



Coventry and Warwickshire Business Start-Up Strategy 2003-2006

Final consultation draft

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Produced by the Coventry and Warwickshire Business Start-Up Strategy
Group

with the assistance of
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Supporting new and young businesses in Coventry and Warwickshire: Draft strategy 2003-2006

1 Why do new and young businesses matter?

New and young businesses make a vital contribution to the health, wealth and long-term prospects of the economy. They provide an essential source of:

- new wealth;
- new employment;
- and new opportunities for people in disadvantaged areas to participate in wealth creating activities that can benefit whole communities.

In addition, and equally important, they stimulate:

- Innovation in products, services and business techniques.
- Competition both within the small firms sector and between new entrants and established players in key markets.

In these various ways, therefore, new and young businesses help to ensure a fresh supply of ideas, energy and inventiveness – the essential drivers of growth and diversity in the local economy.

2 Why support new *and* young businesses?

Local experience and other research suggests that the right kind of support delivered to new businesses at the right time in the business birth cycle – at critical stages in their development – can make a huge difference to survival and growth rates. These stages include:

- Pre-start preparation – when specialist support is often needed to help people decide whether or not this is the right route for them, and then to help with business planning, initial market research, etc.
- Start-up support – which can include help with accessing finance, finding premises, sales and marketing, etc.
- Incubation and early years – including building the confidence and competence of business owner-managers, leveraging venture and other growth capital, helping with recruitment, and so on.

We also know that new and young businesses that use external help – be that from public or private sector providers – are more likely to survive and thrive:

- **More likely to survive:** start-ups that have used local Business/Enterprise Link assistance, for example, are less likely to fail at an early stage.¹ Survival to 24 months in 2000 was 82% for Coventry-based businesses, and 84% in Warwickshire. VAT registration data suggest that the average survival rate after 2 years is much lower, at 70%.

¹ Enterprise Link Performance Figures.

National SBS figures also suggest that business starters who take external advice are 20% more likely to survive than those who do not.²

- **More likely to thrive:** the SBS national strategy report also makes it clear that new enterprises that use external help grow their turnover faster than those who don't.

In other words, business support makes a measurable, positive difference to the robustness and prosperity of new and young businesses.

3 Why a business start-up strategy now?

Our view is that business start-up support services make a direct contribution to wealth and opportunity creation in the local economy. In the past, though, they have tended to be rather fragmented and 'initiative' or funding led. This has created confusion in the marketplace, a degree of unhelpful competition between providers and, just as important, gaps in provision where particular policies or funding streams have simply failed to reach.

The opportunity and need now exist for providers, especially in the public and not-for-profit sectors, to join forces. There is strong national government and regional/AWM support for more coherence, greater consistency and improved quality in business support services. AWM, in particular, has adopted a series of strategic priorities for the development of specific Regeneration Zones, Clusters and Corridors that will create exciting new opportunities for innovative business start-ups and entrepreneurial activity. These opportunities will need to be identified and supported in a coherent manner, informed by a shared view of what business start-ups need to survive and prosper.

Our view is that a shared business start-up strategy will deliver these benefits much more directly than *ad hoc* partnering. That is why the main players and providers in business start-up and early years support services have come together to develop an overarching strategy. The intention is to involve and consult with all interested parties and sectors, including: the local authorities; CSWP Ltd and the local Regeneration Zone Board; AWM; Coventry University and the University of Warwick; local FE colleges; voluntary and community organisations, and business-led initiatives such as Business in the Community.

The draft strategy has been produced for wider consultation by a steering group representing:

- Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber and Business Link
- Coventry City Council
- The Learning and Skills Council, Coventry and Warwickshire
- Warwickshire County Council
- University of Warwick Science Park

² See: *A Comprehensive Strategy for Start-Ups: Consultation Document*, SBS, May 2002.

