

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Executive Decision Record**

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment
Date:	15 September 2015
Title:	Solent Business Support Hub – European Regional Development Fund Project
Reference:	6881
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

Contact name: David Fletcher

Tel: 01962 846125

Email: david.fletcher@hants.gov.uk

1. The decision:

- 1.1 That the Executive Member for Economy, Transport & Environment gives approval for Hampshire County Council to act as one of the formally named Delivery Partners for the Solent Business Support Hub project, which is to be part-funded through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programme, subject to the Full Application for these proposals being approved by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG);
- 1.2 That approval is given to the commitment of match funding as a contribution to the project, in the form of staff time to the estimated value of £379,000 over a 3 year period;
- 1.3 That approval is given for Hampshire County Council to enter into a formal agreement with the Applicant/Lead Partner, the University of Portsmouth, in relation to its role as a Delivery Partner, with specific lead responsibility for the inward investment element of the proposals;
- 1.4 That the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment delegates authority to the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment to finalise the contractual arrangements, in consultation with the Head of Legal Services, in relation to the County Council's role as lead partner for the inward investment element of this project;
- 1.5 That authority be given to recruit and employ any new posts funded through the ERDF funding for the period of this project, in relation to the inward investment element, should this be required.

2. Reasons for the decision:

- 2.1. To establish and sustain appropriate business support for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) across the Solent LEP area, including provision of resources to deliver inward investment into the area;
- 2.2. To position Hampshire County Council as a key delivery partner in these arrangements, working in partnership with the private sector, universities and other local authorities;
- 2.3. To leverage the value of Hampshire County Council's contribution in the form of staff time, to enhance the level of activity to support business growth.

3. Other options considered and rejected:

- 3.1. Hampshire County Council to act as lead partner for the Solent Business Support Hub project – the University of Portsmouth was the accountable body for the previous Solent Growth Hub project (funded through the Regional Growth Fund) and was therefore the natural choice to continue in this role. It was also felt that the existing staff resources of the County Council were best directed to the inward investment strand of the project.
- 3.2. Hampshire County Council not to participate – the level of overall match funding required (£1.8M over 3 years) could not be achieved without the County Council's participation.

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: ----- Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment Councillor Seán D T Woodward	Date: 15 September 2015
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