

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

D2 JOINT COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

10 October 2022

PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP A FESTIVAL OF BUSINESS ON BEHALF OF VISION DERBYSHIRE

(1) Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to allocate £53,000 of the Retained Business rates funding to pay for a second Derbyshire Festival of Business ('DFoB') under the banner of Vision Derbyshire delivered through a partnership led by the University of Derby.

(2) Discussion / Decision Required by the D2JC

Discussion to be held at Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee on 5 October 2022 to agree in principle the project proposal, the outputs of which will be verbally reported to the D2 Economic Prosperity Committee meeting.

The D2JC is recommended to agree the allocation of £53,000 from the Retained Business Rates Fund to develop and deliver DfoB in 2022/23 under the Vision Derbyshire banner.

(3) Information and Analysis

Following the success of the previous DFoB in 2021/22, the University of Derby in partnership with East Midlands Chamber ('EMC') proposes to run a DFoB in 2022/23. DFoB in 2021 ran the following events:

Component	Aim of the events	No. Events
Showcasing Derbyshire's Business Community	To profile Derbyshire's businesses to potential customers/clients and future employees.	14
Educational Engagement Programme	To bridge the gap between Derbyshire's businesses and the next generation of employees. To inspire school/college and university students to consider Derbyshire based employment opportunities.	11

Masterclasses	To raise the profile of Derbyshire with numerous thought leaders within the UK business community and so raise the county's profile as a place with knowledge.	43
Derbyshire Business Awards	To showcase the business and enterprise talent within Derbyshire and help raise aspirations to succeed.	2
The Derbyshire Business Expo	To showcase Derbyshire's businesses to existing and future clients.	7
Total	Note: This is the proposed minimum of events, both with in categories and cumulatively.	77

The overarching aim of DFoB 2022/23 is to support the businesses in Derbyshire recover from the pandemic and forward the aims of the Vision Derbyshire project.

Following the recommendations from the DFoB 2021/22 Evaluation Report, which is provided in Appendix 1 below, and feedback from events in DFoB 2021/22, there will be much stronger marketing and connection of event to the themes. The breadth of disciplines that are covered within the themes will also be increased to reflect the diverse business in Derbyshire and the academic strengths across the University. This will further develop cross-theme issues such as emerging technologies, clean growth, health and well-being, innovation, community and civic engagement, and diversity and inclusion. The student body, as a key pipeline of future talent across the county, are also proposed to be more involved in the DFoB 2022/23. They will support the development and delivery of events providing relevant student experience opportunities, as well as attend the events to provide opportunities to network with local businesses. The University outreach team and academic schools is proposed to be actively involved in conjunction with local authority connections in order to engage and inspire the next generation to understand the breadth of career opportunities that are available to them in the county.

In working with the University of Derby and other partners, it is felt that this is a project that all parties can support, whilst benefiting the whole business community across Derbyshire. This will also facilitate delivery from locations across the County as well as virtually to increase accessibility to DFoB and to reach as wide an audience as possible.

Impact from DFoB 2021/22

An Evaluation Report of DFoB 2021/22 is attached as Appendix 1 to this proposal. Key data from this report include 5,496 total attendees, attendees coming from 33 counties, over 1 million social media impression related to DFoB, and 88% of attendees that completed a survey saying they would

recommend DFoB to others. A sample of further comments from a recording of feedback from attendees is contained in Appendix 2 below, with further examples of feedback in the Evaluation Report at pages 15-18. There is also an [online archive](#) of video footage of some of the key events, which facilitates further impact for those who were either unable to attend or wish to revisit events.

The case study on MiniApertur Photography, which is detailed at page 18 of the Evaluation Report, provides an example of the positive impact the DFoB 2021/22 had on this business. Benefits detailed by the business are networking opportunities and generation of new LinkedIn contacts, a new client with a contract that is “worth quite a few months’ earnings”, personal development of the business owner to assist her confidence and business practice, and enhance knowledge of best practice of other SMEs at local and national levels.

It is proposed that further case studies will be created in the DFoB 2022/23 to continue to show the benefits and outcome from investment from running the DFoB. Where possible hard statistical data will complement anecdotal evidence that has been gathered to date. It should be noted that DFoB concluded only five months before submission of this approval. As such, hard statistical evidence on aspects such as increased revenue will be extremely limited at this stage. Many organisations may find such evidence to be commercially sensitive and as such may be loath to release this information. Furthermore, there would be cost attached to undertaking a full survey of all businesses that attended DFoB 2021/22. In the meantime, therefore, it is hoped the case study, statistical analysis on engagement, and feedback/comments provide reassurance as to the success and value created in the DFoB 2021/22.

The Proposal for DFoB 2022/23

In a similar vein to DFoB 2021/22, DFoB 2022/23 is proposed to run over several months. The intention is to launch the DFoB at the launch event of the Derby Top 200 Business Event on November 15th 2022 and will run until March 2023. The overall aim remains to support Derbyshire’s business community to continue to bounce-back from the challenges caused by the pandemic and meet the emerging challenges of such as the cost-of-living crisis, wage inflation, energy costs, and supply chain issues.

