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**North East
Derbyshire**
District Council

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Date: Thursday, 3 March 2022

To: **Members of the Growth Scrutiny Committee**

Please attend a meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee to be held on **Monday, 14 March 2022 at 1.00 pm in the Council Chamber**, District Council Offices, 2013 Mill Lane, Wingerworth, Chesterfield S42 6NG.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Steuberg".

Assistant Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer

Members of the Committee

<u>Conservative Group</u>	<u>Labour Group</u>	<u>Independent Group</u>
Councillor Michelle Emmens Councillor Anthony Hutchinson Councillor Michael Roe Councillor Bentley Strafford-Stephenson Councillor Philip Wright	Councillor Nigel Barker Councillor Suzy Cornwell Councillor Lee Hartshorne	Councillor John Funnell

For further information about this meeting please contact: Damon Stanton 01246 217011

AGENDA

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Declarations of Interest

Members are requested to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or other interests, not already on their register of interests, in any item on the agenda and withdraw from the meeting at the appropriate time.

3 Minutes of Last Meeting (Pages 4 - 6)

To approve as a correct record and the Chair to sign the Minutes of the Growth Scrutiny Committee held on 24 January 2022.

4 Spotlight Scrutiny Review

- a. Approval of Project Plan and Timetable (Pages 7 - 11)
- b. Consideration of Briefing Paper and relevant documentation (Pages 12 - 25)
 - Briefing Paper on Business Engagement
 - Business Advisor Programme Project Update
 - NED Business Network Evaluation May 2018
 - NED Business Skills Adult – Lessons Learned
- c. Consideration of Questions that Members wish to ask Stakeholders

5 Scrutiny Review - Spotlight Review - The Council's Communication with Businesses

Interviews

- Mark Ross – D2N2 Business Advisor
- Business CBE+
- Business Ian Hands Consultancy
- Karl Apps – Assistant Director – Economic Development, Regeneration & Housing Delivery

6 Scrutiny Review

Triangulation of Evidence

7 Forward Plan of Executive Decisions

To consider the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions. Please note, the most up-to-date Forward Plan of Executive Decisions can be accessed via the following link:-

<https://democracy.ne-derbyshire.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=1137&RD=0&bcr=1>

8 **Work Programme** (Pages 26 - 31)

To consider the Work Programme for the Growth Scrutiny Committee 2019/20 and review the proposed workload.

9 **Additional Urgent Items**

To consider any other matter which the Chair of the Committee is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.

10 **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee will take place on Monday, 9 May 2022 at 1.00 pm.

11 **Venue for Next Meeting**

To determine whether the next meeting be held formally (in person) at Mill Lane, or informally via virtual conference call.

We speak your language

Polish
Mówimy Twoim językiem

Romanian
Vorbim limba dumneavoastră

Urdu
ہم آپ کی زبان بولتے ہیں

Chinese
我们会说你的语言



North East
Derbyshire
District Council



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GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 24 JANUARY 2022

Present:

Councillor Bentley Trafford-Stephenson (Chair)(in the Chair)

Councillor Nigel Barker
Councillor John Funnell
Councillor Philip Wright

Councillor Suzy Cornwell
Councillor Lee Hartshorne

Also Present:

G Callingham	Director of Growth
A Kimber	Interim Head of Property and Estates
B Harrison	Senior Regeneration Officer and Urban Designer
D Stanton	Governance Officer
A Bond	Governance Officer

GSC/ Election of Chair

41/2

1-22 RESOLVED – In the absence of both the Chair and Vice Chair, Councillor Trafford Stephenson was elected to Chair the meeting.

GSC/ Apologies for Absence

42/2

1-22 Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors M Roe and A Hutchinson.

GSC/ Declarations of Interest

43/2

1-22 Members are requested to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest and/or other interest, not already on their register of interests, in any item on the agenda and withdraw from the meeting at the appropriate time.

There were no interests declared at this meeting.

GSC/ Minutes of Last Meeting

44/2

1-22 RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Growth Scrutiny Committee held on 27 September 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

GSC/ Discussion on Assets

45/2

1-22 The Interim Head of Property Services and Estates updated Committee on progress made on the previous scrutiny review on business centres and industrial units. In total ten Recommendations had been put forward and the officer explained the progress made on each recommendation.

Members heard that the Officer intended to create a dashboard of all the KPIs that the Council could utilise when setting targets.

Committee noted that there was no asset management strategy in place at the present time.

The Officer informed members that legal action against individuals that owed the Council money could not have taken place previously due to the Covid19 pandemic. However, this would not be an issue following March 2022.

