

AGENDA

Growth Hub Governance Board Meeting

Date: 28th June 2021
 Time: 11:00 to 13:00
 Venue: Teams Meeting

	Item	Format
	Apologies, Declarations of Interest	
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth Hub Update – Annual Review, Covid Recovery, LEP Transition, LEP review, 	Information- A Driver
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Renewal Bids 	Information – S Harrison
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Transition Blueberry Research Findings <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Discussion - What do board members feel are the main findings from the report that the Growth Hub should consider in future plans</i></p>	Presentation and Discussion
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start Up Support discussion Start up providers – NBV, E-Factor and Princes Trust will present insight into types and volumes of enquiries • Current start up landscape • Gaps in provision <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Discussion - How can the Growth Hub ensure there is a clear and cohesive start up offer and what elements to the board see that should be considered in future provision</i></p>	Presentation and Discussion
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future Meeting structures and frequency • Next meeting date 	James / Mark
6	Other Business	All



Growth Hub Annual Report Financial Year 2020-2021

Publication	No				
Meeting date:	27/5/2021				
Agenda Item:	1				
Item Subject:	Growth Hub Annual Report Financial Year 2020-2021				
Author:	Angela				
For:	Discussion		Decision		Information X

This template has been produced by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to help aid the production of 2020-2021 Growth Hub 'Annual Reports' and is divided into four sections.

SECTION 1

Executive Summary

Details of the primary objectives and priorities of your Growth Hub for the 2020-2021 funding period and the high-level achievements demonstrating how these objectives were met. **This should be across core, supplementary and EU Transition funding.**

Introduction

This report provides an update on the activity and impact from the Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub. It has been an unprecedented year and the Growth Hub has quickly responded to provide critical support to help sustain and stabilise businesses in Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland during this crises.

We have been working closely with our Local Authority colleagues who have been providing Covid-19 Response grants and this has been coupled with the EU Transition work and extra support services required to help the business community navigate through the new processes.

It has certainly been one of the hardest and the busiest years we have known, but the growth hub has continued to provide a highly regarded professional business support service throughout these difficult times. Our advisory teams went the extra mile to ensure our businesses feel supported, provided a sounding board/shoulder for their clients, (old and new) and we have received many thank you comments.

Over the next 12 months we will focus on supporting individuals to start a business, building resilience, supporting our businesses to access peer to peer support, utilise digital technology, adopt low carbon practices, and enhance their leadership and management skills and access new markets.

Renewed emphasis will be placed on enhancing communication channels through a front line telephone enquiry handling service, awareness raising and increasing business take up and extending social media reach.

COVID Response

The main focus for the Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub for the first 6 months of 2020-21, was to provide an emergency response and information signposting service, and we implemented a number of measures as part of this response which were explained in detail in the Interim report provided in November 2020.

Headlines include:

- Emergency enquiry helpline
- Remote working practices across the Growth Hub Operational and Adviser teams
- Working with County Council colleagues and ESIF funded providers locally to add capacity to enquiry response to ensure the large numbers of additional enquiries were answered swiftly
- Implementation of a single source of business support information updates to all advisers from all ESIF funded projects across the Greater Lincolnshire area
- Business Support matrix
- A wide ranging calendar of remote events
- COVID specific section of the Business Lincolnshire website with daily updates from local and national sources and multiple downloadable resources
- Development of a COVID secure toolkit <https://www.businesslincolnshire.com/explore/building-business-resilience/covid-19-support/> and <https://www.businesslincolnshire.com/media/2147/covid-19-toolkit.pdf>
- 'Survive and Thrive' marketing campaign with positive news stories encouraging business innovation. Some of the Survive and Thrive Case studies have been included later in the report.
- Adapting ERDF grant schemes to provide homeworking digital equipment grants
- Rapid response to deliver the £776k Kickstarting Grant Scheme
- Working alongside the Local Resilience Forum to deliver a joined up response to business support crisis response

COVID Recovery

As the COVID response moved towards recovery, work focussed to supporting the GLLEP in finalising the mid-term recovery plan which will provide our strategic framework for the next 3 to 5 years and implementing measures to support businesses implementing recovery activity which was only made possible due to the supplementary funding provided from BEIS. Highlights:

- New Sector Specialist Advisor Support for Agri / Horti and Visitor Economy Sectors
 - The Sector specialist approach has been extremely well received and we are working with a number of businesses from both sectors now that we had not previously. The sector specialists are experts in their fields and have the right knowledge and connections to provide very targeted support. This depth in sector knowledge complemented with the wider Growth Hub Adviser general adds real value for the businesses and widens the reach of the Growth Hub.
- Sector Specific Support for the Manufacturing including
 - Manufacturing Transformation Programme – described later - delivered to 13 businesses to date
 - Supply Chain Programme – a workshop and 1:1 adviser support, providing a supply chain audit and action plan. 3 of 4 Workshops completed to 26 individuals from 22 Companies, with 14 clients progressing through to Supply Chain Audit & SWOT Analysis
 - Launch of the Greater Lincolnshire Manufacturing Network (GLMN) - a 1 year pilot being delivered in partnership with the University of Lincoln. The network will work to support the growth and development of SMEs by promoting best practice, new manufacturing processes and partnership opportunities, showcasing technological advances, cutting edge thinking and acting as a knowledge-transfer vehicle between academia and industry. Members and partners join free and access free membership to MakeUK. Website - [GLMN](#) Dedicated LinkedIn page - [GLMN - Greater Lincolnshire Manufacturing Network: Overview | LinkedIn](#)
 - [The Made in Lincolnshire online brochure](#) is now live on the Business Lincolnshire website – [PowerPoint Presentation \(businesslincolnshire.com\)](#) and has attracted significant interest with an additional 15 new Manufacturing businesses already coming forwards to express an interest in featuring in the brochure
- Closer working with Financial Intermediaries locally through the quarterly Financial Intermediary Forum where we share updates and intelligence.

- Digital Adoption survey for visitor economy businesses helping us to understand the use of digital technology in this important sector and helping us to shape future support to respond to gaps in knowledge.
- Supplementary support for our scale up businesses by ensuring that our existing offer could be effectively delivered remotely and by offering new scale up support via the 10x10 Accelerator programme.

EU Exit Support

This COVID Recovery work was delivered in parallel with EU Exit Support which was extended in light of further funding from BEIS. This additional funding allowed the Growth Hub to extend the number of advisers available to support businesses through this difficult time and included:

- Additional General Advisers and additional EU Exit Specialist Advisor
- A local EU helpline operated by Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce on behalf of the Growth Hub
- 2 Specialist Business Resilience programmes of 121 and workshop support – one focussing on specialist issues with imports & exports and the other focussed on the other EU impacts for businesses such as HR and recruitment, data management and contracts.
- An extensive cluster wide outbound marketing campaign, delivered by Blueberry, highlighting the support options available and signposting businesses to the respective Growth Hub and specialist support provision
- Intelligence reports provided by Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce to provide further insight into the impacts within the business community locally

More widely:

- The LEP boundary review has highlighted some changes that affect the Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub.
 - In May 2020, Rutland announced its plan to become part of the Greater Lincolnshire LEP with immediate effect. Since then the Growth Hub have been working to integrate support for Rutland businesses within the Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub as far as possible. However there remains constraints around the ERDF funded activity that makes Rutland businesses ineligible for this support, so there will be a period where Rutland businesses will not be able to access the full support that businesses in the rest of Greater Lincolnshire can access. The Growth Hub used some of the BEIS core funding to employ an additional Growth Hub adviser for the team that will cover the Rutland area.
 - In April 2021, North and North East Lincolnshire joined the Greater Lincolnshire LEP, and we have undertaken extensive work with our GLLP colleagues to analyse the impact of this and the actions that needed to be taken. Amendments to the website to reflect the boundary change have been made, including adding new adviser biogs. Full team meetings have taken place to welcome the advisers and all have undertaken the required training on systems and processes. The Humber led ERDF provision is still in place and there is therefore a seamless changeover in terms of on-going relationships with clients. We will continue to work with the Humber Adviser teams to continue integration over the coming months.
- We continue to working with the University of Lincoln and 6 transnational partners to deliver an Interreg Funded programme called COTEMACO (Collaborative robots within Agri-food/ Manufacturing environments) which provides support to Agri Food businesses seeking to implement robotic technology within their operations.
- We are working with the University of Lincoln and 11 transnational partners to deliver an Interreg Funded programme called COM3 (Building Competencies for Competitive Companies). The UoL4.0 Challenge helps rural businesses in Lincolnshire to grow by utilising digital technology. The Growth Hub will engage an Adviser to work with businesses to implement the ideas that have been generated by the students.
- We are continuing to support our businesses to make international connections via our established

civic and trade relations with Hunan Province in China. We have held events, promoted trade missions and made supply chain connections.

- We continue to work with the digital sector to develop a support strategy. A steering group has been created for the new Digital Hub for Lincolnshire – Mosaic made up of representatives from the private and public sector and the Growth Hub attends this steering group. Further analysis of the make-up and needs of the sector locally have been undertaken by the steering group through the pandemic whilst the Digital Hub is unable to fully operate as a co-working and events space. Ideas are coming together for a 'Future Ready' campaign to connect Digital and Traditional businesses together locally and the Growth Hub plans to support this campaign with 'Future Ready' related business support and events activity. This activity will commence during 2021.

1. Governance

- Please confirm the governance arrangements that were in place in 2020-2021 for: Core, Supplementary Funding and EU Transition funding; and the role of the LEP and Accountable Body played in providing oversight and ensuring compliance of the Growth Hub. If your governance arrangements changed during the funding period/or are set to change in the next three months, please provide details of:
 - Why governance arrangements were/need to be change(d)?
 - What new measures were/will be put in place?
 - Any changes as a result of the supplementary funding?

Please ensure you include the role of the LEP and Accountable Body in providing oversight and compliance of the Growth Hub (including line of sight back to LEP Board and national LEP Local Growth Assurance Framework). Do include charts/diagrams if possible .

The Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub is the business support arm of the Greater Lincolnshire LEP and has a specific role to develop and inform LEP strategic plans with particular reference to business growth needs. The Growth Hub has a Governance with is sub board of the GLLEP and was chaired by a GLLEP Board member- Mary Stuart VP from the University of Lincoln up until the end of December 2020 when her 5 year tenure came to an end and she stepped down from both the Governance Board and LEP Board.

The Growth Hub Exec Team invited forwards applicants for a new Chair and Vice Chair and we have successfully appointed the previous chair of the Programme Board, James Pinchbeck as the Governance Board Chair, a Director at Streets Accountants, and Mark Webb as Vice Chair, Managing Director of EFactor Group Ltd - a social enterprise company based in North East Lincolnshire, dedicated to providing meaningful professional, free support to help businesses survive and grow

The GLLEP Board receives copies of the minutes from the meetings and the Growth Hub presents an annual update to the board. The Board also has clear Terms of Reference (ToRs) which have been reviewed in line with the Mary Ney Governance recommendations and to ensure full adherence with the LEP Assurance Framework.

The Growth Hub sits within Lincolnshire County Council and the Council are the Accountable Body for the LEP. Monthly progress meetings are held with the GLLEP Director (Ruth Carver), Head of the Growth Hub (Samantha Harrison) and the Accountable Body (Linsay Hill-Pritchard).

The Growth Hub as two boards; The Governance Board (Strategic) and the Programme Board (operational). The Programme Board acts as the operational board for the Growth Hub Governance Board which in turn acts as the Enterprise Board for GLLEP.



Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub Governance Board

The Governance Board members are a mix of Private Sector, Public Sector and Delivery Stakeholders e.g. Streets Accountants (James Pinchbeck - Chair), EFactor Group Ltd (Mark Webb Vice Chair), Bishop Grosseteste University, Federation for Small Business, IoD, Lincolnshire Chamber, Lincolnshire County Council, North and North East Lincolnshire Council, MEIF/Banking rep and the GLLEP director. A review of the Growth Hub board membership is being undertaken in order to incorporate representation from Rutland.



Key: Green- Private Sector Purple – Public Stakeholders Orange – Delivery Stakeholders

The chair of the Governance Board, also sits on the LEP Board to ensure alignment. The Governance Board sets the strategic direction for the Growth Hub.

Conflicts of interest are managed in 2 ways;

- 1) Board Members have to sign a code of conduct and declaration of interest.
- 2) At each meetings declarations of interest are requested

If there are agenda items which they may directly influence through their position on the board, we ask in advance for a declaration of interest and they will be asked to leave the room when that agenda item arises.

- **Triage. Diagnostics and Signposting**

Local Infrastructure

- What Growth Hub delivery model/typology was employed during the 2020-2021 funding period?
 - Was this consistent or did it change during the twelve-month period? Why was this delivery model/typology chosen?
 - If applicable what is the contract period with the current provider?
 - What value does this model add over other models and why?
 - What was the benefit of this chosen model to businesses using the Growth Hub?

The delivery model includes the following:

Telephone / online support

The Growth Hub has utilised the National Support Helpline and continues to promote both the telephone number and webchat facility. Our plans to incorporate a local telephone number have been impacted by the COVID-19 issues but will be implemented during 21-22.

The council implemented a corporate COVID-19 support line and added a business support option which received 2317 calls between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021.

Web portal

Our web portal www.businesslincolnshire.com has been regularly updated with new information, news, case studies, tools, links, events, grants and support schemes.

The website underwent significant change in response to COVID and the EU Exit, with both topics requiring significant change to the website and the creation of new content. This is all housed in the '[Business Resilience](#)' section of the website which has dedicated pages for COVID and EU Exit which are regularly updated.

During the last 12 months there has also been significant work undertaken to bring the website in line with new accessibility standards which came into law in September 2020.

The site signposts businesses to further sources of support and includes an advice and grant scheme finder, newsletter and events calendar as well as blogs, Industry spotlights and business directory.

One to one advice / brokerage – triage service

We have welcomed the Ex Humber Growth Hub Advisers to the Business Lincolnshire Adviser team as from 1st April 21.

The team has grown to 10 Business Growth Advisers, focussing on geographic areas across Greater Lincolnshire, who are able to meet with established business owners to take them through an action planning and diagnostic process and refer them on to more specialist areas of support which meet the needs

of their business. In addition, we have 1 Scale up Account Manager to cover the GLLEP area.

Specialist One to One and One to Many support

We are delivering a range of specialist ERDF funded support. This includes diagnostic, action planning and brokerage advice. Our ERDF funded offers cover a broad spectrum of provision around Resource Efficiency, Supply Chain Development, Finance Readiness, Digital Business Support, Marketing Support, HR support, etc.

This is supplemented with BEIS funding to enable us to offer diagnostic and action planning support to business types that are not eligible for ERDF, particularly tourism businesses, inward investment opportunities that important in the GLLEP.

In addition, we will utilise our Scale Up work to inform the development of deeper specialist support schemes to priority sectors such as agri-food, engineering, manufacturing, renewables, health and care and technology businesses that serve these priority sectors.

This year we have also used our BEIS funding to add two sector specialist advisers to the team. Paul Ward is an Agri / Horti Specialist Adviser and Gill Harvey is a Visitor Economy Specialist adviser, both operating on procured call off contracts. The addition of these sector specialists for two of our GLLEP priority sectors that have been particularly impacted by EU Exit and COVID, has been really successful and enabled the Growth Hub to reach new clients.

Within the Humber ERDF funded advisers, there are the following specialists - Finance Readiness, Digital and Visitor Economy, so overall there are 9 specialists in total, mainly operating on a call off basis.

2 Finance Readiness Advisers, 2 Digital Advisers, 1 FTE Legislative Best Practice Adviser, 1 Exporting Adviser, 2 Visitor Economy Advisers and 1 Agri / Horti Adviser.

Other support

Other ERDF funded projects are being delivered locally under the Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub branding, including specific support for start-up businesses, Innovation, Exporting, high growth and manufacturing support. Referrals to other sources of help will also be made where they fit the needs of the business.

Facilitated access to the national programmes

Including: Department for International Trade, Intellectual Property Office, Innovate UK, Enterprise Europe Network, Goldman Sachs 10000 businesses, etc.

