

CITY OF PLYMOUTH

Subject: Economy and Growth Board Update

Committee: Growth and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Panel

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Executive Summary:

This report outlines key activities that have happened and are on-going which impact on the economic situation in Plymouth. The city has been affected by the recession and by changes introduced by the new coalition Government. Fewer delivery organisations and reduced funding have meant there is less funding available for developing the city. This has resulted in more collaborative working with the private sector in access funding, working more closely with the University of Plymouth and other voluntary and third sector organisations to ensure that the growth agenda Plymouth is pursuing remains on track.

The report provides a brief overview of the current economic position Plymouth finds itself in, outlines some key aspects of the strategic context – such as the move to private-led partnerships – and some of the continuing success and indeed some of the areas challenge such as how to maintain a growth agenda without a city airport. Finally the report outlines a wealth of initiatives underway that showcase the activities that are on-going at present.

Economy and Growth Board Update

1. Local and Strategic Context.

a. Plymouth's Growth Aspirations

The Council's Vision – to make Plymouth one of Europe's finest, most vibrant waterfront cities, where an outstanding quality of life can be enjoyed by everyone, by 2020 – underpins all Council strategies. The Local Economic Strategy (LES) and the Local Development Framework (LDF) were written in parallel and reflect this desire. The growth agenda outlined in the LES – to grow the Plymouth Travel to Work Area TTWA by 42,500 jobs by 2026 (which equates to c 30,000 in Plymouth alone) – is reflected in the LDF by the provision for growing the city by an additional 50,000 population.

These two documents, supported by the emerging Housing Strategy and the Local Transport Plan 3, provide for Plymouth to grow in a coherent manner; these four documents together provide a cohesive framework for this growth. The Area Action Plans that have been developed, especially the emerging one for the Derriford and Seaton area of Plymouth, and the joint work undertaken jointly with South Hams District Council for the Sherford/Langage new community provide many of the sites to accommodate this growth.

The recent economic turmoil has not changed the desire by PCC to grow its population and business base in order to reaffirm its status as the regional centre for the far South West. This is reflected in the recent Enterprise Zone bid, the work of the University to encourage new business to start-up, as well as the work of the Council itself with the ERDF funded Urban Enterprise programme, again providing the support for businesses to start.

b. National Policy Framework

Since the change in national Government in 2010 the emphasis of national economic policy has been around re-balancing of the economy, reducing public expenditure and securing growth. Outside of the UK border, there has been an emphasis on securing stronger trade links with parts of the world with high growth potential, such as India and the South American continent.

The 2010 Spending Review was followed by the launch in 2011 of the national Plan for Growth. These set the context of national economic policy.

The Plan for Growth aims:

- To create the most competitive tax system in the G20.
- To make the UK the best place in Europe to start, finance and grow a business.

- To encourage investment and exports as a route to a more balanced economy.
- To create a more educated workforce that is the most flexible in Europe.

The Government has reduced the number of policy instruments and quangos which shape and oversee economic initiatives and is looking for the drive towards localism to identify needs and deliver economic initiatives.

Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) are being scrapped by the end of March 2012 and although overall public expenditure on economic development has been reduced there remain some opportunities to access government finance, for example, the Regional Growth Fund (RGF). Programmes such as this are being increasingly targeted directly at the private sector or at partnerships which can embrace, include and stimulate that sector.

c. Local Enterprise Partnerships and Plymouth Growth Board

A key feature of national policy has been to introduce Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). There is now almost blanket coverage of England by LEPs. Although not replacements for RDAs, LEPs are nevertheless in most cases sub-regional covering two or more upper tier/unitary authority areas. The whole of the South West region is now covered by LEPs.

LEPs are led by the private sector and exist to identify economic needs and priorities for their area, create the conditions for growth, and act as a conduit for areas or businesses to apply for or access Government funds and support. LEPs are strategic, not delivery bodies.

Most LEPs have local delivery mechanisms and in Plymouth's case this is the Plymouth Growth Board. The Plymouth Growth Board (PGB) is the recent [2010] successor to the Local Strategic Partnership's Wealthy Theme Group. Similar to LEPs, it is private sector Chaired and led. It exists to oversee the delivery of Plymouth's Local Economic Strategy (LES) and to hold to account those organisations contracted or with responsibility for on-the-ground delivery of specific initiatives.

The Government is encouraging LEPs and local delivery mechanisms to be based around economic geographies wherever possible, and therefore activity will increasingly be based around Travel to Work Areas rather than public administration boundaries.

d. Role of New Economic Development Service

The Economic Development Service (ED) was created in 2009 as a direct response to the challenge of securing sustained economic growth and the transformation to a modern, balanced economy. The Service exists to provide a mix of direct services to business and enterprise and to ensure strategy and initiatives are in place which deliver new jobs, tackle economic inequality and make Plymouth a place where business can flourish and

increasing numbers of visitors can enjoy an ever improving experience of place. In particular the commercial estate was embedded within the ED service in order that the Council's property portfolio could be used to stimulate the economy and support growth.

The economy and economic growth has been thrust centre stage even as the UK has come out of recession. Recovery remains fragile and sluggish and therefore as jobs are lost in the public sector, expenditure is reduced and disposable incomes in all sectors are hit by rising inflation, it becomes more important than ever to invest in initiatives which protect or deliver new growth. Plymouth's nationally peripheral geographical location and historical reliance on employment in a relatively narrow base of economic sectors make the economic challenges facing the city - and the Service - highly significant. Issues around transport and digital connectivity, downsizing in the public sector and continuing uncertainty over many aspects of the Devonport Naval base and dockyard will make the coming year no less challenging.

