

# Diamond Resilience

Specialist training for MK entrepreneurs



**Entrepreneurs in Milton Keynes could more than £100,000 worth of specialist training after MK Council launched its biggest ever support programme for small businesses.**

MK Council has partnered with leading business groups to provide support and training to 100 small and medium size businesses. Called Diamond Resilience after one of nature's strongest substances, the programme covers how businesses can move from survival mode to recovery, and how to become more resilient in preparation for changing circumstances or other future crises.

The programme will offer entrepreneurs practical support, including mentoring and coaching. Businesses can also get a voucher of £500 to cover support across legal, marketing and IT services among others.

***Turn over for all the details...***

## Taught courses

*(participants would need to complete a minimum of four courses):*

### Business Development courses

- Refocussing and Rethinking for the Future
- 'Greatness' session
- Marketing your Business
- Workforce planning
- Maximise your FSB membership introduction  
*(must be an FSB member to enrol in this course)*

### Personal Development courses

- First Aid for Mental Health
- Presentation Skills with IMPACT
- Developing Assertiveness Skills
- Team Motivation – in difficult times
- How to hold Difficult Conversations



*(Chamber of Commerce to run each of Personal Development course twice – 25 participants per course)*

## SEMLEP Growth Hub support

SEMLEP Growth Hub provides support to local businesses through a range of initiatives including 1:1 mentoring sessions with a business adviser. Building on a resilience toolkit that SEMLEP developed in partnership with Grant Thornton in 2020, SEMLEP will offer each participant in the MK SME programme an initial assessment including a review of a business's operations, finance, marketing plan and strategy to identify a set of actions to build resilience and improve performance over the 12 months of the programme.

Participants will be required to complete the diagnostic assessment and plan at the start of the programme to give an assessment of their businesses current performance. This will produce an agreed action plan for the business, with SEMLEP Growth Hub advisors booking a session once a quarter with the participants to review progress and provide mentoring through the programme.

## **MK Business Leaders Partnership – MK Professional services scheme:**

MK Council will purchase a voucher for each participant for £500 worth of expertise/advice from existing MK SME's, making links between participant businesses and the wider MK Business community, and ensuring funding is kept within the MK economy. MK has significant strengths in the professional services sector, and this represents an opportunity to make links between SMEs within the MK economy.

This will be administered by MKBLP on behalf of the council, who'll provide guidance to the participants on what can be achieved with their voucher and ensure this doesn't cut across other sources of support, for example the legal support which participants are entitled to through being an FSB member.

### **Scheme SME selection criteria:**

- Business must be MK borough based and have been operational for at least a year
- Employing no more than 25 people
- Annual turnover below £1m
- New member of the FSB/recent new member from MKC Economic Recovery Plan
- Aim to ensure a mix of sectors
- Additional prioritisation will be given to businesses on MK High Streets who are looking to develop their business model.

### **Commitments from each partner organisation:**

- Participate in assessment of applications received
- Participate in the introductory and closing sessions
- To be part of communicating the opportunities and successes of the scheme
- Sharing of intelligence and outcomes for participants

### **Commitments from participating businesses:**

- Completing the Toolkit assessment at the start of the programme and reviewing it at each quarterly call with SEMLEP.
- Completing at least four of the virtual 'taught' sessions
- Evidence of commitment and passion to business transformation journey and to Milton Keynes

**Participant check ins:**

SEMLEP (quarterly)

FSB (monthly Milton Keynes virtual networking)

MKC (twice throughout the 12 months)