- Coventry University Enterprises
- Coventry and Warwickshire Co-operative Development Agency (CDA)
- The Women's Business Development Agency (WBDA)

Local partners have many years' experience of working in this field and a great deal of expertise in both generic and more specialised business services. This ranges from working with high-growth, high technology 'team' starts, through employee buy-outs and worker co-operatives, to women's enterprises and work with unemployed people who want to become self-employed. This collaboration is a first for Coventry and Warwickshire and marks a milestone in the collective progress being made towards an integrated business support service across the sub-region.

The publication of this draft strategy for wider consultation will, it is hoped, build support for such an integrated service and attract other key providers and players to join the 'family' of local start-up support services. In particular, it is hoped that key actors in the *private* sector will see benefits and opportunities for them in aligning themselves with the strategy (not least, by joining in and shaping the final draft and resulting action plan).

4 Strategic aims and objectives – a comprehensive service in a bigger marketplace

Aims

Our two main strategic aims focus on improving the *supply* of services in order to stimulate *demand*. They are:

1. By 2006, to create a comprehensive, inclusive and integrated support service to new and young businesses throughout Coventry and Warwickshire.
2. To stimulate a more entrepreneurial culture locally and thereby boost sustainable entrepreneurial activity across the sub-region.

Objectives

Specific objectives relate to these core aims. They are:

- To identify and overcome barriers to new business start-up activity and survival rates, especially those faced by people from disadvantaged communities (of place or interest).
- To increase the number of new and young businesses in Coventry and Warwickshire that are seeking and benefiting from external help.
- To ease and improve access to an integrated network of both generic and specialist business start-up and early years support services.
- To achieve and maintain the highest standards in service delivery and product development.





- To identify gaps and opportunities to deliver new services in priority sectors and segments of the business start-up market in Coventry and Warwickshire in a more proactive way.
- To acquire and deploy the resources needed to meet all of the above objectives.

5 A strategic framework for business start-up support

The achievement of these ambitious aims and objectives will require some radical new thinking about the segmentation and prioritisation of the market. It also prompts us to re-think the relationships between different agencies and providers.

We need to see the market as a series of differentiated (though potentially related) segments of entrepreneurial activity that deliver a range of returns to the economy and community, depending on whether the emphasis is on *economic growth* or *social inclusion*. Twin-tracking these policy commitments has proved a rather awkward exercise in the past, but we have devised a model that brings both of them into the fold, as the figure below shows.

Figure 1 Segmenting the market for new and young business support – a more inclusive agenda

 Inclusion: <i>social</i> orientation and potential 		Growth: <i>economic</i> orientation and potential  	
		Hi	Lo
	Hi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some social enterprises (including some employee buyouts and co-operatives) • Some minority ethnic owned businesses • Some women entrepreneurs • Some business starts in rural and other isolated locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most social enterprises and community business projects • Most women's business start-ups • Some self-employed • Some minority ethnic owned businesses • Some business starts in rural and other isolated locations • Most business starts by disabled owner-managers
Lo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-growth starts and spin-outs (including 'team' starts) • Some lifestyle businesses • Some self-employed • Most other entrepreneurs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most lifestyle businesses • Most self-employed 	

Source: UK Research Partnership Ltd, 2002

The matrix above describes two axes or dimensions along which new and young businesses might vary:

- **From high to low *growth*** (Hi-Lo on the horizontal axis).

And

- **From high to low *inclusion*** (Hi-Lo on the vertical axis).

Every type of new or young business can be plotted somewhere on this matrix. For example, the bulk of **Business Link's** support for start-ups is thought to have been concentrated in the lower right-hand (Lo-Lo) quadrant. In this case, people from not particularly disadvantaged backgrounds, for the

most part, are being helped to set themselves up in one-person businesses that are unlikely to grow beyond supporting the owner with an income in a job.

By contrast, all of the **University of Warwick Science Park's** investments are in high-technology, high growth potential business starts and spin-outs, in the bottom left-hand quadrant (Hi-Lo). They make a measurable contribution to growth in turnover and profits, and often also employment, but have little if any impact on the social inclusion agenda. The start-up activities of the **Coventry University TechnoCentre** follow the same pattern.

