

(Stage 1 application)

1. Give key outcome(s)

This East Suffolk Means Business Programme will deliver the following outcomes:

- The three core business group partners, which include Suffolk Coast Business, Waveney Business Forum and Felixstowe Chamber, will be resourced to ensure that the strong, collaborative relationships that have been built continue to grow and focus on East Suffolk's business economy as a whole through a co-ordinated approach.
Measure: Projects will be collectively developed to support the business community across the whole of East Suffolk focussing on joint priorities that are identified at a local level. Best practice is shared across the business associations through a co-ordinated approach.
- East Suffolk businesses will be able to access specific support as identified in the recently released 'Barriers to Recruitment' report.
Measure: Tackle the 10 myths that hinder growth by collaboratively working on improving communication and engagement amongst the business community through the development of a number of tool kits and social media campaigns.
- East Suffolk businesses will be able to access training, advice or guidance on regulatory and policy changes that impact on their business.
Measure: By working in partnership with support providers ensures bespoke and timely training and support packages are accessible across East Suffolk.
- Projects/initiatives are developed that address East Suffolk wide needs of the business community as identified directly through our business groups.
Measure: To deliver the outcomes of the Business Associations survey and an agreed programme of activities to deliver a collective approach to East Suffolk's business communities objectives.

2. How has the need for this outcome(s) been identified?

The Vibrant Economy Task Group (VETG) was set up in 2014 to help the East Suffolk Partnership Board achieve their vision and priority to "Support a vibrant business ecosystem by working with the independent place based organisations and groups who work for, support and provide services for the benefit of the business community."

The VETG has evolved over time and now includes representatives from Felixstowe Chamber, Suffolk Coast Business and Waveney Business Forum (along with local authority representatives) which means that more than 90% of the independent, place based business associations in East Suffolk are now engaged with or have representation at the task group.

The first round of funding provided a number of groups with seed funding to support the capacity and development of their associations enabling them to become fit for purpose and able to provide basic functions for their members. These outputs included:

- Provision of the resources and support to create membership/administration roles for the individual associations.
- Business planning support for individual associations.
- Grass routes social media training – 82 employees from 63 businesses as well as 12 1-2-1 successions.
- Development of coherent marketing campaigns to raise the profile of the individual

associations.

The second round built on the first phase of capacity building to support the delivery of more outcome focused projects. A variety and diverse applications and delivered a number of outputs that included:

- Bespoke and professional marketing campaigns undertaken to increase membership numbers
- Development of an back office events booking system including an automated payments system to increase the efficiency of the promotion and administrative process for town centre events in Bungay
- Development of a database communications system with the ability to generate and send bulk/targeted emails
- The creation of new websites with enhanced content and improved functionality to promote both the destination and its businesses helping to raise the profile of the area and increase membership of the association.
- Research on the precise positioning of business associations and their activity within their localities and an understanding of the benefits expected by members identified to ensure support is targeted towards members needs.
- A bespoke training programme developed for businesses to understand the benefits of using social media to improve their business marketing
- Joint working with the ESP Skills task group on the Barriers to Recruitment research report.
- The delivery of the first successful collaborative East Suffolk wide project that addressed changes in data protection legislation.

The task group itself has identified the following needs for the next phase of the project building on the previous work streams and provided the following feedback :

- Felixstowe Chamber – collaborative working will allow invaluable opportunity for business leaders across East Suffolk to discuss mutual challenge sand develop practical solutions, which can be shared by all.
- Suffolk Coast Business – having a core group of business leaders that connects directly to the business associations has been established and needs to be progressed to the next phase that will deliver East Suffolk wide solutions and projects to address issues identified by our business community.
- Waveney Business Forum – through the capacity building work and the development of focused activities significant progress has been made connecting the business community of east Suffolk to collectively work together to address shared issues.

Through the VETG work streams, an established platform has now been created that provides the vehicle to encourage greater corporation and shared approach to deliver an East Suffolk agenda. This project is seeking resources to progress and embed this East Suffolk wide collaborative working approach. This will also include the delivery of the recommendations from both the Barriers to Recruitment and the Business Association survey needs.

3. Who will benefit from the outcomes(s)?

There are 16 established business associations across East Suffolk and each association supports between 20 and 150 members. The actions of the co-ordinated East Suffolk approach will bring greater benefits than just to those who are directly members of the business associations. The project will be seek to support:

- The independent place based business in East Suffolk
- Businesses across East Suffolk who will become better connected and have improved access to the information, knowledge and resources that will enable them to grow.

- The economies of the towns and villages in east Suffolk will benefit from a vibrant and resilient business community.
- Individual employees will access an enhanced programme of training and support.

4. How will the outcomes(s) be sustained after the funding has run out (if appropriate)?

Once the coordination of East Suffolk business group's activity becomes well established with a track record of achievements it is envisaged that the desire to work together will continue. With greater co-operation established between the business community, collective funding can be sought or influencing support agencies to develop practical solutions that can be shared by the business community.

5. Name of Project/activity that will deliver the outcome(s)

East Suffolk Means Business

6. Brief description of the project / activity that will deliver the outcome(s).

This is an East Suffolk wide project that will build on the significant work achieved by the VETG previous work streams. To date the group has achieved the delivery of a programme of activity that has supported the growth of individual place based business association, achieved significant capacity development at town level, connected the place based groups together through best practise and shared issues, the delivery of place based projects and initiatives and began the development of collaborative East Suffolk working.

The next phase of the VETG group is to develop collaborative working into a well established process that delivers the collective objectives of the business associations. Dedicated resources are required to allow each of the three umbrella groups to devote time to the East Suffolk business collective agenda through the VETG and deliver the following:

- Provide access to specific support as identified within the 'Barriers to Recruitment' report.
- Provide access training, advice or guidance on regulatory and policy changes that impact on businesses.
- Projects/initiatives developed that address East Suffolk wide needs of our business community as identified directly through our business groups.

Project/activity START DATE: September 2018 END DATE: September 2019

7. Who is involved?

Who is involved in developing this outcome proposal?

The Vibrant Economy Task group whose members include:

Waveney Business Forum
Suffolk Coast Business
Felixstowe Chamber
East Suffolk Councils
East Suffolk Partnership

Who will deliver the project/activity?

The Vibrant Economy Task group

Project / activity lead:

Name: Jason Berry

Organisation: Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Council

Telephone: 07769 364418

Email: jason.berry@eastsoffolk.gov.uk

ESP Board member supporting the project
Roger Abbott

8. Give information about match funding here:		
Source of match funding	Funding confirmed?	Amount (£)
Suffolk Coastal District Council Economic Development	Yes	£6,000
Waveney District Council Economic Development	Yes	£5,000

Total project / activity cost	£ 32,000
Total of confirmed match funding	£11,000
Total amount of ESP funding required	£ 21,000

9. How will the project / activity be monitored and outcomes reported (including project risks)?
<p>The VETG will meet on a quarterly basis to review and plan work stream activity. The group will make collective decisions on activities going forward.</p> <p>The Council's Economic Development team are imbedded into this group and will provide support with monitoring and ensure the activity is complementary to the ED service.</p>

10. Identify where the ESP money will be spent here:	
Description of activity or item (by who and by when where appropriate)	Cost (£)
1. Provision of collective resources through Suffolk Coast Business, Waveney Business Forum and Felixstowe Chamber.	£12,000
2. Training Package	£6,000
3. Products to address barriers to recruitment (eg tool kits)	£5,000
4. Activity Programme	£9,000