

Report from the Local Enterprise Partnership Summit 24th November 2010

This report feeds back on the workshops and discussions that took place at our first Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership Summit on 24th November 2010 in St Ives.

This is part of the ongoing communication and engagement we promised you on the day, and provides us all with the opportunity to reflect on the discussions that took place before putting them into action. This is the first step in the process and there will be more to come.

The presentations from the day can now be found online at www.yourlocalenterprisepartnership.co.uk and you can continue the discussions on LinkedIn within the “Your Local Enterprise Partnership” group.



Objective of the Summit

The main objective of the Summit was to establish the key priorities and objectives for the proposed Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership. What do businesses, education providers, the voluntary sector, and local authorities want their LEP to focus on?

Scene-setting

The first LEP Summit was introduced by John Bridge, chair of the LEP Project Board, who welcomed attendees to the event and encouraged them to make the most of the opportunity to help shape the LEP proposal.

Alex Plant provided an introduction to Local Enterprise Partnerships; how they are intended to take the place of former regional structures, and setting out possible roles that the LEP might have. He summarised Government policy statements on LEPs, stressing that there was significant flexibility so that LEPs could be tailored to each area's particular needs. The presentation concluded with the next steps in the LEP process: gathering views, resolving funding, functions & governance, and making the LEP happen.

Neil Darwin then presented a summary of the economic characteristics of the LEP area. Noting that the area has a number of characteristics in common, he described the sectors that have a strong presence within the LEP and the opportunities offered by growth and a globally recognised brand. The weaknesses and potential priorities of the LEP were summarised, concluding with the overall aim of the LEP to create significant numbers of new jobs and promote economic growth.

Audience

In total 80 delegates attended the first LEP Summit from local authorities, Government, business, the third sector, and education sector from across the GC GP LEP area.

Each local authority was given the opportunity to invite local businesses to join the debate, which lead to a broad range of sector expertise including high-tech, bio-tech, clean-tech, utilities, manufacturing, transport and tourism.

Each table of eight delegates included a mix of private and public sector representatives from across the geographical area to ensure the workshop sessions had a mixture of perspectives within each group.

Best hopes for the Enterprise Partnership

As an ice-breaker for the day the delegates were asked to name their best hopes for the LEP. Across the room a number of key themes emerged. The top four responses were:

- To work in a new way that cuts the red tape and is a true business/ public sector partnership
- To innovate and look for new ways of working and sharing best practice
- To boost the local economy
- To support infrastructure development of all kinds

Workshop Process

The aim of the workshop exercise was to identify key barriers to economic growth in the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough area, and explore how the LEP might help to overcome them. In order to examine this, attendees split into 10 groups of 8 or 9 people. Each group had a facilitator and a chair, to shape the discussions and capture what was said.

The workshop had four steps:

1. Identify at least three barriers to growth;
2. Cluster the identified barriers into common themes and rank these themes in order of importance;
3. Develop clear actions to address the two most significant barriers;
4. Suggest who is best placed to take responsibility for these actions. If the Enterprise Partnership is suggested, then a function that the Enterprise Partnership would need in order to take responsibility for the barrier should be proposed.



Once all ten groups had completed the exercise, each fed back their top two barriers, actions, and suggested responsible parties.

Plenary Feedback: Emerging key messages

- Clear consensus emerging on the most important barriers to growth across the Enterprise Partnership area namely, skills shortfalls, poor physical infrastructure and a lack of funding/ access to finance. Other key areas of focus included strategic planning and housing, advocacy for the area, and business support.
- A real sense of ambition for the Enterprise Partnership with a need for challenging goals to drive growth.
- A genuine desire to form a new kind of relationship between the private, public and voluntary sectors based on 'genuine partnership working' and real collaboration across boundaries and sectors.
- Recognition that the Enterprise Partnership must be hard-edged and commercial – bringing forward innovative funding solutions with a 'return on investment' focus.
- The need for the Enterprise Partnership to bring forward breakthrough innovations e.g. high speed broadband.
- The need for the Enterprise Partnership to take a leadership role, and build effective alliances between public/private/voluntary sectors and act as an effective advocate for the area.
- The Enterprise Partnership should be strategic influencer, planner and co-ordinator with delivery of services focused at more local level.
- This is a new approach, it's localism and "big society" in the context of economic development, and responsibility for the Enterprise Partnership success is down to the stakeholders across the area – businesses, Local Authorities, education, third sector – it's "us" not "them"!

