

**CITY OF NOTTINGHAM AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ECONOMIC
PROSPERITY COMMITTEE– 20 JUNE 2014**

Subject:	Skills and Employment		
Presenting authority / representative):	Nottinghamshire County Council/Matt Lockley Nottingham City Council/ Nicki Jenkins		
Report author and contact details:	Celia Morris Celia.morris@nottscc.gov.uk		
Key Decision <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Subject to call-in <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		
Value of decision: Nil			
Authorities affected: All Nottinghamshire local authorities.	Date of consultation with relevant authorities: N/A		
Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/constituent authorities):			
<p>a) Skills and employment are key priorities for the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership and are recognised as significant priorities in economic development strategies and Growth Plans for partners across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.</p> <p>b) Changes to the skills and employment landscape, influenced by the establishment of a D2N2 Skills and Employment Commission, have led to new governance arrangements for skills and employment in Nottinghamshire. The new Skills and Employment Board (SEB) will provide local input into the design of major new funding and commissioning opportunities utilising European Social Funds in the coming years.</p> <p>c) This report provides information to Committee Members on the N2 Skills and Employment Board and on early work to identify skills and employment priorities for the area.</p>			
Exempt information:			
Recommendation(s):			
<p>The Economic Prosperity Committee agrees to:</p> <p>a) Note the content of the report;</p> <p>b) Provide feedback on the Skills and Employment Board's early priorities as outlined.</p>			

1 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 The terms of reference for the new Skills and Employment Board (SEB) propose that the Board be accountable to the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Economic Prosperity Committee. It is therefore important that the Economic Prosperity Committee recognises this and understands and is able to influence the work of the SEB.

2 BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)

- 2.1 A workforce with the right skills to support the delivery of economic growth in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is vital. Mainstream Government programmes such as the National Apprenticeship Service and Work Programme deliver standard offers across the whole country. Whilst these programmes form the backbone of employment and skills provision, local investment in programmes that support upskilling and

employability also play a significant role, particularly in being more responsive to the needs of the local economy.

- 2.2 Partnership approaches to employment and skills issues have a long history in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Most local authority partners have some form of local structures relating to employment and skills, and there was until recently the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Employment and Skills Board (ESB). This has now been disbanded and replaced with a more streamlined approach through the N2 Skills and Employment Board (SEB). The terms of reference for the new Board reflect changes to the policy and operating landscape and seek to align the SEB with both the Economic Prosperity Committee and the D2N2 Skills and Employment Commission.
- 2.3 The SEB has a strong private sector membership to lead work on this agenda. The overall remit of the board is to:
- Work across partners, commissioners and providers to ensure that skills and employment in the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire labour market match the current and future needs of employers
 - On behalf of the Economic Prosperity Committee for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and the D2N2 LEP Skills Commission, the Board will ensure delivery of the LEP Skills Plan and alignment of local strategies by providing strategic leadership and guidance, encouraging collaboration and monitoring local delivery.
 - To work with Skills Funding Agency/Department of Work and Pensions to develop funding specifications for EU and other funding as required and to impartially performance monitor EU and other funding streams, such as Youth Contract underspend and other devolved budgets.
- 2.4 The bulk of EU funding for skills and employment will be devolved to the D2N2 LEP from later in 2014. This includes the entire European Social Fund (ESF) allocation, which is targeted at improving skills and employment levels and tackling social exclusion. A key early focus for the SEB will be to work up local specifications which will inform the allocation of D2N2 ESF from 2014-2020. Large parts of the ESF will be matched centrally by the Skills Funding Agency, Department for Work and Pensions and the Big Lottery Fund to deliver match funding at source and increase the investment in the D2N2 area. Influencing the design of these 'opt-in' programmes will be crucial for the SEB.

N2 Skills and Employment Framework

- 2.5 The SEB has discussed the development of a Skills and Employment Framework for the N2 area and proposes that the Framework outlines a number of principles and priority actions. These are outlined below.
- 2.6 **Principles** – it is proposed that the following principles are adopted:
- a. build on best practice and existing high-performing initiatives and seek to extend these and sustain their reach, where possible
 - b. focus on the needs of our employers

- c. develop and deliver end-to-end solutions, which offer career pathways and harness ambition
- d. lobby and influence mainstream provision to ensure that it is meeting local needs, improves in quality and that commissioning is devolved to local areas, where possible
- e. integrate our own activities and investment as far as possible to avoid duplication and add better value

2.7 **Priority Areas** - the Board has prioritised work in three areas: Economic Inclusion; Children and Young People and Sector Growth. Examples of the key activity proposed in each of these three areas are outlined below:

Children and Young People

- a) actions to secure greater engagement of schools in the development of the future workforce;
- b) support to develop apprenticeships and roll out the apprenticeship hub model;
- c) lobby for the inclusion of employability within the Ofsted framework;
- d) enhanced careers guidance for all, with a particular focus on key sectors
- e) Focus on points of transition – preventing young people becoming NEET.

Economic Inclusion

- a) supporting marginalised groups; targeted BME support and a focus on Employment Support Allowance claimants;
- b) development of local jobs plans at community level, with the aim of pulling together and ‘bending’ mainstream provision;
- c) employer engagement – simplifying it, increasing it, extending the hub model and building on Jobs Pledges, Work Clubs, Jobs Fair activity;
- d) incentive programme to encourage entry level job creation – Jobs Fund approach

Sector Growth

- a) develop a system that enables employers to commission what they need from training providers;
- b) lobby for greater control over skills funding through bodies such as the SEB or relevant local sector groups;
- c) develop traineeships and career pathways in priority sectors, both those that have high growth potential and those that offer high volume entry level opportunities

3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 None.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING VALUE FOR MONEY/VAT)

4.1 Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership are each contributing £25,000 towards the core resourcing of the SEB in 2014-15 and 2015-16. A project co-ordinator post will be established (and hosted by the City Council) along with some part-time project support.

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

5.1 None.

6 SOCIAL VALUE CONSIDERATIONS

6.1

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)

N2 Skills and Employment Board Terms of Reference

9 PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN THIS REPORT

None

10 OTHER COLLEAGUES WHO HAVE PROVIDED INPUT

Nicki Jenkins, Head of Employment and Skills, Nottingham City Council