Over the past 12 months the city and the Service have nevertheless experienced and been involved in many successes. Examples include unemployment recently showing an overall downwards trend, the securing of the America's Cup, over 400 jobs set to be created at Hemerdon Mine, hundreds of new job opportunities through the creation of apprenticeships, a successful Regional Growth Fund (RGF) bid, new action plans of the LES approved by a refreshed Plymouth Growth Board, establishment of a LEP, the establishment of a local Plymouth Growth Fund, the transfer of RDA property assets to the City Council, creation of a new Waterfront Partnership, the appointment of a Priority Sector Co-ordinator and Head of City Marketing both funded from City Development Company(CDC) legacy funding and unprecedented levels of income from sales of co-ordinated events advertising packages. There are many, many more.

The Service is at the heart of both Council and Plymouth 2020 Partnership priorities, and especially delivering growth. We will continue to be so in the coming year and beyond. Our successes in 2010/11 were achieved despite moving through a major restructure of the Service and a maelstrom of change arising since the 2010 General Election.

With bodies such as RDAs and Government Offices being closed, the focus of economic development has very much turned to the private sector and local government. It is therefore essential that our service makes best use of its resources and has the right mix of skills, competencies and behaviours. The restructure has enabled us to move towards this and our employees have worked incredibly hard over a sustained period to manage change and deliver our work.

In the coming year we will continue to ensure that we work effectively, using our newly established Staff Forum and making increasing use of business opportunities around technology. We will continue to work closely with the private sector and work also with

the University of Plymouth and other stakeholders to make the most of opportunities such as Enterprise Zones, the Plymouth Growth Fund and transfer of RDA assets kick-starting city centre and Derriford re-development and a Waterfront BID vote. Initiatives such as GAIN, Urban Enterprise, city centre events, campaigning as a result of a socio-economic study of the naval base, Positively Plymouth, Whiz Kids and a new visitor plan will all come fully into fruition this year making it one of both excitement and challenge. As the city prepares to host major events such as British Art Show and America's Cup, Economic Development will be fully engaged and leading on ensuring that the city gets lasting legacy in order to improve the city's economy and achieve its growth ambitions.

2. Economic Health check

a. Where Are We?

We need to bear in mind that we are working against a backdrop of high global and national economic uncertainty:

- Global: Eurozone debt crisis and weak recovery in major economies (US and Germany) leading to stock market turbulence.
- UK GDP growth over last 6 to 9 months close to zero, high rates of inflation (further increases expected) and job insecurity, leading to low consumer demand.
- Plymouth's business and individuals therefore operating in difficult economic environment – strong GVA growth and job creation, driven by the private sector, is crucial.

Unemployment:

Plymouth's unemployment rate – as measured by the number of individuals claiming unemployment related benefits – was 3.8% (of working age residents) in July 2011, the same as the UK but above the South West average (2.5%). Plymouth's rate has closely tracked the UK's since 2000, continuing to do so during and in the aftermath of the recession with no sign of a divergence yet. With a high proportion of its workforce employed in the public sector, however, the city's labour market will be under increasing pressure as the necessary transition to a less public sector dependent economy is made. The hope is that the private sector is strong enough to fill the gap and create enough new jobs.

Output:

GVA data showing the full impact of the recession on Plymouth's economy is not yet available from national data sources; however, we know that nominal growth slowed to 2.5% in 2008 compared to national and regional averages of 3.1% and 2.8% respectively. This suggests Plymouth's economy was hit relatively hard; prior to this growth had been

fairly robust with an average annual rate of increase of 5.1% between 2003 and 2008, above the corresponding SW (4.7%) and UK (4.9%) values.

b. What are our Major Issues?

- Low rates of labour productivity and a deteriorating relative position against the national average.
- Disproportionately large contribution to growth between 1998 and 2008 from 'public administration, education & health'; a comparatively small contribution from the productive 'business & financial services' sector.
- Over reliance on large employers and relatively low rates of business start-ups as a percentage of the working age population.
- Percentage of individuals with NVQ4+ qualifications below the national average; however, the city has been closing the gap since 2007 (see successes);
- High proportion of claimants aged between 18-24 (as nationally) - research from University of Bristol has shown that prolonged periods of unemployment early on in life can lead to a 'wage scar' (i.e. dampens future earning potential).
- Above average rates of part-time working, particularly among 16-24 year olds. Worrisomely, in Q4 2010 the percentages of 16-24 year olds in employment working full time and part-time were practically even at 50%.
- High rates of economic inactivity although partly due to large student population and lifestyle choices – looking after family/home.

c. What are our Opportunities?

- Considerable specialisation in the marine industries sector, with potential for diversifying into new, high growth potential sectors (e.g. marine renewables), drawing on the significant intellectual capital provided by the University of Plymouth.
- Other areas of employment specialisation in Advanced Engineering sectors, Creative industries (performing arts, programme production) and Medical & Healthcare (Hospital, medical practices...etc.).
- A relatively large student population offering a pool of potential talent for the future labour market (if retained). Student spend in the city is equivalent to 8.4% of GVA in 2008 – only Cambridge had a higher percentage.
- Below national average percentage of individuals with 'no qualification' (5.8% of the economically active population in 2010 vs. UK 7.3%) and, as noted above, the city has closed the gap with the UK average in terms of % with NVQ4+ qualifications.
- A relatively high proportion of high value 'Professional' and 'Associate Professional & technical' occupations among its workforce (i.e. includes non-residents commuting in).
- Plymouth's labour market, as was the case nationally, exhibited a relative degree of resilience to the recession – businesses tended to cut hours rather than jobs.

