

The Local Enterprise Partnership

Birmingham & Solihull, with Bromsgrove, Cannock Chase,
East Staffordshire, Lichfield & Tamworth

ISSUE1

Welcome to the first eUpdate on the progress made to date on the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for Birmingham & Solihull, with Bromsgrove, Cannock Chase, East Staffordshire, Lichfield & Tamworth. This is the first of a series of e-Updates to keep you informed on progress to date - and the work we are doing.

Since we were given the green light as a LEP (one of only 24 out of 62 across the country in the first instance), we have made progress in a numbers of key areas. Since the original successful bid was made to Government we have gained two new member areas, Bromsgrove and Cannock Chase. We have also established a Development Board – comprising business and local authority representatives – and met in November and December. You can find out who’s who below.

The Development Board will have as its primary task the challenge of preparing the essential groundwork for the establishment of the full LEP board in April 2011. The partners at the Board also recognised the great opportunity the LEP has to impact the lives and futures of the people and institutions of our area and agreed that our work should remain outcome focused.

We have now agreed terms of reference to guide the Development Board, and set the framework for a new business plan and economic strategy for the LEP area. Over and above establishing the mechanics for a successful LEP Board in April 2011, in the coming weeks and months I see the Board taking a leading role in reviewing existing structures within the LEP area, developing the LEP’s ability to acquire funding, supporting a communications plan and mechanisms for inter-LEP communications, engaging with the Government and helping lead and support Regional Growth Fund bids from across the LEP area.

From our first meeting it was very encouraging to see how eager all our partners are to ensure we design a LEP that maximises the considerable potential in the private sector to underpin our growth ambitions. Our stated mission is to make our LEP area the easiest place in Europe in which to set up and run a business and the work of the Development Board is focussed on ensuring the full Board will have every chance of delivering on this important goal.

We are at the early stages of development of the LEP and I appreciate that many of you will want to know more about its work and how you can get involved. We will soon set out the ways to engage and get involved but in the meantime, are keen to hear from you. In the interim, this e-Update includes links where you can obtain relevant information.

We will meet again in the new year and I intend to keep you updated on the progress by issuing an e-Update following that meeting.



Bridget Blow
Chair of the LEP
Development Board

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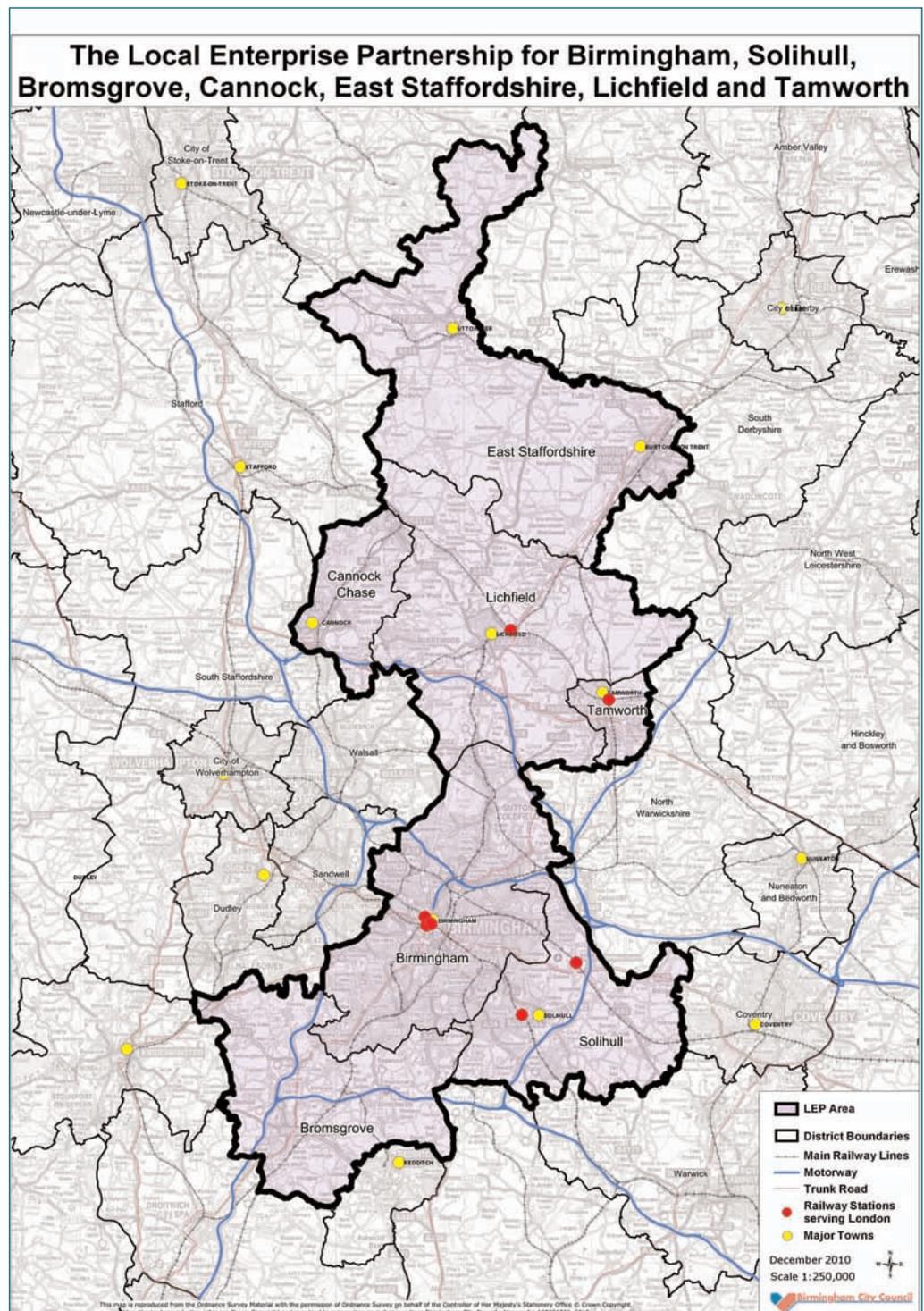
‘Aiming to be the easiest place in Europe in which to set up and run a business’