The **City and County Councils**, other public sector and government agencies are much more likely to be supporting start-up initiatives with a high *inclusion* content, reflecting their policy commitments to assist the most disadvantaged, isolated or marginalised communities. In the top right-hand quadrant, therefore, (Lo-Hi) we see funding for programmes being delivered by specialist agencies, such as the **CDA** and **WBDA**, for example, and support for initiatives such as **CBED** (Community Based Economic Development) in Coventry.

The least well developed quadrant locally is in the top left-hand corner – in the Hi-Hi segment – where we might see social enterprises (businesses with a conscious social or community purpose, ownership and constitution) being set up and growing as successful commercial entities. Successful business starts in isolated or deprived locations would also contribute to the scorecard in the Hi-Hi quadrant.

6 Current market penetration – strengths and weaknesses

The calculation of the numbers involved in 'entrepreneurial activity' in Coventry and Warwickshire is not a straightforward task. This is partly a problem of definition and partly a lack of reliable data sources. It is even more difficult to gauge activity by segment (i.e. in each of the four main quadrants identified in our matrix). Nevertheless, we have used a number of SBS and other sources to estimate the total number of people involved in 'entrepreneurial activity', using the following steps:

- **Using the international benchmarking GEM study,³ we have assumed that 8% of all economically active adults in Coventry and Warwickshire are also *entrepreneurially active*** – that is, either trying to start a new business or actually owner-managers of an enterprise that has been trading for less than 42 months (3.5 years). This proportion is the UK average.⁴ We have no reason to suppose that the Coventry and Warwickshire sub-region is untypical, given that other measures of business activity (such as VAT

³ Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2001 Executive Report, by Paul T Reynolds, et al.

⁴ The SBS household survey of entrepreneurship amongst working age residents, conducted in 2001, comes up with very much higher estimates. The IFF authors of the report claim that anything up to a third of the population "... are either already involved in entrepreneurial activity (18%) or thinking about it (12%)". In Coventry and Warwickshire this equates to almost 118,00 actual or potential new enterprises, which seems to be a highly inflated figure.

registration data) show the sub-region to be on a par with the West Midlands region.⁵ However, we also need to note that the region as a whole is below the national average in terms of the number of VAT registrations and deregistrations recorded in 2000, placing the West Midlands in sixth position out of the nine English regions.⁶

- **This equates to 31,400 entrepreneurially active adults in Coventry and Warwickshire,**⁷ of whom about 60% (18,800) are running recently established/young businesses (less than 42 months old) and 40% (12,500) are actively thinking about setting something up.⁸

Partners' initial estimates of their annual market penetration in each segment suggest the following breakdown (starting in the top left-hand quadrant of the matrix and working clockwise):

1. **Hi growth-Hi inclusion:** fewer than 20 social businesses or projects being supported directly or likely to come on stream in the near future (although at least one rural marketing co-operative involves well over 100 members). There is potential for a number of women's business starts, for example, which are currently classified in the Lo-Hi quadrant, to migrate across to Hi-growth. There may also be opportunities to focus targeted resources, such as through the Regeneration Zone, to encourage high growth start-ups in disadvantaged areas.
2. **Lo growth-Hi inclusion:** 400-500 pre-starts per annum, with a conversion start-up rate of around 25%. There are approximately 20 social enterprises about to come on stream. A small proportion of all these business starts will go on to achieve higher growth. Particular gaps or weaknesses here include the lack of targeted support for minority ethnic business (MEB) starts.
3. **Lo growth-Lo inclusion:** the most heavily populated segment, with an estimated 3,000 initial enquiries per annum (mostly through Business Link, and many of them very cursory). These yield a take-up of 900 first stage awareness sessions and 200-220 actual business starts (a 22% conversion rate). The potential for generating more Hi-Lo (bottom left) and Lo-Hi (top right) business starts from this source needs to be explored.