Committee discussed small industrial units and what plans were in place to utilise Council owned land to build new units. They heard that this would depend on Council priorities and Capital projects.

Members enquired about the size of business that occupied the Council's business units. The Officer stated that businesses of all size occupied the units and that they were very popular. A 'waiting list' would therefore not be of much use due to how quickly vacant units were rented out.

The Interim Head of Property Services and Estates agreed to attend the May meeting to give a further update on progress made against the action plan.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

GSC/ Previous Review on Business Centres and Industrial Units

46/2

1-22

The Interim Head of Property Services and Estates covered this item with Members during the discussion of the above item.

GSC/ Discussion on the Implementation of the Growth Strategy

47/2

1-22

The Director of Growth delivered a presentation to update Committee on the Growth Strategy.

Members heard that a Growth Strategy had been completed in 2021, as well as a skills and employment strategy and a visitor economy strategy. The progress and implementation of these strategies would now be reviewed.

Committee was updated on the progress of the growth strategy since its implementation and on the work that had taken place on the Visitor Economy.

The Director informed Members that 1201 businesses had been targeted in a skills audit but this had not received the desired level of responses so there would be an effort to increase engagement on this.

Committee received an update on each of the towns and the town centre regeneration. They noted that there would be additional Growth Strategy activity in 2022.

Members discussed the presentation at length and enquired as to the progress with D2N2, the rural economy and the business skills audit.

The Director informed Committee that there would be meeting with the D2N2 Chief Executive and would update Members after this had taken place.

Committee noted that the first step for the rural economy would be to understand its needs. More work would also be done to encourage businesses to engage with the skills audit. The Senior Regeneration Officer informed Members that a current sector analysis of the District had begun.

Members agreed to undertake a spotlight review into the Council's communication with local business. A spotlight review was a short review which was done all in one meeting. A number of local businesses and stakeholders would be invited to take part. The spotlight review would take place at the Committee's next meeting in March.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

GSC/ Forward Plan of Executive Decisions

48/2

1-22 RESOLVED – That the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions be noted.

GSC/ Work Programme

49/2

1-22 The Spotlight Review would be added onto the Work Programme.

RESOLVED – That the work programme be noted.

GSC/ Additional Urgent Items

50/2

1-22 There were no additional urgent items at this meeting.

GSC/ Date of Next Meeting

51/2

1-22 The next meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee will take place on Monday, 14 March 2022 at 1.00 pm.

GSC/ Venue for Next Meeting

52/2

1-22 The next meeting will be held in person at the District Council Offices, 2013 Mill Lane, Wingerworth, Chesterfield.

NORTH EAST DERBYSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SCRUTINY PROJECT MANAGEMENT

DRAFT PROJECT PLAN FOR SPOTLIGHT REVIEW

<p><u>NAME OF COMMITTEE:</u> Growth Scrutiny</p>	<p><u>SCRUTINY OFFICER:</u> Damon Stanton</p>
<p>SUBJECT TO BE REVIEWED</p>	<p>The Council’s engagement with local business</p>
<p>REASON(S) FOR THE REVIEW</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure the Council’s communication with local business is effective and fit for purpose.
<p>IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE CORPORATE OBJECTIVES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a business friendly District that develops skills and jobs. • Enhancing our Resident’ quality of life.
<p>TERMS OF REFERENCE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure the Council’s communication with local business is effective and fit for purpose.
<p>AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF REVIEW</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review the Council’s communication with local business to see how it has been conducted • To review what has worked well and what has not worked so well • To suggest improvements to any future communications with businesses
<p>KEY ISSUES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the key elements of the Council’s communications with business and has it been effective? • How does the Council update or inform businesses about available grants, initiatives and support? • Do businesses engage and are they aware of the

	<p>support that the Council offers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do businesses view the Council and do they have any opinions on what could be done differently or better? • What changes should be considered to any future communications? • What are the barriers to success?
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TIMESCALE	ESTIMATED	REVISED	ACTUAL
Commencement	24 January 2022		
Finish	09 May 2022		
Report	June 2022		

METHOD(S) OF REVIEW:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with stakeholders • Review of relevant documentation
IMPLICATIONS: (legislative, regulatory, etc)	
DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE: (Internal/External)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scene setting evidence from the Director of Economic Growth and the Senior Regeneration Officer and Urban Designer. • Growth Strategy 2021-24 • Briefing Paper on business engagement • D2N2 business advisor progress report • NED Business Skills Audit

WITNESSES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gill Callingham - Director of Economic Growth • Bryan Harrison - Senior Regeneration Officer and Urban Designer • Karl Apps - Assistant Director - Economic Development, Regeneration, and Housing Delivery • Mark Ross - D2N2 Business Advisor • Business CBE+ • Business Ian Hands Consultancy
CONSULTATION/ RESEARCH:	
SITE VISITS	

