

THE CITY OF NOTTINGHAM AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY COMMITTEE

DECISIONS OF THE MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2016 AT 10.30 AM AT KELHAM HALL, NEWARK & SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEMBERS PRESENT

(A denotes absent)

Chairman – Councillor Alan Rhodes – Nottinghamshire County Council
Vice- Chairman – Councillor Neil Clarke MBE – Rushcliffe Borough Council **A**

Mayor Kate Allsop – Mansfield District Council **A**
Councillor Roger Blaney – Newark and Sherwood District Council
Councillor Cheryl Butler – Ashfield District Council
Councillor Alan Clark – Nottingham City Council (substitute for Councillor Jon Collins)
Councillor John Clarke – Gedling Borough Council
Councillor Jon Collins – Nottingham City Council **A**
Councillor Tony Harper – Broxtowe Borough Council (substitute for Councillor Richard Jackson)
Councillor Richard Jackson – Broxtowe Borough Council **A**
Councillor Simon Greaves – Bassetlaw District Council (substitute for Councillor Jo White)
Councillor Simon Robinson- Rushcliffe Borough Council (substitute for Councillor Neil Clarke)
Councillor Jo White – Bassetlaw District Council **A**

OFFICERS PRESENT

Fiona Anderson – Nottinghamshire County Council
David Armiger – Bassetlaw District Council
Craig Bonar – Ashfield District Council
Shane Flynn – Broxtowe Borough Council
Keith Ford – Nottinghamshire County Council
Allen Graham – Chief Executive, Rushcliffe Borough Council
Anthony May – Chief Executive, Nottinghamshire County Council
Mandy Ramm – Nottinghamshire County Council
David Ralph – Chief Executive, D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership
James Schrodel – Nottingham City Council

Rachel Heyes – Nottingham Trent University
Stuart Marriott – University of Nottingham

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mayor Kate Allsop, Councillor Neil Clarke, Councillor Jon Collins and Councillor Jo White. Apologies were also

received from Ian Curryer and Chris Henning (Nottingham City Council), Ruth Hyde (Broxtowe Borough Council), Robert Mitchell (Ashfield District Council), Andrew Muter (Newark & Sherwood District Council), John Robinson (Gedling District Council), Bev Smith (Mansfield District Council), and Neil Taylor (Bassetlaw District Council),

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2016, having been previously circulated, were agreed as a true and correct record and were confirmed and signed by the Chair of the meeting, subject to the following amendment:-

- Item 6 – Sheffield City Region Combined Authority Consultation – 5th paragraph, 1st sentence – insert ‘district’ ahead of ‘council – revised sentence to read:-

‘Anthony May clarified the legal aspects and explained that a district council could only be a constituent member of one Combined Authority’.

ORDER OF AGENDA

The Chairman proposed that the item on Innovation Centres in Nottinghamshire be moved down the agenda as the presenting officer was running late due to a road traffic accident in the Newark area.

The Chairman welcomed Rachel Heyes and Stuart Marriott to the meeting.

4. INTRODUCTION TO SKILLS ITEM – PRESENTATION BY ALLEN GRAHAM

The presentation by Allen Graham outlined the N2 (Nottingham and Nottinghamshire) skills and employment strategic priorities, challenges, ongoing work and existing governance arrangements (including the potential for strengthening links to this Committee through the appointment of a Member Champion for Skills and possible budget allocation for that role).

RESOLVED 2016/023

- 1) That the presentation be noted.
- 2) That the appointment of an N2 Member Skills Champion be considered at a future meeting of the Committee.

5. GRADUATE RETENTION IN N2

Stuart Marriott, Associate Director, Careers and Employability Service, The University of Nottingham and Rachel Heyes, Head of Business Engagement,

Employability and Enterprise, Nottingham Trent University (NTU), gave a presentation which highlighted the following key issues:-

- the shared priorities between the Universities and the local authorities around addressing the existing higher level skills gaps within N2;
- the challenges faced in terms of graduate retention (with Nottingham currently having the lowest rate of all the core cities) and the investment and plans to respond to those challenges – for example:-
 - the Fuse pilot project which had been developed jointly by the two universities. This was a corporate graduate recruitment mechanism targeted at Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) with no graduate recruitment history. Although the initial numbers had not proven as successful as a similar project in Sheffield, evaluation and development work was ongoing to try and better match the needs of SMEs with graduates' career goals;
 - a 'Welcome to Nottingham' campaign;
 - NTU's Global Strategy 2020 which aimed to create more work experience, placement and internship opportunities for home / EU students locally, nationally and internationally and provide careers guidance for under-graduates. NTU had one of the largest Employability Teams nationally, tapping into and providing a wide range of funding. NTU viewed paid internships as one of the key ways forward.

In response to Members' questions and comments the following points were clarified:-

- with regard to the low graduate retention rate, it was recognised that a lot of graduates from Nottingham who have studied elsewhere do return to Nottingham to live. Many of the fashion and textile students who graduated in Nottingham moved to London to seek employment. With regard to overseas students, many had limits on their visas following graduation;
- further work had been undertaken with employers regarding job design and to make opportunities more attractive to graduates. Less than 10% of jobs advertised in Nottingham allowed a discussion about flexible working;
- with regard to promoting employment and living in the districts, rather than just the City, a Memorandum of Understanding had been developed with Nottingham Trent University and the potential benefits of a similar agreement with the University of Nottingham had been highlighted. Ms Heyes underlined the ongoing discussions with Rushcliffe Borough Council about maximising opportunities to share and work a lot more collaboratively (which she planned to discuss further with Mike Carr, the relevant NTU Vice-Chancellor for Employment);

- with regard to the national Graduate Development Programme, which the various Councils subscribed to, Anthony May suggested that one option could be for the Councils to request graduates only from the two local Universities. He planned to discuss that possible approach further with Allen Graham and bring any proposals back to this Committee as appropriate. Ms Heyes and Mr Marriott thought such an approach could be helpful.