⁵ VAT registrations each year only include businesses that exceed the £50,000 annual sales threshold. According to the 2001 SBS household survey, 54% of new and young Midlands-based businesses achieve less than £50,000 annual turnover, which means that the VAT register probably excludes more than half of all new businesses at any one time.

⁶ Figures quoted in *Improving Access to Finance for SMEs*, Deloitte & Touche, June 2002 – a study commissioned by AWM.

⁷ That is, 8% of the economically active adult population, which is c.392, 200.

⁸ The SBS/IFF household study suggests that 29% of all entrepreneurial ventures in England are 'new' business starts, which means less than 2 years old. If we take the GEM-derived estimate of total entrepreneurial activity as 31,400 and assume that 29% of these are less than 2 years old, there would be a total of around 9,000 new and young businesses in the sub-region at any one time.

4. **Hi-growth-Lo inclusion:** this segment is thought to be close to saturation, with around 65 high-growth companies currently involved in specialist support programmes of one sort or another. Nonetheless, there may be potential for encouraging more 'in-migration' from the Lo-Lo segment, including specialist, self-employed 'lifestylers', such as consultants, who are running high value added, knowledge-based businesses.

Whichever estimate of total numbers we decide to use, it is clear that in all but one segment (Hi growth-Lo inclusion), business start-up service providers have a potentially very large market to reach. The challenge for this strategy is therefore twofold:

1. To consolidate and improve services to the *existing* customer base, including easing access and improving quality.
2. To identify which parts of the potential *new* market should be prioritised and with what resources.

Below we summarise what we know about the support needs of new and young businesses. We go on to describe the delivery model we believe is required to meet these established needs and to respond to new opportunities as they emerge.

7 What new businesses need

Clearly, different sorts of business start-ups (e.g. a high growth team start compared with a community-based waste recycling venture) are likely to need rather different kinds and degrees of support. But partners have identified three broad categories of support that new and young businesses typically need and benefit from:

- **Information and related services** – such as help with assessing the viability of business ideas, personal support, market research, sales and marketing, recruitment, ICT and government regulations, finding and managing premises.
- **Business skills** – business planning and management development.
- **Investment** – principally, help with access to finance, from bank loans, overdrafts and micro-finance, including for social enterprises, through to venture capital for higher risk growth enterprises.

Research evidence suggests that the take-up of, and access to, support services is uneven. For example:

- Minority ethnic business (MEB) start-ups are less likely than their white counterparts to approach banks for funds and more likely to use informal networks for external support (such as family and friends).⁹

⁹ See for example, the preliminary results of the September 2000 CEEDR/Middlesex University survey of MEBs, by David Smallbone and Robert Balldock.

There is also evidence of dissatisfaction amongst MEB entrepreneurs in relation to the banks' awareness of cultural issues.¹⁰

- Women business owners find it more difficult to access resources (both financial and human) than men. On average, they start up with only a third of the capital used by male entrepreneurs. Men are more likely in any case to seek external funding, possibly as a result of institutional barriers that deter or discriminate against women in some way.¹¹
- Unemployed people are more likely to be thinking about engaging in entrepreneurial activity than those in work, but their plans tend to be less developed and relatively few have confidence that their plans will come to fruition.¹² The quality and appropriateness of pre-start advice and guidance is therefore especially critical for this group.
- Younger entrepreneurs and those with degrees are more likely to seek and benefit from external support, and they are certainly more entrepreneurially active than older and less well-qualified people.¹³

This unevenness impacts directly on business performance and prospects. For example, recent SBS research shows that early under-resourcing and non-use of external advice lead to poorer performance in the longer-term. For a number of partners, encouraging more business starts by people from minority ethnic backgrounds, women entrepreneurs, unemployed and older people is seen as a priority. Our strategy must therefore begin to address the inequalities and institutional barriers that prevent such groups from accessing the fullest possible range of business support services.

