

Business Leadership Group

Wednesday 5th September 2018

1330 – 1530hrs

NFU, Agriculture House, Pynes Hill, Rydon Lane, Exeter. EX2 5ST

Present

Richard Stevens (RS) - Chairman / LEP Board member / Business Representative (Citybus)

Amanda Ratsey (AR) – LEP Theme Lead / Local Authority (Plymouth City Council)

Colin Bettison (CB) – Local Authority (Plymouth City Council)

Cllr Harvey Siggs (CHS) - Councillor Mendip District Council

Daniel Newman (DN) - Torbay Development Agency

Eifion Jones (EJ) – LEP Head of Strategy

Noel Stevens (NS) – ESIF Committee Representative / Business Representative (Alder King)

Stewart Horne (SH) – Business Support Representative (Business Information Point)

Hedi Hallam (HH) – LEP Partnerships Manager

Martha Wilkinson (MW) – Social Economy / LEP Board Member (Devon Community Foundation)

Linda Middle-Jones (LMJ) – Business Representative (International Trade Matters)

James Gilgrist (JG) – Local Authority (Somerset County Council)

Sue Wilkinson (SW) – Business Body Representative (Federation of Small Businesses)

Victoria Gage (VG) – Local Authority (Devon County Council)

Robin Daniels (RD) – Business Body Representative (South West Business Council)

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Alistair Handyside (AH) - Tourism Alliance

Apologies

Julia Blaschke – Local Authority (Plymouth City Council)

Adrian Dawson - University of Plymouth

Chris Evans – R&D and Innovation (University of Exeter)

Karl Tucker – Business Representative (Yeo Valley)

David Ratcliffe - Devon and Cornwall Business Council

Steve Warren Brown – Business Representative (YSL Landscapes)

Paul Thomas – Local Authority (Devon County Council)

1	Introductions, Apologies and Conflicts of Interest
	The introductions and apologies were made (see above) Conflicts of interest were declared by Richard Stevens, Linda Middleton-Jones, Stewart Horne and Victoria Gage for Growth Hub.
2	Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising
	Items to be corrected under item 3 – ‘by’ not ‘my’ Misspelt: Hayley Wallbank and Eifion Jones Matters arising: Following May’s meeting HH has met with the OPCC (Office of Police Crime Commissioner) for Devon & Cornwall and has improved relations there. Action: HH to get in touch with Somerset & Avon PCC. Action: circulate the Scale Up Report.
3	Update on Productivity Delivery Plan
	EJ updated the group on the draft Productivity Delivery Plan, already acknowledged that the cross-cutting themes need to be woven in more thoroughly. The plan is split into 2 main parts: the core support (e.g. business support) which is available to everyone, whilst the second part is where the document is more distinctive and builds upon emerging markets or economically significant parts of our economy. The first iteration of opportunities will include: photonics, nuclear, marine, high value tourism and farming, fishing & food.

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Action: slide to be circulated to the group.

LMJ – queried the lack of internationalisation in the document. (EJ) There is specific mention of helping companies to export with DIT recognising HotSW as a photonics area of high-growth potential. ERDF also allows us to add a little extra to DIT money, this is hidden from the slides but it is there.

HotSW is in the second wave of Local Industrial Strategies (LIS), government are interested in our area as a mixed economy with a mixed geography. The Delivery Plan will morph into the LIS. In the LIS the government are looking for 3-4 areas/sectors of globally significant activity. There are ongoing discussion as to what this might look like in terms of leading and the role of the Joint Committee.

A distilled version will be delivered in October to local MPs with the aim for the document to gain the regions recognition in the upcoming budget.

The LIS is due for completion mid-2019 with a good foundational document in time to pitch government for the Comprehensive Spending Review and the Shared Prosperity Fund.

AR – we have over 300 different forms of business support in the area, in this we are not unique, however that still makes it very confusing for a business. We need to identify the gaps in the support and redesign where appropriate. Example interventions could include the rationalisation of the support.

There is an extensive evidence base behind these business supports as they are predominantly EU funded, however the interpretation and evaluation is more difficult. What is the best measure of success?

MW – what is the time frame on this? Some of these projects will run out, others won't? (EJ) It will be expressed more clearly in the final document.

RS – our job is to design the toolkit that businesses need to succeed, have a one-stop-shop for businesses to go to (VG) the Growth Hub.

LMJ – the issue leads back to funding support, there needs to be support for other service providers, need to create a level playing field between public and private sector business support.

RD – there is a need to create something fit for purpose, capture it on a map with the business support, its funding life and geographical coverage. The digitalisation of it with live e.g. export opportunities.

RS – the gap is in access to private sector business support, but for the LEP to do this we need sight of our asset base. (VG) Although there is a huge risk in endorsing private sector business support, a credibility check would be required with the risk sitting with the public sector.

AH – the issue is language, business want access to this support, they just don't know it's available. There needs to be more publicity of the Growth Hub.

RD – a need for an outcome focused view, correct the un-coordination between the Chambers, FSB, membership organisations

HH – we have the tools for more access to private sector support with private directory and the Buy with Confidence.

AR – the reason for so many projects is the multiple sources of funding, there has to be something that makes it more simplistic. Could we enhance the Growth Hub and a voucher based scheme? Leaving businesses able to choose the support they would like.

VG – the issue with tasking the membership organisations or chambers to refer to the Growth Hub is that they are output paid.

EJ – there are 4 key strands of work:

1. Rationalising support – an evaluation of the existing support
2. An enhanced front-end (Growth Hub)
3. Better coordination across different organisations

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	<p>4. Publicity and increasing the penetration. SH – there is currently no business support or skills training for agriculture.</p>
4	Growth Hub Update
	<p>CB - Paper was sent to the Board in July and signed off.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There will be a one year extension of the Growth Hub with a meeting with Serco in October to understand what that extension may look like, to what extent does the contract allow for flex. 2. We are looking to procure a pilot of a Scale-Up Programme. 3. Begin Growth Hub re-procurement for 2020. <p>AR – can we ask for a working group to assist on this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martha Wilkinson • Noel Stevens • Cllr Harvey Siggs • Sue Wilkinson <p>Following the interim we will go back to the working group.</p>
5	Growth Deal and Unlocking Growth Fund Performance
	<p>CB – have moved forward: all GD1 delivered, nearly all GD2 are contracted, 2 business cases for GD3 projects have been received are being assessed. UGF – 6 projects have funding agreements with 2 projects having been agreed and working towards receiving funding agreement. Action: next Business Leadership Group meeting to be held at Exeter Science Park.</p>
8	AOBs
	<p>HH – would like to draw attention to some events:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. LEP Conversations, socialising the draft Delivery Plan and LIS – afternoon of the 2nd October (Devon) and 10th October (Somerset). 2. LEP Conference AGM – would like the groups to contribute to the Breakout Sessions again – concerns over the planning and ensuring there is no duplication of slides. 3.
	<i>Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 8th November 2018, 1330-1530hrs, Exeter (tbc)</i>

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