

**Hertfordshire Economic Partnership Board
Minutes of meeting held on
Monday 30th March 2009**

Attendance:

Herts County Council:	Cllr Robert Gordon Cllr David Lloyd Jan Hayes-Griffin David Hughes
North Herts College	Fintan Donohue
Herts CVS Group	Mark Mitchell
Exemplas	Jo Ransom
Herts Chamber of Commerce and Industry:	Tim Hutchings
University of Hertfordshire	Stephen Boffey
East of England International	David Riches
Herts Prosperity	John Pryor
Broxbourne Borough Council:	Cllr Ken Ayling Richard Freeston-Gough
Dacorum Borough Council:	Cllr Ian Reay Chris Taylor
East Herts District Council:	Cllr Mike Carver Paul Pullin
Hertsmere Borough Council:	Cllr Morris Bright Richard Grove Polly Chacon
North Herts District Council:	Cllr F J Smith Andy Bevan
St Albans City & District Council:	Cllr Melvyn Teare Richard Shwe
Stevenage Borough Council:	Cllr Sharon Taylor Peter Bandy
Watford Borough Council:	Mayor Dorothy Thornhill Jane Custance
Welwyn/Hatfield District Council:	Cllr Mandy Perkins

Apologies: Councillor Charles Goldstein, Hertsmere Borough Council
Glen Woodrige, Hertsmere Borough Council
Chris Conway, Welwyn/Hatfield District Council
Will O'Neill, East Herts District Council

	Item	Action by
1.	Welcome and Introduction Robert Gordon, Chair of the Economic Partnership Board, welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new partnership, and asked each person to introduce themselves and the organisation they represented.	
2.	Hertfordshire Economic Partnership Board	

	<p>The Board considered a paper presented by Jan Hayes Griffin (HCC) outlining the terms of reference, partnership structure and governance arrangements and priorities for 2009/10.</p> <p>As there was no consensus at the meeting on the name of the new partnership, the Chair asked Board Members to submit ideas within the next few days.</p> <p>Action: All Board Members to suggest name/strapline for new partnership.</p> <p>The Terms of Reference of the Board, partnership structure and governance arrangements were agreed.</p> <p>The following lead Board Members were agreed for each Topic Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategy & Economic Intelligence University of Hertfordshire - Skills and Economic Participation Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry - Recession Task Force Hertsmere Borough Council - Inward Investment & Business Support Hertfordshire County Council - Vibrant Towns Watford Borough Council <p>Jan Hayes Griffin explained that each group would be supported by an officer/partner group to take forward the work of the topic group.</p> <p>Mark Mitchell queried whether a 3rd sector group should be set up. Jan Hayes Griffin said she envisaged the V & CS strongly represented across the 5 proposed topic groups. However, it was agreed there was a need to keep topic group themes under review on an annual basis to ensure continued relevance and to pick up emerging new themes.</p> <p>The Board agreed the 2009/10 priorities, set out in the paper.</p> <p>Mark Mitchell suggested that the Partnership also needed to monitor other social and environmental performance indicators, particularly in relation to low carbon economy, sustainable development and social inclusion.</p> <p>Action: Jan Hayes-Griffin to identify other social and environmental indicators of relevance to the economic</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>JHG</p>
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	<p>partnership.</p> <p>Councillor Mandy Perkins (WHDC) said there was a need to establish clear action target to measure the success of the new partnership. Jan Hayes Griffin said one of the first tasks of the new topic groups was to establish action plans.</p> <p>Action: Each Topic group to meet quickly and develop Smart Action Plan.</p>	<p>Topic Group Leaders</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Tackling the Recession</p> <p>David Hughes (HCC) presented a paper outlining the range of activities/initiatives being carried out by partners to support business, people and places in Hertfordshire through the recession. The Board also considered a draft pledge prepared by the Recession Task Force.</p> <p>Members of the Board made a number of comments and suggestions for rewording the draft recession pledge:</p> <p>Pledge no 4: Provide advice on debt management and income maximisation/benefit entitlement for people facing financial difficulty.</p> <p>Pledge no 6: This should be deleted as its purpose is subsumed in Pledge no 9.</p> <p>Pledge no 13: Support the economy and vibrancy of our towns, including local shopping areas.</p> <p>Pledge no 11: Work with employers to maintain existing jobs, identify opportunities for new jobs and promote the re-skilling and lifelong learning of employees.</p> <p>Add extra pledge To promote apprenticeships across all sectors and encourage new entrepreneurs in Hertfordshire.</p> <p>Add extra pledge To monitor the impact of the recession on public services across Hertfordshire.</p> <p>Subject to these amendments the Partnership Board agreed to endorse the pledge.</p> <p>Tim Hutchings and Fintan Donahue referred to the need to be innovative in the way in which support was provided to people wanting</p>	