8 The delivery model – an inclusive and comprehensive service

It is critical to deliver the right kind of support to new and young businesses at the right stage in their growth cycle. These stages include:

- **Pre-start preparation** – when specialist support is often needed to help people decide whether the business idea is sound in principle and likely to be right for the individuals involved in practice.
- **Start-up support** – which can include help with accessing finance, finding premises, and with sales and marketing.
- **Incubation and early years** – including building the confidence and competence of business owner-managers, leveraging venture and other

¹⁰ See *Improving Access to Finance for SMEs*, Deloitte & Touche, June 2002.

¹¹ See *Women's Business Ownership – a Review of the Literature*, report to the SBS, by Sara Carter, et al, Department of Marketing, University of Strathclyde, August 2001.

¹² SBS Household Survey, IFF, 2001.

¹³ SBS Household Survey, IFF, 2001.

growth capital, helping to establish business systems, helping with recruitment, and so on.

One of the weaknesses of the service support infrastructure in the past has been the lack of any clear progression routes, referral or hand-over links between different levels of support and areas of special expertise. In particular, we see a need to establish:

- A 'spine' of generic services that can respond to a well-defined range of common support needs amongst new and young businesses.
- A 'key stage' and specialist business response service that is capable of identifying and meeting the more specific needs of new and young businesses as they mature.

The provision of such a service will depend on creating a much more effective network of shared knowledge and progression links between agencies in both the public/not-for-profit and private sectors. It also requires clear routes to be established for new and young businesses, where appropriate, to move in to more 'mainstream' business support services.

The text box below illustrates some of the diversity we want to cater for and capture in our area. It provides a mini- case study of a specialist service that needs to interface with other agencies and service streams. All partners use broadly similar induction and support processes, but with differing access levels and tailored services.

**Women's Business Development Agency (WBDA)
Business Start-up Support – Service Delivery 'Walk-Through'**

Entry points

1. General enquiry/referral.
2. Outreach clinics.
3. Women's Empowerment Programme (WEP).

Introduction to service

One-to-one diagnostic session – includes skills and 'start-up readiness' assessment – if needed, training offered via WEP (confidence building, the business idea, marketing, finance, tax, etc.) or one-to-one basic IT training. Signposting to other agencies for e.g. ESOL training.

Client sensitivity

1. Ensure that office suitable for any special needs – if not home or other venue visit. Attempt to address language difficulties, including provision for signer if necessary (currently seeking funding for Braille literature – forms, workbooks, etc.).
2. Offer childcare and transport costs (through WEP and other funded programmes).
3. Ensure that appointments and availability of Business Adviser fit client need (e.g. during school hours, or evening appointment).

Support/advice

1. Counselling sessions.
2. Help with market research and analysis.
3. Help in preparation of business plan.
4. Help in accessing funding.

5. Site visits, where appropriate.
6. Advocacy work, where appropriate, with grant makers, banks, landlords, etc.
7. Referrals, where appropriate and when ready (e.g. Business Link, Science Park, etc.).
8. Phone/letter contact/encouragement with clients to stop/unable to continue seeing us.
9. Client newsletter.
10. Use of 'phone/fax/IT resources up to agreed limit.
11. Automatic transfer from start-up to existing business support, should client require.
12. Access to free training at any stage of business.

Client sensitivity

1. Time, length and frequency of counselling sessions needs-led.
2. Language, literacy and other special needs addressed in preparation of research and plans.
3. Personal support in overcoming family resistance, difficult lending, grant-making institutions, etc.
4. Development of support circles for women in similar circumstances.

