

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

SUPPORTING BUSINESS AND INWARD INVESTMENT

REPORT TO THE CUSTOMER, COMMUNITY & PARTNERSHIP SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 10th MAY 2016

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR BUSINESS, DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the strategy and performance of the Council in the delivery of business support services and promotion of the Borough to inward investors and how this is to be developed to support the Borough's growth strategy.
- 1.2 The core of the service comprises a team of Business Support Officers with a focus on the delivery of a wide range of business support to all business sectors and a team of Inward Investment Officers whose remit is to develop strong relationships with Telford's top 250 companies, to assist those companies to expand and realise their growth potential and to promote the Borough to potential new investors.
- 1.3 The Business Support team play an essential role in meeting business needs in terms of recruitment, skills and training, and works as an intermediary between businesses, schools and colleges, working closely with the Skills Service Delivery team. Both teams work closely with teams across the Council including Estates & Investment, Planning, Business Rates and Skills to meet the needs and opportunities from business expansion in the Borough.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In 2012, Cabinet approved the establishment of a 'First Point' for business; a single point of contact for business to access Council Services. This was in recognition of the crucial role that the Council has to play in providing a range of services that support the needs of local companies and potential investors. It was also in response to the Local Economic Assessment which highlighted access to Council services as a key issue for businesses, with a need for a 'one stop shop' approach.
- 2.2 First Point for Business & Planning was established in Wellington in 2013, supported by the co-location in the Council's Wellington Offices of the Business Support, Inward Investment, Estates & Investment, Skills and Planning teams – many of the key services that businesses were trying to engage with in order to support their growth. Underpinned by a Council Charter for Business a commitment was made to provide a joined up service including the engagement of other teams such as licensing and regulation services and business tax collection and to refocus the Council's engagement with business from a largely regulatory one to one that actively sought out and supported business growth.
- 2.3 Also in 2013 the Council launched 'Invest in Telford' a proactive campaign to attract business and investment supporting its commitment to being a 'business supporting and business winning' Authority. Through Invest in Telford the Inward Investment and Business Support service area promoted the Borough as a place to invest to both existing businesses and potential new investors and offered free support to businesses from start-ups to our largest companies.

3.0 INVEST IN TELFORD

- 3.1 Launched in 2013 the Invest in Telford campaign created a strategy and programme that incorporated free business support (through First Point) and the promotion of Telford as a place for businesses to invest and expand, driving economic growth and job creation. The campaign was supported by a high quality website, marketing literature and investment propositions which have been used to respond to the widest possible range of investment enquiries. The Team were able to develop tailored packages of support depending on the businesses needs including advice on business planning and marketing, recruitment, land and property.
- 3.2 Through this campaign the service worked to raise Telford's profile with the Government's trade and industry body (UKTI), with Telford now promoted through this body as a key UK investment destination for advanced manufacturing and in particular automotive manufacturing.
- 3.3 Through the Invest campaign the service also raised Telford's profile with investment intermediaries such as property agents, lawyers and accountants with attendance at key trade shows and events generating significant investment enquiries. The service has developed account management relationships with Telford's top 180 foreign direct investors, gathering local intelligence and supporting these companies to expand.
- 3.4 Since the launch of the Invest in Telford campaign the service area has:
- generated 132 investment leads
 - directly secured 21 new business investments creating 369 jobs
 - supported the expansion of 13 of the Borough's strategic businesses including Stadco, BAE, Denso and Heinz who have made multi-million pound investments
 - delivered full turnkey solutions, in house, for a number of investors including land acquisition, design and build, relocation and project management
 - worked with the Estates & Investments team to secure land and property disposals
 - regular contact with over 3,500 businesses
 - visited and given direct support to over 1,000 businesses
 - directly helped businesses secure funding for growth in excess of nearly £2.5m which has created 274 jobs and safeguarded 356 jobs
- 3.5 As part of its role in supporting businesses with their recruitment, skills and training needs the Council has also secured business commitment to recruitment opportunities for the young and unemployed and encouraged business participation in skills and jobs fairs directly supporting the Council's Job Box programme and contributing to the reduction in youth unemployment. The business community has also joined forces with the Council to support aspiring entrepreneurs and pre-start ups with successful annual events around Global Entrepreneurs Week and Start Up Saturday.
- 3.6 The Council is a member of the Telford Business Board – a private sector Board comprising 20 business leaders from across the Borough's business sectors chaired by Paul Hinkins – a local business owner. The Board and its sector champions is increasingly the voice of business locally working with the Council to put propositions to investors, identify and address issues faced by existing businesses and promote the Borough.

