

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Executive Decision Record

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Economy, Transport and Environment
Date:	17 June 2021
Title:	New Everywhere International SMEs (EIS) European Project Funding
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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1. The decision:

- 1.1. That the Executive Lead Member for Economy, Transport, and Environment endorses the submission of the application by the County Council, as lead partner and accountable body, to the Interreg Europe programme in response to a new Call for Additional Activities of the Everywhere International SMEs project (EIS) through to September 2022.
- 1.2. That authority is delegated to the Director of Economy, Transport, and Environment in consultation with the Head of Legal Services to enter into the necessary funding and other arrangements to implement the scheme.
- 1.3. That authority is delegated to the Director of Economy, Transport, and Environment to take any necessary additional action to implement the New Everywhere International SMEs (EIS) European Project, subject to a successful outcome of the County Council's bid to the Interreg Europe programme for further funding.

2. Reasons for the decision:

- 2.1. If approved, the extension project to EIS will enable partners (Hampshire County Council and WSX Enterprise Ltd in the case of Hampshire) to focus on the impact of Covid on internationalisation of SMEs in the participating regions. Specifically, the project will address three themes:
 - Covid disruption to SME international supply chains;

- Take up of new digital processes as a result of Covid by Business Support Organisations (BSOs) in support of internationalising SMEs; and
 - Resilience of the regional SME support system in the face of the crisis.
- 2.2. Project outcomes will include 18 SME case studies of successful SMEs internationalising despite the crisis; and identification of 4 Good Practices, and recommendations from workshops, which will inform Hampshire County Council's economic recovery strategy, as well as the Economic Development Team's inward investment and business support functions, and the Regional Trade and Investment Strategy currently under development by the EM3 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). This material will also be made available to Solent LEP.
- 2.3. In summary, the project will continue to provide a conduit to closer collaboration on this important post-Brexit agenda with our Hampshire international support organisations, such as WSX Enterprise Ltd (an EIS project partner), Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, the two Hampshire LEPs, the regional South East branch of the Department of International Trade, Universities, and other related stakeholders. It will also build on the work delivered by EIS to the Export Fora and Local Industrial Strategies for Hampshire developed by the LEPs.

3. Other options considered and rejected:

- 3.1. This is a one-year addition to the recently completed Everywhere International SMEs project delivered during 2017-20. The last year of the project was interrupted by Covid and therefore the Interreg Europe programme Joint Secretariat (JS) offered a total pot of €20million for approved Interreg Europe projects to bid for up to €500k per project to address the impact of Covid on their project. Not bidding would prevent the County Council from benefiting. All EIS project partners expressed a strong preference to submit an application for the project's continuation.

4. Conflicts of interest:

- 4.1. Conflicts of interest declared by the decision-maker:
- 4.2. Conflicts of interest declared by other Executive Members consulted:

5. Dispensation granted by the Conduct Advisory Panel: none.

6. Reason(s) for the matter being dealt with if urgent: not applicable.

7. Statement from the Decision Maker:

Approved by:

**Executive Lead Member for Economy, Transport and
Environment
Councillor Rob Humby**

**Date:
17 June 2021**