

# Swindon Enterprise Group

Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2007  
10.00-12.00

Basepoint Business Centre, Rivermead, West Swindon

## MINUTES

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

Chaired by Daphne Milner (DM) – GWE/Business Link

Attendees:

David Evans (DE) – Economic Development Directorate, SBC  
Matt Spencer (MS) – Economic Development Directorate, SBC  
Andrea Fitzgerald (AF) – Swindon College  
Beverly Reynolds (BR) – Basepoint Manager  
Julie Allen (JA) – Co-Operative Futures  
Jim Pettipher (JP) – Co-Operative Futures  
Tim Mason (TM) – SBC Youth Service  
Geoff Tate (GT) – SBC Youth Service  
Christina Howell (CH) – Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce  
Peter James (PJ) – New Swindon Company  
John Bennett (JB) – Young Enterprise South West  
Peter Beech-Allen (PBA) – GWE  
Kate Norris (KN) – Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce  
Pete Manley (PM) – SWERDA  
Andy Reeve (AR) – Business Link  
Mike Foyle (MF) – BMW Swindon Pressings Ltd

### 2. Background

DE gave a brief introduction to the Swindon Strategic Economic Partnership and explained how the Swindon Enterprise Group will feed into it. He stated that major growth is expected but we cannot expect people to move to Swindon just because 35,000 houses will be built. We need business creation - and therefore jobs - to attract people.

DE explained the four blocks of the Economic Development Vision and Framework: Business Creation and Growth; Regenerating and Creating Places; Image and Culture; Skills and Labour Market. The Swindon Enterprise Group will form part of the Business Creation and Growth block and will drive enterprise growth and enhance access to enterprise. There will be overlap with the other blocks but, in general, other bodies will look at the issues in the other blocks.

### 3. Purpose of the Enterprise Group

DM stated that she saw the role of this group as strengthening the actions around the enterprise agenda. The group will have an action plan and will deliver outputs, with an emphasis on encouraging new start-up businesses and coordinating support for existing businesses. It also has a strong role to play in coordinating partners' activities, particularly in relation to transformational projects.

There was a discussion around links with the skills agenda and particularly the need to engage young people as soon as possible.

There was also a discussion around rural areas and the relationship of the Swindon Rural Regeneration Strategy Group to the Enterprise Group.

### 4. Draft Terms of Reference:

#### I. Membership

PBA stated that actions need to be determined before the group invites private sector companies to attend. JB added that the group should invite companies before the terms of reference are established.

DM stated that a focus group can be established that will involve local businesses and CH added that the Chamber of Commerce can assist with getting businesses onto the group.

### 5. Swindon Skills & Employment Board

DM stated that Sue Watkins (SW) would like to create a forum between businesses and learning providers. SW would like to know whether the Enterprise group could take this over or if it should be run by a separate organisation.

CH stated that the Enterprise Group should look at the results of the workshop before deciding whether to commit.

DM added that Jobcentre Plus and Learning and Skills Council (LSC) should be at the workshop.

**Action: DM/DE to talk to Sue Watkins from LSC.**

6. 2007 Work Programme

DM asked the members of the group about the process needed to establish an action plan.

It was decided that a half-day workshop would be held in order to determine the action plan, considering how the group can create a programme of activity to encourage new businesses and growth in existing companies.

**Action: DE, DM and PBA to meet in advance of the workshop to plan the meeting.**

7. Schedule of future meetings

**Action: DE/DM will send around details of the workshop and the next meeting.**