

## Swindon Enterprise Group

### Note of Meeting held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2007

#### Beard Construction, Faraday Road, Dorcan

**In Attendance:** Marc Braddock (UBiS, Small Enterprise Hub),  
Mark Beard, Beard Construction  
Phil Merrick, Innovation Centre and Swindon Chamber of Commerce  
Pete Manley, SWERDA  
Daphne Milner, GWE (Chair)  
David Evans, Swindon Borough Council (minutes)  
John Bennett, Young Enterprise

**Apologies:** Peter Beech Allen, GWE

#### 2. Minutes of last meeting

Approved as an accurate record of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2007.

#### Matters arising:

DM had had no success in speaking to Pom Sandhu from the Federation of Small Businesses.

**Action: DM to contact Pom in advance of the next meeting.**

**Action: PBA to circulate the paper on Innovation referred to at the last meeting.**

#### 3. Progress on the Group's priorities:

##### 3a Young People and Enterprise

JB reported on the progress made by the group at its meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2007, which considered how to create a culture of Enterprise amongst young people in Swindon. The group agreed that it requires quick, easy wins as well as a longer term, ambitious project. It is important to obtain the buy-in of all relevant partners in this field, and to get input from young people themselves.

**Action: PMe to speak to contacts at Thring Townsend regarding obtaining the support of Ramona Darbyshire (Organiser of the Swindon Young Professionals)**

**Action: MBe to write to Mike Godfrey at Honda regarding the potential availability of young employees at Honda who might be able to assist the group.**

Early ideas that the Young People's group had include:

1. Quick wins: expand on the idea of 'Enterprise Days' currently organised by Swindon College, perhaps aiming for around 10 per year. The group liked the idea of the project, but queried who would coordinate it, and how it would be funded.

**Action: JB to produce a brief summary of the project for the next meeting, addressing the group's queries.**

2. Major Project: Young people's Enterprise Centre, creating integration between education providers and support agencies, big businesses, and young people in Swindon. The group agreed that the project is good in principle and worth pursuing to feasibility stage at the earliest opportunity.

SBC may be in a position to offer financial assistance towards the feasibility study. DM offered the technical support of James Monk at GWE, particularly in relation to property aspects.

**Action: DE and MBr to contact mentors at UBiS regarding the availability of assistance to carry out a feasibility study.**

**Action: DE to ascertain the availability of financial assistance from SBC and other partners to carry out both projects**

### **3b Business Networks & Mentoring**

MBr spoke to his report, circulated with the agenda, which outlined existing mentoring activities in the Swindon area. The group discussed the paper and recognised that the most achievable way to take the project forward would be to build on, perhaps expanding, the existing programme at UBiS, including taking the existing mentors and project infrastructure (such as web site). It was recognised that the project could be enhanced by engaging individuals within some of Swindon's bigger businesses as mentors.

**Action: MBr to consider potential sources of funding to refresh the existing UBiS Mentoring network.**

### **3c Innovation**

**Action: PBA to present a paper on Innovation to the next meeting**

### **4. LAA II – Priorities for the next Local Area Agreement**

DE explained that deliberations over the contents of the next LAA had commenced, and that the SSEP had been asked to put forward its priorities. The group agreed that its priorities, for consideration as LAA targets, should be those issues for which sub groups have been set up to address, namely, young people, mentoring, and innovation.

**Action: DE to submit the three priority areas on behalf of the Enterprise Group to the Policy Sub Group.**

### **5. Economic Research**

DE circulated a brief overview of the research currently carried out in support of SSEP activities (see attached). The paper identified an annual Economic Analysis, and research into Industrial Sectors, as being 'owned' by the Enterprise Group. The Group requested that future research include those areas highlighted as priorities for the Enterprise Group, namely Young People, mentoring and innovation.

PM informed the group that the Swindon Chamber will be shortly sending out a member questionnaire.

**Action: DE to add the group's three priorities the research programme.**

**6. Business charter**

DE introduced the item, and explained that little progress had been made since the previous meeting, owing to the availability of a resource to progress it. The meeting discussed the approach being taken to the project. It was suggested that a more high-level format might be adopted for the Charter.

**Action: DE to produce a rough draft of the Charter and circulate it for comment.**

**7. SSEP conference – 13 November 2007**

DE and MBe gave an outline of the proposed event, which will be presented as a 'launch' of the partnership. It will be an opportunity to tell businesses what has been achieved by the partnership so far, present proposals for the future of the partnership, and obtain the businesses' buy-in and engagement both to the partnership and to individual projects. The conference will be supported by a networking lounge in which partner agencies and sub groups will be able to showcase their services and activities to delegates. DM offered the services of GWE to design the Enterprise Group's stand.

**Action: DE to ensure that Business Link is invited to take a stand in the networking lounge**

**Action: DM to ask colleague at GWE to contact DE in relation to designing the stand**

**8. Communications**

DE reported that Sinclair Brown was unable to attend this meeting.

**Action: Item to be carried forward to the next meeting, and Sinclair be asked to speak to the item.**

**9. Schedule of meetings for the remainder of the year**

**Action: DE to obtain dates for the next six months, ideally aiming for the first Tuesday of each month (with the exception of January).**

**10. Any Other Business**

The group agreed that an overview of the funding opportunities open to the group, including from Trust funds, would be of use.

**Action: DE to table report at the next meeting on the availability of funding to assist the group's work to be included on the next agenda, including advice on how to approach potential funders.**

**11. Dates of Future meetings**

To be circulated subsequently