusing on new business sectors including Low Carbon Transport, Environmental Technologies and Creative/Digital Industries which had been identified as growth sectors for the city.

In light of the changing economic situation it was proposed that the target for new investments was reduced from 37 to 20. The Board agreed to this proposal.

The report referred to the people assisted into employment through WEETC. During the first half of the year 20 people had been supported, which represented only 26% of the 78 target for the year. However, the Board noted that activity had picked up in quarter 3 with 19 job outcomes secured, subject to the collation of evidence and WEETC were confident that the full target of 78 job outcomes would be achieved by the end of the financial year. A further performance update on this project would be available at the next Board meeting.

In relation to jobs identified, reference was made to the Recruitment Development Service which was designed to provide work opportunities including jobs, placements and work experience, for unemployed clients in the programme. An excellent performance in supporting people into jobs and placements had been achieved even though the number of job opportunities identified was lower than the initial target. This reflected the way in which the programme had been able to connect unemployed people with a wider range of job opportunities to fulfil their employment ambitions. When reviewing the Jobs Identified measure it was apparent that the high volume (1,500 jobs identified) hadn't been required for the programme to meet its employment objectives.

Attention was drawn to the work of partners who were developing a Labour Market Task Group approach that would link employers, work opportunities and unemployed people across a wider range, making it easier and more convenient for everyone to use the local labour market effectively. It was recognised that the labour market needed to be ahead of strategic developments within the local economy e.g. Low Carbon. The importance of planning for a workforce to meet the skills needs of the future was being emphasised. A more coherent approach across new growth sectors between employers, investors, learning providers and employment support agencies could provide a more 'upstream' way of skilling local people for these new opportunities.

It was proposed to develop this way of working over the new few months, to inform new service objectives and a revision of targets related to job opportunities identified.

Given the good performance in terms of people into employment (84% against target) and the higher than planned conversion rate of jobs identified, it was recommended that this target was reduced from 1500 to 396. The Board recognised that there was now a more focused approach for specific client groups and, in light of the requirement to use resources as efficiently as possible, they agreed to this target reduction.

Detailed 2010/11 performance tables were set out in two appendices attached to the report.

The report set out the current financial position as follows, with further details being included in a third appendix:

Revised allocation for 2010/11 - £3,133,000
Year end forecast spend position (at 31st October, 2010) - £3,214,689
Over-programming position - £81,689

Since the last meeting the over-programming position had slightly increased. The programme team were continuing to work with delivery managers to identify new savings and further information would be available at the next Board meeting. Carl Pearson, Assistant Director (Economy and Community) assured the Board that the programme would come in on budget by the end of 2010/11.

RESOLVED that:

(i) Approval be given to the target for new investments being reduced from 37 to 20.

(ii) Approval be given to the target for jobs identified being reduced from 1500 to 396.

32. Employment Placement Scheme Update

Trevor Howard presented this report that had been circulated with the papers and provided an update on the performance of the Employment Placement Scheme and the outcomes achieved.

The Employment Placement Scheme (EPS) was launched in October 2009 as a targeted response to the employment needs of local people and was designed to target the following groups:

- (i) Unemployed local graduates (graduated within the last 12 months)
- (ii) Unemployed managers and professionals
- (iii) Unemployed young people (16-18) that are not in education, employment or training (NEET's)

The scheme offered six month work placements, training and employment advice, to support local people into work (and back into work), with a variety of employers. It had provided a crucial bridge into the workplace and proved to be a very effective route into sustainable work for unemployed people, at a time when this support had been critical for them. It was funded through Area Based Grant resources and the Enterprising Coventry programme.

The Board were informed that the initial target for EPS was to move 100 people into placements between October 2009 and March 2011. The Board received a report in January 2010 which identified good progress with 38 people having been provided with work placements. At that stage, the target was increased to provide a further 40 placements, making a total of 140 placements by March 2011.