- Were any additional physical Growth Hub locations opened in 2020-2021 Please provide details (including why these locations were chosen).

No

- Number of FTEs employed by or contracted to work on behalf of the Growth Hub as an organisation and specify roles/job titles, **irrespective of funding stream.**

Zero are directly employed. We have a procured and contracted white labelled adviser provision

- The number of FTEs employed by or contracted to work on behalf of the Growth Hub as an organisation and specify roles/job titles, **funded only by BEIS core funding.**
- The number of FTEs employed by or contracted to work on behalf of the Growth Hub as an organisation and specify roles/job titles, **funded in part by BEIS core funding and other funding streams.**

The Full Time Growth Advisers are a mixture of self employed / contracted and employed

Funded through the Business Lincolnshire Sustainable Business Growth ERDF programme:

5 Growth Hub Advisers and 1 Scale Up Account Manager - employed by EMB Ltd, our procured supplier

There are two sector specialists covering Access to Finance and Digital Technology who are supported by a range of other support specialists which can be accessed as demand dictates, covering sector / thematic areas such as including Resource Efficiency, Supply Chain, HR, Marketing, Financial Management, etc.

Funded through the Humber ERDF programmes:

4 FTE Growth Hub Advisers and 3 FTE sector specialists covering Visitor Economy, Access to Finance and Digital Technology.

Funded through BEIS Core funding

Match funding for one of the Humber ERDF funded posts in North East Lincs

1 FTE Growth Hub Adviser for Rutland

2 FTE sector specialists for Argr / Horti and Visitor Economy covering – call off contracts

Were Growth Hub staff generalists or did they have a specialism? Did advisers hold any accreditations (e.g. SFEDI)? What were the benefits for the Growth Hub and its customers derived from having staff with specialisms and specific accreditation?

We have 10 general advisers, 1 Scale Up Account Manager and 9 specialist advisers plus a wider pool of other specialists that can be called upon as demand dictates. We have developed this approach in accordance with our research and clear business growth requirement articulated by our businesses. The thematic and sector specialist offers work well and complement the general advisory provision.

Our advisers are fully ILM qualified.

- Did the Growth Hub use the Business Support Helpline to provide initial inbound telephone /email enquiry capability? If so provide details. If the Business Support Helpline is not used give details of local arrangements for inbound telephone/email enquiries.

Yes. We plan to implement our own local telephone triage service during 2021.

- How did the LEP ensure that the Growth Hub continued to proactively promote both public and private sector support services and programmes that provide businesses with access, and information to:
 - Enable them to trade internationally/any other internationalisation activity beyond trade support

We have been working closely with DIT and the Internationalising SME's ERDF funded programme. We link directly to Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce for export documentation support. We developed a number of EU Exit events/support guides and we commissioned an Export Trade mentor for our micro businesses to access.

- Improve the take up of modern technologies that improve productivity (e.g. cloud computing, data analytics, CRM, automation/machine learning etc.)

We have 3 Business Lincolnshire Technology Hubs which provide an environment where businesses are given the opportunity to use state-of-the-art equipment, as well as having the option to take advantage of workshops and other advice. The hubs can help a business to create a prototype product, develop a new service or provide a greater level of detail to help improve production lines.

Horncastle Hub

- 3D printers, 3D colour scanners and a laser cutter
- UV printer, 2 and 4 axis milling machines
- Oculus 1 Rift virtual reality glasses and Go Pro 360
- Workshops and advice on how to use the equipment or approach your project
- The chance to try out cutting edge technology to see how it would benefit your business

For more information:

technologyhub@mortons.co.uk, Mortons Media Group, Media Centre, Morton Way, Horncastle, LN9 6JR

Designblok Hub

- 3D printers, 3D colour scanners, laser cutting, CNC milling and CNC routing
- Access to 3D fabrication technology with expert guidance across a number of industry sectors
- Free workshops to show how to use the equipment
- Access to 12 hours free business advice or one-to-one support to help improve your business or help with the integration of new technology, tailored to the needs of each business

For more information: www.designblok.co.uk

MoCap Hub

- Professional movement analytics and filming with high speed/3D video
- Technology outreach, consultancy and business support for human movement, equipment modification and industry production methods
- Working closely with Designblok to inform the human-equipment interaction

For more information: www.designblok.co.uk

We also hold **Industry 4.0 workshops** and hold conferences on automation and digitisation, e.g. :

In November 2020 our #GoDigital20 Conference was held virtually for the first time attracting over 100 businesses from across Greater Lincolnshire & Rutland. The annual conference was held to inspire businesses to embrace digital technology. We were joined by Practical Futurist and former IBM Global Managing Partner, Andrew Grill, whose keynote address talked about how to assist businesses to navigate the new working world. The businesses also heard how they could successfully bring tech and tradition together; gain an insight into the state of the art facilities available at Barclays' world leading AgriTech hub Eagle Lab Farm; learn from inspiring Lincolnshire based companies that are embracing digital technology to grow.

Our innovative [Digital Health Check toolkit](#) is available for businesses to test how 'Tech savvy' they are. The tool helps businesses to self-assess their digital capabilities and identify key areas for improvement to optimise their growth. The five areas evaluated in the short online survey include e-commerce, digital strategy, ICT and digital marketing strategy and implementation.

The digital sector within Greater Lincolnshire is a rapidly growing sector, with an overall turnover value of £992m as measured in 2019, so there are lots of local suppliers of digital products and services that can help organisations across all sectors to achieve their digital goals.

- Stimulate investment in science, research & development

The advisers always ensure that the businesses are aware of R&D funding and innovation support, to inject new ideas and embrace product development – we have a dedicated ERDF funded local innovation programme called the Productivity Programme which is delivered by the University of Lincoln and supports business with Proof of Concept grants and Innovation Vouchers, they also refer into the national offers from Innovate UK.

- Adopt leadership & management best practice

Our ScaleUp Programmes predominantly focus on Leadership and Management development and showcase best practice.

- Improve workforce skills and access the right talent/apprentices needed to grow

We directly support businesses to develop their staff and access apprentices, via the Skills Support to the Workforce ESFA programme and the National Apprenticeship Service (this is part of our GrowthHub offer). GLLEP has also produced a website showcasing career/business sectors and support via www.theworldofwork.co.uk

- Increase business awareness and participation in public procurement and major infrastructure projects.

The Growth Hub holds Bitesize workshop events which encourage and help businesses to access public procurement opportunities. The Growth Hub has an opportunities portal and we promote supply chain links.

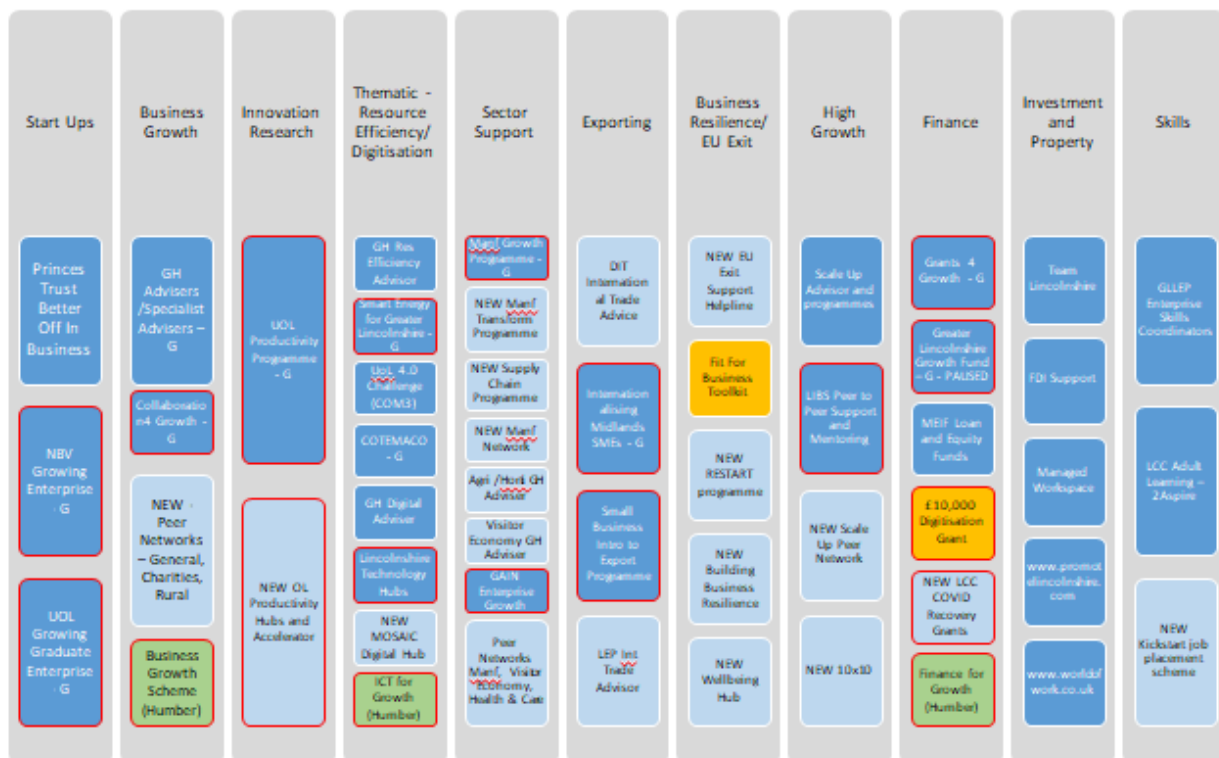
- What action was taken to ensure that the Growth Hub continued to simplify the local business support landscape (e.g. joining up activities or service provision, hiding the wiring for customers)?

The Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub manager sits on the GLLEP ESIF Committee and provides the committee with local intelligence and strategic fit on SME Competitiveness funding and business support projects. This helps ensure that ERDF and ESFA business support and skills programmes are not overlapping and that a clear ladder of provision is developed and funded.

The Business Support landscape has become very busy during 2020-21 as a result of the response to COVID and the EU Exit and the Growth Hub team have played an important role in supporting businesses to understand what support is available to them

The image below shows the current business support landscape.

Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub and ESIF Business Support Programmes



Blue = Scheme live – NEW highlighted, Orange = Scheme yet to Go Live, G = Grant, Red outline = Rutland excluded

- Has the LEP and/or Growth Hub developed or purchased any new and/or innovative online tools or localised on-line content in 2020-21, that might be of interest/benefit to other Growth Hubs e.g. diagnostic tools; benchmarking tools, rate and review systems etc? If yes, please provide details.

We have developed a **Digital Health Check** for businesses which launched in 2019. The tool can be accessed here - <http://businesslincolnshire-digitaltool.com/> .

Our toolbox contains a webinars page with lots of up to date content
<https://www.businesslincolnshire.com/toolbox/webinars-and-podcasts/>

We have created an extensive structure of COVID 19 related webpages to help business easily navigate to the information they need <https://www.businesslincolnshire.com/explore/funding/search/>

Our grant finder includes a COVID 19 filter to help businesses find the right support for them - <https://www.businesslincolnshire.com/explore/funding/search/>

- What other England wide activities has the Growth Hub engaged in/supported in 2020-21 e.g. targeted ERDF provision, the Made Smarter programme, Peer Networks, etc?

Peer Networks – Phase 1 Summary

'Phase 1' of Peer Networks in Lincolnshire began in October 2020, and it was decided to take a 'sectoral' approach to delivery. Specific sectors were chosen to focus on, being LEP priority sectors, with the intention to draw participants from them, and an open procurement held to determine appropriate delivery partners.

Sectors: High Growth (CMBD), General/Mixed (CMBD + Greenborough), Visitor Economy (Visit Lincoln), Health & Care (Pym's Consultancy) Rural (Skills Reach) Charities (Skills Reach), Agriculture (Lincs Chamber of Commerce), Manufacturing (Oxford Innovation).

Over the delivery window, from October 2020 – March 2021, the following support was given to 17 'cohorts' of Lincolnshire businesses.

- 170 group workshops delivered via Zoom/Teams.
- 174 unique attendees (attending multiple workshops)
- One to one coaching session totalling 3.5 hours for each participant, addressing areas of focus chosen by the business.

Satisfaction rates for Phase 1 have been very high, and businesses have enjoyed real, tangible benefits from being engaged in the Peer Networks programme.

- 93% of participants were either very or somewhat satisfied with their experience of Peer Networks overall.
- 97% of participants were either very or somewhat satisfied with the quality of facilitation.
- 97% felt their expectations were either met or exceeded.

Darren Joint of Viking Signs said of his experience:

"The Peer Network has been a fantastic way to connect with more Lincolnshire Manufacturing businesses like us, and with great facilitation, learn from the leaders of those companies and benefit from all of our shared depth of experience"

Caroline Reeves of Rocket Global Ventures fed back positively:

"I highly recommend the Network, it has been encouraging, insightful and the 1-2-1 coaching has been super"

helpful"

BEIS have allocated a further 20 cohorts to Lincolnshire for the 2021/22 financial/delivery year, and our existing suppliers have been engaged once again to deliver Peer Networks to additional businesses across Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland.

4. Customer Satisfaction

In line with the requirements of the 2020-2021 'Metrics and Evaluation Framework' for 'medium' and 'high' intensity interventions only, please provide the tabulated responses to the satisfaction question set out below:

"How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of this service?" rated on a five-point scale.

1/5 (very dissatisfied)	2/5	3/5	4/5	5/5 (very satisfied)	Total
9	10	57	159	243	478

For 'light-touch' interventions, a survey approach is sufficient. Questions that could be included based on standard questions asked of customers by all Growth Hubs.

"How likely would you be to recommend this service to a friend/colleague", rated on a standard five point scale?

1/5 (very unlikely)	2/5	3/5	4/5	5/5 (very likely)	Total
6	2	12	140	307	467

Note: (1 Very Dissatisfied- very poor, 2 Somewhat Dissatisfied - poor, 3 Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied- average, 4 Somewhat Satisfied - good, 5 Very Satisfied – excellent)

2. Data, monitoring, reporting, evaluation and value for money

- How has the LEP ensured that the systems and processes were in place for the Growth Hub to comply with the metrics and evaluation standards as laid out in the 2020-2021 “Monitoring & Evaluation Framework”?
 - Please include information on the processes for accurately collecting both aggregated and non-aggregated (firm-level) data categories.
 - Please detail your experience in collecting unique business identifiers (e.g. Companies House Registration Number, VAT/PAYE and postcode), is the LEP and/or Growth Hub able to do this?
 - Have there been any challenges faced in collecting the requested data? Please provide detail.

We comply with the data collection and reporting requirement as per the Metrics & Evaluation Framework.

Our existing CRM system, Tractivity captures all of the business support activity delivered directly by the Business Lincolnshire Growth hub, as the support is delivered. In addition, we pull in business support activity data on a spreadsheet from ESIF funded delivery partners locally on a quarterly basis. These sources together create a complete picture of the funded business support activity being delivered by the Growth Hub locally. (All of these partners have an Information sharing Agreement in place).

The Tractivity CRM system and the partner MI spreadsheet will be updated with any additional fields and a suite of reports will be developed by Tractivity in order for the aggregated and firm level data requirements to be met, this will need to be funded through the BEIS Growth hub grant.

Our experience in collecting unique business identifiers varies per business status and the level of intensity of support. For businesses who are only making an enquiry or attending an event collecting specific identifiers can pose as a challenge and is not always required to be captured. In circumstances where a more involved intensity of support is provided and a business is effectively enrolled, this data can be more easily captured.

We do face challenges when BEIS change/adapt the Metric & Evaluation reporting requirements because we do not have the time/capacity or capability to retrospectively provide data for business clients, from previous years/months that was not previously mandatory data (hence we struggle with cumulative figures from 2015 for new data fields). Additionally, the level of data requested is not always appropriate to capture when initially engaging with a business and can put off a business from engaging with the Growth Hub.

- Are you currently using, or planning to use the ‘firm level data’ collected by the LEP and/or Growth Hub to undertake qualitative and/or quantitative assessments of the Growth Hubs impact on those businesses receiving ‘medium’ and ‘high intensity’ support?
 - If so, what will these assessments examine? E.g. economic impact, operational efficiency, business productivity, customer satisfaction etc.

