

PRESS INFORMATION issued by Shropshire County Council

New Shropshire Business Board launched

The first meeting of Shropshire's new Business Board took place earlier this week (23 June), just six weeks after the public commitment from Shropshire County Council to its formation.

Ten business leaders from some of the county's biggest employers and a number of representatives from various business support organisations have agreed to join the board, set up to guide the economic development service for the new council.

Carolyn Downs, Shropshire County Council's chief executive, announced to business leaders at the Shropshire Business Summit in early May that the new Shropshire Council would work more closely with businesses and a dynamic board could provide the vehicle to ensure business views come through strongly when developing economic policy and supporting the county's economy.

Geoffrey Davies OBE, Managing Director of McConnells Ludlow and the Alamo Group Europe, was elected the inaugural Chairman of the Business Board and has agreed to serve for the first two years.

The Business Board agreed that early tasks would include agreeing the county's existing economic development priorities and formulating a Business Plan which economic partners will deliver over the next three to five years.

This Business Plan will be presented to the new Shropshire Council and ultimately to Advantage West Midlands, the Regional Development Agency, to ensure that the priorities of the county are high on the agenda within the region.

John Hurst-Knight, Shropshire County Council's Cabinet member for economy, said: "As a council we are committed to building stronger links with our businesses. A strong economy is vital to the wealth and community well-being of the county. The Shropshire Business Board is a brand new idea and the first meeting demonstrated a real willingness to work together to improve the economic prosperity of Shropshire. I am very pleased to be a part of it."

Geoffrey Davies added: "The board is potentially a hugely powerful tool to ensure Shropshire businesses receive strong consideration in regional and national economic planning and investments.

"We want a good infrastructure in place to deliver strong support to ensure the economic well being of the county. The co-operation between the private and public sectors is essential to developing it."

Ends

For further information, call Samantha Hine, Acting Head of Economic Regeneration, on (01743) 252591.

For media contact, call Laura Owen, Communications Officer, Economy & Environment on (01743) 253318.

Notes to editor

The board also includes, such as Business Link, the Learning & Skills Council, Job Centre Plus, the Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses.

Photograph: Geoffrey Davies, Chairman of the Shropshire Business Board and John Hurst-Knight, Shropshire County Council's Cabinet member for economy.



ref: New Shropshire Business Board launched / EE/08/097
date: 26th June 2008