Allen Graham introduced the report and highlighted the need for the Committee to give further consideration to the issues of investment and accommodation (with suitable accommodation possibly playing a role in encouraging graduates to stay in the City and County). David Ralph underlined the importance of locating all mainstream funding into a single area and highlighted the consideration being given to designating housing within business enterprise zones as possible 'graduate residential areas'. Councillor John Clarke highlighted the Erasmus Project's work in Gedling, which had built upon successful work in Germany and Poland. He suggested that a presentation to the Committee by officers could be helpful. He also highlighted the 36 week placements offered to two Nottingham Trent University students around work with the homeless, for which Gedling Borough Council were also paying a £1000 bursary.

RESOLVED 2016/024

- 1) That, subject to a successful appraisal of the FUSE pilot project, the scale and ambition of the FUSE SME Graduate Employment Programme for N2 be increased.
- 2) That the ESIF Higher Skills Development opportunity be supported, subject to the identification of the added value it will bring to county based SMEs.
- 3) That officers apply to the Nottinghamshire Pre Development Fund for a feasibility study on the need, shape and design of a housing scheme for young professionals.

6. N2 JOINT APPRENTICESHIP STRATEGY

Allen Graham introduced the report and emphasised the need for more co-ordinated activity to better understand needs and opportunities and for local authorities buying in such services to have more control over the actual provision. As an example of the need for better co-ordination, David Armiger highlighted the experience of Bassetlaw District Council, who had found that the two local Universities' planning courses were not supported by the relevant professional bodies, meaning that graduates trainees were having to travel to Birmingham. Anthony May highlighted the need to give further consideration to the better deployment of existing provider vehicles within the City and County, underlining the need for greater input into the types of provision and better outcomes across the County and City. Councillor Greaves agreed with the need for improved benefits across the board. David Ralph and Allen Graham highlighted the need for greater ambition in order to extend any collaborative working across the public

sector to include the Health Service, Fire and Police, thereby maximising the benefits of public expenditure on the apprenticeship levy.

RESOLVED 2016/025

That approval be given to the proposal:-

- a) to develop a joint N2 apprenticeship strategy for Local Authorities, including the potential and opportunity for a shared resourcing model;
- b) to jointly develop a case to lobby Government to extend the 18 month deadline for use of the funds in the levy account;
- c) that N2 local authorities work collaboratively to analyse existing and future workforce needs and
 - i) procure apprenticeship provision to meet these needs;
 - ii) work with providers to design appropriate apprenticeship provision tailored to meet skills gap areas;
 - iii) continue to analyse existing and future needs and develop a timetable to address these requirements;
- d) that local authorities within the City of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Economic Prosperity Committee confirm their commitment to the development of a collaborative framework and their interest in accessing this to procure apprenticeship training from 2017;
- e) to continue discussions with wider public sector organisations and consider their inclusion within the Framework;
- f) to develop a process to extend the framework to enable SMEs to access apprenticeship training.

7. CAREERS PROVISION IN N2

Allen Graham introduced the report, which aimed to start a dialogue with the Committee about this issue. Anthony May underlined the need to consult with the board of Futures about their role within this (the City and County Council were currently undertaking work to clarify the role of Futures going forward).

RESOLVED 2016/026

- 1) That further work be undertaken to develop the following proposals for future consideration by the Committee as appropriate:-
 - a) a joint communications campaign to promote the benefits of careers in N2 and particularly those linking to the key sectors to young people in N2;

- b) the establishment of a local co-ordination group that brings together careers providers, schools and employers to maintain strategic oversight and promote integrated working;
 - c) clarification of the role of the N2 Skills & Employment Board in relation to lobbying government for more control of skills budgets including careers provision.
- 2) That it be noted that the refreshed Skills for Growth Strategy will inform local education providers of recent labour market trends and projected future areas for growth.

8. INNOVATION CENTRES IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Mandy Ramm introduced the report, giving an overview of the current contract and performance, outlining the planned development of the new provision and seeking funding from the N2 Business Rates Pool for business property upgrades at the Mansfield i-centre, the Worksop Turbine and the Newark Beacon.

During discussions, Members raised the following issues:-

- the proposed funding bids were supported but Members sought clarification as to how they could access this funding stream for similar centres within districts. Members were reminded how the innovation centres had been brought together under a single management contract, on the understanding that should similar centres open elsewhere they could be dovetailed into this same management arrangement;
- it was clarified that the possibility of funding the property upgrades through loans rather than grants had been considered but discounted on the basis that pay back might not be feasible. Other sources of funding had also been explored, for example SUDS had been considered but some of the centres would not have matched their criteria. Officers felt that the Business Rates Pool was the most appropriate source of funding;
- It was agreed that it would be helpful to clarify the criteria for future funding applications from the Business Rates Pool so that Members could put forward funding bids for other relevant projects.

RESOLVED 2016/027

That the update on the Innovation Contract be noted and the request for £300,000 investment across the 4 business sites be approved.

9. WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED 2016/028

To note the work programme with the inclusion of the following item agreed earlier in the agenda:-

- Appointment of an N2 Member Skills Champion

The meeting closed at 12.07 pm

CHAIRMAN