

Agenda Item No. 7(a)

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET MEETING

23 December 2014

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**D2 EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS BOARD (STRATEGIC POLICY,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND BUDGET)**

(1) **Purpose of the Report** To seek approval to part-fund a Co-ordinator post to support the development of the D2 Employment and Skills Board and to shape the Employment and Skills work of the proposed D2 (Derby and Derbyshire) Combined Authority.

(2) **Information and Analysis** The economic strategies of Derbyshire County Council and Derby City Council have both identified employment and skills as a key priority in ensuring local economic growth; this is also supported as a key ambition of the emerging D2 Combined Authority.

Supporting the wider, strategic employment and skills agenda, the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has developed a Skills Commission as part of its formal governance arrangements and to oversee the LEP-wide Skills Plan and associated commissioning of the European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) and Single Local Growth Funds.

However, to ensure effective delivery, the LEP is devolving activity to separate D2 and N2 (Nottingham and Nottinghamshire) Employment and Skills Boards to ensure that local needs of D2N2 are fully addressed.

As part of the LEP's work on skills, a review was undertaken by the previous Derbyshire Employment and Skills Board (accountable to the Derbyshire Economic Partnership) and the Derby City Employment and Skills Board County Council which identified a need for one strategic body to represent the needs of D2 employers in relation to Employment and Skills.

Chaired by Graham Mulholland from EPM Technologies, a new D2 Employment and Skills Board (ESB) has been established to be employer-led and consists mainly of private sector businesses from across Derby and Derbyshire. The new Board is currently accountable to the LEP Skills Commission and in future, it is envisaged the D2 ESB will also form a key part of the emerging D2 Combined Authority arrangements.

Progress in determining the D2 ESB strategic vision and objectives has been limited due to a lack of a dedicated resource, with work to date being supported by existing resources from within Derby City Council and Derbyshire County Council Economic and Regeneration Service.

D2N2 has committed £25,000 over two years (£12,500 per year) to fund a dedicated ESB Co-ordinator post subject to match funding from Derby City Council and Derbyshire County Council. Similarly, Nottingham City Council has recently recruited a similar post to support the equivalent N2 ESB.

Following discussions at the D2 ESB, an appropriate job description and person specification is being drafted, with the intention to begin the recruitment process as soon as possible, subject to Cabinet approval. The employing body for the new post is subject to further discussion/agreement. Should it be agreed that Derbyshire County Council is to be the host employer the post will be subject to job evaluation to determine the grade.

It is envisaged the following key responsibilities will be undertaken by the postholder:

- To co-ordinate the D2 Skills and Employment Board and its sub groups, and ensure employer led input into the development of the D2 employment and skills proposals (notably the “21st Century Guildhall” concept).
- To lead the development of an integrated programme of activity that will maximise external funding from the LEPs, Government and EU.
- To engage with Small-Medium Enterprises/Micro-Enterprises and key sectors, and develop labour market information to identify gaps in provision.
- To review employer led approaches to engaging with young people.

(3) **Financial Considerations** Match funding of £25,000 for the post will be committed from Derbyshire County Council’s Economic Development General budget, £12,500 per annum for 2015-16 and 2016-17. Derby City Council has committed a similar funding profile.

(4) **Human Resources Considerations** The post will be a two year fixed term contract. The employing authority has yet to be finalised.

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

(5) **Key Decision** No.

- (6) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.
- (7) **Background Papers** Held on file in the Economic Regeneration Service of the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officer contact details – Frank Horsley, extension 38348.
- (7) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION** That Cabinet approves £25,000 over a two year period to part fund the D2 Employment and Skills Board Co-ordinator.

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