Business who go through our programmes and receive medium and high intensity support are always attempted to be contacted for follow-up by our evaluation team to monitor the quality of the service provided. This is either via electronic survey or direct follow-up. The evaluation team assess customer satisfaction and the impacts the Growth Hub delivery has had on the business. The evaluation team provide bi-monthly reports so that the Growth Hub can monitor potential gaps in delivery and address any specific issues. This data also forms part of our reporting on economic impacts and intelligence.

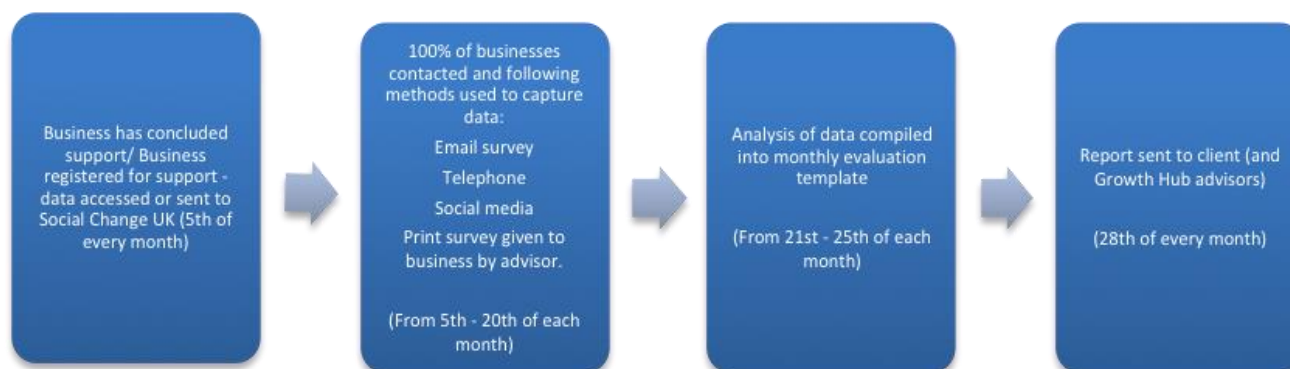
- How are you measuring the impact your Growth Hub has had in terms of businesses (or

individuals) acting on the help/advice they received from the Growth Hub? Have you undertaken specific local evaluation and what have you found?

Customer satisfaction is measured via email to an online survey, follow up, telephone feedback and event evaluation forms.

Our procured Evaluation partner undertakes follow up evaluation with clients that have received at least 3 hours of support. The results are summarised in a bi-monthly report. In addition to a bi-monthly evaluation report, they provide an annual summative report covering the 12 months previous to give an overview of awareness levels of the support the Growth Hub offers, satisfaction levels with services accessed, barriers experienced to accessing support and outcomes of support accessed.

These reports provide Business Lincolnshire with up-to-date information and key insights around beneficiaries' experience of and views towards the Growth Hub service, in addition to key barriers relating to their business and to accessing support. The reports also provide recommendations as to how the delivery of the Growth Lincolnshire programmes and services provided by the Growth Hub could be improved. The bi-monthly reports allow the information and key insights to be provided in 'real time', supporting the Growth Hub to make continual improvements to the delivery of the Growth Hub to ensure it remains relevant and fits key business needs. Any future BEIS evaluation requirements will be incorporated into the bi-monthly evaluation activity.



The evaluation reports also focus on Value for Money and the impact of the Growth Hub in terms of business growth, increases in GVA, new jobs created etc.

Across April 2020 – March 2021, the evaluation evolved under the COVID-19 pandemic to include questions obtaining insight as to how businesses had been impacted by the pandemic, what support they had been able to access and any barriers to accessing support, how this support had helped them and what support they would like to see in the near future to support them through the pandemic. The insights from these questions were incorporated into the bi-monthly reporting and recommendations so the Growth Hub could be supported to continue to deliver the support businesses needed during this difficult time as effectively as possible.

A. Support accessed

When asked what support they accessed, the most frequently used services were support from Growth Hub advisers (65%), events or workshops and the Business Lincolnshire website (49% respectively).

Almost half of businesses (45%) said they accessed specialist support from the Growth Hub. When asked further about the nature of the specialist support, many said that they had received Business Growth

Coaching support (35%), support from a Digital adviser (27%), Sales and Marketing support (20%), Scale Up advice (9%), and support from a Supply Chain adviser, support from a resource efficiency adviser, Trading Standards Legislative Best Practice support and Financial Management support (2% respectively).

A quarter of businesses said they accessed financial support from the Growth Hub – mainly grants to support their business (25%). Other services accessed included the telephone helpline (9%) and webchat support (4%).

Table 1: Services accessed by beneficiaries

	Growth Hub Adviser	Events or Workshops	Accessed the BL website	Received specialist support	Financial support	Rang Telephone Helpline	Webchat Support
Response %	65%	49%	49%	45%	25%	9%	3%

B. Satisfaction

Respondents reported high rates of satisfaction with the services offered by the Growth Hub. The services which received the most 'Satisfied' responses were the Growth Hub advisers (61%) and the events/workshops (44%).

Table 2: Satisfaction levels expressed by beneficiaries

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	N/A	Total
Support from a Growth Hub Adviser	56%	5%	0%	2%	2%	35%	100%
Specialist support	27%	5%	0%	0%	2%	65%	~100%
Website Support	9%	11%	5%	0%	2%	73%	100%
Telephone Helpline Support	5%	0%	2%	0%	0%	93%	100%
Webchat Support	0%	0%	2%	0%	2%	96%	100%
Events/Workshops	31%	13%	0%	0%	0%	56%	100%
Financial Support	18%	5%	0%	0%	2%	75%	100%

Overall Support	69%	13%	9%	2%	7%	0%	100%
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Overall, 82% of beneficiaries were either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with their experience with the Growth Hub as a whole; only 9% were 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied'. High levels of satisfaction are reflected in the fact that when beneficiaries who were asked how likely they were to recommend the Growth Hub service to their friends or colleagues, 82% answered that they were either 'very likely' or 'likely'; only 11% of beneficiaries said they were 'unlikely' or 'very unlikely' to recommend the service.

Event satisfaction

As a part of the bi-monthly activities across April 2020 – March 2021, additional event satisfaction data collected by the East Midlands Business (EMB) group was reviewed. Across April 2020 – March 2021, EMB collected data for 78 events within the Sustainable Business Growth Programme.

Across April 2020 – March 2021, 90% of beneficiaries considered the events within the Sustainable Business Growth programme to be 'excellent', 'very good' or 'good'.

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	No response	Total
Sustainable Business Growth programme events	48%	35%	12%	2%	1%	2%	100%

In addition, 77% of beneficiaries considered themselves to be 'very likely' or 'likely' to make changes following the information from the events within the Sustainable Business Growth programme.

Finally, across April 2020 – March 2021, 94% of beneficiaries were 'very likely' or 'likely' to recommend events within the Sustainable Business Growth programme to their friends and colleagues.

Impact of support

Businesses were asked whether they had developed new or improved products, services or processes as a result of accessing the Growth Hub, to which 58% said yes. Examples of how businesses have done this included:

- Reassess and adapt business offer and services;
- Establishing a strong online presence through a website and social media;
- Improving website and website SEO;
- Improved sales and marketing strategies;
- Development of environmentally friendly processes; and
- Implementation of an overall business strategy for growth.

Businesses were also asked whether they had seen an increase in turnover or employment as a result of accessing the Growth Hub, to which 16% said yes.

3. Scale-Ups

- The on-going focus on identifying and supporting high growth potential/scale up businesses continued in 2020-21. Please provide an update on the progress of the LEP's Scale-Up Plan in terms of providing services to scale up businesses through the Growth Hubs as defined in your Grant Offer Letter(s). How has this developed and built on local Scale-Up plans? Please provide details of any 'high-growth or scale-up' programmes that you are either delivering or promoting via the Growth Hub and what can you tell us about their impact?

The **Business Lincolnshire Scale-Up Programme** offers:

- Referral into the Programme by 6 Geographically based Growth Hub Advisers
- 1:1 Guidance from dedicated ScaleUp Account Manager (Noreen Read)
- Leadership and management programmes, peer to peer networks, including coaching and mentoring support as well as pathways to National offers, the support helps rapid-growing businesses cope with the difficulties that increased demand can have in periods of high growth.
- The programmes that have been adapted for digital delivery and utilised with the ScaleUp client group are:
 - **High Performance Leadership programme** for *existing* ScaleUps including mentoring support (procured partner – Human Alchemy) – 4 x 2hr Zoom sessions
 - **Leadership and Management Programme** for *future* ScaleUps including follow up mentoring support (procured partner CMBD) 4 x 2hr Zoom sessions
 - **Business Leaders Peer Support & Mentoring** for *future* ScaleUps (ERDF project partner LIBS)
 - **Digital Transformation** for *future* ScaleUps (procured partner – Digital Media Edge)
 - **Managing the media workshop** – 1 day workshop – 1 day breakout Zoom session (procured partner – Secret Source Marketing)
 - **DISC Management Style Profiling** - 2 x 2hr sessions (procured partner – CMBD)

As well as a pathway into national programmes – such as referrals to the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses and the NatWest Business Entrepreneur Accelerator

Client attendance on the key programmes during the pandemic has been:

WORKSHOP	START DATES	ATTENDED
SECRET SOURCE MARKETING - MANAGING THE MEDIA 2	<i>(both 21.04.2020 & 17.09.2020 cancelled)</i>	0
HUMAN ALCHEMY - EXTRAORDINARY LEADERSHIP 4	29.09.2020	10/10
HUMAN ALCHEMY - EXTRAORDINARY LEADERSHIP 5	04.11.2020	8/10
HUMAN ALCHEMY - EXTRAORDINARY LEADERSHIP 6	17.03.2021	10/10
CMBD - LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME 6	06.10.2020	7/10 virtual
CMBD - LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME 7	19.01.2021	8/10 virtual
CMBD - LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME 8	09.03.2021	7/10 virtual
CMBD - DiSC 8 & 9	<i>(both 30.04.2020 and 07.05.2020 cancelled)</i>	0
LIBS - PSM 4	16.11.2020	6/12
LIBS - PSM 5	JUNE TBC	6/12
DME - DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION 1	18.09.2020	13/14
DME - DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION 2	04.11.2020	9/12 virtual
DME - DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION 3	03.03.2021	11/12 virtual

During the Covid-19 pandemic the Business Lincolnshire Scale-Up Programme has continued to be accessed by eligible clients during the period but understandably we have had many instances of clients having to pull out of provision at short notice due to rapidly changing business pressures. The delivery of the workshops evolved into a wholly digital offering during the period, which was a learning curve to many. One of the unexpected outcomes of digital delivery was for us to get more clients from the outreach areas than we normally do. As a result of this we will continue a mixed offering of face-to-face and digital delivery as we move towards the “new normal”.

In the last report we highlighted that we had 117 clients identified as Scale-Up through the three categories of definition. This has unexpectedly risen of the year to 179. Not all of these have been able to take part in planned provision but are clearly committed to realising their potential / aspirations of growth within the 3 year window and are working closely with us. Interactions with this group have been key to us being able to feedback business intelligence during the pandemic and the impact that Government policies and outside factors are having on the business community. During 21-22 we will continue to monitor the needs of this important client group and deliver support that is responsive to these needs.

Lessons Learned From Cluster Working

Lessons learned from current Cluster working?

Please indicate what lessons you have learned around cluster working and how this has helped the LEP improve the Growth Hub service.

- What is your cluster role National Co-ordinator, a Cluster Lead or Cluster member?
- What has worked well?
- What has not worked well?
- How has the LEP learnt from challenges with the cluster working arrangements it has faced in delivering its Growth Hub and how has this helped to improve capability and delivery of the Growth Hub?

GLLEP is the lead for the East Midlands Cluster Region. The East Midlands Cluster comprises 3 LEPs and 3 Growth Hubs –

1. Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP) and Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub.
2. Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham, and Nottinghamshire (D2N2) and D2N2 Growth Hub.
3. Leicester and Leicestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) and Leicester and Leicestershire Business Gateway Growth Hub.

Cluster Lead activity is primarily undertaken by Samantha Harrison, Head of the Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub and Louise Higham, Cluster Coordinator. Samantha and Louise are supported by team members from Economic Development as required.

Since the Cluster Coordinator role was implemented on 1st August 2020, we have created a Cluster level Action Plan, which is updated bi monthly – this has allowed us to align Growth Hub activities between GLLEP, D2N2 and LLEP. We have invited partners, such as Be the Business, UMI, IPO and British Business Bank to attend our meetings with the plan to facilitate the alignment and embedding of national programmes on offer from these partners.

We have and continue to act as a conduit for sharing best practice and have also set up monthly meetings with other Growth Hub Cluster coordinators, this was implemented on 3rd September 2020 and we continue to grow this group. We continue to work with Cluster partners to gain and exploit local knowledge/ expertise to help shape and drive Growth Hub policy forward.

The Cluster is working well, we are supporting each other by sharing best practice, aligning provision, undertaking joint training and development and collaborating on regional procurement and delivery.

We have worked together as a Cluster offering help, guidance, 121 support and webinars through our Business Resilience Programmes with Actif and The Export Department and our joint Cluster website building on our EU Exit. We also implemented a Telephone Outreach Campaign further prompting the support available to Businesses with regards to EU Exit.

We will continue to hold our bi monthly virtual meetings with D2N2 and LLEP Growth Hubs. We also have regular email and telephone calls and will continue to work with our Cluster members to investigate and provide business support solutions in response to future economic shocks.

The Cluster approach continues to be very well received by cluster members, providing a forum to work through shared issues, deal with concerns and queries and support each other.

Lessons Learned/Further Activity

Lessons learned/good practice in 2020-2021.

Please indicate what lessons you have learned to date and how this has helped the LEP improve the Growth Hub service.

- What has worked well?

Strong internal systems, processes and communication channels and effective working relationships across the Growth Hub and its partner network have largely contributed to the success of the delivery and monitoring of the Growth Hub's various support services. The Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub and its advisers have been able to continuously and effectively act on an increasing number of enquiries, which saw a significant increase through the COVID-19 pandemic, to identify key business needs, deliver the best support possible to beneficiaries and then further signpost where relevant to additional support services. The knowledgeable and helpful advisers have been frequently praised by beneficiaries, as have the quality and value of various training events/workshops. Many businesses noted how the effective delivery of Growth Hub services has helped their business to grow, in terms of improving and developing new products, services or processes and with regards to increases in turnover and employment.

The promotion of the Growth Hub and its services has also contributed to its overall success. The profile of the Growth Hub has been raised through various communication channels, including but not limited to social media, e:newsletters and printed press releases and adverts. Case studies have been used to showcase how the Growth Hub has supported businesses across Lincolnshire, encouraging others to engage with the Growth Hub and seek support. The successes of these communications are reflected in consistently high engagement metrics, website users and attendance to various events/workshops.

Across 2020 – 2021, the Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub has continued to deliver invaluable support to businesses across Lincolnshire, making a positive contribution to the growth of the local economy by supporting an increase in both job opportunities and turnover for many businesses.

- What has not worked well?

Although the Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub's internal processes, communications and relationships were considered strong, it was thought that there could be a further joined up approach across stakeholders,

delivery partners and programme providers so to provide clarity for businesses around who can deliver different support services and avoid duplication.

The COVID-19 pandemic was discussed by stakeholders and beneficiaries, with both indicating that it had an adverse impact on communication and the delivery of key services. Beneficiaries felt that communication during the COVID-19 pandemic was limited, and that support needed to be more tailored so to meet the varying needs of different business. They thought that further contact and conversations with the Growth Hub was necessary so that they could understand their unique business and business needs in order to provide the most appropriate support for them. Although stakeholders and partners felt that the move to remote working presented an initial challenge to service delivery, they felt they were able to adapt and overcome this barrier, and intend to continue delivering some services remotely to allow greater flexibility.