During the year the demand from all three groups had been significant, and take up of the placements has been such that 135 placements had already started, which was ahead of the timescales originally identified. Graduates were marginally the largest group, as was envisaged, and the demand from managers and professionals was significant due to the profile of those losing jobs through redundancy. The young people in the NEET group now included Looked After Children. Working in collaboration with colleagues in the

Children, Learning and Young People service, six of the places have been specifically allocated to support Looked After Children, which was proving to be an excellent support route for this client group. To date 3 had been placed and 2 had the potential to convert into apprenticeships. The scheme was also working closely with the Construction Employment Unit to offer 6 placements to NEETS currently participating in the Building Your Future programme to provide a positive outcome via the shared apprenticeship scheme. The final five placements had also been earmarked for Looked After Children, which would bring the total to the target of 140 placements.

The real impact for each person, in terms of quality of life, could be better understood from the brief case studies that were attached in the Appendix to the report.

The placements had been made across the range of public, private and community sectors, and a good balance had been achieved. Further information was included in a table set out in the report.

The report detailed the financial position of the project confirming that the scheme had delivered increased outputs within the allocated resources. In addition, the limited ongoing resource needed to fund the placements that had started, but would not be completed before April 2011, could also be funded from within the allocated resources.

In relation to the objective of achieving sustained work beyond the period of the placement, the Board noted that to date 58.7% of all leavers had found sustainable employment since completing their placements. Discussion centred on which sectors clients had secured employment with and on the age range of the managers/professionals supported by the project.

The report also made reference to the Future Jobs Fund and the Construction Shared Apprenticeships Scheme.

The Future Jobs Fund was a nationally funded programme that provided work placements for young people and supported (i) 18 to 24 year olds who had been unemployed on Job Seekers Allowance for 6 months or more and (ii) long term unemployed and workless people in unemployment hotspots. Since October 2009, 182 people had been supported into placements, with targeted national resources available for up to 250 starts by March 2011. The programme had been particularly successful in placing young people into third sector (75 placements) and public sector (80 placements), with a further 27 in the private sector. As with the EPS, the Future Jobs Fund had been aligned to Enterprising Coventry, providing all placement participants with an opportunity of tailored one to one support from Employment Advisers, access to Barrier Breaking support including training and job clubs, which had definitely increased numbers of people moving into sustainable work.

The Construction Shared Apprenticeships Scheme was a partnership between Coventry City Council, Whitefriars, BAM Construction, City College, National Apprenticeship Service and Construction Skills which enabled the local construction industry to support NEET's (young people not in education, employment or training) who were 'employed' by the scheme via a host employer (BAM). A pool of employers shared the apprentice according to where they could offer work. Individuals were trained in a broad range of construction disciplines ranging from groundwork right through to brickwork, plastering, tiling, carpentry and maintenance occupations. To date, the scheme had received huge interest from approximately 120 young people that had expressed an

interest in becoming an apprentice. Following a recruitment process, four apprenticeships were offered to young people, with others due to follow shortly. The Board were informed that Enterprising Coventry had committed £150,000 to the 3 year shared apprenticeship scheme which represented only approximately 18-20% towards the programme costs, with the majority of resources being provided by employers and other partners.

The Board expressed support for the work that had been carried out to assist people into work, and were particularly encouraged by the number of people who had subsequently secured sustainable work.

33. Environmental Technologies Sector Development Presentation

Further to Minute 25, the Board received a presentation from Trevor Howard on environmental technologies and Enterprising Coventry with particular reference to the low carbon economy.

The presentation highlighted the opportunities for Coventry presented by the new and growing low carbon 'industry' which would see the largest growth in the next decade with leaders in the field attracting maximum benefits. The work already being undertaken in Coventry was detailed with emphasis being placed on the city's growing reputation for developments associated with low carbon transport. Reference was made to the recent study undertaken by Coventry University which predicted investment of £1.9 billion in the city over the next ten years (equivalent to around 26,000 jobs) in the low carbon transport and environmental technologies businesses.