3. Review and Delivery of Economic Strategy

a. Review of Local Economic Strategy Action Plans

The Plymouth Growth Board (PGB), emerging out of the 2020 Partnerships' Wealthy Theme Group, has placed the Local Economic Strategy at the heart of its activities. The LES, launched in 2006, had an accompanying action plan. With the onset of the recession and the change in Government in 2010 the validity of the action plan was called into question. This was compounded by a number of the organisations highlighted ceasing to exist. The Action Plan was also very lengthy and lacked focus. The reviews were undertaken against a backdrop of fewer resources and fewer organisations able to deliver and therefore focussed on those interventions capable of having the greatest impact.

The new membership of the PGB coupled with a new Chair and new Co-ordinator provided the opportunity to re-establish the role of the PGB. This placed the LES and its delivery at its heart and moved away from a period of strategy. Each of the five LES themes – Business, Skills, Centres, Participation (now known as Economic Inclusivity) and Leadership – were sponsored by an LES member and systematically reviewed. The Sponsor took ownership of the theme and through small work groups reviewed the 2006 Action Plan to ensure that actions were current, attributable, and helping to deliver the core foci of the PGB, namely creating jobs, raising GVA, diversifying the business base and doing all of this within environmental limits.

All five themes have now been reviewed and a new action plan created for each theme. The PGB has moved into a period of holding members to account regarding the delivery of the actions. Each action plan will be reviewed on an annual basis as part of a rolling programme to ensure it remains relevant and is being delivered.

b. Agreed Actions

All five themes have now been reviewed and revised actions largely agreed. The key actions are as follows:

Leadership:

1. Establish PGB as LEP local Delivery Board for Enhanced lobbying.
2. Production of a new Visitor Plan by Destination Plymouth.
3. Implementation of City Branding and inward investment plan.
4. Creation of Economic Intelligence function and 6 monthly health check.
5. Development of enhanced stakeholder communication e.g. Plymouth Matters.
6. Development of Digital Plymouth initiative.

Business:

1. Additional support for new start up businesses through GAIN.

2. Supporting existing businesses through new aftercare programme.
3. Development of GAIN to promote knowledge transfer to stimulate new business.
4. Appointment of Priority sector co-ordinator and prioritisation of Marine and Advanced Engineering sectors.
5. Targeted inward investment supporting key sectors.

Skills:

1. Supporting young people through development of Plymouth Milk round.
2. Support for Jobseekers and those at risk of redundancy through Plymouth Area Task Force
3. Adult workforce development.
4. Skills development in support of economic growth and inward investment (e.g. priority sector requirements)
5. Enhanced employability training e.g. City College Employability centre

Centres:

1. Ensure policy framework in place to de-risk development
2. Deliver major projects (focussed on Derriford and City Centre) and maximise the use of assets.
3. Improve connectivity and infrastructure
4. Improved Housing offer.
5. Inward investment to support major regeneration schemes and identification of development partners.

Economic Inclusivity (formerly Participation)

1. Increased employability for all
2. To ensure that all economic development initiatives support economic inclusion where possible
3. Development of a new City workless plan following appointment of worklessness co-ordinator.
4. Further development of asset transfer initiatives to support third sector.
5. Community regeneration (economic development outcomes in North prospect and Devonport)

c. Economic Development Business Plan - Star projects

Our Service priorities completely match the priority of the city and Council to deliver growth. Indeed the Service is at the heart of and leads on many aspects of delivering that priority.

In order to prioritise our work and time against 'big ticket' items that will have a real and significant impact on the growth and the rebalancing of the local economy, we have this year decided to adopt an approach of prioritising resources into 'Star Projects'. There are five of these and they are described in more detail in the table in the next section.

The Star Projects are:

City Centre Regeneration – Promotion of Major Development projects outlined in AAP.

Growth Acceleration and Investment Network – Development of GAIN to support high growth businesses and development of a marine sector commercialisation strategy.

Inward Investment – Targeted inward investment and lobbying plan. Development of 'Plymouth Ask'.

Local Enterprise Partnership– Development of LEP capacity to represent Plymouth's economic interests in Westminster and Europe.

Waterfront BID – Successful delivery of Waterfront BID vote.

The Service has also been given corporate lead on the America's Cup and is heavily involved in the Devonport Task Group and Save Devonport Campaign. It will also contribute or lead on major city challenges such as the future of Plymouth Argyle and Plymouth Airport.

d. Wider Development Priorities

This paper, whilst focussing on the activities of the economic development service, should be set in the context of the wider Directorate of Development and Regeneration Growth Agenda. There are a wide range of supporting initiatives including investment in the Eastern Corridor, Development of LTP3, LSTF funding bids, Rail Franchise lobbying activity, Derriford AAP, Community Infrastructure Levy, the development of the new Housing Strategy and Plymouth Plan.

e. Focus on Jobs and GVA

The PGB and the LES are focussed on driving forward the growth agenda in Plymouth. The LES sets a target of 42,500 new jobs in Plymouth TTWA by 2020 (around 30,000 in Plymouth itself). Similarly, the LES also identifies the growth of GVA as being key to changing the prosperity of the city.