	to retrain, set up new business. Reference was made to new Executive Job Clubs set up in Letchworth and St. Albans and using a variety of different venues.	
4.	<p>Engaging Business in Hertfordshire</p> <p>Tim Hutchings of HCCI outlined proposals to establish a network of local business advisory groups across the county and a countywide business forum by July. This will build on a number of successful groups and provide the opportunity for partners to engage with business more comprehensively across Hertfordshire and to promote a more business friendly image for Hertfordshire. There would be a strong link to Local Learning Partnerships and the Herts Adult Learning Partnership.</p> <p>Jan Hayes Griffin said the Chair of the Countywide Business Forum would sit on the Economic Partnership Board.</p> <p>David Lloyd said there was a need to ensure the business forum represented all sectors and sizes of businesses across Hertfordshire. Tim Hutchings said this was the intention but would take time to achieve complete coverage.</p> <p>Other members of the Board referred to the need to ensure the rural economy/rural business were represented, and the importance of sustainability issues and a low carbon approach to future economic growth.</p> <p>The Economic Partnership Board endorsed the proposals to establish a countywide business forum.</p>	
5.	<p>Inward Investment</p> <p>Jan Hayes Griffin outlined a proposal to create a jointly funded post between Hertfordshire County Council and East of England International to focus on attracting inward investment into Hertfordshire.</p> <p>David Riches, Chief Executive of East of England International outlined the work of his organisation which is funded by the RDA and UK Trade and Industry. The purpose was to promote inward investment of foreign companies to the region, and support local firms develop trade links abroad. At present, there are 2500 foreign owned companies in the region, 700 of which are in Hertfordshire. Hertfordshire is seen to have significant locational advantages for foreign companies.</p> <p>The proposal to create a dedicated Hertfordshire Inward Investment post was welcomed by the Board.</p>	
6.	Developing a new Hertfordshire Economic Vision and Strategy	

	<p>John Pryor presented a paper outlining the process and timetable for the development of the new economic vision and strategy for Hertfordshire.</p> <p>Members of the Board said there was a need to ensure the Business Advisory groups were fully involved in developing the strategy.</p> <p>A number of Board Members said that the timetable for the strategy was too long and said that it should be in place by November to link in to the conference.</p> <p>Jan Hayes Griffin said each of the topic groups will need to contribute towards the strategy.</p> <p>The Board agreed the paper subject to changing the timetable so that the draft strategy was produced by November.</p>	
7.	<p>Herts Forward Conference 6 November 2009</p> <p>David Hughes presented a paper outlining the proposed content of the Herts Forward conference on 6th November, the theme of which was the economy.</p> <p>A number of Board Members felt the purpose and overall message of the conference needed to be clearer and that it needed a different content to attract business and have links to the wider agenda, e.g. low carbon, links with health etc. It also needed to be reconfigured to enable the launch of the new strategy.</p> <p>Other Board Members suggested workshops to be covered including St. Albans city vision, Royston Bid process, Rural Development Programme.</p> <p><i>Action: David Hughes/Jan Hayes Griffin to recast content in consultation with partners.</i></p>	DH/JHG
8.	<p>Any Other Business None</p>	
9.	<p>Dates of future meetings <i>Action: Jan Hayes-Griffin to identify dates for 2009/10 and circulate to the Board</i></p>	JHG