<u>PROJECT OUTCOMES</u>	
CONCLUSIONS:	
RECOMMENDATIONS:	
CABINET CONSIDERED:	
OUTCOME:	
FOLLOW UP:	

REVIEW OF PROCESS/COMMENTS:	
SIGNED OFF BY CHAIR:	
DATE:	

Growth Scrutiny Review - Draft Timetable
The Council's Communications with Business

DATE OF MEETING	ITEMS TO BE COVERED
24 January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scene Setting by Lead Officer - Gill Callingham (Director of Economic Growth) and Bryan Harrison (Senior Regeneration Officer and Urban Designer)
14 March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider and agree the Project Plan and Timetable • Consider Relevant Documentation. • Members to consider the questions they want to ask stakeholders. • Interviews: • Mark Ross - D2N2 Business Advisor • Business CBE+ • Business Ian Hands Consultancy • Karl Apps – Assistant Director – Economic Development, Regeneration and Housing Delivery • To consider the review evidence gathered to formulate recommendations (triangulation of evidence)
09 May 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider draft report and finalise
June/July 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report submitted to Cabinet

Business Engagement – Growth Scrutiny March 2022

Historical Engagement

- Grow 200 was developed in 2019 to support the top 200 businesses in NED to grow. Specific branding and materials were produced. Consultant engaged with businesses on a one-to-one basis to ascertain their views and issues, and a 'Grow 200' Support Pack was mailed to each business. Business News – developed. Branding similar to the News (residents newsletter). 4 editions to almost 2000 businesses.
- Monthly business networks took place in free venues in Clay Cross, Wingerworth, Dronfield and Eckington in 2017/2018. Well attended and feedback has been that these were missed. A minimum of 15/20 businesses attended each one – some same, some different. Not just limited to NED.
- Meet the buyer events used to be organised and secured through employment conditions included in planning applications. The aim was to support local contractors to find out more about opportunities to work with developers on local projects.
- Advanced Manufacturing Forum. 15 businesses attended, feedback received was very positive.
- D2N2 business surgeries. Free premises were provided and promoted (Coney Green, Mill Lane). Not attended by any businesses.
- Apprenticeship Fairs took place in Mill Lane in 2017/2018/2019 to promote apprenticeships at all levels – Local HE and FE attended. Approximate 8 businesses attended each event promoting apprenticeship and jobs (not just from NED)
- Ambition SCR supported 18 – 24 year olds into employment. Engagement with businesses took place over 4 years to encourage them to employ Ambition clients.
- Business Apprenticeship Hour launched and promoted via social media and in the News. No businesses made contact
- Knowledge Transfer Partnership webinar nothing to add
- 3 Exporting Webinars took place with Department of Trade and Industry. Only 3 businesses (1 from NED) attended events. 2 had to be cancelled
- Digital Derbyshire Finished in 2019. The team utilised the NEWS magazine and the Council's website to promote the Digital Derbyshire project and its services to businesses and residents within the district to help to increase the uptake of Superfast Broadband. The partnership team was supported with promotion of and appraisals of LEADER BNED and NED Business Growth Fund funding applications
- Mentoring Scheme through Sheffield City Region was promoted to support people who were interested in setting up their own business. Very limited success

- Energy Efficiency grants and support provided through University of Derby. We weren't given any that I know of.

Engagement to date

- NED Business Skills Audit and Digital Skills webinar with Chesterfield College – lesson learned produced. No interest at all with webinar despite door knocking in Clay Cross and follow up emails.
- Higher and Degree Level Apprenticeship webinar. NED business showcased their business and apprenticeships. Only 1 business (Rykneld Homes) attended. Recorded and included on NEDDC website and you tube channel
- Graduate recruitment webinar. NED business showcased their business and experience of using RISE. No businesses attended. Recorded and included on NEDDC website and you tube channel
- NED Business Adviser – I'll send Mark's latest report
- Vision Derbyshire adviser – 13 NED business advisers being supported
- Promotion of Universities offer in the News (Notts/Sheffield/Sheffield Hallam) – no feedback provided on if businesses have accessed the support but have been asked.
- Job Fairs in Clay Cross and Killamarsh. Both well received by local businesses
- Key Account Management initiative started in 2013 with specific businesses being contacted by officers. Limited number of businesses but ongoing relationships continue
- NEDDC website has a business support website
- EDU supported during the pandemic with pro-active phone calls to businesses reminding them to supply bank details and providing an established contact during the pandemic.
- Social Media Webinar following on from the Grow 200 initiative, businesses in the Visitor Economy sector were targeted for one-to-one contact by the consultant. From this, due to the Covid-19 lockdown, many expressed issues relating to utilising new forms of marketing etc to promote themselves. Therefore, a free webinar workshop was held in September 2020 for businesses to learn how to better utilise social media to promote themselves and their offers.
- ShopAppy Poor take up in NED
- Promotion of HE / FE in News. No specific feedback from HE / FE if increased business contact