Implications for Work Streams

Work streams	Emerging messages from summit workshop
Functions and transitional arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ LEP to have lobbying and advocacy role for area. ▪ Strategic planning function in LEP (coordinating local plans) ▪ Develops Business Case for ED investment ▪ Inward investment function ▪ Research capability ▪ Need for a cohesive business support infrastructure with local delivery mechanisms
Governance, structure and accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work will be influenced by the outcomes of the functions and transitional arrangements work stream
LEP Running costs	
Making a bid to the Regional Growth Fund	
Making best use of public sector assets	
Communication and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communications function including promotion, marketing and branding of the area could be a LEP function



Barriers to economic growth and jobs (Step 1)

Ranking	Barrier	Reasons
1	Skill shortfalls and gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Businesses identifying skills gaps/shortages ▪ Skill shortages slows growth -missing business opportunities ▪ Unwillingness to invest in skills training ▪ Insufficient focus on business creation/enterprising skills in schools/colleges ▪ Lack of leadership development for CEOs/managers with too much focus given to technical aspects ▪ Need to improve business decision making in organisations (better judgement) ▪ Public sector skills not aligned with private sector needs ▪ Lack of high-quality personnel available for work ▪ Businesses have poor access to HEI capabilities ▪ Business and Education not joined up ▪ Vocational route not pushed ▪ Issues over basic numeracy and literacy skills ▪ Concern over continuity of business support could give rise to skills shortages in small businesses
1	Weak physical and broadband Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wastes business time = Loss of productivity ▪ Lack of public funding for transport investment particularly A14 ▪ A14 upgrade holding back growth ▪ Poor (road/rail) access to ports ▪ High speed broadband lacking across the region ▪ Is lagging infrastructure the unintended consequences of success? ▪ Hinders business development in rural areas ▪ Poor public transport ▪ Cost of utilities (water, gas electric) ▪ Lack of strategic planning
3	Lack of funding/ Access to funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of funding both in business support and 'strategic funding' ▪ Credit crunch impacting on availability of commercial (bank) funding ▪ Reductions in EU funding ▪ Lack of public sector funding relative to GDP contribution ▪ Hampers business creation ▪ Insufficient resources to address other barriers particularly infrastructure ▪ Access to finance critical to support start-ups and help sustain growth ▪ Access to finance more critical in period of austerity ▪ Lack of certainty of funding inhibits development
4	Planning constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Over rigid planning system ▪ Lack of a joined-up planning – need a clear indication of what's needed and what's deliverable ▪ Planning that inhibits growth ▪ Planning rules need changing ▪ Planning system too complicated ▪ Planning not joined up locally/regionally/nationally
4	Lack of affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of affordable housing particularly around Cambridge ▪ Shortages of supply – demand not met ▪ Make up of supply wrong ▪ Barrier for employers in attracting good quality staff ▪ Rutland house prices 12x Average salary ▪ Development land too expensive ▪ Lack of office/business space ▪ Section 106
6	Lack of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inability to form a coherent voice for the whole area (breaking down

	leadership	<p>the barriers between locations and between private/public sectors)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Results in a lack of influence in Whitehall ▪ Lack of effective leadership ▪ Untapped potential of businesses not engaged ▪ Lack of understanding between statutory organisations, private sector and voluntary sector on how to collaborative and work together ▪ Slow bureaucratic systems lead to businesses giving-up ▪ Failure to learn from the past ▪ Lack of innovative thinking (outside the box) ▪ Divisive politics ▪ Too much focus on processes not on outcomes ▪ Self interest dominates e.g conflicts of interest at geographical level ▪ Poor communication with the business community ▪ Misinformation and misunderstanding between partners leads to delays ▪ Delays = cost ▪ Overcoming established boundaries ▪ Unclear on brand and marketing message for the area overseas ▪ Poor coordination of strategic ventures especially if there is a national element ▪ Red tape/bureaucratic interference
6	Quality of life aspirations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of culture/aspiration <i>links with skills</i> ▪ Inequalities of opportunity ▪ Big society!!!! ▪ How do we bring the community with us? ▪ Lack of a 'can do' culture ▪ Equipping people for the world of work ▪ Job losses in the public sector
7	Lack of business support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concern over continuity of business support ▪ Access to funding for SMEs without time/skills to acquire funding ▪ Lack of sharing of best practice and cooperation between SMEs ▪ Insufficient support and finance for start-ups and growth orientated SMEs ▪ Issues over compliance and red tape ▪ Low levels of business start-ups ▪ Need to attract and invest in 'sustainable growth' businesses ▪ Inward investment (attracting new businesses to the area) ▪ Lack of a consistent local business advise system ▪ Lack of dedicated support for hi-tech start-ups e.g Biotech

Actions to address 'barriers to growth' (Step 2)

