

**CITY OF NOTTINGHAM AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ECONOMIC  
PROSPERITY COMMITTEE- 24 JULY 2015**

<b>Subject:</b>	N2 Collaborative 'Employment and Skills Hub'		
<b>Presenting authority / representative):</b>	Allen Graham Rushcliffe Borough Council		
<b>Report author and contact details:</b>	Fiona Anderson Nottinghamshire County Council Tel. 0115 9772688 fiona.anderson@nottscc.gov.uk		
<b>Key Decision:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<b>Subject to call-in</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		
<b>Value of decision:</b> £ 0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revenue		<input type="checkbox"/> Capital
<b>Authorities affected:</b> All	<b>Date of consultation with relevant authorities:</b>		
<b>Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/constituent authorities):</b>			
<p>a) To reduce the skills shortage across N2 by more effectively matching labour supply and demand</p> <p>b) To facilitate economic growth by increasing the number of skilled workers/employees available to N2 employers</p> <p>c) To reduce duplication and simplify the landscape for N2 employers</p>			
<b>Exempt information:</b>			
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>			
<p>a) To support in principle the creation of a bid which results in the development of a 2 collaborative 'Employment and Skills Hub';</p> <p>b) N2 to prepare and submit a bid for the ESIF 'Employ Local' project for resources to deliver relevant services to employers and job seekers;</p> <p>c) Futures Advice, Skills and Employment to be the lead bidder on behalf of a combined N2 partnership approach;</p> <p>d) If successful with the Employ Local bid, agreement from N2 partners to align current similar Employment and Skills activity under the Employ Local initiative.</p>			

**1 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 The establishment of an N2 'Employment and Skills Hub' aligns with the wider vision of devolving skills funding and responsibility to the Combined Authority;

- 1.2 The EPC has supported the Local Enterprise Partnership view that a more coherent offer for both employers and employees is required. The concept of an 'Employment and Skills Hub' builds upon the principles of the Nottingham City Employer Hub and is strategically aligned to creating a simplified process for Employers, Job Seekers and Public Sector Agencies;
- 1.3 Futures Advice, Skills and Employment (a not for profit company jointly owned by the City and County Councils) has experience and a track record of success in accessing and delivering Skills Funding Agency and European Funded projects;
- 1.4 The employer incentives built into 'Employ Local' could help to drive growth in the priority sectors as outlined in the D2N2 Strategic Economic Plan, however this will need to be integrated with additional localised delivery mechanisms which make sense for employers, citizens and Government Agencies;
- 1.5 The establishment of the 'Employment and Skills Hub' will utilise existing infrastructure from the partnership to reduce costs and avoid duplication, whilst building upon localised best practice;
- 1.6 This approach contributes to the integration of Economic Development services and closer working of the Districts, County and City Councils in accordance with the combined Authority proposals.

## **2 BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)**

- 2.1 In line with the EPC approach, there is an opportunity to consider how some of the principles of the Employer Hub model (operating in the City) might benefit the wider N2 geography;
- 2.2 The current opportunity to access EU Funds could be used to support the introduction of a City and County wide approach. The ESF project, 'Employ Local' is aligned to support the potential operation of a hub model and could bring a more collaborative, high quality recruitment and support service to local employers and job seekers, through building upon best practice, aligning and developing local programmes;
- 2.3 'Employ Local' is being commissioned by D2N2 and the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), it will be a competitive process. It is therefore an opportunity for the Economic Prosperity Committee to demonstrate its commitment to work together by submitting one bid. It also provides the opportunity to have a European bid designed to support the delivery of locally managed and directed services which maximises the value for the local area whilst aligning with existing activity. Given the resource limitations of the funding, one of the ways in which this might be achievable is for local partners to work together using established models and augmenting these to suit local needs;
- 2.4 'Employ Local' is aimed at people who are unemployed including graduates, who may benefit from an intervention to enable them to find a graduate level job;