- How has the LEP learnt from challenges it has faced in delivering its Growth Hub and how has this helped to improve capability and delivery of the Growth Hub?

The COVID-19 pandemic presented a particular challenge across April 2020 – March 2021, with many beneficiaries shifting their priorities from growing their business to surviving. Not only did business needs change, but the way in which the Growth Hub could deliver key support services changed as the country went into lockdown and remote working was put in place. However, stakeholders and partners praised how the delivery of the Growth Lincolnshire programme was able to adapt quickly and continue to provide support to businesses through the pandemic via remote needs, such as the online delivery of events and training. They recognised that this style of working would need further development for long-term use, but think remote working had provided an opportunity to be more productive and reach more businesses seeking support.

As well as highlighting where support services have supported businesses, the bi-monthly and annual summative reports also detail challenges faced by beneficiaries or stakeholders and partners in the delivery of the Growth Lincolnshire programme. They provide actionable recommendations as to what can be implemented to overcome these barriers and improve the delivery of the Growth Hub in order to better meet business needs.

Case Studies/Best Practice

Please provide up to three case studies that showcase the Growth Hub at its best. These can include examples of initiatives, Growth Hub activity and individual business case studies. When choosing please ensure the case study relates to 2020-21.



Through the Growth Hub Communications channels we have published a number of case studies in the format of a good news story. Further examples of these can be found on the [Business Lincolnshire news pages](#).

Lincolnshire Chocolatier secures £250K boost to meet increasing demand

A Stamford-based chocolatier has secured a £250,000 MEIF loan to help meet increasing demand for its products from the UK and overseas. This is alongside boosting its marketing campaigns to drive sales in 2021.

[Firetree Chocolate](#) secured the finance from The FSE Group Debt Finance Fund, part of the Midlands Engine Investment Fund (MEIF) and backed by the

Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS).

Incorporated in 2016, Firetree Chocolate aims to become the top UK luxury brand of premium craft chocolate. The company manufactures, from bean to bar, rich volcanic chocolate and focuses on sourcing and sustainability. The company sources cocoa beans direct from farmers in the remote volcanic islands of the South Pacific and Madagascar, where the volcanic minerals produce a unique bean and taste. The beans are imported to the UK and crafted into chocolate by expert chocolatiers at its factory, before being wrapped in packaging depicting the volcanoes from where the beans were sourced.

Firetree Chocolate's products are all dairy-free and suitable for Vegans, Halal, Kosher and those with lactose intolerance.

David Zulman, Co-Founder and Managing Director of Firetree Chocolate commented: *"Although Firetree, along with other businesses, has been operating differently during the pandemic, we have adjusted well to the new normal and are encouraged to see demand for our product increasing. We take immense pride in what we do, working closely and directly with our farmers and creating single estate super-premium quality chocolate to delight our consumers. I would like to thank Paul at The FSE Group for helping us through the funding process which will assist in supporting the day-to-day sales, distribution and operations process whilst we plan ahead for an exciting future."*

Paul Lynam, Fund Manager, at The FSE Group, which manages the MEIF Debt Finance Fund adds: *"We are proud to have supported Firetree throughout this process. The loan will support David and the team in their ambitions to continue to develop the brand and increase sales into 2021 and beyond. The FSE Group is committed to providing finance for innovative Midlands-based businesses and we wish them well for the future."*

Lewis Stringer, Senior Manager at the British Business Bank said: *"The MEIF offers a range of funding options which can be used to support different business needs. Having previously secured an equity investment from MEIF fund managers Foresight Group, this latest funding package for Firetree Chocolate will play a key role in the business improving its operations. We would encourage other Midlands' businesses to consider the finance available through the MEIF."*

Pat Doody, Chair of the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership, said: *"It's exciting to see Firetree Chocolate opening new premises in Greater Lincolnshire in Stamford and investing heavily in its operations and marketing capacity. The Firetree brand is a fantastic addition to an already long list of high-quality food producers in Greater Lincolnshire and we are watching their progress with interest. We would encourage all innovative and ambitious businesses in our area to consider the Midlands Engine Investment Fund if they are looking for finance to help them grow and innovate."*



The Midlands Engine Investment Fund project is supported financially by the European Union using funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020 and the European Investment Bank.

The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) is managed by the British Business Bank on behalf of, and with the financial backing of, the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). Deadline for CBILS applications has been extended to 31st March for UK businesses.

- **Lincolnshire hotel on the road to becoming UK's first net-zero holiday accommodation**

A Lincolnshire hotel has taken its next steps in the

journey to becoming the UK's first net-zero hotel.

As well as being a local treasure for the past 22 years, the Bacchus Hotel in Sutton-on-Sea aims to be the first holiday accommodation to remove as many emissions as it produces and do its part in the fight against global warming.

Three years ago, owner David Smith found himself becoming more concerned by climate change and how it might affect his local community. He was also becoming more aware of Government legislation, such as increasing tariffs on CO2 emissions and the digitisation of the electricity network, and wanted to make sure his business was ahead of the game when it came to going green.

David said: *"The consequences of not doing something to combat climate change are dire.*

"By embracing the situation, we're not only doing our bit to save the planet, but also saving money and future-proofing our business."

The first step was to add 30kw of solar panels onto the roof and outbuildings of the hotel, the success of which gave David the confidence to explore more eco-friendly options.

The installation of ground-source heat pumps in the garden has since removed the need for gas for central heating, and last year, David added another 40kw of solar panels, as well as a new battery storage system. The system collects energy from sunlight during the day, allowing the hotel to run on the stored energy overnight. Overall, the Bacchus has reduced its gas and electricity consumption by 65% and 60%.

David says: *"We need to realise that the world is turning. The power grid systems in Lincolnshire are antiquated and the infrastructure isn't there, meaning many businesses find it hard to make these changes, or don't know where to start.*

"But there are many benefits of going the extra mile and embracing smart energy. Our heat pump system means we receive Renewable Heat Incentive payments from the Government, and we were the only applicants from North East Lincolnshire to receive funding as part of the Smart Energy UK scheme.

"But most importantly, our systems save a massive 32 tons of CO2 emissions annually, and we are self-sufficient eight months of the year. Plus, with the energy we're saving elsewhere during summer, we now have the power to supply an array of electric vehicle charge points throughout our car park.

"Although it may seem overwhelming at first, we believe that becoming net-zero is attainable for businesses. We're proud to be a model for other businesses wanting to fight climate change, and hopefully, we can inspire others to do the same!"

If you'd like to find out more about the Bacchus Hotel and the work they're doing to combat climate change, visit their [website](#).



- **6 reasons to join the Greater Lincolnshire Mentoring Programme**

The Greater Lincolnshire Mentoring Programme is back for 2021!

Run by the University of Lincoln and the Business Lincolnshire Sustainable Growth Programme, the scheme gives business owners and leaders across the county access to support from mentors with extensive experience.

The programme is open to eligible business owners across any sector and offers a series of one-to-one mentoring meetings and peer support sessions.

[Kixx Lincoln](#), a local franchise of Kixx owned by Daniel

Hone, is the latest business to have benefitted from the Greater Lincolnshire Mentoring Programme's guidance.

Kixx is an innovative football programme which introduces physical activity to young children aged between 18 months and 10-years-old, helping them to develop physical and social skills while simultaneously promoting a healthy lifestyle.

Daniel explains why joining the Greater Lincolnshire Mentoring programme was the perfect next step to grow his business.

He explains that the scheme helped him to:

a) 1) Find focus and direction for the business

"I discovered the programme through the Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub who helped me initially get started on my journey to create Active Arena."

b) 2) Make difficult business decisions

"I decided to join as I had a dream and vision that was a big undertaking. I had the belief, and I knew it would work, but I didn't know where to start and I knew I was taking a big risk. I needed advice from someone further down the business line than me that could give me a push, and the knowledge and support to help me make my business idea a reality."

c) 3) Set goals and achieve them

"I set a goal with my mentor to build a business that could be scaled through its infrastructure, whether that be through franchising or me taking on a second building myself. This original goal quickly turned into prioritising how to survive the pandemic while still building a robust business for the future.

"The programme has helped me to achieve my goals by giving me the support and guidance I needed at the right time. My mentor's support was vital during the tough times, giving me the nod to say keep going, making sure I knew I was doing OK and challenging my decisions when it was needed.

"I was breaking new ground and sometimes I didn't know whether I was making the right decisions. All I had was my gut feeling and my mentor's experience and that was invaluable."

2. Daniel explains some of the key benefits of the programme:

a) 4) The mentors have vast experience in business and leadership

"Sue Liburd was my mentor and I am truly grateful for her support as she has achieved incredible things in her career and is someone I admire. Just having her in your corner lifts you up and gives you the confidence to conquer anything.

"Sue was invested in my progress, not just its monetary value, but she also loved what we were creating and was excited to see it develop and grow. That to me is the only encouragement I needed."

b) 5) You don't have to dedicate any more than three hours each month

"Like anything, you have to be invested in it to get the best out of it and making time for the programme ensured I got a lot from it.

"It also forces you to be accountable for the decisions you are making. If you had a business problem, you had the support of the peer group to solve it and it encouraged you to overcome that challenge."

c) 6) Access to an extended network of like-minded business leaders

"I would 100% recommend the programme to others as it gives you access to support networks and information that you don't already have. Business information is key, and I would urge anyone to get involved to gain the benefits of this. It can be a lonely place in business, so it was great to sit down with like-minded

people and support each other.

“The programme has given me a peer network and a mentor who understands me and my business. I can call upon them to help me at any point to overcome any challenges that I may not be able to see past.

“I am very grateful for the opportunity it has given me for self-development and business development.”

3. How do I apply?

If you would like to do the same for your business, mentoring will commence in March, June and October 2021. The closing dates for submissions are 28th February, 30th May and 30th September 2021.

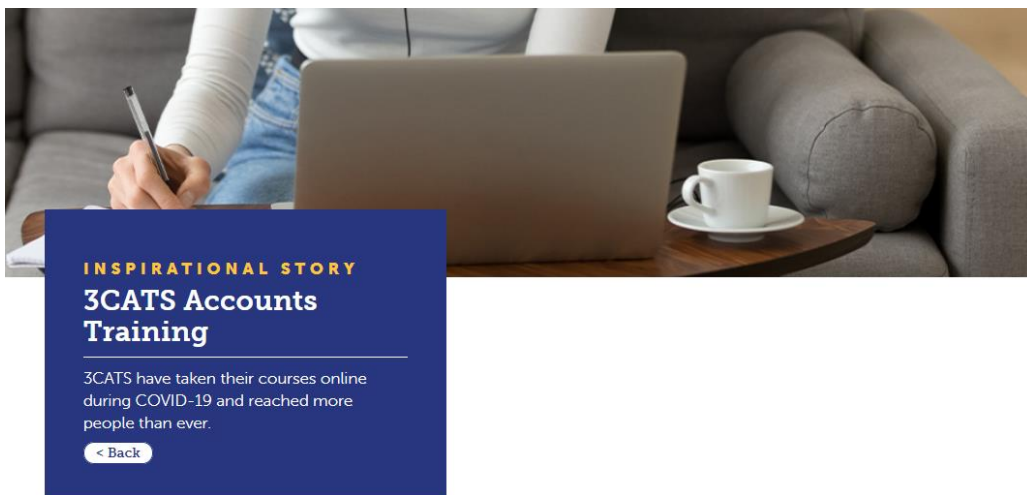
The Greater Lincolnshire Mentoring Programme is open to scale-up businesses and the funded places will be assessed by Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub Advisors.

For more information or to register your interest in joining the Greater Lincolnshire Mentoring Programme, click [here](#).

The following case studies were involved in our Survive and Thrive programme which was designed to help businesses bounce back after COVID-19 and provided handy guides, informative webinars, funding guidance and adviser support to help businesses tackle a range of issues – from marketing, to health and safety to finance.

In addition to offering guidance and support, the Survive and Thrive programme aimed to inspire and encourage innovation by highlighting good news stories. These case studies were used to showcase how SME's have strengthened their business by diversifying during COVID-19, often having a positive impact on their community in the process.

Case Study 1 - 3CATS Accounts Training



Who are 3CATS Accounts Training?

3CATS Accounts Training are a Grantham-based adult learning provider that offer training in bookkeeping and payroll with a twist. Founded by David Nelson in 2014, along with Kym Banks as tutor and administrator, 3CATS serves adults who are looking to learn new skills, with many learners who are unemployed or on low wages. Unlike most providers, 3CATS deliver training using the “workshop style,” where each student is treated as an individual and learns at their own pace, making learning more accessible.

How was business before the outbreak of COVID-19?

Over the past six years, business has grown steadily for 3CATS. Before the pandemic began, the organisation was running five to 10 face-to-face classes a week across South Lincolnshire. In January, they received the go-ahead to launch a new e-learning programme for the Adult Skills and Family Learning Service of Lincolnshire County Council – this turned out to be a gamechanger once the outbreak began!

How has the business adapted during the pandemic?

3CATS have begun to use video conferencing to hold virtual classes for their students. This has not only allowed the business to continue, but also enabled students to stay on track with their learning during this challenging time. 3CATS has also started to offer courses for people who have been furloughed. Within two days of the programme going live they'd received 20 enquiries, and the courses have continued to be popular.

What does the future hold for 3CATS post COVID-19?

David believes that the pandemic has made working and learning from home more acceptable, and 3CATS aims to continue developing their distance learning programme to accommodate this change. He hopes that people who are furloughed or made redundant due to COVID-19 will use their e-learning courses to develop their skills, so they can progress their current career or begin a new one. David and Kym are also adding a new tutor to the team to increase their capacity and predict that business will have doubled by 2021.

What would 3CATS say to other businesses looking to offer alternative services or products?

David says to succeed in a difficult climate like the one we're currently facing, businesses need to be as innovative as possible.

"You have a responsibility towards your customers," says David.

"Take a look at the services you offer, identify the problem and how you can adapt in an evolving marketplace.

"If you move quickly and do the best you can, you have nothing to lose. And always take advantage of the skills and expertise of your team!"

Case Study 2 - Bottomley Distillers Ltd



Who are Bottomley Distillers Ltd?

Bottomley Distillers Ltd are a family-owned gin distillery based in Louth. Founded in the 1950s by Stansfield Bottomley, Lincolnshire's oldest distillery is now in the hands of Stansfield's son Alan and his partner Amy. The business is best known for its award-winning Pin Gin and 'Mr Bottomley's Original Recipe' – the county's

only single malt whiskey.

How was business before the outbreak of COVID-19?

Business was booming for Bottomley Distillers prior to the outbreak of COVID-19. The business moved into their new premises in April 2019 to cope with the demand for their products, complete with a new gin school, tasting room and on-site shop.

How has the business adapted during the pandemic?

To help support keyworkers, charities and businesses in the fight against COVID-19, Alan and Amy decided to use their facilities to commercially produce hand sanitiser. With the help of regional distributors, Bottomley Distillers have been working tirelessly to supply frontline organisations with the product including NHS services, social care providers, food supply chains, charities and more. Since March, the business has produced over 10,000 litres of hand sanitiser.

Amy told The Louth Leader: "Our focus is ensuring that local businesses that need it to remain open and compliant are able to purchase directly from us, along with supporting community groups such as The Priory, Echo and The Trinity Centre with free of charge stocks.

"Whilst creating this product for wholesale and retail, we want to support the local community wherever possible."

What does the future hold for Bottomley Distillers post COVID-19?

Amy said: "We wanted this project to ensure the future of our employees, whilst also enabling us to do good.

"We are humbled by the stories we are hearing every day and are proud that we have been able to adapt our business for the security of us and our team, as well as helping with a desperate national shortage."

What would you say to other businesses hoping to diversify during COVID-19?

Amy says that public need and longevity are key factors in diversifying your business.

She explains: "Our business landscape is changing daily. If you have the necessary knowledge and your idea has commercial longevity, then you would be silly not to grab the opportunity!

"None of us know what the climate will be like in the months to come, and if businesses will ever operate the way that they did prior to the COVID-19. Any opportunity you have to ensure future security for yourself, your business and your team, has to be maximised.