NORTH EAST DERBYSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS ADVISER PROGRAMME PROJECT UPDATE NOVEMBER 1 TO DECEMBER 31 , 2021

PARTICIPATION STATISTICS TO DATE

Project Performance from November 1 to December 31, 2021

	Feb- March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept - Oct	Nov - Dec	Total
Total Businesses Engaged (per month)	71	105	52	33	14	16	22	20	333
Grant Enquiries (COVID)	66	93	43	30	10	4	0	5	251
Business Support Enquiries	5	1	9	3	5	11	22	15	71

Since the start of the contract a total of 333 unique businesses have been supported through the North East Derbyshire District Council Business Adviser contract.

A total of seventy - one business have been in contact for additional business support of which fifteen have come in during November and December. These businesses are mainly looking at growth grants for their businesses. The type of businesses ranged from:

- Nuclear Energy support company
- Accommodation Business
- DJ and events
- Tourism Guide Company
- Boat Supply Company

Business Adviser Update

November and December support has predominantly focused on more qualitative interventions with business support being supplied to organisations within the NEDDC area. The adviser sends a regular update on the D2N2 Growth Hub events calendar for promotion by NEDDC to businesses.

Support during this period has included a series of one to one business advice and diagnostic support sessions, this has led to several business developing a detailed action plan allowing the NEDDC business to focus on their growth ambitions.

The adviser has supported two clients in applying for Business Investment funding and Innovate to Grow funds from Derby University. The applications are pending but have a grant value of over £20,000.

In addition to the above, the adviser has also identified and signposted two clients to additional support from the Chamber's, 'Scale Up and Innovation Team' for additional assistance in reviewing opportunities for growth with the businesses.

An example of the types of enquiry now coming into the adviser are:

- Clients discussing range of grants and growth opportunities including the 'Vision Derbyshire Grant'
- Adviser also had customers discussing how the costs of goods, supplies and logistics was impacting business
- There were also several clients wanting to plan more effectively in 2022 for growth

NORTH EAST DERBYSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS ADVISER PROGRAMME PROJECT UPDATE NOVEMBER 1 TO DECEMBER 31 , 2021

The Business Adviser and Chamber have undertaken activities to raise awareness of the support via a dedicated campaign to actively promote the NEDDC Adviser Service and other offerings such as 'Peer Network', D2N2 Training and events, Kickstarter Programme, scale up support, Innovate UK, and Business Start-up training sessions.

Since the announcement on 21 December, 2021 by Government relating to new grants for business to deal with the, 'Omicron' variant, the adviser has seen an increase in business enquiries asking for help to apply. Until clear guidance for this new grant is published (not available at time of writing this report) the adviser has informed businesses to check the NEDDC website for new announcements. Also they will be contacted directly by the adviser when new information is provided in due course from NEDDC.

Ongoing active support - Client Example

The Business Adviser has been working very closely with several NEDDC business for example:

- Tourism guide company looking to develop business and offer additional training to staff
- High Pressure water company fixing major pipes for nuclear industry looking to develop CNC machine capability – Innovate to Grow Grant from Derby University applied for
- Working with a DJ company to reinvent services post COVID and apply for Vision Derbyshire grant

Marketing and Events

A series of jointly branded online events have been delivered to NEDDC business, these were fully funded for businesses and jointly branded with Northeast Derbyshire District Council and the Growth Hub.

The series of branded events organised on behalf of NEDDC:

- Wednesday 13 October, 2021 the following two-hour webinar, '*Social Media - How to have greater impact using social media: understanding how to improve impact on social channels*'
- Friday 05 November, 2021 the following three – hour workshop, '*Marketing Communications*'

Start Up Workshops

The project is engaging with the D2 Business Starter Programme which is part-funded through the Chamber, Derbyshire County Council and Derby City Council. The project provides workshop plus 1:1 mentoring to support residents wishing to start a business.

To date 24 individuals have contacted the Start-up team for advice on starting a new business and 11 have now enrolled to receive active business support.

D2 Business Starter Programme offers people the essential foundations to get their business off to a great start, through a series of workshops and 1-2-1 business adviser support.



