

## **NEW LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIPS CRISS-CROSS THE COUNTRY**

The commitment and ambition shown by councils and business to radically reshape the way business and government interact at the local level was praised by Communities Secretary Eric Pickles and Business Secretary Vince Cable today.

Following the closing day for submitting local enterprise partnership proposals the Government confirmed that it has received 56 proposals from across the country.

Ministers have been impressed by many of the proposals which are radical in their approach. They identify the variety of challenges facing individual local economies and put forward innovative ways of tackling them – reflecting the importance of allowing local areas to determine their own economic development and drive private sector job growth.

The Government is keen to see partnerships remain proactive and maintain momentum. Over the coming weeks Ministers will consider the proposals in detail, looking at how they will support economic growth, before providing feedback to partnerships ahead of the publication of the White Paper on sub-national economic growth and the introduction of the Localism Bill.

Tackling the debt crisis and rebalancing the economy are urgent national priorities.

Local enterprise partnerships can rewrite the economic geography of the country - unconstrained by arbitrary boundaries of Regional Development Agencies and the top-down prescription approach taken previously. Proposals include partnerships that cut across existing regional boundaries and include universities or community groups among them.

Eric Pickles said:

“These 56 local enterprise partnership proposals are just the beginning of a new radical way of delivering prosperity and rebalancing the economy.

“We are facing economic problems that need solutions from local communities. The secret to the success of local enterprise partnerships will be working on the basis of local economic geography – gone are the artificial political regions of RDAs - this will better serve the needs of local business.

“The bureaucracy of Regional Development Agencies gave local authorities little reason to engage creatively with economic issues. Local enterprise partnerships are a way of tying council and business interests together, and creating the conditions for business to thrive and prosper.”

Vince Cable said:

“Business leadership in local enterprise partnerships is critical. Mark Prisk and I have met many leading groups including the CBI, the Institute of Directors, the Federation of Small Businesses, and the British Chambers of Commerce who have all contributed their thoughts to how it should work. It is clear that there must be genuine partnership between business and local government and that local enterprise partnerships should be practical bodies for promoting enterprise, not talking shops.

“Trade and investment promotion, sector leadership, innovation, business support and access to finance will in future be led nationally, though with devolved local management in many cases. This still leaves huge scope for local initiatives to promote enterprise. The outcome will vary just as local economic priorities differ across the country. In some areas, there might be a focus on skills. In others, local enterprise partnerships may help set priorities for planning and infrastructure decisions. The key is that these partnerships are built from the bottom-up and will have the flexibility to determine their own agenda, rather than have it handed down to them by Whitehall.”

Yesterday was also the closing date for the consultation on the Regional Growth Fund. Announced in the Budget, the £1bn fund will provide support for projects that offer significant potential for sustainable economic growth and can create new private sector jobs. The two-year fund will particularly help areas that have been traditionally reliant on the public sector make the transition to private sector growth and prosperity. Proposals for funding will be sought from private organisations and public-private partnerships, and local enterprise partnerships will have a key role to play in coordinating bids across areas and communities.

Around 350 responses to the consultation were received, from organisations including trade associations, business groups, local authorities, universities and, environmental bodies, setting out their views on how the Fund can be designed to best meet the needs of local areas and communities. The Government’s response to those views and further criteria for funding proposals will be set out in the forthcoming White Paper.

### **Notes to Editors**

1. The full list of local enterprise partnership proposals is as follows:

Bexley, Dartford, and Gravesham

Birmingham and Solihull with East Staffordshire, Lichfield and Tamworth

Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole

Brighton and Hove, Croydon, the Gatwick Diamond and West Sussex - Coast to Capital

Cheshire and Warrington

County Durham

Coventry and Warwickshire  
Cumbria  
Devon, Plymouth and Torbay  
East Anglia (Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and North Essex)  
East Sussex  
Empowering Enterprise - Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly  
Enterprise M3 - Covers parts of Hampshire and Surrey including Andover, Basingstoke, Aldershot, Farnborough, Fleet, Hook and Camberley  
Fylde Coast, Lancashire  
Gatwick Diamond  
Gloucester, Swindon and Wiltshire  
Greater Cambridge & Greater Peterborough  
Greater Lincolnshire  
Greater Manchester  
Hampshire  
Heart of the South West  
Hertfordshire  
Hull, East Riding & Scarborough  
Humber  
Kent and Medway  
Kent-Essex  
Lancashire  
Leeds City Region  
Leicester and Leicestershire  
Liverpool City Region  
Newcastle Gateshead  
Norfolk  
North East  
Northamptonshire  
Northumberland and North Tyneside  
Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, Derby and Derbyshire,  
Oxfordshire City Region  
Pennine Lancashire  
Sheffield City Region  
Solent

South East Midlands  
South Somerset and East Devon  
South Tyneside and Sunderland  
Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire  
Surrey Connects  
Tees Valley  
Thames Valley Berkshire  
Thames Valley Buckinghamshire  
The Black Country  
The Marches Enterprise Partnership - Shropshire and Herefordshire  
The Peel Group - Atlantic Gateway - Liverpool and Manchester  
Visitor Economy Southern England  
West Midlands  
West of England  
Worcestershire  
York and North Yorkshire

2. In June Business Secretary Vince Cable and Communities Secretary Eric Pickles have asked councils and businesses to consider forming new local enterprise partnerships:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/newsroom/1626475>

3. The joint letter to councils can be found at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/1626854.pdf>

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