



Further promotion of the scheme is due to follow, if Councillors would like any scheme further details to share with their local businesses, please contact Vicky Fether [vfether@northdevonplus.co.uk](mailto:vfether@northdevonplus.co.uk)

In Torridge a selection of business supported include:

- A small cosmetic manufacturer looking for grant assistance to develop their website to improve their online presence and attract more sales.
- A charitable organisation helping homeless and vulnerable people seeking support to create a centre for people in need to drop in for a meal or a coffee and tap into help and support.
- Rural garage business, looking to improve efficiency and considering applying for a grant to help with the cost of buying a piece of equipment to assist with development of their operations.
- Potential property development pre-start venture seeking support on how to structure the business.
- Pre-start venture looking to set up a new tourist activity.
- Start-up support for a mobile catering business touring rural area offering quality take-away food.

### **Kickstart Scheme**

In October 2020 the Government announced a £2 billion fund to create high quality 6-month work placements for young people aged 16-24, who are claiming Universal Credit. With the support of our local authorities, Torridge District Council & North Devon Council; Barnstaple Chamber & North Devon+ are operating as an approved Gateway for employers to access the scheme through the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP). ND+ are providing support to micro and small businesses who individually have less than 30 placements to access the scheme.

To date ND+ have had 38 companies approved by the DWP for a Kickstart Placement with 86 placements in total.

Out of 86 placements the DWP have matched their clients with 48 placements to date. So far 11 young people have completed their 6-month placement and 9 (82%) have already been kept on in permanent roles by companies such as Atlas Packaging, Moo Free Chocolates, Lineal Software Solutions and 514 Elemental which is a fantastic success. Atlas Packaging have now also registered further placement opportunities.

ND+ are still working hard with the Employers and the Kickstart team at the Job Centres to find suitable candidates for the remaining placements.

The scheme was officially due to complete recruitment in December 2021; however, the government has now extended this until March 2022 with placements running up to 6 months beyond the cut-off date.

### **Future Farm Resilience Programme**

ND+ is currently working in partnership with West Devon Business Information Point to deliver the Future Farm Resilience Programme.

This is offering free, tailored one to one advice, webinars, and business skills development workshops to help farmers and land managers navigate the changes brought about by the Agricultural Transition.



Between 2021 and 2027, the government will gradually reduce and then stop Direct Payments. Instead, farmers will be supported to improve the environment, improve animal health and welfare, and reduce carbon emissions.

There will be three levels of support aimed at paying for sustainable farming practices, creating habitats for nature recovery, and making landscape-scale change, such as establishing new woodland and other ecosystem services.

The move away from Direct Payments will be a big change for some farmers, so they will happen over a 7-year transition period to give time to plan and adjust. The Future Farming Resilience Fund has been funded by Defra to allow us to support farmers and land managers with this transition.

The support is free and available from September 2021 to February 2022 to any farmer or land manager currently in receipt of BPS payments. The scheme is running throughout Devon and Somerset, and North Devon + is supporting business across Devon.

### **DCC 'Growth Hub Services for All' Programme**

North Devon + has successfully bid to run the Devon County Council 'Growth Hub Services for All' business support programme within North Devon, Torridge, and West Devon. This programme will provide a mix of one-to-one support, specialist advice and group workshops to help businesses across the area to grow. Through the programme, businesses can receive up to 12 hours' of support.

The support will include a combination of workshops, 1-2-1 advice and follow-up support and will run until March 2023.

## **3. IMPLICATIONS**

Legal Implications

Financial Implications

Human Resources Implications

Sustainability/Biodiversity Implications

Equality/Diversity

Risk Management

Compliance with Policies and Strategies

Data Protection (GDPR) Implications

Climate Change

No climate change implications.

Ward Member and Lead Member Views

Date of Consultation – 24/11/2021



## **Cllr Hicks**

It's good to see so much going on to help our local business community. The covid pandemic hit the area hard and supporting small business will be key to the recovery of the local economy.

### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

That ND+ continues to provide a wide range of high quality business support services across Northern Devon. These services are vital to ensure that businesses in the area flourish and grow and that the area as a whole sees an improvement in economic performance.

### **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that members note the contents of the report.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

Consultations:                      Date of Consultation – 24<sup>th</sup> November 2021  
   Officers Consulted – Steve Hearse, Staci Dorey, David Heyes.

Contact Officer:                      Sean Kearney

