



Department
for Business
Innovation & Skills

Better
Regulation
Delivery Office

Better Business for All and Growth





“Better Business for All is a means for local authorities to engage with the local businesses in their areas and deliver the support they need to grow.”

“When businesses receive the right regulatory support it gives them more confidence to invest in new equipment and employees, including apprentices.”

“We encourage greater involvement with the programme and look forward to its continued success.”

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Anna Soubry'. The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a long, horizontal, slightly curved line that serves as a decorative underline.

Rt Hon Anna Soubry MP
Minister of State for Small Business, Industry and Enterprise
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

Better Business for All: Business Benefits

Better Business for All (BBfA) brings together businesses and local regulators to consider and change how local regulation is delivered and received.

Although the regulations themselves cannot be modified at a local level there is plenty of scope to transform the way that businesses and regulators work together.

The attitudes, competency and overall approach of local regulators have a direct bearing on the way advice is given and visits, inspections and enforcement are carried out. How they interact with a business can determine whether it decides to grow.

Through the removal of regulatory barriers to growth, BBfA is helping local areas to be recognised as good places to do business, and is creating more prosperous and competitive local economies.

While it is aimed at all businesses, its focus is on smaller businesses, as these generally need the most help to comply with the law.

There are now over 160 local authorities in 18 LEP areas involved with the programme, preparing and implementing action plans for their areas and sharing good practice.

Six examples of the diverse work of local partnerships are highlighted on the following pages, to give a flavour of activity across the country.



Better Business for All: Practice

The **Cornwall local partnership** is well established and has achieved both a change of culture and a high profile for regulation and BBfA, with them referenced in the LEP Strategic Economic Plan. It has ensured that contact pages for regulatory services are included on the LEP website, at the request of business. It has given practical advice about writing letters to business. It has developed case studies showing how local businesses have benefited from a good relationship with local regulators, which are also available on the LEP website.

The **Derbyshire local partnership** is large and extends to national regulators, the LEP, the Chambers of Commerce and other business representatives. It has made strong progress with engaging local businesses. It has created a single point of contact for enquiries about regulation. It is providing a free health and safety advisory service, in response to concerns raised by business about compliance with relevant regulations. It has ensured that regulatory services are prominently featured on the local Growth Hub.

The **Hertfordshire local partnership** includes the LEP, FSB and Chambers of Commerce. It has built trust and mutual understanding between regulators and business representatives. It has produced a video as part of a training programme for local regulators, to help them understand the complex nature of business and why regulation should support growth. It has developed a one-stop-shop for accessing advice, available via the LEP website. In areas where business satisfaction has increased enforcement action has decreased due to improved compliance rates.



Better Business for All: Practice

The **Leicester and Leicestershire local partnership** was established by a pathfinder LEP and was instrumental in developing the BBfA toolkit. It has proved a vibrant forum for regulators and business representatives to discuss matters, resulting in trust and mutual understanding. It has led to better cross-service working, with more sharing of information and more efficient use of resources. It has ensured that regulatory services are prominently featured on the local Growth Hub, and provided advice and support to the Loughborough Business Improvement District.

The **Northamptonshire local partnership** extends to national regulators and the LEP. It has achieved a change in mind-set, with business now more willing to approach regulators for advice. It has used organisational awareness training to break down regulatory silos. It has redesigned the food safety service and focused on providing start-up advice. At just one of the local authorities involved, the savings to business in 2014-2015 were estimated to be £80,000, with improvements in business compliance and business satisfaction also reported.

The **Stoke and Staffordshire local partnership** has the active involvement of the LEP. It has fostered an atmosphere in which regulators and business representatives can openly discuss local issues and cooperate to resolve them. It has resulted in better cross-service working. It has created a Charter to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the partners and underpin their joint commitment to deliver a regulatory environment that promotes success in business while continuing to provide public protection.



Better Business for All: Feedback

“The regulators are coming in, they are talking to us, and BBfA was the reason why.”

Maxine Aldred OBE, Development Manager, Federation of Small Businesses

“Without doubt, good regulation and business success go hand-in-hand and through BBfA we aim to remove both real and perceived regulatory barriers to growth.”

Councillor Julian German, Cabinet Member for Economy and Culture, Cornwall Council

“My staff were very sceptical at the start but they are very enthusiastic now and they have seen the benefit to business. It’s been absolutely brilliant for morale in the office.”

Alan Twells, Head of Regulatory Services, Charnwood Borough Council

“Being involved in BBfA has given me a better understanding of the needs of local businesses so that I can be supportive in the service I provide.”

Eleni Vasilopoulou-Middleton, Environmental Health, Kettering Borough Council

“Things like the organisational awareness training were a great opportunity for inspectors to meet other regulators and get a greater appreciation of what they do.”

Trevor McIlwaine, Group Manager, Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service

“Once we integrated BBfA into the Growth Hub, it really started to take off and it’s now mainstream.”

Jonathan Dale, Board Member, Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire LEP



Better Business for All: Background

BBfA was initially developed in 2011-2012 by the Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO) – working with two pathfinder LEPs – and is backed by the British Chambers of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses.

It involves the creation of local partnerships to identify the issues facing local businesses and to shape the provision of effective support services to them.

The membership of these groups varies from area to area. It always includes leaders from local business organisations and local authority regulatory services – such as environmental health, fire safety, licensing and trading standards – but is usually wider, often extending to economic development and national regulators with a regional presence.

We support local partnerships, for example by bringing all the stakeholders to the table and staging introductory workshops, and we have created a toolkit of resources for them, drawing on good practice and material from LEPs and regulators.

For example, a template pack for businesses provides them with essential information on the regulatory areas that apply to them at launch, focusing on practical steps to take, and highlighting links to existing business-friendly resources.

When local regulators understand the needs of businesses and are solution-focused in providing support they can encourage growth and boost the local economy, as well as continuing to protect citizens.

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Better Business for All Toolkit

<http://www.regulatorsdevelopment.info/grip/bbfa>

Better Regulation Delivery Office

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/better-regulation-delivery-office>

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