

6<sup>th</sup> September 2016

**Agenda Item: 8**

## **REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, PLACE**

### **D2N2 DIGITAL BUSINESS GROWTH PROGRAMME**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval, subject to the outcome of EU funding, for the establishment of two full-time equivalent (FTE) posts on fixed term contracts within the Economic Development Team which, subject to the availability of European Union (EU) funding, will deliver the proposed Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Enterprise Partnership (D2N2 LEP) Digital Business Growth Programme.
2. At the time of writing this report the EU funding commitment is unconfirmed, which means recruitment will not take place until the outcome on funding is known. Therefore, in the event of EU funding not being realised, there may be a requirement to bring further options back to Committee once the position is clear.

#### **Background**

3. At its January 2016 meeting, members approved a budget allocation of up to £70,000 per annum from the Economic Development budget for the 2016/17 - 2018/19 financial years (£210,000 in total) towards the D2N2 Digital Business Growth Programme.
4. It was also agreed that this resource be used as match funding towards a partner-based European Funding submission to the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) programme; potentially doubling the Council's (and the partners') resources available to support the delivery of the programme to businesses in collaboration with other D2N2 partners.

#### **Proposed Support**

5. This report seeks approval to increase the Economic Development team establishment by two full-time equivalent (FTE) posts for a three year period; one being a Programme Manager (indicative Band C grade, subject to job evaluation) and the other being a Programme Co-ordinator (indicative Band A grade, subject to job evaluation). The roles of each post are summarised below:
  - **Programme Manager** – To initiate, develop and manage the D2N2-wide Digital Business Growth Programme and to realise the benefits and deliver

all contractual obligations. The key responsibilities include delivering the Programme objectives to the appropriate levels of quality, time and budgetary performance; working with and managing the partners' responsibilities in delivering the respective workstreams; manage the County Council's Accountable Body obligations; line manage the Project Co-ordinator post and oversee the delivery of the ICT grants scheme; provide technical and secretariat support to the Programme's governance group and design and monitor all processes and procedures to comply with ESIF regulations.

- **Programme Co-ordinator** – To deliver the outreach function of the D2N2 Digital Business Growth Programme, supporting the Programme Manager and the partners to deliver key aspects of the programme. The key responsibilities include liaising with businesses to facilitate take-up of programme activities; promoting, managing, monitoring and delivering Nottinghamshire's allocation of the ICT grants scheme; supporting the Programme Manager to comply with our Accountable Body obligations, account managing and referring clients to partners and engaging key stakeholders.
6. Nottinghamshire County Council is leading on the ESIF submission, managing the partnership input and will act as the Accountable Body, operating under the terms and conditions of the ESIF award, subject to contract and partnership arrangements.
  7. The European Funding submission is at the final appraisal stage with a decision expected in September. As this is the only bid under consideration, the partners are optimistic that it will secure funding especially given positive feedback from the Managing Authority (Dept. for Communities & Local Government). As the County Council is the Accountable Body for the bid, it is essential that we are in a position to commence recruitment to these posts upon confirmation of funding to oversee the programme's successful delivery.

### **Other Options Considered**

8. Should the European Funding submission be unsuccessful, then alternative approaches would be investigated to secure the most effective use of the £210,000 budget allocation. If this scenario occurs, further options will be brought to Committee for consideration.

### **Financial Implications**

9. If the European Funding bid is successful, it is proposed to establish two posts as outlined at paragraph 5. These are indicatively graded at Band C (Programme Manager) and Band A (Programme Co-ordinator). The maximum total cost of these two posts, per financial year and including on-costs (based on the top-point of the salary range) is £89,620.

### **Human Resources Implications**

10. The HR implications are reflected in the report, relating to the establishment of two additional posts on a three-year fixed term basis. The total costs associated with the employment will be met within the budget as referenced.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

11. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described within the body of the report.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

12. It is recommended that:

- a) subject to EU funding being secured, this Committee approves the establishment of the two full-time posts within the Economic Development Team of a Programme Manager at Band C and a Programme Co-ordinator at Band A (both subject to job evaluation) on 3-year fixed term contracts, subject to and in line with, the European Funding obligations;
- b) should the European Funding not become available, further options are to be brought back to this Committee for consideration.

**Tim Gregory**  
**Corporate Director, Place**

For any enquiries about this report please contact:  
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### **Constitutional Comments [SLB 08/08/2016]**

Economic Development Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report, subject to the Council's Employment Procedure Rules which state that all reports regarding changes to staffing structures must include HR advice and that the recognised trade unions will be consulted.

### **HR Comments [FW16.08.2016]**

These posts have been preliminarily evaluated under the job evaluation process and the grades detailed are indicative grades pending a formal job evaluation process. The posts will be recruited to using the County Council's vacancy control protocol.

### **Trade Union Comments**

Unison do not have any objections to the new post (TC 23/08/2016).  
Comments awaited from GMB

### **Financial Comments [RWK 08/08/2016]**

The financial implications arising from the proposals in the report are set out in paragraph 9 above.

**Background Papers and Published Documents**

- *ESIF Programme: D2N2 Digital Business Growth Programme*, report to Economic Development Committee, 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016, approved.
- *European Structural Investment Fund: ERDF ICT Funding Call*, report to Economic Development Committee, 8<sup>th</sup> September 2015, approved.
- *Additional proposals for Economic Development budget 2015-16*, report to Economic Development Committee, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2015, published.

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

All