3.7 The Council is a member of the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership. LEPs are public/private partnerships typically covering groups of counties or sub regions, introduced by Government to drive economic growth across England. The Marches LEP also covers Shropshire and Herefordshire and is an influential organisation through which significant funding for infrastructure, skills and business support is channelled by Government.

4.0 CHANGING NATIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

National Growth Hub Programme

4.1 Since 2015 the delivery strategy of the Service Area has started to change in response to changes in the national, regional and local context and an increasingly competitive inward investment landscape.

4.2 At a national level, Government has launched a national initiative to simplify and streamline the delivery of support to business. This was as a result of increasingly confusing and often competing programmes of support on offer to businesses through a variety of different public and private agencies. Government tasked each Local Enterprise Partnership to develop a Business Growth Hub through which accessible and 'joined up' support could be given to businesses regardless of sector or stage of development. There are now 39 Growth Hubs established across each of the LEP areas nationally and the first Growth Hub week, celebrating the role of the Hubs, will be held in May 2016

4.3 In October 2015 the Council, with its partners the Telford Business Board, the University of Wolverhampton and the Marches LEP launched a new Business Growth Hub at the Telford Innovation Campus, Priorslee. The Growth Hub, which will complement First Point in Wellington, brings together the Council's Investment and Business Support team with the University's Business Solutions team, the Business Board Sector Champions and a range of other local, regional and national business support providers in a one stop shop that meets all business needs and acts as a showcase to attract inward investment.

4.4 The Growth Hub, which offers hot-desking, meeting space and access to webinars, also provides access to significant European Grant Funding programmes, export advice, direct access to research and innovation and links to business and sector networks. The Telford Growth Hub links to a virtual Growth Hub website, managed by the Marches LEP and our Hub co-ordinates and shares activities with physical Hubs in Herefordshire and Shropshire.

4.5 In less than 6 months the Telford Growth Hub has made significant progress establishing itself as the 'go to' for, coordinated local business support –

- welcomed over 350 businesses to use the Hubs meeting room and webinar facilities.
- hosting a diverse series of business events, workshops and meetings covering a wide range of topics from cyber security and drone technology to free business start up seminars, access to finance and skills related events.
- attracting in kind sponsorship from intermediaries such as Lloyds Bank, Lanyon and Bowdler and the Federation of Small Business and
- is also successfully promoting a hot-desking membership package to start up businesses.

- 4.6 Through the Growth Hub the teams are developing strong links with the University, maximising opportunities for collaboration and introducing businesses to the support services offered by the University, specifically linked to advanced manufacturing and the automotive industry.

Enterprise Telford

- 4.7 Since the launch of Invest in Telford, Telford's economy has shown positive signs of growth with company expansions particularly strong in manufacturing, defence and logistics (highlighted by the £83m investment into the MOD Logistics Hub at Donnington, but also growing through investments by local companies include BAE Systems).
- 4.8 Given the growth in the local economy the Council has determined to designate the whole of Telford an enterprise area – Enterprise Telford – and has developed an Enterprise Telford Pledge to Business to provide a unique borough wide offer that matches investor aspirations with a tailor-made support package. Enterprise Telford will now replace the Invest in Telford campaign and will be formally launched on the 26th May 2016 at a Midlands Insider (top regional business publication) breakfast event at the Growth Hub.

Looking Forward

- 4.9 The Borough has seen considerable success through the investment into business support and inward investment and Telford has an unrivalled land offer in the region and fast connections nationally and internationally, but there are challenges and opportunities. The core services are currently undergoing some restructuring to align capacity to address this.

Key priorities for the service looking forward are set out in the Enterprise Telford – Economic Development Strategy and include:-

Skills: Engagement with businesses through the Telford Business Board, networks and through business surveys and events highlights that the key concern from investors (nationally and locally) is skills. There is a clear need to better match the skills and training provision of education and training providers with the needs of businesses if we are to address labour shortages and the increasing need for workers with high level skills.

