

# **Brexit Impact on Nottingham & Nottinghamshire's Skills Landscape**

**14 March 2017**

Dear Robert Halfon MP

We are writing to you to outline our concerns about the impact that Britain's exit from the European Union (EU) will have on skills provision and inequality across N2 (Nottingham and Nottinghamshire).

## **The N2 Skills & Employment Board**

Working under the auspices of the Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Enterprise Partnership (D2N2 LEP), the N2 Skills & Employment Board (N2 SEB) is an employer led body that takes strategic responsibility for the N2 skills and employment landscape. The Board consists of 20 private sector employers from 11 N2 priority sectors.

European funding has enabled the N2 SEB and broader employer networks to develop local solutions to the skills and employment challenges they face that are not directly supported by national funding streams. The Employ Local<sup>1</sup> and Skills Local<sup>2</sup> 'opt ins' under the D2N2 European Social Fund (ESF) 2014 – 2020 programmes are examples of this in practice.

D2N2 received an investment in skills of £146m for the 2007 – 2013 ESF Programme. ESF funding is a key source of funding that improves skills and employment outcomes for our local residents, has enabled employers to develop local solutions to the skills and employment challenges they face and has played a significant role in reducing Nottingham's unemployment rate by over 50% from 2012 to 2017.

N2 experiences a number of significant labour market challenges; low skills attainment, high levels of worklessness and deprivation, particularly within Nottingham City's inner and outer estates and deindustrialised communities in the north of Nottinghamshire. Our region has the lowest GCSE outcomes in England and we know that raising aspiration and providing routes in to meaningful employment for young people and their families improves social mobility.

N2 has a vibrant economy that includes global employers such as Experian, Boots, Capital One and British Sugar but we also experience key skills gaps relating to coding and programming, digital marketing, teaching and social care.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.d2n2lep.org/write/Documents/Skills/EMPLOY\\_Local\\_-\\_Overview.pdf](http://www.d2n2lep.org/write/Documents/Skills/EMPLOY_Local_-_Overview.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.d2n2lep.org/write/Documents/Skills/SKILLS\\_Local\\_-\\_Overview.pdf](http://www.d2n2lep.org/write/Documents/Skills/SKILLS_Local_-_Overview.pdf)

This is exacerbated by a brain drain of highly skilled graduates to London and the South East which limits our productivity and growth potential. Without replacing ESF funding after 2020 to improve provision and performance, N2 risks falling further behind the national average for skills and job growth. The impact of this on the local economy cannot be underestimated.

We would welcome the opportunity to share the positive work that is underway to improve employment and skills outcomes and are keen to work with Government to provide local solutions to skills and employment challenges in our area.

### Request to Ministers

Following Britain's exit from the European Union:

1. What commitment will be made to maintaining and increasing investment in skills and employment across N2?
2. Will direct funding be made available to enable employers and other local partners to close the gaps in skills provision and to reduce inequalities e.g. the disability employment gap?

Yours sincerely,



Martin Rigley M.B.E

Chair

N2 SEB



Cllr Sam Webster

Portfolio Holder for  
Education, Employment &  
Skills

Nottingham City Council



Cllr Diana Meale

Chair  
Economic Development  
Committee

Nottinghamshire County  
Council



Nottingham  
City Council



Nottinghamshire  
County Council