- 2.5 'Employ Local' is an 'opt-in' via the SFA, this means that match funding is not required. 'Employ Local' will be £6m across the D2N2 LEP area, due to need, £3.2m has been allocated for N2 over a 3 year period. This figure includes an amount for employer incentives. Please see Appendix 1 for a draft outline summary of 'Employ Local';
- 2.6 Following the 'Hub' agenda item at the March 2015 EPC, discussions have taken place with Economic Development Officers from across the City, County, District and Borough Councils; Futures and the DWP. In principle, all parties are committed to the concept of an N2 'Employment and Skills Hub' and have indicated that, subject to political support, we should take the opportunity to work across the N2 area to prepare a bid for Employ Local;
- 2.7 It is recognised and proposed that where necessary that we will look to engage with neighbouring areas e.g. Derbyshire and Sheffield to ensure there is a coherent approach beyond the N2 boundaries for businesses.

### **3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 One option is to do nothing; this would mean that the strategic opportunity to align N2 skills and employment activities within one hub model would be significantly delayed. It would also result in the potential loss of £3.2 million funding;
- 3.2 Another option is for the City or County Council to bid for Employ Local for the whole of the N2 area. However, this may result in competitive bids from other partners. It is proposed that a joint bid involving all Districts, City and County Councils should be led by Futures. A bid of this nature which is on behalf of N2 would more effectively demonstrate our collective commitment to the proposed Combined Authority.

### **4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING VALUE FOR MONEY/VAT)**

- 4.1 N2 is seeking to secure £3.2m of European Social Fund to deliver 'Employ Local' via an integrated employment and skills hub. This funding is available for a three year period to deliver specific outcomes. Although the ESIF programme is until 2020, consideration needs to be given to the long term sustainability of such a model.

### **5 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES (INCLUDING LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND CRIME AND DISORDER ACT IMPLICATIONS)**

- 5.1 None.

### **6 SOCIAL VALUE CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 None.

## **7 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)**

Has the equality impact been assessed?

- (a) not needed (report does not contain proposals for new or changing policies, services or functions, financial decisions or decisions about implementation of policies development outside the Council)
- (b) No
- (c) Yes – Equality Impact Assessment attached

Due regard should be given to the equality implications identified in any attached EIA.

## **8 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS RELIED UPON IN WRITING THIS REPORT (NOT INCLUDING PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS OR CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION)**

8.1 None

## **9 PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN THIS REPORT**

9.1 EPC Minutes March 20<sup>th</sup> 'Skills Hub'

## **10 OTHER COLLEAGUES WHO HAVE PROVIDED INPUT**

Allen Graham, Rushcliffe Borough Council  
Kevin Bartlett, Nottinghamshire County Council  
Catherine Evans, Rushcliffe Borough Council  
Nigel Jackson, Nottingham City Council

## Appendix 1

### **Summary of Employ Local**

The programme will provide:

- A one point of contact service for employers to include:
  - Support with recruitment e.g. advertising vacancies, screening applications, interview days.
  - Support to take on an apprentice, providing advice, guidance and practical help to the employer through the process.
  - Financial incentives to create apprenticeships and jobs in SME's.
  - Employment and training incentives to support SME'S with initial training costs of previously unemployed new recruits.
- Support for candidates to engage them with the candidate bank and to make sure they are job ready, to include:
  - Working with existing SFA funded providers to deliver ongoing sector based work academies based upon the specifications of the employer.
  - Active management of the candidate bank of job ready individuals for employers.
  - Bespoke pre-employment training, based upon needs highlighted by sector consultative task groups where this is not available through mainstream funded provision
- Travel bursaries for trainees and apprentices in the first few weeks of work.

People who will benefit from this programme are:

- Individuals who have been unemployed for 6 months+
- Young people aged 16 – 24 who are currently NEET
- Individuals who originally had multiple barriers to accessing work (those supported through the Social Inclusion and Time to Change projects)
- Unemployed graduates who have not previously had a graduate job

The D2N2 area will benefit from:

- 5578 unemployed people engaging with the EMPLOY Local service
- 3000 unemployed people completing purposeful training
- 1231 unemployed people progressing into employment and self-employment
- 1000 unemployed people progressing into apprenticeships
- 290 incentives to support SMEs providing employment and training
- 510 incentives to support SMEs to employ long-term unemployed
- 800 incentives to support SMEs to recruit an Apprentice