

**Nottinghamshire Growth Plan
Feedback from Initial Theme
Group Meetings**

**Economic Development
Committee**

4th September 2012



**Nottinghamshire
County Council**

Introduction

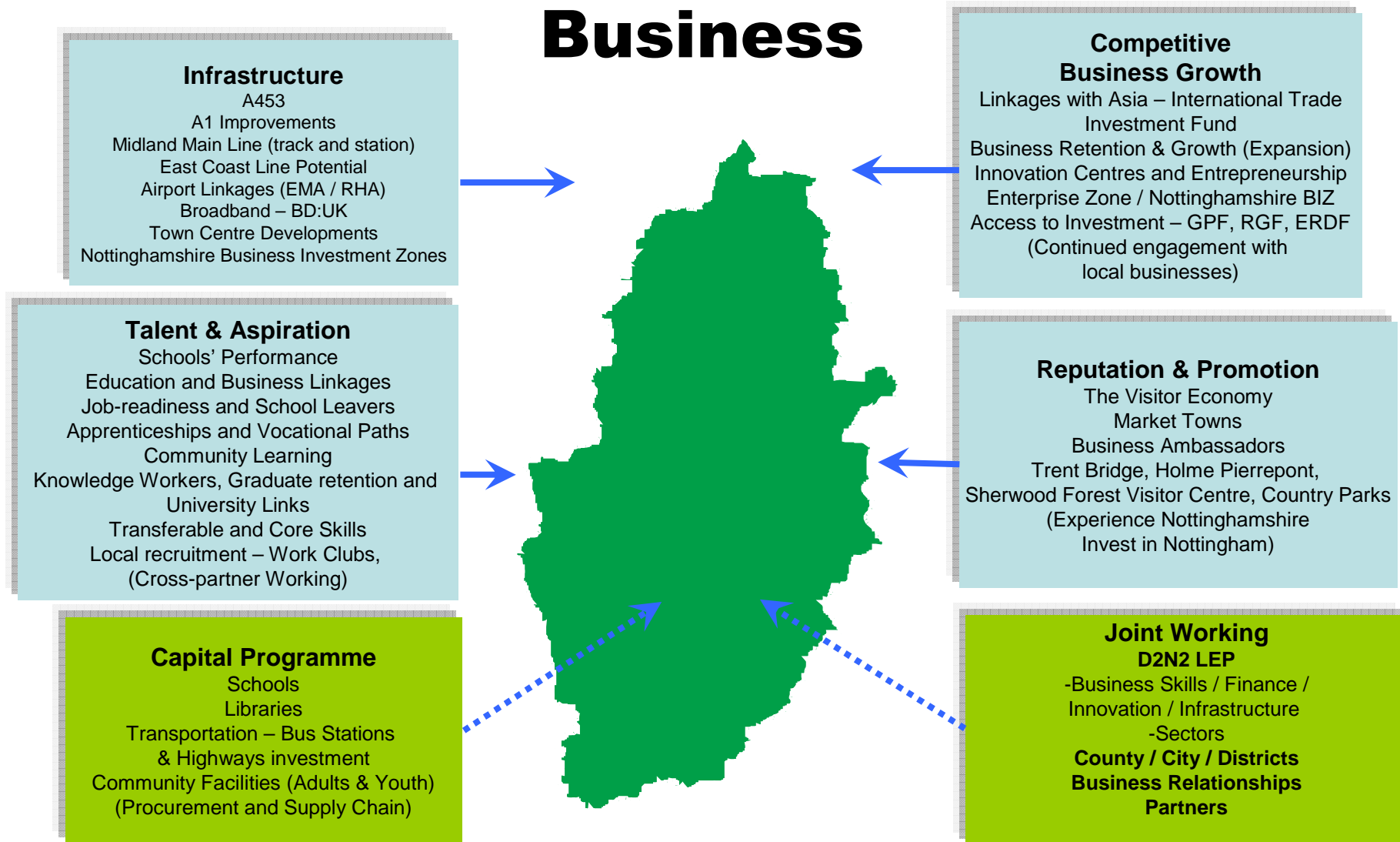
- Aspiration for a long-term plan for economic growth in Nottinghamshire – under 4 key headings
- Closely aligned to the Nottingham Growth Plan, which is supported by a ‘City Deal’
- Dialogue with key business representatives and delivery partners over the summer to inform drafting of plan

Introduction

- Participants have included:
 - Directors from high growth companies based in Notts
 - Venture capitalists and business support providers
 - Universities, FE colleges and Jobcentre Plus
 - Infrastructure partners – Highways Agency, Network Rail, BT
 - Invest in Nottingham / Experience Nottinghamshire
 - UKTI
 - Notts County Cricket Club / Newark Showground



Nottinghamshire: The Place to do Business



Competitive Business Growth

~ Issues Arising ~

- Access to finance is still difficult, particularly at lower levels and for smaller firms, where impact could be greatest
- Business potential to promote inward investment campaigns and activities is largely untapped
- Difficult to define or identify high growth businesses, although some communities have a greater density of high growth firms
- The national business support offer is not widely understood or very actively promoted, which leads to limited take-up
- Business churn is a sign of a healthy economy, if the balance is right

