

**REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL****GROWTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TEAM PROGRAMMES****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approvals to maximise the take up of grants and support for Nottinghamshire businesses linked to the themes and priorities set out in the Council Plan Your Nottinghamshire Your Future 2017-2020 and other strategic documents produced by Government.

**Background**

2. The Council Plan 2017-2020 - 'Your Nottinghamshire, Your Future', sets out how we aim to support residents and businesses across the county to be prosperous, aspirational and to share with us responsibility for the future. Given the financial constraints facing the County Council, the attraction and use of external funding is paramount, especially in using external funding to deliver local priorities.
3. This report builds on Members recent approval (November 2017) to temporarily increase staffing resources for two of the externally funded programmes, Digital Business Growth and Nottinghamshire LEADER (Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale, which roughly translates as 'Liaison among Actors in Rural Economic Development') operated by the Council's Growth and Economic Development team.
4. Attracting investment and funding from Government is key to helping Nottinghamshire 'punch its weight' and to achieve local priorities. This trend is set to continue, exemplified by our role in the Midlands Engine and Midlands Connect and in the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership. It is through the D2N2 LEP that the County Council has been successful in attracting funding to support local programmes to support businesses.
5. We have a good track record in attracting external funding and have secured a significant amount of funds for the Council. As a guide, the seven 'live' Nottinghamshire projects shown in the table below equate to circa £57m of funding aimed at boosting county jobs and economic growth.

PROJECT/ PROGRAMME	AIM	TOTAL COSTS
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NAME		
D2N2 Digital Business Growth Programme	To help 850 small and medium sized enterprises across Derby City, Derbyshire, Nottingham city and Nottinghamshire to make better use of digital connectivity to expand their businesses	£7.2m
Nottinghamshire LEADER Programmes	To help support the development of the Nottinghamshire rural economy and create new jobs	£2.8m
Better Broadband for Nottinghamshire	Improved broadband access across Nottinghamshire where it is currently lacking and where needs will not be met by the private sector	£29m
Careers Local	Grants of up to £10,000 available to a range of educational institutions across Derby City, Derbyshire, Nottingham city and Nottinghamshire to support 15 to 19 year olds at risk of becoming Not in education Employment or Training (NEET) to increase their employability skills and chances of participating in further education	£1.7m
D2N2 Growth Hub	'One stop shop' for ambitious new and developing businesses looking for advice on training, growth and how to access funding to help expand into fresh markets	£1.2m
The European Regional Development Fund – Technical assistance	Technical advisory support to support those interested in making successful applications to the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)	£187k
The Building Better Opportunities Programme	To tackle long-term unemployment across Derby City, Derbyshire, Nottingham city and Nottinghamshire and help those socially excluded to access support	£15m

6. Now that this funding has been secured, we need to ensure that local residents and businesses benefit from the activities we provide. In order to stimulate, grow and expand the impact of the existing projects and programmes for the benefit of our 26,800 businesses, we propose to market and promote the availability of the latest funding and resource opportunities.
7. The Programmes are supported by European funding which will be drawn down over the coming years. The projects have varying end dates, however all currently agreed funding will be spent by June 2020. As referenced in the Governments industrial strategy, proposals are being developed for a UK Shared Prosperity Fund. To provide funding local priorities, following the cessation of European funding. Government intends to consult in 2018 on the precise design and priorities for the fund.

#### Marketing and communication

8. The expertise of the Council's communications team will be called upon (as appropriate). The types of campaigns and communication channels which will be deployed for the period up to 2020 include engagement with all relevant stakeholders through multiple channels including (but not necessarily limited to): emails, telephone, face to face, case studies, postal and email mailshots, newsletters, leaflet drops, press releases, email me, information on the council website, Facebook and Google adword campaigns, social media, tele-marketing, surveys and consultations.
9. Other activities anticipated in publicising the availability of funding and resources include attending and hosting events such as: workshops, seminars, conferences, job fairs, presentations, and meetings with a view to promoting funding and grants available, launch of funding calls and invites to bid, training and events, business support offerings, and the success and achievements of the programmes. All of which typically requires the production of promotional materials such as: leaflets, banners, business cards, posters logos and postcards.

#### **Other options considered**

10. The option for the team to not undertake marketing communication and event activities has been discounted as this would mean the County's 26,800 businesses would not be provided with expertise and resources to encourage and support them in making the most of the great opportunities externally funded support brings.

#### **Reason for Recommendation**

11. To enable Nottinghamshire County Council to use its influence to promote and improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the County in the best interest, and for the greatest benefit, of all present and future residents, businesses and visitors.

#### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

##### **Finance implications**

12. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report as the previously approved funding for each of the programmes and partnership includes provision for marketing, communication and event activities.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

13. It is recommended that Policy Committee:

- a) Approves publicising the availability of grants and support in order to unlock the full potential of specific externally funded projects and programmes that meet local priorities.

**Cllr Mrs Kay Cutts, MBE**  
**Leader of the Council**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**  
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**Constitutional Comments (SLB 21/11/2017)**

14. Policy Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

**Financial Comments (SES 21/11/2017)**

15. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.

**Background Papers**

- *LEADER Programmes Funding Agreement, 10,09-2015*
- *The European Regional Development Fund – Better Broadband For Nottinghamshire Funding Agreement, 14-05-2013*
- *The European Regional Development Fund – D2N2 Digital Business Growth Programme Funding Agreement, 29-03-2016*
- *The European Regional Development Fund – Technical assistance Funding agreement 17-07-2016*
- *European Social Fund - Careers Local Funding agreement, 14-11-2016*

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All