

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

**COUNCIL
9 NOVEMBER 2010**

COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS

**FROM COUNCILLOR JEFF OSBORN
TROWBRIDGE GROVE DIVISION**

**TO COUNCILLOR JOHN BRADY
CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
PLANNING AND HOUSING**

Question

Can the Council please be informed whether it will be involved in a Local Enterprise Partnership?

Response

On the 9th June 2010, the Government, CLG and BIS, invited interested parties to submit proposals for the creation of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). LEP proposals were to be submitted jointly by business and upper tier local authorities and be with Government by 3rd September 2010.

The Wiltshire Strategic Economic Partnership considered the issue at its meeting on the 15th July 2010 and agreed to work jointly with Wiltshire Council on the development of a LEP proposal or proposals that gave best advantage to the business community of Wiltshire. Consultation with over 120 businesses and business representative organisations identified the issues to be championed and what constituted the best economic footprint for any LEP proposal.

Discussions were held with both Gloucestershire and Swindon, and Dorset and Hampshire over the summer months. Given tensions with other partners and competing LEP proposals, neither Hampshire nor Dorset were able to progress a 'Central Southern' LEP to proposal stage, whereas discussions with Gloucestershire and Swindon progressed to a proposal which was submitted within the timescale required.

We were formally informed on the 28th October that whilst our bid had not been given the 'green light', in general it was seen as a strong proposal and with further work, could still come forward as a LEP.

WSEP and Wiltshire Council still wish to see the creation of a LEP with a geographical footprint that recognises the challenges faced by Wiltshire's business community and are consulting with partners prior to any reworked proposal being submitted to Government.