

# Vision for Development of an Eastern Enterprise Hub

## Introduction

The East is a leading global knowledge region with 43% of employment being knowledge based. Its economy is diverse from London Fringe to Rural Norfolk Coast with significant numbers of small businesses and entrepreneurial activity. The East has an ambition to develop a global reputation for innovation and business growth, a region that harnesses and develops the talents and creativity of all. This briefing note shares proposed plans for the development of an Eastern Enterprise Hub, based in Ipswich, in support of realising these ambitions for our communities.

## Why Now?

The Coalition Government has identified the central role for the private sector to play in helping to rebalance employment within our economy to enable a reduction in public expenditure without an increase in unemployment. In the recent consultation for the Regional Growth Fund Nick Clegg highlights the need to support investment and entrepreneurship to create jobs and stimulate growth. The proposed Enterprise Hub will enable our communities in the East to respond effectively to this call to action by creating a focus for enterprise learning.

The Enterprise Hub will enable us to capitalise on our strengths and

- Tap the unexploited potential from our strength in knowledge & R/D
- Broaden our economic base, particularly in support of new sectors
- Capitalise on the potential of our young people
- Overcome the challenge of youth unemployment and low skills
- Stimulate and foster successful business start up
- Exploit the unique model that UCS offers– a new business focused university with a distributed delivery model
- Use the strong partnership already developed in Suffolk to grow the idea out across the region

## Our Vision for the Enterprise Hub

We plan to create a centre of expertise in enterprise that will be:

- a vibrant and nationally recognised centre for enterprise particularly serving communities in the East
- a provider of training and support services in enterprise development and entrepreneurship
- there for people wanting to work in business, set up their own business or develop their entrepreneurial skills in the private, public or voluntary sector.

## Project Partners

This project is led by University Campus Suffolk and Suffolk County Council, working with a range of local and regional partners both in the public and private sectors. EEDA are supporting the project with a significant investment of capital funding.

## Our Ethos

The ethos for the Enterprise Hub is:

- to be accessible to people of all ages, with a particular focus on young people
- have strong relationships with businesses in the region
- combine academic rigour with practical application, tailored to business needs
- enable participants to take control of their own career, wherever that career takes them
- provide training and experience to participants when, where and how they need it

- provide progression from education to work and enterprise
- develop a mindset rather than a skills-set
- joined up enterprise offer that is simple to access and effective in its support

### **Location**

The physical centre for the hub will be on the top floor of the new University Campus Suffolk (UCS) James Heir building located on University Quay, Ipswich. UCS will provide the Enterprise Hub with dedicated serviced accommodation which will be able to offer facilities and support to all those participating in programmes and activities offered through the hub. It is also envisaged that over time the Enterprise Hub will work with partners around the region to create a number of local spokes which can bring enterprise support nearer to local communities, supported by a virtual network accessible to all hub participants.



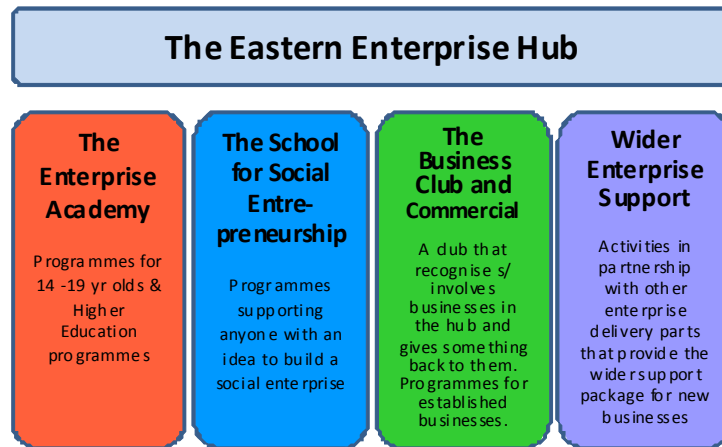
*James Heir Building, University Quay – Home to the New Enterprise Hub*

### **Business Involvement**

Business commitment and involvement is pivotal to the success of the Enterprise Hub. Business leaders have been involved with the project from its inception and will continue to play a leading role in the development and delivery of the project at every stage. It is planned to establish a Business Club alongside the hub to ensure that businesses are able to maintain close involvement with the hub as it develops.

## The Offer

The Hubs offer will be managed through a number of programme strands:



### The Enterprise Academy

**Programmes for 16-19 Year Olds:** The first course to be established will be a fulltime Edexcel National Diploma in Enterprise and Entrepreneurship, commencing in September 2011. This will be delivered through a partnership with Suffolk New College. It will enable young people to take a business idea from its inception through the stages of development to business readiness. In due course we will look to expand the offer to include a Level 2 course and potentially Enterprise Apprenticeships. We are currently exploring joint working on these programmes with the National Enterprise Academy.

**Higher Education Programmes:** University Campus Suffolk (UCS) already offers modules in enterprise on existing courses. This offer will be developed to include an HE programme focused on enterprise at Foundation Degree level.

**Enterprise for 14-16 Year Olds:** Taster workshops will be offered to young people during their final year at school as part of the pre-programme to the academy fulltime offer. The first workshops will run in autumn 2010. In the longer term the academy will work with schools and other providers of work related learning such as the Chamber of Commerce and Education Business Partnership to develop a further offer for 14-16 year olds.

### The School for Social Entrepreneurship

This strand of development work is being led by Choose Suffolk working with the National School for Social Entrepreneurship. The programme will work with adults with ideas for social enterprises and provides support for them to develop these alongside other like minded people. Once established the school would be the centre for the Eastern region. It is planned to commence the first course in January 2011.

### The Business Club and Commercial Offer

The hub will establish a Business Club during its initial year of operation. The club will recognise the commitment of those businesses who become involved in the work of the Enterprise Hub. It will build commitment to supporting the various delivery strands, offer Special activities exclusive to its members, provide business to business opportunities and be a great network for new starters.

The Commercial Offer planned will bring world class contributors to Ipswich to provide business development support. It will respond to the needs of local businesses and help our economy become more enterprising. The development of this strand is being led by the business representatives on our delivery board.

**Wider Enterprise Support**

This strand will develop the joint work with other providers of enterprise services across the region to ensure there is a co-ordinated approach which provides emerging new businesses with a comprehensive support offer.

**Timescales**

We plan to open the Enterprise Hub facility in January 2011. The strands of the offer will be rolled out over a two year period starting in Autumn 2010.

**A Truly Regional Offer**

We recognise that to become a centre that can support enterprise across the region will take time and specific focus to ensure that activity is not just based in Ipswich. It is planned to use a hub and spoke model to offer provision across the region, underpinned by a web based package using the UCS Wolsey platform. The hub concept will enable many different “locally” based institutions to offer provision and draw on the benefits of the hub. This concept will first be piloted in Suffolk and then spread across the wider Eastern area.

**More Information**

If you are excited by our plans and would like to get involved or find out more please contact:

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