Competitive Business Growth

~ Potential Responses ~

- Greater effort to champion Nottinghamshire businesses and showcase successes – a Notts Ambassadors' Group
- Develop a local web-portal on business support and finance – enhanced by who makes / who supplies in Notts to encourage supply chain growth
- Pushing the transformative potential of superfast broadband, and making sure Notts companies are skilled up for this
- Develop added value activity for advanced manufacturing & engineering sectors – recognising high innovation and high skill / wage levels

Competitive Business Growth

~ Potential Responses ~

- Explore a Nottinghamshire Funding Circle approach to local investment in local business
- Complement existing activity in Nottinghamshire to encourage high growth plans in more firms
- Complement high growth proposals with an approach to boost start ups generally

Infrastructure

~ Issues Arising ~

- A number of recent positive announcements will have a significant impact upon the Nottinghamshire economy if fully exploited
- The County's Local Transport Plan offers a 15 year strategy reflecting the economic necessity of bringing forward key infrastructure projects
- National organisations such as the Highways Agency, Network Rail, East Midlands Trains have plans for strategic road and rail investment impacting upon the County
- Dialogue between these agencies and their respective responsibilities is key, as are relationships with wider infrastructure issues including utilities and broadband
- Finance to bring forward quality sites and related infrastructure is limited, and focussed on 'quick wins'

Infrastructure

~ Potential Responses ~

- Promote major capital infrastructure schemes (and the opportunities they open up) to potential inward investors and indigenous companies that want to expand
- Employment land opportunities should be developed strategically with developers, planners and land owners under the “Nottinghamshire Business Investment Zones” (NBIZ) approach



Infrastructure

~ Potential Responses ~

- NBIZ should build on the learning from the Nottinghamshire Enterprise Zone, and new flexibilities in planning and business rates should be explored for other sites in the County
- The vibrancy of town centres and market towns across the County should be a specific focus, working with the private sector and District Councils to deliver more accessible and resilient retail and service offers
- Establish a Nottinghamshire Developers Forum (linked into NBIZ activity) to lobby utilities and planning regimes for fast-tracking of key sites in the County

Aspiration & Talent

~ Issues Arising ~

- We understand our labour market very well, but lack the tools / influence to address issues relating to relevant skills and attitudes
- Delivery of skills training is increasingly disparate and confusing for employers
- Employers need to be more demanding of skills providers to get what they need out of the system
- There is some reluctance / prejudice to employing young people, or employers' expectations are too high



Aspiration & Talent

~ Issues Arising ~

- Limited or unrealistic aspirations, particularly in workless families
- Higher level skills should be a focus – graduate retention / employer requirements / business start-ups
- Sub-County differentials need to be taken into account, as County level figures can be skewed by certain areas

Aspiration & Talent

~ Potential Responses ~

- The Employment and Skills Board offers a good route to explore more strategic approaches to skills and employment
- The County's colleges and training providers need a better understanding of the needs of SMEs and micro-businesses - training generally required to be employer responsive
- A sophisticated, on-going sector and vacancy analysis would complement this approach, offering help to providers in reviewing where job opportunities are and what skills are required
- Develop a programme to address perceptions and perspectives of young people into employment
- Develop a Nottinghamshire approach to the important transition points between schools, FE and HE
- Consider the potential for a more co-ordinated approach to enterprise education in Nottinghamshire schools

Reputation & Promotion

~ Issues Arising ~

- Reputation will be earned as a consequence of progress with wider activity
- Promotion will influence the Nottinghamshire story though a sense of place may be lacking
- Opportunities to enhance the picture relate to exciting developments referenced within other themes
- Visitor economy has strengths but many “named” attractions do not meet expectations in reality
- Perceptions are largely driven by crime and related safety issues, be they historical or not applicable pan-County
- Strengths outweigh negatives and other themes reflect this

Reputation & Promotion

~ Potential Responses ~

Anticipated focus on :

- Attracting new businesses and residents – including student offer
- Building a positive reputation via the theme strands – via :
 - Delivery
 - Referencing related materials such as the “Happiness Survey”
 - Exploring how a unified perception of the area could be built
- Exploiting visitor economy opportunities and specifically Nottinghamshire’s heritage and history

Next steps

- Draft a Nottinghamshire Growth Plan with key objectives and deliverables
- Draft headline objectives along the following lines:

Competitive business growth

Create a unique environment for the Nottinghamshire business community where creativity and innovation are valued, investment is facilitated, entrepreneurs are encouraged and established businesses can thrive and grow.

Infrastructure

Forge Nottinghamshire's enviable infrastructure networks into one of the best connected counties, driving investment and the creation of new jobs.

Next steps

Aspiration and Talent

Drive the competitiveness of Nottinghamshire's economy through an increasingly skilled and productive workforce, promoting only high aspiration, supporting talent and maximising potential.

Reputation and Promotion

Possible consideration as a 'horizontal' theme, rather than stand alone?

Champion Nottinghamshire's growing reputation, exploiting its assets and its business, heritage and cultural successes.

Timeline

- Draft Growth Plan completed – end September
- Consultation – to end October
- Economic Development Committee endorse Growth Plan – November meeting
- Policy Committee ratify Growth Plan - December meeting