NORTH EAST DERBYSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS ADVISER PROGRAMME PROJECT UPDATE NOVEMBER 1 TO DECEMBER 31 , 2021

In addition 3 NEDDC clients have signed up to the, 'ScaleUp 360 Project', which provides clients with 12 hours of support, which is delivered in a multitude of ways through 1-2-1 high growth business coach support, dedicated mentors work directly in their field, and workshops, as well as additional help with prototypes and packaging design through Design Futures.

Partnership Meetings

The Business Adviser continues to meet with partners to promote the business support available, as well as understanding how it complements and supports other local projects. Meetings are held with Bryan Harrison at NEDDC fortnightly and the Adviser now attends regular Economic Development Team meetings.

Mark Ross 7 January 2022

North East Derbyshire Business Network

May 2018

Evaluation

Q1 How did you hear about this network meeting?

Answer Choices	Responses –
Eventbrite	4 (18.18%)
NEDDC website	1 (4.55%)
NEDDC Business News	2 (9.09%)
SCR Growth Hub	0 (0.00%)
D2N2 Growth Hub	1 (4.55%)
From previous NED Business Network	9 (40.91%)
Word of mouth	4 (18.18%)
Other	1 (4.55%)
TOTAL	22

Q2 How would you rate the venue used for the network?

	Poor –	Fair –	Good –	Excellent –	Total –
–	0.00%	0.00%	45.45%	54.55%	
	0	0	10	12	22

Q3 Overall, how would you rate the network meeting?

	Poor –	Fair –	Good –	Excellent –	Total –
–	0.00%	0.00%	72.73%	27.27%	
S	0	0	16	6	22

Q4 How many useful contacts have you made from this business network?

Answer Choices –

0	1 (4.55%)
1-5	20 (90.91%)
5 - 10	1 (4.55%)
10 - 15	0 (0.00%)
15 - 20	0 (0.00%)
20 +	0 (0.00%)
TOTAL	22

Q5 Would you like the Growth Hub to contact you to support your business (If yes, your contact details will be provided to the Growth Hub)

	Answer Choices –	Responses –
–		
Yes		3 (13.64%)
No		19 (86.36%)

North East Derbyshire Business Skills Audit 2021/2022

This project was led by external consultant who was procured – Ian Hands – and two members of staff supported the project with business engagement.

Timeline

- **February, 2021:** Collating and cleansing business databases (focusing on the four main towns of the district – Clay Cross, Dronfield, Eckington, and Killamarsh, and on specific sectors with more ‘setting’ in the area – construction, manufacturing and tourism – as identified as key sectors in the NEDDC Employment and Skills Strategy)
- **March, 2021:** Started engagement with businesses through email
- **May, 2021:** Project put on hold due to Covid-19 lockdown and subsequent lack of engagement with businesses
- **August, 2021:** Communication with businesses re-commenced via email and paper surveys being sent through the post
- **October, 2021:** Communication with businesses begun via phone calls
- **25th November, 2021:** Clay Cross door-knocking and engagement with businesses at the Clay Cross Job Fair.
- **Mid-December, 2021 to early January, 2022:** short suspension of activity due to Christmas holidays and low engagement levels
- **20th January, 2022:** Dronfield door-knocking
- **27th January, 2022:** Eckington door-knocking
- **3rd February, 2022:** Killamarsh door-knocking and engagement with businesses at the Killamarsh Job Fair.
- **End of February, 2022:** Official end of survey, however, it will remain open until the report is finalised i.e. end of March
- **25th March, 2022:** Submission of final report

Statistics of engagement (as at 22nd February, 2022):

Number of targeted NEDDC businesses on database	1329
Number of postal communications sent out (no email contact) / number of returned surveys	791 / 5
Number of emails sent out / number of returned surveys	452 / 57
Number of phone calls made	355 / 381 (219 numbers on TPS – i.e. do not contact)
Number of phone calls still to be made	26
Number of surveys completed	83
Number of surveys completed - Clay Cross	23
Number of surveys completed - Killamarsh	21
Number of surveys completed - Dronfield	13
Number of surveys completed - Eckington	14
Number of surveys completed from other towns	10 (Alfreton, Ashover, Chesterfield, Mansfield, North

As of 22nd of February, 2022, there were 83 completed surveys which equates to around 6.2% completion rate from about 1330 businesses in total (there are duplicates and quite a few have been marked as “dissolved”). For comparison, a standard survey completion rate goal is to reach 10%.

Ways of communication/engagement – Pros and Cons

Email:

Several waves of emails have been sent throughout the duration of the project, from initial engagement to ‘final chance’ emails. This way of communication remains the main method of engagement with businesses.