Reference was made to the purpose and work of the following:

- (i) Environmental Task Group
- (ii) Renewable Energy Technology Alliance
- (iii) Phoenix Low Carbon Enterprise

The presentation concluded with the outcomes that could be achieved in the local economy along with the start of a draft development plan.

The Board discussed at length the issues raised by the presentation expressing support for the potentially very positive outcomes for the city's economy. Particular reference was made to the requirement to have the relevant business networks and skilled workforces in place to be able to attract the massive investments to Coventry.

34 Planning for Programme Closure

Andy Williams presented this report that had been circulated with the papers and indicated that, since the last Board meeting, the Government had announced its Comprehensive Spending Review. It was clear that that there would be no ongoing LEGL funding. As a result, the planning assumption for the current programme of work was that it would need to come to an end by March 2011 under the existing governance arrangements. Consequently, consideration needed to be given to the programme closure principles, financial implications, timescales and key messages and approval was sought for an effectively managed process of programme closure.

The Board discussed and agreed the following principles set out in the report which would enable an effective closure:

- (i) We continue to deliver a high quality, customer focused employment and enterprise service until 31 March 2011;
- (ii) We will be clear on what alternative services our customers can access;
- (iii) We will move customers on to new provision at a time that is right for the customer;
- (iv) We will communicate the lessons learned to our colleagues, partners and other service deliverers, locally, regionally and nationally;
- (v) Each service provider and partner will take responsibility for and commit to communicating and transitioning their programme staff;
- (vi) We will communicate any information as soon as we can to our service providers, staff and customers throughout programme closure – 'You will hear from us first';
- (vii) All service providers and staff will maintain the highest quality processes in relation to document and evidence retention for audit purposes.

The Chair, Councillor Bigham, drew attention to the fact that despite losing their own jobs, employees were still working to put their customers first.

Reference was made to the current over programming position of £81,689, as detailed in Minute 31 above. The Board noted that further slippage on two projects was anticipated that would bring the figure down. In addition, a resource switch with another series of grant funded programmes focused on Employment and Enterprise was envisaged, that would mean the final programme coming in on budget.

The Board were informed that Ryan McHugh was to be appointed as Project Manager for the Programme Closure and would manage the day to day process on behalf of the Board.

The report set out the broad timeline of activity and it was noted that a complete project plan of key dates and times would be drawn up as part of the closure. The programme would officially close on 31st March, 2011 with the final programme reports and achievements being submitted to the last meeting of the Board in May, 2011.

Clear, consistent communication across customers, service providers and staff was critical to ensure that the programme closure was successful.

It was proposed that a formal letter be drafted within 48 hours of this meeting, to be agreed by the Chair, Councillor Bigham, outlining the Government's decision to withdraw funding for the LEGI programme. The clear implication was that each contracted organisation should make the planning assumption that there would be no further LEGI funding through the Enterprising Coventry Programme after 31 March 2011.

The Board noted the intention to ensure that staff across the programme were briefed at the same time to ensure that the messages received were consistent and to remove any informal communication prior to official briefings.

RESOLVED that the programme closure principles, the timescales and key messages be approved and agreement be given to the effectively managed process of programme closure as detailed in the report.

35. Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership – Progress Update

Dianne Williams, Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce, drew attention to the letter sent to Councillor John Mutton, Coventry City Council and Councillor Alan Farnell, Warwickshire County Council, dated 28th October, 2010 confirming that the proposal for a Local Enterprise Partnership(LEP) for Coventry and Warwickshire had been successful. A copy of the letter had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The Board were informed that the Coventry and Warwickshire LEP had been one of 24 successful bids, meeting the key expectations of support from business; economic geography; local authority support; and added value and ambition. The next stage was to establish the partnership and Board. Louise Bennett, Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce, was due to meet representatives from the Government the following day to find out more about the LEPs and would have the opportunity to network with delegates from the other successful bids. Information was provided on the proposed membership of the Shadow Board. The importance of building on the successes of the Enterprising Coventry programme was emphasised.

