

ENTERPRISING COVENTRY PARTNERSHIP BOARD

28th February, 2011

- Members Present:- Councillor Linda Bigham (Coventry City Council) - Chair
June Jeffrey (Coventry Community Empowerment Network)
Councillor Ram Lakha (Coventry City Council)
Janet McLean (for Jane Beaver, Job Centre Plus)
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:- Clive Benfield (Private Sector Representative)
Jane Beaver (Job Centre Plus)
Elaine LeMontais (Midland Heart)

37. 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.

38. Declaration of Interest

Councillor Lakha declared an interest in his capacity as a Non-Executive Director of Willenhall Education, Employment and Training Centre. He remained in the meeting for the consideration of all business.

39. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 22nd November, 2010 were signed as a true record. There were no additional matters arising.

40. 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 22nd November, 2010.

The report indicated that all outcomes within the Business, Investment & Enterprise strand were on track to meet targets by the end of the year. The Board were pleased to be informed that Amazon Initiatives had already exceeded their annual target at the end of quarter three and that they planned to deliver an extra five business start ups

and five business assists on top of their contracted target. These outcomes would be delivered without any additional outcome payments.

Partners continued to report that there was strong demand for both enterprise coaching and support for existing businesses. Concerns were raised about the future lack of support for existing businesses.

In relation to the people assisted into employment, four employment projects were behind profile at the end of quarter three – the City Council's Employment Delivery Team, WATCH, WEETC and Pertemps. Despite this shortfall, The Employment Delivery Team, WATCH and Pertemps were all confident that their full targets would be met by the end of the year. However, WEETC was currently forecasting a shortfall of nine job outcomes (12% of 2010/11 target).

The Making Progress project had also exceeded its annual target at the end of quarter three, supporting 26 offenders into work. The project was forecasting that an extra 4 offenders would be supported into employment by the end of March. Overall, the programme was on track to significantly exceed its people assisted into employment target. The current forecast was 918, compared to a target of 740. Detailed 2010/11 performance tables were set out in two appendices attached to the report.

Clarification was sought as regards to the current job situation in the city and the Board were informed that there were job vacancies however a number of these were either temporary or part time. Employers were still reporting skills shortages.

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

Revised budget for 2010/11 - £3,135,000

Year end forecast spend position at 31st December, 2010 - £3,162,002

Over-programming position - £27,002

The Board noted that in November, 2010 the over-programming position stood at £81,689. Additional savings had been achieved through a reduction in Barrier Breaking activities and minor savings from the Marketing, Client Management system and Evaluation budgets. The programme team were continuing to work with delivery managers to identify further savings to ensure that the programme would come in on budget at the end of the financial year. The Board expressed their appreciation for all the ongoing work. The year end financial position would be available for the Board at the May 2011 meeting.

41. Programme Closure Update

Ryan McHugh presented this report that had been circulated with the papers and indicated that at the November 2010 meeting, the Board had agreed a planning assumption that the current programme would come to an end under the existing funding and governance arrangements. Following this agreement, the Chair had written to all delivery partners confirming this planning assumption and the principles agreed at the last board meeting to enable an effective programme closure. Following discussions with the delivery partners, the report provided an update on programme closure aligned to these principles.

Attention was drawn to the fact that employees were committed to continue to deliver a high quality, customer focused employment and enterprise service until 31st March 2011. All projects within the programme would continue to support clients until the end of the financial year including: Employment, Placements, Barrier Breaking, Enterprise Coaching, Business Support and Inward Investment.

The Board noted that the Women's Business Development Agency (WBDA) had confirmed that their Enterprising Coventry provision (Enterprise Coaching and Business Coaching) would end before 31st March 2011. They would only be able to deliver their contracted outputs for Enterprising Coventry. Once these targets had been met, WBDA would need to reallocate staff to different projects or make redundancies. Although Enterprising Coventry support would not be available until the end of the year, WBDA would be able to support individuals/businesses through capacity that remained in the organisation's Business Link contract.

The report highlighted that the service would be clear on what alternative services our customers could access. Customers would be moved on to new provision at a time that was right for the customer. Delivery partners would be actively referring clients to alternative provision when needed.

The report set out the alternative local and national provisions for the individual projects within the programme with particular emphasis on the support to be provided by the City Council. The Board discussed these provisions at length.