Pros:

- Quick, easy and effective way of reaching a large number of businesses at the same time – consistent approach
- Easy way of distributing the survey link
- Allows some level of personalisation
- Read receipts available

Cons:

- Lacks personal contact
- Majority of emails go to a ‘common’ inbox’ and never get to managerial level, which we need to engage
- Many emails do not even get read – low engagement (persistency can be seen as incessant ‘noise’)

Due to the more or less equal number of pros and cons, email communication is in many ways indispensable, but still lacks the numbers to prove its true effectiveness.

More personalised emails have led to a higher response rate, however, the level to which an email can be personalised remains low, which has led to the use of other means of communication.

Postal:

Paper surveys sent out by post remain the least effective way of engagement with businesses. As statistics suggest, only 5 out of the 80+ survey have been received back through the post. The indirectness (lack of personal contact) of the method, coupled with the continuous rise of digital technologies and the fact that many business addresses are too generic and not always accurate, proved this communication method largely ineffective.

Phone calls:

Contact via phone has yielded a mix of results.

Majority of businesses have shown bigger interest in the project when contacted by phone than by any other communication method applied so far. They still preferred to do the survey online and be additionally contacted by email to receive the survey link, but that initial more personal contact has sparked higher levels of engagement.

A fair amount of businesses have still stated that they are not interested in the project, and only a few preferred to complete the survey via phone as opposed to any other method.

Pros:

- More personal contact
- The caller get a clearer picture of the business likelihood of involvement
- Business Database being constantly updated
- A lot more detailed information can be received that the survey questions allow
- Pro-active and personal business engagement via NEDDC

Cons:

- Every call is different – no consistent approach can be applied
- Time/energy consuming

With a clear prevail of the pros against the cons when it comes to phone calls, this method has proved very effective in increasing the levels of engagement with local businesses. Follow-up calls have yielded even better results, however, unfortunately, there's still no guarantee that a phone call will lead to a survey completion, unless the survey is filled during the call.

Door-knocking:

The door-knocking exercises have proved to be somewhat of a break-through for the project. It was no surprise that businesses responded better to a more personal approach. Engagement was higher compared to all other communication methods and nearly half of the completed surveys were filled on the door-knocking days.

Most businesses were still pretty busy serving customers to pay us full attention, but as a result of going physically into the four main district towns, many new businesses were added to our database that were not present before (including updating emails of present businesses) – 60 added after 3 town visits.

After the third door-knocking (in Eckington) there was a 'surge' in completions – 62 completed surveys up from 27 before Christmas. The last door-knocking day in Killamarsh yielded 59 new businesses added to the database and 7 surveys completed in person.

However, it goes without saying that this method is the most resource-intensive of all.

Incentives

Incentives for all completed surveys were a free swim voucher (for Sharley Park Leisure Centre in Clay Cross) and entry into a draw for £20 Amazon vouchers. 20

additional £10 Amazon vouchers were given away during ‘door-knocking’ as a thank-you to businesses for completing the survey.

Note: some businesses didn’t want the incentive even after completing the survey. This may be due to them not being interested in this particular kind of incentive, which is, more or less, unrelated to their business and holds a personal benefit rather than commercial.

Promotion and Social Media engagement

Various methods of marketing were used to promote the Business Skills Audit and urge local businesses to complete the survey, including extensive social media outreach and flyer distribution. Partners were also asked to support the promotion of the skills audit.

Social media marketing has used paid ads. The ads targeted local businesses, business owners in the specific areas. However, although some have clicked through to the survey (a click is all Facebook can guarantee), none have proceeded to complete it.

Unfortunately, as a result of the paid skills-survey advertising, the Council’s ad account with Facebook was disabled, receiving a ‘final warning’ in terms of future advertisement. Moving forward, organic posts would be easier to manage, while with paid boosts the communication team would have to be more selective what’s being promoted to adhere to Facebook’s terms.

Designers have produced:

- Business Skill Audit Survey Flyer (digital & printed x 800)
- Free swim voucher – digital only
- Social media posts – digital only

Engagement:

Date	Results
7 paid posts in Nov	10,426 overall reach; 16,196 impressions; 51 link clicks
30 Nov	315 reach; 0 engagements
7 Dec	392 reach; 2 engagements
12 Jan	444 reach; 4 engagements
17 Jan Paid	16,348 reach; 9 eng-s; 19 link clicks (Businesses in Dronfield)
20 Jan	369 reach; 0 engagements
24 Jan Paid	18,000 reach; 22 eng-s; 15 link clicks (Businesses in Eckington)
30 Jan	414 Reach; 3 engagements
31 Jan Paid	18,898 reach; 4 eng-s; 22 link clicks (Businesses in Killamarsh)
2 Feb	381 reach; 1 engagement
8 Feb	0 reach; 0 engagements (uncertain if this is a fault with the reporting or due to the ad account being banned)

Overall over £160 spent on social media promotion and £24.26 for printing 800 flyers.