A large aspect of this growth in GVA and jobs is placed on the development of the priority sectors, six sectors in which the city has expertise and which can help to diversify the business base. The six sectors are: Advanced Manufacturing, Business Services, Creative Industries, Marine and Renewables, Medical and Healthcare and Tourism and Leisure. Work is progressing on driving these forward through the establishment of action plans (through Plymouth Chamber of Commerce and Industry). There is a particular focus on developing the Advanced Manufacturing and Marine and Renewables sectors, which link well to the work of the University, GAIN and other initiatives.

The LES is a long-term strategy and the direction it seeks to go in is still valid. Some of the targets, such as GVA, may be more aspirational than others but the general desire

and impetus to grow the number of jobs and similarly the GVA levels (through higher value job creation) remains key to development in Plymouth.

4. Economic Development Successes

a. Plymouth Growth Fund

Established earlier this year following the ring fencing of the New Homes Bonus the Council's Plymouth Growth Fund seeks to and will support schemes across the city, providing infrastructure and delivery to underpin growth. The fund will be vital to address the viability gap that exists in many Plymouth development projects and to fund the development capacity that will be essential to enable and facilitate growth. The governance surrounding this fund is yet to be fully established but will provide critical finances for projects that drive growth in Plymouth.

b. Regional Growth Fund

The Council has promoted and been supportive of Regional Growth Fund (RGF) bids that have been submitted through the two rounds there have been this far. RGF is a fund jointly administered by BIS and CLG and is open to private companies bidding for grants of £1m upwards that will create significant private sector employment and help to rebalance the economy in areas with high public sector employment levels. The funds cannot be accessed by Councils in their own right. PCC has therefore been working with partners over the two rounds to help put bids together for investment in the city.

Some £15m was bid for in Round 1 including Langage Energy Park (for small business space and units) and Royal William Yard (for the creation of a creative cluster). Ultimately only one bid was successful that included Plymouth, namely the University of Plymouth and Western Morning News Growth Fund (PWGF) (discussed further below).

Round 2 closed on 1 July 2011 and again there were a number of bids from Plymouth which the Council helped to support. Princess Yachts and Wolf Minerals (Hemerdon Mine) were two bids submitted by the private sector, but the Council also worked in partnership with two other bids, one for the Forder Valley Link Road and the other to boost the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funded Urban Enterprise programme. A number of other bids were also supported. As yet the outcome of Round 2 bids is still eagerly awaited.

It is likely that there will be a very small Round 3 which will take place in early 2012. The £1.4bn pot for RGF has been three-times oversubscribed making the funding very competitive. (For the £950m available in Round 2 bids came in totalling £3bn).

c. LEP

The Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (HotSWLEP) has been formed under the leadership of the private sector supported by the local authorities from

Devon, Plymouth, Somerset and Torbay to create a powerful economic alliance. Objectives are to create new jobs, raise productivity levels and increase our average wages.

With a diverse economy, the area has many strengths, including: outstanding expertise in low carbon energy generation (notably nuclear power and renewables), the defence sector, marine and maritime industries. The HotSW has an exceptional landscape and coastline, including two National Parks, providing an unrivalled tourism experience and quality of life.

It also has two world class universities and excellent further education colleges helping to provide a skilled workforce and a growing knowledge base. For example, the area has the highest concentration of climate change and environmental researchers and experts in Europe. Small and micro businesses make up a significant part of our business sector and demonstrate the depth of our entrepreneurial spirit.

Our economy does face a number of challenges however, in terms of lower than average wages, productivity levels and distance from market.

The dispersed economic geography, with few, but important, urban centres increases reliance on critical infrastructure and key services. Overcoming significant transport and logistic issues, as well as planning constraints is vital for businesses to thrive and attract new investment. Rapidly accelerating the roll out of superfast broadband is crucial to future economic success. There is a high dependence on the public sector for employment so there is a very real need for the LEP to address the rebalancing of our economy.

The LEP has 3 main areas of focus which are:

JOB CREATION

- Secure growth in key urban centres and facilitate job creation across the heart of the South West, ensuring that market towns and rural areas are closely linked to urban growth and also economically successful in their own right.
- Provide support to strong sectors across the area such as tourism, food and drink, and land-based industries to grow employment opportunities through improving business profitability and productivity.
- Encourage investment in potential growth sectors such as marine technologies and low carbon energy generation (notably nuclear power and renewables) that can create and sustain new private sector jobs, rebalancing our economy away from an over-reliance on the public sector. Give specific emphasis to the marine technologies and low carbon energy sectors.
- Create the conditions for high levels of business start-ups and increase the numbers of jobs in expanding SMEs.

- Working with businesses to access international markets to grow their customer base and create additional private sector employment.

PRODUCTIVITY

- Co-ordinate and secure improvements to infrastructure, including superfast broadband and electrification of our rail network, key road improvements and housing, which underpins the success and prosperity of businesses and communities.
- Promote changes to the planning system in order to allow businesses to flourish and expand.
- Extend, strengthen and accelerate the transfer of knowledge and innovation from our outstanding universities and educational institutions through to businesses. Particular emphasis will be on encouraging stronger links between our knowledge base and SMEs.
- To enable businesses, and especially SMEs, to deliver higher levels of productivity by improving the economic environment in which they operate. This includes facilitating effective business mentoring mechanisms, promoting business networks, enabling access to finance and supporting skills development.
- Influence and secure UK and EU funding streams to increase levels of productivity and deliver our priorities.

