



Worcestershire
Local Enterprise Partnership

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WORCESTERSHIRE LEP NEWSLETTER

Bulletin no: 21



BUMPER CHRISTMAS EDITION

From the WLEP Chair, Peter Pawsey

In the best traditions of Christmas, here is the Worcestershire LEP's festive bumper bulletin! Since my last update, a lot has been happening in the world of LEPs and the items below explain further. The turn of the year is a good moment to reflect on progress, consolidate achievements and renew energies for the forthcoming year. In 2013, the WLEP will be focused on delivering its Business Plan and enabling others to make their contributions. At the recent WLEP Conference, I vowed to "talk up Worcestershire" and lead partners and diverse interests in lobbying, persuading and influencing others to invest in and promote Worcestershire's huge potential of business, places and people.

I wish you all a very Happy Christmas, a prosperous New Year and look forward to working with you to deliver the LEP's ambitions in 2013.

FORTHCOMING DATES AND EVENTS

Tuesday 8th January
Meeting Mark Pearce &
Geoff Hughes,
Herefordshire Council

Wednesday 9th January
Special LEP Board, LEP
HQ

WLEP Conference "The Outlook is Bright in Worcestershire"

Worcestershire's outlook is extremely bright and optimistic around growth and employment prospects, according to overwhelming positive feedback received for the LEP Conference on 9 November 2012, and compered magnificently by ITV Central's Emma Jesson. Over 300 delegates, two thirds of whom represented businesses, attended Worcester Warriors Rugby Club to hear about the newly launched WLEP Business Plan, Regulatory and Business Partnership Charter and WLEP website.

Miranda Ballard, of Muddy Boots Foods, caught

Worcester News' Local
Business Awards Judging

Monday 14th January
Cyber Security Sector
Meeting

Thursday 17th January
Worcester Technology
Park Board Meeting

**Wednesday 23rd
January** Wychavon
Business Ratepayers'
Consultation Meeting

Thursday 24th January
WLEP Board Meeting,
WLEP HQ

Monday 28th January
Meeting with Leader &
Deputy Leader Malvern
Hills DC

Tuesday 29th January
Meeting with the
Woodland Trust

Thursday 14th February
Redditch Business
Leaders Lunch with BIS
Minister, Michael Fallon
MP, at Westminster

Thursday 21st February
West Midlands LEPs
Chairs and CEOs
meeting, Birmingham

South Worcestershire Development Plan

The WLEP welcomes the three local authority decisions to progress with the joint plan, with particular reference to the allocation of employment land in the right places to attract investment and to maximise the use of our excellent infrastructure.

the audience's imagination with her entrepreneurial spirit, returning with her husband from London to their home county and successfully launching a new business selling locally sourced beef burgers, from Hereford Farmers' Market to national supermarket chains. Urging people to "be positive", she noted: "Small businesses are trendy at the moment in the media and government – let's make this a county of non-whingers." It was a theme which the audience really got behind, inspired by Josh Tiffany and Andrew Craik of Cattleya CIC, a social enterprise exotic cocktail company founded and run by students from King Charles School in Kidderminster, who quipped that the future lay with the "scary young people" they represented. Interactive texting and voting alongside a flurry of Twitter comments throughout the conference provided a real time sounding board for the WLEP and speakers.

David Frost, National LEP Network Chair, Mark Garnier, MP for Wyre Forest and Lorraine Holmes, Chief Executive, Manufacturing Advisory Service, stressed the need to address skills, access to finance and regulation to support business growth, all priority areas for the WLEP.

WLEP Business Plan - The Outlook is Bright in Worcestershire

The launched WLEP Business Plan lays down important foundations for delivery and tangible change over the next few years. The Plan reflects the efforts of the WLEP Executive, WLEP Board and Business Board in the preceding six months in consulting wide ranging interests, listening to ideas and perspectives and creating a robust framework of ambitions which will shape the WLEP's direction and impacts over the next few years.

The WLEP has set a series of Worcestershire targets including 10,000 new jobs in the next five years, 1,000 new apprenticeships and attracting new private sector funding of £750 million by 2017. Four strategic objectives will steer and broker delivery by a wide variety of business, public and third sector interests. Have a look at the business plan on the WLEP website www.wlep.co.uk or contact the WLEP Office to get your own hard copy.

Cross Border Co-operation

We recently met with the Chair and Executive of Gloucestershire LEP to discuss cross border opportunities related to transport infrastructure, manufacturing and tourism initiatives.

WLEP submitted comments to Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP on its recent Economic White Paper consultation and continues to work in positive collaboration with its neighbour, especially in joining efforts and resources to benefit Kidderminster, Redditch and Bromsgrove.

Transport Summit and Communiqué Signing

On the 13th November at Molineux Stadium, Wolverhampton, I signed on behalf of the Worcestershire LEP, a transport communiqué aimed at securing the maximum funding and co-operation across all six West Midlands LEP areas within the West Midlands.

Armed Forces Covenant

As a signatory to the Armed Forces Covenant, the WLEP is keen to

Board and Business Board Appointments

The WLEP has strengthened its commitment to build jobs and growth with the appointment of a host of new board members. Fresh blood has been injected into both the main WLEP Board and the Business Board. The moves underpin an ambitious strategy for a better future.

The Board has two joint LEP Vice Chairs – Cllr Simon Geraghty, Deputy Leader of Worcestershire County Council, stays in the role while Dean Attwell, Managing Director of Oakland International, takes over from Tony Hyde of Thomas Vale.