Anecdotal feedback from the team:

On engagement/communication:

- Door-knocking and personal contact have gotten the best results. Businesses are prepared to talk (even about other things not related to business skills) but this is a resource-intensive method of engagement.
- A personalised approach (even when emailing or phoning in terms of setting a preferred time for a call or adding someone's name to the email) worked best.
- Via phone, people were more likely to disregard or dismiss the message. Via email the chances of this doubled. But remote communication is undoubtedly easier. Emails are quick. Phone calls take up time and can be tiresome. Mornings were the best times to call with higher interaction noted between the hours of 10 and 11:30 am.
- Social Media interaction does not work or engage businesses.
- Overall, the more time and effort we put in, the more responses we got, but as such, the response rate depends a lot on the amount of resources available to the team.

Other:

- Timing has been crucial. In the middle of a Pandemic businesses are just trying to keep afloat and are not concerned with the future skills needs of a business they may not have in 6 months.
- Need for a more co-ordinated approach, as numerous surveys, events, trainings have been sent out to businesses pertaining to similar topics.
- Need to have 'defined' database for future use.
- Need full support of Councillors (known locally and more likely to respond).
- Lack of support from the Business Centre in Eckington despite making contact with management.

Digital Skills Webinar with Chesterfield College – to support Clay Cross Town Deal work

Lessons learned from Clay Cross door-knocking for Digital Skills Webinar flyer distribution – 24th February, 2022

As with our door-knocking in Clay Cross for the Business Skills Audit in November, 2021, a lot of the businesses were busy with customers and could only spare us a couple of minutes. However, unlike our previous experience, there was a lot more positive comments in regard to the Digital Skills Webinar, in terms of businesses being a bit more engaged and showing enthusiasm in participating. Our take on this is that as we were offering something as opposed to asking for their time and insights, people were a lot more inclined to engage with us.

200 flyers were produced and the webinar was promoted via social media – by both NEDDC and Chesterfield College.

Close to **50 businesses** were visited on the day by two members of staff.

Feedback from team:

- **2 businesses showed no interest** and didn't take a flyer
- A few didn't realise the workshop was delivered online, so we had to reiterate it was a webinar and they could easily join online
- We sensed there was a **good interest** in the topic of digital skills and social media but several barriers for businesses to engage
- A few businesses said they won't be able to attend on the bases of **being busy** (webinar falling within working times) or **lacking the means** to attend – a laptop on the premises
- There was an occurring **misunderstanding** that this webinar was aimed specifically at businesses as a few offered to put up the flyer to advertise it to residents. One customer asked if this has been advertised to local schools
- With no sign ups as of two days before the webinar, despite the show of interest, concerns were raised that it might be too much effort that we're asking businesses to email us *first*, instead of giving them the Zoom link straight away. An **additional 'action' step** may be **creating further barriers** for people to attend

Additional notes:

- When asked, a few businesses stated their more preferred time would have been in the afternoon (3, 4, or 5 pm; possibly a Friday)
- One business expressed their frustration with the Town Deal plan, in terms of wanting more time and money spent for the regeneration of the High Street as opposed to other projects such as the new Railway Station

GROWTH SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

MONDAY AT 1:00 PM

Chair Councillor A Hutchinson
Vice Chair Councillor M Emmens

MEETING DATE	AGENDA ITEM	SCRUTINY ACTIVITY	WHAT IT WILL COVER	UPDATE/COMMENTS
28 th June, 2020	Remit of the Committee		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefing on Scrutiny: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scene setting - The terms of reference for the Committee - How the Committee operates, ways of working – Discussion 	Committee Members / Sue Veerman -Overview and Scrutiny Manager
	Draft Work Programme	Consultee, monitor and challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider items for the draft work programme for the year and any suggested items for inclusion 	Committee Members/ Sue Veerman - Overview and Scrutiny Manager
	Selection of Scrutiny Review Topic	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider suggestions for review and select a topic for the Scrutiny Review Consider what we want to look at Consider stakeholders who we want to see 	Committee Members Items received from officers
	Forward Plan of Executive Decisions	Consultee, monitor and challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions 	Sue Veerman- Overview and Scrutiny Manager

