

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Executive Decision Record

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Economic Development and Rural Affairs
Date:	22 January 2013
Title:	Smarter Working Centres
Reference:	4530
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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1. The decision:

- a) That the success of the Smarter Working Centre (SWC) in providing support for businesses during the credit crunch and the recession be noted but, in recognition of the significantly reduced demand for the service in 2012, the network be closed and the project ended.

2. Reason(s) for the decision:

- 2.1. The Smarter Working Centre network was established and supported by Hampshire County Council as a specific response to the recession and to assist new start up businesses to be accommodated.
- 2.2. However, in recent years a greater range of private sector provided managed workspace has become available in the marketplace, and the need for the SWC network has diminished.
- 2.3. As a result, the SWC network is now an unnecessary intervention which is a duplication and in competition with the private sector.
- 2.4. An integral element of Hampshire County Council's future economic development activities will be to support, in partnership with the private sector in delivering a broad geographical coverage of the county in terms of the provision of flexible workspace for start ups and small businesses.

3. Other options considered and rejected:

- 3.1. That the Smarter Working Centre (SWC) network continues to operate. This option was rejected because the SWC network is now an unnecessary intervention which is a duplication and in competition with the private sector.

4. Conflicts of interest:

4.1. Conflicts of interest declared by the decision-maker: None.

4.2. Conflicts of interest declared by other Executive Members consulted:
None.

5. Dispensation granted by the Conduct Advisory Panel: none.

6. Reason(s) for the matter being dealt with if urgent: not applicable.

7. Statement from the Decision Maker:

Approved by:

Date:

22 January 2013

**Executive Member for Economic Development and
Rural Affairs
Councillor R Ellis**