

# Swindon Enterprise Group

## Note of Meeting held on Monday 23rd November 2009

### Venue - Thring Townsend Lee & Pembertons, Swindon

**In Attendance:** Ramona Derbyshire, Thring Townsend Lee & Pembertons (Chair)  
Heydar Faramarzi, Emnico Technologies  
Simon Jackson, InSwindon Company  
Tom McInerney, EtherLive  
Mark Pepperall, Hot Pepper Design  
Neil Reaich, Swindon Borough Council  
Gerry Reilly, Federation of Small Businesses  
Vanda Tanner, OMG Hair & Beauty  
Jessica Vallentine, Business Link  
Phil Merrick, Swindon Borough Council

**Apologies:** Samantha Badminton, Legal & General  
Nick Beaumont-Jones, Swindon Chamber of Commerce  
Peter Beech-Allen, GWE Business West  
Steve Causer, SwinCity  
Tiso Fiaola, Swindon Borough Council  
Sam McGrath, Lloyds TSB

#### 1. Minutes of Last Meeting

Agreed as a true reflection of the meeting.

#### 2. Actions & Matters Arising

Actions associated with execution of Youth Enterprise Challenge event all completed. (Actions at 3.)

Business Link Adviser now available to assist Mark Pepperall in developing *Mind Your Own Business* prototype. (Action at 4.)

Working Group met to develop Route Map. (Action at 4.)

Actions associated with execution of New Business Competition all completed. (Actions at 5.)

Action on Banks Network follow-up activity to carry forward. (Action at 6.)

Presentation for SSEP Conference completed. (Action at 8.)

Representatives of other sub-groups to be invited to future meetings. Action to be re-visited early in New Year. (Action at 8.)

#### 3. Youth Enterprise Group Update

RD provided the group with a briefing on the Youth Enterprise Challenge event, which took place on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2009. Around 120 students representing 12 Swindon schools and colleges participated in what was, without doubt, a great success. All presentations made by the students were of a high standard and supporting material e.g. promotional leaflets, were professionally produced, making judging a very hard task. NR stated that the teachers involved were impressed with the way the event had been organised and were very appreciative of the enthusiasm that had been installed in the students by group members from an early stage.

Students had a choice of two projects. Winners of the IT Green Project were the *EDGE Team* from Ridgeway School and winners of the Creative Media Project were the *TOP NOTES Team*, a joint St Joseph's and Crowdys Hill School team.

It was agreed that the Youth Enterprise Group now need to meet to discuss follow-up activity, particularly individual feedback to the schools and ongoing engagement.

**Action: Youth Enterprise Group to meet to action feedback to schools and plan ongoing engagement.**

#### **4. *Mind Your Own Business* Route Map Update**

RD specifically thanked Mark Pepperall and Tom McInerney for executing a successful launch of our *Mind Your Own Business* route map service at the SSEP conference. (It was noted that Mark had gone above and beyond the call of duty in ruining a set of clothes whilst painting the Jenga display!) MP reminded the group that the home page video still needs to be commissioned and it was agreed that well known Swindon entrepreneurs should be approached e.g. Richard James, James Swift together with this years Business Competition winners.

In order to get the site populated with "live" start-up Swindon businesses, all group members will invite around 3 known contacts to register. All group members were also encouraged to populate the open forum facility in order to kick-start community use and discussion around "Swindon centric" business issues.

TMcI stressed the need for further proactive launch activity, particularly with the aim of raising awareness amongst our target audience and that a plan/campaign of activity was required. It was agreed that the group would need to go out to an external specialist and SJ offered to invite VOX PR to our next meeting in order to advise on the most appropriate techniques and media channels. Sponsorship opportunities also need to be discussed with a view to creating an income stream from the service.

HF stressed the importance of gathering webstats e.g. visits and navigation, on usage in order to assess and improve the site as it becomes established.

With the successful Youth Enterprise Challenge still fresh in the mind, NR agreed to investigate potential usage of the service amongst colleagues and associates who are delivering Swindon's youth enterprise agenda.

The group were unanimous in inviting Mark Pepperall to join the group on a permanent basis.

**Action: All Group members to recruit 3 known contacts to route map.**

**Action: RD to approach well known Swindon entrepreneurs to request video interviews.**

**Action: SJ to invite VOX PR to next meeting.**

**5. New Business Competition**

As announced at the SSEP Conference on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2009, *Bloomfields Fine Foods* are the winners this year, with the two runners-up being *Evershine Granites & Quicktime Skips*. Although the total entry (of 6) was disappointing, the three winning entries are of high quality and the overall winner, Sue Belcher, the Proprietor of *Bloomfields Fine Foods*, is to be invited to join Swindon Enterprise Group.

The judging process has highlighted several improvements for next year, specifically refinement to the questioning on the application form.

**Action: RD to invite Sue Belcher of Bloomfields Fine Foods to join Group.**

**Action: TF to provide feedback to winners along with their cheques.**

**6. Economic Development & Regeneration in Swindon**

PM asked if there were any questions following the presentation by Gavin Jones (Chief Executive of Swindon Borough Council) at the SSEP Conference about a "New Borough Wide Delivery Vehicle for Swindon". It was agreed that PM should keep the group up to date with developments as they are announced.

**7. Any Other Business**

RD received several requests, following her stimulating presentation at the SSEP Conference, to join the Enterprise Group. These were considered on an individual basis and will be followed up, as appropriate.

**8. Date of Next Meeting**

**8.30 a.m. on Tuesday 22nd December 2009** at Thring Townsend Lee & Pembertons, Drakes Meadow, Swindon.