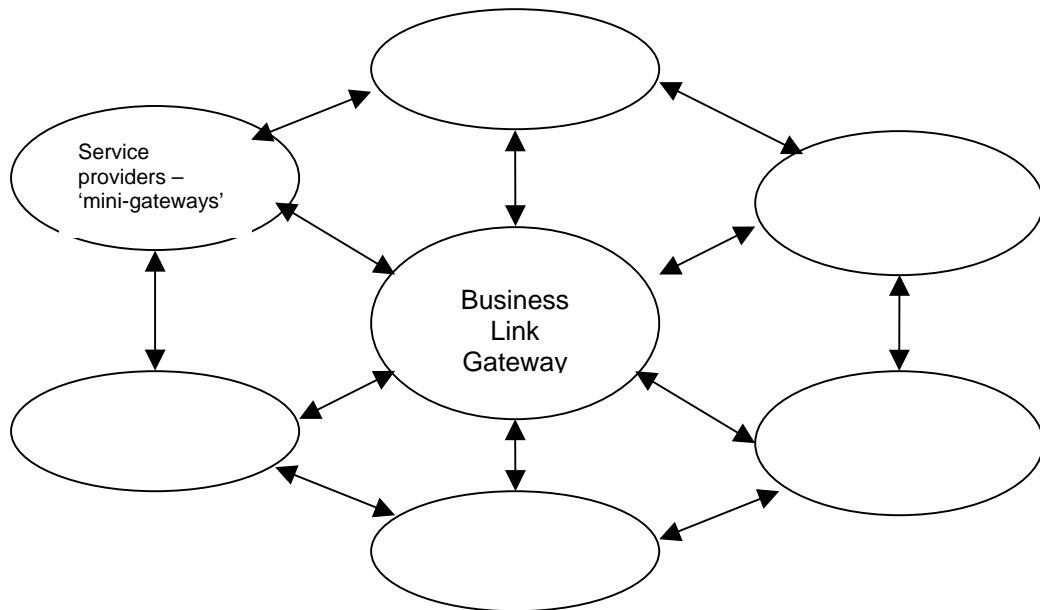
9 A New Business Service Gateway for Coventry and Warwickshire

With these sorts of requirements in mind, partners are keen to make sure that access to business start-up services in Coventry and Warwickshire, at whatever level, is easy, accurate and intelligent. Requests for business start-up and early years information, advice or guidance should be handled in a consistent, seamless manner, making sure that clients are routed through to the most appropriate levels and sources of help. For those who are in the early stages of thinking about starting a business, this must include help with deciding whether or not such a course of action is realistic.

The model we have in mind builds on a hybrid version of the traditional 'hub and spoke'. The figure below is intended to show an enhanced Business Link Gateway in the centre, with a well-informed and continuously updated reception and referral team at its heart. The team is capable of handling all new/young business enquiries and knows where to refer people for more specialised or intensive support within the network of local providers.

However, the effective operation of the Gateway has to acknowledge that clients can (and will) enter the service network at various points, not just via Business Link. Every service provider must therefore aspire to act as a 'mini-gateway', giving customers access to the entire network of provision as far as possible, not just their own (often more specialised) service. Making this *distributed* model of the Gateway work will require much closer working links and regular information exchanges between providers. The Action Plan at the end of this document outlines how those links will be further cemented over the next 3 years.

A New Business Service Gateway



10 From strategy to action planning: the key questions

The overview we have produced of current activity in each market segment (see section 5 above) begs as many questions as it answers. For example:

Hi Growth-Hi Inclusion:

- Why is there so little activity in the Hi-Hi quadrant?
- What can partners do to stimulate more social entrepreneurial activity?
- What new market opportunities are likely to emerge in this sector, such as for childcare and other service-based businesses, as a result of the transfer of public services?

Lo Growth-Hi Inclusion:

- What should be done to meet minority ethnic business start-up and survival needs?
- What kind of support is required to stimulate more migration into high growth from this segment?

Lo Growth-Lo Inclusion:

- What kind of support is required to stimulate more migration into high growth and high social inclusion in this segment?

Hi Growth-Lo Inclusion:

- What new business opportunities and emerging markets can be identified that will attract more local entrepreneurs?
- How can the skills and resources of specialist high growth business support agencies be applied to benefit other segments?

