

LEPs

# The Policy Context

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**Your**

**Local Enterprise  
Partnership**

# What are LEPs?

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Coalition Programme says:

*“We will support the creation of Local Enterprise Partnerships – joint local authority-business bodies brought forward by local authorities themselves to promote local economic development – to replace RDAs”*

A letter from the Secretaries of State for Business and Communities and Local Government inviting areas to put forward LEP bids over the summer of last year – ours was one of the first 24 to get the green light from Ministers in Autumn 2010

# What are LEPs?

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- LEPs are the key vehicle for delivering economic growth and rebalancing the economy at the sub-national level
- Expected to take strategic lead in local economic growth
- Locally created around natural economic geographies
- Business-led, but working with local government and other key sectors impacting on economic growth
- Reflection of principles of Big Society and Localism in economic development sphere – not agents of Govt

# What will LEPs do?

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- Government not prescriptive
- Each LEP to determine its own priorities
- But expected to help tackle issues such as:
  - transport and infrastructure;
  - economic development;
  - employment and skills;
  - strategic planning and housing;
  - supporting start-ups and high-growth potential

# Local Growth White Paper

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- *“The Government wishes to see partnerships which understand their economy and are directly accountable to local people and local businesses”*
- *“We particularly encourage partnerships working in respect to transport, housing and planning as part of an integrated approach to growth and infrastructure delivery”*

# Local Growth White Paper

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- Over 90 references to LEPs
- Including one that says “LEPs are expected to fund their own running costs”
- LEP role suggested in: innovation, low carbon, inward investment, skills, regeneration, EU funding, planning, housing, transport, business support, sector policy, green infrastructure, supply chain management, tourism, trade development, venture capital, economic intelligence, employment, Broadband, Olympics and Paralympics.....

# Concerns about LEPs

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*“LEPs look more & more like talking shops”*  
Local Government Chronicle – January 2011

*LEPs could be 'toothless tigers' warns business group*  
The Business Desk – August 2010

***“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”***  
BIS Select Committee Report – November 2010

# LEPs : a new approach

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- Not about chasing Government grants
- Can create a better platform across local areas to support sustainable economic growth
- A means by which partners across all sectors can put collective shoulders to the wheel to address agreed priorities and tackle barriers
- Budget sets out possible new funding freedoms
- Enterprise Zones, Tax Increment Finance, other forms of local revenue streams provide new opportunities to drive investment in priority areas
- LEPs to be centre stage in exploiting these