



THAMES VALLEY REGIONAL POLICY GROUP

MEDIUM TERM PLAN 2006-8

General Approach to any Policy Initiative

- Identify the issue
- Understand the issue and its effect on small businesses
- Research what's happening at Policy Office/SEUP and link in
- Consider who we need to influence
- Agree objectives and plan of how to lobby on issue
- Contact key decision makers
- Plan communication to our member

Lobbying within the FSB

National Issues are dealt with by the London Policy Office. The National Policy Chairman oversees the work of the London Office and is supported by a National Policy Manager. Each policy issue falls within a portfolio which is headed by an elected chairman. There is also a policy development officer working under each portfolio chairman.

Sub regional issues (matching the government area offices) and in this area the South East, are dealt with by SEPU (South East Policy Unit). This is headed by the SEPU chairman who is supported by a committee and Area Policy Development Officer.

Regional (Thames Valley) This region has a regional policy group which is made up of an elected chair and representatives from each of the 5 branches within the Thames Valley. The regional policy group support the branches on local lobbying activities.

Collaboration with other lobbying groups

The main groups who also speak nationally for business groups are the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), the Institute of Directors (IoD) and the Chamber of Commerce.

Key Themes	Specific Issues	Actions	Lead Member
Local Government			Sandy Lovatt
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Business Rates Relief 	Ensuring councils are doing enough to made businesses aware of rates relief	Survey of Thames Valley council identifying how they have informed businesses of relief.	Colin Willman
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LABGI 	Encouraging councils to spend the grant in a way that supports small businesses	Written to all TV councils who received the grant asking for conformation of what the money is to be spent on.	???????
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement 	Commitment to Small Business Friendly Concordat Less aggregation of public procurement contracts E-procurement accountability	Working with TV councils to improve processes and encourage signing up to concordat. Supported events to communicate to businesses how to win local authority contracts. Meetings with procurement managers of councils	Linda Walton
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nurseries 	Impact of DfES Code of Practice	Survey of nursery owner members. Support given to action groups. Letter to MPs requesting support of Early Day Motion.	??????????????
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of Local Authority trading 	Impact of Local Authority trading & charges assessed		????????????????
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Authority 	Watching brief on local	Oxford Covered Market ?????	Barry Wheatley

<p>Rent Increases</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non Domestic Rate Payers Meetings • Local Elections • Business pages of council website 	<p>authority rent increases acting where appropriate</p> <p>Consult on council spending in relation to small business needs. Raise small businesses issues with candidates</p> <p>Assessing how small business friendly council website are</p>	<p>Attend on behalf of Small Businesses.</p> <p>Communicating issues to members to enable them to raise with candidates, press releases, letters to candidates.</p> <p>Carrying our survey of sites and presenting small business friendly award in November.</p>	<p>Branches</p> <p>Branches</p> <p>SEPU</p>
<p>Trade & Industry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postal Services 	<p>Quality of service Post Office closures</p>	<p>Represent small businesses on Post watch committee</p>	<p>Linda Walton</p>
<p>Transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road Pricing • Affordable and accessible parking. • Reduced impact of road works 	<p>Investigation by councils into road traffic schemes such as road pricing</p>	<p>Survey to Reading & W Berks members. Meeting with head of transport for Reading BC</p>	<p>BarryWheatley/ Brian Eastman</p> <p>Brian Eastman</p>
<p>Waste</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures to prevent illegal 			<p>Colin Willman</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> waste dumping Suitable waste infrastructure Clarification of WEEE rules 			
<p>Environment & Rural Affairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Continuity Role of small businesses within the community 	<p>Report written on needs of SMEs in a national disaster. Attendance at Berkshire Business Continuity.</p> <p>Raise awareness of the importance of SMEs to the community</p>	<p>Study of Oxfordshire businesses</p>	<p>Barry Wheatley</p> <p>Brian Eastman</p> <p>Sandy Lovatt/Barry Wheatley</p>
<p>Crime</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Crime to be given greater priority by police Improve awareness amongst small businesses 	<p>Local Strategic Partnerships to make tackling crime a priority.</p> <p>Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to address business crime.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Policing plan to focus on business crime</p>	<p>Meetings with TV head of neighbourhood policing and area commanders. Support of TV police consultation meetings. Attendance of local business watch/neighbourhood action groups. Communication to businesses.</p>	<p>Sandy Lovatt/ Brian Eastman</p>
<p>Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> South East Plan Ensuring local town planning 	<p>Ensuring the plan considers the needs of SMEs in Thames Valley</p> <p>Reading Town Centre Action Plan</p>	<p>Meetings with SEEDA. Response to South East Plan RES consultation.</p> <p>Attendance of consultation meeting. Provided information</p>	<p>Allan Banks/Colin Willman</p> <p>Brian Eastman</p>

