

NEWS FROM THE  
WEST OF ENGLAND LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

Tuesday 7 June 2011

**Temple Quarter to be site of new Enterprise Zone**

The West of England Local Enterprise Partnership has named Temple Quarter as the official Enterprise Zone which will act as a magnet for inward investment and boost the local economy by creating thousands of new jobs.

Meanwhile five other places have been given Enterprise Area status which will bring benefits and make it easier for developments to take place, ensuring economic growth across the whole of the sub-region.

Chairman, Colin Skellett, said this was the most significant step taken by the LEP, a Public/Private Partnership formed between business, local authorities and education earlier this year.

"We set ourselves the task of removing the barriers to the creation of new jobs and the Government gave us the opportunity to do that, in part, by creating an Enterprise Zone. It brings a number of advantages to businesses by reducing both the amount of planning red tape and the cost of their rates. But it also generates benefits for the area as a whole since we are able to retain the business rates that are generated which can be used to improve the other five areas we have identified," he said.

The selected Enterprise Zone covers 70 hectares (173 acres) of land surrounding and to the north and east of Bristol Temple Meads Railway Station

Initial estimates suggest that potentially well over 250 businesses could be accommodated in the Zone and that its redevelopment will lead to the creation of almost 17,000 new jobs over a 25 year period in over 240,000 sq m (2.6 million sq ft) of new or refurbished space featuring offices, research and development floorspace and retail as part of a wider mixed use development that is highly attractive to businesses looking to relocate

There will be a particular focus on attracting creative industries and technology, but will be a hub for all creative minded businesses. Very high speed, pervasive digital connectivity will be a central feature of the Zone

Council Leader Barbara Janke said: "This is excellent news for Bristol and the whole region because the Temple Quarter site is a major gateway that has huge potential to generate jobs and investment. In five years alone almost 4,000 jobs will be created in around 40 businesses - with more to come in the long-term.

"The focus on creative industries and technology firms opens up opportunities of creating a media hub in the city, and will build on the world-class reputation of Bristol and the West in these sectors. The Enterprise Zone will also encourage the vision that we and partners have for Temple Meads as a major transport interchange."

The Enterprise Areas will be Avonmouth/Sevenside, Bath City Riverside, Emersons Green/Science Park, Filton/A38, Weston Regeneration Area.

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The LEP Board moved quickly to reach a unanimous decision because the Government had set a deadline of June 9<sup>th</sup> and the host local authority had to have time to finalise details with landowners and developers.

Five criteria were drawn up against which the sites were judged: strategic fit with sub-regional priorities, speed of development, deliverability, need to avoid the displacement of businesses already in the sub-region and the capability of securing benefits, directly or indirectly, for more than one location in the sub-region.

At the same time, it had to be an open competitive process which was validated by the accountants PWC (PricewaterhouseCoopers) who reported: "It is our view that you have successfully conducted a fair and transparent process to evaluate potential Enterprise Zone options in a very short timescale and that the recommendations made to the LEP Board reflect this open and robust process"

The Board has also agreed measures to ensure that the Enterprise Zone will not be given an unfair advantage over the surrounding area.

"We will be putting in place marketing arrangements which will minimise competition between locations and to ensure a complementary offer is established for inward investment across the entire West of England and we will ensure there is a non competition or enticement clause to prevent poaching."

"Creation of an Enterprise Zone and Enterprise Areas is a major step forward for the West of England. They will be a major attraction to a wide range of businesses who are currently not operating in the West of England and, as a result, we expect to see significant inward investment, create new jobs and economic growth."

### **Note to Editors:**

West of England Local Enterprise Board members.

Business members: Colin Skellett, (non voting Chair) Executive Chairman of Wessex Water and Vice Chairman of GWE Business West. Katherine Bennett, Vice President and Head of Political Affairs at Airbus, David Sproxton, co-founder of Aardman, Professor Joe McGeehan, Managing Director at Toshiba Research Europe Ltd and Robert Sinclair, Chief Executive of Bristol Airport.

Local Authority members: Leaders of the four local authorities: Nigel Ashton, North Somerset, John Calway, South Gloucestershire, Paul Crossley, Bath and North East Somerset and Barbara Janke, Bristol.

Education: Glynis Breakwell, Vice Chancellor the University of Bath.

### **For more information contact:**

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