Ranking	Barrier	Actions
1	Skill shortfalls and gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engage businesses to ensure their training needs inform training provider provision ▪ Influence the Sector Skills Councils to reflect business needs in their qualification specifications ▪ Develop effective mechanism for engaging SMEs in the skills debate ▪ Work with business clusters to determine skills needs and demand ▪ Lock HE/FE/training providers into process which aligns courses to business needs ▪ Invest in educational facilities ▪ Early intervention in schools to plant seed of entrepreneurialism ▪ Build effective partnerships between businesses and HE/FE ▪ Link with benefits framework to incentivise work
1	Weak physical and broadband infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Enterprise Partnership to identify infrastructure priorities and build business case for investment ▪ Be innovative in securing resources –look for different finance models for large capital projects ▪ Influence decision makers at national/local level ▪ Build effective partnership with strong advocacy and lobbying skills ▪ Develop a long-term infrastructure plan (25 years) ▪ Address weak broadband infrastructure by the Enterprise Partnership building a public/private sector collaboration with a single voice ▪ Negotiate with broadband suppliers on a collaborative basis ▪ Focus solutions on not-spots (<2Mbit) ▪ Joined up procurement on broadband provision ▪ Use infrastructure tariffs for innovation revenue generation solutions e.g. use tolls ▪ Provide support for inland port at Peterborough
3	Lack of Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify and understand issues, priorities and goals ▪ Lobby with single voice on behalf of business to improve access to finance ▪ Identify who's best to deliver and procure at local level ▪ Identify with whom need to build relationships ▪ Engage in dialogue, be proactive ▪ Lobby for greater discretion on use of local business rates ▪ Develop a clear business case –linked to integrated planning process ▪ Reach out to other 'outside' investors including banks ▪ Raise £m's via public/private partnerships ▪ Lobby government for matched funding
4	Planning constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning: review and prioritise growth within local planning strategies ▪ Develop consistent, clear strategic planning framework across the area ▪ Fast track process for key economic projects ▪ Develop a cross Enterprise Partnership planning team (no boundaries)
4	Lack of affordable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Plan to include clear objectives and targets (including housing) ▪ Maintaining a 'pro-growth' stance ▪ Lobby for better access to mortgages ▪ Use Section 106 freedoms and flexibility to increase % of affordable housing and tenure mix ▪ Actively stimulate investment in private rental market ▪ Link house planning with employment requirements

6	Lack of leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leaders to remove politics for economic growth ▪ Work differently – build better more effective partnerships ▪ Good politics focusing on what we have in common rather than differences ▪ Stop doing stuff that not adding value (bureaucracy) ▪ Integrate team working across the partners ▪ Learn from the failures of the past ▪ Get the right people ▪ Focus on relevant outcomes, not processes ▪ Coherent and clear messages on vision, direction and values
6	Quality of life aspirations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Build on family business ethics = work together for family goals ▪ Encourage incomers ▪ Go for and encourage 'low carbon' growth ▪ Big Society – everyone is a responsible citizen
7	Lack of business support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a consistent network of local business advice –designed 'by business for business' ▪ Develop a clear branding, marketing and promotional campaign to attract inward investment ▪ Mentoring support for SMEs ▪ Build an enterprising culture by developing entrepreneurial skills in work and in education ▪ Programmes designed to support new business creation (start-ups) ▪ Support for innovation skills in business

Step 3 – Role and functions of the Enterprise Partnership
Function and Delivery Matrix

LEP

LEP Local

LEP "Pan LEP"

Local

Whole region

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordinating Local Skills Boards ▪ Encourage and support the use of tax increment finance at local level ▪ Encourage businesses to support 'real' work based apprenticeships ▪ To provide a framework for a housing market wide strategy for managing housing supply 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advocacy and lobbying function e.g. influencing Sector Skills Councils, lobbying for broadband policy, the re-introduction of technical colleges, housing reforms, better access to mortgages ▪ Strategic planning function with responsibility for indentifying infrastructure priorities including improvements to A14 ▪ Responsible for developing the business case for "regional" infrastructure investment ▪ Led on developing innovative funding models for infrastructure investment e.g. tolls, matched funding, private/public finance partnerships ▪ Pooling of funding to pump prime investment projects ▪ Inward Investment ▪ Research facility – e.g. A14 needs/evidence base
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local Skills Boards responsible for building linkages between businesses and schools/FE/HEI ▪ Delivery of business support (start-ups and supporting growth of existing businesses) ▪ HEI/FE colleges proactive in engaging businesses and aligning training courses to meet business needs. ▪ Businesses engaged in the successful delivery of infrastructure projects including stimulating investment from the private sector ▪ Flexibility on tenure mix and % of affordable housing ▪ Employer skills clusters focused around local schools/colleges ▪ Encouraging responsible citizens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local Authorities to support regional plans and lobby according. ▪ Priorities and goals/plans determined via Local Authorities aligned with regional plan ▪ Registered Social Landlords to support regional plans and lobby according. ▪ FSB, Chambers of Commerce, Country Land & Business Association and LGA to work together to deliver a cohesive voice ▪ More cohesion in business support linking signposters, social enterprises, Enterprise Agencies & Business Link together.

"Other" Local

Partner organisation

"Other" Pan LEP

Next Steps

The feedback we have received from the Summit has already been shared with the Project Board, and it will now be used to help shape individual projects further.

We will also use it as a reference point when making decisions, and having conversations with you all in the future. These are our collective first thoughts, and we must work together to develop them further over the coming months.

A LinkedIn Group has been set up (“Your Local Enterprise Partnership”) to help continue this discussion further, and we are planning a series of events in the New Year.

We are also keen to find out how you would like to be involved in the continued development of the Enterprise Partnership, and we would welcome your feedback via a short online questionnaire: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/9YGK9T2>

Most importantly, thank you for taking part – we really believe that the Enterprise Partnership gives us the opportunity to work in a new way: a genuine and functional collaboration between business, local authorities, education, and the third sector.