

8th September 2015**Agenda Item: 8****REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, POLICY, PLANNING
AND CORPORATE SERVICES****FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR NOTTINGHAM AND
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT BOARD****Purpose of the Report**

1. To request in principle approval from Economic Development Committee for a continuation of the Council's support, including a future financial contribution, to the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Skills and Employment Board.

Information and advice

2. Economic Development Committee approved a £25,000 contribution towards the staffing and revenue costs of the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Skills and Employment Board (N2 SEB) at its budget setting meeting in March 2014. This was principally to fund the costs of a Skills and Employment Board Co-ordinator post along with revenue costs for web development, marketing and the development of a Nottingham and Nottinghamshire skills and employment strategy. The County Council's contribution was matched by £25,000 from Nottingham City Council and the same amount from the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership.
3. Committee considered an update on the work of the N2 SEB at its meeting in January 2015. This report builds on the January report and outlines how the work of the Board will be taken forward.
4. The N2 SEB is chaired by Martin Rigley, Chief Executive of Lindhurst Engineering. The Board is private sector led, and includes members from Boots, Experian, Sasie and smaller private sector firms. The Chair of this Committee represents the County Council on the Board, alongside Elected Member representatives from Nottingham City Council and Mansfield District Council.
5. The Board's key priorities are as follows:
 - a. Making the skills and employment support landscape simpler and more accessible for employers and individuals.
 - b. Developing an 'early years to employment' approach which ensures that young people in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire are prepared for the world of work and the future needs of our economy.

- c. Re-engaging unemployed and disengaged people through pathways that prepare and reintroduce them to the labour market.
 - d. Ensuring the local workforce develops the higher level skills needed to increase business productivity and competitiveness whilst enabling individuals to fulfil their potential.
6. Board members work closely with the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership which has overall responsibility for the investment of significant European funding streams in skills and employment activity in the local area. The N2 SEB is therefore vital in terms of informing and influencing D2N2's priorities and investment proposals.
7. The N2 Skills and Employment Board is reviewing actions that need to be taken by partners across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire to achieve change. This includes what business can do to drive change forward – working with schools to give children a view of the world of work, ensuring colleges and training providers have the information they need to help students progress into real and exciting job opportunities and creating jobs that all residents can access.
8. The next steps for the N2 Skills and Employment Board are to:
- a. Publish the N2 Skills and Employment Board Strategy for 2015 – 2020 setting out the evidence and recommendations for actions under the four priorities.
 - b. Develop and publish sector profiles, including labour market information and future skills needs for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire priority sectors. The profiles can be used by schools, colleges, independent training providers, careers advice and guidance professionals and students to inform pathways through education that link to real job opportunities.
 - c. Work closely with the D2N2 LEP to establish an action plan to implement an 'employability model' and then embed this work.
 - d. Production of an N2 Graduate Employment Strategy to increase the number of graduates employed locally
 - e. Convening a 'Health and Social Care' sub-group to discuss specific opportunities to shape the local training offer
 - f. Informing the plans for devolution of employment and skills to the N2 level.

Resources

9. £75,000 was made available by Nottinghamshire County Council, Nottingham City Council and the D2N2 LEP to support the development of the N2 Skills and Employment Board and its revenue costs in 2014-15 and 2015-16. The Employment and Skills Co-ordinator has recently left the role and this has prompted discussions between Nottingham City Council, the County Council and the D2N2 LEP. All of the funding partners recognise that in order to recruit to the co-ordinator vacancy, a longer temporary contract would need to be in place (the post is currently only funded to March 2016). Partners are therefore proposing to commit an additional £20,000 each to the N2 SEB, which would enable the Co-ordinator post to be recruited to for a minimum of 18 months.

Other options considered

10. Committee could opt not to offer continued financial support to the N2 Skills and Employment Board. However this would mean that the staffing capacity to support the important work of the Board would be lost.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

11. Current funding allocated to the N2 Skills and Employment Board will be exhausted by March 2016. Recruitment to the vacant Co-ordinator post will be more effective if a longer fixed-term opportunity can be offered.

Statutory and Policy implications

12. 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 in the body of the report.

Financial implications

13. The proposed £20,000 contribution to this work will be taken into account in constructing the 2016-17 budget.

RECOMMENDATIONS

14. That Economic Development Committee:

a) Approves continued County Council support for the N2 Skills and Employment Board and aligned with this, approves a financial contribution of £20,000 in 2016-17

Report of the Corporate Director, Policy, Planning and Corporate Services, Jayne Francis-Ward

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Celia Morris, 72043

Constitutional Comments [SLB 27.08.2015]

Economic Development Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Financial Comments [NDR 26/08/2015]

The financial implications are set out in paragraph 12 of the report.

Background Papers and Published Reports

N2 Skills and Employment Board, report to Economic Development Committee, 6th January 2015, published.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All