Agenda Item 8

2nd August,2021	Apprenticeships	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider a presentation from the Human Resources Manager on Apprentices 	Sara Gordon – Human Resources Manager –
	Housing Strategy	Consultee, monitor and challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the new Housing Strategy 	Di Parker – Joint Housing Policy and Intelligence Officer -
	Forward Plan of Executive Decisions	Consultee, monitor and challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions 	Sue Veerman Overview and Scrutiny Manager
	Scrutiny Work Programme	Consultee, monitor and challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the Committees' work programme 	Sue Veerman Overview and Scrutiny Manager
27th September, 2021	Discussion on Assets	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management of Assets Mill Lane 	Anthony Kimble and David Broom-will be in attendance
	Dronfield Development	Monitor and challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider an update on progress of this development 	Gill Callingham Director and Bryan Harrison
	Procurement	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To discuss Procurement Arrangements within the Authority 	Jayne Dethick HoS- Finance and Sandy Williams – Procurement Manager
	In House Services	Consultee, monitor and challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General discussion on this topic 	Lee Hickin – Director of Corporate Services and Head of Paid Services
	Scrutiny Review	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To select Review topic and scope it 	Committee

	Forward Plan of Executive Decisions	Consultee, monitor and challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions 	Sue Veerman Overview and Scrutiny Manager
	Scrutiny Work Programme	Consultee, monitor and challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the Committees' work programme 	Sue Veerman Overview and Scrutiny Manager
22nd November, 2021 <i>Informal meeting</i>	Scrutiny Review	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion on Review Topic 	Committee
	Forward Plan of Executive Decisions	Consultee, monitor and challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions 	Sue Veerman Overview and Scrutiny Manager
	Scrutiny Work Programme	Consultee, monitor and challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the Committees' work programme 	Sue Veerman Overview and Scrutiny Manager
24 January 2022	Discussion on Assets	Monitor and challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management of Assets Mill Lane 	Anthony Kimble will be in attendance accepted
	Previous Review	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider progress on the Business Centres and Industrial Units review 	Anthony Kimble accepted
	Growth Strategy	Monitor and challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To discuss progress on implementation of the Growth Strategy 	Portfolio Holder and Director of Economic Growth and Development - accepted

	Forward Plan of Executive Decisions	Consultee, monitor and challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions 	Overview and Scrutiny Manager
	Scrutiny Work Programme	Consultee, monitor and challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the Committee's Work Programme 	Overview and Scrutiny Manager
14th March, 2022	Spotlight Scrutiny Review	Review	<p>Approval of Project Plan and timetable</p> <p>Consideration of briefing paper and relevant documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefing Paper on Business Engagement. Business Advisor Programme Project Update. NED Business Network Evaluation May 2018. NED Business Skills Audit – Lessons Learned. <p>Consideration of questions that Members wish to ask stakeholders</p>	Committee Damon Stanton – Senior Scrutiny Officer
	Scrutiny Review - Spotlight Review – The Council's communication with businesses	Review	<p>Interviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mark Ross - D2N2 Business Advisor Business CBE+ 	

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Ian Hands Consultancy • Karl Apps - Assistant Director – Economic Development, Regeneration, and Housing Delivery 	
	Scrutiny Review	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triangulation of Evidence 	Committee
	Forward Plan of Executive Decisions	Consultee, monitor and challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions 	Damon Stanton – Senior Scrutiny Officer
	Scrutiny Work Programme	Consultee, monitor and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the Committee’s Work Programme 	Damon Stanton – Senior Scrutiny Officer
9 th May, 2022	Clay Cross Town Deal and Masterplan for Eckington and Killamarsh	Monitor and Review challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive an update on the Clay Cross Town Deal and masterplan for Eckington and Killamarsh 	Head of Economic Development and Housing - accepted
	Partnership Activities in Support of Growth	Monitor and challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider an update on the work of the Partnership Team 	Steve Lee- Strategic Partnership Co-Ordinator accepted
	Previous Review	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider progress on the Business Centres and Industrial Units review with a view of finalising the review as complete 	Tony Kimber – assistant director of property services accepted

	Scrutiny Review Report	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To finalise the Scrutiny Review Report 	Committee
	Monitoring of O&S recommendations	Monitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To monitor the implementation of previous committee and review recommendations 	Damon Stanton – Senior Scrutiny Officer
	Forward Plan of Executive Decisions	Consultee, monitor and challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions 	Damon Stanton – Senior Scrutiny Officer
	Scrutiny Work Programme	Consultee, monitor and challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider whether the Committees' work programme has been completed at year end 	Damon Stanton – Senior Scrutiny Officer