EARNINGS

- Ensure the workforce is equipped with the skills that businesses need, and support the development and delivery of the right skills for our potential growth sectors.
- Achieve higher levels of earnings by improving skills and educational attainment levels, giving individuals across all our communities more choice and access to a wider range of employment opportunities.
- Improve access to higher education for individuals across the area.
- Attract inward private sector investment from high growth sectors to encourage higher paid quality jobs.
- Encourage increased levels of indigenous investment to improve the quality and pay levels of existing jobs.
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The HotSW LEP has a Board of 15 members, 8 of whom are private sector. Plymouth City Council is represented by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for economic development. The Board will meet four times per year and it is currently firming up a Business Plan following its first meeting.

To date the LEP has been successful in bidding for start-up and capacity funds and has helped secure c £30 million for roll-out of superfast broadband across Devon and Somerset.

d. America's Cup

The City has recently secured the America's Cup World Series which will take place in September 2011. As one of the world's largest yachting events it provides the City with a global platform to promote the visitor economy and target inward investment. The event has already attracted over £1m of PR value including national and international coverage in the Sunday Times, Channel 4, Sky News and the worlds yachting press. As part of the event the City Council has organised a week's long programme of inward investment activity with major events focussing on waterfront regeneration, venture capital, major development projects, marine renewable energy and the visitor economy.

e. Tamar Science Park Restructure

The City Council, working with the University of Plymouth, has now completed the restructure of the Tamar Science Park (TSP) proving additional capacity to support the City's wider economic aspirations. This includes a new management structure, the appointment of a new Chairman and Board under Nolan principles.

f. City Centre Company BID renewal

The City Centre Company's (CCC) Business Improvement District (BID) was successfully renewed in April 2010, securing the highest positive BID ballot mandate every achieved in the UK with 89% of businesses voting in favour. The CCC is delivering the new BID Business Plan 2010-15, with standout projects including the Winter Festival Ice Rink and the recent FlavourFest food festival.

g. West End Public Realm

This £3.2m public realm improvement scheme was well received by West End traders, lifting the area's attractiveness whilst creating 90 new car parking spaces, and providing 70 new trees and a safer, high quality streetscape based on a 'shared space' design. The scheme has recently won two national awards, the Urban Transport Design Award 2011 and the CIHT Award 2010 judged by the Department for Transport.

h. Visitor Plan

The City Council approved the Place Management Strategy in April 2010, which made Destination Plymouth responsible for driving the City's visitor economy. To date Destination Plymouth has co-ordinated the America's Cup and the marketing of the British Art Show. It has also completed a draft Visitor Plan and will seek City Council approval for this in November

i. Waterfront BID

The Plymouth Waterfront Partnership (PWP) has delivered many improvements, including the 2011 Visitor Guide; HMS Bounty event; and the repainting of the Belvedere. PWP now seeks to secure a Business Improvement District for the Waterfront and through detailed consultations with businesses has prepared a draft

Waterfront BID Business Plan 2012-17 and will seek City Council approval for this in November.

j. Aftercare programme

In April 2011, the economic development team launched an Aftercare Programme targeting the largest employers in the City. The aim of the programme is to develop a close working relationship with key businesses to gain 'on the ground' information on the real issues they face and provide advice and support where needed. The other key aim of the programme is for the economic development team to strengthen its role as a main point of contact for companies to help them liaise with different departments within the Council, such as planning and transport, as well as providing statistical information to help with grant applications, and other support in terms of skills issues and property and land matters. The programme has been co-ordinated with UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) to ensure that companies can develop a relationship with this organisation (which has taken on the company relationship work of the South West RDA) and access the support it can provide.

The programme is proving very successful with companies being open to discuss their growth aspirations and the very real issues facing their business. Since its launch seven companies have been visited including Wrigley's, Kawasaki, Brittany Ferries and The Barden Corporation. The economic development team are currently working closely with colleagues in Transport and Planning to deal with a number of specific issues raised following the visits which the Council would otherwise have not have been made aware of. The Aftercare Programme is a rolling initiative and the current forward plan of visits will continue in 2011/2012 and into 2012/2013.

k. Economic Intelligence sub group

An economic intelligence sub-group, comprised of a range of experienced public and private sector individuals, has been set up to service the Plymouth Growth Board. The intelligence group will provide up to date economic intelligence to help the PGB make informed, evidence base decisions about priorities for driving strong, sustainable economic growth across the city and its travel to work area. It will also help the PGB respond pro-actively to any shocks to Plymouth's economy.

The group will be responsible for producing a comprehensive bi-annual report on the city's economy, drawing on a range of key economic growth indicators and 'real time' intelligence via new, innovative mechanisms including a business survey and sounding panel.

l. Priority Sector Co-ordination

Through the City Development Company legacy fund we have commissioned the Plymouth Chamber of Commerce and Industry to employ a priority sector co-ordinator as set out in the LES. This has in turn led to the nomination of six sector champions who

are working with the Chamber to develop six sector action plans to support the creation of new jobs as defined in the LES.

m. Investment in third sector

The Council actively provides support to a number of Community Economic Development Trusts in Plymouth (CEDT) who provide business support activities and premises to companies, many of them fledgling. These facilities complement those provided by the Council itself, such as East End Business Centre and City Business Park.