"Plus, the positive impact your success will have on the Lincolnshire economy is a big bonus!"

Case Study 3 - Riverside Training



INSPIRATIONAL STORY

Riverside Training

Riverside Training have adapted during COVID-19 to ensure vulnerable learners are still supported.

< Back

Who are Riverside Training?

Riverside Training are a community-based business whose goal is to upskill those furthest from employment and help them get back into the world of work. Working with the local job centre, council and charities, Riverside Training is renowned for its holistic approach to employability. Along with teaching new skills, the centre focuses on improving the wellbeing of those they train and addressing the deeper issues of unemployment. This includes coffee mornings for isolated individuals and one-to-one sessions with a wellbeing coach, as well as hosting the Gainsborough foodbank on-site.

How was business before the outbreak of COVID-19?

Before the outbreak of COVID-19, Riverside Training's course calendar was so successful they were considering offering evening courses alongside their usual programme.

"The centre was always full," says Training Manager Faye Bevington. "Particularly our social area, which was created to help prevent loneliness and social isolation. People could come in for a tea or coffee, even if they weren't taking a course, and build relationships with others at the centre."

However, COVID-19 meant the centre was forced to close, which left Faye concerned that vulnerable individuals might lose their connection to others.

How has the business adapted during the pandemic?

Faye and her team rapidly moved their courses online, allowing learners to complete their studies remotely. To improve the social aspect of distance learning, Riverside provided portfolios for learners to complete while taking part in a virtual classroom with their tutor and fellow students. The goal was to simulate a real classroom experience, where learners could interact with each other as they normally would and counteract the loneliness they may feel during lockdown.

Riverside has also created a suite of additional courses, which are delivered by virtual classroom or in the form of how-to videos and webinars. These courses are inspired by the current climate and include topics such as improving your mental health during lockdown and a virtual group art project. The team has also launched virtual daily coffee clubs, to ensure the most at-risk and vulnerable individuals are still receiving human contact.

However, the biggest challenge for Riverside Training has been reaching learners without access to IT or the technical knowledge to use video conference platforms such as Zoom.

"We were quickly able to adapt our model to deliver our services, but much of our learner base do not have the technology to dial-in at home," explains Faye. "This is something we're still working on overcoming, including working with a charity that provides old laptops to training providers and disadvantaged learners.

"We also have a dedicated member of staff who is checking in on vulnerable learners day in and day out, to let them know we're still here that they continue to have our support."

What does the future hold for Riverside Training post COVID-19?

Faye and her team know things will be different at the centre post-COVID. Prior to the outbreak, weekly coffee clubs at the centre would average around 20 to 30 people, but moving forward this number will have to be reduced to comply with social distancing guidelines. Instead, they're considering offering 15-minute slots to at-risk individuals to meet, while course start times will need to be staggered.

Faye said: "We may not be able to have as much social interaction on-site as we had before. Our ethos is based around social interaction as well as training, to encourage a safe space for people to learn. It's a big change, but we're determined to retain our position as an integral part of the community."

Riverside Training is also planning on taking a blended learning approach moving forward, by integrating distance learning and technology into their courses.

Faye explained: "I'd like to maintain our new social media presence, which has been important for reaching out to our learners, as well as continuing to provide how-to videos and webinars.

"We're also keen to use technology to communicate with others who struggle to come into the centre, whether due to lockdown or for other reasons, along with adding blended learning into more of our courses in the future."

What would Riverside Training say to other businesses looking to offer alternative services or products?

Faye says the best thing businesses can do to withstand unpredictable climates such as the COVID-19 pandemic is to "think outside of the box."

"No idea is a silly idea! Our team throws ideas into the mix daily, and although it's not always easy we persevere until we find solutions."

Feedback Quotes:

The quality of the advisors is superb. Their knowledge, style and professionalism has helped me far more than services that I have paid for previously from other sources. This extends to the workshops - which by the way are even better online than they were in person. The 'Masterclass' style works really well. [In addition to this], the team that deal with financial support show real empathy and are respectful throughout the process. - Business Management Consultant, Mablethorpe

I received great help from those that dealt with my application for financial help [in] establishing my new business in these uncertain times. Those that I spoke to were both friendly and understanding of the situation and genuinely sounded as though they wanted to help. - Saddle Provider, Lincolnshire

As a result of the combined products/services/financial support, I have been able to completely reassess my business offer and redefine my niche to a market that will value and is able to pay for my services. I now have an effective sales strategy and my website and LinkedIn profile have been re-crafted to reflect what my customers are looking for. As a result, my confidence has grown, my contact list has doubled and I am now actively engaged in more conversations with potential clients, which I am confident will convert to sales. - Business Management Consultant, Mablethorpe

[The support was] very helpful. [They] gave me signposts for who to contact for further specialist advice, [I received a] tailored report and advice very quickly, and I am currently applying for a grant. - Information Technology Consultancy, Skegness

I have launched a website which will [not only] allow customers to browse [and] view my services, but to also purchase [services] from the website directly. - Saddle Provider, Lincolnshire

[Our] turnover is up 20%, [and we are] currently recruiting two staff [members]. - Psychotherapist, Cleethorpes

My advisor has been very supportive and informative. This has been an exceptional service. Hopefully I will be able to commend other services once I have experienced them. - Gift Shop, Healing

[We have] improved [our] Facebook marketing since taking part in [the] webinar. [We are] also working towards developing online events, as opposed to in-person events, through the equipment purchased through the grant. - Herbalist, Lincoln

The service from Business Lincolnshire has been absolutely fantastic in every form since we began to work

with them. [They are] friendly, thorough and effective. We are extremely impressed and happy with the service. - Events Planning Company, Lincolnshire

I had very informative help which supported my organisation and I was very satisfied to get the action plan which helped focus what was going to happen next and what was being offered. - Local Charity, Horncastle

[We're] in the process of up-scaling [in terms of hiring] more staff [and undergoing an] expansion to larger premises. Further jobs [have been] created, [our] moving and handling practices [have] improved [and we have seen] increased sales. - Cosmetics Industry, Langtoft

I am much more aware of how SEO impacts my website traffic and how to improve my overall SEO. The course has been invaluable and very informative. - Educational Consultant, Cranwell Village

[Our] turnover has grown by 5-10%. Staffing has increased by three employees, with view to increase soon to add a further three [employees]. - Cosmetics Industry, Langtoft

Feedback Examples from the Supply Chain Programme.

- "The Programme made me realise how complicated our supply chain is and how it is seen as one department as opposed to across the business".
- "Good explanation all the way through the workshop, delivered at a steady pace and very understandable".
- "Thought provoking and very relevant to my business right now".

Feedback Examples from the Peer Network Programme

Peer Networks Lincolnshire

MTAG (Coningsby)

Description: MTAG Composites specialises in the manufacture of high quality Phenolic, Epoxy and Polyester Glass Fibre and Carbon Fibre reinforced plastic mouldings with a diverse product mix for customers within the aerospace, rail and leisure industries.

Peer Networks Participant: Neil Holmes (General Manager)

Comments on Peer Networks Programme:

Peer Networks has given me a wonderful opportunity to interact with other business leaders and owners and better understand how they think and how they are looking to see their businesses develop.

Whatever your agenda, as senior manager or business owner, the Peer Network provides a fabulous opportunity to pool experience and knowledge. What better way to solve a problem or prepare for change, than by working on the problem or change with like minded individuals who may have already found the answer or have another viewpoint?



Peer Networks Lincolnshire

Jackson Engineering (Navenby)

Description: Jackson Engineering UK Ltd is a 10 employee steel fabrication business. Established 20 years it specialises in wear resistant heavy plate fabricated and machined wear parts for the recycling industry.

Peer Networks Participant: Roy Jackson (Managing Director)

Comments on Peer Networks Programme:

The manufacturing Peer networks sessions I took part in run by Oxford Innovation Services were, without doubt enlightening and very worthwhile. This sort of programme is not something that in the past I would have set aside time for or thought beneficial, but having completed it I consider it a great return on time investment as well as an important requirement of any business leader trying to move forward.

The organising and facilitation for our widely diverse group of people and businesses was excellent, both being considerate, insightful and motivational, the sessions were relaxed, synergistic and productive. Along with the many obvious positive outcomes, there are also many more really important unexpected gains that can only be found in this type of unique environment. I would highly recommend anyone considering this program to take part.

Peer
Networks



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Business
Lincolnshire
The place to go for business growth

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innovation

Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Note: If you have any additional material that you think would further illustrate the work and impact of your Growth Hub on driving business growth and/or increasing productivity please attach these, listing what you are sending within your covering email. This could include info-graphics, diagrams and flow charts or case studies.

Other information could include quotes from businesses you have assisted and any innovative or collaborative activity with intermediaries.

Key Performance Outcomes

Provide information on the key outcomes of your Growth Hub linked to the requirements of the 2020-2021 'Metrics and Evaluation Framework'.

Indicator	Local KPIs (where set by the LEP)	Annual Total (1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021)	Cumulative Total (since launch of Growth Hub)
Number of businesses that have received 'light touch' triage, information and/or signposting support (excluding website traffic)		2794	19,627
Number of individuals ¹ that have received 'light touch' triage, information and/or signposting support (excluding website traffic)		570	2946
Total number of unique visitors to GrowthHub website		60,189	168,413*Correction Previously quoted unique 'sessions'
Number of businesses receiving 'medium intensity' information, diagnostic and brokerage support		658	5000
Combined turnover (amount £) of businesses receiving 'Medium intensity' information, diagnostic and brokerage support.		£908,894,153.00	£3,202,263,805.61
Combined employee numbers (FTE) of businesses receiving 'Medium intensity' information, diagnostic and brokerage support.		5749	23,713.12
Number of businesses receiving 'high intensity' support e.g. account management / intensive support directly provided by the Hub or partner organisation		589	3714
Combined turnover (amount £) of businesses receiving 'High intensity' support i.e. sustained support and using significant Growth Hub resource.		£598,077,646.01	£3,641,283,740.50
Combined employee numbers (FTE) of businesses receiving 'High intensity' support i.e. sustained support and using significant Growth Hub resource.		5417	14,957.50
Number of businesses receiving 'Medium' and 'High intensity' support that, have the opportunity, ambition and greatest		21	144

¹ Number of businesses and individuals are both required as (for example) several individuals from the same business may attend an event; may contact a Growth Hub separately via different routes on different issues.

potential to grow (including Scale-Ups)			
Total number of individuals who been helped to start a business		82	1169
Number of businesses referred to a mentoring programme (combined figure for 'Medium' and 'High' intensity interventions only)		23	223
Number of businesses referred to a skills or training programme (combined figure for 'Medium' and 'High' intensity interventions only)		96	550
Number of businesses referred to a finance and/or funding programme (combined figure for 'Medium' and 'High' intensity interventions only)		47	906
Number of businesses referred to an innovation and/or R&D programme (combined figure for 'Medium' and 'High' intensity interventions only).		13	75
£Private sector match secured (where linked to GrowthHub)		£2,943,614.62	£8,010,366.60

Additional KPIs

Number of jobs created		195	1567
Number of jobs safeguarded		386* new measure for 2020	

Figures from April 2020 to March 2021	Number
ERDF Grants approved – SBG2 and Kickstart	386
Total value of Grants Paid	£1,210,780
Private Sector Match Secured	£698,011

Figures from April 2020 to March 2021	Number
Facebook Likes	1354
Twitter followers	6028
Linked in	1027

Notes: Measures such as “combined turnover” or “combined employee numbers” should only include the local business office receiving support (in the case of multi-site businesses). They will be calculated by aggregating the values recorded at firm-level. They should be the most recent values held by the LEP/GH at the point of reporting.

Measures such as “total number of businesses referred” do not need to reflect whether (or not) the referral was taken up.

UK Community Renewal Fund - Lincolnshire County Council / Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub Submissions

Publication	Yes					
Meeting date:	27/5/2021					
Agenda Item:	2					
Item Subject:						
Author:	Samantha Harrison					
For:	Discussion		Decision		Information	X

Background

The budget announcements on the 31st March 21 provided further opportunities for Lincolnshire in the form of the Community Renewal Fund (CRF) and the Levelling Up Fund.

The Government's spring budget committed to levelling up, across the United Kingdom, to ensure no community is left behind, particularly during the recovery from the impacts of COVID-19. UKCRF and the Towns Fund represent major changes in the way government intends to support local economic growth going forward, including a direct relationship between government and local areas and a desire to move at pace to affect change.

UK Community Renewal Fund (UKCRF)

1. UKCRF seeks to invest £220m in 2021/22 across four investment priorities:
 - a. skills
 - b. local business
 - c. communities and place and
 - d. supporting people into employment
2. This was a one-off fund to support pilots and innovative approaches to local economic growth ahead of the 2022 launch of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). The latter will be the long term replacement for the EU Structural Investment Funds (previously worth £20m per year to the county).
3. The funding is 90% revenue and allocates up to £3m per pre-selected priority place based on an Index of Economic Resilience¹. In Lincolnshire these places are Boston, East Lindsey and Lincoln. There was no allocation to investment themes and cross theme bids were encouraged.
4. UKCRF will be allocated on a competitive process with no pre-set eligibility and in Lincolnshire it will be managed by the County Council as Lead Authority, who have launched an open bidding process to engage a variety of project applicants including district councils, voluntary and community sector organisations, local education providers and universities. LCC will appraise the bids and present justified priorities to MHCLG on the 18th June. Decisions are expected in late summer and all funding must be spent by 31st March 2022.
5. UKCRF is open to all areas – although the 3 Lincolnshire priority 1 areas have been included in a top 100 which the government has identified as most in need. These areas have been prioritised, but not guaranteed funding and must score well on strategic fit, delivery and effectiveness. Authorities were encouraged to consider cross-border collaboration where

¹ Index of Economic Resilience based on index measures of productivity, household income, unemployment, skills and population density.

relevant to drive impact, scale and efficiency. Where a non-priority area and a priority area work together and the latter constitutes 50%+ of that bid area, they will achieve priority status. This provided an opportunity for programme bids which achieve an impact both within and outside the priority district, albeit with significant caveats as described.

6. Bids will be banded A-C and selected in sequence:
 - a. Band A – Projects that have scored 80% or above on both 'strategic fit' and 'deliverability, effectiveness and efficiency' and predominantly focus on priority areas
 - b. Band B - Projects that have scored 80% or above on both 'strategic fit' and 'deliverability, effectiveness and efficiency' and do not predominantly focus on priority areas
 - c. Band C - Projects that have scored 50% or above on both 'strategic fit' and 'deliverability, effectiveness and efficiency' and predominantly focus on priority areas

7. Match funding was encouraged but not mandatory. It is noted that ministerial discretion will apply within a set boundary to achieve a balance of the type and spread of projects across the UK.

8. The LEP 's Economic Revival Plan and a Skills Action Plan provided a useful back-cloth for the strategic objectives for the delivery of the UK Community Renewal Fund. These included:
 - a. Skills –a move towards digitisation both of education and learning and of jobs in the labour market, a need for individuals to better understand career opportunities in Lincolnshire and the pathways to achieve those careers.
 - b. Business –a growing interest in self-employment and entrepreneurship, a substantial reduction in businesses' ability to access finance, a shift to the way that sectors operate which provide substantial opportunities to the county in food, manufacturing, and visitor economy.
 - c. Community –an increased interest in community based and in business led energy schemes, a need to improve rural connectivity.
 - d. Employment –the compatibility of skills between one sector and another which provides job opportunities, the need to improve access for certain groups to employment, the high number of under 25s whose job prospects have suffered as a result of Covid-19.

9. The county council Strategic Infrastructure team issued a local prospectus and are managing a bidding round which ran between 26th April and 14th May.