Other new WLEP Board appointments are Carl Arntzen, Managing Director of Worcester Bosch Thermotechnology and John Callaghan, Principal of North East Worcestershire College.

Remaining in post are Cllr David Hughes, Leader of Malvern Hills District Council, Cllr John Campion, Leader of Wyre Forest District Council, Ed Webb, Executive Chairman of Webbs of Wychbold, and Alan White, Managing Director of Malvern Hills Science Park.

New appointments to the Business Board are: Jacqui Bayliss of Harris Lamb Property, Rebecca Widdowson of Hallmark Hulme Solicitors, Chris Akers, MD of Titan Steel Wheels, Paul Alekna of e-Response Recruitment, Steve Borwell-Fox, MD of borwell Ltd and Steve Speller of Speller Metcalfe.

Regulations Charter

With the Regulatory and Business Partnership Charter launched, delivery mechanisms and actions are now forming to improve businesses' experience of regulations. A working group which brings local and national regulators together is in place for the first time (Environmental Health. Trading Standards.

solutions to convert this high level commitment into actual delivery. The WLEP business community has forged a good working relationship with Brigadier Gerhard Wheeler, who is the Army's senior representative in the West Midlands. Worcestershire businesses are keen to tap into the well trained, disciplined and wide ranging talent of Armed Forces' personnel as they transition out of the Armed Forces to forge careers in the public or private sectors, particularly in the advanced engineering and cyber security sectors. There will also be opportunities for the Worcestershire workforce to become UK Reservists. Worcestershire will be one national Armed Forces pilot in 2013, so any businesses keen to get involved with this initiative should contact the WLEP Office.

New Worcestershire LEP Website

Worcestershire LEP has launched its new website www.wlep.co.uk which has an eye catching format incorporating rolling news updates and interactive connections with social media channels. The website augments all other forms of traditional communication through interactive meetings and workshops, as well as face to face meetings. You may also be interested in the established WLEP

Defra, HMRC, ACAS, Fire and Rescue Service, Environment Agency). In the New Year, a business engagement campaign will begin to capture business voices, insights and experiences to jointly develop and deliver beneficial solutions. In parallel, the evolving joint Worcestershire approach has attracted the interest of Michael Fallon, MP Minister of State for Business and Enterprise. As a consequence, Worcestershire LEP has been selected to work with BIS/BRDO (Better Regulation Delivery Office) and a handful of LEPs to develop unique and national streamlined regulatory approaches which support economic growth and enterprise. Keep an eye on the web site for updates and opportunities to get involved!

Planning Charter

The WLEP Board and Local Authorities' Leaders Panel have both agreed the forthcoming Planning and Development Charter for Worcestershire. The Charter will be launched on 9 January 2013 and will frame delivery of a 'business friendly' planning and development experience in Worcestershire. The WLEP is committed to engaging all types of businesses in this endeavour, so watch out for a forthcoming Developers/Land Owners and Agents Forum to begin this constructive challenge in the New Year.

No Stone Unturned in Pursuit of Growth (Heseltine Review)

In the national landscape, the Government's top priority is to achieve sustainable and balanced growth, and measures emerging in its Plan for Growth will steer forthcoming delivery. The Government commissioned Lord Heseltine to contribute thinking and policy development to the Government's Growth Review and produced his independent report with 89 recommendations for economic growth, highlighting the potential of LEPs to do more and expand their remit.

LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) and Twitter @worcsLEP.

Whatever your preferred channel of communications, get involved with the WLEP and let us have your views and thoughts. If you are a more traditional communicator (like me!) you can still contact the WLEP office via telephone on 01905 346180 or email enquiries@wlep.co.uk.

The Heseltine Review recommended a new partnership between private and public sectors, as well as between localities and national interests, to get the best use of limited public funds and leverage in private investment. Notable recommendations included resourcing and supporting stronger LEPs to develop their own tailored local economic growth plans and, from 2012/16, to compete for a share of a single national pot to support growth over a five year period. Interestingly, a national restructuring of the regulatory regime and a more responsive planning system mirrors Worcestershire LEP's attempts to tackle local issues with local solutions in these areas.

National Infrastructure Conference

On the 5th and 6th December, I had the opportunity to the National Infrastructure Conference at the Institution of Civil Engineers in London, and more particularly to present a paper on Worcestershire's approach to infrastructure planning. For the latter I am indebted to the work and assistance of Dale Bristow and Hannah Wyld of Worcestershire County Council, in presenting the full picture of County's planning and approach to long term needs, while also focusing on the short and medium term. I took every opportunity to present Worcestershire as THE place in which to live, work, play and invest.

Chancellor's Autumn Statement

The Government is currently considering the Heseltine Review recommendations in depth and will give its full response in Spring 2013, but the Chancellor responded in line with the general thrust of the Heseltine Review in his Autumn Statement. He signalled further individual and national resources becoming available for LEPs in the next few months. The Chancellor endorses the suggested single pot concept, whereby elements of the various departmental budgets come together, with LEPs then putting their respective cases to secure a slice of that fund. This localised approach and added financial support to LEPs provides certainty and will underpin efforts to grow Worcestershire's economy. It highlights Government confidence in LEPs, allowing Worcestershire LEP to deliver on some of its ambitions, building on the commitment of local businesses and local authorities working together. LEPs will be given a role in setting skills strategies, particularly working with further education colleges, where good progress has been made in Worcestershire. Confirmation of the £1 billion capital for the Business Bank is also welcomed and Worcestershire LEP is working to identify suitable local projects.

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