There are long-standing arrangements with the Millfields Trust, based on Union Street and the Wolseley Trust, based at Scott Business Park. Both of these trusts receive funding from the Council and are monitored to ensure that they accrue benefits to the communities they are located in. As part of their leases they need to maximise employment and economic benefits to particular wards, namely Stoke, Keyham, Trelawney and Ham (Wolseley) and St. Peter (Millfields).

Additionally, the Tamar Science Park is jointly owned by the University of Plymouth and Plymouth City Council. Its focus is on providing spaces for businesses that are involved in innovation and technology and R&D operations. TSP, along with the University of Plymouth and PCC is also heavily involved with the GAIN initiative.

The Council is also involved in many partnerships across the city and supportive of their work. A recent example of this would be the Council to act as a Guarantor for £200,000 grant funding that has been awarded to Enterprise Plymouth Ltd by Job Centre Plus. The funding will be used by the appropriate locally based partner organisations to deliver services, led by Enterprise Plymouth Ltd, which help disadvantaged members of the community overcome barriers to employment. This highlights how the City continues to work in partnership with organisations in order to maximise any potential funding source, even when the Council is not able to access it itself.

n. Gain RGF Bid - PWGF

The successful joint bid to Round 1 RGF by the University of Plymouth and Western Morning News for a local growth fund (known as PWGF) was launched on 22 July 2012.

The £1m fund is to be administered through the University of Plymouth and is aimed at SMEs (<250 employees and turnover ≤€50m and a balance sheet totalling <€43m), located in the Heart of the South West or Cornwall and Isles of Scilly LEP areas, growing rapidly or with a desire to grow rapidly, and EU State Aid compliant.

The PWGF will allow businesses to access investments of a minimum of £10,000 and a maximum of £100,000. Applicants need to submit an Expression of Interest (EoI) which will be assessed within three working weeks for eligibility by the PWGF team. Advisors

will work with potential applicants if the proposal requires further development. Feedback will be provided to those Eols not deemed suitable.

Once an Eol has been approved, the applicant will be asked to submit a full application. These will be assessed by the Investment Panel and Steering Group. Again, bids may be rejected or subject to further work.

The funding may be used for:

- Purchase of equipment
- Expenditure associated with purchasing or refurbishing business premises
- Purchase of specialist software
- Purchase of specialist training

The fund is to create or safeguard employment so eligible activities outlined above will need to demonstrate why they are necessary in order to achieve job creation and/or safeguarding.

5. Economic Development Challenges

a. Impact of Airport Closure

The City Council have tried very hard to keep the airport open in discussion with Sutton Harbour but we could not justify the additional capital investment that they required given the low levels of economic impact attributed to the airport.

Following the economic study and the soft market testing of “thin” air routes, Cabinet has now accepted that the airport is non-viable for scheduled public air services and the best we can hope for is to continue with FOST military flying, and related services such as air/sea rescue, whilst planning work is carried out on a comprehensive redevelopment scheme for the site.

The site is around 110 acres and therefore would be a significant addition to the Council’s holding of development land in the economic growth area of Derriford. The site needs very careful study both for land-use and transport purposes, but could provide a real opportunity to meet future employment and housing needs and potentially could accommodate around 2,000 jobs, as opposed to the 100 or so direct jobs lost from closure of the airport.

In transport terms, the public has been finding other alternatives to the use of Plymouth Airport, since the loss of the Heathrow link in 1998, and hence its market share of regional air travel was declining.

Many local businesses used air services very little, if at all, and travelled by road or rail instead. If we could secure improvement of our rail services to achieve hourly 3-hour

journeys to and from London throughout the working day, with early morning departures from London, that would go a long way to making up for the loss of air services.

A study of rail services has now been commissioned by the Council and will provide the evidence we need to engage with the Department for Transport to ensure that they will publish a suitable specification for the renewal of the rail franchise in 2013.

The Council will defend against short term and incremental development by standing by the Core Strategy Position protecting the land as an airport until such time as the Core Strategy is reviewed through the new Plymouth Plan.

It is the view of Consultants Berkley Hanover that the impact of the closure of the airport upon the economy will be minimal.

b. Failure of the Plymouth Enterprise Zone application

If Plymouth had been granted Enterprise Zone (EZ) status, it would have been highly valuable in two respects: the city's profile in investment circles would have been raised and highlighted, and the likelihood of creating between 4,000 and 7,000 jobs in the private sector would have been a significant boost to efforts to create the number of new jobs which are in keeping with the Local Economic Strategy.

A significant advantage of an EZ was the Government being prepared to pick up the costs of rates relief. Although it is possible too for a local authority to introduce all or some elements of an EZ unilaterally, there are likely to be significant costs to the local taxpayer.

Nevertheless, there is no reason why a commitment to more permissive, simplified planning regimes and other 'business friendly' measures cannot be introduced at relatively low cost. Plymouth finds itself in an increasingly competitive market for attracting investment so the development of 'niche' incentives or offers becomes highly important. Something such as, or similar to, an Enterprise Zone would take the city beyond somewhat stale (and used by most places) 'quality of life' positioning.

The recent application for an EZ showed that key stakeholders, the local media and others can work well together to get behind a unified cause and it would be prudent for the city to capture the enthusiasm which existed for an EZ in developing other initiatives to create significant numbers of new jobs across the city.