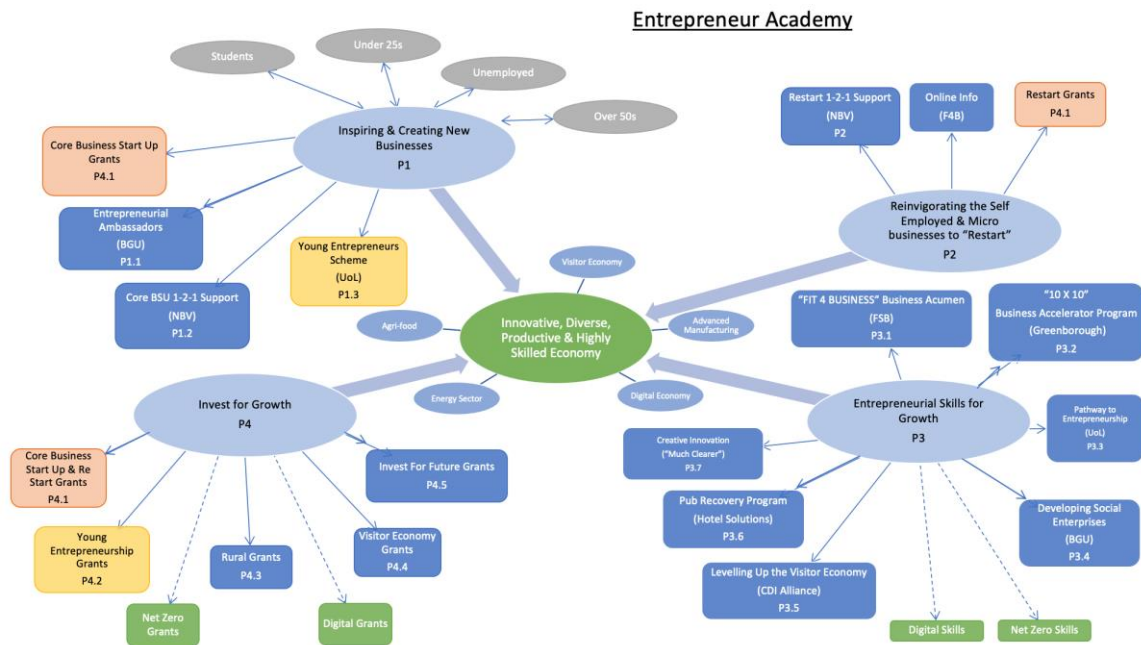
Lincolnshire County Council/ Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub Submissions

The county council and Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub submitted 3 bids covering the Lincolnshire boundary with between 60 and 80% of delivery with the Priority 1 Areas.

All the bids were formed as partnership programmes, in order to ensure a cohesive approach to place Lincolnshire in the strongest place to achieve the very best outcomes for Lincolnshire's people, our communities and businesses.

1) Entrepreneurs Academy

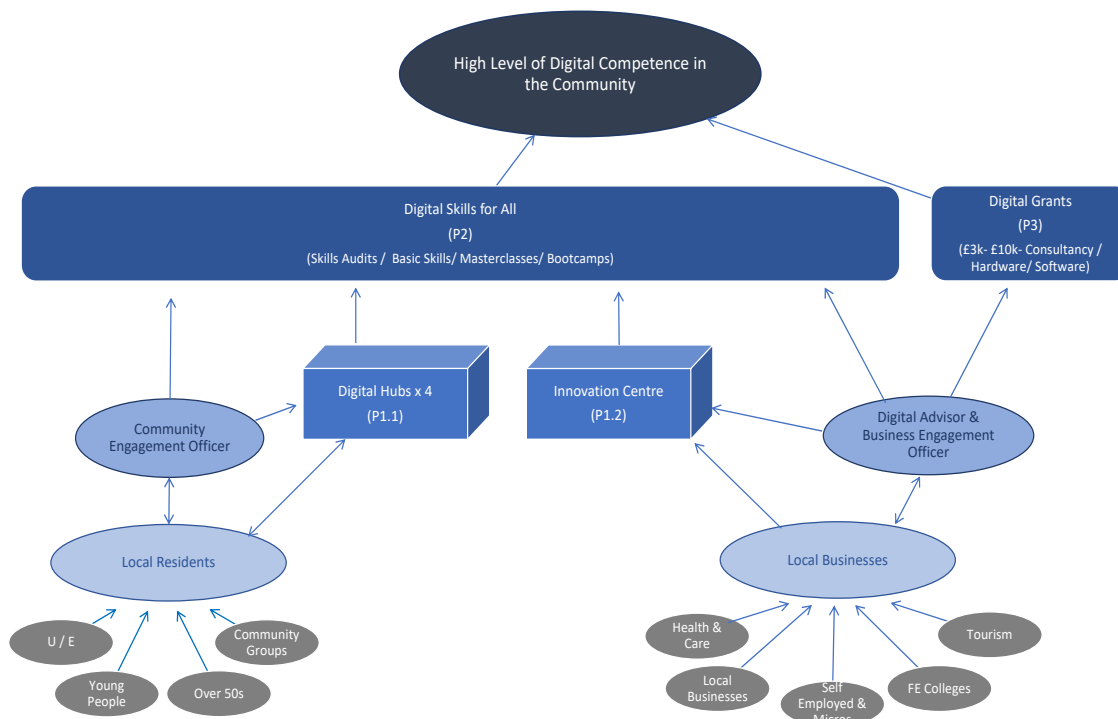
Project Costs - Total Project Value/Spend - £2,805,000 CRF Requested £1,723,500



The project will establish an integrated package of 11 support areas (as demonstrated graphically in above) through an embedded partnership approach that will inspire new business start-ups and improve entrepreneurial skills and increase creative thinking to ensure business growth and survival.

2) Digital Lincolnshire

Project Costs - Total Project Value/Spend - £1,771,333 CRF Requested £1,362,00



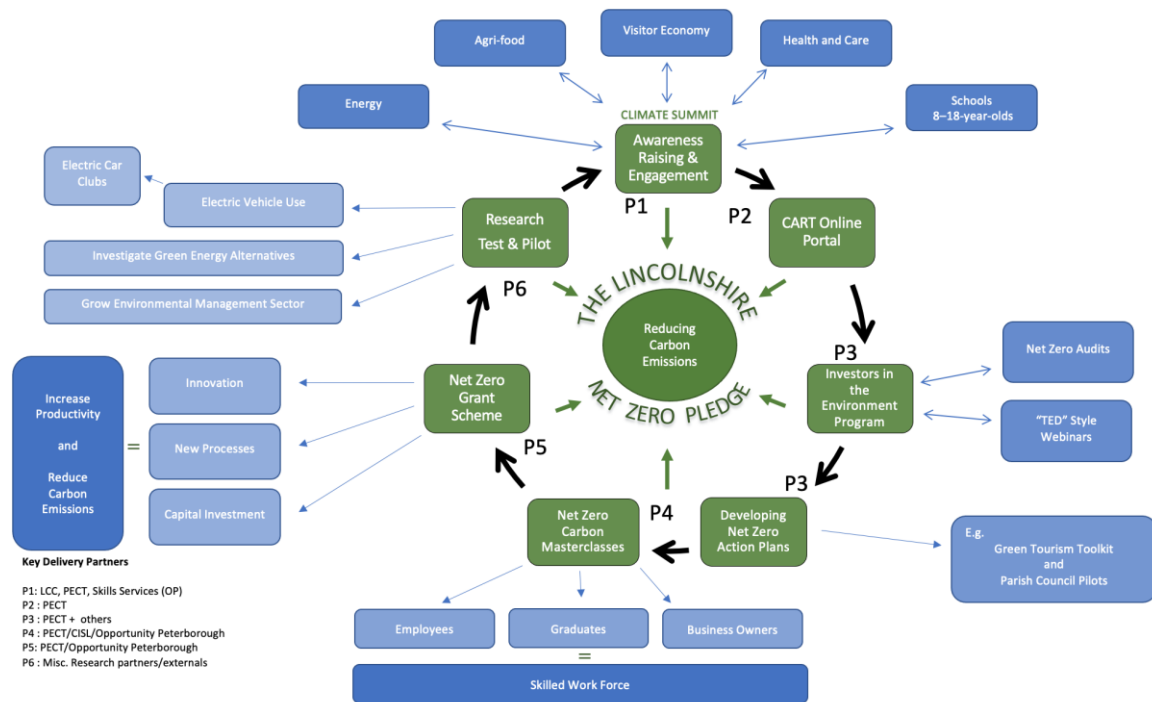
Digital Lincolnshire is a partnership programme focussing on raising digital competencies across entire communities (demonstrated graphically above).

Primarily delivered within the Priority one areas it addresses the urgent need to equip both residents and businesses with access to the digital information, digital skills and resources they need to compete in a post Brexit, post Covid world. It is comprises of physical drop-in digital hub facilities, structured training and grants.

This will include a 'Digital Skills for All ' programme that will support anyone looking to upskill, reskill or gain confidence around the digital agenda. Delivery will be via a blended approach of classroom and online provision, to meet learners' needs and widen participation.

3) Green Lincolnshire

Project Costs - Total Project Value/Spend - £2,618,500 CRF requested £1,350,500



Green Lincolnshire is an integrated programme of Net-Zero support activities that will be delivered by a partnership team of experienced practitioners.

The action focussed activities have been developed to fit together to offer a progression. Alongside these activities, there is a research element to test new approaches to support the design of future provision. (Demonstrated graphically above).

UK Food Valley GLLEP Bid

GLLEP submitted a CRF bid to further develop the UK Food Valley programme for 1.7m.

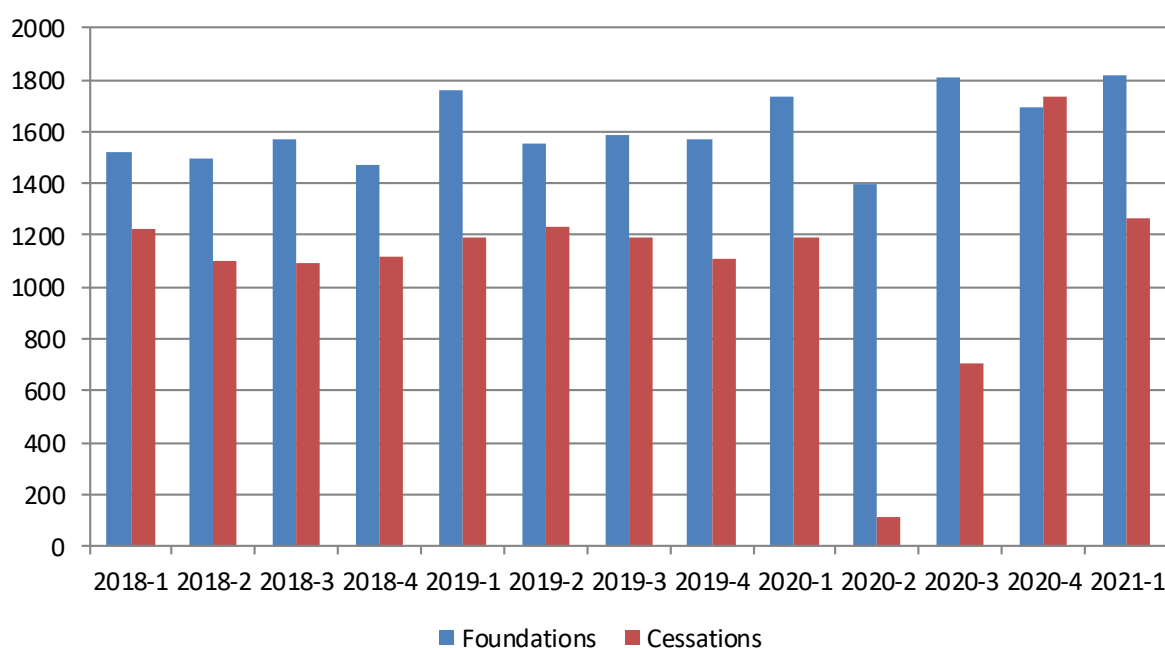
Greater Lincolnshire & Rutland Business Start Up and Cessations Data

Publication	No					
Meeting date:	27/5/2021					
Agenda Item:						
Item Subject:	4					
Author:	Samantha Harrison					
For:	Discussion	X	Decision		Information	

1) Greater Lincolnshire analysis

- Analysis of Companies House data for Greater Lincolnshire shows that prior to 2020 there was a steady net growth of businesses, with new starts exceeding cessations every quarter.
- In Q2-Q3 2020 we can observe the impact of business support packages with unusually low cessations, with 109 cessations in Q2 2020.
- Q4 2020 saw the highest number of business cessations in Greater Lincolnshire since the data started being measured in this way, in 2005. In total there were 1,737 business cessations in Q4 2020.
- However Q1 saw the highest number of business foundations since 2005, with 1,821 businesses incorporated in Greater Lincolnshire. This indicates an unusual pattern of business churn.

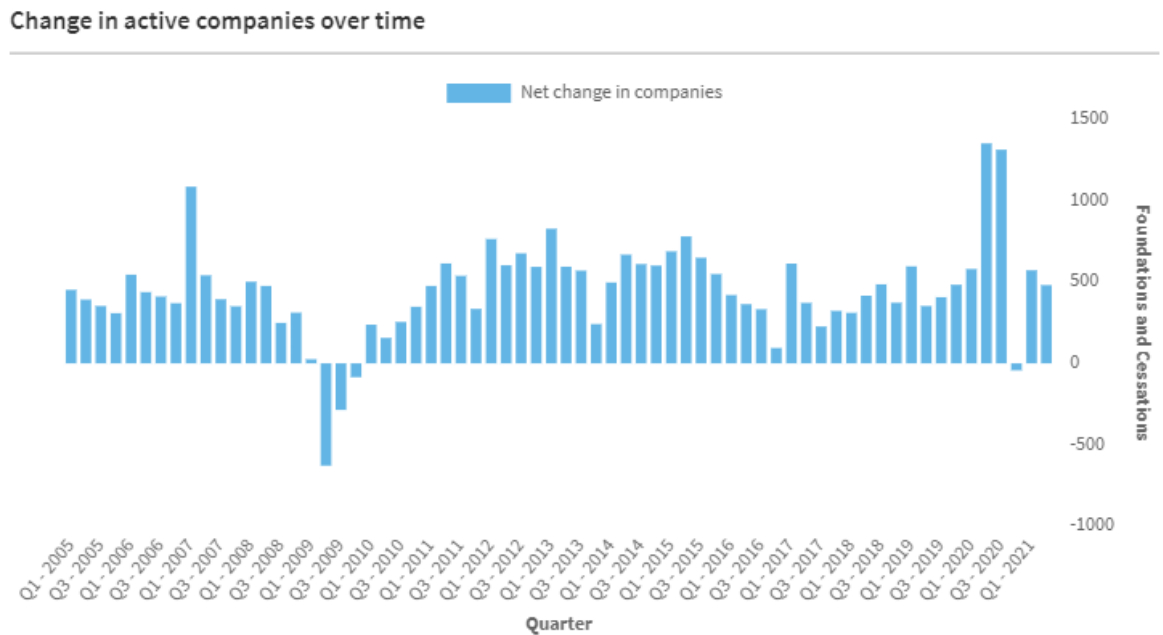
Figure 1 – All business formations and cessations January 2018 to May 2021 – Greater Lincolnshire



2) Change in active companies over time

As can be observed in Fig 2. There were 3 quarters of net negative growth in businesses in 2009 as a result of the financial crash in 2008/09. Q3 2020 saw net negative growth, following two quarters of net positive growth.

