

JOINT CABINET AND EMPLOYMENT & GENERAL COMMITTEE**Tuesday, 4th November, 2014**

Present:-

Councillor Burrows (Chair)

Councillors	Blank	King
	Elliott	Russell
	Gibson	Serjeant
	Gilby	Simmons
	Higginbottom	

Non Voting	Brown	Huckle
Members	Hollingworth	

*Matters dealt with under Executive Powers

**20 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS
RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

Councillor King declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No. 24 as Chair of the Innovation Centres Management Board, and he took no part in the consideration of this item.

21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bradford, Hill and McManus.

22 MINUTES**RESOLVED –**

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Cabinet and Employment and General Committee of 7 October, 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

23 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC**RESOLVED –**

That under Regulation 21 (1)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2000, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the following Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 – Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3, on the grounds that it contained information relating to individuals and to financial and business affairs.

24 INNOVATION SUPPORT PROJECT POST 2014 (J000)

The Development and Growth Manager submitted a report recommending continuation of the Innovation Support Project based at the Innovation Centres.

The Tapton and Dunston Innovation Centres had been open since the late 1990s and had been highly successful in nurturing new technology and innovation businesses in Chesterfield. Since September 2012 the Innovation Support Project had been in operation from the Innovation Centres, providing direct one-to-one support to companies helping them to identify and resolve their innovation needs. The project had been funded in part by a grant from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and by the Council from savings made as part of the restructure of the staffing at the Innovation Centres in 2011/12. The ERDF funding for the project was due to end in June 2015 along with the contract for the Innovation Support Project Manager.

The project was managed by the Innovation Support Project Manager on a part time basis (three days per week). The project had exceeded the targets for the number of businesses supported and the portfolio of the businesses that the Project Manager worked with had a combined turnover of £81m, a net profit of £8m and employed over 1050 staff. Since the Innovation Support project commenced in September 2012 it had supported 15 Chesterfield businesses to access over £2m of Regional Growth Fund, supporting the creation of over 200 new jobs.

The report considered the options for the future of the Innovation Support Project, and it was proposed that the £30,000 saving from the earlier

staffing restructure be retained to enable the continuation of the Innovation Support Project Manager post with a view to securing additional support as and when available. It was anticipated that either direct financial support would be available via the new European Union structural funds programme or via activity that was supported by the new programme, for example, businesses being signposted to other projects if they offered more specialist or appropriate support.

*** RESOLVED -**

- (1) That the post of Innovation Support Project Manager be made permanent.
- (2) That applications for funding to support the project be submitted as opportunities arise.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS

To ensure that local innovative businesses have the opportunity to grow and contribute to the improvement of the local economy.

To maximise the income to the Council from lettings at the Innovation Centres.