

**County Durham Economic Partnership  
Business and Enterprise Working Group**

**13 May 2007, 8.30am  
The Digital Factory, Newton Aycliffe**

**MINUTES**

**1. Attendees**

Sue Parkinson <b>SP</b> (Chair)	Business Support Network/Enterprise Agency
Tarryn Lloyd Payne <b>TLP</b>	Secretariat, CDEP
Joanne Willey <b>JW</b>	Secretariat, CDEP
Bob Hope <b>BH</b>	Wear Valley District Council
Peter McDowell <b>PM</b>	Derwentside District Council
Ginny Williams <b>GW</b>	Children and Young People's Services, DCC
Rachel Spence <b>RS</b>	North East Chamber of Commerce
Joanna Tait <b>JT</b>	Bishop Auckland College
Nick James <b>NJ</b>	Learning and Skills Council

**Apologies**

Melanie Sensicle	County Durham Tourism Partnership
Stewart Watkins	County Durham Development Company
Rachel Orange	Durham University
Dorothy Kelly	One NorthEast

**2. Declarations of Interest**

Ginny Williams noted that she had an interest in item 4, Enterprise Education Advocate.

**3. Minutes/Matters Arising  
- Protocols of representation**

The minutes from the last meeting (24 April 2007) were agreed as a true record.

**Matters Arising**

Pg 2, item 3. B&E group to suggest to SP to add another rep from the Enterprise Agency to the group. **ACTION:** Sue agreed to propose this to her colleagues at the agency and report back at the next meeting.

Pg 2, item 3. JW to ensure minutes and advocate final reports are added to the CDEP website. JW noted this was in progress.

Pg 3, item 6. Secretariat to circulate BSN report and LAA VAT Registration report. Circulated on 26/04/07.

Pg 4, item 6. TLP to draw up a work programme. Included in minutes.

Pg 4, item 7. Secretariat to provide an update on progression to better engage with the private sector. TLP informed the group that the Board has agreed for a dinner to be set up with the private sector at the beginning of July. The group felt that we should also be liaising with the district forum groups through the LSP's.

**ACTION:** It was agreed that Sue Parkinson would write to the LSP Co-ordinators to ask them for their views of feeding into this group.

**ACTION:** It was agreed that TLP would circulate a list of invitees to the dinner.

Protocols of representation:

SP noted that a schedule of meetings for the next year had been drawn up and would be circulated to the group by e-mail after the meeting. **ACTION** Secretariat.

Papers will be sent out 10 days in advance of meetings.

The group were asked to all state how they would implement their responsibilities for this group:

JT – Circulate papers to monthly meeting of principles. Communicate information with business development managers.

NJ – Feed in to LSWG. LAA Structures

GW – Circulate papers to colleagues at County Hall. Update Adult and Community Service management groups.

PR – Disseminate information to economic development officers meetings of district councils.

BH – Represents southern districts of Teesdale, circulate and seek comments on agenda items to colleagues.

RS – Circulate to members of the chamber of commerce and wider business community.

#### **4. Enterprise Advocates – PIFS**

TLP noted that 2 PIF's had been submitted to ONE to allow for the 2 current enterprise advocate posts to be continued as agreed at the last meeting.

A discussion took place on where the enterprise advocate currently based at BLNE would re-locate. It was highlighted that this group would still direct the work of the advocates.

**ACTION:** RS agreed to ask her colleagues at the chamber of commerce about hosting this post at their offices.

#### **5. LAA VAT Registration Report**

SP explained that this report had been presented to the Senior Advisory Panel (SAP) earlier in the week. Their recommendations were for the B&EWG to consider the main findings and recommendations of the report and take some action.

*VAT Registrations*

A discussion took place around the recommendations set out on page 47 of the report; More out-reach in VAT guidance/support and less formal

ways of delivering VAT advice than the more traditional government-based advice currently available. The group needed to understand BLNE's role of helping businesses. Should they be already providing this service in the recommendation?

**ACTION:** RS to write to BLNE to ask for a rep to attend the next B&W to get their specific views on the recommendations in the report and ask them how they can input, talk generally on sub-regional activity for what they can and can't influence. It was also agreed that the session would be used to introduce wider discussion with BLNE.

### *Procurement*

A discussion took place on the section on public sector procurement and how and if this can be an effective means of creating and retaining wealth in a local economy.

A lot of sources were noted as already available to help businesses get support to win contracts through procurement. RS noted she was not convinced that public sector procurement would have an impact on VAT Registrations. NJ felt that this wasn't a priority to concentrate on this area of activity but didn't think it was a bad thing. An understanding of partners on the LAA board as a driver towards targets was needed however something else should be done before this. A one day or half day event was suggested for SME's and procurement officers to get together and find out how their jobs relate to increasing VAT Registration in Co. Durham. It was agreed that we would ask the LAA Board for their agreement to go ahead with the day. A facilitator would be required. RS agreed to champion this.

**ACTION:** SP, TLP and RS to get together to work up a brief to give to the facilitator and get an initial proposal with suggested audiences.

## **6. BSN Evaluation Report**

It was agreed to discuss this item at the next meeting.

**ACTION:** Secretariat to ensure it's on the next agenda

## **7. Enterprise Programme Network – Update**

SP – As no meetings had taken place recently, there was no update.

## **8. Workplan for the next meeting**

BLNE – As actions agreed under item 5.

LEGI – **ACTION:** NJ and BH to provide a presentation on LEGI focusing on delivery.

## **9. Any other business**

No other business was discussed

## **10. Date and Time of Next meeting.**

25<sup>th</sup> July 2007, Venue: Chester le Street