supports needs of SMEs		to support small business needs and involvement	
<p>Misc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications with key influencers Communication with members 	<p>Thames Valley SEEDA Manager</p> <p>Local Strategic Partnerships & Economic Partnerships</p> <p>MPs, MEPs</p> <p>Local councils – Leader, Chief Executive, Economic Development Officers.</p> <p>Thames Valley Police</p> <p>Press releases</p> <p>Support active members in their lobbying activities</p>	<p>Influence economic plans at SEEDA level via Thames Valley contact and via SEPU (South East Policy Unit). Respond to RES.</p> <p>Influence local economic plans, critically through Local Area Agreements and Strategic Partnerships</p> <p>Raise issues and influence national & EU decision making. Meetings, Briefing notes.</p> <p>Influence local decisions and raise issues, respond to consultations.</p> <p>Meet at regional and local level. Support TV police plans to communicate to SMEs</p> <p>Raise profile of issues via programme of press releases.</p> <p>Produce with London Office "Lobbying Guide". Provide guidance and support on each issue to branches and where necessary templates.</p>	

Organisation	Opportunities/Action	Comments/Actions
IoD	Identify appropriate 'Thames Valley' level contact Affirm commitment to joint working for mutual benefit Agree pattern of contact/collaboration Encourage branches to link up at local level	Mixed signals at local level as to whether we are seen as collaborators or competitors
CBI	Connect with Steve Rankin, Regional Director, Thames Valley Respond to transport policy document May 2006 Agree pattern of contact/collaboration Encourage branches to link up at local level	First contact made with Steve Rankin.
Chamber of Commerce	Identify appropriate 'Thames Valley' level contact Affirm commitment to joint working for mutual benefit Encourage branches to link up at local level	Regional director is Gavin Shepherd, based Slough HQ. Agreement secured (Aug 2006) to collaborate on lobbying and policy but no mutual support for events because of 'competition for members' (CofC perspective)

Policy Issue	Thames Valley Lead Representative	National Policy Development Officer
Deregulation	Not adopted	Emma Winsor-Cundell
Taxation – Income, Corporation, VAT, National Insurance, Payroll, Audit, CIS	Not adopted – Robin?	Angela Silberberg
Pensions	Not adopted	Angela Silberberg
EU, R and D and E-commerce – MEP's/Brussels	Barry Wheatley	Andrew Cave
Trade and Industry – Postal Services, Competition, Licencing, Supermarkets, Entrepreneurship, Consumer Affairs, Public Procurement, Telecoms, Manufacturing,	Linda Walton	Ulrika Almen
ICT & E commerce	Sandy Lovatt	Ulrika Almen

Entrepreneurship	Kiran Noonan	Ulrika Almen
Enterprise and Initiative	Kiran Noonan	Ulrika Almen
Health and Safety – Occupational Health, Employers Compulsory Liability Ins.	Not adopted	Rosina Robson
Crime – Fraud, Data Protection, Freedom of Information, Business Crime, Policing, Cybercrime, Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships	Brian Eastman	Rosina Robson
Business Continuity	Brian Eastman	Ulrika Almen
Transport – Road networks, Public transport, Road Pricing, Road Tolls, Town Centre Parking, Road works, Taxis and private hire, HGV, Emissions	Barry Wheatley (lead) Brian Eastman (support)	Matt Jaffa
Education & Training –Further education, Regional skills partnerships, Vocational Training, Apprenticeships, Entrepreneurship, Sector Skills.	Allan Banks (lead) Kiran Noonan (support)	Matt Jaffa
Employment – National Minimum Wage, Working Time Directive, Maternity/Paternity leave, Age Discrimination, Employment Tribunals	Kiran Noonan	Lucie Goodman
Local Government – Business Rates, Finance, Consulting with business, LABGI	Sandy Lovatt	Lucie Goodman
Planning – Regional strategies, Local Development Frameworks, Planning Applications	Allan Banks (lead) Colin Willman (support)	Lucie Goodman
Environment and rural affairs – Food, Environmental Liability, Flooding, Environmental Taxation, Climate Change, Chemicals, Energy and Utilities, <i>Business Continuity</i> , Energy Efficiency.	Barry Wheatley	Nyree Connell
Waste – Fly Tipping, Prevention & Recycling, Disposal of electrical and electronic equipment, Collection &	Colin Willman	Nyree Connell

Disposal Facilities, Agricultural, Hazardous, Enforcement.		
Banking – Bank terms & Conditions, Investments, Access to Finance, Payments Systems, Financial Services.	Colin Willman (lead) Linda Walton (support)	Cassie Kenny
Health – Care Homes, Food Supplements, Pharmacies	Not adopted	Cassie Kenny
Culture Media and Sport – Olympics, Gambling, Tourism, Sports	Barry Wheatley	Cassie Kenny