Vision for the Partnership

Our vision is to create and support a globally competitive knowledge economy, the natural home for Europe's entrepreneurs and wealth creators. Reflecting our tradition for attracting innovators, risk takers, entrepreneurs and mavericks, within ten years the economic area will be renowned for being the easiest place in Europe in which to set up and run a business.

Key aims are to:

- Increase economic output (GVA) in the area by 30% (£8.25 billion) by 2020;
- Create 100,000 private sector jobs by 2020;
- Stimulate growth in the business stock, survival rates and business profitability;
- Boost indigenous and inward investment;
- Achieve global leadership in key sectors, including: automotive assembly; low carbon R&D, transport and building technologies; business, professional and financial services; clinical trials; ICT; creative and digital sectors;
- Build a world class workforce with the skills needed to achieve our ambitions whilst dramatically reducing worklessness.



The Development Board

Our LEP provides an exciting opportunity for a business-led approach to economic development for an area which enjoys the most significant collection of assets and drivers outside the capital. The Development Board is made up of the following private sector and public sector representatives and will remain in place until the full Board is established on 1 April, 2011:

Private Sector

Bridget Blow (Chair)

Formerly President of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce; Chair of the LEP Development Board.

Kathryn James

Managing Director of the NEC; Solihull Business Representative on the LEP Development Board.

John Haywood

Burton and District Chamber; East Staffordshire Business Representative on the LEP Development Board.

Debbie Baker

Owner, Hawthornes: Research & Business Development Limited; Tamworth and Lichfield Business and Economic Partnership; Tamworth and Lichfield Business Representative on the LEP Development Board.

David Caro

MD of Qualplast; Federation of Small Business Birmingham Branch Chairman; Birmingham Business Representative on the LEP Development Board.

Spencer Wright

Chief Executive, Dains LLP; Cannock Chase Business Representative on LEP Development Board

Public Sector

Cllr Mike Whitby

Leader of Birmingham City Council

Cllr Ian Hedley

Leader of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

Cllr Roger Hollingworth

Leader of Bromsgrove District Council

Cllr Neil Stanley

Leader of Cannock Chase District Council

Cllr Richard Grosvenor

Leader of East Staffordshire District Council

Cllr Michael Wilcox

Leader of Lichfield District Council

Cllr Daniel Cook

Leader of Tamworth District Council

University Representative

David Maguire

Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Corporate Development, Birmingham City University

Latest LEP update from Government

The Business, Innovation and Skills Committee published its first Report of the new Parliament. Entitled The New Local Enterprise Partnerships; An Initial Assessment.

The Report recognises the opportunity that LEPs offer for business and local government to work in closer partnership, opening up roads to local growth. However, it also wants that Government needs to be conscious of the potential gap in LEP funding-between start-up and an eventually self-sustaining financial model-and in certain cases be willing to support LEPs at inception. LEPs' role in promoting growth and rebalancing the economy is too important, and the potential dividends from their success too great, to permit them to fail for lack of small amounts of transition funding. Access the full report here:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmselect/cmbis/434/43402.htm>

Update on the Regional Growth Fund

The deadline for the first round of bids to the Regional Growth Fund (RGF) is 21 January 2011. The LEP has received a significant number of bids from across the LEP area and an assessment panel is reviewing those that should be put forward in the first round of applications.

For more information on the RGF visit the website below:

<http://www.socialenterprisewm.org.uk/events/regional-growth-fund-road-show/>

Useful links and contacts

For more information and copies of the LEP submission, Development Board Terms of Reference, press releases and latest news, please visit

<http://www.birminghamchambergroup.com/Business-Support/Local-Enterprise-Partnership.aspx>

For more information, please email: info@yourlep.biz