Overall:

- How can local partners increase demand for business start-up and early years support? Who else needs to be involved?
- Where are the gaps and opportunities?
- What should our priority segments and sectors be? What are the relative 'unit costs' of providing support in each segment? Are some business starts not worth bothering with?
- What targets should we set ourselves?
- What service infrastructure is required to meet increased demand and respond to priority areas of need or opportunity?
- How and where should local business support agencies that specialise in different segments be joining forces to create more growth in priority areas?
- What resources will be needed to achieve local priorities and targets?

11 The action planning framework: priorities, targets and resource needs

In this concluding section, we summarise our view of the main priorities and tasks ahead, linked to each of the objectives outlined earlier.

Objective	Priorities	Targets	Possible activities	Suggested lead delivery partners	Resources (existing/new?)
1 Increase the number of clients using and benefiting from local BSU services	<p>(a) Raise awareness of enterprise, entrepreneurship and the social enterprise option amongst:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - young people (14-19) - women - minority ethnic (ME) communities - socially excluded groups in disadvantaged areas - people with disabilities <p>(b) Increase the take-up of business start-up and enterprise support services</p>	<p>All secondary schools and FE colleges in Coventry and Warwickshire</p> <p>20 most deprived wards and areas in C&W, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the C&W Regeneration Zone - the New Deal for Communities area - isolated rural settlements 	<p>Devise teaching packs and programmes for use in schools (covering every form and segment of business activity)</p> <p>Visit schools and colleges to disseminate teaching materials</p> <p>Sponsor more post-16 enterprise modules and business simulations</p> <p>Invite FE Colleges to propose BSU Programmes based on known good practice</p> <p>Identify high growth start-ups in HE (post-Spinner¹⁴/post-Enterprise Fellowship Scheme) that can benefit from the broader spectrum of early stage business support</p>	<p>BL, Education Business Consortium, LEAs, Prince's Trust</p> <p>All partners; Adult and Community Learning services</p> <p>FE sector and LLSC</p> <p>Higher education (HE) sector</p>	

¹⁴ This refers to start-ups that have been spun out of Intellectual Property held in the Universities and that have grown beyond the embryonic stage.

¹⁵ Coventry and Warwickshire CDA started running the first in a series of community-based enterprise/entrepreneurship training courses in January 2003, aimed at people living in disadvantaged areas who are in the process of setting up social enterprises.

Objective	Priorities	Targets	Possible activities	Suggested lead delivery partners	Resources (existing/new?)
<p>Increase the number of clients using and benefiting from local BSU services (continued)</p>			<p>Encourage additional HE based start-up activity, not necessarily high growth) that can improve graduate retention locally</p> <p>Provide community-based enterprise training courses and business support services¹⁵</p> <p>Recruit and train Enterprise Mentors</p> <p>Set up a Business Ideas Store, supported by an Enterprise Brokerage Service bringing people with good ideas together with energetic entrepreneurs</p> <p>Hold an annual C&W EnterPrize competition for outstanding performance in different categories (self-employment; social enterprise; high growth, etc.). Prizes to include cash, business planning; training and consultancy; market research; subsidised rents, etc.</p>	<p>BL; WBDA; C&W CDA; Universities; the Coventry CBED team</p>	

Objective	Priorities	Targets	Possible activities	Suggested lead delivery partners	Resources (existing/new?)
2 Overcome barriers	<p>(a) Improve access to appropriate BSU and early years finance for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MEB owners/managers - Women entrepreneurs - High growth businesses needing small amounts of venture capital - Unemployed people <p>b) Provide more starter units and associated incubation programmes targeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hi social inclusion agendas (MEB, rural, women, etc.) - Priority sectors and clusters (e.g. Creative Industries, Food, etc.) 	<p>All High Street Banks in C&W approached on a co-ordinated regional basis</p> <p>Double, then double again, Hi social inclusion related start-up rates – then plan probable sustainable ongoing support provision</p> <p>Develop X '000 sq metres of new/refurbished starter units (50% in rural locations)</p>	<p>Set up a sub-regional Finance for New Business Forum to drive the development of the system of appropriate investment funds, and investment readiness services and competencies – all integrated with regional programmes and capabilities where they exist or are planned</p> <p>Support a Community Development Finance Initiative</p> <p>Participate in the national pilot scheme to investigate the feasibility of setting up a Union of Self-employed</p> <p>Develop close and co-operative working links with the Birmingham based regional Halal Fund (for Muslim start-ups)</p> <p>Acquire premises/land in target locations</p>	<p>All partners</p> <p>C&W CDA WBDA</p> <p>Local planning authorities</p>	

¹⁶ The WBDA has recently submitted a bid to AWM to fund such a facility.

