



North Devon Council

Report Date:

Topic: Work of North Devon +

Report by: Chief Executive/Leader

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. North Devon + is a company owned jointly with Torridge District Council which operates as a local authority/private sector partnership.
- 1.2. It seeks to support local businesses through grants and advice and administers local and national funds in order to achieve this. It also has experience of project management and supports both authorities with expertise and resources to support bid writing etc.
- 1.3. This report sets out the current main workload of the company and is brought to Council to highlight to members the positive impact that the two councils and the company are having.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That Members note this report

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. To appraise members of the work of North Devon +

4. REPORT

- 4.1 North Devon + is a local authority company that is operated jointly with Torridge District Council. It operates as a partnership with the private sector which has representatives on its board. One of its main purposes is to provide business support to existing and new businesses within the northern Devon area and also to support both councils in their economic development and regeneration functions.
- 4.2 The company has 6 employees and is largely self-funded, although both councils do contribute relatively small amounts of funding each year.
- 4.3 In the past the team has successfully administered very large grant schemes such as the Leader programmes but with the European funded schemes now coming to an end, the team have been concentrating on building up their "portfolio" of schemes and working in partnership with other business support providers.
- 4.4 The Appendix to this report goes into more detail about the current schemes being administered by the team but some highlights are worth mentioning.

Kickstart

4.5 ND+ operates as an approved Gateway for the government's Kickstart scheme. This is a scheme that seeks to match young DWP claimants with local employers who provide 6 month placements with the hope that permanent roles will result.

4.6 So far, of the 11 young people that have completed their placements, 9 have been given permanent roles with local employers which has to be seen as a success. A further 37 people are currently completing their placements and so hopefully this number will increase further.

Business Boost

4.7 Both councils received central government funding to deliver Additional Restrictions Grants (ARG) as a result of the various lockdowns. The guidance allowed councils to use a proportion of the funding for longer term support as well as direct grants. As a result, both councils agreed to retain £100,000 each and to put those funds into a new business support and small grant scheme designed and delivered by North Devon +. That scheme is named "Business Boost" and has currently helped 35 local businesses, examples of which are set out in the Appendix.

4.8 The team will also be involved in delivering elements of some of the projects funded by the recently announced Community Resilience Fund.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1. There are none from this report.

6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

6.1. (Please detail if there are/are not any equalities implications anticipated as a result of this report. If so, please complete the Equality Impact Assessment Summary form available on Insite and email to the Corporate and Community Services Team at equality@northdevon.gov.uk).

6.2. There are no equality issues

7. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

7.1. This item is to note with no decisions required

8. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

8.1. This report contains no confidential information or exempt information under the provisions of Schedule 12A of 1972 Act.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1. The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: (The background papers are available for inspection and kept by the author of the report).

Appendix



10. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

10.1. The author (below) confirms that advice has been taken from all appropriate Councillors and Officers: Leader and Deputy Leader, Solicitor, Director of Resources and Chief Executive

Ken Miles, Chief Executive.