

23rd February 2016**Agenda Item: 7****REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, PLACE****THE D2N2 GROWTH HUB****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval for the establishment of two full time posts on fixed term contracts within the Economic Development Team which, alongside the wider team, will expand the work in meeting business engagement needs across the County.

Background

2. At the meeting of this Committee in November 2015, members approved a budget allocation of £150,000 over a period of three years towards the D2N2 Growth Hub, commencing in the 2016/17 financial year. Further, it was agreed that this resource be used as a match towards a partner-based European Funding submission to the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) programme, potentially doubling the resources available to the Council to support Nottinghamshire businesses in collaboration with the Growth Hub.
3. The review of the team's business engagement activity, the subject of a report elsewhere on this Committee's agenda, also relates.

Proposed Support

4. Since November 2015, further work has progressed with the ESIF submission and additional details have been submitted for further assessment. Subject to the European Funding being secured, this report seeks approval to increase the economic development team establishment by two FTEs posts for a three year period; one being a Business Support Coordinator (Band B grade, subject to job evaluation) and the other being a Business Advisor (Band C grade, subject to job evaluation). The roles of each post are summarised (but not limited to) the following:
 - **Business Support Co-ordinator** - to work in part with the Growth Hub coordinators to respond to inquiries from Nottinghamshire businesses and to support the work of business support programmes in their delivery. In addition, the post will generate enquiries directly, as well as working closely with the Nottinghamshire Business Engagement Group (NBEG) to support the development of new and influence existing provision as required by micro and small businesses across the county. It will maintain and develop

the KAM role undertaken by the team and support wider referrals to the Growth Hub and to the Business Advisor.

- **Business Advisor** - a qualified position, the post will work directly with businesses across Nottinghamshire, ordinarily via referrals from the Growth Hub / the Coordinator and offering direct advice and brokering support from providers allied with the Growth Hub and supporting businesses' plans for expansion, especially those seeking finance.
5. The European Funding will also allow for the establishment of a small **commissioning budget** which will be available to draw in additional specialist expertise as may be required. The use and facilitation of this resource will be a prime responsibility of the Business Advisor, to be commissioned in accordance with ESIF and County Council procurement guidelines.
 6. Nottingham City Council is the lead on the ESIF submission and will act as the Accountable Body. This Council will operate under the terms and conditions of the ESIF award, being subject to contract and partnership arrangements.

Other Options Considered

7. Should the European Funding submission be unsuccessful, then an alternative approach would be adopted to secure the most effective use of the £150,000 budget allocation. This would see the establishment of the Business Advisor post only, but with a small commissioning budget. The Advisor would develop their own portfolio and take referrals from the D2N2 Growth Hub, working with the Economic Development team to support the ties with NBEG.

Financial Implications

8. If the European funding bid is successful, it is proposed to establish two posts as outlined at paragraph 4. These are indicatively graded at Band C (Business Advisor) and Band B (Business Support Co-ordinator). The total cost of these two posts, per financial year and including on-costs (based on the mid-point of the salary range) is £83,963. 50% of these costs would be met from the EU funding grant. If the European funding bid is not successful, the proposal is to establish the Business Advisor post only. The cost of this (including on-costs) would be £44,934 per year.

Human Resources Implications

9. 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

10. 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) this Committee approves the establishment of the two full-time posts within the Economic Development Team of Business Support Coordinator at Band B and Business Advisor at Band C (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, this Committee approves the establishment of the Business Advisor post at Band C (subject to job evaluation) on a 3 year fixed term contract.

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For any enquiries about this report please contact:
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Constitutional Comments [CEH 12.02.16]

The recommendations fall within the remit of the Economic Development Committee.

Financial Comments [SES 12/02/16]

The financial implications are set out in the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

The D2N2 Growth Hub, report to Economic Development Committee, published 3-11-2015

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All