Reference was made to the new Regional Growth Fund. Guidance was now available and there was an expectation that bids would align with the strategy of the LEP. £1.4 billion would be available over the next three years. The importance of public/private sector partnership working was highlighted.

36. Taking the Employment and Enterprise Agenda Forward

Andy Williams presented this report, tabled at the meeting, that referred to the substantial benefits achieved by the Enterprising Coventry Programme and outlined the requirement to ensure that the local employment and enterprise agenda was taken forward at the same time as this programme ended.

The report was a position statement that set the framework to define the agenda and identify key local responses that needed to be considered by strategic partners in taking this area of front line service delivery forward.

Two themes had been central to Enterprising Coventry and going forward they remained priorities locally, sub-regionally and nationally:

- (i) Employment - working with individuals seeking work and the companies that might employ them
- (ii) Enterprise & Economic Growth - working with businesses, investors and communities to facilitate the development of a future economy and generation of jobs for the people of Coventry

In relation to the employment theme, the report highlighted that unemployment was likely to increase, at least in the short term, due to public sector spending reductions. Added to this, new rules about health and claiming benefits could create another 1.5 million job seekers. In effect there would be a much larger group of job seekers. The government had responded by proposing the appointment of 11 'Framework Providers' to deliver generic employment support through the new Work Programme. These would be large contracts awarded to national organisations and appointments were expected this November.

As worklessness remained a major problem for the city, there was a need for a local response. Coventry had some nationally recognised successful programmes that had helped long term unemployed people back into regular work, but much of this work was likely to end as Government focuses all its resources through the new Work Programme. Some of the most notable work had been around helping individuals overcome perceived barriers due to health and disability. The report set out the clear areas of priority.

With regard to the enterprise and economic growth theme, the report indicated that the investment and business support national framework was also changing with the closure of Advantage West Midlands and the regional Business Link. Support for new and existing enterprises would be primarily through national websites and call centres. The government was also proposing Growth Hubs and Technology and Innovation Centres although how these would work in relation to local activities was not yet clear.

The Board noted that in future there would be only two principal levels: national support programmes and Local Enterprise Partnerships (the Coventry and Warwickshire LEP).

The removal of the regional layer would reinforce local partners' roles in inward investment, support for key business sectors, business start ups and new opportunities for social enterprises. These roles had been strongly supported by Enterprising Coventry and were in line with government policy in the recent 'Local Growth: Realising every place's potential' White Paper.

There was a clear responsibility to continue to deliver a powerful sector strategy for the sub region. This sector strategy had three elements:

- (i) Targeted sector marketing to attract investment to the sub region in key sectors.
- (ii) Work with local partners to develop flagship projects, such as the low carbon vehicle programme, to reinforce the local competitive advantage and raise the profile and reputation of the sub region
- (iii) Working collaboratively with key local sector businesses, to engage them in business development, investment and job creation.

Reference was made to recent work which included low carbon vehicle demonstrators, digital technologies, aerospace collaborations and environmental technology initiatives.

The Board were informed that close partnership working and strategies already aligned to emerging needs and opportunities, placed the sub region in a positive position to respond to the investment and enterprise challenges of the future. Moving forward there could be greater opportunities to explore different mechanisms for delivering employment and enterprise services. The role of local community based social enterprises, and community interest companies was an area by which could be chosen for investment and earn resources for the future whilst delivering the contracts of today. With the national push for more delivery to take place within the private sector this could also be a way of obtaining resource for the city.

Furthermore the new Coventry & Warwickshire LEP was yet to think through governance structures and any delivery or accountability of services so there could be opportunities there for working in greater partnership to deliver local employment and enterprise services.

The Board noted that the position statement, alongside the achievements and lessons learned over the past five years would be used to inform the discussions within the LEP and initially the application of resources and funding bids within strategic partner organisations and Board Members. The local areas of need and focus would enable services to be built to meet the demand.

The Board supported the future service priorities set out in the position statement.