These issues and support for developing business resilience will be covered by:

- identifying existing and future skills talent
- identifying new/emerging trends and hot industries
- exploring key business-related issues
- providing opportunities for collaboration and networking
- showcasing the best of Derbyshire’s businesses to existing and future clients/customers/investors and workforce
- a celebration of the European funded projects that local business have undertaken with the University and to discuss new ways of partnering post European funding

Following feedback from DFoB in 2021/22, the proposed DFoB in 2022/23 will have a number of clearly defined arcs of activity to tie events together. These will include the following:

3.1 Showcasing Derbyshire's Business Community

The University of Derby to work in partnership with EMC, Federation of Small Business, the Confederation of British Industry, the Institute of Directors, as well as national, regional and locally based organisations such as Business Peak District, Destination Chesterfield, Marketing Derby, Marketing Derbyshire, Marketing Peak District and Erewash Partnership to organise a programme of community focused open day events that are geared to showcasing Derbyshire's businesses to Derbyshire's residents. EMC's signature events run at Derby, Chesterfield and Buxton, which received extremely positive feedback, will be updated and run again. A further event to also be delivered under EMC's Derbyshire Manufacturing Network badge. A third signature event to include a virtual business networking event with Chamber members in Cork in the Republic of Ireland.

The main aim of this strand will be to profile Derbyshire's businesses to potential customers/clients and future employees. However, there are opportunities to showcase organisations such as Derbyshire Police and the Business Crime Reduction Partnership in events, as part of their campaign to show the positives of living in Derbyshire and why people should move to Derby to work.

3.2 Educational Engagement Programme

The University to work with the same employer facing organisations as referenced above, plus the local authorities and D2N2 Careers Hub to implement a co-ordinated programme of educational activities. This will include school/college/university visits to employers and employer visits to schools/colleges and the University of Derby to deliver careers related advice and guidance. Consideration to be given to the delivery of a hackathon, a series of live project briefs and a series of masterclasses on key business-related topics e.g. business resilience. This could be extended to include a programme of intensive 1 week-long work placements.

This will also link with the wider careers activity, creating additional opportunities for businesses to extend their reach through the local careers sites such as My Future, and STARTIN to potential young people in our schools, colleges and University.

The aim will be to showcase Derbyshire's businesses to the next generation of employees; to inspire school/college and university students to consider Derbyshire based employment opportunities.

3.3 Online and Face-to-Face Masterclasses

This strand will be to deliver a suite of keynote business focused talks on key topics of relevance to Derbyshire businesses. Speakers to include leading professionals, academic and businesspeople in Derbyshire, with the keynote event being the delivery of a TEDx style of talk. The University of Derby to publish a written version of the presentations.

The main aim is to raise the profile of Derbyshire as a thought leader within the UK business community and so raise the county's profile as a place to do business.

3.4 Derbyshire Business & Enterprise Awards

The University to partner with EMC's own awards schedule and to work in connection with Generation Next to showcase Derbyshire's business and enterprise focused talent through a face-to-face awards ceremony.

This has the aim of showcasing the business and enterprise talent within Derbyshire and help raise aspirations to succeed.

3.5 The Derbyshire Business Expo

As with DFoB 2021/22, the proposed DFoB 2022/23 will continue to engage closely with key agencies and organisations representing Derbyshire's business community. In particular, it is proposed the University work with EMC to deliver three separate days of business expo across locations in Derby, Chesterfield and Buxton, organised by the University of Derby.

This showcase aims to promote Derbyshire's businesses to existing and future clients. EMC have confirmed support for DFoB 2022/23, with further events possibly being co-branded to encourage EMC members to attend.

(4) Costs

Based upon DFoB 2021/2022, the costs of the project have been identified as follows:

£18,000	1.0 FTE Project Manager fixed term over 6 months (including on costs) – to coordinate the various activities linked to DFoB
£25,000	Marketing/promotional work needed to build demand for the Expos
£5,000	Brand development & broader social media campaign to promote DFoB
£5,000	Impact assessment/evaluation of DFoB
£53,000 +VAT	TOTAL

Whilst this amount was not spent last year due to the project manager resigning part way through, feedback has shown one of the areas of development is communication and linking of events, which are key aspects of the Project Manager role.

(5) Recommendations

The D2JC is recommended to:

- i) Note the projects aims set out in this report,
- ii) Consider and agree the suggested project proposal, and
- iii) Agree the spend of £53,000 plus VAT from the Retain Business Rates Fund.

(6) Appendices

- (1) Evaluation report for DFoB 2021/22
- (2) Feedback comment from attendees of DFoB 2021/22
- (3) Examples of feedback collection from Planning for Growth event in the DFoB 2021/22, that are being used to shape the proposed DFoB 2022/23