

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	Item 15	Page 1 of 5
Report Originator	Liz Wade	<i>Fwd Plan Ref No:</i> A17/017	
Wards Affected	All Wards	18 th October 2017	
Title	BUSINESS SUPPORT – ENTERPRISING KETTERING		

Portfolio Holders: Cllr Mark Dearing

1	<u>PURPOSE OF THE REPORT</u> i) To set out the proposed future delivery and promotion of local business and enterprise support provision under a new Enterprising Kettering brand ii) To present recommendations for the use of agreed Community Grant enterprise funding
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2 **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

2.1 Members have made their priorities for infrastructure and jobs-led growth clear – these are the prerequisites of growth. Members have indicated they wish to use the growth agenda to leverage three key and interrelated ambitions for the borough; namely:-

- ◆ A better offer for our town centres
- ◆ A better education and training offer
- ◆ A better employment offer – high grade, higher density jobs

2.2 This report seeks to contribute to all of this ambitions by improving an updating the information and signposting to the support that is available to our residents and business communities by a relaunch of our economic development brand.

3 **CURRENT ENTERPRISE SUPPORT OFFER**

3.1 Over the last few years the business support context in Northamptonshire has changed significantly. In 2011 the government set up Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) to replace regional development agencies and business links.

3.2 South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnerships (SEMLEP), which covers the Kettering area, provides “Growth Hub” support for new and existing businesses ranging from start-up to high growth as well as taking a lead on the skills and workforce development agenda.

3.3 In addition our Council offers a range of services to support businesses including:-

Committee	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	Item 15	Page 2 of 5
------------------	----------------------------	------------	----------------

- Premises and commercial
- Commercial waste collection
- Market Operations
- KBT Study Programme
- KBT Apprenticeships
- Pre planning advice
- Environmental Health advice and licensing
- Housing and Life-plan advisors

3.4 There is also an increasing variety of local, regional and national providers operating across the area offering support ranging from employability and enterprise support to tailored provision aimed at target groups such as:-

- the unemployed and long term unemployed;
- the economically inactive;
- disadvantaged groups (over 50s, lone parents, disabled or with health problems, ethnic minorities, those without basic skills (IT, numeracy, literacy))

3.5 The above has resulted in fragmented communication channels by a broad range of providers and confusion/lack of awareness of support that is available at both national and local levels highlighting that a change of approach is required.

3.6 There is also a need to raise the profile of support available from Kettering Borough Council to:-

- Increase business engagement and awareness of the council's business service offer
- Raise the profile of KBT, skills & apprenticeship support
- Build awareness and understanding of the Economic Development service offer

4 ENTERPRISING KETTERING BRAND PROPOSAL



4.1 What is it?

An identifiable “umbrella” brand/trading name to enable to promote and signpost to the wide range of enterprise, skills and business support services available to people and businesses in Kettering.

Committee	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	Item 15	Page 3 of 5
------------------	----------------------------	------------	----------------

The KBT website will also be refreshed and linked to the branding, but remain separate.

4.2 Why?

Ultimately to increase the take up of the services by local businesses and individuals across the Borough as we increasingly need to engage and commercially trade with employers directly.

To bring an online package of coherent services to support and enable local residents and businesses to easily access information on the support available to them at local and national levels.

To provide an interactive web platform to use news feeds and video case studies to keep the information fresh and interesting as a point of reference for all.

To replace the Enterprise4Kettering brand that is owned but no longer supported by the University of Northamptonshire and the Chesham House website.

4.3 How?

Brand Awareness & Communication Including:-

- Visits and distribution to local businesses and business networks
- Creating a single online platform for business and people.
- Creating a brand that business and people recognise as local
- Direct to new businesses or contacts that don't know where to go for support and guidance
- Use multiple communication channels to promote e.g. Enterprising Kettering business cards, social media and rebrand of The Business Booklet
- Work closely with the LEP Growth Hubs to ensure all businesses are guided and web pages linked.

4.4 What are the benefits?

- Raise the profile in Kettering of the business support and enterprise offer
- Enable people and business in Kettering to aspire, to grow and progress
- Provide an online package of coherent services to new and existing business
- Provide an online package of coherent services to develop individuals skills and employability
- Greater control and flexibility to update information in 'real time'.

4.5 What will be the outputs?

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	Item 15	Page 4 of 5
------------------	----------------------------	------------	----------------

Include:-

- Increase in no of businesses engaged with the Council
- Increase use of online resource compared to KBC and Chesham House current websites
- Increase in social media engagement with local business
- Increase in number of business referrals to our partners e.g. Growth Hubs

5 **TIMESCALES**

5.1 The estimated timetable for Enterprising Kettering is as follows

Action	Expected date
Creation of Enterprising Kettering Brand	August – September 2017
Rebrand of Business Booklet	August – December 2017
Approval of Enterprising Kettering from Executive Committee	18 th October 2017
Creation and use of Enterprising Kettering social media presence and brand	October 2017
Launch of pilot of Enterprising Kettering website	October – December 2017
Enterprising Kettering website launch event	By March 2018 (subject to corporate website release)

6 **IMPACT ON POLICY**

6.1 It is considered that the proposals are in accordance with the members stated priorities, as they will support both the employment offer and education/training offer

7 **FINANCE/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The review of the previous SLA provision (Enterprise4Kettering), conducted by the Task and Finish group in early 2017, recommended that an allocation of £22,500 per annum be made from 2017 for the next four years, and for employability and support for business start-ups to be part of that overall package.

7.2 It was decided that the funding would not be allocated until there was more clarity with regard to the “gap” in current provision provided by local, regional and national providers.

7.3 It is proposed that going forward funding is used to provide a more flexible yet targeted approach to supporting business via:-

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	Item 15	Page 5 of 5
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- Launch of Enterprising Kettering including website and other collateral
- Tailored workshops/events to support current needs
- Workshops to support our Town Centres including independent shop keepers /retailers (this could be linked with the existing shop front grant scheme)
- Further development of Teenage Market Offer and Youth Enterprise activities

7.4 It is not anticipated that there will be a need for additional staff resource to deliver the proposals.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Committee:

- Note the range of business and enterprise support currently available
- Approve and welcome Enterprising Kettering as an umbrella offer to business.
- Agree proposals to utilise the funding previously allocated for business support in the way set out in the report.