

Task and Finish Specification

Accountable Organisation	Business and Economic Partnership
Descriptive Title	To help create the right conditions and environment to encourage the start up of local enterprises and creation of jobs within local businesses.
Statement of purpose	<p>A project is needed to address the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased unemployment levels. • Low levels of enterprise and business start up. • Lack of support and guidance for local businesses.
Background	<p>The current business population in Tamworth stands at around 2400 businesses, the majority of which can be classified as Small to Medium Enterprises employing on average between 5-50 employees. Our key larger employers in the area are: Percy Lane Products, Focus, Brakes, DHL, UPS, Europarts, Bristan, CPP, Drive Assist and Storm King. There is also a varied supermarket offer, by the main national chains. The Town has a key number of industrial areas, with the main three being Lichfield Road Industrial Estate, Tame Valley Industrial Estate and Amington Industrial Estate, but also benefits from the ongoing development of Birch Coppice logistics park in neighbouring North Warwickshire.</p> <p>Over recent years Tamworth, particularly during the recession saw a considerable increase in its Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimant figures. Although some of this was due to down sizing and restructuring of Tamworth based businesses, it is fair to say that because of its location and transport links, a large number of Tamworth residents work in the wider region, East and West Midlands alike, and were duly affected by wider regional redundancies. A significant number of house builders also had regional offices in Tamworth and as the downturn affected the construction trade first, this also added to the issue, along with the relevant linked trades.</p> <p>In the last year JSA figures have improved, possibly due to the flexibility of the workforce and the aforementioned locational factors of the Town as the economy slowly recovers.</p> <p>Tamworth currently has a shared economic strategy with Lichfield. This strategy has been formulated by The Business and Economic Partnership (BEP) in Tamworth and Lichfield following the extensive involvement of businesses and key partners within the BEP and a wider consultation exercise with local businesses and partners. The BEP is a group of public, private and voluntary organisations and businesses that has been established to support and develop the economy across the Borough of Tamworth and District of Lichfield.</p> <p>Founded in April 2009 following the establishment of a shared</p>

Accountable Organisation	Business and Economic Partnership
	<p>service in economic development between Tamworth Borough Council (TBC) and Lichfield District Council (LDC), the BEP articulates the priorities, needs and economic significance of the Tamworth and Lichfield area. It acts as the primary vehicle through which public sector agencies engage with businesses in a coordinated fashion and conversely through which businesses can influence agendas, policies and activities to support businesses and the local economy.</p> <p>The BEP is unashamedly business led. It benefits from the active participation of a wide variety of local businesses across Tamworth and Lichfield.</p> <p>Within the economic strategy there are 5 priority areas for action these being:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supporting our Businesses 2. Place Promotion 3. Infrastructure to support business 4. Town Centres 5. Workforce Development <p>These themes reflect a desire expressed by BEP partners and businesses to focus on the key determinants of business growth and success, alongside those attributes and features of Tamworth and Lichfield as places which, if further enhanced, will lead to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater inward investment into Tamworth borough and Lichfield district, with an accent on attracting high growth/value added sectors and new industries. • An enhanced 'enterprise culture', leading to higher rates of new business formations, survival rates and new job opportunities. • Further growth amongst indigenous businesses and a resultant growth in employment opportunities for local people. • An enhanced reputation for Tamworth borough and Lichfield district as a place in which it is 'easy to do business', with a well connected and supported, thriving business community which offers a multitude of business opportunities and is sustainable as a strong economy for the foreseeable future. <p>The 5 themes are also reflective of the distinctive characteristics of Tamworth and Lichfield as a more local economic area, as well as the more specific needs of the local business community and the different level of resources available to partners.</p> <p>At a wider level, LEPs have been formed, as a partnership between local business, local authorities and other organisations to drive</p>

Accountable Organisation	Business and Economic Partnership
	<p>forward local economies. The BEP Economic Strategy contributes to and interacts with the LEP's that cover the area, these being Greater Birmingham and Solihull and Stoke and Staffordshire.</p> <p>In order to ensure that the Town and its residents are more resilient and able to adapt to any future economic downturns, an increase in entrepreneurial activity, in particular an increase in self employment is seen to be one potential answer. Increased self employment and local business start ups, could provide an increase in skills, levels of aspiration and wealth generation within the local community.</p>
Objectives	<p>To create conditions that will lead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved levels of enterprise • Encouragement of job creation within local businesses • An environment of innovative business growth • Higher levels of entrepreneurial activity • Improved levels of business formation • Improved levels of new business survival • Overall business development and growth in the area.
Business Case	<p>This project will produce a net benefit to the council's priorities by meeting the following aspects of Strategic Priority 1:</p> <p>To Aspire and Prosper in Tamworth – To create and sustain a thriving local economy and make Tamworth a more aspirational and competitive place to do business.</p> <p>There are currently opportunities to address this through gaps in the regional business support offer, that could be taken advantage of by the Task and Finish Group, as following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Link, the current business support agency is disappearing without any replacement local service or centralised business advisor service • There is a fragmented, dispersed and confusing array of services on offer to businesses. • There is a lack of knowledge and understanding of general local business needs and of specific sector based needs. • Lacking physical infrastructure to support businesses, e.g. start up units / centres, appropriate conference centres. <p>Additionally there is already ongoing work by the BEP with partners that would contribute to the priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.ThinkLocal4Business.co.uk offers a platform to coordinate services to businesses. • Development of the BEP as the coordinator of the local business voice, particularly via the Business Networks Forum.

Accountable Organisation	Business and Economic Partnership
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication and distribution of the Business Brief to the 2400 local businesses as a means to disseminate information on business support. • Clear commitment by public sector to coordinate activities through the BEP • A coordinated shared service across two local authority areas, focusing on Economic Development.
Implications for other workstreams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to work closely with the Increase aspiration and educational attainment levels
Measures of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased levels of business start up and enterprise*. • Increased business survival rates*. • Increased employment opportunities offered by local businesses*. • Decrease in Jobseekers allowance claimants.
Sponsor/ Champion on TSP Mandate	<p>* Collected as part of the service outline contract Peter Farmer / Business and Economic Partnership.</p> <p>Tamworth Strategic Partnership.</p>
Accountable Officer	James Roberts