

28 May 2009

all politics is local

## Hull City Council:

### *The 'Hull Deal' package of business support*

#### Summary of policy/project

A comprehensive package of support for local businesses in Hull, helping businesses access more information in one place

#### Description

Working with partners across the City, Regional Development is bringing together information on a comprehensive package of support for local businesses. The 'Deal will offer:

- **Free impartial business advice** - from Business Link, the central point of information and access to advice for all businesses in the City, no matter size, sector or stage of development.
- **Premises** – The Council operates several managed workspace centres throughout the City. These offer an ideal start-up base, particularly in challenging times. There are no lease requirements, just simple no nonsense, easy in, easy out, monthly license agreement.
- **Grants and loans** – through the Acorn Fund, Hull Deal beneficiaries can receive tailored loan and / or Grant Finance towards start-up costs. Where the Fund is unable to meet the total funding requirement support will be given to access other funding. Again the process is streamlined and straight forward to minimise delay. In most cases a decision will be made within one week of applying.
- **Local Work Guarantee Scheme** – Hull Deal beneficiaries will receive direct access to support for the recruitment and training of new staff. Wage subsidies and training grants will further help in the development and growth of businesses, together with a productive workforce
- **Training** – Access training, higher skills opportunities and learning progression through

the University, Hull College and other training providers

- **University of Hull** – has world leading expertise and an extensive range of high quality services to transform businesses or make them more efficient and profitable. Services include the enterprise centre, logistics institute, research facilities, knowledge transfer partnership, product development and consultancy.
- **World Trade and Export** – links to support from the World Trade Centre Hull & Humber. Bringing international trade under one roof expert advice and practical support on exploiting overseas market opportunities can be easily accessed.
- **Employment Searches** - linkages to employment and job search initiatives within Hull. **Job Matching** – utilising job matching services through partners 'Cityworks'

#### What problems does the policy/project solve?

The 'Hull Deal' seeks to simplify and condense existing information in order to make it more readily available to businesses. Rather than someone having to go to a number of different organisations to get this information, we have worked together with a variety of partners to put it in one place.

#### What is the cost of implementation?

The project is about integrating and adding value to a number of existing business support products. There is no significant extra cost.

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It is difficult to precisely identify total costs. As an example the grant/loan fund element has a budget of around £5m, delivery costs are around £100K pa

Hull City Council has committed approaching £5m to component parts of Hull Deal. This project to some degree is reliant on sufficient resources being made available.

#### What is the evidence of success?

Increased numbers of business starts, stronger more viable businesses. Improvement in business survival rates. All leading to a positive impact on employment levels in the City.

#### Would this work in other Councils?

There is no reason why not. It is largely subject to resources and a willingness of partner organisations to work together to offer an integrated package.

#### What advice would you give any Councils wishing to adopt this idea?

Utilise existing resources as much as possible, do not duplicate what is already there. The project is largely one of enabling people to start – advice coupled with finance and premises and a whole host of other support measures. A sensible criteria to assessing risk is required – it is not practical or wise to support every single person who wants to start up.

#### Other Comments

#### For more information

Contact Paul Burnley, Regional Development, Bond Street, Kingston House, Hull, HU1 3ER or email paul.burnley@hullcc.gov.uk

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