6. Key Strategic Focus Going Forward

a. GAIN

The Peninsula Growth Acceleration & Investment Network (GAIN) has been established by the City Council, the University of Plymouth and Tamar Science Park to 'super-charge' economic growth for the local and regional economy through translating knowledge and ideas into commercially sustainable businesses. It intends to raise the level and quality of innovation in the peninsula, with Plymouth at its heart, and in doing so meet the ultimate objective of turning the city into one of the UK's top 20 'Innovation Cities' by 2020.

To achieve this goal, GAIN is bringing the public and private sectors together so that the knowledge, skills and expertise that exist in city, along with its physical assets, can be exploited to achieve economic growth. As one of the Development & Regeneration Directorate's 'star projects', the development of GAIN is a priority and a project team approach has been adopted, involving officers from other departments such as Children & Young People's Services, to ensure a co-ordinated approach by the Council.

In terms of activity, a significant GAIN initiative is the development of a web-based GAIN portal which will provide a single point of contact of advice and support for knowledge and high growth businesses. The portal will be an invaluable business support tool for the city where knowledge based businesses (pre-start, new and existing) will be able to access expert advice, financial support, links to investment opportunities, events and networking opportunities and available commercial property. With the wind-up of Business Link in November 2011, the need for the portal is even more prevalent and its launch will be timed to coincide with that date.

b. Inward Investment and Lobbying

The City Council has a lead role in the attraction of inward investment and a project team has been established in the Service to drive it forward through the development of an action plan. A fundamental element of this work will be to ensure that a tailored, proactive approach is adopted which targets the six priority sectors of the Local Economic Strategy, and to ensure that the information produced is 'fit for purpose' and meets investors requirements.

The Positively Plymouth web-site will be fully developed and utilised as the inward investment 'face' of the Council along with its branding on promotional material. The way the Service handles inward investment enquiries will be fully reviewed to ensure a speedy and co-ordinated approach where other relevant sections of the Council are brought in at the earliest stages. The promotion of Plymouth as a business location in terms of trade fairs and other related events will also be explored where private sector interest and sponsorship can be secured.

Raising the profile of Plymouth and the communication of clear, consistent messages is absolutely vital if the city is to attract investment into the future and to resonate with Government in order to make bids for funding or initiatives successful. Compared with a

number of other major urban areas, Plymouth is peripheral not just in terms of geographical location, but also in terms of 'lobbying' visibility.

Whilst there have been both increased efforts and successes in this area of activity over the past year, for example the Save Devonport Campaign, the direct lobbying of Ministers in London and increased use of the Positively Plymouth brand more could be done. To be effective, however, efforts need to be strongly co-ordinated and focused and therefore the development of a 'Plymouth Ask' into Government and a 'Plymouth Offer' for inward investment purposes is underway.

c. Rail Connectivity

FirstGroup, the owner of the present Great Western franchise, has given notice that it intends to exercise an option in the franchise agreement to terminate the existing contract at the end of March 2013. This decision means that the Government must organise a competition for a new franchise which will extend for the subsequent 15 years. This new franchise will have implications for Plymouth but also the wider South West, both east- and westwards.

Plymouth has therefore recently instructed consultants to work with the Council to identify key interventions and needs in order to converse with Government to provide a rail service that fits the needs of Plymouth and its growth agenda, whilst being realistic and not one which provides disbenefits to other areas on the same line.

The timing for this has come just after the announcement from Sutton Harbour to pull out of Plymouth City Airport and the cessation by Air South West of further flights from September 2011. The impact this will have on the ability of businesses and residents of Plymouth to access other major cities and indeed to continue with the city's growth agenda will become clearer.

The study will look at providing an early service from London to Plymouth, the impact of more three—hour journeys as well as improvements to ICT on trains to allow better working on-board.

d. Worklessness

The approach to worklessness taken by the Economic Development Service is based on a two phase approach, an internal phase and an external.

The internal phase was based around activity that the Council currently engage in, whether this activity could be considered best practice and if this type of activity can be improved upon in the future. The internal focus discovered that some of what the Council do could not be considered joined up and many departments were working on

projects or plans that may impact on the worklessness agenda, but were unaware that they were doing so.

Another issue that arose was that whilst it may not be possible to provide new jobs in the current climate, the Council could perhaps do more to assist those who are looking to gain useful experience or skills, particularly amongst the 18-24 age range (although not excluding other groups) where Plymouth has had a problem for some considerable time. There are positives however; the Council already has an apprenticeship scheme up and running for 50 apprentices in 2011 throughout the organisation with the expectation that there will be 100 in place by 2014.

There is a link with the University to enable student placements and internships within the Council to enable graduates to develop their skill sets, the Urban Enterprise scheme working in conjunction with Working Links and Outset Plymouth to encourage people from some of the deprived wards to start their own businesses and recently we have agreed to take a leading role in providing work experience for those on the mandatory work activity element of the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP's) 'Get Britain Working' initiative which aims to help people into employment before the onset of the Work Programme. This activity helps demonstrate that the Council is taking the lead in the city on the worklessness issue, but there is still more to be done.