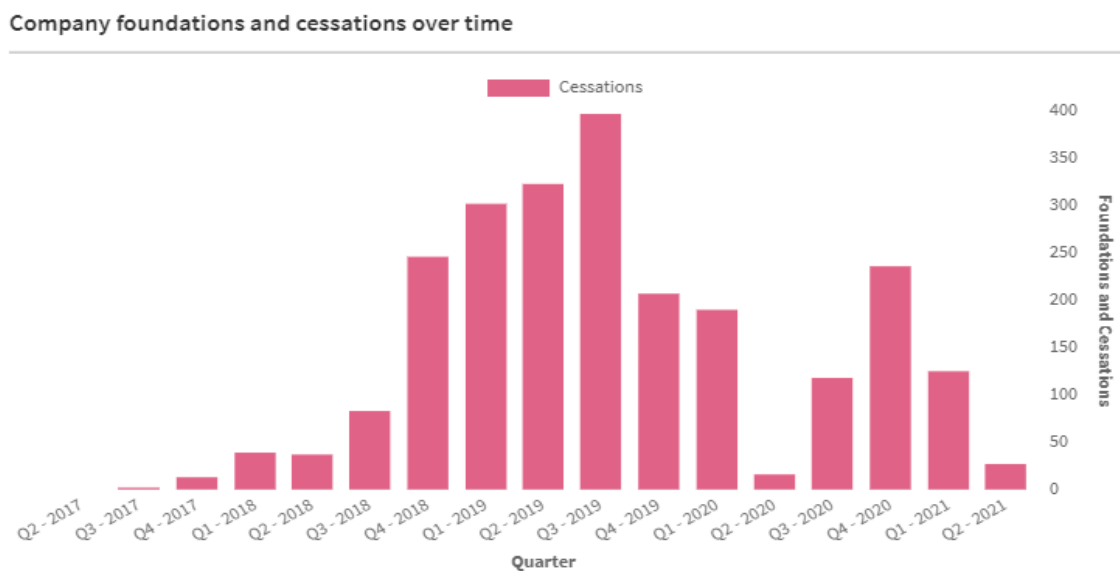
Figure 2 Net change in active companies over time



Based on analysis of businesses started between May 2017 and May 2018 in Greater Lincolnshire 60% of businesses are still operating.

The graph below show the profile of cessations of businesses incorporated between May 2017 and May 2018. Figure 3 Profile of business cessation of businesses formed between May 2017 and May 2018 – three year survival .

Figure 3 Company foundation and cessation over time



3) Cessation of businesses formed between May 2017 and May 2018.

For future report we will seek to further split this out by district.

Figure 4 Profile of business cessation geography between May 2017 and May 2018 – three year survival

Cessations of businesses formed between May 2017 and May 2018						
Quarter of cessation	Rutland	North Lincolnshire	North East Lincolnshire	Lincolnshire	Greater Lincolnshire	
2017-2		0	0	0	0	0
2017-3		0	1	0	2	3
2017-4		0	1	3	13	17
2018-1		1	4	7	38	50
2018-2		1	8	3	36	48
2018-3		4	9	14	79	106
2018-4		10	31	43	236	320
2019-1		9	48	46	293	396
2019-2		9	56	50	314	429
2019-3		12	54	81	385	532
2019-4		6	34	43	201	284
2020-1		5	27	34	185	251
2020-2		0	3	3	16	22
2020-3		4	19	28	114	165
2020-4		7	32	49	229	317
2021-1		0	19	17	125	161
2021-2		2	2	4	25	33
Surviving @ May 2021	121	479	513	3,357	4,470	
Total formations 2017/18	191	827	938	5,648	7,604	
3 year Survival %	63.4%	57.9%	54.7%	59.4%	58.8%	

Source: Beauhurst Analysis of Companies House Data

For reference:

- A company's founded date is based either on the date on which the initial incorporation filings were made, or when it started operating as a company.
- A company's cessation date is based on when its Companies House status changed to either "Company is dissolved" or "Converted/ Closed".

4) The Centre for Entrepreneurs 2020 Business Startup Index

(<https://centreforentrepreneurs.org/cfe-research/business-startup-index/>) showed that all districts in Lincolnshire are in the bottom half of start ups per capita. Boston and East Lindsey are in the bottom 20% nationally, although East Lindsey has shown strong growth whilst Boston saw negative growth at the start of 2020 pre-pandemic.

In terms of absolute start ups, Boston ranked 363rd out of 379 local authorities in the UK for total number of start ups during 2021, with the rest of Lincolnshire ranking in the bottom half nationally. Lincoln ranked 285th and East Lindsey 293rd.

As of February 2021, 21,700 people were claiming self-employment income support (SEISS 3) in Lincolnshire, with a further 37,800 employments on furlough as of the end of April 2021 showing there is likely to be pent up demand which will require support to succeed.

5) **Business Churn**

Our analysis of companies house data from 2020 (not official statistics) indicates that there was an increased rate of business start-ups, with an estimated 0.13 businesses starting per active business, coupled with a significantly lower death rate of 0.08 deaths per active business. In total there were an estimated 6,600 businesses started in Greater Lincolnshire in 2020 and 3,700 cessations.

This is broadly in line with what happened nationally, although the birth rate nationally was 0.16 per active business. The business death rate is likely to have been positively impacted by Government support during the pandemic. It is likely that towards the end of 2021 we will see the business death rate recalibrate as the support schemes taper.

Figure 5 ONS Business Demography 2019

ONS Business Demography 2019 (released November 2020)					
LAD	Birth	Births per active	Death	Death per active	Active
Lincolnshire	2990	0.11	2695	0.10	27260
Boston	295	0.13	235	0.11	2205
East Lindsey	435	0.09	405	0.09	4745
Lincoln	365	0.13	320	0.11	2900
North Kesteven	420	0.11	380	0.10	3930
South Holland	490	0.13	420	0.11	3905
South Kesteven	660	0.11	605	0.10	6150
West Lindsey	325	0.09	330	0.10	3425
North East Lincolnshire	620	0.12	535	0.10	5160
North Lincolnshire	670	0.12	580	0.10	5700
Rutland	205	0.11	180	0.09	1925
GLLEP	4485	0.11	3990	0.10	40045

Based on ONS business demography data (2019 based - <https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/activitysizeandlocation/datasets/businessdemographyreferencetable>), Lincolnshire has a comparatively low business churn rate compared to England.

In 2019, there were 0.11 new businesses per active business; and 0.10 business deaths per active business in Lincolnshire. In England there were 0.13 births and 0.11 deaths per active business. This indicates that there is a lower rate of business churn in Lincolnshire on average than nationally based on latest data

6) Pre start and Start Up Enquiry Numbers

Statistics show an increase in pre start/start-up enquiries post Covid compared to the previous year, same time period by 53% and 60% respectively. This could be due to employed individuals on furlough deciding to make a career change or they have spotted a gap in the market and decided to start their own businesses or people may have been made redundant and feel that there is no other option but to try self-employment.

Figure 6 Pre Start and Start Up Enquiry Number 2020 - 2021

	October 2020 - December 2020	October 2019 - December 2019
Partner	Number of Enquiries	
NBV	92	
Princes Trust	3	
Business Support Helpline	218	
University of Lincoln	43	
Total	356	232

	January 2021 - March 2021	January 2020- March 2020
Partner	Number of Enquiries	
NBV	75	
Princes Trust	4	
Business Support Helpline	282	
University of Lincoln	59	
Total	420	263

Annex 1 – Overview paper from NBV Ltd

NBV Enterprise Solutions update from Andrea Huscroft, NBV Regional Director



Background:

NBV Enterprise Solutions Ltd is a not-for-profit Company limited by guarantee and was established in 1982 to promote entrepreneurship and offer on-going support to individuals planning to start their own enterprise or who are already operating a small business.

NBV has achieved this by delivering Government and European funded contracts. Our active contract, **ERDF Growing Enterprise** is in its final year of delivery in Greater Lincolnshire (subject to a pending extension) which comprises 3 elements:

1/ Starting in Business

Three-day course aimed at individuals who want to start their own business and understand what is involved. The programme provides in-depth knowledge on how to become self-employed and covers the skills needed to start and manage a successful business, delivered on a “one to many” basis.

As at the end of March 2021 = 402 individuals have completed a minimum of 12 hours.

2/ Business Assist

This programme enables businesses to receive ongoing advice/mentoring from one of our professional Business Advisers.

NBV specialise in supporting new starts and those that have been trading less than 12 months, but do also support businesses outside of these parameters.

As at the end of March 2021 = 172 businesses have completed a minimum of 12 hours of which 112 have been trading less than 12 months.

3/ Grant for Enterprise/Grant for New Business

In summary, this grant offers a 25% contribution against a minimum £4k project with a maximum grant of £2,500 so ideal for projects up to £10k. Can be used for both capital and revenue-based projects for eligible firms (e.g., not business to consumer retail)

As at the end of March 2021 = 135 businesses received a minimum of £1k grant. Total grants awarded £267,885 (average £1,984) attracting £1,002,800 in private sector match.

However, only 35 grants have been awarded to businesses trading less than 12 months. This grant has been suspended due to reaching its fund capacity.

Start-up Enquiry Volumes

Oct 19 - Dec19 (Qtr 4 2019) = 93

Jan 20 - Mar 20 (Qtr 1 2020) = 133

Apr 20 - Jun 20 (Qtr 2 2020) = 83

Jul 20 – Sep 20 (Qtr 2 2020) = 4

Oct 20 - Dec 20 (Qtr 4 2020) = 92

Jan 21 - Mar 21 (Qtr 1 2021) = 75

As you will note from the above figures, we have witnessed a drop in enquiries during Qtr 2 (2020) but more surprising is the reduced number of enquiries received during Qtr 1 (2021). January to March is traditionally the highest period for start-up/prestart enquiries.

Types of Enquiries

The types of business ideas/start-ups remain varied with serviced based businesses being more prominent.

- Recent trends include:
- retail/ecommerce
- hospitality
- professional turning hobbies into viable businesses (due to their risk of redundancy)
- sustainability and net carbon

Gaps in Provision

NBV's current contract has resource limitations due to the private sector match funding element of the ERDF contract structure. If NBV is awarded an extension, the contract will run until June 2023. This extension would include all three programme elements defined above.

With more funds, NBV could increase its front-line advisory team offering greater reach and impact on the business community. The current delivery team comprises of 2.4 FTE Business Advisers and 0.4 Business Trainer.

We have already identified current "hot spots" where additional provision would make a difference, and these have been factored into a bid for the UK Community Renewal Fund.

- Intensive support for individuals to produce a viable business plan (current delivery is one to many). Business starts will be created and receive a £3,000 seed corn grant.
- Self Employed / Micro Business owners negatively impacted by COVID and claiming benefits to receive intensive one to one support and £3,000 grant to reinvigorate their business.

Both grants are based on 100% intervention rate taking into account the low percentage of young businesses claiming the existing grant fund due to not meeting the minimum project value of £4k or not having the funds up front to pay out and claim back.

There is also a gap in provision due to NBV's grant fund reaching capacity with the ERDF Growing Enterprise project.

Present:

Mary Stuart (MS) Chair – Vice Chancellor of University of Lincoln
 Samantha Harrison (SH) – LCC
 Angela Driver (AD) – LCC
 Simon Beardsley (SB) – Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce
 Richard Blackmore (RB) – CBI
 Ruth Carver (RCa) – GLLEP
 Helen Thompson (HT) – North East Lincs
 Mark Webb (MW) – E- factor
 James Pinchbeck (JP) – Streets Chartered Accounts
 Russell Copley (RCo) - Greenborough
 Andrew Stevenson (AS) – University of Lincoln
 Noreen Read (NR) - EMB
 Phoebe Edwards (PE) - EMB
 Katrina Pearce (KP) - FSB

Apologies were received from:
 Zoe King
 Ian Green
 Paul Scott – taken early retirement and will no longer be a member of the board.

Mark Webb declared that he also provides business support in Northern Lincolnshire.

**Approval of minutes of meeting from Governance Board Meeting 19th December 2019 –
 Mary Stuart**

All approved minutes of last meeting – no outstanding actions.

**Update and
 Discussion**

Review of Governance Board terms of Reference - AD

The terms of reference are still the original terms of reference that were put together back in 2015. No proposal to make any substantial changes to the Terms of Reference as they are still fit for purpose in terms of the main content. However there have been changes of representation on the boards so these changes will be updated. Also, the Terms of Reference state that the board should meet 4-6 times per year and the board has previously agreed to meet 3 times per year.

SH stated that these will be reviewed on an annual basis.

JP asked whether or not there is anything in place to review the effectiveness of the board. MS reported that this is something that has been discussed and also the possibility of adding more members onto the board. It is potentially something that should be put to the LEP regarding how

**Action AD
 to confer**

Update on Growth Hub Programme Board Meeting from 5th October 2020 – James Pinchbeck

JP provided an update on the main points from the Programme Board held on 5th October.

From the meeting most of the focus was on the interventions that have taken place with colleagues around the work that they have been doing to support businesses. One big take away from this was the growth in the number of start-up businesses that have taken place in this time as well as businesses seeking advice to repurpose or reimagine their structure post Covid. Most of the business support provider organisations stated that interventions put in place have helped a large number of businesses, but within certain sectors there are still a large number of challenges to face.

Time was also spent speaking of future challenges such as work forces needing up skilling in certain areas such as technology as well as the challenges that will come from a likely spike in redundancy following the end of the furlough scheme.

Other concerns that were mentioned were surrounding the need for greater support to be provided to combat things such as areas where businesses are working within a tier 3 lockdown.

Run through of Paper 1 – Growth Hub update, Business Support Landscape, BEIS Bi Annual Review, Impact Report – Angela Driver

AD started by stating that it has been a very busy time for business support providers and that the efforts put in have been commendable. The Covid emergency forced operational changes across the board and that advisor teams have provided the crisis and signposted support that was needed.

AD ran through the key points of paper 1 which was sent out to all board members which highlighted the Response and Recovery measures which has developed into a new Business support landscape which has been put in place to answer the needs of local businesses as defined in the Business And Economy Recovery Plan developed by the Business and Economy Cell of the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum.

Run through of Paper 2 – Growth Hub Adviser Update - Phoebe Edwards and Noreen Read

PE stated that Greater Lincolnshire has handled the pandemic and the extra requirements that this has brought very well. Advisers have dealt with over 300 businesses on Covid specific enquiries.

NR reported the different types of examples of enquiries that advisers have been dealing with from people who have put their all into starting businesses at this time who couldn't claim any of the financial support that was provided. Other businesses struggled with the fear of losing valuable members of staff.

It is getting to stage now where people who were initially seeking general advice have made it out the other side of challenges faced and are now seeking advice surrounding growth plans.

PE stated that one thing to be noted is that businesses that contacted advisers had areas in their business plans that were causing issues, so going forward this is something to think about to ensure that businesses have their basics in order.

AD highlighted that the Growth Hub are planning to develop a 'Fit for Business' toolkit to help

<p>support businesses with some of these basics that businesses are missing.</p> <p>PE gives a brief run through of Paper 2 which was circulated ahead of the meeting.</p> <p>PE reported that EMB are 38% through meeting their targets for the year in terms of providing 3 hours of support to businesses which is on target. 423 blocks of specialist support have been delivered with the most popular being support to businesses around financial readiness.</p> <p>The ERDF grant fund has been well accessed with the capital and revenue fund being completely allocated for the programme lifetime unless new funds are provided. Funds are still available in the Digital Grant pot however.</p> <p>PE stated that at the beginning of the pandemic the Scale Up programme was negatively impacted as people were turning more towards surviving than trying to scale up. However, this is starting to pick up again. Scale Up support is now being delivered remotely and clients had now started to be able to commit time to courses after the initial crisis phase had subsided.</p> <p>There are now 130 Scale Up businesses that the Growth Hub has or is supporting, which shows growth over the current period with one example creating 21 new jobs.</p> <p>There was a discussion around the definition of a 'Scale Up' business. BEIS have provided a definition that the Growth Hub is working to.</p>	<p>Action – Scale up definition to be circulated with minutes.</p>
<p>Group Discussion - The business support landscape is very complex as are the needs of businesses as they deal with the effects of COVID and with the end of the EU Transition period looming.</p> <p>Board members to discuss and recommend the approach that the Growth Hub should take to prioritise its finite resources to meet business need.</p> <p>SH reported that BEIS have put a bid in to continue Growth Hub funding into the future and that the level of funding is expected to be enhanced with the uplift money once again, which will mean funding of just under £600,000 as well as potentially transition funding money which can vary from £50,000 to £150,000. This funding can be utilized if any gaps in provision are highlighted.</p> <p>SB stated that businesses are not ready or prepared for the end of the transition period on 1st January 2021. Small businesses are finding that they don't have the capacity or the capability to cope with the upcoming hurdle. Businesses are asking for more face to face or hand holding support to get them through the next phase which is difficult to provide with the current resources available. Going forward solutions can be provided via documentation for origin purposes or customs declarations but the Chamber of Commerce can't fill all the gaps that the end of the transition period will bring for small businesses.</p> <p>KP reported that businesses are suffering with fatigue due to the issues that they have already had to face within this year so it could be a good opportunity for a campaign to be put in place surrounding Lincolnshire being a good place to start up and grow a business whilst feeling good about it. KP also stated that with the challenges that will be brought with the end of the job retention scheme that people will be looking at the option of starting their own business so now is a good time to push this message whether it is a campaign or practical support.</p> <p>RCa raised the point of whether it would be worth working more intensely in certain business</p>	

communities. Also, potentially would more intense support need to be provided to certain sectors that have been hit harder such as Visitor Economy, hospitality, retail and leisure to help them reimagine how they might come out of this period. Some smaller businesses don't always know where to go for support in terms of up skilling for example.