Reference was made to the report 'A Jobs Strategy for Coventry' which was to be submitted to the Cabinet meeting scheduled for 15th March, 2011. As unemployment in Coventry was increasing, concerted action was needed to create and sustain job opportunities for local residents. It was proposed that the Council adopt a jobs strategy, the purpose of which was to:

- Set out an ambitious prospectus for Coventry pointing the way to a return to prosperity and equal access to employment for all.
- Set out what the Council will do, the actions it will pursue, to provide leadership and help create new jobs and also help people back into work, especially young people and those with the greatest needs.
- Provide a framework in through which the Council can invite other partners and stakeholders to join with it in the challenge of creating more jobs for Coventry.

Particular concerns were raised about the loss of resource to provide advisers to support the unemployed 16-24 year olds. The need to encourage employers to offer apprenticeships was highlighted. Attention was drawn to the recently launched Construction Shared Apprenticeship scheme which would continue to support young people to enter the industry.

The report indicated that a number of these local and national services were still being defined and would take some time before they were fully operational and available to individuals and businesses seeking support.

The Board were informed that each service provider and partner would take responsibility for and commit to communicating and transitioning their programme staff. All partners were aware of their responsibilities for managing staff arrangements and were undertaking restructuring work to allow for grant fall out within their organisations.

The City Council would potentially be making redundancies across the whole organisation as a result of the public sector budget cuts. Where this was the case, Enterprising Coventry would be making comprehensive employment support available to these staff, assisting their transition into new jobs. This support would also be available to staff that could be facing redundancy across other delivery partners within the programme.

All service providers and staff would maintain the highest quality processes in relation to document and evidence retention for audit purposes. The service would also communicate the lessons learned to our colleagues, partners and other service deliverers, locally and nationally.

As discussed at the last Board meeting, the Programme Team had drafted a report detailing the successes and achievements of the programme over the last 5 years (Minute 42 below also refers). The report included input from all delivery partners, highlighting the lessons learned over this period and the good practice going forward. Once finalised, this Achievements Report would be shared with local partners via the LEP and with colleagues at DCLG.

The Chair, Councillor Bigham placed on record her appreciation for all the work being undertaken by employees, some who were unsure of their own future employment, which continued to be high quality and very much customer focused.

42. Achievements Report – Draft for Discussion

Andy Williams presented this report that had been circulated with the papers which indicated that since April 2006 Coventry had received approximately £20 million of LEGL resource. Much had been achieved during this period and since the Government funding would come to an end at 31st March, 2011, it was good practice to recognise the achievements and lessons learned.

A draft report was attached, the purpose of which was to highlight the successful achievements of the programme over the last five years and to identify key lessons which could be used as part of future service, programme and project development.

Information was provided on the intended audience which comprised the Board Members and Delivery Partners; Local Economic Development Governance and Partnership Boards; CLG and BIS; Economic Development and Regeneration Service Managers; and potential further funding opportunities for the city – ERDF and ESF proposals.

The report had been designed to be brief and short in content making it easy to identify successes and achievements. It was intended to have a real life feel by the inclusion of case studies from different parts of the programme.

The Board Members discussed the content of the draft report and put forward a number of suggestions for inclusion as follows:

(i) Greater emphasis to be made of the fact that the original LEGL bid had been designed, submitted and approved during a time of economic prosperity in 2005, however

it had been delivered when the economy faced the worst recession since the 1930's, highlighting how the programme had successfully coped with changing priorities.

(ii) Mention to be made of the legacy of the programme – the benefits from the public/private partnership working for the city and how the new Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership would gain from this.

(iii) The inclusion of quotes from the private sector representatives on the Board regarding the project's achievements.

(iv) The inclusion of information from the Environmental Technologies Sector Development presentation made at the November, 2010 Board meeting.

(v) Reference to be made to the support provided to the Construction Industry project to build two sustainable show homes in the city. The project was being managed by a Doctor in Engineering from Coventry University to ensure the necessary training was provided to allow local businesses to deliver new ways of working.

(vi) DWP and private sector individuals to be included in the intended audience for the report.

(vii) Greater significance to be placed on the outcomes included within the report.

(viii) The names of the partners who have provided placements to be included in the report.

The Chair, Councillor Bigham referred to her membership of the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership and outlined her intention to raise the work of Enterprising Coventry as opportunities arose.

RESOLVED that the issues outlined above to be taken into account when updating the Enterprising Coventry Achievements Report.

43. Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership Progress Update

Andy Williams informed the Board of the intention to circulate a briefing note on progress with the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

Reference was made to the LEP website which included the minutes from the two initial Board meetings. Discussion centred on the problems associated with the reporting of commercially sensitive information.

The Board were informed of the arrangements to host a national meeting of all the Local Enterprise Partnerships at the Ricoh Arena in the near future.

RESOLVED that a briefing note outlining the progress with the development of the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership be circulated to all Members of the Board.