

		Executive – 2nd March 2011	Agenda Item No. 15
Title		Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership	
For further information about this report please contact		Bill Hunt Deputy Chief Executive (01926) 456014 bill.hunt@warwickdc.gov.uk	
Service Area		Chief Executive's Office	
Wards of the District directly affected		All	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006		No	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number		Executive 25/8/10 Minute number 57	
Background Papers		Letter from BIS/CLG 29 June 2010 Expression of interest 2 September 2010 Letter from BIS/CLG confirming proposal accepted 28 October 2010 Background papers for LEP proposal submission CSWP Executive minutes Arrangements Board papers and minutes Shadow Board papers and minutes LEP Board papers and minutes CWLEP Newsletters Report to Executive 25 August 2010 – Development of a Local Enterprise Partnership Partnership Checklist	
Contrary to the policy framework:			No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:			No
Key Decision?			Yes
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)			No
Officer/Councillor Approval			
With regard to officer approval all reports <u>must</u> be approved by the report authors relevant director, Finance, Legal Services and the relevant Portfolio Holder(s).			
Officer Approval	Date	Name	
Relevant Director	Author	Bill Hunt	
Chief Executive		Chris Elliott	
CMT		Chris Elliott, Andrew Jones	
Section 151 Officer		Mike Snow	
Legal			
Finance		Mike Snow	
Portfolio Holder(s)		Cllr. Doody and Hammon	

Consultation Undertaken	
Final Decision?	Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)	

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the continuing development of the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Executive notes the establishment, current membership and Terms of Reference of the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) Board.
- 2.2 That Executive formally approves this Council's membership of the Partnership.
- 2.3 That Executive agrees the approach to be adopted by the Leader of the Council when the current membership of the Board is discussed at the Coventry and Warwickshire Leader's Board (CWLB).
- 2.4 That Executive notes the Partnership Checklist, attached at Appendix Three, and delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to complete the document as the arrangements for the operation of the CWLEP are further developed and agreed by the relevant Government departments.
- 2.5 That Executive notes that a further update report and, if necessary, an amended Partnership Checklist will be presented to a future meeting once the governance and operational arrangements for the CWLEP have been finalised.

3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Members will recall that following the joint letter from the Secretaries of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and Communities and Local Government (CLG) in June 2010 announcing the Government's intention to establish Local Enterprise Partnerships, a proposal for a CWLEP was formulated by the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) and the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Partnership (CSWP), following dialogue with the local authorities, universities and business leaders across the sub-region.
- 3.2 In October 2010 BIS/CLG announced the CWLEP proposal had been accepted, as set out at Appendix One.
- 3.3 A Shadow Board was established under the auspices of CSWP and the Chamber which was subsequently ratified, by an Arrangements Board comprising of business and civic leaders, as the inaugural CWLEP Board, which met for the first time in January 2011.

- 3.4 The current CWLEP Board membership is set out at Appendix Two within a Governance and Terms of Reference document approved by the Board on 17 January 2011. Members should note that in the section headed 'Principle' on page two of this appendix there is a reference to Board decisions being binding on members and the organisations they represent. This was flagged by the Civic Leaders as likely to be problematic due to the political process that would potentially need to be followed within a local authority to ratify certain decisions made at the Board meeting. However, the Board's decision was that this broad principle should remain in the document subject to an acknowledgement that the issue might need to be addressed as and when necessary in relation to any specific decisions made by CWLEP in the future.
- 3.5 The Terms of Reference confirm the principle already established by BIS/CLG that the Chairman of the Board will be a Business Leader. It records that Business and Civic Leaders will both have 5 seats on the Board with the two universities each holding a seat.
- 3.6 Of the 5 Civic Leaders, 2 are from Coventry City Council (CCC), 2 from Warwickshire County Council (WCC) and 1 represents the five District and Borough Councils. The district/borough representative is currently the Leader of Rugby Borough Council. Support to the Board is provided by local authority officers including our own Chief Executive who is formally the support lead for the district/borough representative.
- 3.7 Members should note that the composition of the Civic Leaders' representation on the CWLEP Board was not agreed in advance by the Coventry and Warwickshire Leaders' Board (CWLBB). A meeting of that body is being arranged for the near future and Executive have the opportunity to decide what approach it wishes to take were it to consider that the current composition required review.
- 3.8 Members should further note that BIS/CLG have indicated to the current Chairman of the CWLEP Board that the current composition of the Board is unsatisfactory and would not be approved. Their guidance is that the university members should be classified as Civic Leaders, representing the public rather than private sector. This then becomes problematic as each Local Enterprise Partnership should have equal representation of Business and Civic Leaders' (unless it chooses to have more of the former) in addition to a Chair drawn from the former group.
- 3.9 The CWLEP Board's response, agreed at their 31 January 2011 meeting, is to increase the number of Business Leaders to 7, matching the combined total of local authority and university Civic Leaders. Formal ratification of these revised arrangements will be required by BIS/CLG and members might feel this provides an opportunity for the composition of the Civic Leader's representation on the Board to be reviewed.
- 3.10 A Partnership Checklist has been developed for the CWLEP. This is, as yet, incomplete as the Board has yet to determine how secretariat functions will be provided beyond the short term (during which time they will be undertaken by designated CSWP staff) or what staffing resources will be available to deliver the CWLEP work programme and vision.

- 3.11 The Board has established a working group to consider these issues and it is currently assumed that CCC and WCC will designate members of their staff to work directly on the CWLEP work programme. A decision on the future of CSWP has yet to be made and could also impact on these issues. Until these issues are resolved the Board will be unable to determine whether the CWLEP will be a direct employer of staff or not, an issue that could impact on potential future liabilities for this Council dependant on how constitutional and governance arrangements are developed. It is therefore recommended that authority to finalise the Partnership Checklist is delegated and that a further report is presented to a subsequent meeting.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTION CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Members could choose not to engage with the CWLEP but this has been discounted given its centrality to the development of a successful private/public partnership to stimulate the sub-regional economy, particularly given the announced demise of the Regional Development Agency, Advantage West Midlands, in the near future.

5. BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 There are no direct budget implications arising from this report. The operational support delivered by the Chief Executive is undertaken within existing resources.
- 5.2 Where the CWLEP work plan aligns with Council priorities the necessary work would be undertaken within existing resources.
- 5.3 It is not yet known whether the CWLEP will employ staff directly and, if so, this would have any financial consequences for this Council. This will be monitored closely and an amended Partnership Checklist brought to a future Executive together with an assessment of any potential future budgetary implications as and when necessary.

6. POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 6.1 The Council's Vision, that guides all its actions, is: Warwick District – a great place to live, work and visit.
- 6.2 The strengthening and development of both the local and sub-regional economy is an integral part of the delivery of the Vision.