



Herefordshire Business Board

Actions from the Meeting – Tuesday 6th September 2011

Present:

Chair: Neil Kerr (NK), **Vice Chair:** Ray Stone (RS). Andrew Sanders (AS), Andy Edwards (AE), Angela Fitch (AF), Cathy Meredith (CM), Gary Woodman (GW), Heather Gorringer (HG), Helen Thomas (HT), Jonathan Hines (JH), John Jones (JJ), Natalia Silver (NS), Paul Sinclair (PS), Phil Collins (PC), Cllr Roger Phillips (RP), Richard Garnett (RG), Stephen Eckley (SE)

Apologies:

Joseph Connor, Ian Hilditch.

1. Chair Update

Following several months of very focused work NK stressed that there would be a shift away from the Enterprise Zone and back to the standard Business Board priorities. NK thanked everyone in the HBB for their work in supporting the Zone bid and the team leading it.

NK reported back on the LEP Board meeting held on 5th Sept. The Board decided to sign the MOU with UK Trade and Investment for Inward Investment support for the LEP, how Inward investment is handled within LEP is now focus of discussion. EZ Board membership was debated, agreed that NK should be LEP representative on this, also agreed that RS should act as Chair of EZ and represent the HBB. EZ Board will also have representation from Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Councils and Business Boards.

Auxiliary Group representatives. The LEP has set up sector focused auxiliary groups, currently looking for members, will act as task and finish groups and their action plans will inform LEP Business Plan.

Actions:

- NW to circulate the list of auxiliary groups to HBB members
- HBB members to contact NW if they would like to sit on one of the auxiliary groups.

2. Enterprise Zone Update:

RS updated on progress since confirmation of success, spoken to lead Civil Servant in Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) about any government guidance, due to be out week commencing 12th Sept.

Pressing on with management structure regardless, Board structure will be developed asap, delivery team to be led by NW and appointments to be made within next couple of months.

Looking at getting sponsorship from local and national companies (Banks, Accountants, Legal Firms, hospitality etc), companies must be able to “offer” something, either to EZ or to businesses within it. Also must be a fair process for selecting sponsor businesses.

Reporting to the HBB will occur on a regular basis and will include: financial updates, number and nature of enquiries, outputs (jobs created, companies locating), communications.

3. Branding for Herefordshire

NS gave a presentation on the outcome of recent branding exercise, looking at “living” brand that can be used for both tourism and business use. Will be used for Inward Investment, HBB, place branding, product branding etc.

Actions:

- Looking for 10 leading Herefordshire companies who will use the new branding on their products (‘Made Here’) and on their emails/letterheads (‘Proud to be Here’).
- Nominations or volunteers to contact NW.

4. Superfast Broadband Update

NS updated group on progress with SFB, currently at Invitation to Submit Outline Submission (ISOS) stage, companies have 40 days to respond to our spec, start competitive dialogue after this stage, final tenders to be submitted by end of year. Delivery to start around Sept 2012.

Need companies to sign up to demand stimulus website, will strengthen our hand when negotiating with companies. Recent government announcements on amount given to various counties for SFB doesn't help our negotiating position.

Actions:

- Members to sign up to Broadband for Herefordshire website and to encourage others to do so.

5. Working Group Updates

Small Business Support

JJ gave updates on grant schemes: Business Booster has had 70 expressions of interest of which 25 have come back as applications, applying for £67k in total. Training Voucher has had 9 applications applying for £5k in total.

NW reported that Herefordshire Council had secured £465k of EU funding to support business start up and business booster schemes, would secure the Business Booster offer for next three years.

Communications

HG presented a paper on communications and HBB website, should be very simple website, should signpost to as many other relevant websites as possible, don't repeat information. Could get something for under £2k, will include hosting and on-going support, have already registered some potential domain names.

Actions;

- NW to investigate procurement of website and establish budget.

6. Other matters

HG presented paper on support to retail sector. Proposal to lobby Mary Portas for inclusion of Hereford in pilot project for governments retail review was supported. Proposals on parking to be discussed at next meeting.

Actions:

- Need 6 city retail businesses to support letter lobbying Mary Portas, HG, GW and NW to arrange.

Discussion

Rob Garner from the Bulmer Foundation gave a quick update on the work of the Foundation on greening businesses, asked for volunteers to represent the business community.

7. Date of next meeting: 1st November 2011, TRP building, Rotherwas.