

CHAMBERVIEW



LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIPS

A Panopticon for Burnley, 'Singing Ringing Tree', designed by architects Tonkin Liu Ltd.



The challenge

One of the first activities of the new government was to write to local authority leaders and business leaders inviting them 'to work with government to help strengthen local economies'.

Vince Cable, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, and Eric Pickles, for Communities and Local Government set out in their letter of 29th June the challenge to groups of councils and business leaders to come together to consider how they wished to form Local Enterprise Partnerships.

These partnerships would provide the strategic leadership in their areas to set out local economic priorities, with a clear vision for planning, housing, transport and infrastructure, employment, enterprise and the transition to a low-carbon economy.

The whole, short letter is available on the Chamber's website www.chamberelancs.co.uk. Despite all kinds of conjecture and self appointed experts, it remains the definitive, indeed only major guideline.

Expressions of interest and outline proposals had to be submitted by September 6th.

This is of course against a backdrop of smaller government, public sector cost reduction, rebalancing the economy toward the private sector and global trading conditions.

There's a fairly brutal contrast between the over complicated structures that had been established over the past Government's cycle and the Coalition's current thinking.

How has Pennine Lancashire responded?

One of the few criteria set is that LEPS should be set on 'functional economic areas', not necessarily corresponding to current administrative boundaries. Pennine Lancashire has a population of 525,000 and is a natural economy, with 84% of its residents employed in the area. It is located between two major city regions - Manchester and Leeds, with around 17,000 commuting to Greater Manchester every day, which is almost four times as many as those travelling to Preston within Lancashire.

“In emotional terms we are proud to be part of Lancashire; However...

Mike Damms, Chief Executive, East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce said

“All economic analysis points to a Pennine Lancashire bid. It is important to stress, this is not about size; it is about suitability.”

Percentage of working population working within PENNINE LANCASHIRE

BLACKBURN	84%
BURNLEY	90%
HYNDBURN	89%
PENDLE	87%
RIBBLE VALLEY	78%
ROSSENDALE	67%

This doesn't mean that the area is introspective - look at our exporting achievements - just that it has made its own fortunes.

Partnership working has been established for many years and the Chamber, and other business leaders and organisations, alongside the Local Authorities and some third sector organisations have been working up the economic priorities and possible routes to investment for some time. The unique 20 year old authorities' Chamber Support Programme for Exporters is an operational example. Earlier in the year the then government formally recognised an evidence-based agreement that acknowledged that our interpretation of the facts was correct and that Pennine Lancashire could be entrusted with delivering. While the government has changed, the evidence has not.

CONTINUED OVERLEAF

at the **Heart** of Pennine Lancashire

CHAMBER of
COMMERCE
East Lancashire



The Chamber was delighted to help launch the Pennine Lancashire Food Festival. The Chamber's Chief Executive, Mike Damms, pictured with Nigel Haworth of Northcote Manor and Katy McCormick of Regenerate Pennine Lancashire says:

“Nigel is a huge inspiration, not just an undisputed master in his field but leading by example on engaging and enthusing young people and acting as an ambassador for the area. The first event of the Festival, which takes place over three weeks, attracted 5000 visitors, and most of the exhibitors of local produce sold out.”

“This doesn't just speak volumes about the quality of our life and our people but is a real reminder that our food and visitor offers are our undersung economic opportunities.”

The problem for Pennine Lancashire is that the notions of trickle-down, or that its future lies better in some less independent structure doesn't wash. Under this model, levels of growth and investment simply haven't resulted.

So the authorities and agencies in Pennine Lancashire have bid to stand on their own two feet and to link up to wherever job growth and opportunity can be found rather than sticking to the historic 'administrative and political boundaries'.

And the Chamber's role?

We've taken soundings from individual businesses, other business support organisations held briefing events and of course been guided by our board of 20 elected local businessmen and women. The message we have received has been to carry on with developing the bid.

So the approach that the Chamber has taken has been to patiently continue to build on the work already done and marshal the evidence and arguments to form a reasoned bid. As John Getty, Chamber President has reported

“Our opinion is clear; this is about pragmatism over power, suitability over size, localism over lop-sided economic growth. Pragmatism, as we have known for some time what will work best for Pennine Lancashire. Suitability, as Pennine Lancashire is a clear functioning economic area with almost all the population living and working here. Localism, as Pennine Lancashire businesses know what is best for Pennine Lancashire.”