The team will continue to work closely with the Telford Business Board, supporting its sector champions and working particularly to support businesses with their skills requirements in order to influence the Marches skills strategy and ensure that skills and training delivery is matched to business needs.

Supporting Growth: The Enterprise Telford campaign recognises the ability of the whole of our borough to contribute to economic growth. The teams are therefore looking at ways of promoting the investment opportunities of for example our market and borough towns. An investor proposition has recently been prepared for Newport and we are already raising Newport as a possible investment destination to potential investors. The team are also supporting growth in our borough town high streets through the Pride in Your High Street initiative and is working on further proposals to support high street growth.

Regional Partnership Opportunities: Under the new Enterprise Telford campaign the teams will continue to work with UKTI to promote the Borough, but we will also be working closely with the Midlands Engine to ensure that Telford benefits from a series of 20 trade missions

over the next 3 years and that we take advantage to participate in joint stands at key trade events such as Automechanica in June 2016 and the Advanced Manufacturing Exhibition in Birmingham in November 2016. As a non constituent member of the WMCA we are working closely with the metropolitan authorities who recognise the value and opportunity for growth Telford offers through its land, connectivity and growth potential. Our business base has strong supply chain links into the conurbation and it is important that we develop opportunities for them to grow and to attract more companies.

Business Grants: The Council is jointly bidding with Shropshire and Herefordshire for funding through the European Funding Programme for grant funding that will support business growth. We are also joint partners with Birmingham City Council in a Business Growth Programme which will offer a range of grants to businesses to support growth and innovation. These funds will all be promoted through the Growth Hub to maximise take up from Telford businesses and support new job creation.

Centres of Excellence: The Borough has a number of strong business sectors e.g. advanced manufacturing and engineering, agri tech and ICT. Through the Growth Hub we are working with the University, Made in the Midlands and local companies to identify opportunities to establish Centres of Excellence in key fields and to host high profile events to build the Borough's reputation. This includes a major, international Advanced Manufacturing event in Telford in 2017 and exploring opportunities to lead in fields including lightweight vehicle manufacture and the ICT/digital sector, building on the investment in the Borough by companies such as Capgemini.

Maximising Commercial Opportunities for the Council: The inward investment team will continue to target our top home grown companies as well as new foreign investors. Some of our existing larger companies are outgrowing their premises and looking to move to larger sites in Telford. The team are identifying these companies and working closely with them to support their growth aspirations, while at the same time linking these companies with the Council's Estates & Investment and biT team winning business for the Council undertaking design and build commissions and through the £20m Growth Fund acquiring land, building and leasing premises to companies.

Following the establishment of the Telford Land Deal between TWC, HCA and DCLG, the Borough has greater control over the marketing and disposal of all HCA land in the Borough and an opportunity to attract investment through profit share on land receipts into site preparation and infrastructure. It will be key for the service to attract investors/business expansions to take land in Telford to earn this profit share and deliver the Deal's targets to deliver 8500 new jobs over the next 10 years.

Marketing and Promotion

- 4.10 The Invest in Telford website is being redesigned to reflect new Enterprise Telford branding and the Enterprise Telford twitter account has a healthy and active community. The Telford Growth Hub newsletter goes out to a growing database of over 2,000 new businesses and we are developing new promotional literature for the Growth Hub to promote the facility for business use.

Monitoring Our Performance

- 4.11 The team will be monitoring performance against a number of requirements and so a new set of performance monitoring standards is to be set. Monitoring for external reporting will be taking place to:
- provide output performance in line with the requirements of the department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) who are responsible for the Growth Hub network
 - provide monitoring in terms of the delivery of outputs relating to projects being funded through the European Funding Programme (2014-2020)
- 4.12 The team will continue to monitor the number and outcomes of inward investment enquiries, the level of grant funding secured to support new job creation and the number of businesses supported. It will also be maintaining detailed records of support delivered through the Growth Hub including the number of businesses supported, the number of events and training courses held and the number of hours of support given to businesses (including start up businesses). The team will also have to monitor the delivery of all partners in the Growth Hub so that a full record is maintained of the complete package of support that a business receives.

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