

Agenda Item 6: Norfolk Ambassadors Programme

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Summary

The aim of the programme is to engage the wider Norfolk business community to support the delivery of the Economic Strategy and promote the county as a great place to live, work and do better business thus supporting inclusive economic growth.

The Norfolk Ambassador Programme will consist of business partners from across the county who are passionate about Norfolk and will encompass all sectors (public, private and VCSE) and will identify and coordinate a range of opportunities for the Ambassadors to raise the profile of Norfolk and support the local business community.

Ambassadors will support the Norfolk Business Board and will act as a voice for business sharing concerns and ideas with local and central government. They will use their network of contacts to signpost and promote business support programmes throughout Norfolk including existing support and sharing of new initiatives. In addition, Ambassadors could directly support partner training or speaking at relevant events.

Steering Group

The Steering Group is made up of:

- Nova Fairbank, Norfolk Chambers of Commerce
- Candy Richards, FSB
- Adam Goymour, ROARR
- Alex Till, MENTA
- Lucy Hogg, Voluntary Norfolk

The group is supported by Roberta Willner and Helen Wilton from Norfolk County Council and will meet every 3-4 weeks as the initial areas of work are developed.

Key stakeholders / guests will be invited to participate in the steering group as required to provide specialised knowledge and input.

Proposal

The Steering Group has reviewed the proposal presented to the Business Board in December and agreed that the programme will initially focus 2 key areas:

- Acting as a voice for Norfolk and championing the county
This will include:
 - Promoting Norfolk and its benefits as a place to work and do business by highlighting the wealth of existing business strengths
 - Providing input into local and central government on consultations and campaigns

- Feeding into the Norfolk Business Board on issues which are important to the local business community and the Norfolk economy
- Provide an overarching network into which other brands and initiatives which promote the county can feed.
- Building a business community across the county
 - Highlight opportunities for business engagement to access new ideas, perspectives and best practices.
 - Ensure business are kept aware of the support network available including financial and training opportunities
 - Represent their sector area at events, in order to spread key messages

March – June Activity

In order to refine objectives and establish the focus for the first phase of the programme a scoping document will be produced covering all available options. This will enable budgeting and resource requirements to be established enabling decision making.

Initial work will be concentrated on utilising Ambassadors to support a celebration of everything to do with Norfolk as a place to live, work, do business and invest.

Work will utilise the knowledge of those living and working here to showcase what is great about Norfolk. It will be clear and simple thus enabling it to cover all sectors and encourage involvement from across the whole county. It will help reshape the perception of Norfolk as one that is modern, inclusive and contains diverse, thriving and vibrant business communities, as well as offering an excellent work life balance.

In order to feed into a larger campaign initial work will focus on the creating of a bank of written feedback and video clips from businesses across Norfolk supporting the idea of 'Why Norfolk?'

This will enable the collation of key messages and will provide a strong understanding of the main themes around how businesses feel about their county and what they see for its future ahead of any further and wider campaigning. It will also provide a showcase of the brilliance of the Norfolk's business community.

Ambassadors will act as an extension of the Norfolk Business Board in engaging with the business community who will also be able to contact the Business Board via the web site and social media channels.

The initial group of around 30 people who applied for the Norfolk Business Board will be contacted and asked to support the programme and extend communications out through their networks.

The Royal Norfolk Show would provide an opportunity to launch the process with various options available:

- Postcards available for completion on the stands of key partners asking 'Why Norfolk?'
- Recording of video clips on the day from attendees and exhibitors from across the Show
- Clips may be recorded within the Norfolk Chambers 'Business Hub' marquee.

Future Actions

To add a page to the Norfolk Business Board web site to support the Ambassadors programme

Consideration needs to be given to resource and budget requirements therefore a specification document will be produced covering all potential areas of work to enable cost estimates to be produced and to support planning and decision making.

To proceed with planning for a June launch event. This could include a 'Norfolk Ambassador's pledge', so start a phased approach to the programme, with the initial cohort of 30 ambassadors identified.

Recommendation

The Board asked is to:

1. Receive the specification for the Norfolk Ambassadors Programme
2. Support a joint event with Norfolk Chambers of Commerce in June 2025, to launch the initial phase of the Norfolk Ambassador's programme