



» **FAST FORWARD**  
YOUR SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

# CASE STUDY

WORKING WITH  
DEVELOPMENT IN  
SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Business Support  
Sustainability  
**Consultancy**  
Social Value  
Asset Transfer

## KEY FACTS

### MISSION

To undertake activities that make an impact on the most disadvantaged through employment and training pathways delivered by member organisations

### SERVICES

A consortium of over 80 charities, voluntary groups and social enterprises forming a supply chain to deliver training, learning and employability programmes in local communities.

### BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Development of a business plan for strategic decision-making and to attract high value contracts

### ESTABLISHED

2009

### LEGAL STRUCTURE

Company Ltd by Guarantee

[www.thebestnetwork.org.uk](http://www.thebestnetwork.org.uk)

**“The business plan captured where the organisation was and where it should be going. It asked pertinent questions and offered an independent perspective we trust and value.”**

Ray Walker, Chief Executive, BEST Network

## The BEST Network



**Focusing on the bigger picture can be a struggle in any business. When the market is moving rapidly, it's even harder to keep up and find the time for forward planning. Employment and training contracting specialist, The BEST Network, asked us to assess future market potential and their place within it all.**

Since launching five years ago, The BEST Network has managed the delivery of large contracts totalling £2m in value, reaching nearly 5,000 unemployed people in Birmingham. “The requirement for a new strategic framework had been identified but there simply wasn't the capacity to work on it internally,” says Ray Walker, Chief Executive of The BEST Network.

The BEST Network applied to the BIG Assist infrastructure support programme for the resources to engage Development in Social Enterprise to undertake a review of its governance structure and work with members and the executive team to inform strategic decision-making. Putting in place a robust business plan - often required by contracting authorities - was also a key priority. »



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## The Best Network

» “Development in Social Enterprise approached the work through a series of facilitated workshops involving internal and external stakeholders and quickly demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of our market, our member base and the funding environment which gave us great confidence in the end product.

“The business plan captured where the organisation was and where it should be going. It asked pertinent questions and offered an independent perspective that we trust and value.

“We are now elevating our profile and engaging in far more strategic conversations with funders and implementing key recommendations made by Development in Social Enterprise such as expanding our membership beyond Birmingham and exploring new

markets such as health and social care.” BEST have since used the business plan as a working document – updating and revising it in response to market changes.

“The business and the market doesn’t stand still, but the groundwork to bring our thinking up to date and provide us with a solid base from which to move forward has been really valuable.” ■



### Development in Social Enterprise CIC

We provide bespoke business support and consultancy services for social enterprises, charities, voluntary organisations and start-ups.

Our mission is simple.

**Do Good Business and Create Social Value**

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