Objective	Priorities	Targets	Possible activities	Suggested lead delivery partners	Resources (existing/new?)
Overcome barriers (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RZ (or other disadvantaged urban areas) where there is self evident under-provision - People with disabilities¹⁶ <p>Explore the feasibility of setting up a pilot hi-tech, hi-growth, hi-social inclusion enterprise trust and centre</p> <p>(c) Improve access to/flows of information about support services available to particular communities of interest or place</p> <p>(d) Create a financial allowance system that helps unemployed people and benefit claimants pursue the self-employment/enterprise option</p>	<p>See 1 above and 3 below</p>	<p>See 1 above and 3 below</p> <p>Work with appropriate agencies to explore options</p>	<p>SBS/BL, LSC, Employment Service/JobCentre Plus</p>	
3 Create an integrated network of BSU and early years support	<p>(a) Set up a New Business Service Gateway</p> <p>(b) Develop greater cohesion between delivery agencies</p> <p>(c) Seek greater coherence</p>	<p>All relevant public and private sector service providers</p> <p>Ensure a wider understanding of and</p>	<p>Recruit and/or train BL Gateway staff</p> <p>Arrange inter-agency work shadowing programmes, secondments, etc.</p> <p>Support the creation of the BL Wider Partnership Intranet/ Customer Management System</p>	<p>BSU Strategy/BL Wider Partnership Group</p> <p>All partners</p> <p>All sub/regional</p>	

Objective	Priorities	Targets	Possible activities	Suggested lead delivery partners	Resources (existing/new?)
	between partners' BSU/enterprise strategies at a local and regional level	support for this Strategy and Action Plan	Ask partners to make explicit reference to this Strategy in their own plans. Review BSU priorities in light of emerging sub/regional strategies	partners and AWM	
4 Maintain and improve quality standards in service delivery	Participate in the BL Wider Partnership 'Virtual Learning Network'	Create a BSU advisory staff development programme and fund	Run inter-agency training and staff development days	All partners	
5 Identify gaps and opportunities	<p>(a) Gather/commission better market intelligence and analysis in each of the four main segments (Hi-Hi, Lo-Hi, etc.)</p> <p>(b) Create closer, more dynamic links with priority groups and market segments</p>	Complete and maintain an ongoing estimate of support needs and map emerging opportunities in every major segment of the local BSU market	<p>Encourage the regional Observatory to research and report on enterprise activities at a sub-regional level</p> <p>Commission specific pieces of research in priority/emerging segments and sectors where more needs to be done and where on-the-ground experience may be limited. Explore good practice, ideas and methodologies</p> <p>Establish automated systems for pooling provider output data on a consistent and continuing basis</p> <p>Participate in the national pilot scheme to investigate the feasibility of setting up a Union of Self-employed</p>	BL	

Objective	Priorities	Targets	Possible activities	Suggested lead delivery partners	Resources (existing/new?)
Identify gaps and opportunities (contd)			Support networking activities between BSUs in target locations and communities		
6 Acquire the necessary resources	(a) Increase investments in BSU support to deliver each of the above objectives and priorities (b) Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of existing resources	Double the amount of finding for BSU support by 2006	Identify and pursue all new funding opportunities, especially via AWM, through partnership-based or endorsed bids Identify the unit costs and benefits of different types and levels of service delivery in each market segments and, where possible, compare to known good practice from other UK regions or the wider EU	BL and partners	

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