It is felt that the Council can only achieve so much on this issue, which has a wide ranging feel to it. There are many groups in the city that can be said to be involved in activity around worklessness and it is important for the Council to engage with these groups to have a positive impact on this issue. Working in isolation will not be ideal, and it is hoped that a city-wide strategy involving a wide variety of partners can be developed by mid-2012. As such, the second phase of the approach to worklessness will be essential in the effort to ensure that Plymouth continues to demonstrate the growth that is necessary to make it one of the most vibrant waterfront cities in Europe.

Plymouth can be considered lucky in that the performance of Jobcentre Plus (JCP) in the city show that in recent years they have been good at finding work for the majority of their customers in the first six months of unemployment, and that Working Links has established a strong relationship with JCP when dealing with those considered long term unemployed. With the new Work Programme coming online another organisation - Prospects (like Working Links, one of the DWP's Prime contractors) - has engaged two sub-contractors in the Plymouth area (Tomorrows People and Groundwork Southwest). This will mean there will be more activity based around looking at the barriers to work suffered by the long term unemployed, and the new programme ensures that sustained employment over a long period of time is recognised as the best outcome.

The Council has also demonstrated its ability to work well with other organisations, with the Flexible Support Fund bid (mentioned earlier) and with the European Social

Fund(ESF) fund which centres around families with complex multiple needs. This fund has allowed the Council (via the Family Intervention Project) to engage with a number of organisations and agencies and inform them of where we think the problems are, and how best they may fit.

The Council has also been part of two successful bids for Future Jobs Fund funding. The FJF scheme, overseen by Wolseley Trust, brings together partner organisations from across the Public and 3rd sectors in Plymouth to provide work placements for mainly 18-24 yr olds who are long-term unemployed. PCC has provided 94 placements out of 373 available in Plymouth. Out of these 27.5% of participants have left the scheme to go into employment, full time training or started their own business. A number of others are now volunteering in the services they worked for. The scheme ends September 2011.

e. Destination Plymouth and Waterfront Plan

Working with visitor economy specialists Blue Sail Destination Plymouth is in the process of developing an ambitious new plan to develop and grow the City's visitor economy. This plan is already on the scrutiny work programme for 2011 and will provide a clear route map to creating the 7000 new jobs identified within the visitor economy by the LES to 2026. Plans are also well underway to launch the first Plymouth Waterfront BID Business Plan with a plan to go to ballot early in 2012. Destination Plymouth will provide the co-ordination and strategic context for the Plymouth Waterfront Partnership and the City Centre Company to successfully operate, building on the success of the America's Cup.

f. Derriford and City Centre

Our jobs target within the LES is a demanding one and the current recession is stifling the growth of our local economy, as it is the world over. Cuts to the public sector, on which Plymouth has traditionally relied, are on the way but haven't yet taken full effect yet, so we might anticipate that there is worse to come.

The creation of new economic development structures such as the LEP may help to some extent as there will be more focus on local action, but it is clear we that we have got to help ourselves and also accept that much of our future economic expansion will need to be home-grown.

However, we do have fantastic opportunities for new growth, as our environment and quality of life cannot be matched by other large cities.

In the City Centre there are sites at Colin Campbell Court, Bretonside Bus Station and in Cornwall Street that have the potential for major new mixed-use development (as well as at Millbay Docks) and these should be brought forward to the development market

when economic conditions allow. These sites can provide additional retailing, employment and commercial leisure facilities and a range of occupiers that again will lift the City Centre and extend Plymouth's influence in the region.

The bi-nodal economy envisaged in the LES has been based upon growth in the Derriford area as well as the City Centre. Derriford has already seen major development at Tamar Science Park and the Plymouth International Medical & Technology Park, and the Council will be taking a transfer of the remaining 27 acres of the latter from the South West RDA any day now – one of very few RDA/Council transfers that is taking place in the country, we understand.

We have also, separately, acquired Derriford Business Park as a commercial investment from the outset SWRDA and that site could be linked in future to the adjoining Plymouth International Medical & Technology Park to create a major site for a new district centre comprising a new food store and other retail facilities, offices, and residential units. At the other (eastern) end of Plymouth International medical & Technology Park there is a new residential scheme that will enable a new strategic road link to be made from Tavistock Road to Forder Valley Road (known as the Forder Valley Link Road). That link will assist the whole area and also take some pressure off Tavistock Road, which will, of course, serve new development at the Plymouth Airport site.

New developments in the City Centre and Derriford have the potential to create many thousands of new jobs that will meet the needs of our growing economy and our aspirations for increased population and economic productivity.

7. Summary

It is clear that there are major economic challenges ahead and that the Plymouth economy is vulnerable to a reduction in the public sector. Plymouth like other cities has had to respond creatively to the new economic development landscape and has been quick to develop new initiatives such as the creation of the Plymouth local growth Fund, the transfer of RDA assets and the development of Destination Plymouth.

The Growth Board's review of the LES has reaffirmed that the City's Local Economic Strategy remains valid and correctly defines the City's direction of travel. The review of LES action plans has refocused us on delivery and ensured a comprehensive process of challenge and review is now in place.

In the light of the recent decisions on Plymouth Airport and Enterprise Zones our focus on lobbying and inward investment activity must intensify. At the same time we must continue to promote growth from within the City focussing on initiatives such as GAIN and Urban Enterprise.

Plymouth now has the building blocks and policy frameworks in place to enable growth; alongside a clear delivery mechanism through the Economic Development service and a new invigorated partnership with the private sector with the Growth Board.

We will continue to drive forward the economic interventions outlined in this plan and in the LES with the clear objective of increasing jobs and GVA growth.