These proposals are based on a 'natural economy' and the board described the bid as a 'chance for real change', 'recognition from government of the role business plays in developing the local economy' and an 'opportunity to move from a geographical to economic argument.'

And if the bid succeeds, how will business be engaged?

Many business men and women have long contributed to local partnerships, vision boards, and helped articulate the merits and needs of East Lancashire. John Calway said

“Having had deep involvement in Pennine Lancashire partnerships, it is patently obvious that Pennine Lancashire has got to have self confidence and be responsible for its own economic fortunes. Relying on outsiders, no matter how well meaning, hasn't brought the private sector investment or jobs that we know the area is capable of winning.”

What appears to be different this time is that the message will go directly to government. It will not have to pass up and down through several bureaucratic layers, all adding their interpretation, political spin - and costing! It's suggested that the independent Business Leaders Forum that successfully navigated

“Relying on outsiders, no matter how well meaning, hasn't brought the private sector investment or jobs...”

the Multi-Area Agreement through, with the chairmanship of a prominent local business person would act as a Shadow Board for the transitional period. The business community at large would then be invited to volunteer, but at least by then knowing what for and what contribution they could make.

Isn't Lancashire divided?

At the time of writing there will be 3 bids for Lancashire (none of which cover the whole County). In emotional terms we are proud to be part of Lancashire. However all of the analysis shows separately functioning economies and the challenge for us all is to

find a way to increasingly collaborate. However, any model needs to have Pennine Lancashire making its own decisions and free to link up with opportunities wherever they may be - not just those of historic and arbitrary administrative boundaries. Pennine Lancs, with a £7bn economy and ½ million population is bigger than many cities in its own right.

It isn't that long since East Lancashire was regarded as the 'Balkans of the North' how times have changed.

What happens next?

Government will make its decision at the time of the Comprehensive Spending Review. The Chamber will publicise the result, and hoping that the submission has been successful, we'll make sure that all businesses in the area have the chance to contribute. We will at least know by then what the role, resources and responsibilities are to be, at the moment no one does, so they are bidding 'blind'.

COVER PHOTO: Singing Ringing Tree by Ian Lawson

Pennine Lancashire



EXPORT RECOGNITION FOR



Hyndburn company, Isothane, has recently been ranked number 37 in the list of private firms with the fastest growing international sales. The business has boosted its overseas sales by 82% a year, from £614,000 in 2007 to £2m in 2009.

Isothane is a £9million turnover company employing 33 people at its headquarters in Huncoat. It is privately owned and part of the Stirling Lloyd Group of Companies.

The company manufactures chemicals and supplies them to a range of industries - from automotive and agriculture to chemicals and civil engineering. It is a leading manufacturer of polyurethane systems and its products can be found insulating buildings and pipes, providing buoyancy for floats and boats, protecting bridges and waterproofing roofs. It has even provided materials made into

reproduction armour and leather on the film sets of Troy and A Knight's Tale.

East Lancashire Chamber's International Trade team has supported the company providing Market Research on India and the Middle East together with helping to get funding for the subsequent business trip. This has helped Isothane establish a number

“ Everyone at Isothane was surprised and delighted with being featured as a Sunday Times Fast Track 100 Company

of customers and many more prospects which will help to continue the sales growth in the region. The Chamber has also provided training on Export Documentation which has helped Isothane provide good customer service.

Isothane also embarked on a Business Excellence Project some time ago, which included a benchmarking study to compare with the best companies in the world. Continuous Improvement has been the name of the game and has driven the company forward, with some impressive results. Isothane and its employees aspire to becoming a world class manufacturing company with sustained profitable growth.

Dr. Peter Bullivant, Managing Director, said

“Everyone at Isothane was surprised and delighted with being featured as a Sunday Times Fast Track 100 Company. The team has worked extremely hard over the years to continue to improve the performance of the company across all departments and in this tough economic climate it is rewarding for everyone to get this recognition.”

IT EXPERT EDUCATES EAST LANCS BUSINESS LEADERS

Microsoft IT guru and published author Jessica Meats unveiled the latest Microsoft software package to East Lancs business leaders during a special visit to Burnley.

Leading IT provider Lanway hosted the event at its Network 65 HQ, which focused on the benefits of Microsoft's latest SharePoint technology and how it can help businesses boost productivity.