HT raised the point that due to the hospitality, retail and tourism sector has been hit so hard during the pandemic whether or not there could be a sector focus. If tourism businesses go under then Greater Lincolnshire will be at a much weaker position to take advantage of the opportunity that we may have for tourism growth.

MW raised the point that there could be a role for growth hubs to play in order to deliver intelligence about the things that are going on nationally and internationally so that Lincolnshire businesses can not only be on the curve but ahead of the curve by looking for best practices etc. Also, there needs to be a balance between centralising and localising support as this could result in freeing up time to be able to guide smaller businesses in more detail.

MW also stated that it is important to have clear alignment between different support elements as this will enable the ability to grow certain areas by sharing experience between the different areas. This is reflected through the GAIN programme as it is sector specific.

SB highlighted that a lessons learned review would be useful to identify what has gone well / not so well during the pandemic in case another event such as this takes place.

PE answered the question of what has worked well by saying that different companies and sectors have all come together and worked well together, especially in Lincolnshire which has meant support has been provided very quickly.

PE echoed the point that a lot of businesses are not ready for the end of the EU transition period and that there perhaps won't be enough advisory support available when there is a surge in demand. Also, businesses that gain the most success from support are the businesses that advisers go out and find and then connect them to support, rather than waiting for them to respond to marketing.

NR reported that there are still many clients saying that the EU exit won't have an effect on them. The best way to handle them is to triage the businesses. This involves the business issues being identified, before passing them on our specialist EU adviser who address the issues and then refers them to other programmes. This means that resources are saved on businesses that only have a minimal amount of issues. The other effective way to deal with this issue is via workshops.

PE added that businesses are now becoming more alert of the EU Exit date so we need to ensure that there are enough channels available to manage the amount of support that will be required.

MW added that as a growth hub it is important to start looking ahead and thinking about plans to put in place to be able to reduce the impact of leaving the EU on businesses.

SH summarised that all points from this discussion will be put into the forward plan and align it.

Business Support Reform

SH reported that the Small Business Policy Unit within BEIS have reported that 10 of the national programmes and the way they are structured aren't effective enough as there aren't any clear objectives, no baseline for data, no evaluation, too many funding streams and that the outputs weren't measurable.

One thing that has resulted from this is that they will look into the business support arena and will build this into the future CSR review. It is felt that there needs to be consistency of offers and clarity of message as well as a clear focus with clear accessibility, stability and that we work well alongside the private sector.

This would see an increase in provision around leadership and management, increased tech adoption, making more use of the gov.uk provision, making more use of specialist support and to make sure there is a clear core function across all of the growth hubs.

This would be achieved by making sure there is a clear start up offer, an ambition to grow offer and a scale up offer that is provided by a tiered service from web services through to full adviser support.

We account manage relationships with businesses well and this is something that needs to continue. Data sharing agreements are in place however in Lincolnshire we seem to share more data than we receive back from BEIS, this is something that we need in order to be able to grow businesses more going forward, e.g., data from DIT in relation to Trade and Investment support is only provided at a regional level.

We are still in the early stages of the reform but it is important that all members of the board are aware of this so they can provide feedback.

RCa added that nationally LEPs are pleased with the direction of travel but they want further understanding of where this might end up as there is a huge value in a local growth hub due to the local connection and flexibility so it is important to find a balance between national and local. RCa stated that is important to make sure that we have a clear vision going forward.

Midlands Engine Investment Fund July Report – RCo

RCo updated that as at the end of July the fund is 30% deployed, the fund is around £250,000,000 and there has been around £78,000,000 that has been invested in the East and West Midlands. Greater Lincolnshire has around 8% of the businesses by number across the East and West Midlands. £5,000,000 of LEP money has been contributed which is 6.4% of the overall contributions but already 12% of the overall funds invested have been drawn down into Greater Lincolnshire businesses, so Lincolnshire is punching above its weight in terms of value of investments.

There are 4 elements of the Midlands Engine Investment funds.

Small business loan which is a loan of £25,000 to £150,000 which is managed by Enterprise Loans East Midlands;

Larger loans fund £150,000 up to £1,500,000 which was initially managed by Maven but has now been joined by the FSE Group.

Two equity funds - One of which is a proof of concept fund which is investments of up to £750,000 which is managed by Murcia and a larger equity fund which is investments up to £2,000,000 which is managed by Foresight.

<p>Maven and Foresight are doing really well in Lincolnshire and are making more investments per capita than anyone else.</p> <p>There isn't much traction with the small business loans which is something that is now being worked on to try and get the visibility of this fund improved.</p> <p>SH will work Russell to ensure alignment to try and gain traction on the small business loans.</p>	
<p>AOB: None</p>	
<p>Date of next meeting: 23rd February 2021</p>	

DRAFT

Present:

James Pinchbeck (JP) Chair – Streets Chartered Accounts
 Mark Webb (MW) Vice Chair – E- factor
 Samantha Harrison (SH) – LCC
 Angela Driver (AD) – LCC
 Simon Beardsley (SB) – Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce
 Susannah Carr – University of Lincoln
 Noreen Read (NR) - EMB
 Paula Clay (PC) - EMB
 Katrina Pearce (KP) – FSB
 Pete Holmes (PH) – BEIS
 Maggie Johnson (MJ) – North East Lincs
 Faresh Maisuria – Blueberry
 Nathan Topping – Blueberry
 Andrew Welsh – Blueberry
 John Owens – NBV
 Sean Gray - LCC

Apologies were received from:

Zoe King
 Ian Green
 Vicky Addison
 Richard Blackmore
 Andrea Huscroft
 Scott Fleming
 Helen Thompson
 Ruth Carver

James Pinchbeck declared an interest that he is also a board member of NBV and Nwes.
 Mark Webb declared he provides support for E-Factor as well as being a board member.

Approval of minutes of meeting from Governance Board Meeting 21st October 2020 – James Pinchbeck

All approved minutes of last meeting – no outstanding actions.

Update and Discussion

Growth Hub Update – AD

AD mentions the BEIS Annual report extract included in the meeting papers. If any board

members have any questions regarding the report AD is happy to answer those.

AD runs through page 3 of the Governance Slide presentation provided. This covers the stats that reflect the total number of businesses supported and how they have been supported during the past year. The total number of business engaged is up 40% on the previous year so a significant increase. However, the number of businesses receiving 3 -11 hours of support is lower than the previous year. This is due to the nature of the support that the businesses require, for example, quick access to specific questions when needed as opposed to needing more in depth and on-going support. The number of businesses receiving over 12 hours of support is roughly at the same level as the previous year.

Advisors have returned to face to face interaction with clients but it is acknowledged that there will likely be a blended approach going forward. A survey has been carried out through the BL events activity to see how businesses feel about returning to face to face events. Around 1/3rd are ready now to return back to face to face events, 1/3rd never want to return to face to face events and the final 1/3rd wish to return to face to face events between November 21 and January 22. Taking this into account BL are looking at continuing with online events in the short term, with face to face events returning towards the end of the year.

AD runs through future plans of the Growth Hub which are covered in the slide presentation.

AD states that the ERDF project will continue to be monitored to ensure that the objectives and outcomes continue to be met.

Working closely with the full East Midlands Cluster as the Cluster Lead to provide support to sectors that need it across the cluster. The Business Resilience programme is in place across the East Midlands area, which will be looked at building upon with other common areas of support need such as Net Zero, Access to Finance and Industrial Digitalisation.

Various areas of the Business Lincolnshire website are having new content developed, including for example, a new section focussing on Net Zero and development of the Visitor Economy sector pages.

Scale Up support contracts are coming to a natural end so it is a good time to revisit the provision to make sure it is still meeting business demand and need.

The team are developing meet the buyer and procurement events and **SH** states that BL are happy to partner with any of the BROs or other board members to help deliver these flagship events.

Also **SH** highlights that previously the Growth Hub received £246,000 to deliver Growth Hub services, whereas during the last year the team had managed the commissioning and delivery of £3.6million worth of Covid Recovery and EU Transition support, including additional advisory support and grant funding.

JP asks for clarification as to whether or not the financial report covered in the meeting papers are annual and whether it is a framework report.

AD confirms the reports are bi-annual - completed in October and May of each year. The report is made up from a template narrative report and a download of firm level data (interaction with each business on an hour by hour basis) provided from GH CRM system.

BEIS review the reports and plan to meet individual Growth Hub teams in July. There is also

<p>an independent evaluation of the returns through a 3rd party supplier – Technopolis. Results will be shared with the board.</p> <p>JP states that it is important to respond to local business support requirements as well as balancing the report requirements.</p> <p>MW asks where the future plans originate from and how are the priorities decided.</p> <p>AD reports that the plans respond to a number of strategic requirements, including the direction set by the LEP Board, as documented in the LEP Recovery Strategy, the County Council as set by the LCC Corporate Plan and the Funders, for example from ERDF and BEIS, such as the cluster lead role.</p> <p>SB states that it would be worthwhile to have a year on year comparison of the figures from the report.</p> <p>JP states that the board should consider what is success in terms of Growth Hub and how has the board helped to achieve this, to be discussed at the Growth Hub Governance planning meeting</p>	<p>Incorporate comparison figures in future reports.</p> <p>GH success criteria to be discussed at the GH Governance Planning meeting.</p>
<p>Community Renewal Bids - SH</p> <p>SH runs through the Community Renewal Funding (CRF) bids – information included in the slide presentation provided. The delivery window is very tight - if successful the fund will need to be delivered by 31st March 2022. The fund is a precursor to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. 18 bids have been submitted to Government for the next stage of review – we will find out at the end of July if these have been successful.</p> <p>KP asks whether or not the Start Up Scheme in the Entrepreneurship project is aimed towards just young or older age bracket of people. SH confirms that it isn't exclusively for younger or older people, however it is targeted more specifically at these groups. This is to ensure that no new talent is missed and people with more experience are able to share knowledge.</p> <p>CRF funding is predominantly to be focussed towards the Priority areas of East Lindsey, Boston and Lincoln City, however the 3 Growth Hub bids will include provision across the whole of Lincolnshire, albeit with scaled down provision.</p> <p>JP queries whether the Digital Lincolnshire programme will cover hybrid working. SH confirms that there is support for up-skilling and re-skilling on the agenda as well as a grant programme which can be used for hybrid ways of working. Also, there is an advisory support attached to the programme to help them adapt to a hybrid way of working.</p> <p>JP asks whether there is scope for the Entrepreneurs academy to cover the FE sector. SH confirms that the University already has a programme for Lincolnshire's indigenous graduates who want to start a business which provides a start up 'boot camp' and access to seed corn grant. The CRF bid will open up a version of this programme to you people who don't have a degree but do have a good idea and want to set up a business.</p> <p>SH mentions that the Growth Hub is in partnership with the Lincolnshire Chamber of</p>	

Commerce in providing the Health & Wellbeing Hub. Please see link below:

<https://www.lincs-chamber.co.uk/campaigns/leadership-and-wellbeing/>

EU Transition Blueberry Research Findings

Blueberry provided a presentation attached with the minutes for information which reflects the findings that they have made from research that they have carried out, and how this information can be used when planning future provision.

JP states it is important to note the lasting impacts that leaving the EU will have on businesses within certain sectors and how can we use this report to solve potential issues.

JP asks if you ask a business what support they would like, funding is always high on the list. Is there anything specific that they would use this funding for specifically?

Blueberry confirms that funding is one of the highest on the list type of support they would like. The priorities seem to be with solving cash flow issues as well as high interest in innovation and diversification. Digitalisation is also another priority.

MW states access to finance becoming more and more important.

MW also states that the view that issues around leaving the EU are short to medium term should be taken with some level of scepticism as the reality is that it is more likely to be medium to long term.

KP reiterates the previous points by saying businesses have said similar and that the issues will not be short term. KP also states that it is difficult to distinguish between Covid and EU exit issues and asks whether it is necessary to separate and analyse which is causing the issue.

Blueberry confirms that their feedback has resulted in the same.

JP asks whether in the research it was picked up on where businesses went for advice and support or did businesses assume that issues will sort themselves out.

Blueberry – Feedback was provided from research in order to provide support around what businesses felt they needed as a number of businesses didn't realise how they would be impacted by the EU exit.

SB states that it is important to make sure that we make the most of the opportunity to help

<p>sectors to grow such as Agri-food due to increase in costs.</p> <p>Blueberry confirms that increase in costs has been an issue to a lot of businesses and that more support could be provided for these businesses.</p> <p>SH states that the Business Resilience programmes are being continued to allow for an on-going import and export support provisions as well as business resilience provisions looking at cost restructures and innovations and the results found in this report can help to shape the support going forward. There is also an Internationalisation Strategy in place which is funded by the DIT and provided by Deyton Bell which is in a draft stage which can be brought to a future meeting.</p> <p>SB states that there is a real opportunity to move quickly to implement any support from the advantages that we have at this stage.</p>	<p>Draft Internationalisation strategy to be discussed at a future meeting</p>
<p>Start Up support discussion</p> <p>NBV update provided by John Owens.</p> <p>SH provided a quick introduction to the full start up support in Lincolnshire that sit directly under the Growth Hub's support offer. The University of Lincoln provide start up support to graduates. NBV, Princes Trust and E-Factor jointly provide the broader business start-up support.</p> <p>JO provides an overview of NBV and the support that they provide such as the 3 day Starting in Business programme. As these are now provided on Zoom which has helped increase the levels of attendance as there is less travel involved. A blended approach of face to face and online sessions will be continued going forward.</p> <p>In March 2021 402 individuals had completed the course. Funding is provided to cover the Starting in Business course until 2022 with potential for extension to 2023.</p> <p>Grant funding is also provided by NBV across all of the East Midlands including Greater Lincolnshire, however the grant pot has now been fully allocated. NBV are seeking to add funding to the grant pot if possible.</p> <p>At the end of March 2021 135 businesses had received a minimum £1k grant. Total grant value awarded was £267,885 with the average grant being for £1,984. This attracted £1,002,800 in private sector match.</p> <p>MW states that E-Factor have also been carrying out online advice but are slowly returning to face to face sessions however a blended approach will remain in carrying out a 1-2-1 and 1-2-many support. MW also mentions a 12 month start up academy has been created due to an increase in demand. The attitude across majority of growth hubs is that the start-up support isn't recognised. The GH needs to focus on making sure that entrepreneurs want to start up business in Lincolnshire.</p> <p>Before the first lockdown in March 20 MW states that E-Factor had around 15 enquiries per month, since this point the enquiries are up to around 40 enquires per month.</p> <p>JP states that we should revisit this agenda item again in a future meeting.</p>	

<p>Future Meeting structures and frequency.</p> <p>JP, MW, SH and AD have had a meeting regarding the structure and frequency of the board meetings. There is another meeting scheduled in to have a look at the role of the Growth Hub board as well as the strategy of the Growth Hub board as well as the input and outcome of the meetings. This is opened up to all board members if they have any contributions. The proposed frequency would be a bi- monthly meeting that is shorter in length.</p>	
<p>AOB: None</p>	
<p>Date of next meeting: TBC</p>	

DRAFT