Lanway's Technical Director, Ian Morris, said: *“It is important for our local businesses to be informed about all the latest IT tools to help them remain sector leaders in their individual fields, especially if the software can save them time and money.*

“Jessica is one of the UK's specialists in this field. She is an accomplished speaker and we were pleased to have her onboard to talk about what SharePoint can offer all types of businesses.

“The event proved to be extremely popular, with everybody invited attending. Lanway is a forward-thinking company and events like this are a great idea to help educate businesses about the technology that is available to them.”

The session on SharePoint technology was the latest in a series of free seminars organised by Lanway for East Lancashire's business community.

Delegate David Burke, of Burnley based Learoyd Packaging, said: *“The event was very interesting and informative. It's great that Lanway is setting up these specialist seminars so we can all meet up and discuss the latest technologies, as well as do some networking.”*



SharePoint is a software platform developed for collaboration and web publishing under a single server, including developing web sites, intranets, search engines, blogs and many other tools for business intelligence.

Based at the Network 65 Business Park in Burnley, Lanway is a member of the Chamber of Commerce East Lancashire and one of the leading independent IT and telecoms solutions specialists in the North West.

They are also one of only a handful of Gold Certified Microsoft Partners in the region.



CHAMBER EVENTS



24 SEPTEMBER 2010
CHAMBER CURRY CLUB

Early booking is recommended for this networking event with added spice.

VENUE: Blackburn Rovers

08 OCTOBER 2010
PRESIDENT'S AWARDS DINNER

A black tie dinner honouring our most successful member businesses and the people working in them

VENUE: Blackburn Rovers

15 OCTOBER 2010
HOTPOT FOR HOTSHOTS

A tasty mix of mingling and business card swapping, handy quick fire advice and a mouth watering Lancashire hotpot

VENUE: Oswaldtwistle Mills

20 OCTOBER 2010
NETWORKING WORKS!

Networking is part market research, part finding new suppliers and customers, part public relations...and all good business!

VENUE: Sparth House Hotel

27 OCTOBER 2010
BUSINESS NW 2010

The region's leading business to business exhibition & conference

VENUE: Manchester Central

02 NOVEMBER 2010
PREPARING TO EXPORT

A great opportunity to look at expanding your sales through exporting.

VENUE: East Lancashire Chamber

03 NOVEMBER 2010
PREPARING TO IMPORT

A look at overseas supply chains and reducing the cost of importing into the UK.

VENUE: East Lancashire Chamber

04 NOVEMBER 2010
UNIQUE LUNCH & LEARN

The Unique Women in Business Lunch & Learn series is a great opportunity to lunch, learn and network!

VENUE: Dunkenhalgh Hotel

EVENT GALLERY



CHAMBER CURRY CLUB



NETWORKING WORKS!



ARE YOU USING YOUR MOST VALUABLE ASSET?

Chamber Business Training is a leading training provider with an impressive portfolio of clients. We work extensively with both the public and private sectors.

PROFESSIONAL CIPS TRAINING

The East Lancs Chamber is an Approved Study Centre for the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply and the North Lancs branch for CIPS. We offer CIPS training from Level 2 through to the Level 6 Graduate Diploma and our pass rates exceed the national averages. We are also the sole provider to the 22 Yorkshire & Humberside local authorities.

FREE LEADERSHIP TASTER SESSION

TOMORROW'S LEADERS - TODAY! is a highly engaging programme focussing on getting the best out of your individual leadership style and maximising business performance. Join us at our open evening on Wednesday 20 October from 4-6pm for a **FREE** taster session to find out more about this highly engaging programme.

SALES MASTERCLASS WITH DALE CARNEGIE

If your people are great with your customers but don't have the skills or confidence to sell, this is the course for them. By investing just £395 per person (£450 non-members) in the professional development of your staff, their next sale could easily cover your costs.

FIRST AID AT WORK TRAINING

Employers are legally required to provide adequate and appropriate equipment, facilities and personnel to ensure their employees receive immediate attention if they're injured or taken ill at work. The Health and Safety (*First-Aid*) Regulations apply to all workplaces including those with less than 5 employees and to self-employed people. Our First Aid at Work courses start from just £95.



For further information visit www.chamberbusinesstraining.co.uk or call DEBBI, LINDA or CHRISTINE on 01254 356400.